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The City Go Club

Meets Friday nights at :-

At Philas House
17 Brisbane St
Surry Hills

From 5.00pm

Entrance fee - \$3 per head includes tea and coffee.

For further information from Robert ravadas@yahoo.com

How to study go

In no particular order...

DO:

- ... engage your brain, during study and play
- ... play as much as possible against as many different players as possible
- ... play quickly but thoughtfully
- ... try to have a strategy and play toward it – at least you will know what you were fighting for even if you lose
- ... discuss your games with your opponent and others (stronger or weaker): it always helps to see it through someone else's eyes
- ... study and memorise professional games; try to understand the moves and question anything you do not understand
- ... play through printed game scores – this will help you find the next area of play and while occasionally it may be frustrating trying to find the next move, it is at those times that you are learning. (This method teaches far more than clicking on the 'next move' button or waiting for 'auto-play' to show you what happens next).
- ... study lots of go problems (tsume-go, tesuji etc) and try to think out the position rather than playing it out – you will learn much more
- ... read as many books and magazines as you can
- ... stretch your imagination and try new things
- ... write a constructive critical commentary on somebody else's game once a month – try to teach at least one lesson
- ... when studying turn the board around 180° every 30 to 40 moves, it is surprising what you see.
- ... respect your opponent

DON'T:

- ... take the Go books literally, they are guides that point to ideas or set sequences, they are not the font of all knowledge.
- ... worry about losing, every game is a lesson and you learn more when you lose
- ... focus on winning the game as the only thing: try to focus instead on playing well, on playing moves you will be proud of in a post-mortem analysis, this way you'll learn more and improve
- ... think for too long for any particular move: usually after a long thinking session one plays strange, unnatural moves, many times wrong ones. It happens to professional players too
- ... worry about your grade – if you play well you will do well; if you play poorly you will do poorly no matter how many 'dan' or 'kyu' you claim.

Black – Fan Xiping vs White – Shi Dingan

Played in 1739 - Black wins by 7

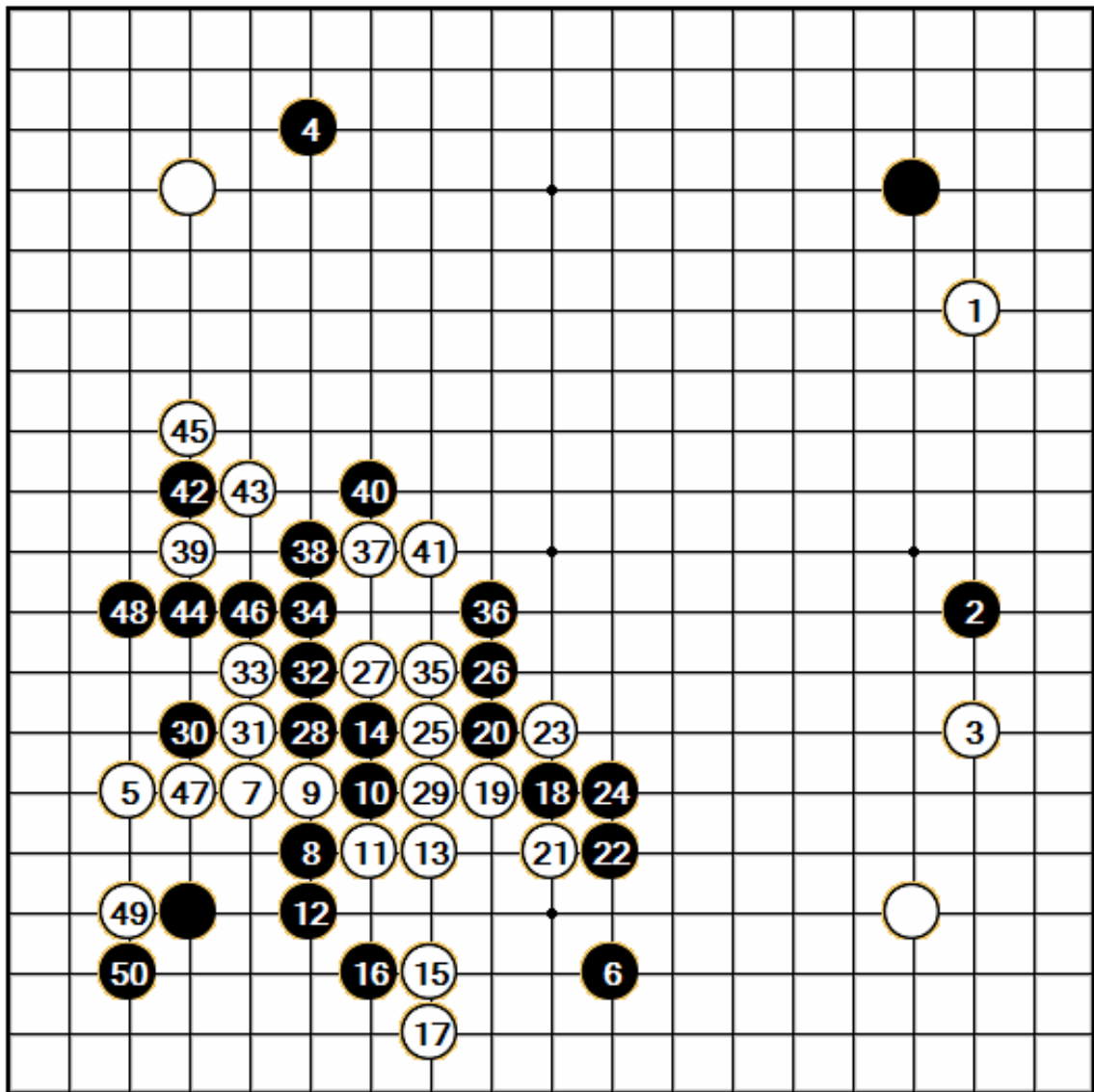


Figure 1 (1-50)

This game was played over 250 years ago with the players strength put at 1 dan professional.

The fuseki is ritualised compared to today but the fighting is awesome. There is no commentary on the game, but this is well worth studying.

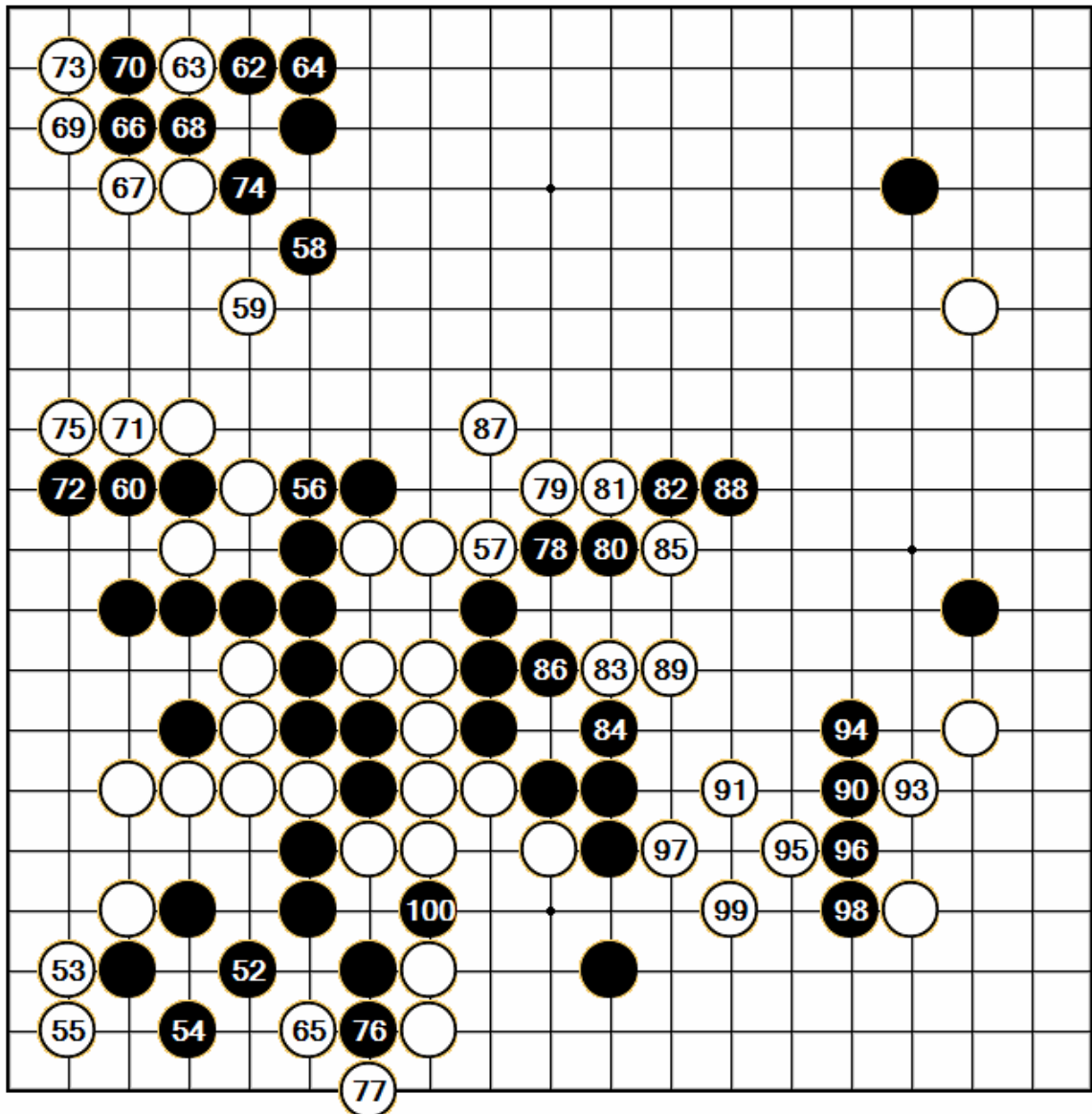


Figure 2 (51-100)

