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Relentless

Lee Sedol vs Gu Li

Go Game Guru

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To my family and my wife Jisun, for their love and support while I was working on Relentless, my teacher Hur Janghoi 9 dan, without whom I could not have become a professional, and Dae Hahn, for helping me to move to Australia.

David:

To Jingning and Ella, for filling life with happiness.

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Foreword

In ancient times there were four arts which educated people sought to master.

They were: music (the zither), baduk (Go), calligraphy and painting.

Among these four arts, baduk is unique in being the only one that requires a partner. No matter how skilled a master is, they cannot create a work of art unless they have a worthy adversary.

This gives baduk a special character, because even though the top players throughout history always competed fiercely to be the best, they also respected one another and often became friends.

Lee Sedol and Gu Li are a perfect example of this phenomenon. Both players are possessed of an indomitable fighting spirit and a strong desire to climb to the top of the baduk world. Yet, despite the intense rivalry that takes place over the board, they have become good friends through baduk.

Games between Lee Sedol and Gu Li are always dramatic, unpredictable and full of fireworks, and they both have many fans. Their 10 game match in 2014 was much anticipated and was exciting to watch, and the players created a collection of artworks for future generations to enjoy.

The analysis presented in *Relentless* goes into great detail to explain the strategies and techniques employed by the players throughout this match, and should be of assistance to ambitious Go players in the West.

When you study the games in this book, I recommend that you first play through the game record by yourself and think about the best moves for Black and White using your own mind and ideas. Once you've replayed the game, you can read the analysis in this book and compare the authors' ideas with your own.

I hope to see the level of baduk players in the West increase steadily over the coming decades, and that the baduk world will become more internationally competitive and richer as a result.

—Lee Changho 9 dan, Seoul, October 2015

Preface

This book contains analysis of 48 games between two of the top Go players of the early 21st century, but it is not just another book of game commentaries. It is the story of the rivalry and friendship between Lee Sedol and Gu Li, their relentless struggle to become the best, and an explication of the secrets of Go hidden within their games.

There are two parts to *Relentless*. Part One is the core of the book and examines, in unprecedented detail, the 10 game match (jubango) played by Lee Sedol and Gu Li throughout 2014. Part Two reviews every other official game between the two masters (up until the end of 2015), providing the reader with ample material to review and enjoy, while reflecting on what they learned in Part One.

Rather than just saying what happened, we use the match as the basis for an extensive study of the fundamental techniques, strategies and principles of Go—all applied within the context of real games, so that the reader can see how ideas and techniques are employed in practice.

Go is an art form, and like other arts, studying the work of masters contributes greatly to one's appreciation, enjoyment and gradual mastery of the craft. When you study a piece of music, the goal is rarely (if ever) just to be able to play it. Rather, a deep study of a piece is intended to convey a visceral understanding of the technique and theory embodied within it, in a way that a book about theory never could.

Relentless strives to offer that same experience to Go players. Over two years, we have distilled our knowledge and passion for the game into 625 pages of pure Go, until nothing more would fit.

Where other books might gloss over the details, we have sought to expose the wealth of tactical considerations beneath the surface, so that they may be studied, applied to the reader's games, and eventually mastered. We have extracted a practical lesson from every passage of play and boiled it all down to a series of memorable proverbs (both old and new) for the reader to internalize.

Relentless also draws on the knowledge of great thinkers of the past—such as Sun Zi (Sun Tzu), Lao Zi, Thucydides, Carl von Clausewitz, and many more—demonstrating how their ideas apply to Go.

Finally, the commentary is honest. In the past, some books portrayed professional Go players like gods and politely overlooked small mistakes. We make no apologies for doing away with this convention.

This is not intended to be the kind of book you will only read once. The content is dense in parts and may require reflection. It is our hope that it will serve readers for many years to come, however worse for wear, as a source of knowledge and inspiration, throughout their journey along the path of Go.

Lee Sedol and Gu Li

It's no secret that we, the authors, are big fans of both Lee Sedol and Gu Li. Anyone who has frequented the Go Game Guru website over the last few years would already be well aware of that.

When you review the list of titles that these two have to their names (given in the introduction shortly), it's hard to dispute that they've been amongst the best players in the world over the last decade. Beyond that, they're also two of the most popular players, even outside of their native countries.

Of course, winning tournaments helps one to acquire fans, but it's not the only factor. We believe that the attraction of both Lee and Gu's games lies in their originality, their adventurousness and their relentless fighting spirits. In an era where most professional Go players are trained in specialized Go schools from a young age, the level of play is higher than ever, but it comes at the cost of individuality.

The scores of technically masterful, fearsomely strong players whom we see today somehow pale in comparison to the colorful and wonderfully idiosyncratic personalities of last century. The likes of Sakata Eio (the razor), Kato Masao (the killer) or Takemiya Masaki and his cosmic style have gradually faded from the stage. Does the current intense competition even leave room for such characters?

Lee Sedol's style of play is practical, dynamic, territorial and razor-sharp. Like other top players before him, he excels in the middle game and is a master of attack and defense, sabaki, and fighting ko. He can also hold his own against the best in the endgame. Guided by deep and accurate reading, Lee often makes bold exchanges that lead to him capturing groups or trading on a large scale. This makes his play both flexible and decisive, and requires great confidence in the accuracy of one's analysis.

On the other hand, Gu Li's style is thick and powerful, and (like Lee's) razor-sharp. His play in the opening is flexible, creative and inspiring. It can appear slow at times, but he's rarely behind in the early stages of the game. His explosive fighting power helps him to convert his thick positions into profit in the middle game and is very difficult to imitate. One of the great pleasures of reviewing Gu's games is seeing him direct this power towards dismantling a moyo, as if it were made of tissue paper.

However, the real magic happens when these two play together. When the finely honed edges of their steely wills clash across the board, sparks fly in all directions and lead to unexpected and delightfully novel variations.

Like many Go players, we both have fond memories of most of the games in this book—watching the games live, or rushing home from work to download the latest game record—and reviewing them with friends. The cult following of this famous rivalry may seem strange to some readers, but it is best understood by replaying Lee and Gu's matches together. The game records speak for themselves.

Why Are We Fighting?

“Go uses the most elemental materials and concepts—line and circle, wood and stone, black and white—combining them with simple rules to generate subtle strategies and complex tactics that stagger the imagination.” —Iwamoto Kaoru 9 dan

Fundamentally, a game of Go is just a bunch of pebbles on a piece of wood with a grid; or a collection of lines and circles on a computer screen. Everything else that happens is a product of your imagination.

People often use the metaphor of warfare to describe Go, and we've followed that convention in this book because it's already well accepted and relates to the strategic insights of great military thinkers. However, it's just one of many possible models. Among other things, a game of Go could be viewed as:

a conversation, debate or negotiation, cooking or construction, the living of a single life, the running of a business or economy, an elaborate dance, or the interaction between primeval physical forces.

You can choose or invent any model which appeals to you, but we sometimes come across very gentle and kind players who take exception with the notion of ‘fighting’. These people see fighting as negative and immoral, and may consequently become upset when someone is “too aggressive.”

Of course, they are mostly right in the broader sense. We all benefit from a society that is peaceful and productive enough for us to enjoy Go and other activities. Most people understand that it’s necessary to abide by certain ethical and legal frameworks in order to maintain that stability for everyone.

The mistake in worrying about fighting is simply that it over-stretches the model and applies it to things that are way outside its scope. When people talk about fighting with respect to Go, what they really mean is something like “a finely balanced series of moves.”

The forces at play on the Go board are elemental in nature and bear more resemblance to the laws of physics than a human society. There is no such thing as morally right or wrong, good or bad. There is only possible and impossible.

Therefore, don’t avoid fighting and deprive yourself of knowledge just because of unrelated emotional connotations. Doing so only stunts your development as a Go player and reduces your enjoyment of the game. If you are one of these kind and gentle souls, a better response is to completely change your mental model for Go. For example, when people talk about ‘fighting’, what they’re actually discussing is a respectful business negotiation or, perhaps, mixing the cake. It’s all up to you.

In this book, we discuss your opponent and yourself, attack and defense, chaos and harmony, war and peace. We make no moral judgments about moves or states of play, because that’s quite unhelpful. We’re interested in what works: practical techniques and strategies which you can apply to your games.

“Use only that which works, and take it from any place you can find it.” —Bruce Lee

Creating Relentless

We feel grateful that fate and the Go community have given us the opportunity to write this book.

In terms of how *Relentless* was created, the majority of the analysis is Younggil’s, with advice and feedback from members of the Korean professional community, and suggestions from David.

The text in the book was written by David, in close collaboration with Younggil, starting from the draft commentaries on our website.

Josh helped behind the scenes, by automating parts of the typesetting process, and is listed as an author in recognition of this contribution.

Cover Art

The Chinese calligraphy on the cover depicts the word *hen*, which means *relentless* in Mandarin. As with the English word ‘relentless’, it can have both positive and negative connotations.

The Copyright Thing

As you may have noticed if you pay attention to copyright notices, we have some slightly unconventional views about copyright. In short, we like to get paid for our work by people who can afford to do so (so we can write more books) and don't like other people selling our work without including us.

That being said, if someone wants to 'loan' their digital copy of *Relentless* to a friend, we don't think it's reasonable to expect them to request a license to do so. People have been loaning books since before publishers existed, and libraries have long been esteemed institutions in most societies. We both have an embarrassingly large collection of printed Go books and lend them to friends all the time.

If a teacher somewhere wants to use content from our book to teach their students Go, we're happy for them to do so. In fact, we are overjoyed. We do what we do to promote Go, so why would we want to stop someone from teaching others? All we ask is that you give us credit for our work, so that people who have the interest and the means can buy our books. That way, we can write more for you.

The thing is, the knowledge in this book doesn't belong to us anyway. The games are the creations of the players and almost everything else has been handed down from one generation of Go players to the next over thousands of years. Our contribution is just presenting the knowledge in a new way.

Furthermore, we are almost at the point where universal access to human knowledge is attainable, for the first time in history. Of course, certain business models might have to be updated, but from a broader perspective it's hard to see this access to knowledge as anything but a good thing.

You can find more information on the details of all this on the copyright page, at the front of this book. If you're interested in working on a commercial translation of *Relentless*, please contact us.

On the Important Matter of Pickle Jars...

When reviewing the games of past masters, we are struck by two things. Firstly, the level of play even hundreds of years ago was remarkable, especially given that the players didn't have access to the resources we take for granted today. Secondly, the pace of improvement in Go theory is startling, particularly in the opening.

Part Two of this book surveys games between Lee Sedol and Gu Li, spanning a whisker more than a decade. It is a mere flash of brilliance in the long arc of Go history. Yet, even over this short time, the rapid evolution of opening theory can clearly be seen if you pay attention from start to finish.

We have tried to capture the essence of cutting edge opening theory and make the thinking of contemporary professionals accessible to readers around the world, because we felt that a sizable gap existed in Western Go literature, in this area. Nevertheless, we expect Go theory to continue to develop day by day, and that gap will widen once again.

Almost exactly 250 years ago, the Go master Fan Xiping wrote the preface for his book, *Peach Blossom Fountain Go Manual*. His sentiments are just as relevant today, so we would like to echo them:

We are products of our time. We play modern Go. As for those who come after us, we cannot know what they will come up with. Perhaps our work will become like that of those who came before us, used only to cover pickle jars? We do not doubt it.

—Younggil An 8 dan and David Ormerod, Sydney, December 2015

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The book you hold in front of you was made possible through the assistance of many kind and generous people. We will do our best to recognize everyone here, and beg forgiveness for any oversights.

To begin with, we would like to thank Gu Li 9 dan and Lee Sedol 9 dan for their art, which has enriched our lives over many years and without which *Relentless* would not have been possible.

Next, we are grateful to Ni Zhanggen, the CEO of MLily, for sponsoring the MLily Gu vs Lee Jubango and transforming the dream of many Go players into a reality. The Chinese and Korean Go associations were also heavily involved in organizing the match, and deserve recognition for it.

We were humbled when Lee Changho 9 dan appraised our draft manuscript and agreed to write the foreword, and we greatly appreciate the time he took out of his busy schedule in order to do so.

The cover art and design is by Jingning Xue, who dusted off her calligraphy brushes for the occasion. Jingning also helped with translating and interpreting Chinese texts, and proofreading the final draft. On top of all that, she patiently indulged us alternating between the computer and the Go board, for days at a time, and working on this book on and off for two years, and reminded us to eat and sleep.

Our tireless editor, Carol Barnard, read *Relentless* from cover to cover and made many improvements to the text. This was a Herculean effort, especially given that she only knows the basics of Go.

Lee Hajin 3 dan caught many minor blemishes, as the technical reviewer, and worked diligently to ensure the accuracy of the commentary. She was also a welcome source of positivity and encouragement.

We received generous feedback and advice from our friends Han Jongjin 9 dan, Kim Jiseok 9 dan, Kim Juho 9 dan, Lee Jungwoo 9 dan, Mok Jinseok 9 dan, Park Jungsang 9 dan, Song Taegon 9 dan, Park Seungchul 7 dan, Choi Moonyong 6 dan and Na Hyun 4 dan, all of whom helped with game analysis and background information.

We were also very fortunate that friends who proofread the draft seemed to believe in what we were doing, and dedicated much more time than we expected to significantly improving this very long book. They were: Huw Barnard, David Mitchell, Tony Purcell, Neville Smythe and Gareth White.

Many members of the Go community offered feedback on early draft commentaries and asked helpful questions, on our website. They also encouraged and prodded us when we seemed to be losing steam.

John Fairbairn and T. Mark Hall created the GoGoD database of professional games, which was invaluable in ensuring that our comments about opening theory and trends were supported by data.

How to Use This Book

Reviewing high quality games is an important aspect of becoming a better Go player. The question of just how important it is depends largely on your current level and, to a lesser extent, your interests.

General Suggestions for Kyu Level Players

As we've written elsewhere, the most important thing you can do to get better at Go is simply to play games. After you've learned the basics, should spend most of your time playing games. Once you're around 15 kyu, books will be helpful if you enjoy reading them, but it depends on your personality. Try some books about basic haengma, tesuji and the middle game if you feel so inclined.

Once you reach single digit kyu level (9 kyu to 1 kyu), books become increasingly important. You can still improve by just playing games if you have the opportunity to play regularly with stronger players, but you may find that you improve more quickly if you can absorb the techniques and principles of play which have been worked out by Go players over generations. Who wants to reinvent the wheel?

How to Read *Relentless*

We wrote *Relentless* with an audience ranging from single digit kyu players to high amateur dan level players in mind. The book contains many detailed variations, especially in places where the games become complicated. For some players, the variations might be too intense and tiring to follow at times, and could detract from the overall story of the games. So, we recommend reading the book mainly for enjoyment at first, and dipping into the variations when you feel curious about something.

Our intention while writing the book was that players who were reading it primarily for entertainment could start at the introduction, to get to know the players and the background of the jubango, and then follow the story from chapter to chapter.

If you choose to read the book in this way, you can skip from section to section (sections start with headings and centered diagrams) and treat the variations as optional. Following the story with this approach will help you to stay engaged and you will still learn plenty. You don't need to have a Go board in front of you when reading, but it generally helps and can increase your enjoyment of the book.

We spent a great deal of time distilling all the knowledge we could into the commentary and variations in this book. It is not intended that readers will remember (or even look at) everything on the first

reading and the information is provided, rather, as a resource for enthusiastic players to mine over a period of years. We hope that you will become stronger and discover new things with each reading.

General Suggestions for Dan Level Players

By the time you reach low kyu or low dan level, you may have already established your own routine for improving at Go. If that's the case, keep doing whatever seems to be working for you. We will provide some suggestions below which you can try if you feel interested, or when you hit a wall.

If you're trying hard to get better at Go, it's important to have fun so that you maintain your passion for the game and motivation to improve. It's somewhat counter-intuitive, but often the fastest way to improve at something is to focus on your strengths and areas of interest. Very few people can excel at all aspects of Go, so you should strive to master the things that come most naturally to you first.

You may improve with this approach for some time, and then plateau. After several months without improvement, you might consider studying other aspects of the game and patching up weaknesses, but you don't have to if you're already satisfied.

Playing games is still very important, in order to experiment with what you're learning and consolidate the knowledge in a practical sense. You don't need to play too many games at this level. It's much more helpful to play fewer games with more time, so that you can concentrate and stretch your abilities to their limits. Doing so will help you to become stronger. You need time to read carefully and form a coherent strategy, which applies your current knowledge of the game.

If your goal is to become stronger, don't play fast games. If you don't have enough time to think, you'll make mistakes, reinforce bad habits through repetition, and condition yourself to think about the game in superficial ways. It will take more effort to unlearn these bad habits afterwards. Very few players are able to improve by playing fast games, so you should only play fast games for fun.

It's true that professionals sometimes play fast games, but they've already been through the learning process described above, and need less time to think because of faster reading and greater experience. Playing only fast games also makes professionals become weaker.

It's best to have a good teacher if possible. A teacher—even if only consulted on an irregular basis—can help you by pointing out mistakes and weaknesses in your game, and correcting any misconceptions you might have. Some misconceptions can be difficult to discover and address when studying by yourself.

Matters of Life and Death

If you feel that you lack confidence in fighting, or often collapse in the middle game, the fastest way to improve is to practice solving life and death problems. This will sharpen your reading and improve your sense of play far beyond life and death situations themselves.

Some players view life and death problems as a chore, but if you persevere for a little while they can become quite entertaining. Each problem is a self contained puzzle, like a crossword or sudoku, and solving problems can itself become an enjoyable game.

You will improve more quickly and have more fun with problems that you can solve without too much effort. If you can't solve a problem in two minutes, it's too hard and isn't helpful right now.

Learning to Love Fighting

After some time practicing life and death and learning about middle game strategy (there is plenty about strategy in *Relentless*), you may feel that your game becomes more aggressive and fighting oriented. This is generally a good sign. It's very difficult to become a strong player without first becoming good at fighting.

Eventually, when you've honed your fighting skills and become stronger, you might want to consult a teacher again. At this stage, a teacher can help you to focus on the more subtle aspects of the game and help you understand when to fight, and when not to. A teacher can also help you to expand your perception of the whole board, which is very important for mid to high dan level amateur players. We have tried to bake as much knowledge about whole board strategy as possible into *Relentless*.

How to Study Professional Games

With regards to replaying professional games and studying game commentaries, we will outline the method used by players who are studying to become professionals. You can try this approach if you're serious about improving and have plenty of time. It requires some effort, but achieves results.

The first step is to take some time to replay the game record once (or a few times), before looking at any commentary. *Relentless* has been designed with this use in mind and game records are provided at the beginning of every chapter. There is value in physically replaying a game on a board, from a printed game record. The process is more deliberate and engaging, because you need to think about where the next move should be in order to find it. The experience can be difficult at first, perhaps even frustrating, but overcoming that difficulty will make you stronger.

If you find the experience too frustrating, you might want to stop and try the games given in Part Two of *Relentless*, because the game records there have been split into three diagrams. If you're still feeling frustrated after replaying three to five game records, don't worry. Most likely it means that you aren't ready to use this approach to study games yet. You can try it again when you've become a bit stronger. In the meantime, you can download all the game records at: <https://gogameguru.com/relentless/> and replay them as you read through each chapter.

While replaying a game record, you are not a passive observer. With each move, try to understand why it was played and justify its purpose to yourself. Think about the position as if you were playing, and try to predict the next move. After doing so, you can check the game record to see if you were right. As you become stronger, your ability to predict the next move will become more and more accurate, so you will usually be able to find the next move quickly, even on a crowded page.

Try to feel the flow of play and sense when it comes to a natural pause. At these points, you can expect play to shift to another part of the board. Take a moment to widen your perspective and survey the whole board. Who is winning? What are the most important factors in the game and where should the next move be? Check the game record to see if the players agree with you. If not, why not?

Even if you don't understand everything that's going on, replaying games in this way is still worthwhile. Once you've played all the way through the game at least once, replay the game again with the commentary. Compare your ideas with our commentary and study the variations. You can now try to understand the meaning of each move more deeply. If some moves still don't make sense, don't worry. You can come back to this game and review it again sometime later.

Memorizing Professional Games

If you still feel motivated to study a game further, try to memorize it by replaying it several times. The easiest way to memorize a game is to seek to understand the meaning of each move and empathize with both players.

You can also try replaying it upside down for an added challenge. You're now looking at the game from White's perspective and you may find that you notice things which you didn't see earlier. The human brain is strange in that way.

We hope these suggestions will help you to learn as much as possible from game commentaries.

Some Technical Notes About Printed Game Records

When replaying a game from a printed game record, such as those in *Relentless*, the moves are numbered starting with 1 and proceeding in the order that they were played. Often games are broken up into several diagrams, in which case the stones which were already on the board in the previous diagram will appear without numbers, and only new moves will be numbered.

It's common to start counting from 1 again after every hundred moves, such that moves 101, 102 and 103 are simply represented as 1, 2 and 3 (likewise for 201, 202 and 203). This convention makes game records easier to follow and avoids straining readers' eyes with small fonts. If you need to know what the full move number is, you can find more information in the caption for each diagram.

Sometimes stones are played on the same intersection more than once in the space of a single diagram, such as when there is a ko fight. When this happens, the moves are listed below the diagram in the form: 7 at 1, 10 at 4 etc. This means that move 7 was played in the same place as 1, and 10 was played at 4. If you're ever having trouble finding a move, check below the diagram to see if it's listed there.

Don't Forget the Back Matter

If you come across a term or phrase that you haven't seen before, don't forget that a detailed glossary is provided in the back matter.

We have also compiled an 'Index of Principles' at the very end of the book, to help with looking things up and to assist those who learn best by reviewing a summary of key ideas.

Enjoy Yourself!

Finally, remember that the most important thing is to enjoy yourself. If something doesn't work for you, try something else. Everyone is different and this advice is general by necessity. Have fun!

Introduction

Let's get to know the players and learn a little about the match which is the centerpiece of this book.

Gu Li

Gu Li was born in Chongqing on February 3, 1983. His family name is Gu and his given name is Li.

Chongqing is a thriving metropolis and commercial hub, situated towards the center of China at the confluence of the Yangtze and Jialing rivers.

His father was an amateur Go enthusiast and Gu began to learn the game at the age of 6. Go was booming in China at the time, because of Nie Weiping 9 dan's amazing performances in the China Japan 'Supermatches' from 1984–88, and young Gu was swept up in the rising tide.

He showed an early talent for the game, so his parents enrolled him in local Go classes. However, he succumbed to the lure of the nearby video arcade for a time. Even though Gu didn't have much money to feed the arcade games, he enjoyed watching others play and skipped Go class in order to do so.

When his father discovered what Gu had been up to he was enraged, and the experience instilled enough fear in the young boy that he never missed Go class again.

Gu won the National Youth Championship when he was 11. In the following year, aged 12, he qualified as a professional and joined the National Youth Team. At this stage, unlike many of his contemporaries, Gu was still without a formal mentor. It had always been his father's belief that Gu should only have one mentor in his career and, therefore, this teacher should be a 'great master'.

At the time, Nie Weiping was the head coach of the Chinese National Team. Upon receiving a recommendation from Yu Bin 9 dan, Nie traveled to Chongqing specifically to play several games with Gu and assess his talent. After doing so, he decided to formally take on Gu as his apprentice.

Besides Go, Gu loves music and sport, particularly soccer. He is the self-proclaimed 'secret weapon' of the Chinese Go Association's soccer team. He was also a torch bearer during the Chongqing leg of the 2008 Summer Olympics torch relay.

Gu has been known to say, "If you only play Go and don't enjoy life, your Go will suffer for it."

A list of professional titles won by Gu throughout his career is provided on the following page (international titles are **bolded**):

2001 – 8th Xinren Wang, 2nd Liguang Cup

2003 – 17th Tianyuan, 5th Ahan Tongshan Cup, 7th China Korea Tengen

2004 – 18th Tianyuan, 17th Mingren, 9th NEC Cup, 8th China Korea Tengen, 5th Japan China Agon Cup

2005 – 19th Tianyuan, 18th Mingren, 7th Ahan Tongshan Cup, 9th China Korea Tengen, 12th Xinren Wang

2006 – **10th LG Cup**, 20th Tianyuan, 19th Mingren, 11th NEC Cup, 7th Japan China Agon Cup

2007 – **6th Chunlan Cup**, 21st Tianyuan, 20th Mingren, 11th China Korea Tengen

2008 – **21st Fujitsu Cup**, 22nd Tianyuan, 21st Mingren, 4th Chang-Ki Cup, 13th NEC Cup, 10th Ahan Tongshan Cup, 2nd Quzhou-Lanke Cup, 1st Longxing

2009 – **13th LG Cup**, **1st BC Card Cup**, **4th Toyota-Denso Cup**, 22nd Mingren, 14th NEC Cup, 10th Japan China Agon Cup

2010 – **15th Samsung Cup**, 1st China Japan Korea Meijin

2011 – 8th Chang-Ki Cup

2012 – 14th Ahan Tongshan Cup

2013 – 14th Japan China Agon Cup

2014 – 5th Longxing

2015 – **10th Chunlan Cup**.

Lee Sedol

Lee was born on Bigeum-do (Bigeum Island) on March 2, 1983—just one month after Gu. Lee is his family name and Sedol is his given name.

Bigeum is a small island in Shinan County, one of the poorest parts of South Korea. The main industries in the area are agriculture, salt farming and fishing.

His father was a strong amateur player who ran a small Go class for children in the area. Lee was shy, so he only watched the other children play at first, but he soon became interested in Go and began to participate. He quickly surpassed the other students, so his father began to teach him more seriously, together with his older brother Lee Sanghun (now a professional 9 dan) and sister Lee Sena.

By the time he was 8, Lee had reached the level of amateur 5 dan, and began to participate in children's tournaments. That same year, he defeated Han Jongjin (now a professional 9 dan) to win an important youth tournament. It was sensational at the time because Han was in year 6 at school, while Lee (who defeated many older children) was only in year 2.

While Lee remained on Bigeum-do, his father was his only teacher. He would set life and death problems for young Lee to solve while he was working on the farm and would check his answers later in the day. He wanted Lee to find the correct solutions, even if it took the whole day. Lee's reading became quick and precise, partly because of this early training when he was still very young.

At the age of 9, Lee left home to study at Kwon Gapyong 8 dan's dojo in Seoul. Kwon recognized Lee's special talent, so rather than trying to change his unique style, he nurtured it and allowed Lee

to play as he wished. In 1995, aged 12, Lee became a professional.

Lee is gentle, positive and humorous, but is also independent and incredibly strong-willed. In 2009, at the height of his career, he took some time off from professional Go to the shock and disappointment of fans. He returned six months later, seemingly stronger than ever.

Because of his quirky sense of humor and straight-talking attitude, interviews with Lee are very popular, even amongst people who don't play Go. He is known for funny quotes which often contain a nugget of truth, but some members of the older generation don't appreciate this and are quite critical of Lee. Since most younger people find him inspirational, he is something of a polarizing character in Korea.

He was once asked how he felt about his many critics, and quipped, "I don't have enough time to take care of all my fans, so I don't even think about my critics."

The list of Lee's professional titles can be summarized as follows:

2000 – 5th Chunwon, 8th Baedal Wang

2001 – 1st Osram Cup

2002 – **15th Fujitsu Cup**, 7th Korean LG Cup, 1st KTF Cup, 12th BC Card (Korean New Stars), 6th SK Gas Cup

2003 – **7th LG Cup**, **16th Fujitsu Cup**

2004 – **9th Samsung Cup**

2005 – **2nd Toyota-Denso Cup**, **18th Fujitsu Cup**, 6th Maxim Cup

2006 – 11th GS Caltex Cup, 7th Maxim Cup, 2nd Price Information Cup, 25th KBS Cup

2007 – **3rd Toyota-Denso Cup**, **19th Asian TV Cup**, 35th Myeongin, 51st Kuksu, 8th Maxim Cup, 3rd Price Information Cup,

2008 – **12th Samsung Cup**, **12th LG Cup**, **20th Asian TV Cup**, 36th Myeongin

2009 – **13th Samsung Cup**, 52nd Kuksu

2010 – **2nd BC Card Cup**, 6th Price Information Cup, 1st Olleh KT Cup

2011 – **3rd BC Card Cup**, **8th Chunlan Cup**, 6th Siptan, 2nd Olleh KT Cup

2012 – **2012 Samsung Cup**, 40th Myeongin, 17th GS Caltex Cup, 3rd Olleh KT Cup

2014 – MLily Gu vs Lee Jubango, **26th Asian TV Cup**, 15th Maxim Cup, 1st Let's Run Park Cup, 32nd KBS Cup

2015 – **27th Asian TV Cup**.

The MLily Gu vs Lee Jubango

Since at least the 18th century, the question of who is superior between two top players has often been resolved by playing a 10 game match. The Japanese term for such a match is 'jubango', and has been imported into English by Go players.

Given the innate magic that is apparent on the Go board when observing games between Lee Sedol and Gu Li, many dreamed of a jubango between the two masters. The Chinese and Korean Go associations were involved in plans to organize a 10 game match starting from at least 2009, but there was some

difficulty involved in finding a sponsor.

At long last, in 2013, Ni Zhanggen offered to sponsor a jubango after hearing about the aborted plan. Ni is the CEO of MLily, a mattress and bedding company based in China, and is also a serious Go fan. He believed that history demanded that such a match occur and was in a position to make it happen.

Chinese reporters claimed that Ni was disappointed after seeing Gu lose to Lee in the final of 2012 Samsung Cup. Gu lost two games by half a point in that match, and some observers regarded Lee's victory as a matter of luck. Ni is a big fan of Gu Li, and he thought that Gu was the stronger player. Consequently, he believed that if a longer match were played, Gu would prove to be superior.

The organizers considered venues in Canada, Europe and South America, but they eventually decided to have nine games in China and one in Korea (for financial and logistical reasons). Some journalists predicted that such an arrangement would favor Gu, because China is his home country, but Lee has played regularly in the Chinese A League for many years and doesn't seem to mind traveling for games.

The official name of the event was *MLily Meng Baihe Shiji Zhi Zhan Gu Lee Shifanqi*. This translates literally to MLily Battle of the Century Gu—Lee Jubango, but we at Go Game Guru elected to omit the battle of the century flourish for brevity, in all of our translations.

MLily tends to use its double barrel English and Chinese names in the titles of events that it sponsors. Its Chinese name, Meng Baihe, can be translated literally as meng = dream and baihe = lilies. A looser, but more natural translation would be something like 'sweet dreams'. The *M* in MLily stands for Meng. This explains the somewhat cryptic MLily moniker and its unusual capitalization.

The time limit for each game was 3 hours and 55 minutes per player, with five overtime periods (byo-yomi) lasting one minute each. It's traditional to subtract 5 minutes from the 4 hour total to account for the five overtime periods. Originally, Gu wanted the time limit to be shorter, but Lee insisted that they needed plenty of thinking time for an important match like this and Gu accommodated him.

The prize money for the winner of the match was 5 million renminbi (about \$800,000 US dollars at the time). The loser would receive a match fee of 200,000 renminbi.

The match was officially launched on November 24, 2013, at the Conrad Hotel in Beijing, China. Liu Siming, the president of the Chinese Go Association, gave a speech where he said:

"The jubango between Gu Li and Lee Sedol is finally going to start in 2014, and many Go fans have been looking forward to it. Each of the 10 games will be played in a different city."

"I think these two players are the best choice for a jubango, and the games will be very exciting. There hasn't been a jubango like this in the last 70 years [Translator's note: Liu was referring to the famous jubango between Go Seigen and Kitani Minoru], but we've pushed ahead to make this one happen."

"Gu Li and Lee Sedol were both born in 1983, and Lee is just one game ahead in their head to head record. There are many rising stars today, but Lee and Gu are still the best, since they've won 14 and 7 international titles respectively."

"It's a very special event with a lot of prize money, and I hope that both players will create great games, of which they can be proud."

Relentless

Part I

The MLily Gu vs Lee Jubango

January

January 26, 2014, Beijing, China: *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

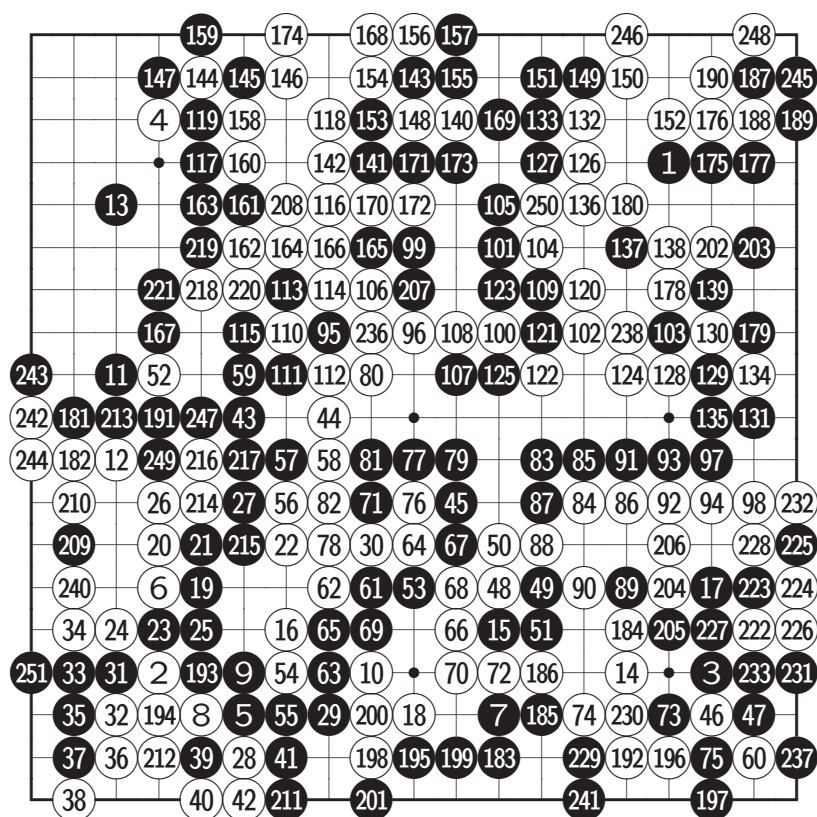


Diagram 1

(Moves: 1-251)

(234) at (225), (235) at (110), (239) at (130)

Beijing

The first game of the MLily Gu vs Lee Jubango kicked off in Beijing, China, in the depth of Winter, on January 26, 2014.

Beijing is the capital of China and has been for most of the last millennium. Due to its long-standing role as the seat of government, the city is filled with ancient palaces, temples and sprawling parks.

Today, Beijing is an economic powerhouse, dominated by a large services sector. It is also home to countless cultural institutions, including the headquarters of the Chinese Go Association, so it was fitting that the organizers chose to start proceedings there.

From the outset, it was very difficult to predict who would win the Jubango, because the players were so closely matched. Before this game, the head to head record between Lee Sedol and Gu Li stood at 18–17 in Lee’s favor, after 36 games. One game between the two ended without a result, because of a rare quadruple ko (see Chapter 37).

For many Go fans, it didn’t matter who would win. It was enough to be able to watch the two masters play a series of high quality games together.

There was no formal lunch break scheduled for these games, but food was provided and the players were free to get up and eat whenever they wanted to.

Both players were no doubt keen for an early win, in order to dictate the flow of the match in their favor. Lee Sedol drew black in the nigiri and the players alternated colors thereafter.

The Star Point

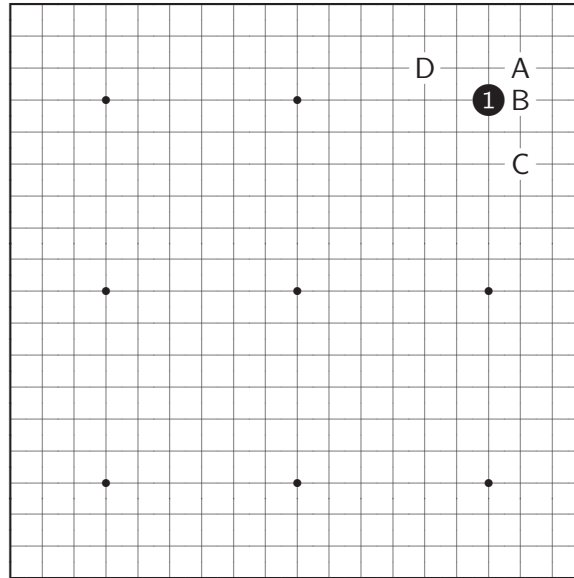


Diagram 2
(Move: 1)

The White Rabbit put on his spectacles. “Where shall I begin, please your Majesty?” he asked. “Begin at the beginning,” the King said gravely, “and go on till you come to the end: then stop.”

—Lewis Carroll, *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*

Lee Sedol began the match with ❶ on the star point.

The star point is the most common first move for Black in contemporary play, mainly because it offers Black great flexibility in choosing his next moves after seeing White’s opening strategy.

The star point’s strengths are its flexibility, speed, influence and simplicity. Its main weakness is that it doesn’t firmly grasp the territory and, consequently, the eyespace in the corner.

If Black wants to control the corner, playing at A or B instead is more effective. After ❶, White can easily invade at A and seize the corner territory for himself. However, because Black will develop powerful outside influence in the process, correctly timing the invasion at A can be quite difficult.

At this stage in the game, it’s too early for White to invade at A, and the merits of an invasion will likely remain questionable for some time. Because of this, the weakness at A isn’t as significant as you might think, especially if Black develops a large framework around ❶—obscuring his weakness.

This, combined with the fact that the symmetrical star point stone is unbiased in either direction and simplifies local tactical considerations for Black, is why the star point is so flexible. After playing ❶, Black’s plan is to develop rapidly, on a large scale, and to adapt to changing circumstances.

Black can later enclose the corner with a move at C or D, but he won’t rush to do so before the ideal direction of play reveals itself. Enclosing the corner too early reduces Black’s flexibility by slanting the corner in a particular direction. We’ll discuss the star point enclosure in more detail in Chapter 5.

The 3-4 Point and the Direction of Play

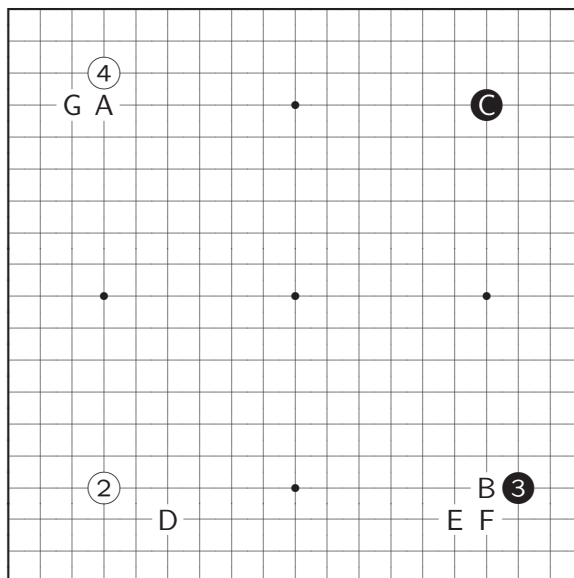


Diagram 3
(Moves: 2-4)

Gu Li played ② on the diagonally opposite star point and Black played ③ on the 3-4 point, facing ②.

The star point is also the most common move for White in the opening, but playing in an adjacent corner (e.g. at A) is more common. Playing in the diagonally opposite corner like this reduces the number of possible opening formations for both players.

This can be a good way to play when White wants to avoid a diagonal opening (i.e. when Black places stones at ③ and ②, and White plays at A and B). Many players like to play at ② because they dislike diagonal openings as White. However, there's no reason for White to avoid a diagonal opening and playing ② at A offers other strategic advantages, which we'll discuss in Chapter 3.

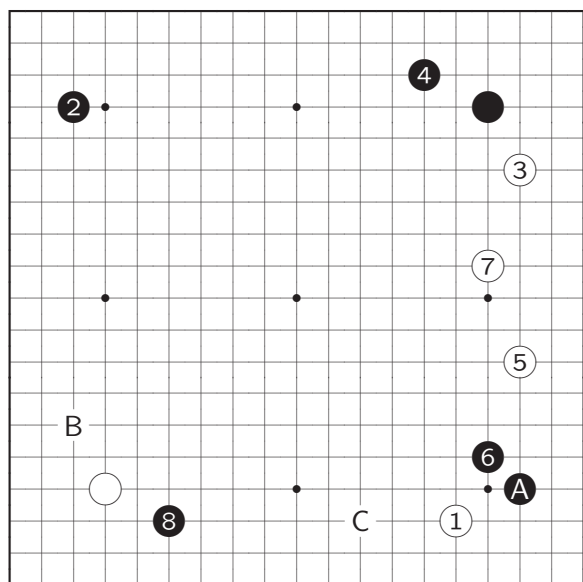
Black generally prefers opening formations consisting of one star point and one 3-4 point corner these days. In the past, we saw trends towards more territorial or center-oriented styles, but contemporary Go strikes a finer balance between territory and influence.

When you play on the 3-4 point, the direction of play is more important, because your stone doesn't rest on an axis of symmetry. In this game, Black played at ③ to create good continuations at D or E.

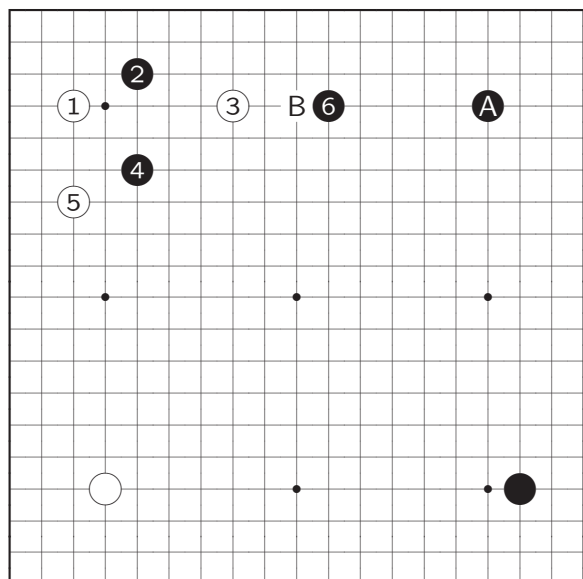
Black ③ used to be less popular than playing at B or F, because some players thought that approaching at E next was good for White. However, professional thinking has changed and ③ establishes what is now the most common formation in response to ②.

White doesn't usually approach at E because he prefers to take the last open corner with ④ or A.

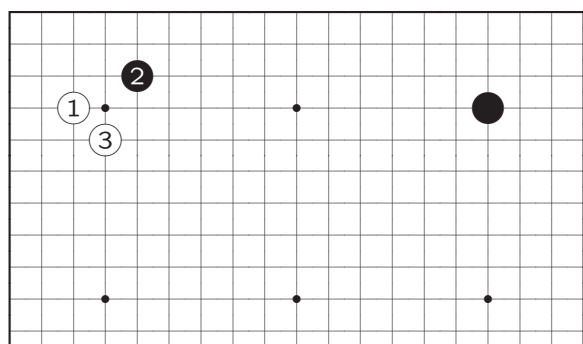
In contrast to ③, playing ④ at G isn't a particularly good move, as we'll see in the following variations.



Variation 1 for ④



Variation 2 for ④



Variation 3 for ④

Approaching ① with ② is also possible, but Black will be happy to take the last open corner with ②.

White ③ and ⑤ are fine from a tactical perspective, but Black defends naturally with ④ and ⑥. The kosumi at ⑥ prevents White from enclosing Black, by playing at ⑥ himself.

Black ⑧ makes miai of B and C, and this opening feels slightly better for Black. White has spent many moves on the right side, very early on in the game.

The situation is different when White plays at ①, because there are no more open corners.

Black will approach at ② and, if White pincers around ③, fighting with ④ to ⑥ suits Black.

Black ① provides support for Black's pincer at ⑥, so White would prefer it if ① were a White stone.

Instead of ⑥, B is also possible. As a rule of thumb, it's usually more effective to pincer fourth line stones on the fourth line (if you want to attack).

A pincer on the third line is easier to ignore or press down, though there are obviously exceptions to such a simple rule.

When pincering ② isn't effective, the kosumi at ③ is a patient and time honored move.

Even though ③ looks slow, it's a strong move which quietly accumulates power in White's corner and is still often played today.

However, in this opening, White's stones are all on the left side and the exchange of ② for ③ feels somewhat forced.

Even when a move is usually effective, you need to adapt your strategy to the opening in play.

Modern Go Is Wide

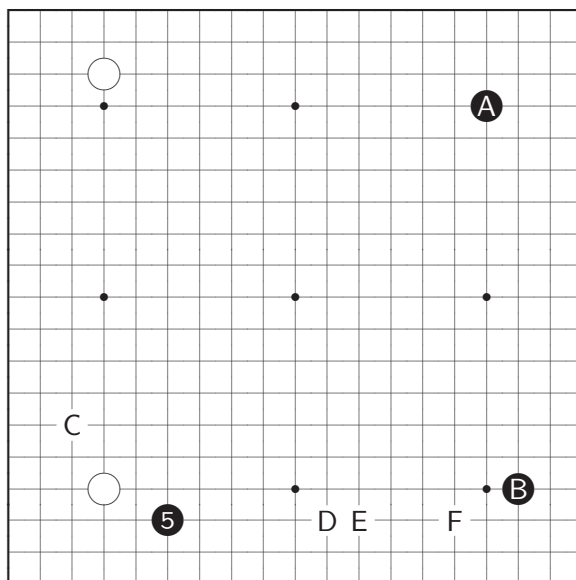
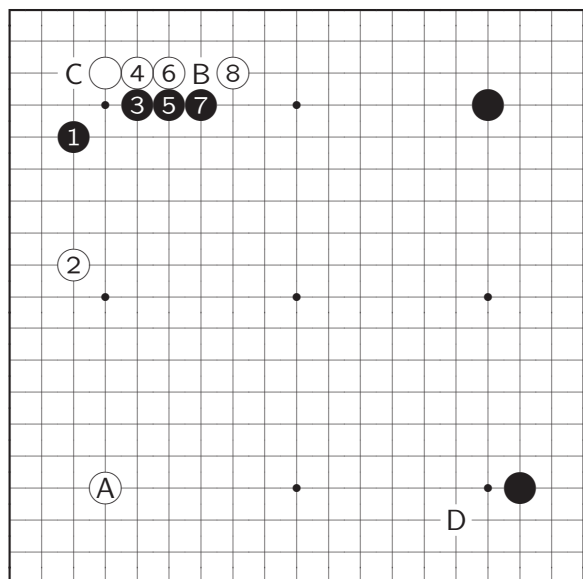


Diagram 4
(Move: 5)

Black's approach at ⑤ aims to create a large framework in combination with ① and ②. If White defends the corner at C, Black intends to set up a wide position with D or E.

'Wide' means that you consider and draw as much of the board as possible into play; that you embrace and explore the countless possibilities in Go, and expand your strategic options. In contrast, enclosing the corner with ⑤ at F would be narrower (and tight) but that doesn't necessarily make it a bad move.

There are also times when you might want to play narrow moves, to control the options available to your opponent, but the trend has been for games to become wider as the art of Go evolves.



Variation 4 for ⑤

Approaching at ① is also conceivable. However, in contrast to the earlier variation, White can now pincer at ② with support from ①.

Even if Black continues with ③ to ⑦, White still has a comfortable position up to ⑧. It's quite hard for Black to counter-attack severely, because ② is a loose pincer and the bottom left is White's sphere of influence.

White can also play ⑥ at B, but then it becomes easier for Black to attach at C.

White doesn't have to pincer at ② immediately. Playing ② at D is another option.

The High Enclosure Emphasizes Thickness

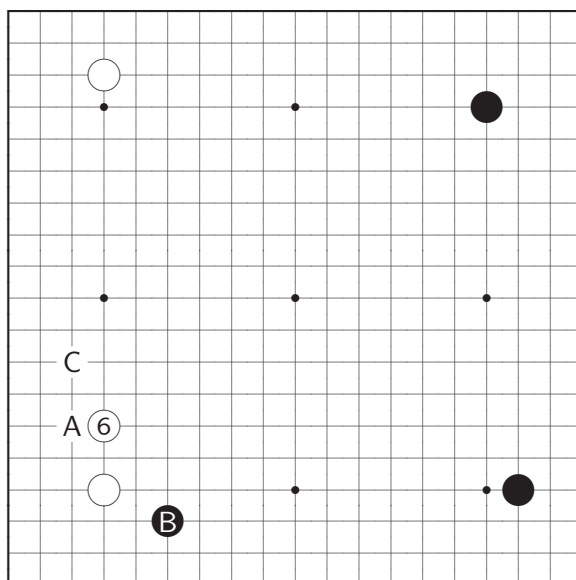
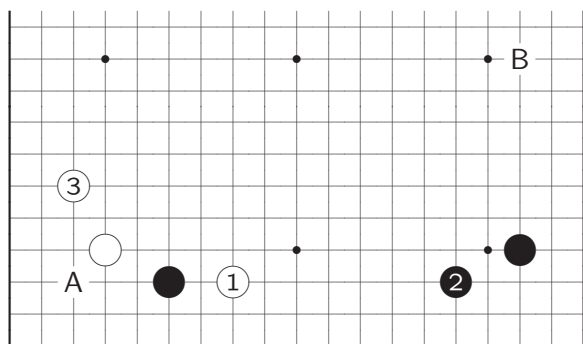


Diagram 5
(Move: 6)

The low enclosure at A is more common than ⑥, but Gu Li likes to play the high enclosure at ⑥ because his style emphasizes thickness and fighting. White ⑥ has a greater effect on ② than A does, but at the cost of leaving a weakness at C. Distaste for this weakness is what makes most professionals prefer the low enclosure instead. The game is harder to manage after ⑥, but this doesn't worry Gu.

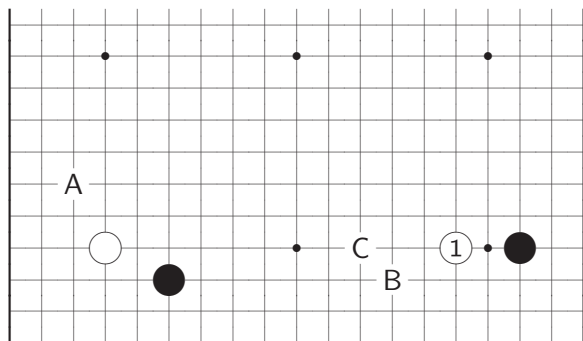


Variation 5 for ⑥

If White wants to prevent Black's large framework, he can pincer at ①.

Black ② is a flexible response, which creates good continuations around A and B.

White ③ is a firm way to defend the corner without playing too tightly.



Variation 6 for ⑥

Playing in the bottom right with a move like ① is another possible strategy if White doesn't want Black to develop a large framework at the bottom.

Black has good continuations at A, B and C, and the game is still playable for both sides.

The Micro-Chinese Opening

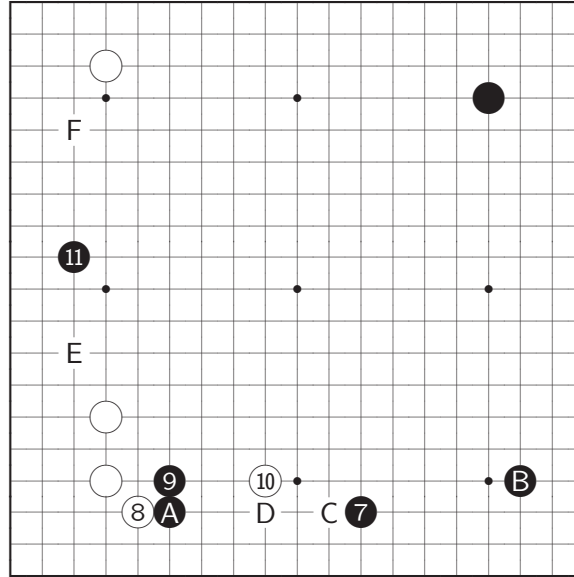
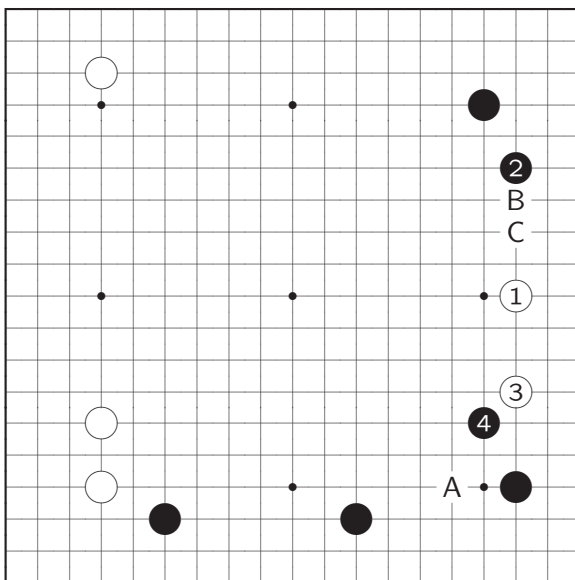


Diagram 6
(Moves: 7-11)

Lee chose to play the Micro-Chinese Opening, creating a framework at the bottom with ⑨, ⑦ and ⑩. The Mini-Chinese Opening (with ⑦ at C) is also popular, but ⑦ has been gaining popularity in recent years. For the sake of brevity, we'll refer to these sorts of positions as *Chinese style openings* (or formations) throughout this book.

White kicked ⑨ with ⑧ because he wanted to make Black heavy before attacking. Kicking and pinching with ⑧ and ⑩ is typical of Gu Li's style of play. If ⑦ were at C, ⑧ could be at D instead. Black split the left side with ⑪, instead of responding directly to ⑩. This made miai of E and F.



Variation 7 for ⑧

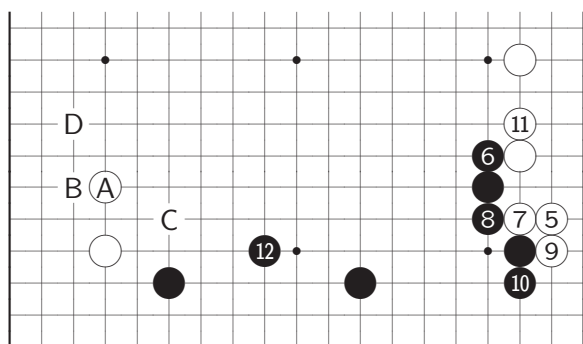
The splitting play at ① is a common countermeasure against Chinese style openings, and ② to ④ is a natural continuation.

Black plays the shoulder hit at ④ because White's two space extension on the right side is already solid.

Black's judgment is that he stands to gain more at the bottom than White does on the right side (if both players' positions are solidified by a contact fight).

This strategy is more active than simply defending the corner with ④ at A and, if White does become strong on the right side, holding back with ② may prove to be a wise decision.

Instead of ②, Black can also consider B or C. The close approach at C puts more pressure on White, but leaves Black at risk of becoming thin later.

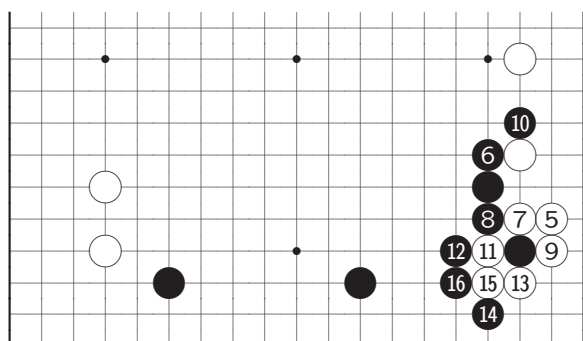


Variation 8 for ⑧

The moves up to ⑪ illustrate the most common variation after the previous diagram.

If ① were at B, Black would play ⑫ at C instead. However, because White played the high enclosure at ①, Black prefers to defend tightly at ⑫ in this case.

After reinforcing at ⑫, Black can aim to approach at D later.



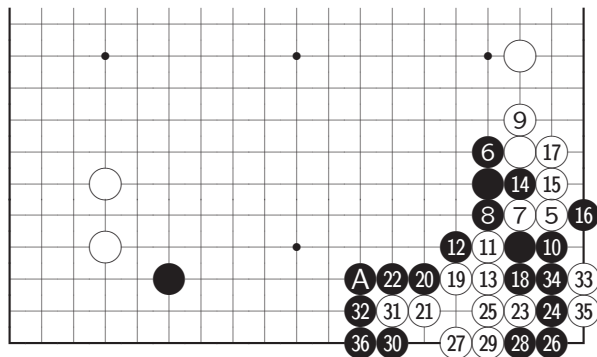
Variation 9 for ⑧

Resisting with ⑩ shows fighting spirit.

Gu Li (Black) played like this against Lee Sedol in the group stage of the 2012 Samsung Cup. The game is analyzed in Chapter 37.

The opening in that game was slightly different, but the variation up to ⑯ is still acceptable for both players in the present game.

Black ⑭ is possible (and better than simply playing ⑯), because White's corner is not yet alive after ⑬.

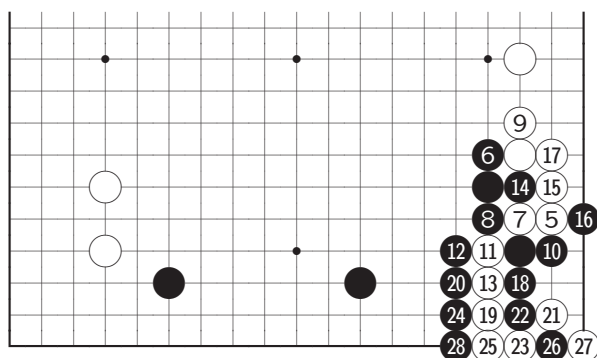


Variation 10 for ⑧

If White plays at ⑨ (instead of ⑩), ⑩ is a strong move for Black.

White can't expect a good result after cutting at ⑪, because ⑭ to ⑳ are powerful moves. Black ① helps Black to win the capturing race up to ⑳.

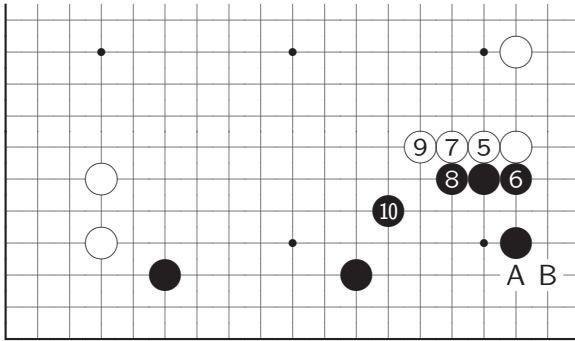
There are also other possible moves for Black in this situation, but this variation shows a relatively straightforward way to capture White's cutting stones.



Variation 11 for ⑧

White ⑱ doesn't work either. Black ⑳ is a strong counter and ㉔ is a very useful tesuji.

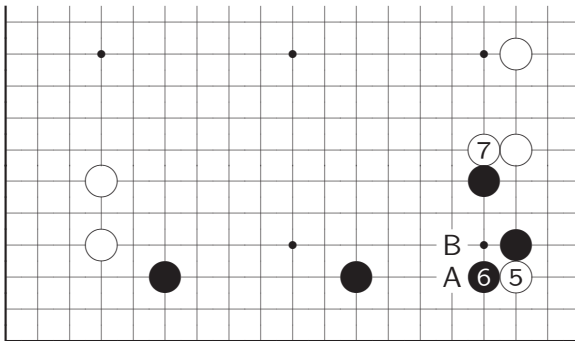
White loses the capturing race once again.



Variation 12 for ⑧

If White simply answers at ⑤, Black will be happy to enclose a large territory up to ⑩.

If White plays at A later, Black will respond at B and there isn't enough space for White to live on the inside.

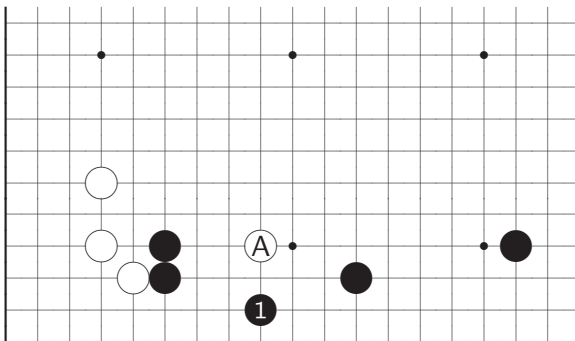


Variation 13 for ⑧

White might think about exchanging ⑤ for ⑥ before playing at ⑦.

This leaves aji in the corner, but the problem is that it also makes Black's position stronger. Because of that, Black will tenuki after ⑦.

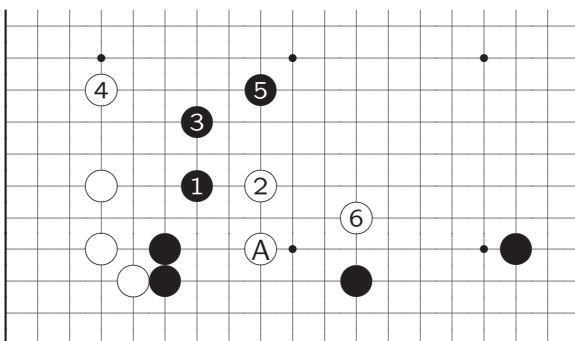
If White hadn't made the exchange in the corner, he'd be able to continue at A or B next, but because of ⑤ and ⑥, these moves lack power.



Variation 14 for ⑪

After ①, instead of ⑪ in the game, Black could consider connecting under with ①, but it's passive.

White will take sente and, because ① is very low, White can regard the exchange of ① for ① as forcing.



Variation 15 for ⑪

Black might move out with ①, but then ② will run alongside Black and ④ will take profit naturally on the left side.

Black can continue by capping with ⑤, but it's hard to attack White's three stones effectively after White makes shape with ⑥.

The shape formed by ①, ② and ⑥ is called the *horse's head*.

Remember to Close the Door

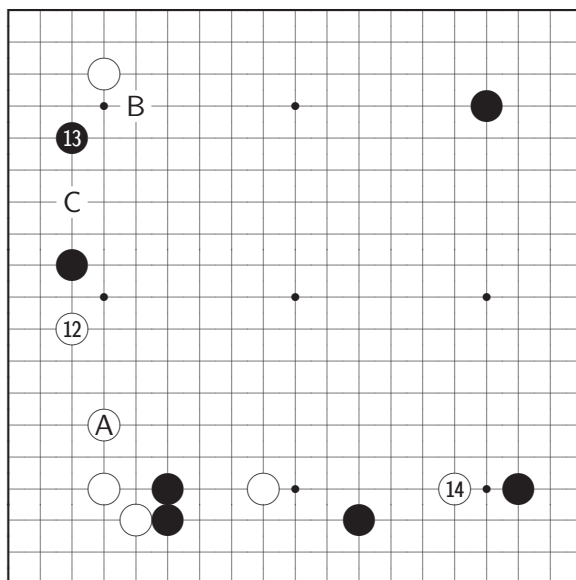
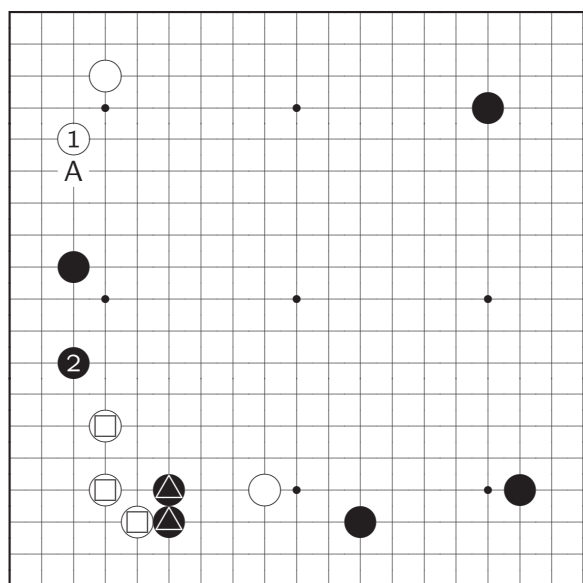


Diagram 7
(Moves: 12-14)

Extending at ⑫ was more important for White than enclosing the top left corner at ⑬. That's because White's high move at ① left the door open in the lower left (with respect to territory).

However, ⑫ closed the door; meaning it helped to consolidate White's lower left territory.

White's kosumi at B would follow a basic joseki (aiming to invade at C next), but that looks slack. White chose the dynamic and lively approach at ⑭ instead!

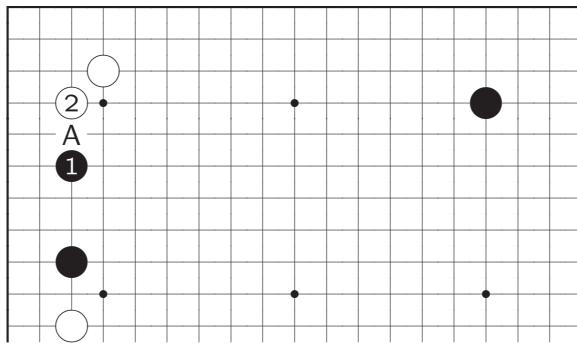


Variation 16 for ⑫

If White encloses the top left corner, at ① (or A), White's squared stones will become much weaker after Black extends to ②.

In addition, White's potential territory in the lower left area will be greatly diminished, because the door is still open down there.

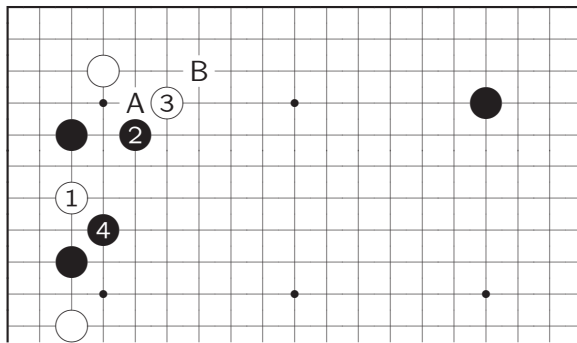
Black ② also assists Black's marked stones indirectly and reduces the scale on which White can surround them. This will make it easier for Black to sacrifice the triangled stones later, if necessary.



Variation 17 for 13

Extending at ① is also conceivable, but after White checks Black's group with ②, his two stones feel constricted and are not completely settled yet.

Extending one line further (at A) gives Black more room to breathe in this case. Even though it looks thinner, it's also more flexible.

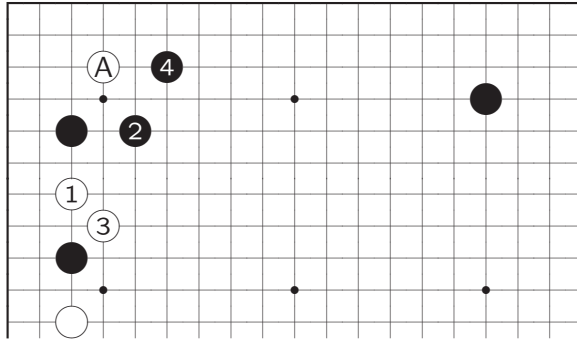


Variation 18 for 14

If White invades at ① later, Black can play ② to ④ and it's hard for White to move ① out.

As you can see, Black has latent sente moves against White's corner (such as ② or A) which make his three space extension stronger than it might seem.

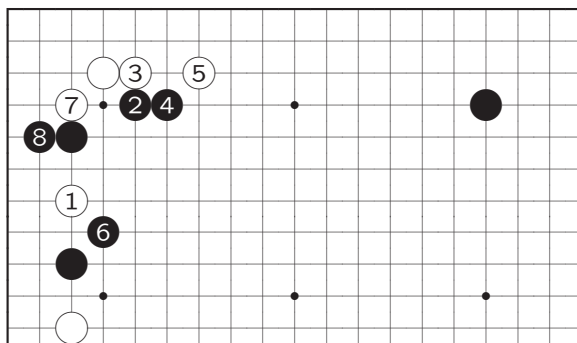
It's better style for Black to hold such moves in abeyance until they are truly needed, because exchanging ② for ③ gives up territory at the top, and Black might prefer to pincer around B later instead.



Variation 19 for 14

If White plays at ③, Black can enclose White's corner stone with ④.

White's potential at the top has been erased and replaced with Black's. What's more, ① isn't alive in the corner yet, so this isn't a good idea for White.



Variation 20 for 14

Instead of ② in the previous variation, Black can also press with ② and ④.

Black can still come back to enclose ① with ⑥, so the result is similar.

Since trying to save ① doesn't lead to a good result, White will sacrifice by exchanging ⑦ for ⑧, before playing elsewhere.

Get to the Key Points Quickly

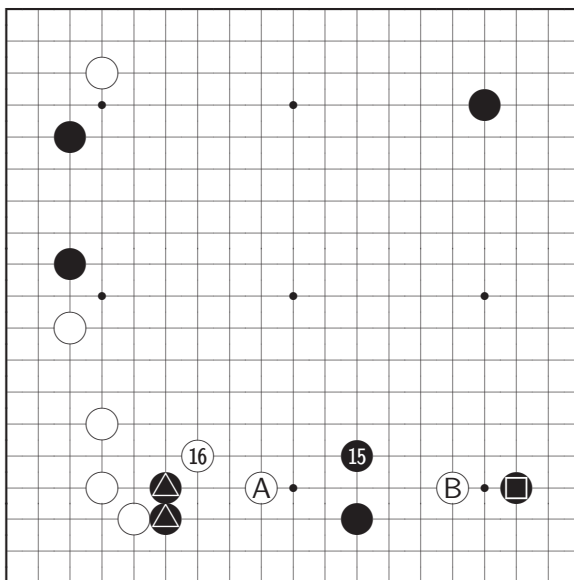
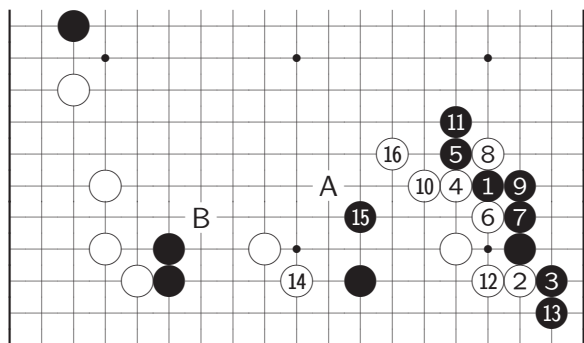


Diagram 8
(Moves: 15-16)

Black jumped out from the middle with 15 because it split and weakened both (A) and (B), while also indirectly helping his marked stones. Pressuring Black's triangled stones with 16, and developing his pincer stone at (A), was more important than defending (B). Both players seized the key points.



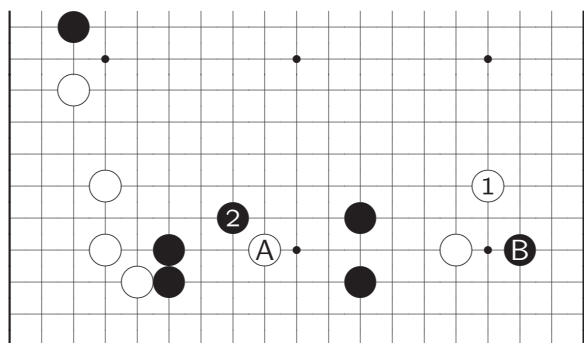
Variation 21 for 15

Strengthening Black's corner with 1 is also possible.

White might continue with a leaning attack, starting at 4, and both players can fight with 5 to 16.

White can aim at moves like A or B next and it's another game.

Instead of 2, capping at 15 is also conceivable.



Variation 22 for 16

If White plays around 1, Black will move his lower left group out with 2, while also applying pressure to (A).

Black (B) is light and flexible, so Black is able to take the initiative in the center. This isn't good for White.

Size Matters in Go

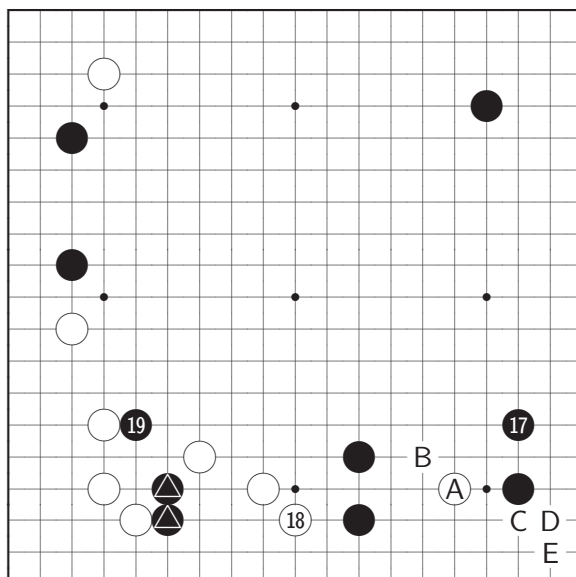
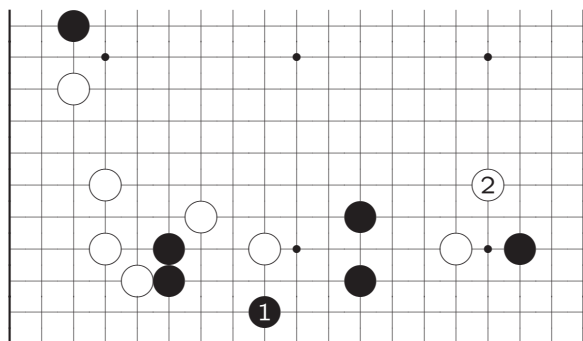


Diagram 9
(Moves: 17-19)

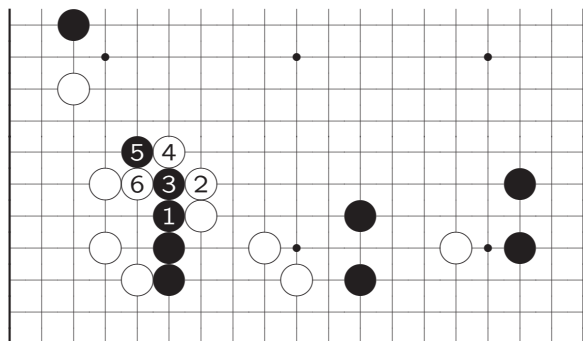
After 17, ① was still light. There was no way for Black to swallow the whole lower right area (including ①) in a single move. For example, even if Black encloses White with B, White still has some aji in the corner with C to E. White 18 was bold. By threatening to capture the marked stones on the largest possible scale it induced Black into moving them out with 19.



Variation 23 for 17

If Black slides underneath at 1, White can play a move around 2 and is able to manage his groups on both sides.

Black shouldn't just follow White around the board like this.



Variation 24 for 19

If Black just pushes from behind with 1, the fight is very difficult for Black after 6.

Playing 1 at 6, as in the actual game, was skillful.

Speech Is Silver and Silence Is Golden

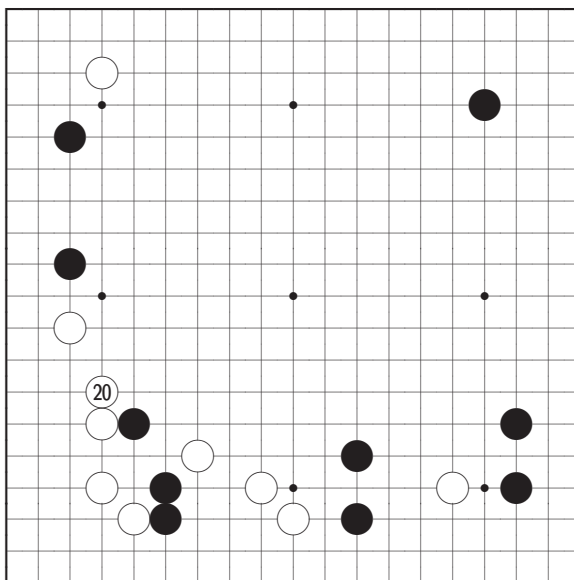


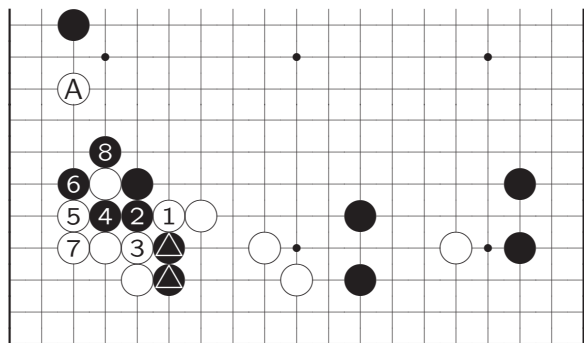
Diagram 10
(Move: 20)

Extending calmly to ②⑩ was the right answer for White.

When you're attacking, quiet moves like this are often the strongest way of playing, because they don't help your opponent to make shape, trade or move out.

It's one of the paradoxes of Go that contact moves tend to be ineffective when attacking, but good when defending. This is because they usually force the situation to be resolved quickly, and both players' positions become stronger as a result. Most people tend to assume the opposite when they first start playing.

Black's group in the lower left is weak and he'd like nothing more than to provoke a complicated contact fight here. The best response for White is to remain silent and aloof from the bickering.

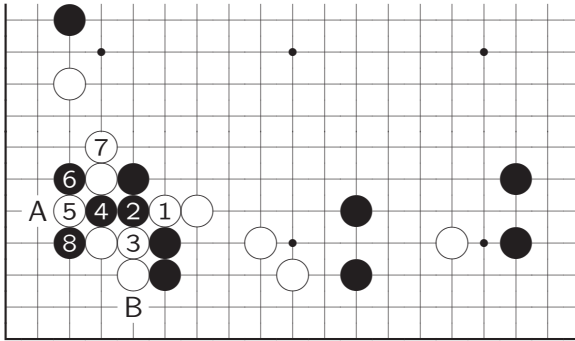


Variation 25 for ②⑩

If White cuts at ①, returning the favor with ⑥ is a good counter and White has to connect at ⑦.

Black gives up the marked stones, but White's territory in the lower left is greatly reduced and ① becomes weak.

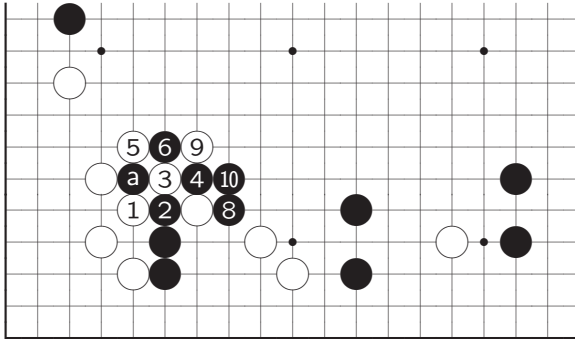
This result is good for Black.



Variation 26 for (20)

If White saves the cutting stone with ⑦, Black will atari at ⑧.

A and B are miai for Black next.

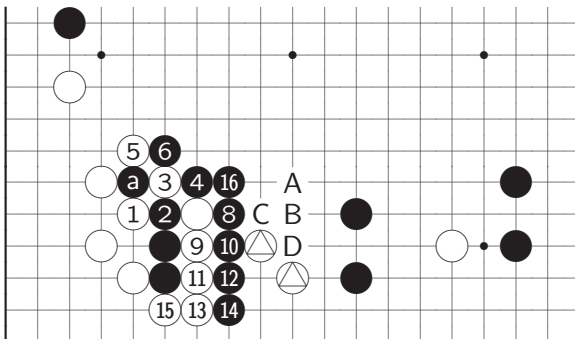


Variation 27 for (20)

⑦ at a

If White pushes and cuts from the other side, with ① and ③, Black will dodge White's attack up to ⑩.

This is a relatively simple continuation and the result is reasonable for Black.

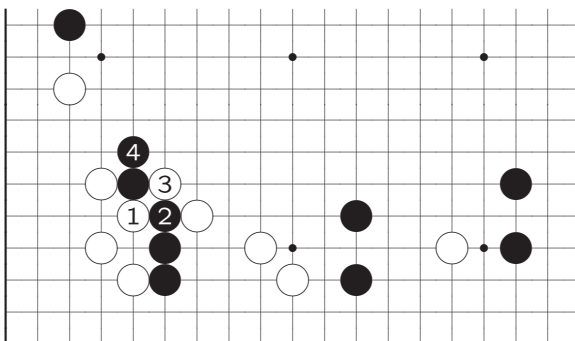


Variation 28 for (20)

⑦ at a

Saving the cutting stone with ⑨ isn't a good idea. Black will sacrifice three stones up to ⑩ and White's marked stones are as good as dead.

If White plays at A later, playing B to D is a safe response for Black and White can't separate Black's stones.

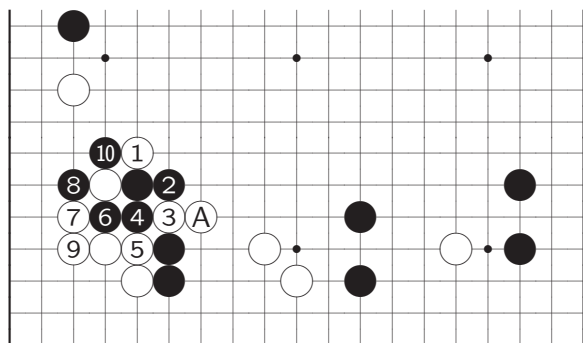


Variation 29 for (20)

Extending at ④ is also conceivable, but the position becomes quite complicated after this, so Black needs to come up with a clear continuation first.

Since the last two variations were clear, and satisfactory for Black, not many players would choose ④.

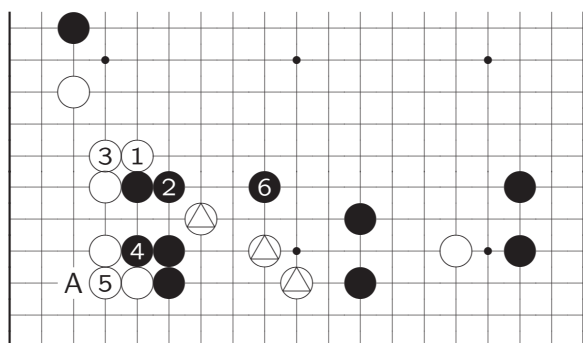
If you make a habit of choosing straightforward, reasonable sequences that are within the horizon of your reading ability whenever possible, your game will become more stable and you'll win more often.



Variation 30 for ⑳

If White hanes at ①, Black can just extend to ②. This creates a bad relationship between ① and A, which is another reason why Gu's quiet extension in the game was better style.

Black doesn't have to worry about White's push and cut, with ③ and ⑤, because the trade up to ⑩ still works for Black. This is even better for Black than Variation 25.

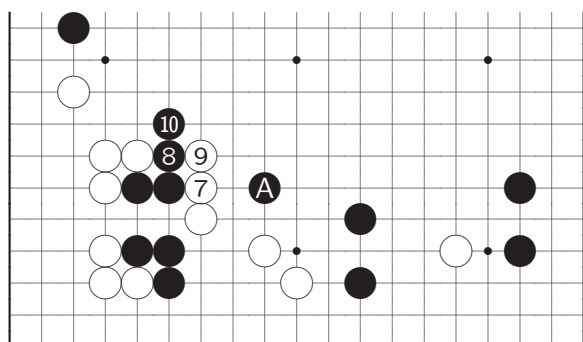


Variation 31 for ㉑

If White connects at ③, then it's time for Black to exchange ④ for ⑤. Black might regret removing the aji in the corner (at A), but sometimes you just have to let your misgivings go and play down to earth moves.

Black's capping play at ⑥ is severe and provides adequate compensation.

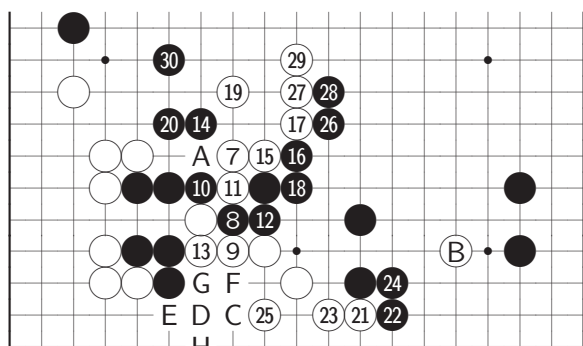
White's marked stones are quite weak now.



Variation 32 for ㉒

If White pushes with ⑦, Black can just walk out in front of White up to ⑩. Black has the high ground in this fight and White's group feels a little heavy.

Black A occupies a vital point and the overall result is bad for White.



Variation 33 for ㉓

If White tries to fight with ⑦, ⑧ is a sharp tesuji. The hane at ⑩ prevents White from cutting at A, and White is too thin to seal Black in after ⑩.

White is enclosed and in urgent need of life.

If he makes two eyes with ②① to ②⑤, B fades away as Black takes the initiative in the center up to ③⑩.

If White surrounds Black with ②⑤ at ③⑩ instead, Black C to E, ②⑤ and F to H sees White lose the race.

Maintain the Pressure

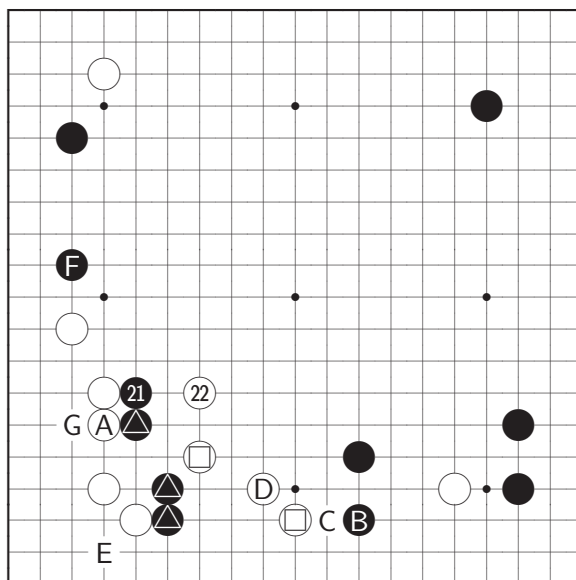


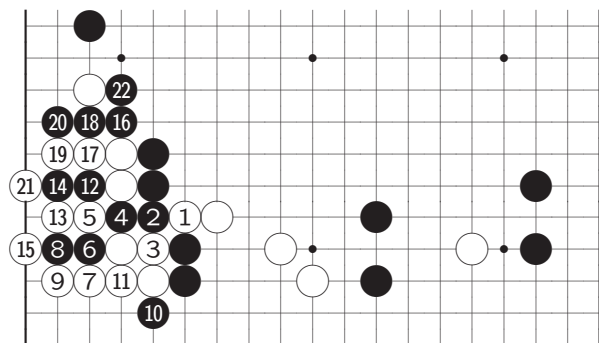
Diagram 11
(Moves: 21-22)

Moving out with ②① may seem premature, but there weren't any satisfactory alternatives. Jumping to ②② was a powerful move, which kept the pressure on Black's triangled group, while helping White's squared stones.

The opening up to ②② seems slightly better for White, but it's difficult to find any questionable moves by Black.

After the game, Lee Sedol lamented choosing the Micro-Chinese Opening (with ②B) after White's high enclosure at ②A. That's because Black would prefer to move ②B to C after ②D. Therefore, instead of ②B, E or ②F could be better for Black when White plays ②A instead of G. Black ②F is shown in Chapter 45.

However, that's a very subtle point and it doesn't fully explain White's advantage at this stage of the game. Gu Li's intuition for the opening is extraordinary, even amongst professionals, and he's usually ahead in the opening when he plays against Lee Sedol.

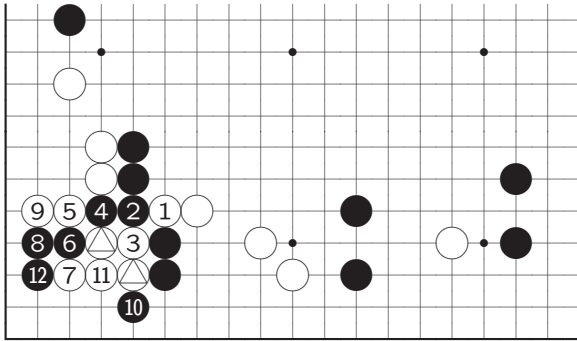


Variation 34 for ②②

Cutting at ① still doesn't work. Countering with the cut at ⑥ is good, and Black can pursue a sacrifice strategy with ①⑥ to ②②.

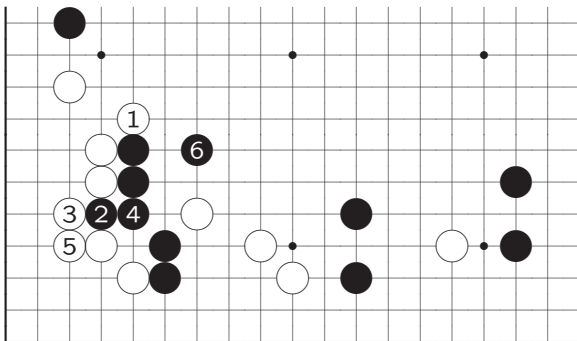
Even though White captures many Black stones, the result still favors Black. White's lower left group is (for the most part) buried deep within the corner, so those stones have little future potential in the game.

The long term effectiveness of stones is a factor in their overall efficiency. White's corner stones cannot be expected to continue working hard after this.



Variation 35 for (22)

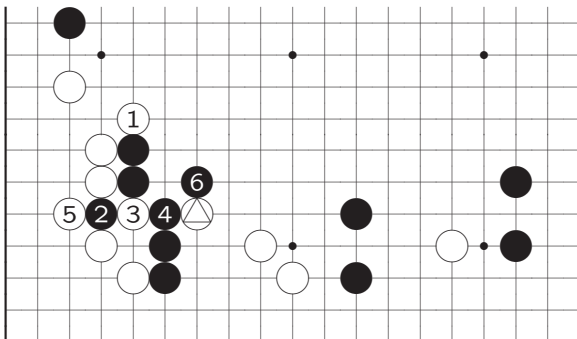
White can't block at ⑨, because White's five marked stones will be captured after ⑩ to ⑫.



Variation 36 for (22)

If White hanes at ①, Black's wedge at ② repairs his weaknesses in sente. After that, Black will be happy to take the key point for attack and defense with ⑥.

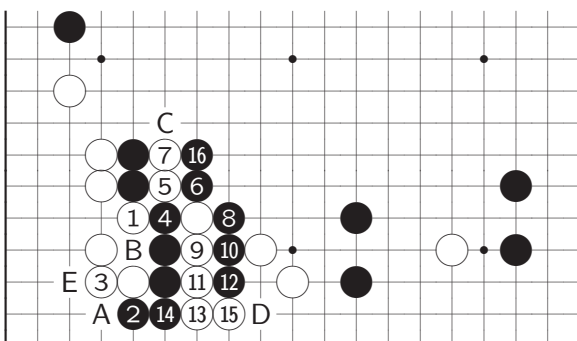
In the game, White didn't waste any time in taking the key point at ⑥ for himself.



Variation 37 for (22)

Resisting with ③ is what Black wants. Black can dodge White's punch with ④ and ⑥.

This result is even worse for White than the previous variation, because the marked stone is damaged.



Variation 38 for (22)

If White tries to cut with ①, the hane at ② shows excellent timing.

White ③ is necessary, because if White blocks at A instead Black will exchange ④ for ⑤ and double atari at B.

Black's best continuation is ④ to ⑧. White ⑨ doesn't work because Black's counter from ⑩ to ⑫ makes miai of C and D.

If ③ is at ④, Black can live in the corner with E.

Know When to Hold ‘Em...

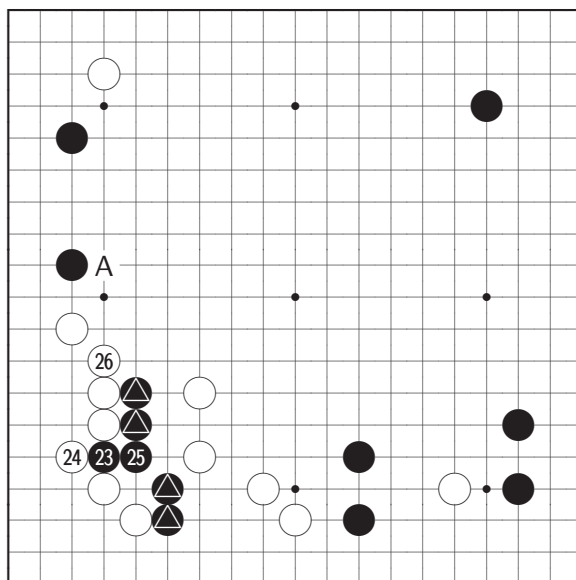


Diagram 12
(Moves: 23-26)

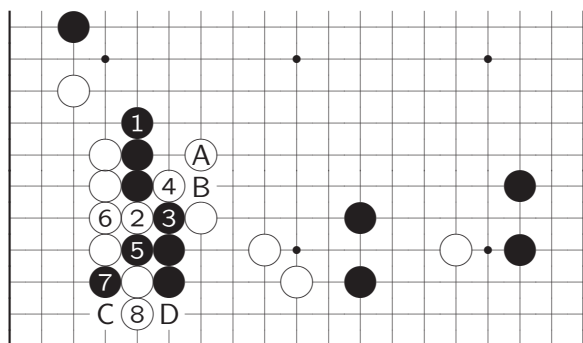
You’ve got to know when to hold ‘em, know when to fold ‘em, know when to walk away, and know when to run. You never count your money when you’re sittin’ at the table. There’ll be time enough for countin’ when the dealin’s done.

—Don Schlitz, *The Gambler*

Lee exchanged ㉓ to ㉔ to settle the shape and prevent White from cutting at ㉕.

