

Civilizations varied, wisdom unbounded



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ANOTHER CHINESE SURPRISE



Lithuanian master Valery Kudriavcev met the Chinese power today in the 3rd round of the international draughts tournament. He agreed a draw with 10 year old Quinrang Zeng. After a win yesterday this Chinese boy knows that all eyes are focussed on him. Quinrang has also played Go, he surely is used to playing under pressure. According to Alexei Chizhov, Quinrang is not the only Chinese talent. There is a group of kids of his age, all playing equally well.

Chess, The First Gold Metals

Alexandra Kosteniuk, the newly crowned world champion from Russia won the women's chess individual blitz of the First World Mind Sports Games today in Beijing to pick up the first gold of the games. Antoaneta Stefanova from Bulgaria took the silver. China's Hou Yifan got the bronze medal.

Martyn Kravtsov from Ukraine beat his compatriot Yuriy Drozdovsky to win the men's chess individual blitz of the First World Mind Sports Games today in Beijing with 12.5 while Yuriy Drozdovsky got the silver medal with 11.5. Christodoulos Banikas from Greece got the bronze medal.



Today's Programs

Bridge

Open Teams, Women Teams, Senior Teams:

At CNCC:

11.00 hrs – 13.20 hrs.: Round Robin, round 7

14.20 hrs – 16.40 hrs.: Round Robin, round 8

17.10 hrs – 19.30 hrs.: Round Robin, round 9

Junior Teams, played at BICC:

Under 21, Under 26 and Under 28:

10.30 hrs – 12.50 hrs.: Round Robin, round 7

14.20 hrs – 16.40 hrs.: Round Robin, round 8

17.30 hrs – 19.50 hrs.: Round Robin, round 9

Chess

Rapid men, rapid women:

10.00 hrs. -13.30 hrs: Rounds 4-5

15.00 hrs. -19.00 hrs: Rounds 6-7

Draughts

100 square men and 100 square women:

09.00 hrs.: Round 4

15.00 hrs.: Round 5

Go

Individual, men:

10.00 hrs. – 13.30 hrs.: Round 5

15.00 hrs. – 18.30 hrs.: Round 6

Individual, women:

10.00 hrs. – 13.30 hrs.: Round 3

15.00 hrs. – 18.30 hrs.: Round 4

Individual, open:

10.00 hrs. – 13.30 hrs.: Round 1

15.00 hrs. – 18.30 hrs.: Round 2

Xiangqi

Rapid, men:

09.00 hrs. – 10.30 hrs.: Round 7

14.00 hrs. – 15.30 hrs.: Round 8

16.00 hrs. – 17.30 hrs.: Round 9

Individual, women:

09.00 hrs. – 12.00 hrs.: Round 1

15.00 hrs. – 18.00 hrs.: Round 2

Chess Results

Individual Blitz preliminary-Top 20 Final Ranking after 11 Rounds

WOMEN

1	Hou Yifan	CHN	2578	9,5
2	Kosteniuk A.	RUS	2525	8,5
3	Zhao Xue	CHN	2518	7,5
4	Stefanova A.	BUL	2548	7,5
5	Huang Qian	CHN	2430	7,5
6	Li Ruofan	SIN	2426	7,0
7	Tania Sachdev	IND	2425	7,0
8	Houska Jovanka	ENG	2399	7,0
9	Harika D.	IND	2461	7,0
10	Xu Yuhua	CHN	2477	7,0
11	Dworakowska J.	POL	2363	7,0
12	Shen Yang	CHN	2450	6,5
13	Ju Wenjun	CHN	2397	6,5
14	Kovanova Baira	RUS	2379	6,5
15	Vasilevich T.	UKR	2368	6,5
16	Socko Monika	POL	2434	6,0
17	Hoang Thi Bao	VIE	2250	6,0
18	Hoang Thanh	HUN	2483	6,0
19	Zawadzka J.	POL	2378	6,0
20	Zdebskaja N.	UKR	2419	6,0

