# The conversations backstage at computer Go tournaments

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Steve Rowe linked to an essay on why computers can't play Go well even though they've mastered other "difficult" games like chess. I was reminded of a description I received of what happens backstage at computer Go tournaments (i.e., tournaments that pit Go-playing computers against each other). ("Backstage" is a bit of a misnomer, of course; since the contestants are computers, you can talk all you want as loud as you want without worrying about distracting the players.)

At computer Go tournaments, the programmers are like parents watching their children compete in a hockey game where they've only just barely learned how to skate. It's not so much a matter of who plays better as it is a matter of who sucks less. One programmer will lean over to the other and say something like "I hope my program realizes its left-hand-side is vulnerable before your program takes advantage of it."

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