In the variations from ㉑ to ㉕, offering to trade was the key to managing Black’s marked group. At this point though, Black wanted to stop drawing cards and hold what he already had in his hand. It’s usually good to keep the possibility of a trade open for as long as you think you can negotiate an acceptable result. The nature of each trade and your planned counter often changes with each move.

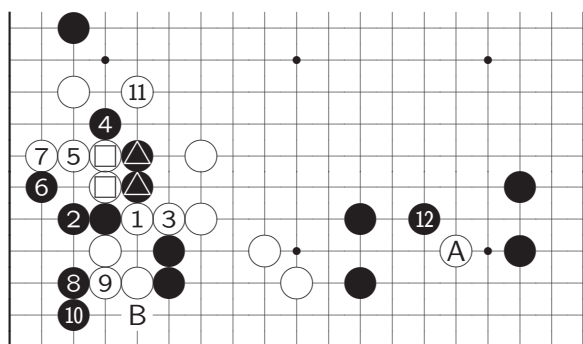
White ㉔ was another move that epitomized Gu Li’s style. It was slow, because it didn’t complete the corner, but it created power in the center and set up a potential leaning attack for White at A.



Variation 39 for ㉓

Simply extending to ① is slack. Pushing and cutting with ② and ④ is now a strong tactic, because ㉑ defends the cutting point at B.

The moves up to ⑦ might seem natural for Black, but White’s extension at ⑧ makes miai of C and D, and Black collapses.

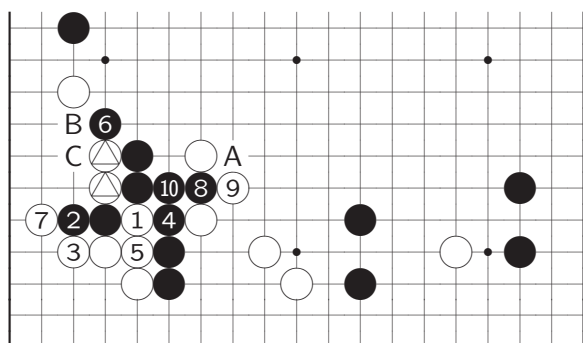


Variation 40 for (24)

Cutting at ① doesn't lead to a good result, because Black can fight back with ② to ⑥. After Black lives in the corner with ⑧ and ⑩, White still needs to worry about Black's marked cutting stones.

Black will take sente and suppress (A) with ⑫. This result is bad for White because Black can still connect under with B, and White has some bad aji in the proximity of Black's marked stones.

Instead of ⑤, White at ⑥ will be met by Black's tesuji at ⑦—capturing White's marked stones.

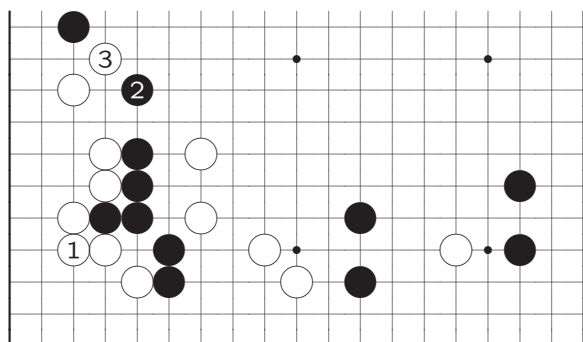


Variation 41 for (24)

If White blocks at ③, Black will play ④ to ⑥.

White ⑦ protects the marked stones, but Black will connect with the wedge at ⑧. After ⑩, A and B are miai for Black.

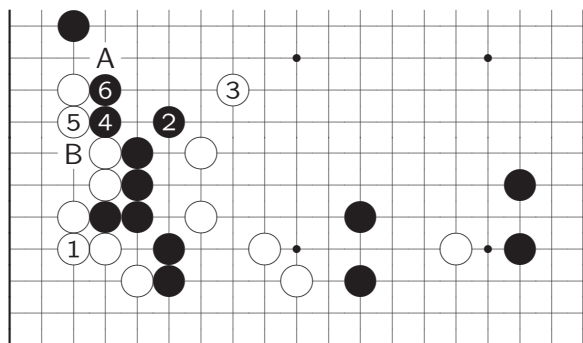
If White uses ⑦ to cut at ⑩, Black will capture White's marked stones with C. Either way, the result is satisfactory for Black.



Variation 42 for (26)

Reinforcing with ① is common, and White's position is still fine after this move.

If Black jumps out to ②, White can simply separate Black's groups with ③, and the game is progressing smoothly for White.

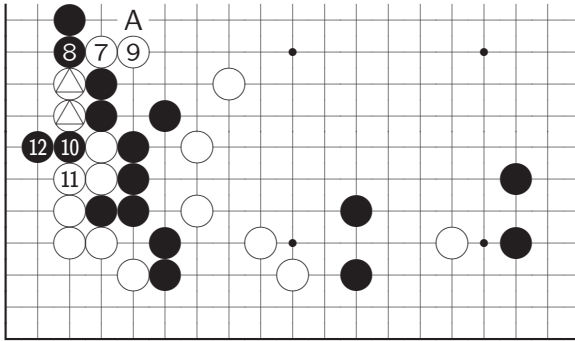


Variation 43 for (26)

It appears that Gu disliked the prospect of ②.

If White moves out with ③, which is natural, Black can continue up to ⑥.

It's difficult for White to cut at A, because White has a weakness at B...

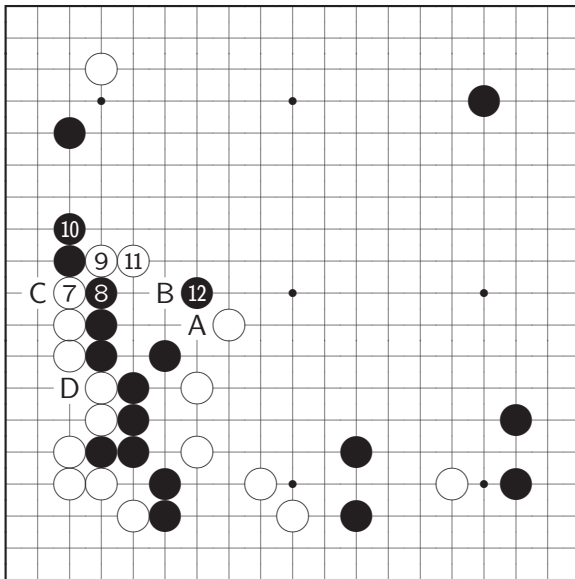


Variation 44 for ②⑥

Rushing to cut with ⑦ is foolhardy.

After ⑧, ⑨ avoids Black's loose net at A, but this leaves Black with the atari at ⑩

Up to ⑫, White's marked stones are trapped and (since they no longer help to cut or exert pressure on anything) ⑦ and ⑨ have become dead weight.



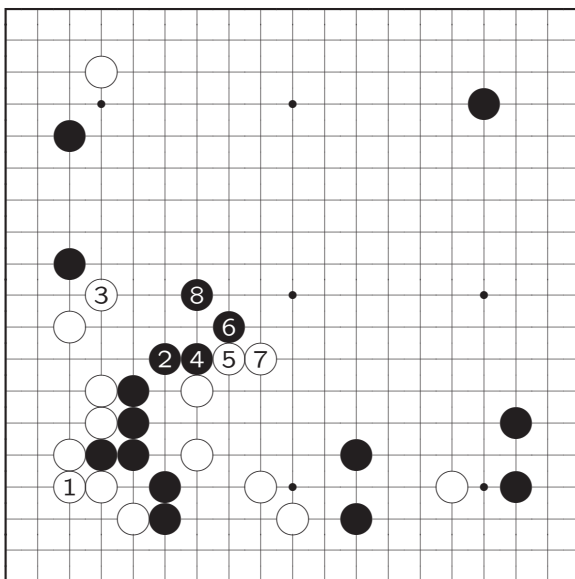
Variation 45 for ②⑥

Cutting with ⑦ and ⑨ is a better idea, but Black can still fight back with ⑩ and ⑫.

After ⑫, White's cutting stones at ⑨ and ⑪ are quite weak, and could easily become a liability.

White can't aim to cut with A, because Black can stay connected with B.

Furthermore, the hane at C will be sente for Black later, because of the cutting point at D, so the overall result is good for Black.



Variation 46 for ②⑥

If White separates Black with ③, Black can develop his group with ④ to ⑧.

Gu may have preferred to avoid this sort of development, because Black is moving into the center ahead of White.

Tread Lightly

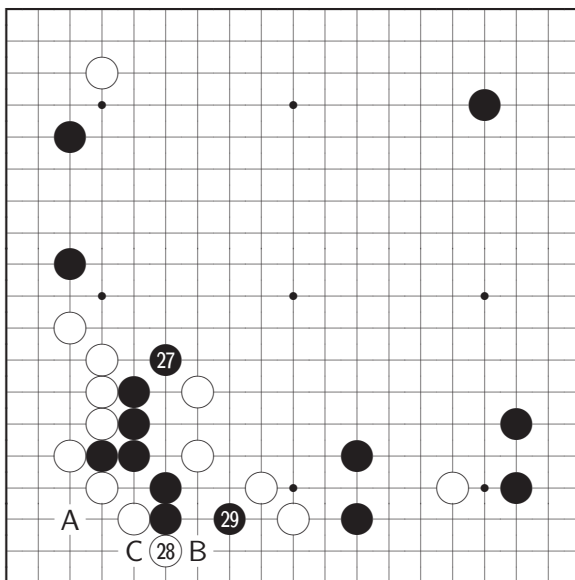
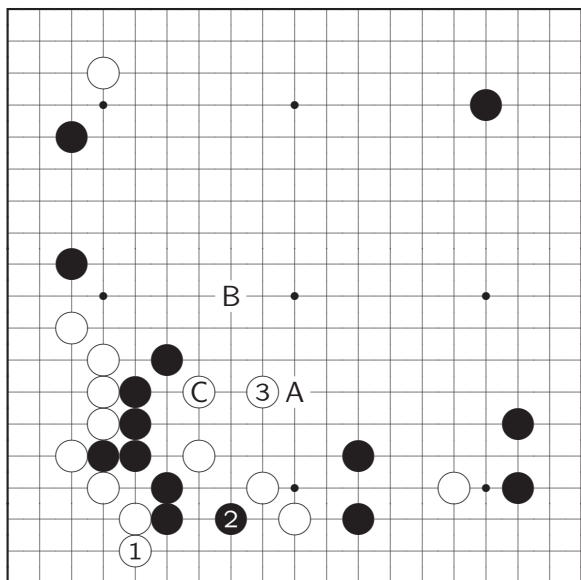


Diagram 13
(Moves: 27-29)

After reinforcing his shape, Black moved out with 27. White played the hane at 28 to enlarge the corner and erase Black's aji around A, but that was a mistake.

Jumping straight to 29—omitting the exchange of B for C—was a brilliant idea which preserved Black's aji in the lower left corner.

Aji is a precious resource. You need to cultivate a light touch to make the most of it.



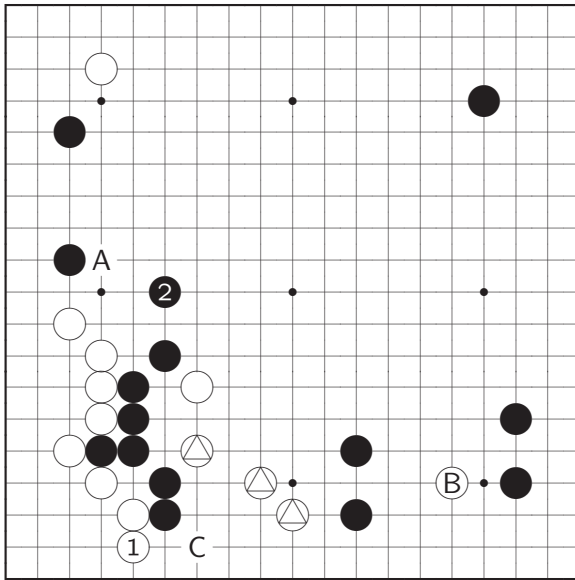
Variation 47 for 28

Descending at ① would have been better for White. If Black still jumps to ②, White makes shape with ③.

There are no weaknesses in the lower left corner now and White's center stones are flexible.

Instead of ③, White A is another possible shape. However, ③ aims to fly out at B later (forming the horse's head haengma, with ③, C and B).

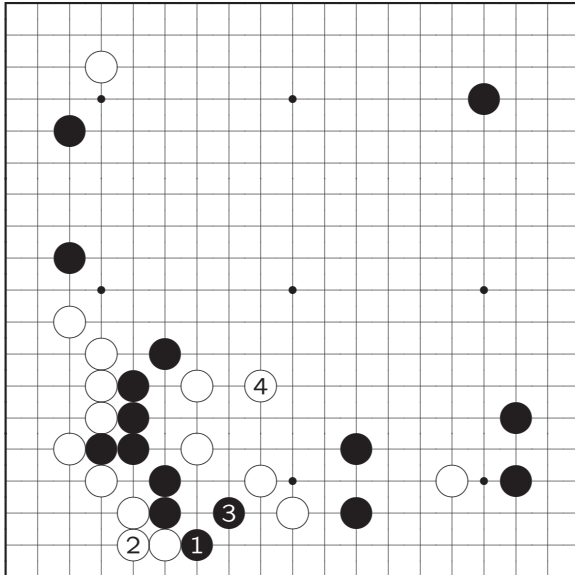
Even when you're defending, you should look for the move that offers you the best possible followups.



Variation 48 for 28

If Black just jumps at 2, White can attach at A, or move B out.

White can connect under with C, to help the marked stones, at any time.



Variation 49 for 29

Almost everyone would have expected Black to block at 1, but this is what Gu wanted.

Now Black's aji in the corner has been erased and White's center group can move out in good shape with 4.

Create Something From Nothing

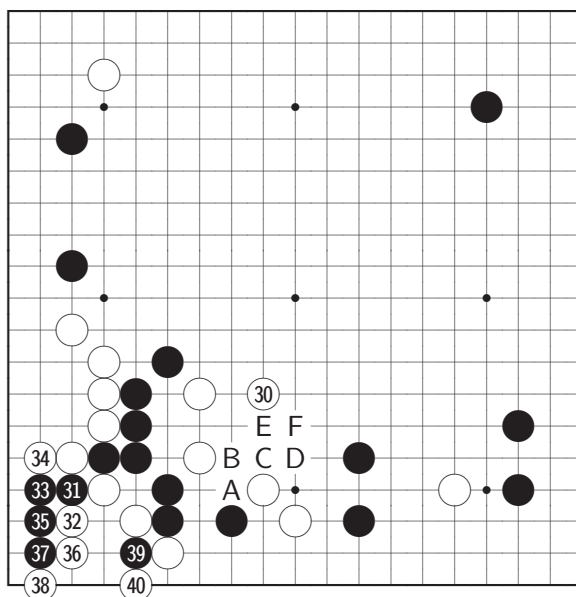


Diagram 14
(Moves: 30-40)

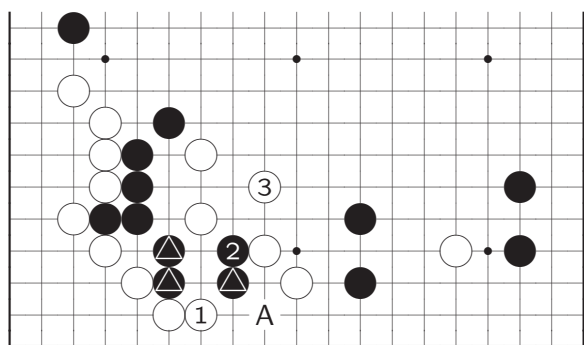
Gu made shape for his group with ③⑩. In general, this kind of move is efficient because it protects White's cutting point at A indirectly (if A, then B to F), while also moving White's group into the center and developing eye shape.

However, in this case, it was another questionable move. Black's cut at ③① was unexpected, and it was the beginning of an exquisite sequence. Pushing at ③⑦ was another fantastic move. White played the best possible responses, but the result already favored Black.

The cut at ③⑨ was the final tesuji of this wonderful combination. With this move, Black squeezed every last drop of value out of his sacrifice in the corner.

Black didn't have to worry about sacrificing five stones like this, because White had already spent many moves in the lower left and Black's stones were all played inside White's territory.

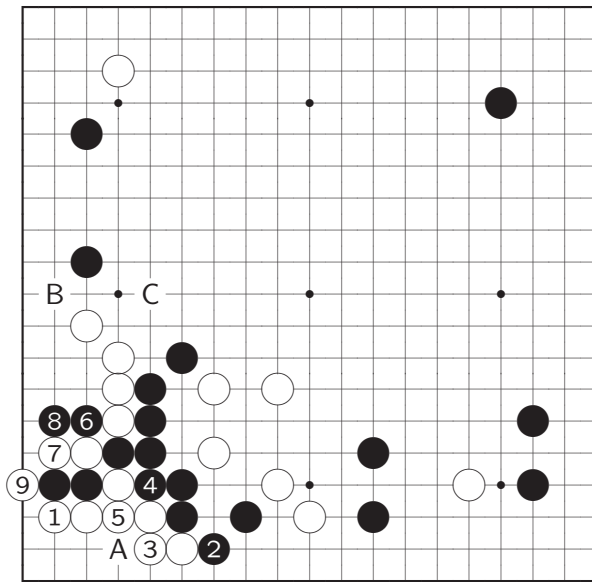
Since White had to add one stone inside his territory for every stone that Black played there, Black didn't lose any points when his stones were captured. As we'll see, Black gained an extra move on the outside for his efforts, effectively creating something from what appeared to be nothing.



Variation 50 for ③⑩

White should have extended to the vital point with ①, because Black didn't block there. Black will form a bamboo joint with ② and the marked stones, and White can jump to ③, making shape lightly.

White's shape is a little thin, but this is better than the result in the game. White can still connect under with A later.



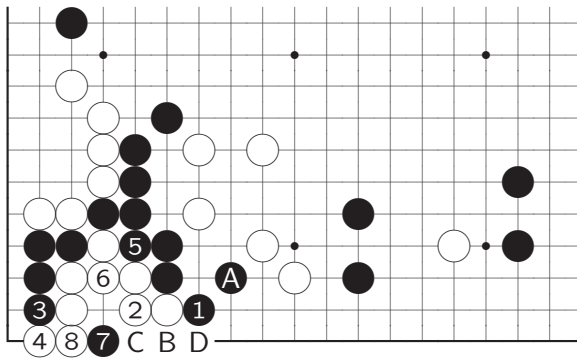
Variation 51 for ③④

If White blocks at ①, Black can sacrifice his two cutting stones.

Black will force with ② in sente and White should defend at ③ to prevent Black A.

Later, Black can force with ④ to ⑧ at his leisure, and ⑥ and ⑧ still hold some aji. For example, Black B will be sente, and Black might enclose at C too.

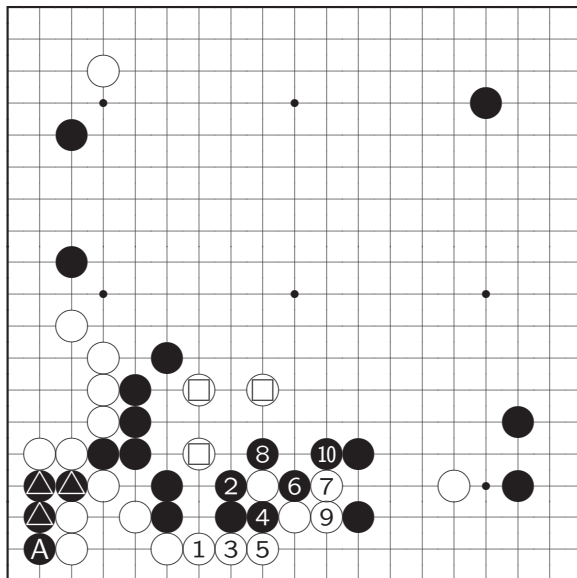
We show the full sequence here to illustrate the aji, but in a real game Black shouldn't exchange ④ to ⑧ too early. Rather, he should save them as ko threats.



Variation 52 for ③⑦

If Black blocks at ①, instead of ③⑦ in the actual game, White will just connect at ②. There's no more aji in the corner now and the situation reverts to what it would have been if Black had simply played A at ① earlier.

If Black pushes at ③ next, White can hane at ④ and not even B to D is sente for Black. White's stones already have an eye and Black's don't, which means White will win any capturing race in this corner.



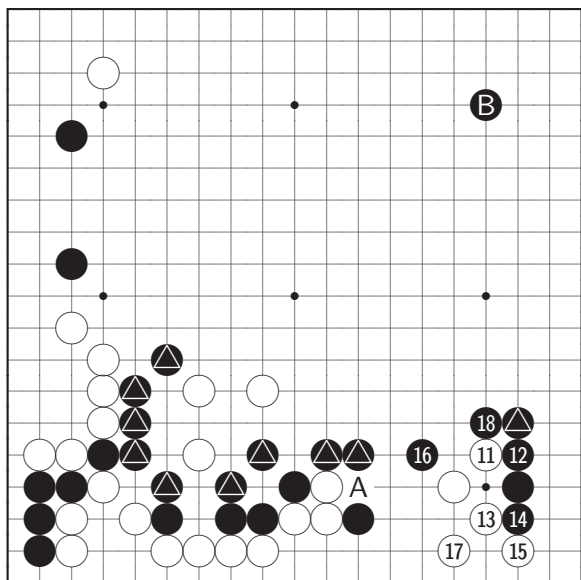
Variation 53 for ③⑧

If White extends to ①, Black will push at ② and White should connect under with ③.

This captures Black's marked stones on a large scale, without leaving behind any bad aji.

However, even though Black's stone at A was wasted, White's marked center stones are now floating in what feels like an endless black ocean.

This is rather dispiriting for White.

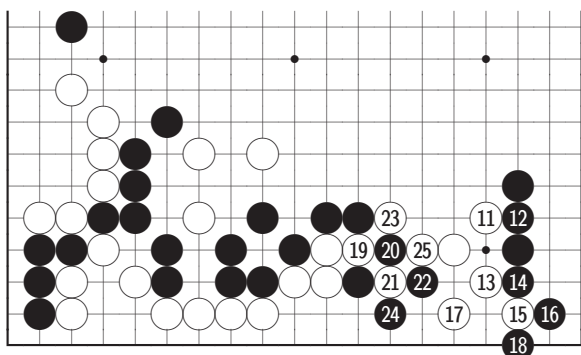


Variation 54 for 38

White might try to settle in the lower right, while eyeing the cutting point at A, but Black can foil White's plan with 16.

After 17, Black simply seals White in while developing even more influence over the center with 18.

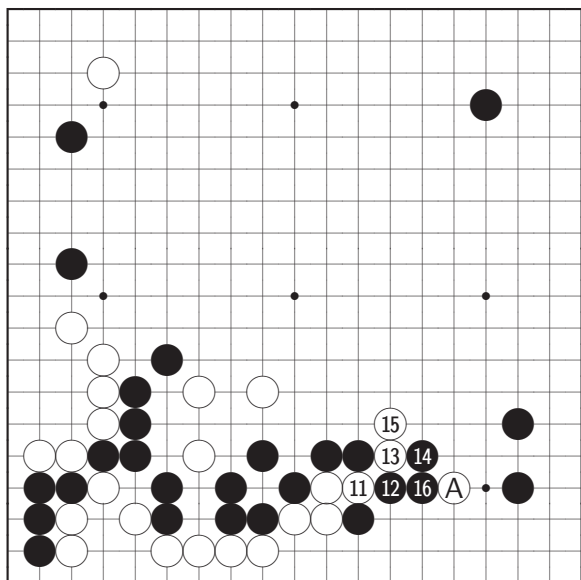
Black's center influence is very powerful and solid, and forms an imposing moyo stretching all the way to B, so White shouldn't play this way.



Variation 55 for 38

Black 16 and 18 might seem natural, but they betray Black's lack of understanding of what White really wants—namely, to cut at 23.

Up to 25, White's plan is a success and Black's four stones are in trouble.

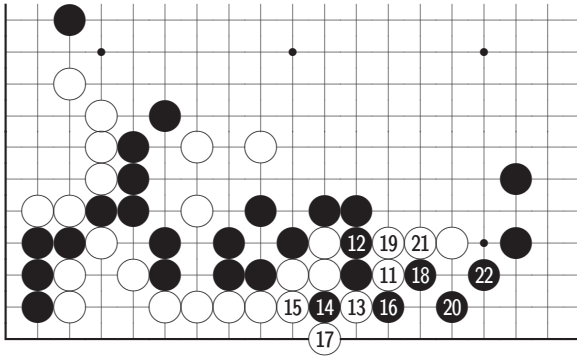


Variation 56 for 38

Pushing through and cutting immediately, with 11 and 13, doesn't lead to a good result for White.

Black will be happy to follow the sequence up to 16, because A is damaged in the process.

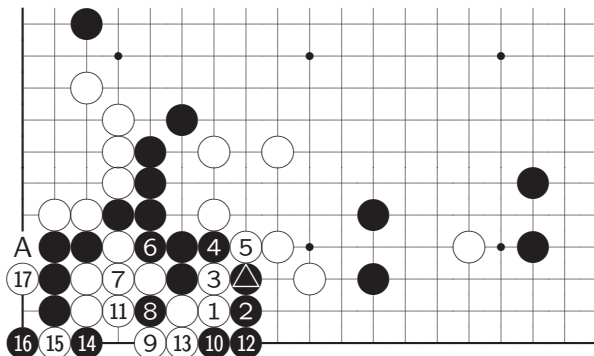
Black is well on his way to consolidating a large territory in the bottom right.



Variation 57 for (38)

Clamping at (11) might look like a tesuji, but it doesn't work either.

The result up to (22) is bad for White.

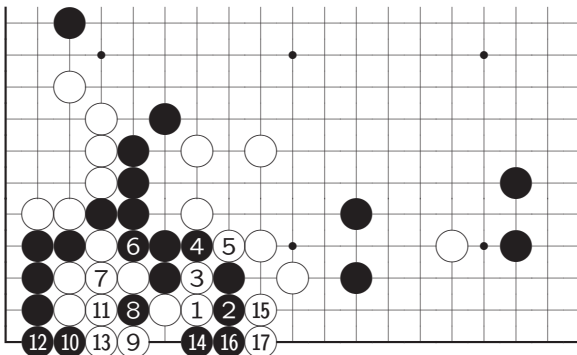


Variation 58 for (38)

If Black blocks at (2), White can push and cut with (3) and (5). There are many possible moves for Black, but none of them work.

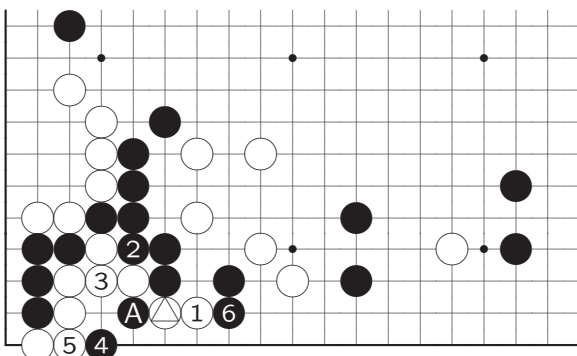
Black (8) looks like a tesuji, but White can throw in at (15). White will win the capturing race with the tesuji of (17), and Black's stones will be captured.

If Black answers (17) at A, White can tenuki and the marked stones still die. Therefore, (17) is better technique than White A, however strange that may seem.



Variation 59 for (38)

Even if he ataris at (10) first, Black still can't save any of his stones.



Variation 60 for (40)

If White resists the cut at A ((39) in the game) with (1), Black captures the marked stones with (2) to (6).

It's worth noting (4) in this sequence; a tesuji which is often decisive in capturing races.

Power Promises Territory

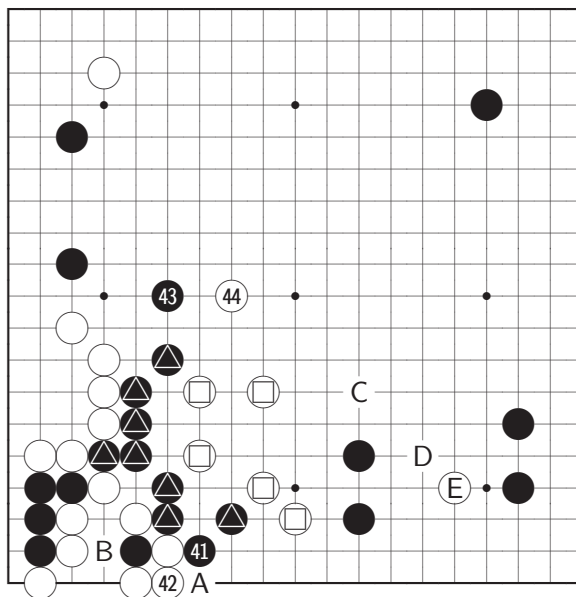


Diagram 15
(Moves: 41-44)

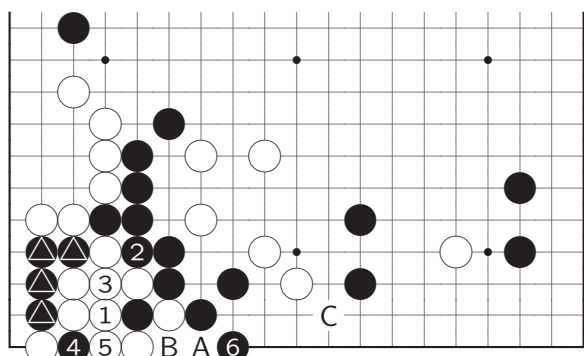
It may look strange, but ④② was the best response to ④①. Black could still atari at A in sente and this gave Black an advantage in the fighting later on, but capturing at B would have been even worse.

As the negotiations in the bottom left finally drew to a close, Black moved into the center with ④③ and White pursued him with ④④.

Exchanging White C for D in sente, before playing ④④, would make White's position in the center stronger, but would come at the cost of weakening ④⑤.

At this point, White still had more territory on the board, but Black had accumulated more power. Even though Black's marked group was not yet settled, White's marked stones were too thin to support a strong attack. In other words, the game was well balanced.

Since his positions were slightly stronger, Black could expect to take profit either in the bottom right corner or, if White set ④⑤ in motion, on the right side later on. Although right now he was only sowing seeds, he aimed to reap territory in the future. Power naturally leads to territory when used wisely.



Variation 61 for ④②

If White captures Black's stone with ①, Black can choose between playing A or ⑥ in sente later, which makes Black's position even more flexible than it was in the game.

After ⑥, starting a ko with B or connecting under with C are miai for Black. As this sequence demonstrates, Black's marked stones are still working hard.

Know When to Fight... And When Not To

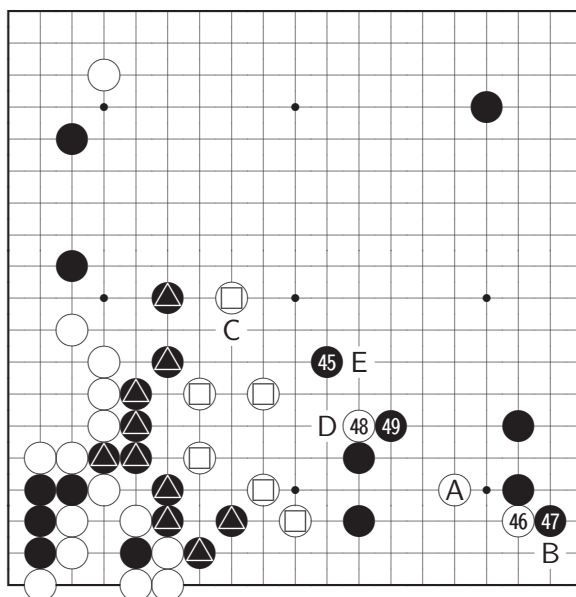


Diagram 16
(Moves: 45-49)

Black 45 showed Lee Sedol's excellent sense of play in the center. Since 45 weakened White's group, it indirectly helped Black's marked dragon in the lower left. "The hand which strikes also blocks."

At the same time, 45 threatened to swallow A on a large scale, making it a clever dual purpose move.

White exchanged 46 for 47, before deciding what to do about his marked stones. Making this exchange now ensures that Black will answer at 47, leaving White with some aji at B for later.

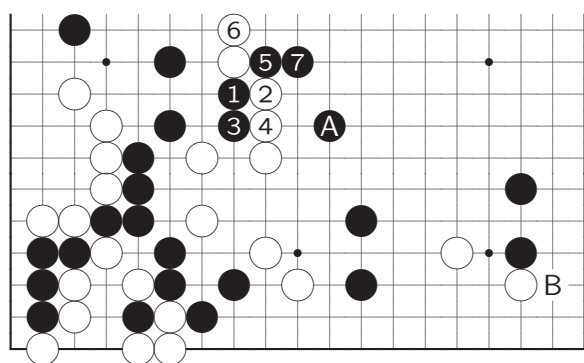
White 48 was Gu Li's counter-attack. With this move, Gu defended the weakness around C indirectly. Lee fell back to 49 because he didn't think the fight starting with the hane at D would favor Black.

When your reading shows that a fight will lead to a bad result, or will become difficult for you, you should search for another path.

As Sun Zi says in *The Art of War*, "The side which knows when to fight and when not to will win."

Lee later mused about whether 45 would have been better at E, but both moves have pros and cons.

Note: An explanation of Sun Zi, Sun Tzu, Sun Wu and Sun Bin is given in Notes, in the back matter.

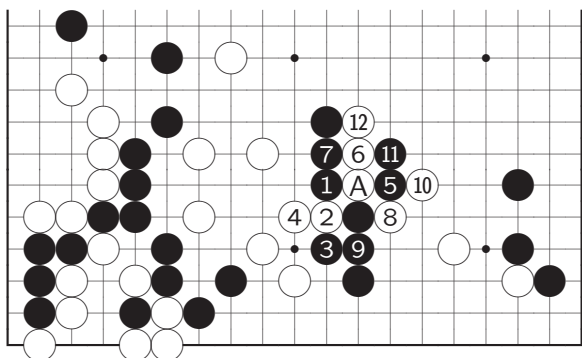


Variation 62 for 47

Among other things, A threatens to cut White with 1 to 5.

If White saves his cutting stone with 6, Black can extend to 7 and the resulting fight looks promising for Black.

However, Black should defend the bottom right corner at B first (as he did in the game). This variation is just to demonstrate what Black had in mind.

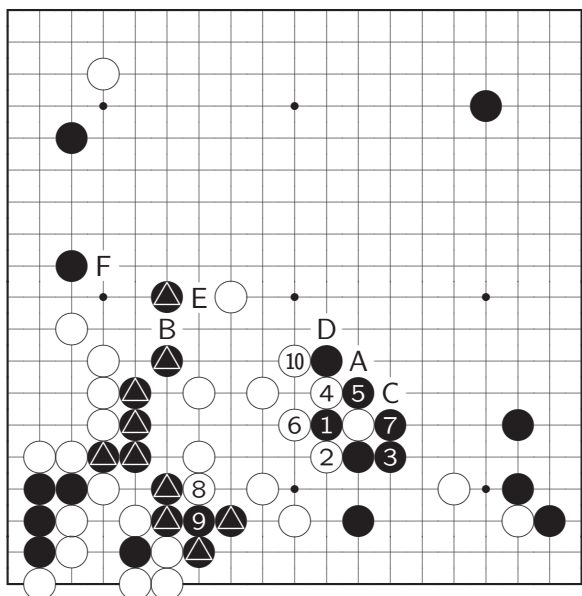


Variation 63 for 49

Let's consider how Black should respond to A (48 in the game).

If Black hanes at 1, White will cut with 2, and Black might consider the atari at 3.

The fight up to 12 is very complicated, and it doesn't bode well for Black.



Variation 64 for 49

So Black can think about extending with 3 instead, but White's shape becomes stronger up to 7.

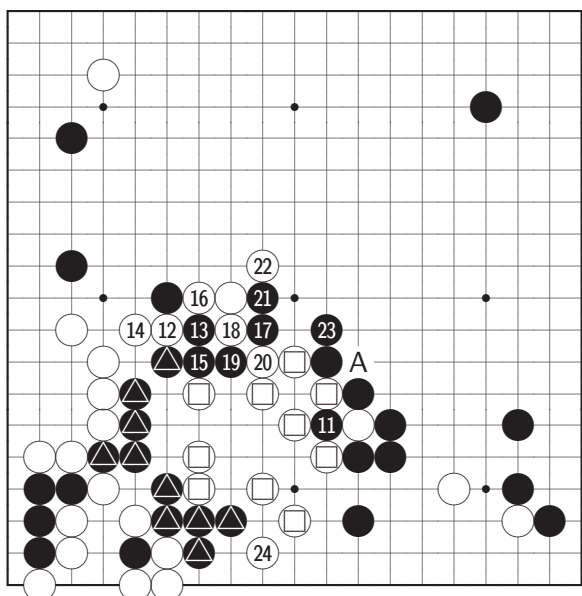
White 8 is a timely forcing move, and bulging at 10 is surprisingly powerful! It makes miai of A and B.

Black might consider playing 7 at C instead, but 10 is still a strong move which aims to continue with B or D later.

The problem with C is that it allows the pressure to slacken too much. White is practically alive after 10.

After exchanging C for 10, Black can prevent B with E, but he will face a one-sided attack after White F.

Continuing on from 7 to 10...

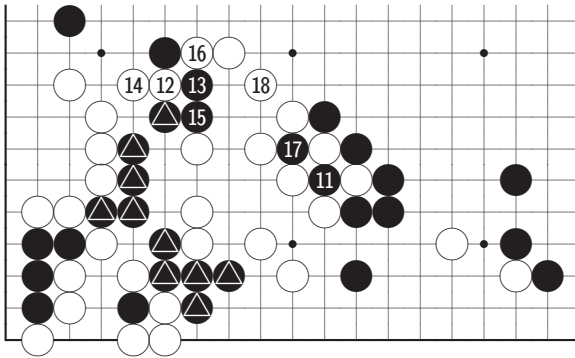


Variation 65 for 49

Capturing at 11 is natural, because it prevents White's double atari at A while denying him of an eye, but White's cut at 12 is severe.

If Black tries to cut with 17, the marked groups become entangled up to 24.

This is a capturing race which White will win.

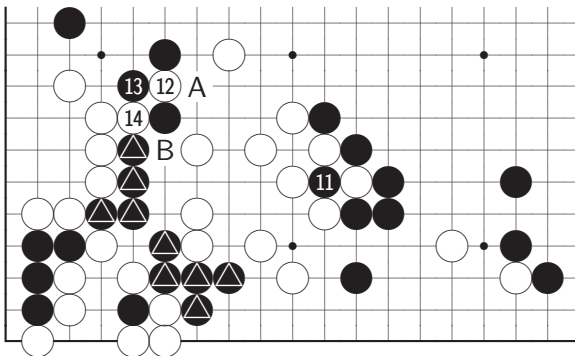


Variation 66 for 49

Capturing the ko at 17 doesn't improve the situation for Black.

White will be satisfied with falling back to 18 while connecting his stones.

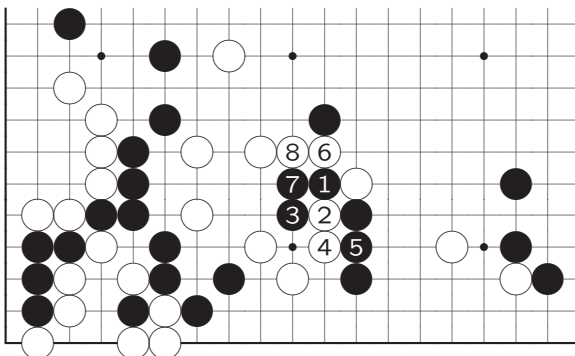
Black's marked stones are in grave danger.



Variation 67 for 49

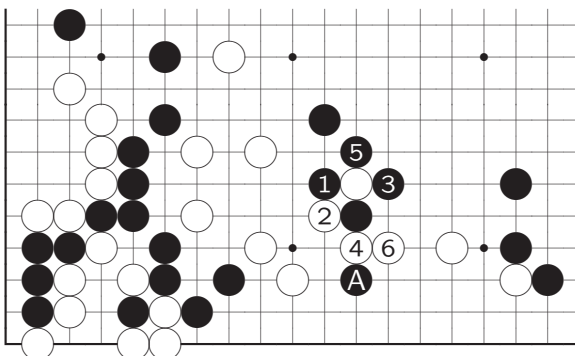
Playing atari on the other side, with 13, isn't possible. White simply cuts at 14, making A and B miai.

Black can't save his marked stones.



Variation 68 for 49

The atari at 3 doesn't work either, because Black can't save his three cutting stones after 8.



Variation 69 for 49

If Black ataris at 3, White responds with 4 to 6.

Even though Black creates a powerful flower shape when he captures at 5, A is isolated and White's formerly weak stones are all connected.

Once again, Black has allowed the pressure to slacken. This result is unsatisfactory for Black.

Running Is More Fun with a Friend

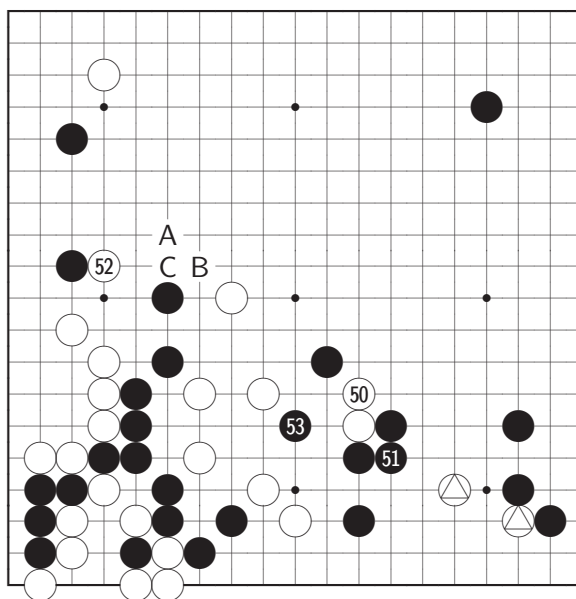


Diagram 17
(Moves: 50-53)

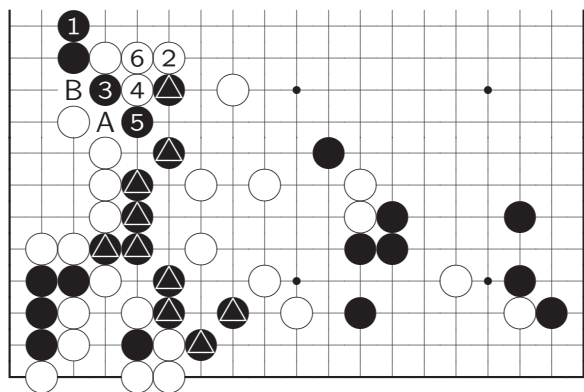
Black was satisfied to fall back solidly and weaken White's marked stones with ⑤①.

White finally executed his long awaited leaning attack against Black's lower left group, with ⑤②, but Black didn't respond directly.

Instead, Black seized the vital point with ⑤③. Lee didn't forget to look for a counter-punch, even though his other group was already under attack. Playing like this was much more interesting and efficient than meekly running away with A, B or C.

Black ⑤③ illustrates the Go proverb, "If you have to run, bring a friend." This means that if your own group is under attack and has to run into the center, you should try to counter-attack and create another weak group to run with you.

If both groups are weak, such that the fight is close to even, then neither group is truly weak.

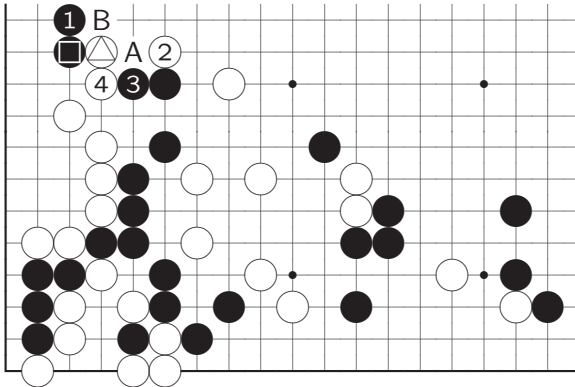


Variation 70 for ⑤③

Falling back to ① avoids helping White to attack, and is often a good idea, but in this case the attachment at ② is powerful.

If Black hanes at ③, White will wedge with ④. A and B are miai, so Black can't connect.

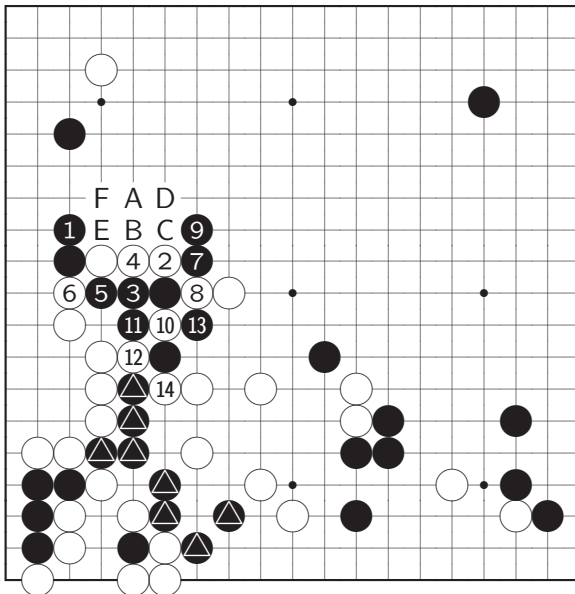
Black's marked group is isolated.



Variation 71 for 53

If Black extends to ③, blocking at ④ is good enough. A and B are miai and Black's shape is broken.

In general, letting your opponent drill straight through a knight's move (or a one space jump) like this is quite damaging.



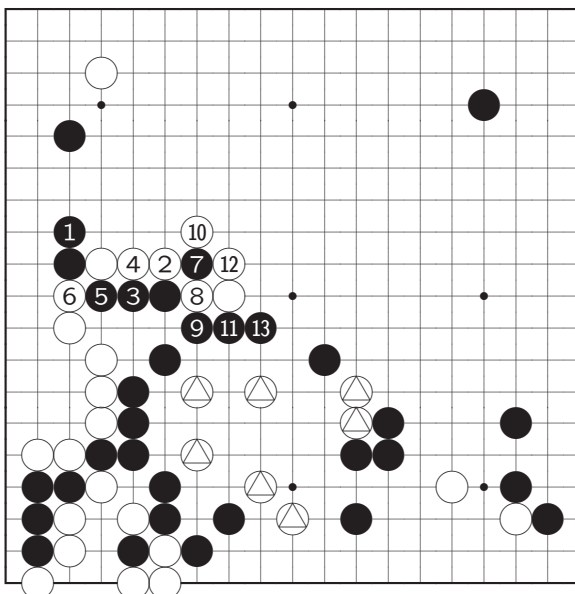
Variation 72 for 53

White might also think about blocking at ④, which looks more severe. Black can capture White's cutting stones with ⑨, but this is what White is hoping for.

If White tries to save his three stones with A, Black sacrifices one stone and still captures them with B to F (this is called a crane's nest).

However, ⑩ and ⑫ are a powerful combination, and White will be happy to cut off the tail of Black's dragon (marked) with ⑭.

Capturing White's three stones with ⑨ was too greedy and Black can do better.

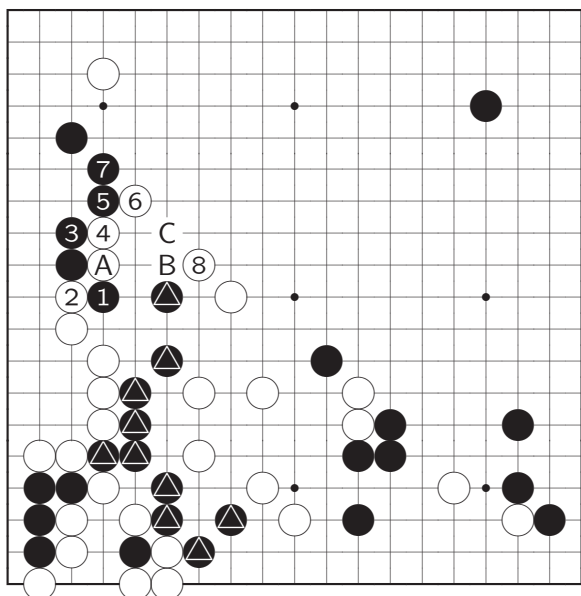


Variation 73 for 53

Simply bulging with ⑨ is more powerful than it looks. It makes miai of ⑩ and ⑪ for Black.

Black can escape up to ⑬ and White's marked stones feel weak now, so ④ turns out to be an overplay.

Playing ④ at ⑤, as in Variation 71, is better.

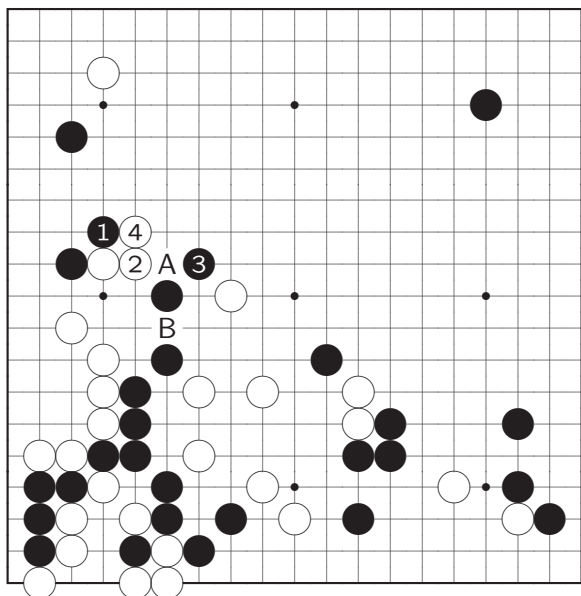


Variation 74 for 53

Resisting with the inside hane at ① can sometimes be powerful, but it doesn't work in this case. White can enclose Black's marked dragon up to ⑧, and Black is in trouble.

It's worth paying attention to the shape formed by ④, ⑥ and ⑧. White ⑥ and ⑧ are the key moves.

It looks thin (and it is), but the haengma at ⑧ can sometimes be a powerful way to enclose a group. B and C are miai for White and even though Black can cut, White can handle the fight.



Variation 75 for 53

If Black hanes at ①, the moves up to ④ are natural for both players, but the hane is not a good move.

Black ③ in this variation is at least better technique than pushing at A, because ④ can be expected either way and has less of an effect on ③ than A.

The problem is that White moves out smoothly and solidly, while Black's shape is left brittle, with a weakness at B.

Furthermore, the center is more important than the right side and exchanging ① for ② removes all other options from the position.

When the tactical prospects of a position seem dim, as in this variation and those above, you should consider playing elsewhere. This is why 53 tenukied in the game.

Don't Obsess Over Shape

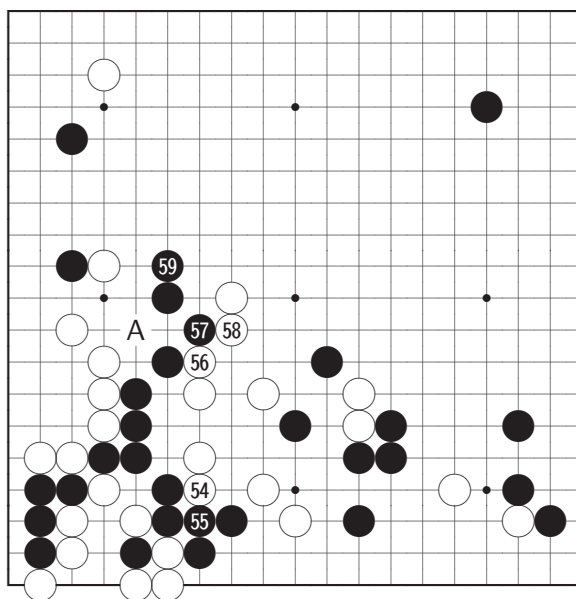


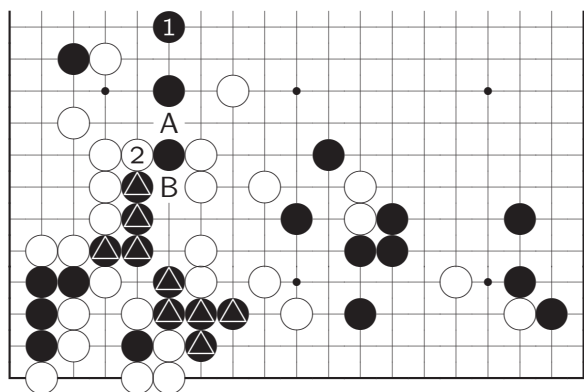
Diagram 18
(Moves: 54-59)

The beauty of a move lies not in its appearance, but in the thought behind it.

—Aron Nimzowitsch

Exchanges like ⑤7 for ⑤8—pushing into a knight's move without cutting—are usually bad, but it was unavoidable in this situation because Black needed to stay connected.

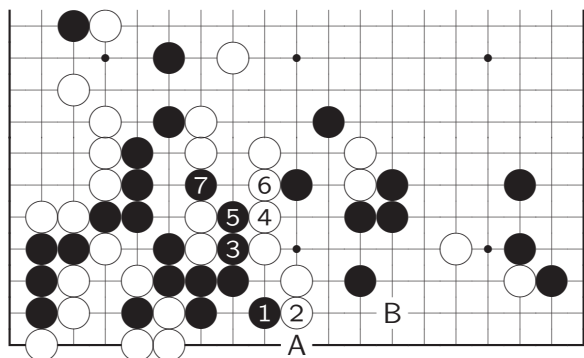
Black's shape wasn't pretty, and White could peep at A later, but this was the right way to move out. Don't let superficial concerns about shape stop you from doing what the game demands of you.



Variation 76 for ⑤7

If Black blithely jumps to ①, he'll find himself in an awkward situation after White clamps with ②.

Cutting at A or B next is miai for White.

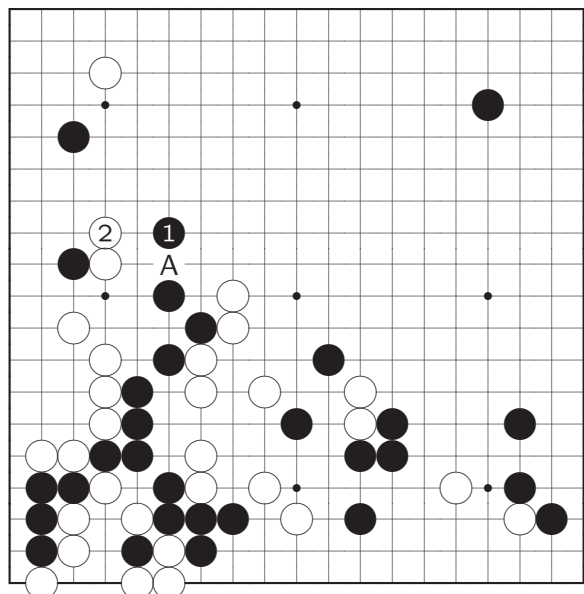


Variation 77 for 57

In an emergency, Black can still live at the bottom with ❶ through to ❷.

However, this feels a bit passive for Black and if A becomes sente for White later (which seems likely after this), White will have the option of playing an endgame move at B.

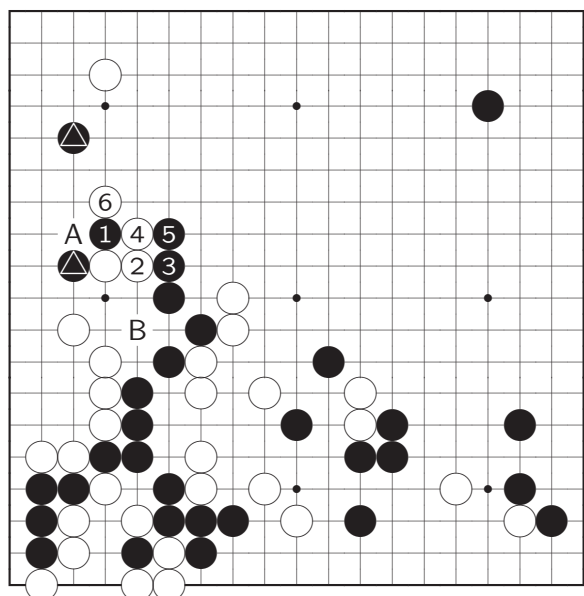
This could eventually become very annoying for Black. Lee Sedol dislikes this kind of variation.



Variation 78 for 59

Jumping at ❶ looks normal, but it's a bit thin in this case.

After White extends to ❷, Black will need to worry about the cutting point at A. That's why Black extended solidly in the game.



Variation 79 for 59

The hane at ❶ and push at ❸ are the epitome of bad style.

Black ❶ only provokes White to separate Black with ❷, after which Black needs to move his dragon out at the expense of his marked stones.

To put it simply, ❶, ❸ and ❺ compel White to cleanly separate Black's stones at close range, inflicting the maximum possible damage on both sides.

If your stones are going to be separated anyway, you mustn't move them towards each other, otherwise you're playing the opponent's game for them.

Locally speaking, Black A is better style than ❶, but in this case A allows White to attach at ❸, which is why Black played 59 (at ❸) in the game.

Peeping at B will always be sente for White, so there's no way to counter in this variation.

Seize Fleeting Opportunities

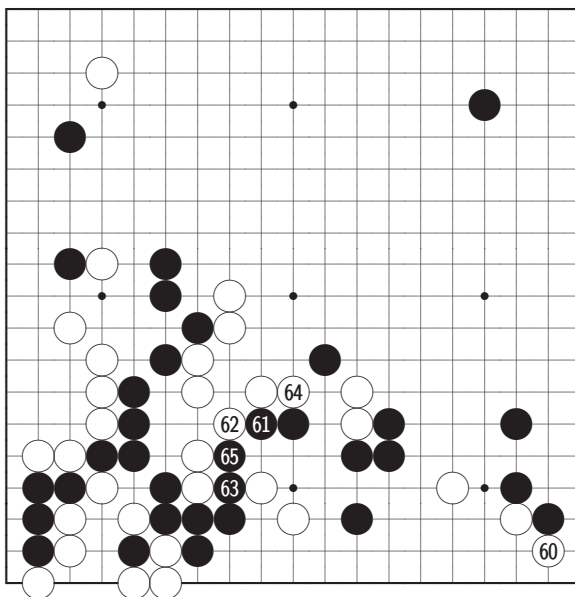
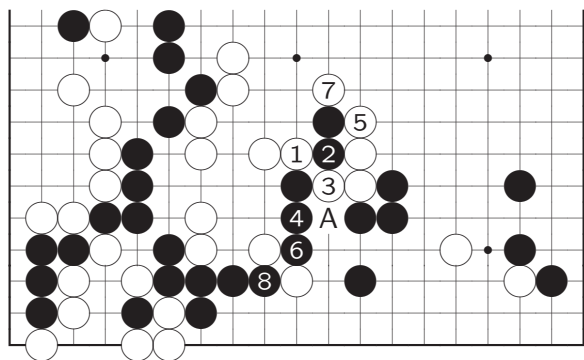


Diagram 19
(Moves: 60-65)

White ⑥⑩ was a probe, but the timing was off.

Lee didn't miss this fleeting opportunity. He seized the initiative by attacking White's center group with ⑥① through to ⑥⑤ in sente, before worrying about the lower right.

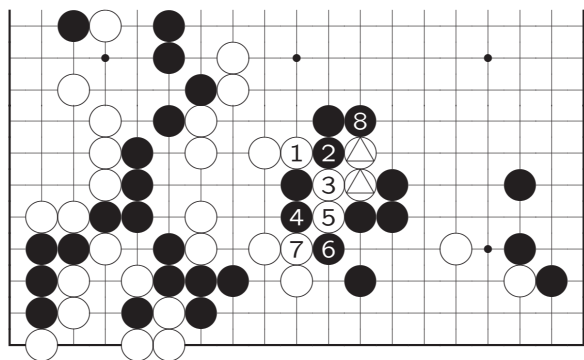


Variation 80 for ⑥⑩

White should have cut at ① instead.

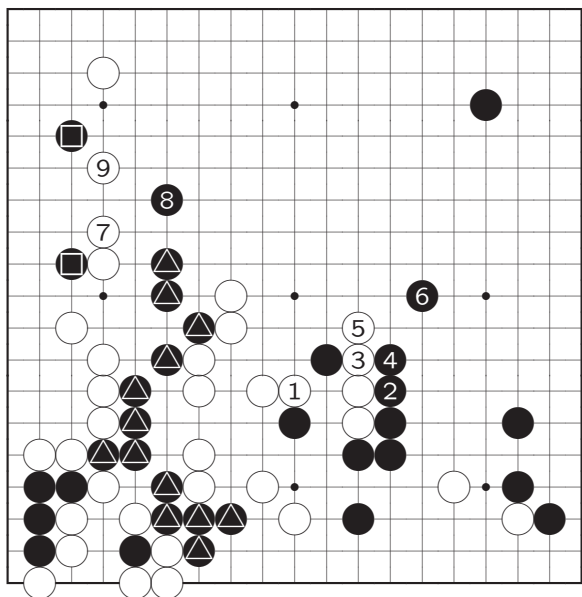
If Black tries to fight with ② and ④, White will push at ⑤. White ⑦ and A are miai for White next.

Black can connect by exchanging ⑥ for ⑦, and then cutting at ⑧, but White's center group also becomes strong and White takes sente.



Variation 81 for ⑥⑩

White can't cut immediately, with ⑤ and ⑦, because Black will capture the marked stones in a ladder.

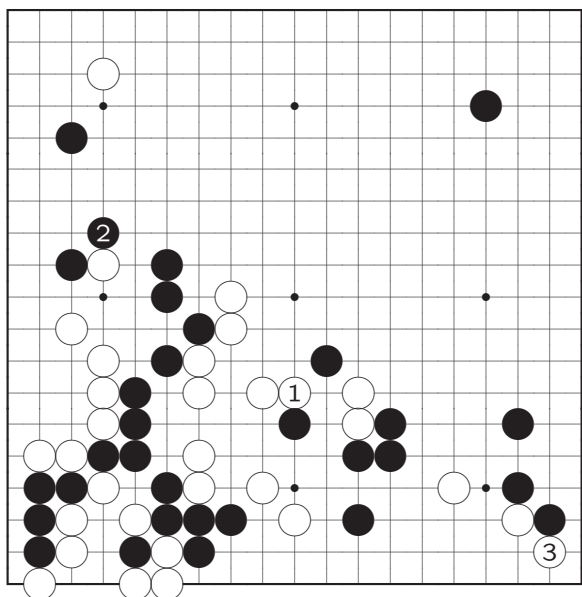


Variation 82 for ⑥0

If Black develops territory on the right side, with ② to ⑥, White's center group will become strong. Meanwhile, Black's triangled dragon is still weak, so extending to ⑦ becomes powerful.

If Black flees with ⑧, White can unleash a leaning attack with ⑨ and the game is still complicated.

This variation favors White because both of Black's marked groups are in trouble.

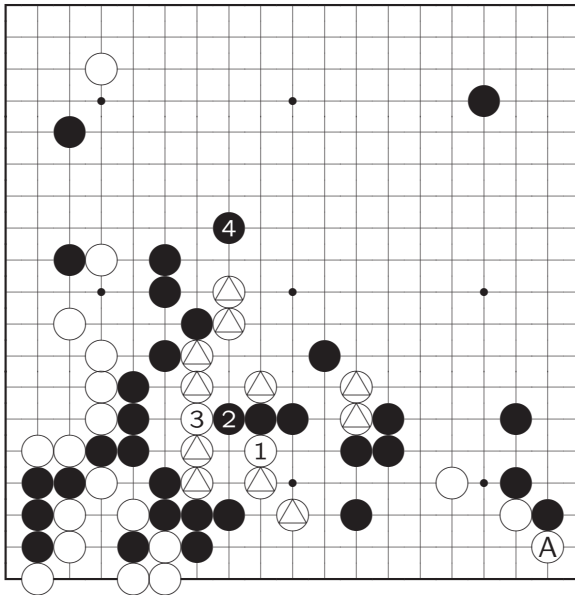


Variation 83 for ⑥0

Coming back to defend with ② is the right move.

Next, White can probe at ③ in the lower right corner, without any fear of a counter-attack.

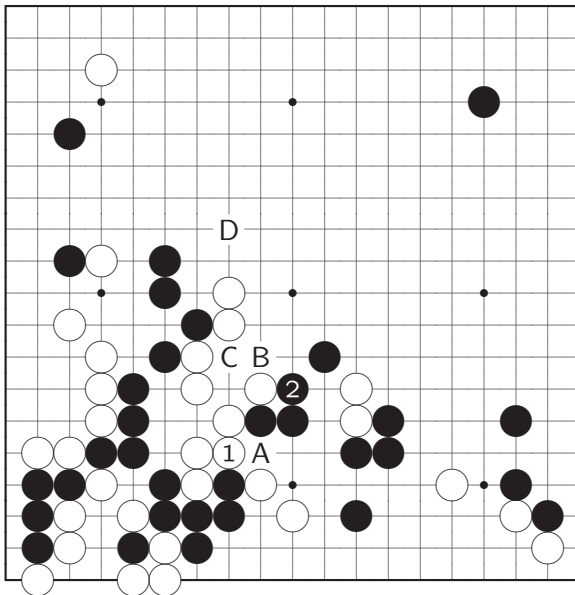
The game is still even. Games of Go are like marathons, and this one still has a long way to go.



Variation 84 for ⑥2

If White connects with ① and ③ instead, Black can attack White's marked group in sente before going back to deal with ④.

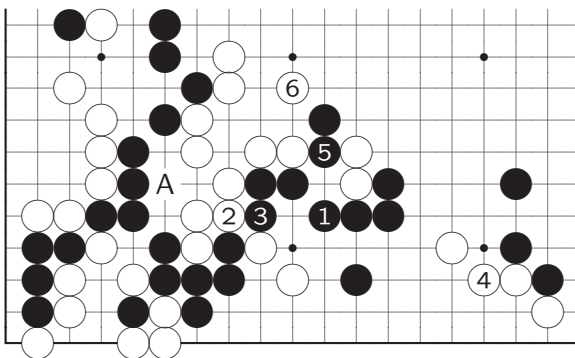
The flow of the game changed very suddenly when White probed prematurely at ④.



Variation 85 for ⑥4

After ⑥3, if White responds directly with ①, Black will reinforce at ② and make miai of A and B.

If White connects at A, his group will become heavy and disoriented after Black attacks with B to D.



Variation 86 for ⑥5

If Black plays ⑥5 at ①, which seems like a common-sense move, White will have time to reinforce his corner group with ④.

Even if Black cuts at ⑤ next, White can develop a resilient shape in the center with ⑥, and his group becomes resistant to attack.

Unlike the actual game, White now has a potential eye at A if he needs it later.

This spells trouble for Black.

Deform Your Opponent's Shape

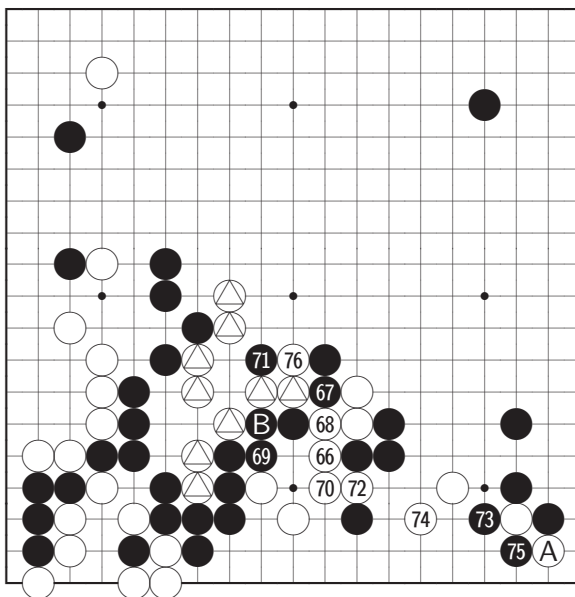


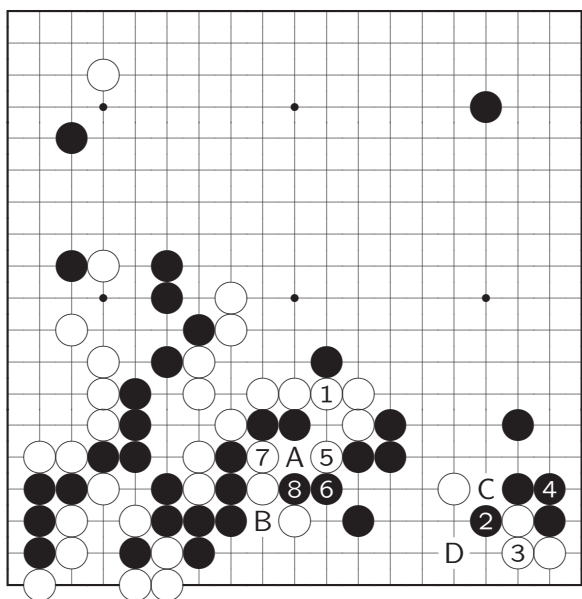
Diagram 20
(Moves: 66-76)

Gu didn't want to passively connect at 67, so he hane'd at 66 instead. In response, Lee went all out and cut the main body of White's group in two with 67. This made miai of 68 and 69.

Black 71 was a sharp tesuji, which ruined White's eye shape, and the game became easy for Black. White needed to look after his groups at the bottom, but his marked center group was heavy too.

Black was overjoyed with the result up to 75. White A was wasted, and this showed the wisdom of Black's earlier tenuki and subsequent attack at B. Moreover, 76 was painful but necessary.

From this point onwards, Black controlled the game.



Variation 87 for 66

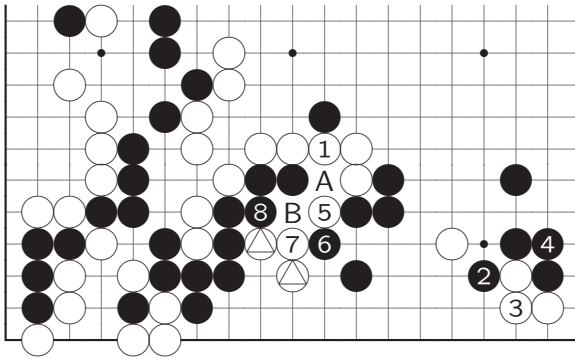
If White connects at 1, Black can return to the lower right to atari at 2 and connect solidly at 4.

Even if White hane's at 5 later, Black can cut with 6 and 8, and White's stones in the lower right corner are practically dead.

Black mustn't play 8 at A, because he'd be caught in a snapback by White's atari at 8.

A and B are miai, and this result is very successful for Black.

Note that if White cuts at C, Black D is a tesuji. After D, Black doesn't need to save 2 because capturing it only gives White a false eye.

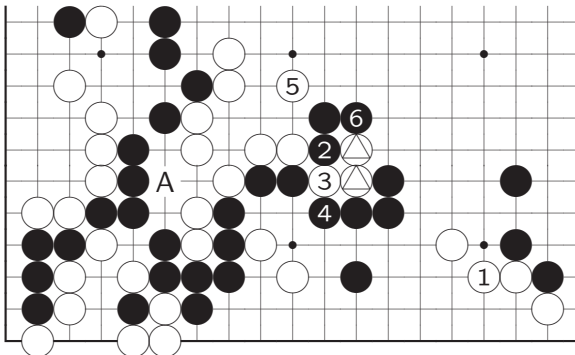


Variation 88 for 66

White ⑦ doesn't work, because Black can simply connect at ⑧.

Now A and B are miai and White's marked stones are captured.

If Black ataris at A, instead of playing ⑧, White will capture him in a snapback again by playing at ⑧.

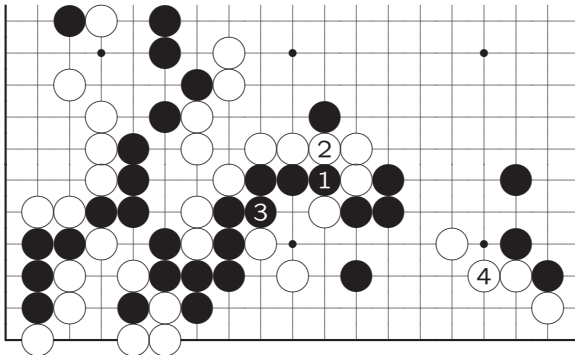


Variation 89 for 66

If White plays at ①, Black can cut with ② and ④ and capture the marked stones in a ladder.

Even though it looks similar, this is quite different to Variation 86.

White can't make an eye at A anymore, so his group is weaker now. Meanwhile, Black's group is slightly stronger than in the earlier variation.

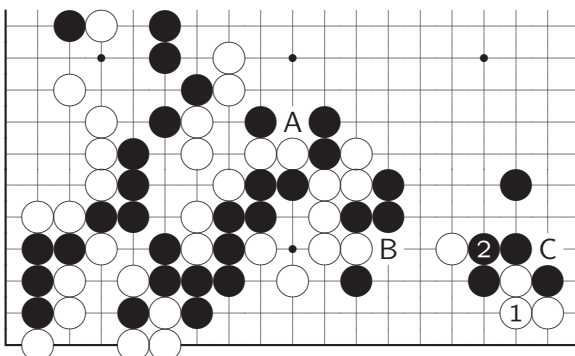


Variation 90 for 67

Cutting at ① is what White wants.

This way, White has time to play in both the center and the corner.

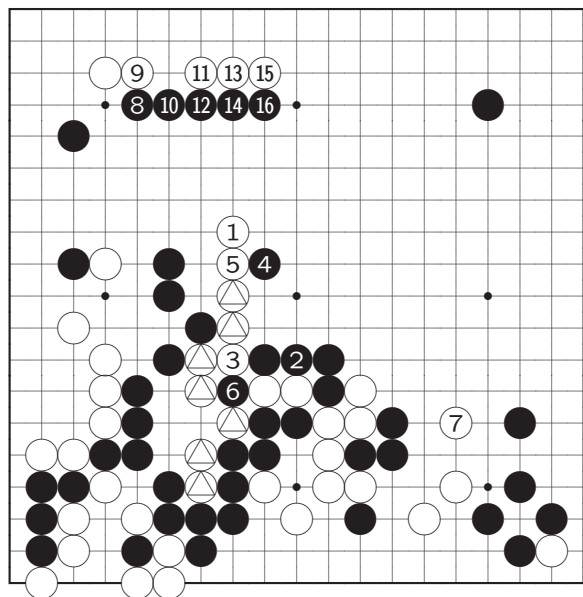
White would be very happy with this result.



Variation 91 for 74

If White connects at ①, Black will connect at ②, and White will be too busy to manage all three of his groups.

Both A and B are severe continuations for Black, and C is quite big too.



Variation 92 for 76

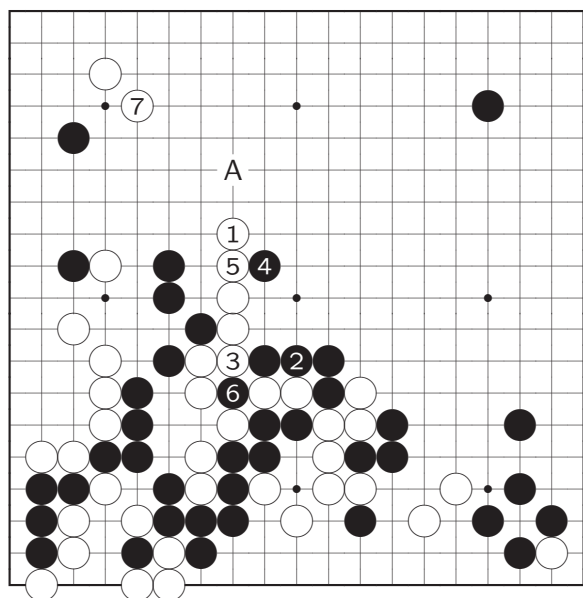
Instead of 76 in the actual game, it might seem better for White to move out with 1. The problem is that White will face a severe attack.

The atari at 2 also threatens to cut at 3 next. So Black can connect his groups with 6 and become strong in the center.

Because of that, White's nearby groups are easy to attack.

If White takes care of his lower right group with 7, Black can press at 8 and start a leaning attack against White's center dragon.

White's marked stones are in danger.



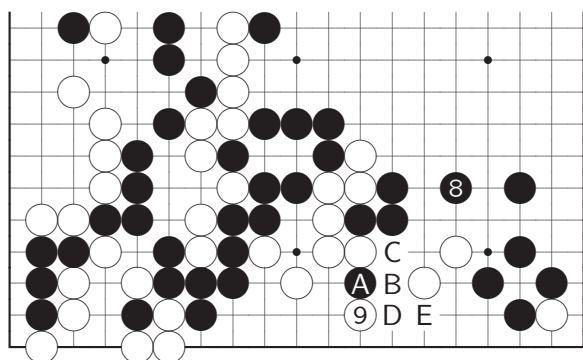
Variation 93 for 76

White might adopt a strategy of prophylaxis, with the kosumi at 7.

White 7 prevents Black from building a powerful wall, as he did in the previous variation.

This kind of strategy makes sense in the top left, because if White plays another move in the center instead (e.g. at A), Black's press at 7 will still be powerful. White 7 nips Black's plan in the bud.

However, now Black can attack White in the bottom right. Let's have a look at how he might do so...

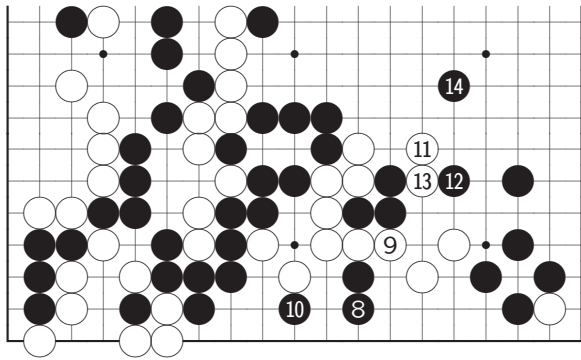


Variation 94 for 76

Black 8 develops the right side and is the simplest way to attack. White will have to defend at 9, after which A will be immobilized.

After 9, Black B will be met by C. This makes miai of D and E for White, so White's group at the bottom is settled for the time being and Black should play elsewhere.

This is a low risk strategy for Black.

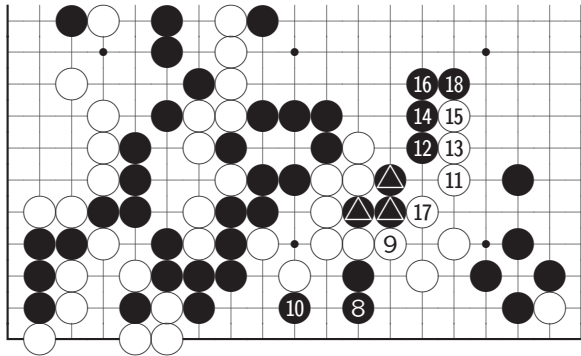


Variation 95 for 76

Taking away White's base with 8 and 10 is a more aggressive strategy, which aims to set White's stones adrift and begin a more drawn out attack.

White 9 is necessary and, after Black connects under with 10, 11 captures three stones in a net. However, Black can develop the right side while attacking with 12 and 14, and White's stones still aren't completely settled.

This is a powerful variation for Black.

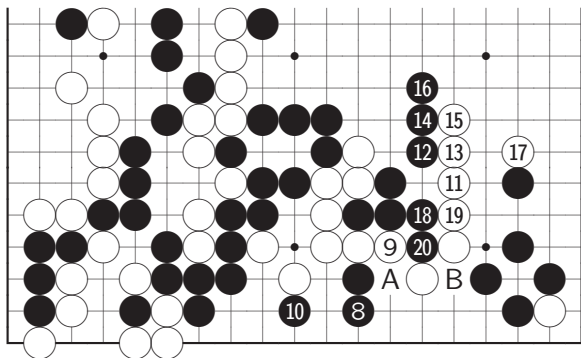


Variation 96 for 76

Since White's net at 12 (11 in the previous variation) didn't completely forestall Black's attack, White might also consider the looser move at 11.

Normally, it would be heavy to drag Black's marked stones out with 12 to 16, but it's powerful in this case because Black's surrounding groups are all strong and White still has two weak groups.

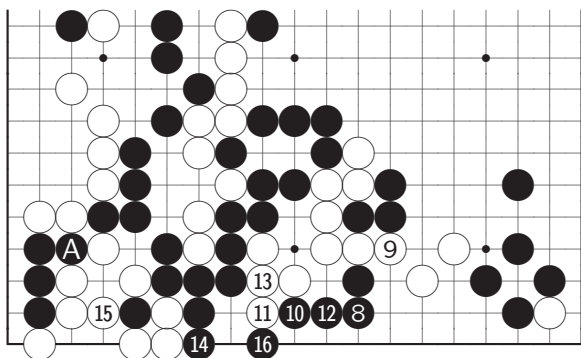
Eventually, White has to go back and patch up his shape at 17, leaving Black to play the one thousand dollar turn at 18. White's group is still under attack and Black is developing the right side magnificently.



Variation 97 for 76

If White doesn't defend at 18, Black will cut White's group in two with 18 and 20.

A and B are miai next, so White has no way to connect all his stones.



Variation 98 for 76

Black can connect under with 10 because 14 is sente.

Even if White tries his best to cut, Black connects along the edge with 16.

As you can see, Black's earlier sacrifice at A is still paying dividends.

Determination Is Power

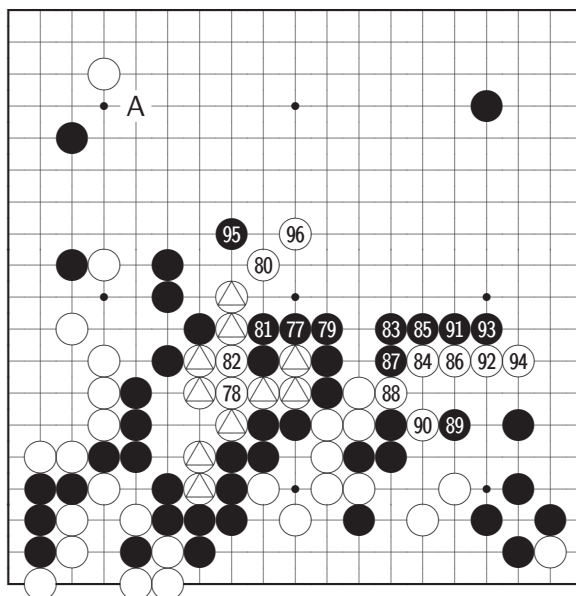


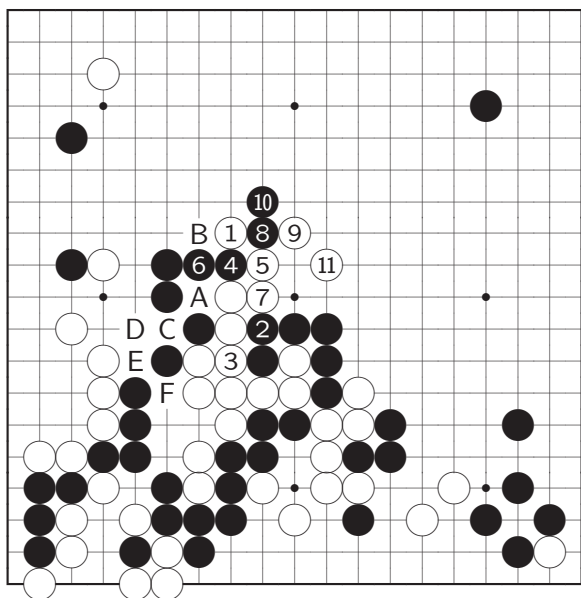
Diagram 21
(Moves: 77-96)

White's slow haengma at ⑧⑩ was questionable. Perhaps White was wary of Black developing power with A and wanted to pre-emptively move away from the top left? This is usually a good idea, but Black began to amass power with ⑧③ instead and White's marked dragon became lethargic.

No matter where White turned, an invisible wall was waiting to spring up and block his path.

Pushing from behind, as Black did with ⑧⑤ to ⑧③, is usually bad style. It can be difficult to come up with this kind of strategy, but Lee Sedol specializes in this sort of decisive and determined play.

After Black had created enough power, he struck at White's vital point with ⑧⑤.



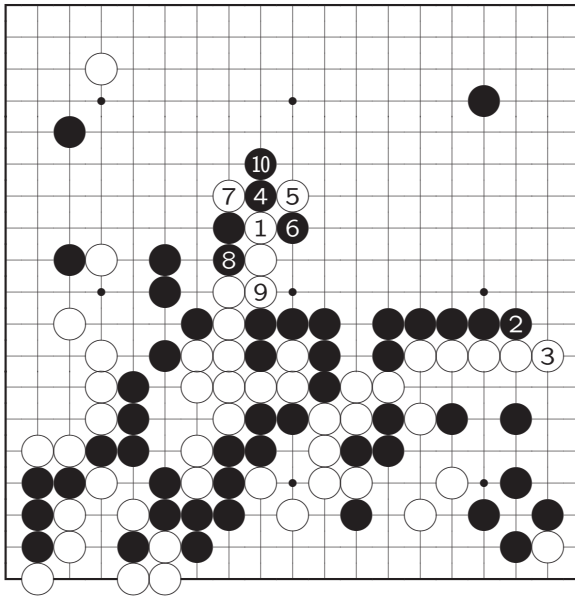
Variation 99 for ⑧⑩

The jump at ① is a little thin, but it still looks more flexible than the kosumi in the game. White doesn't really have any good moves here, so he has to settle for the 'least bad' option.

If Black cuts with ④ to ⑧, it helps White to move out up to ⑪—gaining momentum by sacrificing ①.

White still has a tough fight on his hands, but at least he has more room to breathe than in the game.

If White plays ⑤ as the atari at ⑥ instead; Black at ⑤, White A, and B to F can be expected. White will be in trouble, because he's short of ko threats.

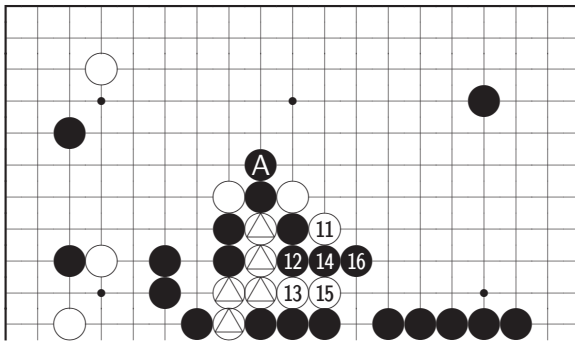


Variation 100 for 96

Playing the push and hane with ① and ⑤ is dangerous, because cutting at ⑥ is powerful.

White's in trouble and Black's cutting stone at ⑥ is stronger than it looks.

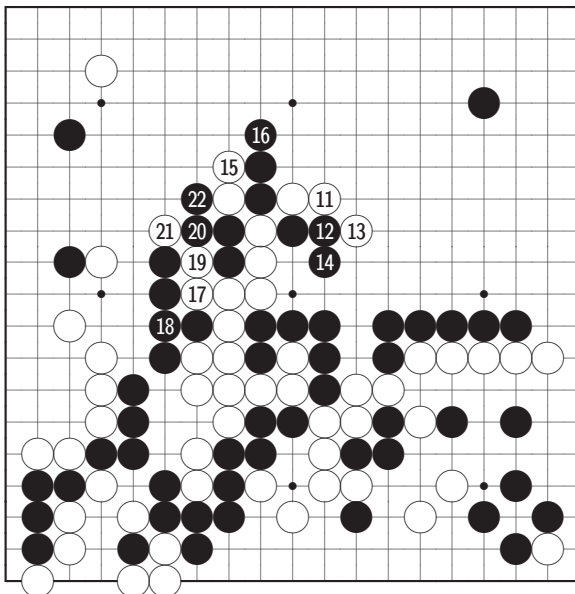
Black ② in this diagram is sente. We will see why shortly, in Variation 108.



Variation 101 for 96

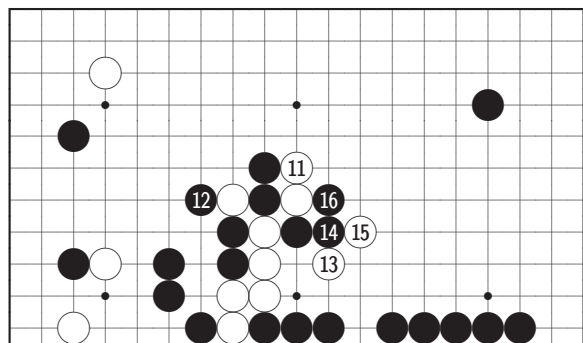
White runs out of steam after Black extends at A.

White ⑪ and ⑬ don't work and White's marked group has very few liberties.



Variation 102 for 96

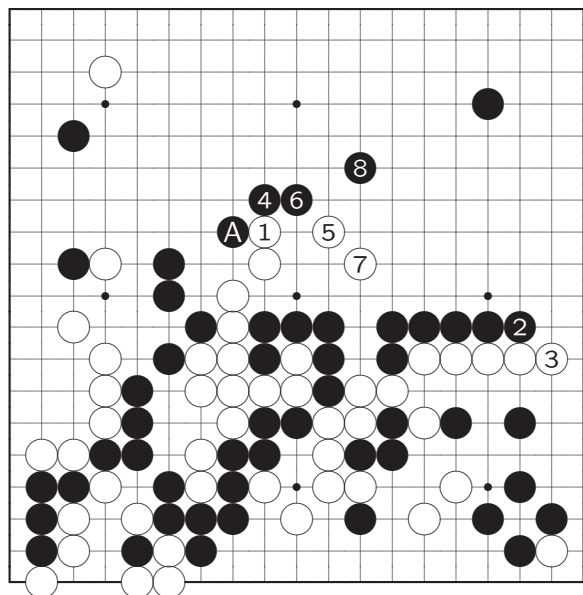
White might try to create a ladder with ⑪, but he can't capture any of Black's stones after ⑫.



Variation 103 for ⑨⑥

Even if White manages to break out momentarily with ⑪ to ⑮, his stones are still incredibly weak and will soon be in trouble again.

This result is much worse for White than the game.

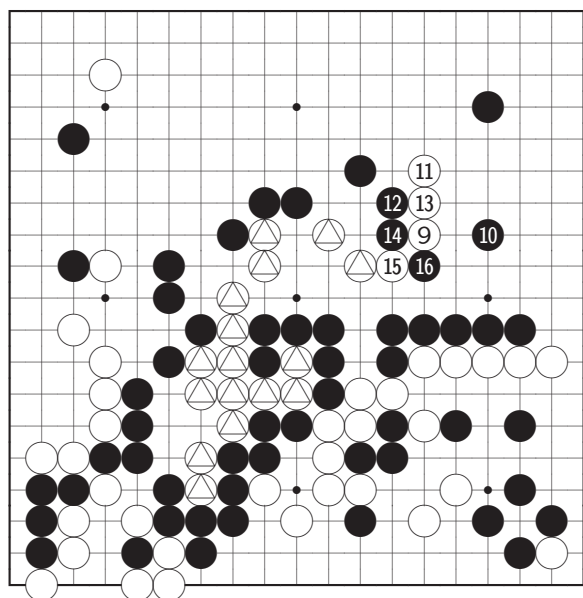


Variation 104 for ⑨⑥

You may think that White can make shape with ⑤, but it hurts when Black takes the vital point at ⑥.

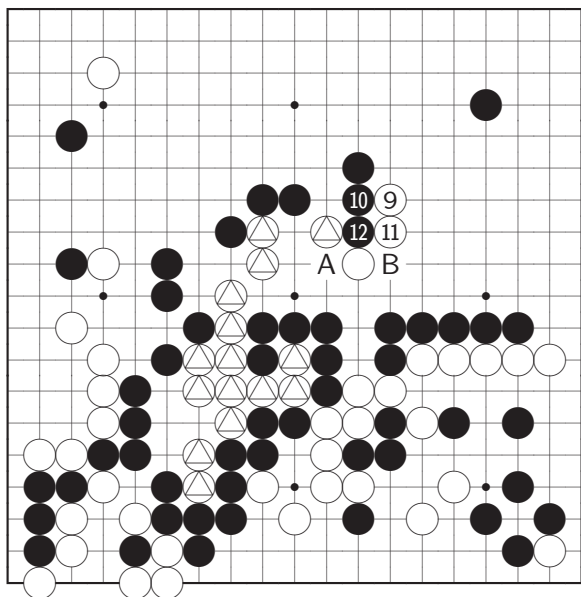
White will find it very hard to move out in good form after this happens.

Here, we can clearly see the potency of A (⑨⑤ in the game). After absorbing that blow, White really struggles to make shape.



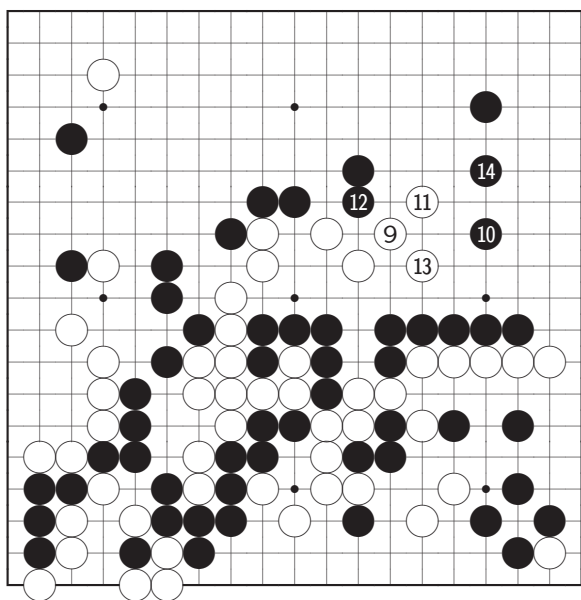
Variation 105 for ⑨⑥

For example, ⑨ and ⑪ look stylish at first, but the cutting point at ⑮ is a problem and White's marked dragon is trapped again.