MEN

1	Paragua Mark	PHI	2526	8,5
2	Banikas Hristos	GRE	2572	8,0
3	Kravtsiv M.	UKR	2549	8,0
4	Drozdovskij Y.	UKR	2587	8,0
5	Gurevich M.	TUR	2634	7,5
6	Korobov Anton	UKR	2605	7,0
7	Akobian V.	USA	2606	6,5
8	Le Quang Liem	VIE	2583	6,5
9	Wang Hao	CHN	2696	6,5
10	Balogh Csaba	HUN	2616	6,5
11	Ghaem M.	IRI	2599	6,5
12	Ni Hua	CHN	2710	6,0
13	Bartel Mateusz	POL	2602	6,0
14	Zhou Jianchao	CHN	2612	5,5
15	Bu Xiangzhi	CHN	2714	5,5
16	Adianto Utut	INA	2554	5,5
17	Socko Bartosz	POL	2631	5,5
18	Reinderman D.	NED	2543	5,5
19	Nguyen Ngoc	VIE	2567	5,0
20	Zhang Zhong	SIN	2649	5,0

Go Individual men

Qualification - Top ranked players in each group after 3 rounds (of 6)

Group 1			Group 2		
Name	NOC	CP.	Name	NOC	CP.
CHIN-HUA PENG	TPE	6	JIN SEUK MOK	KOR	6
DONG YOON KANG	KOR	6	RAPHAEL SHIN	AUS	6
YAOYE CHEN	CHN	6	PAL BALOGH	HUN	6
ANTOLIN	ESP	4	UFFE RASMUSSEN	DEN	4
DAVID WU	FRA	4	RUIYANG ZHOU	CHN	4
KAI TAI CHAN	HKG	4	YI-HSIU LEE	TPE	4
YIMING GUO	AUS	4	MIKA URTELA	FIN	4
KUOK WANG CHAN	MAC	4	ANDRII KRAVETS	UKR	4
LAZAREV ALEXEY	RUS	4	VALENTIN SERBAN	ROM	4
ZOLTAN FODI	HUN	4	IN HANG SAM	MAC	4
TOMOYASU MIMURA	JPN	4	LIONEL ZHANG	USA	4
MIIKA NIKULA	FIN	4			

Group 3			Group 4		
Name	NOC	CP.	Name	NOC	CP.
KIMIO YAMADA	JPN	6	XINYU TU	USA	6
WEI CHENG	CAN	6	LI GU	CHN	6
HONG SUK BAEK	KOR	6	ZHAN BIN KANG	SIN	6
MERO CSABA	HUN	4	HON HUNG SIU	HKG	4
SONG WON KIM	PRK	4	LEE CHENG CHI	NZL	4
ALI JABARIN	ISR	4	M. HALCHENKO	UKR	4
BARRY PHEASE	NZL	4	ALEXANDRE AMARO	BRA	4
THOMAS DEBARRE	FRA	4	TOBIAS BERBEN	GER	4
JAN SIMARA	CZE	4	LIH-CHEN WANG	TPE	4
WEI HE	AUS	4	NIKOLA MITIC	SRB	4
WILLEM POMSTRA	NED	4	PABLO CIANNI	ARG	4
KRISTER STRAND	SWE	4	IVAN PROMYSLOV	RUS	4

Group 5			Group 6		
Name	NOC	CP.	Name	NOC	CP.
XI WANG	CHN	6	JUNG SANG PARK	KOR	6
N.AROONPHAICHITRA	THA	6	SHI HAI YANG	HKG	6
MICHAEL REDMOND	USA	6	DUSAN MITIC	SRB	4
JUN FAN	CAN	4	T.TIAWATTANANONT	THA	4
DAVID ONGARO	GER	4	WAN KAO LOU	MAC	4
MENG HOU CHEONG	MAC	4	MING-WAN WANG	TPE	4
MATEUSZ SURMA	POL	4	XIANYU LI	CAN	4
MICHIEL EIJKHOUT	NED	4	R. SAKHABUTDINOV	RUS	4
HIROSHI YAMASHIRO	JPN	4	DMYTRO IATSENKO	UKR	4
SERGII RYDZEL	UKR	4	WEI QIAN	AUS	4
YONG JIN RI	PRK	4	D. CABRE CHACON	ESP	4
KAIKUN (KEN) XIE	NZL	4	MATTHEW BURRALL	USA	4