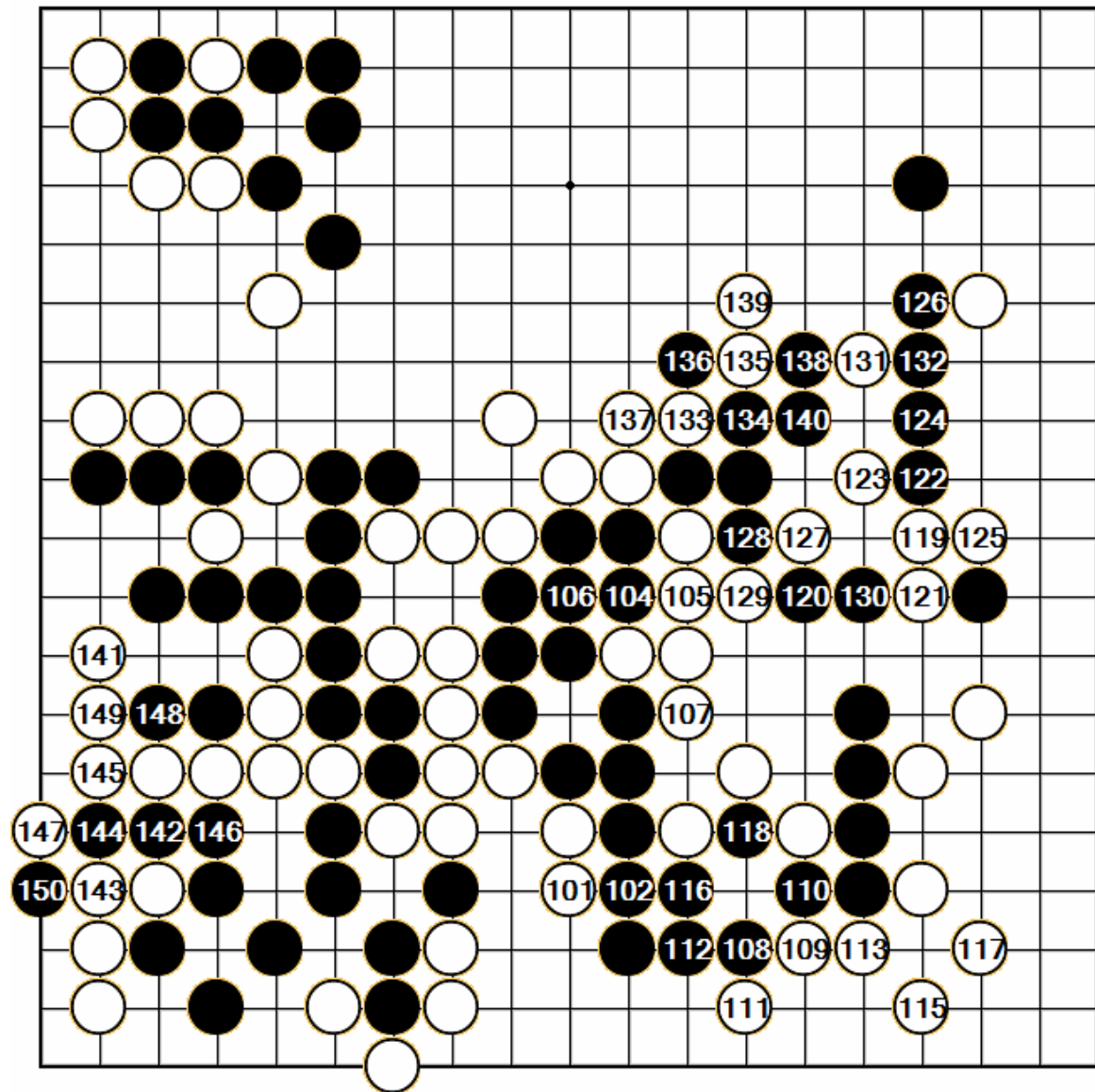


Figure 3 (101-150)
106 at 103

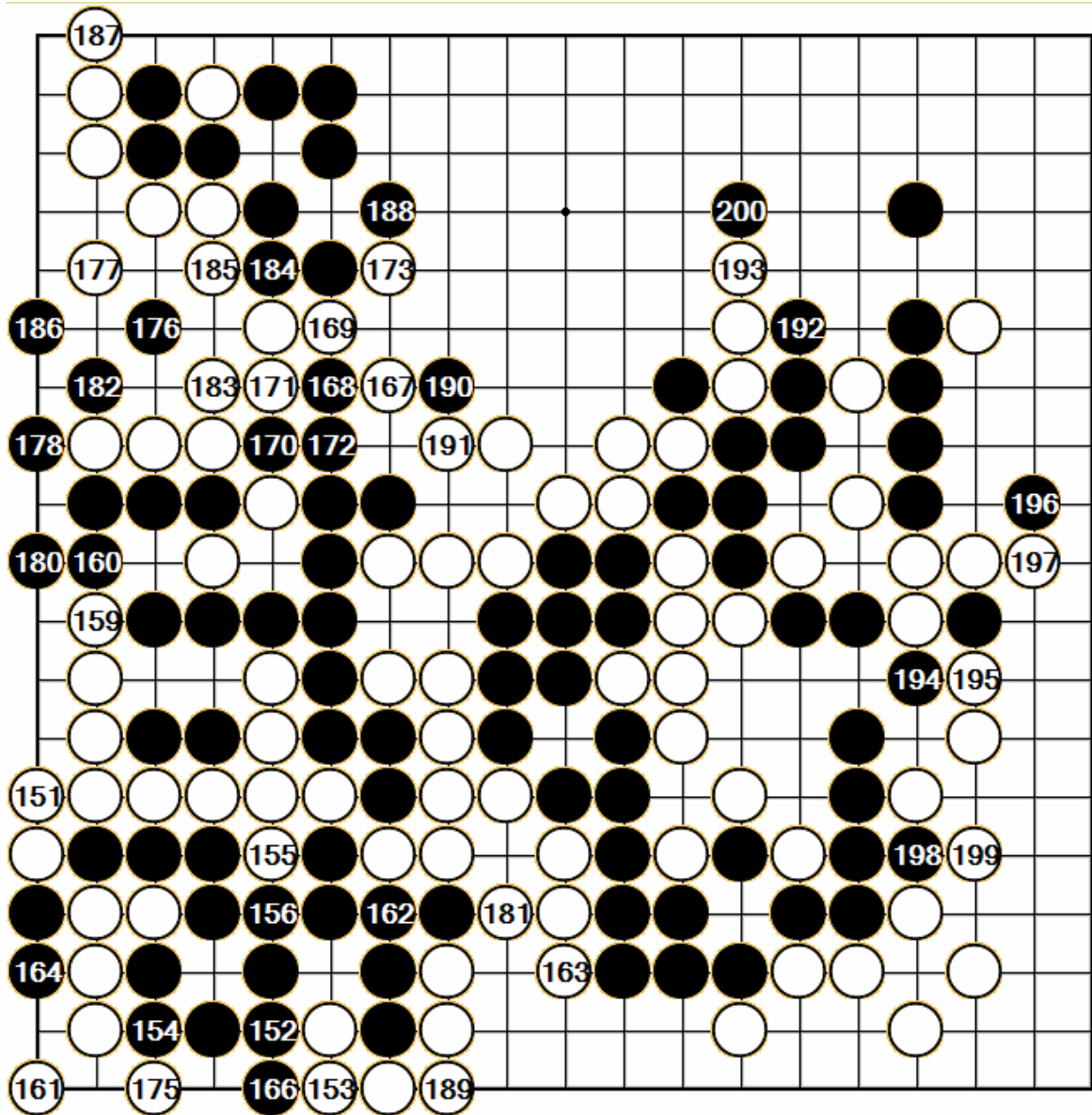


Figure 4 (151-200)
174 at 158, 175 at 157

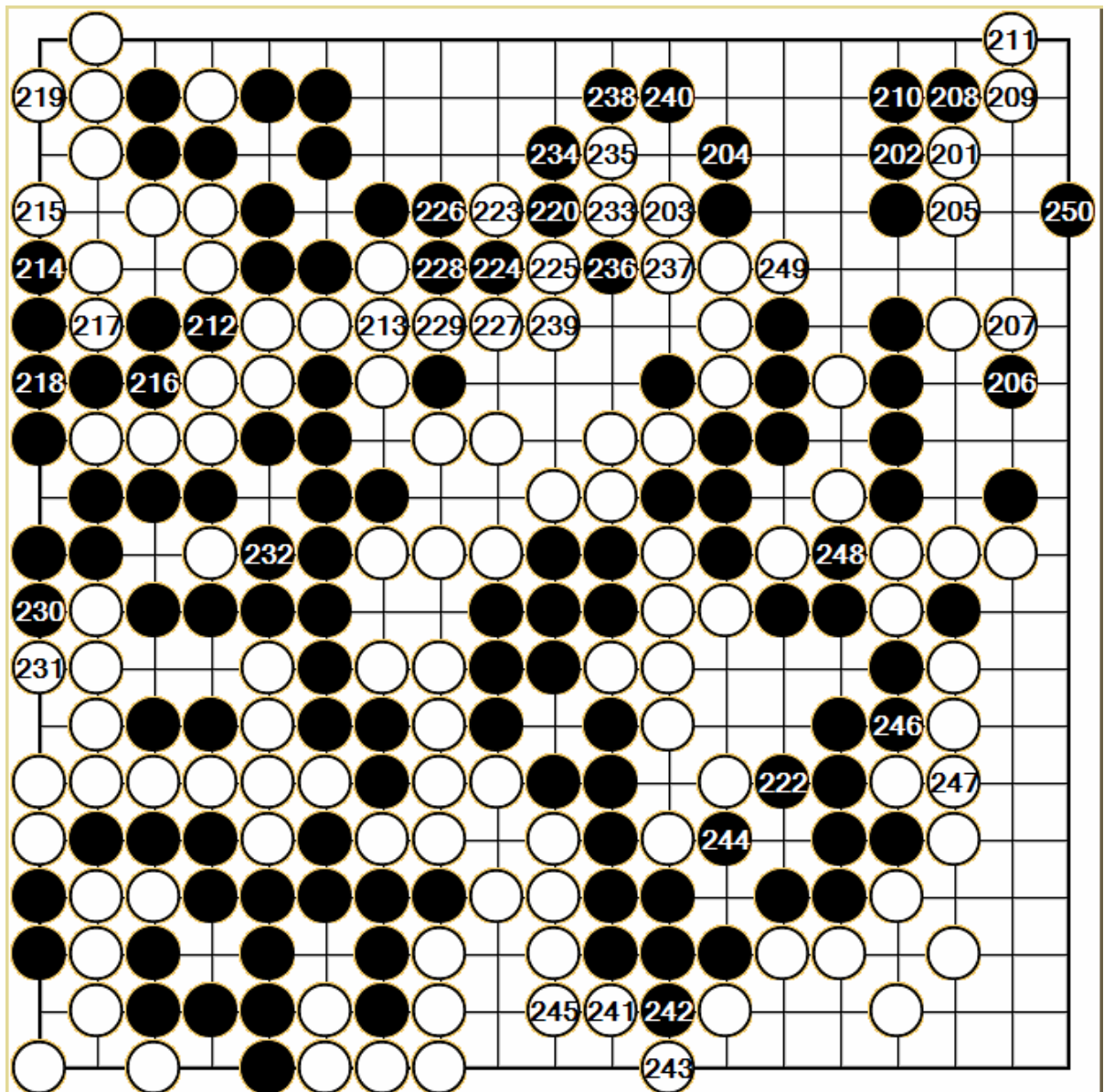


Figure 5 (201-250)
244 above 221

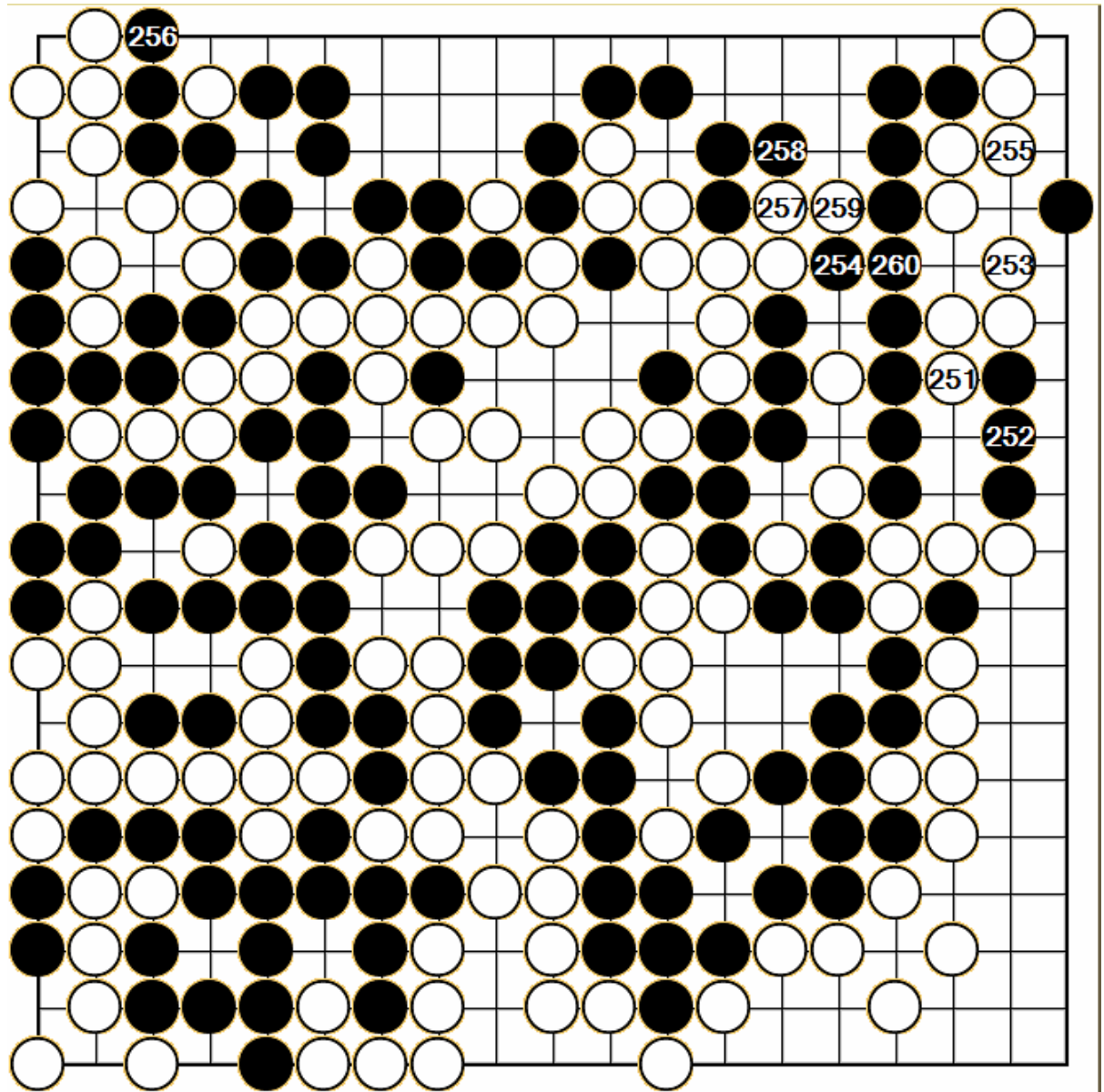
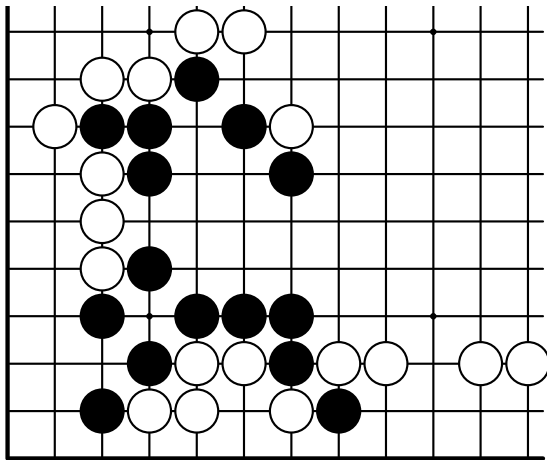


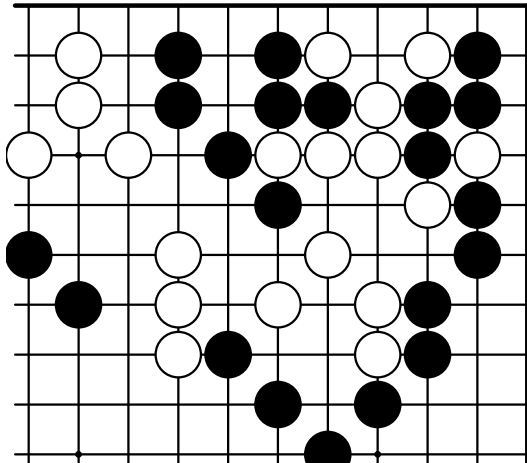
Figure 6 (251-260)

Problems

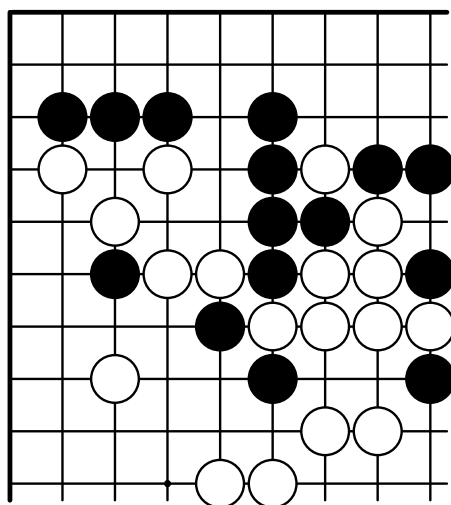
Problem 1. Black to play – what is the best end game for him?