Variation 106 for ⑨⑥

White ⑨ is another move that would usually work, but the shape is too thin and Black's wall is too powerful in this case. After ⑫, Black can cut at A or B. White's marked group is still captured.



Variation 107 for ⑨⑥

White ⑨ succeeds in staying connected, but Black will be happy to take profit while White slithers out at a snail's pace.

Playing ⑨ to ⑬ feels humiliating for White.

The Beauty of Omission

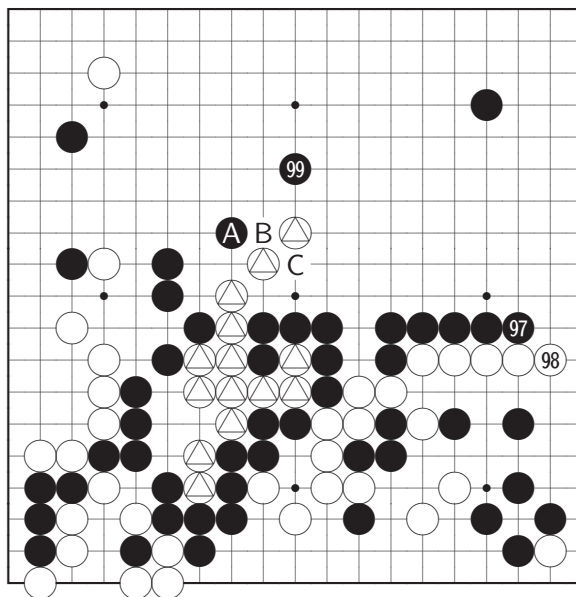


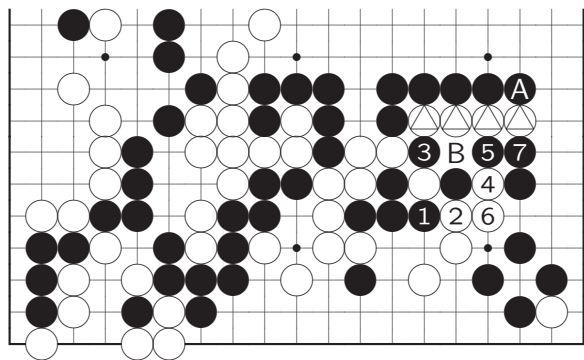
Diagram 22
(Moves: 97-99)

Pushing at ⑨⑦ was still sente and descending to ⑨⑧ was necessary.

Capping at ⑨⑨ followed the direction of play, by driving White's marked group against Black's powerful wall in the center. Black's strategy was to take profit at the top and simultaneously look after his lower left group, while harassing White.

This kind of haengma (the elephant's step, formed by the diagonal jump from A to ⑨⑨) is often used to attack, but it's especially powerful when Black can exchange B for C in sente. Since B is sente, you can imagine that it's already on the board and view ⑨⑨ as an abstraction of the knight's move (from B to ⑨⑨).

It's better style to omit the exchange of B for C and play ⑨⑨ directly, because doing so keeps Black's options open and makes his position more flexible.



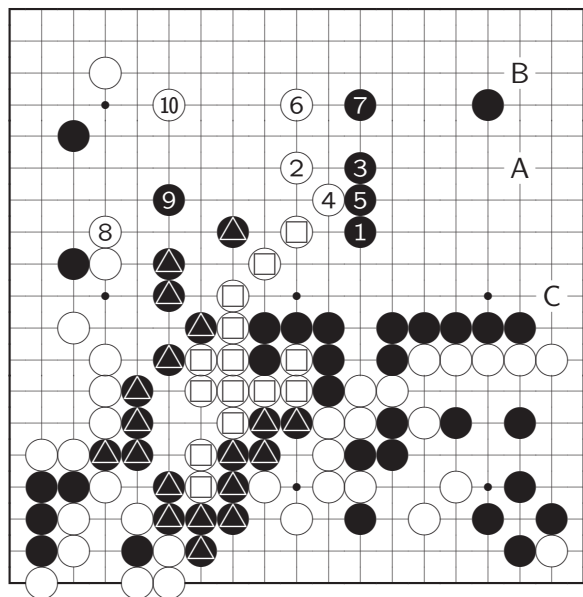
Variation 108 for ⑨⑧

If White plays elsewhere after A, Black can play ① to ③ and White's whole lower right group finds itself in danger.

Cutting at ④ would have worked earlier, but because of A White is too short of liberties to cut at B.

The marked stones are captured and the rest of White's lower right group is also in trouble.

Instead of ⑥, cutting at B leads to ko, but this is a picnic ko for Black.



Variation 109 for 99

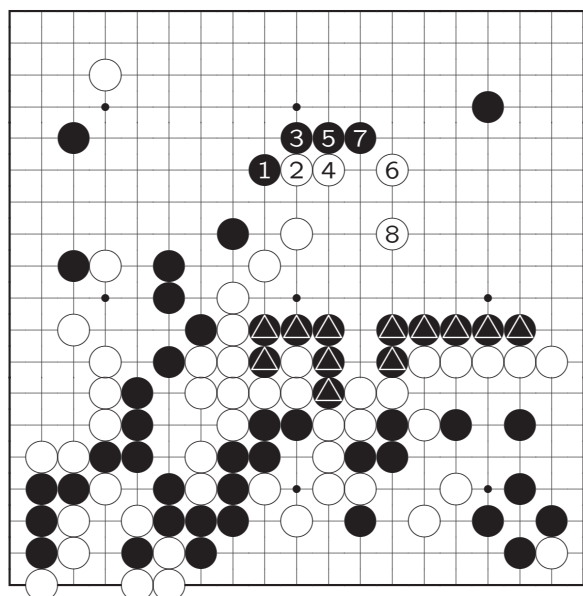
The cap at ① attacks from the wrong direction.

Black can develop the top right area up to ⑦, but he has to worry about his marked dragon after ⑧.

White can still invade or reduce Black's top right moyo with moves like A, B and C later, so this variation isn't promising for Black.

The difference between the capping plays at ① and ② is that the elephant's step to ② (99 in the game) positions Black's marked dragon in front of White's and seizes the high ground, while ① in this variation helps White to escape and attack Black.

Black 99 in the game also makes better use of Black's wall than ① in this variation does, but the most important thing to focus on is the shifting power dynamics between the two weak groups.



Variation 110 for 99

The knight's move at ① is usually a strong attacking haengma, but it's not the best move in this situation.

White can make shape in the center up to ⑧, and Black's marked wall is in danger of becoming a liability as its power gradually evaporates.

When you have a source of power that isn't independently alive (usually an eyeless wall), you need to watch out for this kind of situation.

In general, you want to do one of two things while using your wall to attack:

1. Ideally, enclose your opponent's group while connecting your wall to other friendly stones. In this scenario, you connect around the outside of the enclosed group, but this isn't always possible and can backfire if you're not careful.
2. Failing that, develop your wall while attacking, so that it can't be surrounded. Black's play in Diagram 23 (below) is a good example of this.

A Rich Man Shouldn't Pick Quarrels

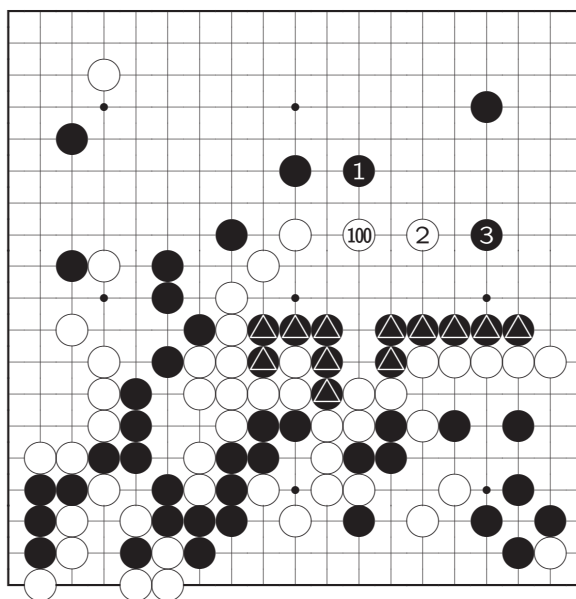
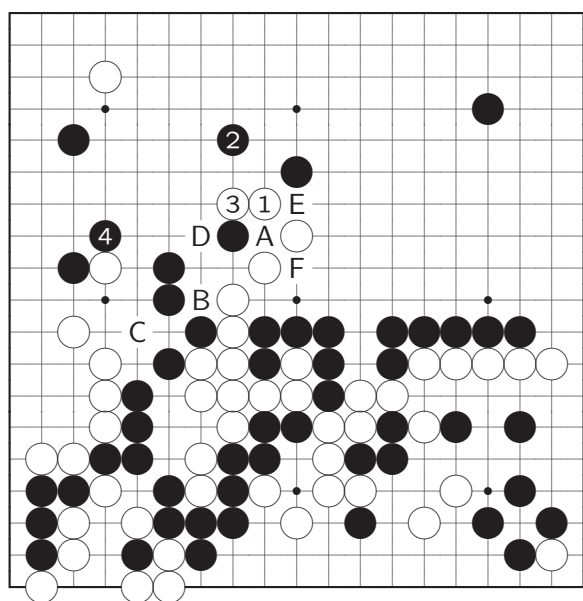


Diagram 23
(Moves: 100-103)

Black continued to attack naturally with ① (101) and ③. Black ③ served a dual purpose, defending Black's marked group while denying White access to the eye potential at edge of the board. If a weak group can make it to the edge, it generally becomes easier for it to make eyes. Therefore, if you can confine a group to the center, you can usually take more profit while it slowly makes life.

There was no need for Black to try to capture White's dragon, because his measured attack followed a safer, more reliable path. The player who's behind is the one who needs to take risks, and games are often reversed when we focus obsessively on capturing a group. As Lao Zi says in the *Dao De Jing*, "If you rejoice in victory, then you delight in killing; if you delight in killing, you cannot fulfill yourself."



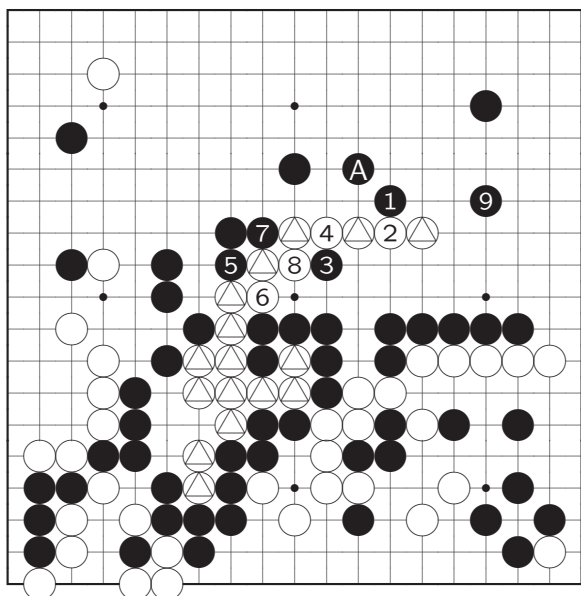
Variation 111 for ⑩00

If White moves out at ①, Black can continue to attack with ②. The progression up to ④ is good enough for Black.

This strategy is patient and flexible; Black doesn't need to wedge and cut immediately with A, and doing so would make Black's position heavier.

White can still play either B or C in sente, so there's some bad aji here if Black plays too aggressively.

Extending to D is sente for Black because it aims push in at A next, making miai of E and F.



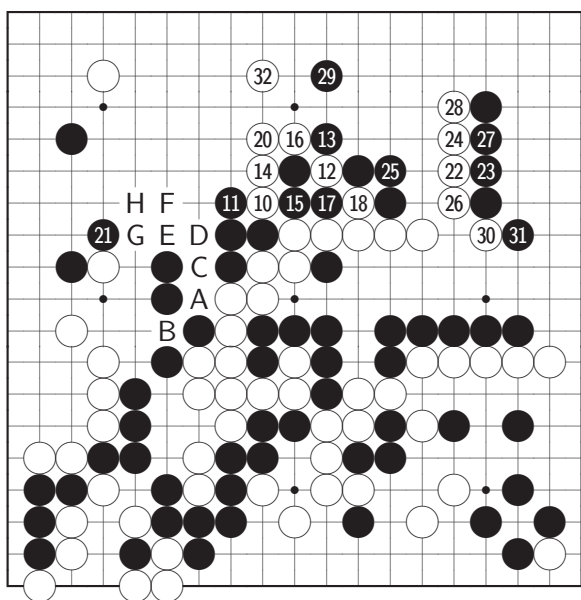
Variation 112 for 103

Black could also consider attacking with ① to ⑨.

Despite being somewhat thin, the shape formed by A, ① and ⑨ is often useful when attacking or enclosing a group.

The forcing exchanges of ③, ⑤ and ⑦ make White's group heavier, but they also remove aji.

A player like Lee Sedol would be reluctant to expend aji like this. He would only do so if he was sure that he could capture White's group.



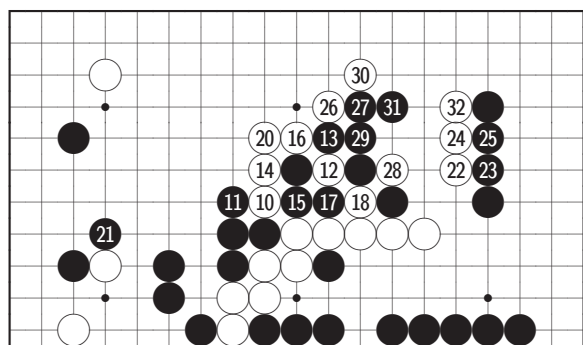
Variation 113 for 103

① at ⑫

White still has some aji in the cut at ⑩.

After the exchanges from ⑩ to ⑳, Black hanes at ㉑ to protect his cutting point (after ㉑, Black can answer White A, with B to H) and White gets sente.

Up to ㉓, White's center dragon is far from captured and the game has become very complicated.



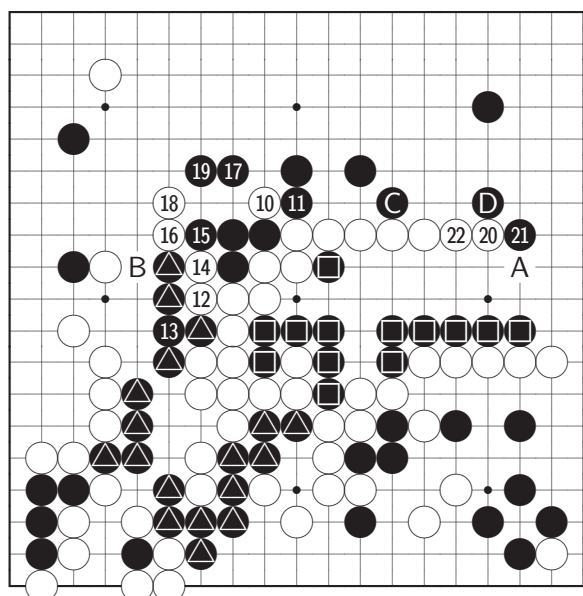
Variation 114 for 103

19 at 12

Connecting immediately at 25, instead of playing at 28 as in the previous variation, doesn't work very well either.

Black's shape will crumple under the force of 26 to 30 and the push at 32 will become more powerful than before.

This variation is needlessly risky for Black.



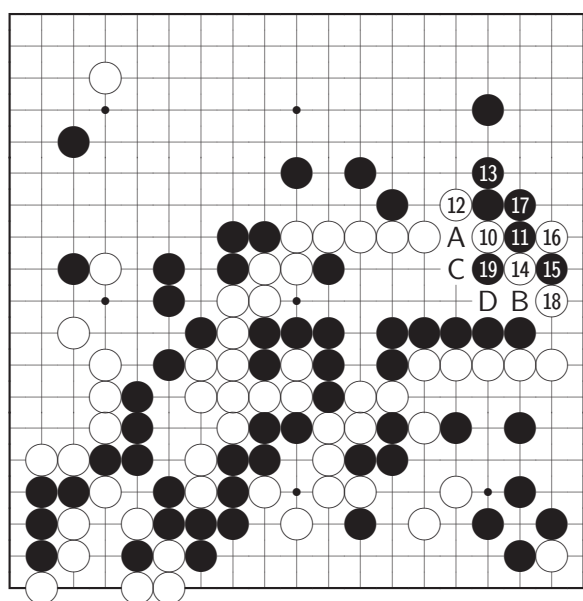
Variation 115 for 103

Cutting at 11 is a dangerous overplay for Black.

The atari at 12 and the moves to 18 are sente, and White can extend his liberties with 20 and 22.

A and B are miai for White, so Black has to choose between saving one marked dragon or the other. He cannot save both.

Lee probably considered fighting with C and D, but decided that the move he played in the game was simpler and clearer, because of the bad aji of 10.



Variation 116 for 103

It's not easy for White to separate Black with 10.

The double hane at 15 is an interesting counter, and 19 makes miai of A and B, so Black's groups are connected.

White can't start a ko now, because both his stones are in atari.

This is an unusual example, but 15 follows the principle of sacrificing on the less important side first.

Instead of 15, playing the immediate atari at 19 allows White to start a huge ko with C. Black can still dodge with the atari at 15, but White D gains more.

If White connects at 19 after Black plays 15, Black connects under with 18 and White's gain is minimal.

Hunt for Weaknesses

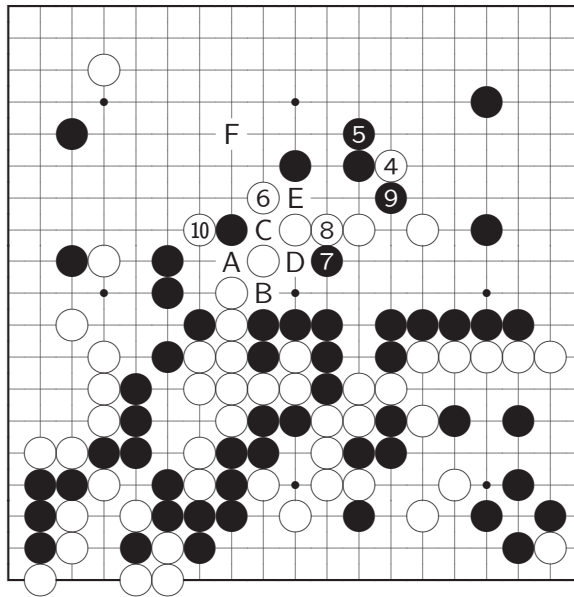


Diagram 24
(Moves: 104-110)

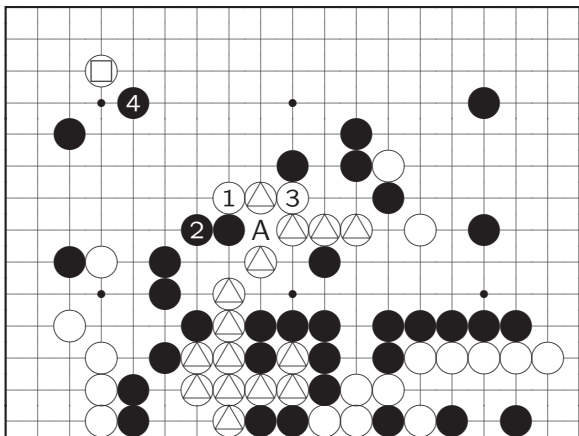
White poked his head out with ⑥ because he decided that continuing to thrash around on the right side would just let Black solidify his territory, as planned.

When one of your groups is under attack, you should hunt for weaknesses in your opponent's position and seek to enlarge or exploit them. This attitude is better than only thinking about running away.

Black's position was too thin to cut with A to E (Variation 115 showed the danger of such tactics), so Black switched to ⑨ to developing his moyo in the top right. Playing ⑨ at F was still possible, but Lee thought ⑨ was bigger at this stage.

White ⑩ was a clever sacrifice tesuji. White wanted to sacrifice this stone in order to repair his potential cutting points in sente, before moving out.

After the game, Lee said that he regretted omitting the exchange of A for B before he played ⑨, because that would have prevented ⑩. Either way, the position was still favorable for Black.



Variation 117 for ⑩

If White simply pushes at ①, he'll need to come back and defend with ③ after ② (to prevent Black A).

Black ④ brings a powerful leaning attack to bear against the marked stones, and the game becomes hopeless for White.

White's development here is too heavy and slow.

Sacrifice Stones to Gain Sente

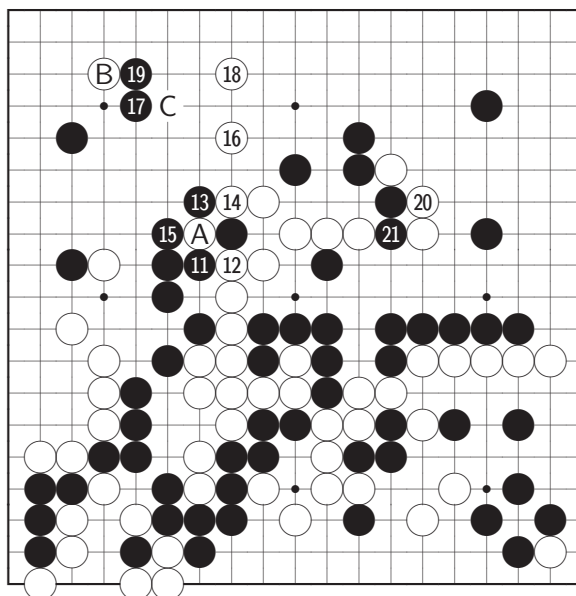


Diagram 25
(Moves: 111-121)

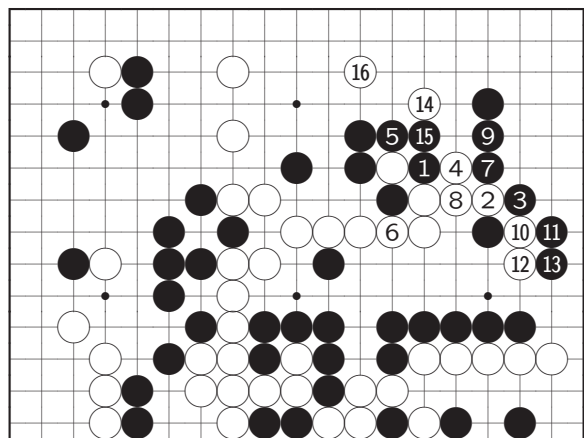
White completed his one stone sacrifice up to ⑭ and escaped with ⑯. Sacrificing ① was a good idea, which earned White a tempo in the center, but it also made Black's dragon stronger.

Black's press at ⑰ was a textbook example of a leaning attack and Black was satisfied to take profit with ⑱. White had little choice but to strengthen himself with ⑲, leaving ② at Black's mercy.

As we saw in Variation 92, pushing with White at ⑲, Black C, and so on would only strengthen Black at the expense of White's desperate center group.

Gu later said that he thought the position up to ⑲ was still playable, because White may yet have an opportunity to complicate the game, after strengthening his group.

White's last hope was to start a complicated fight in the top right, and ⑳ was a good way to begin. Black pushed at ㉑, apparently confident about fighting here.



Variation 118 for 121

Cutting at ① is also conceivable, and White will attach at ② next.

White eventually needs to come back to defend at ⑥, which gives Black time to atari and connect with ⑦ and ⑨.

However, the game becomes closer up to ⑯, so this isn't a very good option for Black.

Find Balance Amidst Chaos

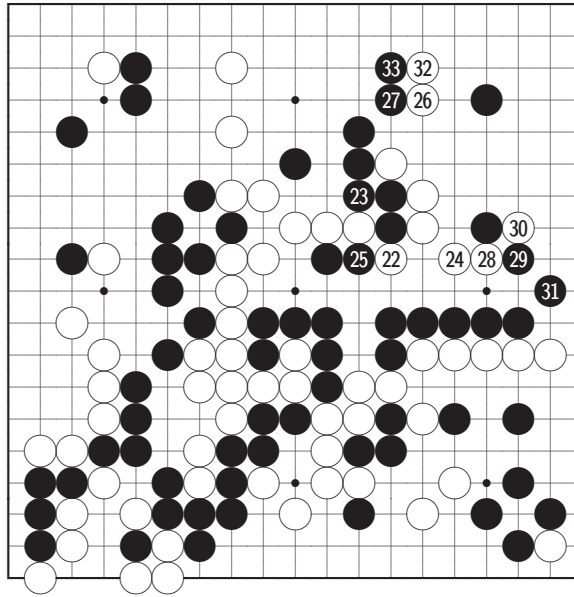
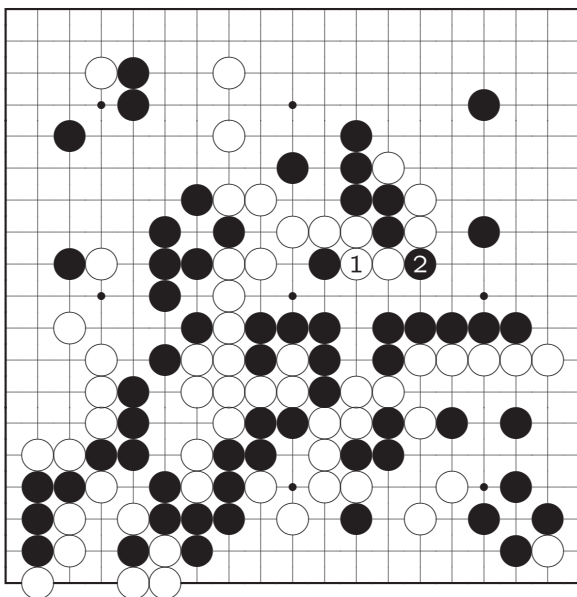


Diagram 26
(Moves: 122-133)

Rather than retreating, Lee cut with ②③ and ②⑤. Defending at ②④ was efficient, because it allowed White to play ②⑧ and ②⑩ next, and ②⑩ was the right technique for defending Black's center dragon. Some readers might be alarmed at this development, but to Lee it was the clearest path to success. Such apparent chaos is essential to Go, and possesses its own point of balance for you to discover.

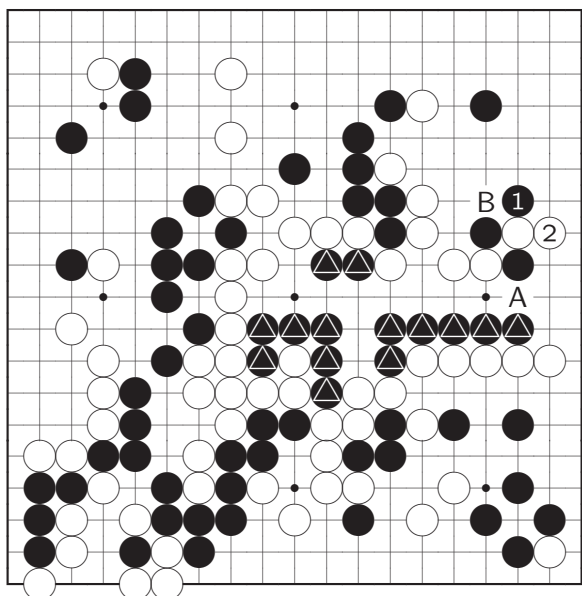
Strive to understand the relationships between stones, the way strengths and weaknesses are counterpoised against one another, and the natural cause and effect of fighting. While the winds of chaos may seem intimidating, you will find peace in the eye of the storm. Should your opponent overstep in a moment of greed, it takes only the lightest of movements to turn their momentum against them.



Variation 119 for ②④

If White connects at ①, Black will cut with ② and the game will become much easier for Black.

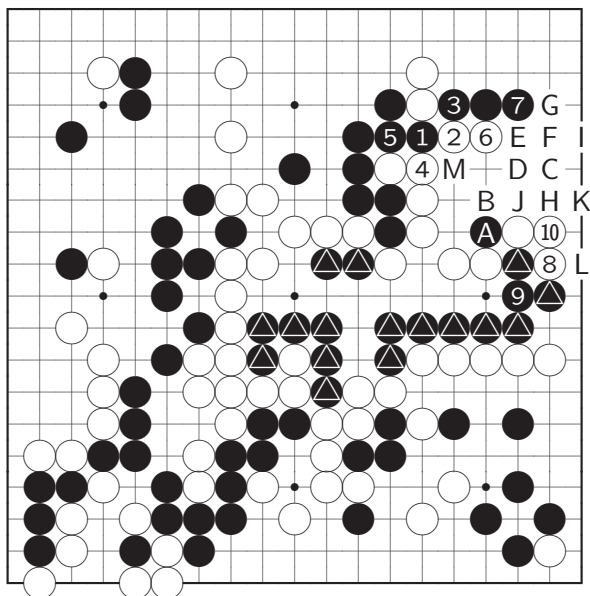
White wants to complicate the game and look for an opportunity to reverse it. This can be regarded as a failure to do so.



Variation 120 for 131

If Black ataris at ①, White will extend to ②.

A and B are miai for White next and Black's center dragon is in danger.



Variation 121 for 133

If Black uses ③③ to cut with ① and ③, White will play ④ to ⑧ in sente and then connect at ⑩.

Black A is paralyzed, and Black's center group is in trouble.

It's worth observing how the forcing exchange of ⑥ for ⑦ prepares a defense against Black B.

If Black plays B, White can respond with C and meet D with E to I. White is intending to trade here.

Even though Black can capture three stones with J, immediately exchanging K for L exploits shortage of liberties to protect the cutting point at M in sente.

In conclusion, Black saves his marked stones with B to L, but he does so at the expense of his top and top right groups. This renders ① and ③ useless.

Appearances Can Be Deceiving

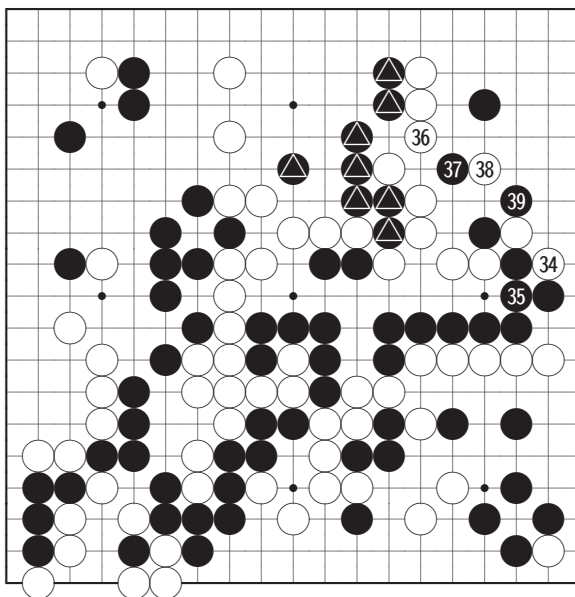
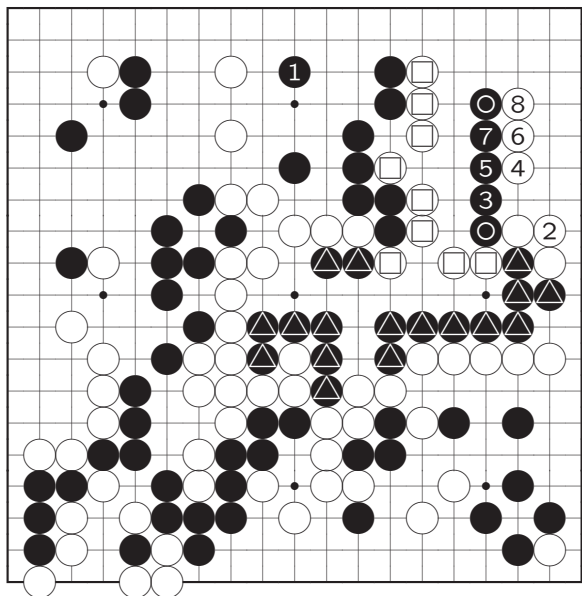


Diagram 27
(Moves: 134-139)

The truth is not always beautiful, nor are beautiful words always the truth.

—Lao Zi, *Dao De Jing*

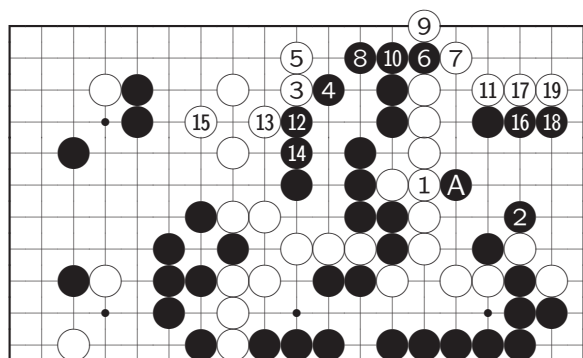
White ③⑧ looked like a sharp tesuji, but simplifying the game with ③⑨ was good enough for Black. Even though White could attack Black's marked stones next, they were stronger than they looked.



Variation 122 for ①③⑦

If Black simply takes care of his top group, with ①, White will fight with ② to ⑧ and entangle the marked groups in a capturing race.

This variation is very complicated, which is what White wants.

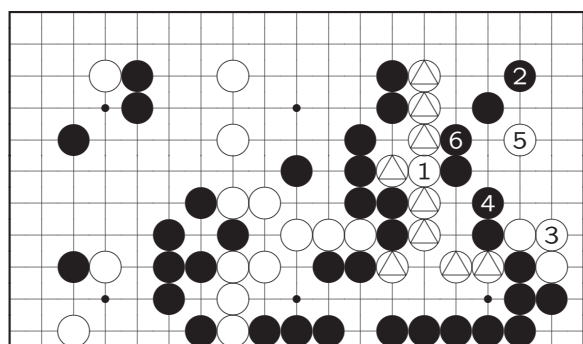


Variation 123 for 138

When Black peeped at **A**, White should have connected at ①. In that case, reinforcing at ② would still be good for Black.

Both Black and White can live at the top up to ⑮. The result in the top right is fairly similar to the game, but the overall result is an improvement for White.

This would have been the best option for White.

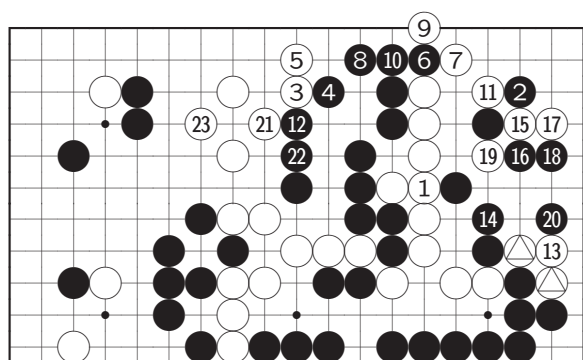


Variation 124 for 138

Black might be tempted to try something like ②.

Black ② destabilizes White's marked group while also preparing a strong resistance against ③ and ⑤.

However...

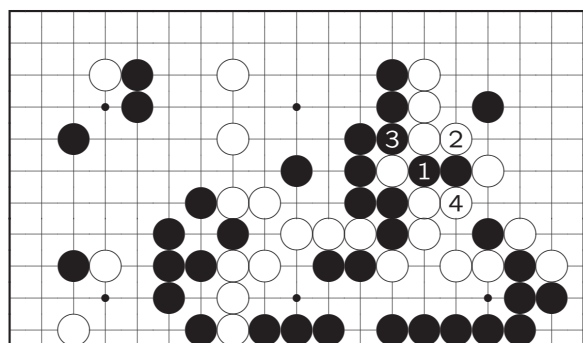


Variation 125 for 138

White can still pressure Black with ③ and sacrifice the cutting stones in sente (after first enlarging them with ⑬).

Black has to take the time to capture White's cutting stones with ⑳, to avoid a difficult capturing race.

After White lives with ㉓, we can see that Black's failed attack loses points.



Variation 126 for 139

If Black cuts immediately at ①, White will answer with ② and ④.

The exchanges from ① to ④ are bad for Black.

The Cunning Rabbit Has Three Holes

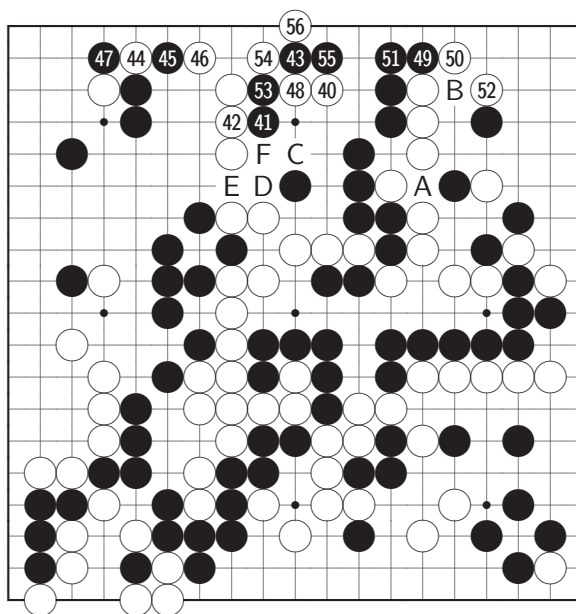


Diagram 28
(Moves: 140-156)

White ④① aimed to cover the weakness at A while pressuring Black at the top, but it was too thin.

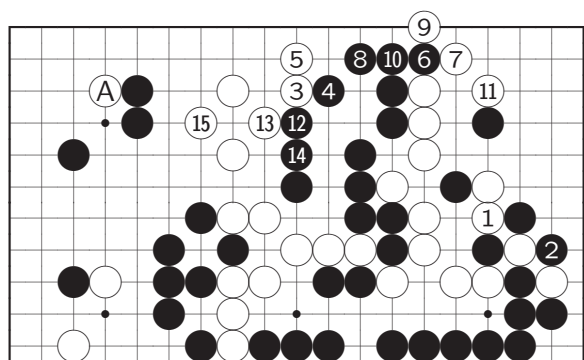
Black ④③ and ④⑤ formed a powerful combination. White had no choice but to connect at ④②.

However, ④④ was a wonderful tesuji and White's center dragon escaped along a hidden tunnel. This move exemplified the Chinese proverb, "The cunning rabbit has three holes." In other words, you usually maintain your balance by preparing two options of similar value (make miai of two plans), but ideally you should also prepare an escape hatch to save yourself if something goes wrong.

If White plays ④④ at ④⑥ instead, Black will extend to ④④ and White's group becomes less flexible.

The sente connection at ⑤① was the ace up Black's sleeve. Defending at ⑤② protected the cutting point at B and damaged Black's corner, but Black was able to live with ⑤⑤ in compensation. Meanwhile, White's center dragon was still in danger. White can't net at C because Black D makes E and F miai.

The hane at ⑤⑥ looks like it was played to gain more thinking time. Gu Li must have entered byo-yomi around this stage, but the game was practically over anyway.

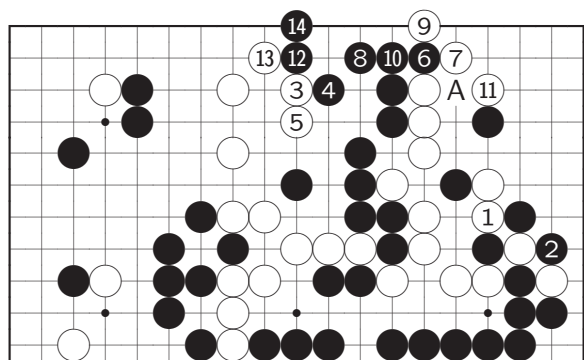


Variation 127 for ①④①

Extending to ③ still seems to be best, but White now needs to exchange ① for ② first.

As we've seen, Black can make two eyes through to ⑭, and White lives with ⑮. By living in this manner, White is trying to preserve the aji in A as best he can.

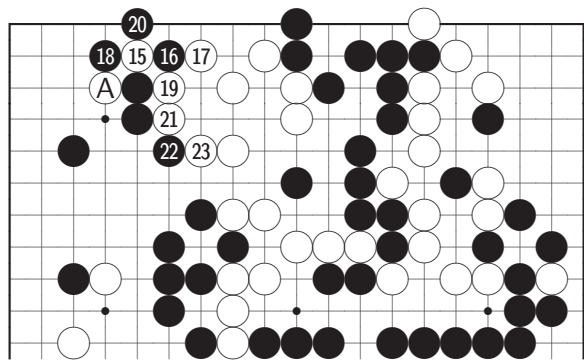
Black is still in the lead, but this variation is better for White than the game.



Variation 128 for ⑭

If White extends at ⑤ instead, Black can still live up to ⑭. White ⑤ and ⑫ are miai for Black.

Continuing...

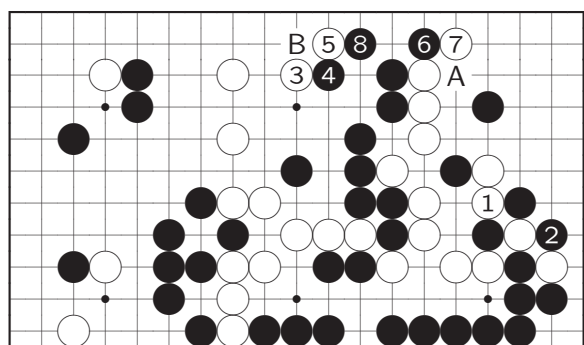


Variation 129 for ⑭

White ⑮ and ⑰ form a good combination to help White settle his group, and White lives up to ⑳.

This result is also better for White than the game, and White is still catching up.

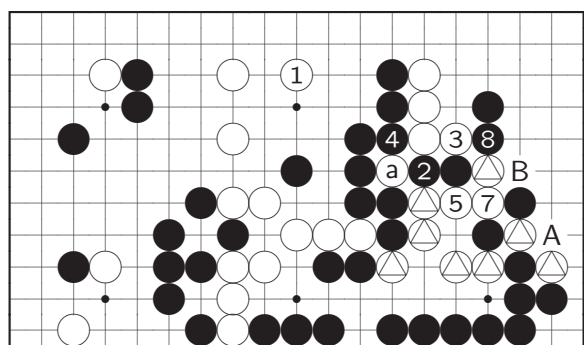
However, White will rue helping Black to reinforce the top left corner and extinguishing A as a result.



Variation 130 for ⑭

If White hanes underneath at ⑤, Black will still exchange ⑥ and ⑧.

A and B are miai for Black next, so ⑤ isn't a good idea for White.



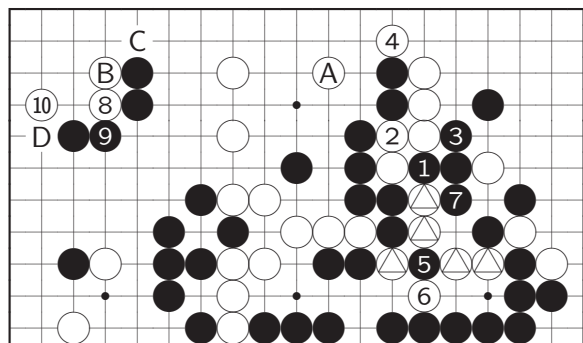
Variation 131 for ⑭

Ideally, White would prefer to forego any other exchanges and play at ① immediately.

Unfortunately, Black's atari at ② is severe. After Black connects at ⑥ (a), ⑦ and ⑧ are miai.

Next, cutting at ⑧ makes miai of A and B, meaning White's marked stones will be captured.

⑥ at (a)



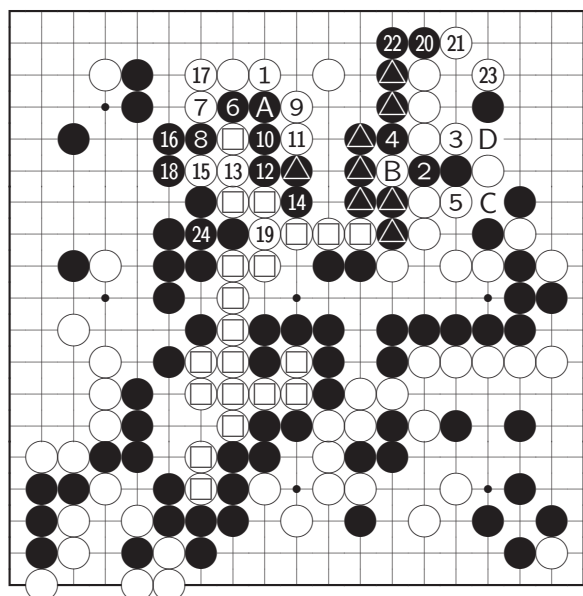
Variation 132 for 141

White played at (A) so that he could respond to ① with ② and ④. If Black chooses this variation, he can capture the marked stones up to ⑦.

However, because White's group at the top has become stronger, White can salvage the top left corner with ⑧ and ⑩.

There are many possible variations after this, but White can aim at C or D next and will be able to create something in the corner.

This is what White wants.



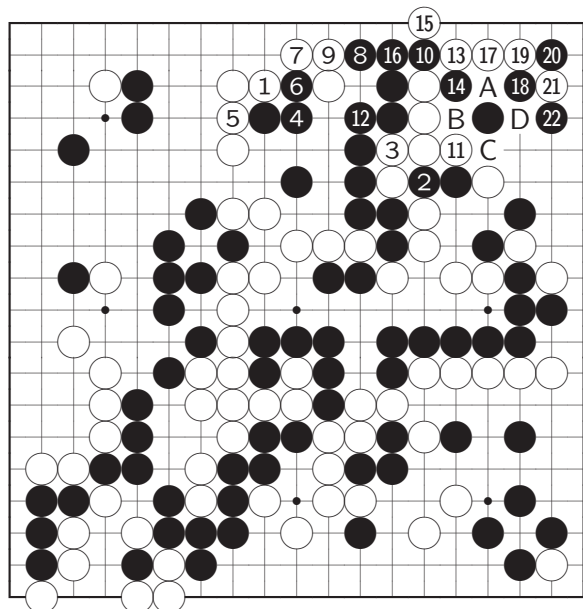
Variation 133 for 142

If White answers the peep at (A) (41) with ①, Black will probe at ②.

Responding with ③ and ⑤ allows Black to increase his liberties such that he can push and cut with ⑥ and ⑧.

The moves up to ②4 lead to a capturing race between the marked groups, which Black will win.

Instead of ⑥, Black can also play (B) to D (as we saw in Variation 131) if he's uncertain about the result of the capturing race.



Variation 134 for 142

If White connects at ③ instead, Black can play ④ to ⑩.

Defending at ⑪ is necessary, to prevent Black from playing at ⑪ himself. This means Black has time to reinforce at ⑫.

White ⑬ appears to be a strong counter at first, but Black can cut at ⑭.

White's cutting stones will be captured up to ⑫. If White ataris at A, connecting at B makes miai of C and D.

Greed for the Win Takes the Win Away

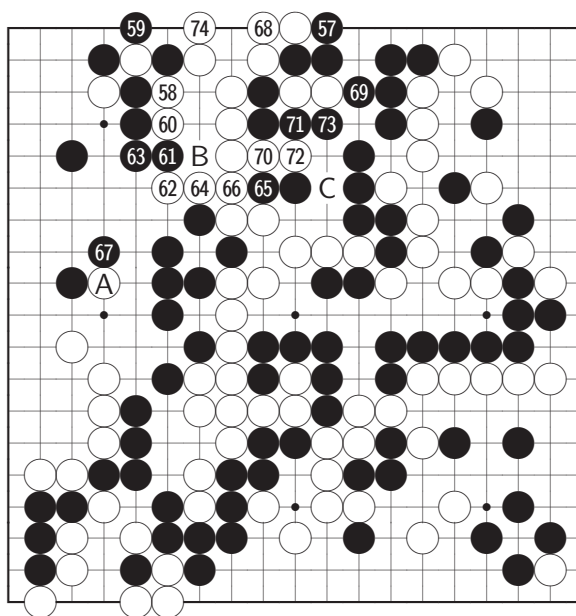
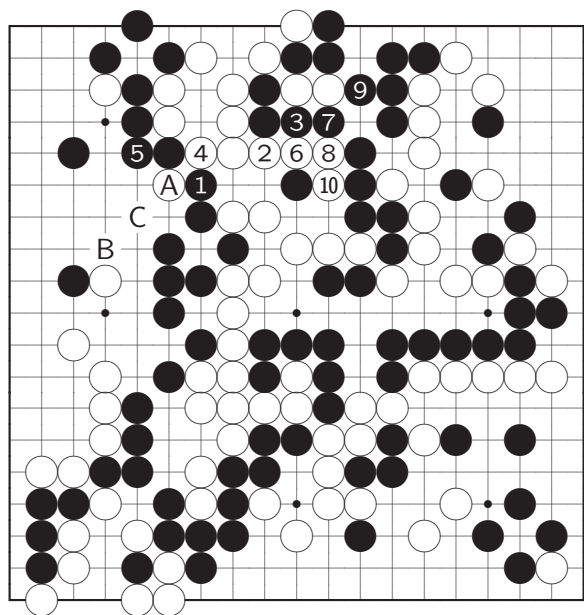


Diagram 29
(Moves: 157-174)

White ⑥② was a clever tesuji, attempting to make an eye in sente, but ⑥③ was the correct response.

Black was able to complete his position in the top left with ⑥⑦. Both players had wanted to play around here ever since White attached at (A), but there was never enough time. Finally, Black found a natural opportunity to play ⑥⑦ in sente, while attacking. Rather than attempting to capture White's group, Black consolidated a clear territorial advantage and allowed White a small degree of latitude.

The sequence from ⑥⑧ to ⑦④ was the only way to save White's group. White's enormous dragon was finally safe (B and C are miai), but you don't need to capture anything if you're already clearly ahead.

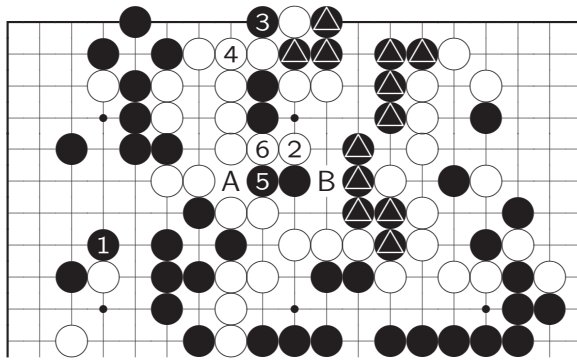


Variation 135 for ⑥③

If Black answers (A) with ①, White can live with ② to ⑩.

Later on, White will be able to play at B in sente, because it threatens to continue with C.

If you compare this variation to the actual game, you'll be able to see that it's better for White.

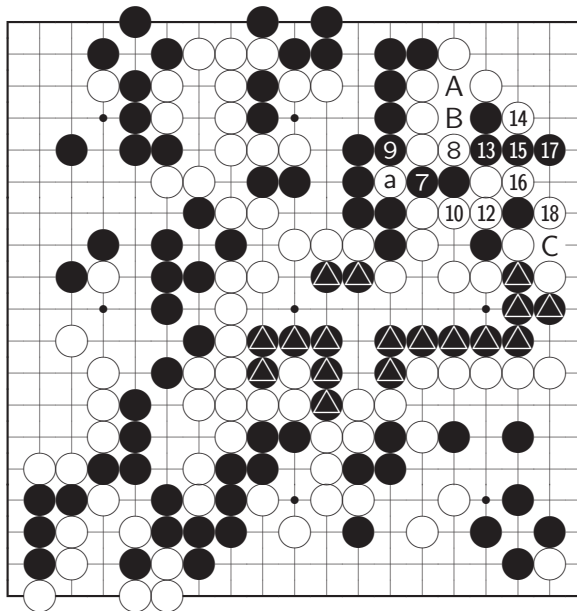


Variation 136 for 165

If Black reinforces at ① without exchanging ⑤ for A first (⑥5 and ⑥6 in the game), White can form a net at ②.

Black can't cut at A, because White will atari at B, so Black's marked group suddenly finds itself in deep trouble and the game is reversed.

Next...



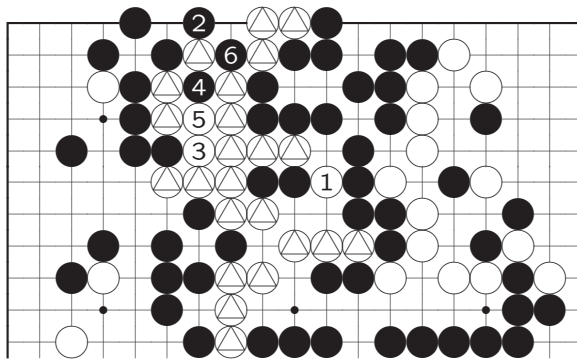
Variation 137 for 165

11 at a

If Black continues by cutting at ⑦, White will play ⑧ to ⑫.

Black can cut at ⑬ and fight, but ⑭ to ⑱ is an excellent continuation, and Black's marked group will be captured after White lives with ⑱.

If Black plays A instead of ⑮; White at ⑮, Black B and White C follow. Black's marked stones still die.



Variation 138 for 174

If White ataris at ① (instead of defending at ②), ② is severe and White's marked dragon dies up to ⑥.

Instead of ③, if White plays at ⑥, Black plays at ⑤ and White still dies.

Strike While the Iron Is Hot

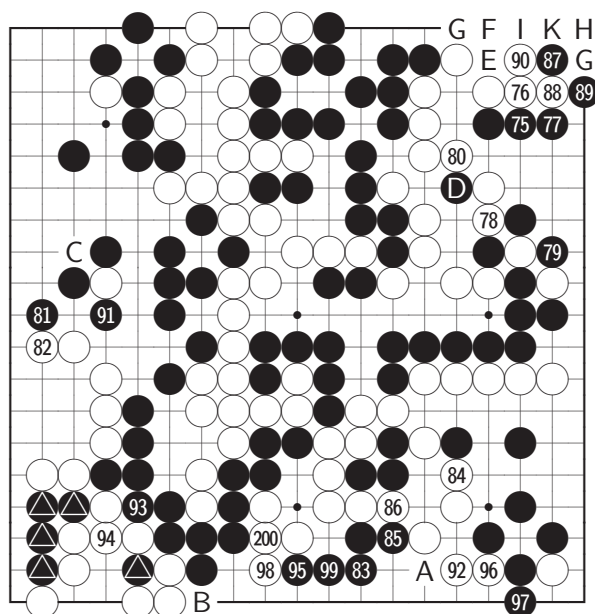


Diagram 30
(Moves: 175-200)

Defer no time, delays have dangerous ends; enter, and cry “The Dauphin!” presently, and then do execution on the watch.

—William Shakespeare, *Henry VI, Act 3, Scene 2*

Black 75 began a sente endgame sequence, and White chose to capture D instead of blocking at 88.

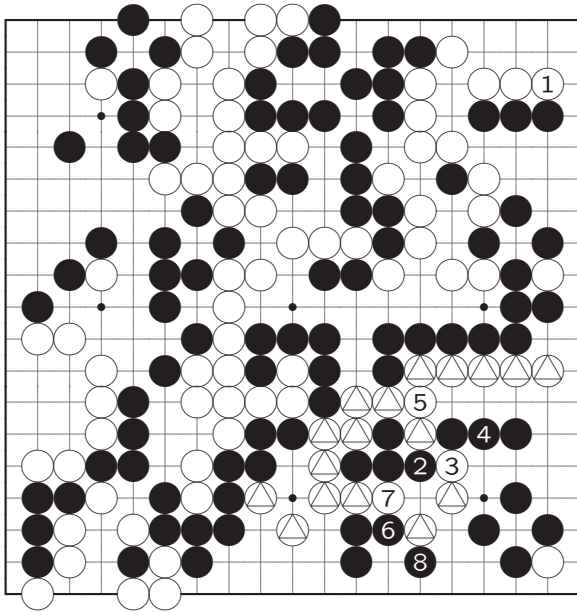
Wasting no time, Black’s conspirators snuck into White’s town at the bottom, disguised as farmers. Then, with 83, they delivered the coup de grâce from within. White couldn’t capture the two stones because A and B were miai, so reinforcing at 84 became necessary.

Black 87 was another sente endgame move. After White defended up to 90, Black’s biggest move was at A, but there was some aji for White in the cut at C so Lee reinforced with 91 instead.

White was alive in the top right because he had eyes at D and E. If Black tries to capture White with F, White G to I makes miai of G and K.

After 92, Black had to connect under with 95. He exchanged 93 for 94 in sente because he was planning to atari at B and squeeze the last drops out of the marked stones soon. When sacrificing stones, you want to try to extract as much value from them as possible, before they’re removed from the board.

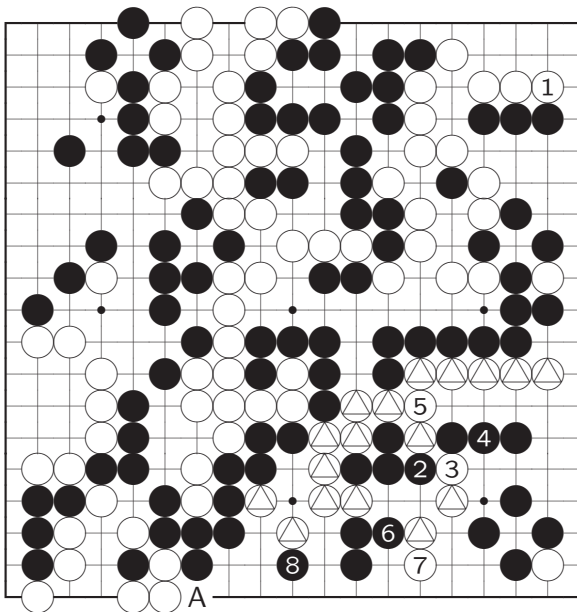
Black was winning by around 15 points on the board (without counting komi), so playing safely was the best policy at this stage.



Variation 139 for ①84

If White tenukis (e.g. ①), instead of defending at ③, Black will attack with ②, ④ and ⑥.

Making eyes in the bottom right is harder than it looks, so White's marked group will die after ⑧.



Variation 140 for ①84

Resisting with ⑦ changes nothing, because Black can still connect under at ⑧.

Remember that Black can play at A in sente!

White is still in trouble.

Can't Capture? Think Endgame

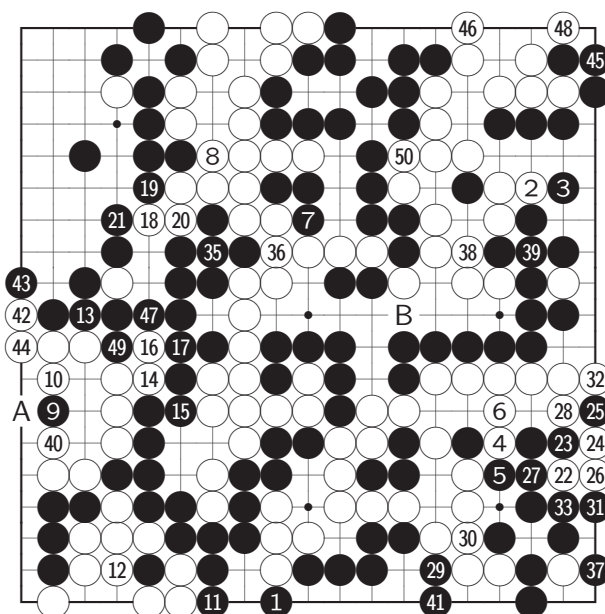


Diagram 31
(Moves: 201-250)

⊙234 at ⊙225

Exchanging ⊙9 for ⊙10 was unusual at this stage, but that's Lee Sedol's style of play. Even in the endgame, he thinks about vital points.

White ⊙22 was a stylish endgame tesuji. White would have analyzed the position in the bottom right earlier and concluded that Black couldn't be captured.

When that happens, you should mentally adjust your focus from life and death to endgame possibilities.

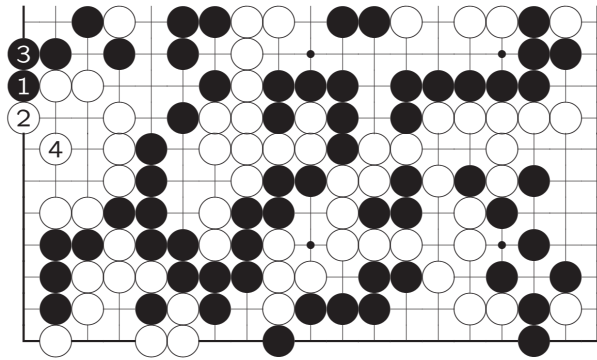
In this case, White could still harass Black's corner and reduce Black's territory in sente up to ⊙37. If you always insist on trying to capture stones you'll often lose points, but if you consider the endgame too you'll discover other options.

Bullying a group to the point where it just barely makes eyes is almost as satisfying as capturing it.

Before defending at ⊙37, Black exchanged ⊙35 for ⊙36 in sente. White had to answer because ⊙35 threatened to cut, and capture part of White's center group.

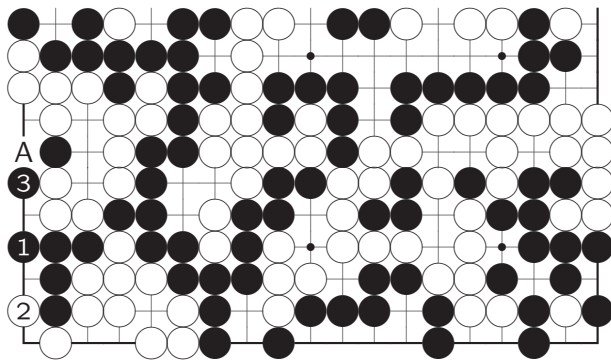
White should have used ⊙50 to reinforce at A in the bottom left. If he had done so, Black would have played at B next.

However, Gu didn't defend because he was behind, and was looking for a place to resign.



Variation 141 for 209

The sente hane at ① would be the usual endgame play, but in this case the net result is about the same.

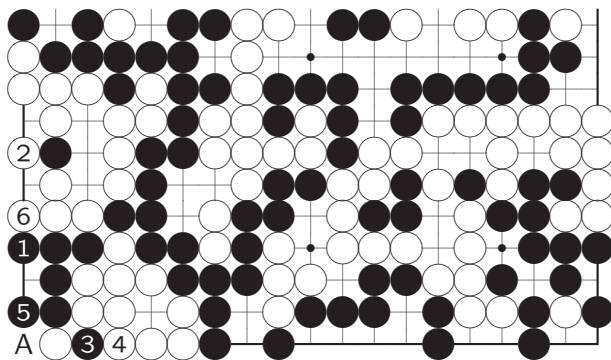


Variation 142 for 250

After ① (251), the game is over.

If White hanes at ②, Black will hane at ③.

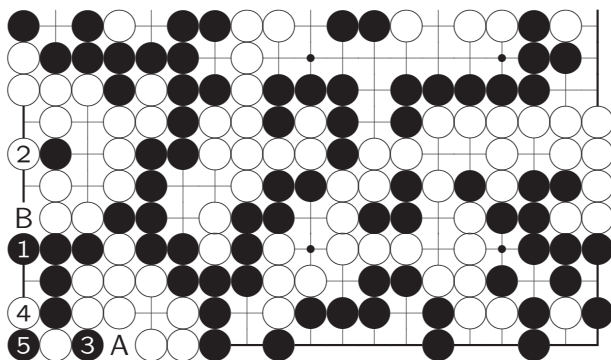
We can expect a ko after White throws in at A.



Variation 143 for 250

If White defends at ②, Black will create a seki with ③ and ⑤.

Neither player can atari at A without putting their own stones in atari.



Variation 144 for 250

Instead of A in the previous variation, White also has a tesuji at ④. It leads to a ko at ⑤.

Playing ② at B doesn't significantly change either of these variations. White still has to choose between ko or seki.

This is why White resigned after 251 in the game.

Lee Sedol Chalks Up His First Win

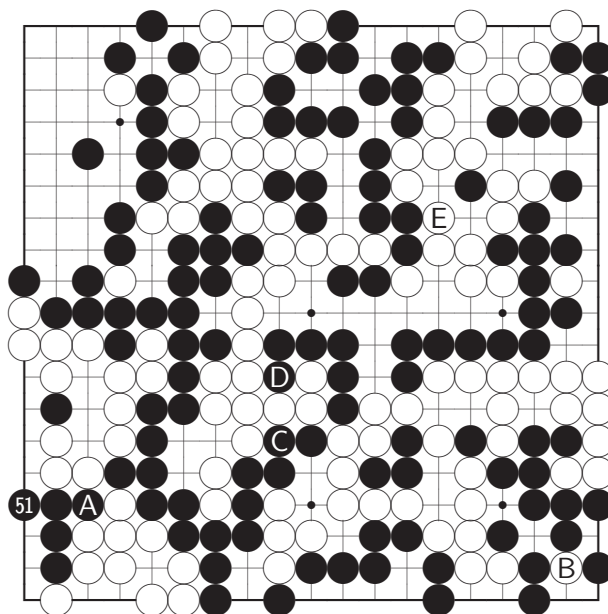


Diagram 32
(Move: 251)

251 moves: Black won by resignation.

There will either be a ko or a seki in the bottom left corner after 251. White should resign either way. See variations 142 to 144 (on the previous page) for details.

Even if White had defended the corner, Black was ahead by 16 points on the board at this stage.

The game was fascinating and enjoyable to watch, and it was a fitting start to the Jubango.

White's position felt slightly better in the opening, but Black caught up again with the cut at 31 (A).

White 60 (B) was a poorly timed probe, and Lee didn't miss the opportunity to change the flow of the game with 61 (C). After that, Black took the initiative with the attack that started at 71 (D).

White fought back strongly and sought to complicate the game with 120 (E), but it was too late. Lee managed the game very well after E, and there didn't seem to be any opportunities for White to recover.

The games of this match had longer time limits than most contemporaneous professional Go tournaments. In slower matches, it's quite hard to reverse a game once one falls behind, because the other player has plenty of time to think carefully at critical moments and carry their lead through difficult situations.

Lee Sedol was off to a good start and the players now had a month before their next game, in Pinghu.

February

February 23, 2014, Pinghu, China: *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

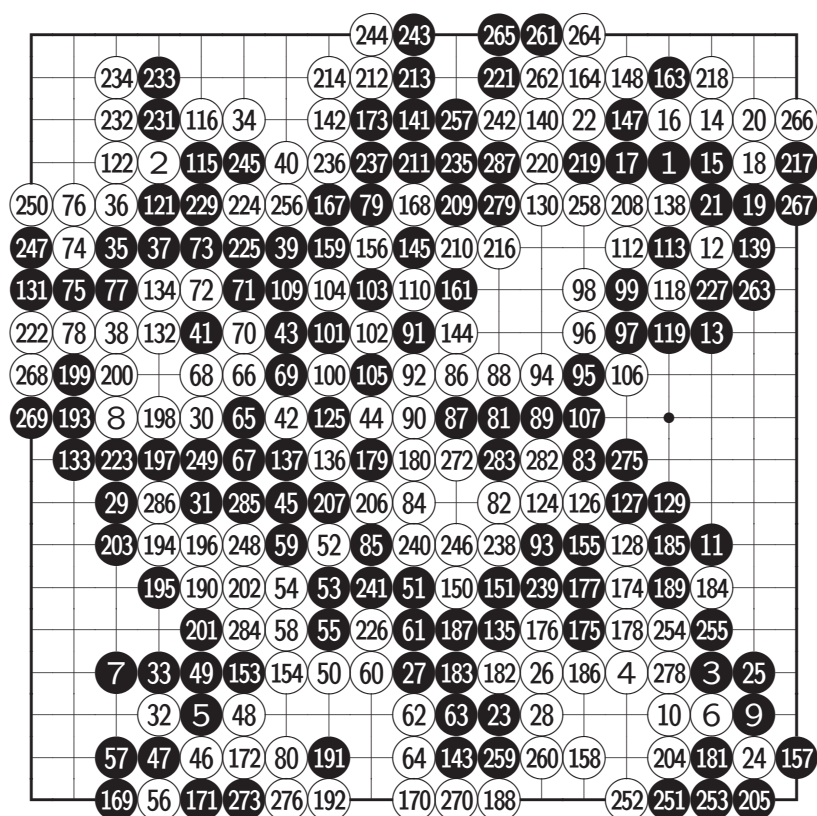


Diagram 1

(Moves: 1-287)

(108) (114) (120) (146) (152) at (102), (111) (117) (123) (165) at (105), (149) (166) at (91),
 (160) at (103), (162) (281) at (100), (215) (274) at (145), (228) at (113), (230) at (168),
 (271) at (52), (277) at (56), (280) at (179)

Pinghu

The second game took place in Pinghu, Zhejiang Province, China, on February 23, 2014. Gu Li played black.

Pinghu is a thriving agricultural and manufacturing center on the outskirts of Shanghai. The organizers selected this somewhat obscure venue due to its historical significance as the location of the famous Danghu Games.

The Danghu Games were a series played between two pre-eminent Chinese Go masters during the Qing Dynasty, Fan Xiping and Shi Xiangxia (better known to Western Go players as Shi Ding'an). The official record stands at five wins each (after 10 games), but it is believed that the two played at least 11 games at Danghu (some say 13). Historians date this event as having occurred in the year 1739.

Fan and Shi were born a year apart into Go-loving families, living in the same town. Fan was a Go prodigy and became Guoshou (a title reserved for the very best players at the time) as a teenager.

Shi was a sickly child and was deemed too delicate to master Go. His father had him schooled in the Four Arts and the classics, but after persistent nagging by Shi, allowed him to focus on Go.

Eventually, Shi also attained the rank of Guoshou, several years after his friend Fan. Fan and Shi, together with Cheng Lanru and Liang Weijin, became known as the 'Four Go Masters of the Qing Dynasty'.

Wu Songsheng 9 dan once remarked that Fan and Shi were on par with modern professionals, in terms of their reading and fighting skills, and contemporary Go historians regard them as being among the greatest players alive anywhere at the time.

Since Lee won the first encounter of the present match, it became important for Gu to redress the balance by winning this game.

Before the Jubango began, many people expected that Gu Li would have something of an advantage, because most of the games were to be played in China. However, it was already becoming apparent that the travel, different food, and unfamiliar environment didn't faze Lee Sedol.

A Wide Opening Serves Black

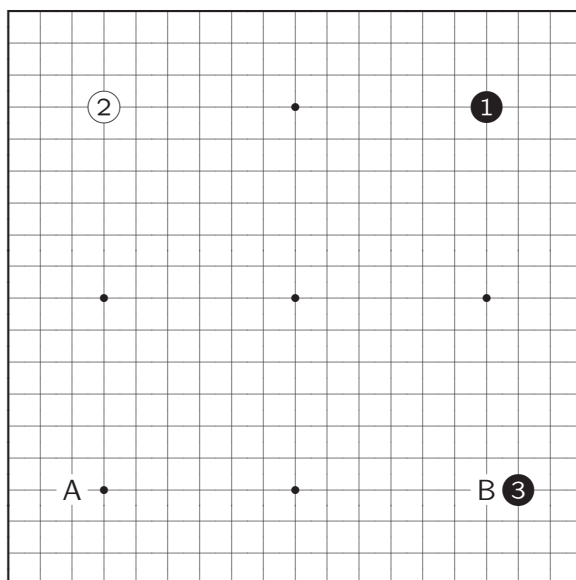


Diagram 2
(Moves: 1-3)

Black played his first two moves in adjacent corners once again, with ❶ and ❸.

Diagonal openings are relatively uncommon these days, because if Black plays ❸ at A, White will take the last open corner with B and the scale of the game will reduce (i.e. the game will become narrower).

People often say that a diagonal opening leads to a fighting oriented game. This is true to some extent, but another way of thinking about it is that a diagonal opening leads to a game with smaller battles, smaller groups and smaller territories. This diminishes the advantage Black gains from moving first.

In contrast, when Black plays in adjacent corners, it's much easier for him to develop a large framework spanning about half the board. This allows Black to maximize the advantage of the first move and keep the pressure on White.

In Edo period Japan, well before komi Go became common for professionals, diagonal openings were so prevalent that the most common variant became known simply as the 'Regulation Fuseki'. These openings made sense at the time because Black, who gave no komi and started off ahead, wanted to make the game narrower (reduce the possibilities) and preserve his advantage. Meanwhile, White wanted to make the game wider in order to create opportunities for catching up.

Perhaps because of this early influence, the popularity of diagonal openings continued for many years, but when komi was introduced to modern tournament Go (initially at 4.5 points in Japan) Black had to employ a wider opening strategy to accommodate it. Over the following decades, the size of komi increased, and we saw Black progressively favor wider, faster formations based on adjacent corners—such as the Three Star Opening (Sanrensei), Kobayashi Opening and Chinese style openings.

The upshot of all this is that White needn't worry about a diagonal opening after playing ❷. In fact, he may welcome it. For Black's part, the message is that it's generally a good strategy to create large frameworks and make the game as wide as possible. In doing so, you can entice your opponent into your sphere of influence and seize the initiative by attacking!

The Immediate Approach

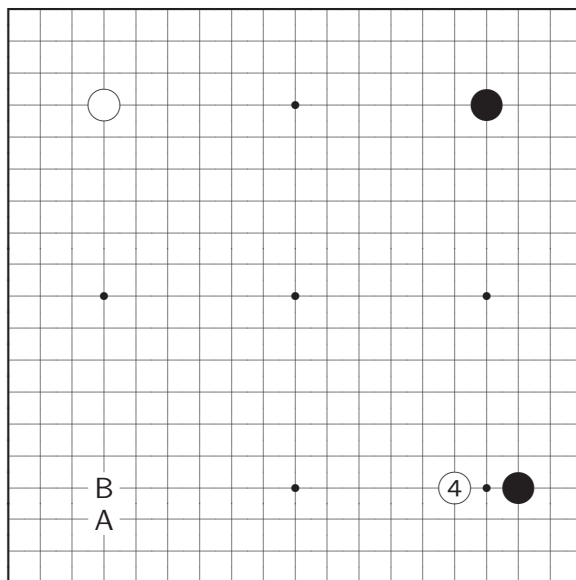
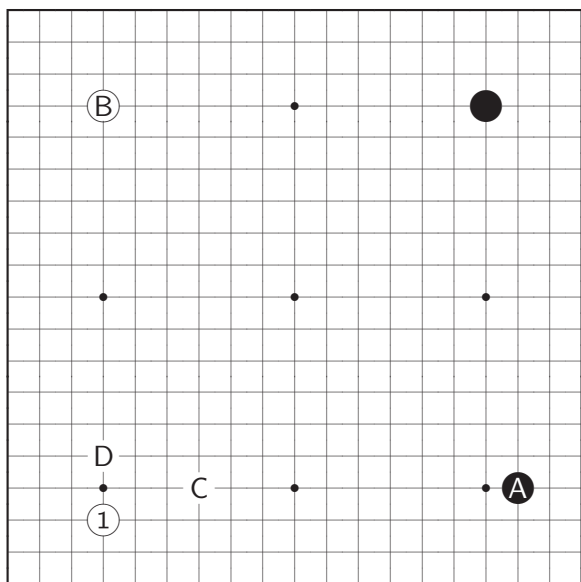


Diagram 3
(Move: 4)

The immediate approach at ④ was an unusual move which, in recent times, has been relatively rare in top professionals' games.

It's much more common for White to occupy the last empty corner, at A or B. However, ④ is by no means new, nor is it bad. Lee deliberately chose ④ because it would likely be unexpected by Gu.

Since Gu likes to play Chinese style openings, Lee chose to follow another path. Studying your opponent's games, frustrating their preferred openings and style, and rendering any specific openings they might have prepared irrelevant is all part of the psychological metagame in important matches.



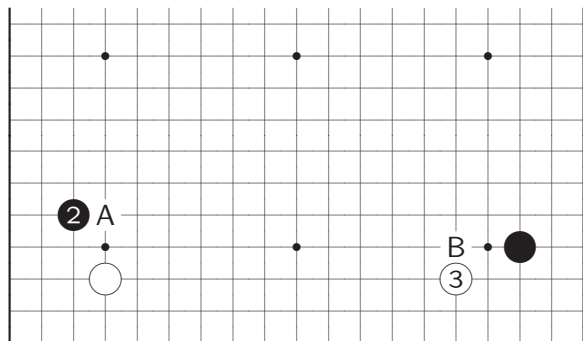
Variation 1 for ④

White ① is the most common move in this opening, though other moves are also possible, of course.

White likes to play at ① because of its relationship with A and B. If Black approaches from the right side around C, White will enclose the corner with D and (locally) the exchange is better for White.

Because of that, it's usually better to approach around D instead, which means White can dictate the direction of play to some extent.

You can think of this as a kind of anti-Chinese style opening for White.

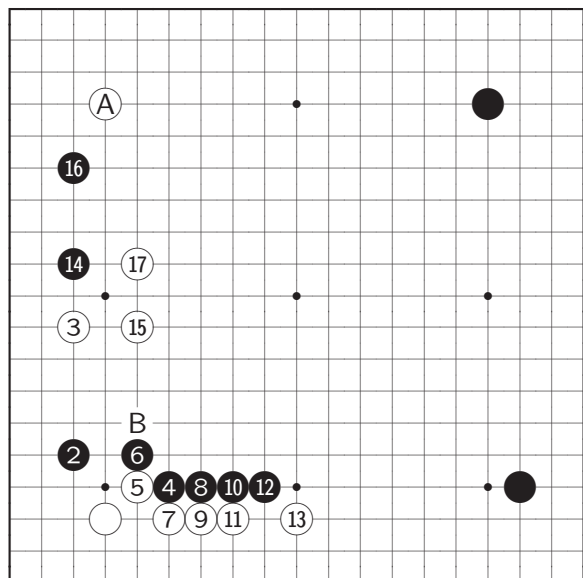


Variation 2 for ④

If Black approaches around ② next, ③ is a calm response. These approaches could also be at A and B instead.

The two 3-4 point corners can be regarded as miai in this opening, and since the players are sharing both corners, this opening is well balanced.

If you don't want Black to develop a large framework, this opening might suit you as White. Black ② at ③ is another option, which we'll study in Chapter 6.



Variation 3 for ④

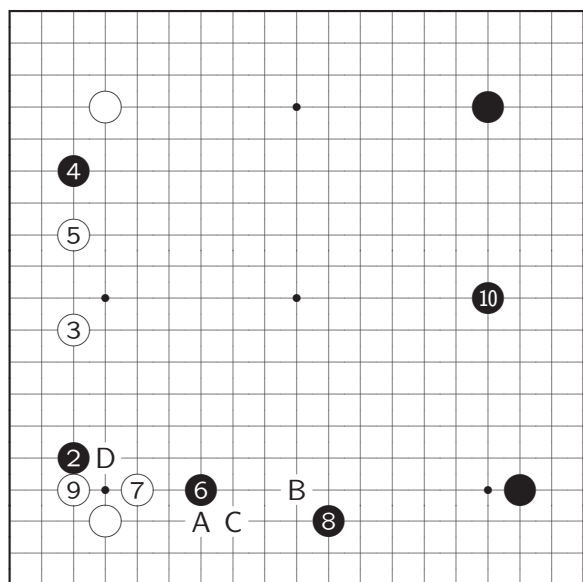
Since White has the support of ①, he might prefer to pincer with ③, as we discussed in Chapter 1.

Proposing a taisha joseki with ④ used to be the most popular continuation for Black, but it has recently fallen out of favor.

White usually continues with ⑤ to ⑪—gaining liberties before jumping out at ⑬—and Black's plan is to develop power before pincering at ⑭.

White ⑮ and Black ⑯ are both natural and ⑰ is a key point for attack and defense.

White's center group is stronger than it looks because White has a tesuji at B later. This has contributed to the declining interest in playing ④ in this opening.



Variation 4 for ④

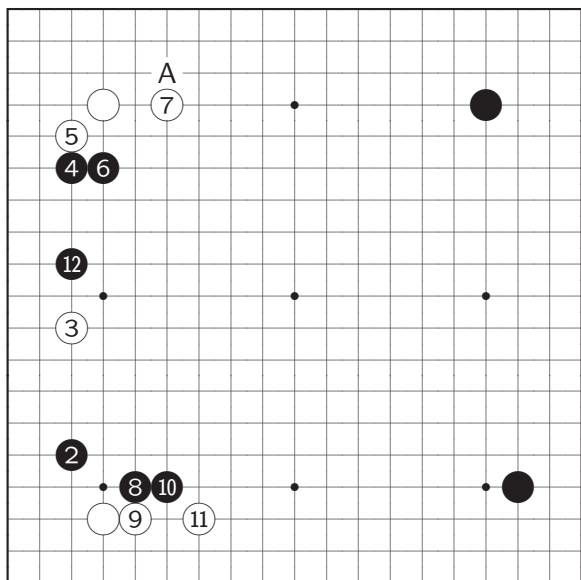
Probing at ④ is a more interesting and active strategy. Black will decide how to manage his stone at ② based on how White deals with ④.

If White pincers with ⑤, Black can consider giving up ② to play ⑥ and ⑧ in sente.

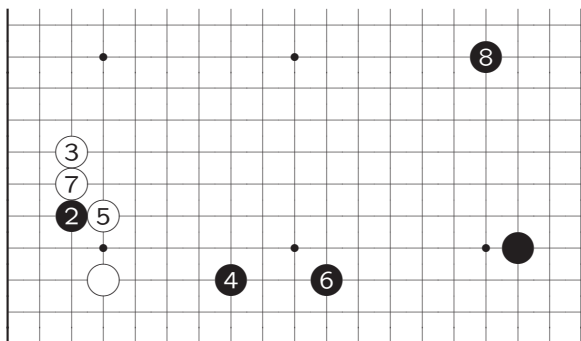
This is because White forms a stable two space extension with ③ and ⑤, which means there's little future potential for attacking ③ after moving ② out.

White consolidates the corner up to ⑨, but his stones are all on the left side so far. Meanwhile, Black is developing rapidly with ⑥, ⑧ and ⑩.

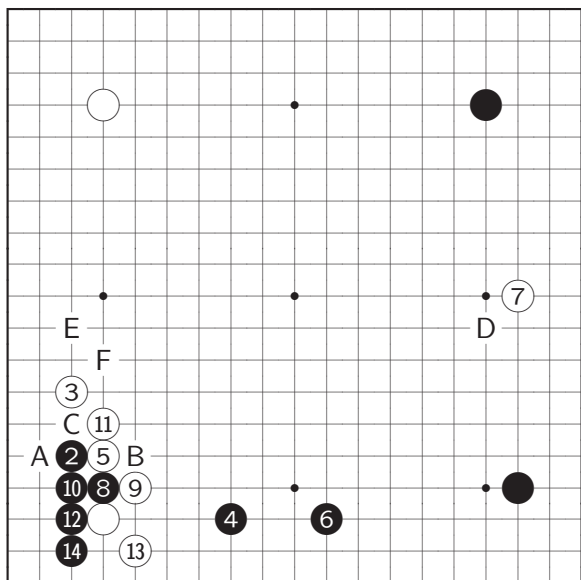
Black ⑥ can also be at A and ⑧ can be B, but ⑥ at C is worse for Black after ⑨, ⑧ and White D. After ⑥, if White plays at ⑨, Black resists with D.



Variation 5 for ④



Variation 6 for ④



Variation 7 for ④

If White answers ④ with ⑤ and ⑦, Black won't sacrifice ② as he did in the previous variation.

Rather, Black plans to press with ⑧ and ⑩, before pinching with ⑫.

White ⑤ or ⑦ could also be at A, but this doesn't materially affect Black's strategy.

Both this variation and the previous one are acceptable for both players, but there's a feeling that things are going according to Black's plan here, so many players would prefer to resist this development.

If White pinches tightly at ③, Black can still trade with the counter-pincer at ④ and the extension to ⑥. White should reinforce the corner with ⑦, and Black will have sente to take a big point like ⑧.

The exchange of ② for ⑦ is good for White, but overall it's as if the move order were ⑥, ⑤, ④, ③, ②, ⑦, ⑧. White is very thick, but a little slow.

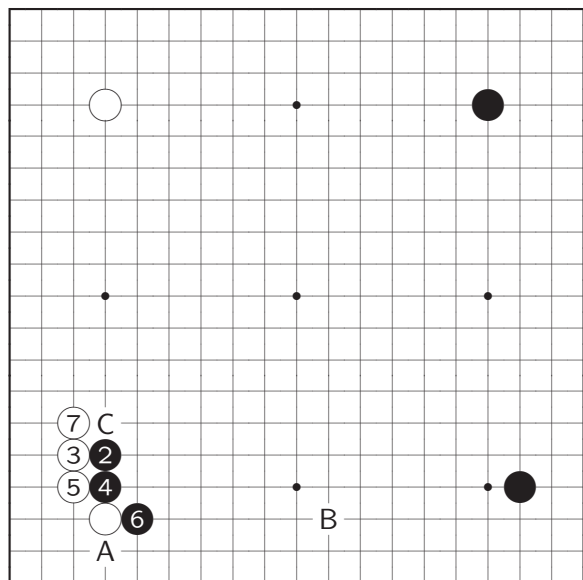
If White tenukis to take a big point, like ⑦, Black can mobilize his stones and live in the corner immediately, with ⑧ to ⑭.

When the dust settles, White is left with a bedraggled looking wall facing Black's stable two space extension at the bottom. Since the ladder favors Black, the cutting point at B is also a matter of concern.

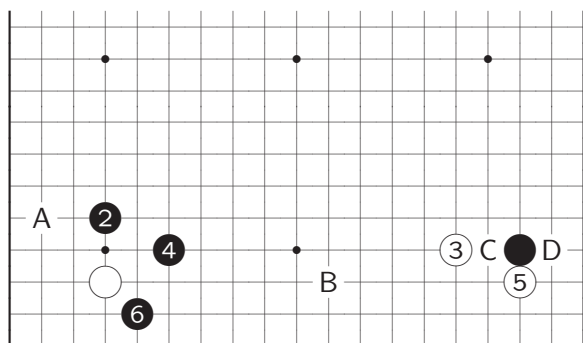
Instead of ⑨, if White ataris at ⑩, we can expect Black at ⑨, White at ⑫, Black at ⑪, White A, Black B, White C and Black around D.

Black will be pleased with either outcome.

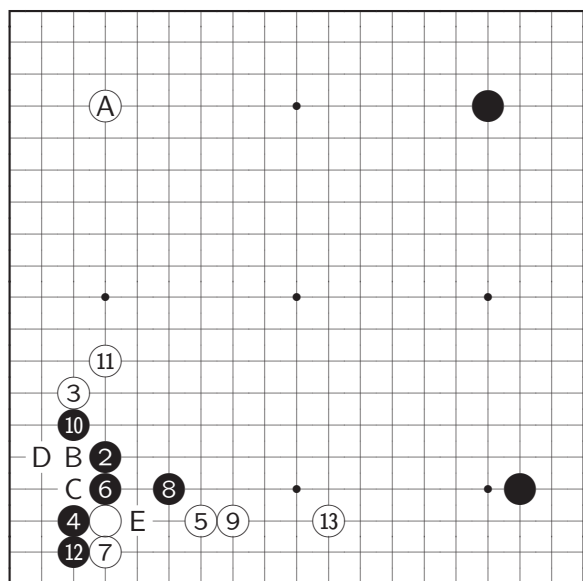
Looser pincers, like E or F, result in more profit for White when Black trades with ④ and ⑥, which is partly why ③ is rarely played in contemporary Go.



Variation 8 for ④



Variation 9 for ④



Variation 10 for ④

The high approach at ② is another good move in this opening, and can be easier to manage than the one space low approach at ③.

Taking territory with ③ is natural and playing the first few moves of the avalanche joseki with ④ to ⑦ is a common continuation for both players.

Continuing lightly with A (aiming to set up a Chinese style formation with B next) leads to a flexible and rapid opening for Black.

Black can also follow the large avalanche joseki with C, which will likely result in a large scale pattern which dominates the lower left quadrant of the board.

For Black, playing ④ at ⑦ would also be natural, and the decision comes down to a matter of taste.

Once again, if you don't like the idea of Black developing a large framework, it's perfectly fine to approach the lower right corner instead.

This has the effect of (potentially) breaking the board up into smaller territories, which can be an effective game plan for White when there is komi.

White ③ to ⑥ leads to a trade and White can continue with any of A to D next. It's another game.

Pincering at ③ (or ⑪) is another possibility, which makes efficient use of A. White ③ aims to connect under by attaching at B, but ④ frustrates that plan.

White ⑤ is interesting, and White develops rapidly up to ⑬. White ⑤ was first played by Sonoda Yuichi 9 dan in 2005. It has become very popular since then.

Responding to ⑤ with Black at ⑦ seems natural, but White's counter-hane at C is surprisingly hard to deal with afterwards. Likewise, ⑫ allows White to hit the vital point at D, so ⑥ is a sturdy choice.

Descending to ⑦ is more efficient than extending at E, and there are many paths for Black to consider next. For example, ⑧, D and ⑩ are all possible.

Playing ⑤ at ⑫ is also good, but ⑤ at C doesn't suit the opening and leads to an obsolete joseki.

Unclaimed Corners Are Big

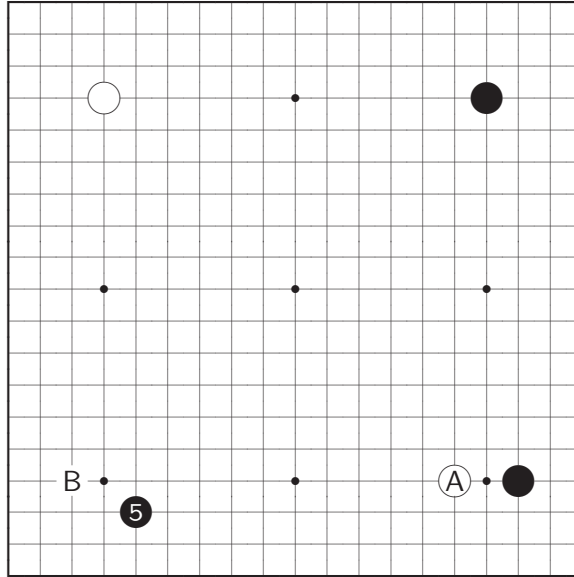
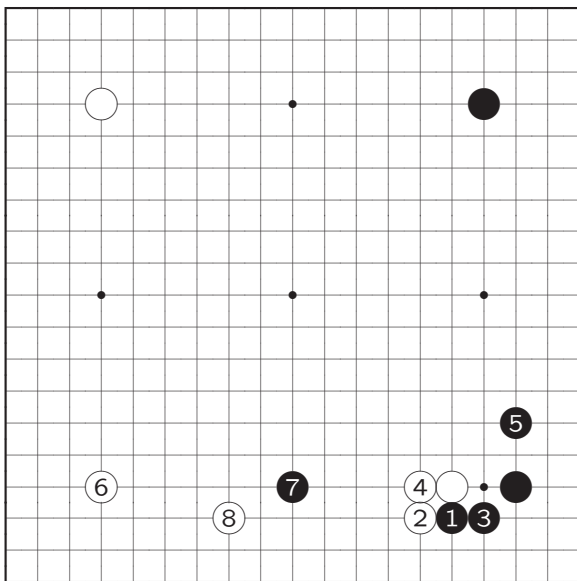


Diagram 4
(Move: 5)

Since White approached at (A) instead of claiming the lower left corner, Black claimed it for himself with 5. Unclaimed corners are often the biggest points on the board in the opening.

The placement of 5 on the 5-3 point, facing (A), is significant. Black aims to pincer (A) soon, especially if White plays at B next, and 5 is well placed to support such tactics.



Variation 11 for 5

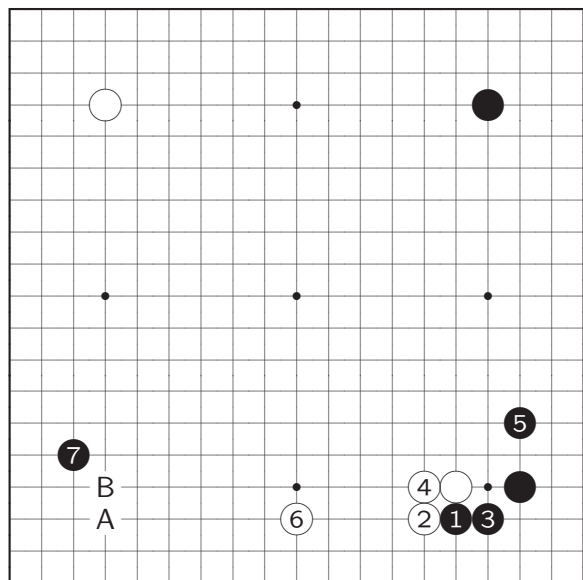
Attaching underneath, to secure the corner territory, is also possible.

The hane at 2 is natural and connecting solidly at 4 is usually good in this kind of situation. Even though White hasn't made a base for his lower right group yet, taking the corner with 6 is very big.

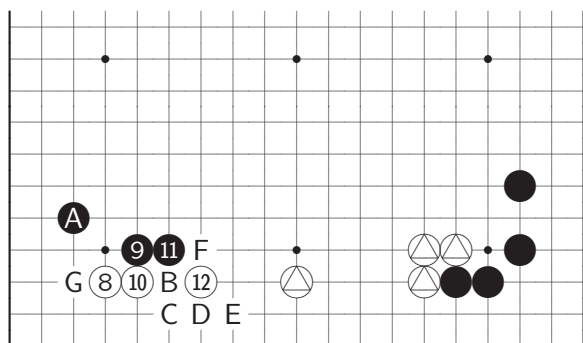
If Black pincers White's lower right group with 7 next, White can counter-pincer at 8.