Group 7			Group 8		
Name	NOC	CP.	Name	NOC	CP.
YOUNG HUN PARK	KOR	6	LI-YU CHANG	TPE	6
ZHE LI	CHN	6	XING LIU	CHN	6
HIDEYUKI SAKAI	JPN	6	LUCIAN CORLAN	ROM	6
JANNIK RASMUSSEN	DEN	4	APIDET JIRASORHIN	THA	4
JAN HORA	CZE	4	ONDREJ SILT	CZE	4
I. CERNUDA CANGAS	ESP	4	KRZYSZTOF GIEDROJC	POL	4
P.SAMPAOKAEW	THA	4	JONG HYOK CHA	PRK	4
M. MACFADYEN	GBR	4	TUNG TSANG	HKG	4
P.O. TREMBLAY	CAN	4	NAOTO HIKOSAKA	JPN	4
E. GUTIERREZ GALICIA	MEX	4	TENGXIAO WU	FRA	4
B. PIERRE KOSTER	NED	4			

Notice

To ensure the security of all participants in the China National Convention Center (CNCC), all people carrying bags must go through the security check at the entrance of the Bridge competition venue in CNCC. The corridor between the North Star InterContinental Hotel and the China National Convention Center is only for the people without bags. Please follow the instructions of the volunteers. Thanks for your cooperation.

How to Play xiangqi

Section 1: Board and Pieces

The Xiangqi set includes a board and 32 Xiangqi pieces for the two players.

The board has 10 horizontal lines (rows) and 9 vertical lines (files). In the middle of the board the central 7 files are broken to form a horizontal space called the "river". The pieces are placed and move on the intersections of the lines, including on the "river banks" but never in the squares formed by the lines.

The pieces are round and flat; they are identified with Chinese characters. The two sides are usually distinguished with the colors of red and black.

Section 2: Movements of Pieces

1. King's movements are limited to the center square marked with an X. King moves one space (step) at a time and can only move vertically or horizontally. King cannot move diagonally. There is one King for each side.

2. Guards (also called: Assistant) are also confined to the center square marked with an X. Guards move one diagonal space at a time and cannot move horizontally or vertically. There are two Guards for each side.

3. Ministers' movements are confined to its own territory, which means a Minister (also called: Elephant) cannot move across the river. Ministers move diagonally and at two spaces at a time, which means it always moves up or down for two spaces and left or right for another two spaces. Therefore, a Minister can only be on seven spots in the board. A Minister can be "blocked", that is if there is a piece (from either side) in the next diagonal space of the Minister; the Minister cannot move toward that direction. There are two Ministers for each side.

4. Rooks (also called: Chariot) can move horizontally or vertically for any empty spaces. There are two Rooks for each side.

5. Knights (also called: Horse) can only move one space horizontally or vertically AND another space diagonally to either forward direction. Knights can also be blocked. If there is a piece (from either side) right next to the Knight, the Knight cannot move toward that direction. There are two Knights for each side.

6. Cannons can move horizontally or vertically for any empty spaces just like Rooks. However, to take a piece, a cannon has to jump over another piece (which is called a CANNON MOUNT) from either side. There is no limit on the empty spaces between Cannon and the cannon mount or between cannon mount and the piece being taken. There are two Cannons for each side.

7. Pawns (also called: Soldier) move one space at a time. Before a Pawn moves across the river, it moves forward only. Once a Pawn has moved across the river, it can move forward or horizontally to either direction. A Pawn can never move backward. There are five Pawns for each side.

8. To capture an opponent's piece, one moves a piece legally to the point

which is occupied by the piece being taken. A piece cannot take another piece from its own side.

9. Kings are not allowed to face each other directly. This means there must be at least a piece from either side in the vertical line between the two kings. A King will be captured if it moves into the "line of sight" of the other King.

10. One side is "checking" if it can capture the other side's King in the next move. The side being checked should "resolve the check" or lose. For example, one side checks with a cannon, the other side can resolve the check by 1) taking the cannon, 2) moving the cannon mount if the cannon mount is its piece, 3) stuffing another piece between the cannon and its own king, or 4) moving the King to a point where it is not threatened with capture or facing the opposing King.

Section 3: How to play a game

1. A game starts as the Red side takes the first move. After that the Black side moves, then Red, then Black, and so on. Toss a coin to decide who play Red. When playing multiple games, the two players take turns to play Red.

