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NOTE: At presstime, U.S. Round 4 results were not yet available; latest results <http://www.usgo.org/congress/2008/> will be posted as we get them, including results from Thursday afternoon's Ing Masters 4th round.

COMPUTER BEATS PRO AT U.S. GO CONGRESS: In a historic achievement, the MoGo computer program defeated Myungwan Kim 8P Thursday by 1.5 points in a 9-stone game billed as "Humanity's Last Stand?" "It played really well," said Kim, who estimated MoGo's current strength at "two or maybe three dan," though he noted that the program – which used 800 processors, at 4.7 Ghz, 15 Teraflops on a borrowed European supercomputer – "made some 5-dan moves," like those in the lower right-hand corner, where Moyogo took advantage of a mistake by Kim to get an early lead. "I can't tell you how amazing this is," David Doshay -- the SlugGo programmer who suggested the match -- told the E-Journal after the game. "I'm shocked at the result. I really didn't expect the computer to win in a one-hour game." Kim easily won two blitz games with 9 stones and 11 stones and minutes and lost one with 12 stones and 15 minutes by 3.5 points. The games were played live at the U.S. Go Congress, with over 500 watching online on KGS. "I think there's no chance on nine stones," Kim told the EJ after the game. "It would even be difficult with eight stones. MoGo played really well; after getting a lead, every time I played aggressively, it just played safely, even when it meant sacrificing some stones. It didn't try to maximize the win and just played the most sure way to win. It's like a machine." The game generated a lot of interest and discussion about the game's tactics and philosophical implications. "Congratulations on making history today," game organizer Peter Drake told both Kim and Olivier Teytaud, one of MoGo's programmers, who participated in a brief online chat after the game. At a rare loss for words in a brief interview with the EJ after the game, Doshay wondered "How much time do we have left? We've improved nine stones in just a year and I suspect the next nine will fall quickly now."

- reported by Chris Garlock, photo by Brian Allen

CHOU TOPS DIE HARD: Daniel Chou 7d topped the Die Hard Tournament on Wednesday, the traditional mid-week tournament held on the day off from regular Congress activities. Ninety one players participated in the 4-round tournament, while the rest of the Congress attendees were off on hikes, wine and garden tours, or just enjoying

Portland. Four-game winners were Daniel Cho, 7d; Yun-Bo Yi 5d; Yu Chang 4d; Jason Yu 2d; Yoshitomo Nakata 1k; Andrew Okun 2k; David Rohde 6k; Ellen Willard 8k; Neal Goldman 9k; David Tweet 20k. – reported by Laura Kolb; photo of go players “relaxing” at Powell’s Books by Phil Straus

SHI LEADING IN REDMOND CUP: Fourteen-year-old Gansheng Shi 7d, has jumped into the lead at this year’s Redmond cup at the US Go Congress. He defeated Cherry Shen 6d in Round 1 on Sunday night, and won against William Zhou 7d in Round 2 on Monday. Shi represented Canada at the World Youth Go Championships last month, and will be attending high school in Toronto this coming fall. Shi began playing go in China at the age of six. “Making friends while learning to play go has increased my interest in the game,” Shi told the E-Journal. “Mentality is very important for improvement; someone who wants to defeat strong opponents all of the time will improve rapidly,” he added. Shi appears to be getting his wish, with serious competition in the Redmond from Shen and Zhou. Fifteen-year-old Shen was second place in the Redmond Cup last year, and appeared poised for victory this year, but lost to Zhou in round 3 on Tuesday. With Shen knocked out, the finals will end up a best 2 out of 3 between Zhou and Shi. Zhou has compiled a perfect record in national youth tournaments over the past two years, racking up an impressive 15-0 record between the USYGC, the Redmond Cup, and the Youth All Stars Tournament at the Go Congress. Zhou’s winning streak came to an end in the 5th round of the Redmond Cup, where he lost to Shi; both boys are competing in the Redmond for the first time. The Canadian and US youth champions have not met in a Redmond final since 2006. Round 4 will be broadcast live in the English Game Room on KGS at 7 pm on Thursday. If Zhou loses, he will be second place, but if he wins he will play a tie-breaker with Shi on Friday night.

- Lawrence Ku with Paul Barchilon; photo: 14-year-old Gansheng Shi 7d, by Paul Barchilon

2008.08.07 GanShengShi

PROFESSIONALLY SPEAKING: Janice Kim on How To Improve Go can be “a game of negative reinforcement,” said Janice Kim 3P at a lecture earlier this week. “We play not-good moves that provoke our opponents to respond with not-good moves that make us think our not-good moves were good when they weren’t, so our bad habits get reinforced and that makes it difficult to improve.” Once you can “play moves without fear of losing or dying, that’s the way to improve,” she added. Photo by Brian Allen