Since both players now have one unsettled group, a running battle in the center can be expected. In this battle, neither player is at any particular disadvantage. Remember, *running is more fun with a friend*.

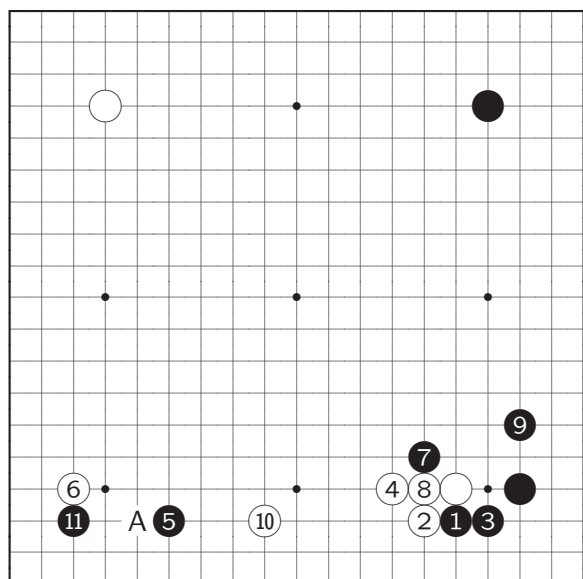
This would be another game.



Variation 12 for ⑤



Variation 13 for ⑤



Variation 14 for ⑤

White ⑥ follows the basic Go proverb, “Extend three spaces from a two stone wall.”

This makes a base for White at the bottom (completing a joseki), but Black will be able to take the last open corner with ⑦.

Black has played first in three corners, so it’s hard to deny that White’s opening is slow.

Black ⑦ could also be at A or B if Black prefers. When Black plays at ⑦, he’s saying that the left side is more important to him than the bottom.

If White enters the corner with ⑧, Black’s plan is to press White down with ⑨ and make White’s position at the bottom flat and over-concentrated. Black can also exchange B to E later, and then atari at F or attach at G.

If White doesn’t like this result, he won’t prevent Black from enclosing the corner with ⑧. That would make A an efficient tactic for effectively claiming the corner in one move.

The hanging connection at ④ is also possible. It’s slightly thinner than the solid connection, but it also reaches further towards the lower left corner.

This variation was played in the second game of the 16th China Korea Tengen title match, by Choi Cheolhan 9 dan and Chen Yaoye 9 dan. Choi played ④ in that game and the progression through to ⑪ followed.

Black ⑤ was a strategic and flexible move (A is also possible). After ⑥, making the two space extension at ⑩ or attaching at ⑪ was miai for Black.

This opening is acceptable for both players.

Don't Change Horses Midstream

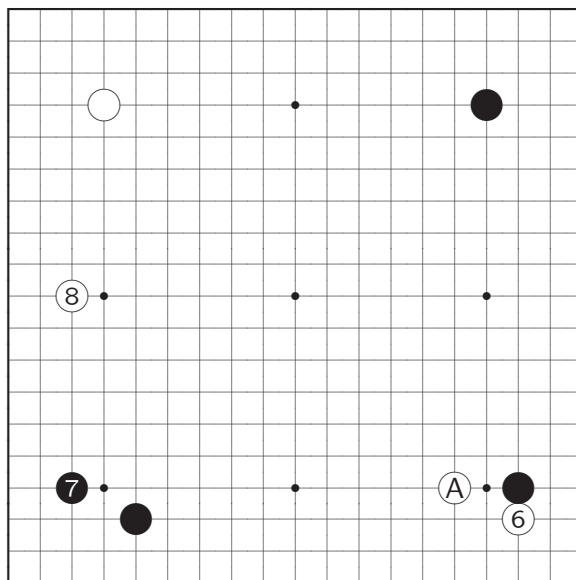
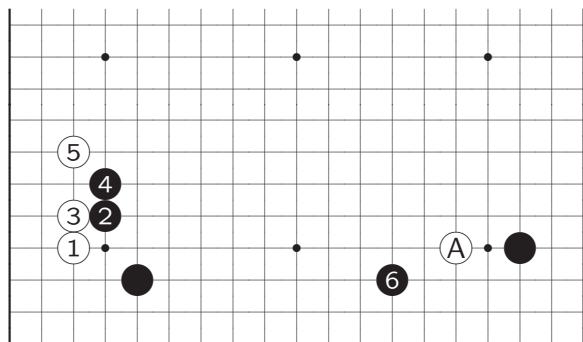


Diagram 5
(Moves: 6-8)

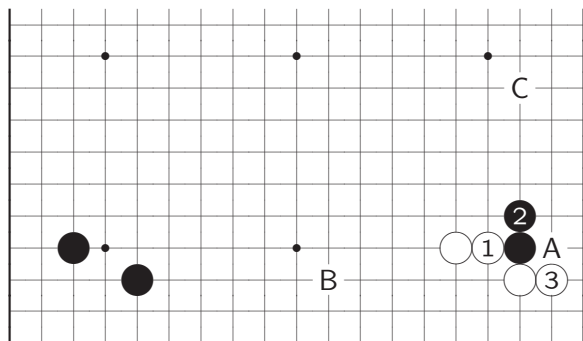
Since Black didn't respond (locally) to (A), taking a bite out of the corner with the attachment at (6) was natural. Black completed his corner enclosure at (7) and White took a big point with (8), but the latter was a questionable move. Rather than playing on the left, White should have continued what he had started in the bottom right. After (8), the opening became slightly better for Black.



Variation 15 for (6)

If White enters the lower left corner with (1), Black will exchange territory for power with (2) to (5). These exchanges provide support for Black's pincer attack at (6).

Black shouldn't be too worried about giving White cash in the lower left corner, because (A) is inside Black's sphere of influence, so Black can expect a return on his investment in this part of the board.



Variation 16 for (8)

Continuing in the bottom right corner would be better for White.

When Black tenukis, as in the bottom right, White can continue at either (1) or A.

After (3), White can regard B and C as miai, and the opening is even.

Strategy Always Trumps Tactics

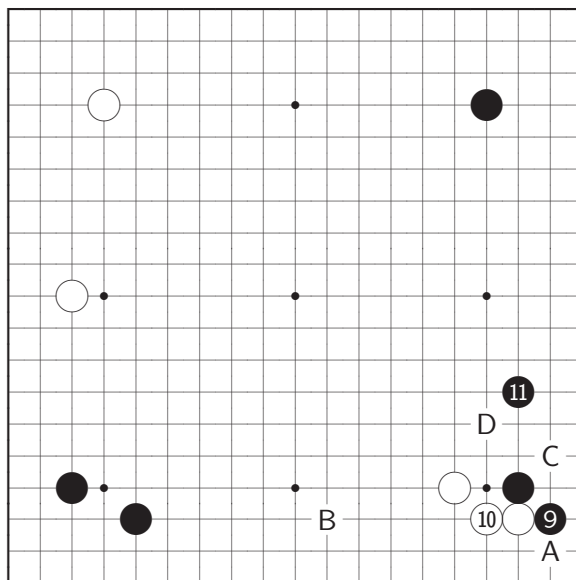
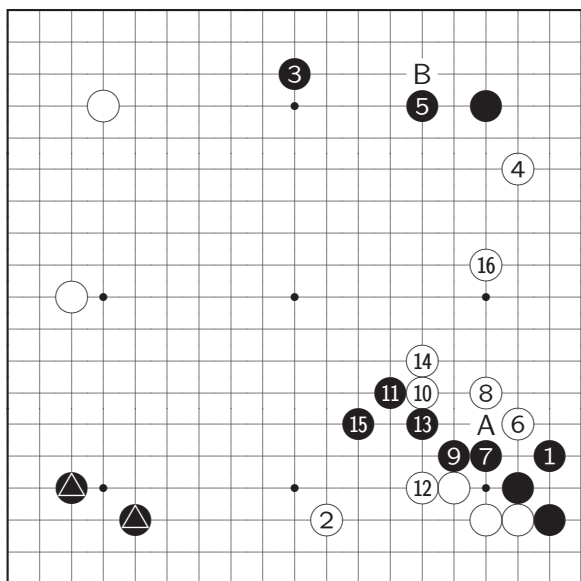


Diagram 6
(Moves: 9-11)

Gu returned to the lower right corner with ⑨ to ⑪, and the opening was already favored Black slightly. Black ⑪ is a relatively modern move, which leaves both lower right groups in a stable situation for the time being.

From White's perspective, his three stones are safe because A and B are miai. From Black's perspective, playing ⑪ at C provokes White B, and Black will still take gote if he completes his shape at D.

This flexible, fast paced move illustrates the principle that your whole board strategy must always precede local tactics. Tactics that do not serve a broader strategy are hollow, and potentially ruinous.



Variation 17 for ⑪

If Black plays at ①, White will be happy to extend to ② as part of the natural flow of play.

White ② limits the potential of Black's corner enclosure in the bottom left (marked), so Black doesn't want to give White the impetus to play there if he can avoid doing so.

Black would like to take the big point at ③ next, but then White can develop the right side while attacking with ④ to ⑧.

Up to ⑫, the result is slightly better for White.

Black could also make shape with A, instead of ③, but then White would use sente to approach at B. Both outcomes are satisfactory for White.

Pincer When It Strengthens Existing Stones

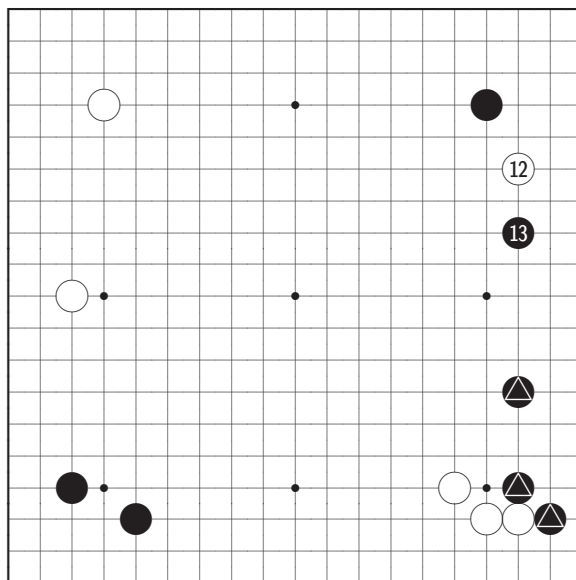


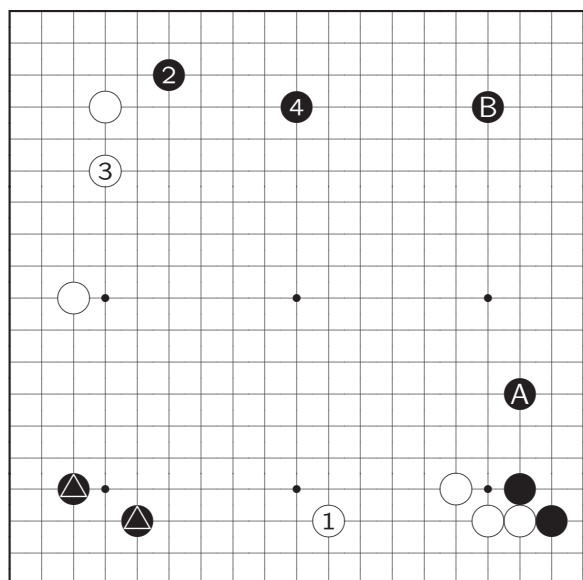
Diagram 7
(Moves: 12-13)

Lee took sente and approached at ⑫.

Black ⑬ assisted Black's three stones in the bottom right corner, while simultaneously pincering ⑫.

Since the right side wasn't particularly interesting anymore, Black's plan was to take sente from the negotiations in the top right and play a big move in one of the more open areas on the board.

The fewer stones there are in a particular section of the board the more untapped potential it has.

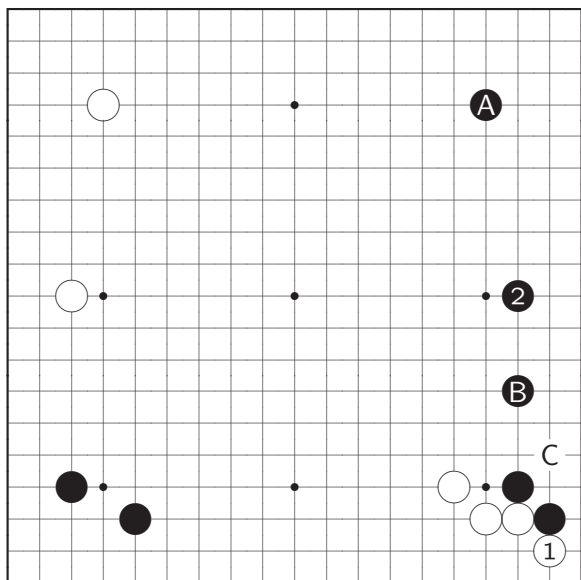


Variation 18 for ⑫

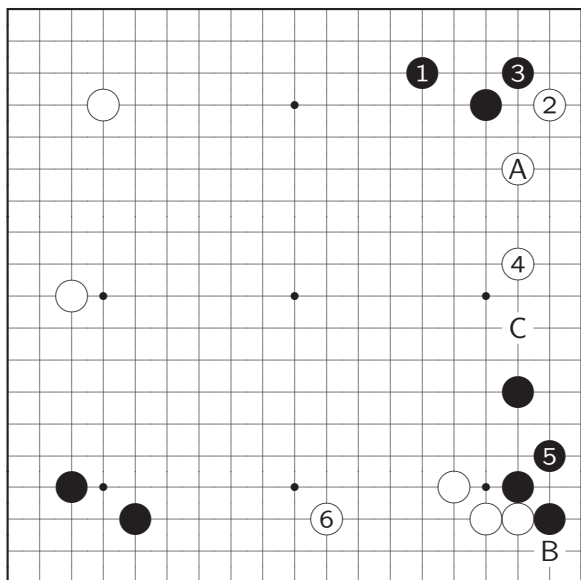
Rushing to the bottom with ① is gone now, so White should consider other ideas after Black plays at A.

Black's lower left corner is already solid, with its doors closed on both sides. That means that, even though ① is a big point, this variation lacks punch.

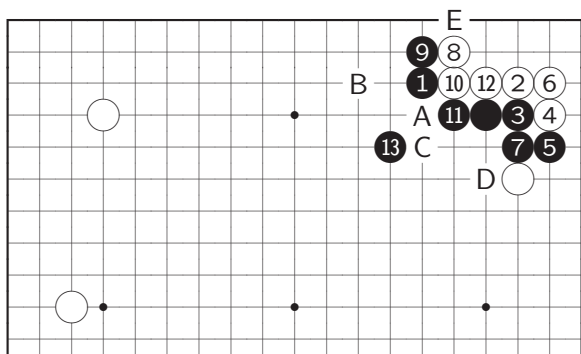
Black can develop a framework at the top with ②, ④ and B, and the opening still looks slightly better for Black.



Variation 19 for ⑫



Variation 20 for ⑬



Variation 21 for ⑬

Continuing to exchange moves in the bottom right is unnecessary right now. If White continues with ①, Black will develop rapidly with ②.

Because ② is fast, and also develops a framework with Black's top right star point at A, the exchange of ① for ② is generally regarded as better for Black.

This is a typical example of one difference between modern and classical opening theory. It used to be common for Black to make shape with B at C. That move is stronger with regards to the corner territory, but slower with regards to the overall game. Black B and ② represent a larger scale view of the opening.

After ① and ②, White has a nice tesuji at C, but it's too slow to play there now, because White's lower right group is already strong. If White plays at C next, Black will tenuki and take another big point.

Defending the corner with the knight's move at ① is the most basic response to White's approach at A.

Black ① is usually a very sound move, because it ensures a base for Black while dissuading White from invading the corner at ③. It also quietly stores power, preparing to attack A if White tenukis. This is why White often settles his group with ② to ④.

However, the result up to ⑥ would be quite satisfactory for White, because ④ invalidates the previous variation and Black is compelled to reinforce with ⑤.

If Black omits ⑤, White plays at B and aims to attack with either C or White at ⑤ next.

As we've discussed, Black would prefer not to exchange ⑤ for ⑥ yet, because he might want to play in the vicinity of ⑥ himself.

Usually, White shouldn't invade at ②, because the knight's move at ① helps Black to tightly enclose him, while developing power on both sides up to ⑬.

Using ⑫ to cut at A takes out loan against the corner, which isn't yet alive. Black B to D may follow, but White will eventually have to repay his debt with ⑫, to stop Black from foreclosing on his corner at E.

Black will take territory on both sides, while White manages his cutting stones (and tenukis to play ⑫). If White's cut is a problem, Black can play ⑨ at ⑩.

When in Danger, Sacrifice

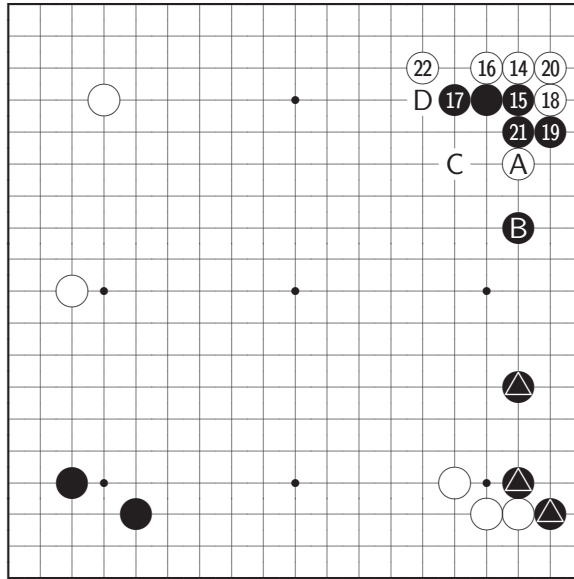


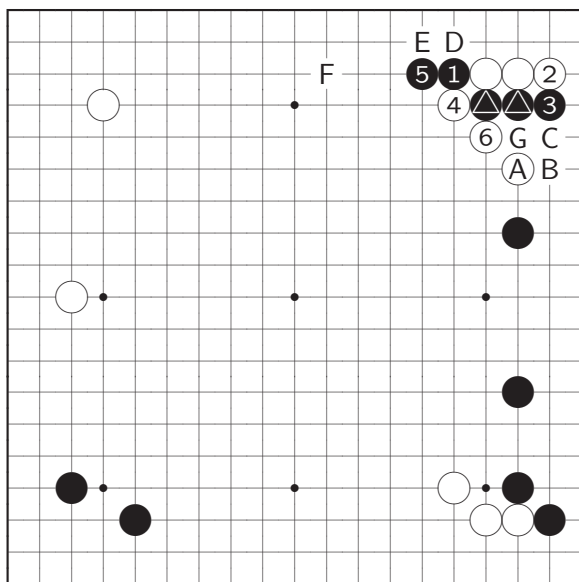
Diagram 8
(Moves: 14-22)

Lee chose the simplest and most common continuation with ⑭. When White plays at 3-3 in response to a pincer (Ⓑ), he's offering to trade Ⓐ for the corner territory.

This tactic works because the presence of Ⓐ curtails Black's ability to play aggressively against ⑭, as you can see in the variation below. This gives White adequate compensation in the corner.

Instead of sacrificing Ⓐ, doggedly running away with C would only provoke Black's jump to D. Because Black's marked group supports Ⓑ, it's likely that Black would take territory on both sides.

The moves up to ②② completed a fundamental star point joseki, and Black took sente as planned.



Variation 22 for ⑰

When White has a stone at Ⓐ, ① is usually an overplay. White's simplest response is to descend to ②, which makes miai of ③ and ④.

White ④ likewise makes miai of ⑤ and ⑥. After ⑥, Black B will be met by C, and Black can't save his marked cutting stones.

Instead of ⑤, if Black rescues his marked stones somehow, ⑥ at ⑤, Black D, White E captures Black's cutting stones at the top.

Rather than courting disaster with ③, Black should connect at ④ and exchange White at ③ for Black F. Instead of ②, White at ③ (followed by Black C, ②, Black G and White at ⑤) would be more refined, but ② is simpler and is still good for White.

Settle the Shape Once the Path Is Clear

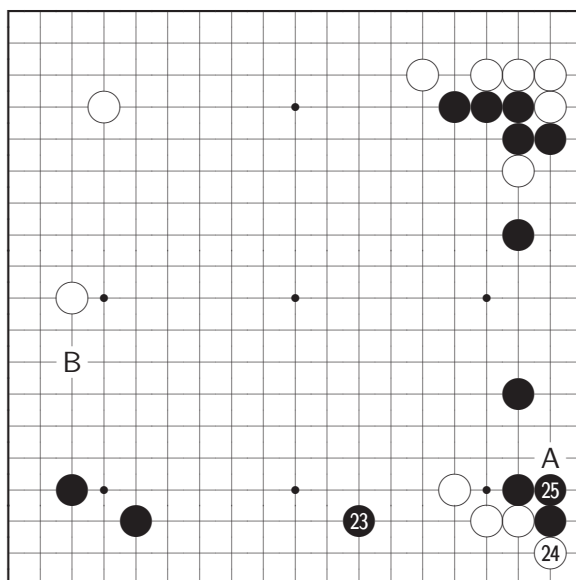
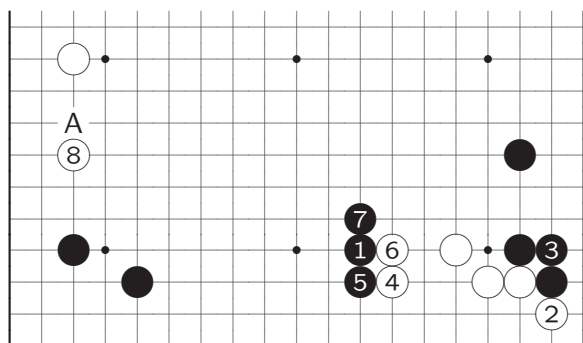


Diagram 9
(Moves: 23-25)

Once the negotiations in the top right drew to a close, the direction of play in the bottom right became quite clear: playing at the bottom was more valuable than tightening Black's grip on the corner at A. Black's pincer at 23 was an unusual, but excellent, move for developing the bottom. After applying pressure to White's bottom right group and settling the shape, Black aimed to expand further with B. Even though we said Black could ignore 24 in Variation 19, 25 became an important move after Black pincered at 23. By keeping White's group unstable, 25 worked in concert with 23 and made it stronger. There is often a relationship like this between the eyespace in the corner and a seemingly distant pincer, which makes moves like 25 larger and more strategically relevant than appearances would indicate.

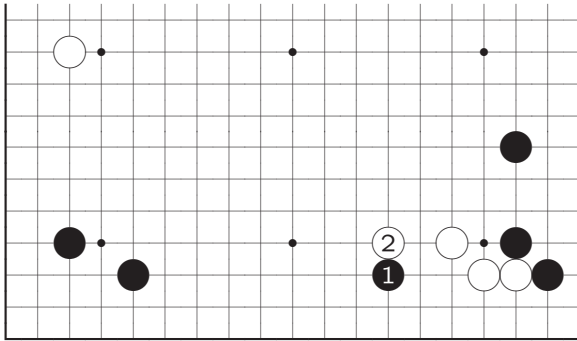


Variation 23 for 23

Pincering on the fourth line with 1 is more common in this kind of position.

However, White will respond with 2 through to 6 and Black will feel compelled to extend at 7. That's because allowing White to "Hane at the head of two stones," (White at 7) is very painful for Black.

As a result, White will have time to extend to 8, which prevents Black from enlarging the bottom left with A. White will be happy with this result.

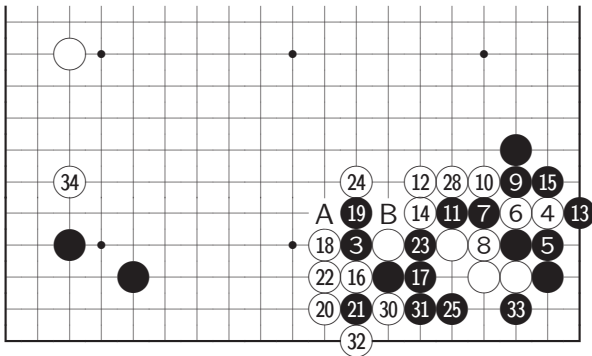


Variation 24 for 23

If Black pincers more tightly at 1, it will become easier for White to counter-attack and manage his group flexibly.

Attaching with 2 seems like a good way for White to continue in this opening (although, there are so many possible continuations that a whole book could be written about it).

Let's just look at one possible continuation, so you can get a feeling for the nature of the position...



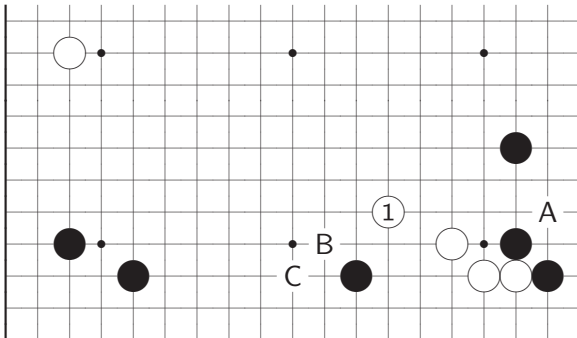
Variation 25 for 23

26 29 at 6, 27 at 4

This particular variation is one that Lee has played in several other games, and it works well with the rest of the board in this opening.

White develops influence and takes sente, while Black takes territory in exchange. A and B are miai, so White can take a big point with 34.

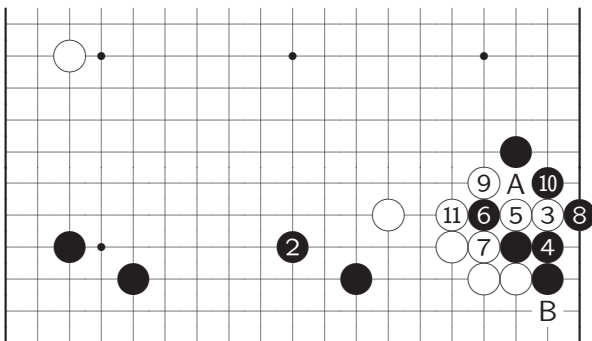
Black would feel that his advantage had been lost.



Variation 26 for 24

White could also think about the knight's move at 1, which makes miai of A and B. This technique requires the potential ladder to favor White.

If Black defends his corner with A, White will press at B and Black C is likely. It's another game, but White's group is still floating in the center and it seems like Lee didn't like that prospect.



Variation 27 for 24

If Black defends the bottom with 2, White will harass Black in the corner.

Because the ladder favors White, he can capture 6 while Black connects along the edge. White's group becomes strong and solid and Black's corner territory is greatly reduced.

Instead of 8, Black A would allow White to descend to 8. The descent makes miai of 9 and B, so Black collapses.

Chase Two Rabbits, but Catch One

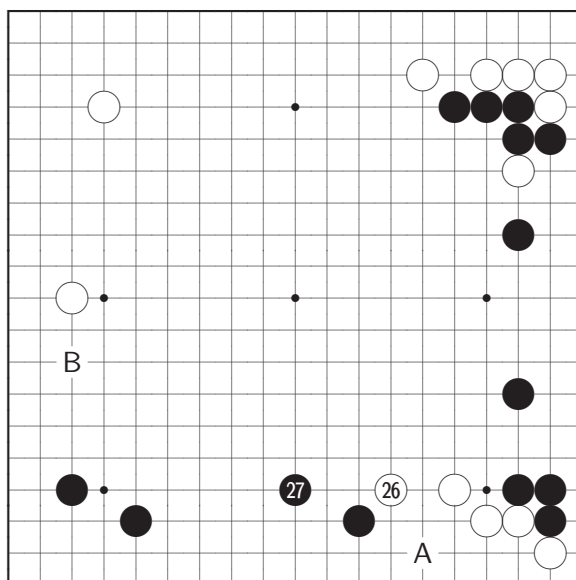
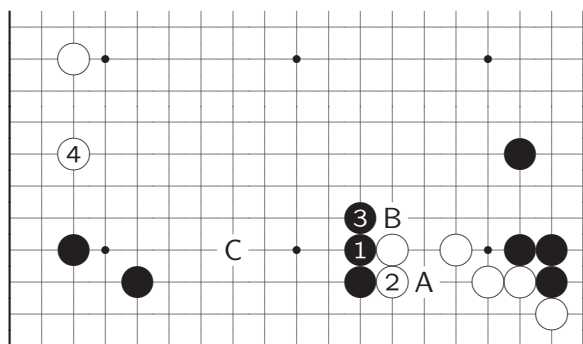


Diagram 10
(Moves: 26-27)

When White sought to settle his group with the solid haengma of ②⑥, the knight's move at ②⑦ surprised onlookers. It was a highly flexible technique which made miai of A and B, and demonstrated Gu Li's extraordinary intuition for the opening. There's a proverb which claims "If you chase two rabbits, you catch none," but in Go we regularly chase two rabbits. Just be sure to catch one.

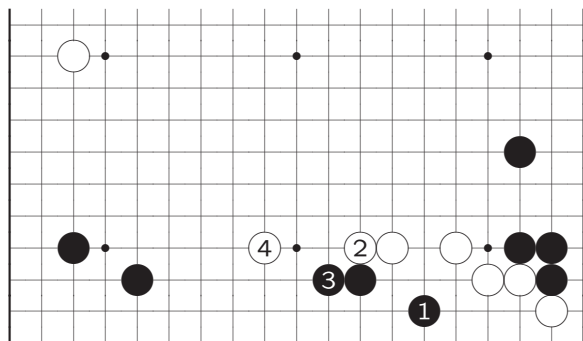


Variation 28 for ②⑦

Pushing up with ① is the most common response to a shoulder hit against a stone on the third line.

However, this is a transposition of Variation 23 (where Black pinched at ①). We already know that this is good for White.

Instead of ①, Black at ②, White A, ①, White B and Black C is possible, but White will still take sente and extend to ④.



Variation 29 for ②⑦

Taking away White's base with ① is also conceivable, but White can fight back with ② and ④, and Black's three stones feel a little heavy and low.

If Gu had felt that this fight would be good for Black, he might have played like this, because it fits well with his style. However, the move Black played in the actual game was superior.

Play at the Intersection of Two Spheres of Influence

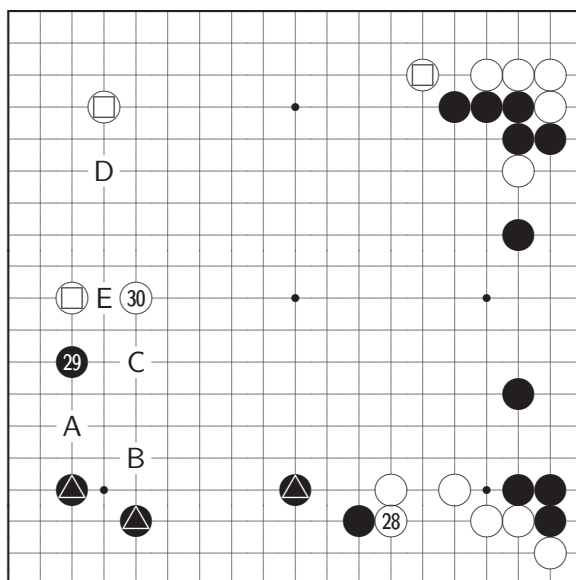
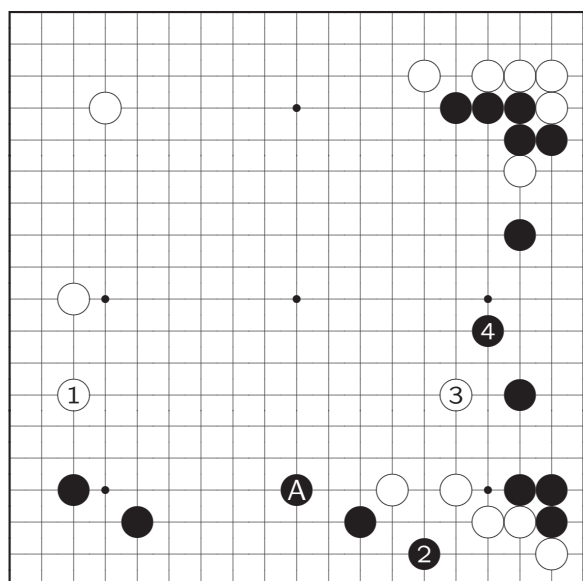


Diagram 11
(Moves: 28-30)

Defending at ②⑧ was necessary and the opening up to ②⑨ was better for Black. It can only be said that Gu Li's sense of play in the opening is superior to Lee Sedol's.

Jumping to ③⑩ reinforced White's moyo in the top left, while restricting Black's potential in the bottom left and creating several possible followups there for White (e.g. A, B or C later). It's often efficient to play at the intersection of two spheres of influence like this (both spheres of influence are marked).

Instead of ③⑩, enclosing the corner with D appears to make an ideal formation in the top left quadrant, but in this case it would allow Black to attach at E, at the intersection of the two spheres of influence.



Variation 30 for ②⑧

If White ignores ①A and takes the big point at ①①, sliding to ②② will set White's lower right group adrift.

Black will be happy to take territory on the right side and at the bottom, while attacking White.

This is an example of the way in which a weak group allows your opponent to profit.

Black can look forward to more profit in the future, because White's lower right group still isn't completely settled.

The Ideal Moment to Probe

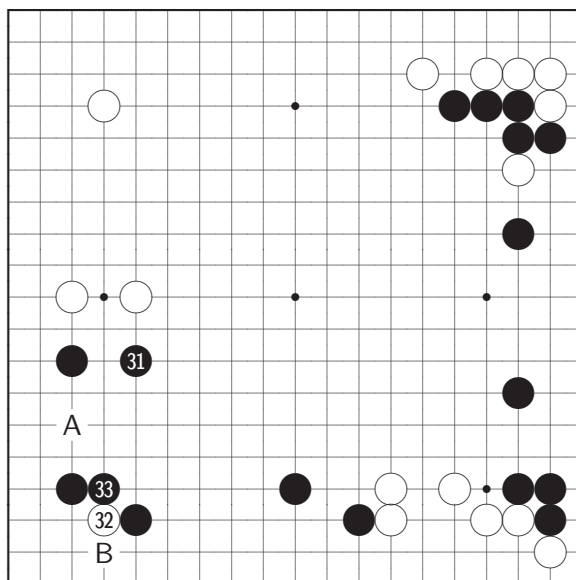


Diagram 12
(Moves: 31-33)

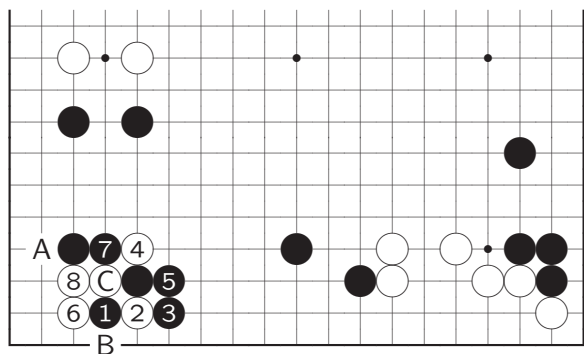
White's attachment at ③② was a probe. After Black reinforced his moyo with ③①, other possible moves, like the invasion at A, became less interesting. Therefore, it was a good time to probe with ③②.

White wasn't worried about making Black's position stronger and erasing possibilities like A, because Black had already reinforced at ③①, making A a dull aim. Moreover, if White probes here later on, Black might resist powerfully with B and capture any group White tries to establish in this area.

Black's response at ③③ was par for the course, and confirmed that White's probe at ③② was well timed.

In summary, this is an opportune moment to probe, because Black's moyo has already been reinforced, but isn't yet strong enough for Black to resist aggressively.

The best way to develop your sense of timing for probes is to replay professional games and experiment with probes in your own games.



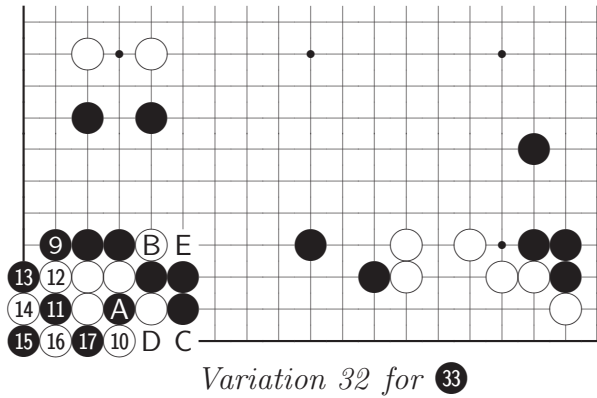
Variation 31 for ③③

If Black wants to resist, he can hane with ①.

White's crosscut at ② is a useful sabaki tesuji which has frequent applications in real games (especially on the second line).

Black can seal White into the corner through to ⑧, but White can live (in ko), because A and B are miai.

Instead of ③, if Black ataris ③ at ⑦ or ⑧, White can tenuki and come back to atari at ⑤ later. The result would end up being very similar to what happened later in the game, so it would be as if ① were at ⑦.

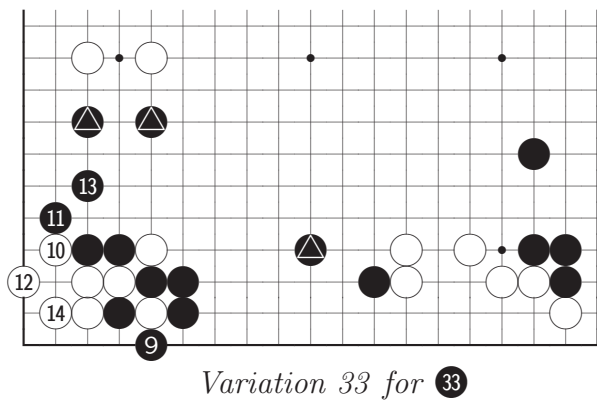


Descending at 9 is often a powerful technique where life and death is concerned, and 10 to 17 leads to ko.

Winning this ko by capturing at A leaves Black with a strong shape, and no bad aji in the corner.

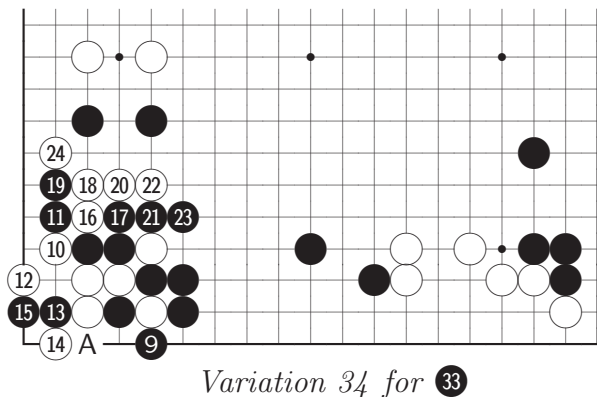
Black can also create a ko with 11 at 14, White at 11 and Black at 16, but this leaves more aji in B.

Before 11, exchanging C for D is sometimes good for the endgame, but in this case Black doesn't want to reduce his own liberties because it would make it easier to move B out with E (if White wins the ko).



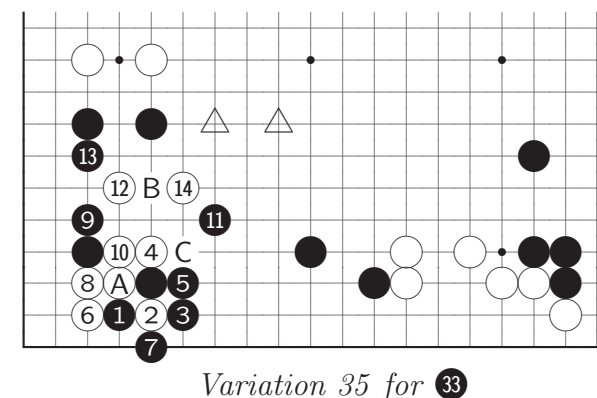
If Black captures at 9, White can make life with 12 to 14.

Black has already invested many stones in the bottom left and now his outside position feels somewhat over-concentrated, so White can be satisfied with living small in the corner.



Black's position isn't thick enough to capture White with 13 and 15.

White can break out with 16 to 24 and even though a potential ko remains at A, this result is good for White.



If Black wants to capture, he can take at 7 and extend stoutly to 9. This is an aggressive strategy.

For now, White can move out with 10 through to 14, and Black is too thin to contain him. If Black plays 11 at B, White will push at C and can still escape.

However, if Black has stones around the triangled points later, capturing White's group will be plausible. This shows why the timing of White's probe at A was very important in the actual game.

Context Is Everything to the Star Point

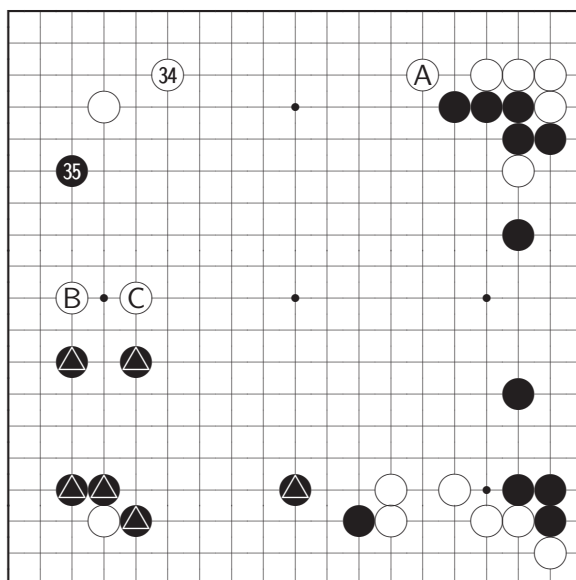


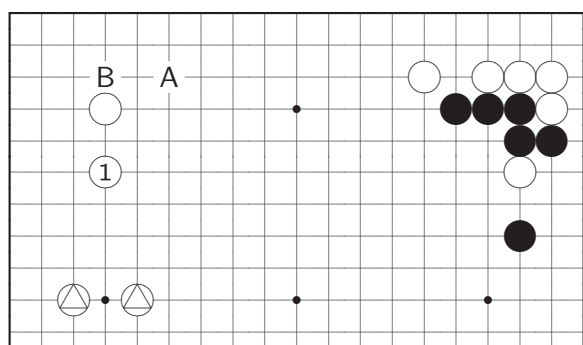
Diagram 13
(Moves: 34-35)

It's always difficult to choose the best way to reinforce a star point corner, because the choice depends largely on the broader circumstances of the overall game.

The knight's enclosure at ③④ was questionable, because the left side was weak and it was hard for White to develop the top. Since ③④ and ①A were both low, White's potential at the top of the board was limited.

Approaching with a move like ③⑤ is generally a poor tactic when there are already opposing stones like ①B and ①C in the area, because it's like playing into a pincer. However, it was conceivable in this situation, partly because Black's marked stones in the bottom left were already quite thick.

Even though ③⑤ is outnumbered locally, Black can aim to use his power in the lower left to gradually turn the tables on White's stones at ①B and ①C. Black just needs to be able to withstand White's initial attack for long enough to bring his power to bear.

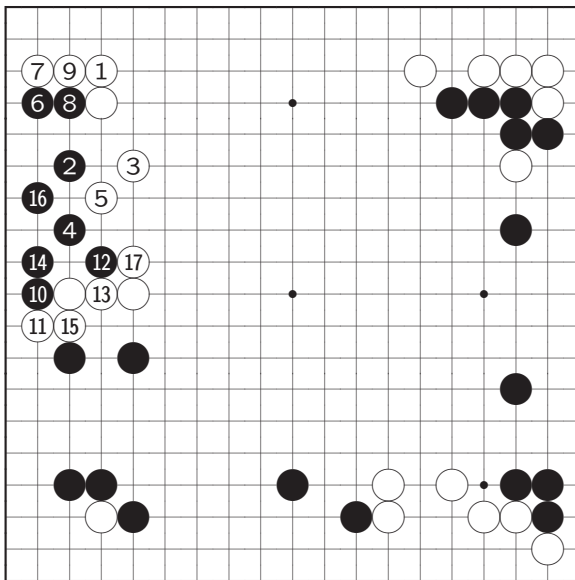


Variation 36 for ③④

The one space enclosure at ① is also possible.

With this move, White establishes an efficient formation with the marked stones and the left side is more secure than when he plays at A or B.

On the other hand, the corner and the top are now more open to Black, so there are pros and cons.

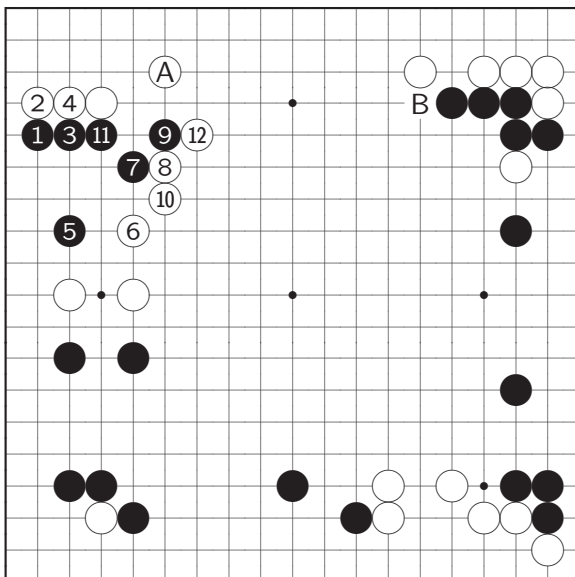


Variation 37 for ③④

White could also consider playing ①, to secure the left side more firmly.

If Black invades at ②, White can cap with ③ and attack Black.

Even though Black can live on the left side in sente up to ①⑥, White's outside becomes very solid and powerful, and the potential of Black's lower left corner is considerably reduced by ①① and ①⑤.

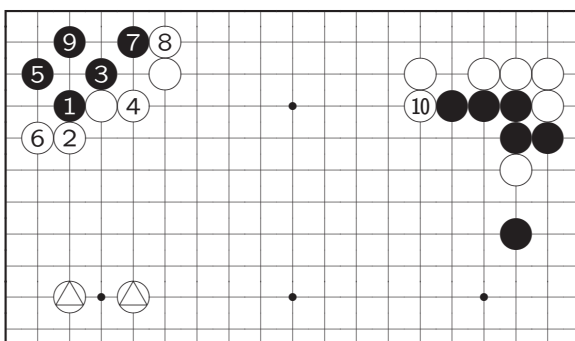


Variation 38 for ③⑤

After the knight's enclosure at A, the submarine approach at ① is a common tactic, but ⑥ and ⑧ are forceful moves which seal Black in.

Black won't have any problems living on the inside, but the result up to ①② is satisfactory for White.

White aims to push up at B soon, to develop the top.



Variation 39 for ③⑤

Attaching at ① is also conceivable, but it's poorly suited to the overall position.

That's because White will develop power on the outside with ② to ⑧, and then push up at ①⑩.

White's potential at the top is very large and his marked stones are well balanced with the top left.

The Opponent's Key Point Is Your Own

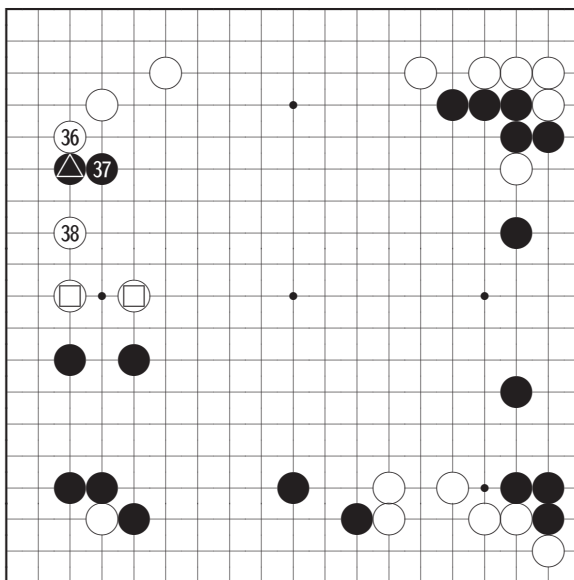
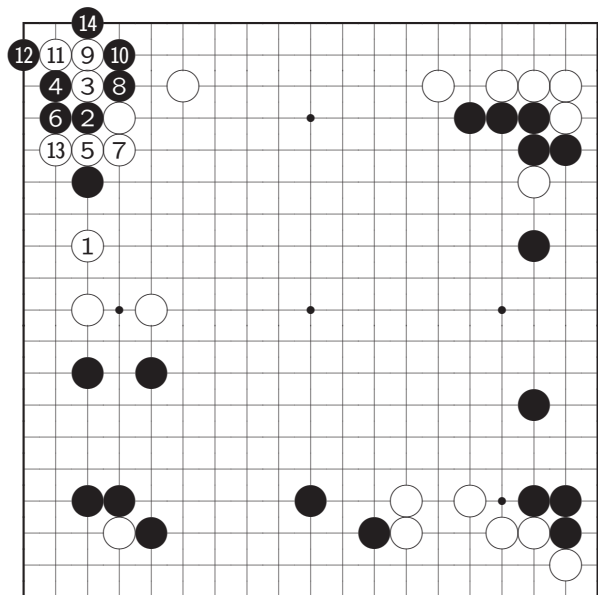


Diagram 14
(Moves: 36-38)

White kicked Black with ③⑥ to make Black heavy and obstruct his access to the corner in sente, before tightening the screws with ③⑧.

‘Double pincering’ with ③⑧ looks small, and may seem redundant in the presence of the squared stones. However, it was an important move in this game, because White’s marked group wasn’t very strong.

White ③⑧ is the key point for the eyespace of both the marked groups. If Black plays there, his group will instantly become much richer in eye potential, while White’s marked stones become thin.

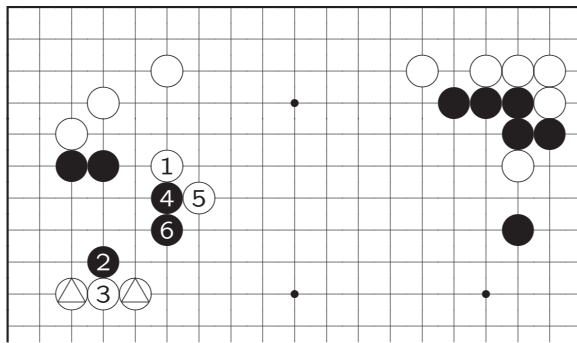


Variation 40 for ③⑥

Playing ① before exchanging the kick at ⑤ lacks severity.

Black ② and the counter-hane at ④ form a practical tesuji combination, helping to settle Black’s stones. Black will be happy to trade and live in the corner up to ⑭.

You can see that ① ends up looking over-concentrated by the end of this variation. If possible, White would prefer to remove ① from the board and place it elsewhere now.

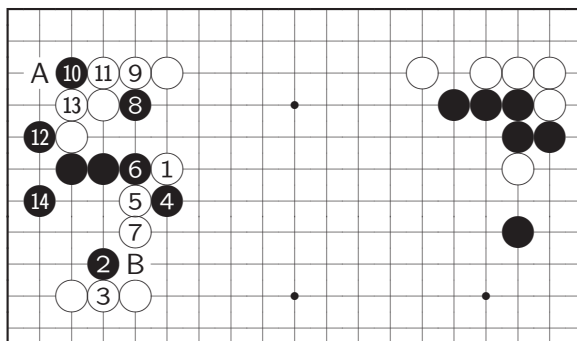


Variation 41 for ③⑧

White can also consider attacking from above at ①.

Sealing a weak group in and forcing it to live locally is usually a good strategy, but in this case Black will resist with ② to ⑥.

White's marked group is heavy, and finds itself in trouble once Black breaks through the containment line. If the surrounding position isn't strong enough to hold a group in, insisting on sealing it in anyway often backfires.

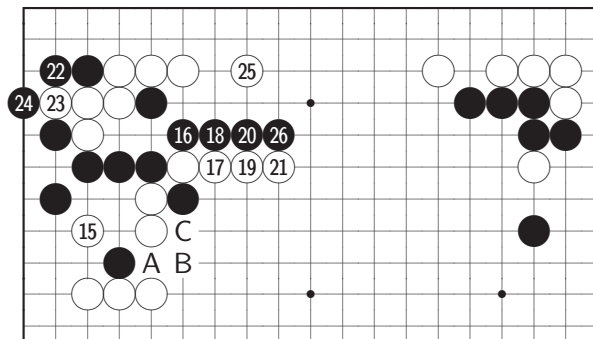


Variation 42 for ③⑧

You may wonder whether White can resist with ⑤ and ⑦. In that case, Black can fight back with ⑧, ⑩ and ⑫.

Black ⑭ is a tesuji that makes miai of A and B, which are both strong moves for Black.

Continuing...

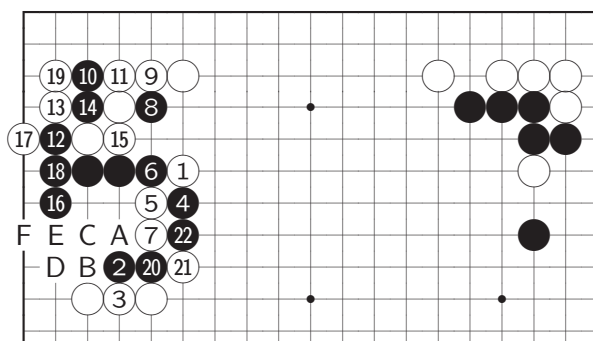


Variation 43 for ③⑧

White should defend at ⑮, because Black's push and cut with A to C will be severe if he plays elsewhere.

Next, Black pokes his head into the center up to ⑳, before taking the eyespace in the corner with ㉒.

Up to ㉔, it's hard to tell who's attacking whom.



Variation 44 for ③⑧

White could also play ⑬, instead of White at ⑭, but it doesn't greatly alter Black's tactics. Black ⑯ is still a clever tesuji, which makes miai of ⑰ and ㉑.

The sequence up to ㉒ is powerful. Even though Black's cutting stones seem to be very short of liberties, you'll find that White can't capture them. That's because trying to capture them in a ladder would put one of White's cutting stones into atari.

The presence of ⑯ ensures that White can't capture ② and ㉑ with A, because it will be met by B to F.

Sometimes You Have to Choose Between Key Points

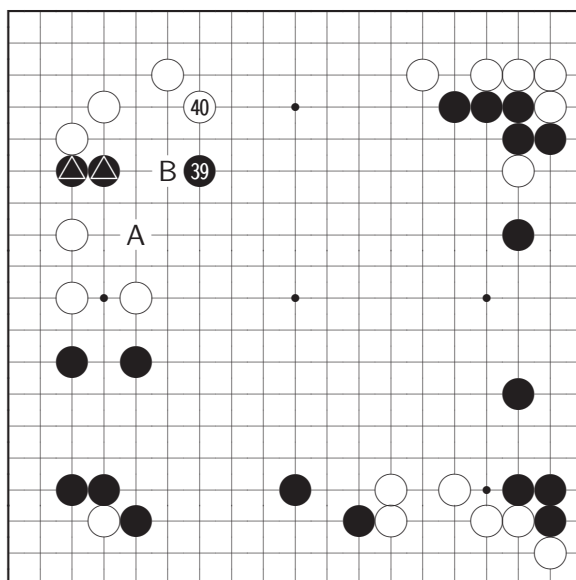
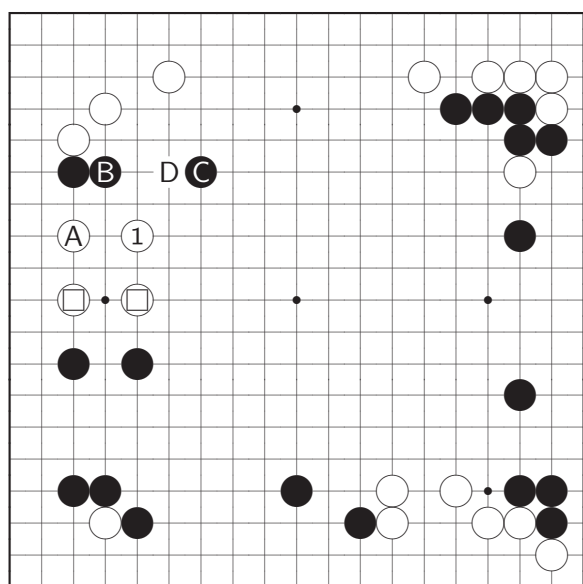


Diagram 15
(Moves: 39-40)

Since Black couldn't settle his group locally, he moved the marked stones into the center with 39. White's vital point on the left side was A, but playing 39 at A invites a counter-strike at B.

White 40 occupied a key point. This kind of move is usually good because it prevents Black from pressing White down, by playing at 40 himself. It also looks forward to exploiting the thinness of Black's two space jump later.



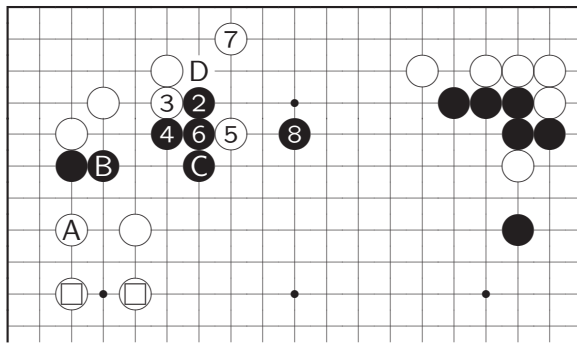
Variation 45 for 40

The situation in the game is somewhat unusual, but it seems like it would have been better for White to look after his left side group with 1.

The merit of 1 is that it creates 'depth' for White's weak group (marked), while reducing the depth of Black's group. As with territory, four stones are needed to establish a base in the center, so White needs to create a box like shape.

In contrast, after 1, Black's weak group starts to resemble a 'stick'. This sort of one-dimensional group doesn't have much eye potential and often finds itself under attack. The connection between B and C becomes thin, and White can aim to cut at D later.

If you think about this, you'll realize that A (38 in the game) and 1 are similar moves. The purpose of both of them is to occupy the key point for eyespace between two weak groups.

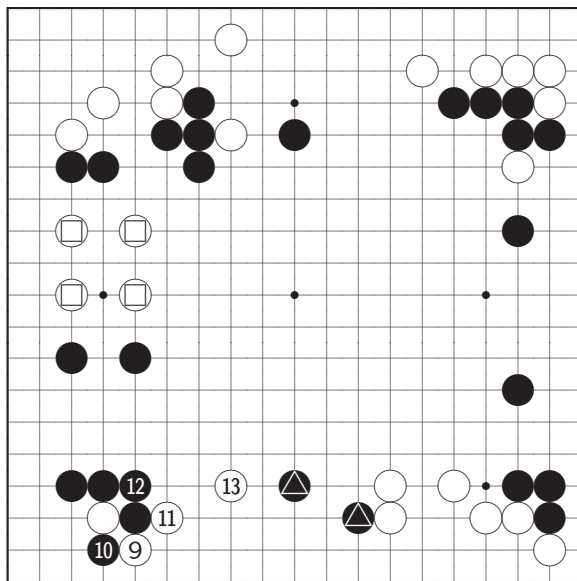


Variation 46 for ④⑩

Nevertheless, ② is a good move which presses White down, while dealing with the thinness between ③ and ⑤.

White ⑦ may look small, but it's important because it denies Black access to the rich eye potential at the edge of the board (after Black D). It also ensures that White's corner group is completely comfortable.

This means that Black will have to make do in the center and the continuation up to ⑧ can be expected.

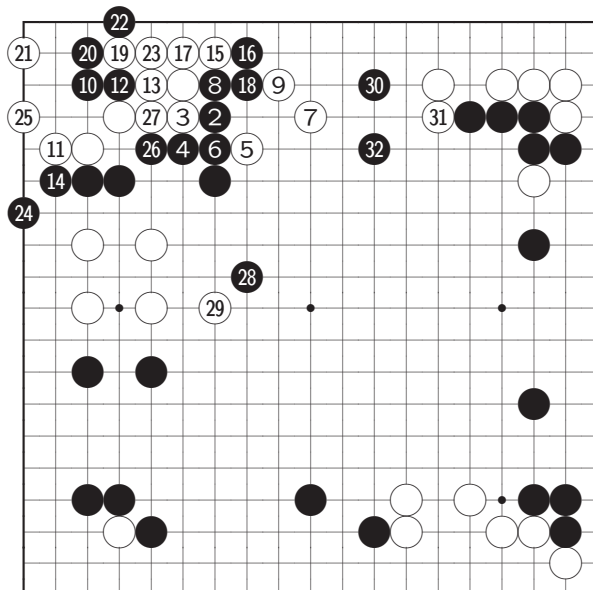


Variation 47 for ④⑩

Next, if White swings into motion with ⑨ to ⑬, as he did in the game, we can see that the position will be much easier for White to play.

White's marked stones are strong, so Black only has one weak group to aim at. This means the fight between Black's bottom group (marked) and White's lower left group becomes more balanced.

Try to remember that depth creates eyespace when playing in the center and that eyespace is a source of power. The process of establishing a base in the center like this is called *raising a flag*.



Variation 48 for ④⑩

Some players doubt the value of sliding on the second line, with White at ⑬, and think that attacking from the outside with something like ⑦ and ⑨ is superior.

This kind of strategy no doubt has its place, but it loses territory and is generally unsuccessful, because White hasn't established a strong foundation for his attack.

For example, Black can harass White's corner with ⑩, ⑫ and ⑭. White can tide things over with ⑮ to ⑳, but the exchanges of ⑭, ⑮ and ⑯ weaken White's outside groups and obviate the intent of ⑦ and ⑨. Meanwhile, White's corner keeps shrinking.

To make things clearer, we can observe that Black can bully White with ㉔ and ㉖ in sente, which makes a counter-attack with ㉘, ㉚ and ㉜ conceivable.

Raise a Flag When Your Group Is Floating

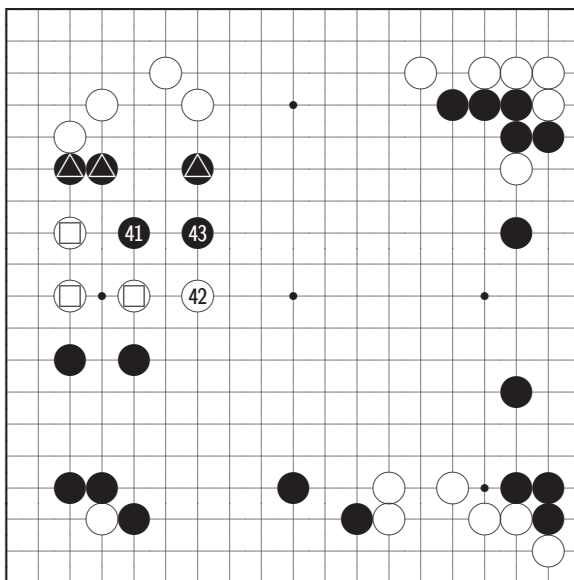
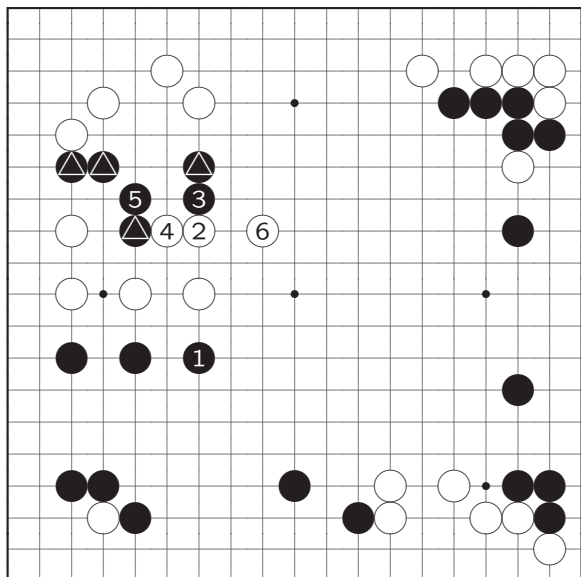


Diagram 16
(Moves: 41-43)

The knight's move at 41 started a flow which made excellent shape for Black and left White thin. Gu didn't just run away, but struck at the vital point and counter-attacked White's marked group.

Up to 43, we can clearly see that Black created depth for his group, while starting to turn White's marked group into a stick.

When Black raised his flag with 43, the balance of power shifted in his favor.



Variation 49 for 43

If Black jumps to 1, White can occupy the vital point at 2.

Black's top left group suddenly becomes weak and heavy, and White moves into the center ahead of Black up to 6.

Use Power to Exploit Weakness

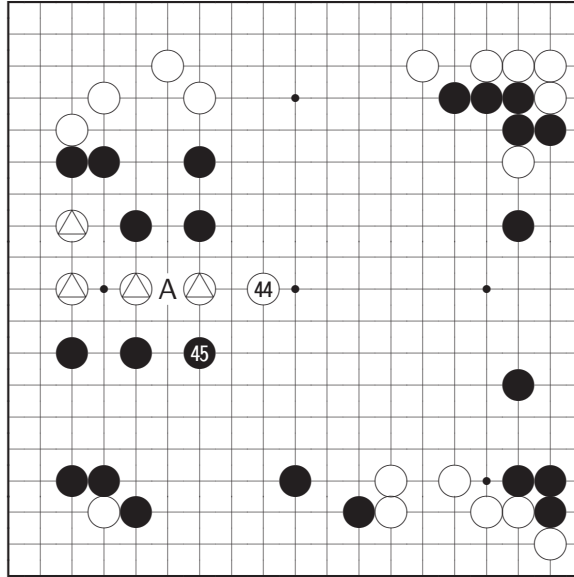
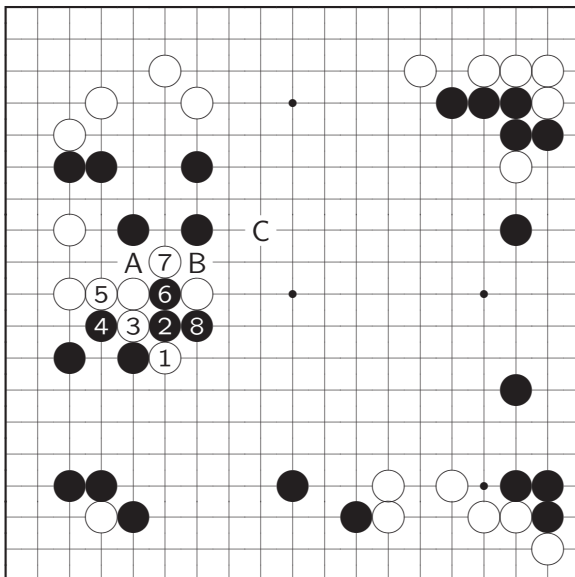


Diagram 17
(Moves: 44-45)

When you have a powerful position, you should look for ways to use that power to obtain some sort of benefit or profit.

Black used his newfound power to exploit the thinness of White's marked one space jumps with ④⑤. White's left side group became weaker and a potential cutting point at A was exposed in the process. While threatening White, ④⑤ expanded Black's moyo in the bottom left, so it was an excellent move.



Variation 50 for ④④

White would like to make shape by attaching at ①, but it isn't possible in this game.

Black can resist with ②, ④, and ⑥. After ⑧, Black has miai to cut at A or B, and White's position is in tatters.

Instead of ⑤, White can also form a bamboo joint with White A, ⑧ and White B. Black will skip lightly to C next and Black's moyo in the bottom left is becoming very big.

Invade Just Before Territory Is Completed

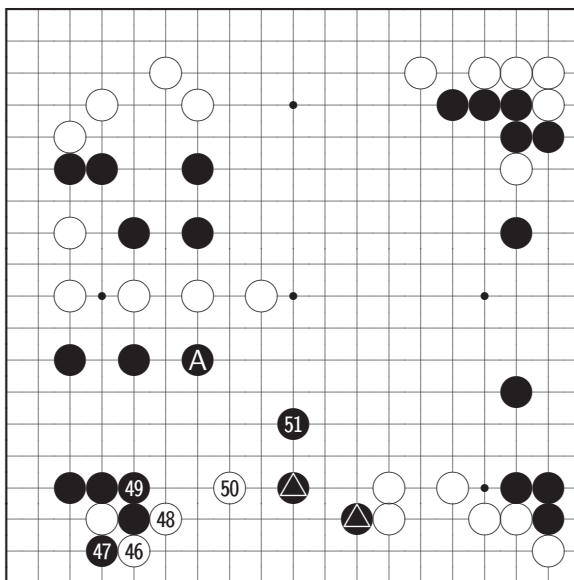


Diagram 18
(Moves: 46-51)

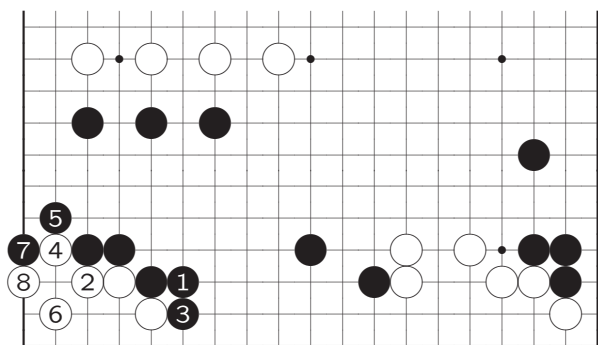
When Black enlarged his lower left area with **A**, his prospective territory in the bottom left was almost complete. Since White was already slightly behind, he needed to do something about the lower left corner before it became too big and solid to deal with.

Usually the ideal time to invade is *just* before territory is completed, and no sooner. If your opponent has already invested many stones in an area, your goals can be modest when invading.

Once you live successfully, their stones will generally be working less efficiently than if you had invaded earlier. If there's no way to live though, it means your invasion came too late. Timing is the hard part.

White's asking move at **(46)** was a good way to start, and when Black secured the corner with **(47)**, White began to settle his group with **(48)** and **(50)**.

Black **(51)** was a dual purpose move which defended Black's marked stones and attacked White's group simultaneously.

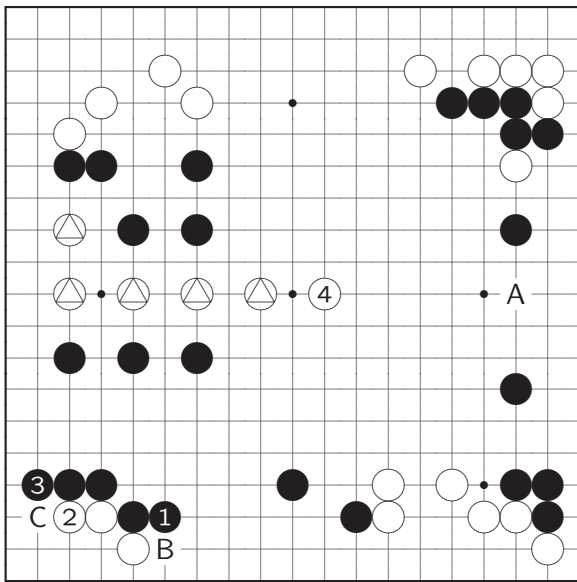


Variation 51 for **(47)**

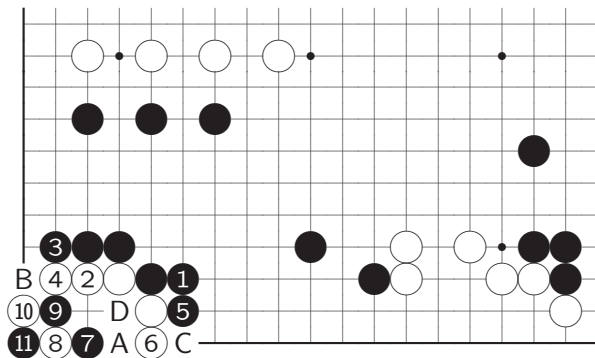
If Black extends at **(1)**, White will be able to create a ko fight in the corner with **(2)** to **(8)** at any time.

Even if Black wins the ko, White will be satisfied with gaining two moves in a row in another part of the board.

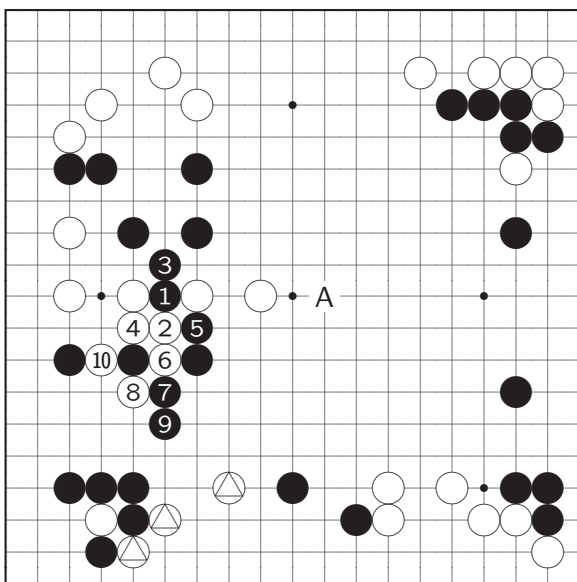
White has too many possible ko threats, so Black can't play like this.



Variation 52 for 47



Variation 53 for 47



Variation 54 for 51

If Black descends to ③, White will still be able to create a ko in the corner later, and the best strategy for now is to tenuki and take the key point for power at ④.

White ④ might look pedestrian, but it's a formidable move which casts an imposing shadow over Black.

It nips any plans Black may have had of capping at ④ in the bud, and radiates power across the whole board.

In more practical terms, the power White accumulates with ④ can be used immediately to invade at A, or start a fight at B. In fact, A and B are miai.

Should White decide that he no longer wishes to fight with B, he can always start a ko with C later.

If White decides to fight the ko in the corner, he can do so with ④ to ⑥ at any time.

Once the shape is settled up to ③, the option of the ko is always there and isn't affected by anything that happens in the center afterwards. That means this variation can be played much later in the game, if that's what the situation demands.

Instead of ⑥, White A would die after Black B, ⑩, Black at ⑧, White at ⑨, Black C, White at ⑦ and Black D.

It's too early to wedge at ① right now. White will respond with ② to ⑧ and break through Black's shape.

Even though Black can play ⑦ and ⑨ in the process, he's still not thick enough to use that power effectively against White's marked stones at the bottom.

However, we can see from this sequence that if Black is able to place more stones within the vicinity of ⑦ in sente, then cutting at ① becomes a stronger aim.

Therefore, a better strategy for Black is to attack White's marked stones first, and look forward to cutting at ① or attacking at A later, depending on how White plays at the bottom.

Some Things Are Too Good to Be True...

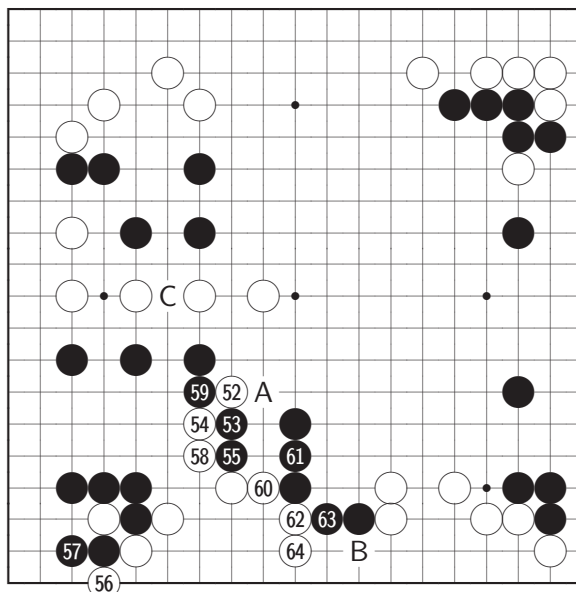


Diagram 19
(Moves: 52-64)

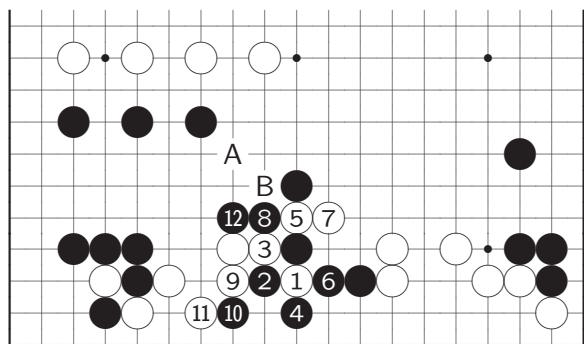
White ⑤② was a surprising and interesting move, typical of Lee Sedol's style of play.

Bumping with ⑤⑤ was questionable, and led to an unsatisfactory result for Black. It would have been better for Black to bulge at A.

White settled very easily at the bottom and the game became even again up to ⑥④. Note that White can connect under at B if he has to.

Black was still focusing on the wedge at C. He thought that reinforcing with ⑤⑨ and taking sente to cut at C would be good enough. Unfortunately for Black, White's responses in the actual game demonstrated the flaw in this plan, as we'll see shortly.

Even when you have mouthwatering tesuji in mind, it's critical to maintain a detached and clear view of the whole board.

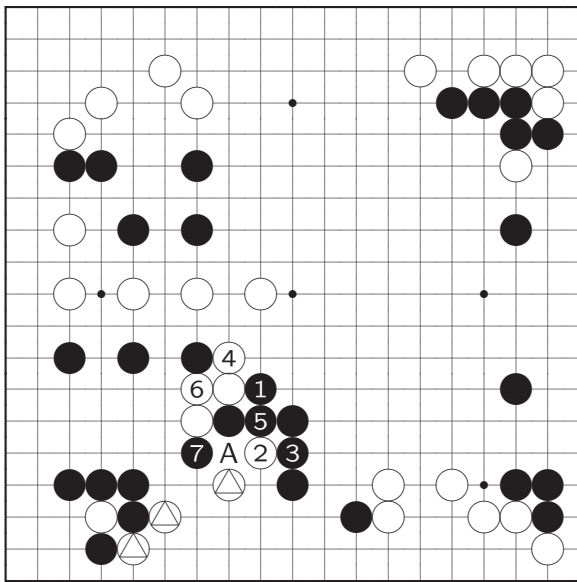


Variation 55 for ⑤②

White ① is the first move most players would think of to try to settle White's group at the bottom, but the moves up to ⑫ show that it doesn't work here.

However, imagine for a moment that White already has a stone on the board at A (⑤② in the game). In that case White will be able to atari at B and capture Black's cutting stone after ⑧.

This was one of Lee's aims when he played ⑤② in the actual game. This is also the thought process that will enable you to find such moves yourself!

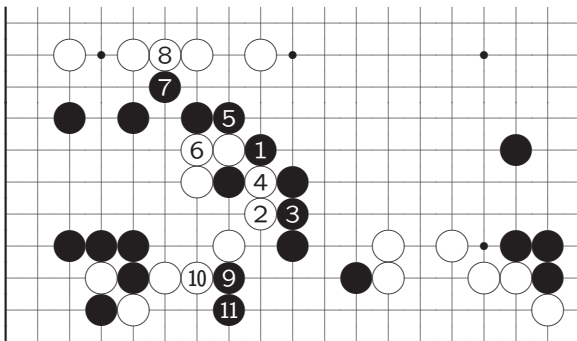


Variation 56 for 55

Black ① is better than A (55 in the game).

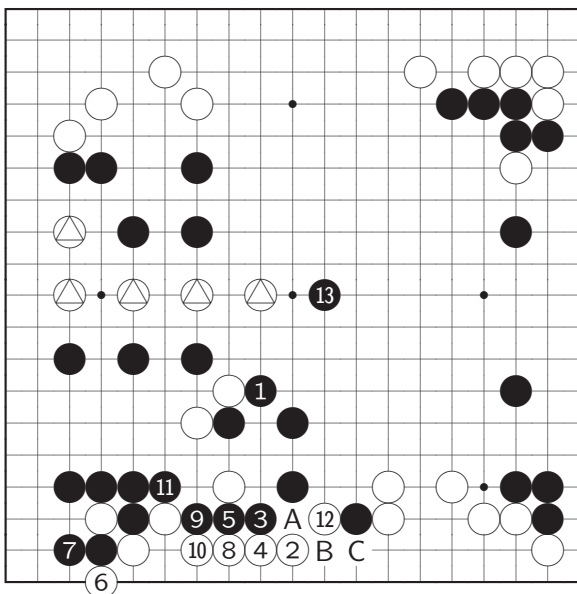
White ② and ④ are an interesting combination, but Black can still cut off the tail with ⑦ and capture the marked stones.

This result would be good enough for Black.



Variation 57 for 55

White can try to live by cutting at ④, but it's very difficult to make two eyes up to ⑪.



Variation 58 for 55

Sliding with ② looks like the best solution for White, but Black will be able to accumulate power with the moves to ⑪.

White has to defend in gote with ⑫ (to prevent Black C), and that gives Black time to cap at ⑬.

Black ⑬ attacks White's marked group from above, while starting to develop a large moyo on the right side.

Instead of ③, the bump at A is often good technique when White slides on the second line (e.g. at ②).

However, if Black plays ③ at A in this case, White lives in style with ⑥, ⑦, ④, Black B and ⑩, so we can see that Black's bump would be slack.

Strategy and Tactics Are Inseparable

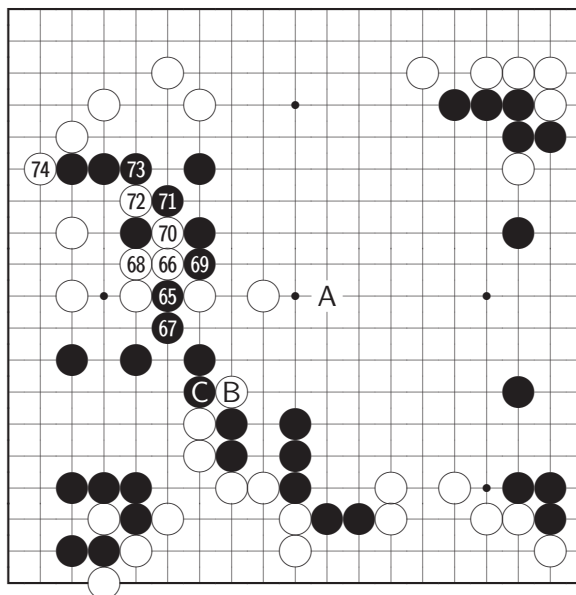


Diagram 20
(Moves: 65-74)

Gu took sente and wedged with 65 (all according to plan), but the wedge wasn't as powerful as it initially seemed. White's atari at 67 no longer worked after Black C, so 66 to 72 was the best option.

However, when White hane'd at 74 the problem became clear. White was able to complete his corner territory and look after his weak group at the same time! It seems that Gu overlooked this possibility when planning to wedge at 65, and this was what caused his strategy to fall to shreds.

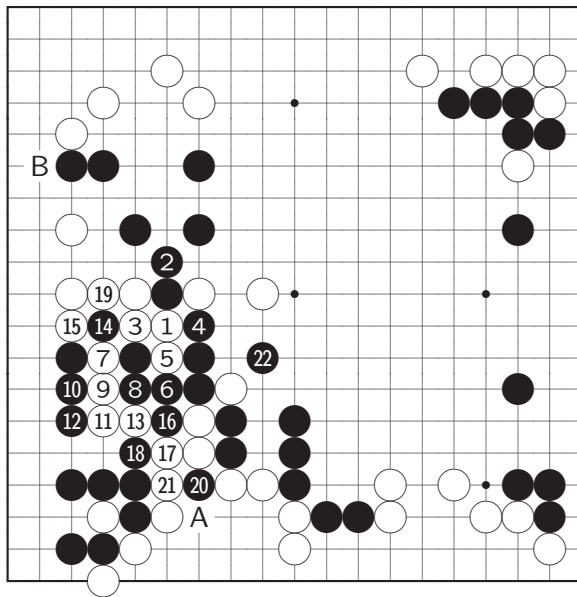
Earlier in this chapter, we discussed how *strategy always trumps tactics*, but that doesn't mean that tactics are unimportant. In fact, proficiency in tactics informs strategy by helping us to glean what is possible and dismiss ideas that are impossible. This may sound obvious once it is stated, but it is a critically important point where many players go wrong, and affects the clarity of your perception.

You can envision the most wonderful strategy ever conceived, but if there's no practical way to execute it you might as well be building castles in the sky. A curious corollary of this is that one way to improve your strategic planning is to focus on tactical skills—tesuji, life and death, haengma and fighting.

Of course, strategy still trumps tactics, so you need to arm yourself with knowledge of strategic principles and experience in applying them, otherwise you won't be able to make effective use of your tactical skills. If this all sounds very circular, that's because it is. The distinction between strategy and tactics is useful, but arbitrary. They are two inseparable halves.

Therefore, in Go and all other pursuits, the best approach is to focus on neither the big picture nor the details, but both. Don't allow your thinking to be constrained just because others expect it of you.

On the previous page we saw Variation 58, where Black took sente and capped at A. Attacking White's entire group instead of slicing it in two would have been a better strategy in this game. Unfortunately, because of the cutting stone at B, Black's marked stones were now thin and attacking on a large scale was no longer viable. Knowing this, Black had to reconsider the whole board and form a new plan.



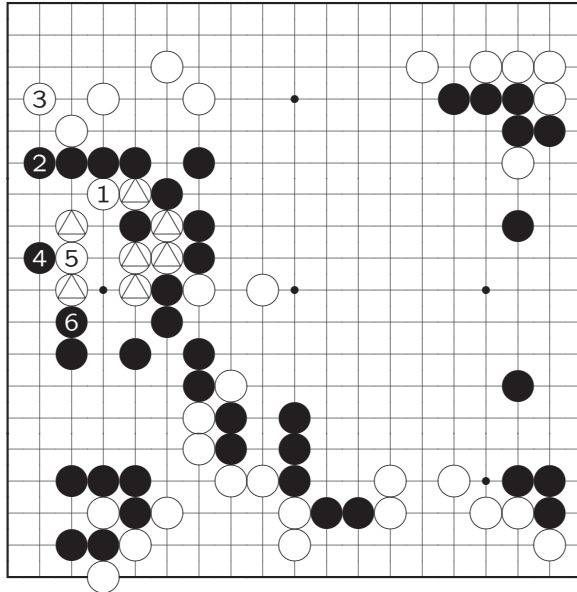
Variation 59 for (66)

If White ataris at ①, he can still break through Black's shape with the moves up to ⑨. However, ⑩ is powerful and Black can prevent White's groups from connecting in the continuation up to ⑱.

White has to capture a stone with ⑲, after which ⑳ is a perfectly timed asking move. If White defends at ㉑, Black will have time to defend too, at ㉒.

Now both of White's groups are unsettled, so A and B are miai and one of White's groups will die.

If White plays ㉑ at A, Black at ㉑ and ㉒ will be miai, so Black will play at B immediately and White's left side group will still die.



Variation 60 for (74)

If White simply plays ①, aiming to live, the descent at ② makes miai of ③ and ④.

White can't defend the corner at ③, because ④ and ⑥ are a powerful combination and White's marked group will die.

Therefore, White would have to play ③ at ④ instead, and the corner would be left open to a reduction or invasion later on.

White would not be happy with this result.

Fix Your Roof While the Sun Is Shining

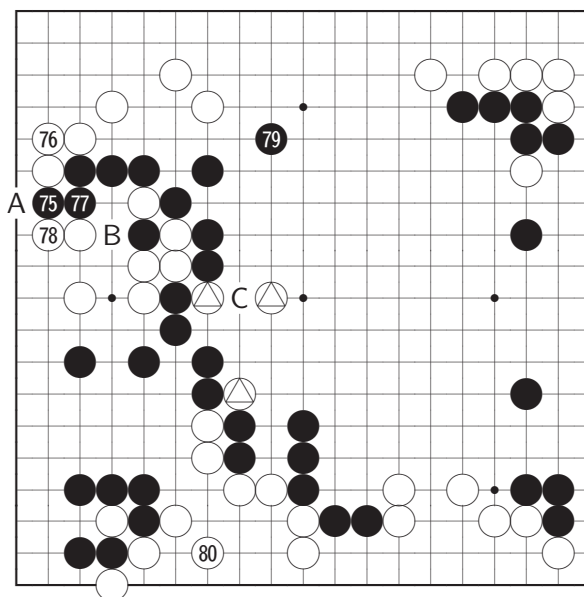


Diagram 21
(Moves: 75-80)

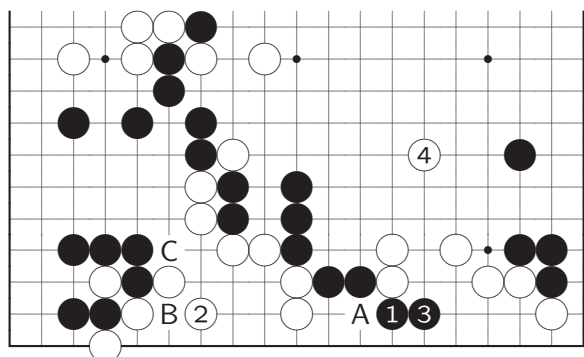
The wise do sooner what fools do later. Both do the same; all that differs is the when. The former act at the right moment, the latter at the wrong.

—Baltasar Gracián, *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*

A and B were miai for White after ⑦⑧, and the game became favorable for White up to ⑧⑩. White had successfully managed both his weak groups, and consolidated the top left corner, without sustaining any serious damage.

Capturing a stone with C would have been too slow, so Black played ⑦⑨ with the aim of swallowing up White's marked stones on a large scale.

White ⑧⑩ looked small, but it was actually very big. White could now play in the center without having to worry about any other weak groups.

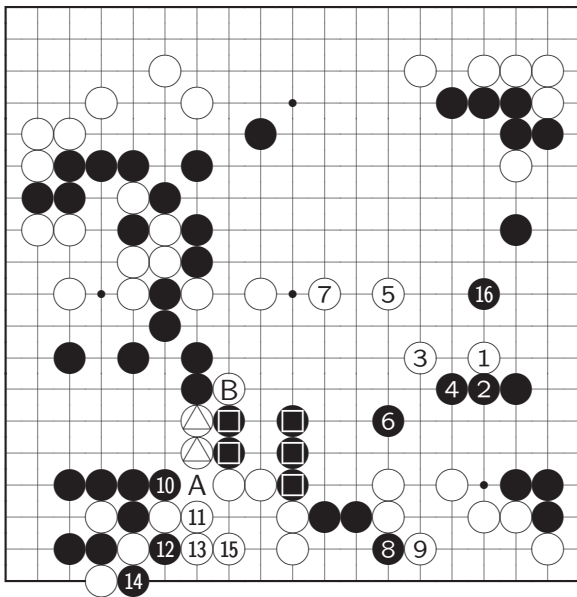


Variation 61 for ⑦⑨

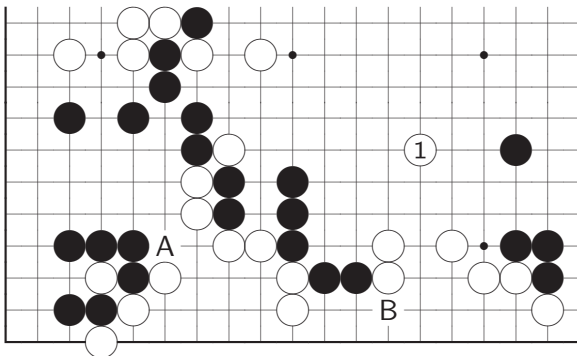
White can connect under at A if necessary, so Black might think about plans involving the hane at ①. If White responds to ① at ③, Black can harass White's lower left group with B or C.

However, White would calmly reinforce his lower left group with ② and would answer ③ with ④.

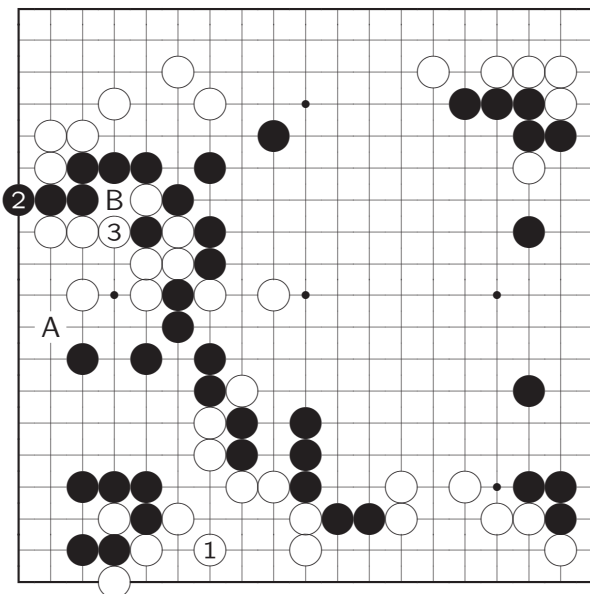
Since it isn't easy to continue attacking, Black has been keeping his options open. For example, he may prefer to exchange Black at ④ for White A later.



Variation 62 for ⑧⑩



Variation 63 for ⑧⑩



Variation 64 for ⑧⑩

To see the value of ⑧⑩ in the game, imagine that White reduces at ① instead. If the game continues up to ⑦, White's lower right group has been isolated.

Note: these moves are hypothetical and not ideal.

Now White has to answer ⑧ with ⑨, and while neither of White's groups can be captured, it's good enough for Black to bully White and force him to live small up to ⑮.

Since Black can now capture White's marked cutting stones with A at any time, White's cutting stone at B becomes dead weight.

Because of this, Black's marked stones are stronger than before and Black can start to attack White's center group with ⑮.

Flying out with ① is also conceivable, but Black's push at A or hane at B might still be annoying for White later.

Since neither of the strategies in these two variations seemed promising, Lee chose to put his affairs in order with ⑧⑩ in the game.

After ⑧⑩ in the game (① in this variation), if Black separates White with ②, White will capture at ③ and can easily live because A and B are miai.

