

## Supporting Information

### A Smart Magnetic Resonance Imaging Contrast Agent Responsive to Adenosine Based on DNA Aptamer-conjugated Gadolinium Complex

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**General:** All DNA samples were purchased from Integrated DNA Technologies, Inc. (Coralville, IA) and desalted. NHS-activated DOTA was purchased from Macrocyclics, Inc. (Dallas, TX). Streptavidin and other chemicals were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich, Inc.

**Conjugation of DOTA-Gd to DNA:** In a typical conjugation, 50  $\mu\text{L}$  of 0.5 mM amine modified DNA strand to be conjugated to DOTA-Gd (called Gd-strand, whose sequence is presented in Fig. 1), 100  $\mu\text{L}$  carbonate buffer (0.5 M, pH 10) and 850  $\mu\text{L}$  water were mixed. NHS-activated DOTA was dissolved in anhydrous acetonitrile with a concentration of 0.5 mg/mL. To conjugate the DOTA-Gd to DNA, 4  $\mu\text{L}$  of NHS-DOTA solution was added into 1 mL of DNA solution every hour for five hours, and this mixture was stirred at 4°C. The mixture was stirred for another three to five hours after the final addition. The solution was then desalted with a C-18 cartridge (Sep-Pak, Waters), lyophilized and rehydrated in 180  $\mu\text{L}$  acetate buffer (50 mM, pH 5.5) with an approximate concentration of 150  $\mu\text{M}$ .  $\text{GdCl}_3$  solution (10 mM) was then added and mixed slowly until the concentration of  $\text{Gd}^{3+}$  reached 180  $\mu\text{M}$ . The solution was then heated at 75°C for 30 minutes and the final product was purified by size exclusion chromatography (PD10, GE Health Care Life Sciences) and lyophilized.

The MALDI-MS of the DOTA conjugated DNA and DOTA-Gd conjugated DNA are presented in Fig. S1. As shown in Fig. S1A, after the conjugation of DOTA to the Gd-strand (sequence in Figure 1A), the specie's mass increased by 386.1 Da. This mass is consistent with the theoretical value of 386 Da. As shown in Fig. S1B, the mass of the Gd-strand increased by 154 Da after incorporation, indicating that  $\text{Gd}^{3+}$  was incorporated into the DOTA coupled Gd-strand.

