

Sydney Go Journal

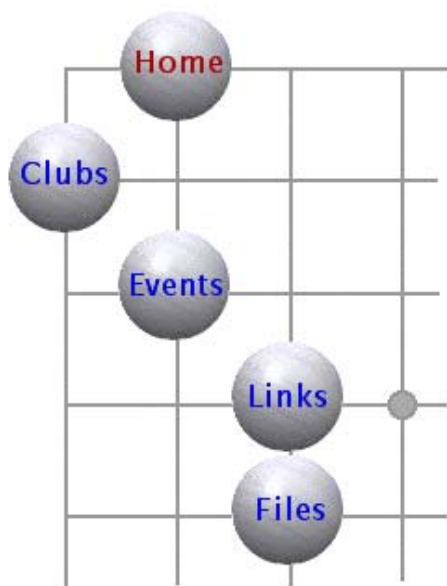
Issue Date – June 2007



Australian Go Association



Founding member
International Go Federation



GO (Weiqi in Chinese, Baduk in Korean) is an ancient board game whose aficionados consider it to be one of the most beautiful inventions of mankind; its hallmarks are elegance of design, simplicity of rules and yet extraordinary depth of intellectual challenge and reward.

The AGA is an association of clubs and individual members whose aim is promotion of the game of Go and communication between the Go players of Australia; it represents the Australian Go playing community internationally through membership of the International Go Federation, selection of representatives to compete in international tournaments such as the World Amateur Go Championships, and liaison with other national Go associations.

Use the links at the left to find information on:

Clubs — a list of affiliated Clubs, with contact details, and how to join the AGA

Events — details of tournaments and other events organised by the AGA and its affiliated clubs, and the Honour Roll of National Champions. The next tournament will be

Wants to know what's going on in Australian Go? Visit:

<http://www.australiango.asn.au/>

NSW Championships

The NSW State Championships, will be held on June 9th and 10th
at Philas House, 17 Brisbane Street, Surrey Hills.

Contact Robert Vadas ravadas@yahoo.com for further details.

Special thanks to Devon Bailey, Tony Oxenham and Geoffrey Gray for proof-reading this edition and correcting my mistakes.

Contributions, comments and suggestions for the SGJ to: DavidGMitchell@optusnet.com.au

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The Sydney Go Club

Meets Friday nights at :-

At Philas House
17 Brisbane St
Surry Hills

From 5.00pm

Entrance fee - \$5 per head; Concession \$3; Children free - includes tea and coffee.

For further information from Robert ravadas@yahoo.com

NSW OPEN GO CHAMPIONSHIPS 2007

Venue: **Philas House.** [Level 3] **17, Brisbane St, Surry Hills** [City]

Dates: **Sat 9th & Sun 10th June.** [Queen's Birthday long weekend]

Entry: **AGA members \$40**, non-members \$65. (Exact amounts appreciated).

Parking: Parking is in short supply.
Train from Museum Station (2 mins walk) or Central (10 mins walk) is best.

Lunch: **Provided**, as with tea & coffee.

Registration: Commences at 8:30am to 9:15am

Play:

Division A: Open, even games, 6.5 komi, Swiss style, 6 rounds, dan rated players only.
75 minutes each + 30 seconds byo-yomi, (once only).

Division B: Handicap, 1dan & kyu players, [Available only to members with current rank].
60 minutes each + 30 seconds byo-yomi (once only).
Double round robin if possible.

Rules: **Japanese counting and WAGC rule set.**

Disputes Disputes should be settled by the players where possible
If resolution of a dispute is not possible the ruling of the tournament director is final.

Times:	Round 1, Sat 09:15	Round 4, Sun 09:00 (<i>NOTE: This is earlier</i>).
	Lunch, 11:45	Lunch, 11:30
	Round 2, 12:45	Round 5 12:30
	Coffee 15:15	Coffee 15:00
	Round 3, 15:45	Round 6, 15:30
		Awards Ceremony, 18:00

Entry: Notify your club and rank to: Robert Vadas at ravadas@yahoo.com
Money on arrival. Please: No cheques, no cards, just money.
If you play in division A, you might be eligible for representative points. This is to represent Australia. ***Please have your Australian passport handy for verification, only an Australian full citizen can represent this country.***

Late Entries: Entries cannot be accepted after play commences. If you may arrive late on Saturday, please notify Robert **BEFORE** 8:00 pm on Friday 8th June, so that a place can be held.

Late arrival: **Once clocks are started you have 15 minutes to arrive – failure to arrive within the 15 minutes means a loss by forfeit. No exceptions.**

Smoking: Smoking levels are down one floor from our room, on the street lobby. Please do not smoke in the foyer outside our room. The entire building is strictly non-smoking.

Emergency contact: The emergency number at Philas House during the tournament is (02) 9264 8301.

The Maxim Cup

This cup is a TV lightning Go competition for 9 dan professional players in Korea. It is a knock-out tournament with the final being a best of three. Each player has 10 minutes thinking time, plus 45 seconds a move byoyomi after that; komi is 6.5 points.

The following games are from this years' competition.

Semi Final

Date: 21st December 2006

Black: Lee SeDol 9p

White: Cho Hanseung 9p Komi 6.5

Result: Black wins by resignation

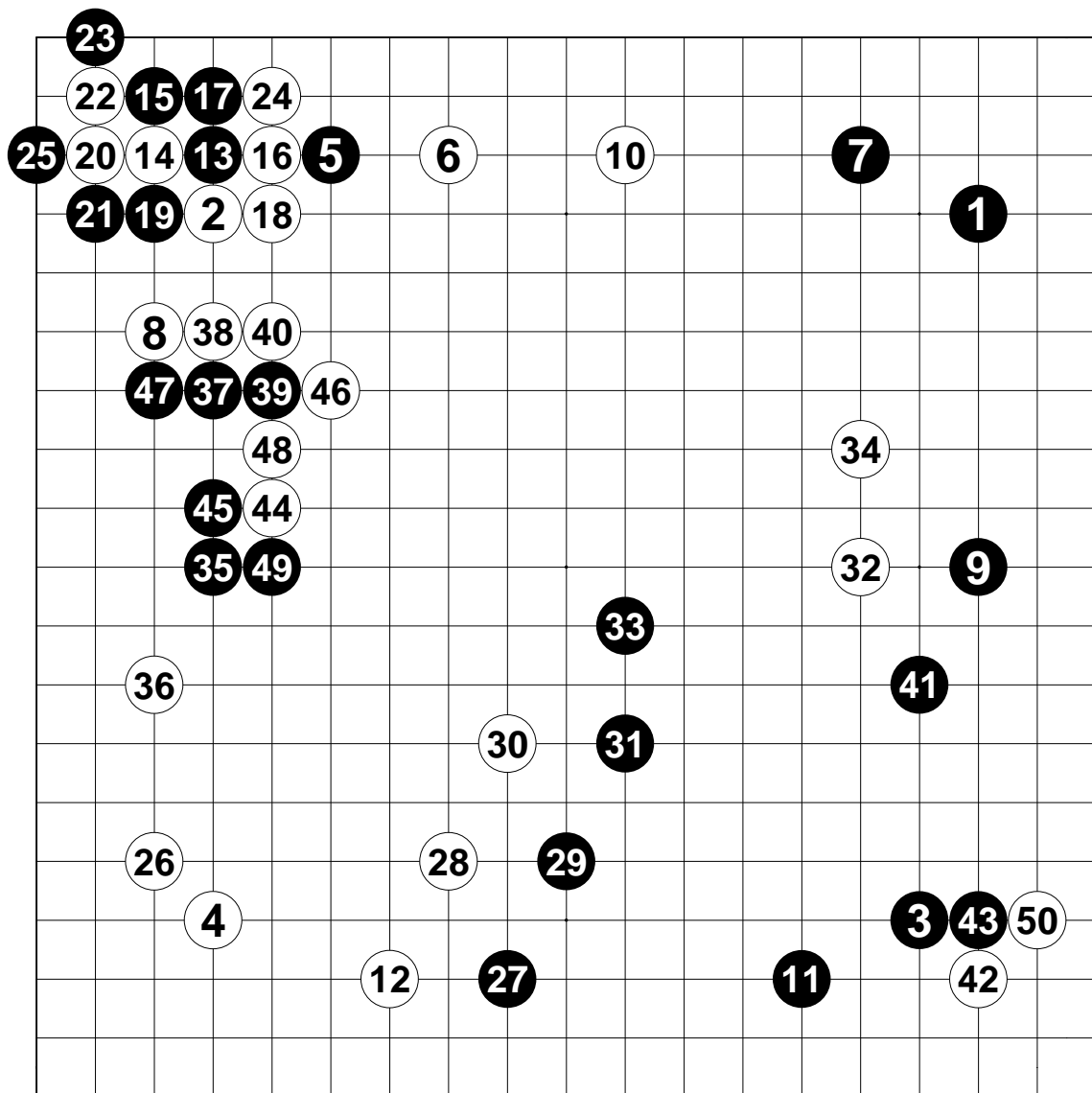


Figure 1

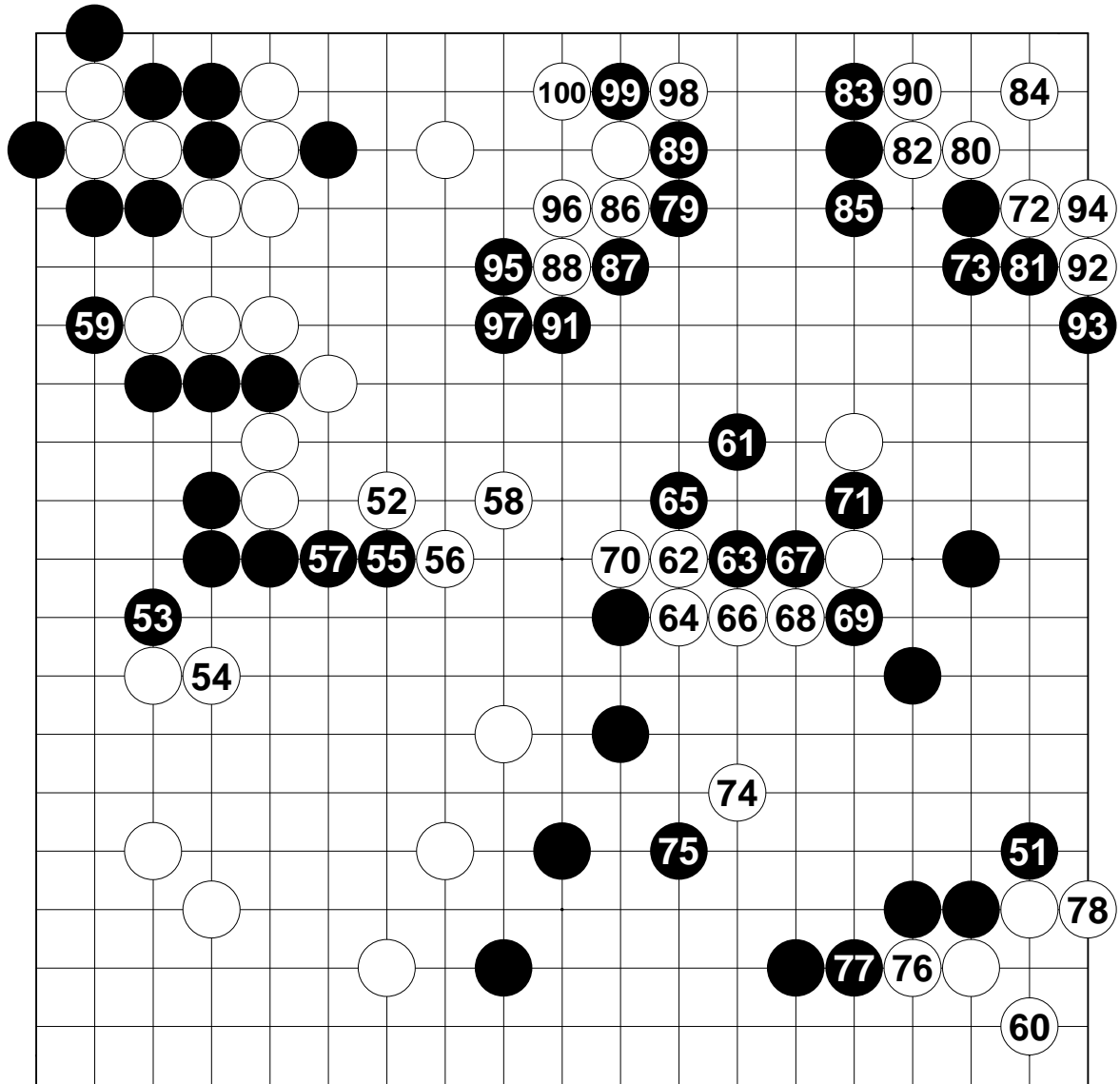
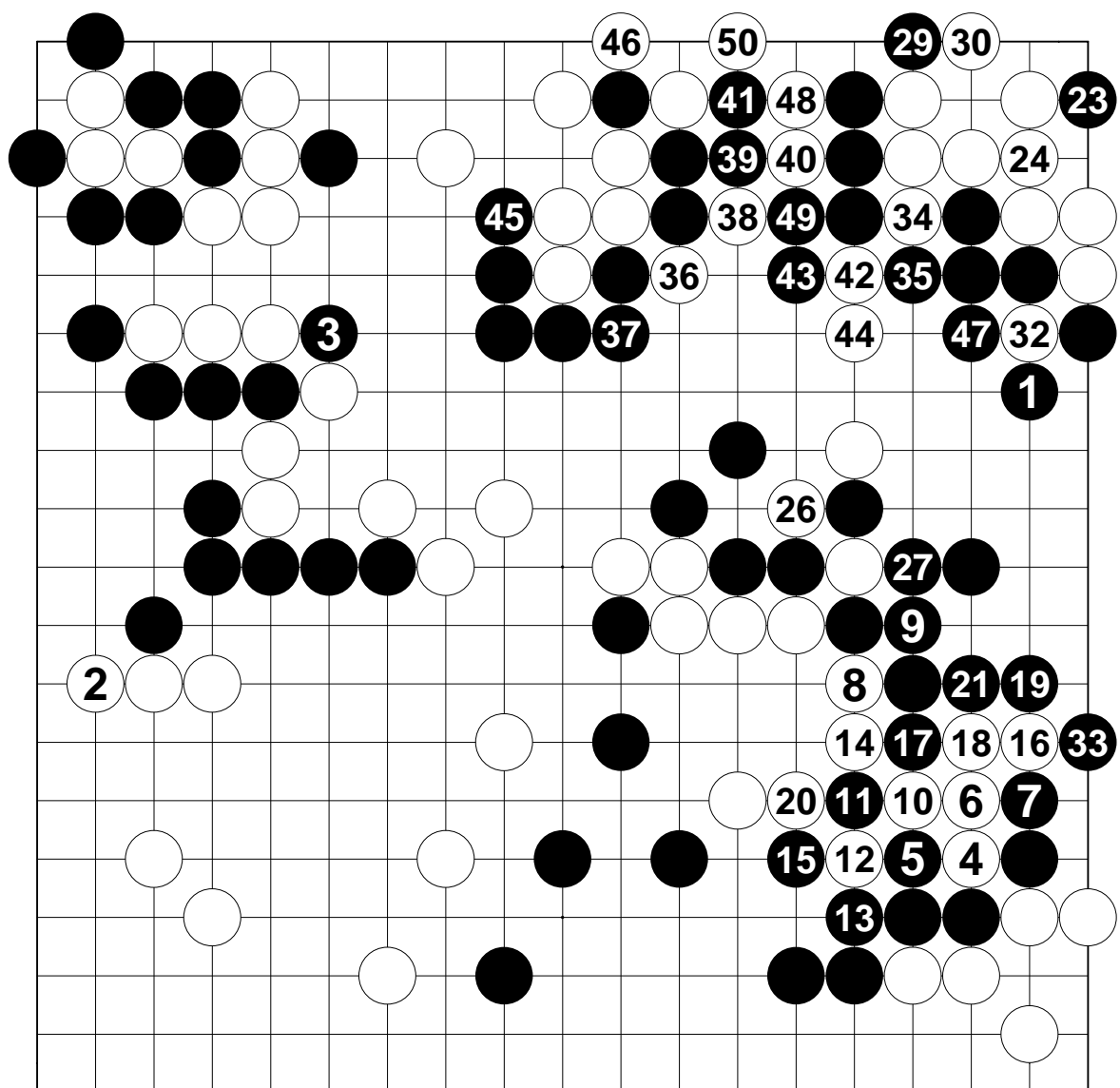


Figure 2



②② at ①②, ②⑤ at ①①, ②⑧ at ①②, ③① at ①①.

Figure 3

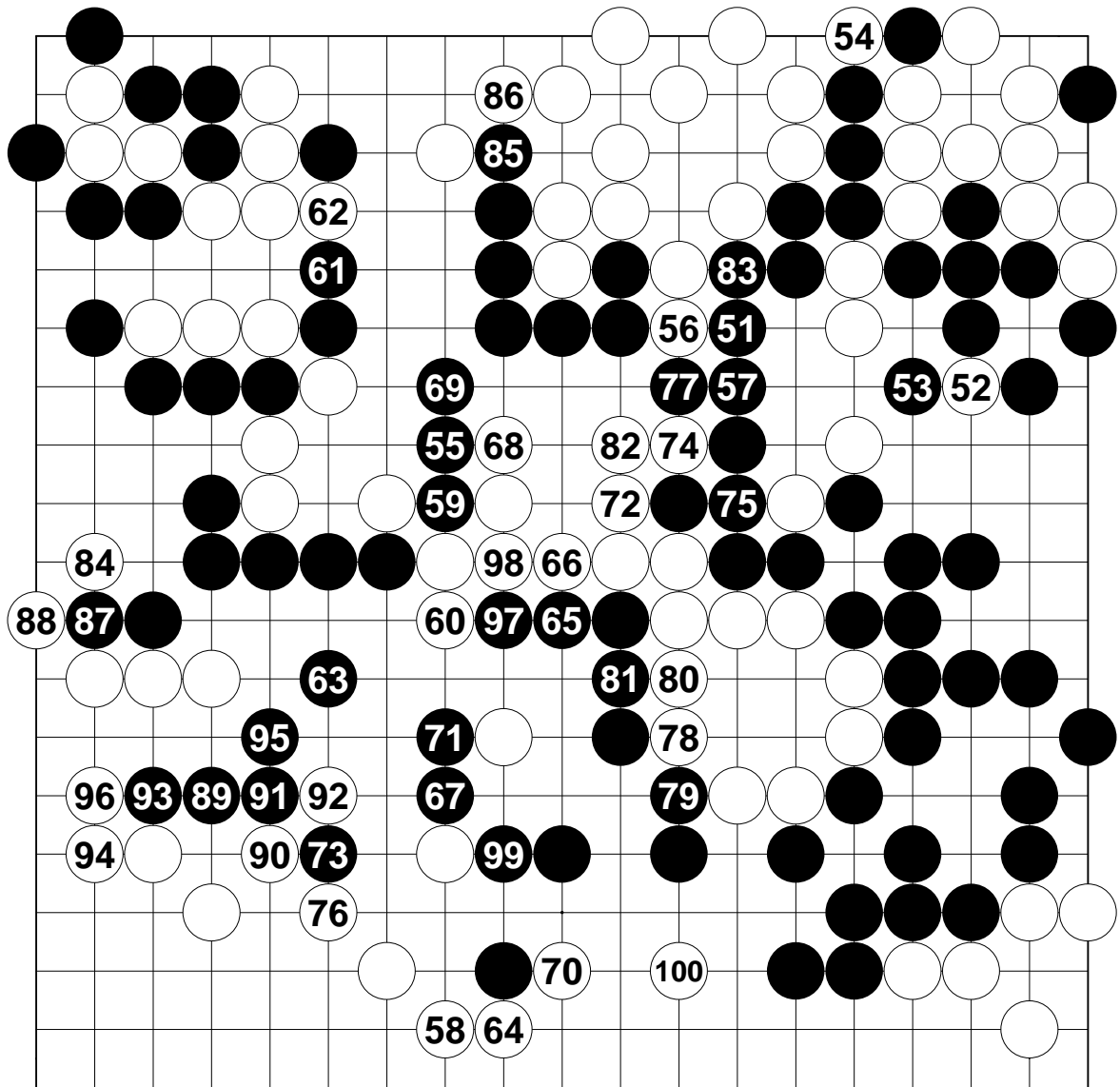
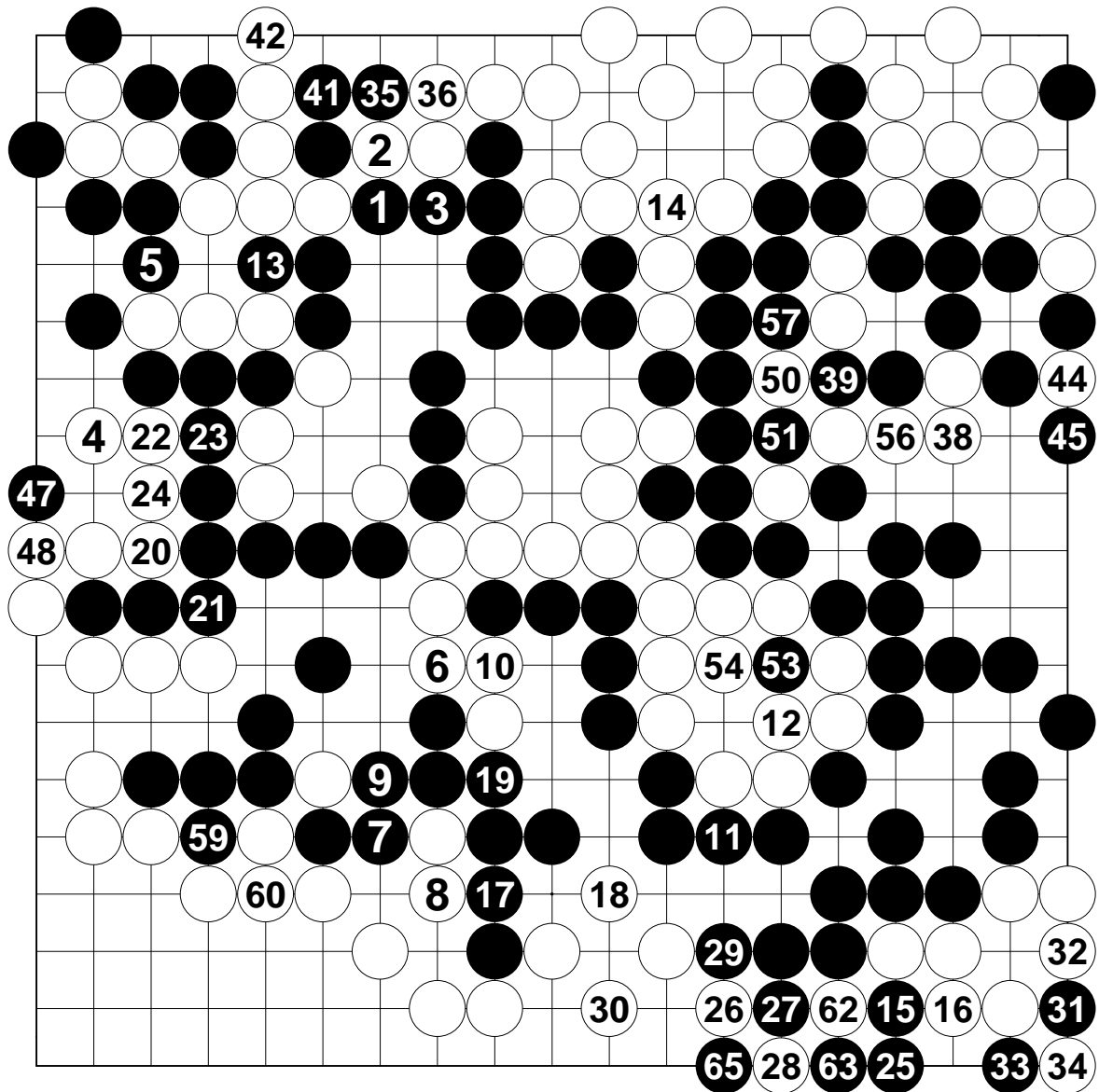


Figure 4



37 at 31, 40 at 34, 43 at 31, 46 at 34, 49 at 31,
 52 at 34, 55 at 31, 58 at 34, 61 at 31, 64 at 34.

