

Othello Program News *by David Haigh.*

Alex Selby will *give* you a copy of Olympiad-winning *Polygon* if you send him a 31/over2 inch diskette and a SAE. *Polygon* only runs on an Archimedes. Alex's address is: Trinity College, Cambridge, CB2 1TQ.

\$ 40 will get you *Smart Othello Board* for the Macintosh from Anders Kierulf. As well as being a tool to assist in "playing, teaching, discussing, analyzing, studying, recording and printing" Othello games, this includes two championship-level programs: *Peer Gynt* and *Brand*. Anders' address is: 680 Sharon Park Drive # 24, Menlo Park, Ca94025, USA.

Bruno de la Boisserie has sent me a wealth of information about programs for the IBM PC and its compatibles. Of the 41 programs he has encountered so far, 16 are classed as "very feeble", 8 as "feeble", 3 as "average", 11 as "strong" and 3 as "very strong". He has also sent me copies of four of the best IBM PC programs for us to review. I believe that these are "freeware", and am in the process of confirming the conditions under which the authors of these programs would allow me to distribute copies to our members.

Assuming they are confirmed to be freeware, what I would ask you to do if you want a program is: (1) send me a **formatted** blank 3½ or 5¼ inch diskette and a stamped addressed envelope for its return, and (2) phone me to discuss which program you would like.

Bruno is in the process of compiling a list of programs for the Atari ST and the Macintosh. He has sent me an Atari ST (mono monitor) version of one of the best programs, *GTHOR*, which is available from me for free as described above.

Othello bits *by Adrian Millett.*

In common (I suspect) with other people, my first encounter with OTHELLO was also my first encounter with computers, on a TRS-80 back in 1979. Later, when I had brought my own PET computer, I had a go at writing my own program. Of course, in common with every programmer's first efforts, my early program simply went for flipping the most pieces at each move—after all it seemed logical! While I tinkered about with this program on and off for some time, the lack of decent OTHELLO literature prevented me from progressing, and it was only recently that I renewed my interest in the game, picked up "OTHELLO - BRIEF & BASIC" and wrote a new PC Othello program called FLIP-IT. You may have seen an early version (FLIP 1.4) on some computer-magazine cover disks (What PC Nov91 & Public Domain Jan91)—ignore the level of play of that program, the latest version is immeasurably stronger.

When developing a program like this, it is a great asset to have a sparring partner in the shape of another program—my own level of play was not good enough! Initially this was a problem, due to the lack of really decent shareware

programs, until I got hold of REV4.1 and GTHOR. By playing FLIP-IT against these I was able to try various parameters and tree-search techniques, and I think now that FLIP-IT has the edge over these programs—although I don't want to belittle them: they all have their own strong points, and are well worth getting if you have a PC. I was able to apply much of what I learnt from writing SAGE-DRAUGHTS (probably the strongest commercially available CHECKERS program) to writing FLIP-IT. In particular, a fast, deep, lightweight search algorithm seems to work better than trying to load the program with too many human-play derived parameters—if the program is intelligent enough to search the right lines it can figure out most of the traps and combinations for itself based on a few simple evaluations like corner squares, stable squares, evaporation and mobility.

Another innovation I have introduced into FLIP-IT is the ability to try different board sizes and corner shapes. Since the stable corner squares are so critical to OTHELLO, the game play is radically altered if you block-out some squares around the corner as non-usable. You can try this yourself on a normal OTHELLO board—try blocking out squares A1,A2,B1, and the same in the other 3 corners, and you get OCTOTHELLO, with 8 'corner' squares! FLIP-IT has a total of 16 corner shapes selectable from the front menu, including normal OTHELLO of course. Another fun-thing you can do is try different board-sizes, anything from 4 by 4 up to 19 by 19. For instance FLIP-IT can 'solve' the game on a 4 by 4 board, as resulting in a forced win for black! By implication OTHELLO is probably a forced win for white or black—it's just a question of getting a computer to search deep enough. Don't laugh—a Canadian Super-Computer program called 'Chinook' is getting close to doing this for the game of DRAUGHTS (or CHECKERS), by dint of storing billions of end-game positions! Hmm . . . anyone out there got a Cray-5 going spare?

I have released a shareware version of FLIP-IT, however the full version is a commercial product, and you will want to get this if you are a serious player. The full version has full game replay/save/load/print features, game comment text, board edit/setup, response time (and hence play strength) variable from 1 second up to 1 week, and very pretty CGA/EGA/VGA graphics. It also comes with other interesting strategy games. It costs just 9 pounds (PC compatible, 5.25 or 3.5 disk), or USA customers can pay normal cheques IN US DOLLARS for only \$24 - that's including AIR MAIL and currency conversion charges.

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PC SOLUTIONS, Dept OTH, PO BOX 954, Bournemouth BH7 6YJ, ENGLAND.

Paris *by Peter Bhagat, with help.*

Editor's Note: Thanks to Adelaide Carpenter and Joel Feinstein for their contributions to this piece (which weren't originally intended as such.)

I decided to regress to being a real Othello player so, deserting my new bride, I packed my sleeping bag, donned my real Othello player's T-shirt and headed for Paris.

It was a warm and sunny day when we left Victoria. After being serenaded by Italians on a French train, seven weary players and one supporter (Adelaide) arrived in Paris. Marc Tastet kindly offered to put us all up so we turned his lounge into a camp site. For the next two days we played Othello. The tournament site was a wooden hut surrounded by a high wire fence. No one managed to escape.

Adelaide writes: *Paris had 52 contestants (not including me—did too poorly in London, have not played since, do not want to put myself off the game!), jammed cheek to jowl in a small, very hot room. The entirety of the tournament was great fun for everyone; other than it being uncomfortably hot, everything went very well (except that the pairing program didn't work so Emmanuel Lazard had to do them by hand—he'd chosen not to play, fortunately!). Everyone finished up well but very tired!*

Joel writes: *Paris was very exciting: Imre Leader got his revenge over me for Brussels, but his 8.5 points weren't enough to make the final. 52 players, most of them very dangerous, four Japanese . . . amazing stuff.*

Imre drew with Caspard, while I drew with Mike Handel in round six, and by the end of the tournament I was ahead of him by 18 discs. Guy Plowman beat Piau and Ralle, but Garry Edmead was too busy to come and complete the job, so I had to stand in for him by beating Piau for the first time.

The number of players was a Grand Prix record. Murakami and Shaman were in the final. Shaman played well but made a fatal mistake: "I made Murakami play very well in that final." 2-0 to Murakami.

In between were the bits that mattered. We found a cafe called "Le Perroquet." Joel "Plouf" Feinstein spilt things everywhere. Then disaster struck. An advance party informed us that the "Assiette Au Beouf" had closed. Further investigations revealed that it was a chain with no less than seven restaurants with the same name in Paris. We went to one. They had mirrors, a six foot three waitress and mousse au chocolat (at which Guy excelled) but it wasn't the same.

The final positions were: 1. Takeshi Murakami (Japan) 10, 2. David Shaman (USA) 9, 3. Imre Leader (UK) 8.5, 4. Erik Jensen (Denmark), Katsuhiko Kozuka (Japan) 8, 6. Joel Feinstein (UK), Mike Handel (UK) 7.5, 8. Paul Ralle (France), Guy Plowman (UK), Francesco Marconi (Italy), Mauro Perrotti (Italy), Peter Bhagat (UK) 7, with stars like Piau, Feldborg, Tastet, Brusca, Penloup and

Juhem lurking further down the field. The other British players were Aubrey de Grey, (who was equal fourth at the end of Saturday (5/7) but equal 22nd at the end of the tournament (5/11)), Matthew Selby (also 5/11), and Sue Shaman (3/11).

Here endeth the Grand Prix, as usual with an anticlimax. Leader's 490 (two wins and a third) was dominant, Shaman's 320 consistent (a second and two thirds), and Marconi's 206 (a win in Milan and six points scraped up in Paris) was marginally superior to Feldborg's 203 (win in Copenhagen and three points dredged up in Brussels). Murakami scored 200 in the obvious way, then we had Caspard 150, Brusca 150, Penloup 144, Berner 143, Puget 140, Tastet 115. Further down, Feinstein scored 85, Edmead 52, Plowman 46, Brightwell 22 and Bhagat 16. This was Imre Leader's third Grand Prix win, with Pete Bhagat having won two, and Feldborg/Murakami sharing the other. Britain ra ra ra, or Imre and Pete ra anyway.

Now for a rather chauvinistic selection of games.

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

Kozuka 31 Leader 33

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

de Grey 33 Tastet 31

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

Tastet 28 Feinstein 36

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

Ralle 31 Plowman 33

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

Plowman 25 Murakami 39

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

Marconi 21 Shaman 43

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

Otani 13 Handel 51

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

Murakami 44 Shaman 20

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

Shaman 16 Murakami 48

News from Abroad *by Graham Brightwell.*

Certainly the main news of last year was the partial eclipse of Hideshi Tamenori. Tamenori had achieved the remarkable feat of winning three successive Japanese and then World Championships, and was also the Meijin. But last year he lost first the Meijin, to the little-fancied Hirokazu Tezuka, and then in the unforgiving Japanese Championship he lost 31-33 in the semi-finals to Noboyuki Takizawa. Takizawa then lost in the final to Kaneda. My tip for next year's World Champion: Tamenori.

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

Tamenori 20 Tezuka 44

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

Takizawa 33 Tamenori 31

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

Takizawa 14 Kaneda 50

In the U.S., Brian Rose and David Shaman dominated the scene one last time, with Shaman winning the Grand Prix and Rose the Nationals. The key game in the Nationals is shown below: things would have been different if Shaman had played 48h6. Rose has now emigrated to Japan, where he intends to marry, and eat properly. Shaman is in Britain for at least the next year: he has already married his "local girl", but I can't comment on his diet. David and Sue have taken up residence in Oxford, and they are welcome additions to the British Othello scene.