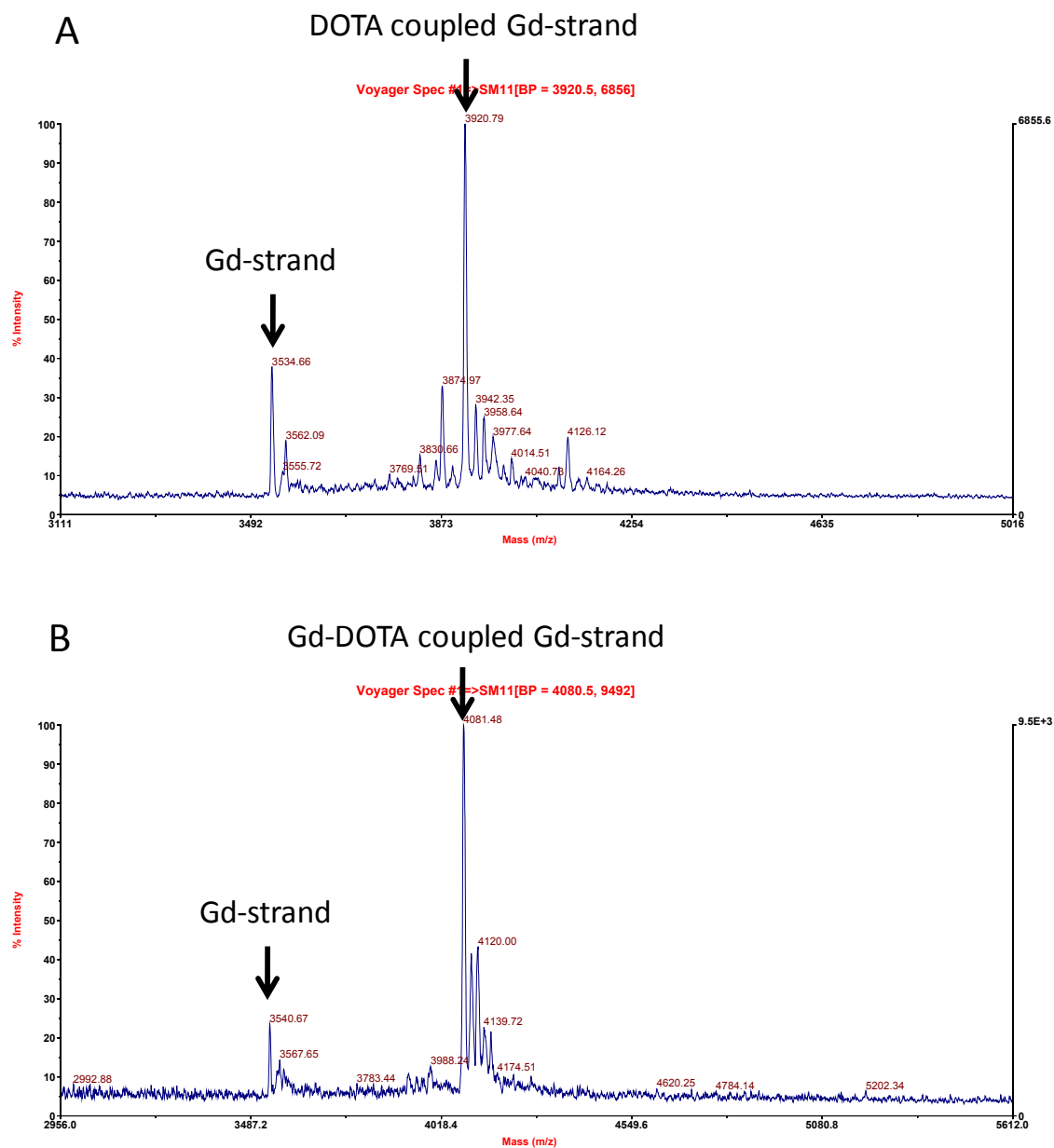


Fig. S1 MALDI-MS of the Gd-strand after conjugation of DOTA (A) and incorporation of  $Gd^{3+}$  (B).

**DNA Sample preparation:** The adenosine aptamer-based contrast agent was prepared by dissolving the DOTA-Gd-coupled Gd-strand and aptamer strand in 50 mM Tris (pH 8.35), 300 mM NaCl and 5 mM  $MgCl_2$  buffer to a concentration of 30  $\mu M$ . The solution was then heated to 90°C and cooled to ambient temperature over the course of an hour. Streptavidin was then added into the solution to a concentration of 30  $\mu M$ . Adenosine

was then added into the contrast agent solution for  $T_1$  measurements and MRI image acquisition.

**$T_1$  measurement:** The  $T_1$  was determined using a Bruker mq60 low resolution NMR spectrometer operating at 1.41 T (60 MHz) and 37 °C using the following parameters: 4 scans per point, 15 second recycle delay, mono-exponential curve fitting, phase cycling with a first pulse separation of 150 ms and a final pulse separation of 15000 ms using 10 data points for fitting, and a delay sampling window and sampling window of 0.03 seconds.

**Image acquisition:** The MRI image was acquired on 1.5 GE Signa Horizon Echo Speed with 9.0 software (1.5 T, GE). Samples with volumes of 500 $\mu$ L were prepared as described above. The MRI images were acquired at 23 °C. Coronal coil was used for the  $T_1$ -weighted image acquisition. The field of view was 7 and the slice thickness was 4 mm. The repetition time and echo time were 400 ms and 14 ms, respectively.

**Raw data of the magnetic resonance image (Fig. 3C):** The raw data is a matrix (97×33), which can be plotted by software such as MatLab or Origin. We used MatLab to process the data.

Columns 1 to 8

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	66	37	148	105	13	257	40	66
2	132	43	202	82	107	184	38	138
3	50	173	153	18	40	140	143	53
4	199	164	184	271	79	116	101	89
5	53	130	83	156	112	74	83	63
6	75	74	67	29	132	212	54	78
7	83	29	45	238	127	136	78	68
8	41	164	179	164	126	116	70	13
9	105	139	91	103	39	45	73	80
10	78	12	161	76	52	88	113	274
11	54	69	34	122	102	130	41	63
12	70	42	76	50	92	60	211	62
13	176	43	28	128	69	121	55	156
14	228	67	124	81	95	24	74	155
15	140	34	46	164	128	223	154	59
16	76	73	77	164	221	191	89	119
17	93	88	183	128	62	4	22	147
18	89	207	112	42	60	151	161	67
19	141	85	161	123	47	114	163	112
20	116	58	167	111	103	220	90	236
21	66	128	27	113	93	104	8	151
22	168	129	137	89	119	97	52	80
23	89	150	124	82	147	61	54	199
24	84	81	112	122	140	135	22	160
25	134	114	46	154	177	182	102	38
26	159	129	131	324	168	217	137	53
27	87	86	63	86	47	189	78	125
28	287	91	75	47	95	117	16	236
29	143	193	202	42	201	117	65	209
30	113	120	51	80	94	176	48	269
31	95	105	131	149	78	71	121	191
32	81	178	47	175	167	104	176	158
33	101	77	108	230	77	188	154	104