Figure 5

Final Game 1

Date: 25th January 2007

Black: Park JungSang 9p

White: Lee SeDol 9p Komi 6.5

Result: Black wins by resignation

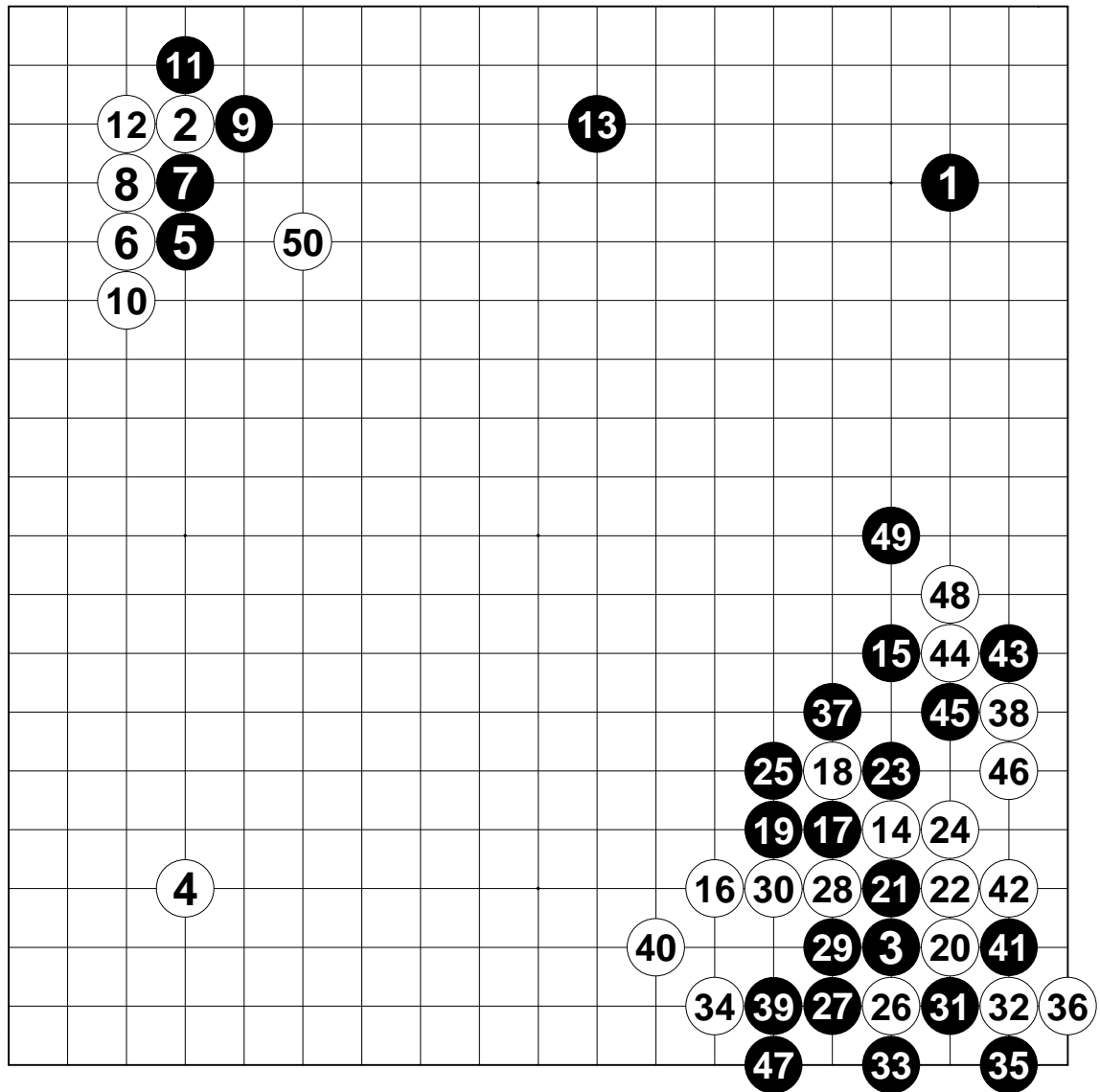


Figure 6

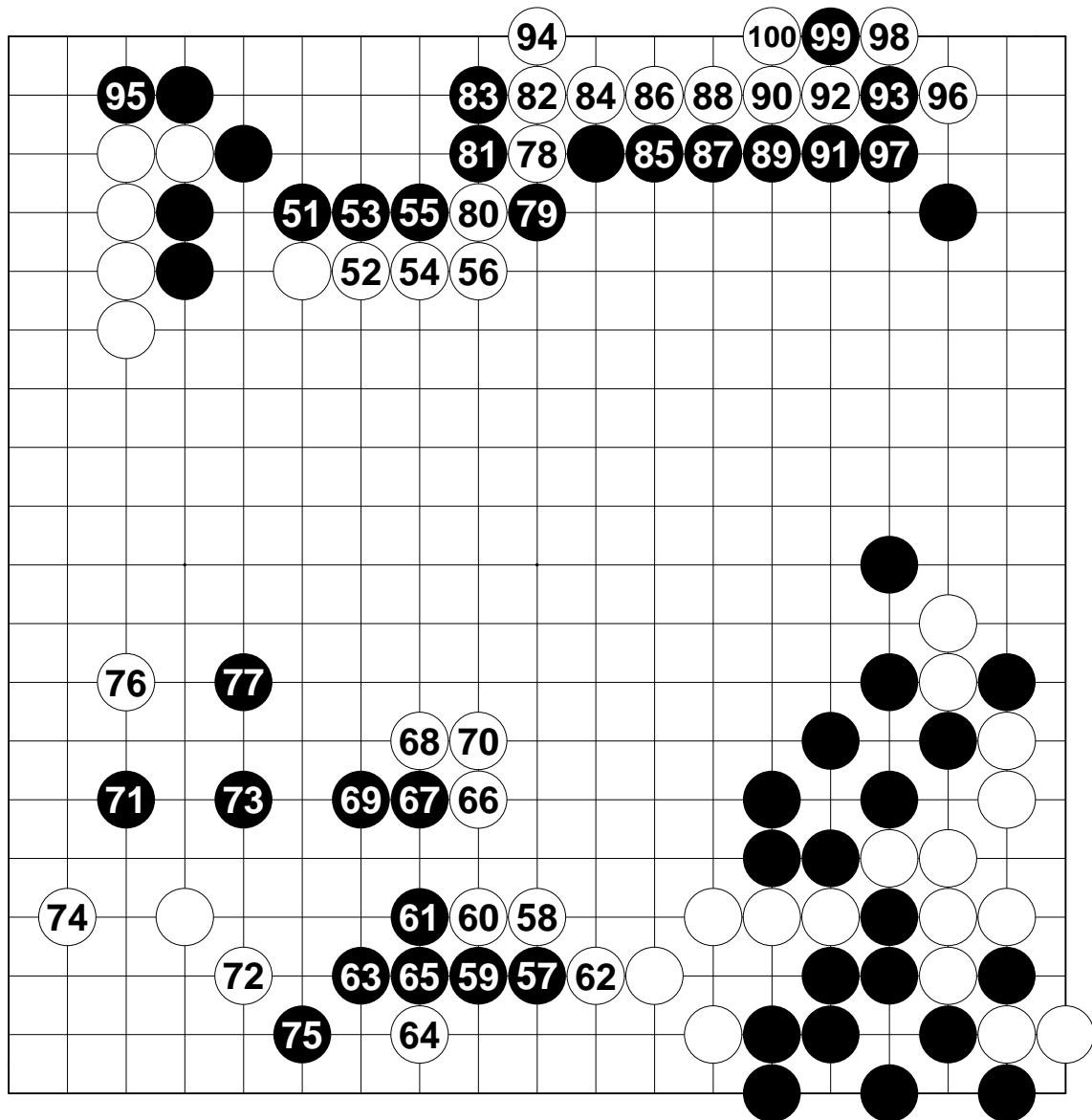


Figure 7

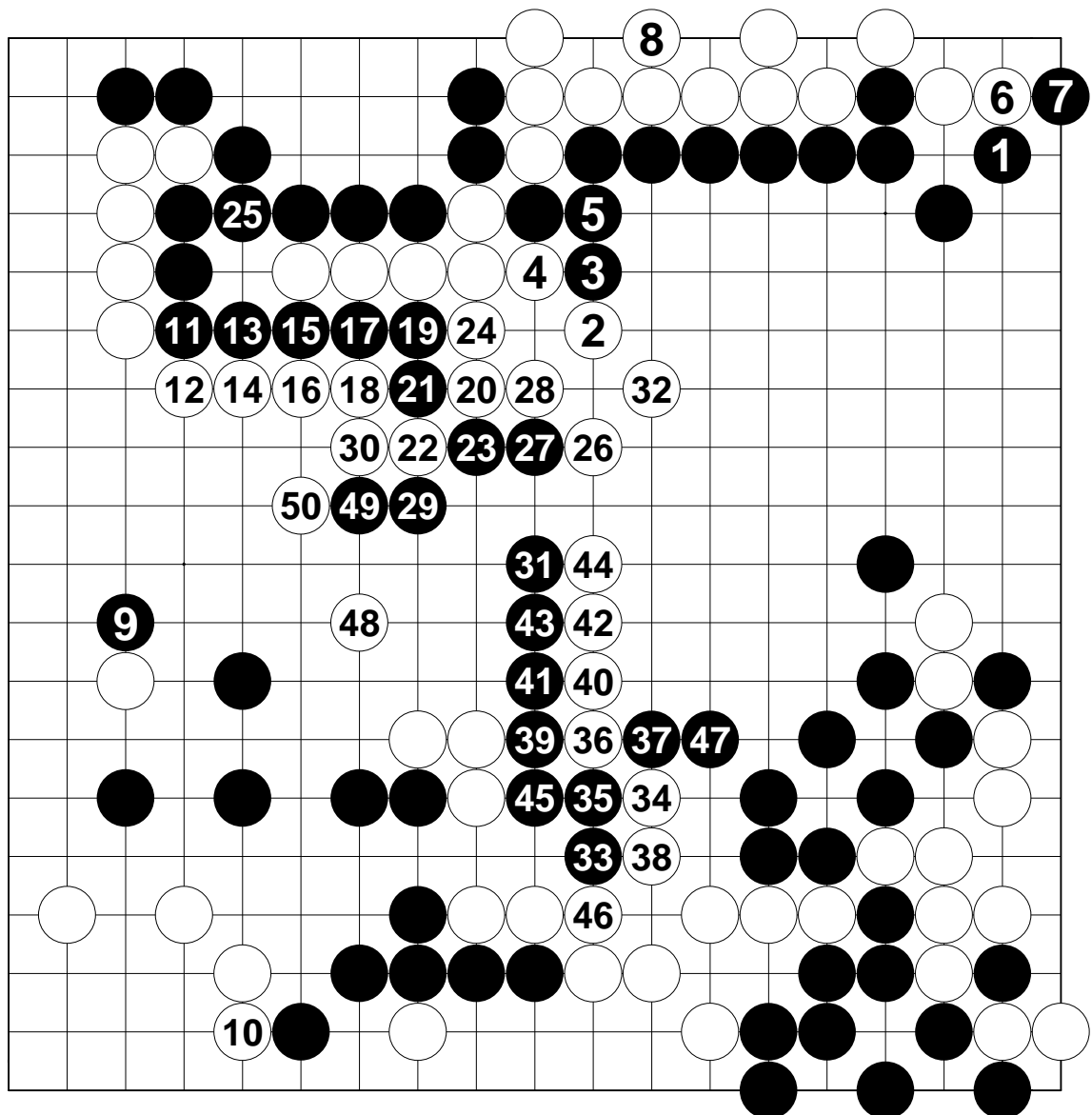


Figure 8

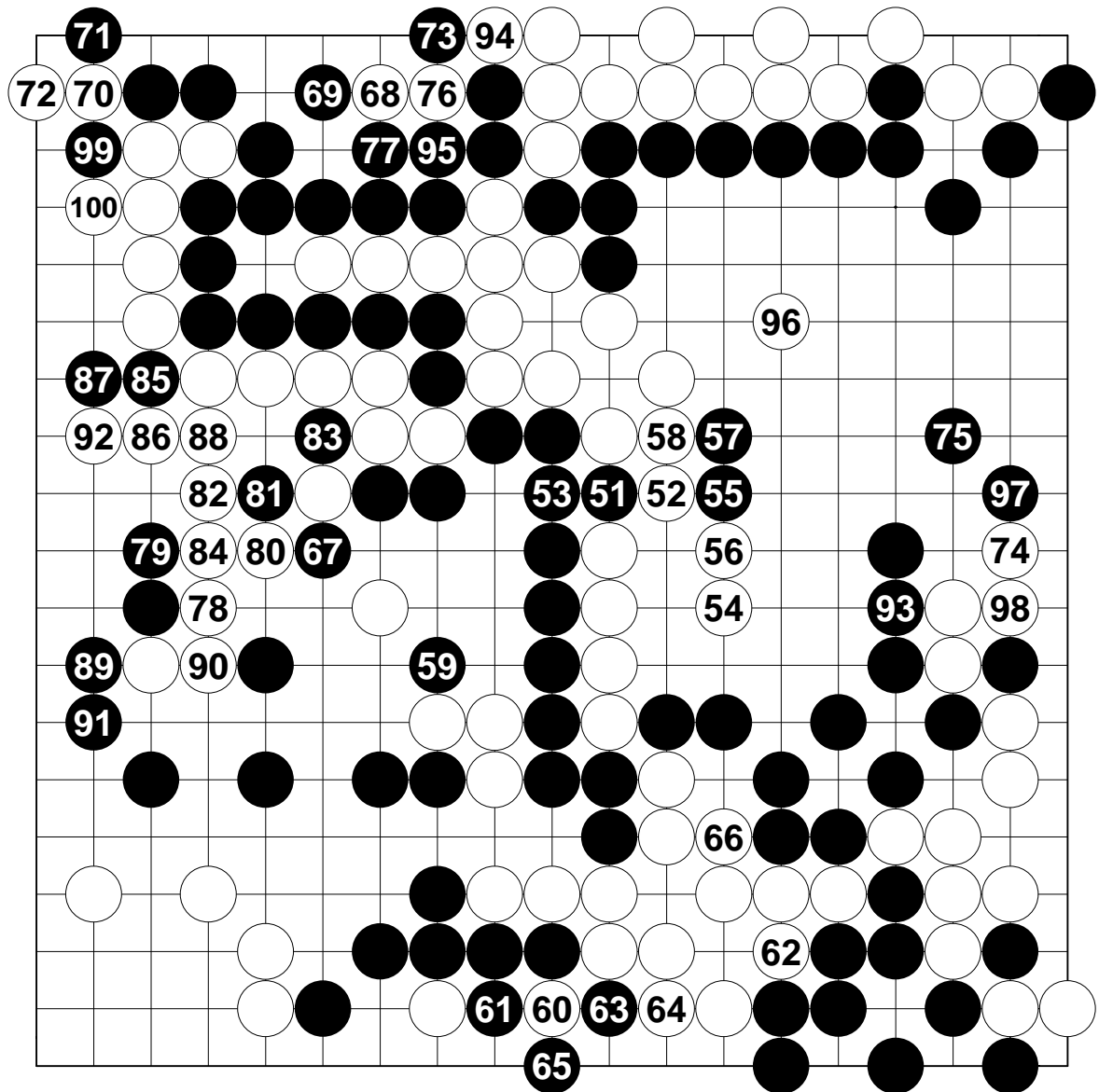
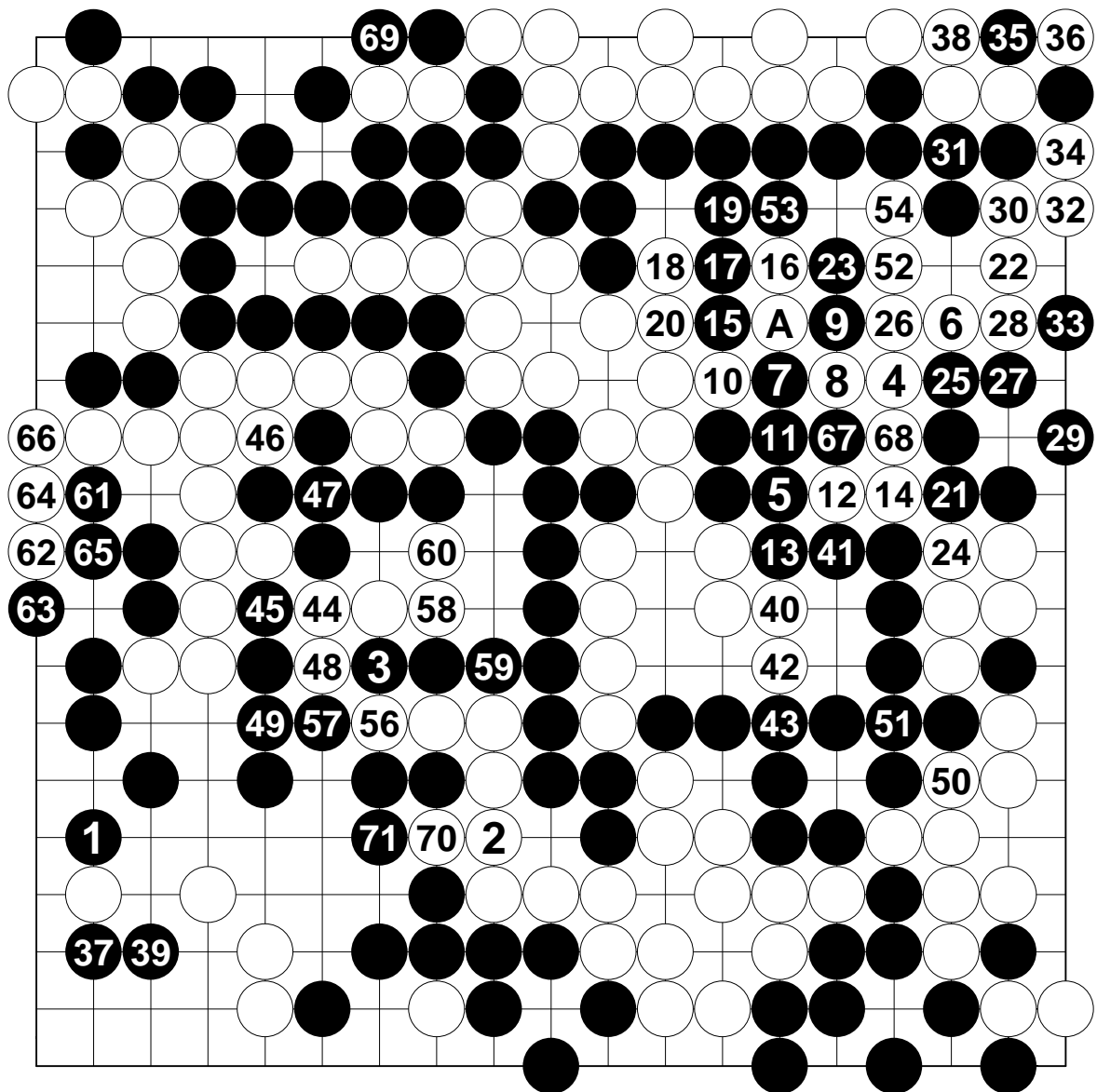


Figure 9



55 at A.