Meanwhile in France, rumours of Marc Tastet's demise were greatly exaggerated. By all accounts, Tastet was very unlucky not to qualify for the French

team in New York, and he demonstrated his talent in December by winning the French Championship. He beat Didier Piau 2-1 in the final: one of the wins is shown below.

My vote for the healthiest Othello scene in Europe goes to Italy. Maybe it's their policy of holding frequent tournaments where the masters are barred, or maybe it's the active support their Federation receives from the toy company, but the number of active players in Italy certainly exceeds that anywhere else in Europe. At the top, Marconi, Brusca and Ghirardato have been the top three players since time immemorial, but their major victories have been relatively few. It's good to see Mauro Perotti improving: in the final of the Italian championship (below), he came within a disc or two of winning.

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

Rose 42 Shaman 22

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

Tastet 42 Piau 22

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

Perotti 31 Marconi 33

The least healthy Othello scene in Europe has to be that in Denmark. The retirement of Claus Quist-Jessen has meant that the serious Danish players can literally be counted on the fingers of one hand. The number not from Greve, a suburb of Copenhagen, can be counted on the fingers of one finger.

On the other hand, and both feet, Norwegian Othello is a growth area. Watch out for Jan Kristian Haugland, Torstein Vehusheia, Per Våje, Lasse Kjørsvik and about eighteen players called Holm, Seland, Holm Seland or Seland Holm. Besides having excellent names, they are all under eighteen, and already they seem to have overtaken the established Norwegian order of Aas, Scheving and veteran Jonny Justvik.

Polish tournaments are all named after brands of beer, and all won by Pawel Pietruszciewicz.

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The Milan Tournament 1992 *by Karsten Sotherwitness.*

A French player won a tournament of the European Grand Prix! How could this happen? Very simple: the other finalist was also French! OK, that's why! Marc Tastet won the Milan tournament on January 11th and 12th 1992, beating Dominique Penloup in the final.

What about the Brits? NO ONE came! Shame on the British players!

What about the Danes? NO ONE came! Shame on the Danish players!

What about the Belgians? NO ONE came! Shame on the Belgian players!

What about the Swiss? NO ONE came! Shame on the Swiss players!

What about the Americans? NO ONE came! Shaman!

What about the Italians? They did come, but Ghirardato hadn't played for a year, Marconi appeared to be a little off-form (and also a bit unlucky), Brusca didn't play and Perotti was probably a bit distracted by his new function as "Presidentissimo".

The previous French win in the European Grand Prix was in Milan 1988 when Frenchy Jean-François Puget had beaten Frenchy Marc Tastet. The one before that was in Paris 1987 when Paul Ralle beat another Frenchman Elie Cali. Can French players only beat French players? No, in Milan 1986, Jean-François Puget had beaten Luigi Puzzo (former "Presidentissimo" of the Italian Federation).

But these last two years, French players have been very good at finishing second: in 1990, Marc Tastet in Copenhagen and Paris, Didier Piau in the Worlds in Stockholm, in 1991, Jean-François Puget in Rome, Dominique Penloup in Cambridge, Emmanuel Caspard in Brussels and Paul Ralle in the Worlds in New York all finished second! So, Milan was the end of a long series (though actually a Frenchman DID finish second).

But let's come back to the tournament. Finally, 21 players turned up: 18 Italians and 3 Frenchmen. The tournament was run very smoothly: the room was quiet, the pairings were done by a computer nobody complained about (maybe because nobody had the stupid idea of unplugging it), there was a photocopying machine in the room, which was very useful to keep a copy of one's transcripts at the end of the tournament.... The organisation was good throughout.

At the end of the first day, Marc Tastet had won all his games (7/7) and he was followed by a trio on 5/7 composed of Marconi, Penloup and Alami (whom Marconi and Penloup could call an "up-and-coming player", see glossary in *New York, New York*). Ghirardato and the third Frenchman, Nicolet, followed with 4.5/7 (they both drew with Barnaba!). It was clear that the two finalists would be among those six players.

There was unfortunately no performance at the Scala on Saturday evening, so the players had to go to bed after visiting "il Duomo", the always very beautiful

cathedral of Milan. You must come here once just for that.

On Sunday, Ivan Facchin didn't turn up, although he already had four wins. Tastet lost two games, to Penloup and Barnaba. Meanwhile, Ghirardato and Penloup (beating Marconi) won their four games. Nicolet, having reached a winning position against Ghirardato, chose for some reason not to play a forced winning line (where his opponent never had any choice) and finally let him win, so that he missed the play-off for third place.

At the end, Tastet and Penloup had 9/11, followed by Ghirardato on 8.5. Marconi had the best tie-break among those equal in fourth (by half a point) and he won the one-game play-off for third place, beating Ghirardato in a close game. Meanwhile, Tastet won the first game of the final 44-20 with a Stoner trap. The second was closer but Penloup missed a win at 46 with h8 and a draw at 48 with a3 (because he played 48b2, with a swindle in the South-East corner if Black takes 49a1) and finally lost 46-18. (See transcripts).

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

Penloup 20 Tastet 44

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

Tastet 46 Penloup 18

The Italians don't know yet whether next year's tournament will be in Milan or Rome, but in any case you should try coming.

Final positions, with scores and European Grand Prix points: 1. Marc TASTET 9 (2-0, 200), 2. Dominique PENLOUP 9 (0-2, 140), 3. Francesco MARCONI 7 (1-0, 90), 4. Paolo GHIRADATO 8.5 (0-1, 60), 5. Carlo ALAMI, Donato BARNABA 7 (35) 7. Stéphane NICOLET 6.5 (20) 8. Marco VENERITO, Stefano ANTONELLI, Mauro PEROTTI, Michele COMERCI 6 (8) 12. Cinzia DAMOSSO 5.5 (0), ...

The other four tournaments in the 1992 European Grand Prix are:

Cambridge, February 15–16.

Copenhagen, May 2–3.

Brussels, late July.

Paris, August 29–30.

Your contact is Peter Bhagat.

Real Othello players don't eat Quiche *by Clare Cox.*

Real Othello players play the X opening.

Real Othello players don't play the diagonal. Actually, no Othello player plays the diagonal after reaching puberty.

Real Othello players don't sleep in hotels. They sleep in sleeping bags. (A crucial part of pre-tournament build-up is to sleep on your own floor for several nights to acclimatise).

Real Othello players don't wear Othello sweatshirts at tournaments (can you think of anything so naff). They wear armpit-revealing T-shirts.

Real Othello players don't fly to tournaments when they can get far more travel sick in 24 hours by boat and train.

Real Othello players come eighth equal in Paris.

Real Othello players play Othello whenever they see a horizontal surface to put a board on.

Real Othello players don't live in Wellingborough. Beware of imitations.

Real Othello players play in DJs, sell newsletters, start with move 0 and have seven seconds left on their clock.

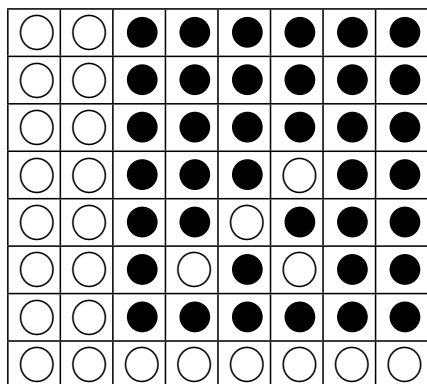
Real Othello players don't discuss openings in Swedish nightclubs. They get excited about optimal disc count endgame analyses from 33 moves out (and then claim they played the safe win). However, real Real Othello players lose it in the endgame.

Real Othello players take Bhagat edges, play Shaman moves and de Grey openings.

Real Othello players don't watch the Final. They spend the time more valuably having dozens of five-minute games against people they didn't get to play in the tournament.

Real Othello players eat Indian curries or plates of chips or plates of beans. Never the three shall mix. Indian restaurants do not serve quiche.

The Mythteriouth Cathe of the Mithing Dithc by Mike Handel.



Mysterious Figure 1.

Thatth enough lithping. [*Phew! – Typist*] Sorry, couldn't rethiht it. [*Thtop that, now! – Typiht*] On to the puzzle. I was very fed up one evening (no money, nothig on tv, all books read, etc.), so I offered my Panda Oth-Oth a game of Othello. We won't go into the gory details, suffice it to say that I won 38-26, and the final position is shown opposite. (Figure 1.) Now, Oth-Oth was, let us say, more than a little annoyed at losing to a job such as my good self. I would even venture as far as to say that she was definitely not pleased.

“You were very lucky to win, pizza face,” she pouted.

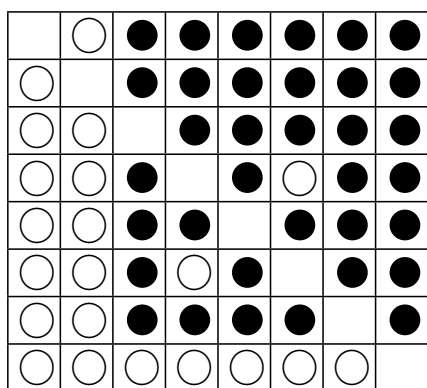
“Oh really?” I said in a rhetorical, disinterested, ‘I’ve just won so it doesn’t matter’ kind of way.

“Yes, really. For one thing, you knew very well I wouldn’t be able to concentrate after an X-square at move 5. And another thing . . .,” she trailed off, guessing I would rise to the bait.