2. If a player touches a piece, he/she must move that piece. Some more details:

a. If one touches one's own piece, one must move that piece. If that piece cannot be moved, such as a Knight being blocked at all directions, the violating party gets a technical. The penalty of a technical is depended on the agreements of the tournament.

b. If one touches the opponent's piece, one must take that piece. If one cannot take that piece, it is a technical.

c. If one touches one's piece first then touches the other's piece, c-1, one's touched piece must take the other side's touched piece.

c-2, If c-1 is not possible, one must move the piece one touched.

c-3, If c-2 is not possible, one must use another piece to take the opponent's piece one touched.

c-4, if c-3 is not possible, it is a technical.

d. If one touches the other side's piece first then touch one's own piece, d-1, the latter must take the former.

d-2, If d-1 is not possible, one must use another piece to take the opponent's piece one touched.

d-3, If none can take the opponent's piece, one should move the piece one touched.

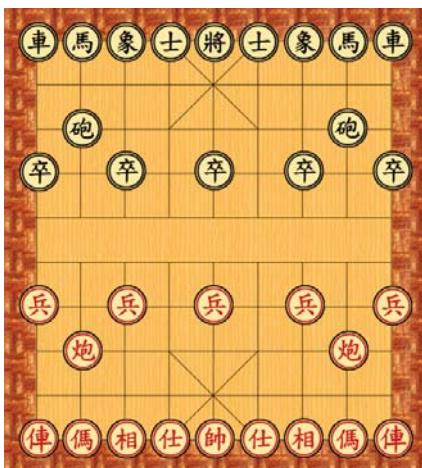
d-4, If d-3 is not possible, it is a technical.

e. If one touches both side's pieces simultaneously, treat it as in case "d".

f. Only the referee can adjust either side's pieces on the board to the precise spot. If one wants to do the same, one should inform the opponent or referee first.

3. No "undo" in any formal match.

XIANGQI STANDINGS AFTER ROUND 6 - STARTING POSITIONS ROUND 7



Desk NO	Red				Black				
	No.	NOC	Name	Sum	Pt	Pt	No.	NOC	Name
1	9	CHN	Wang Yang	11	-	28	HKG	Chiu Yu Kuen	10
2	5	TPE	Chiang Chung Hao	9	-	27	CHN	Jiang Chuan	10
3	37	USA	Mou, Hai Qin	9	-	17	SIN	Kng Ter Yong	9
4	19	VIE	Nguyen Vu Quan	8	-	6	VIE	Nguyen Thanh Bao	8
5	14	HKG	Wong Hok Him	8	-	31	TPE	Chen Li Feng	8
6	11	AUS	Gaoyang Zhang	7	-	30	MAC	Chan Chioweng	7
7	34	NED	Ye Rongguang	7	-	26	FRA	Dang Nicolas	7
8	8	ITA	He Zhimin	6	-	35	USA	Ji Jia Qing	7
9	12	MAC	Choi Houwa	6	-	3	GBR	Chen Fazuo	6
10	15	CAN	Ho Shing Kin	6	-	7	NED	Hsu Wei Kuo	6
11	36	ARG	Lu Liang cheng	6	-	23	FRA	Phung Kim Dang	6
12	1	FIN	Mikko Tornqvist	5	-	38	GER	Pu Fangyao	6
13	4	HON	Yi Kam Siu	5	-	32	CAN	Lin Junwei	5
14	29	AUS	Shijie Zhu	5	-	22	JPN	Yamanaka Joji	5
15	16	MYA	Yang Chounmyint	4	-	13	FIN	Jouni Ramo	4
16	20	GER	Andreas Klein	4	-	33	UKR	Volodymyr Korsak	4
17	10	RUS	Zorin Daniil	3	-	2	JPN	Kumano Kazunobu	3
18	21	RUS	Galochkin Sergey	3	-	24	MYA	Yin Xianyun	3
19	25	NEP	Varun Mehta	0	-	18	UKR	Viktor Shevchuk	2

Man & Machines

Mark Horton examines the five Mind Sports being contested here in Beijing, with a look at some of the stars in each and the development of computer playing engines in each of them.

Draughts 64-square

There is little doubt that the greatest player of all time was Dr. Marion Tinsley, who was World Champion from 1955-1958 (when he withdrew from Championship play) and 1975-1991. Tinsley never lost a World Championship match, and lost only nine games (two of them to the Chinook computer program) in his entire 45 year career.