Figure 10

Final Game 2

Date: 24th February 2007

Black: Park JungSang 9p

White: Lee SeDol 9p Komi 6.5

Result: White wins by resignation

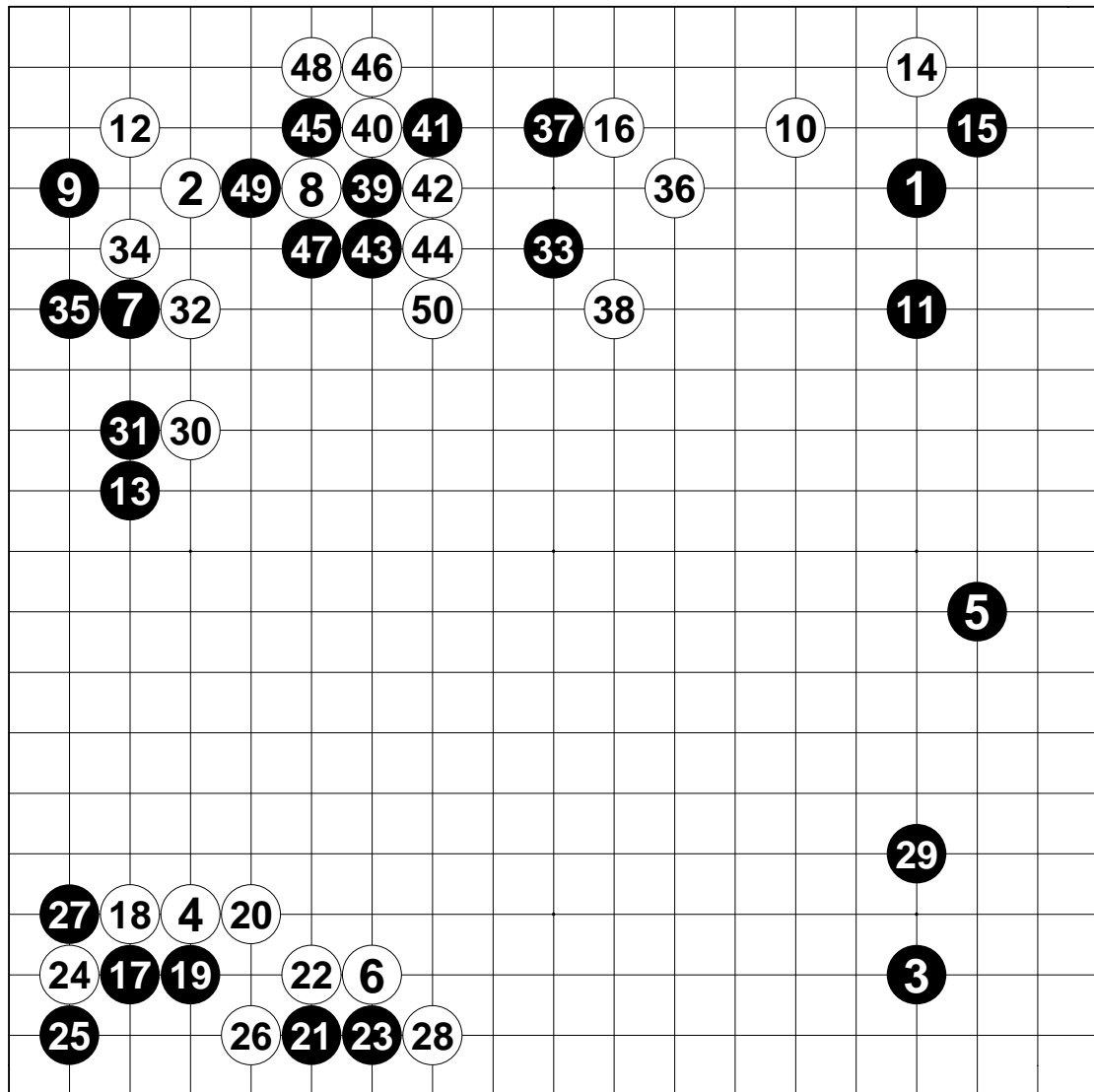


Figure 11

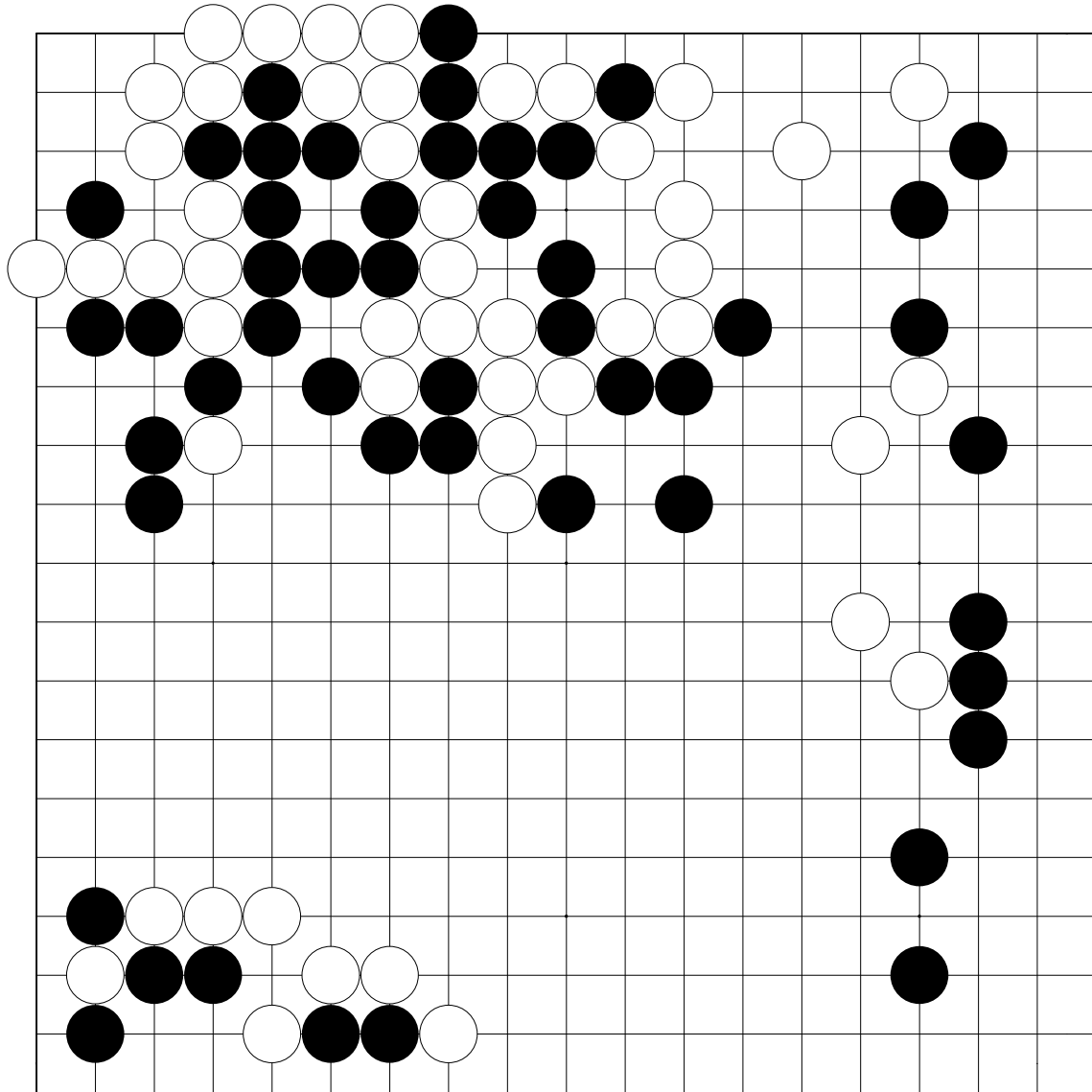


Figure 12

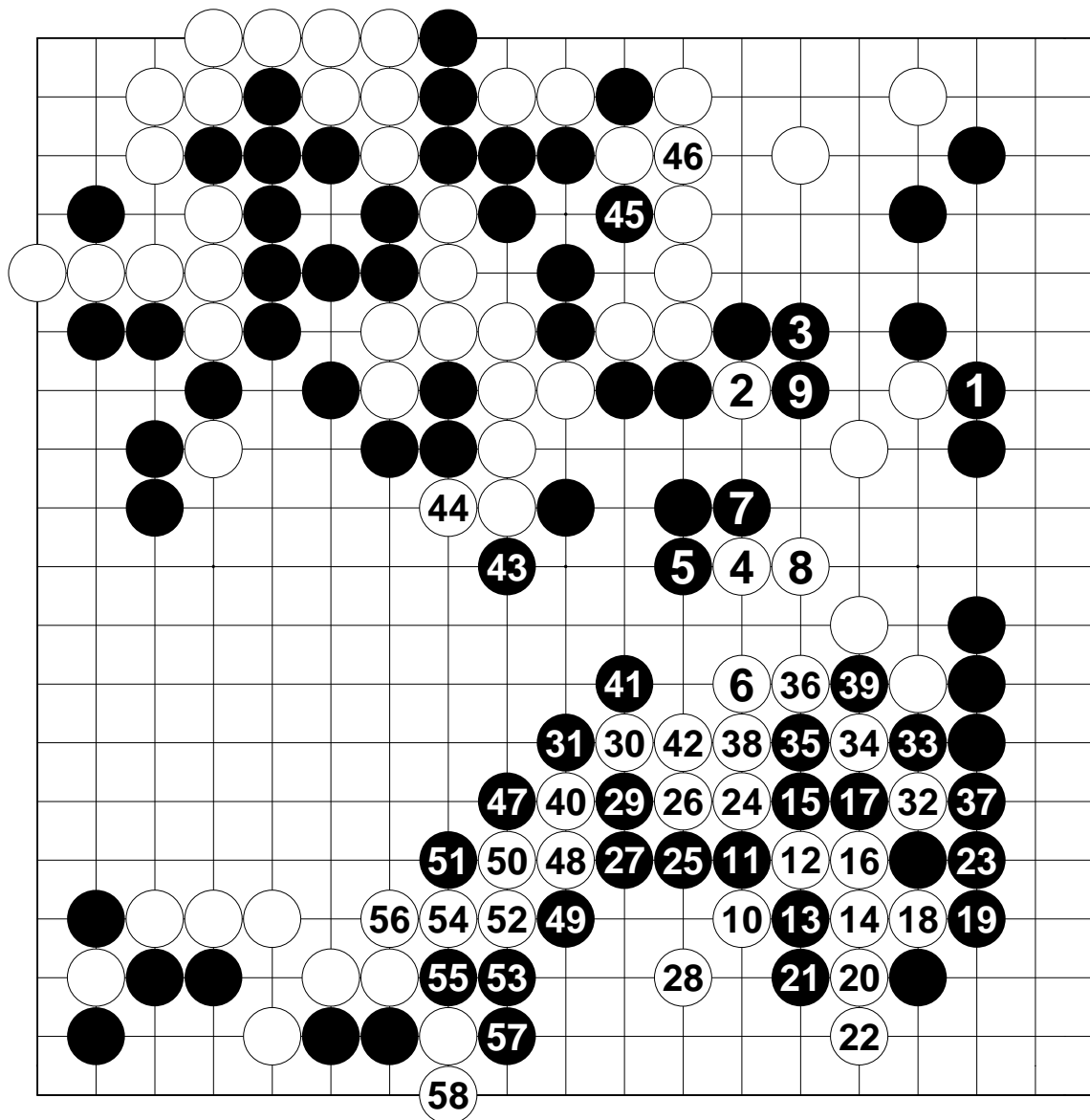


Figure 13

Problem Pairs

Solving problems is a great way to improve your skill, knowing what is possible and where weaknesses are is not just helpful in tactical situations it can also help guide strategic decisions.

People who solve Go problems improve their general Go playing ability and get more enjoyment from their games than those that don't.

The problems in this article are 'paired'; this means that the two problems share much the same shape but one asks you to refute an 'obvious attack' the other asks how should you attack.

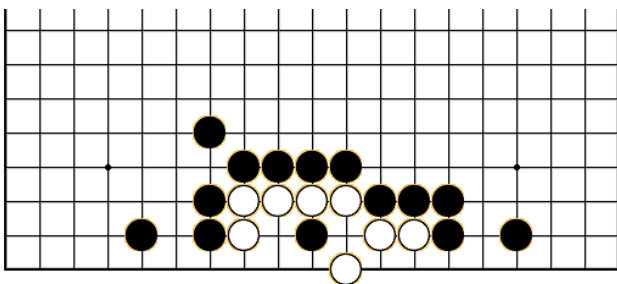
As far as I am aware nobody has ever published a book of problem pairs, but I have seen examples in old Japanese books. Where I came across such problems I was able to learn a lot more about the shape than with single problems.

I recommend that you solve the pair of problems together. Obviously don't look at the answers before you have finished thinking and finally plan to solve problems over a number of days, not in a single sitting.

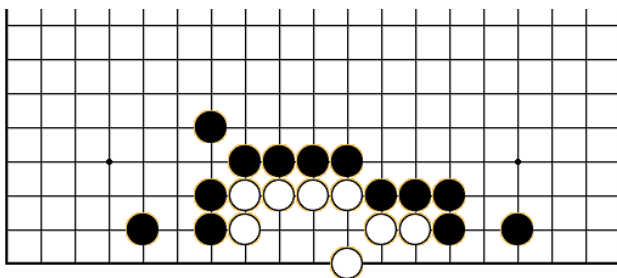
I hope you enjoy the following challenges.

The answers are somewhere later in the Journal, but you won't need them – will you?

Problem Pair 1

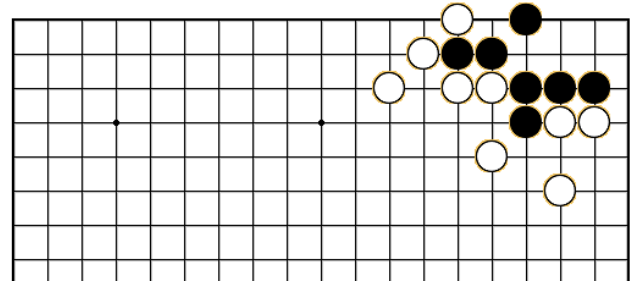


Problem 1 - White to play

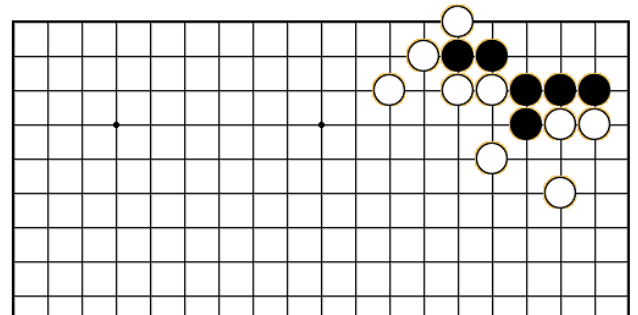


Problem 2 - Black to play

Problem Pair 2

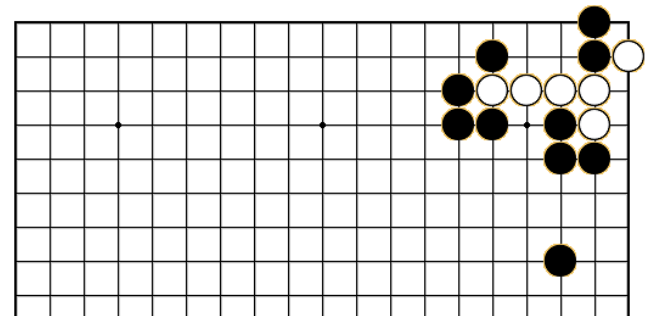


Problem 3 - White to play

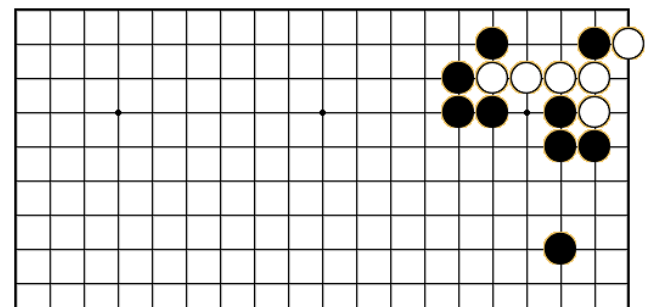


Problem 4 - Black to play

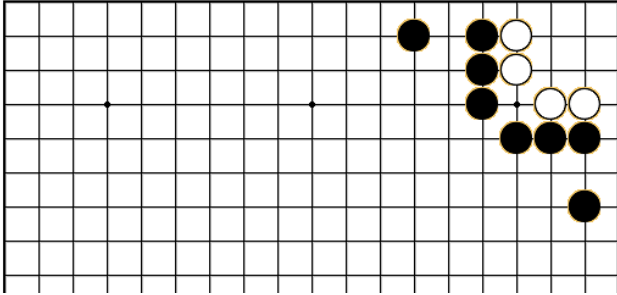
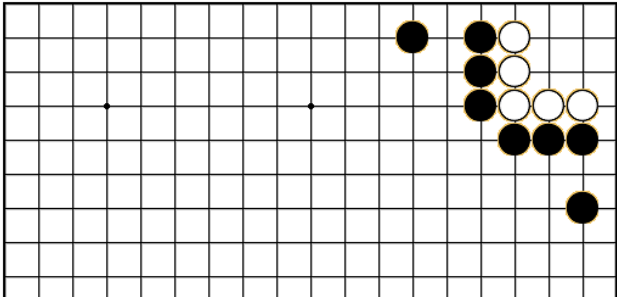
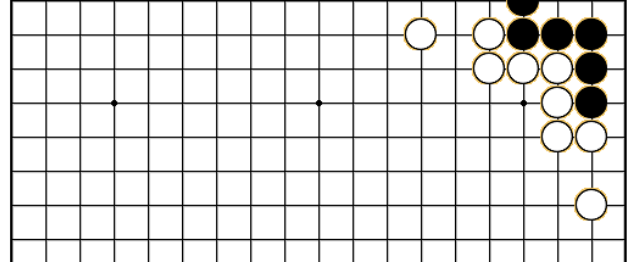
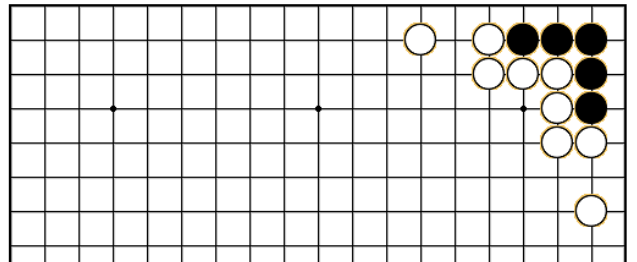
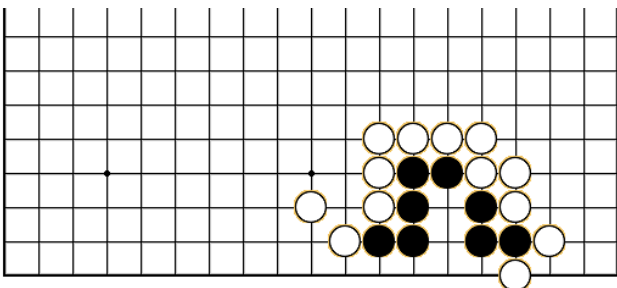
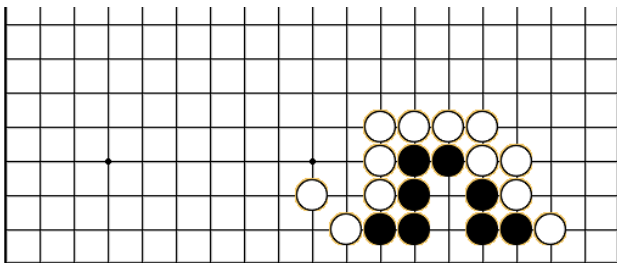
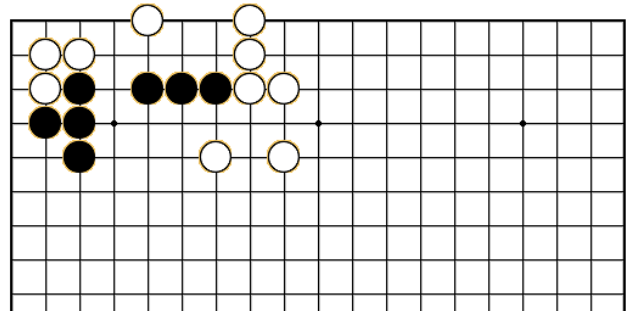
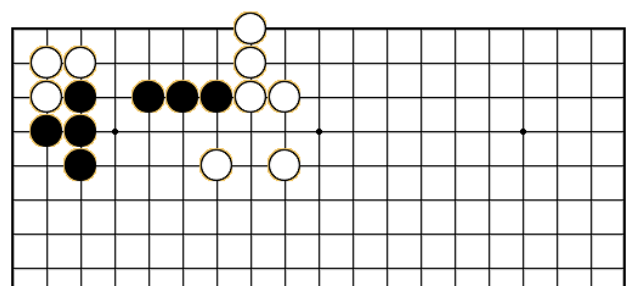
Problem Pair 3



Problem 5 - White to play

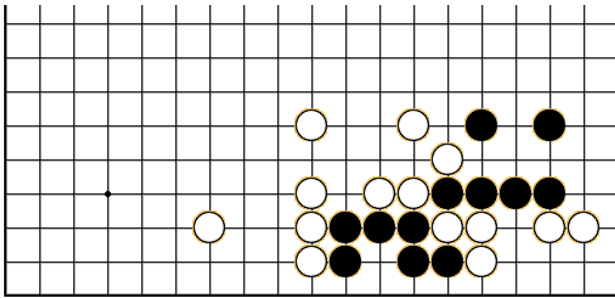


Problem 6 - Black to play

Problem Pair 4**Problem 7 - Black to play****Problem 8 - Black to play****Problem Pair 6****Problem 11 - White to play****Problem 12 - Black to play****Problem pair 5****Problem 9 - Black to play****Problem 10 - White to play****Problem Pair 7****Problem 13 - Black to play****Problem 14 - White to play**

Problem 19 - Black to play

Problem 17 - Black to play

Problem Pair 12

National Championship Game

21

Date - October 2005

Black - Jinan Cao (2d)

White - Alexander Hanyasz (1d)

6.5 Komi

Result - White by 3.5 points

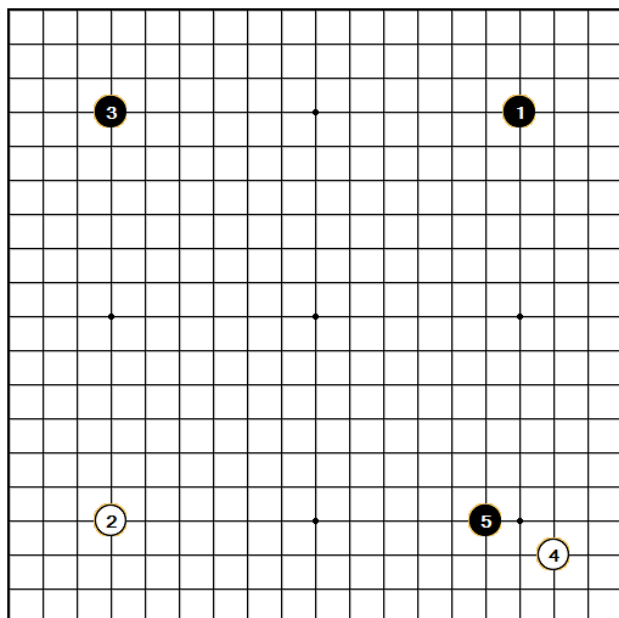


Figure 1 (moves 1 to 5)

White 4 completes the division of corners. Both players have played 'single move' corners – there are no shimari left to complete, so Black must decide how to play next.

Go is a building game, sure there are fights but making territory is the most important thing. To build territory you must get your stones to work together and if this can be done while reducing or impinging on your opponents potential, so much the better.

It is clear by Black 3 that this game is going to be a moyo game – all three stones are on the fourth line. White 4 is not in sympathy with the rest of the game and this creates opportunities for both players.

Black 5 is a common kakari joseki against the 3x3 stone, but it is the wrong direction for this fuseki. In addition, it is entirely unclear whether there is any urgent need to play in the lower right corner.

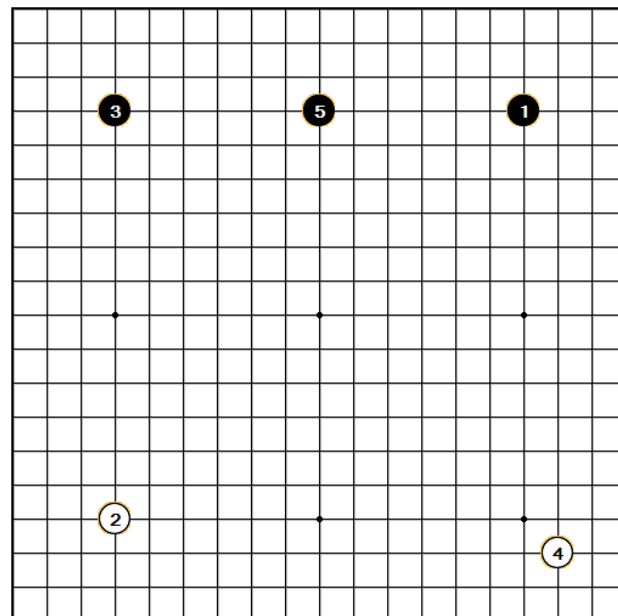


Diagram 1

The normal continuation for this fuseki is to play san-ren-sei on the upper side. Black's three stones work together to build a nice moyo on the top side, this can also be extended on the left or right sides. The second option is to approach White 2 on the left side. With the san-ren-sei White is challenged to build something of his own, but where and how is a problem.

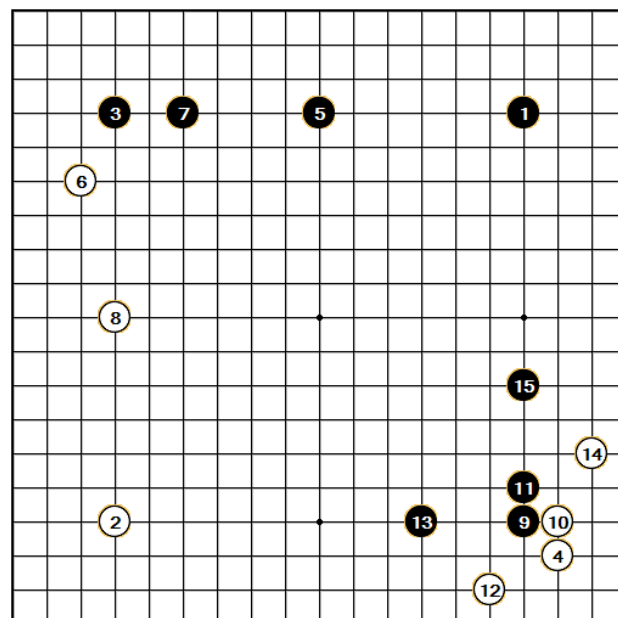


Diagram 2

If White plays 6 and 8 to build on the right side, Black can squash the san-san while building his moyo. There is now moyo potential in the centre as well as on the right. Moyo games work when all the stones work together – Black has achieved that here.

White on the other hand has problems. He has 15 or so secure points in the lower right corner but his chances of extending his moyo on the left are limited because of the position in the lower right; particularly the presence of Black 13.

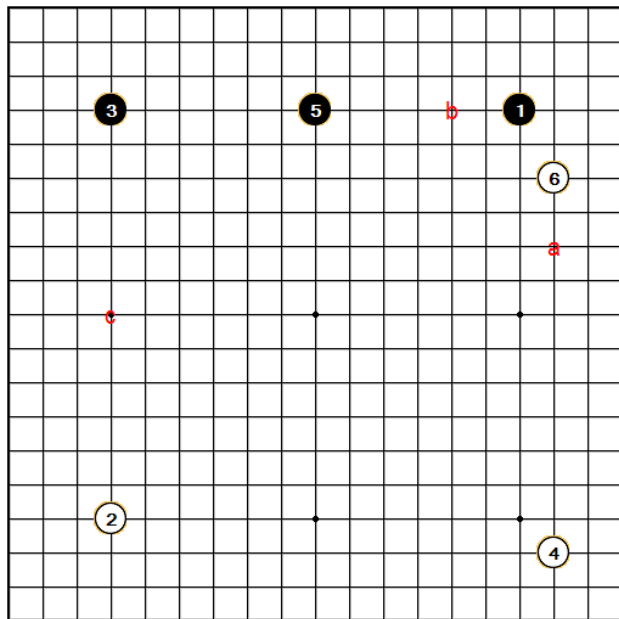


Diagram 3

If White plays on the right side, Black is most likely to pincer at 'a' further enhancing his moyo. Alternatively he can extend to 'b' ; White must then defend on the right giving Black the change to play 'c' and extend his moyo on the left.

There are no easy choices for White because the san-san stone does not fit with the rest of the game. It is because there are no easy options that san-ren-sei is the most common continuation.