Problem 2. Black to play – What is the best result



Problem 3 – Black to play – what is the best end game sequence for him?



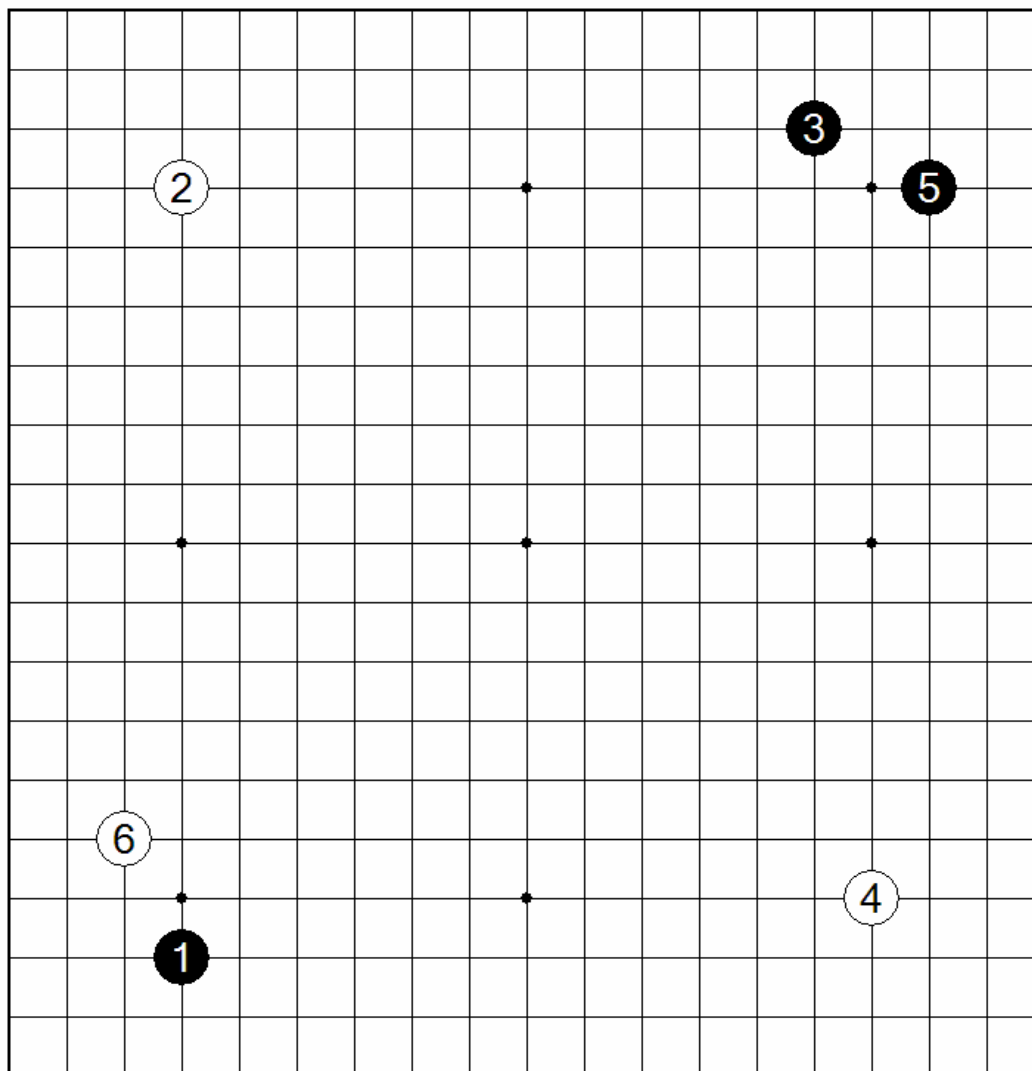
Answers after the game commentary.

Ben Bildstein vs Yangil Jin

Played at the 2006 ACT Go Championship held in Canberra on 22-23 July 2006.

This game is from the first round of the tournament. Ben Bildstein (White) came to the tournament ranked 2 dan while Yangil Jin (Black) is 5 dan. Ben played well above his grade to lose by just 1.5 points.

Figure 1 - Moves 1 to 6



A diagonal Fuseki is not very common and tends to lead to a complex middle game. It requires the participation of both players, first white must offer diagonal corners and then black must accept the option. Some professionals insist that once a diagonal Fuseki is offered by white, black is honour bound to accept – really it is just a matter of choice.

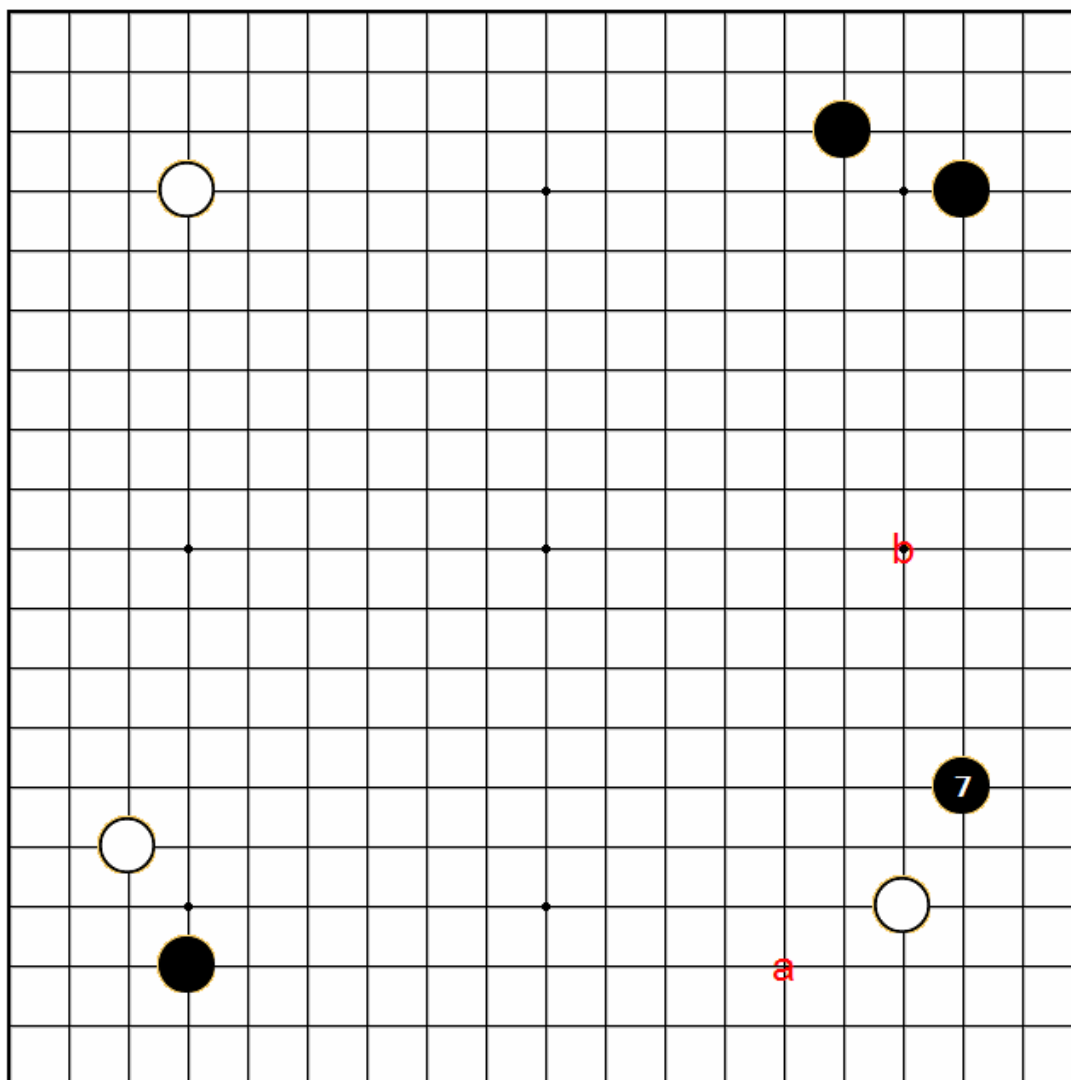
The position up to white 6 is quite normal; this opening can be found in professional games over the past 50 years. Black has taken a solid lower position, with all of his

stones on the 3rd line; White is playing faster and emphasising influence with 2 of his three stones so far on the 4th line.

Diagram 1

The normal continuations are 'A', 'B' and 'C'. 'A' & 'B' restrict White 6 while disrupting White's potential on the left side; this is the most common approach of professional players. 'C' strengthens Black 1 while threatening a follow up attack on the left side.

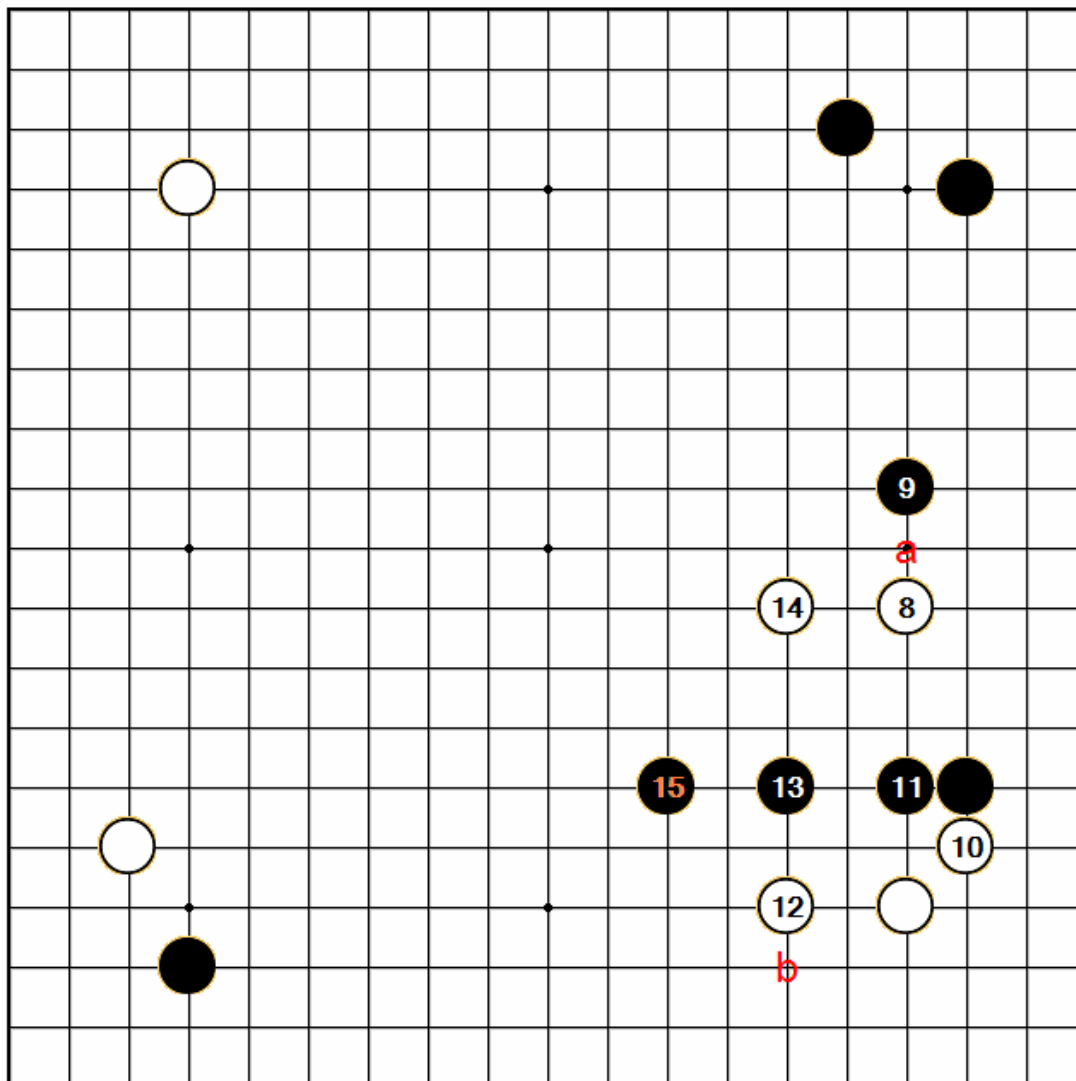
Figure 2



Black 7 in Figure 2 is not found in professional games. The main reason is that White will get sente from an exchange of (say) 'A' for 'B' and can then attack Black 1. While Black gets a nice position on the right, the attack Black 1 builds a strong and white gets a nice moyo on the left side.

White should probably accept this 'offer' and play simply; a squeeze play does not guarantee sente, so Black may be able to get the first play in the lower left.

