IRISH GO ASSOCIATION

Newsletter No. 10  February 1994

In the nine months since our last full newsletter we've seen a dramatic increase in the number of players and general activity of go in Ireland. Overall playing strength has improved greatly, mostly due to the competitive environment of this year's National Championship and the enthusiasm of J.W. Kim. We hope that these trends continue but again this year bemoan the sad lack of women players in the country. Any ideas guys?

News

Japanese Visitors

We were fortunate to have had several visitors from Japan last summer, including the chance visit of a professional! Hirano 6-Dan (professional at the Osaka Nihon Ki-in) and Dr. Satoshi Masaoka (6-Dan) had been touring around Germany and included Ireland in their trip, coming to The Pembroke on 5th. It is always a great privilege to play against a professional and he had lots of advice for those he encountered in the simultaneous games.

Akihiro Kumagai (5-Dan) returned to Ireland and played go with us on the 16th of June. His enthusiasm for Ireland is a continuing wonder and we look forward to seeing him again soon.

Report from 15th WAGC

The 15th World Amateur Go Championship was held in Fukuoka, Japan, on May 25-28th 1993. There were 40 competitors in the eight-round swiss tournament including the new country Portugal. All games are played at even. It's always an interesting tournament and this year was no exception. China finished first with 7 wins, followed by Korea (also on 7 wins) then Japan. Ronald Schlemper (Netherlands) was the highest placed European in joint fourth. Ireland finished in 4th place, with 3 wins.

After the tournament I spent three days in Osaka where we visited the headquarters of the Kansai Ki-in (the western go association in Japan) to watch professionals play, and also the Nihon Ki-in. I saw John Kenny there in Osaka, and stayed with Isao Toshima in Tokyo. They send regards to all their friends in Ireland.

For anyone interested, a more extensive review of the tournament including analysis of Ireland's games is available from Noel.

Contact with Belfast Players

Contact has been established with players resident in Belfast including Tony Goddard (5-Dan) and several Chinese dan players. With any luck they'll be able to make it to Dublin sometime soon or we can foray to the North.

Mr. Kim's departure

During the two years that we knew J.W. Kim he added a very special ingredient to the mix of players at the regular (and increasingly many irregular) meetings of go players here in Dublin; his aggressive style left its mark on many initially overwhelmed Irishmen. We were fortunate to have known him and wish him all the best in his new position in Chile. It was a great pleasure to meet his replacement at the Korean Embassy, Mr. Oh, who is also a strong go player.
Isle of Man tournament

John Gibson and Noel Mitchell travelled to Go Isle of Man 1993 which ran from August 20-24th. It was a very enjoyable week with players from England, Wales, Ireland, Isle of Man and The Netherlands competing in many different tournaments and other less serious events. Both the main and afternoon tournaments were won by our old friend Francis Roads (4-Dan). Again this year Ireland failed to snatch the trophy for the annual match with the Isle of Man in a series of heartstopping (and heartbreaking) games. We hope to play the next leg in Ireland. The whole event has a very relaxed atmosphere, allowing plenty of time for excursions in the countryside of Mann for those willing to steal away from the go.

Current Ratings

The following is a list of current ratings for active players in Ireland. Note that inactive players and new players who have not yet developed a rating are not included. A special welcome to all the new additions, from Ireland and abroad.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T. Goddard</td>
<td>5D</td>
<td>P. O'Hannelly</td>
<td>10k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Matsumoto</td>
<td>3D</td>
<td>T. Molloy</td>
<td>10k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Mitchell</td>
<td>2D</td>
<td>P. Brennan</td>
<td>10k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Oh</td>
<td>1D</td>
<td>M. Lyons</td>
<td>12k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dong-Dong Jia</td>
<td>1D</td>
<td>K. Maher</td>
<td>12k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Mills</td>
<td>1D</td>
<td>J. Wallace</td>
<td>12k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Gibson</td>
<td>2k</td>
<td>P. MacDonnell</td>
<td>14k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Rafferty</td>
<td>3k</td>
<td>N. Gray</td>
<td>16k</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Murphy</td>
<td>3k</td>
<td>E. Keogh</td>
<td>16k</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Gallagher</td>
<td>3k</td>
<td>G. Whelan</td>
<td>17k</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Palmer</td>
<td>3k</td>
<td>D. McBrien</td>
<td>17k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Flinter</td>
<td>4k</td>
<td>C. Dalton</td>
<td>17k</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Dehans</td>
<td>5k</td>
<td>D. Foster</td>
<td>19k</td>
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<td>A. Walsh</td>
<td>5k</td>
<td>J. McGrath</td>
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<td>P. Atling</td>
<td>5k</td>
<td>N. Gibson</td>
<td>24k</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6k</td>
<td>T. Mitchell</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Maguire</td>
<td>7k</td>
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<tr>
<td>T. Murphy</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Brabazon</td>
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<td>R. Delhammeau</td>
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Results

