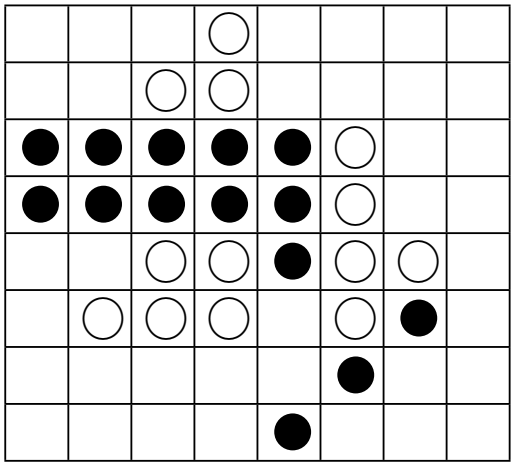
York, New York

The Newsletter of the British Othello Federation

July/August 1991



White to play.

What would *you* do here?

Sorry about the boring name for this newsletter. By the time you've reached the end of the "Forthcoming Events" section on page 4, you'll probably have figured out all the subtleties there are in the title. The cover position comes from a game played by someone whose surname is the same as the name of a town in the obvious county (at least before boundary changes).

Contents.

Secretarial Snippets ..... *David Haigh* . . . 3
Forthcoming Events 4
About the Cover ..... *Karsten Switness* . . . 5
The 1991 Regionals ..... *compiled by Peter Bhagat* . . . 6
Cryptical Mindbogglers ..... *Garry Edmead* . . . 12
Count Him Out! ..... *Septimus Q. Trolley-Bus* . . . 13
Syncopated Cerebrations ..... *Sid Cox* . . . 14
Shared Edges ..... *Graham Brightwell* . . . 16
How I Saved Eric ..... *Graham Brightwell* . . . 18
Othello: The Movie ..... *G+G* . . . 20
It's 1-1 and the Tension is Mounting ..... *Graham Brightwell* . . . 22
Giant Killing ..... *Garry Edmead* . . . 26
The Eighth Cambridge International Tournament ..... *Peter Bhagat* . . . 28
Some Cambridge Games ..... *Dylan Boggler* . . . 30
Brussels: City of Mystery ..... *Magnus Maestro* . . . 33
A Giant-Killer Killing ..... *Joel Feinstein* . . . 36
European Grand Prix Standings 37
Filler ..... *Arnold Kling* . . . 38
Letter from Wellingborough ..... *Garry Edmead* . . . 39
Rating List ..... *maintained by David Haigh* . . . 40

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The British Othello Federation is an independent body. Annual subscription costs £5 for the first year's membership (including a copy of the instructional book *Othello: Brief & Basic*) and £3 thereafter. Ten years membership is available for £25. A foreign subscription costs £5 per year, or £45 for ten years. Cheques or postal orders payable to the *British Othello Federation* should be sent to David Haigh. The price of *Othello: Brief & Basic* for existing members is £5.

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Secretarial Snippets *by David Haigh.*

Here are a few things which I am quite often asked about, which seem worthwhile mentioning in our newsletter.

1. The prices quoted for things like back issues of the newsletter and *Othello: Brief & Basic* include post and packing.

2. To save time and postage costs, I do not send an acknowledgement of renewal of membership. Your cleared cheque will indicate I have received it.

3. The number in the bottom left-hand corner of the address label on an envelope from me is a date code which is used by the computer to decide whether to print that address label when it is printing the labels for mailing the newsletter. The first four digits are the year and the last two are the month, e.g., 199112 means December 1991. This is the approximate date (give or take a month (*or two – Ed.*)) of the last newsletter you will receive before your membership runs out. So this is a way for you to check if your membership renewal has taken place, and when it will next expire.

4. Increasing numbers of people are writing and asking about where to obtain computer programs that play Othello. I would be grateful if those of you who are acquainted with an Othello-playing program, especially a good one, could write to me letting me know what computer it runs on, how to obtain a copy of the program, how much it costs, how good it is, and any other useful information about it. I would like to know about commercially available programs as well as privately available ones. I will maintain a register of these programs which I could send to anyone who sends me a SAE.

Forthcoming Events

Your last chance to qualify for this year's National Final is on August 17th, at Eastbourne. This tournament was originally scheduled for earlier in the year, but had to be postponed due to circumstances beyond Rodney Hammond's control. The venue is: The Scout Hut, Elm Grove, Hampden Park, Eastbourne, East Sussex, just 300 yards from Hampden Park Station. Ring Rodney on 0323-502167 for further details. His address is 70, Percival Road, Hampden Park.

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The Federation's main event of the year is always the National Final weekend. This year, we are pleased to announce that this will be held at the Viking Hotel, Bridge Street, York, on the weekend of September 28th-29th. The schedule for the weekend will be as laid out in the last newsletter, with the AGM starting at 1p.m. on the Saturday and the tournament itself beginning about 3:30. On the Sunday, play will begin at 9:30. The main tournament is due to end at 5p.m., to be followed by a one-game Grand Final. As usual, there will be a Challengers' Tournament run alongside the National Final, with a place at next year's championships on offer to the winner. The Challengers' is open to absolutely everyone, and is the ideal opportunity to make your tournament debut, with all the experts otherwise engaged. There will be Sunday play only for the Challengers', but please do come along to the AGM anyway! Afterwards you can watch the opening rounds of the main tournament, or visit the city.

The organiser of the event is Mark Wormley. His address is:
Flat 45, Rowntree Wharf, Navigation Rd., York. YO1 2XA.
You can 'phone him during working hours on 0757-618181 x3436.

Mark has managed to secure the venue free of charge, so we are pleased to announce that we will not be charging any entrance fee this year, and also that there will be trophies awarded, both for the National Final and for the Challengers'.

Mark does ask that you arrange your own accommodation for the weekend. A list of possible hotels and guest houses is available from the York Tourist Information Centre, 0904-621756. You should find enclosed with your newsletter a street map, showing the location of the Viking Hotel, and a brochure showing the many things to see and do in York.

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The top three in the National Final will qualify to represent Great Britain in the World Championships, which are this year going to be held in New York City. The dates for this event are November 8-10. It helps the organisation if everyone has a good idea in advance of whether they are likely to be able to make this trip.

The final tournament of this year's European Grand Prix is the Paris Open, held on the weekend of August 31-September 1. Britain traditionally sends a strong contingent to this tournament, and traditionally also provides the winner. According to the latest rumours, there will be three Japanese players attending this year, as well as the top Russians, so that maybe the task will be a little harder this year. Ring Pete Bhagat if you think you might be interested in going.

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Notation.

a1	b1	c1	d	e	f	g	h1
a2							
a3							
4							
5							
6							
7						X	C
8						C	h8

The board is split into eight columns and eight rows. Each column is labelled with a letter, from 'a' for the left-hand column to 'h' for the right-hand column. Rows are numbered from '1' for the top row to '8' for the bottom. This is the opposite convention to that used in chess. Thus the top left corner is called 'a1', and the bottom right is 'h8'.

A square such as b2, one in diagonally from a corner, is known as an 'X-square', and a square such as h7 adjacent to a corner is a 'C-square'.

Compass directions are sometimes used when describing regions of the board, so for instance the area of the board near to h1 is called the North-East corner, and row 8 is called the South edge.

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About the Cover *by Karsten Switness.*

The cover position is from a Regional tournament. White (Alex Selby) is in trouble. A routine continuation such as 24h6 25b5 26f2 27e2 28a5 29a6 30f8 31g8 leaves him literally forced to b2. This is a truly weird position. White is short of moves, but it's not that either side has taken edges, or that either side has very few discs, or even really that White is on the outside. All that can be said is that White is off all the key lines, with no way back on. Alex found the correct solution: 24b2!. It is absolutely imperative to play this before Black plays b5 and poisons it. The correct response is probably 25e6, staying with the theme of keeping White off key lines, but Black decided to go for the corner win: 25e1 26f1 27a1 28e2 29b1 30b5. Now White has some play, and the black discs in the South-East are starting to hurt. Later in the game, Alex was winning, although sadly he eventually blundered away the game.

The 1991 Regionals *compiled by Peter Bhagat.*

The 1991 regionals were successful in that everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. The only disappointment is that attendance is down on last year. If you are a member who hasn't competed in a regional yet then please come—it really is fun! If you come regularly then bring a friend with you next time.

It's not too late to enter this year. The Eastbourne regional had to be postponed a week before it was due to take place due to a burglary at the tournament site. We believe we were able to warn on the Othello grapevine everyone who was likely to go. (The Othello grapevine is a phone call from Imre to Pete.) Details of the re-arrangements are given on page 4.

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The first tournament of the year was in Wellingborough. Pete failed to ask organiser Margaret Plowman to write a report, but we have cobbled the following recollections together.

Wellingborough

A strong field made it to Wellingborough on a February day of immemorable weather. The favourites were Peter Bhagat, Graham Brightwell, Mike Handel, Guy Plowman, Garry Edmead and Aubrey de Grey, though not necessarily in that order. Edmead opened up with an easy win over BYE, but his tie-breaker was doomed thereafter. Graham Brightwell was monumentally impressive (writes Graham Brightwell), losing only to Edmead. Bhagat, on the other hand, was a little out of sorts, losing to Edmead and Handel as well as to Brightwell. Edmead's only loss was to de Grey, a difficult opponent for him. De Grey also missed a win against Bhagat: in the end this cost him dear as he missed out on third place by the skin of his disc-count. Further down the field, there was an encouraging performance from Adelaide Carpenter, who scored 4/7, and a promising debut by Vikash Pav.

Mrs. Plowman coped very well with her first tournament, despite the presence of a number of awakward customers in the field. Thanks are also due to the Victoria centre, who gave a donation towards our costs. There was one final panic when we appeared to be a clock short, but it turned up in the boot of a car.

Results: 1. Graham Brightwell 6/7, 2. Garry Edmead 6, 3. Peter Bhagat 4, 4. Aubrey de Grey 4, 5. Guy Plowman 4, 6. Mike Handel 4, 7. Phil Brewer 4, 8. John Bass 4, 9. Adelaide Carpenter 4, 10. David Haigh 3, 11. Jim Brewer 3, 12. Roy Arnold 2, 13. Vikash Pav 1.