Figure 3

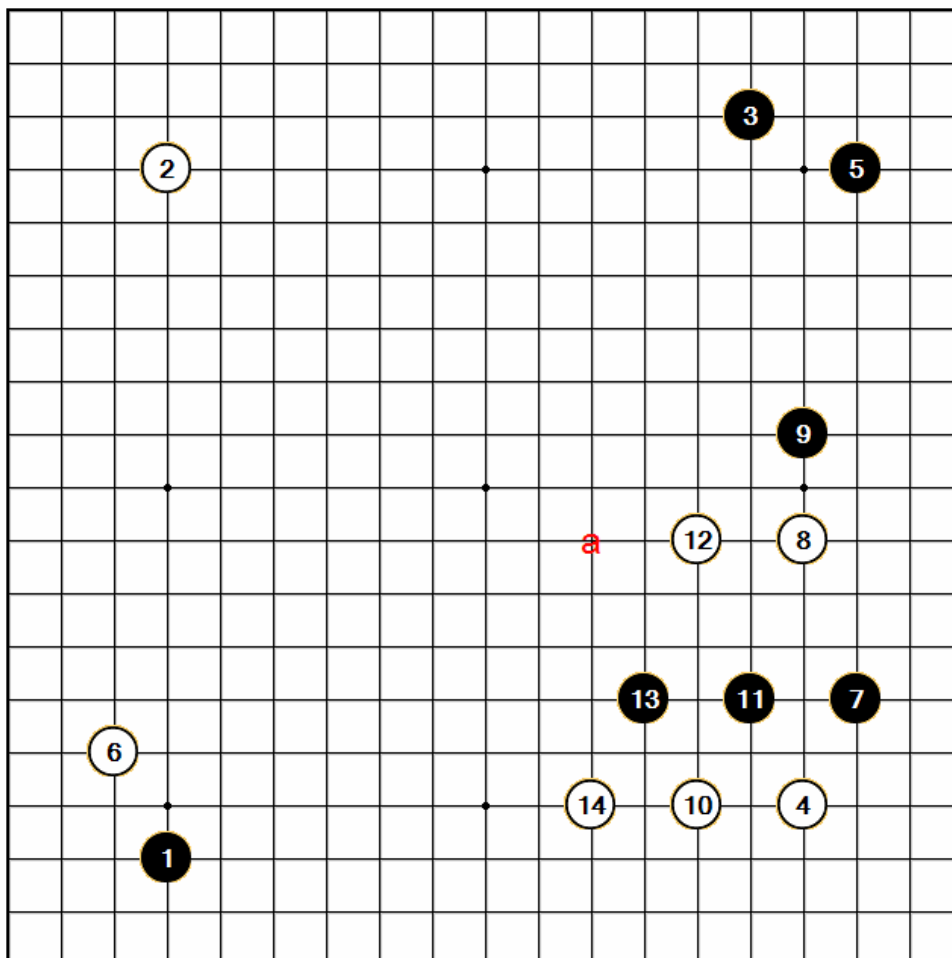


White decided to thwart Black's plan and played a squeeze play at 8 in Figure 3; it appears that Black 9 was a surprise to White.

The way to avoid the counter squeeze is to pincer at 'A', this makes the counter pincer less valuable and puts almost as much pressure on Black 7.

White 10 helps black into the centre and to attack White 8 this is wrong – White would have been better off playing 12 or B (in Figure 3) immediately.

Diagram 2



White can simply play 10 (in Diagram 2) this makes Black defend his own stones. If both follow the natural sequence to 14 the outcome is a lot better for White, because the attack at ‘A’ really has no teeth..

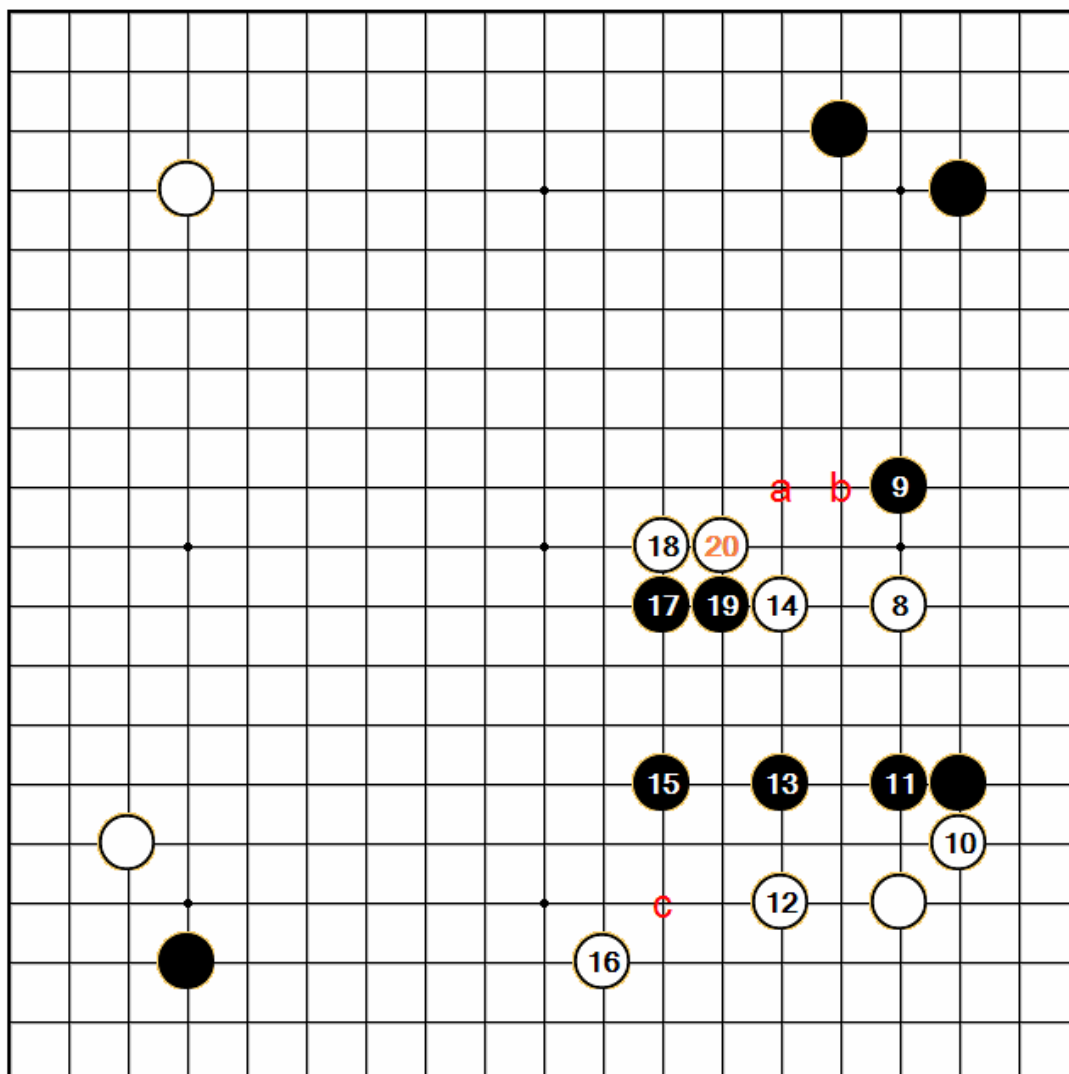
The kosumi-tsuke of 10 in Figure 3 is often used to ‘defend’ the corner, but it does not really do this very well, but the exchange of 10 for 11 does have immediate and substantial negative impact on the pincer stone (White 8). In this situation Black wants to move into the centre – White forces Black to do what Black wants!

There is an old Go proverb (Go Proverbs Illustrated pp201) that says “*The poor player plays the opponents game for him*”. It goes on further to say that “*If your plays provoke reactions that tend to strengthen your opponent’s development you are playing his game for him*”

Look at this another way – is there an immediate danger that Black will invade the lower right corner (in Diagram 2) now? The answer is no – White would take great delight in separating that stone from the rest and strengthening his position while Black makes a small life in the corner. White will then use his extra strength to attack the outside stones.

If there is no danger, there is no need to defend.

Figure 4

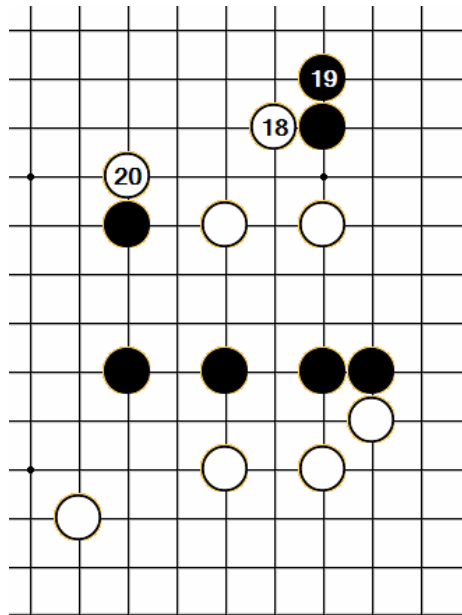


The difference between diagram 2 and the position to 17 in Figure 4 is significant – Black is further into the centre and has a much better attack following 17, while White is going to struggle.

White 16 is better placed at 'C' to assist with the attack on Black (11, 13 & 15) group.

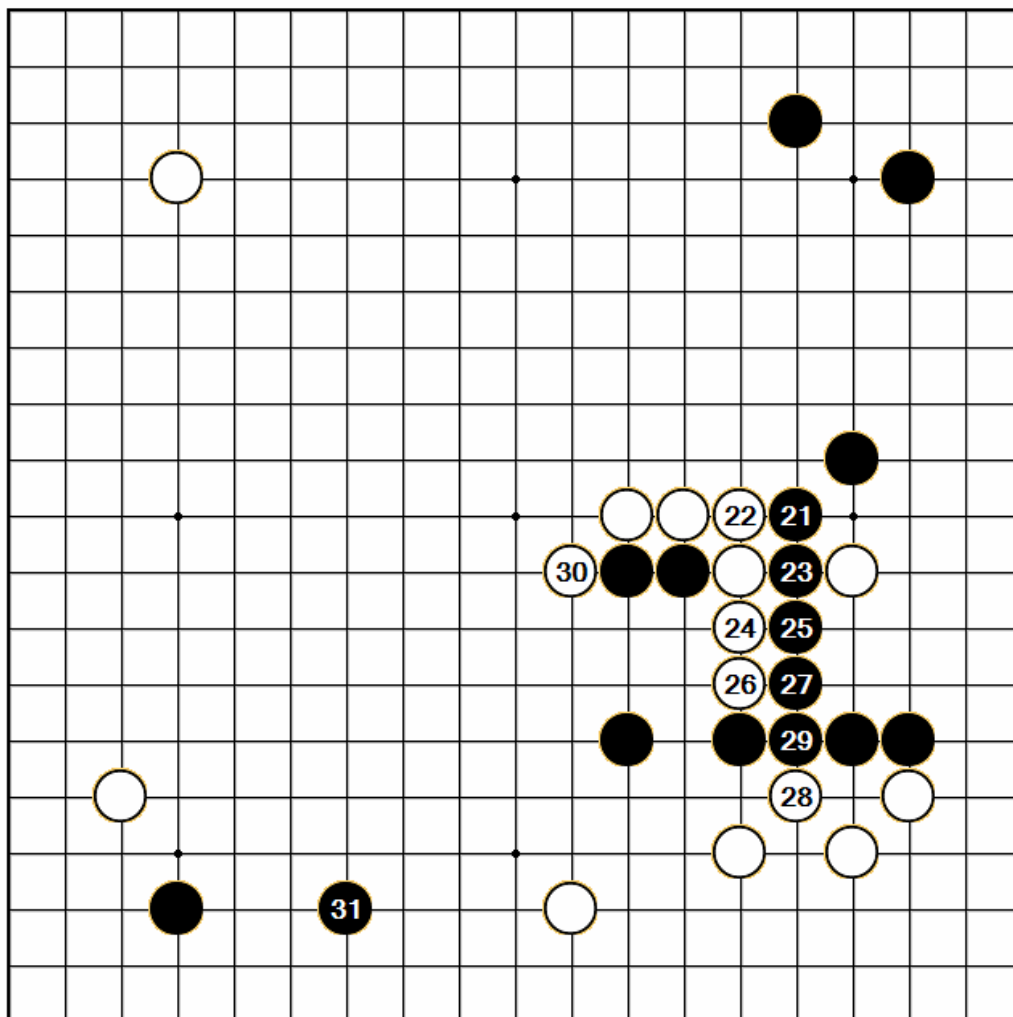
The natural move after 17 are either 'A' or 'B'. 'A' leans on Black's stronger stone threatening hane, if Black pulls back as in Diagram 3, then White can continue with his planned sequence (diagram 3) without worry.

Diagram 3



White does not prepare and plays directly at 18 in Figure 4. After Black 21 White has a problem.