Irish Open Handicap

The second Irish Open Handicap took place on November 13-14th 1993 in the Royal Dublin Hotel, Dublin, with a total of eight players competing in the six round swiss handicap tournament. John Gibson (then 3 kyu and last year's winner) lost in round one to David Wickham (9 kyu from England) and Day 1 ended with David on 3/3 and both John Gibson and Stephen Flinter (playing in his first tournament) on 2/3. Stephen beat John in round 4 and David lost in round 5 leaving them tied going into the final round, which is how they finished.


National Championship

This year's National Championship was divided into three phases, with 15 different players competing altogether. The Irish Go Association had decided that from this year no player could travel to a tournament.

As last year's top two could not participate, the tournament was played as a League match.

Stephen

experience

National League

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tr>
<td>N. Mitchell</td>
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<td>J. Gibson</td>
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<td>B. Gallagher</td>
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<td>C. Rafferty</td>
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<td>B. Palmer</td>
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<td>A. Murphy</td>
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<td>S. Flinter</td>
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<td>A. Walsh</td>
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There were no four-way game among the four players.

When the second game was played the remaining two players were

John Gibson

Final. Thank you for the perfect game.

World Amateur

Games

The following Noel Mitchell players form
travel to the WAGC two years in a row. Therefore, Noel Mitchell was ineligible to represent Ireland in Japan even if he won the championship. This obviously added a lot of excitement to the tournament as six or seven players were in the running for this prize.

As last year, the main part of the tournament was an eight player National League, from which the top two finishers would play a best-of-three final. Seven of these places were allocated on the basis of past performance and the last place would be filled by the winner of a separate two-section open tournament of eight players. This Qualifying Tournament began in October, and the National League itself in November.

Stephen Flinter put in a fine performance to win the Qualifying Tournament from the more experienced Paul Atling and went on to take a few scalps in the League itself.

**National League:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N. Mitchell</th>
<th>J. Gibson</th>
<th>B. Gallagher</th>
<th>C. Rafferty</th>
<th>B. Palmer</th>
<th>A. Murphy</th>
<th>S. Flinter</th>
<th>A. Walsh</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mitchell</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibson</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gallagher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rafferty</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Palmer</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>3-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsh</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were many exciting games and a few surprises along the way. In a very thrilling finish a four-way tie for second place seemed on the cards but John battled to the end against Bernard (see analysis below) in what was a very good tournament for the former, and a surprisingly bad one for the latter who had finished second last year.

In the dust had settled the result of the league was: 1st place - Noel Mitchell, 2nd - John and 3rd - To be decided from a three-way playoff of Brian, Chris and the winner of the quarter final game between Stephen and Aidan Murphy.

Gibson (2-kyu) therefore played Noel Mitchell (2-dan) in the Irish National Championship. This best-of-three match was played in February 1994, the first game is presented in this letter. Noel won 2-0 to retain the national title while John will represent Ireland in the 16th Amateur Go Championship in Kyoto, Japan, in May. We wish him the best of luck.

**Games**

Following two games are from this year's Irish National Championship. Commentary is by Mitchell, typesetting by Stephen Flinter. We are happy to receive records of games from readers for inclusion in the newsletter, either with or without commentary.
1. Game 1: Palmer v Gibson

1.1 Introduction
Black: Bernard Palmer  Komi: 5½  Date: 19.1.94
White: John Gibson  Time: 1hr each + 20 seconds byo-yomi
Black resists

This is John Gibson’s seventh and final round game of the 1994 Irish National Go Championship. Winning this game ensured John’s qualification to the world amateur go championship in Japan, and entry into the final of the Irish Championship with Noel Mitchell (the holder and eventual winner). As usual, Bernard got off to a big lead, only to watch it upset.