“Yes,” I intoned, impatiently.

“And another thing, I only needed five more discs for a draw.”

I thought to myself that it was going to be a long night. “It must be past your bedtime Othy-babes. If you can make $26 + 5 = 32$, I will eat my Othello board.



Mysterious Figure 2.

“OK, that’s a deal,” began my Panda, confidently. “Othello to me is a game of territory. For example in this game most of my discs are in the South-West, and yours are in the North-East.” She then proceeded to remove the discs along the a1-h8 diagonal. (Figure 2.) “There, now we can see things a little better. You won because you had more black discs in my territory than I had whites in yours. 9 blacks against 2 whites in fact. We mustn’t forget 5 whites and 3 blacks on the diagonal. So the difference between us is $2 + 5 = 7$ whites and $9 + 3 = 12$ blacks. $12 - 7 = 5$, so I only needed 5 more for a draw.”

She concluded her discourse with a triumphantly emphatic gesture, and stormed off to bed. A sleepless night was in prospect.

The all-important question is . . . can you tell me the flaw in my black-and-white friend’s reasoning, and explain what happened to the missing disc? Otherwise severe indigestion awaits. Answer next newsletter, folks.

In the Forests of the Night *by Graham Brightwell.*

After a one-issue break, another in-depth look at a popular opening. This time, it's the 7f6 variation of the Tiger, reached after 1f5 2d6 3c3 4d3 5c4 6f4 7f6 or 1f5 2d6 3c4 4d3 5c3 6f4 7f6. See Figure 1.

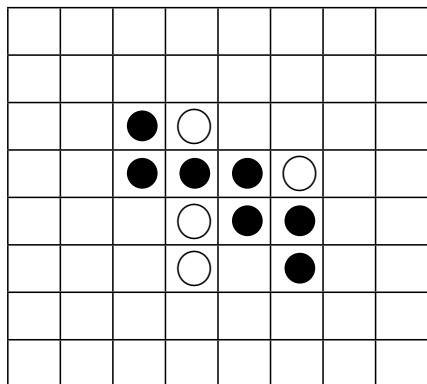


Figure 1. After 7f6.

White can play 8b4, the Kung opening (named somewhat deviously after Arnold Kling—see OQ, Summer '88, p.7, for an explanation), with the aim of getting to e6 first, but it's probably not very good: Black can play either 9f3, simply allowing 10e6, or the more combative 9c2, which leaves White very little.

The two main contenders from Figure 1 are 8f3 and 8g5. One way to look at the continuations is to think of these two as being “White’s moves” and e3, e6 and g4 as “Black’s moves”. This is best illustrated by the following two sequences: 8f3 9g4 10g5 11e3, and 8g5 9e3 10f3 11g4. It will eventually dawn on even our slowest reader that the positions reached are identical. See Figure 2.

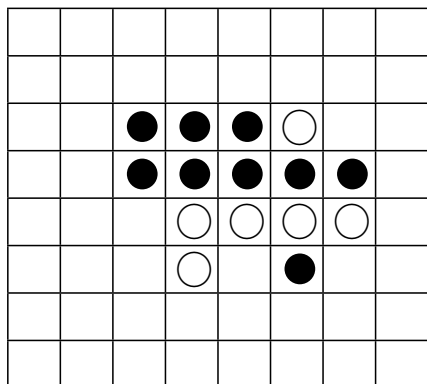


Figure 2. Convergence.

Suppose for the moment that this position is good for Black. Then can White avoid it by playing a different move 10? After 8g5 9e3, 10f3 is almost automatic, but after 8f3 9g4, then there is 10g3 to consider: the usual line against this goes 11e6 12b3, and here I always thought that 13d2 was fine, but now people are playing 13c2, which is therefore presumably even better. So the evaluation of the position in Figure 2 is critical: Black can reckon to reach it whenever White plays the perpendicular.

Now, from Figure 2, 12e2 13d2 is a pair which doesn't seem to gain White very much, and the near-universal preference here is for 12h3. An old (meaning as long ago as 1986) line now is 13c6 14g3 15h6 16h5 17d7 (if you alter the order of c6 and h6, then the f4 disc is white and 18e2 is now very good), and probably White stands better. It's not totally clear-cut, since the black wall is not easy to attack, and Black has moves like e6 and g6 to come. The modern line, after 12h3 from Figure 2, is 13g3 14f2 15e6, see Figure 3.

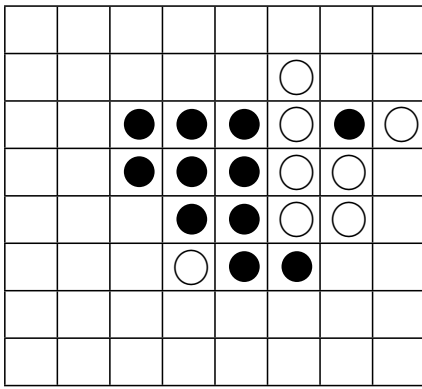


Figure 3. After 15e6.

This line was pioneered by Takeshi Murakami—of course it's the move 15 that makes it interesting, although I don't see what's so bad about 15h6 16h4 (or 16h5) 17c6. The theory from here has yet to be fully worked out (except presumably in Japan). 16h4 seems to be a bad idea: Black will play 17g6 and follow it up with h5. The alternatives are: 16c6, looking to get in e2, 16e7, or 16f7. The theme for Black is to play to h5, with an eye to playing e2 himself. Somehow I suspect that there's something good for White in there.

Assuming this is at least OK for White (and perpendicularists will fervently hope so), then what are the implications for White's choice at move 8? The answer is that he has to look at the various Black alternatives at 9, and decide which he's happiest against.

Taking 8f3 first, 9e3 doesn't really work because of 10b4 11b5 12e6 with an excellent position, so the key line here starts with 9e6. White plays 10e7, and now Black has three interesting options. See Figure 4.

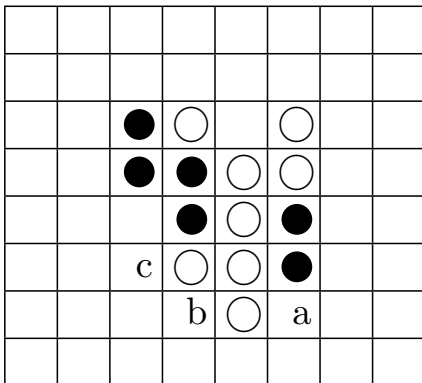


Figure 4. After 10e7.

There are themes here. White would very much like to move to e3, so he will play c5 at some stage, Black will flip that disc, White will flip it back, and quite often Black ends matters by playing to e3 himself. So an archetypal line is 11f7 12c5 13b6 14b5 15e3. After 16g6 17e8 I think Black is ahead. (See p.18 of *York, New York* for a possible continuation.) The current opinion seems to be that 14b5 is wrong here, and one should prefer 14b4 or 14g5. After either of these, 15e3 may still be the move. I must admit I like the look of 14g5,

a move which had escaped my attention until recently, although it has been played on and off since '87 at the latest.

Actually option (a) 11f7 seems to be out of vogue at the moment, and (b) 11d7 is rather more popular. 12g6 is a natural response, usually met by 13g5. Now White is going to play c5, met by c6, and f7, met by e8 or f8. The order does matter, but either way the position at the end looks about level.

The final option from Figure 4 is (c) 11c6. Play here is similar to the other possibilities, but White should watch out for lines like 12g6 13f8 14f7 15h6, with g8 to follow for Black, when White has no way to make progress in the SE: see the Ralle-Piau game below, but don't ask me what's going on in it. Perhaps 12c5 is as good as any.

To be honest, I would rather not reach Figure 4 for White, but others would be perfectly happy with it. So perhaps I should be playing 8g5.

After 8g5, 9g4 is not too good: 10e3 11e6 12c5. 9f3 has been tried a few times: 10g6 11e6 12e3 looks more promising than 10e3 11e6 12c5 13g4. 9g6 is also not out of the question, but 10e3 11e6 12c5 looks good for White. Having seen these lines, the move 9e6, taking White off e3, looks all the more logical. (Of course, 9e3 is the natural reaction, and we've already looked at that.) See Figure 5.

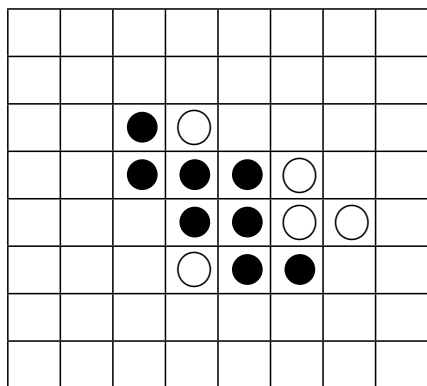


Figure 5. After 9e6.

10c5 is the obvious thing for White to try, but some people insert the pair 10d7 11e7 first. The aim of this (at least when I play it), is to be able to meet a Black move to g6 with g4, but after 10c5 11g6 12e3 White is fine anyway, so probably 10d7 is wrong. After 10c5, a typical line is 11f3 12e3 13g4 14f7, but often White plays b5 instead at 12 or 14, so that if Black replies with b4 then e7 is poisoned for after White goes to f7. Maybe Black should reply to b5 with b3, but that leaves some inviting holes at b4 and c6. In any case, it

seems to me that White is fine in this line.

From Figure 5, another popular move is 10f7, which at the very least is a lot better than it looks. 11e3 is the most natural response, but 12c5 then gains access to several nice moves. Murakami's interesting idea of 11h5 may be the way to go, or 11g6, as played by Kaneda in this year's World Final.