Figure 5

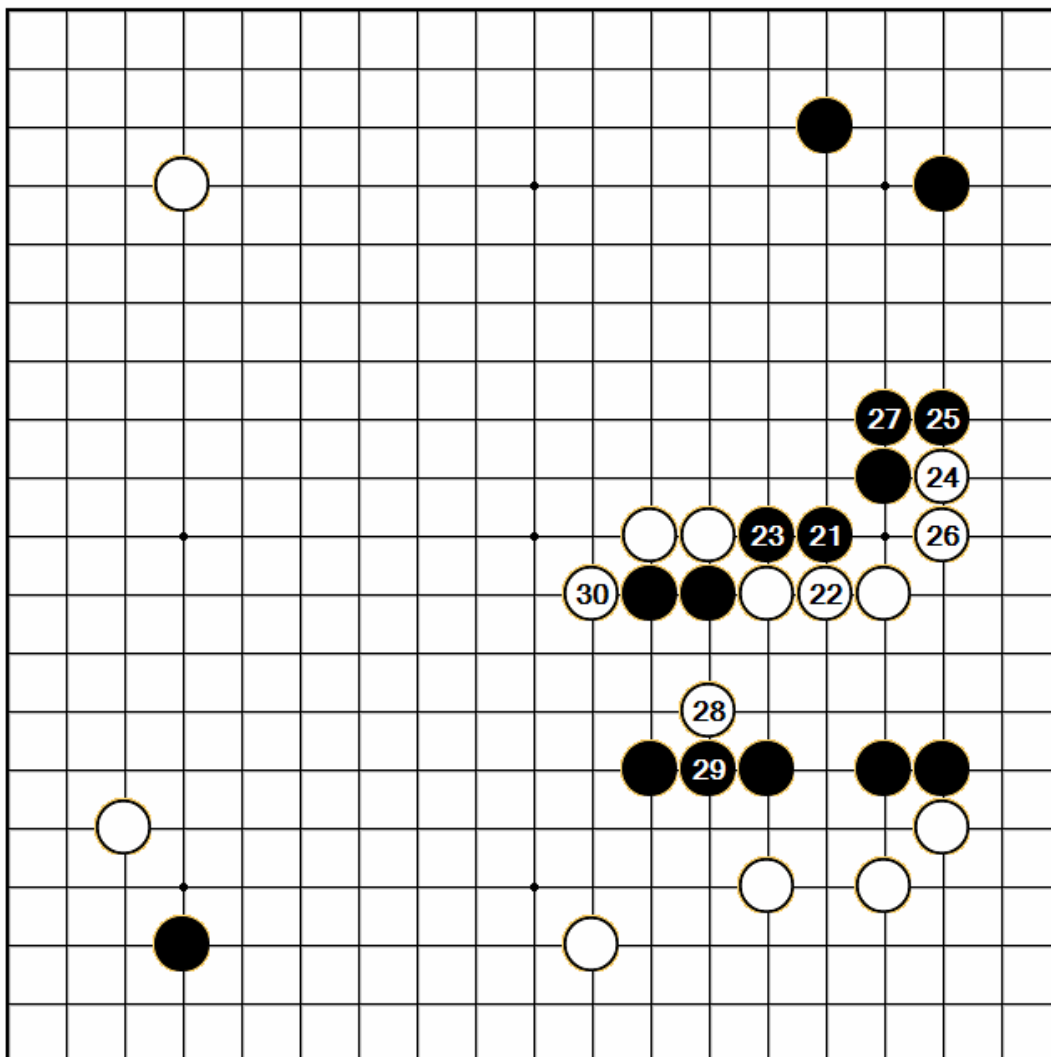


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The connection at 22 and sequence to 30 in the game gives Black 5th line territory on the right and sente. This is bad for White not just because Black has significant solid territory, and gets to play in the lower left first - he also has a strong friendly stone at 15 neutralising the centre.

There are alternate ways of playing – for example if White connects at 22 in Diagram 4 he can build on eye before turning to attack with 28 and 30. This outcome is better for White than the game because Black does not have 5th line territory and Black's group in the lower right corner is subject to attack.

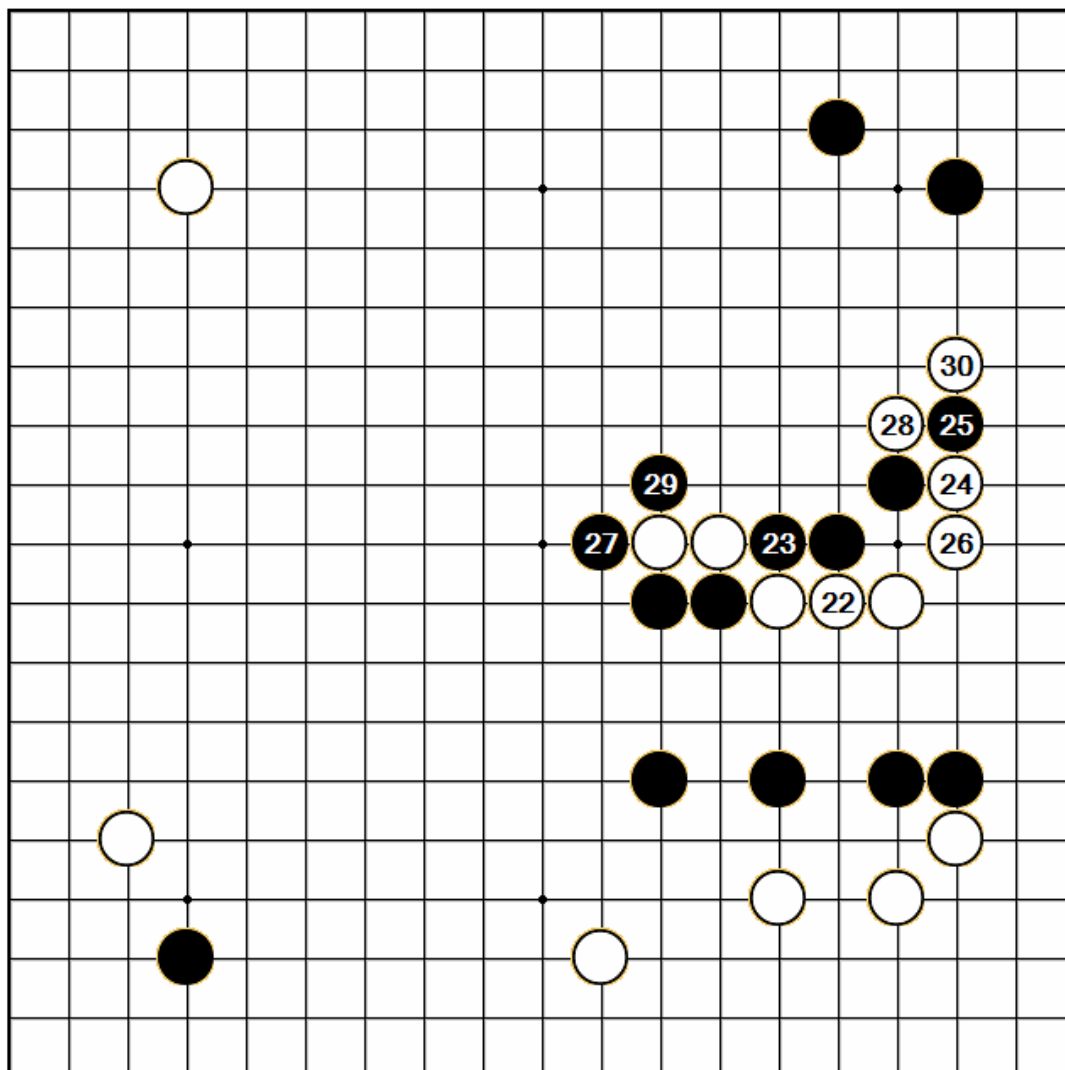
Diagram 4



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Black can vary the sequence by playing 27 in Diagram 5 but White cuts at 28 securing his group, taking Blacks territory while sacrificing two centre stones.

Diagram 5



There are a lot more options and variations than I have shown – this fight is a useful and interesting line of study.

Black 31 (Figure 5) is a very solid move, indeed Black has played a very solid game – he is not trying to get influence or build a large moyo, he is taking profit and keeping the game simple. White has to do something to get into the game.

Black can count nearly 55 points of profit against White's 32 or 33 (including Komi) and sees little reason to play risky moves - if Black maintains the status quo he will win. It must also be said that such a mindset can lead to complacency and mistakes.

Once Black settles his lower left stone, White needs to stop – take stock and find a strategy to get back in the game.

A rough assessment of the game shows that White 6 in the lower left is weak, Black has no weak groups, the left and top sides are developable. Not very promising for White, but there are opportunities.

One possible strategy is build a large moyo on the upper and left sides. Perhaps White can lean against the Black group on the lower side in Diagram 6, then attack Black's Shimari – the moyo is huge but wide open on both the top and left sides.

Black has around 55 points – white has about 32, plus the moyo – can White make 23 points more than Black in the upper and left side and win, I believe the answer is yes.

Incidentally, If Black plays 39 at 'b' then white can attach at 'a' reducing Black's right side.

Diagram 6

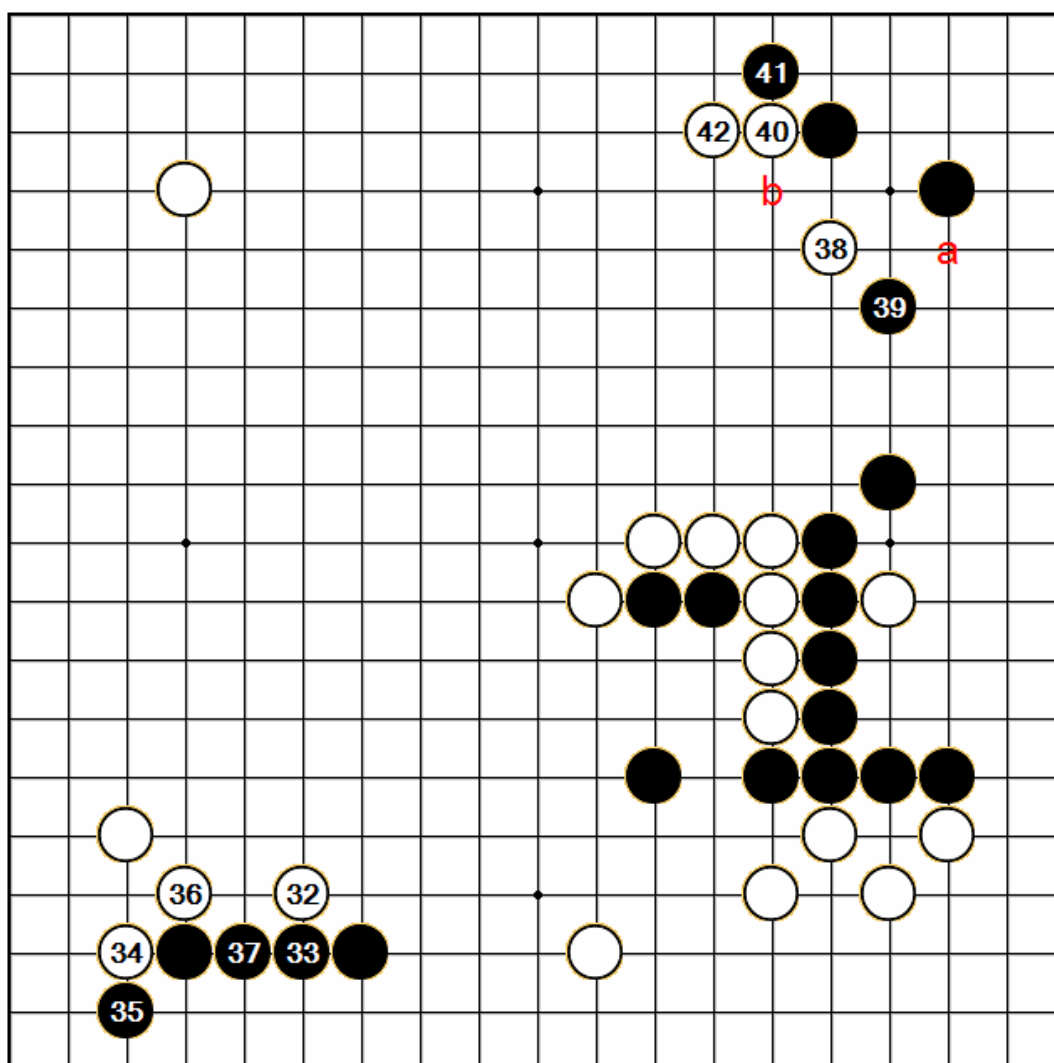
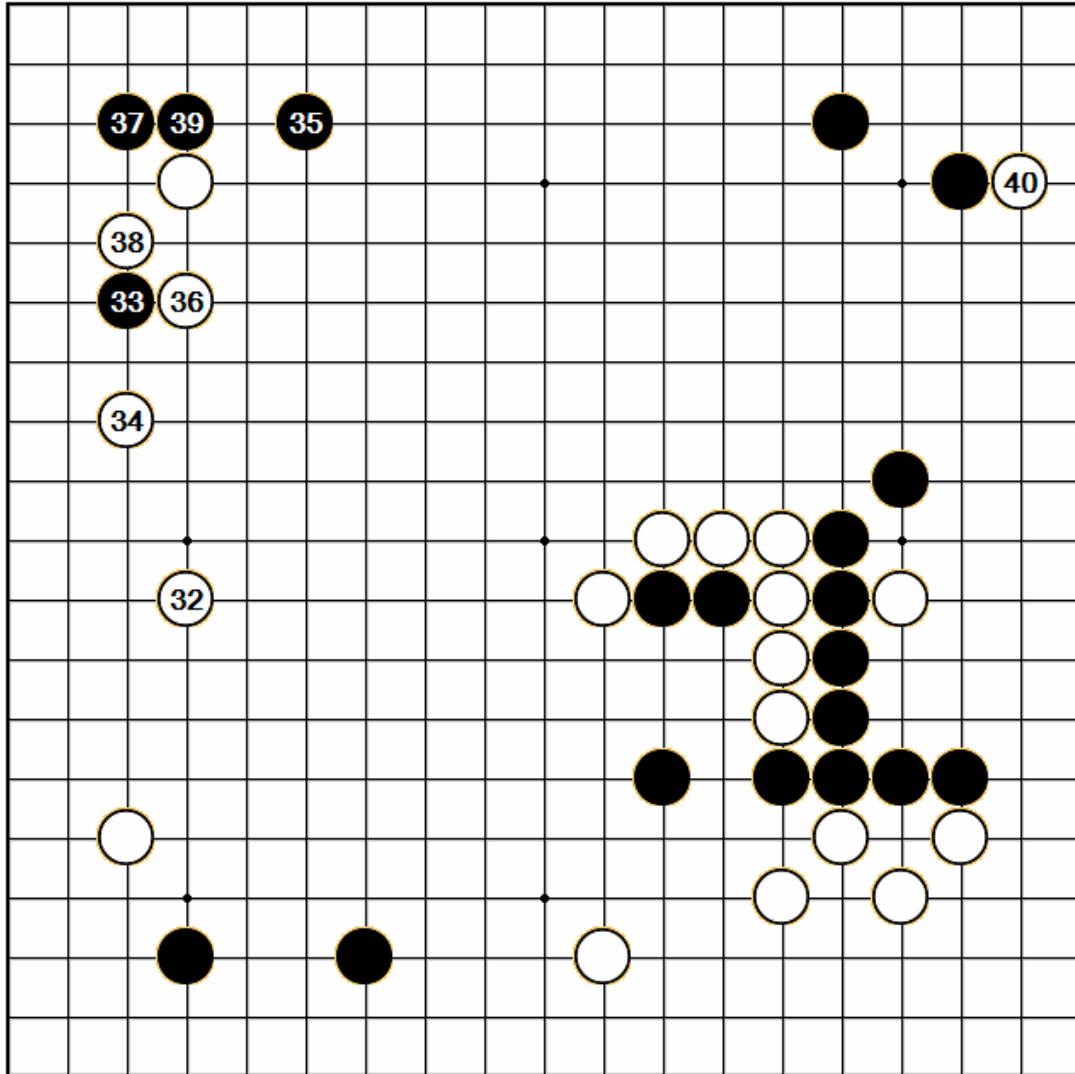