1.2 Moves 1 – 46

![Go Game Diagram]

Figure 1: Moves 1 – 46

John meant to play (9), but (4) is fine. White (6) is a bit strange — try at (8) or around (7). White (8) low and in the wrong direction, leaving black a good move at (9). I think that playing at A, say, is better, trying to create a competing moyo to black’s. White could also try playing at (2) first, then get back to A.

White (10) could also be tried at B which would most likely leave (7) too close to a resulting black wall.

Black (11) should be played at C to establish black’s left-side territory. White will probably answer at D, or E, leaving black to switch elsewhere. Playing on the starpoint is unusual: the kakari one space lower would be usual here.

White (13) is a very nice move: puts a lot of pressure on black, who’ll find white getting territory on both sides as he struggles to either live in the corner or flee towards the centre.
Black 5 - 10: In general black should be trying to get out, rather than be sealed in, so 5 at 10 or 11 at 13 is better.

White 8 must be at 12 to seal black in and connect the white sides.

Black 11: Black misses a chance to play at 10, creating many cutting points in the white wall. 
After 7 - 10 exchange, white still has a cutting point at F, but it’s not so serious now. Black needs to get back to C now and would then have a good position, but 5 isn’t bad: it reduces white’s thickness and expands the top left moyo.

Black 7 - 12 are very bad. It removes the potential of playing at G and doesn’t secure the corner. White is delighted to play 4. Black 7 is better at 10 or 12. White now uses his sente to invade the black moyo with 5. How black’s resulting attack develops will probably decided the game.

Black 5: better at 10 to keep white from getting established on this side.

White 5 better at 10 to give the group more room.

Black F could be at H to pressure white and build territory up from the side.

White 5: White can come back here if necessary: it’s gote for black to destroy this eye. John should play at I (or K) to attack black’s thin group there.

1.3 Moves 47 - 181

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Connect: 6 at 13

Figure 2: Moves 47 - 181

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Black 6 must be at 10. When white cuts the fight favours him.

White 5 is a mistake: it allows black to capture two stones. 5 should be at 1 (probably best).

White 5 is about the best white can do after the disaster in the corner.
White ⑥ is not good. A black reply at ② puts white on the spot. Even after ③ black is way ahead, and white still needs a move around ④ to secure his four stones.

White ④ is a good point for the invasion, which white decides to sacrifice to get ⑥.

Black ⑤ should be at ① to remove the aji there.

Black ② is small, although it does threaten the four white stones.

White ⑤ is better at ②.

White ⑤ secures the side, but leaves his central group struggling.

Black ⑤ is a strange aberration on Bernard's part. He still has a spare liberty on the outside. This gives white a tempo to escape.

Black ② - ⑥ are nicely timed moves, keeping up the pressure on the white group.

White ③ is more shapely at ④, also attacking the three black stones.

Black ⑤ lets white slip away with ⑤. Played at ④ and it would be a different story!

White ⑥ is better at ⑤.

Black ⑤: the double hane at ④ would again leave white squirming.

Black ④: I prefer it one space lower to help the four black stones below a bit more.

Black ②: better to play at ① and stop the weak white groups from connecting. Still, it's not bad and black ② at ④ still looks good, giving a huge lead of 40 - 50 points.

White ① can block at ④.

Black ① should be at ⑦ and the whole black group can then still connect out to the top (or at least played at ⑨ to grasp the cutting stone there).

Black ⑨ at ⑦ seems to get rid of the trouble here.

Black ⑧ at ⑩ is good also. Black only needs to be sure to save the centre stones to win.

Black ⑩ at ⑨ would be enough for life for black. After ⑩ things get very complex.

White ⑩: if black ⑩, white A, black A, white captures, black C then white D kills the whole group. So, black C, if white ⑩ then black ⑩ and will win the semeai with white's lower group (or else manage to connect to his corner). So, ⑩ is best as atari at A, which probably cuts off the top six black stones.

Black ⑤ at C or D and black should live or win the semeai.

After White ③ the black stones are now truly dead, and white has pulled back to about 10 behind.

White ⑥ can block at ③.

Black ⑥ is very small.

Black ⑨ should be one space lower.

White ⑩ is unnecessary.

Black ⑩ at ⑨ will kill all the white stones.

Black ⑩ at ⑩ would give a ko for white to live. After ⑩ white is alive so wins the game.