Since playing ② in sente is Black's right at any time, it's better for him to hold it in abeyance for the time being.

This is because Black might prefer to capture a stone with B later (forcing White to play ②) and he might also want to use ② as a ko threat at some point.

As we discussed in Chapter 1, it's usually better to keep your options open for as long as possible in Go.

Fight from a Position of Strength

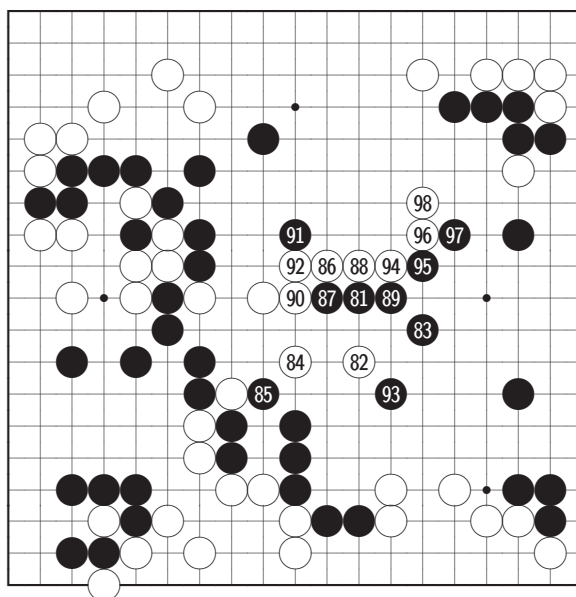
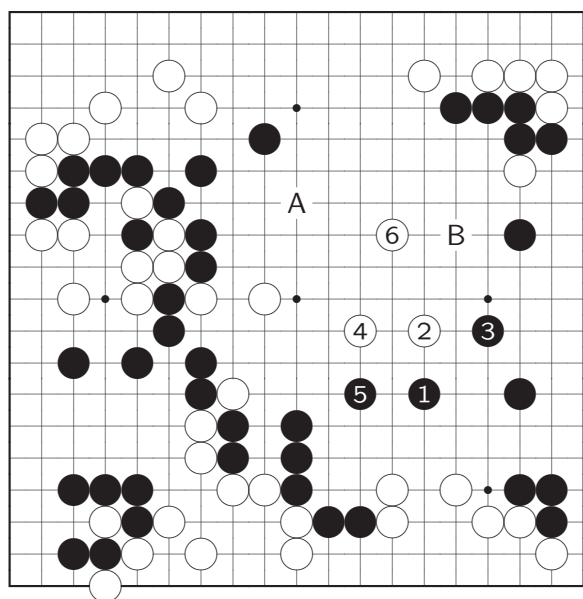


Diagram 22
(Moves: 81-98)

Black 81 showed us Gu Li's keen intuition for play in the center. The center area was neither strong nor solid, so Gu played 81—a flexible move which aimed to take control of one part or the other.

White's reduction at 82 was a balanced response, and Black developed the right side with 83. The reduction was going well up until 90, which was heavy. Lee had a specific plan in mind when he played there, but he'd made a small oversight, as we'll see in a moment.

Since Black had patiently strengthened his positions, with 83 and 85, he could now attack forcefully with 91 and 93. This allowed Black to consolidate a large territory on the right, while attacking.

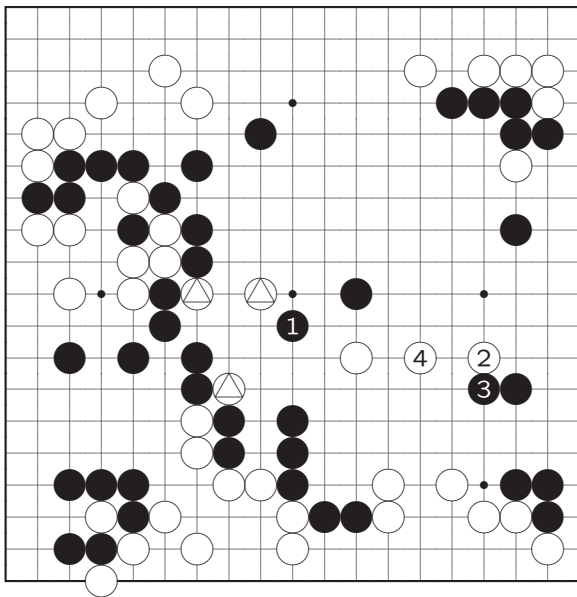


Variation 65 for 81

Jumping to 1 is also conceivable, but then White can reduce the center with 2 to 6, which is an easier continuation for White than the moves in the game.

It's hard for Black to attack this group severely, because White's stones are light and flexible.

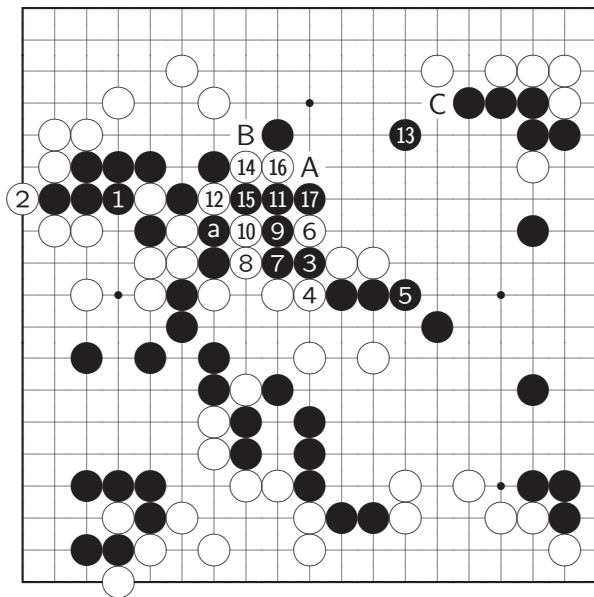
White 6 makes miai of A and B, neatly raising White's flag in the center either way.



Variation 66 for 83

If Black plays 83 at 1, to isolate the marked stones, White will reduce the right side with 2 and 4.

After 4, White's stones in the center look quite difficult to attack, and Black has surrounded the marked stones on a relatively small scale.



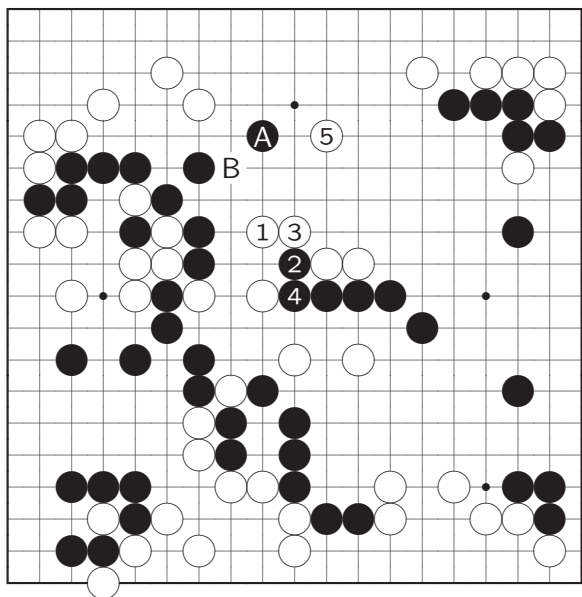
Variation 67 for 89

18 at a

Instead of 89, fighting with 1 and 3 is also possible, but the result up to 12 is satisfactory for White.

It may seem like Black can complete a large territory with 13, but he has a weakness at 14. Even if Black cuts at 15, 16 is an excellent counter which exploits Black's thinness mercilessly.

After White connects at 18 (a), A and B are miai. If Black reinforces around 15, instead of playing 13, White will push up at C and the result is still better for White.

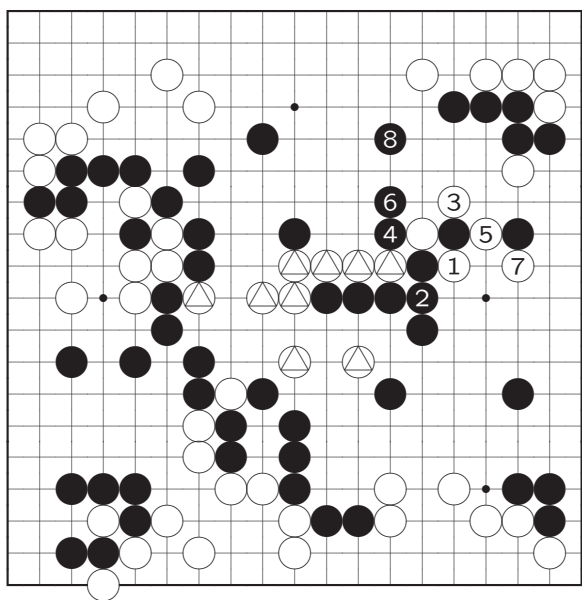


Variation 68 for ⑨⑩

Instead of ⑨⑩ in the actual game, jumping at ① would have been lighter and more flexible.

If Black tries to attack White with ② and ④, White can easily manage his stones up to ⑤. Black needs to look after his stone at A now, because the cutting point at B has been exposed.

This variation is slightly better for White.



Variation 69 for ⑨⑩

If White tries to reduce the right side more aggressively, with ① and ③, Black will cut White's group in two with ④ to ⑧.

White's center group is now in serious danger and this is too risky for White.

Strong Players Love Ko

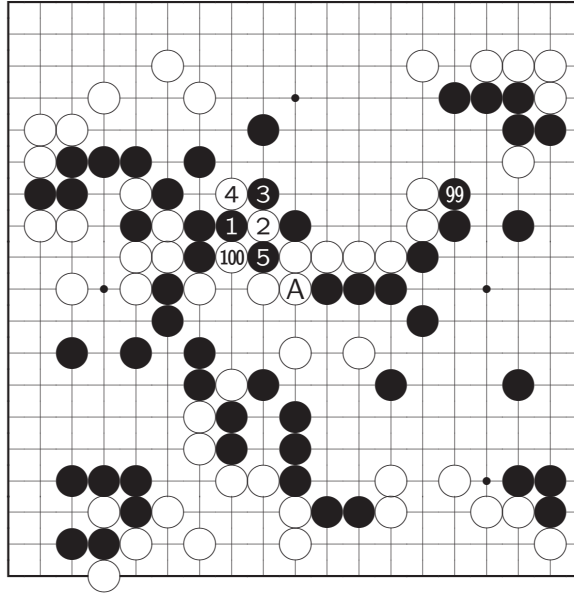
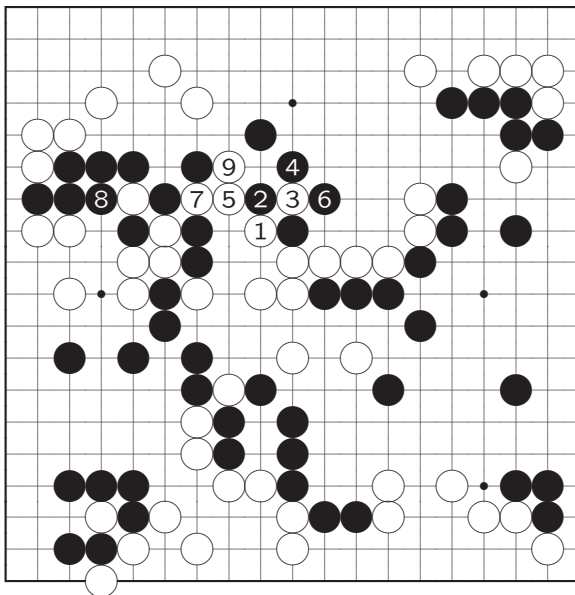


Diagram 23
(Moves: 99-105)

A ko at ② was inevitable after White played ⑩. Lee had been planning this since he played at ⑨.

Many Go players hate fighting ko and seem to avoid it at all costs, but all the best players are masters of ko. If you practice fighting ko, and learn to love it, you will earn yourself a powerful weapon.

In this case, Lee thought that the ko would quickly resolve things in his favor, so he actively sought it out. However, it appears that he overlooked one small detail while analyzing the upcoming ko fight.

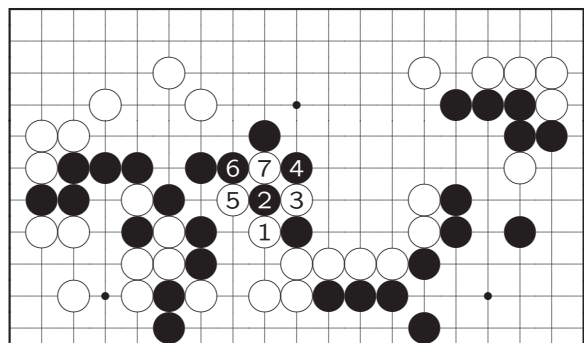


Variation 70 for ⑩

White should have played at ①, instead of ⑩ above.

If Black continues to attack White's center group with ② and ④, White can counter-attack with ⑤ and ⑦.

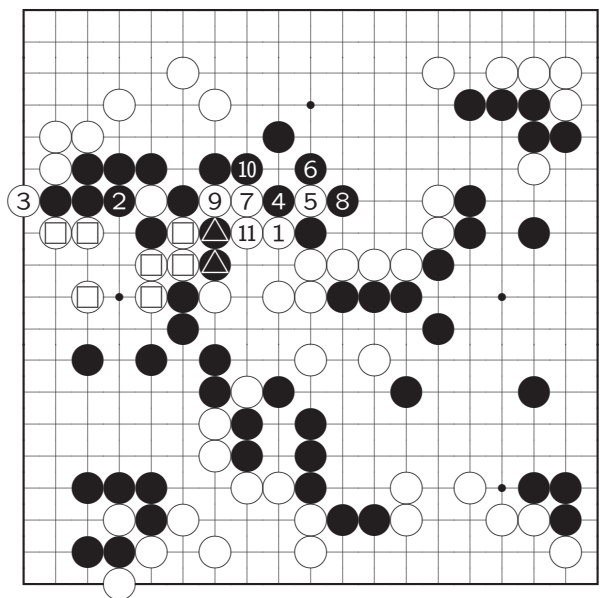
Black is in deep trouble after White cuts with ⑨.



Variation 71 for ⑩⑩

Blocking at ⑥ is another possibility, but it leads to an enormous ko at ⑦.

White captures first and Black doesn't have enough ko threats, so the ko is too heavy for Black.

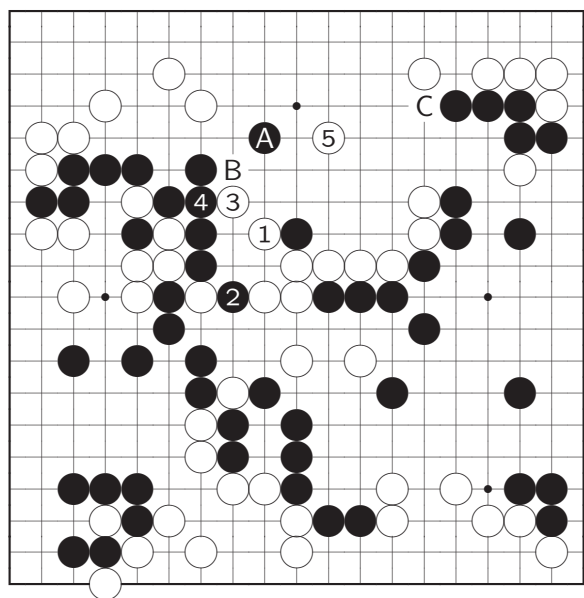


Variation 72 for ⑩⑩

If Black wants to hane at ④, exchanging ② for ③ first is the correct move order.

White needs to save his marked stones with ③, so Black can return to the center and play ④.

Black looks after his left side group in sente up to ⑪, but the overall result still favors White because his center stones become strong after capturing Black's marked cutting stones.



Variation 73 for ⑩⑩

Reinforcing at ② is the best move for Black, and White can calmly manage his center group up to ⑤.

Black A is looking precarious, so Black should spend another move to prevent White from cutting at B next. This is more flexible for White than his play in the game.

If Black defends at B next, White can push up at C.

Every Ko Threat Costs You Something

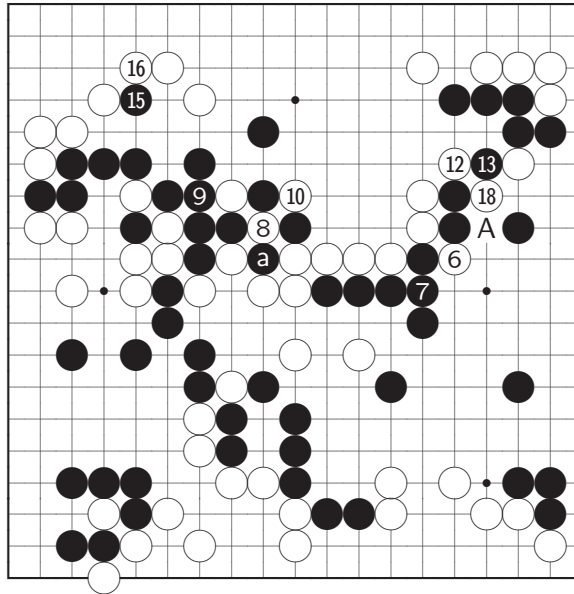


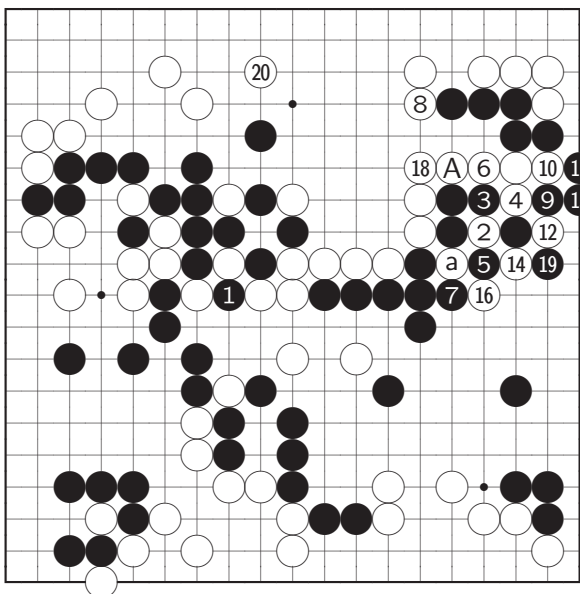
Diagram 24
(Moves: 106-118)

⬤⬤ at a, ⬤ at 114 at 108

After exchanging a ko threat at ⑥, White cut at ⑩ to make the ko bigger. Everything was still going according to Lee's plan.

Black had to answer White's ko threat at ⑫. For his next ko threat, White chose ⑱ instead of A, because the latter would lose more points on the right side. Professionals are sensitive about territory.

Every ko threat has its price, and there's little value in winning a ko if it costs you much more than you gain.



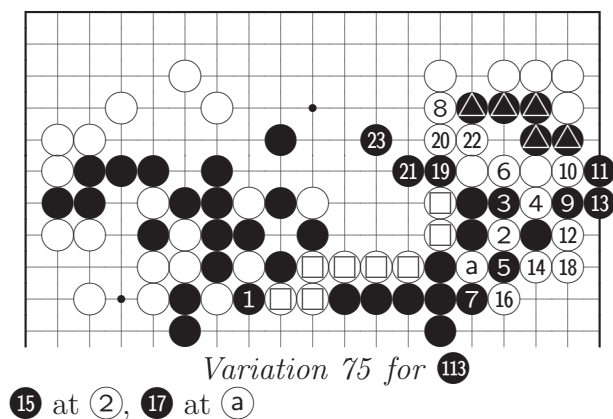
Variation 74 for 113

⬤ at 2, ⬤ at a

If Black ignores White's ko threat at A, the wedge at ② is a sacrifice tesuji which gains ground by squeezing Black with ④ and ⑥.

After White connects at ⑧, Black can connect under with ⑨. White ⑫ to ⑱ are well timed forcing moves, played before defending at ⑱.

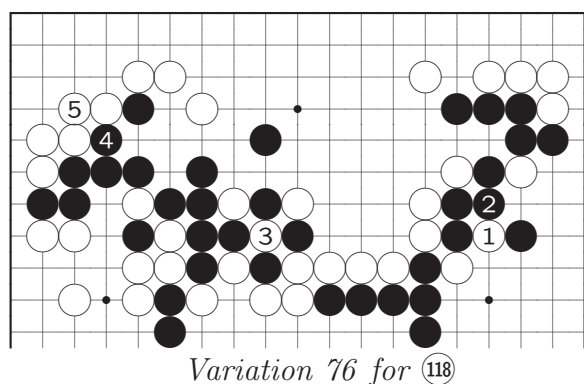
The result up to ⑳ is good for White and he's still in the lead.



Connecting at 18 is also conceivable, but then Black will cut in sente with 19 and reinforce his position with 23.

The result is a large scale trade of the marked groups. Black captures the center stones and White captures the top right, but the result is better for Black.

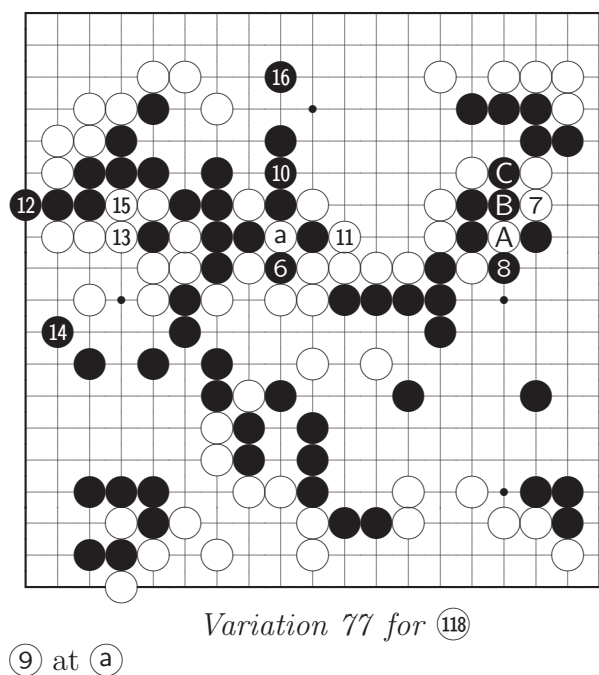
This means that White's connection at 18 is too greedy.



If White ataris at 1 instead, he can win the ko fight, but this ko threat loses points.

White was reluctant to play like this.

Continuing...



After 9 (at a), Black has to fall back to 10.

Black can't make a ko threat elsewhere because his whole top left group is at risk. He doesn't have any more local threats and his other threats are too small.

Even though White wins the ko fight with 11, the game becomes even again up to 16. That's because White's ko threat at A loses four or five points.

To understand how White loses points in this variation, consider the fact that White could play A as the double atari at B instead. In that case, White would be able to capture C and Black's right side territory would be smaller than it is after A.

Count Your Ko Threats Carefully

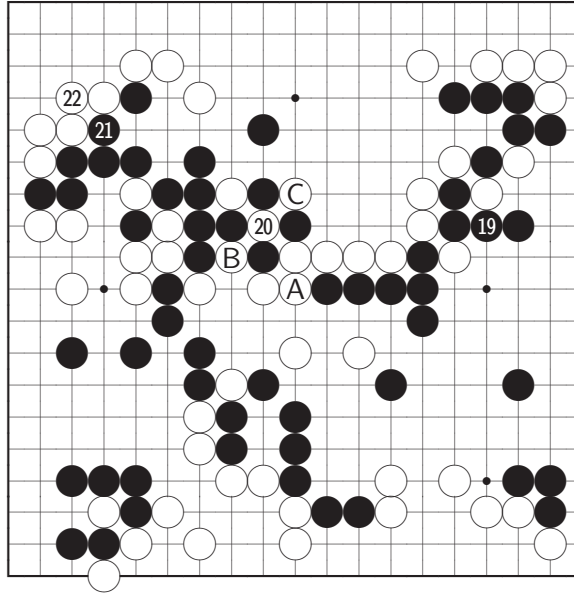
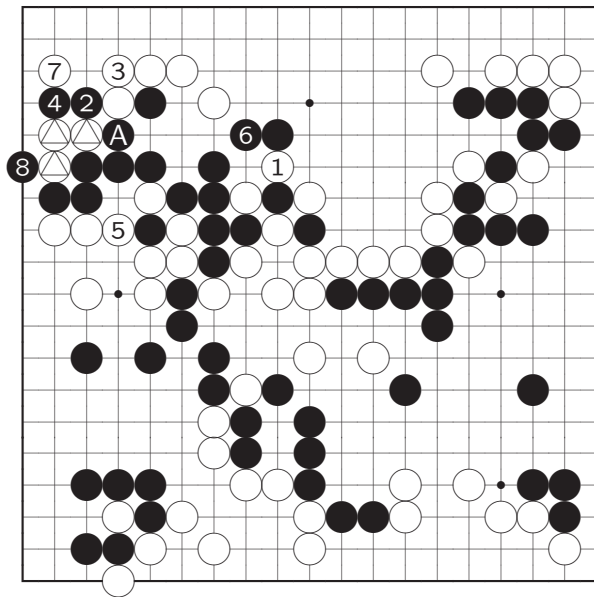


Diagram 25
(Moves: 119-122)

Defending at ②② was necessary, and this is the move that Lee overlooked earlier.

When he played at ① (90), he thought that he could simplify the game and consolidate his advantage by winning the ko after ② to ③.

Unfortunately for Lee, he misjudged the effectiveness of Black's ko threat at ②①.



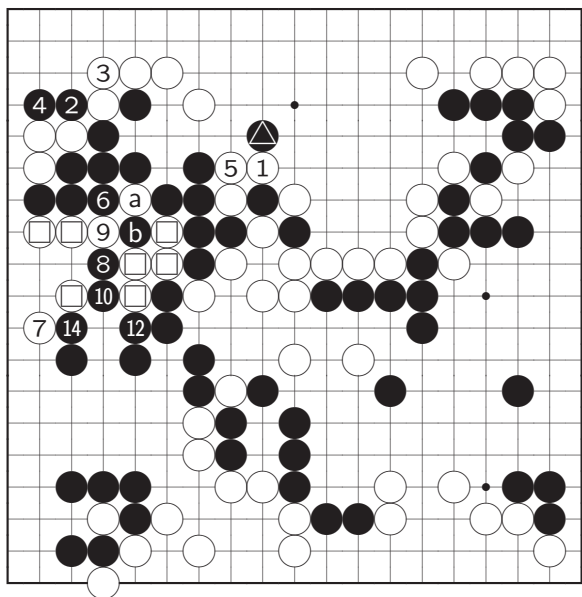
Variation 78 for ①②②

Originally, Lee thought that Black would have to defend at ①, rather than playing at ①.

Lee's plan was to capture at ① now, but ② and ④ are more powerful than Lee initially expected.

The trade up to ⑧ hurts White, because he doesn't actually make much territory in the center, he only makes his group strong.

Meanwhile, losing the marked stones is a big loss.

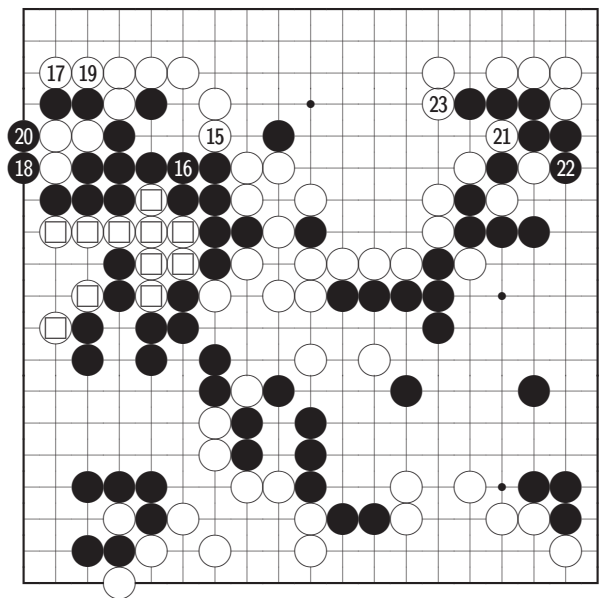


Variation 79 for ⑫

⑪ at ①, ⑬ at ②

If White plays at ⑤, to cut off Black's marked stone, his squared group will be captured up to ⑭.

Continuing...



Variation 80 for ⑫

White can build a huge territory spanning the top and the center of the board up to ⑮, but the game is still better for Black.

Letting Black capture White's marked stones is too big, and Black establishes a clear lead.

Something Is Better than Nothing

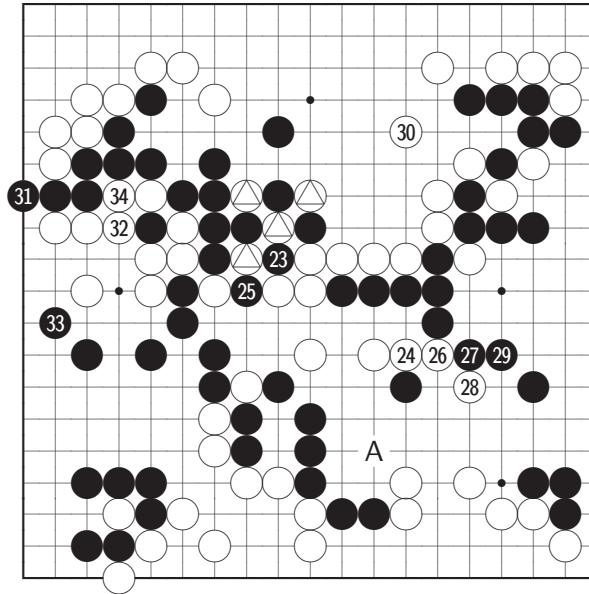


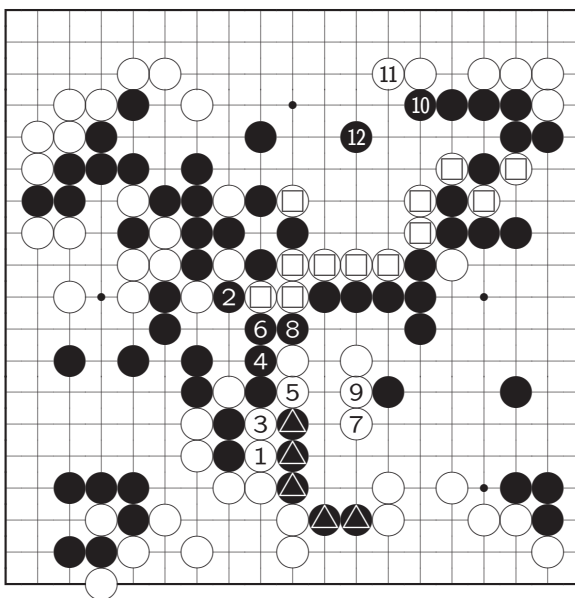
Diagram 26
(Moves: 123-134)

There were no appropriate ko threats left for White, so he played at ②④. It wasn't good enough, but it was better than nothing. Sometimes you just have to take what you can, in order to stay in the game.

The result up to ②⑨ was very successful for Black and the game was reversed again. White's marked stones were all wasted, and they had only helped to make Black's position stronger in the center.

Lee played at ③⑩ to support his center group, but it didn't make any points. He should have played at A instead, which would have been slightly better for White.

Black ③③ was a large sente endgame move at this stage, and White's response at ③④ was forced.



Variation 81 for ③④

White ① looks like it could be a ko threat, but Black will ignore it and capture at ②.

After White cuts at ⑤, ⑥ makes miai of ⑦ and ⑧.

Black and White trade the marked groups up to ⑫, but the result is good for Black.

White's squared stones are worth much more than Black's five triangled stones at the bottom.

Count as You Catch Your Breath

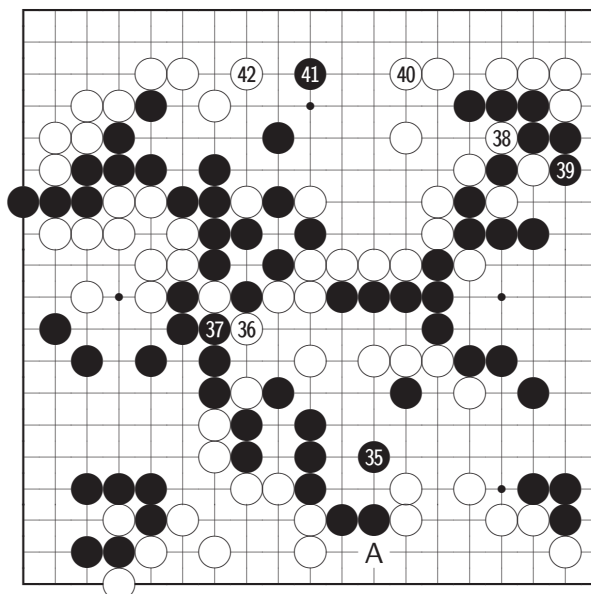


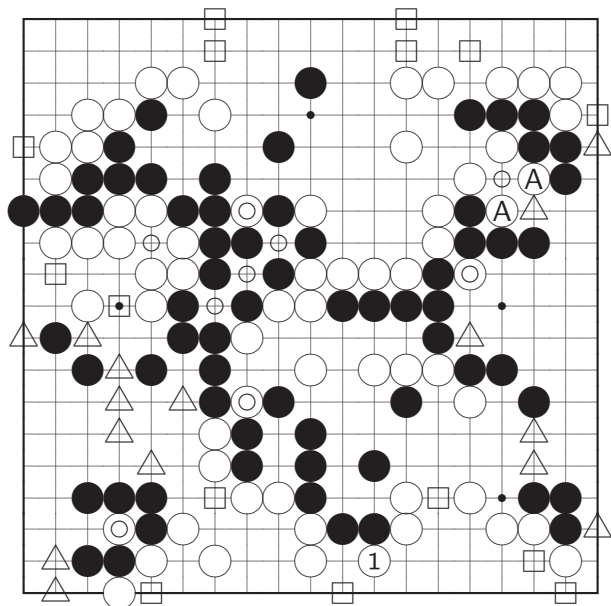
Diagram 27
(Moves: 135-142)

White ④② was another mistake. Lee thought the game was still even, but White was already behind.

White should have played ④② at A. Connecting at the bottom is bigger than it looks and the game would still have been close if White had played there.

What would the situation have been like if White had played at A? Let's have a look together and take stock of the game.

Imagine that the triangles are Black stones, the squares are White stones, and dead stones (usually worth two points each) are circled. Let's count the points inside each area...



Variation 82 for ④②

Black:

Right side: 32, bottom left: 22, and center: 8.

Total: 62 points.

(Ⓐ stones = $4 \times 50\%$ chance = 2 points.)

White:

Bottom: 23, top right: 12, top left: 18, left side: 4, center: 1, and komi 7.5.

Total: 65.5 points.

The game is very close, but favorable for Black, because he has sente.

Black can also expect to make some extra points in the endgame, because his stones are thicker and stronger than White's.

Sometimes There's No Room to Back Down

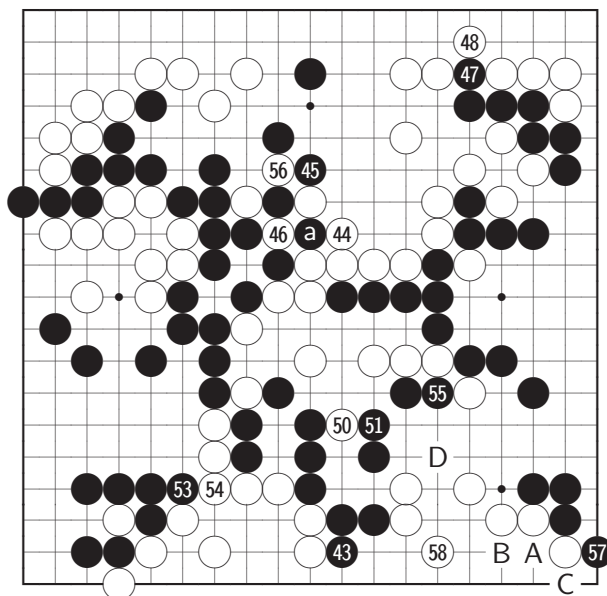
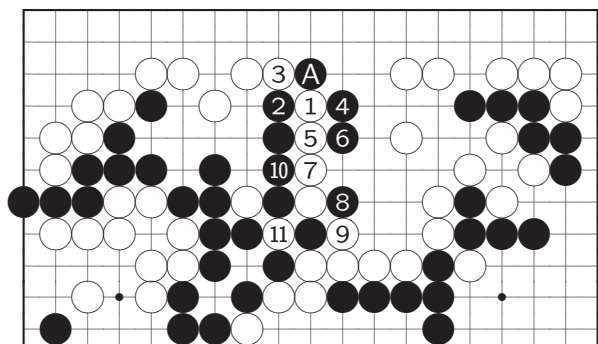


Diagram 28
(Moves: 143-158)

149 at a, 152 at 146

Black 43 was very big, and 44 began a delicate endgame sequence. Black had to start a ko with 45, because he was only leading by a couple of points. Sometimes, in a close game, you just can't afford to back down. White 58 was the only response to 57. If Black continues with A, White B to D lives.

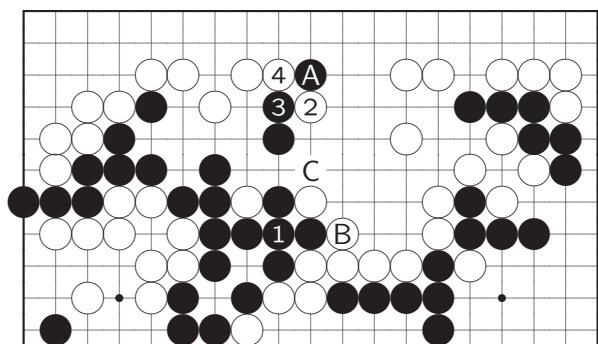


Variation 83 for 144

White would like to cut at ① and isolate A inside his territory if possible.

However, Black can resist with ④ to ⑧ and the result up to ⑪ is a ko.

Unfortunately for White, Black has too many big ko threats (starting in the bottom left), so ① is an overplay.

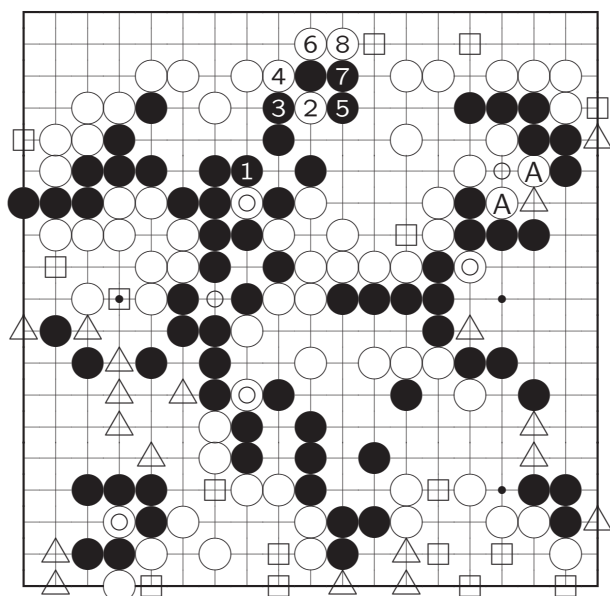


Variation 84 for 145

That's why White played atari at B first in the game.

If Black connects at ①, White can cut Black at ② and A will be stranded.

There's no longer any way for Black to capture White's cutting stone at ②, which is why Black played ① at C instead.



Variation 85 for 147

If Black falls back at ①, attaching at ② is still a good endgame move and ⑧ connects under.

Black:

Right side: 32 (includes ① stones = 2), bottom left: 22, center area: 7, and bottom: 2.

Total: 63 points.

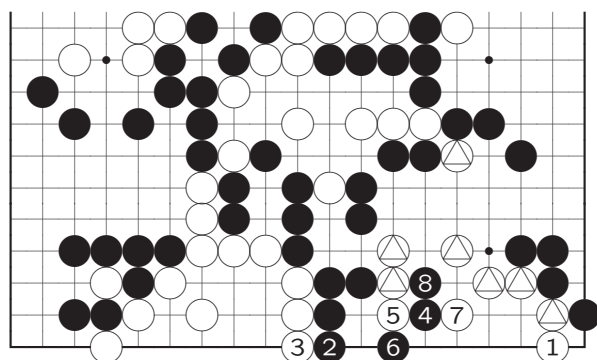
White:

Bottom (both groups): 14, top: 42, left side: 4, center: 2, and komi: 7.5.

Total: 69.5 points.

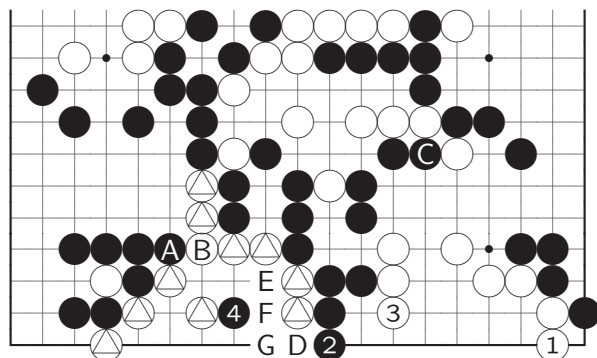
Compared to our previous count, White's territory has increased while Black's is about the same.

The game is still close, but has been reversed. In conclusion, Black shouldn't back down with ①.



Variation 86 for 158

If White defends at ①, as is usual in the corner, ② is a double threat tesuji and White finds himself in great danger up to ⑧.



Variation 87 for 158

If White defends the bottom right group with ③, Black hits White's vital point at ④, and White's lower left group dies.

This is why Black exchanged ① for ② before cutting at ③ earlier.

After ④, D and E are miai, as are F and G.

Play Double Sente as Early as Possible

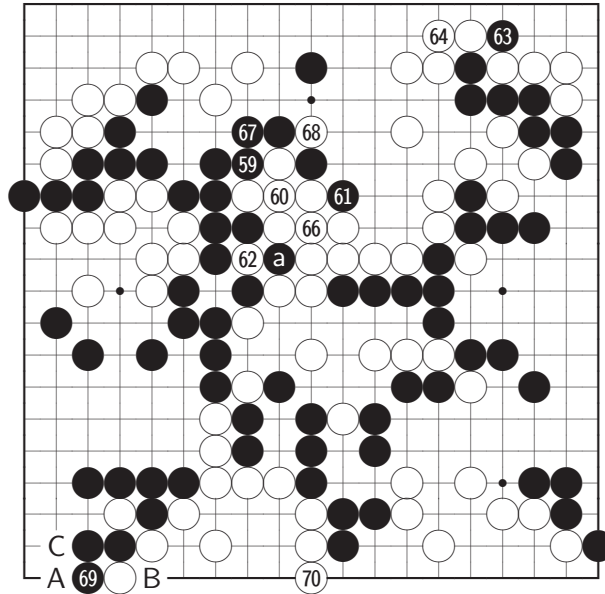
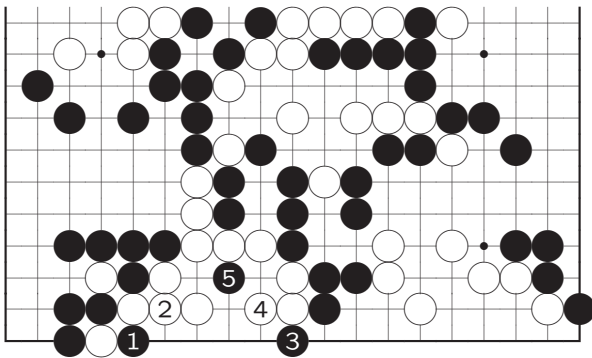


Diagram 29
(Moves: 159-170)

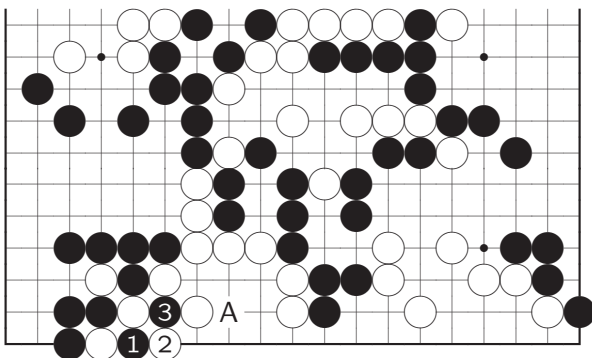
165 at a

The atari at 69 was a double sente endgame move, and defending at 70 was the best response. White at 69 instead would lead to A to C. In this case, White may still choose to reinforce at 70 after the sente exchange, but he doesn't have to. Black was winning by between 1.5 and 2.5 points up to 70.



Variation 88 for 170

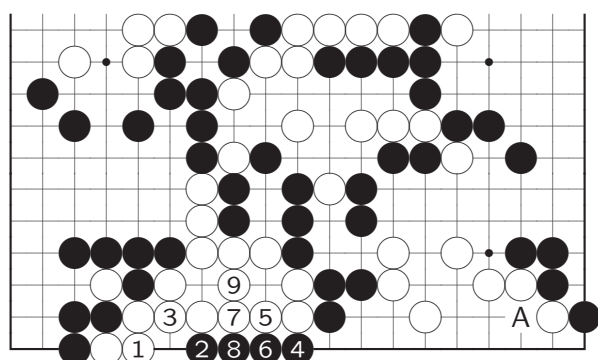
If White doesn't defend at the bottom, his group dies up to 5.



Variation 89 for 170

White might think about creating a ko with 2, but he doesn't have enough ko threats to win it.

Falling back to the vital point with 2 at A doesn't work either. Black will still capture at 3 and White will die.

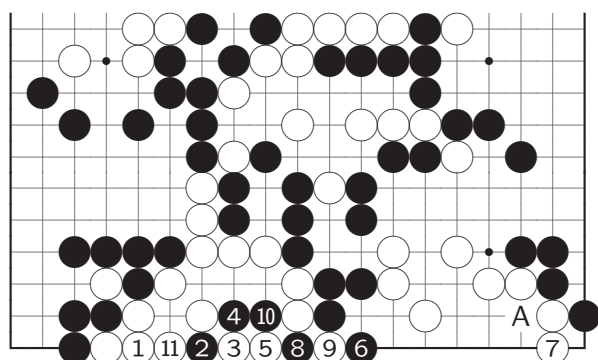


Variation 90 for (170)

Connecting at ① is careless. Black ② strikes at the vital point and White doesn't have a good response.

The best White can do is beg for life up to ⑨, but he has lost practically all his territory at the bottom and Black can still bully his lower right group at A.

This is why White may still play ⑦⑩ in Diagram 29, even if he can play ⑥⑨ first. Strictly speaking, ⑥⑨ is only double sente in the local sense in this game.



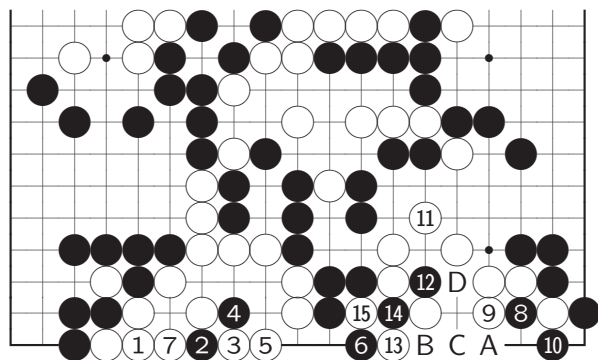
Variation 91 for (170)

If White ataris at ③, Black will exchange ④ for ⑤ before revealing his wonderful double threat at ⑥.

The moves up to ⑪ are forced and when Black recaptures the ko with ⑫ (at ⑧), White should resign.

The timing of ⑥ is important. Black should wait to see how White answers ② and ④, before playing ⑥. If Black exchanges ⑥ for ⑦ too early, he may unnecessarily give up a big endgame move at A.

⑫ at ⑧

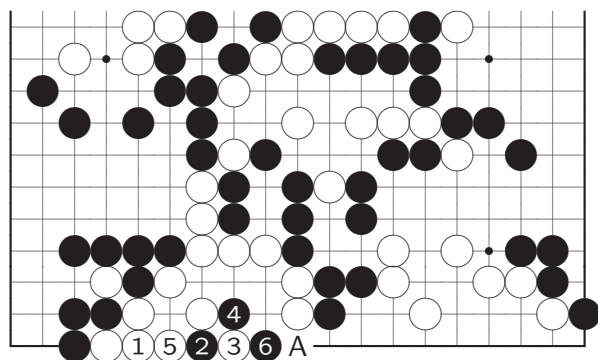


Variation 92 for (170)

White can defend the lower left group with ⑦, but ⑫ is another tesuji and White still has to fight a ko up to ⑮.

If White plays ⑬ at A, the result is still ko after Black B, White C and ⑭.

If ⑪ or ⑬ is at D, White dies after Black C.



Variation 93 for (170)

Capturing a stone at ⑤ also leads to ko, because ⑥ makes miai of connecting under at A and starting a ko with ②.

Go Is a Battle of Wills

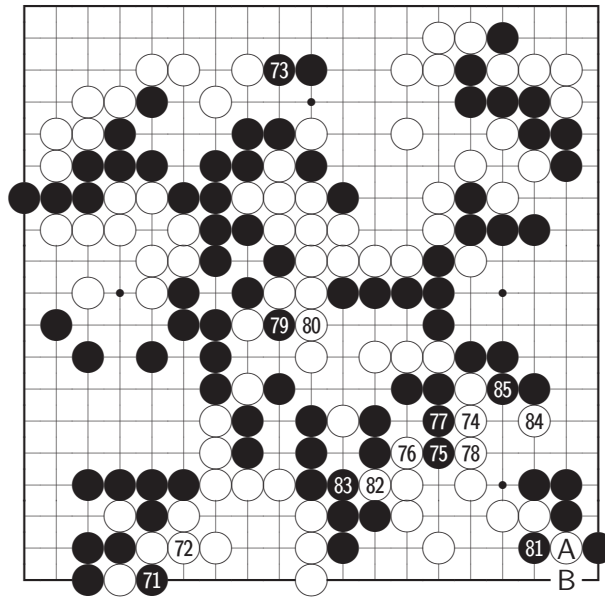


Diagram 30
(Moves: 171-185)

Military power wins battles, but spiritual power wins wars.

—George Marshall

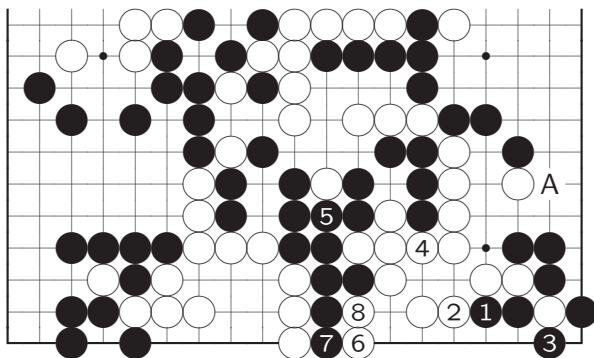
Black eventually had to defend at ⑦③. The game was close, but Black still maintained a small lead.

Black ⑧① was another big endgame move. This kind of move is normally worth seven points, but it was worth even more in this game because Black planned to bully White further in the corner.

Black wanted White to live in gote, but White resisted with ⑧④. This attachment was characteristic of Lee's style. It's hard to say whether ⑧④ is correct or not, but it's difficult for Black to answer.

Lee's fierce endgame moves apply psychological pressure to his opponents and sometimes cause them to make mistakes. White ⑧④ can be viewed as an expression of Lee's fighting spirit in the endgame.

It was a tough choice, but Gu chose to resist with ⑧⑤.



Variation 94 for ⑧⑤

If Black tries to counter-attack with ① and ③, White can still live up to ⑧.

Meanwhile, Black needs to go back and defend at A in gote.

If Black neglects to capture at ③, White can extend to ③ himself.

Sacrifice Plums for Peaches

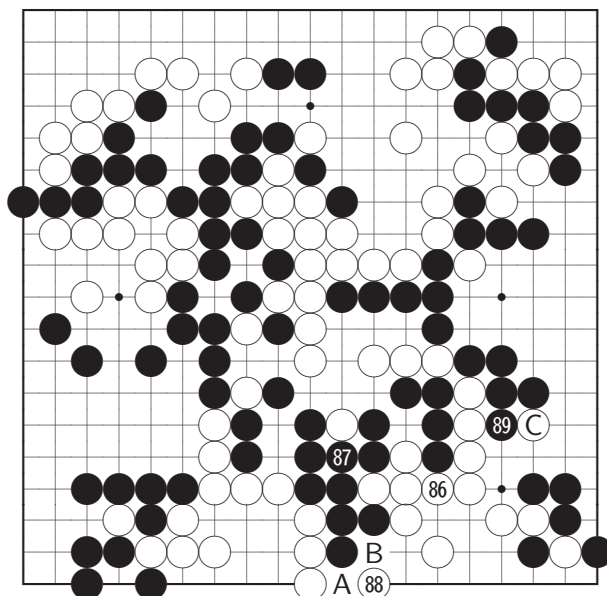
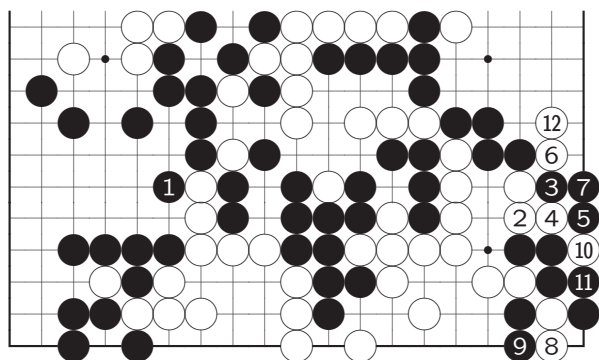


Diagram 31
(Moves: 186-189)

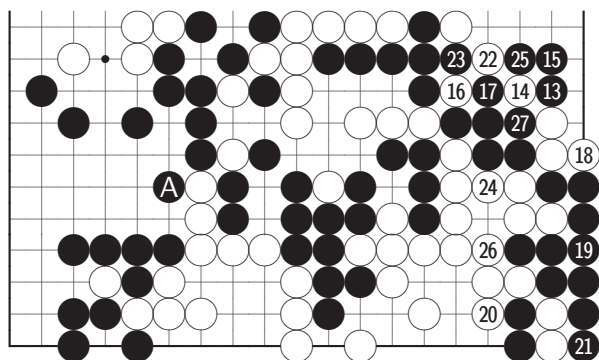
White lived with ⑧⑧, which made A and B miai, and Black captured ③ (⑧④) with ⑧⑨. White was able to take sente, but he had to pay for it with ③. This is what makes Lee's endgame unconventional.



Variation 95 for ⑧⑨

Black can tenuki and defend the left side with ①, which is also big.

However, White will counter with ② to ⑫, starting a capturing race inside Black's territory.



Variation 96 for ⑧⑨

Liberties count here, and ⑬ is the tesuji which saves Black from disaster.

However, White is still able to squeeze eight points out of Black in sente up to ⑳. In contrast, ① is worth only six points, so Black decided not to tenuki in the game.

If Black plays ⑬ at ⑭ instead, White will win the capturing race after playing atari at ⑱.

Greed Leads Not to Success

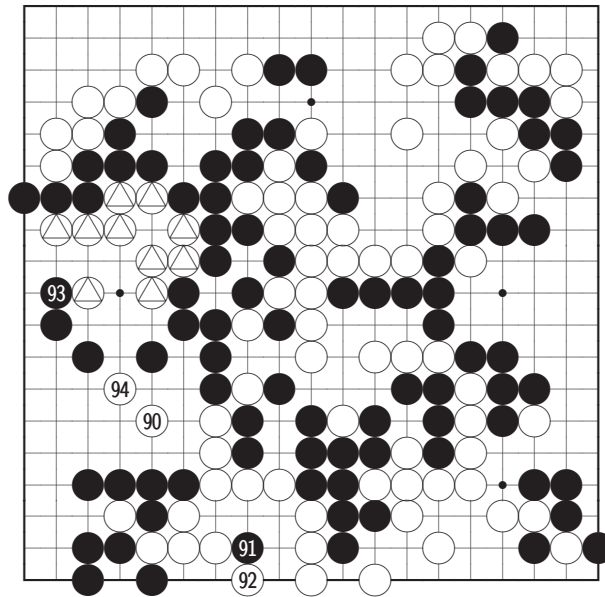
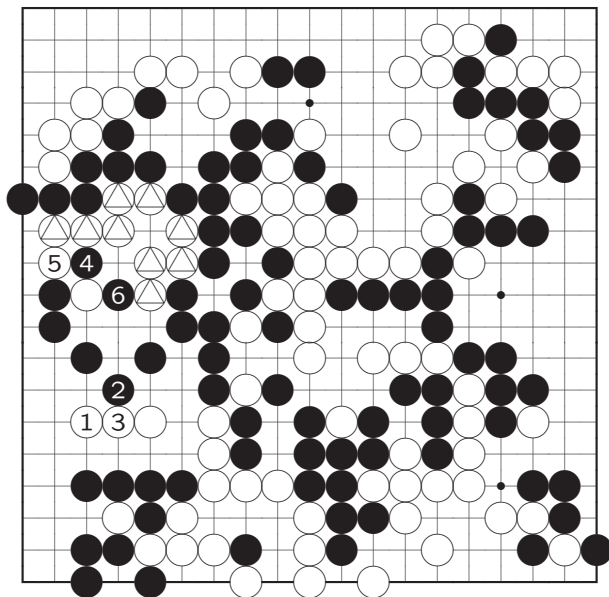


Diagram 32
(Moves: 190-194)

Black ⑨③ was nicely timed, and ⑨④ helped White's marked group indirectly.

The situation in this part of the board was finely balanced, so White had to keep his wits about him and resist the temptation to be rash or greedy.

In long games like this it's natural to become weary, and that's when you need to take the most care.



Variation 97 for ⑨④

It might look like White can jump all the way to ①, but that's too greedy.

Black counter-attacks with ② to ⑥, and White's marked group dies abruptly.

There's Many a Slip Between the Cup and the Lip

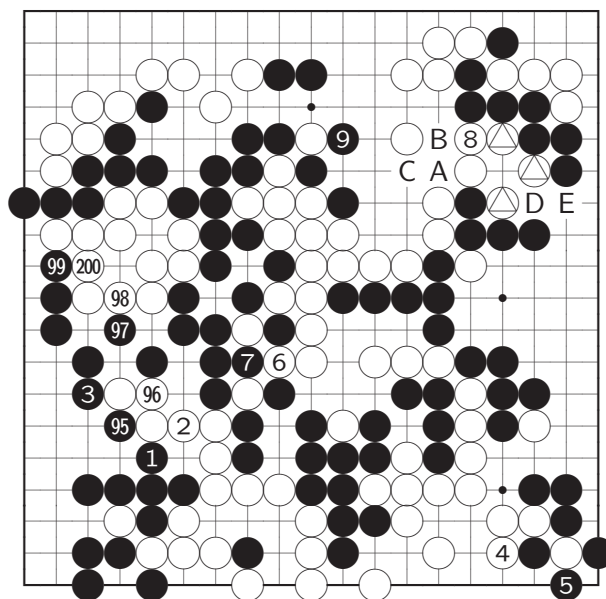


Diagram 33
(Moves: 195-209)

Black 95 was another exquisite endgame tesuji. Black's endgame up to here was excellent and Gu was still leading by about 1.5 points.

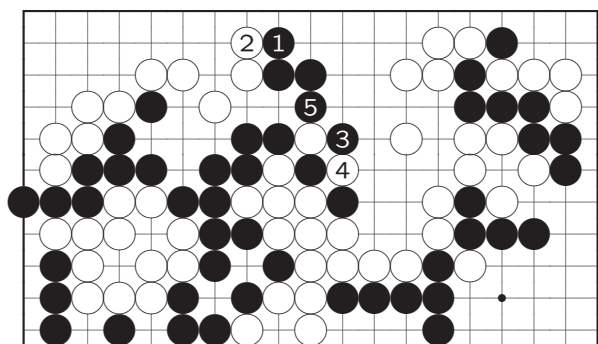
White's endgame move at 8 was worth eight points. If Black can play here first he'll cut at A, followed by White B, Black at 8, White C and Black D; capturing the marked stones.

In that case, Black won't need to reinforce at E later, which earns him seven points (including the marked stones). White's center is also one point smaller, which gives us eight points in total.

At this moment, Black suddenly played 9. It was the losing move.

Disaster can befall we frail humans at any time. In the Greek myth of Ancaeus, King of Samos, a soothsayer told the king that he would not live to taste the wine of his vineyard. Shortly afterwards, Ancaeus embarked on a quest with the Argonauts, but upon his safe return the wine was ready.

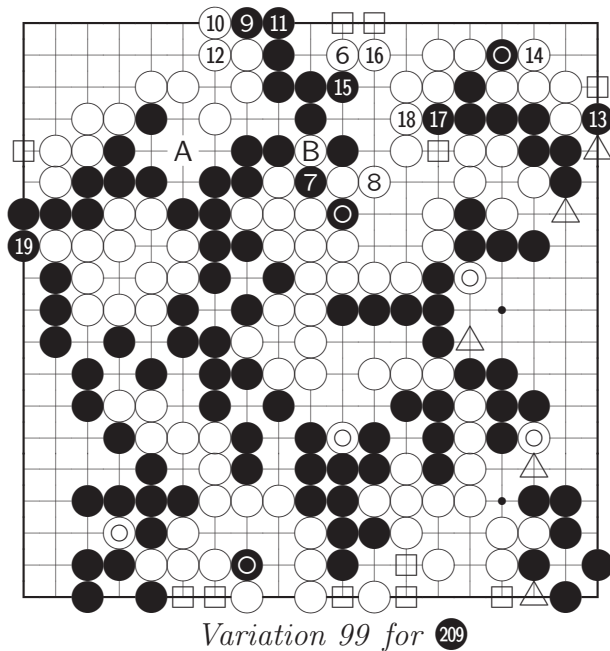
Ancaeus summoned the soothsayer and gloated as he raised his cup, but the man only replied by saying "There's many a slip between the cup and the lip." Suddenly, there was a commotion, as a wild boar was nearby. Ancaeus put down his wine to deal with the boar, but it ended up taking his life.



Variation 98 for 209

Black should have exchanged 1 for 2 first, then he would have maintained his winning position up to 5.

Let's see how the endgame would have proceeded from here, and practice counting once again...

**Black:**

Right side: 34, bottom left: 25, center 3, and a net lead of 1 prisoner.

Total: 63 points.

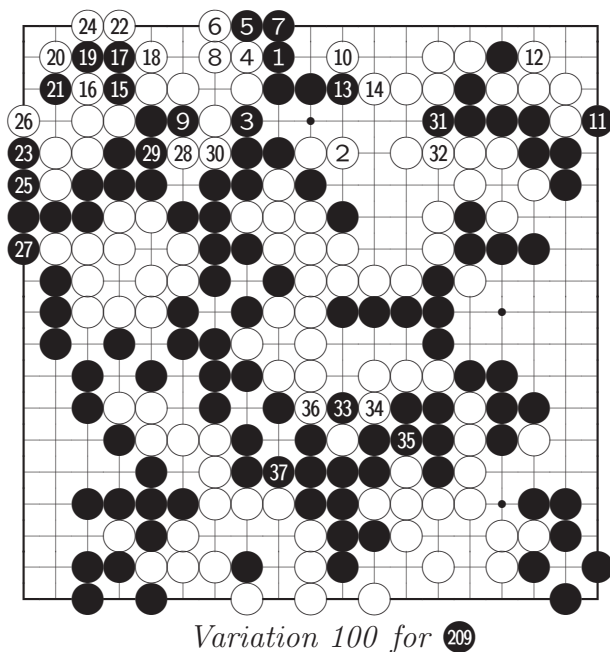
White:

Bottom (both groups): 12.5, top left: 19, top right: 12.5, center: 7.5, left side: 2, and komi: 7.5.

Total: 61 points.

It's White's turn, and A and B are miai for Black.

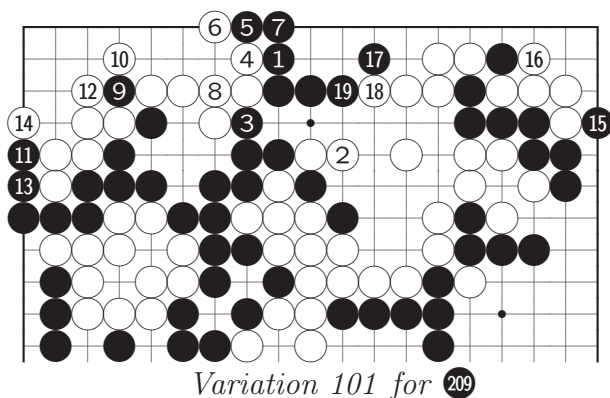
Given the size of the remaining endgame plays, Black is ahead by half a point.



White ② is also conceivable, but then ⑨ becomes bigger.

Cutting at ⑮ is a nice tesuji, and ⑲ and ⑳ are good followups. Wherever White answers, Black can reduce White's territory by two extra points with ㉓.

Up to ㉗, Black is winning by 1.5 points.



If White responds with ⑧, Black can still cut at ⑨.

White can save some points in the top left, but ⑪ and ⑬ are sente.

After ⑲, Black is still winning by 1.5 points.

White Reverses the Game

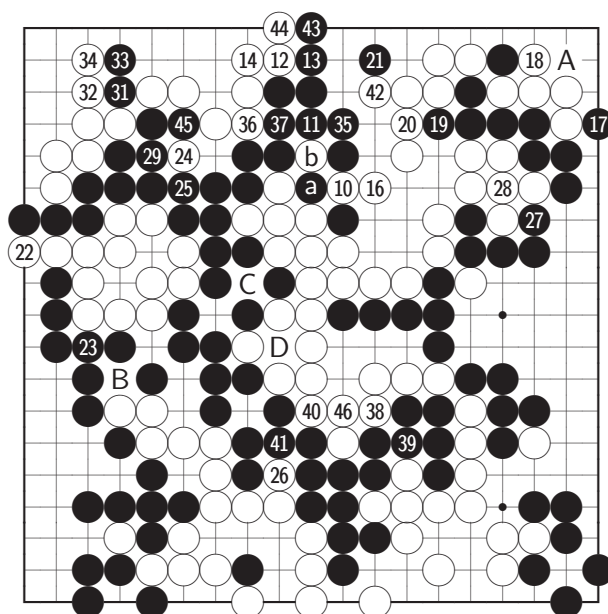
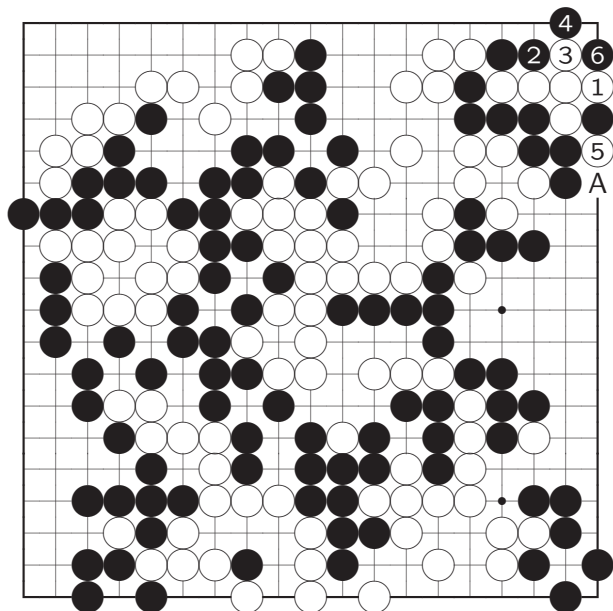


Diagram 34
(Moves: 210-246)

215 at (a), 230 at (b)

White 12 was a four point reverse sente move. The game was still very close, but White took the lead. White 18 may look strange, but it prevented Black A. Meanwhile, 23 stopped White from cutting at B and harassing Black's center group. Black 29 was only worth two points, because 36 was sente.

Black couldn't win the ko at 30 ((b)), because the double ko at C and D gave White unlimited ko threats, so he lost half a point with 35 and 36. He lost another two thirds after 38 and 40, and a half at 45. White 46 was worth more than two and a half points, and the game was completely decided.

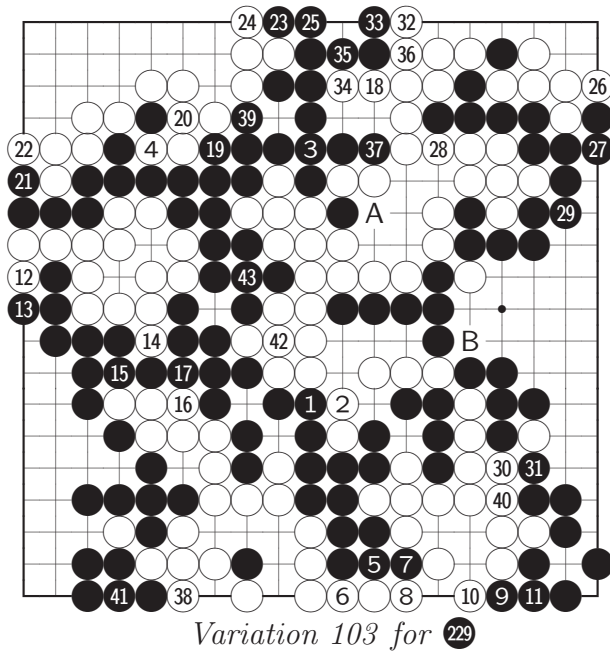


Variation 102 for 218

Blocking at 1 is a big mistake.

Black can start a ko with 2 to 6, which would be a disaster for White this late in the game.

Instead of 3, if White immediately captures at 5, Black at 3, White at 6 and Black A leads to an even more comfortable ko for Black.

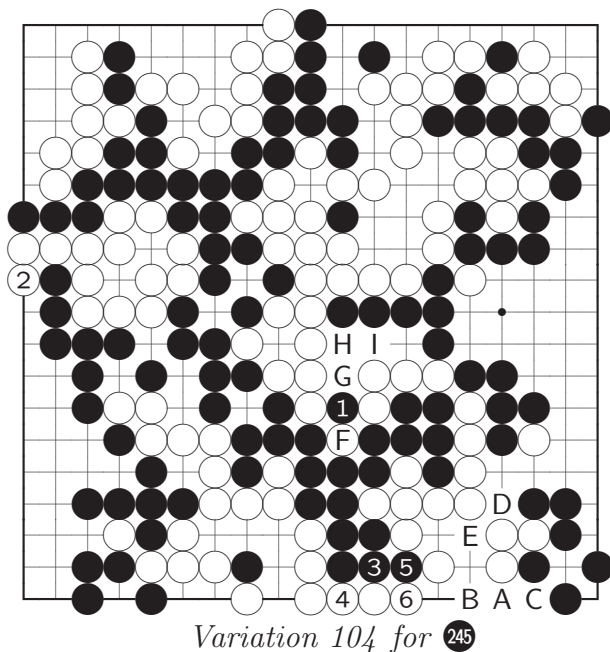


Instead of 29 in the game, 1 is sente and exchanging this move now erases the bad aji in Black's shape.

Next, Black should connect at 3, but he's still behind by half a point.

We can play out the remainder of the endgame with 4 to 43, and we see that Black is ahead by seven points on the board. This means White will win by half a point after adding komi.

Note that White still needs to play one more move at A and Black needs to defend at B later.



Capturing at 1 is a 2.5 point endgame move. Let's compare this variation to the position after White played at 46 in the actual game (previous page).

White's lower side is 1.5 points smaller, because if Black plays A to C later White may eventually have to spend one more move at E (if Black takes D).

Black also gained two thirds of a point at F. We calculate it as $\frac{2}{3}$ because White can atari at G to capture 1 later.

If Black exchanges G to I in sente, White will gain more points at the bottom (or sente) because 6 will be atari. There's no benefit for Black in playing G.

In the game, White has the potential to make another point at H. We count this as half a point because H is gote for both sides, so either player could play there.

Therefore, the value of 1 is actually slightly greater than 2.5 points: $1.5 + \frac{2}{3} + 0.5 = 2 + \frac{2}{3} = \frac{8}{3}$.

Losing a Won Game

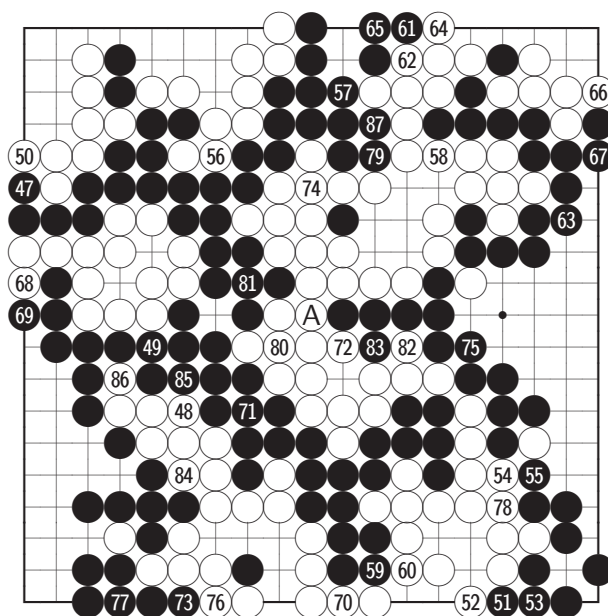


Diagram 35
(Moves: 247-287)

287 moves: White won by half a point.

Lee Sedol won the game in a shocking, last minute reversal. He was now leading the match 2–0.

Gu Li made another good start in the opening, but Lee turned the tables after settling his weak groups at the bottom and on the left side, without sustaining any significant damage.

White ⑨⑩ (A) was a mistake, and Gu was able to attack White's center group. In addition, Lee misjudged the implications of the ko fight, and the game was reversed again.

Gu's endgame was fine, almost until the end, but he made several small mistakes and lost a won game.

White only won by half a point, but using territory scoring White would have won by 1.5. The Chinese rules use area scoring, so Black gains a point when he plays last. This is partly why komi is 7.5 points.

The uncertainty of the last move means a half point lead can be comfortable or uncomfortable. In general, barring an unusual seki, White wins close games by either 0.5 or 2.5 and Black by either 1.5 or 3.5 points using this method of counting. This can be quite confusing if you're not used to it.

Lee's endgame is different to that of other top professionals. His play is fierce and is backed by deep reading. His unconventional moves and constant probing make the endgame harder than usual for his opponents. This intense psychological pressure sometimes causes his opponents to make mistakes, so Lee reverses many games with his magical endgame tactics.

Losing the game in this way was a heavy blow for Gu, because he maintained his lead throughout most of the endgame, only to make several small and unbelievable mistakes right at the end.

He was under a great deal of pressure; not just because he was playing a jubango against Lee, but because the large contingent of Chinese fans and reporters at the venue were expecting him to win.

In general, top pros don't make many mistakes in the endgame, and this game was an aberration for Gu. His challenge now was to let go of his despair and regain his balance in time for game three.

March

March 30, 2014, Chengdu, China: *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

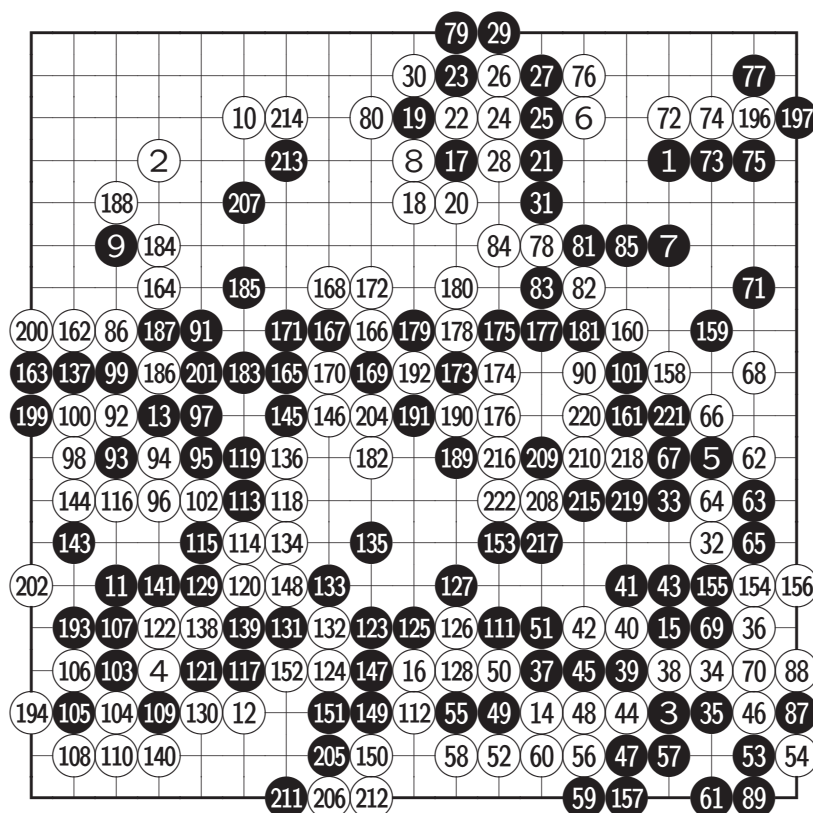


Diagram 1

(Moves: 1-222)

(142) at (109), (195) (203) at (173), (198) at (192)

Chengdu

The third game of the match was played in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China, on March 30, 2014. Lee Sedol played black.

Chengdu is a major city in Western China and has a long history as a regional hub—spanning more than 2,000 years. Marco Polo visited the city in the 13th century, and today it is home to towering skyscrapers, fiery cuisine and the irresistibly cute panda.

Since Lee Sedol won the first two games, he should have had a psychological advantage going into the third, but the mood of the series changed abruptly just before this game took place.

One week earlier, there was a game between Gu Li and Lee Sedol at the 4th Zhaoshang Cup (see Chapter 45). Lee's play in that game indicated that he was in poor form, and Gu won.

When Lee isn't in good form, he tends to rush; playing thin and overly territorial moves, instead of solid moves which emphasize power. If you look at that game, you'll feel that Lee's play was different to his play in the present match. The Zhaoshang Cup is a team tournament, and neither player would have cared about the result as much as they usually do. However, there was another game shortly afterwards which changed the flow of the Jubango even more dramatically.

The Round of 16 of the 10th Chunlan Cup took place just two days before this game, and Gu and Lee were paired together once again (based on drawing lots). This game was different. Both players did their best and you could feel the intensity of their fighting spirits from the beginning until the very end (see Chapter 46).

In the Chunlan Cup, Gu Li took the lead after a large trade on the right side, and maintained his lead throughout most of the game. Lee Sedol caught up near the end as usual, with his characteristic fierce and powerful moves, and almost reversed it. Nevertheless, Gu managed to hold on to the narrowest of leads amidst the chaos. Lee knew that he was losing by half a point, and that there was no way to catch up, so he resigned.

Winning those two games seemed to restore Gu Li's confidence, and relieve the mental pressure he felt about playing Lee Sedol in this match. On the other hand, Lee Sedol suffered a serious psychological blow and he only had one day to regain his composure before the Jubango resumed.

We humans are emotional creatures. Even for professionals, it can be difficult to dismiss a previous loss from your thoughts and be completely in the moment, especially when there isn't much time between games. However, if you don't do so, you will still be playing the previous game in some corner of your mind, draining your energy and distracting you from the game at hand. Part of being a strong Go player—especially a professional—is developing the mental toughness to do this, but we are all human.

In light of his two recent losses, some pundits claimed that Lee was saving his energy and stamina for the Jubango, and, that if he won, the pain of his recent failures would just melt away...

That Which Bends Is Not Always Weak

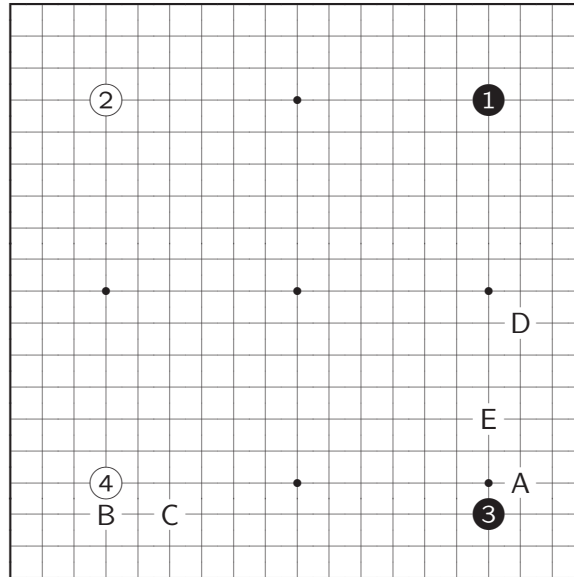


Diagram 2
(Moves: 1-4)

Yield and overcome; bend and be straight; empty and be full.

—Lao Zi, *Dao De Jing*

In Chapter 2, Black played ③ at A and we discussed White's possible response at B. In this game, Black played ③ facing his star point at ①, and White changed his stance accordingly with ④. Setting up a two star formation with ④ is the most popular choice in this opening.

After ③, White isn't as concerned about Black approaching at C anymore, and his focus shifts instead to the potential of Black's anticipated moyo (for example, if Black plays the Chinese Opening at D).

We touched upon the strategic advantages of ② in Chapters 1 and 2, and if you explored the variations in those chapters the flexibility of ② may already be apparent to you.

The important thing to grasp is the way in which White keeps his options open with ②. If Black plays ③, ④ suits the position nicely. If ③ is at A instead, ④ at B is a harmonious response. Of course, other moves are possible too. Go is not that simple.

Influencing the shape of the opening is a privilege of the first move, but some readers may object to White dancing in step with Black. Perhaps you would prefer ④ as an immediate approach around E?

There is great freedom in the opening, so you can choose any moves that appeal to you. Just understand that adapting smoothly to Black's choices is not weak. Such a strategy holds its own subtle power; like water slowly wearing down stone.

Black rarely plays the two star formation in contemporary openings, because professionals think it's too simple. It's nevertheless a nimble formation for White, which gives him two free hands to deal with whatever may come. Since Black has the first move and White has komi, the trend has been for White to focus on balance and flexibility, rather than immediate territory.

The Chinese Opening

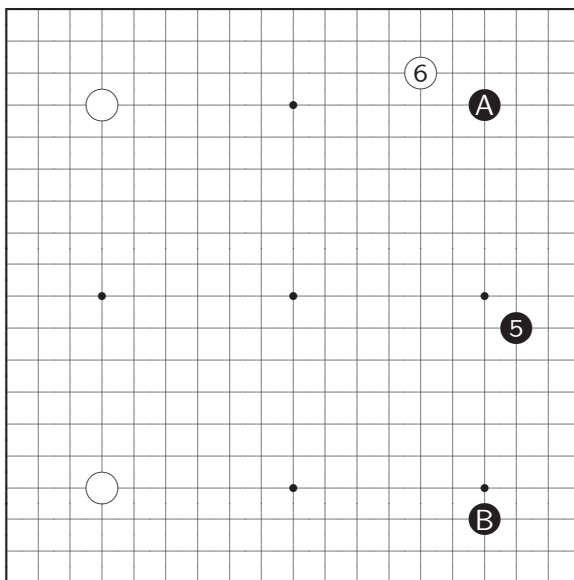
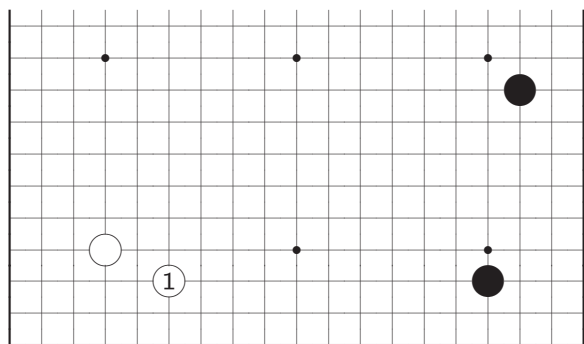


Diagram 3
(Moves: 5-6)

Lee Sedol started the game with the classic form of the Chinese Opening, at **A**, **B** and **5**.

This isn't Lee's favorite opening, but it seems that he was trying to clear his mind by playing something different. As far as openings go, the Chinese Opening is relatively straightforward and dependable.

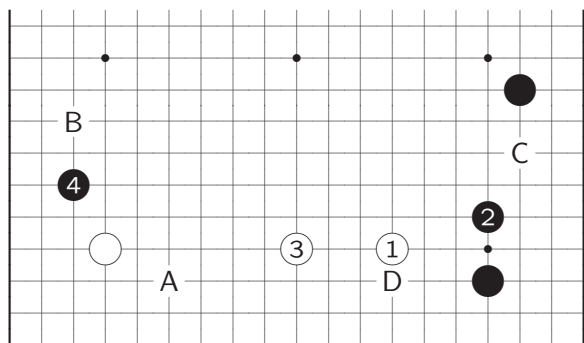


Variation 1 for ⑥

On the other hand, Gu Li likes to play the two star formation against the Chinese Opening, and he usually continues with the corner enclosure at **①**.

This is a firm way to reduce Black's potential at the bottom of the board.

From 2005 onwards, Gu often played **①** and it became quite popular amongst professionals. We'll discuss this 'Gu Li style' opening in Chapter 5.

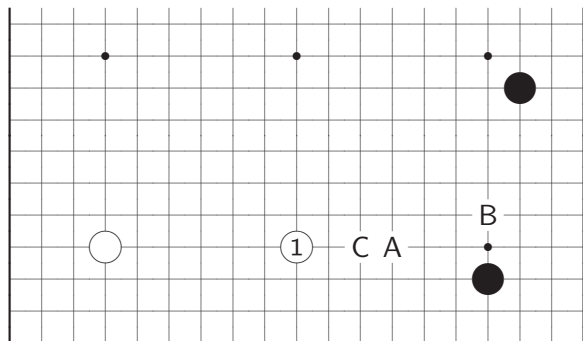


Variation 2 for ⑥

Approaching from the wider side with **①** is another popular strategy for reducing the potential of Black's Chinese Opening.

If Black encloses the corner with **②**, extending to **③** is natural and now it's Black's turn to reduce White's moyo with **④**.

White can continue with A or B next, and aims to invade at C later. Instead of **①**, White D is a similar idea which leads to another game.

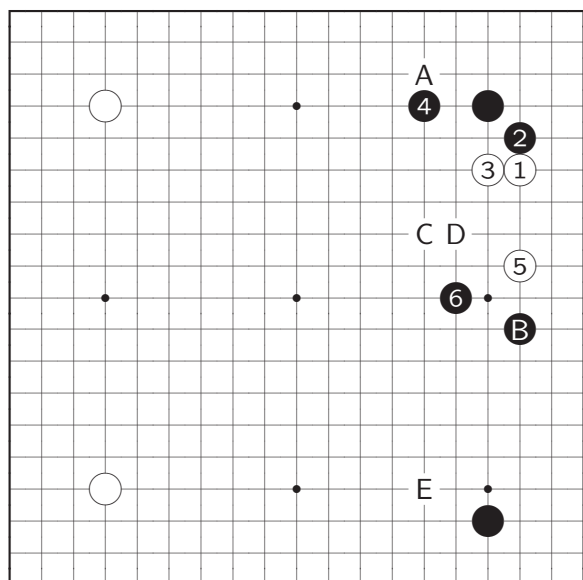


Variation 3 for ⑥

Extending immediately to ① is a more flexible strategy because White avoids exchanging A for B. This retains the possibility of entering Black's Chinese formation at B later.

Depending on how the game develops, White might still approach at A, but for now his strategy is to wait and see. Of course, this also gives Black the option of approaching at C to expand his moyo at some point.

We'll revisit this move in Chapter 8.



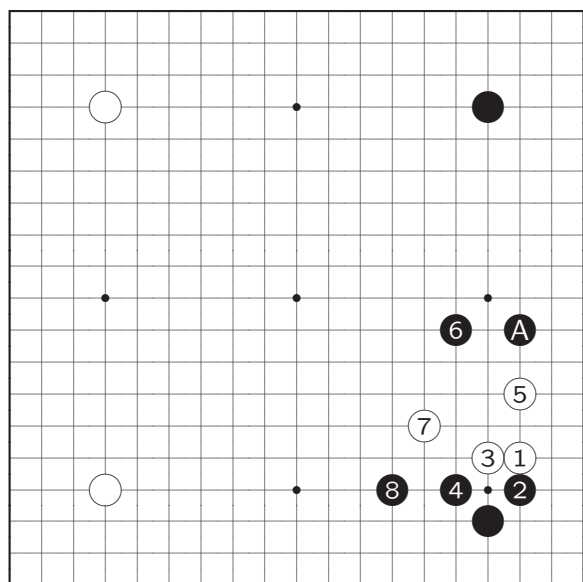
Variation 4 for ⑥

Approaching from the inside with ① goes against the direction of play.

It's better for White to approach from the wider side with A (as in the game). This is because White's potential on the right side is already limited by B.

After Black pressures White with ② to ⑥, White feels cramped and Black is developing potential on both sides. White's group still isn't settled and he should defend at C or D next. Black aims to enlarge his moyo at E soon.

In conclusion, it's too early to play at ①. White should wait until the areas around the top and the bottom of the board are more settled, at which point ① might become playable.



Variation 5 for ⑥

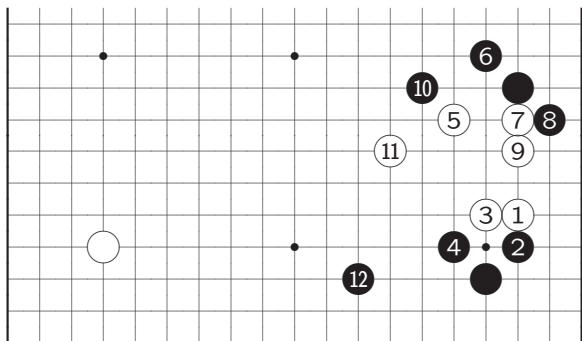
The low approach at ① is the worst option we will consider in this discussion.

Black can make White heavy by kicking with ②, and White can't establish a comfortable base because A is already pinching him.

Black will develop his positions on both sides while White runs out into the center. Most of the stones White plays in this area will end up occupying dame.

You may recall that the *Ten Golden Rules of Go* advise us to "Be unhurried about invading."

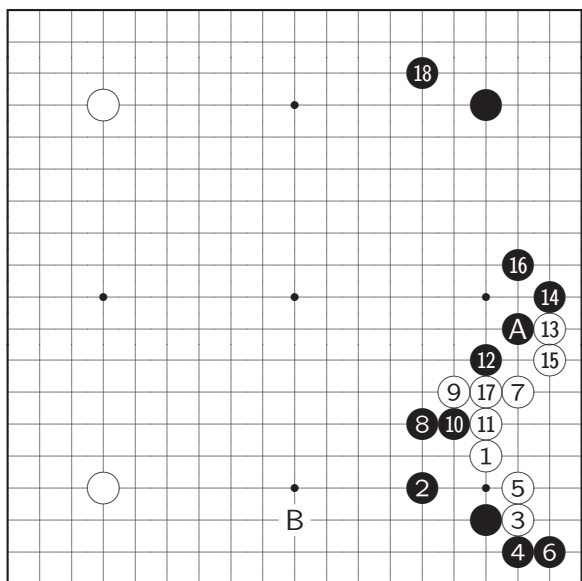
This is exactly the kind of situation the proverb cautions against. Always be careful not to enter your opponent's sphere of influence rashly, or too deeply.



Variation 6 for ⑥

White ⑤ and ⑦ comprise a more sophisticated technique for managing White's weak group flexibly, but Black is still able to develop on both sides while attacking.

White's original invasion at ① betrayed a jealous attitude, and no degree of tactical brilliance can make up for a fundamental strategic error of this nature.



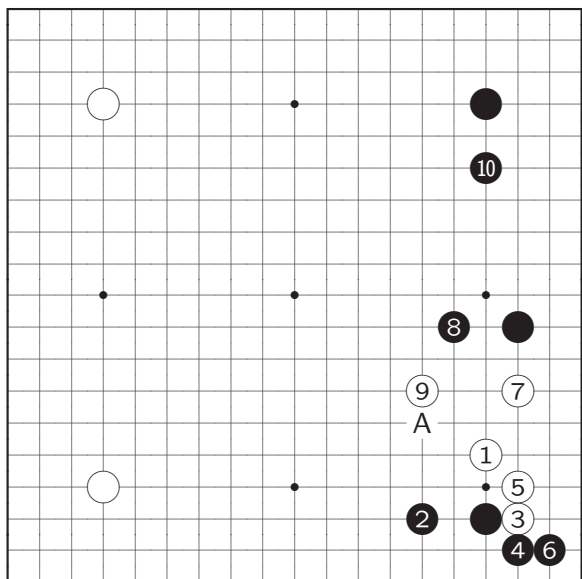
Variation 7 for ⑥

Approaching at ① is another example of playing on the narrow side. Black A is already acting as a pincer, so White's potential here is very small.

Black ② is the most common response when Black has a stone at A, and ⑥ maintains the pressure.

White can establish a small base with ⑦, and the moves from ⑧ to ⑰ form a middle game joseki. However, the result favors Black, because once again it's too early to enter his sphere of influence.

Black ⑱ is a steady way to develop Black's top right area, and the result favors Black. Instead of ⑱, Black also wants to extend at B, but his advantage will be less certain if he allows White to approach at ⑱.



Variation 8 for ⑥

Black ② is another good idea, because after ⑦ Black has already closed the door to his territory in the bottom right.

This gives Black a free hand to develop a moyo in the top right.

If White doesn't move out with ⑨, Black can seal him in at A.

