Forum Geometricorum
Volume 17 (2017) 419–423.

FORUM GEOM
ISSN 1534-1178

Heron Triangle and Rhombus Pairs With a Common Area and a Common Perimeter

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Abstract. By Fermat's method, we show that there are infinitely many Heron triangle and θ-integral rhombus pairs with a common area and a common perimeter. Moreover, we prove that there does not exist any integral isosceles triangle and θ-integral rhombus pairs with a common area and a common perimeter.

1. Introduction

We say that a Heron (resp. rational) triangle is a triangle with integral (resp. rational) sides and integral (resp. rational) area. And a rhombus is θ-integral (resp. θ-rational) if it has integral (resp. rational) sides, and both $\sin\theta$ and $\cos\theta$ are rational numbers. In 1995, R. K. Guy [5] introduced a problem of Bill Sands, that asked for examples of an integral right triangle and an integral rectangle with a common area and a common perimeter, but there are no non-degenerate such. In the same paper, R. K. Guy showed that there are infinitely many such integral isosceles triangle and rectangle pairs. In 2006, A. Bremner and R. K. Guy [1] proved that there are infinitely many such Heron triangle and rectangle pairs. In 2016, Y. Zhang [6] proved that there are infinitely many integral right triangle and parallelogram pairs with a common area and a common perimeter. At the same year, S. Chern [2] proved that there are infinitely many integral right triangle and θ-integral rhombus pairs. In a recent paper, P. Das, A. Juyal and D. Moody [3] proved that there are infinitely many integral isosceles triangle-parallelogram and Heron triangle-rhombus pairs with a common area and a common perimeter. By Fermat's method [4, p.639], we can give a simple proof of the following result, which is a corollary of Theorem 2.1 in [3].

Theorem 1. *There are infinitely many Heron triangle and θ-integral rhombus pairs with a common area and a common perimeter.*

But for integral isosceles triangle and θ-integral rhombus pair, we have

Theorem 2. *There does not exist any integral isosceles triangle and θ-integral rhombus pairs with a common area and a common perimeter.*

Publication Date: November 28, 2017. Communicating Editor: Paul Yiu.

This research was supported by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (Grant No. 11501052).

2. Proofs of the theorems

Proof of Theorem 1. Suppose that the Heron triangle has sides (a, b, c), and the θ-integral rhombus has side p and intersection angle θ with $0 < \theta \leq \frac{\pi}{2}$. By Brahmagupta's formula, all Heron triangles have sides

$$(a, b, c) = ((v + w)(u^2 - vw),\ v(u^2 + w^2),\ w(u^2 + v^2)),$$

for positive integers u, v, w, where $u^2 > vw$. Noting the homogeneity of these sides, we can set $w = 1$, and u, v, p positive rational numbers. Now we only need to study the rational triangle and θ-rational rhombus pairs with a common area and a common perimeter. Then we have

$$\begin{cases} uv(v+1)(u^2 - v) = p^2 \sin^2 \theta, \\ 2u^2(v+1) = 4p. \end{cases} \tag{1}$$

Since both $\sin\theta$ and $\cos\theta$ are rational numbers, we may set

$$\sin\theta = \frac{2t}{t^2+1}, \qquad \cos\theta = \frac{t^2-1}{t^2+1},$$

where $t > 1$ is a rational number. For $t = 1$, $\theta = \frac{\pi}{2}$, this is the case studied by R. K. Guy [5]. Thus we need only consider the case $t > 1$.

Eliminating p in equation (1), we have

$$\frac{u(v+1)(2t^2u^2v - tu^3v - 2t^2v^2 - tu^3 + 2u^2v - 2v^2)}{2(t^2+1)} = 0.$$

Let us study the rational solutions of the following equation

$$2t^2u^2v - tu^3v - 2t^2v^2 - tu^3 + 2u^2v - 2v^2 = 0. \tag{2}$$

Solving it for v, we get

$$v = \frac{\left(2t^2u - tu^2 + 2u \pm \sqrt{g(t)}\right)u}{4(t^2+1)},$$

where

$$g(t) = 4u^2t^4 - 4u(u^2+2)t^3 + u^2(u^2+8)t^2 - 4u(u^2+2)t + 4u^2.$$

Since v is a positive rational number, $g(t)$ should be a rational perfect square. So we need to consider the rational points on the curve

$$\mathcal{C}_1: \qquad s^2 = g(t).$$

The curve $\mathcal{C}_1$ is a quartic curve with a rational point $P = (0, 2u)$. By Fermat's method [4, p. 639], using the point P we can produce another point $P' = (t_1, s_1)$, which satisfies the condition $t_1 s_1 \neq 0$. In order to construct such a point P', we put

$$s = rt^2 + qt + 2u,$$

where r, q are indeterminate variables. Then

$$s^2 - g(t) = \sum_{i=1}^{4} A_i t_i,$$

where the quantities $A_i = A_i(r, q)$ are given by

$$\begin{aligned} A_1 &= 4u^3 + 4qu + 8u, \\ A_2 &= -4u^2 + 4ru + q^2 - 8u^2, \\ A_3 &= 4u^3 + 2rq + 8u, \\ A_4 &= r^2 - 4u^2. \end{aligned}$$