Columns 9 through 16

	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1	37	84	140	95	40	131	81	163
2	58	99	110	35	186	129	56	64
3	16	55	102	193	117	91	57	62
4	127	104	191	166	23	126	130	115
5	104	24	100	230	130	124	128	105
6	181	62	152	214	202	134	11	187
7	201	151	151	165	87	66	172	148
8	130	147	113	180	151	162	434	291
9	40	138	100	173	87	190	473	507
10	101	28	31	196	294	397	425	618
11	100	186	186	282	471	627	599	769
12	177	159	296	362	351	549	614	618
13	211	188	321	450	538	580	450	675
14	34	159	336	625	694	648	431	583
15	23	358	331	555	647	728	651	633
16	28	391	318	482	611	674	705	732
17	151	83	251	401	599	502	578	545
18	62	188	341	366	885	639	628	588
19	186	244	410	543	837	631	593	626
20	86	85	228	492	588	583	665	713
21	81	143	101	178	507	612	653	694
22	85	16	112	11	546	686	627	540
23	79	115	116	196	238	512	678	732
24	58	12	70	130	81	200	412	592
25	52	57	32	54	82	148	220	153
26	84	44	125	71	75	46	78	41
27	81	200	18	115	91	58	202	66
28	53	187	40	60	46	89	234	110
29	251	49	176	68	84	87	50	108
30	50	44	66	292	114	51	10	34
31	94	183	50	207	59	127	152	24
32	138	161	33	112	80	65	79	56
33	50	146	93	61	186	125	36	215

Columns 17 to 24

	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1	100	37	66	31	125	56	74	111
2	132	131	76	119	102	132	47	114
3	109	51	93	43	21	62	68	66
4	191	101	91	84	57	25	100	157
5	107	102	159	166	209	131	116	47
6	121	82	36	147	66	204	158	72
7	202	204	286	288	87	29	94	109
8	265	368	364	329	338	385	155	80
9	535	631	501	427	583	551	316	152
10	670	669	733	666	675	479	434	368
11	711	642	692	702	683	483	702	650
12	577	702	525	660	739	472	659	639
13	794	773	626	786	718	567	495	628
14	638	623	618	555	644	881	698	773
15	738	747	684	531	594	572	511	673
16	869	551	498	733	677	562	674	695
17	578	414	511	826	662	666	624	650
18	514	695	679	645	478	658	497	596
19	542	648	601	615	654	886	728	548
20	544	576	624	621	613	672	683	648
21	535	653	600	565	693	607	651	693
22	633	755	663	732	812	704	688	776
23	799	625	731	778	605	669	663	684
24	688	710	735	563	588	826	510	276
25	125	422	594	532	424	390	101	168
26	25	115	178	132	126	176	59	29
27	47	140	54	62	113	85	179	97
28	236	69	163	190	71	201	73	26
29	73	90	59	74	112	175	115	118
30	33	150	18	113	132	218	125	63
31	90	83	181	109	163	144	47	159
32	183	141	133	87	136	109	73	51
33	77	30	77	111	92	97	77	112