The Report from Edinburgh this year takes the form of a personal "diary" from *Willie Hunter*.

Edinburgh

The day didn't start too well. I was up until 1 am the night before waiting for a friend, Sepehr (he played here last year) to catch a bus that decided to miss out the bus station in Livingston. So I had to get up at six to take him into Edinburgh to catch the next bus to London, on his way to ROOssia!

Eventually six other people turned up by 9.30, so it was decided to play a round-robin—it's easier to organise! There were two newcomers, Iain Gray, a friend from work, and Phil Marson from near Nottingham. Iain drew the bye in the first round but 15 minutes after play commenced, another newcomer, Neil Cuthbertson, turned up, causing me to lose ny concentration and the game against Simon Turner (his first win against me in four attempts).

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

Barrass 61 D.Stephenson 3

Considering Neil only had ten minutes on his clock he made a game of it and bravely lost 36-28. The shock of the round, to me anyway, was young Iain Barrass beating ex-British champion David Stephenson 61-3! (See opposite.) Not bad considering David was playing Othello before Iain was born.

When lunch was taken Ken Stephenson was out in front with 3 wins from Iain, Iain, Simon and David breathing down his neck. The fourth round was delayed as we were watching the boat race—conveniently I've forgotten who won.

In round six Ken won and thus won the tournament. Iain Barrass's loss to Neil meant that all David and I had to do in the last round was win, otherwise it would have been down to a tie-break to see who qualified. In the seventh round David beat his dad 46-18 in a hard fought game (PS I did win), it wasn't a fix, and so Ken, David and myself qualified.

Results: 1. Ken Stephenson 6/7, 2. Willie Hunter 5 (288 discs), 3. David Stephenson 5 (225 discs), 4. Iain Barrass 4, 5. Simon Turner 3, 6. Phil Marson, Iain Gray 2, 8. Neil Cuthbertson 1.

Winchester 1991 – a tournament that needn't have happened? – asks *David Haigh*.

A grand total of six stalwart players turned up for this year's Winchester Regional: Peter Bhagat, Graham Brightwell, Garry Edmead, Imre Leader, Guy Plowman, and finally Joel Feinstein, who fortunately happened to be in the UK on a visit. Of these six, Graham, Garry and Peter had already qualified for the final, so the remaining three were bound to qualify by their mere presence in the tournament.

Clearly the tournament would be a five-round round robin. Thanks to Marc Tastet's elegant and easy to remember algorithm, the pairings for this could be cranked out as if by an automaton, relieving the organiser of much of the interest of running a tournament, and much reason for his presence, but giving him an opportunity to play. After a moment's reflection it was realised that against such formidable opposition, with an average of 1714 ratings points between the six of them, my participation would have no effect on the outcome, would add two rounds to the tournament, and would knock another 10 points off my rating. So I did some route planning for a forthcoming trip to Snowdonia instead.

Their ratings predicted that Imre would win 3.8 games, Graham 3.1, Peter 2.8, Garry 2.0, Joel 1.7 and Guy 1.5. If you round these numbers of wins to the nearest whole number (rounding 1.5 down to 1), you get exactly what did happen! Could there be something in these ratings after all? They even suggested that Guy ought to get a draw! Seriously, it's nice when a check like this reveals that they can't be too far wrong.

Round robins are not nearly so exciting as Swiss tournaments because of the order in which a player's wins and losses occur makes no difference. Much of the excitement comes from the games where the weaker player won. There were four of these, and Joel (so often the joker in the pack) was involved in no less than three of them: He beat Graham and Peter but was beaten by Guy. The other surprise was Peter's 45-19 win over Imre (Was this a case of "I got well behind but there wasn't a loss"?).

Results: 1. Imre Leader 4/5, 2. Peter Bhagat 3 (7), 3. Graham Brightwell 3 (6), 4. Joel Feinstein 2 (6), 5. Garry Edmead 2 (3), 6. Guy Plowman 1.

Sonneborn-Berger was used to split the ties. As predicted Imre, Joel and Guy thereby qualified for the final.

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This year's Cambridge Regional was again not run by Pete. On this occasion, he decided for some reason that he wanted to play in it! So *Jeremy Rickard*, a keen Cambridge United supporter, was roped in to direct on the day when United needed one more win to clinch promotion.

Cambridge

This year's Cambridge Regional took place on May 4th in the putrid environment of the Wolfson Party Room at Trinity College, and fourteen players took part. All of the previous seven times that this event had taken place, it had been won by Imre Leader, so the crowd were rooting for an upset. Imre showed himself able to bow to majority opinion by achieving a creditable sixth place. Paul Smith made a comeback, but finished down the field. One surprise was the disappointing showing of Iain Barrass, who impressed in other regionals. Another was the strong showing of newcomer Ged Thompson. At the top, Graham Brightwell beat Peter Bhagat, but lost to Garry Edmead, as usual. (*Garry and I are currently 4-4 – Ed.*)

At the end of round five, Cambridge United were winning 2-0; at the end of round six they had lost 3-2; at the end of the final round Graham Brightwell had won the Othello, beating Pete Bhagat on a tie-break.

Results: 1. Graham Brightwell 6/7, 2. Peter Bhagat 6, 3. Garry Edmead 5, 4. Alex Selby 4, 5. Guy Plowman 4, 6. Imre Leader 4, 7. Aubrey de Grey 4, 8. Matthew Selby 4, 9. Paul Smith 3, 10. Gerard Thompson 3, 11. Dilip Sequeira 3, 12. David Haigh 2, 13. Adelaide Carpenter 1, 14. Iain Barrass 0.

The two Selby brothers and Aubrey de Grey qualified for the national finals, being the three highest placed players yet to qualify, and Cambridge United and Imre Leader went on to prove that this day's result was just a minor hiccough by winning the Third Division Championship and the London Regional respectively in fine form.

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Manchester

Nine people attended the Manchester Regional Tournament at the Festival Hall in Denton, writes *John Lysons*. As far as I can remember this is the first tournament to have taken place in Manchester.

The first challenge facing the attenders was where to park the car? So came some new Othello terms—"The Haigh Manoeuvre" involved parking miles away and struggling with an enormous box of Othello sets; Mark Wormley employed "The Diagonal" (a new term?): just because two roads are full of parked cars already Mark can still spot a space diagonally across the corner.

After two rounds Mark Wormley and Graham Brightwell were on 100% and played each other in round 3. Graham showed that he was on excellent form that day and beat Mark 58–6.

So on to lunch time and some players went off to explore the Denton pubs while the rest remained to analyse the state of play should they fail to return.

After lunch a fine performance was shown by Iain Barrass who beat Mark and David before just losing in the last round to Phil Marson by 33–31, the closest game of the tournament.

Results: 1. Graham Brightwell 6, 2. Iain Barrass 4, 3. Jeremy Das 4, 4. Mark Wormley 4, 5. David Haigh 4, 6. Phil Marson 3, 7. Roy Arnold 2, 8. Martin Craven 2, 9. Eileen Forsyth 1.

There was a wedding reception at the Festival Hall on the same day but Graham Brightwell proved to be the real best man, winning all six of his games. Iain Barrass, Mark Wormley and Jeremy Das were the qualifiers. The event was captured on video. (*Is that a threat? – Ed.*)

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London

There were sixteen players at the London Regional, which is very encouraging. Even more encouragingly, there were three newcomers, although none of them were strangers to *Graham Brightwell*. Margaret Plowman, mother of Guy, has been playing friendly games against what I suppose is moderately good opposition for a while now, and Tom Landry and David Kotin have been playing at the London Othello Club.

With Imre Leader, Peter Bhagat, Garry Edmead and Guy Plowman in the field, the rest of the competitors were bound to have a hard time of it, one thought. It was also good to see Helena Verrill, Tim Williamson, Ian Turner, Colin Graham and Jeremy Rickard, none of whom have played that much recently.

In fact, it was a wild event. In the very first round Helena Verrill destroyed the new superstar Garry Edmead, while Jeremy Rickard, in his first game out of retirement, beat Aubrey de Grey. Rickard followed this up with a win over Bhagat (Pete was winning, but made a mess of the ending) and then another over Verrill. At lunch, Imre Leader was the only other player on full points.

In the afternoon, Leader beat Rickard, lost to Verrill, and then beat Bhagat (Pete was winning, but made a mess of the ending). This all left Leader, Verrill and Rickard tied for the lead. Leader looked to have the worst tie-breaker, but it was still going his way, as Rickard was way behind against Edmead, as was Verrill against Bhagat. But then Pete's endgame skills came into play, so Helena Verrill took the tournament.

Further down, there was a scrap for the third qualifying place, behind Verrill and Rickard. Ian Turner looked to have got it with his last round win over Tim Williamson, but then news came in of a fine win for Colin Graham over Aubrey de Grey, and the SOS tally confirmed that Colin had sneaked in.

Results: 1. Helena Verrill 6/7, 2. Imre Leader 6, 3. Jeremy Rickard 5, 4. Garry Edmead 5, 5. Peter Bhagat 4, 6. Guy Plowman 4, 7. Colin Graham 4, 8. Ian

Turner 4, 9. Tim Williamson 3, 10. Aubrey de Grey 3, 11. John Bass 3, 12. Margaret Plowman 3, 13. Roy Arnold 3, 14. David Kotin 2, 15. Adelaide Carpenter 1, 16. Tom Landry 0.

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Our thanks to *Sue Barrass* for sending us this report so quickly after the Doncaster Regional.

Doncaster

The shock news must surely have been that received by the organisers about a week before the event, that not only would Neil Stephenson not be journeying to Doncaster but that he had "retired" from the game! Disappointment indeed, but we wish Neil every success with his university course and any other leisure pursuits which replace Othello.

We were, however, very pleased to welcome his dad, Ken, and eleven other players to Doncaster on a warm and sunny July morning. Along with the locals and old hands were two young men, Neil Cuthbertson and Phil Marson, who had made their tournament debuts in Edinburgh at Easter.

Of the twelve players, three—Ken, Iain Barrass and Mark Wormley—had already qualified for this year's final, and a further four were amongst last year's qualifiers, so it was certainly a strong field.

The second round produced two wipeouts, John Beacock against Roy Arnold and John Lysons against David Haigh: "You don't play a bad opening against a player of John's standard and get away with it."