Well, my vote is for 8g5, but the evidence is far from conclusive. And is 7f6 better than 7c5? Somehow I doubt it, but it's certainly a major alternative which will flicker in and out of fashion as the years go by.

The usual sample of games for your delectation.

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

N.Takizawa-Ishii
Meijin match '87

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

Murakami-Leader
Paris '90

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

Shaman-Rose
U.S.Nationals '91

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

Feldborg-Stepanov
World Championship '91

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

Ralle (L.O.T.)-Piau
Worlds '90, semi-final

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

Kaneda-Tezuka
Student Championship '89

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

Piau-Ralle
World Championship '88

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

Bhagat-Brightwell
Unrated Tournament '90

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

Murakami-M.Takizawa
Tokyo Open '90, final

From our Irish Correspondent *by Joel Feinstein.*

The Maynooth College Othello unit meets on Wednesday evenings. There is a ladder which includes eleven humans and a computer program. My failed mascot from the World Championships (a leopard) is now the Maynooth challenge trophy. I won't win it too often because one of the rules I included is that Joel Feinstein must win by at least 52-12 to gain or hold the trophy.

I gave a lecture on "how to win at othello" to our maths club (they even gave me a meal and paid me ten pounds!) Afterwards I gave a four board simultaneous display. On one of the boards the opposing "team" decided to cheat while I was involved elsewhere, turning an instant run-out into a dangerous diagonalization. They denied my claim that I was "sure that I had a piece on that line" until after the game. On another board my opponent played a very good sequence to gain the last three moves of the game. P.S. I won all four games anyway.

So, Othello in Ireland is beginning to grow. Could we be next year's Canadians? We shall see.

The Federation Accounts *by Peter Bhagat.*

The Federation accounts are presented below.

You will notice that we made a large profit for the year. About £180 of this is provision to honour eight ten year memberships taken out this year. The rest is an unspent publicity budget and the regionals making a profit instead of a budgeted small loss.

The committee feels that it is time that the accounts were audited. Does anyone out there feel qualified to advise on tightening up our accounting practices and performing the audit?

INCOME

Subscriptions

British	482.00
Foreign	215.00
	697.00

Regionals

Cambridge	23.60
Wellingborough	10.00
Winchester	(23.40)
Edinburgh	10.07
Doncaster	5.00
Manchester	0.00
London	unknown*
Eastbourne	unknown
	25.27

* These accounts have now been submitted.

Sundry Credit

Sales <i>OB & B</i>	70.00
Sales Newsletter	44.00
Interest	36.94
Sundry Credit	66.52
	217.46

EXPENDITURE

Newsletter

Jan 91	132.99
Jun 91	133.60
	(266.59)

Sundry Expenses

Secretarial expenses	86.18
Insurance	50.00
Purchases <i>OB & B</i> (52)	133.87
	(270.05)
Profit for year	403.09

BALANCES

Balances at 29/9/90

Deposit	456.67
Current	426.58
Profit for year	403.09
	1286.34

Balances at 28/9/91

Deposit	493.61
Current	758.82
Transactions still to clear	33.91
	1286.34

Letter from London *by Graham Brightwell.*

The London Othello club is still there. Third Wednesday of every month, from 8pm. The Grotto Club, Golden Square, nr. Piccadilly Circus. Our first year's London Championship is coming towards a climax, with a final due in March. The Second London Championship will begin in April. To enter, just turn up: you don't have to play every month, but the double Round-Robin format means that you will be able to play quite a few serious games in the course of the year.

Letter to Garry Edmead from Marc Tastet.

Dear Garry,

I don't agree with the solution you give in *York, New York*, to the second "CRYPTICAL MINDBOGGLER PUZZLE".

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

Controversial Position

You say there has been no passes, so that White played the last move. The only possible White move is g8 flipping only f8. So far, we agree. But at that point, you say that Black has just played h5. I think you cannot justify this, because I claim the position is illegal at that point so that you cannot justify any move rather than any other.

The position before 60g8 is shown opposite. One reason why this position is not legal is that it's impossible for f7 to be black.

(1) h8, h7 and h6 cannot have been flipped since they have been put on the board. So among h6, h7, h8, the latest move was h7. (Otherwise, h7 would be black).

(2) So when h8 was played, it flipped g7 (only other access to h8) and g7 became black.

(3) But g7 is white, so it became white when White played h7. So if h7 flipped g7, it means that f7 was white or became white.

(4) So how could f7 be black now?

-f6 was already on the board because black played h8 flipping g7.

-f8 hasn't been played after g7 otherwise g7 would be black (because h6 was played before).

-e8 cannot have been flipped so f7 cannot have been flipped along the e8-h5 diagonal.

-f7 cannot have been flipped horizontally.

Then it's impossible. So you cannot justify any move 59 rather than another one. Sorry for demolishing your puzzle.

[Editor's note. Garry has been strangely silent, so he's probably out cooking up something even more devious. A year's subscription from the Editor's pocket to the best retro-analysis puzzle (i.e., like Garry's puzzles, or for that matter like Marc's analysis above) received in the next year.]

Cambridge Xmas Tournament 1991 by Maggie Maestro.

Three times European Champion, three times British Champion, World Finalist, three times a World Semi-finalist, seven times a winner of the Cambridge Regional. Yet one shadow remained, one flaw in Imre Leader's record, one nagging doubt, one issue yet to be settled. Could he do it? Could he win the Big One? Could he win the Cambridge Christmas Tournament?

Cunning shifting of the date, ostensibly to avoid a clash with a party in Bristol, contrived to remove one of Leader's obstacles, as Guy Plowman was cruelly left to arrive a day late for the event. But still there was Brightwell, there was Bhagat, there was Handel. There was Selby, and Selby, but by lunchtime there was only Selby. Were there no limits to the lengths our hero would go? By lunchtime too, de Grey had bitten what passed for the dust, victim no doubt of a fiendish plot, or possibly a work crisis.

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

Brightwell 29 Leader 35

Then there was a pack of young wolves, anxious for scalps. Marcus Moore, Annemarie Clemence, Roy Arnold. Scalps they got too, but not the one that mattered. After lunch they struck, with Moore taking out Bhagat, Clemence dismissing Handel, and Arnold disposing of the remaining Selby. Only Brightwell remained between Leader and the title he cherished the most. A tussle they had, but Leader emerged with the victory (see transcript, left).

Graham Brightwell annotates: the sequence 15-17 is a modern treatment of the Bat, which I first came across at this year's Worlds. Imre hadn't seen it before, but his 18g8 looks better than anything played in New York. Once the shared edge is set up, White is likely to have several tempi to the East (as 26, 36, 40 here). The sequence 28-34 is very good: the structure to the East is ideal for White, and a quiet move pops up on the other side—perhaps 33h4 is wrong? I want to play b7 at some point, but White just plays h5 and h8-c8 is a pair. Maybe I should leave h8 for longer, but 41b7 42b2 is scary. At the end, 56g1-g2-h1-h2 with an empty square is more logical but no better. Leader in impressive form.

On the tournament went, and stronger our hero became. Seven wins out of seven he scored that day. Then came Brightwell (6), Bhagat and Moore (4), Handel (3), Clemence (2), Arnold (1½, including a draw with de Grey—see cover), de Grey (1½ out of three played), Matthew Selby (1) and Alex Selby (1/3).

[*Editor's Note: One question remains. This so-called "Christmas tournament" was held in November, a shocking indictment of our modern-day commercial attitude to ancient traditions. So, can Imre Leader win in December?*]

Syncopated Cerebrations *by Sid Cox.*

Last issue's puzzle struck a rich vein of interest among our readers. I have heard that David Shaman described it as "the best Othello puzzle that's not about playing the game". [*Or something like that – Ed.*] Roy Oestensen found it interesting that there should be any controversy over something as basic as endgame counting. Iain Barrass sent a 3-page treatise on the subject showing that the situation could not occur, and Marc Tastet provided several insights into the subject, of which more later. But first to write to me by a considerable margin, and the winner of a year's membership, was Aubrey de Grey.

Just to remind you, you were challenged by me (inspired by an article from Septimus Q. Trolleybus) to find a position, with two empty squares, where the player to move had both options available, one of which turned A discs, allowing the opponent to reply with a move turning B discs, while the other turned $A - B$ discs and ended the game. Alternatively, readers were asked to send in a Cox-comprehensible proof that this situation could not occur.

In fact, the situation is impossible. Aubrey proved something even a little stronger, namely that, with two empty squares, a move which ends the game leaving one empty square must flip at least as many pieces as the other move which does not end the game. Here is Aubrey's proof.

Let the square to which a black move would end the game be X , and the other Y . The proof involves independent analysis of each direction in which a black move 59 to Y would take pieces.

In each such direction, starting from Y , there is a string of white pieces followed by a black piece. (We need not consider anything beyond that first black piece.) The pieces taken by Black when moving to X must include the first of this string of white pieces, or else that move would not end the game because Black could still go to Y at move 60, taking that piece. But in that case, the move to X must also take all the rest of that string of white discs, or else it would leave White a move 60 to Y taking in that direction, retaking at least the front piece that Black took at 59. The same argument applies independently to each direction in which Black would take by moving to Y at 59. But that means that, in total, Black's move to X at 59 would have to take all the discs that the move to Y would take. And that means, using the nomenclature of the puzzle, $(A - B) \geq A$, i.e., B is non-positive, which is impossible.

Most of the wisdom about playing Othello consists of various rules of thumb, such as evaporation strategy, avoiding X-squares, parity, etc., which are not always correct. Now at last we have a *theorem* about Othello which is always true! In honour of the main participants I propose to call this theorem the "Grey-Trolleybus Theorem". Put more succinctly, it states as follows.