The Chinook program had finished second at the U.S. Nationals in 1990, but the American Checkers Federation and the English Draughts Association refused to allow a computer to play for the world title. Unable to appeal their decision, Tinsley resigned his title as World Champion and immediately indicated his desire to play against Chinook. The unofficial yet highly publicized match was quickly organized, and was won by Tinsley, 4-2 (with 33 draws) in a match.

In one game, Chinook, playing with the white pieces, made a mistake on the tenth move, whereupon Tinsley remarked, 'You're going to regret that.' Chinook resigned after move 36! The ACF and the EDA were placed in the awkward position of naming a new world champion, a title which would be worthless as long as Tinsley was alive. They granted Tinsley the title of World Champion Emeritus as a solution.

In August 1994, a second match with Chinook was organized, but Tinsley withdrew after only six games (all draws) for health reasons. Don Lafferty, rated the number two player in the world at the time, replaced Tinsley and fought Chinook to a draw. Tinsley was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer a week later and he died seven months later. He claimed to have spent approximately ten thousand (10,000) hours studying checkers while in graduate school.

England's Norman Littlewood was a top class Draughts player who later turned to Chess, rapidly becoming a regular International.

In July 2007 Jonathan Schaefer an expert in artificial intelligence, working at the University of Alberta in Edmonton Canada announced that Chinook was now unbeatable.

Chess

The royal game has had no shortage of stars, but opinion is divided as to who is the best player of all time. The American grandmaster, Robert James Fischer revolutionised the game and until the advent of Russia's Gary Kasparov was generally considered to be the all-time number 1. In the (unofficial) FIDE ratings Bulgaria's Veselin Topalov is in pole position, but a lot of attention focuses on 18-year old Magnus Carlsen, whom many expect to win the world title one day. The World Chess Championship 2008 between the Champion, India's Viswanathan Anand and the previous World Champion, Vladimir Kramnik, will take place in Bonn, between 14 October and 2 November 2008.

Hungary's Judit Polgár is by far the strongest female chess player in history. In 1991, she became a Grandmaster at the age of 15 years and 4 months, at that time the youngest person to do so. She is the only woman on FIDE's Top 100 Players list, and has been as high as number eight.

Nowadays chess is dominated by computers.



Veselin Topalov

The idea of creating a chess-playing machine dates back to the eighteenth century. Around 1769, the chess playing automaton called The Turk became famous before being exposed as a hoax. The field of mechanical chess research languished until the advent of the digital computer in the 1950s.

For a time in the 1970s and 1980s it was unclear whether any Chess program would ever be able to defeat the best human players. In 1968, Scottish International Master David Levy (who created the UK based Mind Sports Olympiad) made a famous bet that no chess computer would be able to beat him within ten years. He won his bet in 1978 by beating Chess 4.7 (the strongest computer at the time), but acknowledged that it would not be long before he would be surpassed. In 1989, Levy was defeated by the computer Deep Thought in an exhibition match.

Deep Thought was still below World Championship Level, as Garry Kasparov demonstrated in two sterling wins in 1989. However, in 1996 during match with IBM's Deep Blue Kasparov lost his first game to a computer at tournament time controls, the first time a reigning world champion had lost to a computer using regular time controls. However, Kasparov won three and draw two of the remaining five games of the match, for a convincing victory.

In May 1997, an updated version of Deep Blue sensationally defeated Kasparov 3½-2½ in a return match. The latter claimed that IBM had cheated by using a human player during the game to increase the strategic strength of the computer. A documentary, mainly about the confrontation, was made in 2003, titled Game Over: Kasparov and the Machine. IBM keeps a web site of the event. IBM dismantled Deep Blue after the match and it has not played since. However, other 'Man vs. Machine' matches continue to be played.

In the early 2000s, commercially available programs such as Junior and Fritz were able to draw matches against Garry Kasparov and his successor, 'classical' world champion Vladimir Kramnik.

In 2005, Hydra, a dedicated chess computer with customized hardware and sixty-four processors and also winner of the



Michael Adams

14th IPCCC in 2005, defeated England's Michael Adams (ranked seventh in the world) 5½-½ in a six-game match.