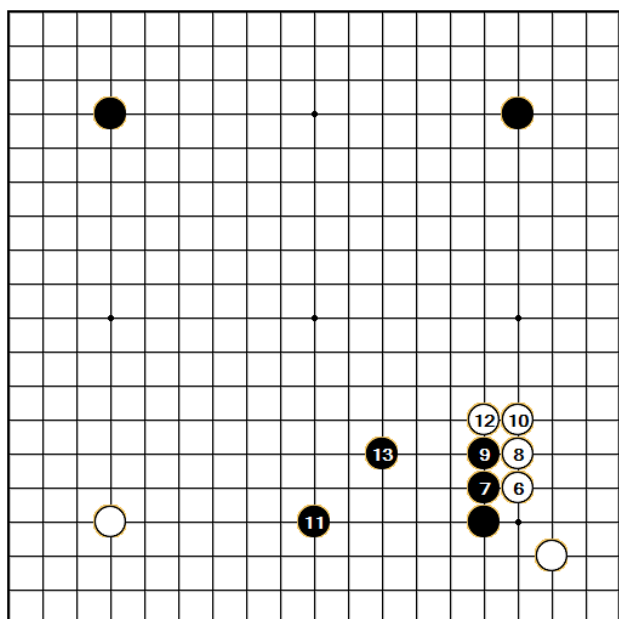


Figure 2 (moves 6 to 13)

22

Black's attack at 5 in Figure 2 is the wrong direction and consequently helps White.

Games of Go are won and lost on the efficient use of stones – if your pieces work together and complement each other you will get greater value, this is accentuated with moyo games because the entire strategy is based on stones working together.

The poor direction of Black 5 can be appreciated clearly if we transpose the game sequence in the lower right corner.

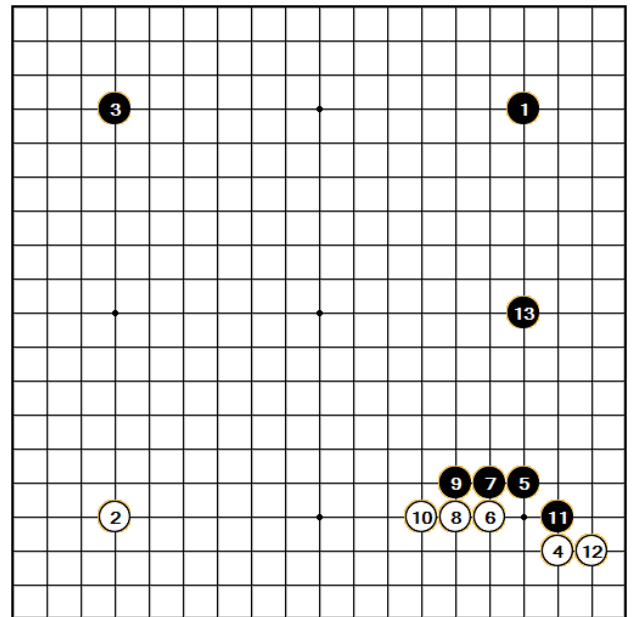


Diagram 4

The Black stones in Diagram 4 are far more effective because they work with the other Black stones and the moyo strategy really begins to pay off.

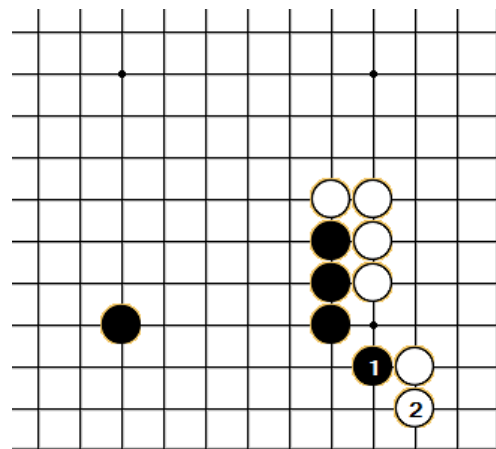


Diagram 5

Back to the game - Black 13 is a strange move. The normal joseki is completed with the exchange of 1 and 2 in Diagram 5. The question is "if Black tenukis, what can White do to attack the Black stones?" Clearly if

there is no threat Black can take a large point elsewhere. 23

So, what can White do?

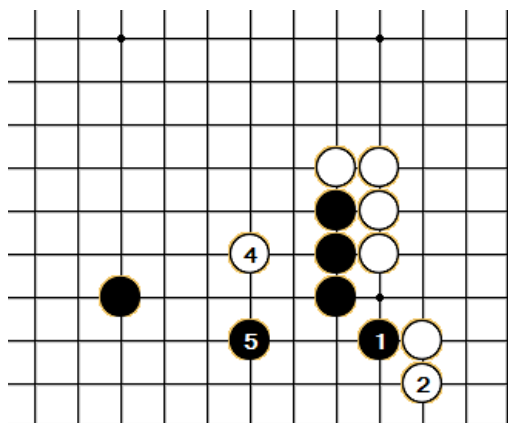


Diagram 6

The most severe attack I can find is 4 in Diagram 6 but Black can connect along the edge with 5 without too much trouble.

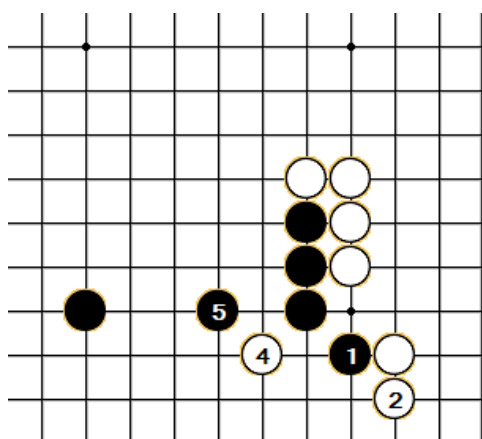


Diagram 7

The other consideration is for White to take Black's base – perhaps with 4, but Black can connect across the top, White must connect his stone underneath and the attack runs out of steam.

Both of these sequences yield profit for White but the area impacted is only 5 lines wide – a move on the top or left side can impact areas 10 or 11 lines wide.

Black 13 is not necessary at this time, so Black would be better off playing as in Diagram 8 exchanging 1 and 2 to finish the joseki and then taking the big point of 3 in the upper right corner.

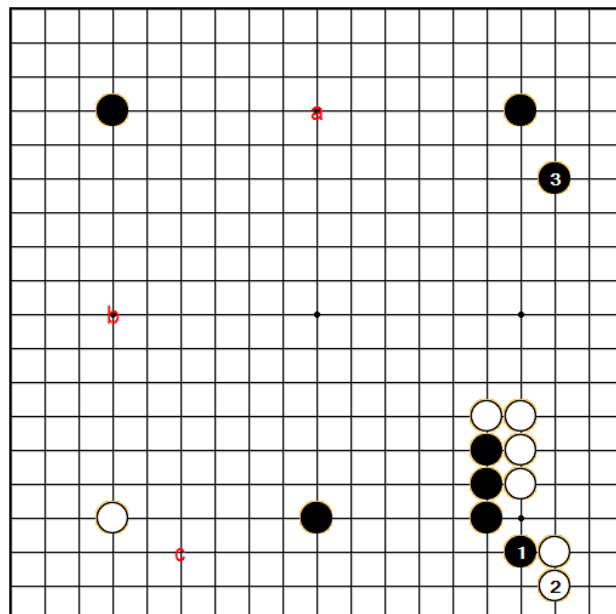


Diagram 8

The other big points to consider are 'a', 'b' or 'c' but 3 strengthens Black's corner, helps his upper side moyo and limits White's potential on the right.

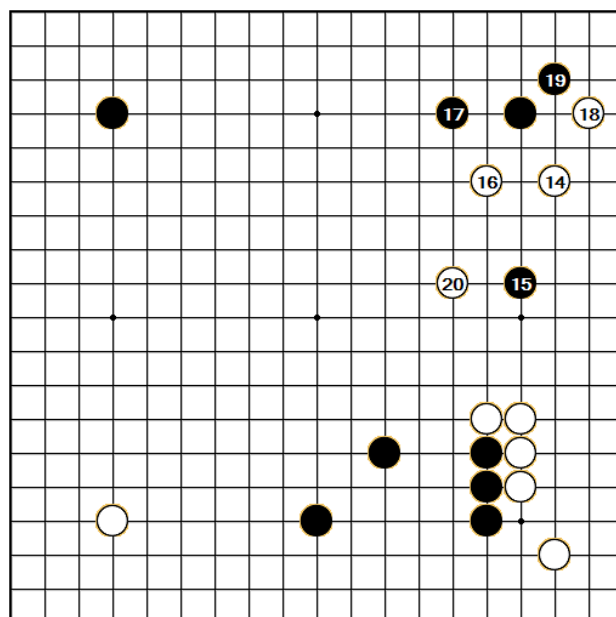


Figure 3 (moves 14 to 20)

In the game White 14 is the natural move, it extends from a strong position and builds along the right side.

Black 15 is dubious. There are two forms of attack – the classic method is to gather your forces and attack on one front with all your strength. Pincer attacks are a modern innovation but they have a fundamental weakness – the attacker divides his strength and that gives the attacked the chance to counterattack. For this reason pincer attacks must be considered carefully.

The pincer of Black 15 in the game is poor because White has a strong position in the lower right consequently Black 15 will come under severe attack almost immediately.

24

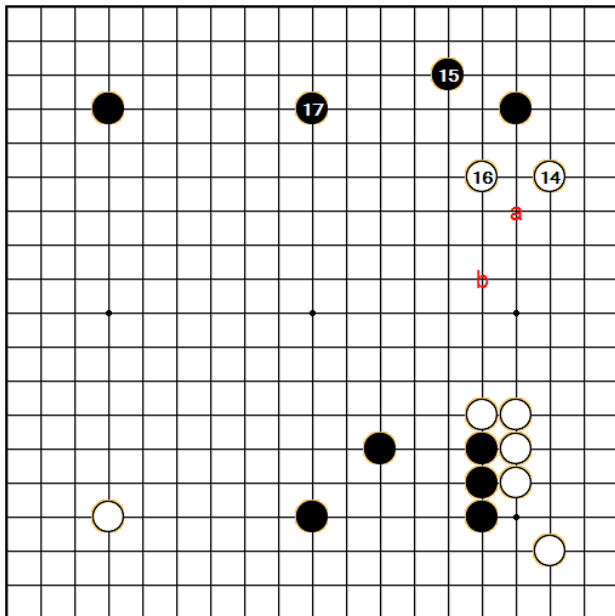


Diagram 9

The best approach for Black is to build with 15 and 17 on the upper side, White will get his area on the right and the game can continue very much on an even keel.

When a player has a strong position is it reasonable that they make territory – it is unreasonable to expect everything.

The other feature of Black's play in this game is a destructive approach. There is no problem with your opponent taking 50 points of territory, so long as you take 51 points.

If Black builds on the top side and White takes the right both players have made comparable gains. Black has aji on the right which makes it difficult for White to reduce the upper right corner – for example, White cannot attack at the 3x3 point without compromising his side – this means Black has more points in the corner than usual and there is no urgency to defend there. In addition, later in the game Black can reduce White's area with the peep at 'a' and a light escape move at 'b'. Such things are definitely for later because they are too small and the focus of the game should now turn to the left and lower sides.

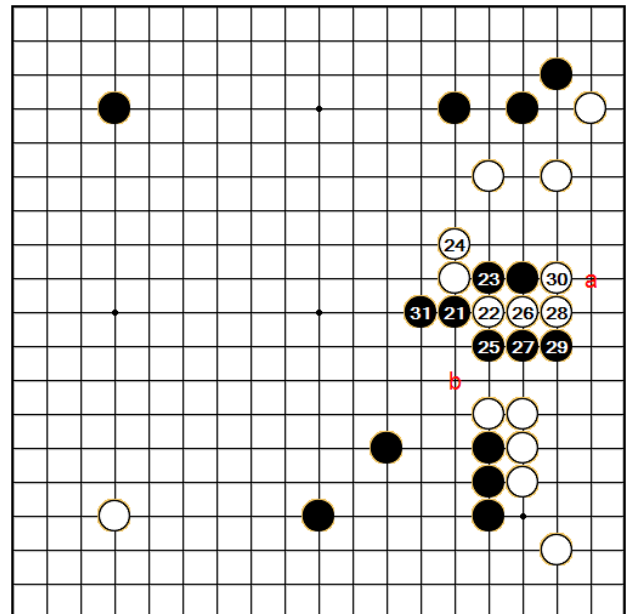


Figure 4 (moves 21 to 31)

In the game Black is put under extreme pressure with 20 but escapes with the sequence to 31. At first sight this looks OK, but if we compare the territory and potential between Diagram 9 and Figure 4 we can see it is not as good as it seems for Black.

In Diagram 9 White has about 30 points on the right side but there is bad aji because of the large gap between his wall and the two stones in the upper right corner. Black has around 15 on the top side and is using his hoshi stone in the top left well.

In the game White still has 25 points on the right side but the aji is gone. Black has not built anything on the top side to compensate and his stones are disjointed. In addition, White has aji at 'b' or, if conditions allow, a cut. So all things taken into account the pincer at 15 was a poor choice.

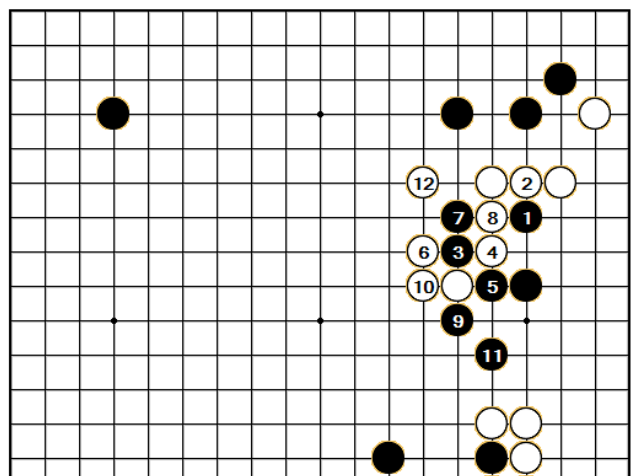


Diagram 10

The normal way of rescuing Black 15 is to play the peep at 1 and then the sequence to 12 In Diagram 10. There are other ways to play but Black has no magic escape formula – his move at 15 was poor and the consequence is that White makes a gain – either on the edge or in the centre.

One final comment on the fight – Alex commented that 1 in Diagram 11 is better shape than 30 and in most cases this is correct, but there can be problems....

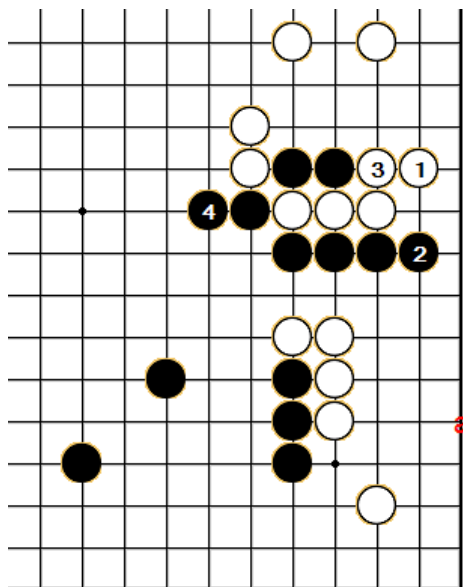


Diagram 11

... Black 2 is sente to rescue the two stones. In itself this does not seem much but with 2 in place and no White stones on the 3rd line Black can play the gorilla jump to 'a'. (A gorilla jump is like a monkey jump only bigger and more aggressive).

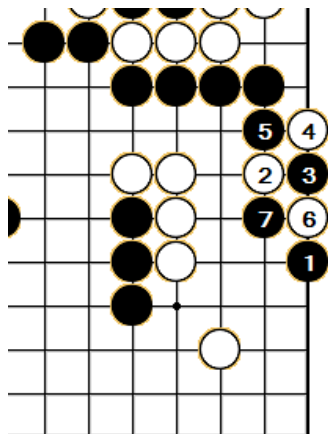


Diagram 12

After Black 1, White can resist with 2 in Diagram 12 but this results in a ko. If Black wins White could die, if White wins he can keep his corner.

A ko where there is profit for one side (haname ko) is bad news if you are on the receiving end. Basically

25 your opponent can pick almost anything he wants and you will be obliged to submit. Needless to say this is a very poor outcome and should be avoided.

So, although White 1 in Diagram 11 is normally tesuji, in this case it could be a problem.

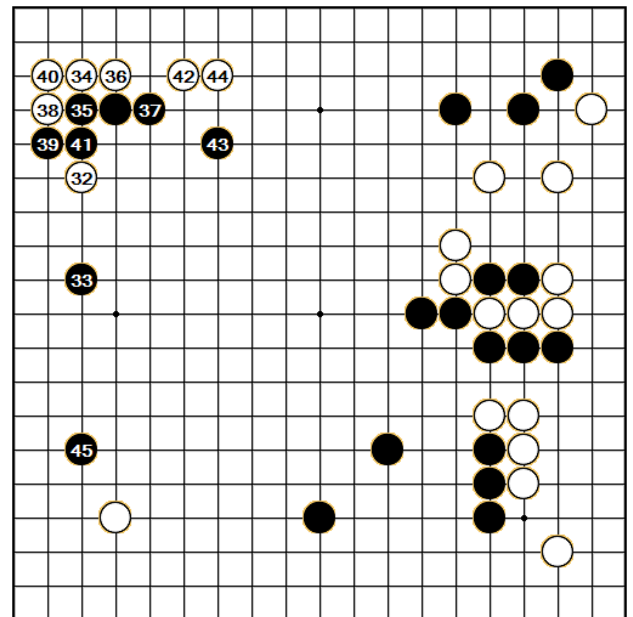
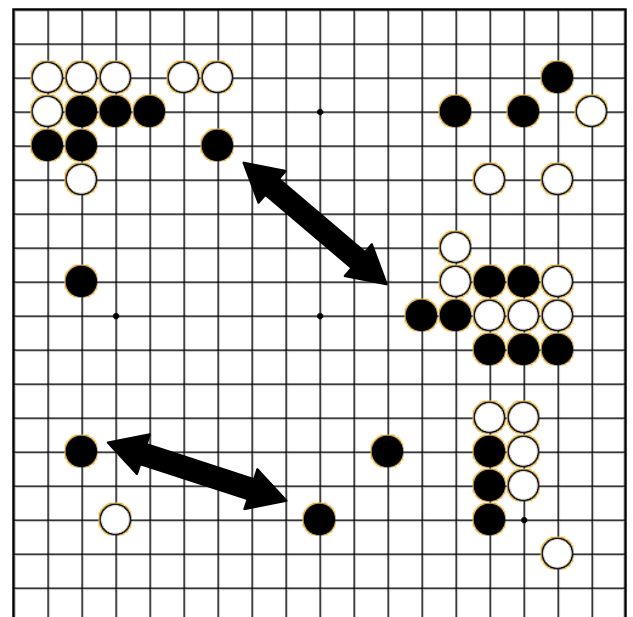


Figure 5 (moves 32 to 45)

Black's pincer at 33 starts a common joseki which is complete with 43. White 44 is an optional move and depends on the situation; in this case White should play 44 because it strengthens White and prevents Black from making much on the upper side. The downside is that Black is able to play 45 and suddenly his central stones, wall on the upper left and extension at 45 begin to work together.



26

White 46 is not a strong defence of the corner, it is better to play 1 in Diagram 15 securing the corner against attack.

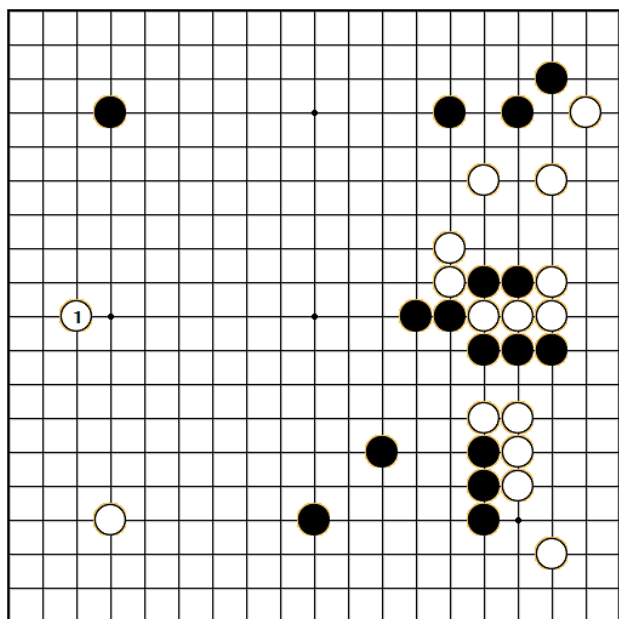


Diagram 14

Alex was not sure what to do after 45.

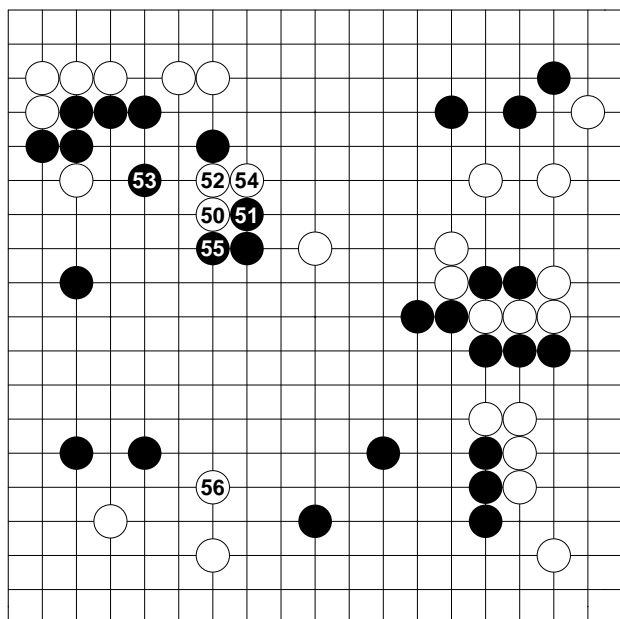


Figure 6 (moves 46 to 56)

In the game Alex played 46 and 48. It should be fairly clear that Black will play 47 whether White plays 1, or 'a' or 'b' in Diagram 15. So it is equally fair to say that

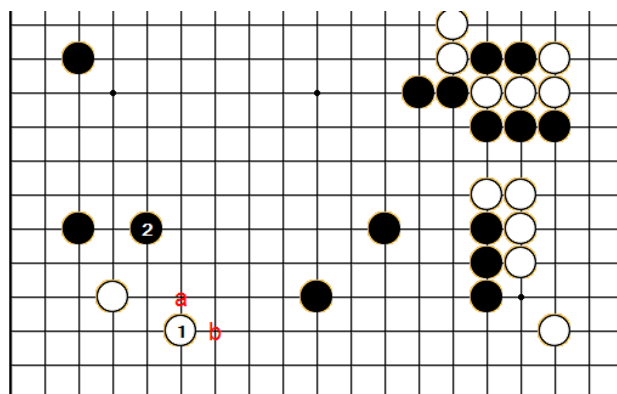


Diagram 15

White 46 is very loose so Black has plenty of ways to attack. For example...

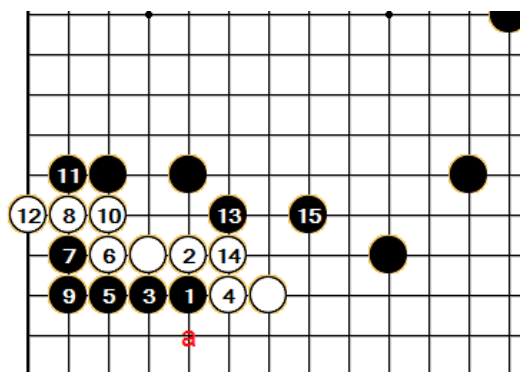


Diagram 16

Black 1 is very severe on White; if White connects across the top with 2 than Black is able to take the corner. White 'a' is sente against the corner but he will have to struggle to live, this will strengthen Black's wall on the lower side.

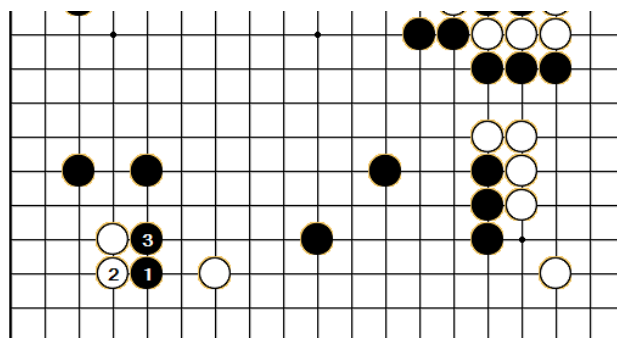


Diagram 17

If White takes the corner Black will connect out with 3 and will make territory on the lower edge rather than the side.