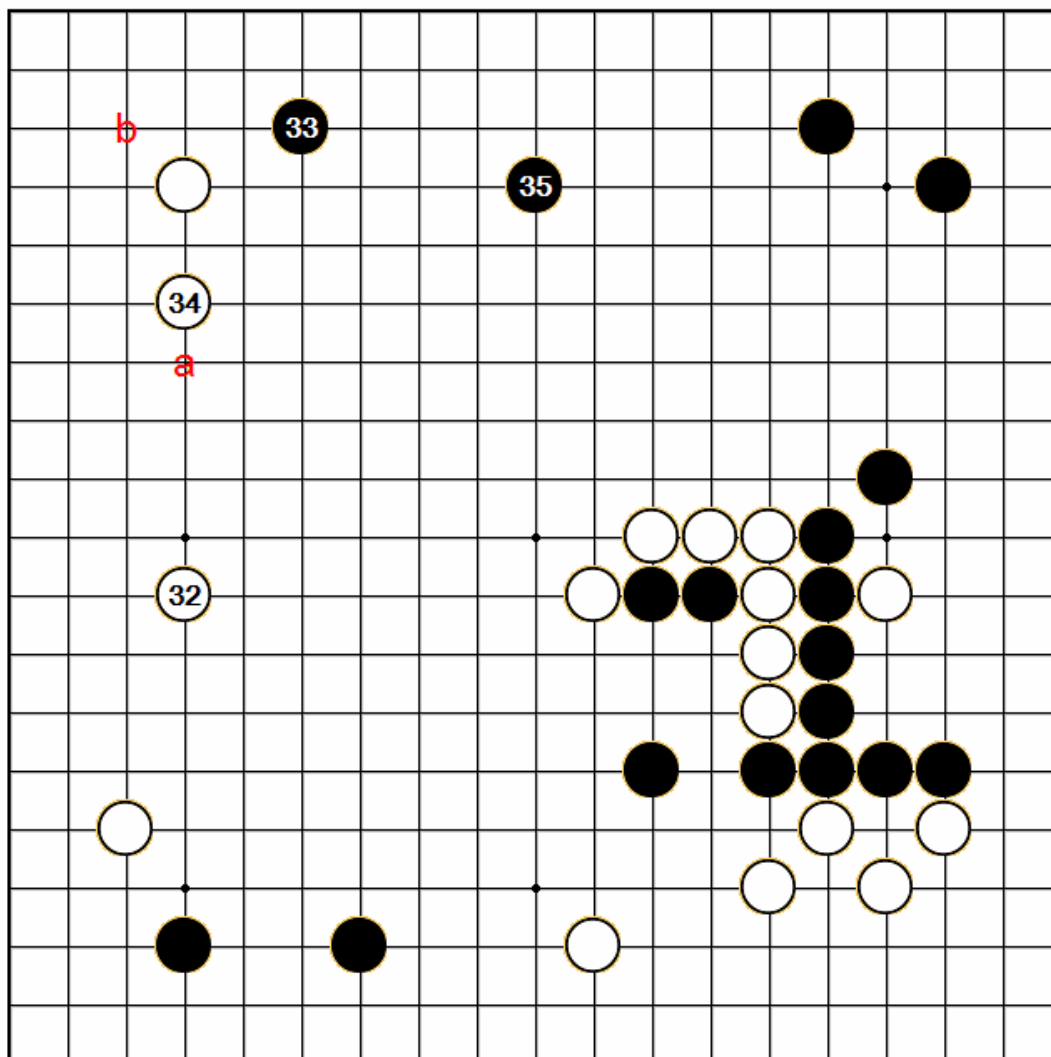
Figure 6



In the game White extended with 32 along the left side and Black invaded at 33. At the end of this sequence (to 39) White has gained a nice area along the left (with the occasional weakness), but has kept sente, he is clawing his way back into the game.

For his part Black has taken the upper left corner in gote, the upper side is still open and his lead has been reduced. So what could Black have done differently?

Diagram 7

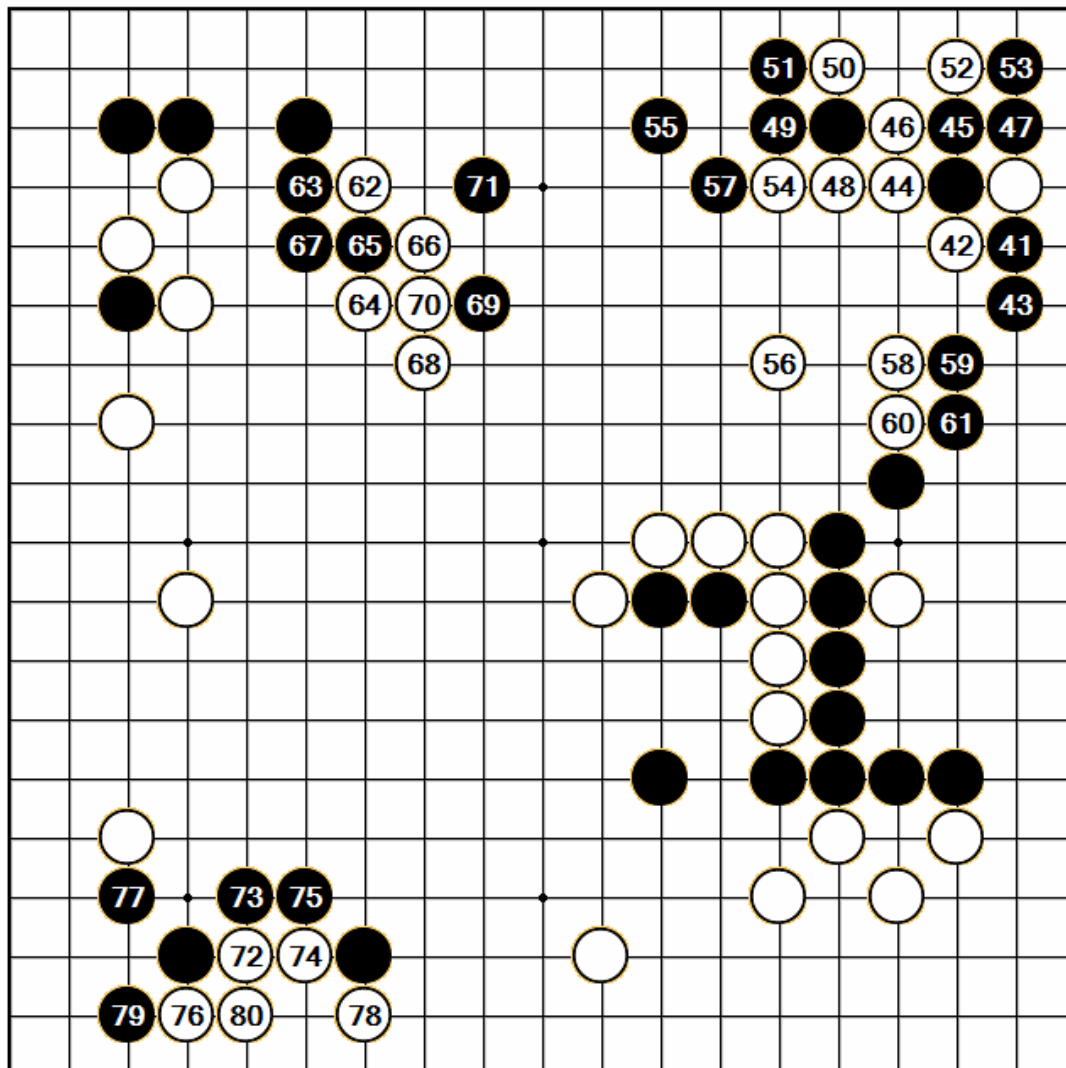


Black can take the simple route (Diagram 7) by attacking the upper left corner at 33 then extending to 35. This works well with his shimari it constructs more territory and it leaves an invasion at 'B' or an attack at 'A' for later.

For his part White is over stretched on the left, the gaps between 6, 32 & 34 have to be a worry, but defence is not possible because he is so far behind on territory.

White was stretched after 32, he really needed another stone on the left to stabilise his position; Black's attack as 33 invited the pincer. This gave White what he wanted – remember the proverb "*The poor player plays the opponents game for him*". It is not easy to apply at any level of the game, but it is often the difference between victory and defeat.

Figure 7 – Moves 41 to 80



Black 41 (Figure 7) and the ensuing fight really levels the game, until this point Black has enjoyed the lead. After White 62 the game is playable for both. Black's secure area has been reduced and White's central stones (once floating without purpose) have meaning. I count the game slightly in Black's favour – but only a few points, not the 20+ he enjoyed earlier.

Black had the option to play more securely with 41 in Diagram 7. If White continues on the second line Black can block the corner and then chase White into the centre with 'A'.

This running fight will progress across the top of the board which should allow Black to secure firm territory on the top. The exchange of part of the right side for the top is to Black's advantage.

Diagram 6

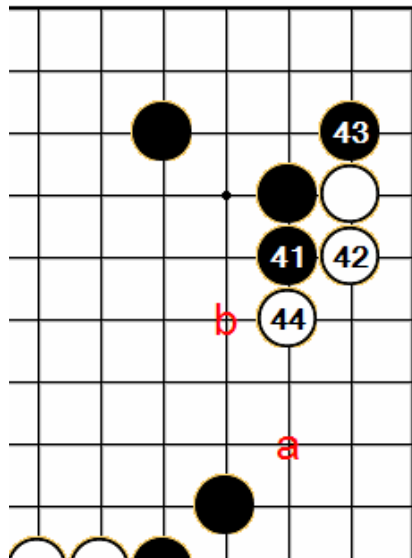
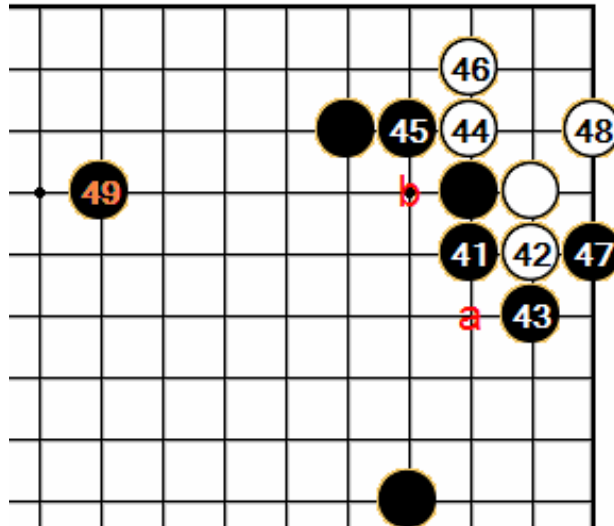


Diagram 7

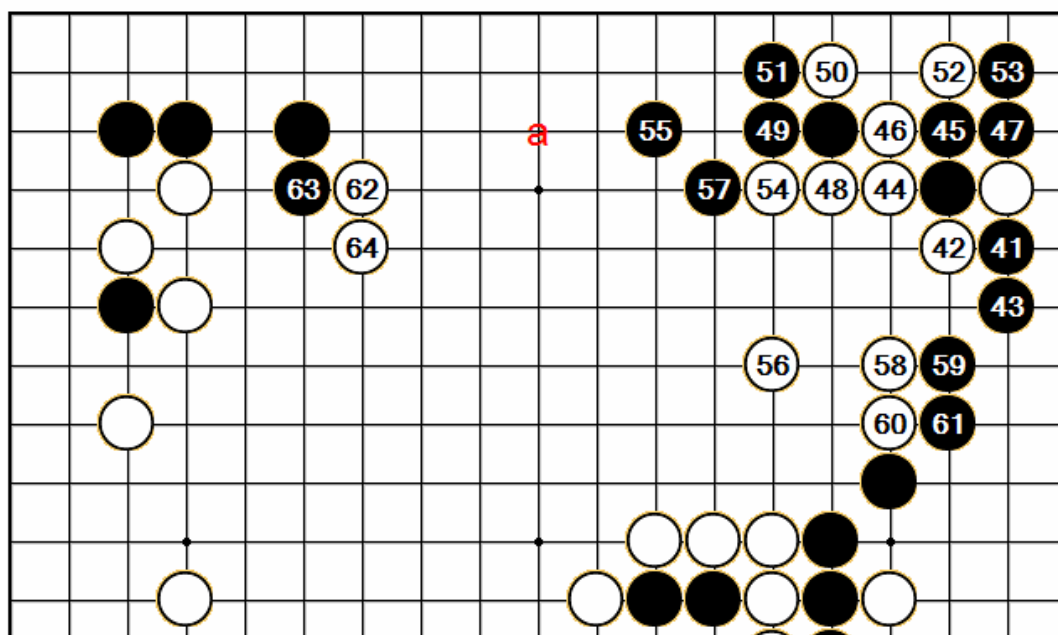


The alternative is to shut White in the corner and extend to 49 claiming the upper side; this has problems because Black leaves behind to cutting points ('A' & 'B').