Columns 25 to 32

	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
1	83	98	52	73	15	188	101	114
2	119	40	141	167	32	104	81	184
3	193	57	108	36	55	71	95	149
4	103	281	114	208	78	176	113	170
5	137	88	62	152	123	117	143	117
6	108	184	128	42	103	117	287	91
7	34	127	68	103	75	189	87	370
8	44	121	75	66	54	217	159	299
9	45	94	58	147	137	182	134	111
10	121	116	105	44	77	135	84	164
11	515	57	123	122	211	61	89	40
12	592	261	80	80	293	97	168	24
13	647	589	101	124	297	104	66	134
14	726	659	183	91	214	220	116	191
15	513	460	292	266	73	114	141	199
16	451	631	521	141	88	151	89	86
17	704	832	449	69	124	4	93	75
18	865	821	461	125	111	191	76	92
19	667	704	554	59	43	223	140	128
20	768	579	98	156	104	24	228	47
21	767	575	147	32	142	121	176	170
22	527	140	74	76	205	60	70	111
23	232	124	70	112	120	130	54	169
24	101	111	15	93	142	88	78	165
25	28	120	165	130	176	45	105	137
26	64	60	22	56	46	116	41	97
27	24	83	86	102	70	136	83	62
28	236	177	70	74	88	212	75	42
29	20	207	98	104	34	74	53	119
30	130	148	167	159	218	116	199	238
31	71	39	69	116	54	140	50	143
32	66	79	125	127	85	184	132	187
33	102	16	58	61	135	257	66	66

Columns 33 to 40

	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
1	119	161	193	147	62	86	88	42
2	48	103	339	86	64	147	150	43
3	30	244	205	5	162	132	32	102
4	112	224	86	101	139	53	97	119
5	39	141	17	72	66	123	139	129
6	44	291	145	178	2	89	81	94
7	59	41	29	83	74	103	178	91
8	215	0	38	0	348	144	66	63
9	245	235	244	180	237	131	191	129
10	143	134	68	108	56	74	147	128
11	68	177	34	187	77	47	137	33
12	18	41	54	70	38	102	15	148
13	46	49	134	66	103	179	106	167
14	118	136	111	130	74	154	111	290
15	42	147	123	176	100	122	170	103
16	82	112	57	98	90	96	124	209
17	216	79	72	242	20	104	123	223
18	94	27	47	88	36	81	124	131
19	98	145	56	89	187	115	219	145
20	248	99	255	118	130	43	180	133
21	110	219	108	42	67	41	90	39
22	96	70	78	79	93	192	53	112
23	123	151	92	52	91	210	92	253
24	126	203	131	159	64	32	233	140
25	56	76	107	38	120	65	41	134
26	78	53	106	14	96	124	109	77
27	114	93	134	187	186	77	76	102
28	166	101	107	53	82	81	26	57
29	135	171	108	82	209	128	62	40
30	47	267	136	21	138	53	165	129
31	93	88	137	170	144	246	76	202
32	94	248	97	94	69	52	36	118
33	46	52	112	82	7	93	107	94



Columns 41 to 48

	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
1	195	77	79	132	114	75	57	35
2	125	12	26	38	147	134	161	117
3	31	101	77	272	249	116	220	83
4	90	92	128	78	70	176	138	38
5	122	64	98	194	91	92	159	94
6	137	160	198	80	81	62	223	116
7	140	125	92	85	77	73	318	243
8	176	139	106	141	94	207	391	231
9	120	105	186	203	210	327	542	370
10	243	170	212	367	442	392	582	592
11	213	215	230	279	387	397	552	693
12	120	202	355	454	551	520	585	512
13	260	316	351	440	585	579	703	522
14	257	424	552	428	463	490	595	645
15	203	398	665	466	450	462	456	491
16	230	376	555	292	470	465	515	522
17	343	429	577	420	653	664	539	570
18	156	305	674	555	503	680	538	523
19	43	253	650	628	500	598	582	574
20	152	247	395	442	602	485	395	512
21	154	43	266	511	695	562	418	494
22	73	163	109	417	688	658	540	569
23	236	249	40	144	309	566	583	602
24	165	154	117	132	78	65	307	690
25	97	174	134	22	88	96	82	166
26	63	116	62	130	106	35	36	118
27	89	116	20	78	164	85	114	49
28	59	215	81	99	65	69	214	50
29	31	104	48	118	191	76	34	67
30	75	119	120	96	212	141	61	85
31	109	66	120	10	114	46	120	62
32	68	254	167	77	121	102	160	109
33	32	89	111	134	19	120	119	43