The system of equations $A_3 = A_4 = 0$ in r, q has a solution given by

$$r = -2u, \quad q = u^2 + 2.$$

This implies that the equation

$$s^2 - g(t) = \sum_{i=1}^{4} A_i t^i = 0$$

has the rational roots $t = 0$ and

$$t = \frac{2u(u^2+2)}{3u^2-1}.$$

Then we have the point $P' = (t_1, s_1)$ with

$$\begin{aligned} t_1 &= \frac{2u(u^2+2)}{3u^2-1}, \\ s_1 &= -\frac{2u(u^6-4u^4+14u^2+3)}{(3u^2-1)^2}. \end{aligned}$$

Putting t_1 in equation (2) we get

$$v = \frac{u^2(u^2+2)}{4u^4+1}.$$

Hence, the rational triangle has rational sides

$$\begin{aligned} &(a, b, c) \\ &= \left(\frac{u^2(3u^2-1)(u^4+6u^2+1)}{(4u^2+1)^2},\ \frac{u^2(u^2+2)(u^2+1)}{4u^2+1},\ \frac{u^2(u^6+20u^4+12u^2+1)}{(4u^2+1)^2}\right). \end{aligned}$$

From the equation $2u^2(v+1) = 4p$ and $\sin\theta = \frac{2t}{t^2+1}$, we obtain the corresponding rhombus with side

$$p = \frac{(u^4+6u^2+1)u^2}{2(4u^2+1)},$$

and the intersection angle

$$\theta = \arcsin\frac{4u(u^2+2)(3u^2-1)}{(4u^2+1)(u^4+6u^2+1)}.$$

Since u, v, p are positive rational numbers, $0 < \sin\theta < 1$, $u^2 > v$ and $t_1 > 1$, we get the condition

$$u > \frac{\sqrt{3}}{3}.$$

Then for positive rational number $u > \frac{\sqrt{3}}{3}$, there are infinitely many rational triangle and θ-rational rhombus pairs with a common area and a common perimeter. Therefore, there are infinitely many such Heron triangle and θ-integral rhombus pairs. □

Examples. (1) If $u = 1$, we have a Heron triangle with sides $(8, 15, 17)$, and a θ-integral rhombus with side 10 and the smaller intersection angle $\arcsin \frac{3}{5}$, which have a common area 60 and a common perimeter 40.

(2) If $u = 2$, we have a Heron triangle with sides $(1804, 2040, 1732)$ and a θ-integral rhombus with side 1394 and the smaller intersection angle $\arcsin \frac{528}{697}$, which have a common area 1472064 and a common perimeter 5576.

Proof of Theorem 2. As before, we only need to consider the rational isosceles triangle and θ-rational rhombus pairs. As in [3], we may take the equal legs of the isosceles triangle to have length $u^2 + v^2$, with the base being $2(u^2 - v^2)$ and the altitude $2uv$, for some rational u, v. The area of the isosceles triangle is $2uv(u^2 - v^2)$, with a perimeter of $4u^2$.

Let p be the length of the side of the rhombus, and θ its smallest interior angle. For θ-rational rhombus, we have the perimeter $4p$ and area $p^2 \sin\theta$, where sin $\theta = \frac{2t}{t^2+1}$, for some $t \geq 1$.

If the rational isosceles triangle and θ-rational rhombus have the same area and perimeter, then

$$\begin{cases} 2uv(u^2 - v^2) = p^2 \sin\theta, \\ 4u^2 = 4p. \end{cases} \tag{3}$$

From equation (3), we obtain

$$\frac{2u(v(u-v)(u+v)t^2 - u^3 t + v(u-v)(u+v))}{t^2+1} = 0.$$

We only need to consider $v(u-v)(u+v)t^2 - u^3 t + v(u-v)(u+v) = 0$. If this quadratic equation has rational solutions in t, then its discriminant should be a rational perfect square, i.e.,

$$u^6 - 4u^4v^2 + 8u^2v^4 - 4v^6 = w^2.$$

Let $U = \frac{u}{v}$, $W = \frac{w}{v^3}$. We have

$$W^2 = U^6 - 4U^4 + 8U^2 - 4.$$

This is a hyperelliptic sextic curve of genus 2. The rank of the Jacobian variety is 1, and Magma's Chabauty routines determine the only finite rational points are

$$(U, W) = (\pm 1,\ \pm 1),$$

which lead to

$$(u, w) = (\pm v,\ \pm v^3),$$

then we get

$$v^3 t = 0.$$

So equation (3) does not have nonzero rational solutions. This means that there does not exist any integral isosceles triangle and θ-integral rhombus pair with a common area and a common perimeter. □

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