Round 5 was the end of John Lysons' winning run, losing to John Beacock (*another informant claims that Robert Stanton was John's conqueror – Ed.*), giving three players (John L., Iain and Mark) 4 points each, with John B., Robert Stanton and Maurice Kent on three points chasing the remaining qualifying places. The two newcomers were together with two players with over 300 rated games between them (Ken and David), on two wins each.

Round 6 paired two of the top three together, with Mark having a convincing win over Iain: "I was running out of time and played any move to avoid losing 64-0."

Results: 1. John Lysons 6/7, 2. Iain Barrass 5, 3. Mark Wormley 5, 4. Robert Stanton 5, 5. Maurice Kent 4, 6. John Beacock 4, 7. Ken Stephenson 4, 8. David Haigh 3, 9. Phil Marson 3, 10. Neil Cuthbertson 3, 11. Roy Arnold 1, and our sole, very spirited, female Eileen Forsyth on 7 (losses).

John Lysons, Robert Stanton and Maurice Kent qualified.

Quote of the day must be David's "John won that" when reporting the result of a fifth round game—between John Lysons and John Beacock. Many thanks to St. John Ambulance for the use of their Doncaster HQ.

Our thanks to this year's tournament organisers for all the effort they put in. Regional tournament organisers are usually nominated (coerced) at our AGM. It's not difficult to organise a tournament and the Federation covers losses (and takes the profits). If you think you might be willing to run a Regional, then please get in touch with David Haigh.

Congratulations to the following who have qualified for the National Championships, including Julian Richardson, who won last year's Challengers' Tournament.

Julian Richardson	Graham Brightwell	Garry Edmead	Peter Bhagat
Ken Stephenson	Willie Hunter	David Stephenson	Imre Leader
Joel Feinstein	Guy Plowman	Alex Selby	Aubrey de Grey
Matthew Selby	Helena Verrill	Jeremy Rickard	Colin Graham
Iain Barrass	Mark Wormley	Jeremy Das	John Lysons
Robert Stanton	Maurice Kent		

Congratulations also in advance to the three who will qualify at Eastbourne.

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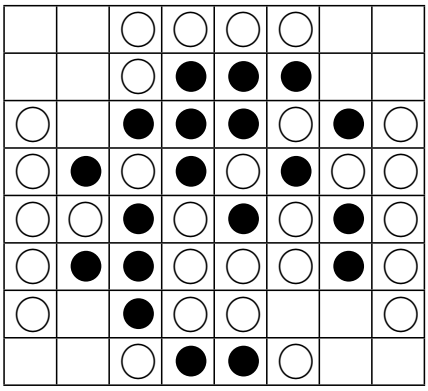
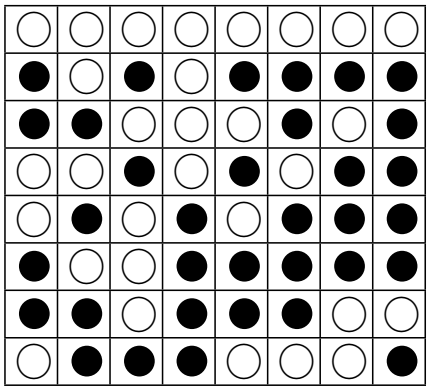
Cryptical Mindbogglers *by Garry Edmead.*

Here are two puzzles where you are asked to reconstruct the last move or two. in each case, you should assume that there have been no passes and no flipping errors.



Where did White just play?



Find the last two moves.

Answers on page 29.

Count Him Out! *by Septimus Q. Trolley-Bus*

(a self-confessed mediocre player).

Have you ever felt that you would like to teach that arrogant aristocrat, that conceited count Salvador Rockinghorse, a lesson? You know, the guy who thinks he knows all there is to know about endgame counting (and just about everything else!)? If you ever find yourself playing against him, and the game looks close, you might be able to use the ploy I am about to describe.

If possible, you should manipulate the endgame so that, of two possible endings, one leads to a final position in which there are empty squares. In this situation his endgame counting method, which he cribbed from that excellent book *Othello: Brief & Basic*, can give a misleading answer.

To recap (– *see the previous issue for the gory details – Ed.*), the OB&B-Rockinghorse method is to count one for each disc you flip or place, and to subtract one for each disc flipped by your opponent. The discs placed by your opponent are ignored.

Suppose we have a situation where there are 28 black discs and 34 white discs on the board. Black has a choice of two moves: one flips 3 discs and then it is the end of the game; the other flips 4 discs and then White flips one disc. OB&B-Rockinghorse would say that the first move is worth $3 + 1 = 4$, and the second move is worth $4 + 1 - 1 = 4$, so there is nothing to choose between the two moves. However, let's look at what is actually happening to the disc count after each of these moves.

Immediately after Black has placed a piece in the first line, before any flipping takes place, there are 29 black and 34 white discs. Flipping changes 3 of the white discs to black, so the score is 32–31, a win for Black.

In the second line, after Black's move there are $28 + 1 + 4 = 33$ black discs and $34 - 4 = 30$ white discs. After White's move there are $33 - 1 = 32$ black discs and $30 + 1 + 1 = 32$ white discs, a draw! So there is something to choose between Black's moves after all.

The endgame counting method that works in *all* situations is to count *two* for each disc you flip, but only *one* for each disc you place; subtract *two* for each disc flipped by your opponent, and subtract *one* for each disc they place. This works because the quantity you are counting is in effect the number of your discs minus the number of your opponent's discs, which you would *always* like to be as large as possible. Counting by twos is not much more difficult than counting by ones, and to make up for the slight complication, this method has a pleasing symmetry to it.

Using this method, Black's first choice is worth $6 + 1 = 7$, and the other is worth $8 + 1 - 2 - 1 = 6$, which correctly indicates that the first choice is better

for Black.

If you want the OB&B-Rockinghorse method to be *certain* of making him choose a draw, rather than giving him a 50% chance of choosing a draw rather than a win, you have to be a bit more clever in your endgame manipulation. You need to arrange things so that one of the two endings has *three* empty squares.

Suppose that Black's first choice again flips 3 discs and that's the end of the game, but with his second choice he flips 4 discs, then White flips 2, then Black flips 2 and finally White flips 1. The OB&B-Rockinghorse value of Black's first choice is again 4, and with the second choice it is $4+1-2+2+1-1=5$, so he will reckon that the second choice is better.

If we start this scenario with 27 black and 33 white discs, then after Black's first choice there will be $27+1+3$ black discs and $33-30$ white, a win for Black. If you work out what happens in the second line, you'll dind it winds up as a draw. If you use my method you will find that it correctly says that the first choice is better for Black.

If you want to go the whole hog and make him lose rather than draw when he could have won, you will have to engineer the endgame so that there are, yes, *five* empty sqaures for one of the final positions. I won't bore you with an example of how this works, but it is possible to devise numbers of flipped discs which will make him choose a 29–30 loss rather than a 33–31 win.

Now, to be fair to OB&B, it is conceivable that these situations cannot actually arise in an Othello endgame. I have not been able to devise board positions to illustrate these points, but until someone proves to me that they cannot happen, I'm going to carry on using my method which works for all situations, including passed moves, empty squares and all combinations thereof.

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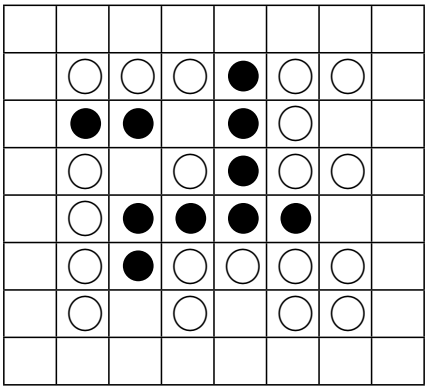
Syncopated Cerebrations *by Sid Cox.*



Black to play.

Only one person sent me a "legal" Othello position with more than 32 moves to choose from. He is that player whose name is suggested by the phrase "or breed a grey!" (with apologies to Bill N. Doggler). Here is his 34-move solution. (*Yes, but what discs were flipped when Black played b3? – irritating Ed.*)

This issue's puzzle is inspired by the article by Septimus Q. Trolley-bus. What you have to do is devise a "legal" Othello position with 2 empty squares, such that if Black goes to one of the squares he flips A discs, and when White goes to the last square he flips B discs. If Black goes instead to the other square he flips $A - B$ discs, and that is the end of the game. A and B can be any numbers you like, but of course B must be less than A.

Out of my own personal fortune I will award a prize of a year's membership of the BOF to the first person to send me such a position, or to the first person to send me a proof (which I can understand!) that the situation cannot occur.

A couple of years ago I was discussing tie-breaking methods with Imre Leader at the Cambridge Regional while we were walking back from lunch at the Grad Pad. He was not too happy with the use of total disc count to resolve ties because it would mean that instead of just concentrating on finding a win, he would also have to think about maximising his disc-count. (Another plaintive cry?) I remember pointing out that one very practical advantage of using the total disc count was that it was almost certain to resolve a tie and was therefore a useful last resort.

Well, last year there was a tournament in which it did not resolve a tie! This was in the Loughborough Regional, when Robert Stanton and Roy Arnold were competing for the last place in the National Final. They had the same number of points, the same sum-of-opponents' scores (SOS), in fact, the same set of opponents, and the same number of discs. So both were declared to have qualified. Surely a one-off: this would never happen again.

At least, not for a few months. At this year's Cambridge Regional, Paul Smith and Gerard Thompson both had 3 points, an SOS of 23, and 177 discs! (No qualifying place was at stake this time.) To resolve such situations, I propose that we use the newly-invented Sid Cox tie(hair?)-splitting method.

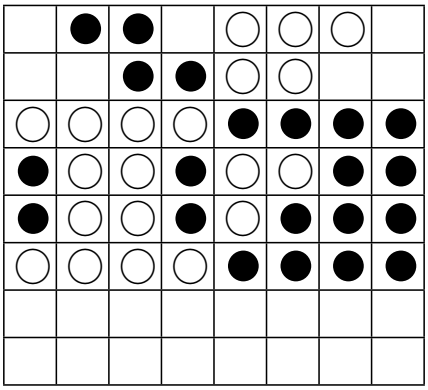
Remembering that the first tie-breaking number is sum-of-opponents'-scores, and the second is total disc-count, it is very logical that by combining these two principles the next tie-breaking number should be sum of opponents' total disc counts! Applying this to the Paul-Gerard tie put Paul ahead with 1532 against Ged's 1514.