In November-December 2006, Kramnik played Deep Fritz. This time the computer won, the match ended 2-4. In the first five games Kramnik steered the game into a typical 'anti-computer' positional contest. He lost one game (overlooking a mate in one), and drew the next four. In the final game, in an attempt to draw the match, Kramnik played the more aggressive Sicilian Defence and was crushed.

Commercial chess-playing computers are now available at a very low cost. There are many programs such as Crafty, Fruit and GNU Chess that can be downloaded from the Internet for free, and yet play a game that with the aid of virtually any modern personal computer, can defeat most master players under tournament conditions. Top commercial programs like Rybka, Fritz & Shredder have surpassed even world champion caliber players at every form of time control.

Speaking of Computers and the forthcoming World Championship match, here is part of an interview from the SPIEGEL, one of Europe's largest new portals, with the World Champion, Vishy Anand:

SPIEGEL: How did you prepare for the World Championship?

Anand: I have been studying Kramnik since the end of April, up to ten hours a day, here at home in my cellar, where I have my office. I have a database and construct game plans. I try to neutralise positions in which Kramnik is strong. He is doing the same thing with my game, which I must of course take into consideration. Let me put it this way: I must remember that he is thinking about what I am thinking about him. In any case one is working for months with the computer, trying to find new paths.

SPIEGEL: Computers are becoming more and more important. Has chess become a preparation game – whoever is better prepared wins?

Anand: That was always the case. Today we analyse our games with the computer, in the 16th century people did it with a board. That is only a gradual difference. Preparation for a world championship was always an arms race, in previous times with books, then with seconds, today with computers.

The computer is an excellent training partner. It helps me to improve my game.

SPIEGEL: But if chess becomes a computer game and every move is calculated by the machine, then isn't the human being simply moving the pieces, and won't every game end in a draw?

Anand: No. Actually I was always pessimistic. Ten years ago I said that 2010 would be the end, chess would be exhausted. But it is not true, chess will not die so quickly. There are still many rooms in the building which we have not yet entered. Will it happen in 2015? I don't think so. For every door the computers have closed they have opened a new one.

SPIEGEL: What do you mean by that?

Anand: Twenty years ago we were doing things that don't work today because of computers. We used to bluff our way through games, but today our opponents analyse them with a computer and recognize in a split second what we were up to. Computers do not fall for tricks. On the other hand we can undertake more complex preparation. In the past years there have been spectacular games that would not have been possible without computers. The possibility of playing certain moves would never have occurred to us. It is similar to astrophysics: their work may not be as romantic as in previous times, but they would never have progressed so far with paper and pencil.

Meanwhile the 16th World Computer Chess Championship is already under way here in Beijing as part of the Computer Games Championship. After five rounds two programs are in the lead, with 4.5 points: Rybka (USA) and Hiarcs (England). The hardware being used by the participating programs ranges from a 40-core system to a Nokia cellphone!

Chinese Chess

Xiangqi has a long history. Though its precise origins have not yet been confirmed, the earliest literary reference comes from the 9th century.

Robert Hübner is a respected German chess Grandmaster, chess writer, and papyrologist (recognised as an expert in



Robert Hübner

Egyptian hieroglyphics). Additionally, Hübner is known as one of the world's best xiangqi players not from China.

A paper written by Shi-Jim Yen, Jr-Chang Chen, Tai-Ning Yang & Shun-Chin Hsu suggests that the first Chinese-chess program was probably written around 1982. The earliest human-computer Chinese-chess competition was the annual ACER cup, which was held in Taiwan between 1985 and 1990. Since 1999 a regular human vs. computer competition has been held in Taiwan. It is anticipated that the strongest program is expected to win against a human top player before 2010.

Go

Go is a strategic board game for two players. It is known as wéiqí in Chinese.

With the advent of major international titles from 1989 onward, it became possible to compare the level of players from different countries. Korean players like Lee Chang-ho, Cho Hunhyun, Lee Sedol and Park Young-Hoon dominated international Go and won an impressive number of titles. Several Chinese players also rose to the top in international Go, most notably Ma Xiaochun, Chang Hao and Gu Li. Remarkably, Japan currently lags behind in the international Go scene.

Historically, as with most sports and games, more men than women have played Go. Special tournaments for women exist, but until recently, men and women did not compete together at the highest levels. However, the creation of new, open tournaments and the rise of strong female players, most notably Rui Naiwei, have in recent years highlighted the strength and competitiveness of emerging female players.