Note how A would loosely connect ② and ⑧ with a two space jump and large knight's move. This is what to look for when aiming or threatening to seal a group in.

There are whole books dedicated to the Chinese Opening, so we won't go into more detail here.

There Are Many Paths to Success

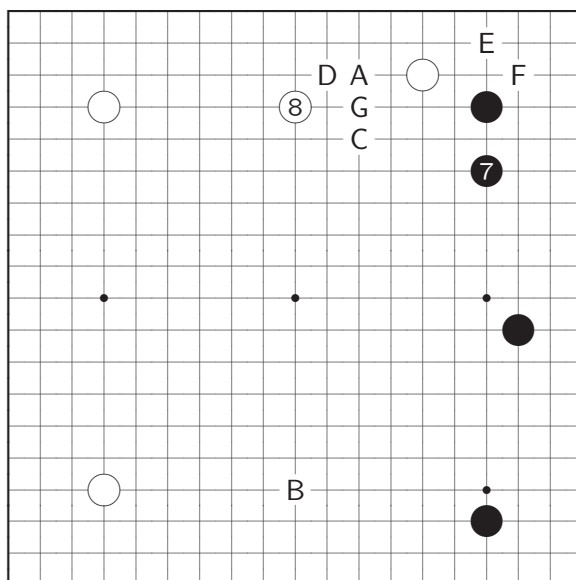


Diagram 4
(Moves: 7-8)

Black defended at ⑦, which is common in this opening, and White simply extended to ⑧ at the top.

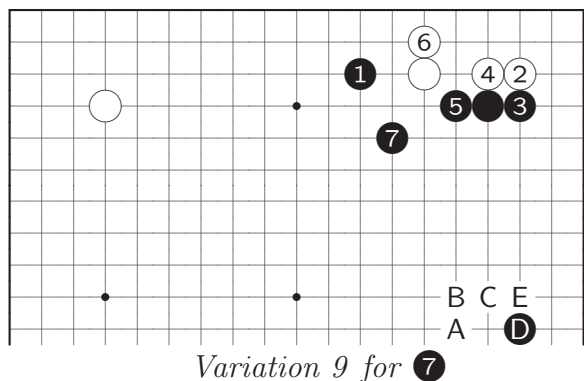
Most professionals stopped playing ⑧ because it makes it easy for Black to invade at A later. However, that doesn't mean ⑧ is a bad move—professionals just tend to place a premium on cash in the bank.

If Black has a stone around B later, he can also exchange C for D as part of a large moyo strategy. In contrast, if the players follow the prevalent joseki with ⑧ at E, Black F and White D, Black can't invade and can only develop the center later (e.g. by pressing at G). This limits Black's options.

There are many effective ways of playing Go, and so many unexplored avenues. Even in the middle game, the kaleidoscopic selection of possible strategies is breathtaking, so you should never allow yourself to be fooled into believing there's only one possible move.

Perhaps we Go players are excessively fond of the phrase, 'the only move'. In practice, the number of situations where there really is just one viable move are far fewer than those where there are choices.

There are many paths to success and they are always branching. Let's see some concrete examples...

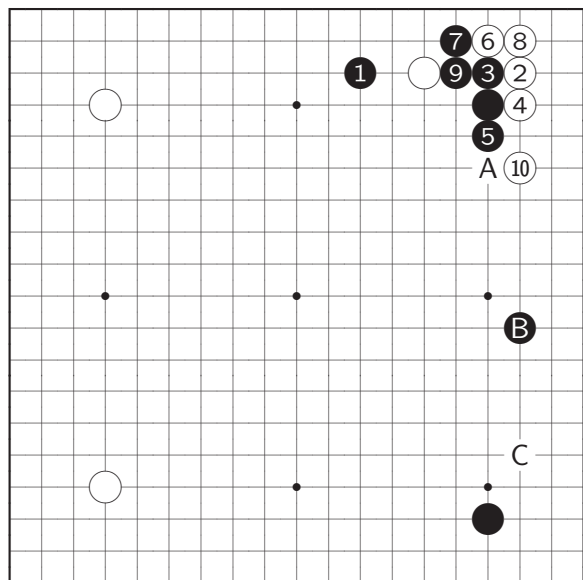


Variation 9 for ⑦

...but first let's address ①, which doesn't harmonize with the standard Chinese Opening. It's difficult to find a good response after White invades at ②.

Blocking at ③ seems to help Black to develop the right side, but White will be able to reduce with A, B or C, so Black's right side moyo feels out of kilter.

This joseki is usually played when Black has a high stone on the right side around C. It doesn't work as well when Black's stone is low (at D or E).



Variation 10 for ⑦

Blocking on the other side with ③ isn't good either, and that's why Black prefers to play ① at A.

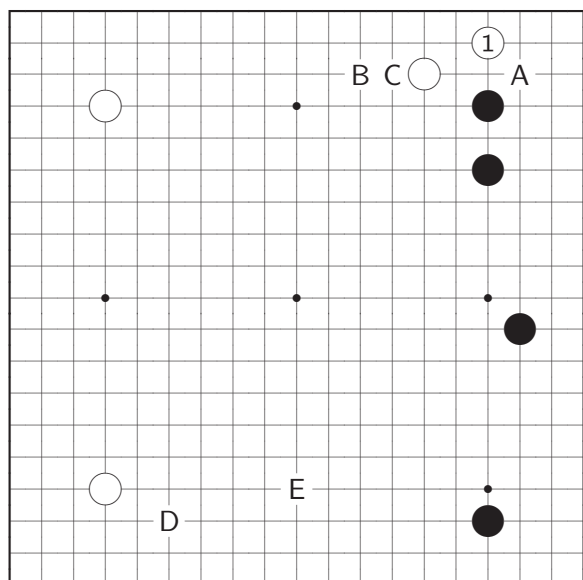
The joseki up to ⑩ is natural, but ② ends up in an awkward position. Black wishes ② were at C now.

Even though joseki are said to provide an even result, that's only true in the local context.

Your strategy must be flexible, and should take all the stones that are already on the board into account.

Having a rigid approach—perhaps with a favorite joseki—isn't good, because it may not suit the position and your stones will easily become inefficient.

If you keep your mind open to the existence of many paths, you will have the freedom to try new things. This is both challenging and exciting.



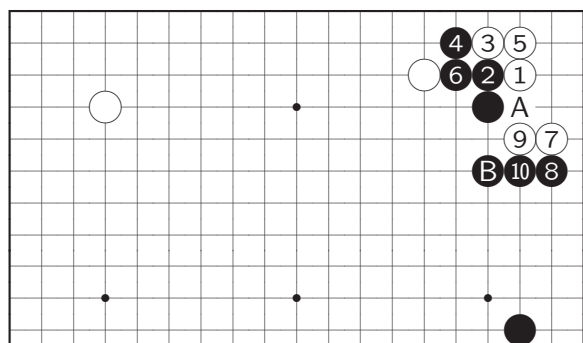
Variation 11 for ⑧

Sliding at ① was the most common move in this opening for a long time. Black can choose between local responses like A, B and C later, depending on the overall situation.

It's not clear yet what the best response in the top right is, so Black might tenuki now and play around D or E. The idea is to see how White responds.

This is an important and subtle point; since there are many paths, it's sometimes better not to commit to any particular path, or settle the shape, until you see how the board develops elsewhere.

Since ignoring ① proved effective for Black, some players began to experiment with ① at A...

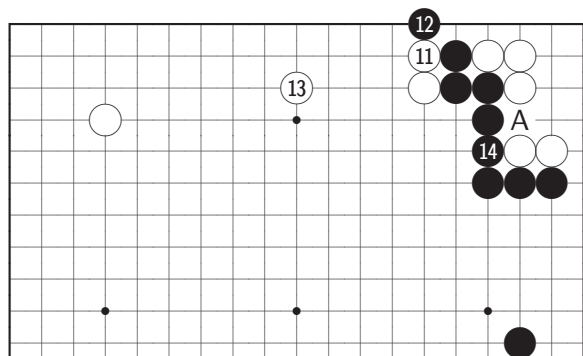


Variation 12 for ⑧

White's invasion at ① is very severe, which makes it hard to ignore. Splitting White's stones with ② is a common sense response.

If Black plays ② at A, White will simply connect at ②. In that case, Black's play would be considered slack and ② would end up being over-concentrated.

The variation up to ⑩ is a fragment of a well known joseki.



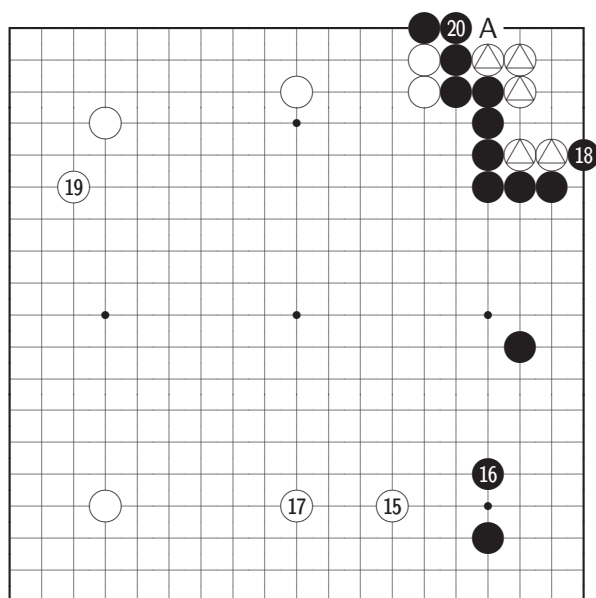
Variation 13 for ⑧

White ⑪ is the result of recent research, and can be regarded as something of a prototype joseki.

Joseki books tell us that White needs to live in the corner with A now, but the board is wider than just the corner and developing rapidly with ⑪ and ⑬ is also conceivable.

After ⑭, White can tenuki and the result is even.

Since White has mostly settled the shape of the top right corner in sente, he now has more information about how to play elsewhere on the board...



Variation 14 for ⑧

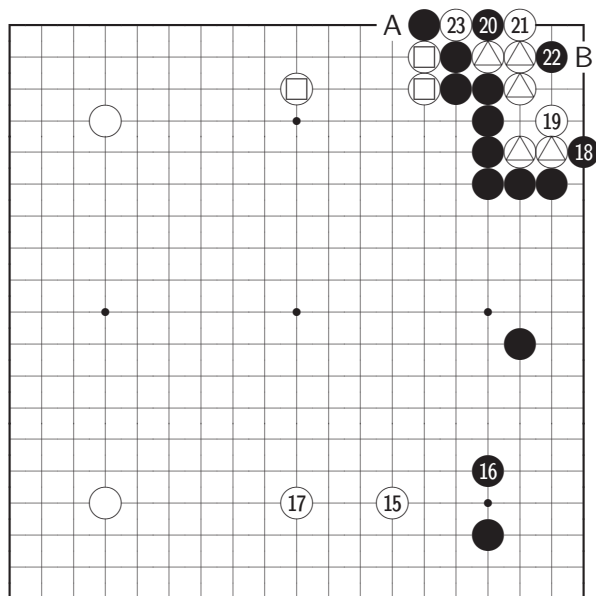
For example, White might use sente to limit Black's large moyo and develop rapidly with ⑮ and ⑰.

White's marked group is more resilient than it looks, because descending at A is sente, but what if Black wants to capture the corner, to 'punish' White?

One Go proverb tells us "There is death in the hane," so ⑱ appears to be the vital point for life and death, but White still isn't completely captured.

White can ignore ⑱ in exchange for another big point at ⑲, and he still has a chance of living in the corner later (see the variation below).

Black ⑳ captures the corner, but White takes sente again and has the better position. Even giving up five stones and a corner is possible if you take enough compensation! There are many paths to success.



Variation 15 for ⑧

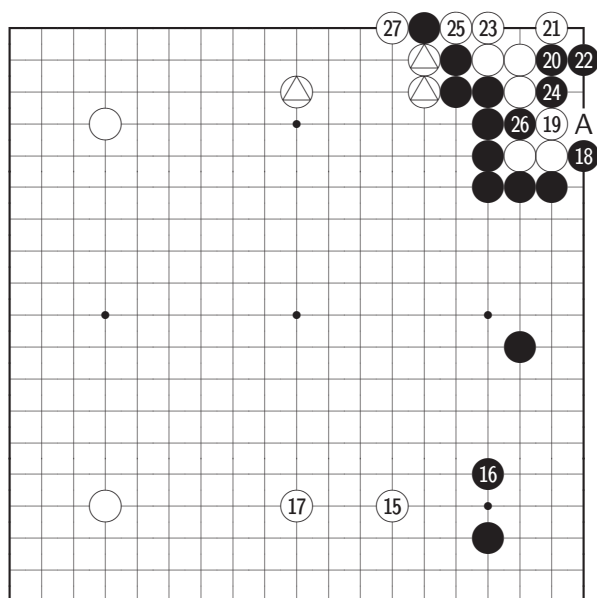
It's too early to play in the corner right now, but later White can still make a ko with ⑲ to ⑳.

The ko is heavy for Black so, if White does play ⑲ now, Black shouldn't rush to start the ko either.

Even if Black wins the ko, the result won't be that impressive because White will be able to play two moves elsewhere.

Meanwhile, if White wins the ko (at A) his marked weak groups will become connected and strong.

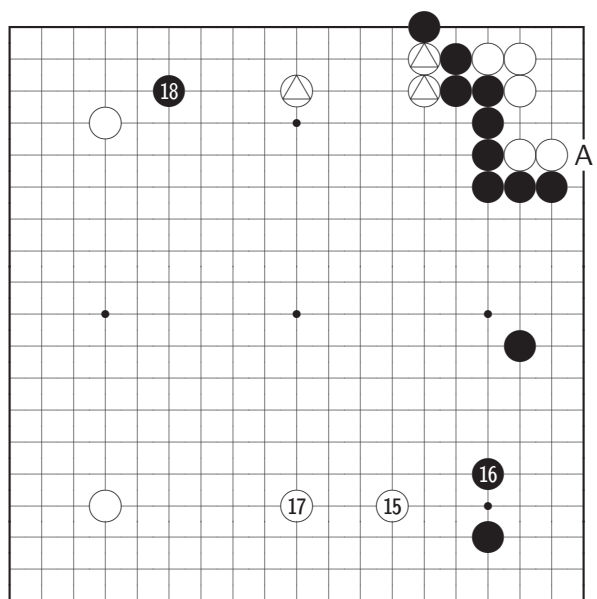
White also has some local ko threats, starting at B.



Variation 16 for ⑧

If Black doesn't want to fight the ko he can play ②① to ②⑥ in the endgame, but it's not good to do this too early, because White's marked stones become strong.

Instead of ②⑤, if White connects at ②⑥ Black will take a liberty at A. White's liberties will then be too short to cut at ②⑤, and his corner stones will be captured.



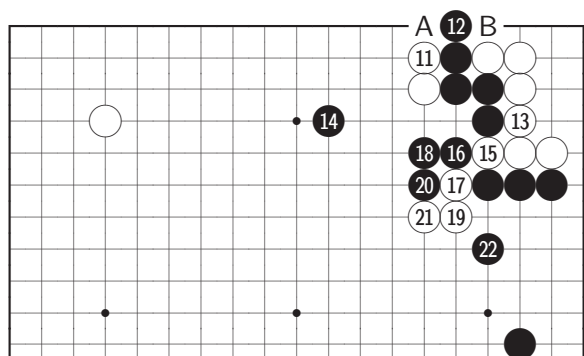
Variation 17 for ⑧

Since playing to capture the corner with A doesn't work properly at this stage, it's better for Black to invade around ①⑧.

Black's position in the top right is quite solid and powerful, so Black wants to use it to attack.

After Black plays at ①⑧, we can see that White's marked stones are relatively thin and weak. Black plans to attack the marked stones, or (if White defends them), use ①⑧ to take profit in the top left.

We called ①⑧ an invasion, but when an invasion is backed by nearby power like this it's possible to gradually turn the tables and take the initiative from your opponent. You want to shift from defending to attacking, when you can.



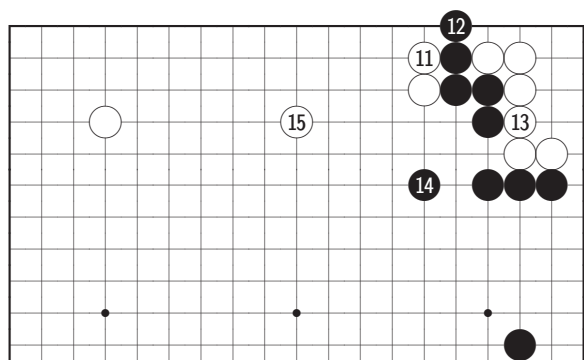
Variation 18 for ⑧

If Black descends at ①②, instead of playing the hane at A, the variations we just explored no longer work. This is because B isn't sente for White.

In this case, White should reinforce the corner with ①③.

Now there are many possible choices. For example, Black can pincer with ①④ and steel himself to fight after White cuts at ①⑦.

The moves up to ②② are playable for both sides.

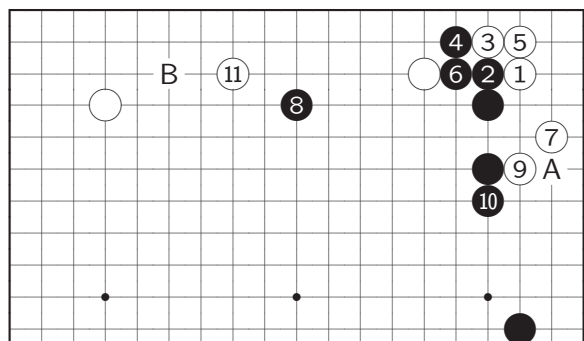


Variation 19 for ⑧

Defending the cutting point with ⑭ is also possible.

White will be happy to extend along the top with ⑮, but Black will have sente to expand his moyo at the bottom.

This variation is playable too.

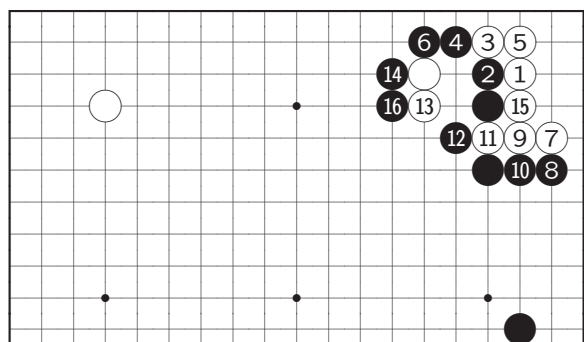


Variation 20 for ⑧

If Black plays at ⑧ immediately, instead of attaching at A, White can kick at ⑨ in sente before approaching at ⑪.

This variation is still playable for Black, but since the right side is left open most players wouldn't be as happy with this as they would with Variation 12.

Instead of ⑧, approaching at B is also conceivable.



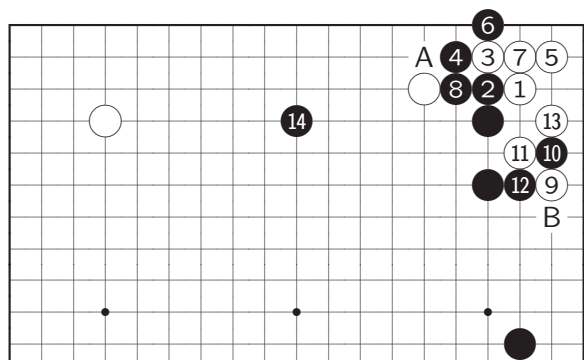
Variation 21 for ⑧

Pushing underneath with ⑥ is also possible.

The idea behind ⑥ is that it prevents White from blocking at the same point.

White will still play ⑦ to ⑨, and extending at ⑬ is an interesting move which exposes cutting points in Black's position.

White takes sente after ⑯, and it's another game.



Variation 22 for ⑧

The tiger's mouth at ⑤ feels somewhat out of place in this opening, because Black can exchange ⑥ to ⑬ in sente before extending to ⑭.

Notice how the exchange of ⑥ for ⑦ means that A is no longer sente for White. Moreover, while White B will be big later, it's too slow to play right now.

We've merely scratched the surface in the preceding analysis, but hopefully this practical illustration of the many paths will help you to expand your perception of the countless possibilities in Go.

A Tactical Approach

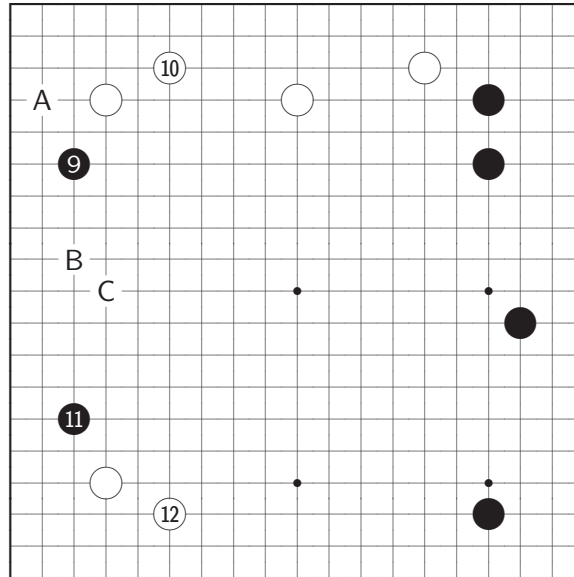
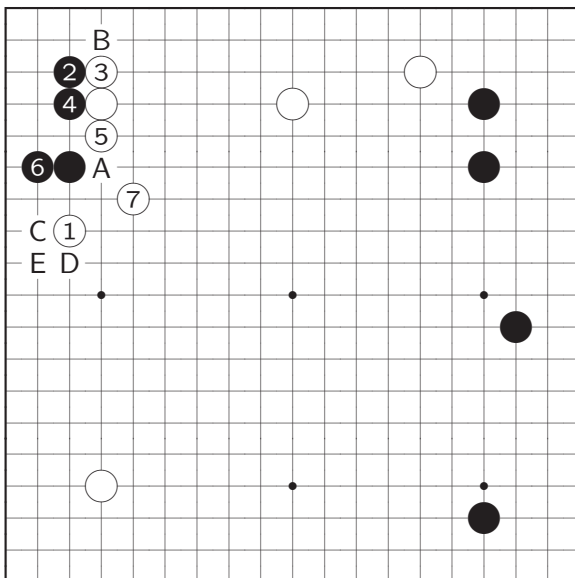


Diagram 5
(Moves: 9-12)

Approaching at the bottom with ⑨ at ⑫ is more common, but Lee chose to reduce White with ⑨.

Black ⑪ was a tactical approach to the opening. Black could also continue with ⑪ at A or B, which would be simpler. Playing ⑪ at ⑫, followed by White at ⑪ and Black C, is another possible tactic.



Variation 23 for ⑩

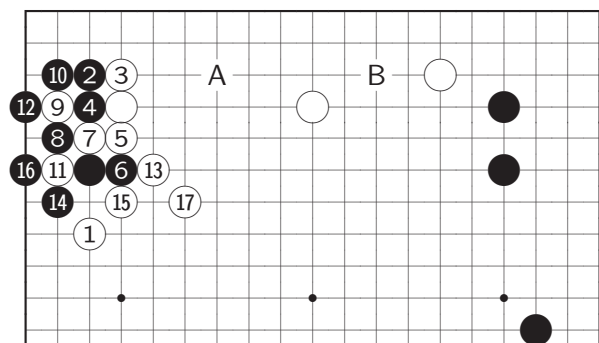
Pincering at ① is another strategy.

This is a well known joseki and the result is satisfactory for both players, but we can expect that Lee would push up with ⑥ at A instead.

Compared to the shape in the next variation, Black's position in the corner is thinner, with slightly less territory, and moves around B potentially threaten Black.

However, White's outside position is also thinner, so there are pros and cons to each joseki.

Later on, if Black is in trouble in the corner or the area on the left becomes small, Black can attach at C to expand his eyespace. White usually answers C at D, because if he hanes at E Black's crosscut at D is difficult to deal with.



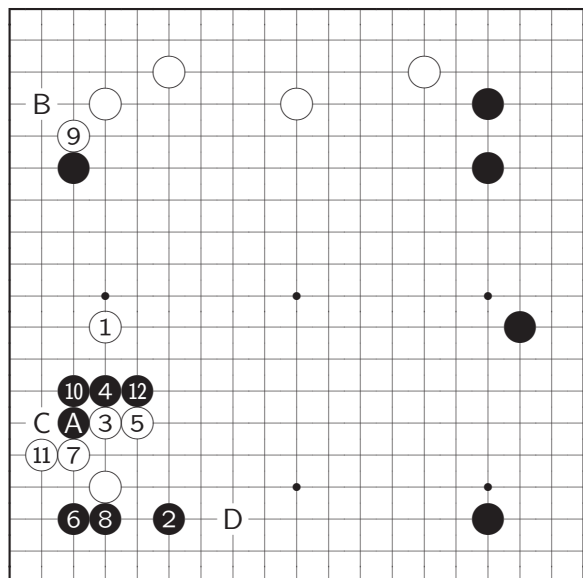
Variation 24 for ⑩

After ① to ⑤, we can expect Black to push up with ⑥. This move is more appropriate in this situation.

The moves from ① to ⑰ form another joseki, but the result is slightly better for Black than the previous variation.

That's because Black can invade the top with either A or B later. We'll examine A in Chapter 7.

After ⑰, Black can take sente and develop his moyo at the bottom.



Variation 25 for ⑫

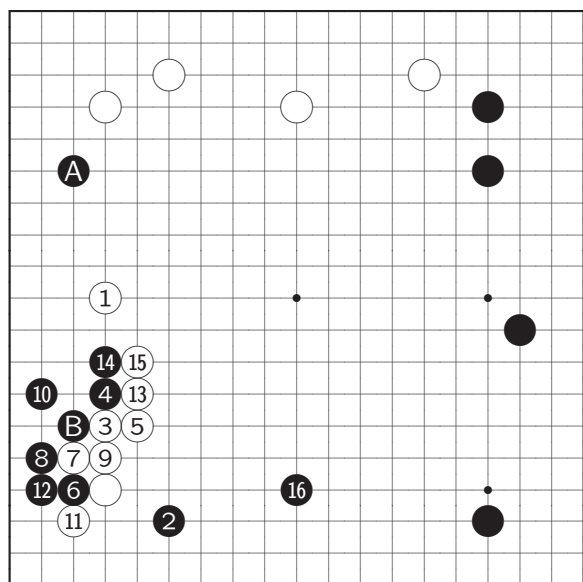
White might also consider pinching A (⑪ in the game) with ①.

However, after the moves through to ⑧, Black has good continuations at B and ⑩, and the moves up to ⑫ are playable for Black.

The sequence from ② to ⑧ forms part of an obsolete joseki, and White would usually complete the joseki by playing ⑨ as the atari at C.

The local result after C is regarded as being slightly better for White, because White is thick and approaching with White D later will be powerful.

Remember though that the board is wide, and if White completes the joseki at C, Black will be happy to slide to B. White ⑨ in this variation prevents that, but Black is nevertheless satisfied.



Variation 26 for ⑫

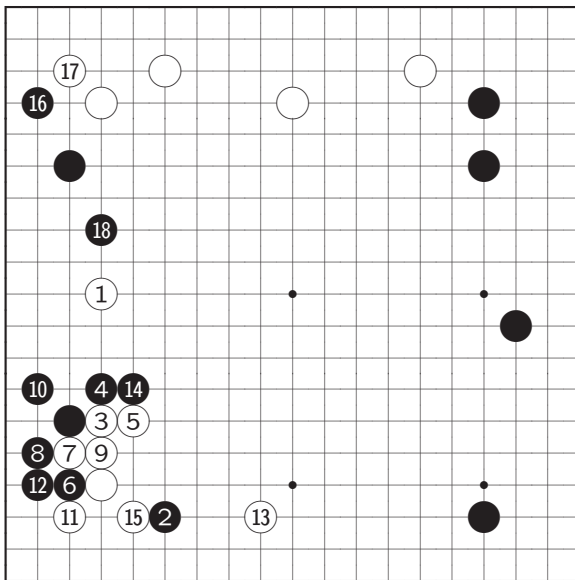
White ① is often played in handicap games, because it pinches A and B simultaneously and prevents Black from establishing an ideal formation on the left side.

This appears at first to be an excellent tactic, but practical experience shows that it lacks severity.

Black will respond with ② to ⑭ and, after White encloses Black with ⑮, Black can develop rapidly with ⑯.

Black's stone at A is still light and this result is good for Black.

If you study the tactics pertaining to star point corners in detail, you will find that *star points like to pincer firmly*, with a one or two space pincer (in most cases). We'll discuss this further in Chapter 6.

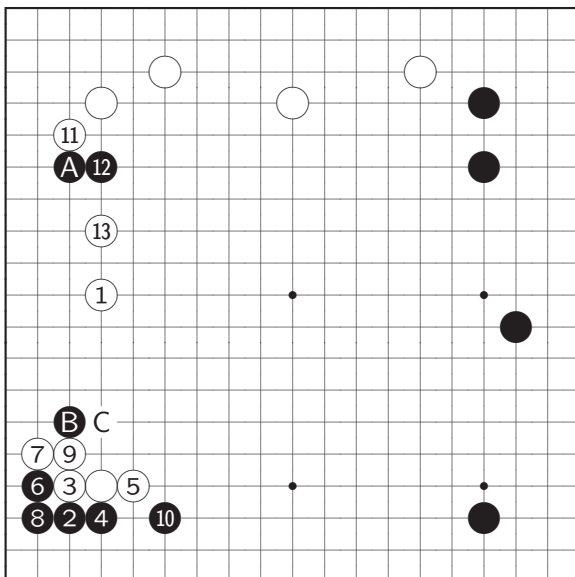


Variation 27 for ⑫

White might consider pinching at ⑬, to avoid the previous variation, but ⑭ is a key point for power and Black can counter-attack with ⑱.

In the previous variation, White occupied the key point for power at ⑭ and connected ① to the rest of his group. He also enclosed Black, which usually promises future profit even if a group can't be captured.

In this variation, ① is isolated and under attack, and White does not have sufficient compensation.



Variation 28 for ⑫

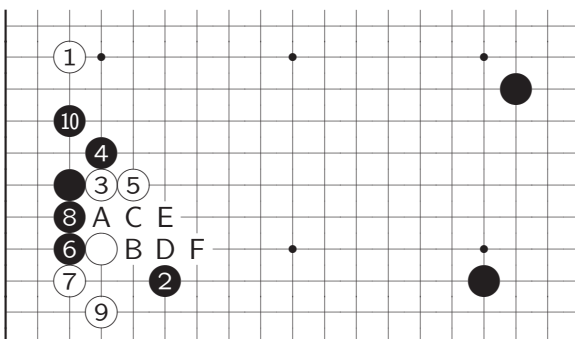
As we saw in Chapter 2, responding to White's pincer at ① by offering to trade with ② is often a simple and effective strategy.

However, in this case it's too simple and it hands the initiative to White. That means it's a bad strategy in this situation.

The moves from ① through to ⑩ follow the basic joseki, but Black's stones at A and B are left stranded.

Instead of playing honte at C, White will kick A with ⑪ and, if Black stands at ⑫, take the vital point at ⑬. This result is good for White.

Remember to look for ways to make your stones work together, as Black did in the previous variation.



Variation 29 for ⑫

The low pincer at ① is also conceivable. It makes a slightly stronger attempt at taking away Black's eyespace, but it's also harder to move into the center later.

The moves up to ⑩ can be expected, after which it's hard to tell who's attacking whom. This result is acceptable for Black.

If Black pushes at A later, White will play B to F and trade ③ and ⑤ for ② and some territory.

Mount Fuji Is a Volcano

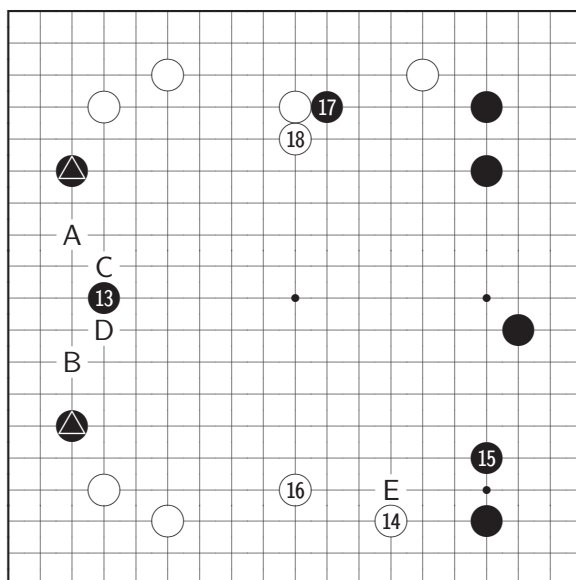


Diagram 6
(Moves: 13-18)

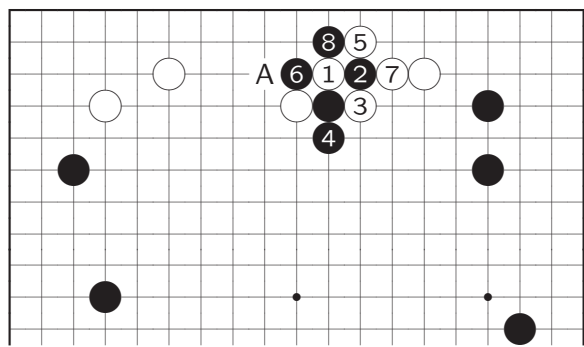
Black ⑬ and the marked stones completed an ideal formation known as Mount Fuji. Nevertheless, White was happy to play at the top and the bottom and the opening up to ⑯ was well balanced.

Even though the Mount Fuji formation looks pleasing, it's actually still quite weak. White can easily disrupt the shape with moves like A, B, C or D later. Technically, Mount Fuji is still an active volcano.

Playing ⑭ at the bottom worked well in this opening. White could also play at E instead, but ⑭ in the game was more practical and made it easier for White to claim the territory at the bottom.

The left and right sides were occupied by Black, while White took the top and the bottom. This kind of opening, where the players just take all the big points, is quite boring. It's unusual to see openings like this in top professionals' games, because they usually try to oppose one another's plans and play more actively.

Black ⑰ was the first contact move of the game. Lee Sedol was ready to fight and Gu Li had several options now. Extending quietly to ⑱ was the best response.

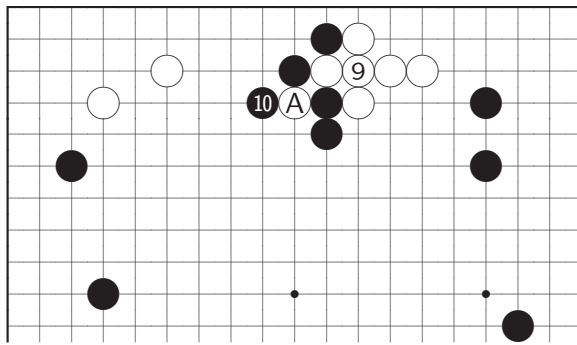


Variation 30 for ⑱

Since White's shape at the top also resembles Mount Fuji, the following variations will give you some ideas about how such a formation can be disrupted. We'll come back to this topic again later on in the game.

If White hane at ①, the moves up to ⑧ can be expected. This variation is conceivable for both players.

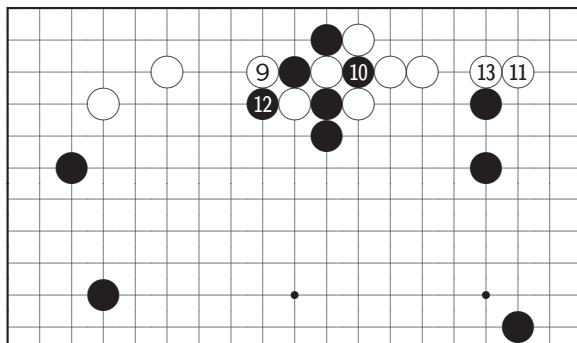
Next, White can consider connecting at ②, or playing atari at A...



Variation 31 for ⑱

Connecting at ⑨ is a little passive.

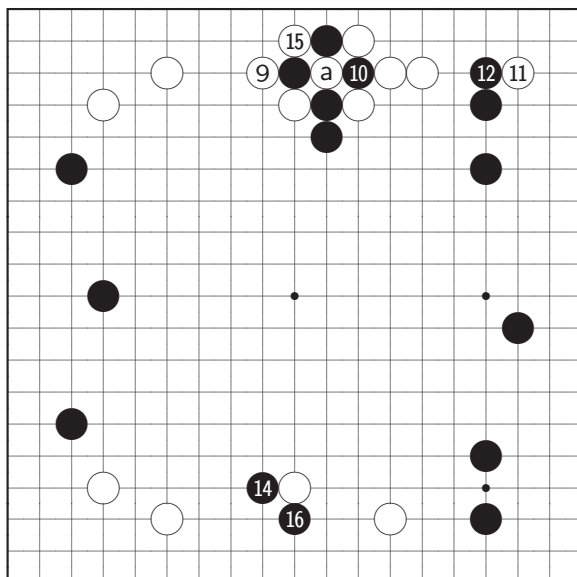
Black will be happy to capture ① in a ladder.



Variation 32 for ⑱

The atari at ⑨ is the proper move for White in this case, and the result up to ⑬ is playable for both sides.

However...



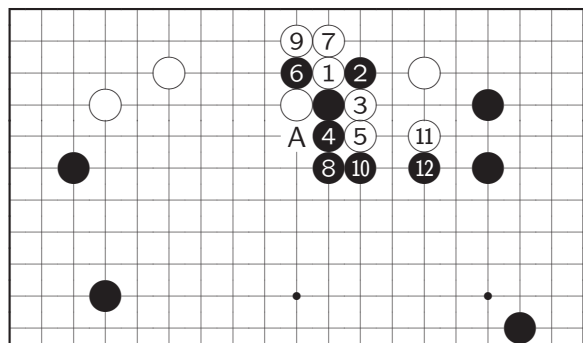
Variation 33 for ⑱

Answering at ⑫ is better for Black in this game.

By playing this way, Black is able to play two moves in a row at the bottom, while White resolves the ko.

This variation favors Black.

⑬ at ①



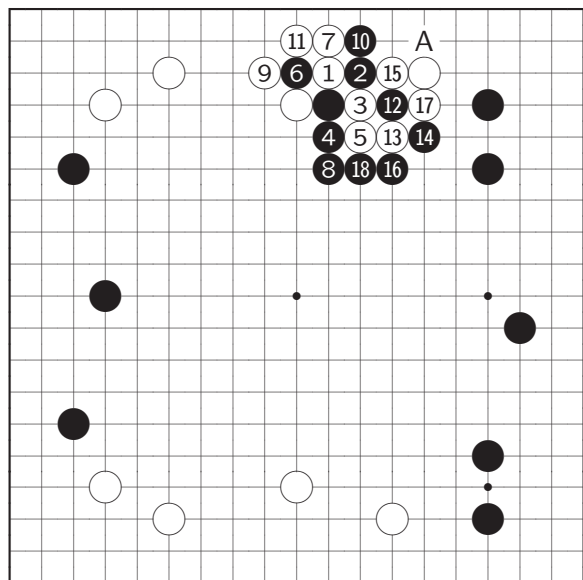
Variation 34 for ⑮

Pushing up with ⑤ is also conceivable for White.

In general, it's good technique to push on the side where your cutting stone is, rather than at A. This isn't an ironclad rule though.

Black can build a wall in the center with ⑩ and ⑫, and this works well with his existing moyo.

This isn't a good strategy for White in this opening.



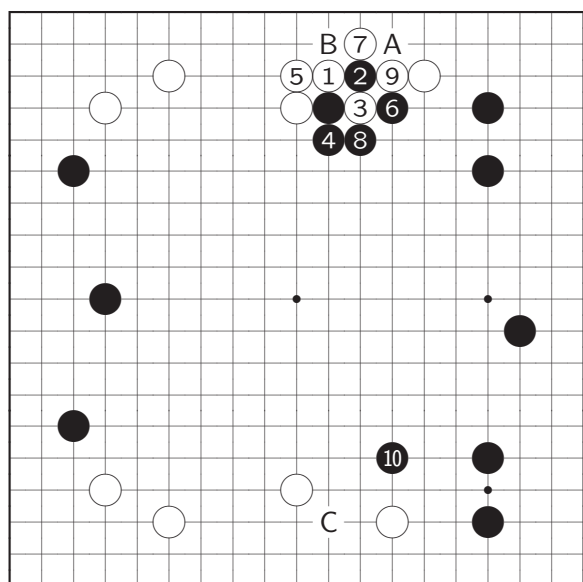
Variation 35 for ⑮

Playing atari at ⑨ is a mistake, because ⑫ is a skillful sacrifice tesuji.

The result after ⑲ (at ⑫) is terrible for White, because Black becomes strong and powerful in the center, in sente.

Instead of ⑮, if White tries to resist with the empty triangle at ⑯, Black at ⑮, ⑰ and Black A will leave White in a tough spot.

⑲ at ⑫



Variation 36 for ⑮

Connecting at ⑤ isn't a good choice in this case.

Up to ⑨, Black has effectively walled off the top in sente, and can develop a deep moyo on the right side with ⑩.

If White omits ⑨ and takes sente to pre-emptively reduce the right side, Black can start a ko with Black A, ⑨ and Black B at any time.

This is a picnic ko for Black. Losing the ko won't severely damage Black's position, whereas White will suffer greatly if he loses it—very bad news for White.

After ⑩, Black can aim to play at C later.

Use Power to Invade

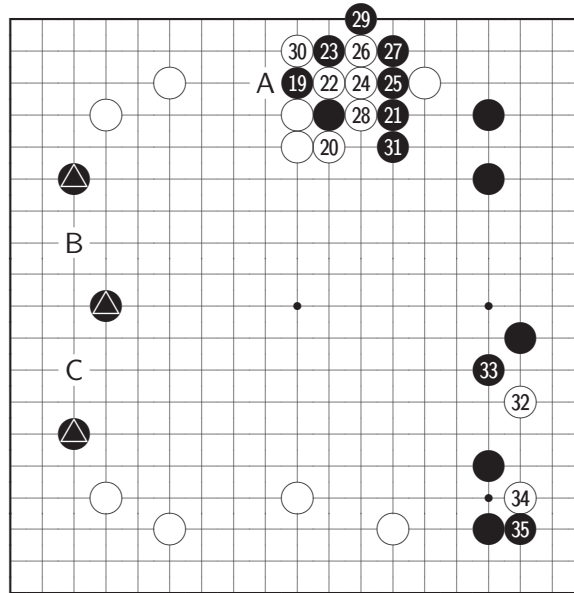


Diagram 7
(Moves: 19-35)

Black 21 was the proper haengma after 19 and 20. If Black simply extends at 28, White will hane at A and the exchange of 20 for Black at 28 will be good for White.

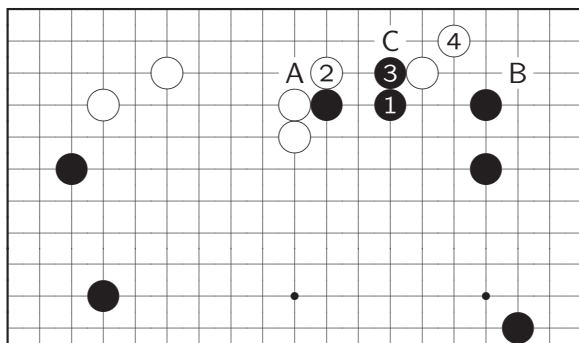
Black's driving tesuji at 23 is usually good technique, but simply playing at 25 would have been better in this game. Black 31 secured the corner territory while reducing White's thickness over the center.

Black's large corner territory may look good, but the overall result favored White. White became very thick and powerful at the top, and this made Black's marked stones thin.

White used his newfound power to invade at 32. After 33, 34 was adroit and 35 was natural.

Invading the left side wasn't urgent, because there were weaknesses at both B and C, and Black couldn't repair them efficiently with a single move.

On the other hand, Black's lower right area was almost complete, and as we know already the best time to invade is just before territory is completed.

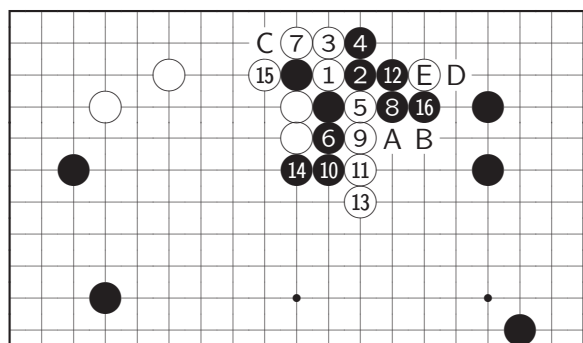


Variation 37 for 19

Black's hane at A (19 in the game) was deft.

The shoulder hit at 1 is too ordinary, and 2 and 4 become a powerful combination.

B and C are miai for White next. Black can't achieve a decent result after 4.

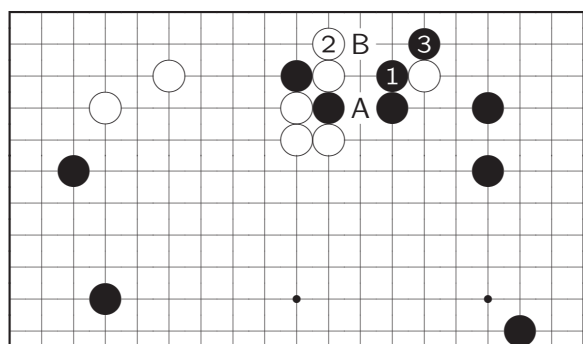


Variation 38 for ⑳

If White cuts at ①, we can expect the variation up to ⑩ and the result is even. Gu may have thought that Black's corner territory was too big though.

If White turns at A, instead of playing ⑪, Black will double hane at B and the result will be similar to Variation 35 (which was good for Black).

Instead of ①, if White hanes at ⑮ we can expect Black at ①, White C, ⑥ and White at ⑭, after which Black will happily kick at D to attack ⑤.

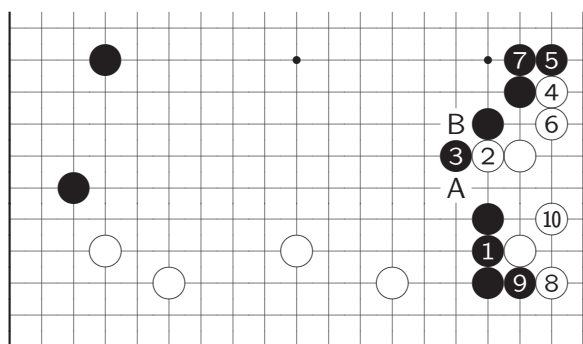


Variation 39 for ㉓

If Black simply pushes down at ①, White will extend to ② and Black can secure the corner with the hane at ③.

This result is better for Black than the actual game, because White doesn't become as thick at the top.

Instead of ①, connecting at A is *too* simple, because White can connect under with a stylish kosumi at B.

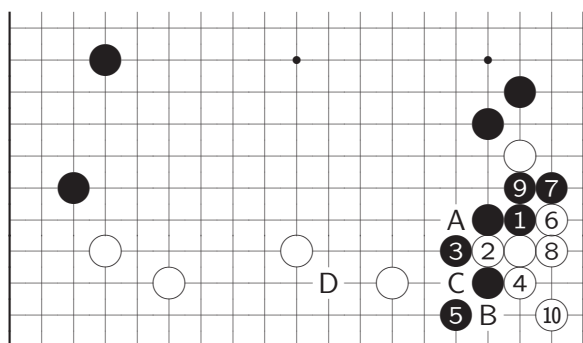


Variation 40 for ㉕

Moving on to White's invasion, if Black connects at ① (instead of ㉕ in the game), White can play the sequence from ② to ⑩ to obtain a satisfactory result.

It's important to note the way Black's corner becomes weak after White's kosumi at ⑧ takes away Black's base.

This is somewhat uncomfortable for Black, because there are cutting points at A and B.



Variation 41 for ㉕

If Black blocks at ①, White will create weaknesses with ②, before living with ④ to ⑩.

The cutting point at A will be annoying for Black, so Lee didn't choose this variation.

Instead of ⑩, White can also atari at B first, but Black C would make Black stronger at the bottom and leave White thinner around D.

There Are No Forcing Moves in a Fight

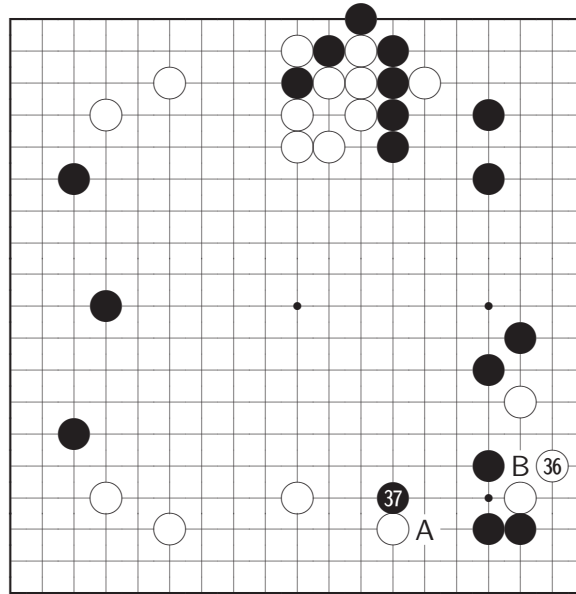
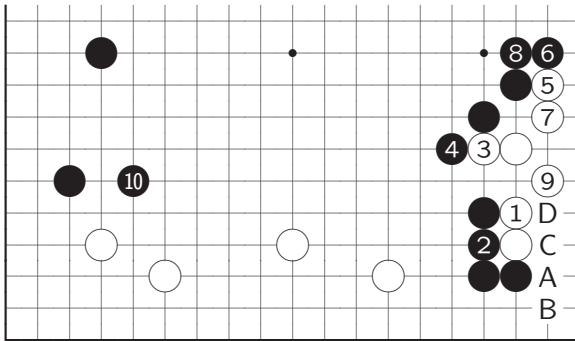


Diagram 8
(Moves: 36-37)

White ③⑥ was an unusual and interesting move. It appears that Black wanted to exchange ③⑦ for A in sente, before playing at B. There was a hint of a forcing move, or asking move, in ③⑦.

However, once a fight begins in earnest you cannot rely on forcing moves; you can only offer to trade.

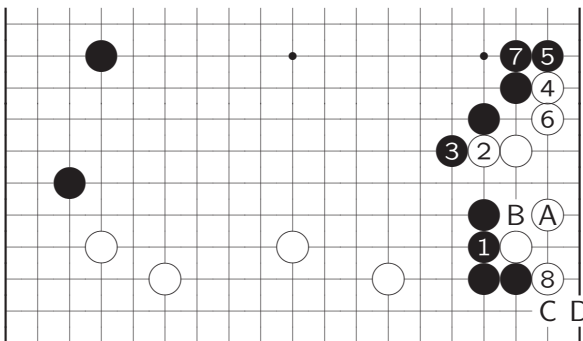


Variation 42 for ③⑥

If White just connects at ①, which is normal, Black can take sente up to ⑨ and reinforce his position on the left side with ⑩.

If White hanes at A later, blocking at B aims to play C. This means Black's corner is stronger, with more eyespace than it had in Variation 40.

Gu didn't seem to like this variation, so he played at D (③⑥ in the game) instead.



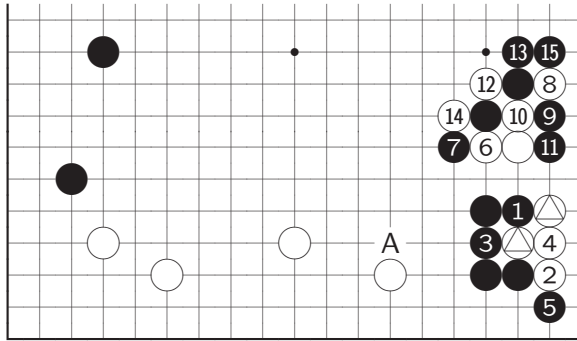
Variation 43 for ③⑦

If Black responds to ① with the connection at ①, the moves up to ⑧ transpose to the shape we saw in Variation 40.

This variation is better for White than playing ① at B (as above), because Black's base has been eroded.

Now if Black hanes at C White can answer with D, which is more severe than the previous variation.

This is what White is hoping for.

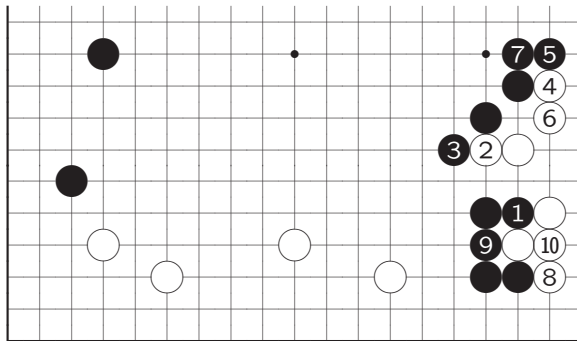


Variation 44 for 37

Rather than A (37), Lee should have played at 1.

If White exchanges the moves up to 7, and then attaches at 8, Black can resist with 9 and 11.

This way, Black can capture White's marked stones with the help of his stone at 1.

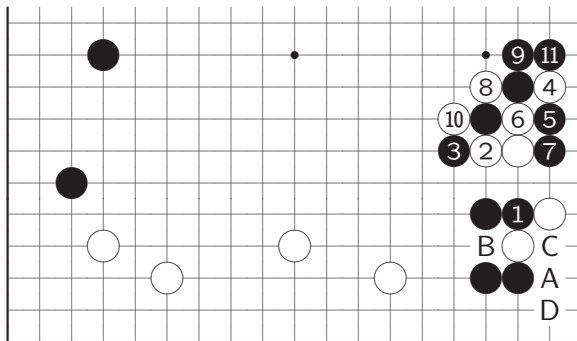


Variation 45 for 37

Pushing up at 2 first is the right move order for White.

If Black hanes at 3, the attachment at 4 works again.

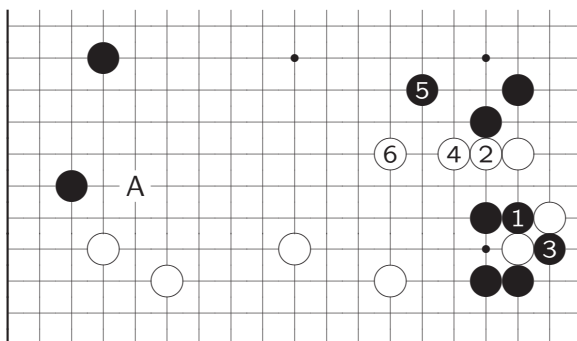
White will be happy with this result, which is similar to Variations 40 and 43.



Variation 46 for 37

If Black still resists with the hane at 5, White will sacrifice his stones with the moves up to 10.

This result is playable for White, because White avoided the bad exchanges of A to D, which we saw in the previous variation.



Variation 47 for 37

Trading with 3 is the right strategy for Black.

White will move into the center with 4 and 6, but the overall result isn't bad for Black.

Black will have sente to reinforce the left side at A.

Fortune Favors the Bold

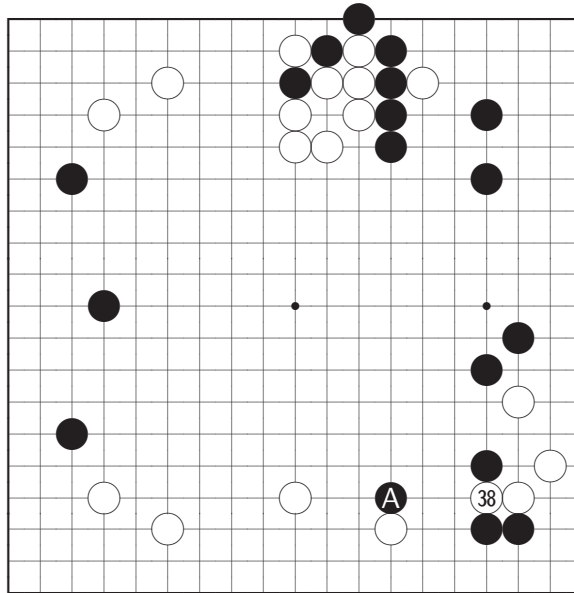
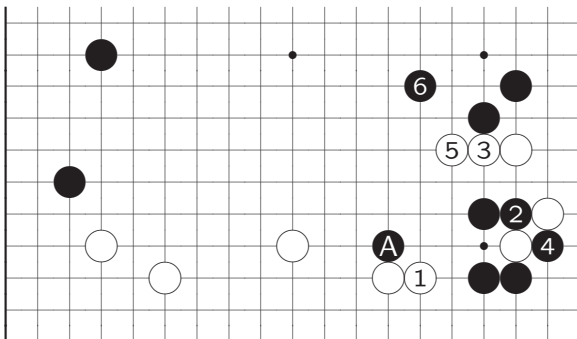


Diagram 9
(Move: 38)

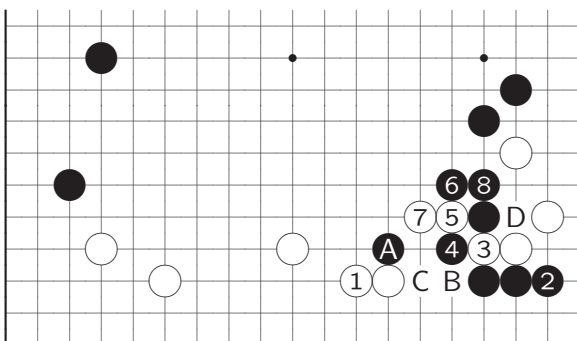
When Black turned to **A** he was implicitly offering a trade. White **38** accepted the deal with vigor.



Variation 48 for 38

If White answers at **1**, Black will play **2** to **6** and the stone at A might help Black to attack White's right side group.

This was Lee's plan, but Gu had other ideas.



Variation 49 for 38

Drawing back at **1** is too calm in this case. As soon as Black takes the vital point at **2**, White's group becomes weak. Pushing and cutting with **3** and **5** doesn't work, because Black can manage the situation up to **8**.

If the exchange of **A** for **1** weren't on the board, White would be able to capture **4** with B now. In this case White can't do that, so he's in trouble.

If White cuts at B, instead of **5**, then Black connects at **5** and makes miai of C and D.

Fight for Sente

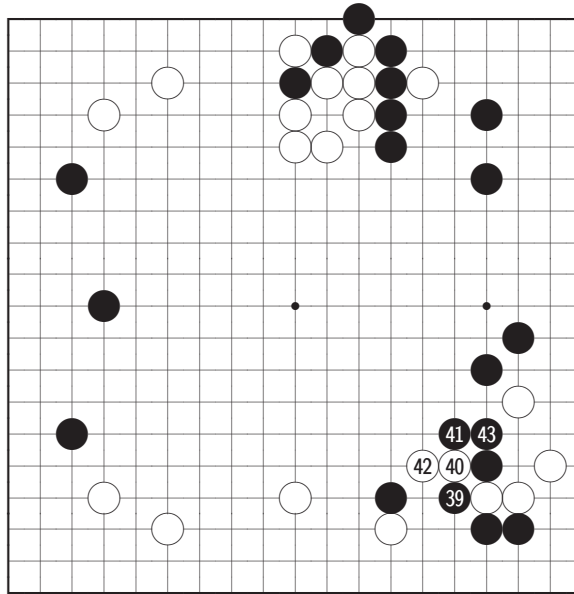
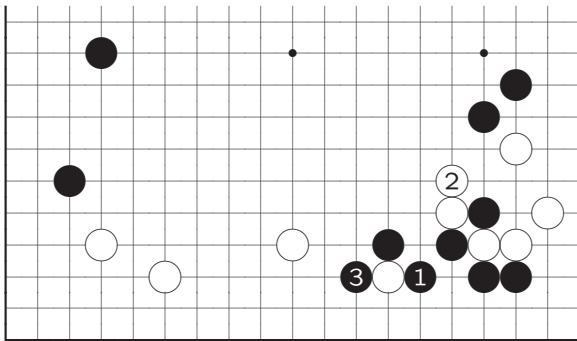


Diagram 10
(Moves: 39-43)

White's cut at ④⑩ was a strong counter, and the battle suddenly became complicated and intense.

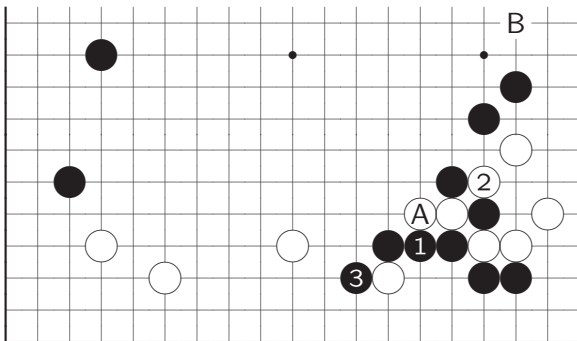
Black ④③ looks like an overplay, but Lee probably thought that fighting like this was inevitable. This was also a fight for sente, because both players wanted to be first to return to the left side.



Variation 50 for ④①

If Black compromises with ① and ③, White will be happy to take sente with ② and invade the left side.

This is too easy for White.



Variation 51 for ④③

After ① (④②) Black still can't compromise with ① and ③, because once again White will take sente and invade on the left.

White will also be able to invade at B later, because his group in the lower right is settled.

Go with the Flow

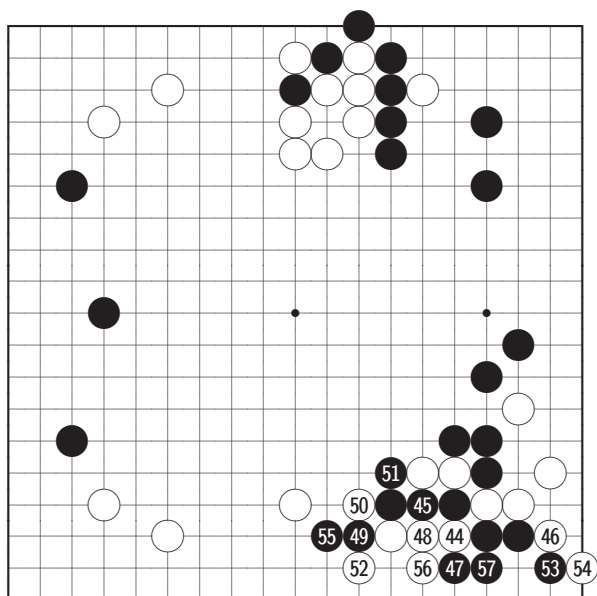
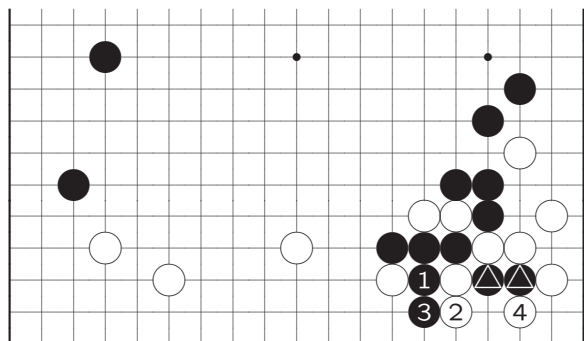


Diagram 11
(Moves: 44-57)

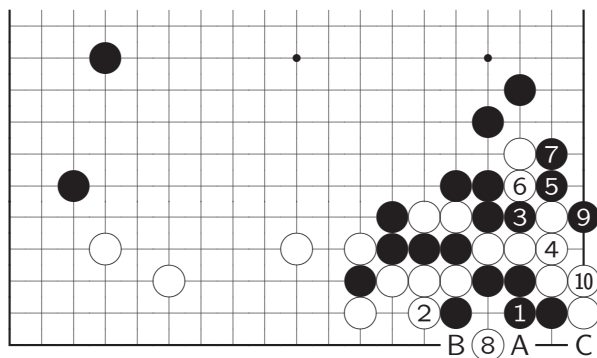
The fighting escalated further with ④④ and ④⑥, and ④⑦ was the only move for Black.

Black ④⑦ and ④⑨ worked in tandem, and the stones followed a one-way street up to ④⑦. There are times to resist, or look for novel variations, but there are also times to simply wait and go with the flow.



Variation 52 for ④⑦

Black can't afford to sacrifice the two marked stones with ① and ③, because he loses all the corner territory and doesn't gain enough center influence in compensation.

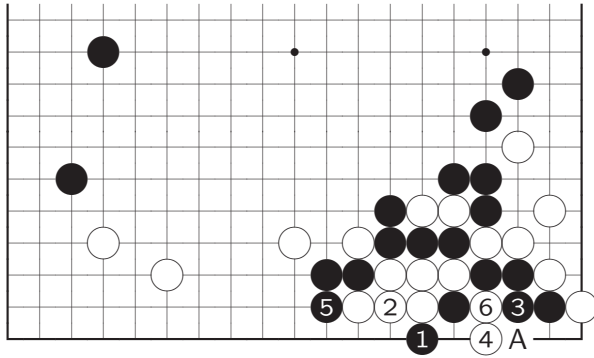


Variation 53 for ④⑤

If Black connects at ①, to capture the corner, White will play ② to ⑩.

Black can start a ko fight with A to C, but it's a picnic ko for White.

This is a bad result for Black, so Lee avoided it.



Variation 54 for 57

If Black exchanges ① for ② and then connects at ③, the placement at ④ is a good tesuji.

After ⑥, Black can't atari at A because he's short of liberties, so Black's in trouble.

Use Ko to Resist

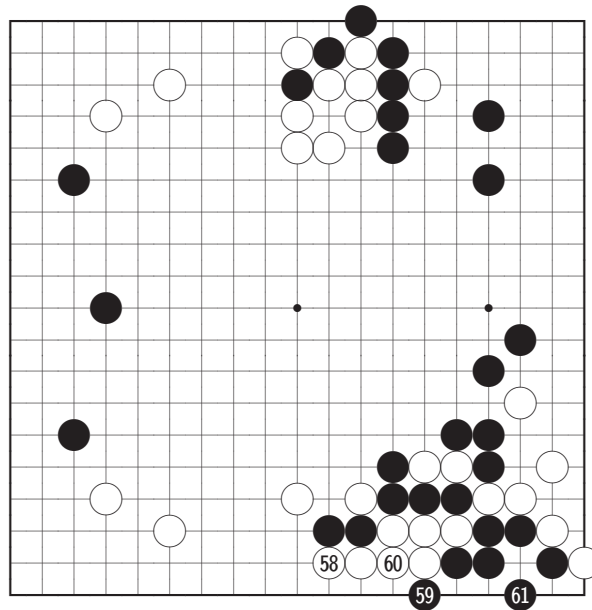
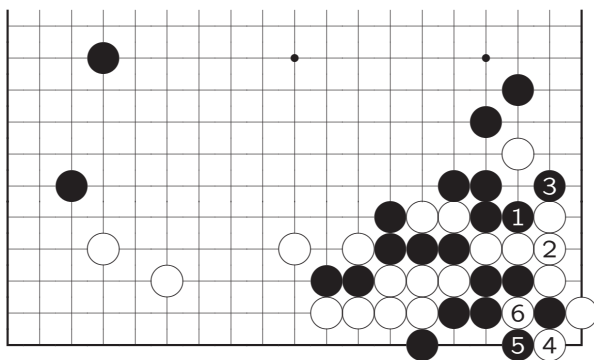


Diagram 12
(Moves: 58-61)

When you find yourself in a difficult situation, creating a ko shape can be a powerful way to resist. As you can see below, the precise nature of the ko matters. Black 61 created a flexible and resilient shape.



Variation 55 for 61

If Black rushes to capture the corner with ① and ③, White can make a slightly different ko with ④.

It's hard for Black to fight this two stage ko, because White captures first in this variation.

At times, there can be a world of difference between a ko where you capture first and a ko where you must find the first threat.

Make Peace When Isolated

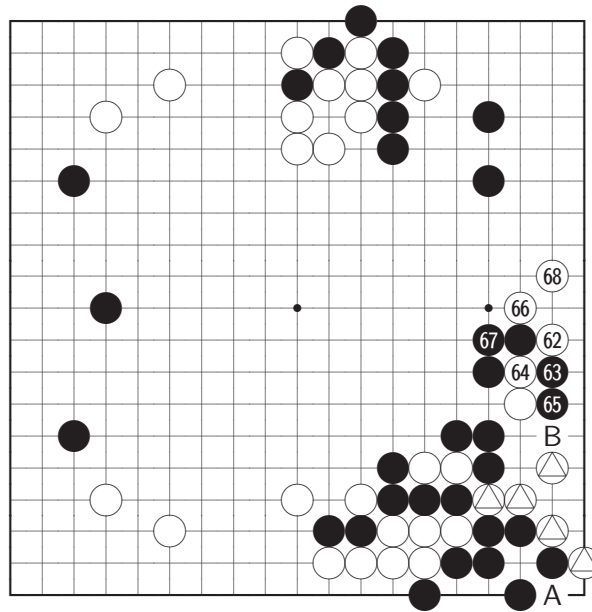
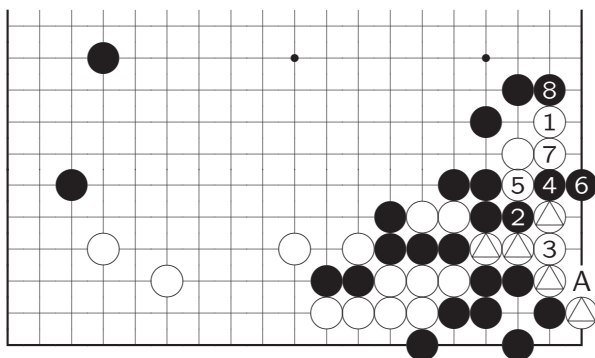


Diagram 13
(Moves: 62-68)

White ⑥② to ⑥⑧ was a brilliant tactic. Gu sensed the steely taste of danger in the air and compromised. White could still start a ko at either A or B, so he was flexible. As the dry wit of Baltasar Gracián urges in *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*, “Don’t hold on to anything too firmly. Fools are stubborn, and the stubborn are fools, and the more erroneous their judgment is, the more they hold on to it.”

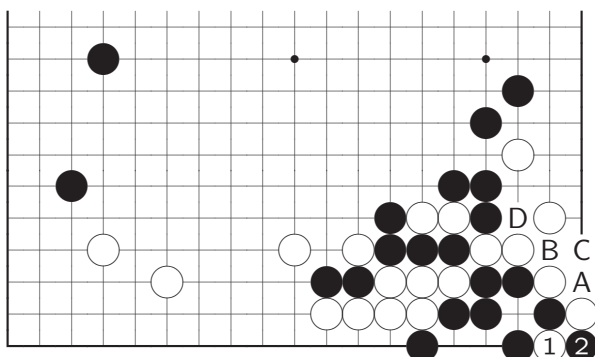


Variation 56 for ⑥②

If White plays ①, Black can exchange ② to ⑦ before blocking at ⑧.

This leads to a complicated capturing race, which is risky for White.

If White plays ⑦ at ⑧, Black A cleanly captures the marked stones.



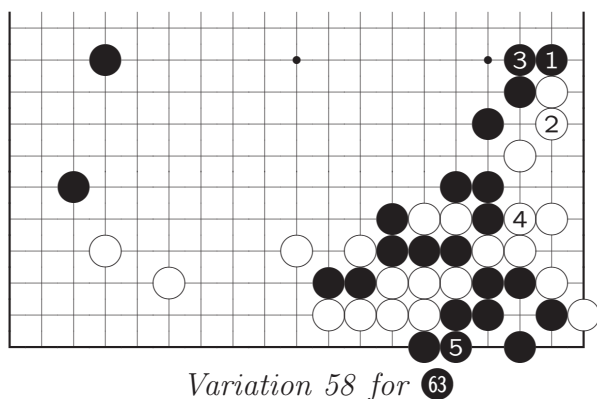
Variation 57 for ⑥②

White can start a ko with ①, but it’s too early to do so now.

White doesn’t have enough ko threats and this time Black gets to take the ko first (unlike Variation 55).

In addition, it’s a two stage ko which favors Black. This means that White will need to spend three moves to remove the ko.

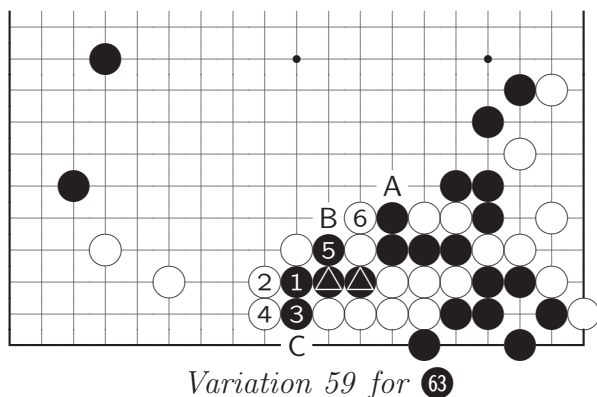
If White connects at A, Black will play B to D.



Variation 58 for 63

If Black falls back with ①, White can live in sente up to ⑤.

Recall that Black doesn't want to give White sente, because he'll use it to invade Mount Fuji.

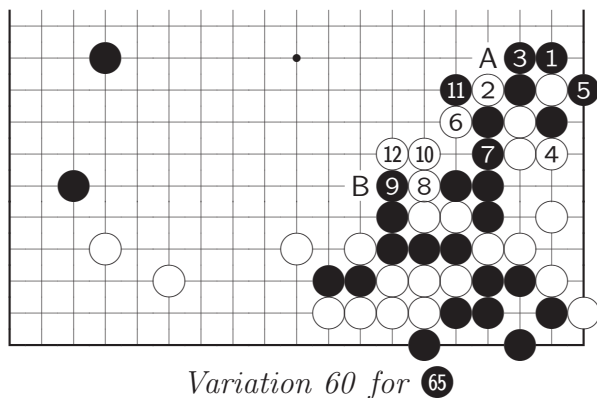


Variation 59 for 63

Some readers may be wondering whether Black can save his marked stones with ①.

White can hold Black in with ② and ④ because ⑥ is sente. After ⑥, A and B are miai.

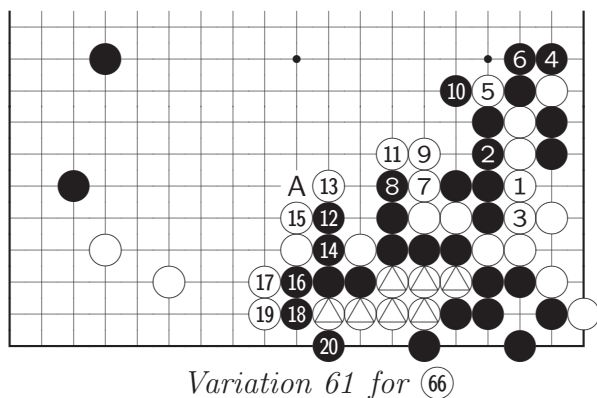
Instead of ⑤, if Black tries to gain more liberties by descending to C, White simply fills Black's liberties from the outside, starting at ⑤. White will win the capturing race by one liberty.



Variation 60 for 65

If Black ataris at ①, instead of playing ⑥5 in the game, White can play ② to ⑫.

White ⑥ and ⑧ are a sharp combination and Black is in deep trouble after ⑫, because A and B are miai for White.



Variation 61 for 66

Extending at ① isn't possible.

Black ② and ⑧ are strong moves, and if White continues fighting with the sequence up to ⑮, he finds himself in a perilous situation.

White's marked stones are captured and his lower right corner group is also in trouble.

Moreover, there's a cutting point at A.

Beware of Indigestion When Eating Stones

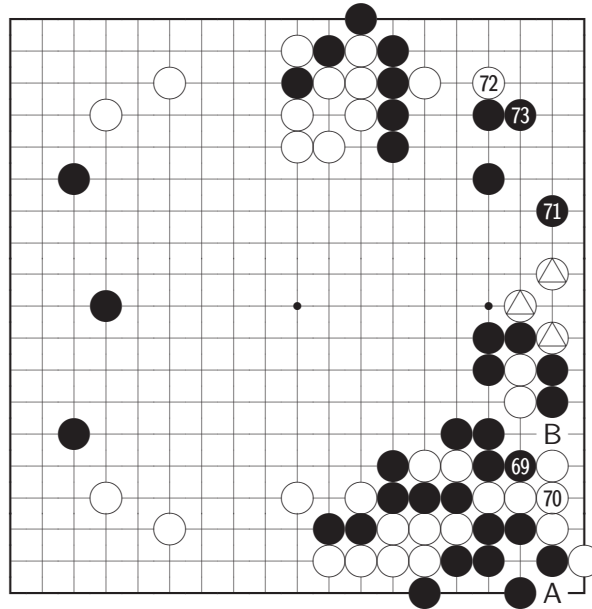


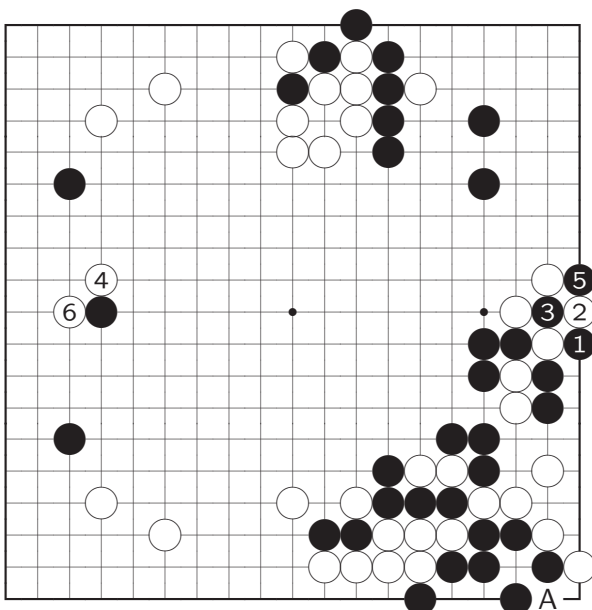
Diagram 14
(Moves: 69-73)

Black exchanged the atari at 69 for 70, to settle the position as best he could. However, there was no way for him to tidy things up with just one move, because bad aji remained at A and B.

Black 71 was the proper move to attack the marked stones and, outwardly, it appeared that Black was in the lead. In reality though, the game was already favorable for White.

When you play to swallow up stones, you have to watch out for this kind of situation. If you can't completely digest them, you'll be left with a sick feeling in your stomach which will weigh you down.

White 72 was a probe and calmly extending to 73 made it clear that the corner was Black's territory.

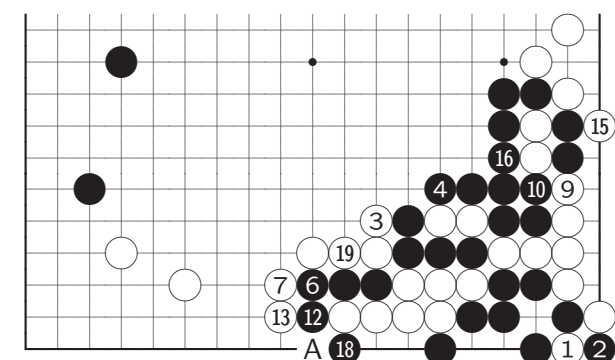


Variation 62 for 69

If Black ataris at 1, White will start a ko with 2.

Even though Black can win the ko with 5, White takes compensation with 4 and 6, and there are still rumblings in the bottom right corner.

White can start another ko at A later, so this variation makes Black queasy.

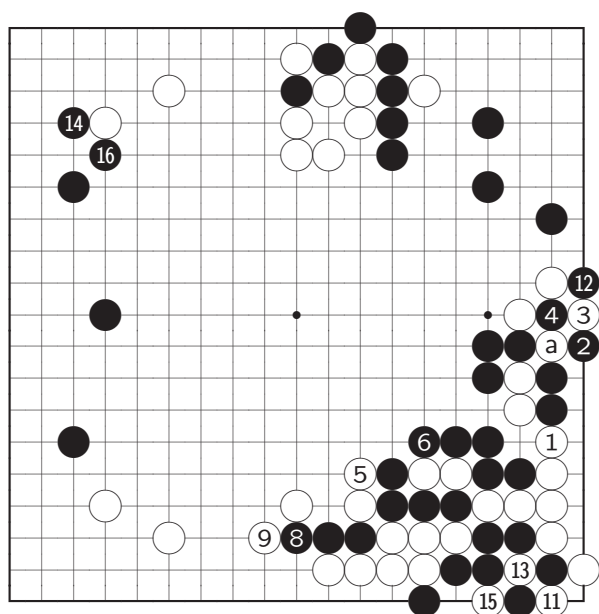


Variation 63 for 72

⑤ ⑪ ⑰ at ①, ⑧ ⑭ ⑳ at ②

After 71 in the game, starting a ko fight with ① is still premature.

White is short of ko threats and Black still has local threats around A.



Variation 64 for 72

⑦ at a, ⑩ at ④

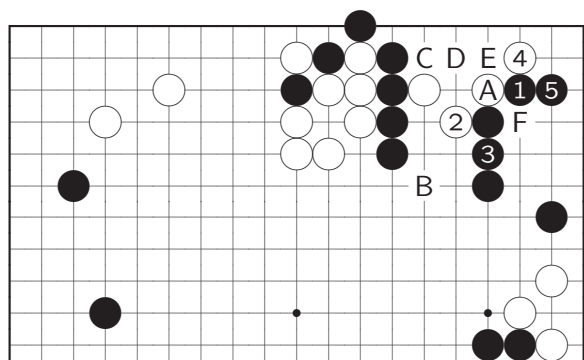
White can also think about ① and ③, which lead to another complicated ko fight.

White ⑪ is a clever move which creates a double ko, and Black needs to resolve the first ko with ⑫.

Eventually White will win the ko, but Black will be able to play two moves in a row in compensation.

The result up to ⑯ is playable for Black, who can settle the right side with ⑫ and reduce his thinness on the left side.

This means that it's too early to start a ko with ①.



Variation 65 for 73

If Black answers A with ①, White will play ② and ④ and there will be some bad aji after moves like B, C and D later.

Using ⑤ to cut at E would fall in with White's plan. White would start a ko with D, which would be a serious problem for Black.

Black's quiet response at F (73) in the game was better.

Don't Use Power to Surround Territory

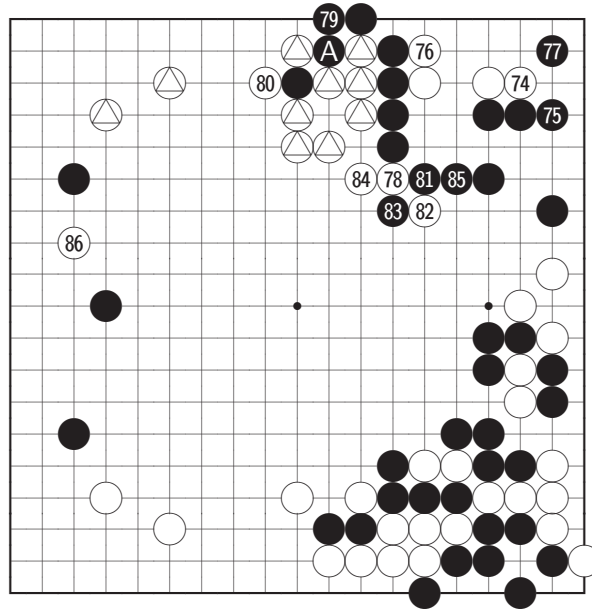
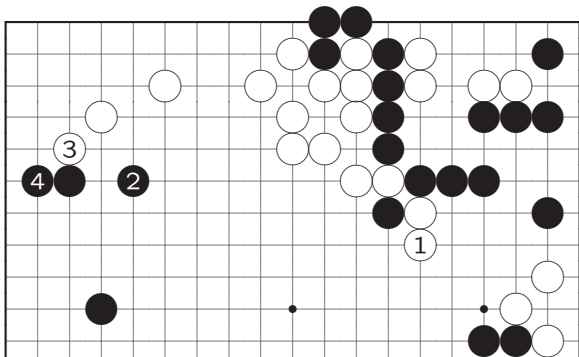


Diagram 15
(Moves: 74-86)

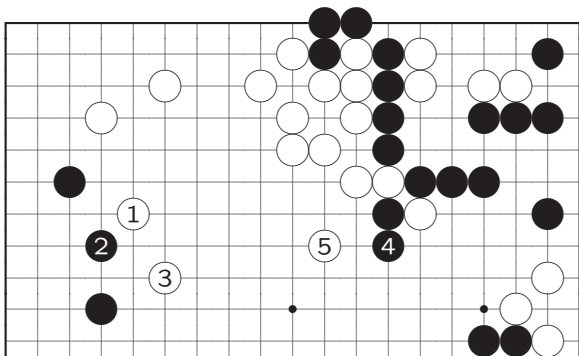
White ⑦⑧ aimed exploit aji in the corner and ⑦⑨ was interesting. Lee didn't want White to be able to capture A in sente, but it's not clear whether exchanging ⑦⑨ for ⑧⑩ was good for Black because White became even more powerful. White's long awaited invasion came with ⑧⑥. He used his considerable influence at the top (marked) to invade and fight, rather than to surround immediate territory.



Variation 66 for ⑧⑥

If White extends with ①, jumping to ② becomes an excellent preventative move and White misses his chance to invade.

Black ② also cautiously reduces White's influence at the top.



Variation 67 for ⑧⑥

Most players go through a stage of learning where they focus on surrounding territory directly. Such players may be satisfied with White's territory at the top, after ① to ⑤, but this is an inefficient strategy.

White doesn't make an adequate return on the many stones he's invested at the top, and provoking Black's reinforcement at ② is a steep premium to pay for ①.

If you doubt this, compare this variation to the result later on in the game. For example, see Diagram 17.

Use Power to Conquer Foreign Territories

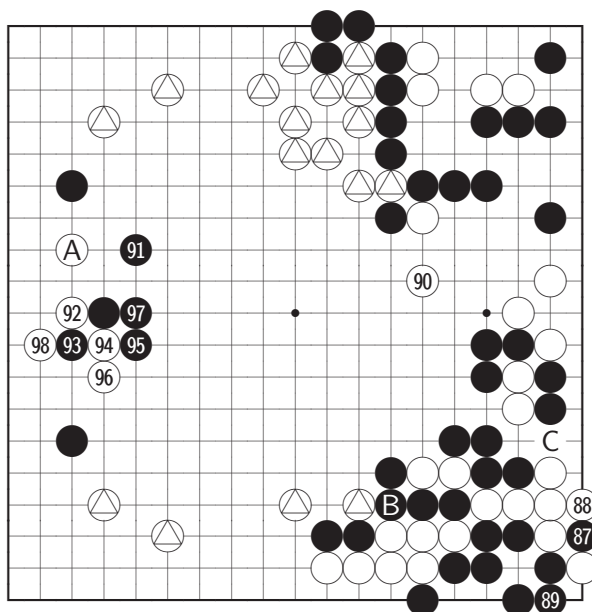


Diagram 16
(Moves: 87-98)

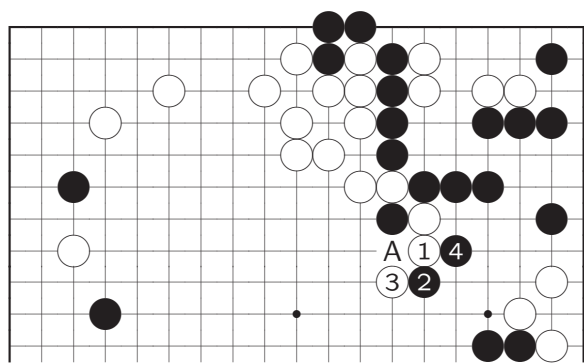
Black couldn't find a good response to ⑨A, so he came back to the lower right corner with ⑧7 and ⑧9. Lee must have felt that it was too hard for Black to fight properly on the left side while the burden of the ko remained in the bottom right corner.

Since Black had to come back to the corner like this, we can conclude that the game wasn't good for him. As a corollary, we can also infer that Black's attachment at ③B (37) was a questionable move.

White ⑨0 demonstrated Gu's delicate sense of play once again. This jump was excellent because it reduced Black's right side influence while maintaining White's potential to play at C later.

Black was still struggling to respond to ⑨A, and the knight's move at ⑨1 was questionable. Mount Fuji suddenly erupted with ⑨2 and ⑨4! This crosscut unleashed a severe counter-attack, and it was hard for Black to fight back because White's marked positions at the top and bottom were so powerful.

After ⑨8, we can see the results of White's invasion at ⑨A. Rather than surrounding territory, as in Variation 67, he used his power to conquer Mount Fuji and transform it into his own territory.



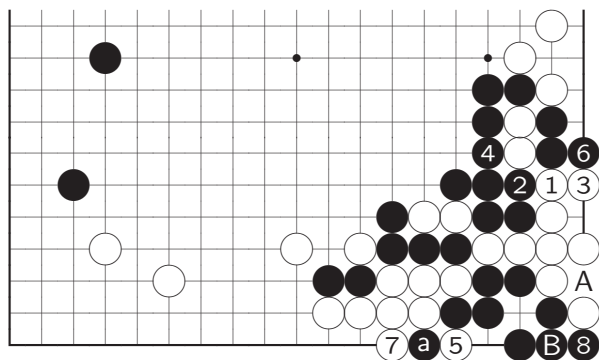
Variation 68 for ⑨0

Instead of ⑨0 above, if White simply extends to ①, Black will play the nose tesuji at ②.

If White hanes at ③ in response, Black will counter-hane at ④, threatening to play atari at A next.

As we'll see below, all of White's right side stones are in danger of being swallowed up in sente.

Preventing this is what made ⑨0 in the game so exquisite.



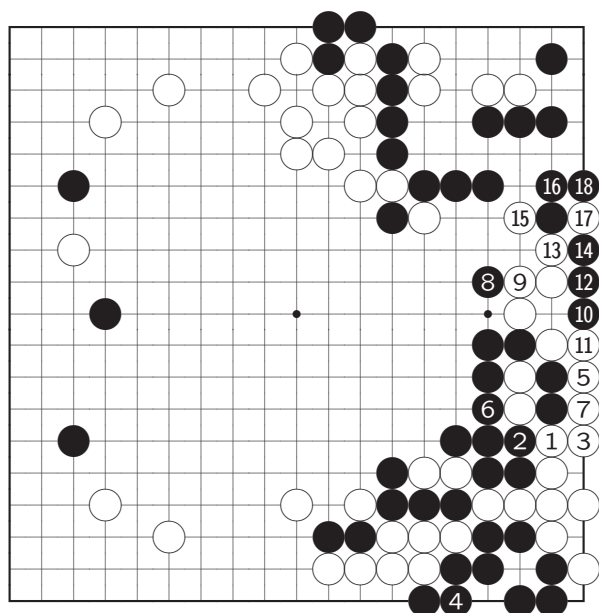
Variation 69 for (90)

(9) at (a)

Even after Black exchanges (A) and (B), there's still some bad aji in the bottom right.

After (1) and (3), (4) is necessary in order to stop White from connecting under, and White can create a seki in the corner with (5) and (7).

If Black tries to capture White's group with (8), White will be able to start a ko by playing at (a) later on, which will be a heavy burden for Black.

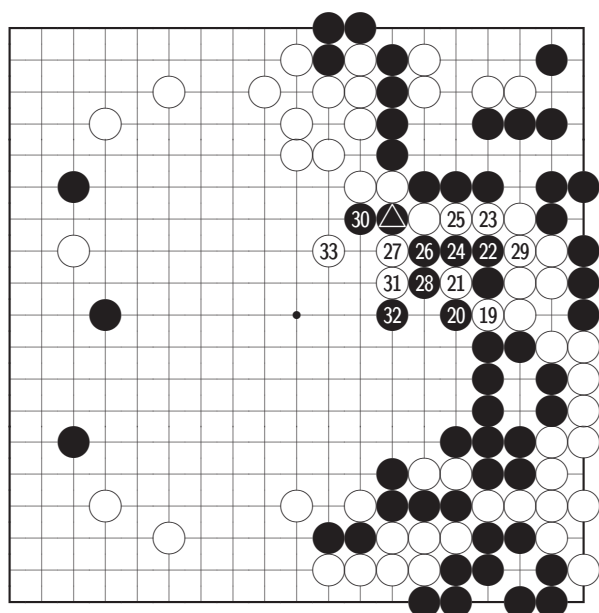


Variation 70 for (90)

If Black wants to avoid the seki or ko in the corner, he can live with (4). This allows White to connect under with (5) and (7).

If Black tries to capture White with (8) and (10), the sequence through to (18) flows naturally.

Next...

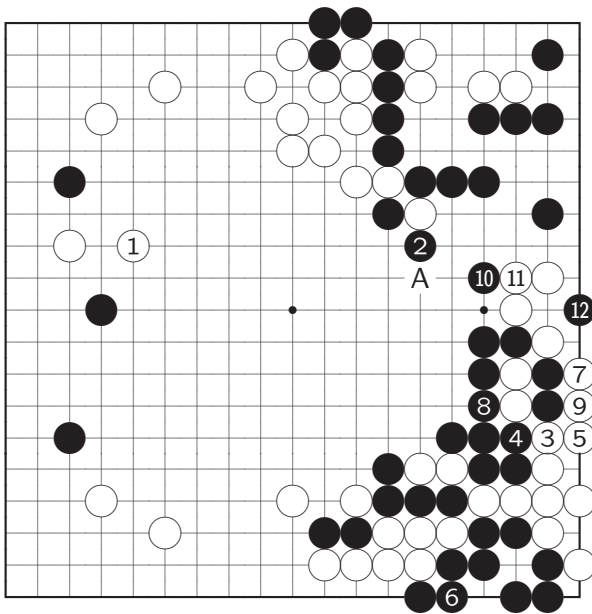


Variation 71 for (90)

Cutting at (21) is the decisive tesuji, and it's very hard for Black to continue.