I would be interested to know what you think of this apparently logical but possibly inappropriate tie-breaking method. Better still, propose either a more sensible alternative or even more logical and more inappropriate alternative!

Editor's Note: OK, I'll take Sid up on that. Surely we should look first at the sum of the opponents' SOSs. After all, the opponents are ranked on their SOSs first, then their disc-counts, and therefore sum of opponents' SOSs should come before sum of opponents' disc-counts. This one should run and run . . . – Graham.

Shared Edges *by Graham Brightwell.*

(This article was written at the eleventh hour, having looked at the provisional list of contents and thought: "Hmm. There's not much here that tells you anything about how to actually *play* Othello!")



White to play.

The edge to the North here is called a *shared* edge. Both players have discs on the edge, and nothing is going to change on the edge without a corner being sacrificed. Perhaps it is even more common to have four discs of one colour (say, white discs on d1, e1, f1 and g1), and one of the other (say, a black disc on b1). This article is concerned with how play around such an edge can develop. There are the usual caveats: the edge can never be considered in isolation, it's always very important to see what's happening on the whole board, every rule has exceptions, and all that.

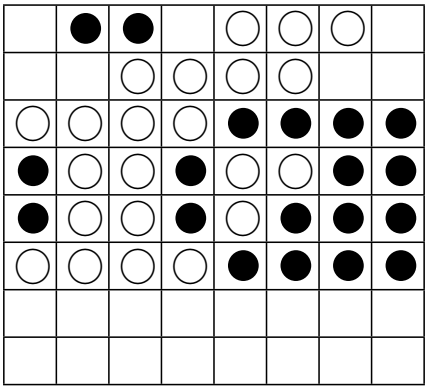
The position above is rather idealised. Neither player wishes to be the first to open up the South, so both would like to get in some moves to the North. It is apparent that all the moves up there give up a corner, but I hope that won't put us off too much!

A White move to g2 in the diagrammed position is pretty much ideal. Suppose that Black takes the corner immediately, 2h1. Then White plays to d1. Now White is going to get the whole of the North edge, including the a1 corner, while Black gets just the h1 corner. As a bonus, Black has no access to h2, so White will get a wedge on that edge as well.

With shared edges like this, it is usually not right for Black to take the corner when offered. He normally does better to play the X-square at his end of the edge, in this case 2b2. Now it is White who should not take the corner: 3a1 is met by 4d1, and Black gets the whole edge.

After 1g2 2b2, White could continue with 3h2. Again, Black doesn't really want to take the corner, so he could play 4a2. Now White doesn't want to take a1 just yet (it's not going away!), so he plays his only other move in the area, 5d1!. Now Black is effectively forced to take 6a1, and so White gets the last move in the region, 7h1.

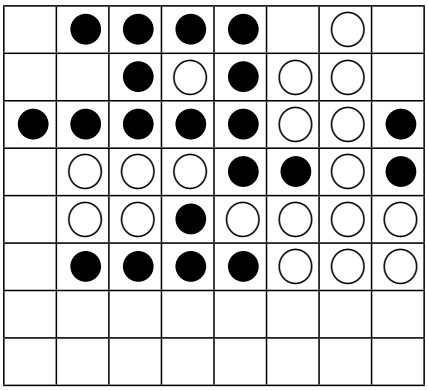
Going back, can you see that Black does better to play 4d1 himself? Now after 5a1, Black takes either a2 or h1, and leaves the other as a free move, while White has to break through, inevitably losing. Going back still further, White should play 3d1 to prevent this! The moral is that the empty square on the edge is often an important tempo, and it is frequently worth playing in it, giving up the whole edge, rather than letting your opponent do so.



White to play.

This position is almost identical, with just the c2 and d2 discs flipped, but there is one very important difference: White has no access to d1. This edge is extremely dangerous for White, and he should have tried to avoid it. Now after 1g2 2h1, White can't play to d1. Even worse, Black has the freedom to play b2, followed by a2, without worrying about White doing the same on the other side. Black is definitely winning here.

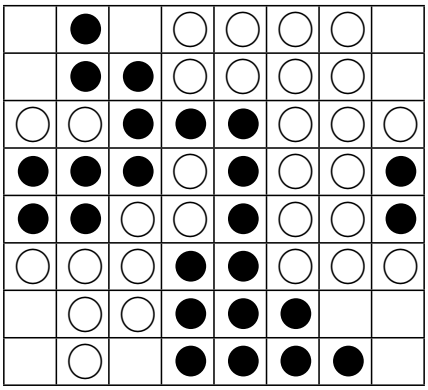
Once there has been an X-square sacrifice against a shared edge, there is often a battle for access to the empty square. In the next position, White has played to g2, but now Black has an evil plan.



Black to play.

Black plays 1a6, taking White off access to f1. If White responds 2a5, then Black plays 3a4, and White has no other way of getting on. Can you see what White must do to counter the threat of a Black move to h1? The answer is that White must play h2. That doesn't get access to f1 now, but he does have access after a Black move to h1. It is true that, after 1a6 2h2, Black can play 3f1, keeping h1 for later, but then White gets a lot of moves starting with a1 and moving round.

What if Black starts with 1h7, threatening 3a6? There are a few things that White can try, but much the best is simply 2f1! After 3h1 4h2, White has plenty of control and a free move to h8.



Some traps.

The final diagram shows some more of the interesting things that can happen with shared edges. On the North edge, it is White to play. As we have learnt, he wants to play f1 rather than h1 (if 1h1, then Black gets 2f1 with h2 to follow later). But he is horrified to notice that 1f1 flips the g2 disc. In this position, it is *still* the right move. Black gets both the a1 and h1 corners, but White at least gets two nice moves to a2 and h2.

In the South, rather than playing the routine 1g7 2c8, Black plays 1c8! Now White takes h8, but Black gets all the remaining moves in the region, first a8, then a7, then g7, then h7. The key is that after 3a8, the 7th row is all black, and that White has no other access to a7.

How I Saved Eric *by Graham Brightwell.*

Eric is a cute little thing with a beaming smile and a fluffy tail. But when he arrived in Balham the other week, he was covered in bandages, and still bore stains from the streets of Paris. Clearly I had no choice. I had to beat Garry Edmead and Guy Plowman in one game of Othello each. No easy task, but one look at Eric's sad face and neglected coat told me that the job had to be undertaken.

As you can see below, I was successful, so now I am the immensely proud owner of a stuffed baby tiger. If you would like to challenge me for Eric, then give me a ring, and we can fix a time. Absolutely anyone in the British Isles is eligible to play. You can either play two games yourself, or bring a teammate and play once each. You have to win both games, or win one and draw the other.

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

Edmead 16 Me 48

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

After move 22.

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

After move 36.

In the first game against Garry Edmead, I forgot that 14b4 was supposedly better than 14b5, but apparently Garry has a good line after that too. I drifted behind, until at 22 I could see nothing better to do than give him the 3 on the bottom edge in order to get 24h4. I didn't fancy this much, as Black seemed to have much the better play on all the edges. But Garry was kind enough not to take the edge, and suddenly I seemed to have some play again. His 33 is good: it offers me two quiet moves at g4 and g3, but Black has plenty of play elsewhere (d1,b4), and then has a nice move to h3 at the end. I chose to play to the other side and extract the d6 disc. I think the X-square at 37 is wrong: the South edge is one I can afford to lose (b7 is pleasant for me), I don't currently have any access to g8, and the move at g4 (or h3) looks much more attractive for him. At 42 I had intended b7, but b4 looked even nicer. He has no good options at 43, but the move he chose, 43a7, falls into a trap that is worth remembering. It's still not all over, as the North-West is now an odd region against me, but the North-East is set up for a swindle in my favour. If he'd seen this, he'd doubtless have played 49g2, rather than filling in the hole, but he's not getting enough discs (perfect play is 29–35). Missing this, he collapsed.

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

Me 42 Plowman 22

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

After move 24.

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

After move 39.

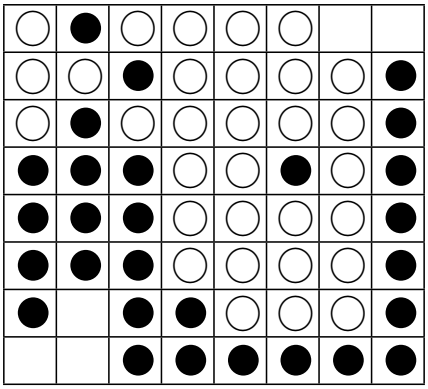
Job half done. Before this weekend, I'd rated Garry much higher than Guy. Now I'm not so sure (see Brussels report). The move 12 is a Plowman speciality. Imre Leader had shown me it a few weeks before, and the line I played through 17 here had worked well enough against him. I had the same position after 18 against Guy in Brussels, and tried 19h6 20h3 21g6 22h4 23h2 24c2 25a4 26a3, which is even worse than what happened here. (I died slowly but horribly.) At the moment I don't know what to do against this opening. Back in this game, the routine line at 25 would be 25a7 26b3 27c2 28h4. I couldn't see what I might do then, so I tried something exciting instead. I seriously think that 25d7 is right. The simplest approach for me after that would just be to take b3 and a7 on my next two moves no matter what. In the meantime, White would have to find three moves, and I would have a solid 4-on-6 in the West and a lot of pressure. I preferred to save my free moves for a while and try to pretty much run White out of moves. At the time, I thought that White was still ahead after 25, but obviously Black has good practical chances. I don't wish to vouch for the accuracy of any of the next few moves: both of us had lots of options. As you can tell, neither of us wanted to take the East edge. White managed to avoid breaking the North wall much until after I had used up my tempi, but after 39 it looked as though he was about to collapse. 40b2 is an excellent try. It might be right for me to cut fairly soon with b8, but that looked a little unclear and I thought playing out the North ought to work out well for me. (This is all lazy thinking: I ought to have been looking at the position after, say, 41b8 42a8 43a1 44b2 and trying to evaluate it.) His play from 42 to 46 is basically forced, because he can't let me cut the diagonal. After 47, it looks as though he's dead, but 48 is another brilliant move. Unfortunately he wrecked it by missing that my move to g2 gave me access to b8. He actually has a draw at 50: 50b8 51e8 52g7 (this is visibly 2 discs better than 50g7-g2-b8-e8) 53g2 54h1 55g8 56h8 57f2 58g1 59c1 60a1.