The sequence to 57 (Figure 7) sees White escape into the middle and Black has not made any area on the upper side to compensate for the loss in the corner.

White 62 is a good move, it builds area in the middle while reducing Black's area on the top – it is also threatening to attack the Black's group (49, 51, 55, 57 etc) on the upper side. Black has little choice except to push up with 63; Black should then simply extend with 64 in Diagram 8. Black then has to defend against 'A', while White is able to extend his moyo in the middle.

Diagram 8

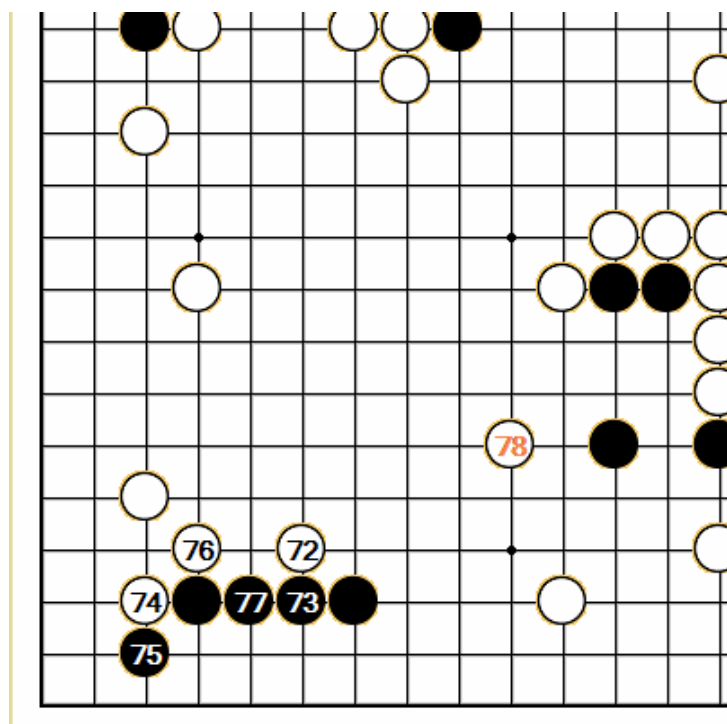


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By the time Black plays at 71, White has secured the upper boundary for a territory on the left side, Black has made more points on the upper side than could have reasonably have been expected given the weakness of his group in the upper right corner (49, 51, 55, 57 etc).

Now White can win the game if he can secure enough points in the middle. My thoughts were something like Diagram 10. Where White pushes the lower left corner then takes a leap of faith with 78.

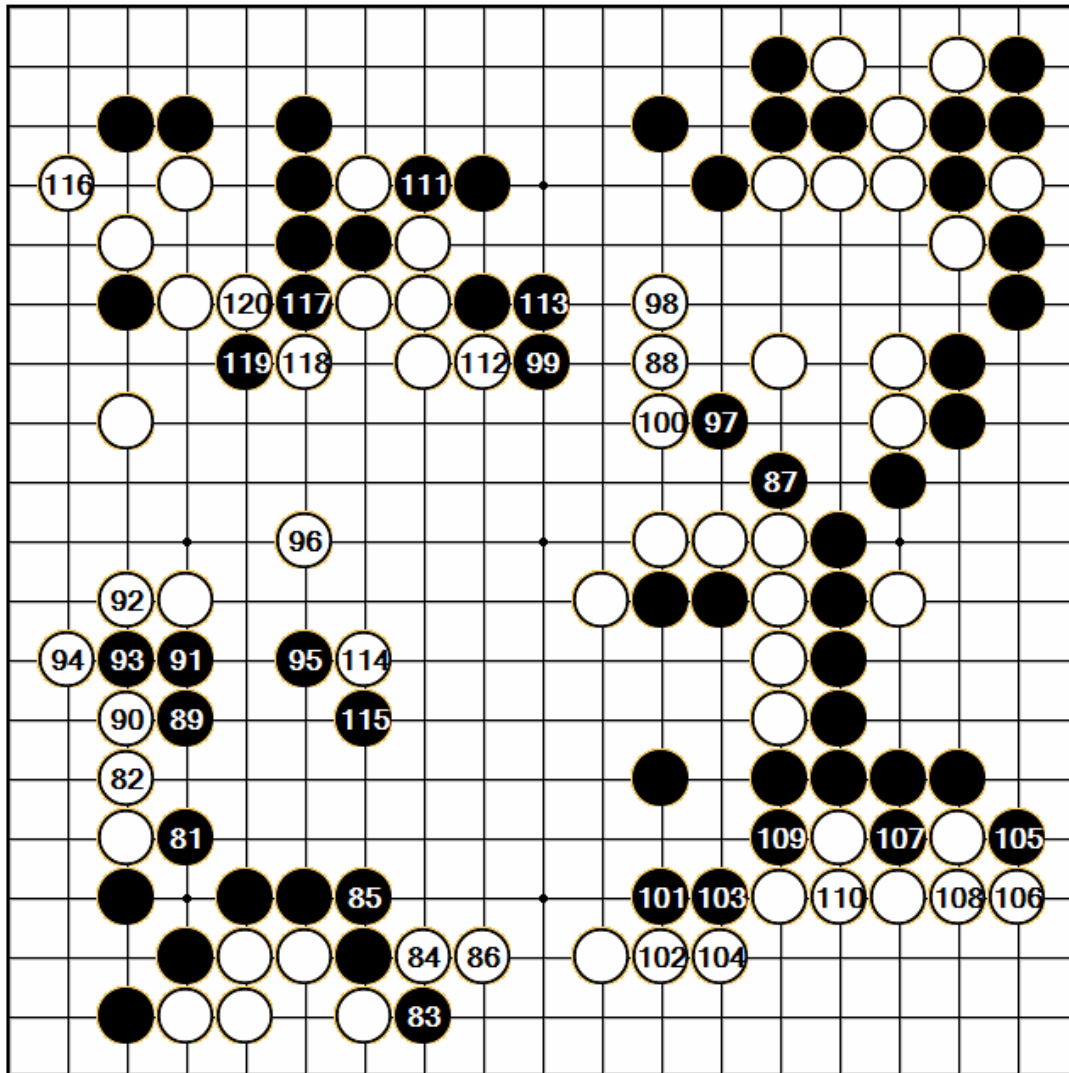
Diagram 9



Obviously there are holes along the lower side, but White should be able to secure enough to win the game.

I cannot comprehend the motivation for White's actual move in the game - 72 in Figure 7. Black is forced into the centre, where White could have expected to get territory and there is no real attack on Black, especially because of Black 15.

Figure 8 – Moves 81 to 120



Black 111 secures enough territory to make the game even; I count the game about 3 points in Black's favour.

There are plenty of opportunities for both players to win (or lose) in the final stages of the game, the final result; a win for Black by 1.5 points is probably fair.