Knowledge of the game has been scant elsewhere for most of the game's history. A German scientist, Oskar Korschelt, is credited with the first systematic description of the game in a Western language in 1880. A famous player of the 1920s was Emanuel Lasker, a former world chess champion during that time. It was not until the 1950s that more than a few Western players took up the game as other than a passing interest. In 1978, Manfred Wimmer became the first Westerner to receive a professional player's certificate from an Asian professional Go association. In 2000, a Westerner, Michael Redmond, finally achieved the top rank awarded by an Asian Go association, 9 dan. In total, as of 2008, only nine non-Asian Go players have ever turned professional.

Edward Lasker, a chess IM, was a leading American chess and Go player. Lasker was deeply impressed by 'Go'. He first read about it in a magazine article by Korschelt which suggested Go as a rival to Chess, a claim which he found amusing. Later on, his interest was piqued again when he noticed the record of a Go game on the back of a Japanese newspaper being read by a customer of a cafe where they played chess. He and his friend Max Lange (not to be confused with the more famous chess player with the same name) took the paper after he had left, and deciphered the diagram, but the game was not complete. The position led them to assume that the notation under the game would indicate a black victory, but being unable to read Japanese, they had to ask another Japanese customer at the cafe. To their surprise, it was a resignation by black. Only after three weeks of study was Max Lange able to understand the reason for white's victory. This experience led them to a deeper appreciation for the game, and they studied it in earnest, but were unable to interest other chess players.

After two years, Emanuel Lasker, then the world chess champion, returned to Germany. When Edward told him

that he had found a game to rival chess, he was skeptical, but after being told the rules, and playing one game, he understood that Go was strategically deep. They started studying go with Yasugoro Kitabatake, a Japanese student, and after two years were able to beat him with no handicap.

Kitabatake arranged a game for Edward, Emanuel and Emanuel's brother Berthold, against a visiting Japanese mathematician, and strong Go player. The Laskers took a nine-stone handicap, and played in consultation with each other, considering their moves deeply, but their opponent beat them effortlessly and without taking much time to think. After the game, Emanuel suggested to Edward that they travel to Tokyo to study Go. In 1911, Edward got a job at AEG. After a year at the company, he tried to get transferred to the Tokyo office, but as the company only posted fluent English speakers in Tokyo, he went to work in England first. He was detained there during World War I, and never made it to Tokyo. He was, however, given permission to travel to the USA by Sir Haldane Porter, who remembered that he had won the London chess championship in May 1914. Lasker was instrumental in developing Go in the USA, and together with Karl Davis Robinson and Lee Hartman founded the American Go Association.

In one of his books Lasker describes a game between two Masters (long before the advent of the use of clocks) – 'On the morning of the third day, only two moves were made.'

Go has long been considered a difficult challenge in the field of Artificial Intelligence and has not yielded as easily as Chess. The first Go program was written by Albert Zobrist in 1968 as part of his thesis on pattern recognition. Recent developments have brought the best programs to a good dan level on the small 9x9 board; however, while the techniques which have brought such progress in the 9x9 case have been applied on the 19x19 board with some success, dan level play has not yet been reached at least with publicly available software on ordinary personal computers.

Currently, the best Go programs running on stock hardware are ranked as (1-3 kyu). Only a decade ago, very strong players were able to beat computer programs at handicaps of 25-30 stones, an enormous handicap that few human players would ever take. There is a case where the winning program in the 1994 World Computer Go Championship, Go Intellect, lost all 3 games against the youth players on a 15 stone handicap. In general, players who understood and exploit a program's weaknesses could win with much larger handicaps than typical players.

On August 7, 2008, the computer program MoGo running on 25 nodes (800 cores) of the Huygens cluster in Amsterdam beat professional Go player Myungwan Kim (8p) in a handicap game on the 19x19 board. The handicap given to the computer was nine stones. The game was broadcast live on the KGS Go Server. In after-game commentary, Kim estimated the playing strength of this machine as being in the range of 2-3 amateur dan. Later, on August 26, Mogo beat an Amateur 6d with five stones of handicap, this time running on 200 cores of the Huygens cluster.