Perhaps I was a little lucky in both games? At least Eric enjoyed them.

It's 1–1 and the Tension is Mounting *by Graham Brightwell.*

The stage is set. The two top players of the tournament are in opposition. It is the Final. Much is at stake. Each player has one win. We enter the third, decisive, game. There is absolute silence. The spectators await a classic encounter. Naive fools.

To say that the third game is 'rarely a classic' would be overgenerous. Almost invariably, it is riddled with incredible errors on both sides. It is easy to speak about the tension that is generated by the situation, but it is hard to imagine unless you've been there. Even the most solid and dependable players are overwhelmed. It is summed up very simply by Imre Leader: "I just *could not* think."



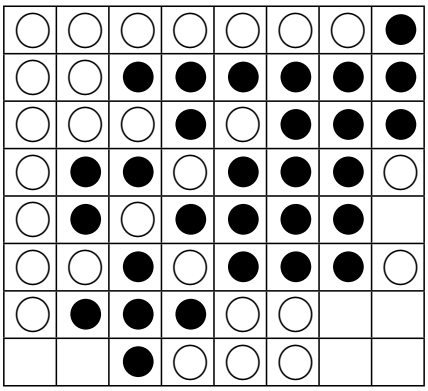
White (Brightwell) to play

Exhibit A. The third game of the 1989 Paris final. This game has actually been reasonable so far, although I was a little surprised to find myself in a won position. Anyway, here I am at move 56, winning. There are two candidate moves: 56a8 and 56b7. (Actually 56b8 draws, but I never even contemplated playing that.) I had two or three minutes on my clock, which is plenty. Now, how does play go after 56a8? Black gets to choose between 57h1 and 57g1, I play out the other one, then choose between 59b7 and 59b8. His problem in that line is that he would rather play 57g1, as far as discs in the North-East are concerned, but after 57g1 58h1, I play 59b7, keeping the whole b-file. So after 56a8, 57h1 looks right. After 56b7, the play is a little clearer: Black plays out each doublet as he pleases. In the South-West, he'll play b8, and in the North-East probably g1. So far, so good. The approved technique here would be to count the second line (56b7 57b8 58a8 59g1 60h1), and see if it wins. If it does, play it: if it doesn't, play the other one. So, I proceeded to count this line. Half-way through counting it, I stopped, and started trying to count the other one. I aborted that too, and went back to check what the two possibilities were. I looked at both the lines, and told myself that all I had to do was count one. I looked at the clock: enough time. Started to count: failed. Tried the other line: I couldn't get beyond the second move of the sequence. Looked at the clock. Of course the entire room was gathered around watching, and one thing I *was* able to think was that at least ten people knew what the right move was. Cursed inwardly. Looked at the clock. Not so much time now. So I played one. At the end of several minutes thought, my deepest insight into the position was that I thought I wanted the last move in the South-West, so I played 56b7.

If you're ahead of me, you'll know that Murakami now had a win. However,

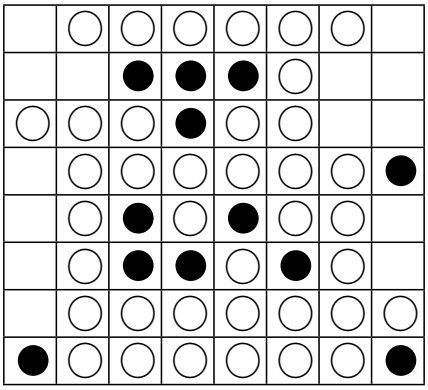
this win does involve flipping an exceptionally large number of discs. You've guessed it. Even Murakami, who is the fastest out, couldn't get his moves in before his flag fell. This was both one of the best and one of the worst moments of my life. One thing I should say is that Murakami was the perfect gentleman, and found exactly the right things to say.

This was not actually a terribly easy ending, but I was supposed to be at the peak of my form and I should have got it right. But really form didn't come into it. The state I was in, I couldn't calculate anything, my mind was just a fog, and my chances of finding the right move were exactly 50%.



White (Penloup) to play

If there's any consolation for me (apart from winning, that is), it's that everybody else is afflicted the same way. Here is Exhibit B, the final game of this year's Cambridge Open. Dominique Penloup has been the surprise package of the tournament, playing most impressively throughout. At this point, he is poised to win. This has been a poor game, with both players missing clear wins at various stages. Leader has made the latest blunder, but with the win in his grasp, Penloup is now suffering from brain-lock. What would you play here? Give yourself five minutes, which is what Penloup had, as far as I remember. White looks to have plenty of discs, a fair amount of control, and parity. 54h7 looks like the move to play, but how do you expect the game to go after that? 54h5 is a reasonable-looking alternative: is there anything terrible happening after that? I don't think you'll find it's that hard. But you aren't under pressure. You don't have twenty experts crowded round you, awaiting your decision. A place in the World Championships is not (potentially) at stake for you. Dominique just sat there. As the minutes ticked by, it became more and more obvious that he was in trouble. Meanwhile, the audience all worked out the right move. Leader sat slumped on the other side, misery incarnate. Still Penloup sat and pondered. One should always try to see to the end of the game, even if it's not possible to count it out. I presume that Penloup was just physically unable to. Under normal circumstances, he would get this right absolutely every time. The audience had moved on to working out whether 54g7 might be a win as well. (It is.) It was becoming painfully obvious that Dominique's chances of winning were roughly evens. Sadly he guessed wrong: 54h7 55h5 56a8 57b8 58g7 59h8 (P) 60g8 34–30. It turns out that he had seen this swindle, but erroneously thought that, after 54h5 55h7 56g7, Black had access to h7 along the h-file. A phantom swindle!

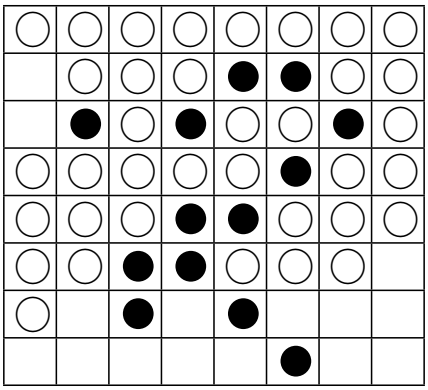


Black (Leader) to play

Exhibit C: the last game of the recent Brussels tournament. The surprise finalist from France this time was Emmanuel Caspard (White), but in the clinch he has played a rotten game, is hopelessly lost, and is almost out of time. Imre Leader (Black) has almost fifteen minutes on his clock, and a dream position. It needs more than one dire move to mess this up, yet Leader all but managed it. First off, what do you want to play here? 47g3? 47a5? Choosing between those two is a very pleasant task, but Leader's autopilot generated 47b2. There are many circumstances where this is the thing to do, particularly where there is no shortage of discs to be picked up, but you need a little more control: then an X-square sacrifice just to gain a move is quite in order. Here it is the exact opposite: Black has all the control he needs, and his only problem is that White already has a fair number of stable discs. After 47b2 48a1, White has rather more, and now Black has just a little work to do. 49g3 is fine, and White responded 50h2. Now Black has a neat win available: 51h3 52either g2 or h5 53a2 54the other 55h6 56a7 57a5 or a6 58h1 59the other 60a4 42–22. That's a nice sequence to spot, but even if you don't, 51h3 is the natural move. Leader is unable to explain why he played 51h6, other than a vague feeling that it was getting some of the discs he was due. (Basically h5-h6 is a doublet: there is no advantage to be gained in playing it out.) Leader claims not to have been aware of what was going on at any stage in this game. Presumably he was just reacting; this wasn't too obvious from his earlier play, but then he does have exceptionally good reactions. Now it is all falling apart in a very dramatic fashion. 51h6 52h5 and now what is your move? Take your time: no need to hurry. There's a three-square region on the right, and a large region on the other side where your opponent has no access. Correct: 53h3 is still the winning move. Leader's 53a7 is gross. The explanation turns out to be that he thought he was losing! He thought that, whenever he played a7 turning lots of discs, White could reply a6 turning lots of his own. This is true, but it's absolutely not what is going on in this ending. The pieces on the 6th rank amount to 5 discs. Parity in both regions almost always counts for far more. I can't stress enough that this is not the Imre Leader we know and lose to. These are not the actions of a man with a functioning brain. Pity now Emmanuel Caspard. No time on the clock, but suddenly he is in the game again. Bintsa Andriani, mindful of the Penloup experience above, had told him before the game: "Whatever you do, don't throw it away at move 54." I think he must have trusted that Leader knew what he was doing, or maybe the discs on the sixth row were too tempting. Whatever, his

instant decision was 54a6. The parity move, 54h3, leads to a draw (even that is on the unlikely assumption that Leader would find the sequence 55g2 56h1 57a5 58a6 59a4 60a2), which would have won Caspard the tournament. As it was, after 54a6, Leader woke up and played 55h3, and the game finished 56g2 57h1 58a7 59a5 60a4 39–25.

There are other examples. David Shaman all but threw away the 1986 Paris Open. Last year's Paris Final featured an amazing double blunder, as Leader, winning easily, allowed Marc Tastet an opportunity to control a key diagonal, but Tastet missed it. My third game against Murakami in the 88 World Semi-final was a joke. And the final game of the Feldborg-Ralle semi-final the year before was not a pretty sight. And, speaking of the 1987 World Championships, here to finish is the only ever third game of a World Final. This one is not quite as grotesque as some of the earlier examples, but the expectations were that bit higher.