White can push and cut with 1 and 3 in Diagram 18 making 20 points in the corner but Black will have sente to defend the centre – either at or near 14.

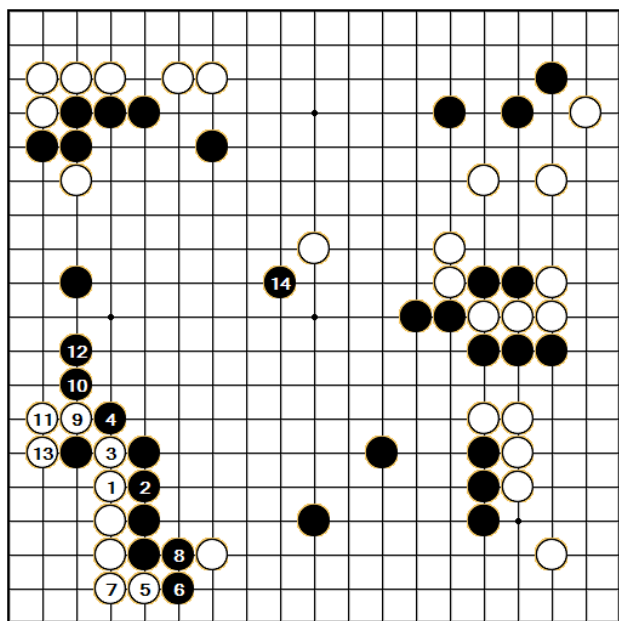


Diagram 18

A 20 point corner is large but Black has gained a lot on the lower edge and all of his stones are now working together, something that was missing in Black's early play.

It should be noted that this is only an example of the kind of attack that can be unleashed against the large knight's move, there are lots of possibilities. The reason White 46 is wrong is that it gives those possibilities to Black. When you are playing a defensive move and know you will not play in that area again, make sure you play the strongest defence.

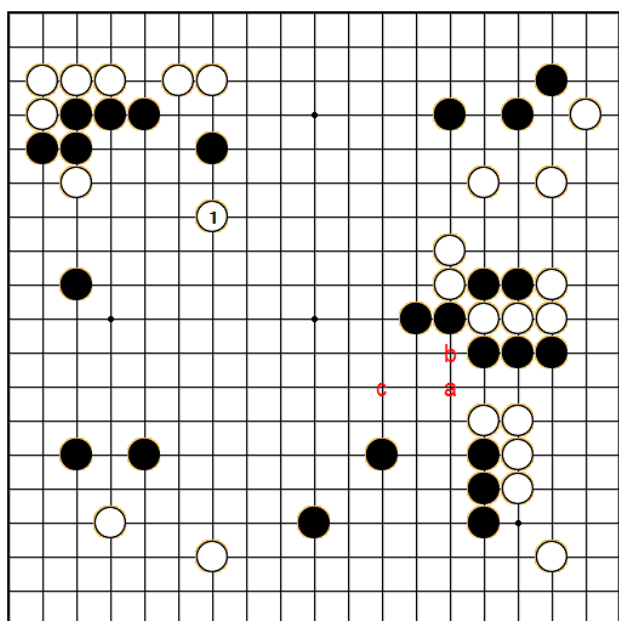


Diagram 19

27

White 48 is a bit of a fishing move, it has been cast out because something must be done to reduce the left side, but it does not do anything specific. When reducing a moyo you should always look for the weaknesses not just in your opponent's position but in yours too.

In this case the lower left corner is weak and we have already discussed the error there, but where are Black's weaknesses?

There is aji for White to peep at 'a' in Diagram 19, Black will connect at 'b' and White is able to get his nose into the centre with 'c'. The other weakness is the marked stone (the knight's move) in the upper left. The normal attack point for this is 1.

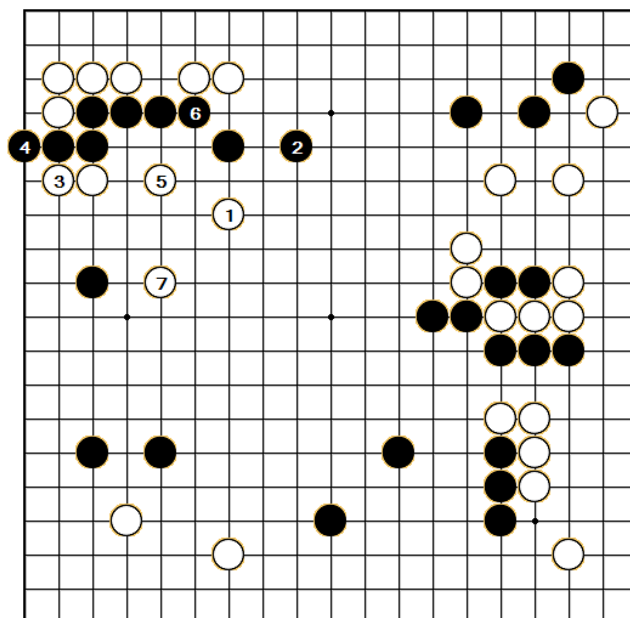


Diagram 20

It is difficult for Black to attack this stone, if he grovels one the left side White has succeeded. On the other hand Black might try to swallow the stone whole with 2 in Diagram 20, but White can counterattack with 3, 5 and 7 – not a bad outcome for White.

Black responded with 49 in Figure 7, this is passive – Black needs to take charge of the game and the way to do that is to attack the White stones in the lower left corner.

White 50 exploits the Black's weakness but the exchange of 48 and 49 has lessened the effect and Black will make more territory here than he should. But the important thing for White is that he gets to

defend the lower left corner – a great gain for White and corresponding loss for Black.

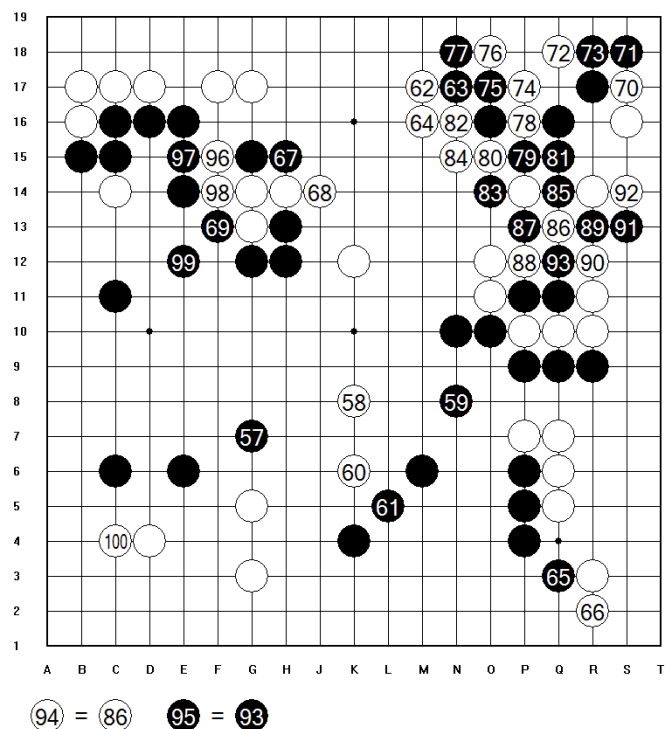


Figure 7 (moves 49 to 100)

Black 57 helps secure a nice area on the left and we are now entering large yose – so let's take stock.

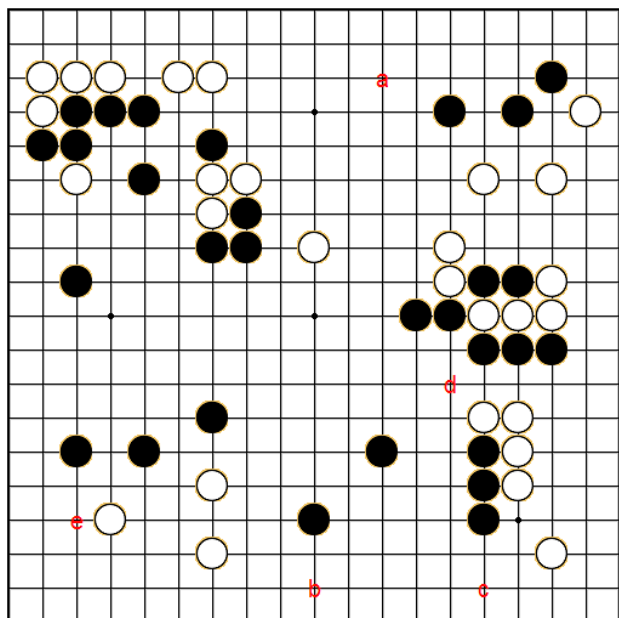


Diagram 21

In Diagram 21 I count 10 points each for Black's lower side and top right corner, plus 40 points on the left at total of 60 points.

White has 15 in the top left corner plus 10 in the lower left, another 10 in the lower right and 20 on the upper right side at total of 55 plus komi and sente.

28

From a power perspective White is better. The White positions are solid and there are fewer opportunities for Black to exploit White. On the other hand White has a number of profit making opportunities on the top and lower sides. 'a' on the upper side is probably the most valuable, but 'b', 'c' 'd' and 'e' are all big.

Back to the game... White 58 and 60 are not good moves – they encourage Black to patch weaknesses and make territory while they make no points for White. It appears they take territory from Black but that is an illusion.

If we examine this theatre of play, it is more profitable for White to play 1 in Diagram 22, 3 is sente against Black's string of stones on the right and then White can slide from the corner and take much of the base away from Black's lower side stones.

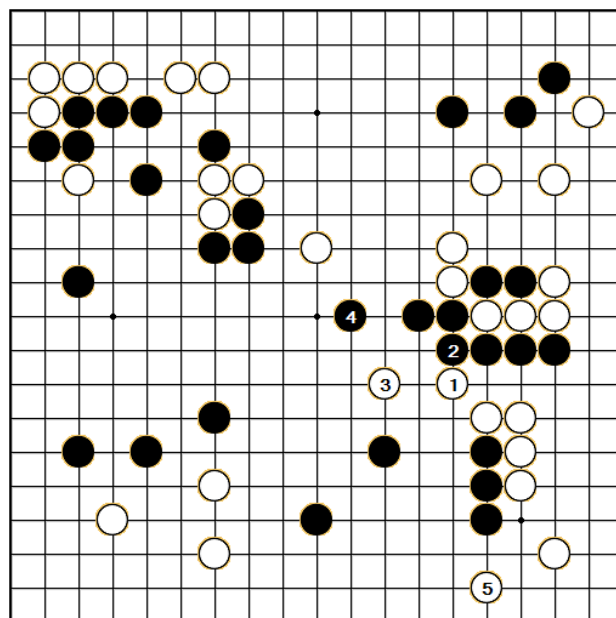


Diagram 22

This reduces the territory in the centre while making points on the lower side; it also asks questions of Black about his stones on the right and lower sides. Dividing these groups is of significant tactical importance. White 58 in the game let Black connect for almost no penalty.

White 62, taking the key point on the upper side should seal the game – I count White almost 20 points ahead at this point.

White 72 is an overplay – there is no way to kill this corner, the best thing is to reduce the area, preferably in sente.

First let's see why it cannot be killed.

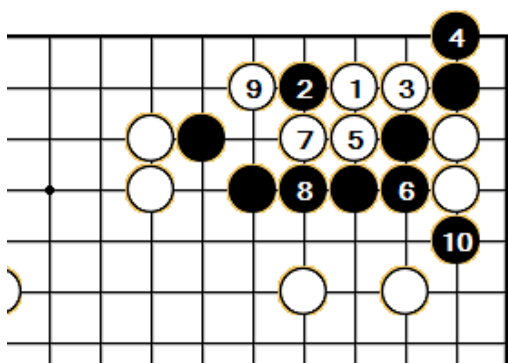


Diagram 23

Black 2 and 4 are the tesuji combination that save Black's stones – certainly White has cut with 3 but in struggling to get enough liberties Black is able to capture two of Whites stones making two eyes and 5 or 6 points of territory.

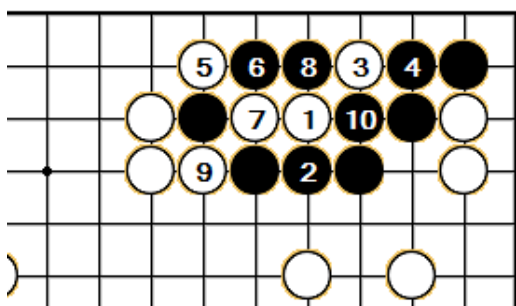


Diagram 24

White 1 in Diagram 24 changes the sequence but Black is able to get enough room to make two eyes. So despite Alex's thoughts to contrary the group was safe.

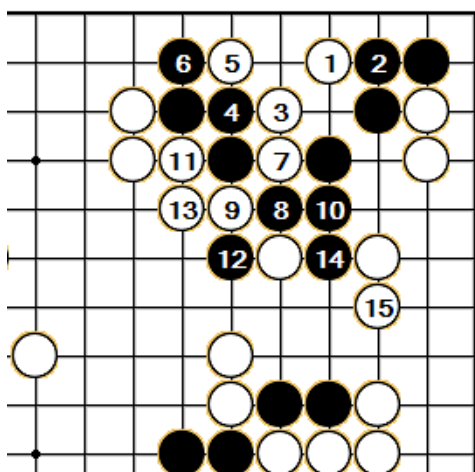


Diagram 25

Black 2 and 4 in Diagram 25 are a big mistake and should have been the game losing moves, Blacks group thrashes around but after White 15 the group dies.

29 The sequence in the game is a disaster for White, not only does Black live, he captures White stones, reduces White's area and makes around 15 points territory. Counting the game and territory, Black is winning, but not by much – perhaps 3 or 4 points.

Not wishing to rub salt into the wound but White was winning and not by a small amount; he chose to try and kill a group to finish the game. This threw the result into the air – it could have gone either way. This is not a good approach – if you are winning, you do not need to take risks: play solidly, and play the entire game – do not get impatient.

There was a subsidiary issue in the game which both players missed....

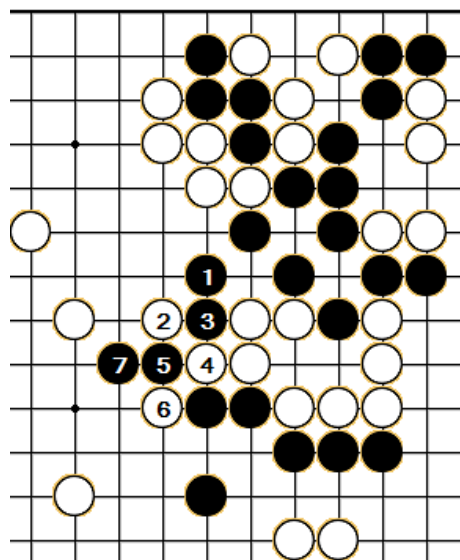


Diagram 26

The geta of 1 in Diagram 26 works. If White tries to escape with 2 and 4 Black is able to run away and White's stones die.

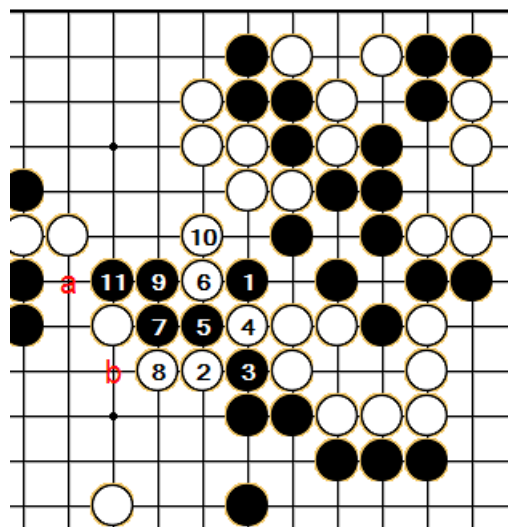


Diagram 27

The alternative is for White to play 2 in Diagram 27, Black is able to escape with 11 – points ‘a’ and ‘b’ are miai.

30

Back to the game – Black 97 is a chicken move. I suspect Black did not count the game – he probably thought he was a long way ahead following his victory in the upper right corner. He just wanted to secure his area and win. Unfortunately the sacrifice of these two stones gives the lead back to White, according to my count by around 5 points.

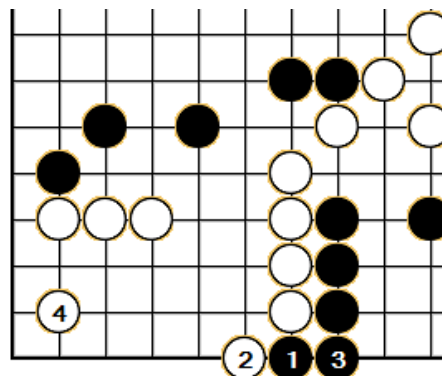


Diagram 29

If Black plays on the lower side first and tries to emulate the situation in the game by defending the lower cut with 4 he will be sorely disappointed.

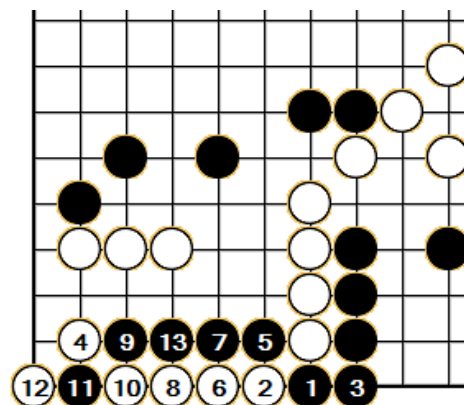


Diagram 30

Black can cut and run with 5 and 7 in Diagram 30, and then plays the sacrifice tesuji at 11, if White captures Black plays 13 capturing the stones and destroying the territory. It may be only one point, but many games are lost for the lack of a point.

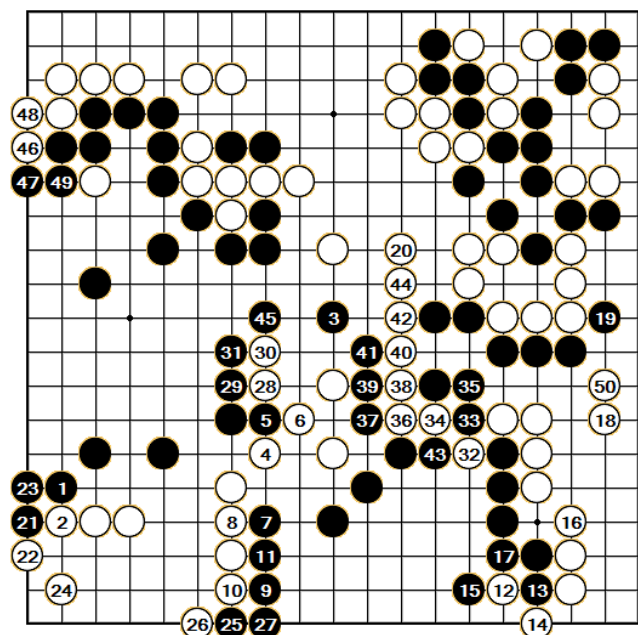


Figure 8 (moves 100 to 150)

I will not comment on the rest of the end game except to highlight the sequence in the lower left corner. Black loses a point because he plays the 21 through 24 exchange before playing 25.

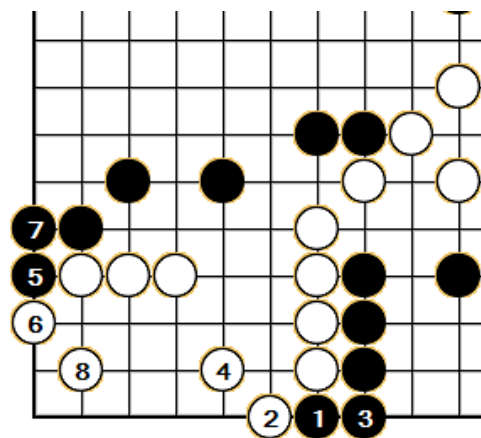


Diagram 28

The correct sequence is shown in Diagram 26. White has to defend at both 4 and 8. In the game White was able to tenuki after Black 127 because his stone at 124 defended the cut on the lower side.

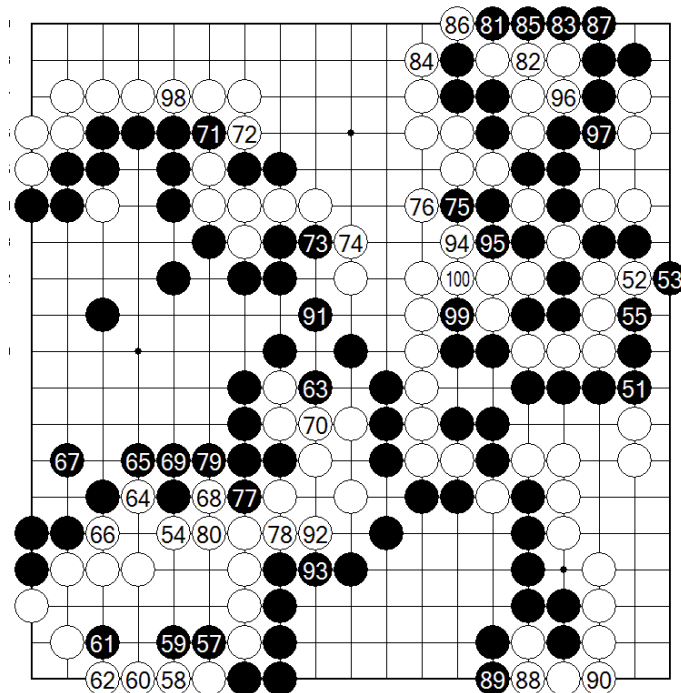


Figure 9 (moves 150 to 200)

White 156 at P11 (move 23 in the game)

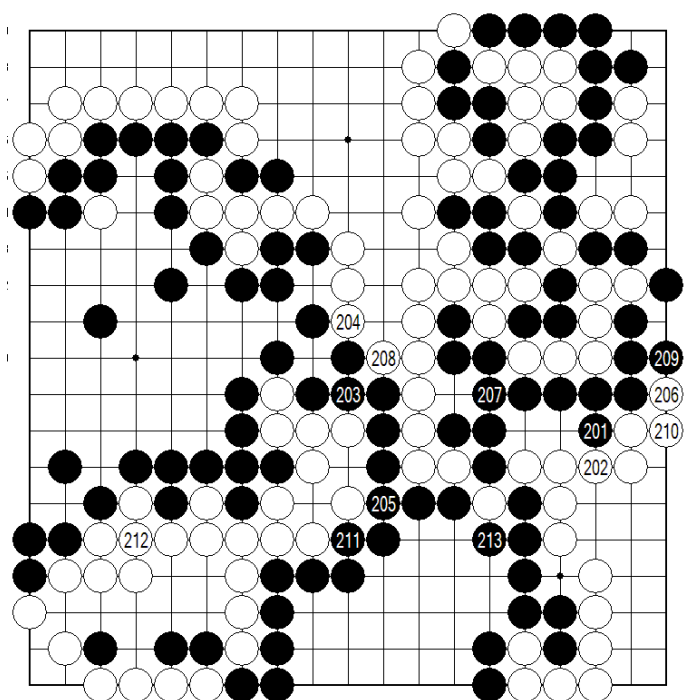


Figure 10 (moves 200 to 213)

White wins by 3.5 points.

The result of the game was reasonable considering the opportunities and errors. There are a few lessons that can be learnt from this game.

1. More value is gained if your stones work together, try to ensure the direction you pick fits with the rest of your stones.
2. If you have the chance to separate your opponents stones or prevent them from working together do so. Make it hard for your opponent to get his stones to work together. In this game there are two examples – in the early middle game White 32 should have been on the 10x3 point on the left-hand side, this would have limited the Black moyo on the left. Also, White 158 should have played 1 and 3 in Diagram 22, this was as destructive as the game but created aji against Black's lower side group.
3. Picking the right direction to develop or attack is key to efficiency. Black's build his major area in this game on the left side when he was able to link his stones in the centre with the wall in the upper left corner.
4. Before launching an attack determine what you will gain. Most of the time an attack does not kill, the gain is in the reduction of your opponents' area or an increase in yours.

Always consider the option of taking a big strategic point; If your opponent defends you can take another big point. If he takes a big point, the attack potential still exists and you should have a better idea of how to use it. In this game Black 5 was premature, it was unclear how to exploit the 3x3 stone and it should have been left for later.