On September 4, 2008, the program CrazyStone running on an 8-core personal computer won against 30 year old female professional player, Aoba Kaori (4p), receiving a handicap of eight stones. The time control was 30 seconds per move.

White resigned after 185 moves. The game was played during the FIT2008 conference in Japan.

These results can be viewed as evidence pointing towards the possibility of amateur dan-level play if contemporary software is combined with strong hardware, but more games will need to be played at this level until solid conclusions of any kind can be drawn.

Bridge

No man has ever become a superstar at both Bridge & Chess, but Irina Levitina was twice a finalist in the Women's World Chess Championship and has won four World Bridge Championships. It is not uncommon for chess players to relax by playing bridge, and vice versa.

I managed to locate this story from the Capablanca Memorial Chess Tournament played in Cienfuegos in 1972. Jan Hein Donner was important participant because he wrote great stories about his chess adventures, and I strongly recommend his masterpiece 'The King'. (As an aside, Donner was the first Grandmaster from the West to lose to a player from China – here is the game:

Liu Wenzhe (2200) - Donner,J (2490), Buenos Aires, 1978: 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Be2 Bg7 5.g4 h6 6.h3 c5 7.d5 0-0 8.h4 e6 9.g5 hxg5 10.hxg5 Ne8 11.Qd3 exd5 12.Nxd5 Nc6 13.Qg3 Be6 14.Qh4 f5 15.Qh7+ Kf7 16.Qxg6+ Kxg6 17.Bh5+ Kh7 18.Bf7+ Bh6 19.g6+ Kg7 20.Bxh6+ 1-0)

In Cuba, Donner was the tournament favourite, but things went badly. The after dinner bridge was much better. Here he is in action partnering David Levy (of the Computer Chess bet fame) against the Bulgarians, Minev and Spiridonov.

Dealer North N/S Vul

♠ J 8 3 ♥ Q 7 2 ♦ K Q 10 7 ♣ 9 6 5	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ 10 9 6 ♥ 8 5 4 ♦ J 6 5 2 ♣ 10 7 3 ♠ A K Q 4 ♥ A K ♦ A 9 3 ♣ A 8 4 2
N					
W E					
S					

West	North <i>Levy</i>	East	South <i>Donner</i>
	Pass	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	4♣
Pass	5♣	Pass	5NT
Pass	7♣	All Pass	

West led the king of diamonds and I cannot resist quoting Donner's remark when the dummy was revealed: 'I make it a

rule never to argue at the bridge table and swear I didn't bat an eyelid.'

He won the diamond lead, unblocked the top hearts, crossed to dummy with a trump and ruffed a heart with the ace of clubs, felling West's queen. Now declarer could draw trumps, cash two hearts and then enjoy the 3-3 spade break.

Following years of limited progress, the field of computer bridge has made major advances. In 1996 the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) established an official World Computer Bridge Championship, to be held annually along with a major bridge event. The first Computer Bridge Championship took place in 1997 at the North American Bridge Championships in Albuquerque. Since 1999 the event is a joint activity of the American Contract Bridge League and the World Bridge Federation.

In Zia Mahmood's book, *Bridge, My Way* (1992), Zia offered a £1,000,000 bet that no 4-person team of his choosing would be beaten by a computer. A few years later the bridge program GIB, brainchild of American computer scientist Matthew Ginsberg, proved capable of expert declarer plays like winkle squeezes in play tests and in 1996, Zia withdrew his bet. Two years later, GIB became the world champion in computer bridge, and also defeated the vast majority of the world's top bridge players from the 1998 Par Contest (including Zia). However, such a par contest measures technical bridge analysis skills only, and in 1999 Zia beat various computer programs, including GIB, in an individual round robin match staged at Andrew Robson's Bridge Club.

Further progress in the field of computer bridge has resulted in stronger bridge playing programs, including Jack and Wbridge5. A series of articles published in 2005 and 2006 in the Dutch bridge magazine IMP describes matches between five-time computer bridge world champion Jack and seven top Dutch pairs including a Bermuda Bowl winner and two reigning European champions. A total of 196 boards were played. Jack defeated three out of the seven pairs (including the European champions). Overall, the program lost by only a small margin (359 versus 385 imps).

Despite the rise of the machines, human players continue to be fascinated and excel at these challenging Mind Sports, as we will see once more here in Beijing.



Donner - Petrosian, Bled 1961



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