Figure 9 – Moves 121 to 160

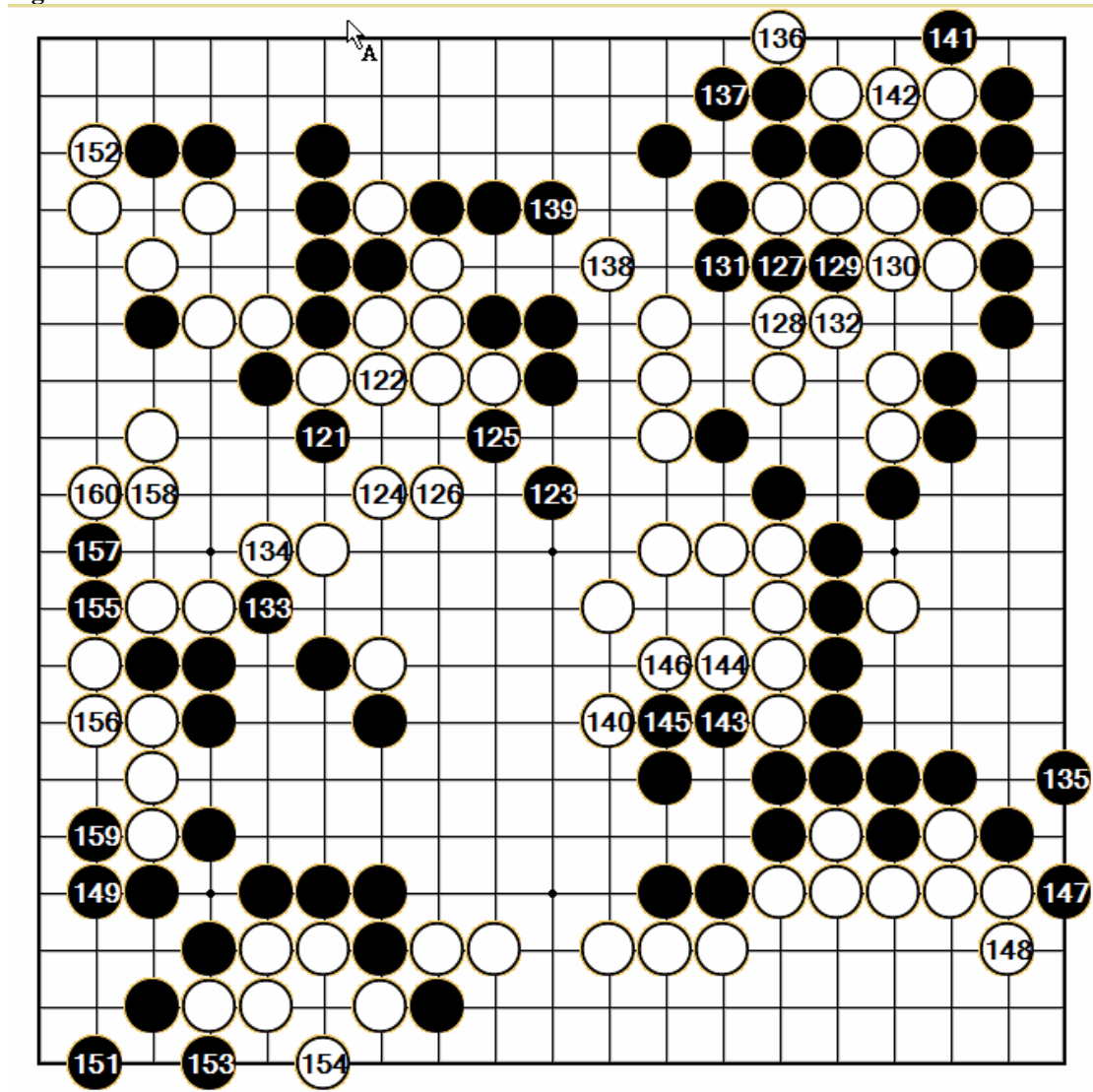


Figure 10 – Moves 161 to 200

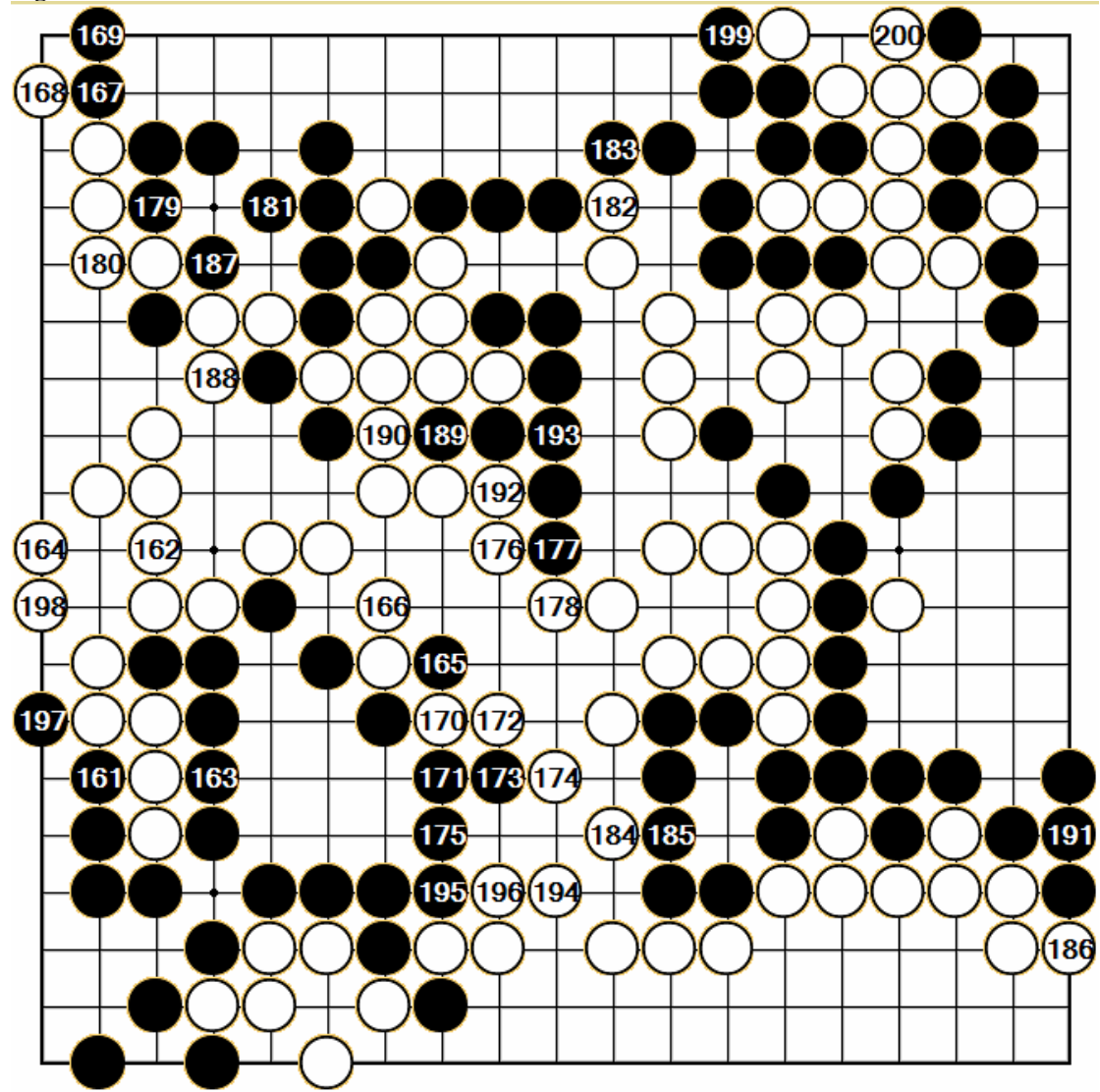
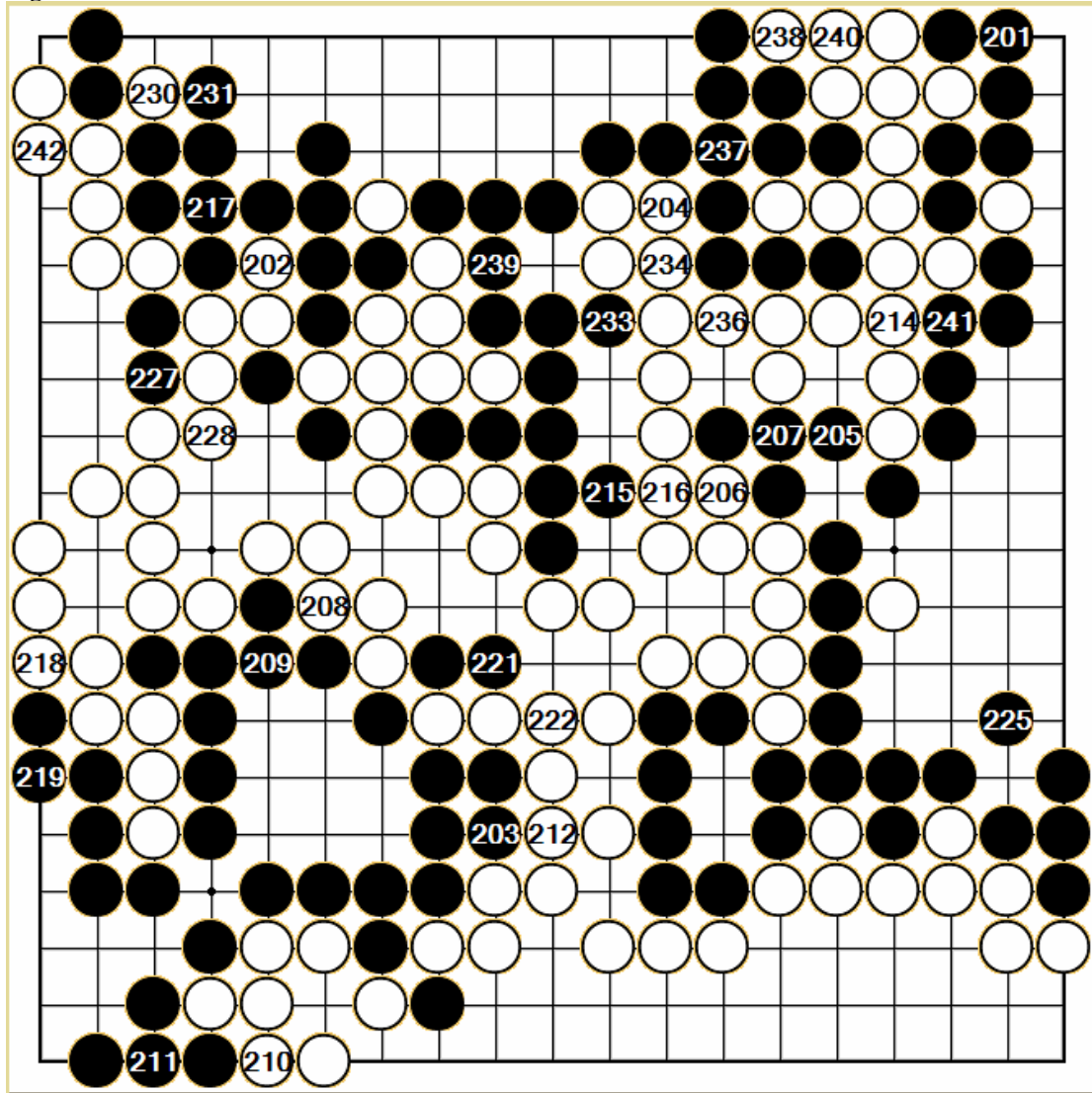


Figure 11 – Moves 201 to 242



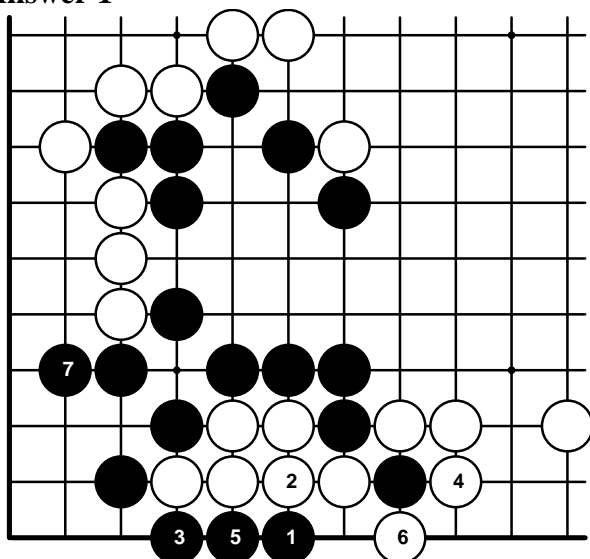
(201-240)
220 at left of 213, 223 at 213, 226 at left of 213, 229 at 213, 232 at left of 213, 235 at 213,
238 at left of 213, 240 at 213.

Black wins by 1.5 points.

Problem Answers

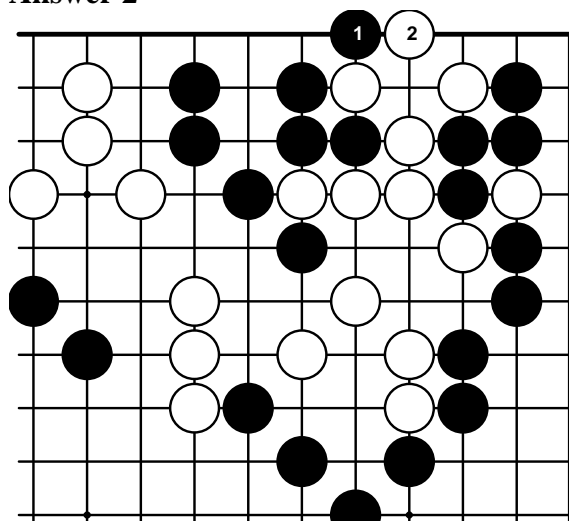
The purpose of solving problems is to improve. These problems were taken from the commented game, either as directly or in a slightly modified state.

Answer 1



Black 1 is the key move – this reduces Whites area in sente – Black can then protect the rest of the corner.

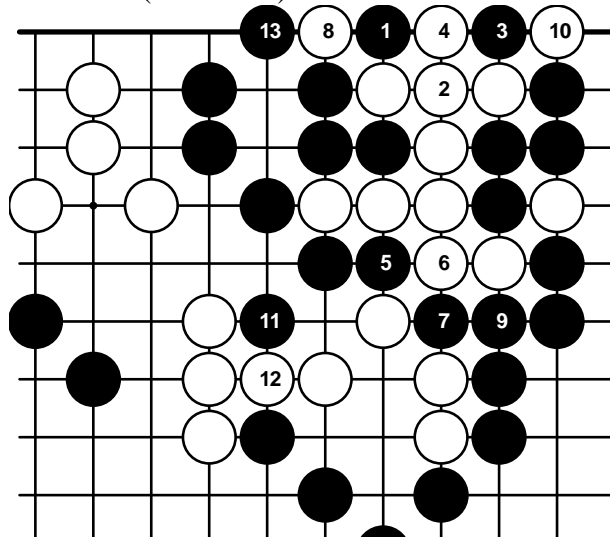
Answer 2



Black 1 forces a ko.

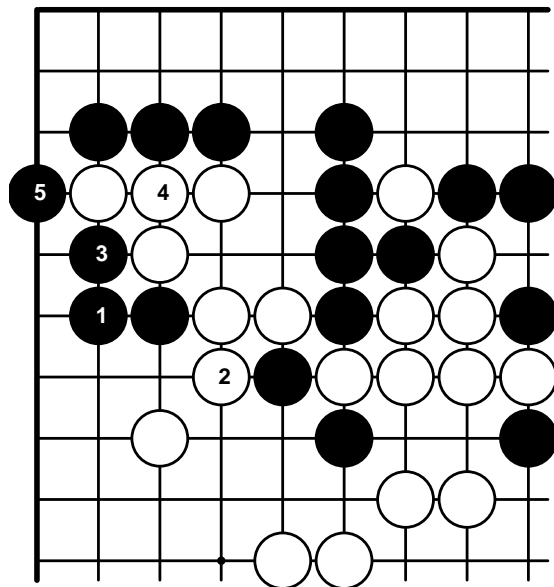
If white connects then....

Answer 2 (continued)



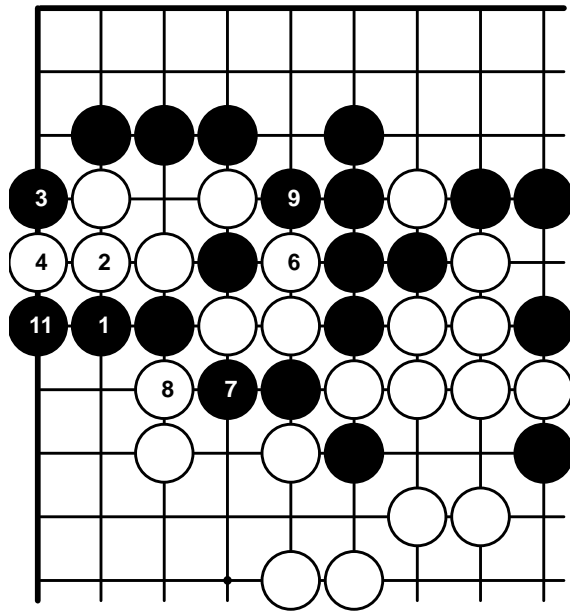
Black is able to disconnect whites group which can be captured in a very favourable ko.

Answer 3



If White resists then....

Answer 3 (continued)



Black 5 to the left of 6 (problem with the software)

White 10 to the left of 6.

Go Proverbs

- There is death in the hane
- If the formation is symmetrical, play at the centre
- The enemy's key play is my own key play
- Don't make empty triangles
- Cross-cut – extend
- The monkey jump is worth 8 points
- Ponnuki is worth 30 points
- To reduce a large territory strike at the shoulder

Who's who

This is a trial section. The aim is to give background information about club players. I have gone first and expect to have a few paragraphs on other players in subsequent editions.

David Mitchell

I was introduced and taught Go by Francis Roads in late 1972. Between 1972 and 1975 I helped organise the Woodford, London and Hampstead Go clubs. I established the Southern Go League and was part of the BGA committee for a number of years.

I worked full time at the London Go Centre from 1975 until 1978 (when the Go Centre closed) I helped administer the centre and teach all level of Go. Iwamoto Kaoru and Magari Reiki both 9 dan spent time at the London Go Centre, during that time I was lucky to have a number of teaching games with them. The fan on the cover of this issue was written by Iwamoto following the teaching games – it reminds me not to under-estimate my opponent (or over estimate my position).

In 1977 I spent a few weeks in Japan on a Go Teaching visit with other teachers from across Europe; we spent time at the Nihon Kiin as well as in Fujisawa Hosai's home in Enoshima.

Apart from teaching at the Go centre, I helped organise 3 Telephone Go challenges 2 against Japan and 1 against Russia with sponsorship from JAL. In 1978 I played lightning Go for over 36 straight hours in a Soho shop front to get publicity for the game – this resulted in some newspaper articles and one TV news snippet.

After the Go Centre closed I continued to play but concentrated on earning money (not something I had focused on to that time). In 1981 (perhaps 1982) I was joint British Open Champion with Matthew Macfadyen. About that time I was promoted to 4 dan.

In 1982/3 I got a group of players together and formed 'The Go Press', this was an attempt to establish a revenue stream for the BGA through book publishing. The team included Jon Diamond, Matthew Macfadyen, John Tilley, Alison Cross and others all contributed to the book. My name was used as author, although we all contributed funds and content. The profits from book sales and copyright income all went to the BGA in 1984 when I left the UK.

I have been living in Australia since although I have not played much Go. I am currently a senior IT Manager in News Limited, designing, building and maintaining production and administration systems for newspapers all over Australia.

I play Go at the Sydney club and live in the beachside suburb of Cronulla, south of Sydney.

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