Theorem 1. (*Grey-Trolleybus*) *A move which ends a game must flip at least as many discs as any alternative move.* □

Theorem 1 has a possibly useful corollary: in an endgame with exactly two empty squares, it is always better to make the move (if there is one) which ends the game, rather than the other move which gives your opponent the last move. There is no need to count any discs! This just might help you not to lose on time.

[*The Editor wishes to point out before anyone else does that it also might help your opponent not to lose on time, and so the corollary might better be stated as follows.*]

Corollary 2. *Suppose that your opponent has sufficient time to make one move. Then, in any 2-empty-square endgame in which the options are ending the game or allowing the opponent to move, it is always better to end the game.* □

I am offering the usual prize in the hope of encouraging the discovery of more theorems about Othello. Please send me any others you know or care to invent. The prize will not necessarily go to the first theorem received, but to the most appealing. To be appealing, a theorem must strike a balance between being too obvious (e.g., “No more than 64 pieces are needed for any Othello game”) and being too abstruse (such as “Affine transformations of the Feinwell matrix are contravariant during a psittacine singularity” [*Technical note: this result is in fact only valid for Type 1 singularities, even in the rank 2 case – Ed.*]) Extra marks will be awarded for relevance to actual Othello play. Unproved theorems will not be eligible for the prize.

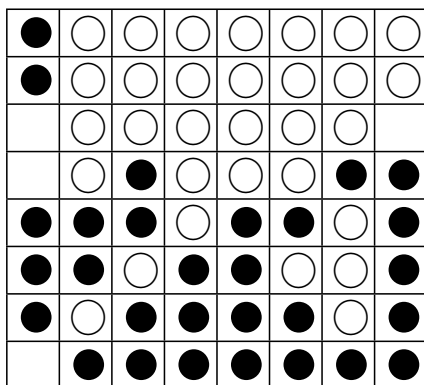


Figure 1. Black to play.

OB^ℓB counting method gives the wrong answer. If Black plays to a4, *OB^ℓB* gives +2 and Black wins 31–30. If a3-a4-h3-a8, *OB^ℓB* gives +3 and it’s a draw.

Marc Tastet sent a proof essentially the same as Aubrey’s, and examples with three (Figure 2), four and six (Figure 3) empty squares where the *OB^ℓB* method is misleading.

Septimus was very sad when I told him that Aubrey had proved that the situation envisaged in his article could not happen, as this seemed to make the article a complete waste of time and paper, to confirm the mediocrity of his Othello playing ability, and to neutralise his cunning plan to defeat Count Salvador Rockinghorse. He was only partly consoled by having the theorem named after him. But he was overjoyed when Aubrey telephoned to describe a position (Figure 1) he had discovered with four empty squares where the

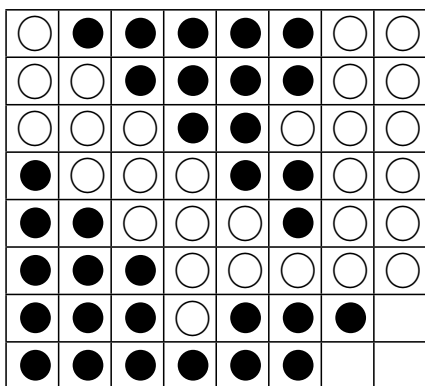


Figure 2. White to play.

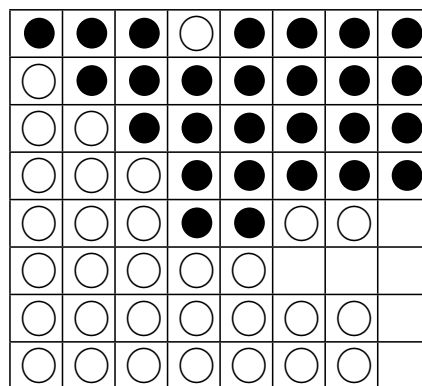


Figure 3. Black to play.

In Figure 2: after h7, *OB&B* says +4 and White wins 30–32; after h8-h7-g8, *OB&B* says +4 and it’s a draw.

In Figure 3: after h5, *OB&B* says +3 and Black wins 30–29; after g6-h5-f6-(P)-h8-h7-h6, *OB&B* says +4 but Black loses 31–33.

Marc points out that, although the Septimus Q. Trolleybus (SQT) method cannot make you lose or draw when you could have won, it does not take into account the fact that empty squares go to the winner. This could lead to the SQT method choosing a 26–35 (i.e., 26–38) loss rather than a 27–37 loss, whereas the *OB&B* method would correctly choose the less severe loss. On top of this, both methods are ridiculous in the case of a wipeout. Marc’s conclusion is that there is no simple universal method. His advice to beginners is this.

Use the OB&B method which is, I think, a bit easier to carry out. If there are no empty squares, don’t worry about anything. If you find the same value for two sequences, one with an empty square and one without, play the one with the empty square. It can only be better (or the same). If there are sequences with two or more empty squares (this will not happen very often), just figure out what will be the score of the game, giving the empty squares to the winner, and choose the best for you.

Now on to tie-breaking methods. I didn’t think much of the Editor’s proposal, because this traps us in a sequence which never leads to considering the disc count, which is already established as a tie-breaking method. [*False! – Ed. My proposal was the sequence Score, Sum-of-Opponents’-Scores, Disc-Count, Sum-of-Opponents’-SOSs, Sum-of-Opponents’-Disc-Counts, Sum-of-Opponents’-SOSOSs, Sum-of-Opponents’-SODCs, Etc. My solicitors will be in touch.*] The sort of thing I was hoping for is something like the following sequence for deciding between two players: (1) Score, (2) Sum of opponents’ scores, (3) Disc count, (4) Sum of opponents’ disc counts, (5) Cranial circumference, (6) Sum of opponents’ cranial circumferences, (7) Telephone number, (8) Sum of opponents’

telephone numbers, etc., sum of opponents' etc.s ... [*I rest my case – Ed.*] Marc Tastet pointed out that where two players have identical sets of opponents, all such tie-breaking methods will fail to resolve the tie. Perhaps what we need to use after all is the Sonneborn-Berger method which is currently only used for round robins, or some other sideways leap to a radically different methodology. [*Dare I suggest ratings? – Ed. Meaning of course that the lower rated player would go through, all other things being equal.*]

- - - - -

Finally, here is a situation that would tax many a tie-breaker. Suppose we have nine very consistent Othello players, with ratings 1900, 1700, 1500, 1300, 1100, 900, 700, 500 and 300. Their play is so consistent that, when they play, the player with the higher rating always wins. They play in teams with three players in each team. The A team has the players whose ratings are 1700, 1300 and 300. Let's call these players A1700, A1300 and A300. The B team's players are B1500, B1100 and B700, and the C team's players are of course C1900, C900 and C500.

They play in a two-layer round robin, where each team plays the other two teams once; when two teams play each other, each player in one team plays every player in the other team once. In the first session team A plays team B. A1700 wins three games, A1300 wins two, and poor old A300 wins no games, making a total of five games. Hence the A team beats the B team by 5-4.

Now the B team plays the C team. B1500 wins two games, B1100 wins two games, and B700 wins one, so B beats C by 5-4.

“Great” says the leader of team A. “There is no need for us to play C. We beat B, they beat C, so we must be better than C.”

“Not so fast!” says the pedantic tournament director. “This is a round robin, so you have to play them anyway.” And, when they did, A1700 and A1300 both won two games, while hapless A300 again won none, so much to their amazement team C beat them 5-4.

When the nine players met again next year, their ratings were all exactly 100 points higher (due to their tournament experience, no doubt), and they were grouped into teams differently. Believe it or not, team A beat team B, B beat C, and C beat A all over again. Can you work out who was in each team this time? It's magic.

1992 World Championships, November 8–10, New York.

by *Graham Brightwell*.

1. Kaneda (J)	11/13 (2-0) (2-0)	17. Juhem (F)	6
2. Ralle (F)	9.5 (2-0) (0-2)	Handel (UK)	6
3. Shaman (USA)	13 (0-2) (1-0)	Back (CAN)	6
4. Rose (USA)	10 (0-2) (0-1)	Johnson (USA)	6
5. Melnikov (USSR)	8	Perotti (I)	6
Piau (F)	8	Andriani (MAD)	6
7. Brightwell (UK)	7	Springer (CAN)	6
Feldborg (DK)	7	24. Wahlberg (S)	5.5
Stepanov (USSR)	7	Yasui (J)	5.5
Marconi (I)	7	26. Englund (S)	5
Svirsky (USSR)	7	Alard (B)	5
Kierulf (NOR)	7	28. Ohyanagi (J)	4.5
Brusca (I)	7	Prime (CAN)	4.5
14. Feinstein (UK)	6.5	30. Cagley (IWT)	4
Berner (S)	6.5	Verrill (IWT)	4
Mironova (IWT)	6.5	32. Daix (B)	0

(withdrew ill after 6 rounds)

1. USA	29	6. UK	19.5	10. Denmark	7
2. France	23.5	7. Sweden	17	Norway	7
3. USSR	22	8. Canada	16.5	12. Madagascar	6
4. Japan	21	9. IWT	14.5	13. Belgium	5
5. Italy	20				

IWT stands for International Women's Team: MAD stands for Madagascar. Players on the same score are listed in tie-break order, but officially are placed equal. (Most people seem to have forgotten this!)

It is of course the UK's lowest placing ever, although we were perhaps a little unlucky to be this far down, with Japan and Italy creeping by us in the last couple of rounds having played weaker opposition. Our poor result was undoubtedly partly due to the absence of Imre Leader (too busy, not enough money), and partly due to the fact that those of us who were there didn't play very well.