Black resigns. Moves after ⑩ omitted.
Figure 3: Moves 1 – 37

A plays ⑩ at ① then black will play ⑪ at one space below ⑩.
It might be better one space higher, farther from the white wall.
Formally would be at A. White will then play B, which is sente against the
side should probably play there early on in the game anyway.)

I don't want to be sealed in by 正 at C, white 正, black captures, white 正.
Back nearly 20 points in the lower left corner, but white's potential in the
is good, and his weak group is connected across. Now, after 正, black can still
this group.

At one space above 正. This would make it harder for white to make territory
Instead, 正 is nice.

Attack the central white stones, with moves like D or E (attaching to 正), the
as black's own group, and will lead to territory at the top. The game at the
discussed around the struggle of these two groups.
2.3 Moves 38–158

Figure 4: Moves 38 – 158

Black ① is better at ②. Get the group out first, then think about reducing white’s territory. There are still good invasion points at san-san or ③. The skirmish after ① turns out OK for black, though, so it’s probably better for white not to try to cut off ①, but simply connect across to the three stones (the two triangulated stones and ②), securing the corner simultaneously. Black ② is better at ③. Black is too concerned about being able to make an eye here. White ④ is trying to connect across and secure the corner. It leaves some bad aji at the top, though.

White ⑤ is better at ⑥, to finish off the top left, and white’s central stones have become much weaker now too, so care is required.

Black ① is probably better at ②, although white won’t be able to block a move at ③.

White ⑥: after this move a big fight will probably follow from the right side into the centre.

Black ③: black can push through above ⑧, although his stones on the right may get into trouble.

Black ①: not good timing, starting to make ③ look big for white.

After ① black has nearly 40 points of territory, white has only 20, and a couple of weak groups, but white has the potential of completing the top left corner and also of attacking the left-side black group still.

Black ①: probably better to start here at ①.

White ⑩: now that there’s little potential for two eyes on the left side, white makes this connection (and black answers, so he gets it in sente.)
White ⑨ is very big, but it would be better to eliminate the aji in the top left (by playing ③ say), or play ⑥ to endanger black.
White ② is a mistake. This is very risky for white, better to give up the four stones than risk loosing the corner.
Black ⑤ is very bad. Played at ② it could give black life in the corner, and leave white with groups to either side which don't yet have two eyes.
Black ④ should connect at ③.
Black ② gives black life.
White ⑥: now white has nearly 50 points (plus komi) to black's 35. Black has missed his chance.
Moves after ⑥ omitted.

Upcoming Events

Irish:

The 1994 Irish Open Go Championship will be held on Saturday, March 19th, in the Royal Dublin Hotel, O'Connell St., Dublin. This three round tournament commences at 10 a.m. and will be run on the McMahon system. Entry fee is £2 for members of the IGA and £3 for non-members, payable on the day. Visitors from abroad are welcome and some free accommodation is available (contact John Gibson 01-908779).

The A.G.M. of the Irish Go Association will be held in The Pembroke on Wednesday, March 9th, at 7:30 p.m. All members are invited to attend.

Abroad:

There are several go congresses in the coming months which may be of interest. We would like to encourage more players to travel abroad to these very worthwhile events, especially the European Go Congress. For more information see John Gibson or Noel Mitchell.

British Go Congress - Coventry, England, April 8-10th.

Remaining tournaments in this season's European Grand Prix:
Vienna (March 11-13), Paris (April 2-4), Bled (April 15-17), Budapest (April 29-May 1), Milan (May 7-8), Amsterdam (May 12-15), Helsinki (June 4-6), Warsaw (June 17-19), St. Petersburg (July 14-16) and the 38th European Go Congress - Maastricht, Netherlands, July 23-August 6. We have now received entry forms for the EGC and as usual it is possible to attend for all or part of the two weeks. Early booking is recommended.


Barmouth Go Tournament - Barmouth, Wales, June 25-26.

1994 U.S. Go Congress - Washington, D.C., August 6-14. This is the 10th U.S. Go Congress and a group is travelling from the U.K. for the special celebrations.

Miscellaneous

Dublin: Go players meet every Monday and Wednesday from 9 p.m. in The Pembroke, Pembroke St., Dublin 2. Additional games are often arranged informally.

Trim: Regular meetings are held every Thursday night in Bregans Hotel.

Irish Go Association, c/o N. Mitchell, Blackwood Lane, Malahide, Co. Dublin, Ireland.