On the number of points a given circle can cover from a diameter one finite point set

Owen Henderschedt Joint work with András Bezdek

Auburn University

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A well known exercise

Given a hexagonal dart board of side length $\sqrt{3}$, where $\overline{{\bf 25}}$ darts have landed, show that there exists a circle with radius 1 which covers at least 5 of the darts.

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Coincidentally In the 2023 Bulgarian Math Olympiad they had the following problem:

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Coincidentally In the 2023 Bulgarian Math Olympiad they had the following problem:

Let N be the largest integer such that in any **diameter** 1 set of $3n$ points we can cover at least N of them with a circle with radius r . Prove that there exists an $\epsilon > 0$ (depending on n) such that the value of N does not depend on r in the interval $r\in(\frac{1}{2}-\epsilon,\frac{1}{2}).$

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Problem (Generalization of the hexagonal dart board problem)

Let n be a fixed positive integer. Let P_n be the family of all sets of n points, so that in any set, the distance between any two points is at most 1. Let the function value $N_n(r)$ ($0 < r < 1$) be the largest integer k so that for every point set $P \in \mathcal{P}_n$ there exists a circle of radius r which covers at least k points in P.

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We especially want to know what happens as n gets large. Let

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c(r):=\lim_{n\to\infty}\frac{N_n(r)}{n}
$$

Remark 1:

Remark 2:

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Remark 2: The Bulgarian 2023 Math Olympiad problem can be phrased with this notation as:

- $N_{3n}(r) = n$ on the interval $r \in (\frac{1}{2} \epsilon, \frac{1}{2}).$
- This implies that $c(r) = \frac{1}{3}$ on this interval. We will see that this is true on a much larger interval!

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Theorem (Jung's Theorem (planar version))

Every diameter d point set can be covered by a circle of radius $r \leq \frac{a}{\sqrt{a}}$ $rac{1}{3}$.

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"...it does seem safe to guess that progress on [this problem], which has been painfully slow in the past, may be even more painfully slow in the future." Klee and Wagon

Work of: Y. Liu 2022

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Ex 1: $N_n(r) \leq \lceil \frac{n}{3} \rceil$ on $r \in (0, \frac{1}{2})$ $(\frac{1}{2})$ and $N_n(r) \leq \lceil \frac{2n}{3} \rceil$ on $r \in [\frac{1}{2}]$ $\frac{1}{2},\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}$ $\frac{1}{3})$

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- Ex 2: $N_n(r) \leq \lceil \frac{n}{\pi} \sin^{-1}(2r) \rceil$ for $r \in (0, \frac{1}{2})$ $rac{1}{2}$

Current knowledge of $N_n(r)$ and $c(r)$

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N_n(\frac{1}{4}) = \lceil \frac{n}{7} \rceil
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 for $n \neq 7$ and $N_7(\frac{1}{4}) = 2$. Moreover, $c(\frac{1}{4}) = \frac{1}{7}$.

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- In 2010 D. Yang, a participant in the Math in Moscow program and found a short elegant proof eliminated continues motion by just computing the diameter of the pentagons formed from dropping the perpendiculars from the shorter sided.
- By dropping the other perpendiculars too we can see a nice proof without words!

A note on Borsuk's Theorem

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Open Questions

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$\textbf{1}$ What is the correct answer: $N_{3n}(\frac{1}{2})$ $(\frac{1}{2}) \in \{n, n+1\}$?

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- $\textbf{1}$ What is the correct answer: $N_{3n}(\frac{1}{2})$ $(\frac{1}{2}) \in \{n, n+1\}$?
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- **a** Is $N_n(r) = \frac{1}{7}$ for $r \in (\frac{1}{4} \epsilon, \frac{1}{4} + \epsilon)$?

Questions!?

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