You will have noticed that Helena Verrill got to play as part of an International Women's Team, along with Julia Mironova (USSR/Japan) and Leslie Cagley (USA). Helena would have been very competitive a year or so ago, but unfortunately she was rather out of practice, and didn't do herself justice. The International Women's Team was an interesting innovation introduced by tournament director Clarence Hewlett. There was a somewhat shall-we-say relaxed

attitude to nationality in general, with true-tricolour Frenchman Bintsia Andriani being encouraged to represent Madagascar, his country of birth. No-one would dream of suggesting that Andriani's first-round loss to Ralle from an overwhelming position (or, for that matter, Mironova's last-round loss to Svirskiy from well ahead) was anything other than an unfortunate accident. Seriously, no-one would, but there are dangers, and the precedent is not a good one.

On a positive note, the US score is the highest ever by anybody, and the only luck involved in that was getting to play in their own time-zone. Shaman's 13 straight wins is another record. His overall record of 14-2 is the best by a non-Japanese. More trivia: Ralle has now played more games in the World final than anyone else—he has also lost more. Shaman has played over 100 games in the World Championships: he is 4-1 in 3rd/4th play-offs.

Sweden's Johan Englund started with wins over Rose and Brightwell, both players he had beaten the previous year. Feinstein lost to both Springer and Back, and overall the UK was 2-3 against Canada. The Canadians in general were most impressive. They all come from the same University, and their knowledge comes from *Othello, Brief and Basic*, together with experience against computer programs. It's amazing they can be this good without playing any international tournaments before—but they are only following in the craters left by the Poles and Russians in previous years. All novices everywhere should be encouraged by this.

As ever, the tournament was a wonderful event. The hospitality laid on at the Marriott Hotel was top-class, and many thanks are due to: Tsukuda Original and the Anjar Corporation (parent companies), Pressman Toys (U.S. licensee), the U.S.O.A., Clarence Hewlett (tournament director), David Parsons (assistant tournament director), all the table referees, and Mike Handel's grandmother.

Here are some of the games from the semi-finals and final: for notes on these, see Brian Rose's article in the Winter 91/2 OQ.

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

Rose 28 Kaneda 36

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

Shaman 30 Ralle 34

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

Kaneda 33 Ralle 31

Some World Championship Games by Mike Handel.

Here are some games from New York with light notes. For some reason they caught my eye more than most, but there's no particular connection between them.

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

Piau 33 Wählberg 31

22-26 A very good white sequence. Wählberg finds a good way to take h4.

27 Sloppy. A slightly more alert Piau would have first played off h3-h2. This way white doesn't get millions of moves in the South.

30 Black is under pressure to find something. He has to break West and white has g7 plus d8.

34 Not bad timing.

39 White must be persuaded to take the West edge. The white disc at a5 much reduces the value of d8.

42 Very wrong. The NE isn't playing well for white, but matters are made much worse when black gets h1 as well as a little more control, by virtue of g3 turning white. Instead 42a6 43e1 44d8 45h8 46b8 47c1 48f1 49f2 50b1 51b7 52a8 53a7 54b2 55a1 56g1 57h1 58g8 58g2 60h2 30-34.

46 Sensational. I can only assume that Wählberg had this in mind for some time, and was therefore unable to play anything else. Piau held on to his win thereafter, with only a couple of minor errors. If 46e1, perfect play is 47g2 48g1 49f2 50f1 51c1 52a7 53a6 54d8 55a8 56b1 57b8 58b7 59a1 60b2 32-32! Er ... of course in real life it's never *that* simple.

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

Piau 28 Shaman 36

What a corker this game is! Taut, intricate, tightrope positions from start to finish. A real education!

8-16 You know, sometimes it seems that Shaman rushes into midgames, where he is in his element, rather than waste time getting into a reasonable position. I am almost compelled to wonder how many games such as this he wins by brute confidence. Hmm, I wouldn't mind some myself!

17 Now the difficulty for black is the correct timing of a move at b4. For white, the difficulty is

survival.

18 Another idea is h5, getting access to e2.

19 Probably afraid of 19b4 20h3.

21 What happens after 21d7? Search me.

- 22** Very amusing, unless you happen to be black.
- 23** This is necessary before playing d2, to prevent white playing d7 himself.
- 30** Just like a magic spell, Shaman produces a playable position from nothing. Don't ask me how he did it.
- 31, 33** I am not convinced this is the best way forward.
- 34** Shaman reveals that he knows precisely what is going on. Piau should surely have found a way to play b4 before now.
- 35-38** I feel that this is somehow the crux of the game. Piau takes a (forced) inferior tempo in the West, which fails to apply any pressure.
- 39** Instinct tells me that a2 "achieves" more.
- 44** And we reach a deservedly complex endgame, a worthy challenge to both players. I can't dwell on a critique here: I have more than is convenient to say. But I do strongly urge study: you will be well rewarded.
- 45** b2 gives a draw—46b7 47c2 48a1 49a8 50a2 51b1 52a6 53a7 54c8 55h8 56g7 57g2 58h3 59h1 60g1 32–32.
- 48** a6 wins—49b7 50c2 51a2 52c8 53h8 54h1 55b1 56a1 57a8 58a7 59g1 60h3 30–34.
- 51** g1 wins—52h3 53h8 54b1 55c8 56c2 57a6 58b7 59a7 60a8 33–31.
- 55** g1 gets 31 discs—56h3 57c2 58b1 59a7 60b7 31–33.

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

Melnikov 14 Rose 50

This one is so cool. Melnikov tried anything and everything to complicate, confound and confuse the issue. There were various points in this game where I didn't have a clue where white should go next. It always seems to be much harder to win if you are, in fact, winning. Here Rose gets ahead early on and lets nothing, *nothing* get in the way of his win. Had Melnikov won, these two players would have been in a play-off for fourth place (this was a last-round match). That makes Rose's performance something rather special.

- 11** Why was I the only player in the whole of the world championships to try d7 instead?
- 12** White is winning. Mainly because he can always keep black from c3 or f6.
- 18** This is the sort of thing I was talking about. Such an obvious and correct move, but only when you see it played.
- 23** Typical Melnikov.
- 26-30** An excellent sequence. If 31h5, white plays g6 and then a4.
- 31** Nicely confuses things, but Rose handles it brilliantly.
- 40-44** What can I say? It's a joy to watch this man at work.
- 52** A firework display to finish.

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

Shaman 33 Feldborg 30

You can rely on these two for a little light-hearted relief. The midgame is, well, funny. (I was going to say witty, but you all know I'm not pretentious.)

8-10 Why be fashionable? Let's have a laugh instead.

14 Excellent.

20 A move like b8 would be far too routine.

22 Hmm. Very natural sequence. (He said without even the merest hint of sarcasm.)

24 Things are getting a little serious now. I mean,

black *is* scattered and white *does* have the centre.

25 No he doesn't. **28** Yes he does.

33 I suppose you were hoping for 34d1 huh David?

44 Shaman goes a little astray from here. Mind you it must have been difficult to concentrate through a game like this. 45 and 51 were minor errors (f2 was the best shot both times). But the real stonker came at move 49. Perfect play is ... you've guessed it, f2. For the modest investment of the North and West edges, black could have reaped glorious dividends including odd regions, free moves, swindles ... in fact discs galore. 49f2 50g1 51b7 52a1 53h7 54b8 55a8 56g7 57h8 58g8 59g2 60b2 41-23. There again it's easy for me 'cos I've got a computer.

And finally a game each from two promising newcomers. You might expect the third member of an American team which includes Rose and Shaman to be slightly overshadowed. Far from it: Greg Johnson contributed fully to America's dominance and took a couple of prized scalps. He thoroughly deserved his team champion trophy. Oh, and he's a nice chap to boot.

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

Springer 28 Andriani 36

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

Johnson 47 Berner 17

The Canadians were not expected to do well. This quickly proved to be a serious underestimation, due in no small part to one Colin Springer. Colin all but

thrashed the entire British team: he beat Joel and me, but got psyched out by Graham. Colin's a nice chap too, but he doesn't smoke, for shame.

Yes, they are inexperienced. Yes, they are a bit rough around the edges, but they do have some fresh approaches to the game, they are learning fast, and at least they don't patronise people.

[*Que? If you want to show how good Colin is, should you really include a game where he loses to a Madagascan playing the parallel? It seems a bit of an excessive way of getting your own back, just because he doesn't smoke. Still, don't mind me: I'm only the Editor. – Ed.*]

Letter from Doncaster *by Eileen Forsyth.*

Phil Marson, pleasant, urbane, parachuting computer programmer from Nottingham joined us after the Edinburgh tournament, adding a certain 'joie de vivre' to our group. Phil last played Othello in the final of 1981 and re-kindled his interest last year. He went on to win the Challengers' at York, so watch out for him in the 1992 finals. Phil will be holding a regional in Nottingham in May. Good going Phil, and happy landings.

Mark Wormley always arrives from York, despite road works and all too frequent adverse weather conditions, bringing a cheerfulness to our gatherings.

Iain Barrass at 14 is steadily improving with every month, always remaining cool under pressure—an excellent quality. We enjoyed having the November Meeting at Iain's house with Sue, Iain's mother, doing the pairings and providing a delicious spread.

It was nice to see Sarah Parrish (nearly 13) appear at our last meeting, with her customary enthusiasm. Along with Sarah came her grandmother Win Brown, bringing home-made cakes. Mary Bell (81) joins us whenever her travels allow, having one of the meetings at her house and providing mouthwatering goodies.

John Beacock, Doncaster chess captain, comes along to help with the preparations, with Maurice Kent, also a chess high flyer, doing the pairings. Roy Arnold should be given a special prize for perfect attendance. Finally, we note that Iain Forsyth is emerging from the shadows.