Full game score

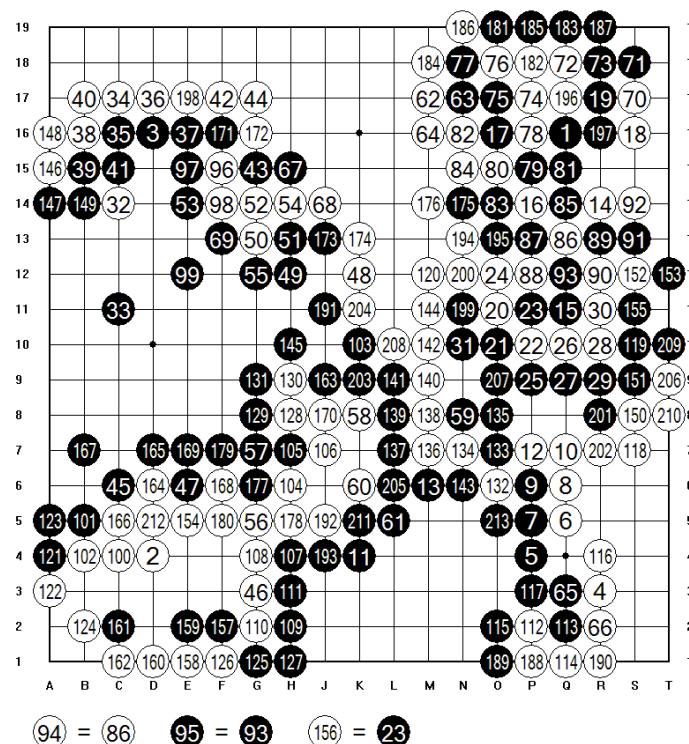


Figure 11 (moves 1 to 213)

NEC Cup (Round 1)

Black: Cheong Guo 3 Dan

White: David Mitchell 5 Dan (win by resignation)

Date 21st April 2007

This was my first tournament game since 1979 so there are some sentimental reasons for commenting on the game.

This is the only game from the tournament where I have the complete score – this is because I recorded the games after completion and in most cases could not recall the yose moves accurately.

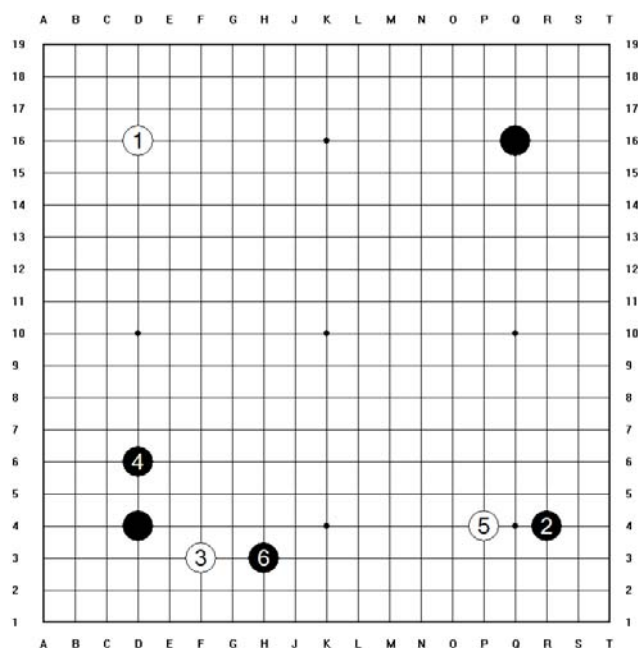


Figure 1

Giving 2 stones is always hard, not only is it impossible to build a preferred fuseki pattern, your opponent has two corners to build from.

I like the shape of White 3 and 5 in Figure 1, it gives White a chance to build along the bottom side and disrupts Black.

While I cannot say Black 6 is a bad move, it certainly gave me a good feeling about the game. White 3 can still run into the middle or dive into the corner so the attack is not severe. This gives White the chance to take sente.

I often carry out a sort of Fuseki analysis – this requires the answer to two major questions – where are the biggest areas and which are the weakest stones. After White 5 neither player can develop the bottom nor right sides.

32 Black cannot develop anything on the right side because of White 5 - if he tries White will press him down and building influence. White cannot build a moyo on the lower side – Black 4 is in a good attacking position, and the right side has nothing for White.

The top and left sides are developable for both and must therefore be the focus of attention. Given the exchange in the lower left I believe the left side is the best for Black, but the differences are marginal and probably governed by personal preference.

So what about weak groups, are there any and how can they be attacked for profit? None of Black's stones are weak but White 3 could be attacked, the real issue is how to make that attack pay.

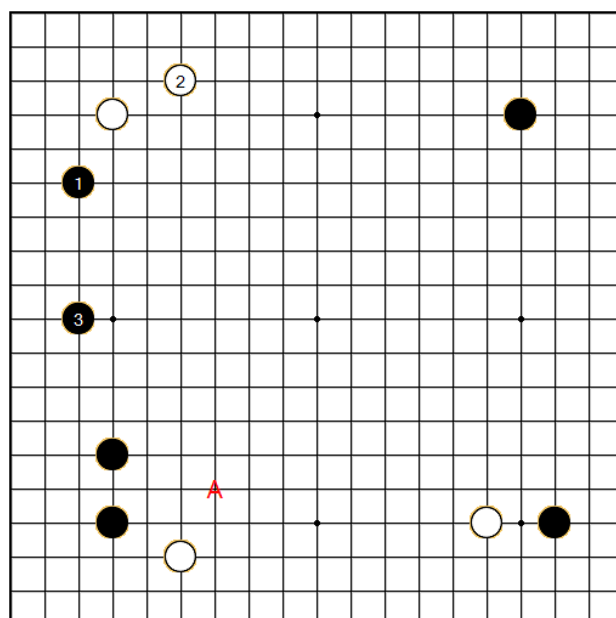


Diagram 1

At this stage of the game it is better to build saving the weaknesses in your opponents position for later. If White spends a move defending then you get an extra move elsewhere; if nothing is done you can choose an appropriate attack once other areas of the board have been settled.

Black 1 in Diagram 1 is a good constructive move in one of the developable areas of the board. White should play 2 defending the corner which allows Black to play along the side. A pincer from White would be foolish because he already has a weak stone at 3.

If White later tries to build along the lower edge then Black can play 'A' pressing White down and adding to Black's central influence.

The key thing at the beginning of a game is to build territory; attacking and killing is fun but that comes later – build first.

Black 6 gave me a chance to build something of my own. I reasoned that White 3 can run into the centre or run to the 3x3 point and despite being weak was not the focus. I had to build something.

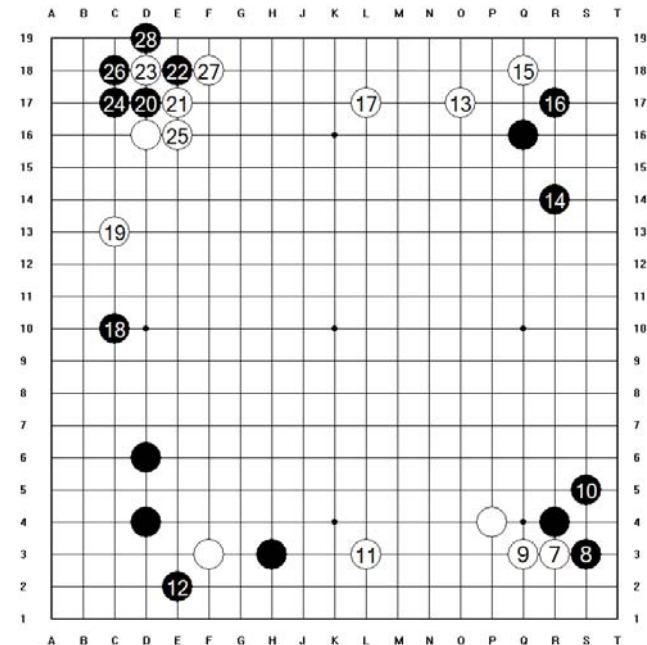


Figure 2

I decided to settle my stone in the lower right with the sequence to 11. Black normally plays 6 in Diagram 2, but because of the investment in the lower left corner Black felt obliged to continue with 12.

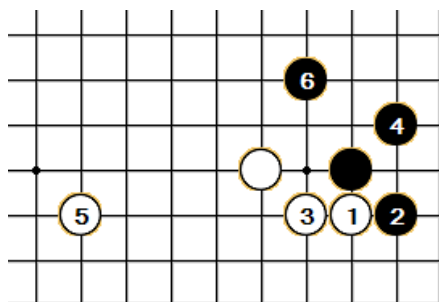


Diagram 2

Without 6 in Diagram 2 there is a weakness in Black's position and if he is not careful he will be pushed down to the second line on the right side.

33

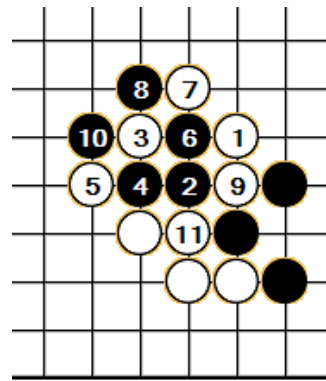


Diagram 3

The clearest way to show the weakness is to review the hamete (trick) joseki shown in Diagram 3. Obviously a 3 dan will not fall for such crudity, but it does show the potential for White and the weakness in Black's shape.

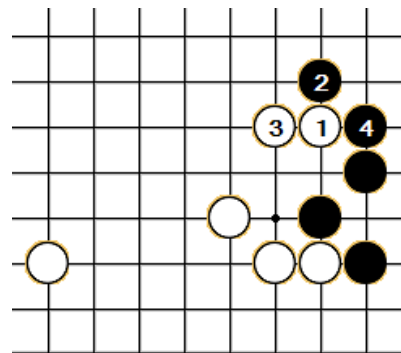


Diagram 4

White 2 is the correct reply to 1 in Diagram 4, this allows White to extend his influence on the lower side up into the centre of the board.

With the group settled I could then turn my attention elsewhere. Rescuing the single stone on the lower left was not important at this time and if Black spent another move capturing it then I would not be unhappy.

I decided the upper side was best for White because it is furthest from Black's strong position in the lower left corner.

The sequence to 17 is a peaceful joseki which helps White on the upper side, but gives Black sente.

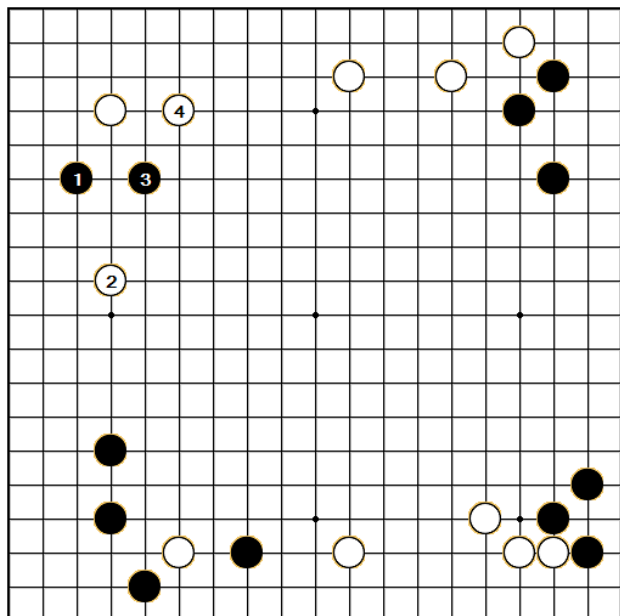


Diagram 5

I had expected Black 1 in Diagram 5 which I planned to pincer with 2 with the sequence to 4 leading to a running fight in the centre.

This was not the advice earlier but things have changed. A Black extension on the left side works well with his lower left corner and the capture of White 3 (Figure 1) does not gain Black much. Black did not like this outcome and decided to play the simple extension at 18 avoiding the difficulties.

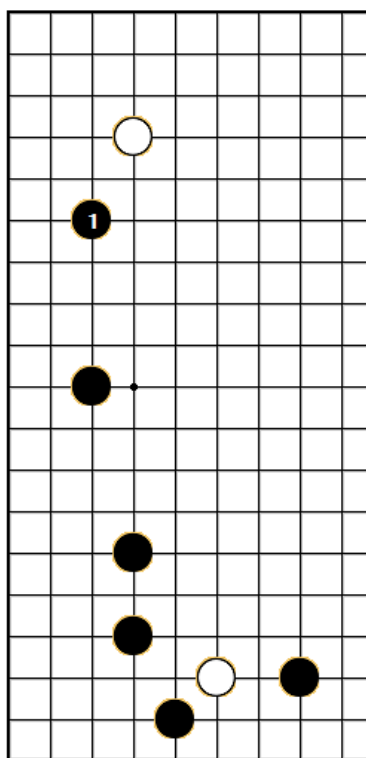


Diagram 6

If White ignores the left side Black will aim at 1 in Diagram 6 making a very nice area. From White's

34 perspective there is nothing else on the board as big, so a move in the upper left corner is essential, but which one.

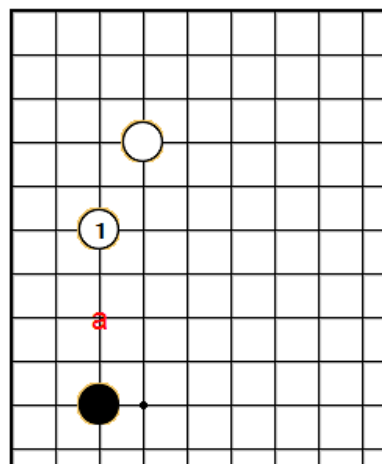


Diagram 7

I spent some time considering this position and rejected White 1 in Diagram 7 as too slow. It does defend the corner but if Black's side stone gets separated from the rest of his stones he still has a one point jump to 'a' for eye shape.

If on the other hand I play 1 Diagram 8 extending my corner Black could simply defend with 2 – I am obliged to defend the upper right corner with either 'A', 'B' or 'C' which allows Black to get the key move at 'D'.

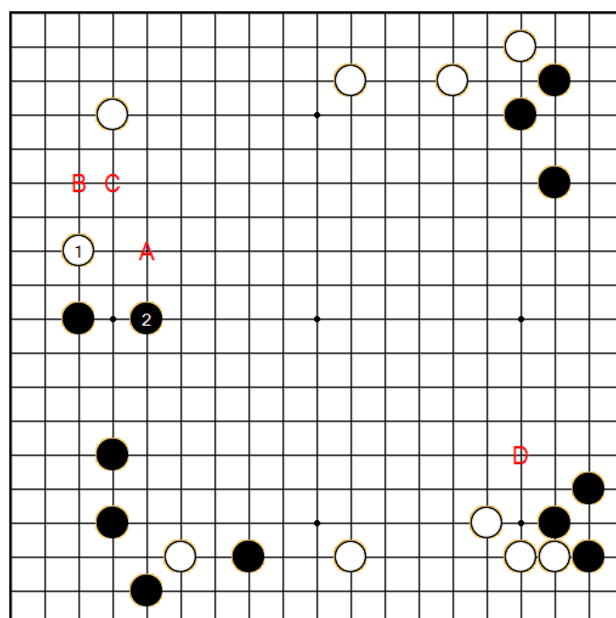


Diagram 8

I picked the large knights move – this leaves the corner open but puts more pressure on Black's left side area.

35 had a number of weaknesses I was able to get to play first in the lower right corner and start executing one of my plans.

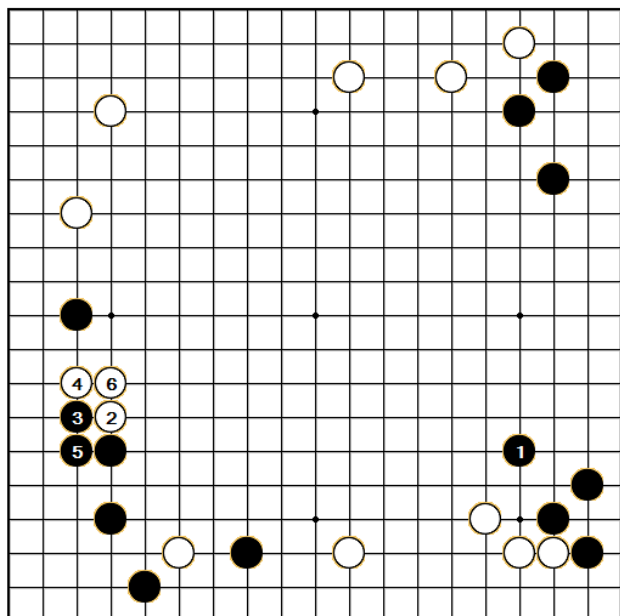


Diagram 9

I reasoned that if Black ignored the upper left corner and played 1 in Diagram 9, I had an attack at 2. The aim would be to separate Black's left side stone and build my own area on the left. Obviously if Black resisted there would be a fight but it would be in Black's biggest area and any mistake would prove costly.

If Black defended with 1 in Diagram 10 I could flatten Black's area on the right and try and bring my stone in the lower left into play by playing sagari with 6. Again my aim was to fight near Black's biggest area.

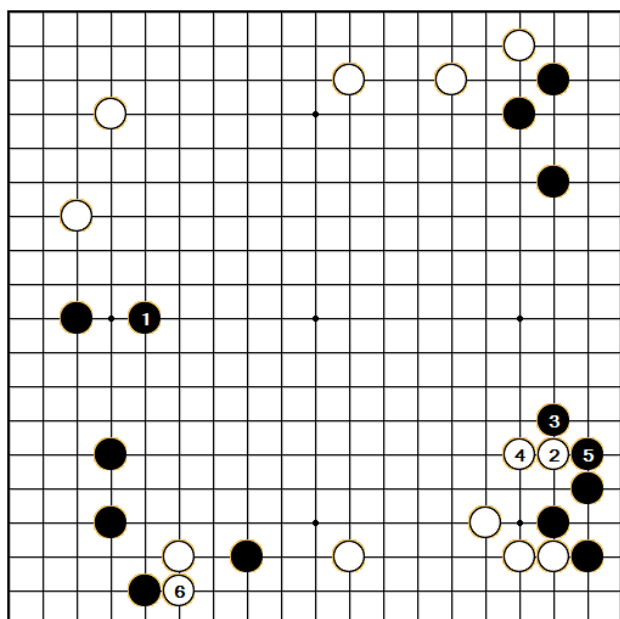


Diagram 10

In the game Black invaded the upper left corner and lived in gote. While my position was stretched and I

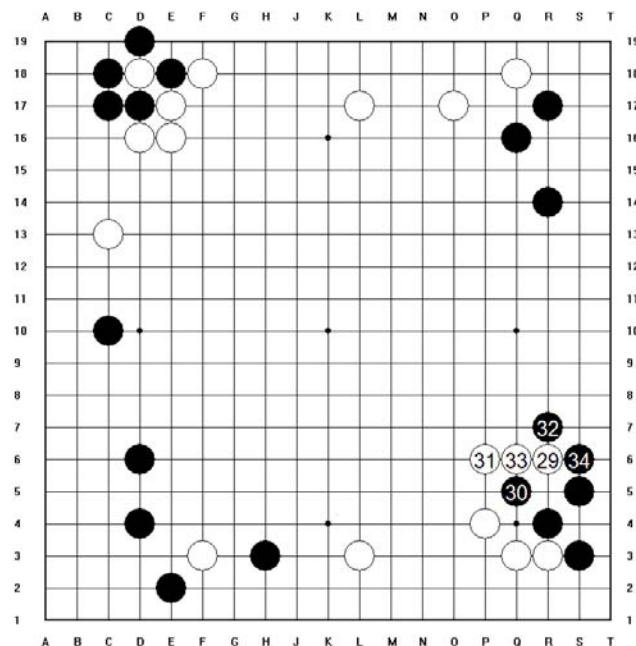


Figure 3

Black 30 in Figure 3 was a mistake, but Mr Guo realised the problem and back peddled with 32 and 34 so the impact was minor.

Assessing the game at this point finds Black still ahead but he has 7 stones on or below the second line; his group in the upper left is isolated from the rest of the game and the majority of his territory is in one place. White has sente and a clear target in the lower left corner, so despite being behind on territory I was not unhappy.

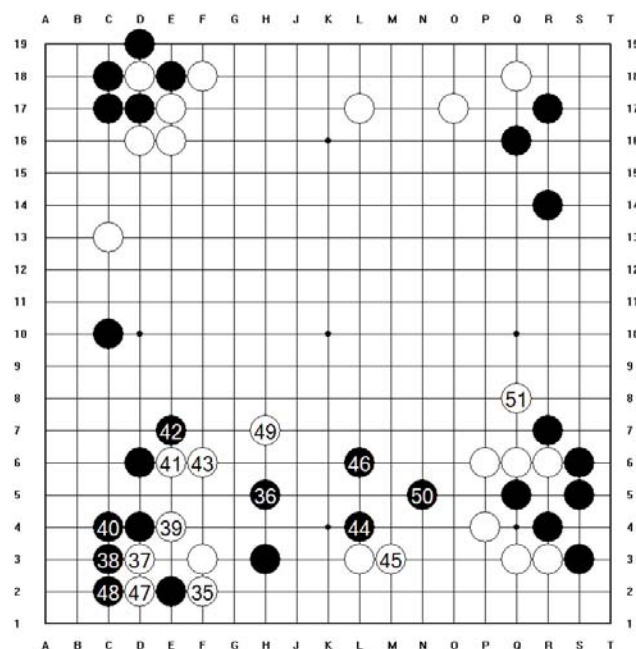


Figure 4

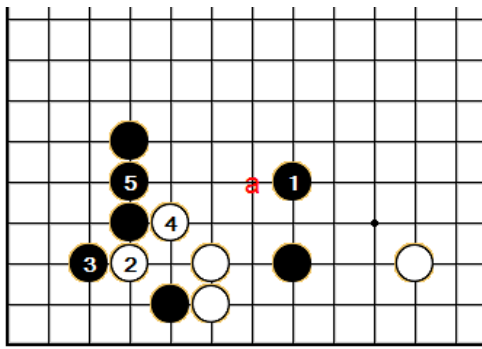


Diagram 11

Black made several mistakes following White 35. I felt that Black 1 was too loose, a keima at 'a'; would have put more pressure on White making escape just that bit more difficult.

However, playing 40 in Figure 4 allowing White to play 41 and 43 lost Black's attack advantage and left weaknesses behind on the right side. All of a sudden Black was under attack and running away not White.

A Black connection at 5 in Diagram 11 is much stronger and reduced other problems later.

Black 50 threatened to cut my position, but after lots of careful reading I decided Black's weakness in the lower left corner could be used to extend my attack. I was wrong, but In the game everything turned out right.

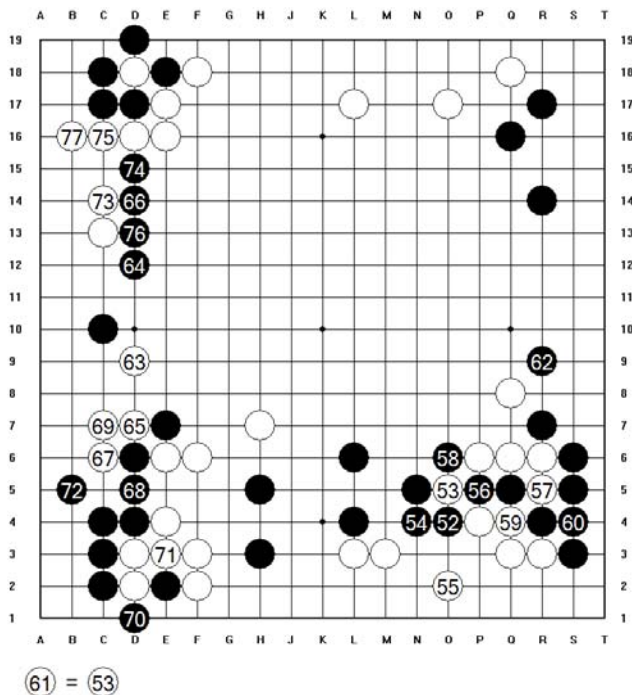


Diagram 12

White 52 and 54 threaten to isolate the two White stones on the lower side but White 57 sets up the double atari at 59 and Black is in trouble.