Eventually, White rescues the whole group, after (33) captures Black's marked cutting stones in a net.

If Black extends with (26) at (27) instead, White will push at (26) and (28), (29), Black at (21), and the cut at (31) can be expected to follow. Black is in deep trouble.



Variation 72 for ⑨⑩

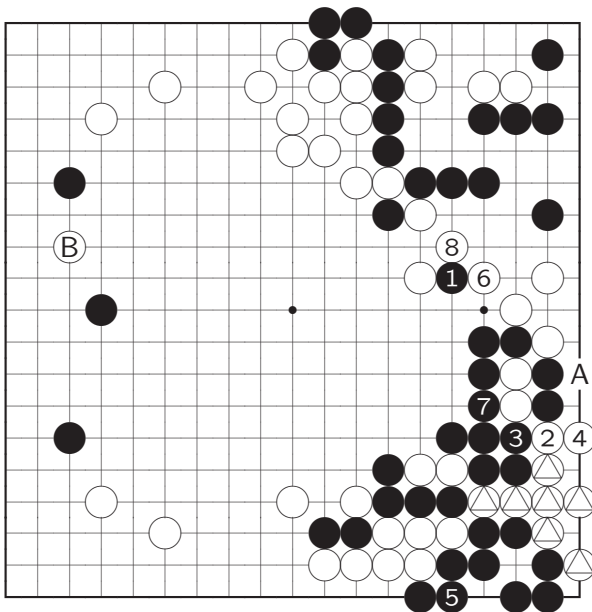
Based on the previous variations, we can conclude that if White doesn't play at A (⑨⑩ in the actual game), Black will immediately atari at ② and capture White's lower right group on a large scale.

If White still tries to mobilize his corner group with ③ and ⑤, Black can now calmly play at ⑥.

Up to ⑫, White's group is dead, because Black's stone at ② invalidates White's decisive tesuji in the previous variation.

This is a clear example of the value of reading.

Practicing life and death problems doesn't just help you to rescue or capture stones. It allows you to glean information from below the surface, which can form the basis of a coherent whole board strategy.



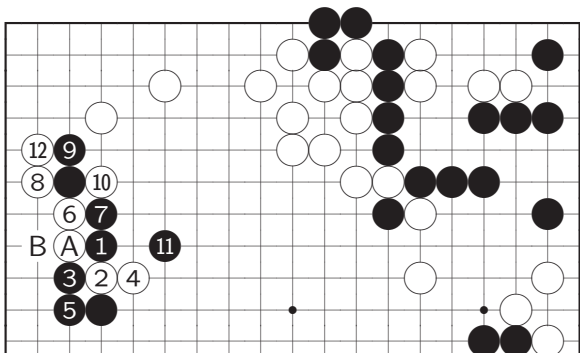
Variation 73 for ⑨⑩

If Black attaches at ①, aiming to cut off White's group, White will play ② to ⑧.

White ⑥ is a relaxed move, which makes miai of A and ⑧ next.

Black finally captures White's marked stones, but Black's territory is all in the top right and bottom right corners, and White has the advantage on the left side.

Having investigated the aji on the right side, let's return our attention to ⑥ and see how White can use his powerful influence to conquer Mount Fuji.



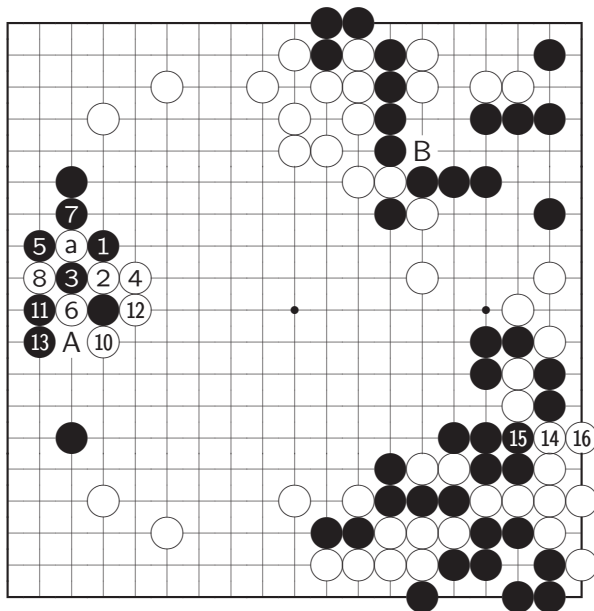
Variation 74 for ⑨⑩

After ①, Black would usually try to connect his stones with ①, but in this case it's difficult to find a good continuation after White wedges at ②.

Sometimes playing ③ and ⑤ is good enough, but in this case White will headbutt at ⑥ instead of playing atari at ⑦ (if ⑥ is at ⑦, Black plays B).

White ⑥ and ⑧ are severe, because White's position at the top is extremely powerful.

White's tactics from ② to ⑫ are very successful.



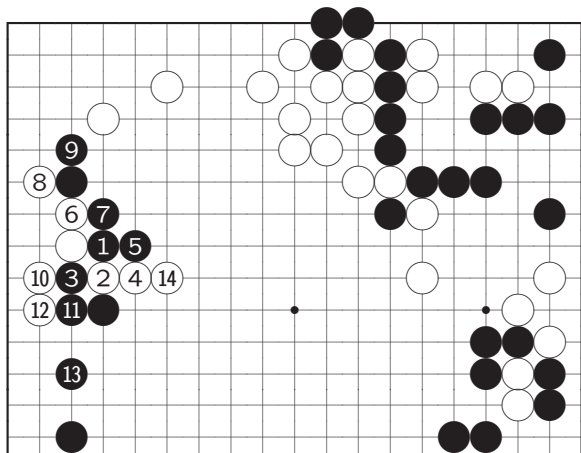
Variation 75 for 91

9 at a

The atari at 5 can be expected. It's hard for Black to start a ko with 9 at A, because White has more ko threats around 14 and B.

If Black just connects with 9 at a, White will reduce Black's left side in sente with 10 to 13.

Next, White can return to the right side with 14 and this variation favors him.

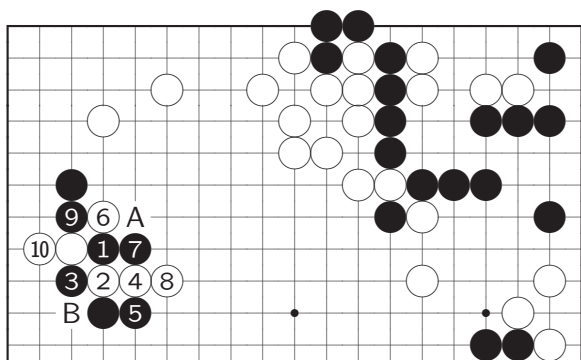


Variation 76 for 91

If Black pushes up with 5, White can still play 6 and 8 because his cutting stones at 2 and 4 can't be captured in a ladder.

This sequence is similar to Variation 74 and is based on the same strategy—to exploit White's power at the top to the maximum extent possible, instead of following typical patterns of play.

Up to 14, it's very hard for Black to fight, because his groups are too weak and White's position at the top is too powerful.

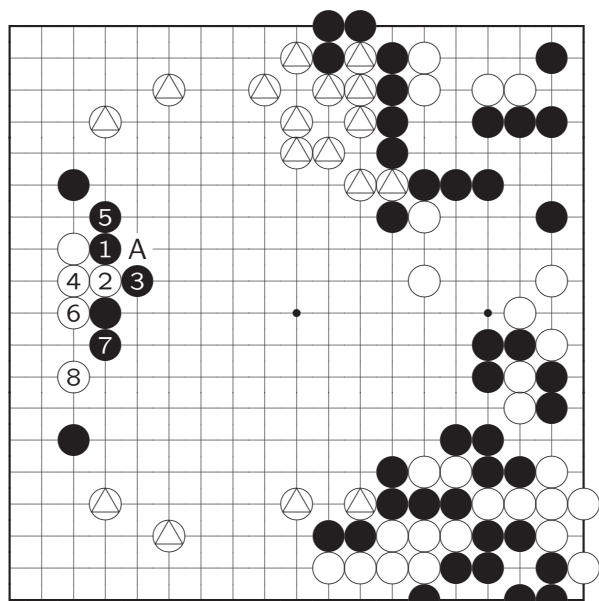


Variation 77 for 91

If Black pushes up with 5, White can atari at 6.

Cutting at 9 doesn't lead to a good result because all the ladders favor White.

After 10, A and B are miai.



Variation 78 for 91

Playing atari at ③ isn't good either.

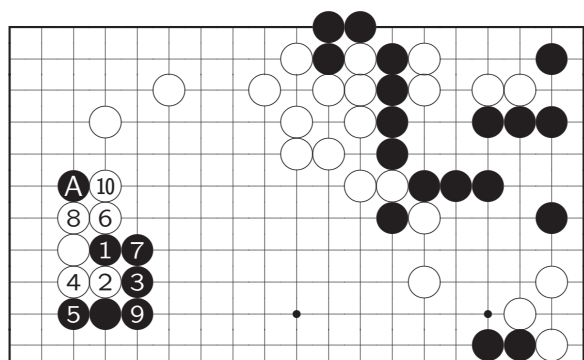
White can easily settle on the left side up to ⑧, and the cutting point at A is a serious problem for Black.

Can you feel the way White's powerful influence makes its presence felt in these variations?

In some positions, exchanging territory for influence with ① to ⑦ would give Black a reasonable result, but here White's marked power is so overwhelming that Black's wall ends up being thin and heavy.

This variation illustrates the principle of *using power to conquer foreign territories* even more clearly than the game does.

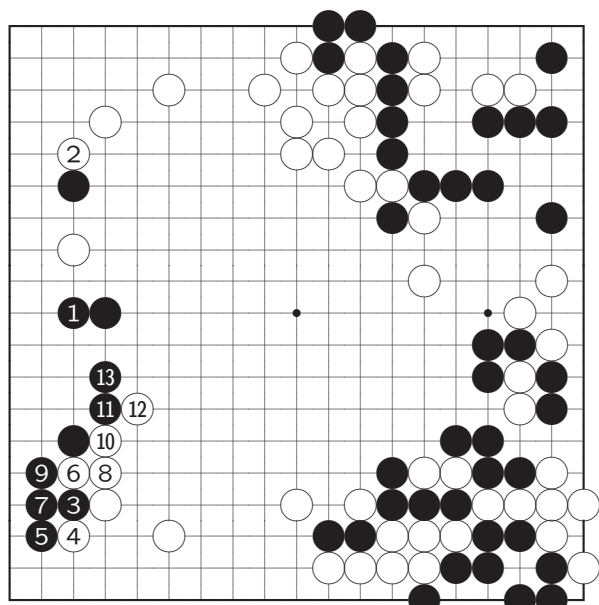
Invading and fighting like this is one strategy for converting the power stored in your stones into territory.



Variation 79 for 91

Blocking at ⑤ is also conceivable, but White will be happy to swallow A along with the corner territory, with ⑥ to ⑩.

Since we can't find a good continuation for Black after he attaches at ①, we can understand why Lee didn't play ① in the game.

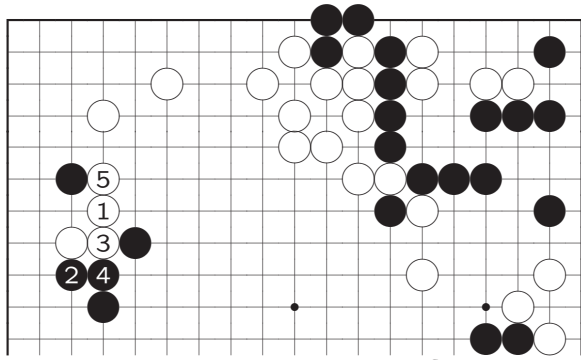


Variation 80 for 91

Creating an iron pillar at ① would have been the best move for Black in this case.

White will kick at ②, and Black can settle the position and consolidate territory with ③ and ⑤.

Up to ⑬, the game is still slightly better for White, but the gap is closing.

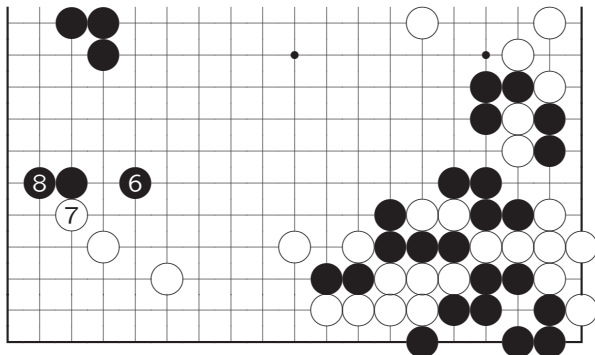


Variation 81 for (92)

Perhaps Lee expected White to move out with ①.

In that case, Black can reinforce his position with ② and ④, and this development is satisfactory for Black.

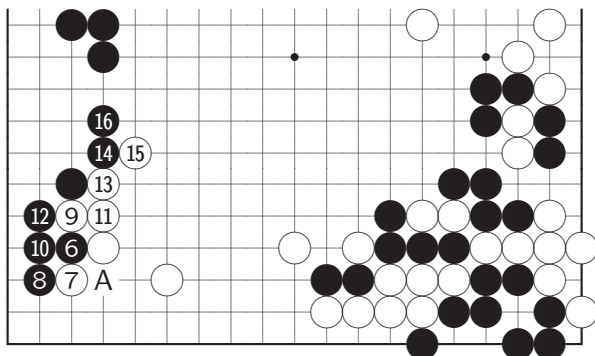
Of course, Gu didn't follow Black's plan in the game. Continuing...



Variation 82 for (92)

Jumping with ⑥ is calm and solid, and the result through to ⑧ is acceptable.

Perhaps you feel that Black should try to stretch his stones to accomplish more though? In that case...

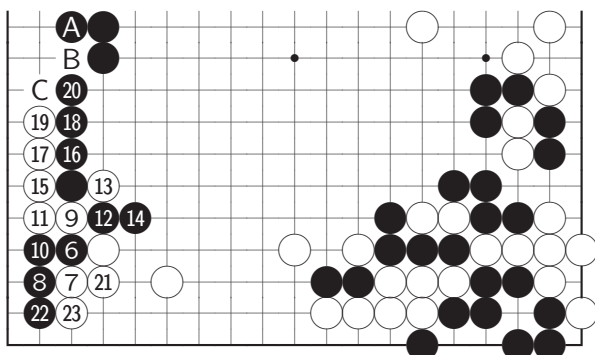


Variation 83 for (92)

The attachment at ⑥ and counter-hane at ⑧ appeared in Variation 80, and it may seem like Black can still play this way.

If Black could play like this and solidify his territory up to ⑩ it would be even better than the previous variations. As we'll see, however, ⑥ is an overplay.

White could connect at A instead of playing ⑨, but Black would make shape with ⑫ and be satisfied.

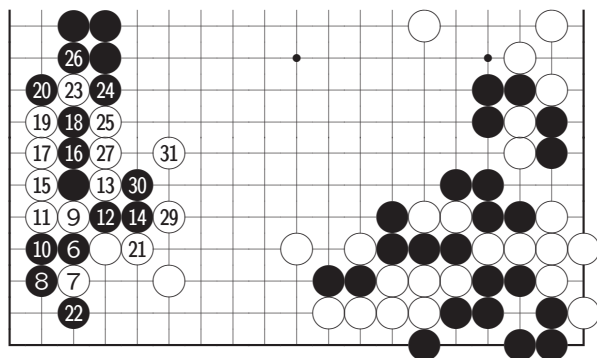


Variation 84 for (92)

White won't meekly connect at ⑫. He will push through and fight with ⑪.

Cutting at ⑫ is natural, but White can extend his liberties with ⑬ to ⑲ in sente, before winning the capturing race in the corner with ⑳ and ㉓.

Note that if ㉓ were at B, as in Variation 80, Black would be able to play ㉓ at C, and White would have one fewer liberty. In that case, Black would win the capturing race.



Variation 85 for (92)

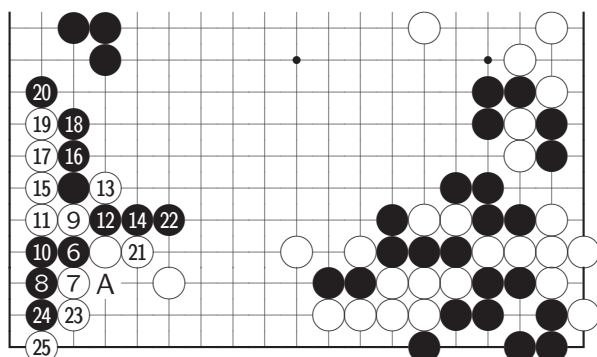
28 at 23

Black can still consider the hane at 20, but his position is too thin to make it work properly.

White 21 is an interesting move, which makes miai of 22 and 29.

Cutting at 23 and squeezing up to 28 is a tight sequence which prepares to net Black's cutting stones with 29 and 31.

This result is very good for White.



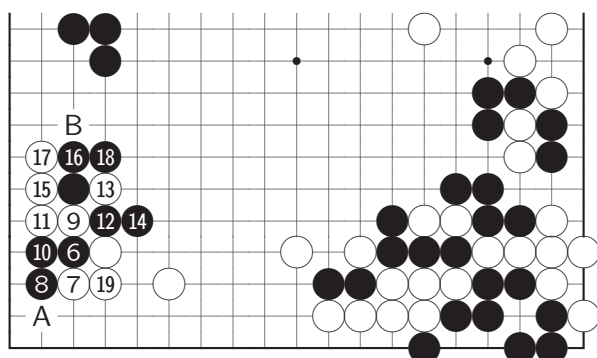
Variation 86 for (92)

Black can avoid the net in the previous variation by extending to 22.

The problem is that if 21 is sente, White can then descend to 23 without connecting at A.

This means Black also has one fewer liberty than in Variation 84, so 20 has gained nothing.

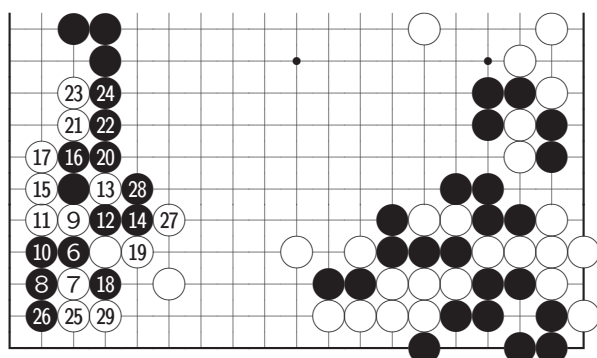
White wins the capturing race with 25.



Variation 87 for (92)

If Black allows the pressure to slacken, by gripping a stone with 18, White can relax and connect at 19.

A and B are miai for White.

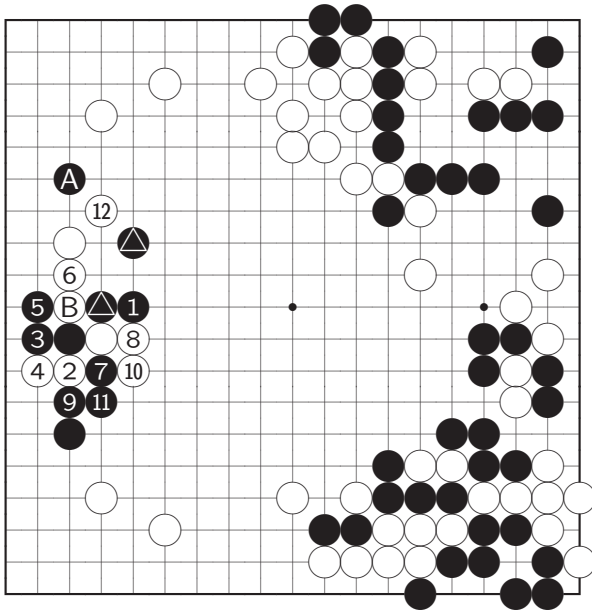


Variation 88 for (92)

Inserting the atari at 18 changes nothing of consequence.

White can extend his liberties in sente with 21 and 23, before saving his stone from atari with 25.

Once again, White wins the capturing race.



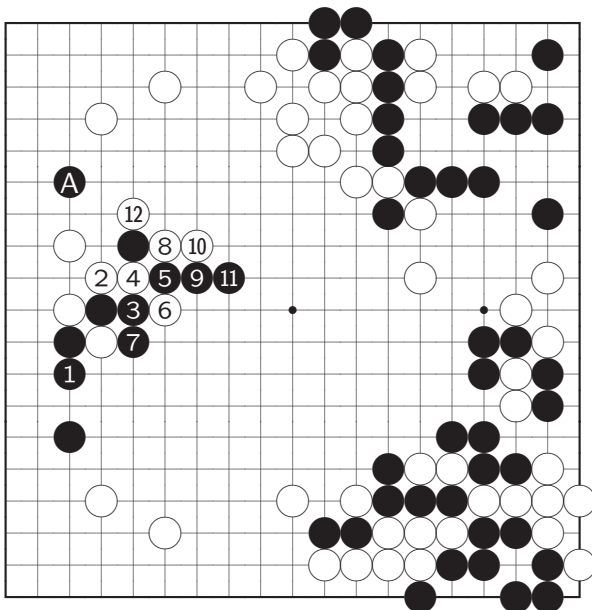
Variation 89 for 95

Returning to game, if Black tries to fight with ① instead ⑨⑤ (at ⑧), White plans to counter with ② and ④.

Even though Black can capture ② and ④, White can move out at ⑫ after exchanging ⑧ and ⑩ in sente.

Black ① and the marked stones have been forsaken inside White's sphere of influence.

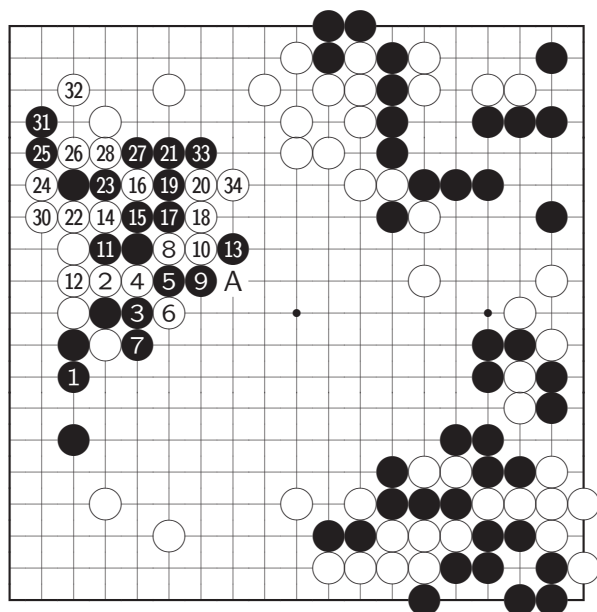
Note how the exchanges of ③ and ⑥ make it harder for Black to sacrifice ① effectively. Compare this with Variation 81.



Variation 90 for 95

If Black extends at ① instead, White will break through with the moves from ② to ⑫.

Black ① is isolated and the result is good for White.



Variation 91 for 95

29 at 16

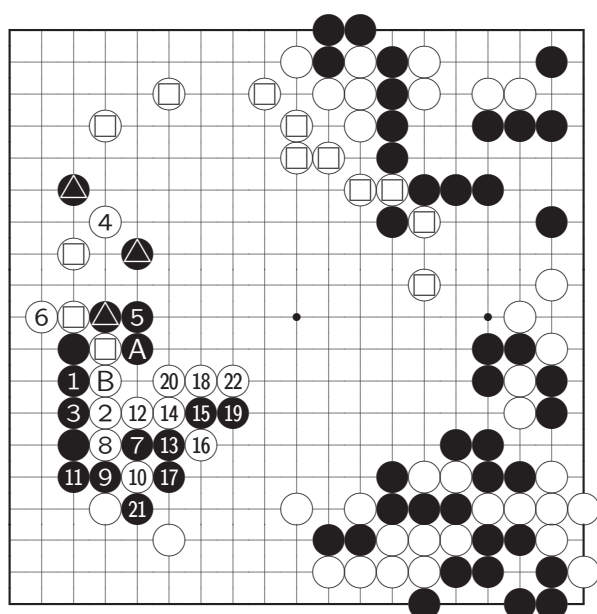
You might wonder whether Black can resist with the extreme tactic of 11 and 13.

Black 13 appears to simultaneously guard against the ladders starting at both A and 14.

White is, however, unperturbed. He can manage both his groups with 14 to 20, and connect under with 22, 24 and 26.

After White evades the immediate danger, Black's giant dumpling finds itself predigested inside White's stomach. This is thanks to White's power at the top.

All of Black's stones after 13 are captured.



Variation 92 for 97

Fighting with 1, after exchanging A for B, is an alternative tactic.

White will play 2 in sente and move out with 4.

Black 5 and 7 start a promising counter-attack. The net at 7 doesn't technically work, but that doesn't usually matter with this shape because Black can damage White's corner with 21 if he escapes.

The humble push at 22 is nevertheless a strong move.

White's squared sphere of influence is huge and Black's triangled stones find themselves adrift and without hope, amidst a sea of white.

Play Carefully, Don't Act in Haste

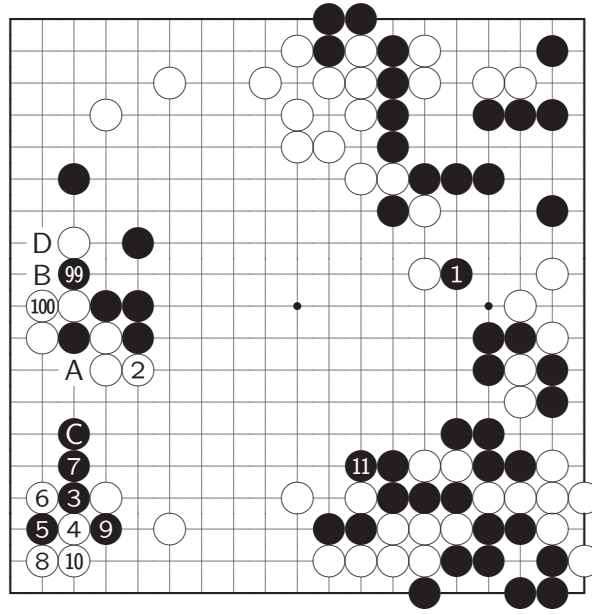


Diagram 17
(Moves: 99-111)

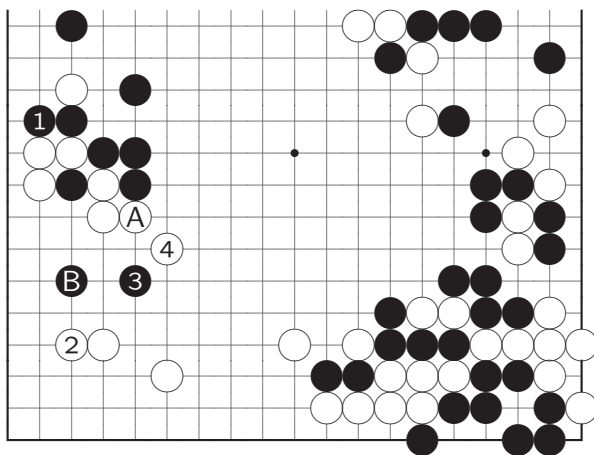
The result up to ⑩ was satisfactory for White. If White had played ⑩ at A, Black would have been able to make good shape with B, so the solid connection at ⑩ was appropriate in this situation.

Lee took sente and returned to attacking White on the right side with ①, but it didn't bother Gu.

Turning at ② was satisfyingly thick, and White was clearly ahead. Since the result up to ② was a success for White, Lee later said that he should have pushed with Black ① at ②, before playing ①.

Black had to make use of ③ somehow, before White swallowed it whole. Black ③ and ⑤ were typical of Lee's style of play, but cutting at ⑥ was a strong counter in this case.

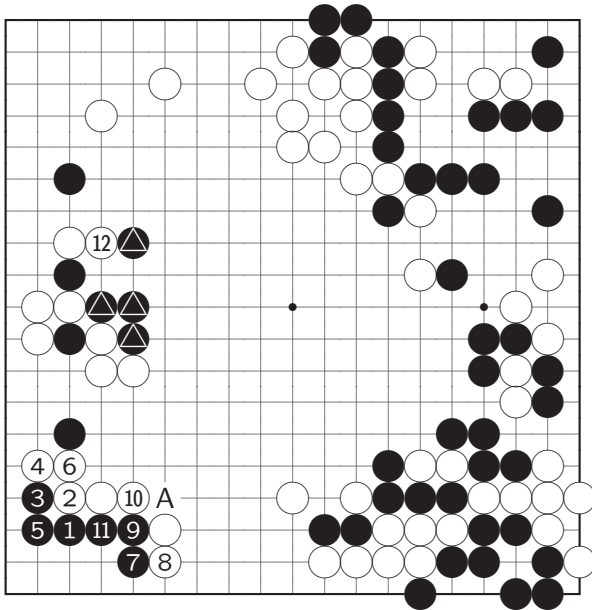
Instead of ①, if Black plays at B, White will still push up at ② and will aim to attack Black's group with the clamp at D later.



Variation 93 for ⑩

If Black tenukis after ④, for example to play at ①, ⑤ is practically captured after White reinforces the corner with ②.

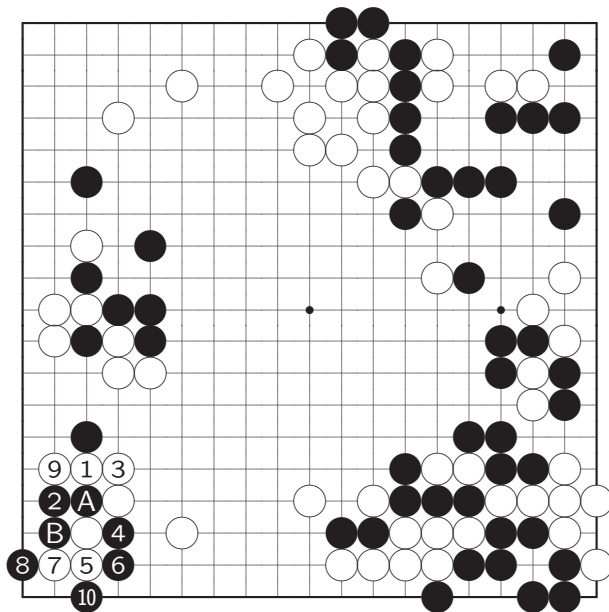
Even if Black tries to run away with ③, White can easily cut off his escape with ④ and Black won't be able to save his group, because White is too thick at the bottom.



Variation 94 for 103

Black can easily live in the corner after invading at ①, but White strikes back with ⑫ and Black's marked group is under attack.

White doesn't need to worry about the cutting point at A in this case, because his position at the bottom is already very strong.

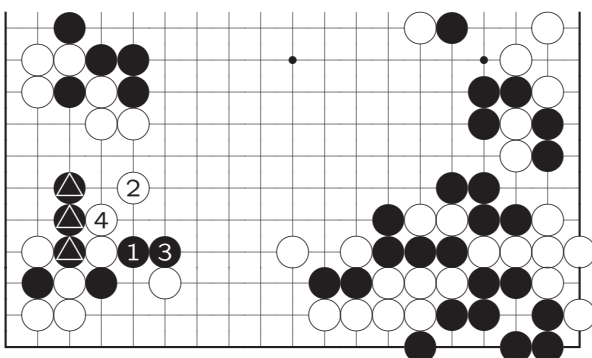


Variation 95 for 106

After Black's attachment and counter-hane with A and B, ① and ③ are more common than White's atari at ② (106 in the game), but they're not good in this situation.

Black can live in the corner with ④ to ⑩, and he has more points than he did in the previous variation.

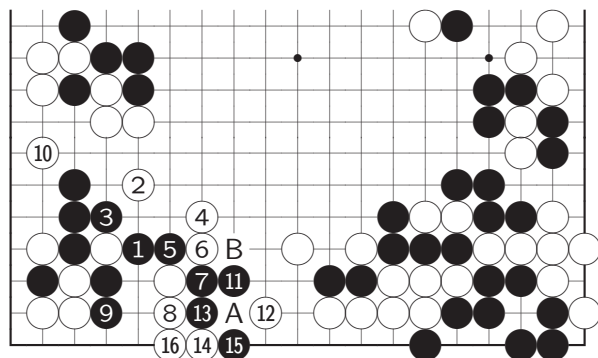
This variation is unsatisfactory for White.



Variation 96 for 111

If Black ataris at ①, ② is the vital point.

Black can try to manage the situation with ③, but White will be happy to capture the marked stones without any trouble.

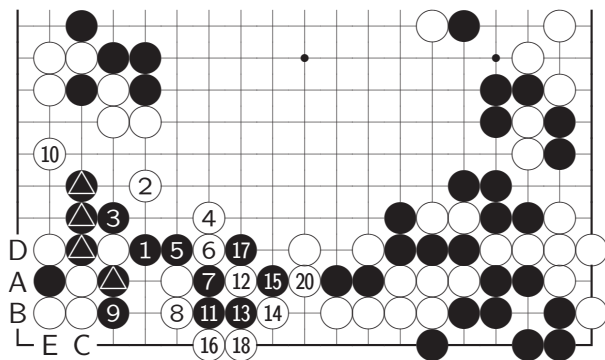


Variation 97 for 111

Capturing with ③ is a lethargic move, which rouses White to put his foot down with ④.

It looks like Black might have some play against the corner with ⑦ and ⑨, but ⑩ and ⑫ are ingenious moves which defend the corner indirectly while landing severe blows.

If Black connects at A, White takes a liberty at B and Black's stones in the bottom left are all dead.



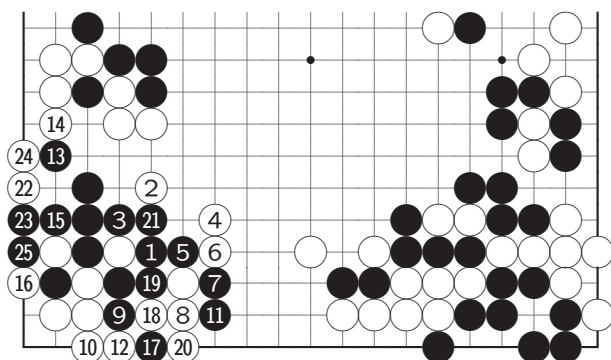
Variation 98 for 111

⑬ at ⑫

Black ⑪ is also worth considering, but ⑫ and ⑭ are a tesuji combination for connecting along the edge.

Up to ⑳, Black's marked group is still captured.

For reference, Black is hoping to capture White's corner with something like A to E, but ⑩ ensures that White can connect along the edge if he needs to.



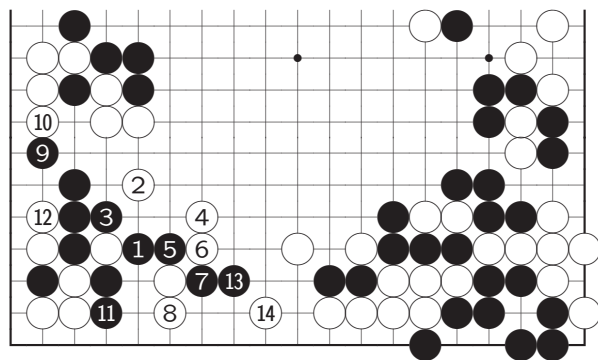
Variation 99 for 111

Worrying too much about the corner lands White in all sorts of trouble.

Defending at ⑩ gives Black too much leeway and ⑬ is a vital point.

Black has two half eyes after exchanging ⑮ for ⑯ in sente, and can form one complete eye with ⑰ to ⑳.

If White continues trying to capture Black with ㉔, the result up to ㉕ is a ko for the life of both groups.



Variation 100 for 111

Since ⑨ is a vital point in this position, Black should think about exchanging ⑨ for ⑩ first.

However, ⑫ is good enough to destroy Black's eye shape and ⑭ still works.

There are many possible variations here, but Black can't live after White encloses him with ④.

Chaos Smiles upon the Underdog

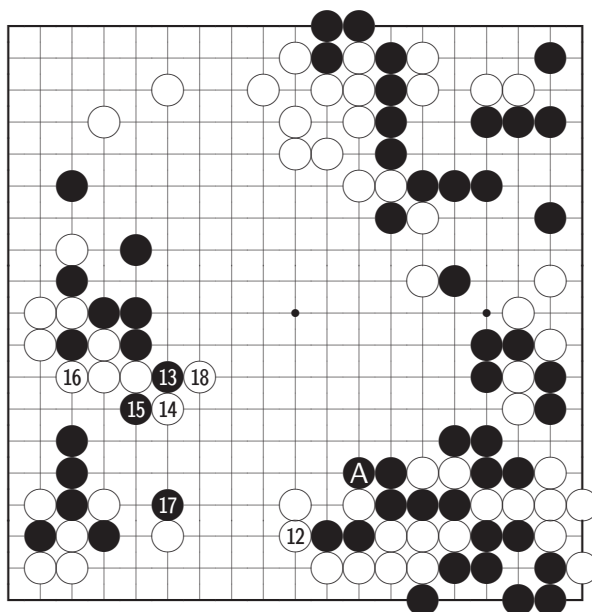


Diagram 18
(Moves: 112-118)

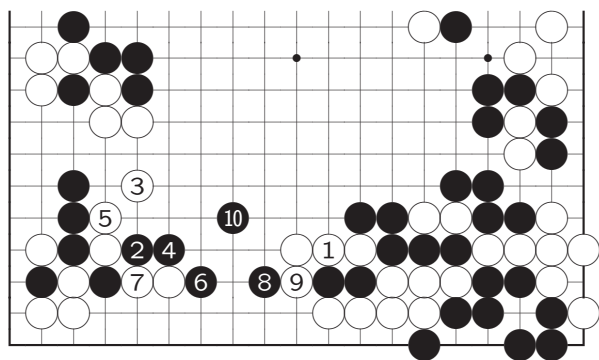
Black **A** (111 in the game) was very subtly timed and Gu fell back with 12, which was a bit passive, but still solid. The position favored White, so he played safely here.

Black 13 and 15 were unexpected. It's not easy to think about cutting and fighting here, because White's position is already quite strong. Lee specializes in this sort of close combat within his opponent's sphere of influence.

White 16 was slack, and Lee was able to begin complicating the game. This is exactly what you want to do when you're behind. A chaotic and unpredictable game favors the player who is already losing.

Gu played very cautiously in order to retain his lead, but he was being too careful.

Black 17 was a difficult move to answer. The atari in the center, at 18, was the correct response.

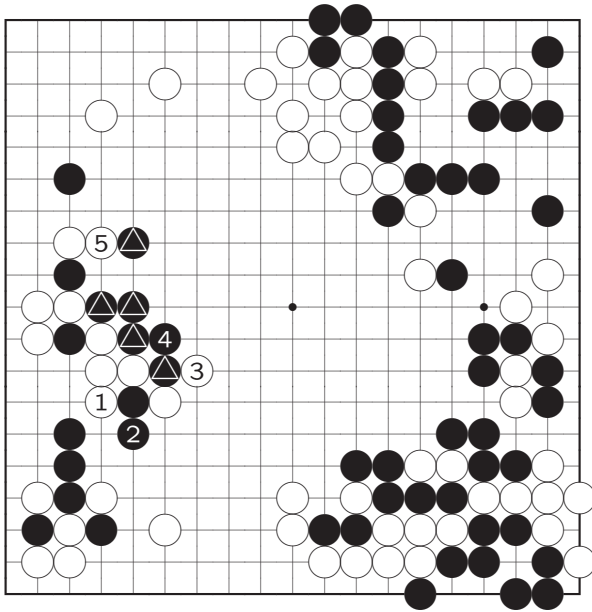


Variation 101 for 112

There's nothing wrong with 1.

In the game, Gu may have worried that peeping at 8 would be sente.

In that case, Black might try something like 2 to 10 later. It appears that Gu disliked this prospect.

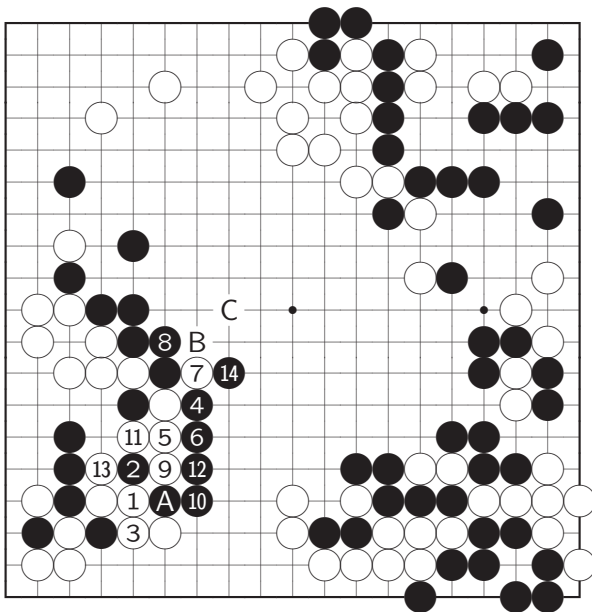


Variation 102 for ①⑥

Instead of capturing with ①⑥ in the game, White should have played the atari at ①.

If Black extends to ②, White can even consider attacking Black's marked group with ⑤.

Black has two weak groups, and it doesn't look like it's possible for him to manage both of them.



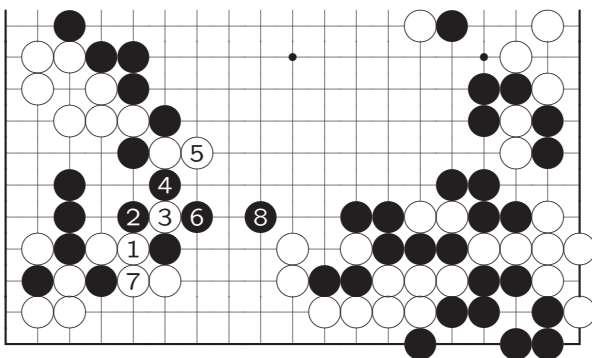
Variation 103 for ①⑧

White shouldn't respond to A directly.

If White answers at ①, Black has the hane at ② up his sleeve and the result up to ⑭ is a great success for Black.

Black has reduced the lower left in sente and developed his own power in the center.

White can't save ⑦ with B, because Black can make a net with C.



Variation 104 for ①⑧

In the middle of this sequence, cutting at ③ doesn't lead to a good result either.

Black can double atari with ④ and run away with ⑥ and ⑧.

There's nothing for White to gain here after ⑧.

Playing Too Safely Is Risky

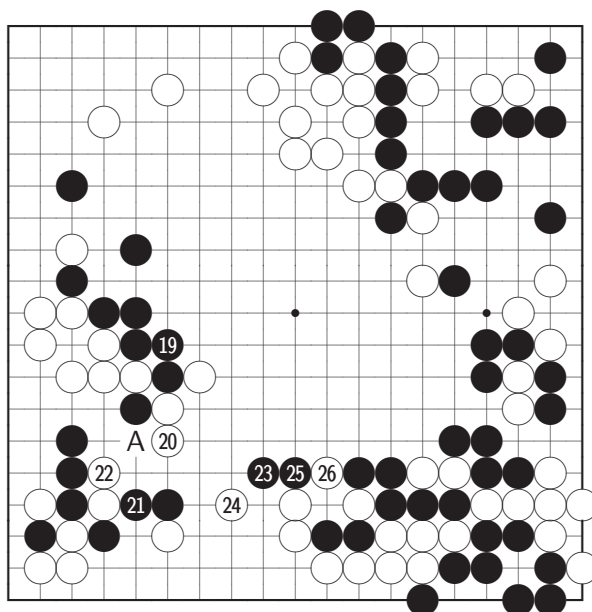
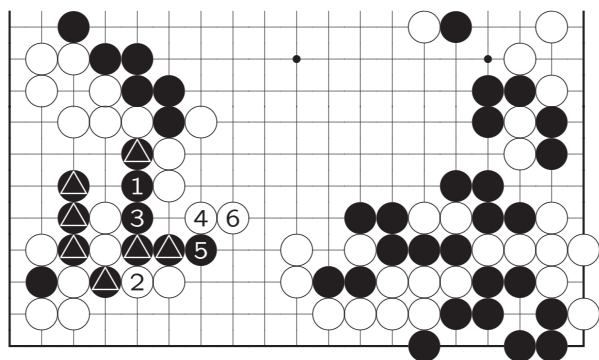


Diagram 19
(Moves: 119-126)

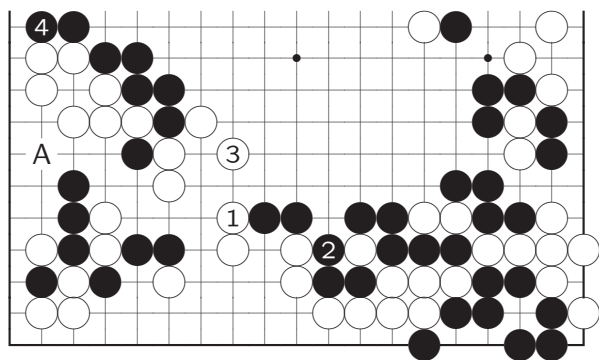
Black ②③ was a brilliant multi-purpose move and ②④ should have been at A. Gu focused too much on protecting his advantage, allowing the game to become complicated. As Niccolò Machiavelli points out in *The Prince*, we never “. . . escape one mischief without falling into another. Prudence therefore consists in knowing how to distinguish degrees of disadvantage, and in accepting a less evil as a good.”



Variation 105 for ②③

Black may try to rescue his stones with ①, but White will counter with ④ and ⑥.

All of Black's marked stones will be captured because he has nowhere to go at the bottom.



Variation 106 for ②⑥

If White pushes up at ①, capturing with ② is a large sente move.

Reinforcing with ③ is necessary and the game would be quite close after ④.

There's still a hint of bad aji on the left side if Black plays at A later on.

Don't Celebrate Too Early

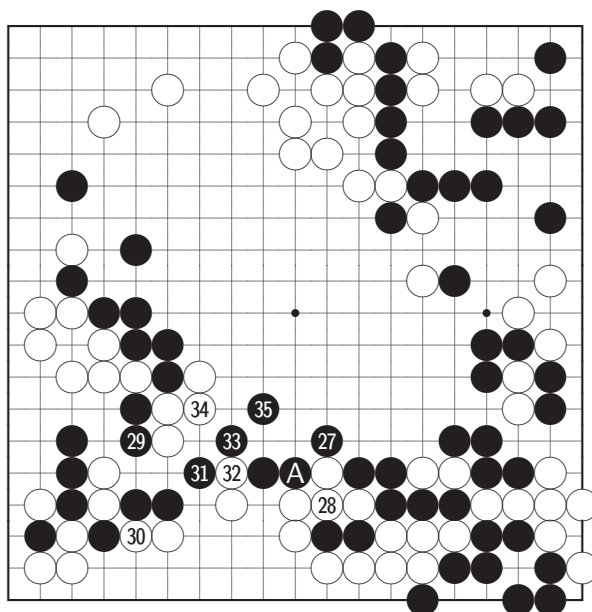


Diagram 20
(Moves: 127-135)

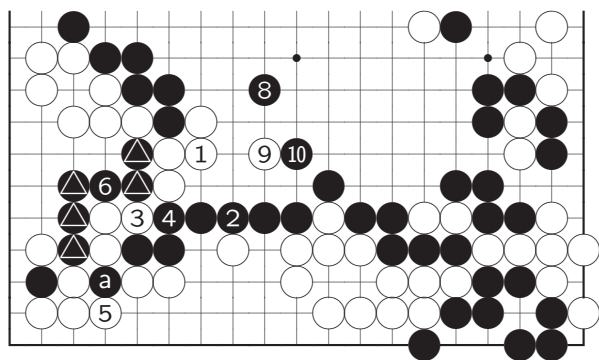
Black (A), (29) and (31) formed a delicate combination, and the game suddenly became even. The way Black made the game playable again was unbelievable.

You can compare the situation at moves (114) and (131), to see the difference. Only Lee Sedol could pull off this kind of magical reversal against Gu Li.

White (32) and (34) demonstrated the correct move order in this kind of situation, but the mood of the game had already changed.

Black was in high spirits now, because the result up to here was a great success. Furthermore, Gu was now under some psychological pressure, because of his history of losing 'won games' to Lee.

However, Black's hanging connection at (35) was a mistake. It's critically important not to celebrate too early in Go. The moment you relax and revel in your lead is the moment you lose it.



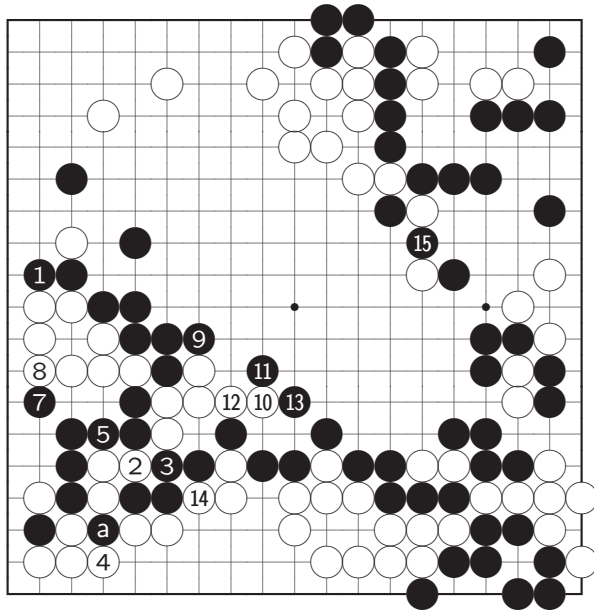
Variation 107 for (132)

(7) at (a)

Connecting at (1) without pushing at (2) first is wrong.

Black (8) is a good move to seal White in, and the result up to (10) is very good for Black.

Later on, White will be forced to remove Black's marked group from the board in a capturing race, and will lose points in the corner while Black becomes thick in the center.



Variation 108 for 135

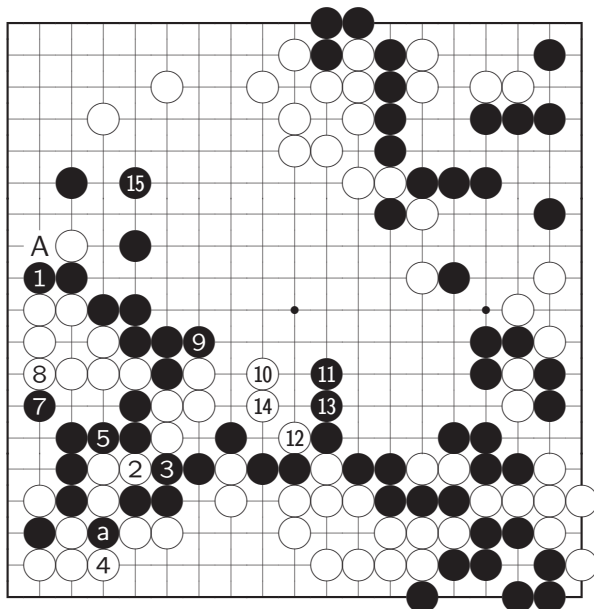
6 at a

Black must play at 1 first.

If White plays the same moves as he did in the game, turning with 9 will set up a squeeze and Black takes sente to play 15.

As you can see, Black is able to seal off the center in sente, while also erasing the aji on the right side.

This result is obviously good for Black.



Variation 109 for 135

6 at a

Jumping at 10 is the right move for White, but the game is still playable for Black.

Reinforcing with 15 is very good, and A doesn't work for White anymore.

Hope Takes but a Moment to Crumble

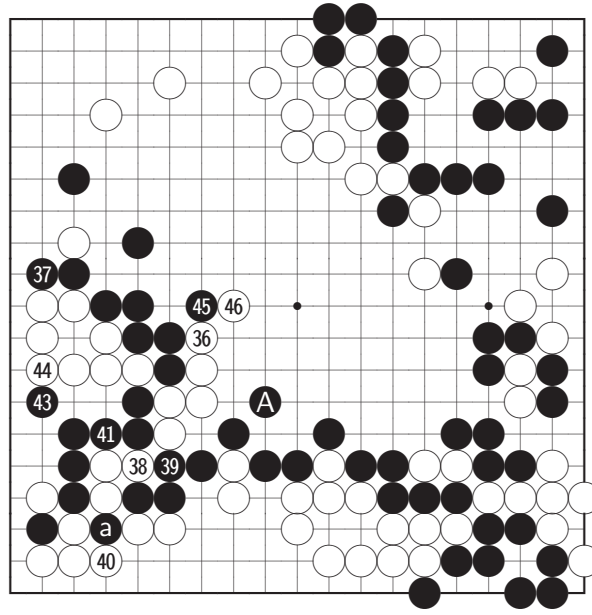


Diagram 21
(Moves: 136-146)

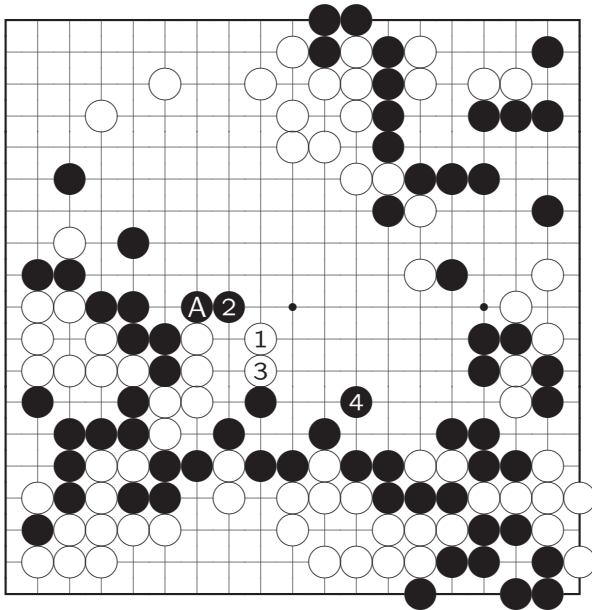
⑭② at a

We can now see that, compared to the previous variations, A was a mistake. Black should have just played at ③⑦ immediately.

The push at ③⑥ and the hane at ④⑥ were strong moves. It appears that Lee didn't anticipate ④⑥.

All of Lee Sedol's hard work came to naught when he stumbled at A. He was back to square one.

You can catch up painstakingly, point by point, and grasp an opportunity with both hands, but if your attention wavers for just a moment it will slip through your fingers like dust.



Variation 110 for ⑭⑥

Lee may have expected White to jump out with ①. If so, Black can maintain good shape on the left side.

Gu played several passive moves in the bottom left, but he played forcefully with the hane at ② (④⑥ in the game).

The mood of the game changed once again, in favor of White.

Go Is an Unforgiving Friend

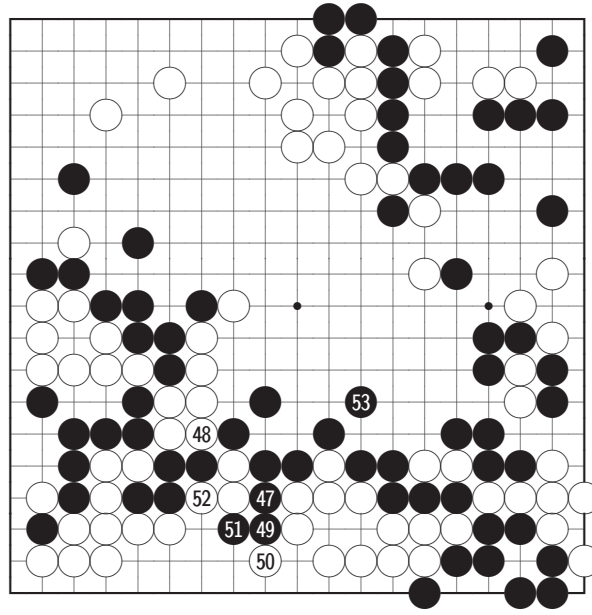
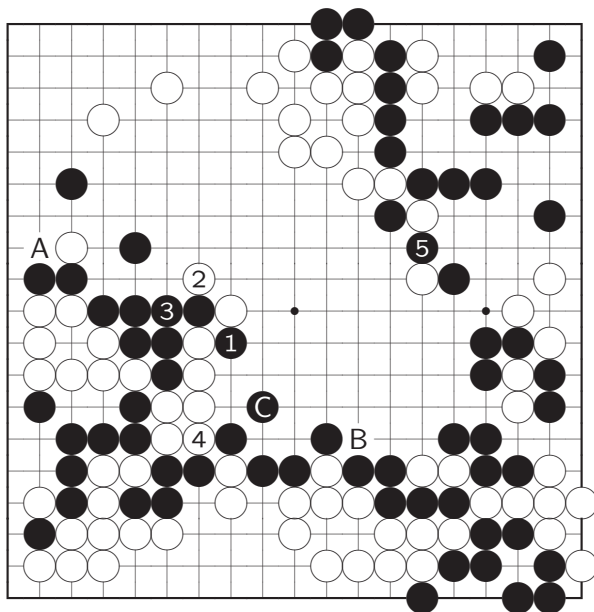


Diagram 22
(Moves: 147-153)

Black's push at ④⑦ was another careless mistake, and it became the losing move. It appears that Lee was too tired to maintain his concentration at this stage. He compounded one mistake with another.

Cutting at ④⑧ was the right response for White, and all of his bad aji was gone.

Black was able to reduce White's territory with ④⑨ and ⑤①, but it wasn't enough. To add insult to injury, ⑤③ became necessary, so White took sente.

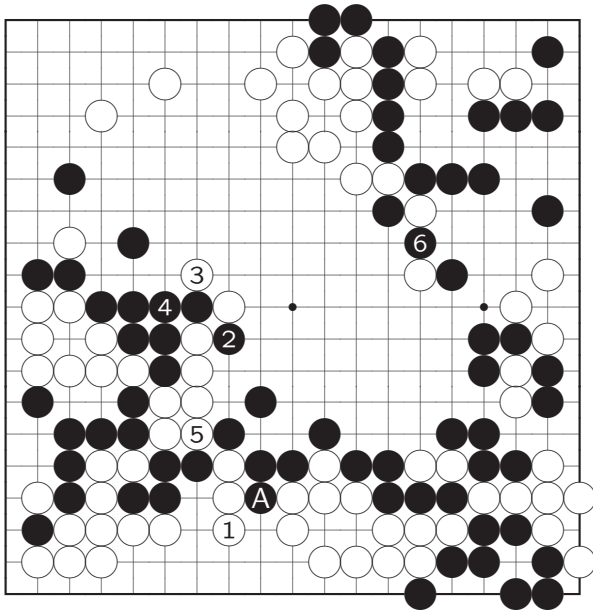


Variation 111 for ④⑦

Black should cut at ①, then he can still come back to play ⑤.

However, the game already favors White again, because there are weaknesses in Black's position at A and B.

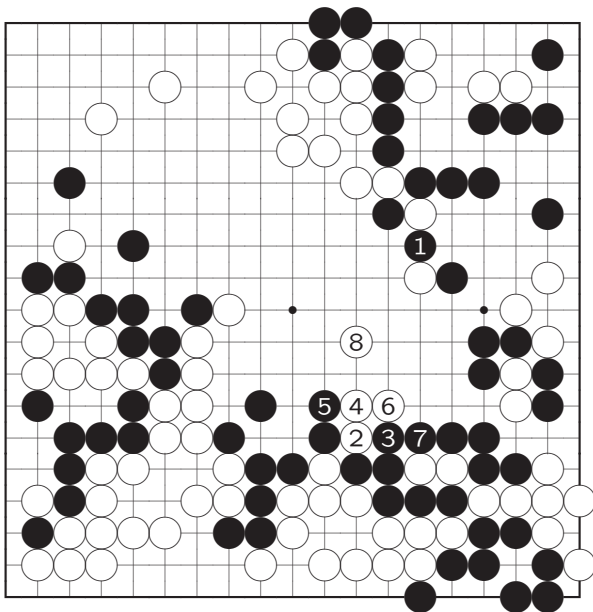
We can conclude from this that ④ was a big mistake.



Variation 112 for ⑭

Lee's plan was to exchange ① for ②, before coming back to ②.

In this variation, Black manages to reduce White's territory by two more points with ①, but this one-sided reading was too optimistic.



Variation 113 for ⑮

If Black doesn't reinforce at ④ (⑤③ in the game), White will cut at ② and it will be hard for Black to manage his group at the bottom.

Always Try One Last Time

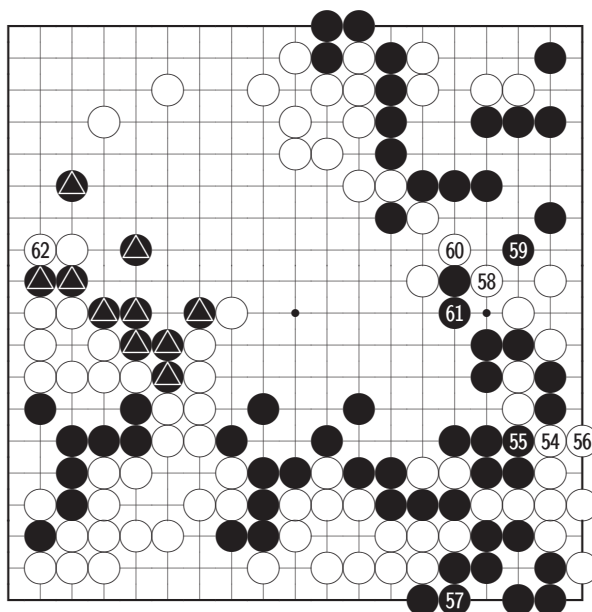


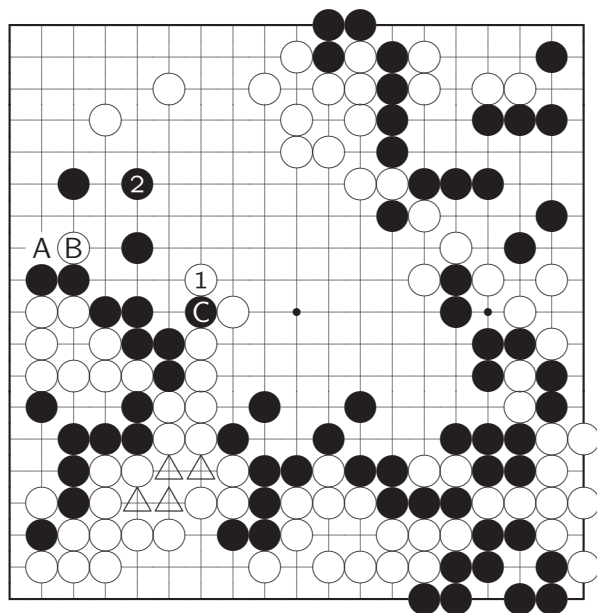
Diagram 23
(Moves: 154-162)

White ⑤④ and ⑤⑥ were well timed moves, and Black played ⑤⑦ to capture White's lower right stones without a ko fight or seki.

Black ⑤⑨ and ⑥① were strong, insistent moves, which showed that Black was going all out.

If Black couldn't capture White's group, the game would be hopeless for him, so he had to play severely. Even when a game seems lost, you should always try one last time before giving in.

Gu didn't keep playing on the right side. He came back to ⑥② to attack Black's marked stones in sente and planned to return to the right side later. This was a great idea and Lee was in trouble.



Variation 114 for ⑥②

White would like to deform Black's shape in sente, before clamping at A, but this is too optimistic.

Black will resist with ②. After this, ⑤ is captured and Black's group is strong.

Black ⑤ isn't very important anymore, because White has captured the marked stones.

White cannot trade ⑤ for ⑤ like this, and should clamp at A without delay.

Use Miai to Maintain Your Lead

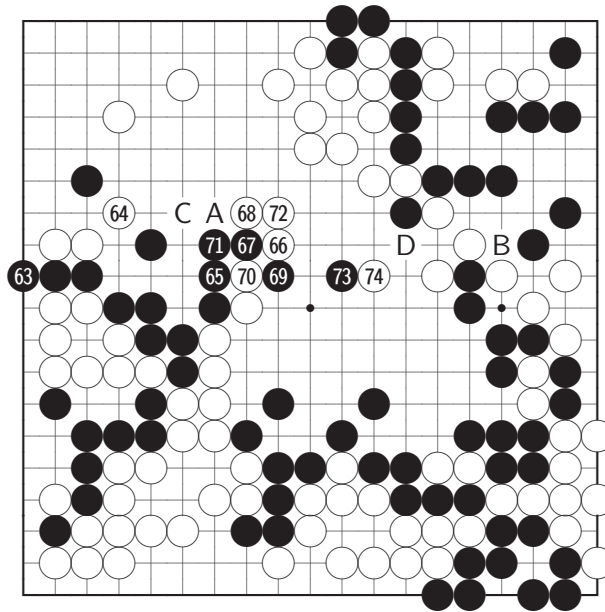
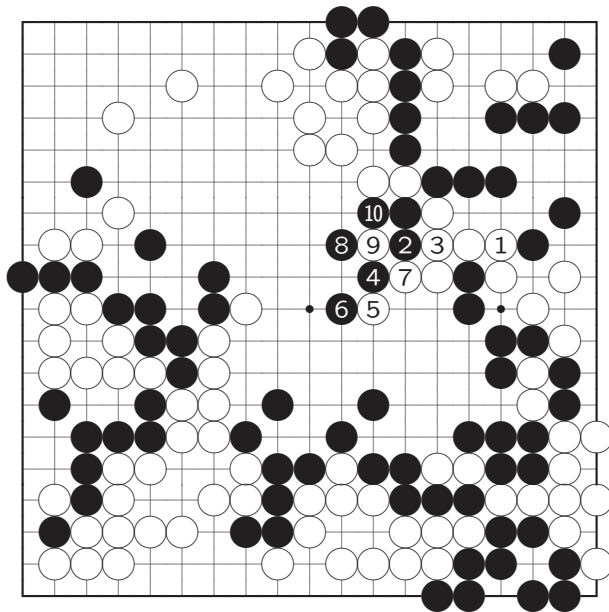


Diagram 24
(Moves: 163-174)

White ⑥⑥ was a gentle yet effective move, which made miai of A and B. White didn't need to save or capture anything, he just needed to maintain his lead.

Black ⑥⑦ was played not only to save Black's left side group, but to keep the possibility of D alive. White ⑥⑧ and ⑦② were the correct responses, and now B and C were miai.

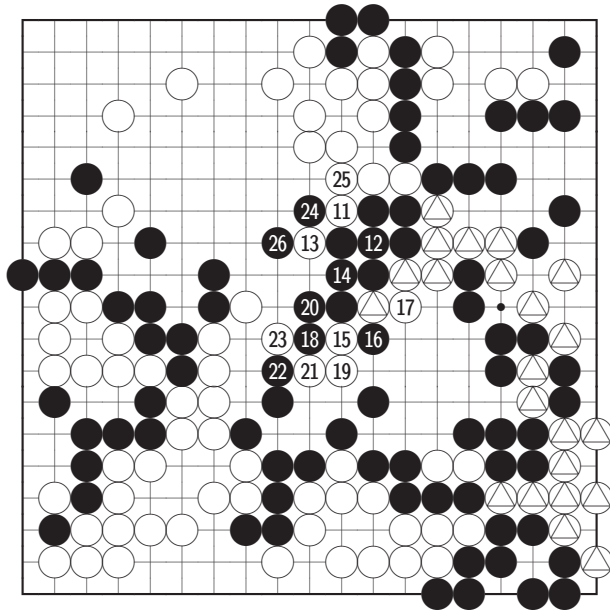
Black ⑦③ was a diabolical move, typical of Lee Sedol. Attaching at ⑦④ was the proper response, and B and C were still miai for White.



Variation 115 for ①⑥⑥

If White tries to save his right side stones with ①, Black can play to capture them with ② and ④.

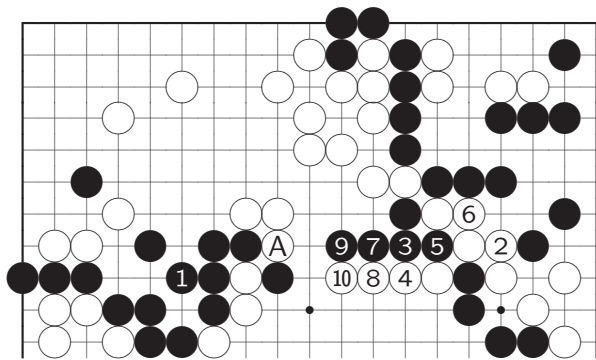
Continuing...



Variation 116 for (166)

It's a long sequence, but Black manages to hold everything together through to 26.

All of White's marked stones are captured.

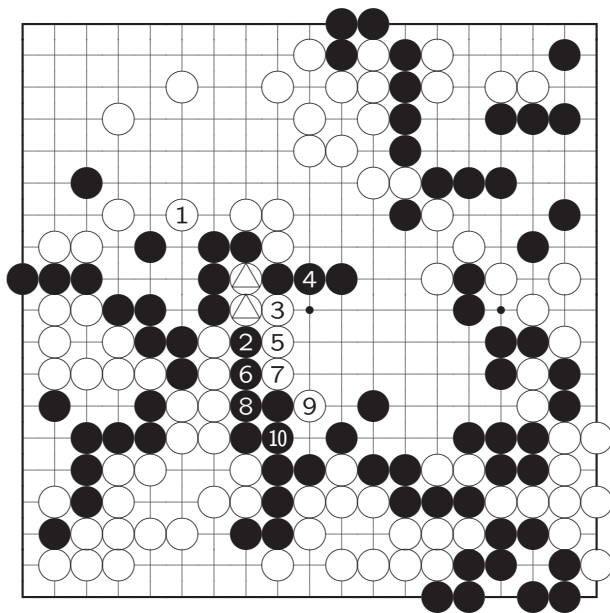


Variation 117 for (173)

If Black reinforces his group on the left with 1, White can save his right side stones with 2.

Black 3 doesn't work anymore and the game will finish here.

This variation makes the effect of White's gentle knight's move at A easier to understand, as it's now blockading Black's escape route.



Variation 118 for (174)

If White doesn't defend the center with 74, and tries to capture Black's group with 1, Black can cut at 2 and White's marked center stones will be captured.

There's No Easy Road to Success

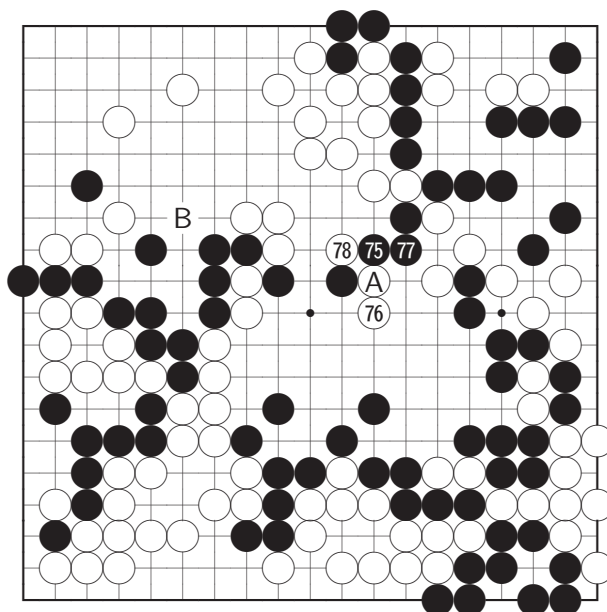
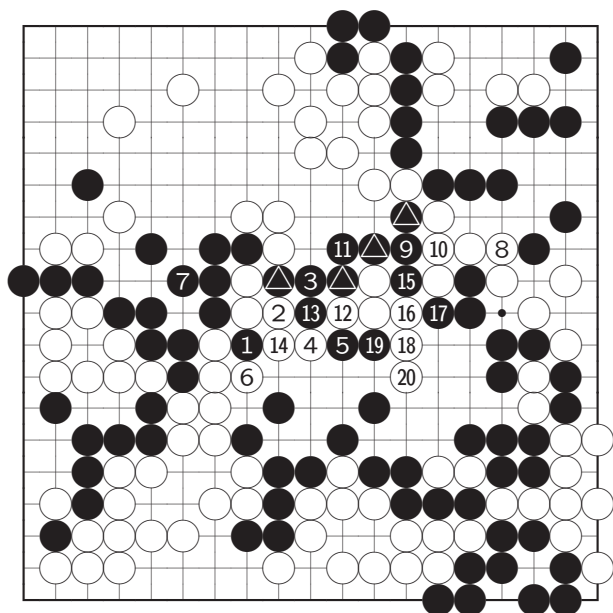


Diagram 25
(Moves: 175-178)

White ① (74) and ② (76) formed a tight combination, and the game was nearing its end.

However, cutting at ③ (78) was a serious mistake. It seems that Gu wanted to ensure that everything was tidy, before capturing Black's group with B, but this cut became a bad exchange.

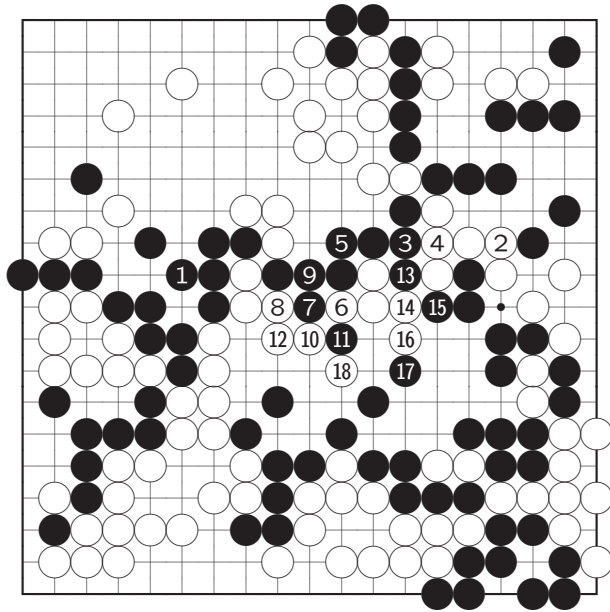
As victory nears, it's incredibly tempting to try to wrap things up as quickly as possible. In this moment, all players face a crucial struggle against the vicissitudes of human nature. There are no shortcuts, however, and you have to continue to read and play with the same intensity that brought you this far, right until the last stone touches the board and settles into stillness.



Variation 119 for ①

If Black cuts at ① first, ④ is a good move and ⑦ and ⑧ are still miai for White.

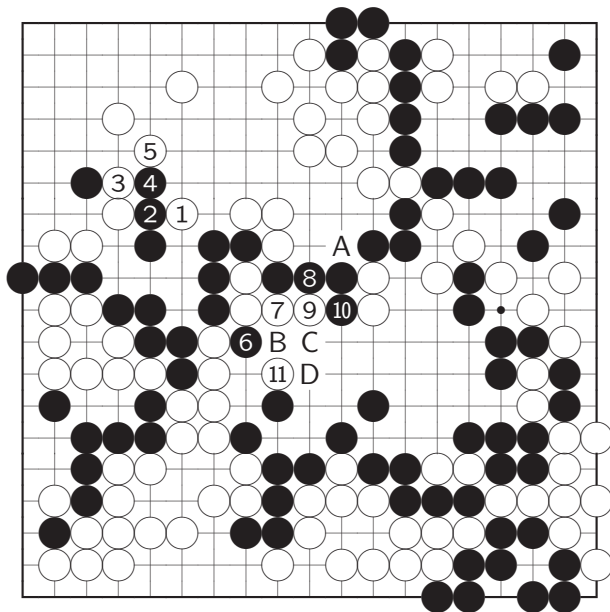
After ②⑩, White has enough liberties to win a capturing race with the marked stones, so Black collapses.



Variation 120 for 177

If Black reinforces at ① now, White can still connect at ②.

As you can see from these variations, there's no way for Black to win the capturing race.



Variation 121 for 178

Instead of cutting at A (Ⓔ), Gu would have won the game easily if he'd attacked at ①.

Black can't make two eyes, and cutting at ⑥ doesn't work either.

If Black plays ⑩ at B, White can turn at C. White will answer Black's bulge at D with the cut at A.

Be Slow to Anger

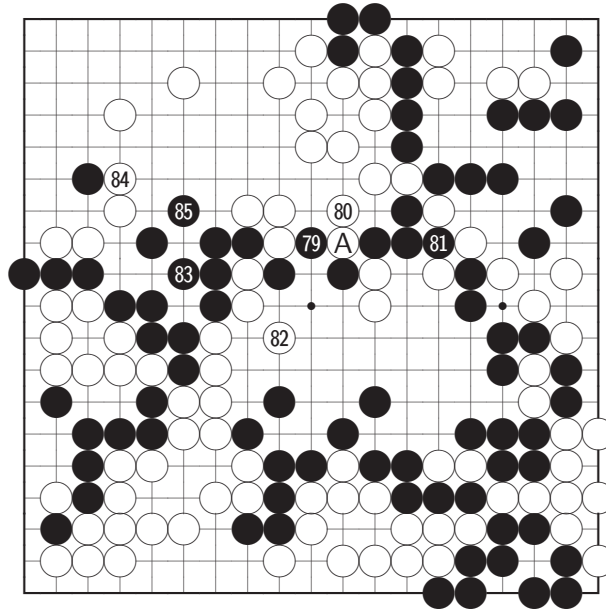
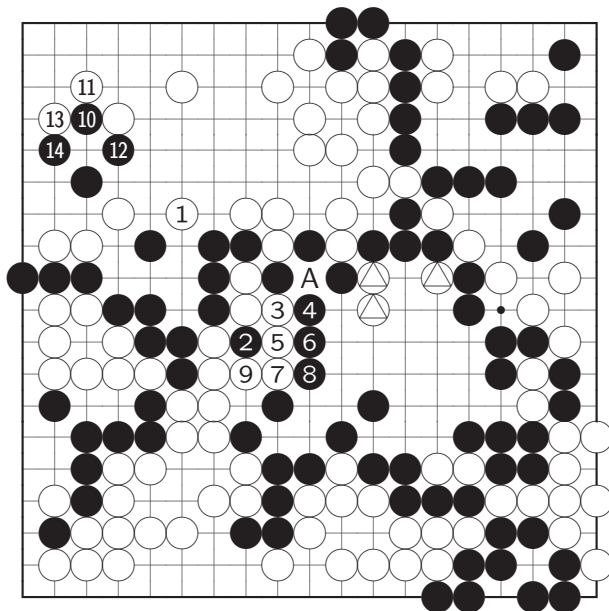


Diagram 26
(Moves: 179-185)

A good soldier is not violent. A good fighter is not angry. A good winner is not vengeful.

—Lao Zi, *Dao De Jing*

Despite stumbling at (A), Gu stayed calm and maintained his balance with (82). You mustn't become flustered or angry when you err, or you will pile mistake upon mistake. Even though Black lived with (83), (85) was questionable. There were no more chances for Black afterwards.



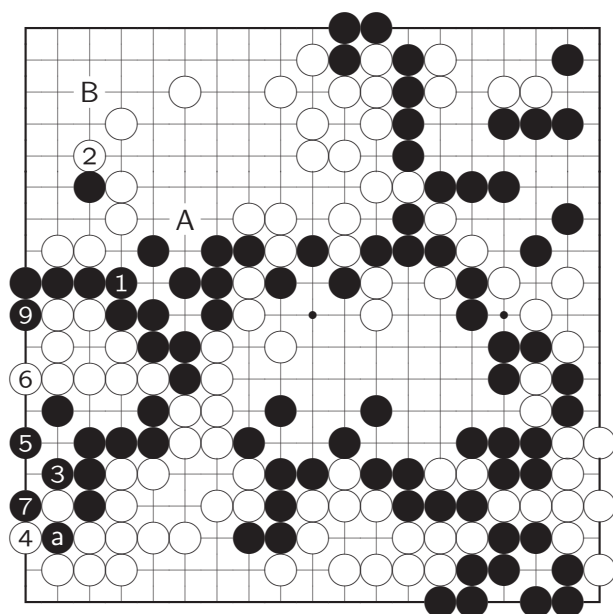
Variation 122 for (182)

Instead of (82), if White attacks at (1) to capture Black's group, cutting at (2) is the beginning of an elaborate counter.

Up to (9), Black has managed to capture White's marked stones in sente.

After this, Black can return to the left side and create a ko with (10) to (14). White might still be winning, but the game has become quite complicated.

Note: In actual play, White would take the ko at A before continuing with each of (5), (7) and (9). This makes Black spend ko threats. Those moves are only omitted here to make the overall strategy clearer.



Variation 123 for 185

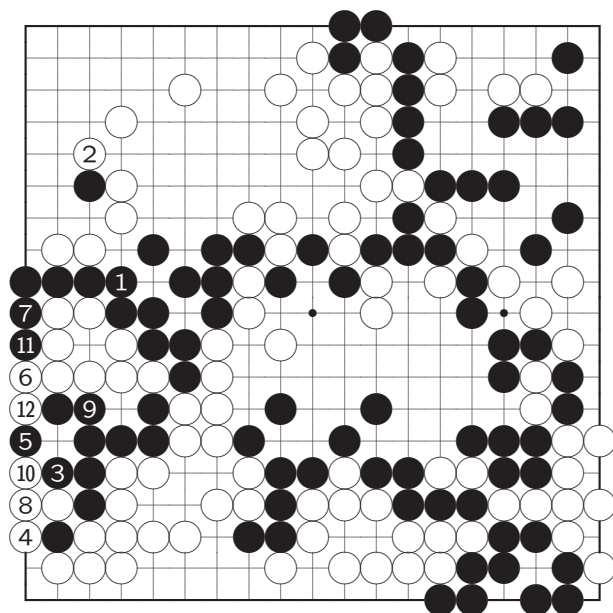
⑧ at a

Black should have lived with ①, instead of A (85).

Reinforcing at ② is necessary, to erase bad aji at B, and Black can create ko on the left side with ③ to ⑨.

It's still very difficult for Black to catch up at this stage, but he might have had a chance with this variation. Something is better than nothing.

If ⑤ is the hane at ⑥ instead, White hits the vital point at ⑤ and it becomes a "One eye beats no eye," capturing race. Black loses such a capturing race.



Variation 124 for 185

If Black just plays at ⑦ immediately, White can play at ⑧ to avoid the ko.

Black's stones are captured in a "One eye beats no eye," capturing race once again.

The reason why a one-eyed group usually beats an eyeless group in a capturing race is that the group with an eye counts all the shared liberties as its own.

This means that the eyeless group needs to have more outside liberties than the total of the one-eyed group's outside and inside (shared) liberties to win.

Because of this, one eye nearly always beats no eye (hence the proverb), but it's not an ironclad rule.

A Flawless Endgame

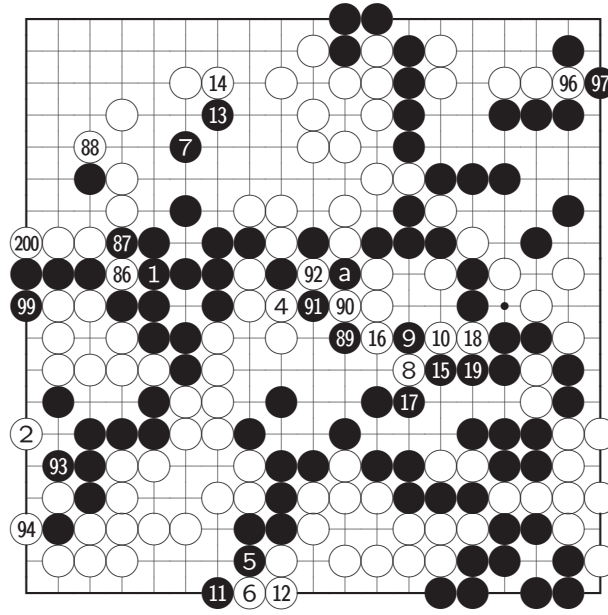


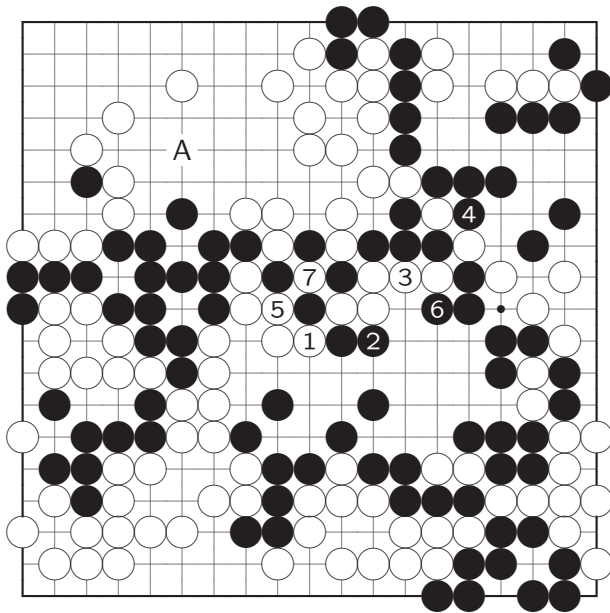
Diagram 27
(Moves: 186-219)

195 203 at a, 198 at 192

White 86 and 88 dissolved the possibility of a ko on the left side and tidied up the corner. The endgame was proceeding smoothly for White, and 4 (204) was the right way to deal with the ko in the center.

The jump at 7 and the knight's move at 8 were miai. White's hane at 10 was a neat tesuji, which ensured that the stone at 8 was connected.

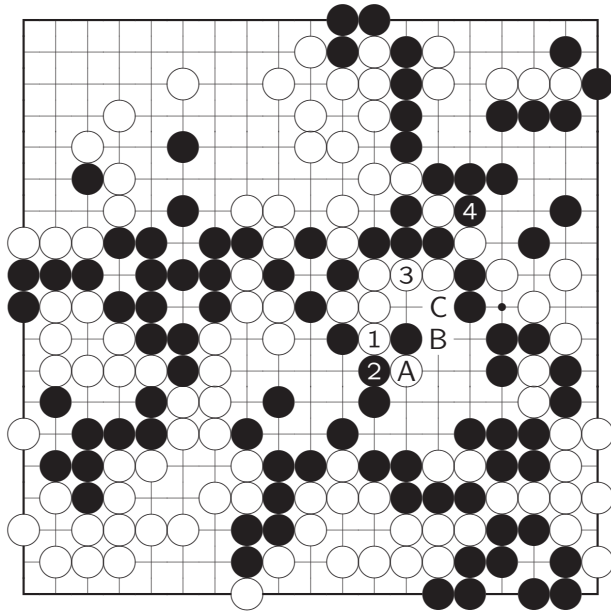
Black couldn't capture 8, so he went back to the bottom with 11. White 18 was another skillful endgame tesuji and 19 was the best response. Gu Li's endgame was flawless.



Variation 125 for 204

If White cuts at 1 instead, Black can block with 2 and 6 in sente.

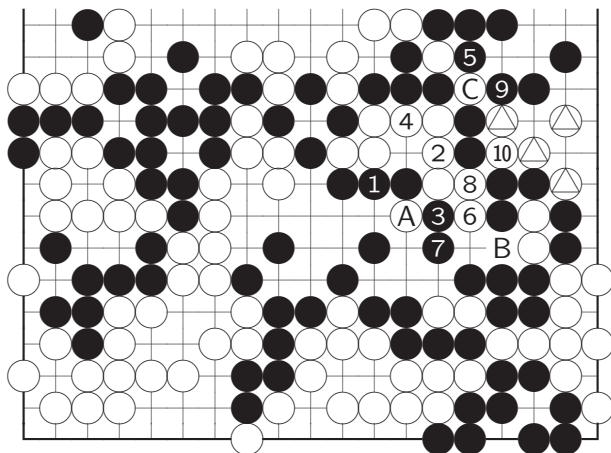
Black will jump at A next, and the game will become quite close again.



Variation 126 for 210

White should be careful not to push at ① first.

White can't save the stone at ① now, because if he ataris at B, Black will threaten a snapback with C.

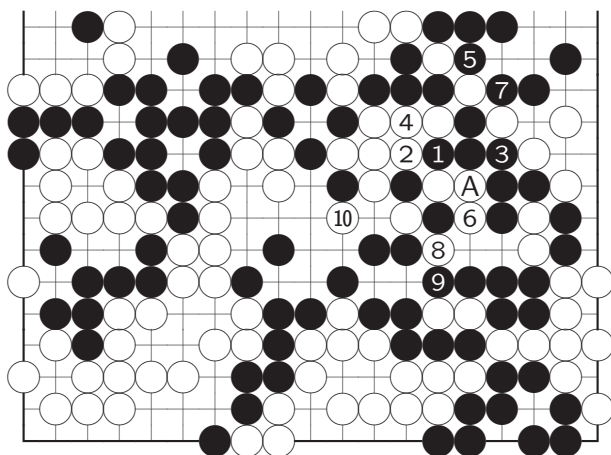


Variation 127 for 211

If Black goes all out to capture ①, White can respond with ② to ⑧.

Black can't connect with ⑨ at ⑩, because he's short of liberties.

After White double ataris at ⑩, his marked stones have been rescued and the game is over (B and C are miai).



Variation 128 for 219

If Black ataris at ① after ① (18), ② and ④ are sente.

The sequence up to ⑩ would be a disaster for Black.

Gu Li Grasps His First Win

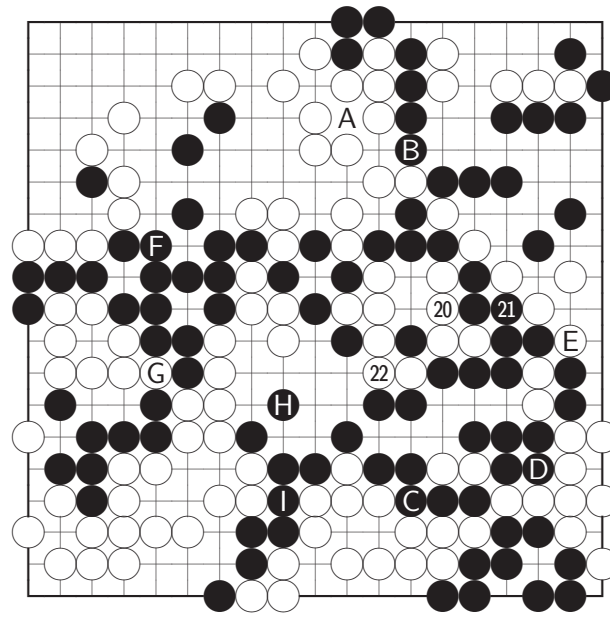


Diagram 28
(Moves: 220-222)

222 moves: White won by resignation.

White gained some points up to ②②, and was about five points ahead on the board when Black resigned. This was a fascinating game, from the very beginning through to the end. The first battle began when Black played at ①⑦ (A) and the result up to ③① (B) favored White slightly.

Black's attachment at ③⑦ (C) was very interesting, but it should have been at D instead. In the sequence following C, sacrificing with ⑥② (E) was a brilliant idea and White established a clear lead.

Black ⑨① (F) was questionable, and White had a winning position after ⑩② (G). Lee tried very hard to reduce White's lower left corner, and Gu played too cautiously. This gave Lee a chance to catch up.

However, ⑬⑤ (H) was a crucial mistake and the game soon became difficult for Black again. Black ⑭⑦ (I) was another careless error, and it became the losing move. Black didn't get another chance.

It still wasn't easy for White to wrap up the game, but Gu was able to carry his lead to the very end.

With his first win under his belt, Gu had made an important step towards catching up. The score was now 2-1 in Lee's favor.

It would have become a very difficult match for Gu if he'd lost this game too, but this victory restored his confidence in his endgame against Lee and relieved some mental pressure.

On the other hand, Lee's psyche was taking a beating—losing three games in a row, in the space of a week. Fortunately, the next game was a month away, so Lee had time to recover from this rout.

At the beginning of 2014, Lee said that the tournament schedule was too tight. Gu probably felt the same. There have been more and more new tournaments in recent years and the professional circuit is tiring for top players. We saw some careless moves in this game, which is unusual for Lee and Gu.

The next game was to be in Korea, and the atmosphere would be very different...

April 27, 2014, Jeung-do, Korea: *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

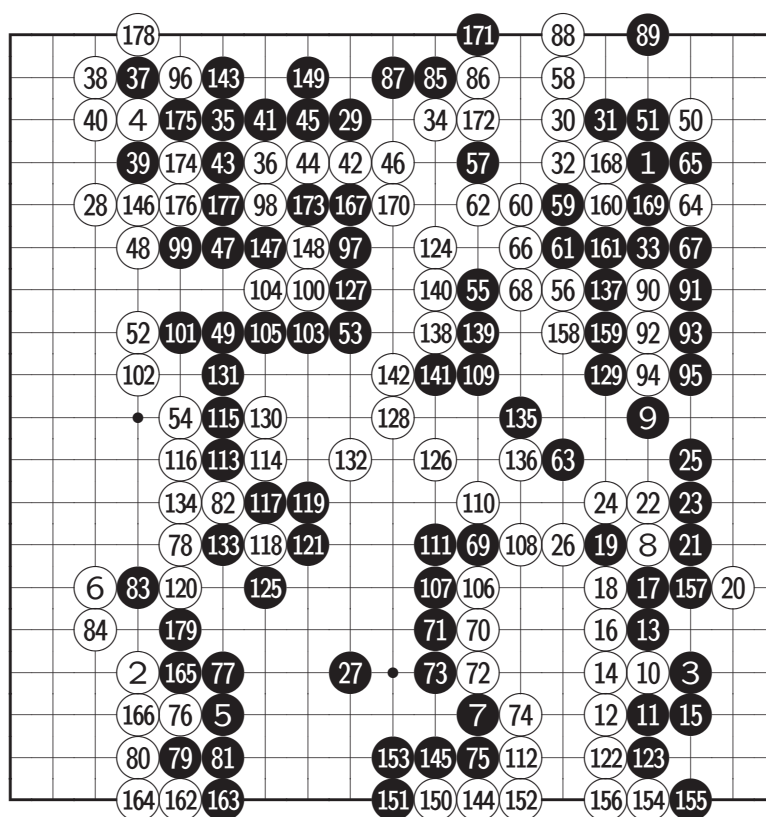


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-179)

Jeung-do

Game four of the Jubango was held on April 27, 2014 on Jeung-do (Jeung Island), in Shinan County, Korea. It was the first and only game scheduled in Korea, and Gu Li held black for the second time.