Doncaster Mini-Tournament *by Eileen Forsyth.*

Nine players took part in the mini tournament on the first day of February: but for the freezing fog, numbers could have been higher. Phil Marson amused us all with a mystifying card trick, before going on to make his pairings debut (with Roy Arnold lending a hand).

Iain Barrass won all his games, with a closely fought 33-31 win over Mark Wormley. An overjoyed Mary Bell beat Iain Forsyth 33-30. All in all we had a happy gathering.

Shaman vs. Kaneda *by Dylan Bogler.*

This is an analysis of a game between David Shaman of America and Shigeru Kaneda of Japan, played at the recent World Championships in New York. The game was played in round 5, and both players were unbeaten so far. In fact, Shaman and Kaneda went on to finish first and second respectively in the Swiss part of the tournament, so they were both clearly on excellent form. After an opening and early midgame in which Kaneda took command, Shaman had to fight hard to stay alive. In an exciting ending, Shaman eventually triumphed 35-29 (see transcript).

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

Shaman 35 Kaneda 29

Kaneda, playing White, chose the Perpendicular opening, and at move 5 Shaman played the Cat, 5c5. This move seems to oscillate in popularity: it was very popular around 1986, then went out of fashion for a while, and is now coming back in a little bit more. The more usual move is the Tiger, namely 5c3.

Move 8 to f3 is the standard move. The obvious alternative is 8c3, but this fails to 9d2, leaving Black very central. Move 9 to c2 sets up access to e6, thanks to the disc at e4. White must respond

to this threat.

At move 10, the two standard moves are c6 and b4. The idea of 10b4 is to remove the Black disc at e4. Although it turns many pieces, it leaves Black checkerboarded: his discs are spread out and in each other's way. Typically, 10b4 is followed by 11b5 12d2, with Black probably then pulling White towards him with 13d7 (perhaps completing the pull with a move to a3 soon).

The move 10c6 is a newer move. It allows Black the quiet move to e6, but then White can play 12d2, the point being that Black has no access to c3. Thus play after 10c6 usually goes 11e6 12d2, followed by Black breaking the White wall with 13g4. Then White may play either 14b6 (to remove Black's access to f6) or 14b4 (a waiting move).

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

After 10c6.

Kaneda chose 10c6, and at move 11 Shaman varied. Since White is threatening 12d2, Black might, instead of playing the quiet 11e6, try to put a disc on the d4-f6 diagonal. The move chosen, 11f6, certainly accomplishes this. Its drawback is, of course, that it allows the obvious reply of 12e6. Shaman's plan was to follow up with 13c7, leaving it White's turn to play. However, this is not really sufficient compensation for the

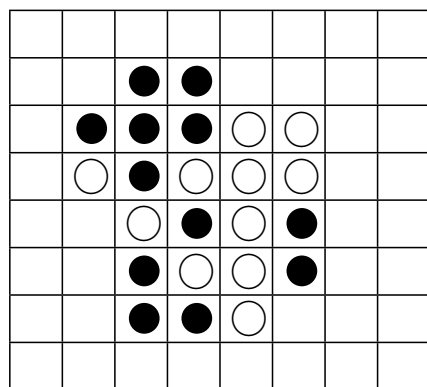
isolated Black disc at f6, and so this innovation at move 11 was not a success.

After 13c7, a White move to c3 is no longer poisoned, and so Kaneda played 14c3. Black is now drifting into trouble: he is very much on the outside. He needs to obtain some centre, without flipping large numbers of frontier discs. Move 15 to d7 has the easy reply of 16e7, but it does set up d2 at move 17: this gives Black some central discs. In addition, after 17d2 Black is starting to threaten a pull down to the South edge with f8, perhaps to be followed by f7. This might gain Black some much-needed tempi.

Actually, White did not have to play to e7 at move 16. A nice alternative is 16b5, controlling the centre and removing Black's access to e7. A move of 17d2 would then be met by 18e7, with e2 to follow.

Move 18 to b4 is a centre-controlling move, and it also prevents Black from playing f8. However, it does wall White off from a large part of the board. A better move is 18b5, although for rather different reasons than at move 16: it is now fairly quiet, and sets up other moves to the West. It also poisons b4 (19b4 being met by 20b6), and 19b6 is just met by 20b4 – note that then 21a4 fails to 22a5. Another point about 18b5 is that it gains access to e2, and this access is not about to disappear.

What if Black tries to reply to 18b5 with a pull to the South edge? A move to d8 is simply met by f8. White has to be a little more careful if Black tries 18b5 19f8. In particular, he may have to fight to maintain his access to b6. To start with, he ought to stop Black from playing f7 (continuing his pull), so 20b4 looks sensible. In addition, 20b4 makes e2 less loud for White. If Black continues 21b3, then White can play 22e2, to be followed by d1. Alternatively, if Black continues 21e2, to prevent White from playing there and remove White's access to b6, then a sequence such as 22f2 23b3 24g5 25g6 26f7 gives White access to b6 and leaves Black in deep trouble. Thus, all in all, 18b5 seems a lot better than 18b4.



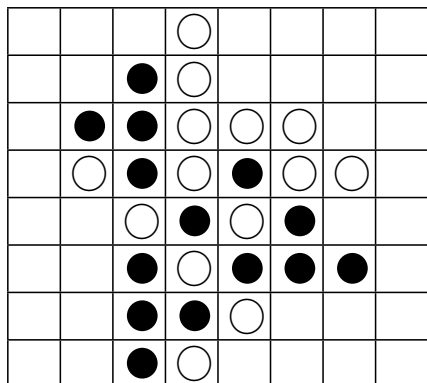
After 19b3.

Shaman replied to 18b4 with 19b3, removing White's access to e2. Note this c4-d3 mini-diagonal, keeping White out of b5 as well.

White would now like to play d1, gaining access to b5, since then it will be hard for Black to stop him playing there. However, Kaneda cleverly noticed that first he could do some very useful 'tidying-up'. If he plays to d1 immediately then Black might reply 21e2, not flipping the disc at e3 (as the rest of column e is all White). So Kaneda played off 20g4 21g6, putting a disc on the e column. In addition, this pair is playing into the region where Black has moves, and it makes Black's later moves to the East less pleasant.

White was still not ready to play to d1. First he played 22d8 23c8. The

point of this pair is that now the only moves remaining to Black in the South are horrible ones. After this elegant preparation, Kaneda finally played d1 at move 24.

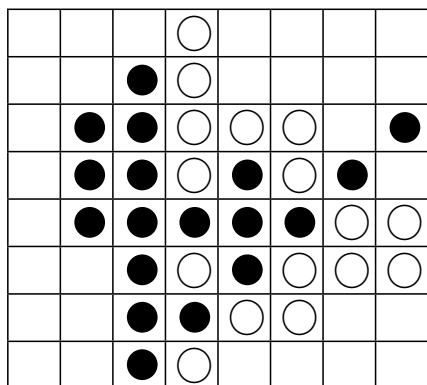


After 24d1.

What should Black do at move 25? He cannot remove the White access to b5 without destroying his position, and yet a White move to b5 looks wonderful for White. In addition, it will then be Black's move again, and he will be getting rather short of moves. So Shaman bravely made the only other move that would prevent White from playing b5: he played b5 himself.

White will now pull Black towards the East. Note that, if Black does not survive in the East, he will die horribly: he is completely walled off from the West. So Black is definitely in trouble. His one consolation is that, *if* White has to break through to the West, the White discs at d1 and d8 *may* be poisoning!

With 26f7 27g5, Kaneda forces Shaman to play through his wall. Move 28 to h5 is a nice move, since after the obvious 29h3 30h6 Black has no access to h4. So it seems that Black is running out of moves: he will soon be forced to play the disastrous e8, and then he will run out. For example, if 31e8 32f8 33h4 34h2 then Black is about to die, while 31e8 32f8 33g8 34h4 also looks terrible.



After 30h6.

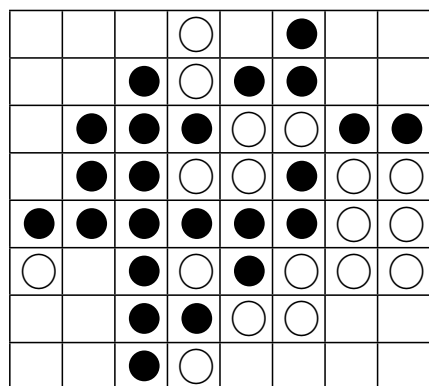
However, Shaman found a superb move to stay alive: 31f2. The idea is just to play a loud move near where White wants to play. White has a disc at d1, and the hope is that this will hurt White. Most important of all, 31f2 flips *both* d4 and f4, thus removing White's access to h4. Another nice point about the move is that all of White's moves nearby are rather loud, while Black has set up some fairly quiet moves for himself, like e1 and e2. This sort of loud move is often a good thing to do when breaking through a wall

in which your opponent has pieces on both the nearby edges. In fact, even in general, it is often worthwhile to play a loud move just to make one's nearby moves more quiet or one's opponent's moves more loud: far too many players are reluctant to even consider this kind of move.