36 I think Black's problem started with 52, if he had simply pushed with 1 in Diagram 13 and connected at 7 White would have been faced with the choice between connecting underneath at 'a' or taking at 2 to connect to the outside stones – not a nice choice. This outcome is obviously far better for Black and throws into doubt White 51.

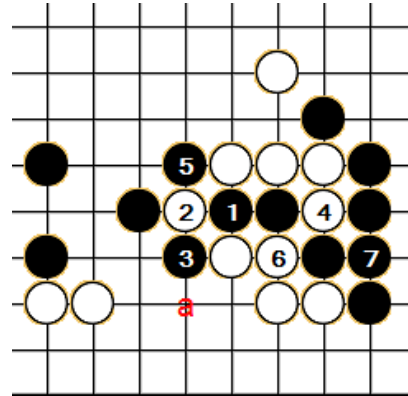


Diagram 13

I was lucky and kept my stones connected. While Black had to jump out with 62 to prevent the isolation of his lower right corner group.

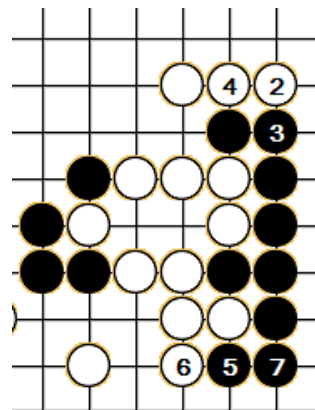


Diagram 14

If Black plays tenuki White will play 2 through 6 in Diagram 14 in sente, Black lives but any hopes of territory on the right side have disappeared.

The fight on the lower side is not over, but it is difficult for to find a way to profit. I formulated a plan where I would first push the left side stones, this would strengthen my position in the direction of the grey arrow in Diagram 15; I could then come back and pressure the Black stones in the direction of the white arrow.

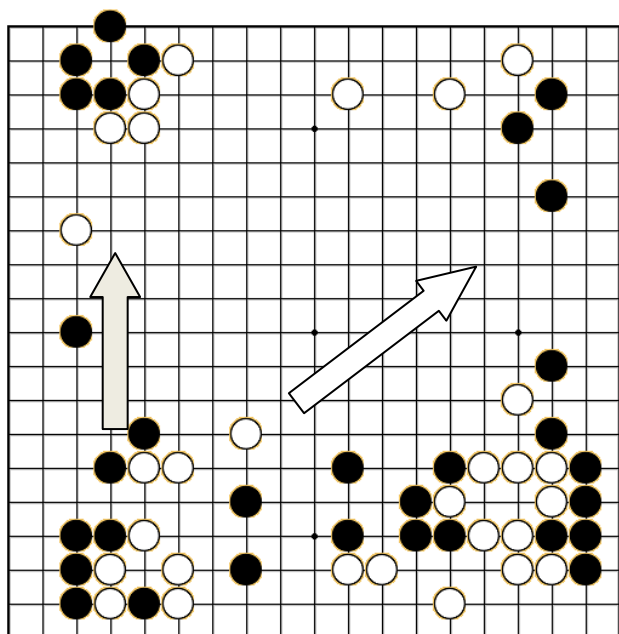


Diagram 15

I had no doubt that the centre side Black stones would be able to live, but I thought I could make a central territory by chasing the group.

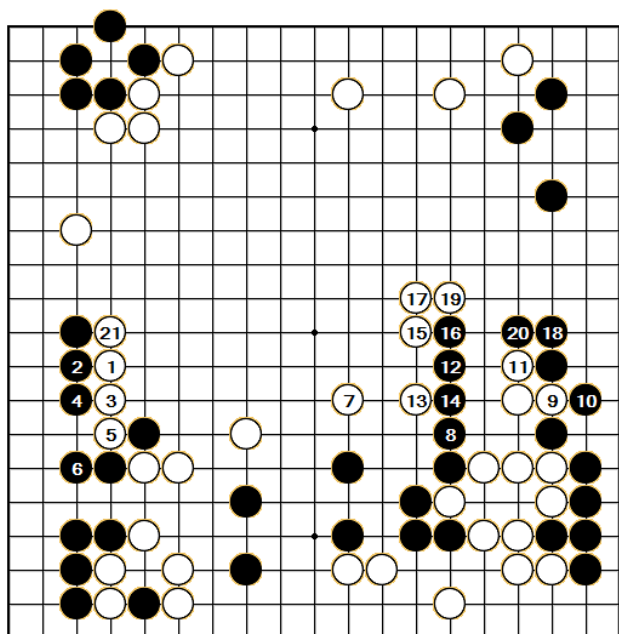


Diagram 16

The rough sequence I had in mind is shown in Diagram 16. Obviously Black is being very cooperative, something that rarely happens in games, but if I could get something like this I thought I would make a reasonable area in the centre.

Needless to say Black was most uncooperative – Black 64 was totally unexpected and looked like it was going to start a running fight right through the middle of my planned central territory.

37 Cutting at 65 was an attempt to get back to my plan, this helped strengthen my lower side group and reduce Black's area. I thought Black had to connect underneath with 2 and 4 in Diagram 17 – I would then be able to continue my plan but I was ignored again!

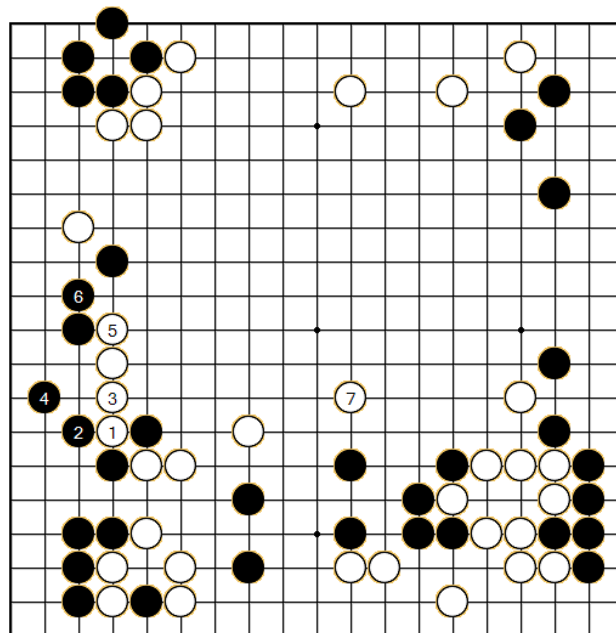


Diagram 17

After 66 it is not possible to kill Black's corner but I could shut it in and reduce the area to a few points.

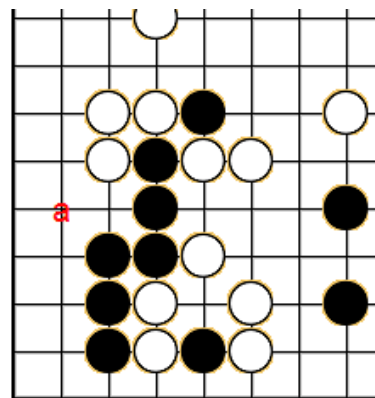


Diagram 18

Black 72 is essential, if Black tenukis White plays 'a' the corner dies. (This is the James Davies 'L' group shape – which as we all know is dead).

White has not only reduced Black's biggest area but gets sente and can rescue his left side stone with 73.

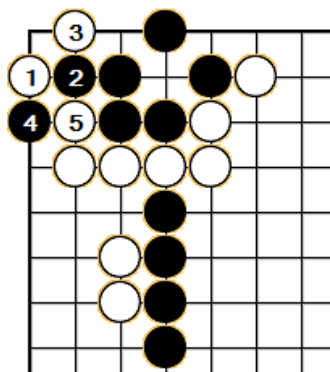


Diagram 19

Black's attack on the left was ineffective, White was able to run along the left side and connect with the sagari of 77; this threatens to kill Black's upper left corner in ko as shown in Diagram 19. Saving the stones also gives White a base while Black is left floating.

Black's problems stem from his knight's move at 64, this more than any other move, loses the game.

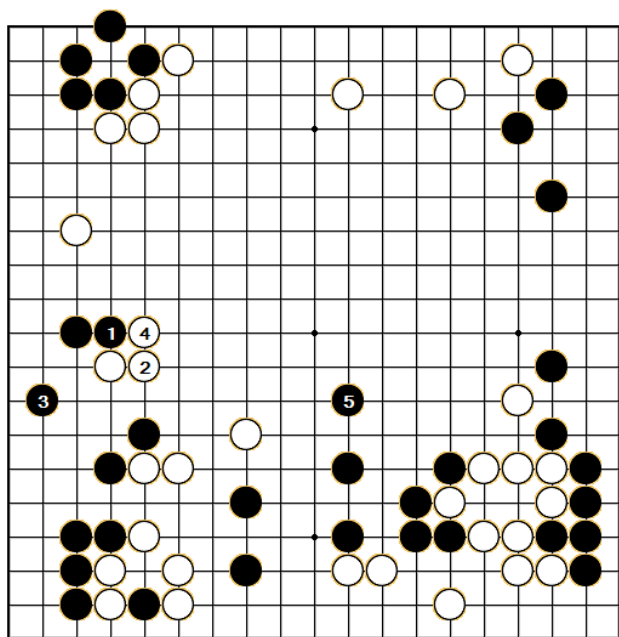


Diagram 20

Black 1 and 3 in Diagram 20 is a better way forward for Black. At this stage White really does not have enough territory to win, so reducing the centre with 5 while strengthening Black's weakest group is a good option. White could try playing 4 at 5 but White's position is looking thin and any central area less likely.

38 Back to the game. After 77 in the game I had expected Black to defend the corner with 'a' in Diagram 21. My plan was then to chase the left side group driving it towards the bottom (as shown by the grey arrow) and then play a splitting attack across the centre as shown by the white arrow.

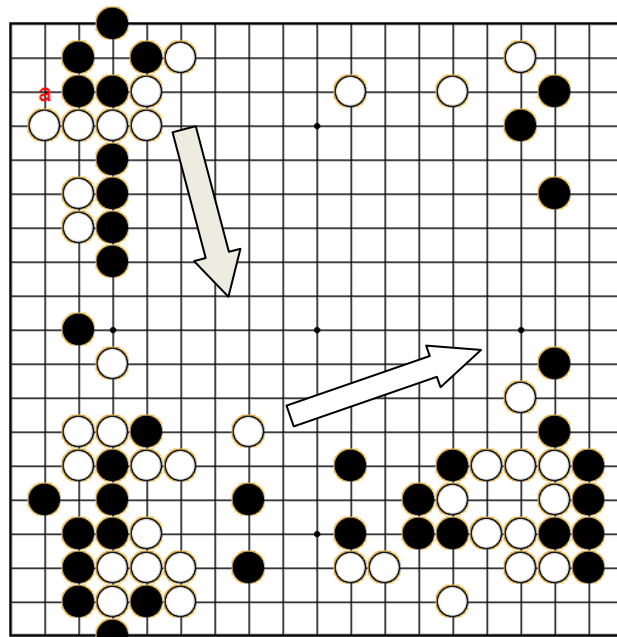


Diagram 21

Black decided to try an escape along the upper side with 78 in Figure 5. White 81 is a very poor move, it is far better to play 1 in Diagram 22, Black cannot make another eye on the side so his stones could still die in ko.

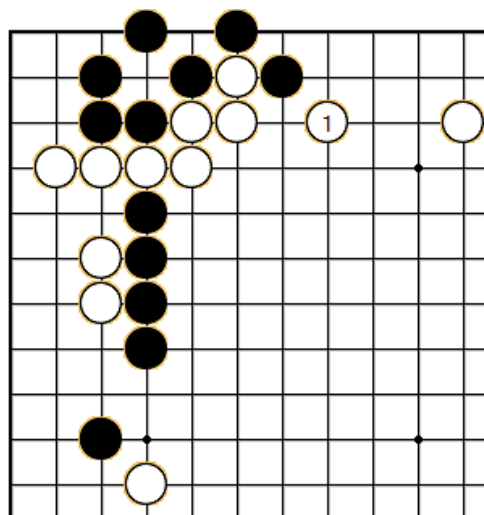


Diagram 22

I had thought White 81 move would strengthen my position and allow me to come back to the upper side but Black 82 was sente.

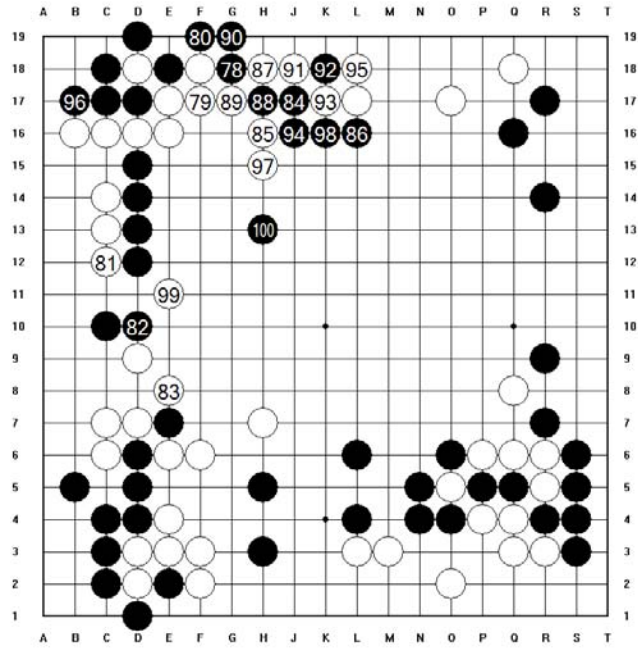


Figure 5

Black 84 is a good move but 86 is just too much.

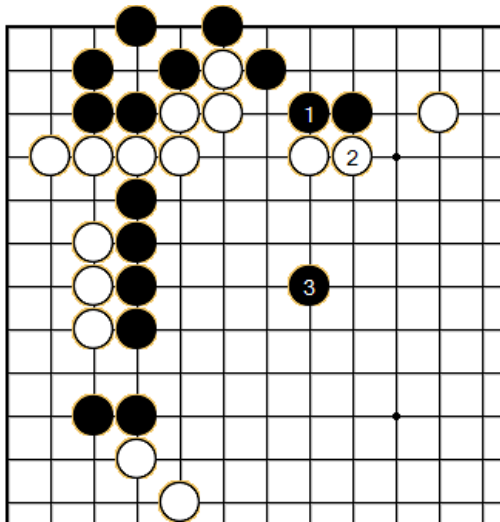


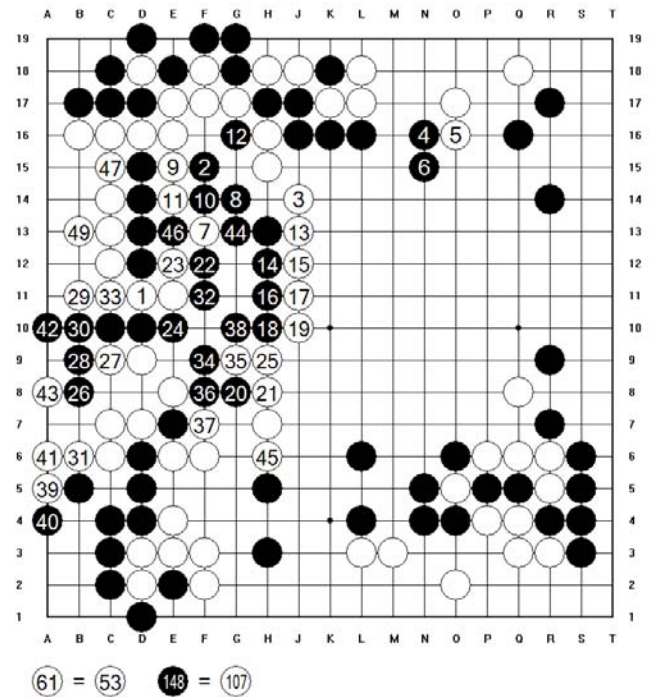
Diagram 23

Black 1 in Diagram 23 is much better, this makes another eye for the corner group, White needs to play 2 but Black can escape with 3. The game is far from settled but Black is much better off this way.

In the game Black's corner was isolated and Black lived with 96 – the difference between Diagram 23 and the game is huge.

After 96 White's strategic aims are much the same, separating Black's weak stones and taking profit when possible – Black would be too busy defending to worry about territory and hopefully this would win the game.

It must be said that the Black's position is much worse following the isolation of the corner because his four stones (88, 84, 94, 98 and 86) are another target for White.



Answer pairs

Answer to Problem Pair 1

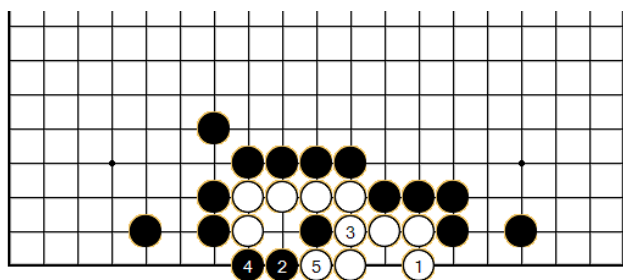


Diagram 1

White 1 in Diagram 1, making the eye saves his group because Black is in damezumari after 5. The only alternative for Black is to play 4 at 2 but when White plays 2 the result is the same.

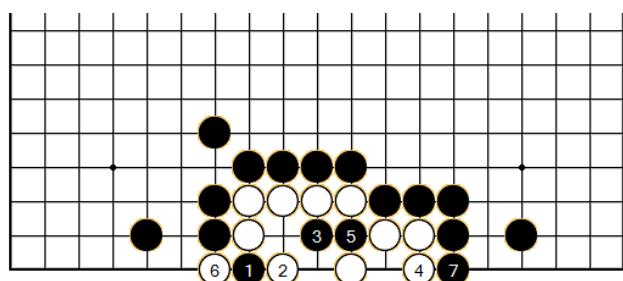


Diagram 2

There is really only one option once the eye-stealing move has been eliminated – reduction. Black 1 pushes into the eye space, but he has no time to play at 3, first he must block. White can then take the eye-stealing move. This looks similar to the shape in the first problem but it is White who suffers from damezumari after 5 and dies.

Answer to problem pair 2

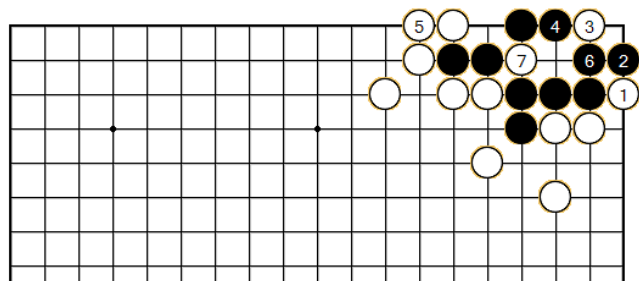


Diagram 3

The tesuji sequence of 1 and 3 should be well known to anybody who has studied life and death in corner positions. This shape enables White to play the apparently passive move at 5 but Black cannot make two eyes.

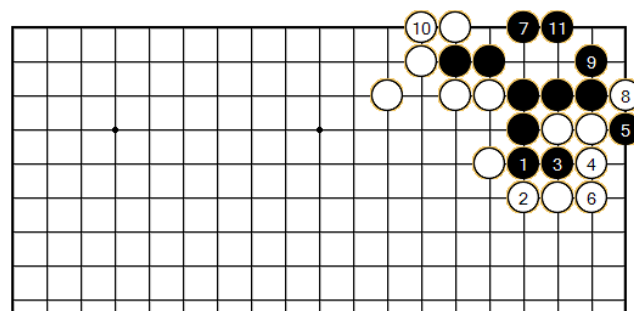


Diagram 4

The question raised in the second problem is now clear – how to avoid this deadly shape. The answer is to use the weakness of the surrounding stones. Black 1, 3 and 5 prevent the key hane move seen in the previous answer, now Black can live.

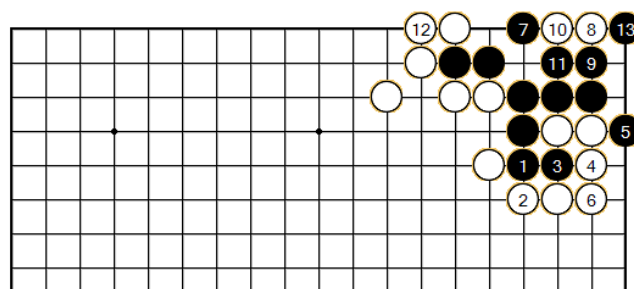


Diagram 5

Diagram 5 is an interesting variation, but after Black captures with 13 he has one eye on the edge and two places to make the second.

Answer to problem pair 3

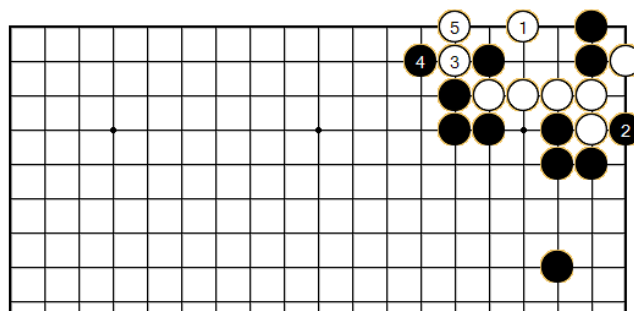


Diagram 6

White 1 is a clever tesuji – if Black takes the eye on the right side White can cut a 3 and extend with 5 to cut off the single Black stone and make a second eye. After White 1 2 and 3 are miai. (It does not matter which move Black makes, White will make the other and live).

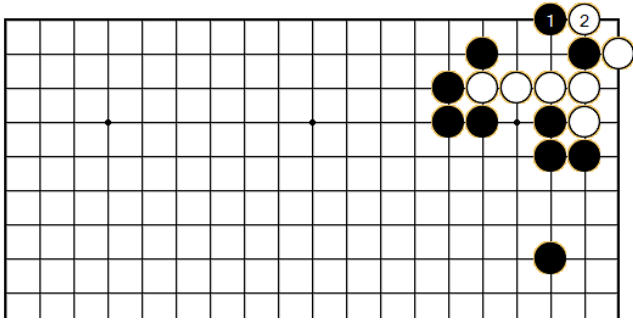


Diagram 7

Ko is the only solution for Black...

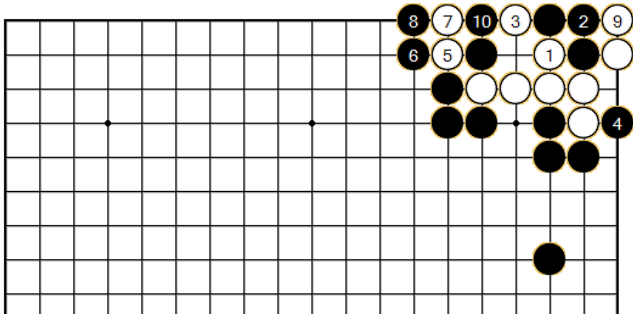


Diagram 8

If White resists with 1 in Diagram 8 he dies. The cut at 5 no longer works and he is not able to make two eyes in the corner.

Answer to problem pair 4

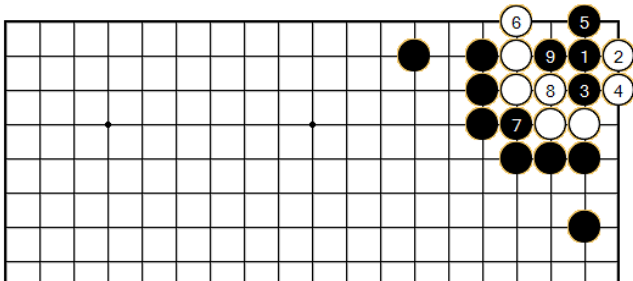


Diagram 9

There are a lot of variations of the 'carpenters square' but when the hoshi (4x4) stone is missing it dies. In Diagram 9 White tries the 2x2 point but ends up with a nakade shape and dies.

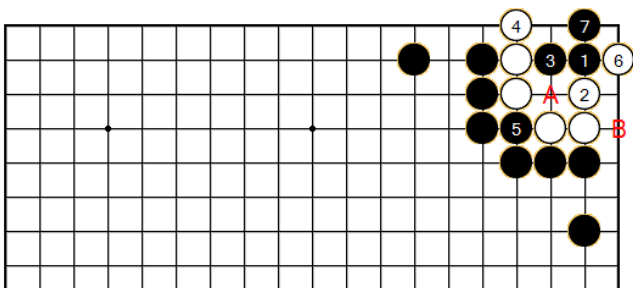


Diagram 10

A more direct route seems to offer hope, but after Black 7 White has to play both 'A' and 'B' – a good ko threat but that is all.