White (Ishii) to move

Exhibit D. Ralle vs. Ishii, 1987. After about 25 moves of this game, I thought that, if I were in Ralle's position, I would resign. I have never resigned a serious game of Othello in my life, but I thought that Ralle was in a position where it would be embarrassing to continue. From then on, until this position was reached, Ralle played very well, and Ishii played very safely. Obviously White is in total command here. Now it is Ishii to play. Put it this way: what is the best way to lose? You are White, you have a mass of discs already, and there is nothing to suggest that anything will go wrong. The doublet a2-a3 is great for you, because you have parity, and so Black will have to play first into it. So, White plays 46c8, throwing away the parity! Presumably he saw 47f7 48g7!, which is quite neat. But of course Ralle spotted this and played 47h7 48h6 49d7. The South-East region was filled in, White was forced to a3, and then the remaining region didn't quite play well enough for Black. 26–38. Ishii's 46c8 is designed to secure another corner, at the expense of problems at the end. This was a rotten way to treat the position, which was quite happily winning itself. (Again, I must stress that Ishii played rather well during the rest of the game, indeed the tournament, and this was just an aberration.)

There isn't a moral. I don't know what to about it except laugh afterwards. And even that is painful.

Giant Killing *by Garry Edmead.*

Picture this. It's the last round of a Regional, and you must win your game to qualify for the National Finals. You hear Graham Brightwell bellow out your opponent's name, you rush over to the rating list. Aargh! They're in the top ten. Don't fear: here are a few tactics to help you qualify.

Imre Leader.
Guy Plowman has a very good plan to beat Imre, so he decided to use it in the 1990 National Finals. It goes as follows.
(a) Play an opening you've never seen or heard of before.
(b) Run yourself out of moves.
(c) Hope your opponent can't take enough pieces.
This tremendously suberb idea worked! Cor!

Peter Bhagat.
When I beat Pete he had a headache. Therefore bring along to tournaments drums, dustbin lids, air-raid sirens etc. This is sure to do the trick.

Graham Brightwell.
Blackmail! I have some very disturbing photographs of Graham in Swedish night-clubs. You can hire them out if you want. Just contact me.

Neil Stephenson, David Sharman, John Lysons.
Unfortunately I haven't played any of these, so I haven't a jolly good tactic yet.

Joel Feinstein.
This is quite easy. Play normally for about ten moves. Just watch Joel play an X-square. Need I say more.

Alex Selby.
Guy has never lost to Alex. I asked him how he managed this. He replied:
(a) Play an opening you've never seen or heard of before.
(b) Run yourself out of moves.
(c) Hope your opponent can't take enough pieces.
Sounds familiar.

Helena Verrill.
(*Helena wasn't in the top ten when Garry wrote the article, and he didn't deign to give us his thoughts on how to beat her. Then they met in the London Regional: Verrill 1 Edmead 0. So it looks like this is one problem our trepid reporter hasn't solved – Ed.*)

As you may have noticed there are only nine people above. I'm the other person in the top ten. To beat me, bribes normally work. I accept cash, postal orders, cheques and American Express.
Here are a few more who should, could and would be in the top ten if only there were more room.

Aubrey de Grey.
If you buy Aubrey a drink before your game you are sure to win. Aubrey has never beaten anyone who has done this. Unfortunately, most Othello players lack money. This could be the reason why I have never beaten Aubrey.
(*The following is a cheaper and almost as reliable approach – Ed.*
(a) Play an opening Aubrey knows very well.
(b) Get way behind.
(c) Reach an ending, any ending.
(d) Win.)

David Stephenson, Ken Stephenson, David Haigh.
These three gentlemen are the kindest, politest, most caring people I have ever met. Just ask them to lose.

And finally:
Guy Plowman.
I have learnt how to beat Guy. This is how to do it.
(a) Play 6000 five minute games against him.
(b) Jot down all the openings he has bad replies to.
(c) Play these openings against him in tournaments.
Always works for me (unless I'm White).

The Eighth Cambridge International Tournament

by Peter Bhagat.

It was a bright and sunny day when we left Parker Street for the Cambridge International.

We were very pleased to welcome three Poles (including one groupie) and three ROOssians to the tournament for the first time. The Russians stayed in Cambridge for a week. It was also good to see Stephan Waser from Switzerland, as well as the usual assortment of French and Belgian players.

The total of 32 players was eight less than last year, which was disappointing, but the tournament was very strong with at least nine players serious contenders to win.

If anyone doubts the dedication of Othello players then they should come to my house the night before the Cambridge tournament to see twenty Othello players looking for any horizontal surface on which to play a game of Othello.

Due to an unfortunate mixture of last minute calls of nature and forgotten cameras and such like, Serge Alard managed to get locked inside Aubrey's flat before the tournament started. No one realised until he appeared just in time for the first round. The main casualties were a broken pane of glass and a concerned but confused passer-by who tried to relate the situation to my answerphone.

Garry Edmead added to some good recent results with an equal 5th place. Graham Brightwell added to his usual record of not doing well at Cambridge by coming equal 11th. One bright spot for Graham was when he only lost 33–31 to Garry in the last round.

Imre Leader emerged half a point ahead of the field to reach the final with Dominique Penloup. Imre eventually won the last game of the final using the old maxim: "He who makes the second-last game-losing move wins."

The social aspects are always important. Once again we overwhelmed a Greek restaurant on Saturday night when we asked for a table for 32. Oleg Stepanov was a hit on Sunday night in an Indian restaurant when he tore a whole deck of cards in half with his hands.

Apparently pineapple is considered an unobtainable, luxury, capitalist, bourgeois fruit in ROOssia. The ROOssians were amazed to arrive at Imre and Janet's one night to find a pineapple in the middle of the table. A further shock was when they were told that it was for dessert.

The final results were Imre Leader $9\frac{1}{2}$ (won final 2 - 1), Dominique Penloup 9, David Shaman 8 (won 3rd/4th 2 - 0), Marc Tastet 8, Garry Edmead, Alexandr Melnikov and Dmitri Svirskij 7, Oleg Stepanov, Peter Bhagat and Emmanuel Caspard $6\frac{1}{2}$, Aubrey de Grey, Graham Brightwell, Pawel Pietruszkiewicz, Emmanuel Lazard, and Joel Feinstein 6, Alex Selby $5\frac{1}{2}$, Piotr Pietruszkiewicz, Bintsa An-

driani, Mike Handel, Dilip Sequeira and Alec Edgington 5, Stephan Waser $4\frac{1}{2}$, Serge Alard, Roy Arnold, Sandry Andriani, Colin Graham and Matthew Selby 4, John Bass and Annemarie Clemence 3, Adelaide Carpenter and Helena Verrill 2, Barney Pell 0.

Helena only played in six rounds and Barney Pell in two.

Congratulations to Imre for winning and thanks to myself for organising it. Also thanks to those who helped finance the ROOssians and Poles stay.

Here, for your delectation, are the three games of the Final.

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

Penloup 20 Leader 44

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

Leader 14 Penloup 50

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

Leader 34 Penloup 30

* * * * * * *

The Ninth Cambridge International Tournament will be held on 15th and 16th February 1992, at the University Centre, Cambridge. Write the date in your diary now. The entry fee must be raised to £10 to cover losses, except the un-waged and low-waged (excluding students) who can enter for £2.

* * * * * * *

Answers to Cryptical Mindbogglers.

Here are the answers to Garry Edmead's puzzles on page 12.

1. a7,
2. 59h5 60g8.

The author offers no explanations, and any correspondence should be directed to him. Garry's address appears elsewhere in this newsletter (page 39).

Some Cambridge games *by Dylan Boggler.*

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

Shaman 39 Feinstein 25

This move 8 is starting to come back into fashion, after b4 was for a long time the only move played. 10b4 is more common, as it is believed that 10e3 11d2 12b4 13c6 is good for Black. Here, it seems that White comes out of the opening slightly better. Move 22 looks a little odd, since White will be obliged to take the bad edge after a response to a4, but this is actually the start of an excellent plan, involving running Black short of moves, and also gains access to f6. Black plays 23f7 before a4, not only because after 23a4 24a2 he has no access to f7, but also because after the the obvious reply of 24f6 there is a White disc on the f-column. At 25, Black is in a quandary. He needs to play a4–a2, to get a disc on b4 to have access to e1, but that same b4 disc will poison moves to the south.

Maybe e1 is better at 27: if White does not play c1 then Black himself will, and if White *does* play 28c1 then Black can play 29c7, with later chances of a Stoner trap against the West edge. When Black does go to e1 at 31, White chooses to let Black play 33c1 as well, since then his East edge not so bad, as he can sacrifice into b2 if necessary.

After 38, White's pull is complete: Black will have to play into the South-West region very soon. 42b2 and 44a6 are well-timed: he must not allow Black to gain a tempo with b7.

After 46, the game is essentially over for Black, but White still has to be careful. One of the few things that can go wrong is for Black to get in g7 turning the entire diagonal. With this in mind, 50g3 is suicidal. In fact, it takes a little while to see what White should do at 50, but 50h4 wins comfortably.

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

Melnikov 24 Leader 40

16e2 is called the Brightstein opening. (*Named after a small North American marsupial – Ed.*) The sequence through 21 is very common: Black fights for access to f3 before White is ready to play there himself. In this game, White chooses to play 22f3 even though he loses his move to g6. (The alternative 22c8 instead walls White off from too much).

The sequence 23–25 is a nice pull, and 27–29 is also well-played. In the ensuing play, Black continues to try to run White out of moves. After

38, Black has a free move to a2, but White has some sacrifice possibilities in the Southeast or Southwest corners. Melnikov found a *superb* move to get rid of all such threats: 39g7! The idea is to play out the South before turning to the North, even though White gets a lot of discs. This is very brave, but almost certainly the right thing to do. White is going to be forced to b7 sooner or later, so he plays there as soon as he can so as to get all the discs on the 7th row. Nevertheless, after 44 Black has parity as well as control.

But it is not easy. Black has to make sure he is on the a8–h1 diagonal so that he can take a8 when he needs to. 47c2 is the clear way forward: if White replies with the routine 48c1, then 49b2 is a safe win, whereas if 48b1, then Black plays 49e1 50d1 51c1 52b2 53a1 (P), and now 54g2 puts him on the diagonal.

After the sequence as played, 50b2 is a good shot. 51h2 is no good, as it allows 52g2, removing the important Black disc at g6: after 53a1 54c2, Black therefore has no access to b1! Black's last chance to win is 51g1. White now passes, and Black follows with 52g2. 53h2 is not then a swindle, as Black plays 54a8 and White doesn't get back on the diagonal. So after 52g2, play should go 53h1 54h2 55f1 56a8 57b8 58c8 (P) 59c2 60a1, and Black wins 33–31.