What should White do at move 32? His moves to the North-East are no good, thanks to that move 31. For example, 32e2 or 32f1 would be met by 33g3. White needs access to h4. In each of the sequences just mentioned, either Black

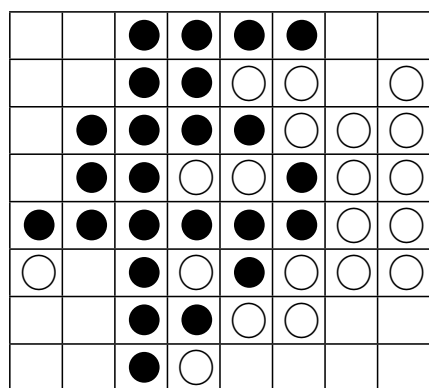
gets to h4 before White or White's move to h4 flips the g3 disc, setting up a free move for Black. Thus White needs to play elsewhere to gain access to h4. Hence he plays 32a6 33a5 34h4. Notice again that, at the moment, the White discs at d1 and d8 are poisoning subsequent White play to the West. However, things will improve a lot for White there if either one flips – for example, if d8 flips then b6 becomes a very nice move for White.

Black's reply to 34h4 was 35g3 – taking the edge instead would be much too horrible. At move 36, White played to e2. This is the obvious move, as it is near where the last remaining Black moves are. Black replied 37f1, to keep from running out of moves. This move also flips the disc at c4, denying White access to c1 – if White *did* have access to c1 then Black would be dying.



After 37f1.

After a White reply of 40g1. For example, if 41h2 then 42b8, to be followed by b6. And if Black tries 41e8 then White can just play 42b6, with a typical continuation being 43c1 44b1 44h2 45f8 46g8 47b7 – Black is dying. So, after all, Black cannot reply to 38e1 with 39h7: he must instead take the North edge with 39c1, and now a4 is unpoisoned for White. Thus 38 is not as silly as it looks!



After 40h2.

There is, however, one problem with 38e1: after 39c1 40h2, the North-West region is odd, and White has no access there (or, alternatively, Black could take a free move there) – we will come back and consider this region soon. In fact, there is an alternative to 38e1: White could put pressure on Black *immediately*, by playing 38b8. This makes b6 a much nicer move for White. White can reply to c1 with b1, and can reply g1 to e1. Black is short of moves: he will soon have to take the South edge, and will run out of moves. A typical sequence might be 38b8 39c1 40b1 41h7 42b6 43e8 44f8 45a7 46b2, and the game is over (note how White's move to b6 gained access to e8). Alternatively,

Black could try 38b8 39c1 40b1 41g2, but again Black is running out of moves after 42h1 43g1 44b6, and a later Black move to f8 may be met by a3. Finally, Black might attempt 38b8 39c1 40b1 41h7 42b6 43f8, but White can just continue 44a3, and will soon control the a1-h8 diagonal. For example, if 45a7 then 46a4 47a2 48g7, and now 49g8 is met by 50e1. Thus 38b8 seems to put enough pressure on Black to win.

Let us return to the position in the game, after 38e1 39c1. Can White afford to leave h2 and let Black take the East edge as well? A typical line would be 40a4 41a3 42a2 43h7 44b8, with White planning to play g2 the moment Black plays g1 or h2. However, Black has lots of control now, and there are plenty of things White must avoid – for example, if White sacrifices to b2 then he cannot reply g2 to Black g1, as row 2 would then be all White. Not surprisingly, Black can use his control to win easily: for example, with 45e8 46f8 47g7 48b6 49a7 50a8 and then either 51b2 or 51b7. Thus White really does have to play 40h2.

Now it is move 41, with Black to play. How can Black win this game? Certainly *not* by using his free move at g1: this would lose parity, as well as creating an unbalanced edge. Rather, Black should try to *keep* parity. Now, how will that happen? If the North-West region of three squares is left until the end, will Black necessarily have parity? Not if White has the a1 corner, and hence access to g1. It looks pretty clear that White will eventually get that corner, as Black has no control at all to the West. So Black's real hope is that, after White plays g1, Black can play the sequence h1, pass, g2. However, for this to happen, Black *must* have access to h1. How can he hope to obtain this? It seems very unlikely that he can force White to give him the h8 corner, so his only hope is that he wedges at h7 after White has taken the h8 corner. So far, so good. But, in all this, it is vital for Black that White gets to a1 only after he has got to h8! Otherwise, White will just play g1, ignore the h8 corner, and have parity (assuming that by this time Black has played g7, which looks very likely because Black is already extremely short of moves). White will then win easily.

So this is Black's task: to ensure that White takes h8 before a1. Otherwise, Black has not much chance, as he has no control at all. Since all this appears rather unlikely to happen, things look bad for him.

Moves 41-43 play out the South edge. White now began to take his moves in the West: 44a4 45a3, followed by White moves to b6 and a2, while Black played his move to g7. Note that, after 46b6, 47a7 would fail immediately to 48b2.

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

After 48a2.

So now it is Black to play at move 49. A move to a7, controlling the a1-h8 diagonal, looks useless: White gets a8, and then marches along the South edge to get h8, so that the diagonal-control is irrelevant. But there is one feature to this diagonal control: it allows Black one unit of time, by letting him play b2 without *instantly* losing a1. Of course, White *will* get to a1, but he will need to go to h8 first to get on the a1-h8 diagonal. Thus, even though 49a7, followed by 50a8 51b2, sacrifices three edges, it *does* achieve the

unlikely-looking goal described above. And the last two moves of the game get Black a large number of discs – enough to win. One can imagine White, feeling comfortably ahead, being rudely awakened by move 49!

Let us go back to moves 42-46, to see if we can change things so as to avoid the a7 move controlling the diagonal. It is easy to check that the order of moves 42, 44 and 46 really does not matter: a7 will still control the diagonal. But White has so much control: surely there is something he can do!

At move 44, what about White grabbing the a8-h1 diagonal with 44b7? This is not cuttable, except by the suicidal h7. If 45b8 then 46b6, while if 45b6 then 46a4. Of course, if Black tries 45g1 then 46b6 – White will follow with a4, and will then even have a2 as well. So Black appears to run out of moves. However, he does get a fair number of discs. Optimal play after 44b7 is 45b6 46a4 47a3 48a2 49a7 (to prevent White from playing there), followed by 50a8 51b8 52h8 53h7: note that Black will get the final two moves, but now he does not get the last move into the h8 corner region, and in addition will not keep column g. In fact, the perfect score is 34-30 to White.

Interestingly enough, White still has a win at move 46, along very similar lines, even though by now the a4 square is occupied. He plays 46a2 47g7 48b7, and then 49b6 is met by 50a7! After 51a8 52b1 53a1 54b2, White hangs on to parity for a 34-30 win. If, instead, Black tries g1 at move 49, then White replies 50b6. After that, White has parity in both the lines 51a7 52b2 53b1 and 51b8 52b1, for a 34-30 win again. But the win at move 44 is certainly a lot clearer than the win at move 46.

During the tournament, one of the players expounded his theory that, when a vegetable dies, it goes to its own individual heaven or hell, depending on whether it has been good or bad. Apparently, these places are filled with flying insects. Someone pointed to a particular insect, and asked if it was a wasp from a turnip's heaven. "Of course not", he replied, "it's a leek's hell bee".

The Rating List *maintained by David Haigh.*

It fits! A sad day for British Othello. First number is the number of rated games.

1	Imre Leader	215	1881	39	John Bass	49	1230
2	Graham Brightwell	207	1818	40	Stuart Routledge	7	1223
3	Neil Stephenson	103	1776	41	Phil Marson	25	1213
4	Joel Feinstein	176	1722	42	Keith Ringrose	43	1205
5	Peter Bhagat	230	1667	43	Samuel Gardner	8	1204
6	Garry Edmead	93	1656	44	David Moore	12	1198
7	Alex Selby	131	1637	45	Simon Turner	67	1177
8	John Lysons	119	1594	46	Iain Forsyth	174	1167
9	Paul Smith	117	1591	47	Annemarie Clemence	31	1153
10	Michael Handel	143	1589	48	Sepehr Taheri	6	1143
11	Helena Verrill	120	1558	49	Iain Gray	7	1107
12	Guy Plowman	79	1551	50	David Kotin	7	1103
13	Aubrey de Grey	209	1515	51	Roy Arnold	146	1078
14	David Stephenson	111	1509	52	Maurice Kent	23	1069
	Jeremy Rickard	56	1509	53	Wayne Clarke	14	1066
16	Alec Edgington	121	1498		Tracy Monk	6	1066
17	Ian Turner	63	1484	55	Jim Hall	6	1065
18	Marcus Moore	78	1473	56	Adelaide Carpenter	36	1056
19	Gerard Thompson	7	1454	57	Tim Wong	5	1050
20	Jeremy Das	135	1452	58	Rodney Hammond	33	1046
21	William Hunter	74	1442	59	Neil Parrish	53	1045
22	Tim Williamson	99	1426	60	Neil Cuthbertson	14	1026
23	Mark Wormley	178	1405	61	Leeroy Moxam	35	1008
24	Jeremy Benjamin	102	1386	62	Alison Hughes	38	1000
	Crichton Ramsay	53	1386	63	Jim Brewer	50	998
26	Ken Stephenson	119	1380	64	Sui Cheng	6	990
27	Dilip Sequeira	81	1360	65	Martin Craven	11	957
28	Mark Atkinson	62	1358	66	David Brown	5	902
29	Phil Brewer	54	1332	67	Paul Taylor	37	842
30	John Beacock	66	1328	68	Graham Parlour	71	839
31	Matthew Selby	69	1326	69	Phil Marshall	6	812
32	Colin Graham	81	1312	70	Ashley Hammond	13	806
33	Margaret Plowman	7	1251	71	Tom Landry	13	804
34	Julian Richardson	53	1236	72	Winifred Brown	24	784
35	Robert Stanton	116	1234	73	Vikash Pav	6	768
	Iain Barrass	84	1234	74	Eileen Forsyth	84	763
37	David Haigh	234	1233	75	Sarah Parrish	13	714
38	Lee Evans	19	1231	76	And Finally	10	654