Columns 49 to 56

	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56
1	254	71	70	97	141	67	211	159
2	83	68	140	161	258	76	181	48
3	106	91	105	143	83	161	126	30
4	99	116	90	110	65	75	102	103
5	83	118	111	113	121	78	136	150
6	103	223	93	34	127	116	116	97
7	233	420	246	93	82	48	107	35
8	334	387	285	400	358	128	188	70
9	543	375	321	465	261	143	59	62
10	475	344	421	640	602	486	327	194
11	385	463	557	607	684	573	588	532
12	505	720	663	672	674	586	528	461
13	456	567	470	613	552	458	551	603
14	561	764	734	578	486	575	664	618
15	343	411	389	504	586	589	563	570
16	522	482	336	647	640	388	560	561
17	623	613	550	523	610	415	575	684
18	565	592	623	413	508	469	506	571
19	523	538	577	675	669	421	631	509
20	493	496	655	644	632	506	549	716
21	600	696	855	559	464	679	487	546
22	680	586	653	653	476	604	658	425
23	656	584	577	648	503	563	460	80
24	739	604	703	569	367	281	195	117
25	245	160	353	301	140	31	91	100
26	72	108	141	83	170	139	72	34
27	281	160	10	62	56	90	32	48
28	94	70	34	204	85	107	105	101
29	128	68	112	16	51	186	41	107
30	112	117	119	128	31	118	49	161
31	110	130	108	83	75	149	114	61
32	45	146	138	112	49	34	20	17
33	60	134	77	46	208	90	55	6

Columns 57 to 64

	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64
1	120	99	74	68	26	46	251	117
2	159	110	128	62	78	21	108	179
3	155	101	121	105	68	108	175	33
4	106	114	79	235	48	100	107	86
5	153	135	119	96	44	72	63	130
6	175	134	100	171	154	98	25	68
7	54	211	103	111	60	83	26	51
8	74	212	91	95	80	34	86	138
9	59	46	41	108	26	191	59	110
10	95	45	122	236	85	172	149	65
11	240	91	181	148	151	150	106	143
12	233	76	137	244	95	77	23	192
13	402	75	77	131	166	104	26	178
14	612	267	39	138	116	52	50	140
15	673	232	68	48	107	298	43	59
16	705	411	111	121	108	152	55	90
17	753	443	76	13	124	95	134	56
18	718	321	110	156	67	143	94	48
19	534	238	57	60	48	139	36	19
20	650	244	154	117	99	181	129	57
21	462	142	81	53	22	62	129	95
22	152	191	83	124	191	64	110	141
23	201	50	142	90	94	118	77	66
24	88	162	67	119	152	96	190	109
25	52	127	148	45	89	137	76	30
26	141	44	98	114	248	101	95	101
27	82	52	312	153	132	73	140	47
28	10	34	95	132	97	82	125	42
29	169	182	234	100	13	269	115	170
30	138	61	151	56	79	143	93	102
31	54	40	138	109	79	127	4	40
32	90	38	64	28	44	84	67	115
33	70	54	159	185	28	32	85	157

Columns 65 to 72

	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
1	71	180	36	80	164	41	97	78
2	85	87	153	76	29	83	62	114
3	190	22	150	119	74	75	42	166
4	82	124	157	152	130	53	119	135
5	117	74	46	263	164	199	238	47
6	108	97	56	50	173	50	143	93
7	169	123	27	0	43	132	187	94
8	159	63	58	158	37	66	66	46
9	175	138	59	145	68	171	45	121
10	115	151	133	35	68	111	19	106
11	195	198	89	72	141	236	112	186
12	92	86	54	68	176	118	167	125
13	201	154	77	24	111	234	103	202
14	85	48	106	140	101	288	29	32
15	68	167	68	71	76	58	58	244
16	245	48	166	66	122	43	129	69
17	160	76	82	71	61	212	76	172
18	98	249	82	116	76	26	124	222
19	6	90	131	6	89	26	94	83
20	127	92	52	151	28	69	122	30
21	75	106	215	138	160	63	109	110
22	65	79	142	180	61	166	72	172
23	73	92	102	96	57	150	122	115
24	53	53	179	63	67	51	61	95
25	54	47	76	161	96	70	150	66
26	123	51	129	118	122	72	202	115
27	168	61	92	164	43	146	153	18
28	117	181	78	89	56	129	90	20
29	58	141	82	30	96	82	77	59
30	117	195	254	155	129	31	109	153
31	91	152	141	204	116	101	9	68
32	128	114	139	89	48	121	37	27
33	30	99	74	165	43	103	169	79