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

Edmead 34 Handel 30

Move 7 constitutes the Inoue, an opening which is not seen very often these days. A very tight battle ensues. White is trying to run Black out of moves. The play from 20 to 40 is really excellent by both sides: all the correct ways to apply pressure and resist pressure. This is a reaaly nice game to play through.

After 36 (creating an odd region), White is planning his evil move 38, but Black replies with the correct move 39. (If Black plays 39h1, then White gets both h2 and g1 while Black collapses.) What should White do at 40? He could try to go for the kill with the promising looking 40h1 41g1 42c1 43c2 44g7! 45h7 46b2, which looks like it ought to end the game, but then Black has the wonderful 47a2!, and White is in trouble. It seems that that odd region to the Southwest is really hurting White enormously. Rather than playing this bad sequence, White wisely decided to break through to the West, and allow Black access to g7.

But at move 48, White makes a mistake. The point is that, after the sequence played, namely 48g8 49h8 50h7 51a8, the Northwest region will play wonderfully for Black. So White should really mess it up a bit before carrying on with giving up the bottom edge. Indeed, 48b3 would have obliged Black to play to the West, as g8 is illegal, and *then* White could carry on with g8 as before. In fact, it turns out that 48b3 would have been enough to give White a draw.

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

Lazard 24 Penloup 40

This is the Shaman move 7. (*Another opening named after a North American mammal – Ed.*) The usual move is 14e2, but this sequence 14–16 is very nice!

At 21 and 23, Black leaves the f5 disc for a while so as to avoid giving White a quiet move at f2. After 24, the position looks very tight. Black has some walls, but the White discs to the North look as though they will poison subsequent play. Maybe 28a3 is better now instead, while it does not flip b4. Then White could follow up with a4 soon.

30a6 is a nice move. Black is more-or-less forced to play reply a4, since he must not flip the disc at f6 (allowing White to play f8 quietly), and then 32f8 removes Black's access to a5. Black made a good move 33. He must watch out for Stoner traps, (after the pair 34–35), but he is forcing White to break through, and now the wall to the North is really hurting White.

Unfortunately, Black fell into a trap at move 51, allowing White both moves in the Northeast corner. In fact, Black is always going to be swindled in that region, but he has to make White pay more for it. The winning line is 51b2 52a5 53a7 54b8 55g8 56g1 57a8 58b1 59a1 60h1 34–30. It looks as though Black should have something less scary!

* * * * * * *

Copenhagen

The third of this year's Grand Prix tournaments (after Rome and Cambridge) was held in Copenhagen on April 27/28. No British players went, but by all accounts it still managed to be a good tournament. Leading Danish superstar Karsten Feldborg won for the third time, beating Nils Berner of Sweden 2–0 in the final. Augusto Brusca of Italy was third, followed by Henrik Vallund of Denmark and Marc Tastet of France. Karsten only lost two games, and one of those was in the last round, after he'd already qualified for the final.

Brussels: City of Mystery *by Magnus Maestro.*

Seven brave adventurers set out from Victoria one Friday morning, bound for the timeless sports centres of Brussels, site of the fabled fourth European Grand Prix tournament. Our abilities finely honed by entire hours of practice games, we were each quietly confident that somebody else would do well. In the party were: the imperious Imre Leader, the inimitable Joel Feinstein, the indescribable Garry Edmead and Guy Plowman, the indomitable David Shaman (American, but proud of it), the irrepressible Sue Wood, and the unintelligible Graham Brightwell.

We were waylaid at the station by one Alain Daix, a Belgian. Purporting to lead us to our hotel, he in fact led us a merry waddle through obscure back streets, in a thinly disguised attempt to damp our spirits. Personfully, we battled on, and even the prospect of some of us sharing a room with French expert Marc Tastet deterred only M.Tastet.

Opponents had come from all over Europe (except, of course, from Italy) to do battle. A hordette of Norse warriors had descended on the city, led by the dynamic Danish duo Karsten Feldborg and Henrik Vallund, and Nils Berner, a strikingly striking Swede. The French contingent was led by rising star Emmanuel Caspard, risen star Dominique Penloup, and Tastet, who could be described as a sinking star, but only for artistic effect. Then there was an entire pack of Belgians, their main man one Luc Jeangille.

Upsets there were aplenty, as Plowman ploughed through the field, leaving Brightwell, Leader and Tastet in his wake. Shaman looked dominant, until Leader and Caspard brought him down late in the day. Feinstein caught Leader in a web of deception to capture the first day lead, but the sinister Caspard was hard on his heels. Tastet was still in touch, despite being caught by a Plowman-Edmead one-two. Brightwell was off the pace, his hopes dented by Jeangille.

On to the second day, and Feinstein faltered. Losses to Caspard and Jeangille left him with nothing but the dubious honour of a match for third place with David "Third Place" Shaman. Leader fought through, and assumed his customary role, centre stage, for the final act. Brightwell had made a magnificent recovery, and challenged for the other final place, until he was hacked down crudely by the vile Caspard, who thus dared to challenge Leader for the title. Plowman was cruelly denied a play-off place, missing out by a paltry five discs.

Leader and Caspard fought toe-to-toe, with first one and then the other winning, making it 1-1. Two fine games, and the audience awaited the deciding struggle with eager anticipation. But then both players caught sight of the trophy they were competing for, a replica of the famous Belgian statue, the 'Mannekin Pis' ('Urinating Mannekin'). There followed a game of utter ineptitude, the like of which had not been seen since the equivalent game of the Cambridge tournament in February. First Caspard walled himself off from most of the board, leaving

himself with a totally hopeless position, then Leader woke down and played a sequence of moves which can charitably be described as absurd. After four or five tries, he finally managed to reach a losing position, but Caspard sank to the challenge, and missed the win.

So, Leader carried off the spoil: he has won the last three Grand Prix tournaments in which he has competed. The last game notwithstanding, he is a major talent, deserving of greater recognition by the public at large, and adulation wherever he treads.

The Belgian organisers, Serge Alard and Alain Daix, deserve thanks for organising the tournament. (Informed readers will be impressed at my restraint at not even mentioning the pairing program.) David Shaman deserves a mention for finishing third. Karsten Feldborg deserves a mention for scoring all of 3 Grand Prix points, just about keeping this year's competition alive. Garry Edmead doesn't deserve a mention.

Final results. 1. Leader 9/11 (2-1), 2. Caspard 8.5 (1-2), 3. Shaman 7.5 (2-0), 4. Feinstein 8 (0-2), 5. Plowman 7.5, 6. Brightwell, Edmead, Jeangille 7, 9. Penloup, Berner, Tastet, Feldborg, Andriani (F), E.Delfante (B), Syren (S) 6, 16. Vallund 5.5, 16. Wood and others 5, ...

The current European Grand Prix standings can be found on page 37.

(Here are a few games, taken from the Brightwell and Leader collections.)

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

Leader 34 Brightwell 30

(Notes by Graham Brightwell.)

This game was played in Round 1, which is not my idea of a gentle start to the tournament! Imre and I know each other's openings too well for comfort, so I decided to experiment with the Tamenori sequence 10–14. This seems to have been a success, but it would have been even better if I'd played 16f2 and saved g5 for next move. Imre's pull to the edge at 19 and 21 puts him back into the game, and I have an awkward decision at 24. My alternative option was 24h7: I judged that I probably wouldn't be able to force him into anything too horrible immediately, and that the edge would hurt me later. But letting him take the edge is a huge risk; I knew I'd be have to sacrifice something soon, but I thought it would eventually pay off. The position after 37 is roughly as planned; I think I have to go to g8 now, since if I delay it I'll only ever get one of g8 and h7. If Imre takes the South edge too soon, then I'll get too many moves in the North-East (g1, then g2, then f1). Through 40 I was very happy with this game, but why did I play 42b4 43a4, losing my access to f1? Actually I do know why, it was because

I thought 44a3 would flip d3! I'm pretty sure that 42a3 is a win: I have a lot of control on the East side of the board. Eventually I fought my way back on to the a6–f1 diagonal, but now the West edge is a huge liability. 49b7 is an excellent move, and the sequence is essentially forced from there on.

Now come three more Leader games.

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

Shaman 25 Leader 39

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

Leader 28 Plowman 36

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

Tastet 25 Leader 39

Next (writes Graham Brightwell) is my loss to Luc Jeangille, which was badly played but great fun. At first sight 32g8 is awful, but after the ensuing sequence it became clear that I just wasn't going to get to play f6 (followed by f8) in a hurry. The next phase of the game was acutely painful, even though I almost came back in the end. Then there are the first two games of the final, which were both good games. The third game has been censored, but see elsewhere in this newsletter for some of the action.

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

Brightwell 30 Jeangille 34

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

Caspard 28 Leader 36

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

Leader 25 Caspard 39

A Giant-Killer Killing *by Joel Feinstein.*

To enhance your enjoyment of this article, it might help to read Garry Edmead's piece on page 26 first – Ed.

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

Feinstein 35 Edmead 29

Here is one of a series of messy games that I played in the recent Brussels Open. As you can see, I gained revenge over Garry Edmead for two recent humiliating defeats. I was dead at move 39, but move 40 let me back into the game, and two very ordinary looking X-square moves at 43 and 45 gave me a winning advantage that I was unable to throw away. Need I say more? OK, I will.

The problem with playing Garry is his terrifying knowledge of openings. I have yet to find a satisfactory opening as Black against him. (Do please send me all your suggestions.)

I played, in desperation, a non-standard version of the Peasant opening. I usually find with this variant (9e1) that White has to build a huge wall, but Black has to break it down in disastrous fashion.

14b4 is a very good way to fight against Black's deaccessing plans. I hadn't initially spotted that 15f2 flipped along the row! After this disaster I looked to be well behind, but after 23h3 Black appears to have chances. Perhaps 27g4 is better than 27a4. As it is, some frightening Stoner trap possibilities appear after 32a6 (if I play 33a7, then White will probably play 34b2 followed by 36a3). After 36a2, it looks as though I am going to collapse completely, but I found a way to keep Garry away from both d1 and a4, thus stopping him making any sacrifices in the North-West.

40c8 looks like a clear win for White, with the plan being to follow up with d1. If for instance 40c1 41b2 42d1 43a1 44a3, Black cannot play 45b2 because of 46b8. Garry's chosen move, 40g5, cuts himself off from d1, which is very dangerous.