2008.08.07 Janice Kim

GNU GO WINS CONGRESS COMPUTER TOURNEY: Seven go-playing computer programs battled it out on KGS Monday and Tuesday for over \$1000 in prize money. Each program played each other program twice -- once as black and once as white -- for a total of twelve games per program. Because prize money was involved, all of the competing programs were running on computers in a lab on the Portland State University campus. GNU Go won first place with 11 wins, narrowly beating ManyFaces, which had 10 wins. Leela took third with 9 wins, followed by HouseBot with 5. Prize money was provided by the Hierarchical Systems Research Foundation, which supports computer

science and physics research, and an anonymous donor. The program SlugGo, which has made appearances at the Cotsen Open, was unable to compete as its latest upgrade from 26 CPU's to 96 CPU's was not complete. "Everything went surprisingly smoothly," reported tournament director Peter Drake, in spite of a few snags such as the laptop running one program running at half speed because it wasn't plugged in. Also not competing was MoGo, which is scheduled to take on 8-dan professional player Kim MyungWan on Thursday at 1P PST on KGS, running on a supercomputer in Europe. - reported by Laura Kolb

THE EMPTY BOARD: How Chinese Is The Chinese Opening?

by Bill Cobb

After finding out that Japanese-style go stones apparently are the shape of the stones first used in China ("Traditional" Chinese Stones 8/4 EJ), I wondered just how Chinese the Chinese Opening is. So I asked T Mark Hall, one of the authors of the invaluable GoGod database, who's here at the U.S. Go Congress this week, and we discovered that the low Chinese opening first appears in a June 1951 game, where Guo Tisheng played it as White against Chen Yi, both Chinese pros. The earliest game we found with Black using the low Chinese is in November 1963 when Chen Zude used it, a top Chinese pro, used it against Miyamoto Naoki. The opening became famous when Chen Zude used it to defeat several Japanese pros in one of the China-Japan matches. The high Chinese opening first appears in the Meijin League in 1971 in Japan when Otake Hideo uses it playing Black against Sugiuchi Masao and wins. T Mark Hall also reports an unauthenticated rumor that the low Chinese opening was invented by a Japanese amateur who showed it to a Chinese pro on a visit there. Perhaps we should really call it the Chen Zude opening since he was the first to make a big impact with it.

TAKEMIYA: "DON'T WORRY ABOUT TERRITORY" Takemiya Masaki 9P smiled broadly at the overflow audience in the U.S. Go Congress main playing room. "When you sit down to play a game is your aim to win the game or to become stronger? You probably think you can do both," he continued, "but these are quite different projects." A nervous chuckle ran through the audience. "The problem with trying to win – besides the fact that it makes it hard to enjoy the game – is that you don't trust your feelings about where to play. When you look over the board there'll be a place find you want to play, but if you're concerned about winning, you're not going to trust your feeling. You'll think and analyze and nervously play somewhere else. This is a terrible way to play go. You should look at the board and play wherever you want to. This is the way to get stronger. I say this everywhere I go, around the world, but no one believes me. Nevertheless it's true. Of course, when you do this, you'll lose a lot of games. So you have to review the games. That way your feelings about the game will get better and you will not only get stronger, you'll also find that playing go is a lot of fun. And you'll win more often. This is go the natural way." Another surprising suggestion from Takemiya is "Don't worry about territory. People say that the player with the most territory wins but this is not true. It's the player with the most territory at the end who wins. The way to win is not to worry about how much territory each player gains. The key is making good shape. If you learn how to make good shape all over the board, you'll be the one who wins."

- By Bill Cobb; photo by Phil Straus
2008.08.07 Takemiya

PARK JONG WOOK LEADS EURO TOURNEY: Park Jong Wook has taken over as the leader of the European Go Championship, defeating Hong Seul-Ki in Thursday's round 8. With two more games to go, Park is followed by eight players with one less win, most of whom he has already defeated. The outcome of the title for the best native European is more unclear and, like last year, will be probably decided by tiebreak as several players will likely have the same number of wins. For the time being Catalin 5P has the best SOS. The main tournament now has 707 participants, just five short of the 2005 Prague EGC record. Quote of the day: "Last week my son didn't know how to play yet," said Michael Riegler. "So I taught him on 9x9. Right now he's at 5-1 on 13x13." Said TD Tonny Claasen --whose son also won a prize --"These children progress very fast."

In other Euro Congress news, in the 13x13 final, Francesco Marigo 4d (Italy) defeated young Igor Nemly 5d (Russia) an European Ing Youth Champ. Crazy Stone from France won the main computer event. Also, Friday 8-8-8 – considered an auspicious date for happiness and fortune -- will see several weddings at the EGC, as youth go teacher Kalli Balduin from Berlin, who'll also receive the EGCC Iwamoto prize for innovative ideas that day, will marry his bride from Taiwan, and a Swedish go-player also will marry his Chinese bride.

CORRECTION: Kim Joon Sang 7d of Korea won the EGC weekend open event (not the European Masters, as reported in EJ #39) and Franz-Josef Dickhut 6d, Germany won the European Masters, defeating 2001 EGC winner Andrej Kulkov in the final.

- reported by EJ European Correspondent Peter Dijkema; photo: 15-year-old Arim Fragman 5d of Israel won the first youth group. Photo by Shavit Fragman

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