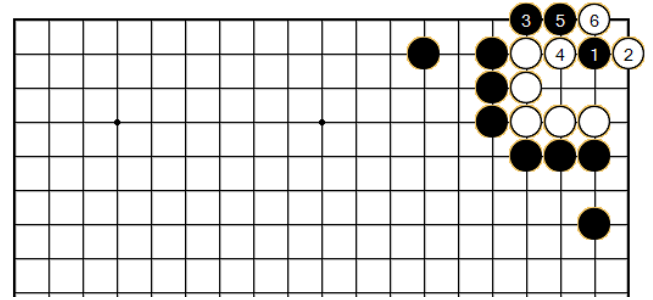


Diagram 11

The carpenters square with a hoshi stone is ko. That's what the books say and they are right, but the position is complex and one slip can mean the difference between life and death. Black 1 in Diagram 11 is the obvious move but White is able to force a ko with 4 and 6.

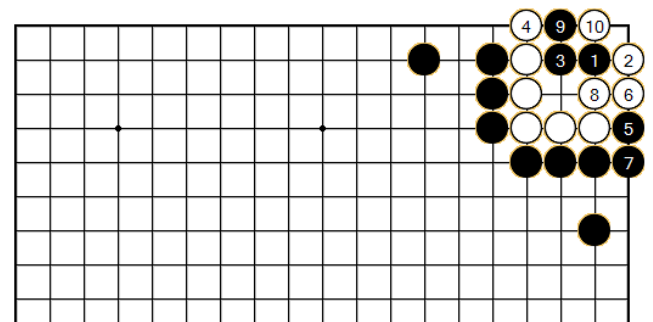


Diagram 12

Black can try 3 in Diagram 12, but the result is still ko – but only if White plays the right moves. Studying the Carpenters Square is a good way to improve your reading and tactical skills.

Answer to problem pair 5

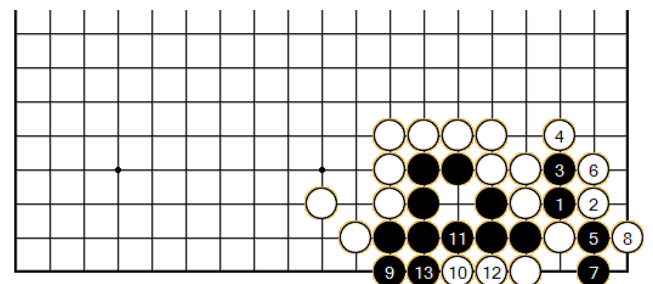


Diagram 13

From the first time I saw this problem I was hooked. It is so clear that Black is dead – only Houdini himself could get out of this. Fortunately for Black there is a way and it takes some study to see all the variations, but the key is the threat to make another eye in the corner following 7, without that Black's stones are history.

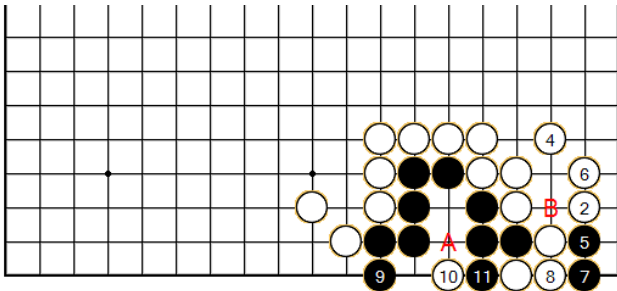


Diagram 14

If White tries to connect with 8 as in Diagram 14 then Black can step back and secure more space with 9 and now he is safe. White 10 (if played) is desperate stuff – following Black 11 there are miai at ‘A’ and ‘B’ for Black to live.

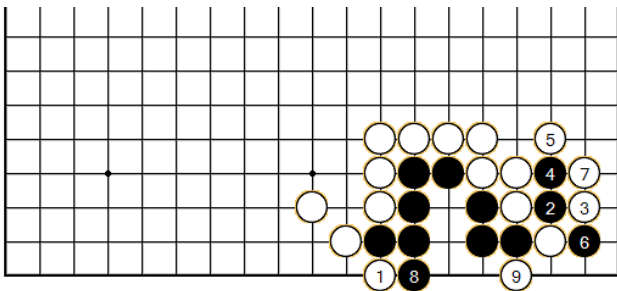


Diagram 15

So, moving to the second problem of the pair – how should White kill. The hane is right, and although the position appears symmetrical there is a difference. White 1 in Diagram 15 kills.

Answer to problem pair 6

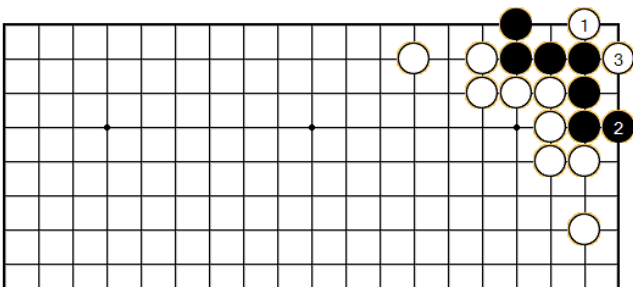


Diagram 16

This problem and its answer are not without controversy, the status of this shape following White 3 has dogged rule makers around the World. The bottom line ruling is that after 3 Black is dead. I can remember arguing with Francis Roads at the Enfield Go Club about this many many years ago and today I do understand the logic in the ruling – equally I understand the flaw (albeit one that may impact one in a million games). Bottom line, the group is dead.

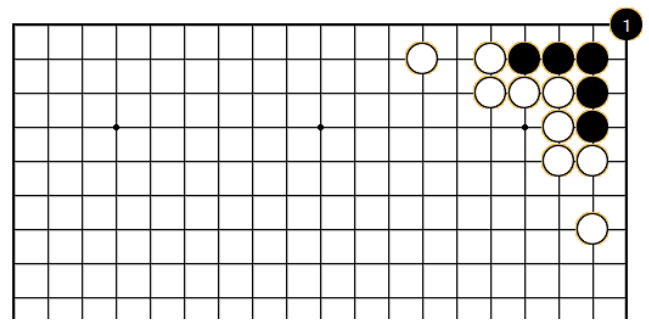


Diagram 17

The real way to avoid disputes is proof. If Black plays 1 in Diagram 17 he lives with an eye on either side. There is no better proof that this.

Answer to problem pair 7

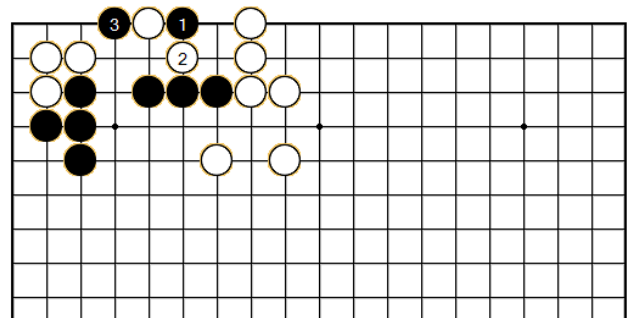


Diagram 18

Black 1 is a sacrifice stone that allows 3 to sever the connection with the three White stones in the corner.

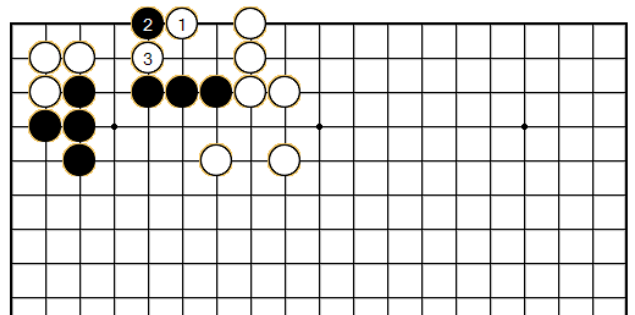


Diagram 19

White 1 is the correct move to connect the corner stones to the outside. The reason this is a problem for many players is that it goes against the general principle of helping the weaker stones first. The stones on the outside are clearly OK but the corner is a problem – normal logic dictates the saving move would be close to the corner – not so. Learn the lesson.

Answer to problem pair 8

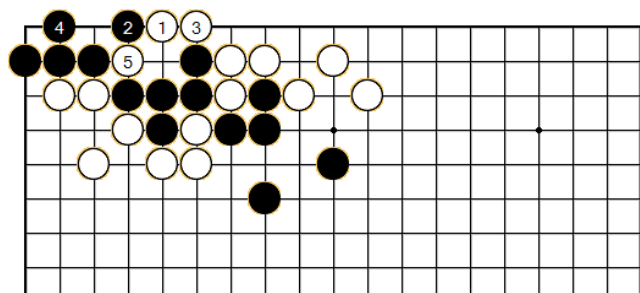


Diagram 20

White 1 uses Black's lack of liberties to kill the corner. Black 4 is a big ko threat that is all, because White can capture some of the outside stones in snap-back with 5 blinding the second eye.

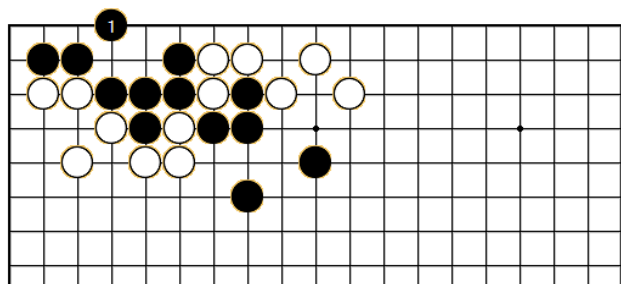


Diagram 21

Life is about making 2 eyes. Black 1 splits Black's area into two and makes two eyes.

Answer to problem pair 9

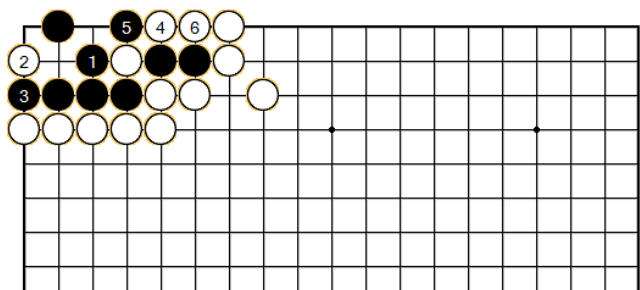


Diagram 22

This problem is fairly simple, not because the solution is easy to see, but because there is really only one logical line. Fortunately for Black he gets two eyes.

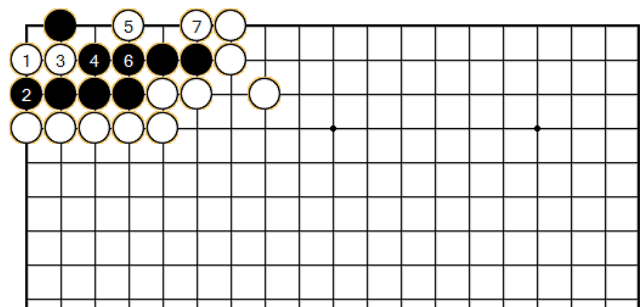


Diagram 23

43 White's problem in this pair is much more complex. There are many variations that fail and only one that works. Taking the 1x2 point with White 1 is obvious, but the real issue is White 3 which is not natural. Black does not have any option but to play 4 and now White can use damezumari (lack of liberties) against Black. White kills with 7.

Answer to problem pair 10

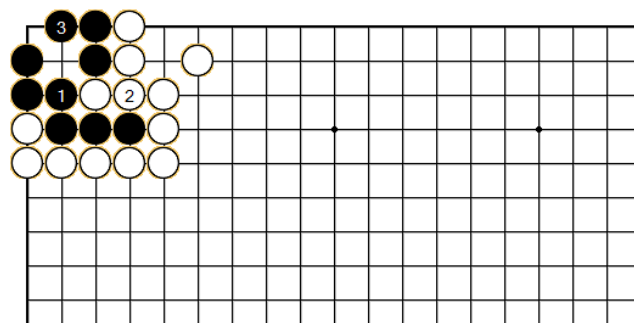


Diagram 24

Atari is never a bad move, so they say, and if you are playing a weaker player simply uttering the word can cause confusion. In this case Black's atari at 1 is fairly obvious and White must connect, this enables Black to live with 3.

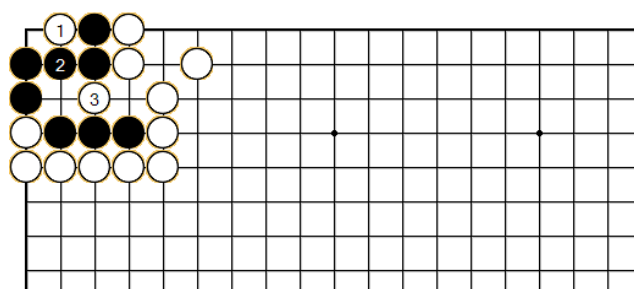


Diagram 25

The correct attack on Black's shape is White 1 in Diagram 25; Black plays 2 to prevent the atari but White kills with 3.

Answer to problem pair 11

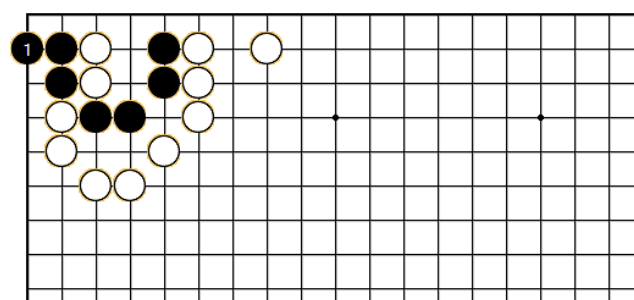


Diagram 26

While there are not a lot of moves to choose from Black 1 is hard to find, but having found it the Black stones live with plenty of territory.

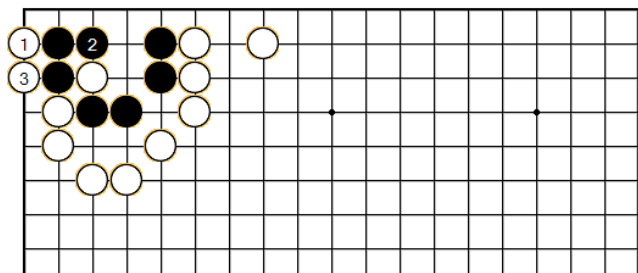


Diagram 27

In reality there is no way to kill these stones. The correct move for White is 1 in Diagram 27, and while this reduces the corner it does not kill it – indeed Black can tenuki after White 3.

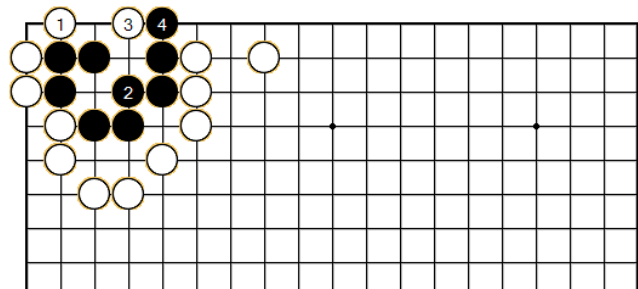


Diagram 28

To prove the point, If White plays 1 to destroy Black's eye on the edge, Black will take with 2. White's attack at 3 fails because of damezumari.

Answer to problem pair 12

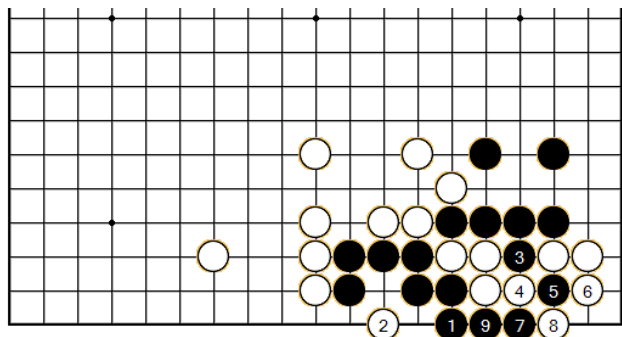


Diagram 29

This problem pair was derived from a position in a game at the NEC Cup in Melbourne in April. Black 1 threatens to make two eyes but at the same time threatens the corner. If White resists with 2 then Black is forced to kill the White corner....

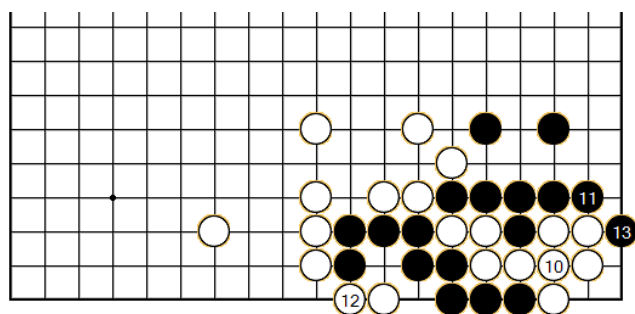


Diagram 30

44

...after 13 White has 2 liberties and Black 3.

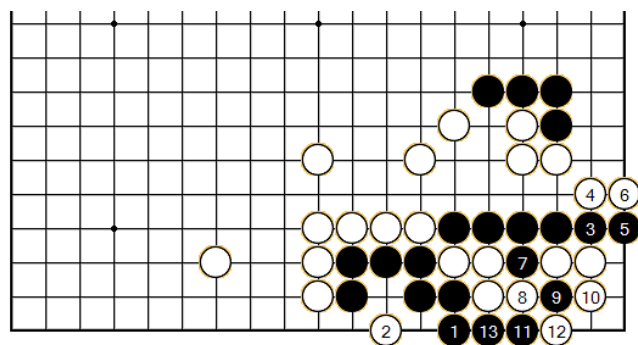


Diagram 31

Using the threat seen in the first problem Black can connect his four stones on the right side. First he threatens to live – if White resists he can play 3 and 5 threatening to connect – if White resists strongly then Black pushes and cuts with 7 & 9. While White can connect his stones.....

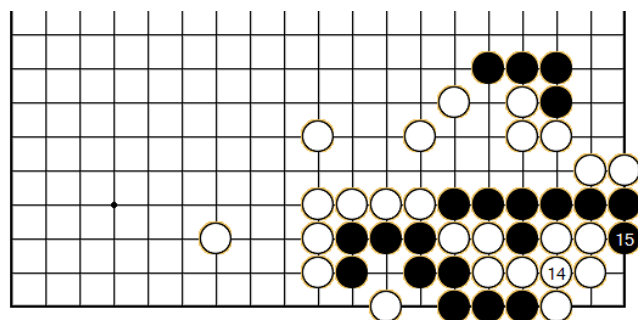


Diagram 32

... with 14, Black 15 kills White's corner.

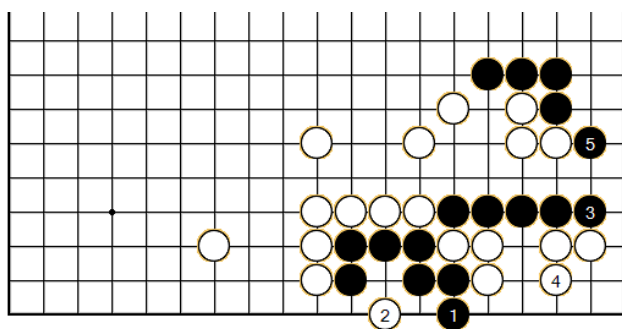


Diagram 33

White's best option is to play 4 in response to 3; this allows Black's four stones to escape.

Answer to problem pair 13

45

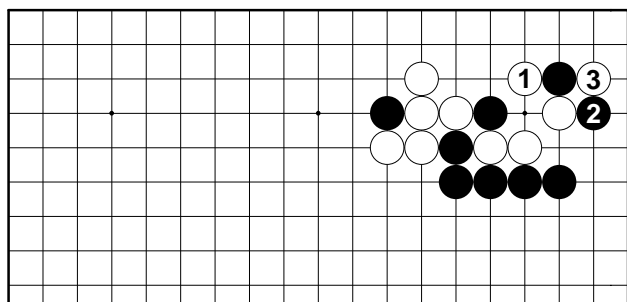


Diagram 34

White 1 in Diagram 34 is the best move, Black may reduce the corner slightly with 2 but White 3 ensures most of the corner remains White.

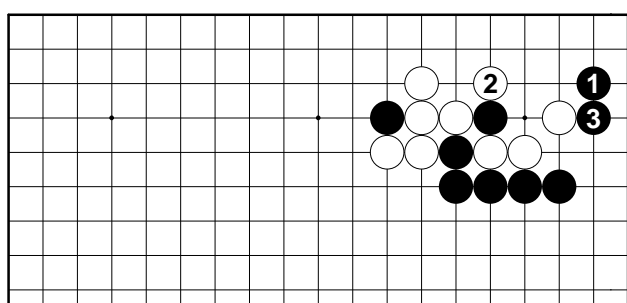


Diagram 35

Black's reducing move is much harder to find, but once located enables Black to not only reduce the corner but take a large chunk for himself.

Answer to problem pair 14

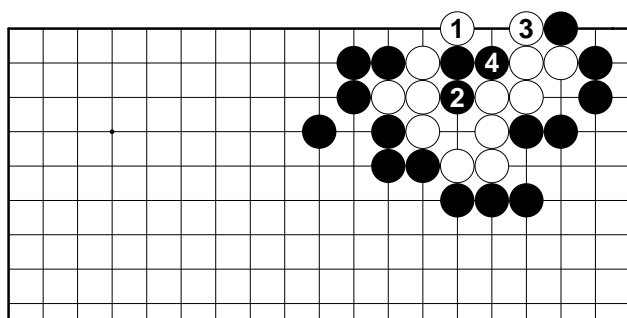


Diagram 36

"Life – don't talk to me about life". Marvin was a little depressed but life is not everything. You can survive without two eyes; in this case White survives in seki.

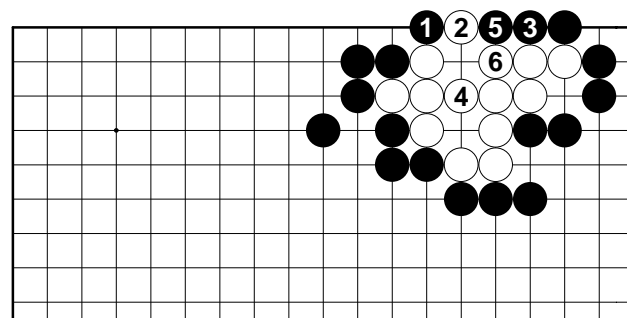


Diagram 37

As with a previous problem, if striking at the heart of an eye space does not work push from the outside. Black 1 in Diagram 37 creates a ko.

Answer problem pair 15

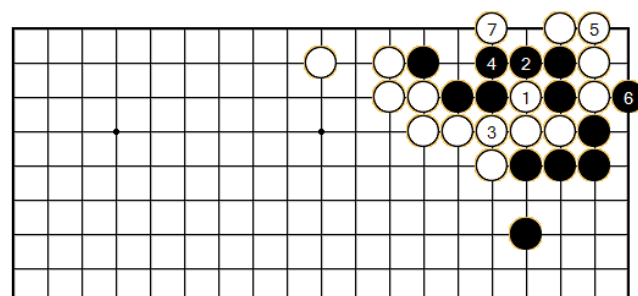


Diagram 38

White 1 takes advantage of Black's weakness – the sequence to 4 is normal but White's connection at 5 is the key. Black cannot live and has fewer liberties than White. Black 6 looks like it might succeed but White 7 kills the Black stones.

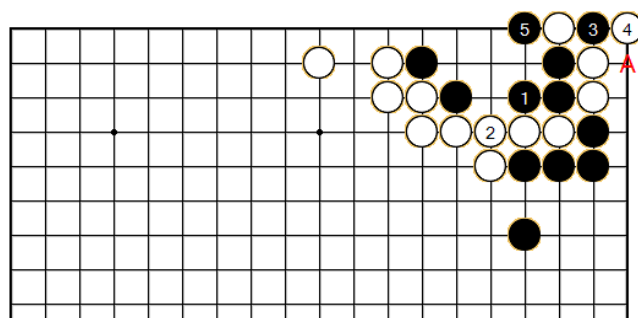


Diagram 39

We know the peep does not work, however Black can force a ko by playing 1 and 3. If White takes at 4 then Black plays 5 resulting in ko. If White plays 5 then Black plays 'A' – again a ko.

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