After the X-square moves 43b7 and 45g7, White is in big trouble. However, Black may be wrong to go for 49h1 and 51b8, even though this takes White back off the a1–h8 diagonal. After 52a3, White has parity in the ending, but not enough discs.

Black is winning throughout the ending, according to my trusty pal, but 56g8 would keep it to 33–31 and give Black a chance to go wrong. 51h5 is indeed better than 51b8 – Ed.

European Grand Prix Standings

			Rome	Camb.	Cop.	Brus.	Total
1.	Leader	UK		200		200	400
2.	Feldborg	Den			200	3	203
3.	Marconi	I	200				200
4.	Shaman	USA		90		90	180
5.	Caspard	F		10		140	150
	Brusca	I	60		90		150
7.	Penloup	F		140	1	3	144
8.	N.Berner	S			140	3	143
9.	Puget	F	140				140
10.	Tastet	F	5	60	50	(3)	115
11.	Ghirardato	I	90				90
12.	Feinstein	UK				60	60
13.	Edmead	UK		30		22	52
14.	H.Vallund	Den			50		50
15.	Plowman	UK				40	40
16.	Melnikov	USSR		30			30
	Svirskiy	USSR		30			30
18.	B.Andriani	F	27				27
	Antonelli	I	27				27
	Puzzo	I	27				27
	Tardia	I	27				27
22.	Barnaba	I			25		25
	Johansen	S			25		25
24.	Brightwell	UK				22	22
	L.Jeangille	B				22	22
26.	Jensen	Den			15		15
27.	Bhagat	UK		10			10
	Stepanov	USSR		10			10
	Andersson	S			10		10
30.	Maccheroni	I	5				5
	Privitera	I	5				5
32.	E.Delfante	B				3	3
	Syren	S				3	3
34.	J.Berner	S			1		1
	Lazard	F			1		1
	Nielsen	Den			1		1
	T.Vallund	Den			1		1

Filler *by Arnold Kling.*

Pete writes: US expert Arnold Kling sent us the following, which he described as stream-of-consciousness. It is dated 5/9/89 and those of you who know how far in advance we work on the newsletter will realise that it just missed the deadline for the New York, New York newsletter (Jan 1991).

My experience of Graham [Brightwell] is very different in person than in the newsletter.

(The phrase "My experience of you is ..." belongs to a manner of speech known in the US as California psychobabble. In the Fall 1989 issue of OQ, I introduced the vocabulary of psychobabble into Othello with an article called "Zen and the art of Othello." Otherwise, OQ continues to be writen in the vernacular of Central Virginia computerbabble.)

In person, I experience Graham as critical, demanding and insensitive.

When he was in the US last spring, he spent a weekend with my family. (If Imre is the best married Othello player then perhaps I'm the best fatherly Othello player. Fatherly Othello is like Othello, but not played at all except when you can make it to a tournament.) I am bringing my daughters, Rachel and Joanna, very slowly into Othello, letting them learn at their own pace. We play maybe once every two months.

I usually allow Rachel, the oldest one, to win against me; my teaching at this point is focussed mainly on getting her to remember to flip discs diagonally when called for. She had just developed a preference for making moves that flip a lot of pieces when Graham turned up. He tried to get her to question the long-run strategic value of her tactical approach, and then he beat her 64-0. Believe me, anyone who can administer a wipe-out to a six-year-old who was given the award for "Biggest Blue Eyes" by the counsellors at her day camp is made of really stern stuff.

In your newsletter, however, I experience Graham as a warm, open, witty, self-deprecating, dedicated, brilliant teacher. For example, in "Marriage of the Eel," the cover position and follow-up are certainly all-time classics as instructive positions.

Actually, the cover position I got in two seconds, using the principle: "Hold on to the good news; get the bad news out of the way." An illustration of that principle is the tendency of top Othello players to hoard their free moves. For Black, the good news is on the South edge, where Black's solid 10 on the bottom two rows creates many potential swindles. The bad news is in the North, where Black has absolutely the most disgusting edge I've ever seen. So, if Black is going to get the bad news out of the way, he must either play H2, which looks like a

disaster, or B2, which we know must be right because we've eliminated everything else.

Arnold also wrote some comments on the solitaire in the same issue, but due to our delay in publishing this letter, these are now well past their Selby date. Sorry Arnold. Back copies of newsletters are available. Contact Graham "It depends what you mean by insensitive" Brightwell – Pete. Actually don't: contact David Haigh for back issues – Graham.

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Letter from Wellingborough *from Garry Edmead.*

Dear Fellow Othello Players,

One miserable day in Wellingborough I had nothing to do, so I found my Othello newsletter to see when I could play some competitive Othello again. "A whole month," said the newsletter (in a sqeaky voice). Then I thought there should be more tournaments, but they will be friendlies. So I thought of something else. My idea is to have a league system consisting of about x amount of teams. There could be teams from Wellingborough, London, Cambridge (since there are quite a few Othello players there, they could have around 5 or 6 teams), Doncaster, and so on. These teams would play in one division with the winners, after all matches have been played, receiving an award of some sort. The rules could be as follows.

1. Each team shall consist of two players.
2. Each team shall play every other team twice, once at home, once away.
3. Each team member shall play each of the opposing team twice, once as White and once as Black. (So each match will consist of eight games in all.)
4. The overall scoring system shall be based on games won, not matches.

The matches should be played at a time of mutual convenience.

I am willing to organise a league along these lines, so if you are interested in participating in this championship, please could you send me:

(a) your team and players' names,
(b) your views on the rules,
(c) your views on how often the matches should take place.

Yours Checkerboardingly,
Garry Edmead.

39, Torrington Crescent, Wellingborough, Northants., NN8 3BX. 0933-677995.

The Rating List *maintained by David Haigh.*

(Perhaps it should be stressed that David Haigh is not responsible for this preamble.)

Exciting stuff at the top: Pete Bhagat has occupied each of the top four spots at one time or another since the previous newsletter, but at the moment he is vulnerable to the *still* improving Edmead. Does this man think he's going to be World Champion or something? Jeremy Rickard's return to form at the London Regional makes him the highest climber, and the highest new entry is Ged Thompson. Finally, the (two?) readers who are interested will note that Peter Bhagat has (temporarily) played more games than David Haigh, so his rating is now the most accurate. Somehow I don't believe it.

There are lots of players on this list, but only because those players who last played in 1989 have yet to drop off. We justify this on the grounds that this year's regional programme has not yet been concluded. All games up to and including the London Regional (but not Doncaster) are included. The first number below is the number of rated games played: the second is the rating.

1	Imre Leader	200	1842	35	Rob Cannings	27	1304	68	Stephen Turner	7	1064
2	G. Brightwell	190	1826	36	Gary Read	59	1299	69	Adelaide Carpenter	36	1056
3	Neil Stephenson	103	1776	37	Matthew Selby	53	1293	70	Tim Wong	5	1050
4	Peter Bhagat	214	1751	38	Gary Baker	66	1282	71	Chris Lund-Yates	12	1049
5	Garry Edmead	84	1682	39	Robert Verrill	26	1279	72	Neil Parrish	53	1045
6	John Lysons	103	1656	40	Andrew Burgess	53	1269	73	Leeroy Moxam	35	1008
7	Alex Selby	120	1652	41	Margaret Plowman	7	1251	74	Roy Morley	13	1007
8	David Sharman	54	1629	42	Julian Richardson	53	1236	75	Alison Hughes	38	1000
9	Joel Feinstein	166	1619	43	Lee Evans	19	1231	76	Jim Brewer	50	998
10	Helena Verrill	111	1600	44	John Bass	49	1230	77	David Guy	18	995
11	Paul Smith	117	1591	45	Stuart Routledge	7	1223	78	Sui Cheng	6	990
12	Michael Handel	122	1578	46	Keith Ringrose	43	1205	79	Maurice Kent	10	988
13	Guy Plowman	79	1551	47	David Haigh	213	1204	80	Neil Cuthbertson	7	974
14	Aubrey de Grey	197	1515		Samuel Gardner	8	1204	81	Tallis Haydn-Davies	4	963
15	David Stephenson	111	1509	49	David Moore	12	1198	82	Martin Craven	11	957
	Jeremy Rickard	56	1509	50	Robert Stanton	100	1190	83	Steven Coates	11	955
17	Ken Stephenson	103	1500	51	Simon Turner	67	1177	84	Pierre Courtney	12	952
18	Alec Edgington	121	1498	52	Trevor Penrose	19	1175	85	David Rogers	6	922
19	Ian Turner	63	1484	53	Iain Barrass	68	1171	86	Edward Wilson	7	889
20	Andrew Blunn	26	1480		Phil Marson	12	1171	87	Michael Penrose	20	859
21	Gerard Thompson	7	1454	55	Iain Forsyth	174	1167	88	Paul Taylor	37	842
22	William Hunter	74	1442	56	Sepehr Taheri	6	1143	89	John Owens	15	841
23	Tim Williamson	99	1426	57	Andrew Hannam	12	1129	90	Graham Parlour	71	839
24	Jeremy Das	126	1422	58	Iain Gray	7	1107	91	Ashley Hammond	8	837
25	Marcus Moore	71	1421	59	David Kotin	7	1103	92	Tom Landry	7	815
	Andy Gannaway	63	1421	60	G. Haydn-Davies	3	1097	93	Anthony Williams	6	813
27	Mark Wormley	162	1417	61	Donald Baker	39	1082	94	Phil Marshall	6	812
28	Jeremy Benjamin	102	1386	62	Roy Arnold	118	1077	95	Winifred Brown	24	784
	Crichton Ramsay	53	1386		A. Clemence	24	1077	96	Eileen Forsyth	77	781
30	Dilip Sequeira	81	1360	64	Rodney Hammond	28	1070	97	Vikash Pav	6	768
31	Mark Atkinson	62	1358	65	Wayne Clarke	14	1066	98	Mary Bell	24	721
32	John Beacock	51	1346		Tracy Monk	6	1066	99	Sarah Parrish	13	714
33	Phil Brewer	54	1332	67	Jim Hall	6	1065	00	Elizabeth Braim	3	454
34	Colin Graham	81	1312		Does Anybody	32	1065		Read This	2	454