Columns 73 to 80

	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
1	53	106	14	96	124	109	77	63
2	93	134	187	186	77	76	102	89
3	101	107	53	82	81	26	57	59
4	171	108	82	209	128	62	40	31
5	267	136	21	138	53	165	129	75
6	88	137	170	144	246	76	202	109
7	248	97	94	69	52	36	118	68
8	52	112	82	7	93	107	94	32
9	84	66	172	199	76	68	150	257
10	20	88	97	79	102	191	369	265
11	32	45	29	138	314	488	540	578
12	157	82	233	599	647	607	460	418
13	149	350	589	665	627	554	657	553
14	40	531	626	411	615	496	522	638
15	438	596	475	407	601	455	401	582
16	578	537	412	591	565	391	312	474
17	482	550	568	536	546	522	395	521
18	479	501	545	447	484	502	487	538
19	451	415	472	468	420	577	551	470
20	608	659	569	578	394	589	617	521
21	485	590	471	602	619	402	461	575
22	113	442	500	572	690	509	620	546
23	75	237	528	535	573	410	536	519
24	19	91	400	410	498	575	632	612
25	25	84	43	301	419	390	564	457
26	119	139	201	214	366	133	336	488
27	92	40	60	9	115	161	174	267
28	42	30	114	80	172	113	22	106
29	106	45	17	74	123	210	141	149
30	109	73	84	100	38	61	45	161
31	136	36	105	63	86	169	90	73
32	71	101	205	72	92	39	71	155
33	44	112	45	46	67	67	94	165

Columns 81 to 88

	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88
1	116	62	130	106	35	36	118	72
2	116	20	78	164	85	114	49	281
3	215	81	99	65	69	214	50	94
4	104	48	118	191	76	34	67	128
5	119	120	96	212	141	61	85	112
6	66	120	10	114	46	120	62	110
7	254	167	77	121	102	160	109	45
8	89	111	134	19	120	119	43	60
9	145	220	58	144	66	75	78	84
10	501	372	214	299	136	98	68	190
11	697	598	523	458	420	290	51	126
12	604	559	477	428	577	641	312	15
13	652	524	467	450	636	706	423	361
14	662	394	391	457	605	560	601	627
15	555	463	458	351	596	551	524	472
16	503	406	540	584	709	547	523	664
17	649	390	392	713	454	441	524	512
18	510	348	312	610	294	361	516	358
19	530	495	415	623	442	429	524	339
20	626	657	768	812	484	618	638	373
21	580	431	596	681	550	584	532	374
22	526	409	468	588	648	478	474	493
23	451	486	537	505	577	603	432	451
24	624	637	590	591	483	481	238	250
25	514	623	528	535	406	423	290	319
26	430	545	509	299	169	203	188	222
27	340	236	253	288	208	32	107	79
28	221	55	128	28	164	103	60	150
29	94	12	121	107	197	76	152	91
30	123	39	155	92	86	76	83	24
31	58	109	52	80	133	108	67	55
32	124	83	31	71	145	88	250	36
33	88	14	109	148	195	51	76	109

Columns 89 to 97

	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97
1	108	141	83	170	139	72	34	141	44
2	160	10	62	56	90	32	48	82	52
3	70	34	204	85	107	105	101	10	34
4	68	112	16	51	186	41	107	169	182
5	117	119	128	31	118	49	161	138	61
6	130	108	83	75	149	114	61	54	40
7	146	138	112	49	34	20	17	90	38
8	134	77	46	208	90	55	6	70	54
9	82	70	69	78	106	100	94	37	74
10	171	91	175	80	114	134	92	134	69
11	48	66	104	109	198	151	110	43	169
12	137	66	82	13	95	125	108	131	39
13	140	147	88	105	161	57	173	56	102
14	191	89	78	99	157	68	43	155	51
15	261	172	162	149	70	214	5	248	116
16	453	295	109	92	77	60	255	159	93
17	375	347	126	82	50	104	105	105	71
18	262	168	134	66	92	71	167	94	138
19	286	191	116	170	137	35	178	141	96
20	420	230	112	116	60	66	57	222	32
21	381	155	108	193	88	66	109	191	106
22	357	62	96	71	74	18	131	60	96
23	423	113	83	182	107	163	111	190	62
24	97	231	160	99	20	118	140	124	70
25	87	138	147	213	71	101	169	126	65
26	82	140	72	166	118	26	137	132	192
27	129	185	120	76	50	128	90	78	100
28	201	88	195	251	101	59	155	234	22
29	87	53	9	90	93	224	268	187	13
30	42	173	147	139	196	210	123	20	108
31	34	58	39	132	158	93	158	81	210
32	96	65	99	79	117	64	139	43	116
33	90	248	54	50	65	215	58	149	69