Jeung-do is not far from Lee Sedol's hometown, Bigeum-do. They are both part of a group of more than 800 islands that form Shinan County.

Apart from the traditional local industries of agriculture, salt farming and fishing, Jeung-do also boasts a burgeoning tourism scene. Visitors are drawn by the coastline, fresh seafood and slower pace of life.

The mood of the series changed when Gu Li defeated Lee Sedol in three consecutive games, including game three of this match and two games from unrelated tournaments, but the overall score was still 2–1 in Lee's favor. Nevertheless, since Gu was on a roll, Lee was keen to win this game and apply the brakes Gu's growing momentum.

Playing on one's home turf can be advantageous in many ways, but also brings enormous pressure. The media and fans in Korea were much more interested in Lee Sedol than the Chinese had been.

Lee Sedol arrived early, with his brother Lee Sanghun (also a 9 dan professional). The camera crew was still setting up and the venue was in a state of disarray. There wasn't anywhere to sit and wait, and tension was clearly visible on Sedol's face.

Sanghun suggested that they return to their hotel rooms, to relax, but his younger brother refused. Instead, Sedol uncharacteristically fussed over minor details, like the lighting around the Go board.

Gu Li finally arrived, but the two friends avoided eye contact...

Chinese Style Refrain

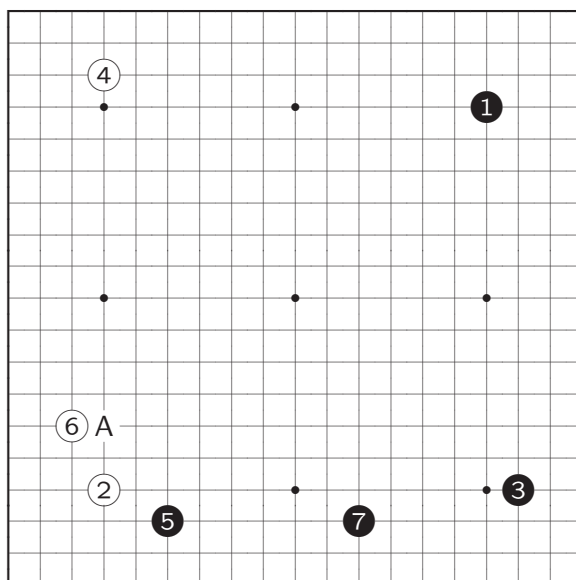
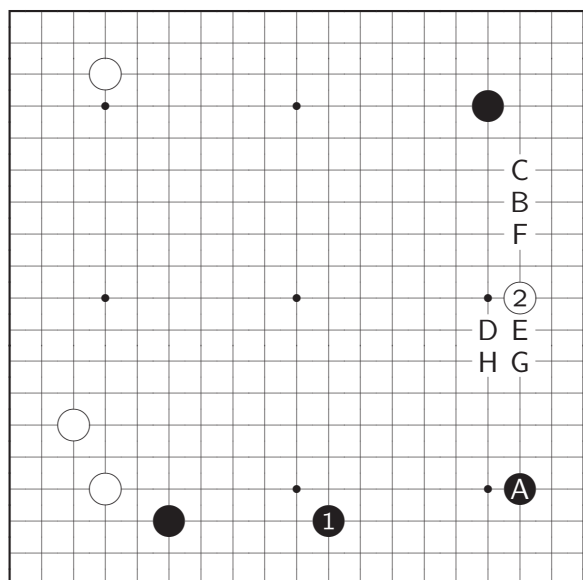


Diagram 2
(Moves: 1-7)

Black started with the Micro-Chinese Opening of ③, ⑤ and ⑦, which is one of Gu Li's favorite formations. The opening was almost the same as in game one, except that Lee Sedol, playing White this time, swapped Gu Li's trademark jump at A for the knight's enclosure at ⑥.

We investigated the Micro-Chinese Opening together in Chapter 1, and by now you've probably made it your own, so we'll refrain from repeating a detailed analysis here.



Variation 1 for ⑦

The Mini-Chinese Opening at ① is also quite common and splitting the right side with ② is the usual strategy for limiting Black's development.

White ② prevents Black from playing near the same point and forming a wide framework centered around his stone at A.

There are so many possible continuations for Black next. For example, on the right side, all of the moves from B to H have been tried extensively in professional games.

Approach from the Wider Side

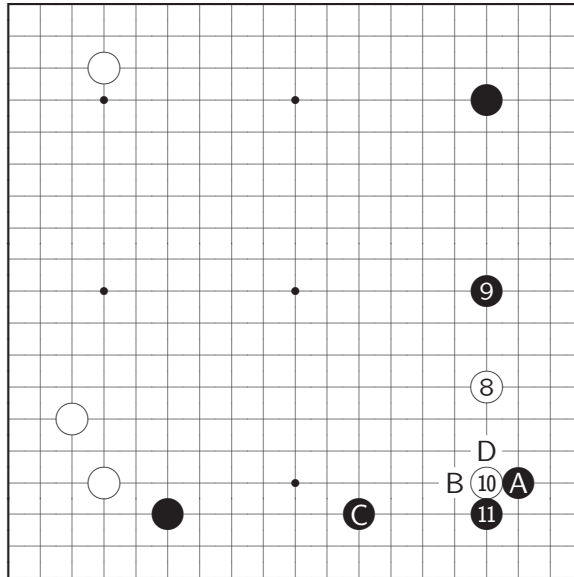
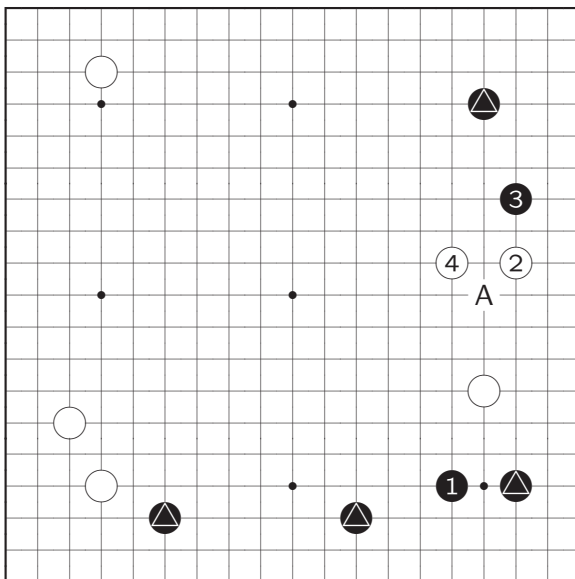


Diagram 3
(Moves: 8-11)

White approached from the outside with ⑧, and you may recall that in Variation 1 of Chapter 2 we said that it's generally better to approach a 3-4 point stone like A around B. However, when C is already on the board, approaching from the outside with ⑧ is better, because White is playing on the wider side—meaning the side that has more free space and future potential.

White wanted Black to reinforce the corner at B or D, so that he could extend along the right side. Resisting with the pincer at ⑨ was a good idea. White attached at ⑩ to settle a group in the bottom right as quickly as possible. It's generally good to play contact moves like ⑩ when you're outnumbered.



Variation 2 for ⑨

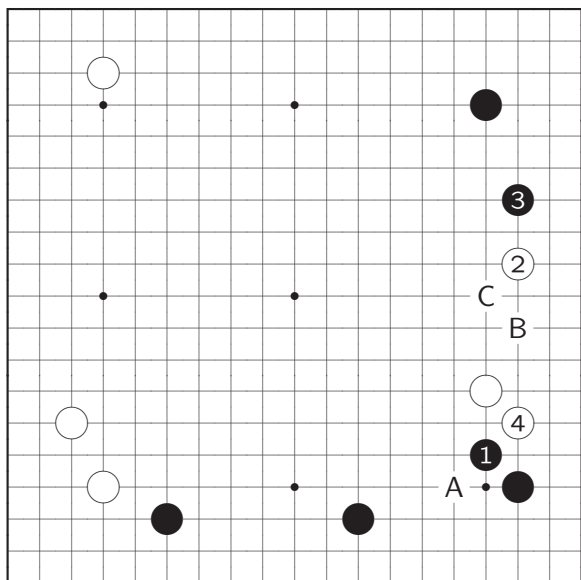
If Black just defends the corner at ①, White will extend to ② and establish a stable group up to ④.

Even though White doesn't gain much on the right side, he settles a group there with relative ease.

Black had hoped to be able to play around A and unify his marked stones in a magnificent large framework, but White's stable group drove a wedge into those dreams.

As long as White is going to interfere with Black's plans, Black would like to exact some form of compensation. That's why he pincered at A in the game.

When your opponent enters your sphere of influence, you should try to pressure them firmly. This allows you to turn a sketchy moyo into real territory.

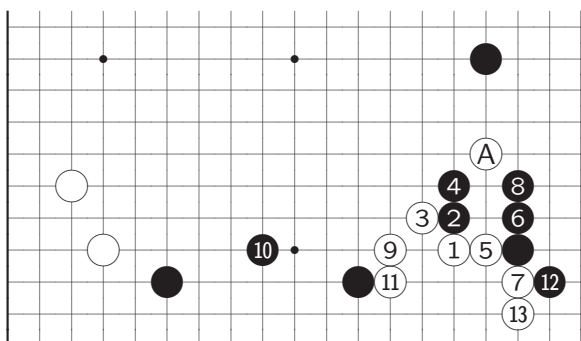


Variation 3 for 9

Responding with the kosumi at ① is similar to defending at A.

White will still extend to ②, and the result up to ④ is playable for White.

If Black invades at B later, White will fight back with a diagonal move at C.

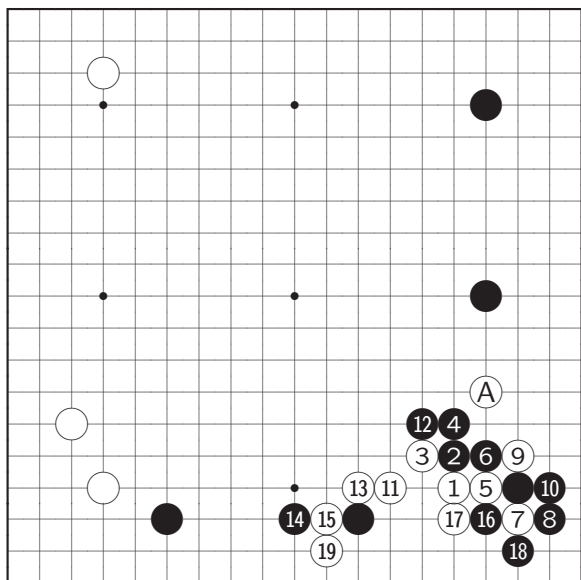


Variation 4 for 10

Pressuring Black's corner with the large knight's move from ① to ① is a slightly gentler haengma.

The large knight's press is thin, yet flexible, and when you play this way you should expect to be separated by ② and ④. White uses Black's momentum against him to gain a foothold in the corner, sacrificing ①.

Park Junghwan 9 dan and Lee Younggu 9 dan played the variation up to ⑬ in game two of the 9th Price Information Cup final, in August 2013.

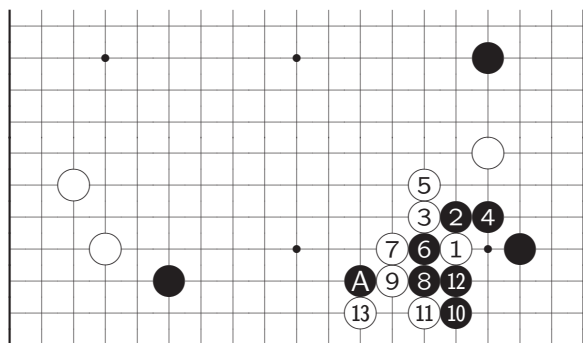


Variation 5 for 10

Black ④ is an important move in these variations. It separates ① from the rest of White's group and prevents Black from being sealed into the corner.

Eight days before this game, the moves up to ⑲ were played by Gu Li 9 dan (Black) and An Kukhyun 4 dan, in the preliminary final of the 19th LG Cup.

White won that game, but Lee may have thought that the result up to ⑲ was playable for Black, so he didn't choose the large knight's move at ①.



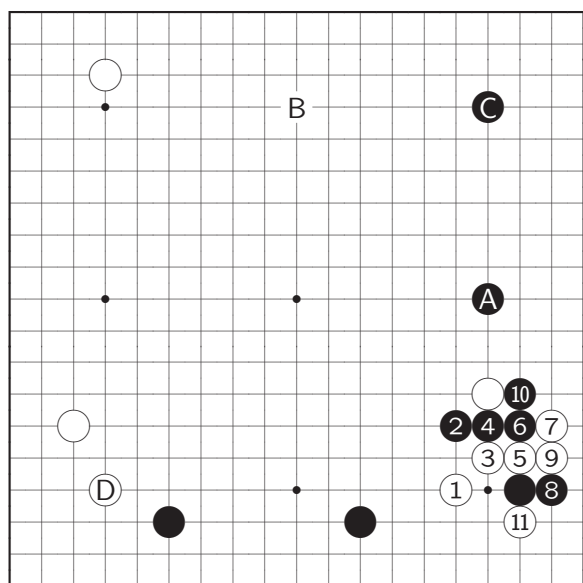
Variation 6 for ⑩

Pulling back at ④ is wrong in this situation.

White ⑤ is a good response and it's very difficult for Black to find an effective move afterwards.

Cutting at ⑥ captures ① and strengthens Black's corner group, but White sacrifices in style with the sequence to ⑬ and achieves a better result overall.

Observe how ① is badly damaged by ⑦ to ⑬.



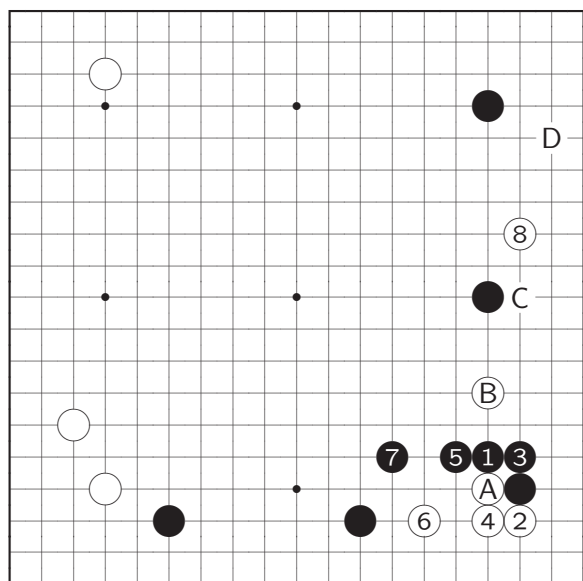
Variation 7 for ⑩

The elephant's step at ② is another haengma for cutting the large knight's move, and can sometimes be played to develop a large moyo.

White will break through with ③ to ⑦ and will be happy with the corner territory up to ⑪. In this game, Black's moyo isn't particularly impressive.

Black ① is too close to Black's influence in the bottom right. It would be better if it were around B. Moreover, it would be better if ① and ④ swapped places. As you can see, Black's opening is confused and inconsistent.

When the overall situation doesn't support developing a large moyo, trying to force one into existence usually leads to a difficult game. Your stones should flow along the path of least resistance, like water.



Variation 8 for ⑪

If Black hane on the outside with ①, White can easily live in the corner with the counter-hane at ②, and the moves through to ⑥.

When White attached at ① to settle his group, it was implicit that he was prepared to give up ③ in exchange for some other profit (such as the corner territory).

Black's influence is not to be sneezed at, but White can treat his stone at ③ lightly and invade with ⑧.

It's hard for Black to attack ⑧ because White has several possible continuations. For example, C and D are miai.

Use Contact Moves to Defend

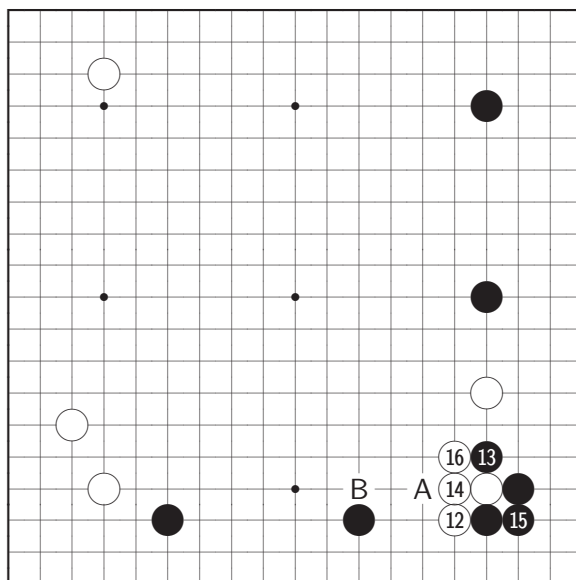


Diagram 4
(Moves: 12-16)

White's forces had landed deep inside black terrain, without any reinforcements, and wanted to avoid getting caught in a drawn out battle. White played another contact move with the counter-hane at ⑫, in order to settle a group in this area without delay. Black played ⑬ and ⑮ to make White heavy.

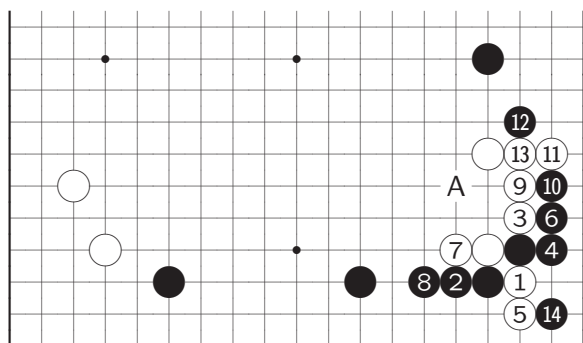
As we discussed in Chapter 1, contact moves help to defend because the resulting contact fight makes the groups on both sides become solid and settled more quickly. This tends to favor the defender.

White isn't worried about Black cutting with ⑬ at ⑭, because after White extends to ⑬ the ladder at A and the atari at ⑮ will be miai for White.

White isn't trying to save all his stones, he's just trying to establish a viable presence in this part of the board. Splitting the position into many small groups helps that cause. Therefore, if Black ataris at ⑭, he has to realize that as he cuts White, he also cuts himself.

Lee couldn't find another feasible path at the time, so he blocked at ⑯. However, he realized later that continuing to play contact moves, with the attachment at B, would have made things simpler.

Perhaps Lee was haunted by the memory of his inopportune attachment in game three?

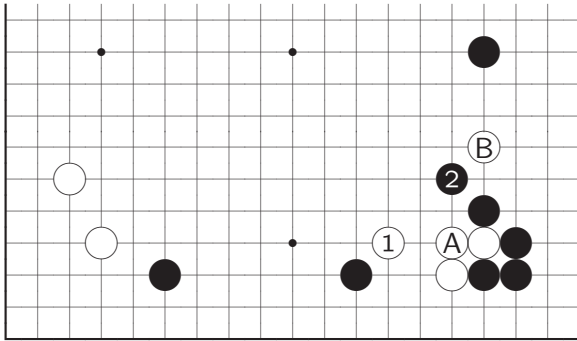


Variation 9 for ⑫

White can also think about the crosscut at ①. The crosscut is another contact technique which often helps to settle a weak group.

However, Black's tesuji at ⑭ captures White's cutting stones at ① and ⑤, and the result is better for Black because White's center stones are still floating.

Black will be able to attack White's group at A later.

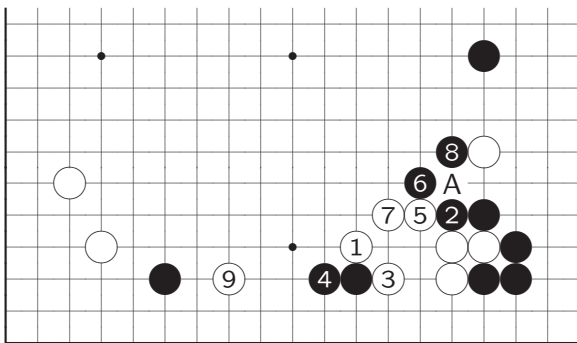


Variation 10 for ⑩

If White jumps at ①, Black will quietly separate his stones with ②. It's hard for White to manage both his groups (A) and (B) after being split like this.

Notice how ② doesn't make direct contact with White's stones on either side.

Non-contact moves like this are usually best when attacking, because they make it harder for weak groups to settle quickly and they draw out the attack.



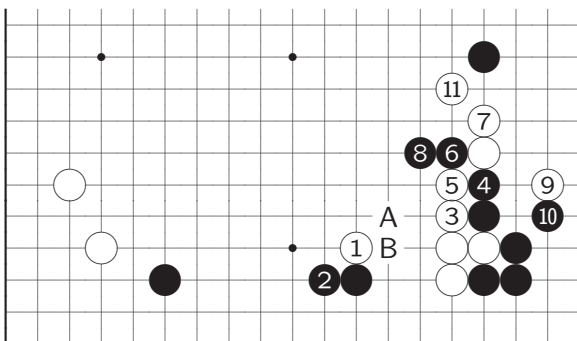
Variation 11 for ⑩

The contact play at ① would help White to settle his group in a more conventional manner.

Black ② hits the vital point, but White can manage with ③ and ⑤.

After ⑦, cutting at A and pinching at ⑨ are miai.

The result is slightly favorable for Black, but it's quite playable for White too.

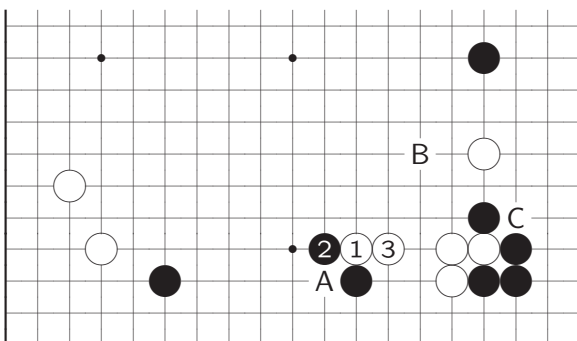


Variation 12 for ⑩

Falling back at ② is too passive in this case. In fact, this is what White wants.

White will go back and block at ③ now, but the conditions have changed after the exchange of ① for ②. That's because, if Black cuts at ⑥, White can manage the right side with ⑦ to ⑪.

Since A and B are miai for White, Black can't easily surround White with a knight's move at A, but he could if ① and ② were not on the board.



Variation 13 for ⑩

If Black hanes at ②, White will draw back at ③ and make miai of A and B.

Instead of B, White can also consider cutting at C if it better suits his style. Both moves are possible.

Concentrate Your Forces

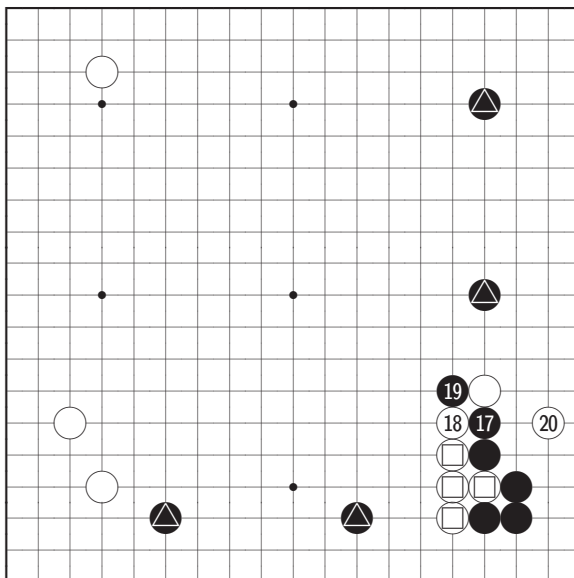


Diagram 5
(Moves: 17-20)

There was no reason for Black to avoid fighting. A battle in the lower right looked promising for Black, because his marked stones could all be expected to play a part in attacking as the fighting spread across the board. Consequently, Black played a grinding yet potent cut with ⑱ and ⑲.

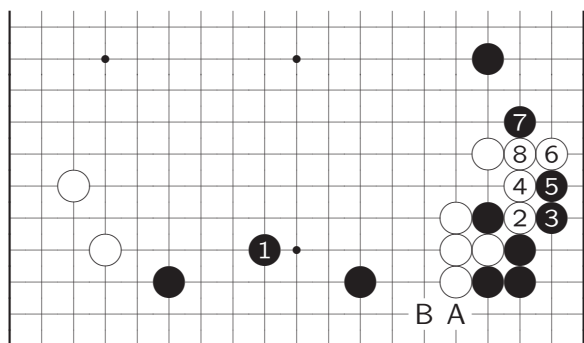
In *The Art of War*, Sun Zi says that a general should concentrate his forces, which means that all of your forces should be focused on a common goal, instead of being scattered towards disparate ends. Black's stones in this diagram are arrayed in a way that epitomizes this principle as it applies to Go.

In the discussion of the previous diagram, we advised against cutting White to pieces, yet here we are praising the cut at ⑲. Isn't that a contradiction?

The difference is that White's lightly peppered stones in the previous diagram were formless. Should Black attack any of them directly, White would be able to dodge away with an inconsequential sacrifice.

In this diagram, White's form is clear because his marked stones are all solidly connected. They are heavy, because no one stone can easily be sacrificed anymore. Once connected, their fates are tied.

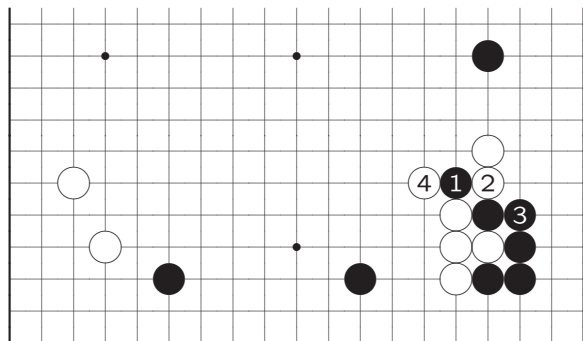
The crux of it is in the value of what you cut. Black ⑲ was powerful, and ⑳ was an exquisite haengma.



Variation 14 for ⑱

If Black reinforces his stones at the bottom, White can cut at ② and develop a strong outside position up to ⑧.

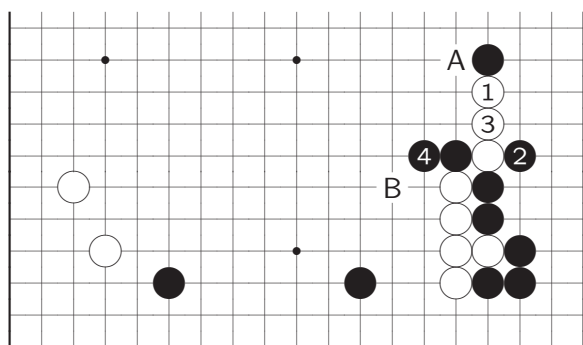
In addition, White will be able to play at A or B in sente later, because both moves threaten Black's corner.



Variation 15 for 17

The double hane at ① is an alternative technique for cutting, which results in better shape for Black.

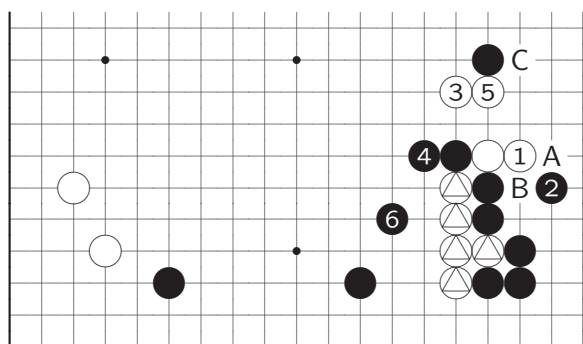
However, it doesn't work in this case because the ladder at ④ favors White.



Variation 16 for 20

Attaching at ① looks like a tesuji, but it doesn't really help White in this case.

After ② and ④, A and B are miai for Black, and one of White's two groups will be in serious trouble.

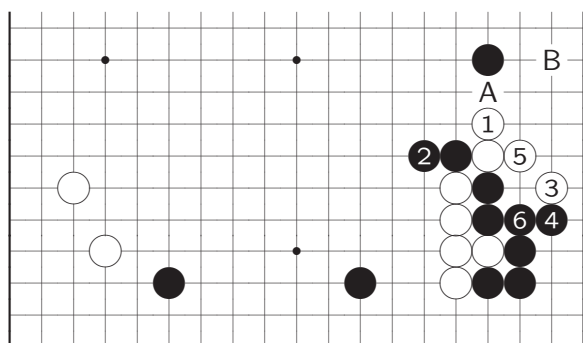


Variation 17 for 20

Extending at ① is a common sense move. However, it's hard to fight after Black defends at ②.

White's marked stones are in danger up to ⑥.

Instead of ③, White can also consider White A, Black B, ⑤, ④ and White C, but the result is similar and White's marked stones are still in trouble.



Variation 18 for 20

White ②⑩ in the game (③ in this diagram) is the right technique in terms of move order.

If White exchanges ① for ② first, Black will respond to ③ with ④. Even though White can threaten a snapback with ⑤, the empty triangle implies that one move was wasted.

White ① is now over-concentrated and White would prefer to move it to A or, in this game, B. The exchange of ① for ② overwhelmingly favors Black.

Cooperate, When It Suits You

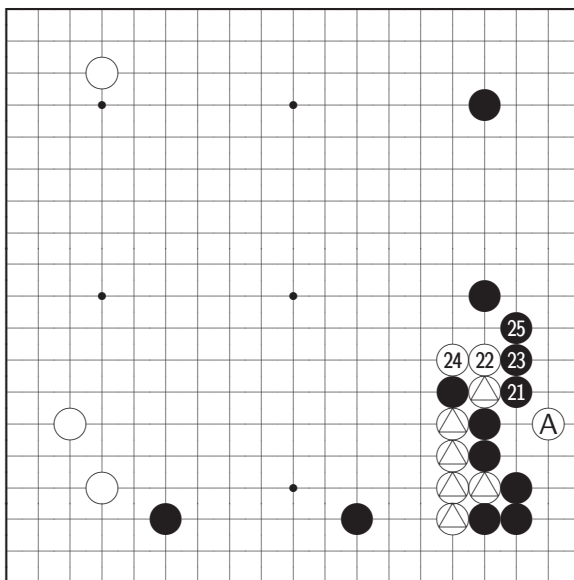
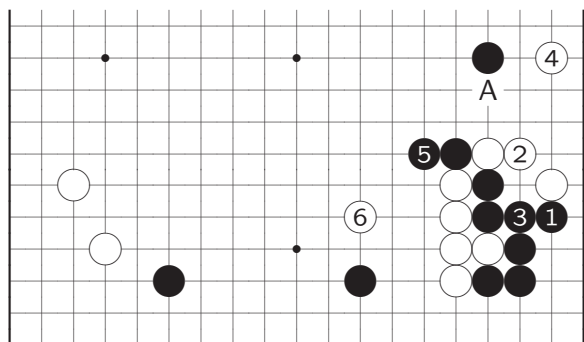


Diagram 6
(Moves: 21-25)

White played (A) to provoke Black's counter from ②① to ②⑤, because this gave him the impetus to strengthen his marked center stones. Even if you know your opponent's plan, it doesn't mean you must resist. When it suits you, you can let him have his way. Black willingly took territory up to ②⑤.



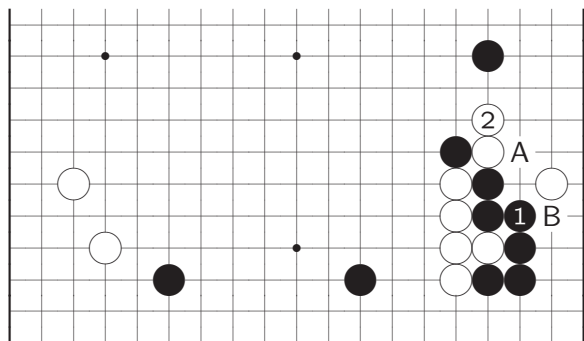
Variation 19 for ②①

If Black defends with ①, the result won't be the same as in Variation 18.

White will crouch down with ④, because it doesn't directly provoke ⑤ like attaching at A does.

Black will extend to ⑤ anyway, but White is now relatively stable on the right side and gains a tempo to move out with ⑥.

This lets White manage his groups on both sides.

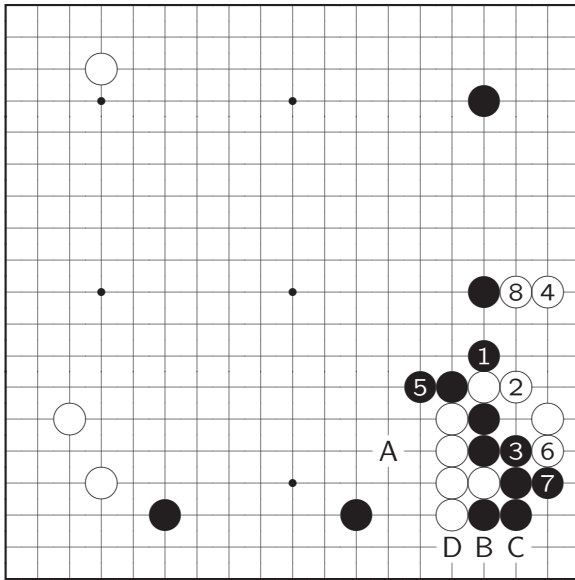


Variation 20 for ②①

If Black connects at ① instead, developing at ② becomes a natural choice for White, because extending at A isn't sente anymore.

The overall situation is still very complicated, but the fact that White can push at B later means that Black's corner isn't completely safe yet.

This gives White more leverage against the corner, which will help him to manage his groups on both sides (as we can see in the following variation).

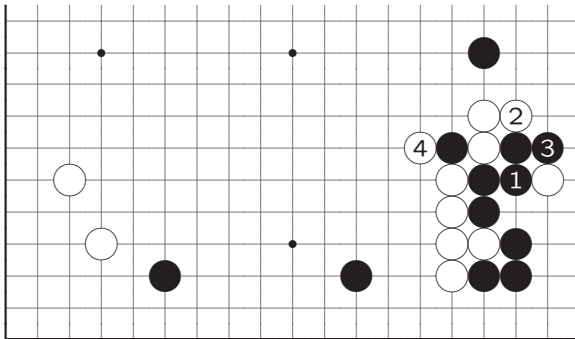


Variation 21 for 21

The atari at 1 is an overlay.

Black's corner is weakened up to 7, and White has time to defend at 8 because moves around A and B are miai for White at the bottom.

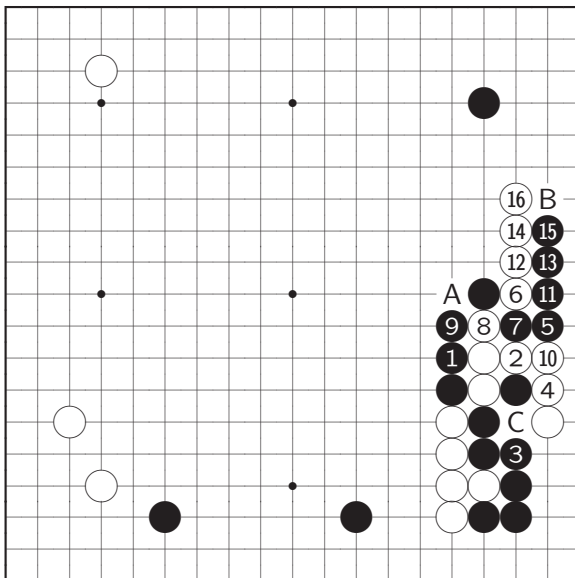
If Black plays at A next, provoking White to play B to D, Black will lose the capturing race in the corner.



Variation 22 for 23

Connecting at 1 is too cautious.

White will be ecstatic when he captures Black's cutting stone in a ladder with 4.



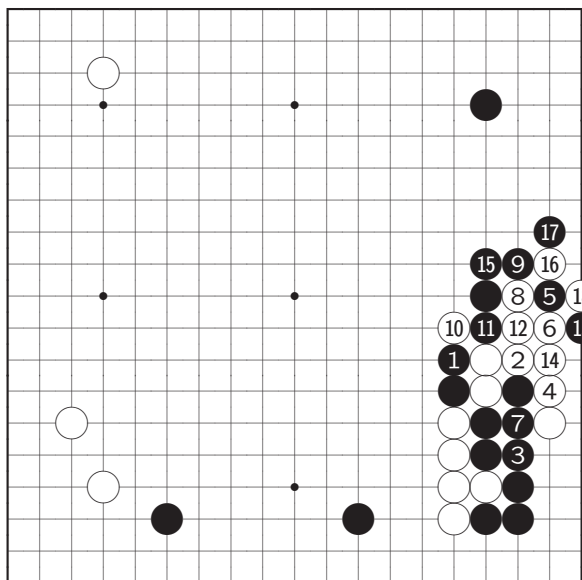
Variation 23 for 23

Sealing White in from above with 1 can sometimes be a powerful continuation, but it doesn't work well in this case.

For Black's attack to succeed, 5 needs to land a debilitating blow.

Unfortunately for Black, 6 is a strong counter and White makes miai of A and B in the sequence to 16.

After White cuts at 8, he makes miai of 9 and 10. If Black ataris at 10, White at 9 makes miai of C and White at 11, and Black collapses.

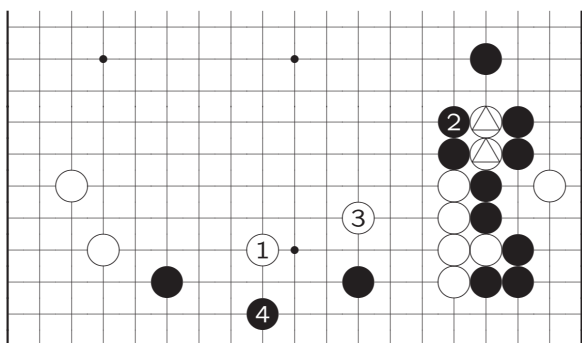


Variation 24 for 23

If Black tries the looser encroachment at ⑤, White can still live easily because ⑥ makes miai of ⑦ and ⑧.

The moves that follow are practically forced and White is alive up to ⑱.

Now Black has to take care of his unstable group in the lower right corner, and the cutting stone at ⑩ is also annoying.

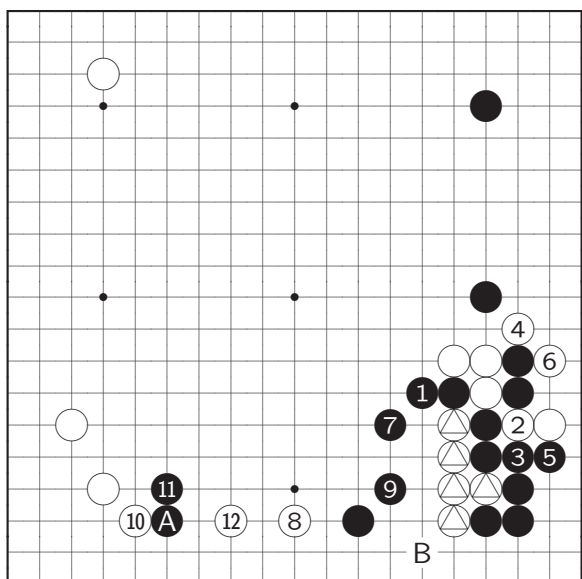


Variation 25 for 24

Pincering at ① is impetuous.

Black becomes too powerful on the right side after he captures two critically important stones with ②.

Even though White can continue with ③, Black can manage the situation flexibly with ④.



Variation 26 for 25

Extending to ① is an overplay. White will make a thick and excellent shape on the right side up to ⑥, erasing most of Black's potential there.

Black is aiming to attack with ⑦, but it's not enough because now White can afford to sacrifice his five marked stones and engineer a counter-attack on A.

There's still some bad aji inside Black's position, for example if White plays at B later. Remember to beware of indigestion.

Never Underestimate Thickness

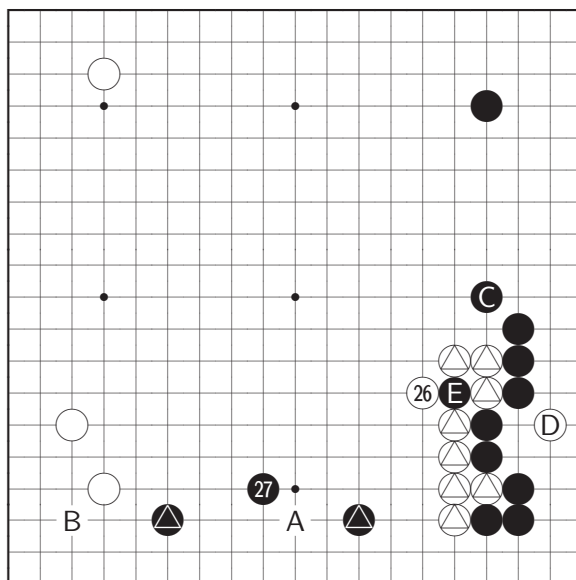


Diagram 7
(Moves: 26-27)

White created an extremely thick shape with ②⑥, and reinforcing Black's position at the bottom with ②⑦ became necessary. It was a classic exchange of territory for power. Many Go players questioned this result and thought that it was better for Black, but most professionals watching the game (including the professional author) evaluated it as even because:

1. Black has to defend at ②⑦, so White takes sente.
2. Black started out with four stones in this area, whereas White had only one, so we should expect Black to end up with more profit than White in this part of the board.
3. Even after ②⑦, Black's position at the bottom is still weak, because of the power of White's thick group. For example, it will be easy for White to invade at A later.
4. Because Black is still weak at the bottom, White's lower left corner is actually much bigger than it looks. Black can't expect to be able to invade at B without provoking a severe counter-attack, and White can enlarge the corner in sente by harassing Black later (see Variation 27).
5. Since White's lower right group has good eye potential, it's much more powerful than a simple wall would be. It's more than a wall; it's thickness. Extending along the bottom is less important for this kind of group, because there's no urgency to create a base (think eyespace).
6. Even though ②⑦ reduces the potential of White's thickness, Black doesn't have much potential to speak of either. White's thickness turns the bottom into a no man's land, where neither player can expect to make many points. Meanwhile, the lower right corner is settled, mostly along the third line. Black's stone at ②③ is slightly over-concentrated.
7. White has potential on the left side and at the top, which he can develop with sente.
8. Both players exchanged one stone (②④ and ②⑤), but ②④ still has some endgame aji, as we'll see later, so Black's lower right corner is slightly smaller than it looks.

Still Waters Run Deep

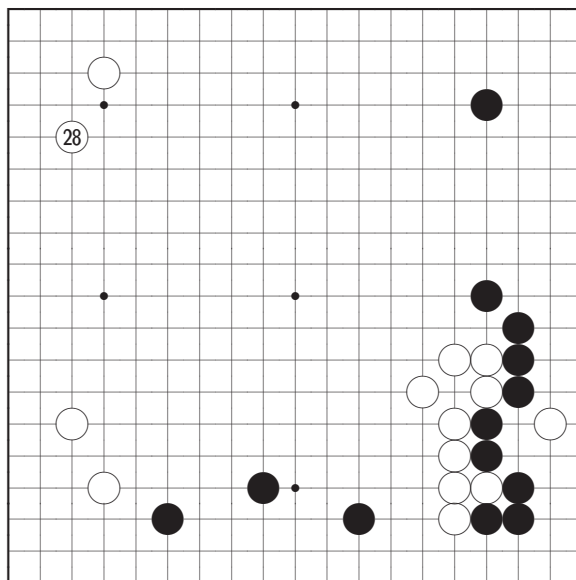
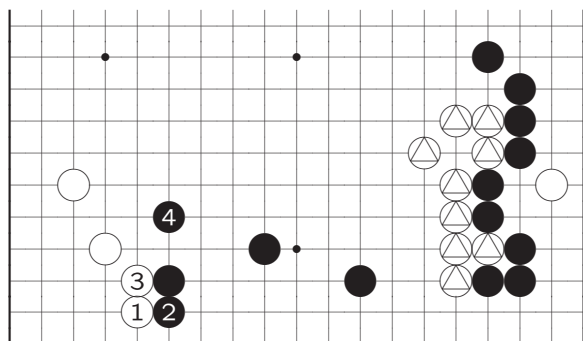


Diagram 8
(Move: 28)

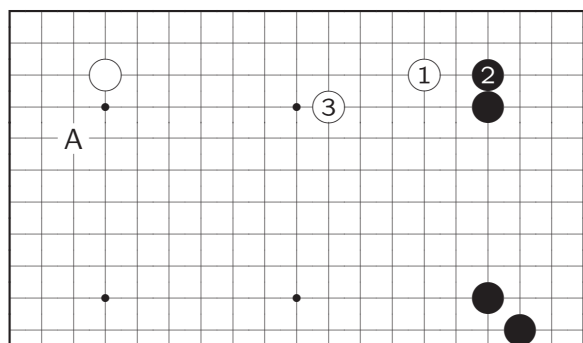
Lee patiently enclosed the top left corner with ②⑧. This move was somewhat slow, but it was also solid. Since all of White's groups were strong, he'd be able to fight without reservation later in the game. Nevertheless, it takes a high degree of skill and explosive fighting power to play this kind of game well.



Variation 27 for ②⑧

White can play ① to ③ in sente later, because of the presence of White's thickness (marked).

This means that White's corner is bigger than it seems and White's power is already paying dividends.

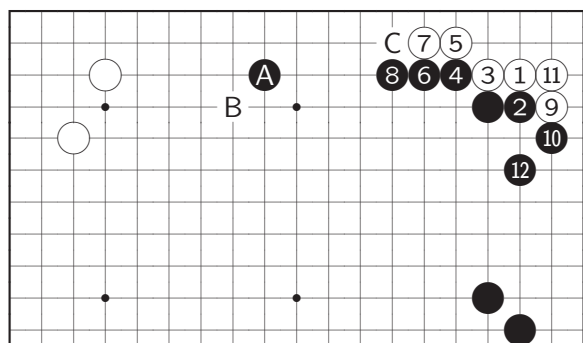


Variation 28 for ②⑧

After the game, Lee pondered whether ① and ③ would have been better. This would certainly have been a more active way of playing, but we can't say that A (②⑧ in the game) was a mistake.

Black can play for territory with ②, because Black's position on the right is already quite strong. This kind of move dares White to invade and create a target for attack.

The moves up to ③ would lead to another game.

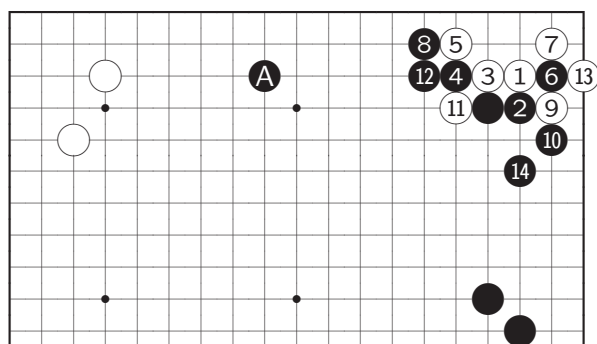


Variation 31 for ③⑩

Invading the corner immediately at ① is also conceivable.

The result up to ⑫ isn't a proper joseki for Black, because A isn't working efficiently.

Black A would be better at B, because the door is open at the top around C; and the center and the top left are more important than the top now.

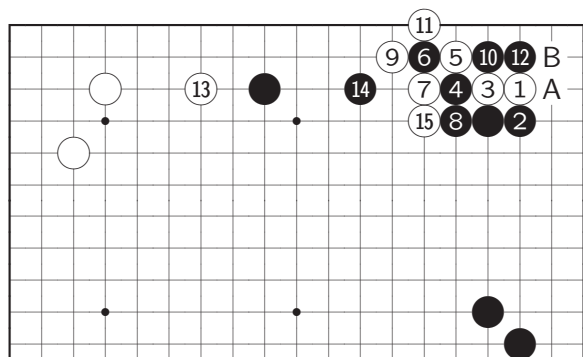


Variation 32 for ③⑩

Black ④, ⑥ and ⑧ are savvy moves.

Black seals White in and makes efficient use of A, which is good enough for Black.

This is why White didn't invade at ① in the game.

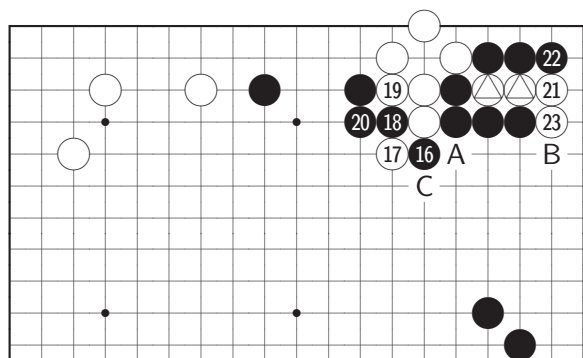


Variation 33 for ③⑩

In the midst of the previous variation, if Black hanes at ⑥ without exchanging A for B, White will capture ⑥ with ⑪.

The result up to ⑮ is playable for White.

Continuing...



Variation 34 for ③⑩

Cutting at ⑮ is an overplay, because White can reactivate his marked stones with ⑮.

White ⑮ makes miai of A and B, so Black runs out of steam.

Instead of ⑮, Black should extend to C, giving White time to connect at ⑮.

Defense Is No Mere Shield

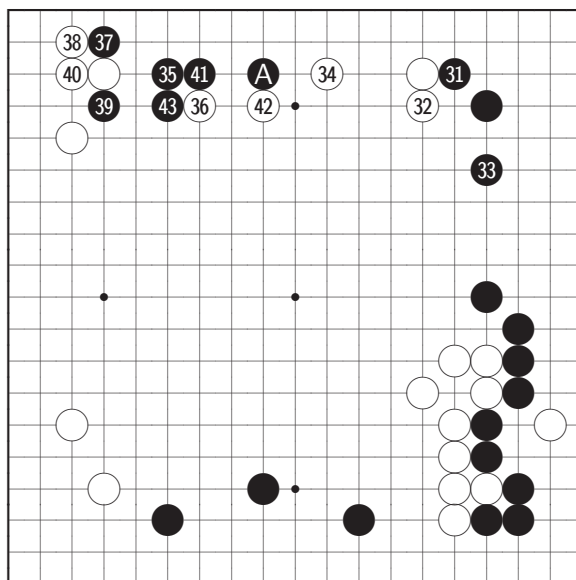


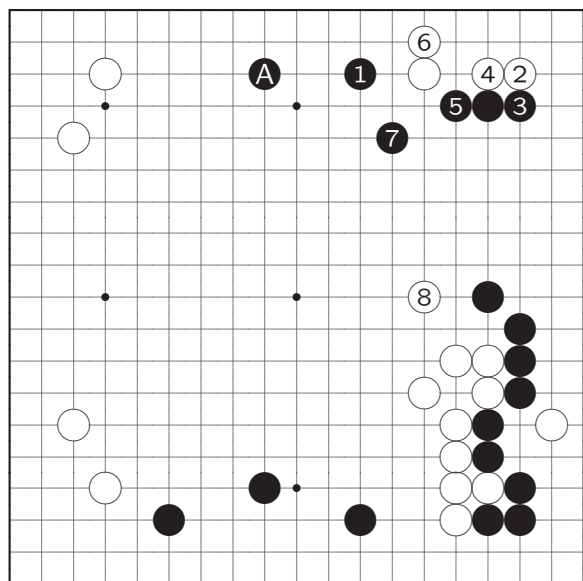
Diagram 10
(Moves: 31-43)

Black chose 31 and 33 because A already stifled White's development and pressured him at the top.

White 34 approached A and established a small base for White, which prompted Black to create his own base with 35. This is the ebb and flow of attack and defense, and such progressions are natural.

White's shoulder hit at 36 aimed to develop influence while helping White's top right group. Black probed skillfully from 37 to 40, and played to minimize White's center influence with 41 to 43.

As Carl von Clausewitz notes in *On War*, defense is “. . . not a mere shield, but a shield formed of skilfully delivered blows.” In practice, attack and defense are finely balanced and are often combined.



Variation 35 for 31

Let's explore how the players should (and shouldn't) combine attack and defense in this position.

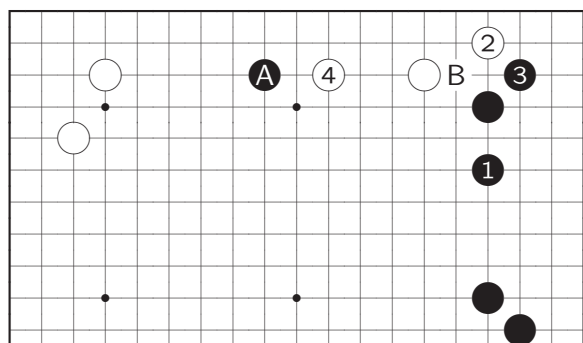
'Attacking' with 1 is a questionable strategy.

White 2 dodges into the corner as swiftly as a swallow and Black is faced with a choice between 3 and 4. He chooses 3 because the right side is large.

White lives in the corner in sente up to 7, and flying to 8 reduces Black's right side territory nicely.

Black A has become a slack move, and this variation is comfortable for White.

Black is thinking about attacking, but going about it in a manner that isn't well suited to the circumstances on the board.



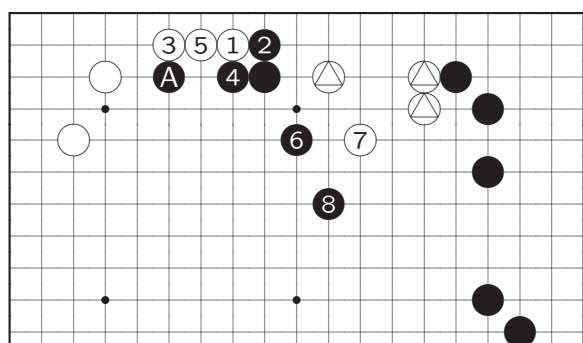
Variation 36 for ③①

The high enclosure at ① puts too much emphasis on defense.

White can expand his eyespace with ②, which makes miai of ③ and ④.

Up to ④, White settles easily at the top.

Black A isn't being used to its full potential in this variation, and is becoming weaker. Since neither of these tactics were promising, Black wisely chose B (③①) in the game, instead of ①.



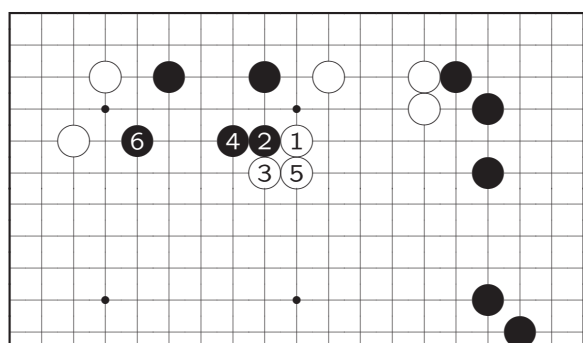
Variation 37 for ③⑥

After Black extends to A, stealing his base with ① and ③ puts too much emphasis on attacking.

Even though ① to ⑤ set Black adrift, and force him to find life in the center, White's tactics don't balance offense and defense appropriately.

Black has sente to counter-attack the marked stones and is able to occupy the high ground up to ⑧.

White ① would be possible if the marked stones were stronger, but in this case it gives up the initiative.

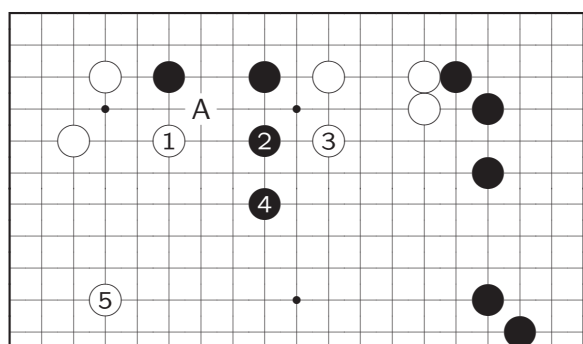


Variation 38 for ③⑥

The knight's move at ① occupies what is often a key point between two space extensions, but it's a bit slack in this game.

Black expands his base into the center, starting with ②, and his group is effectively settled up to ⑥.

Black has a comfortable shape and White's potential on the left side has been reduced.



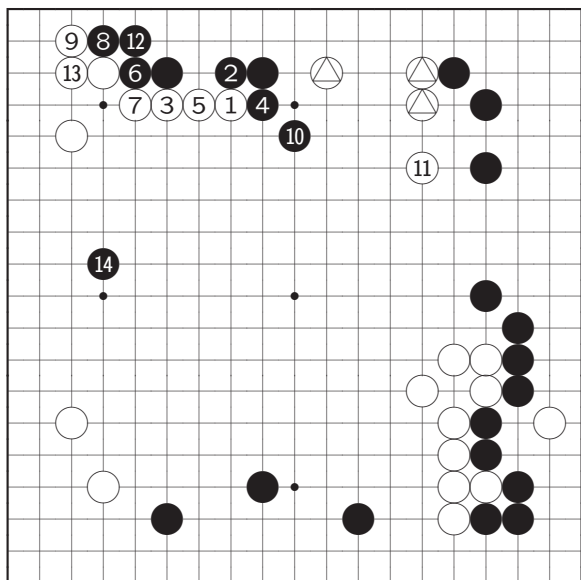
Variation 39 for ③⑥

White chose the shoulder hit at A in the game, but capping at ① is a strong alternative strategy.

As Black moves into the center with ②, White is able to strengthen his own group while attacking with ③.

Black ④ avoids a capping play at the same point, and the stones follow a pleasing rhythm up to ⑤.

It's another game.



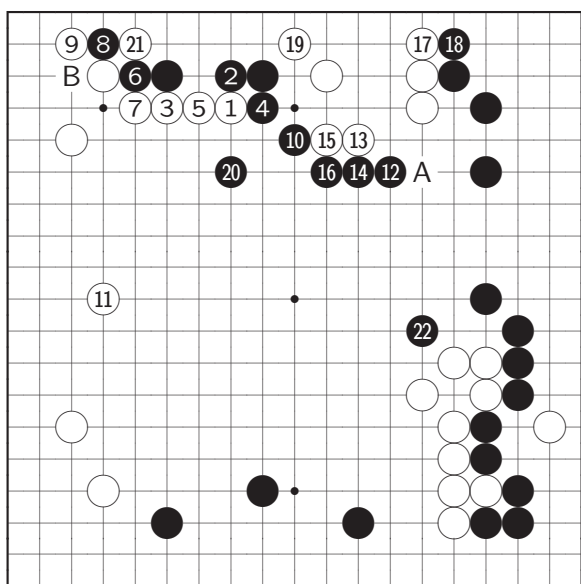
Variation 40 for ③⑥

The other shoulder hit, at ①, heads in the wrong direction. Once again, White fails to combine the needs of attack and defense properly.

When Black turns at ④, White's marked group becomes weaker.

After ⑤ to ⑬, Black plays at ⑭ and the value of White's stones from ① to ⑦ is diminished.

White ⑪ in this diagram may not look big, but it's the key point for attack and defense. Let's explore what happens if White omits this move...



Variation 41 for ③⑥

The fundamental principles of attack and defense are:

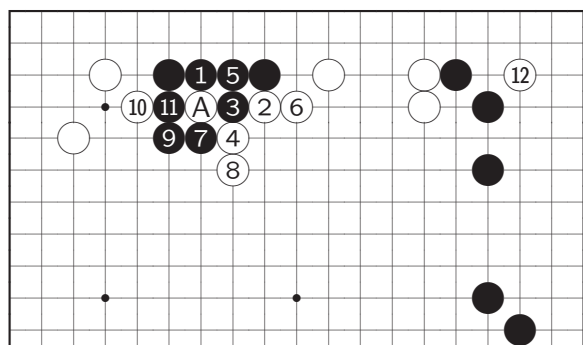
1. Divide your opponent's forces,
2. Surround your opponent, and conversely
3. Stay connected,
4. Avoid being surrounded, and finally
5. Know your next moves.

White ⑪ is big, but jumping to A was urgent.

Black's light enclosure at ⑫ looks thin, but if White scrambles for life like an octopus in a kettle, Black's surrounding positions harden to stone up to ⑲.

Black consolidates a large corner territory, and his center stones become powerful, while White struggles. Next, connecting with ⑳ makes B and ㉒ miai.

Even if you can live, you should avoid being surrounded unless you really know what you're doing.



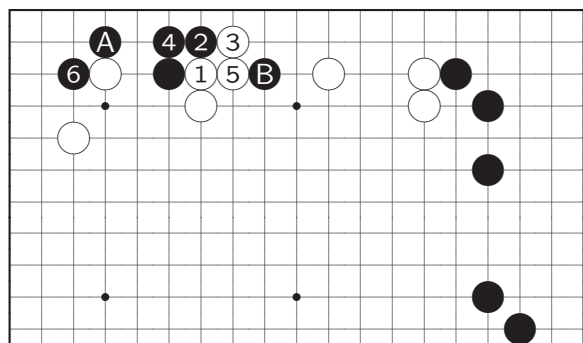
Variation 42 for 37

Simply defending at ① is naive. Black is following White's plan without thinking about what White wants or looking for a counter-punch.

White will be able to strengthen his group and accumulate power in sente, with ② to ⑧.

He can use that power to invade Black's moyo in the top right, with ⑫.

Meanwhile, despite being chuffed about its perfect eye at (A), Black's group is over-concentrated.



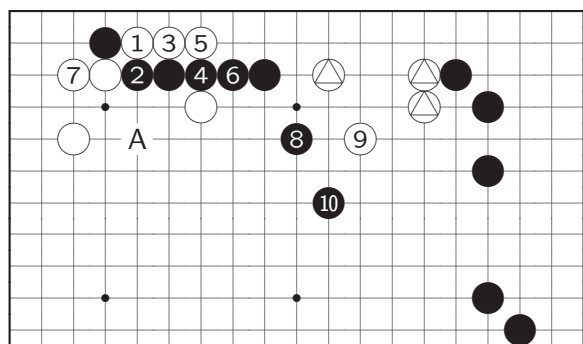
Variation 43 for 38

Black probed at (A) in the game, before defending with Black at ①.

If White resists with ①, Black will happily trade (B) for the corner territory with the moves up to ⑥.

Black's net profit is twice as big as it looks, because White's corner territory has disappeared and become Black's corner territory.

This variation is better for Black.



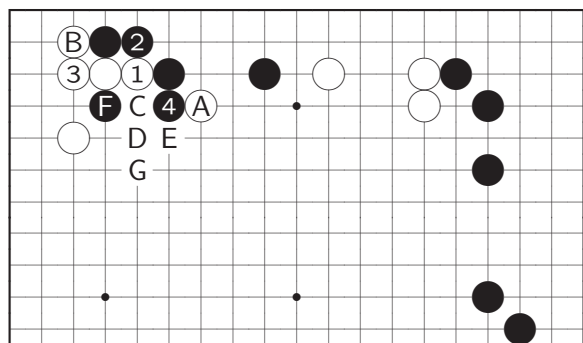
Variation 44 for 38

If White tries to resist with ①, it will only make Black's position stronger.

White will eventually have to defend at ⑦ and Black will take the opportunity to counter-attack the marked stones with ⑧ and ⑩.

Though the moves are different, the result is similar to Variation 37.

Black has the initiative and can make shape in the center with A later.



Variation 45 for 40

Resisting with ① is a bad move, because exchanging ① for ② makes Black stronger and ④ damages (A).

Blocking with ③ at ④ doesn't work well either. Black will be happy to cut at ③ and capture (B).

Instead of ③, White C provokes ④, White D, Black E and (A) is wasted. White (A) is more valuable than (F) and Black G will be sente later (because it aims to atari at ③ once again), so Black will be satisfied.

Make Territory While Attacking

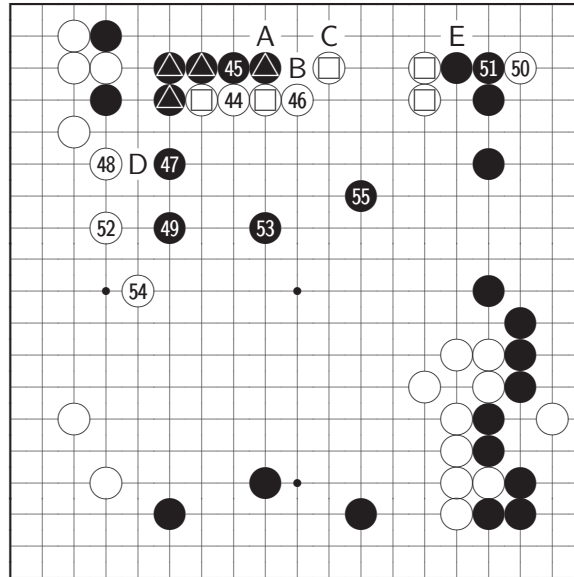


Diagram 11
(Moves: 44-55)

Gu regretted ④⑤ and later said it should have been at A instead. In that case, White would have played ④⑥ at B to prevent Black from expanding his eyespace with C. White ④⑥ was the proper move after ④⑤.

Black's marked group at the top wasn't settled yet and he jumped out with ④⑦ to stave off White's attack at D. At this point in the game, White had developed considerable power at the top and in the bottom right, but didn't have as much territory as Black.

When you have a lot of power and not much territory, you should look for a way to make territory while attacking. White's biggest area of potential was on the left side, so his plan now was to develop territory by attacking Black at the top, and in doing so to maintain the overall balance of territory.

White ④⑧ struck firmly at a key point in Black's shape while simultaneously developing the left side. If White didn't play at ④⑧, Black would have played a shoulder hit at ④⑧—reducing the left side and practically settling his top group at the same time.

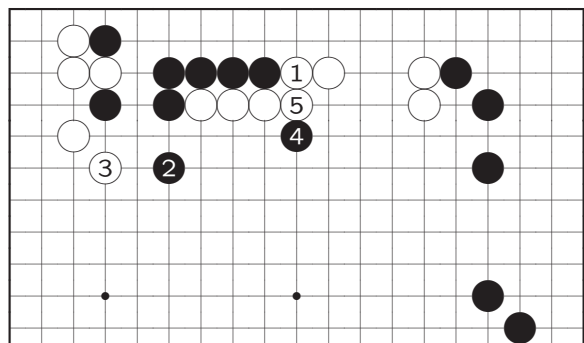
Sometimes you have to play slow-looking moves like ④⑧, to prolong your attack and prepare powerful followups. White ④⑧ set up a powerful attack at ④⑨, so Black jumped to ④⑨ himself—once again forestalling a more severe attack on his dragon in the top left.

The invasion at ⑤⑩ was a probe and ⑤⑪ was the right response. In cases where the squared stones are already relatively strong, there isn't as much potential for a counter-attack after descending to E, so ⑤⑪ is better.

After seeing Black's response at ⑤⑪, which focused on the corner, White continued taking territory while attacking with ⑤⑫. Black's dragon fled into an open sky up to ⑤⑬, gradually growing stronger.

White ⑤⑭ continued to expand White's area on the left side and Gu Li demonstrated his delicate sense of play in the center with ⑤⑮, which lightly pressured White's marked stones at the top.

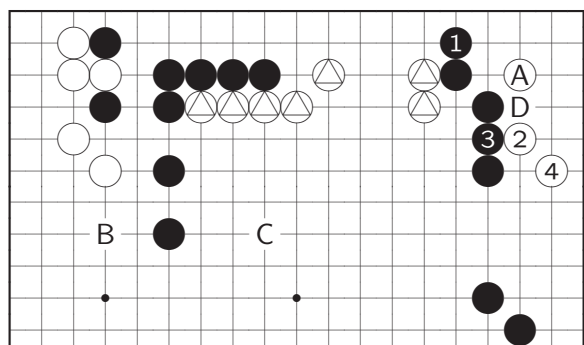
The pendulum of attack and defense had swung towards Black, and it was now his turn to attack.



Variation 46 for ④⑥

If White defends at ① instead, Black can peep at ④ in sente.

Lee didn't like this prospect, so he extended thickly with ⑤ in the game.

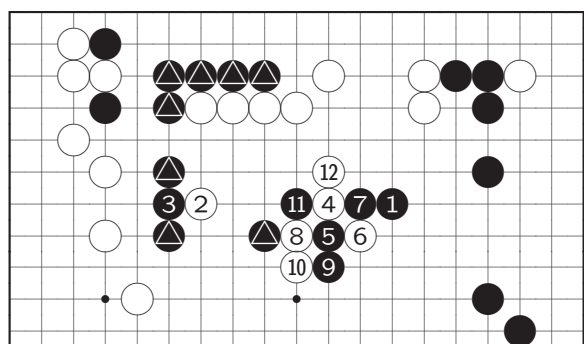


Variation 47 for ⑤①

Descending at ① isn't the right strategy in this game, because White's marked stones are hard to attack.

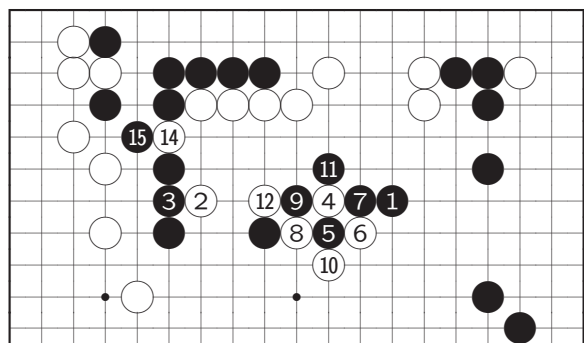
Observe how Lee probed at A before exchanging B for C in the game. If Black insists on trying to attack with ① anyway (which isn't good), White might prefer to play around C later, instead of B.

Instead of ①, blocking at D is nearly always bad, because it allows White to bully the corner with the hane at ① and gains little in exchange.



Variation 48 for ⑤⑤

Playing at ① (instead of ⑤⑤) is also conceivable, but then White will break through with ④ to ⑫ and Black's marked dragon will be threatened.



Variation 49 for ⑤⑤

⑬ at ⑤, ⑯ at ④

If Black cuts White with ⑨ and ⑪ instead, White will start a ko by cutting at ⑫.

White has more ko threats, starting with ⑭, so he will be happy with this development.

Offense Is the Best Defense

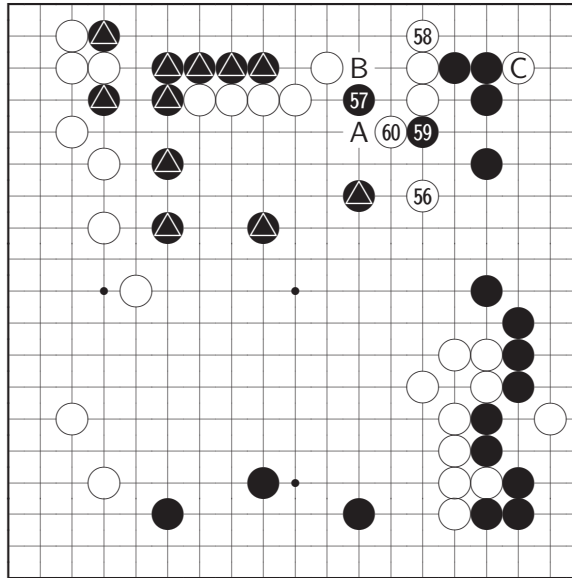
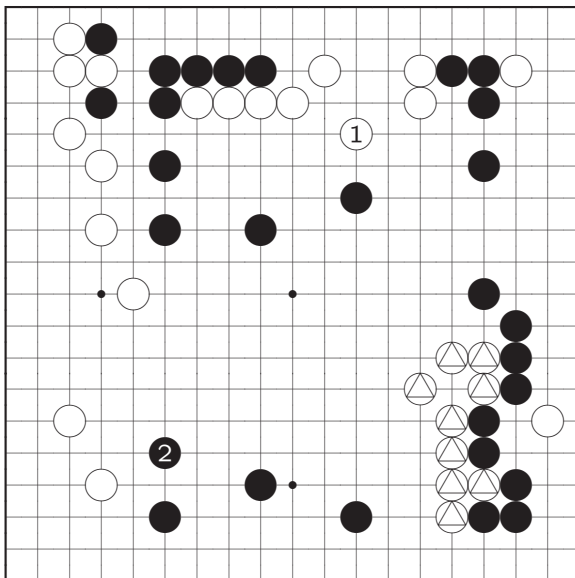


Diagram 12
(Moves: 56-60)

Jumping out with ⑤⑥ was typical of Lee's style of play. He prefers to counter-attack instead of defending whenever possible. White ⑤⑥ prevented Black's marked dragon from connecting to the right side.

Since White counter-attacked, instead of simply defending his group at A, Black fought back with ⑤⑦.

Descending with ⑤⑧ was more efficient than simply blocking at B. It threw a lifeline out to ⑤⑨, so that it might connect under or live in the corner later. Black cut at ⑤⑨ and ⑤⑩ was the best response.



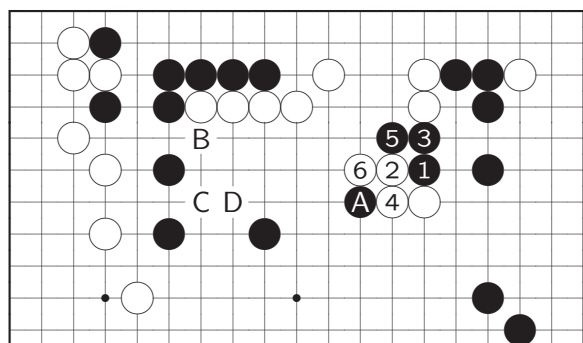
Variation 50 for ⑤⑥

Defending at ① is patient, but passive.

Black will take sente and the game will be slightly better for him after he jumps to ②.

The value of ② is that it reduces White's potential on the left side, while also fortifying Black's group at the bottom.

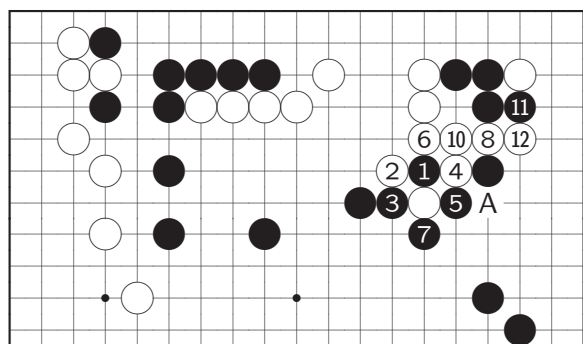
Remember that White's marked thickness is still lurking in the bottom right, waiting for the ideal moment to strike.



Variation 51 for 57

If Black tries to cut with ① and ③, connecting at ④ and falling back with ⑥ is playable for White.

Black ① will be damaged and Black can't expect to separate White because White has too many sente moves like B, C and D.



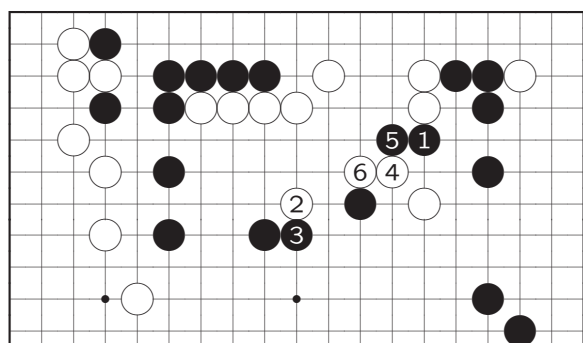
Variation 52 for 57

9 at 1

Cutting at ③ doesn't work, because ⑧ is a clever tesuji. White breaks into the right side up to ⑫.

If Black ataris at ⑫, instead of capturing with ⑨ (①), White will double atari at A and Black will be in trouble.

If Black plays ⑪ at ⑫, he'll have to contend with White's cut at ⑪.

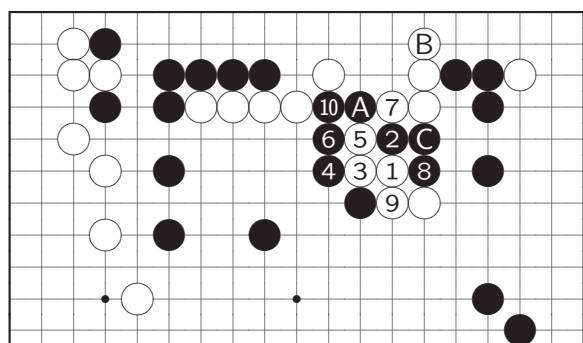


Variation 53 for 57

If Black attaches at ① without any sort of preparation, White will exchange ② for ③, and then play ④ and ⑥ to connect.

Black can't expect to gain much with such blunt tactics.

Let's see how Black's preparation in the game addressed this obstacle...



Variation 54 for 60

The idea behind the exchange of ① for ② becomes clearer after you read the previous variation.

Once ① is on the board, cutting with ③ becomes much more effective.

If White still tries to connect his stones with ①, Black won't allow him to do so.

Because of the presence of ①, Black can hane at ④ and defend at ⑧ in sente, cutting White in two up to ⑩.

White is in trouble.

Sometimes Retreat Is Best

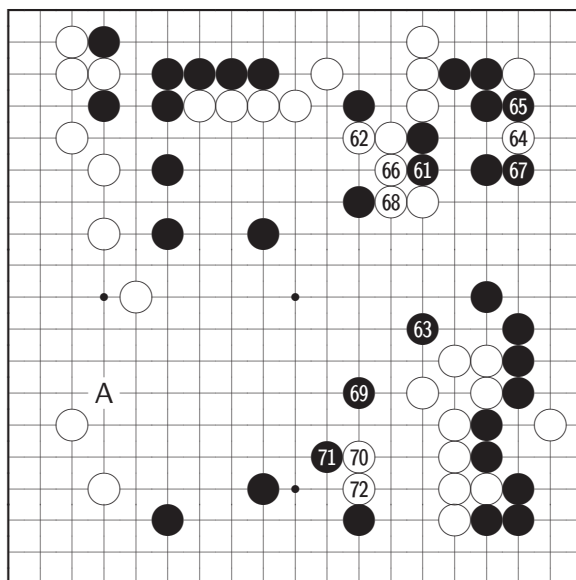


Diagram 13
(Moves: 61-72)

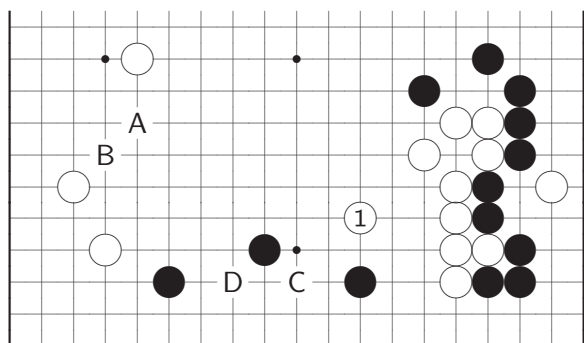
The result up to ⑥② was acceptable for both players, and the game was still well balanced. Immediately after the game, Lee said that he regretted ⑥④, but it doesn't seem to be bad.

Black ⑥⑦ was the right response to ⑥⑥, and Black was probably content with the additional corner territory. White was able to connect at ⑥⑧ in compensation, so the game was still even.

Black's attachment at ⑦① was satisfying, and he became stronger on the outside with the sequence that followed. Nobody likes to play moves like ⑦②, but sometimes there are no better options. It takes a certain maturity to know when to fall back and defend staunchly, even if it feels blunt and uninspired.

Sometimes retreat is best is the last and most famous of the *Thirty-six Stratagems*, giving rise to the well known Chinese saying, "Of the Thirty-six Stratagems, retreat is best." This doesn't just refer to running away, but also knowing when to avoid meeting a strong opposing force head on; retreating only temporarily in order to regroup and await a better moment to fight.

Lee later said that ⑥⑨ and ⑦① were questionable, and that Black should have played at A to reduce White's left side instead. It seems, however, that Gu was satisfied with his moves in the game.

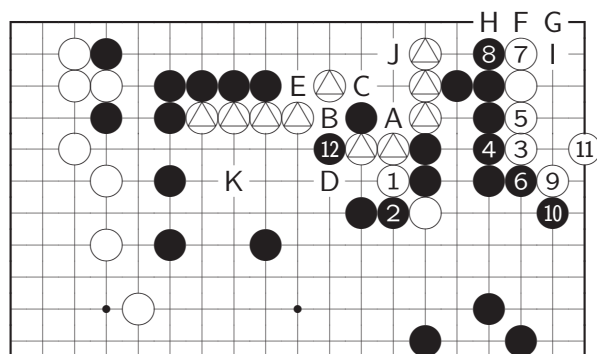


Variation 55 for ⑥④

Lee said that he should have played ⑥④ at ①.

The merit of ① is that it helps to preserve the power of White's influence. White doesn't have any weak groups now, so it will be easier for White to fight if Black tries to reduce the left side at A or B.

White ① also intensifies the aim of invading at C or D later, and Black's top left group is still a bit weak.



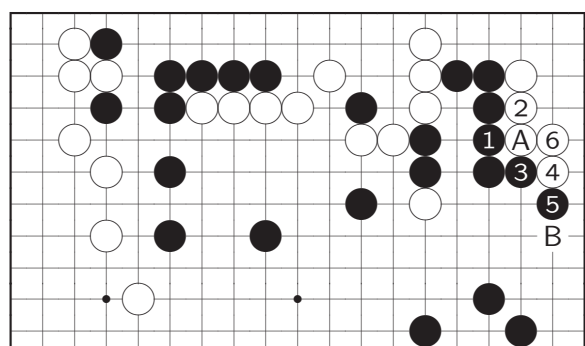
Variation 56 for 64

Pushing at ①, before playing 64 in the game, is the wrong move order.

Black will let White live in the corner, with ③ to ⑪, and can later strike back at ⑫.

A and B are miai, so White can't cut at B. If White plays A to C, Black can exchange D for E. Since F to I is sente for Black (threatening the corner), White will be left with a troubling weakness at J.

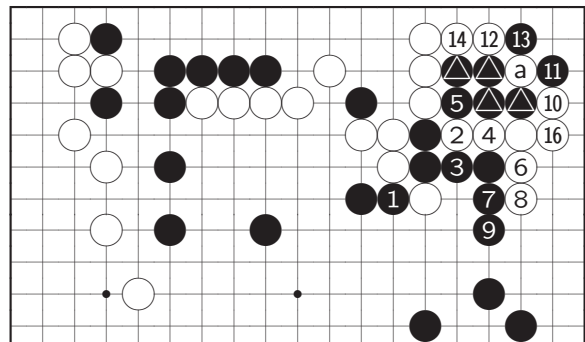
If Black reinforces around K during negotiations in the center, the marked stones will be endangered.



Variation 57 for 65

If Black responds to ① with ①, White will be happy to connect at ② to live in the corner up to ⑥.

The exchanges from ④ to ⑥ leave bad aji inside Black's territory. For example, White can clamp at B later.



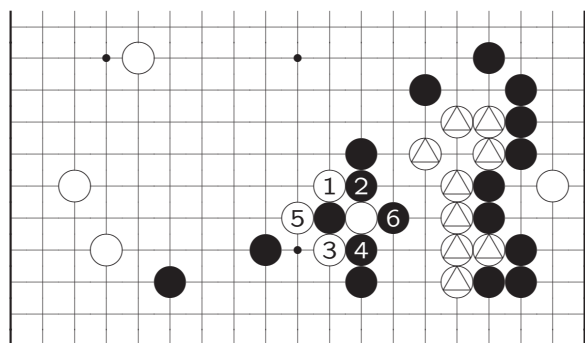
Variation 58 for 67

Cutting at ① is an overplay.

Black's shape up to ⑤ is hideous, and Black will lose the capturing race in the corner after ⑫.

The marked stones are all dead.

15 at a



Variation 59 for 72

White shouldn't try to fight with ① to ⑤, because Black will counter-atari at ④ and isolate White's marked stones up to ⑥.

White's once proud thickness is now in serious danger.

When the position doesn't favor fighting, it's better to be patient and wait for future opportunities.

The Threat Is Stronger than the Execution

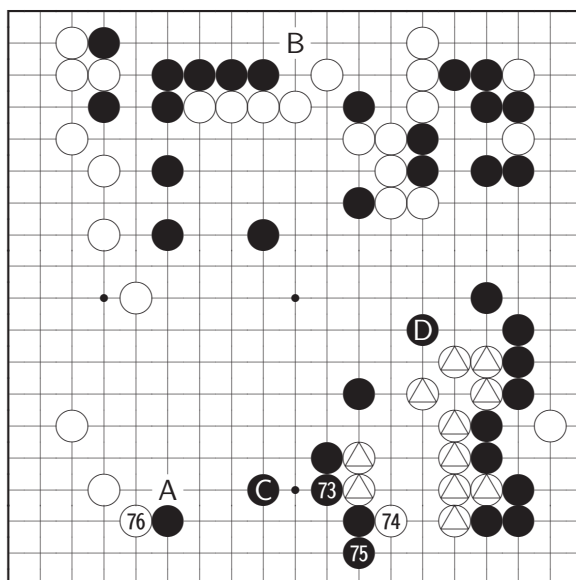


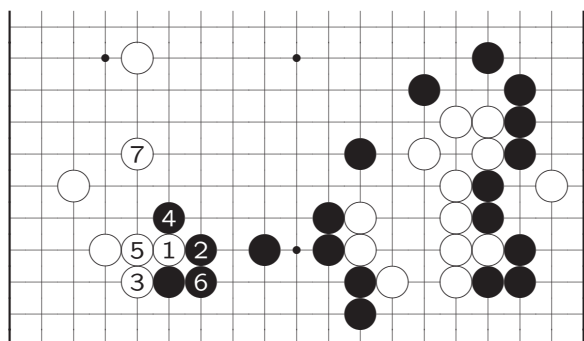
Diagram 14
(Moves: 73-76)

It looks like Lee thought the game was favorable for White at this point, so he chose the simple attachment at ⑦⑥. If he'd thought that he was behind, he would have played at A or B instead—both of which would have led to a more complicated game.

Some readers may look at White's marked group in the lower right now and conclude that White's influence wasn't powerful, because it looks very small. However, we should remember that White created this group in a part of the board where Black had a four to one advantage, and that White subsequently took sente three times (after ③, ④ and ⑦⑤).

White's group was powerful, but the profit has been realized in other parts of the board—both in terms of points and by limiting the scope of Black's actions. It's important to understand that every decision involves some sort of tradeoff in Go.

The mere presence of White's power earlier in the game constrained Black's choice of strategies and led to the current position. As the chess grandmaster Aron Nimzowitsch was fond of saying, "The threat is stronger than the execution."

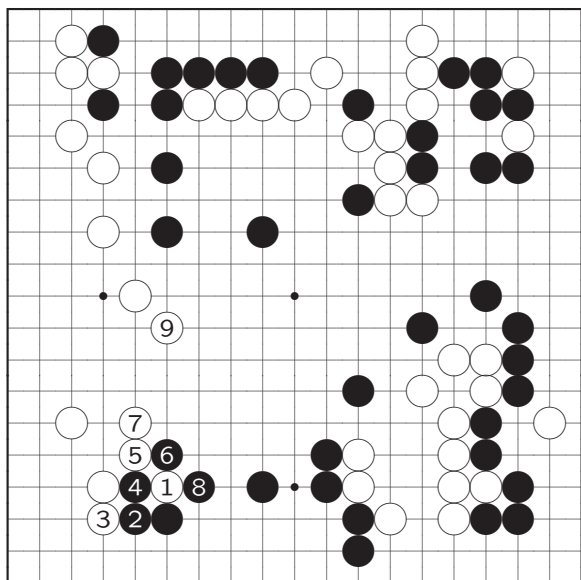


Variation 60 for ⑦⑥

Attaching at ① is conceivable.

If Black answers normally, with ② to ⑥, White will be happy to complete a large territory up to ⑦.

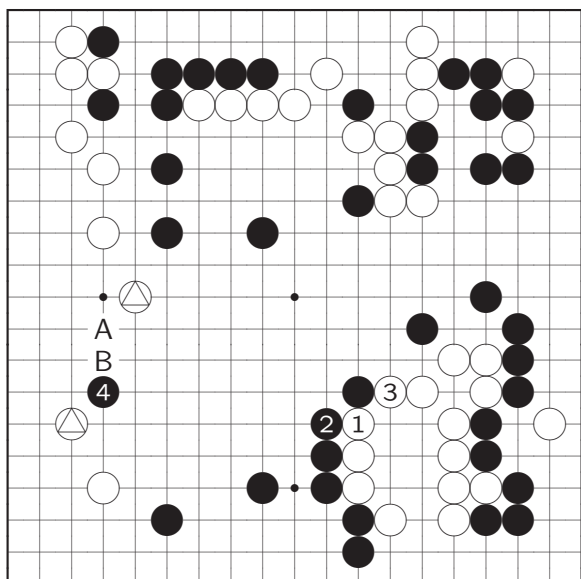
This variation is slightly better for White than the actual game.



Variation 61 for ⑦⑥

Black could also think about resisting with ② to ⑥.

Even though Black captures a stone with ⑧, the result up to ⑨ is also successful for White, because he secures a very large territory on the left side.



Variation 62 for ⑦⑥

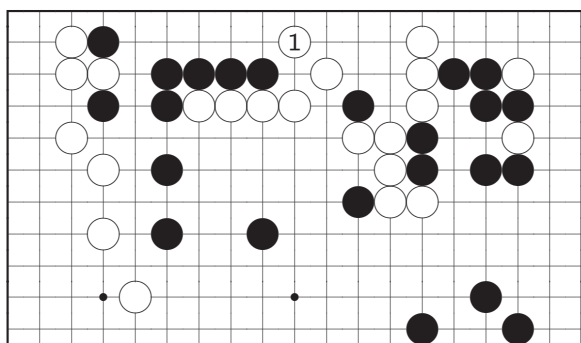
Reinforcing with ① and ③ is slack. Black will take sente and reduce the left side with ④.

It will be hard for White to attack ④, because it is Black's only weak group.

Notice how ④ makes it very difficult for White to connect the marked stones.

When stones are more than one line apart both vertically and horizontally, you can usually separate them by playing at one of the middle points (④, A or B in this case). We call this a bad relationship.

Knight's moves and jumps (long and short) are common shapes when developing, because they're harder to separate in this way. That's because they only stretch out in one direction at a time.



Variation 63 for ⑦⑥

White could also consider playing at ①. This diagonal move is bigger and more important than it looks.

In addition to strengthening White's group at the top, it also dampens Black's ambitions of invading or reducing the left side because it weakens Black's top left group considerably.

Caution Is Both Friend and Foe

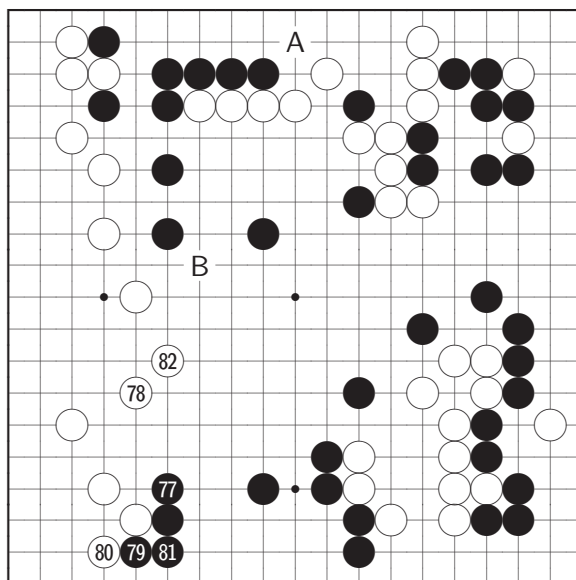


Diagram 15
(Moves: 77-82)

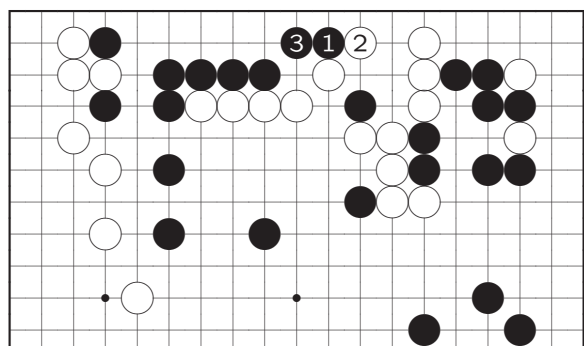
The sense of danger must not disappear: the way is certainly both short and steep, however gradual it looks from here; look if you like, but you will have to leap.

—W. H. Auden, *Leap Before You Look*

The hane at 79 was a big endgame move. We can see from this that Gu thought the game favored Black. If he'd thought that the game was better for White, he would have looked for a more aggressive tactic to reduce White's left side.

White 82 was too cautious, and was a questionable move. Lee doesn't normally play like this unless he has a clear lead. He might have thought White was ahead, but (as we'll see later) Black's thickness gave him invisible potential.

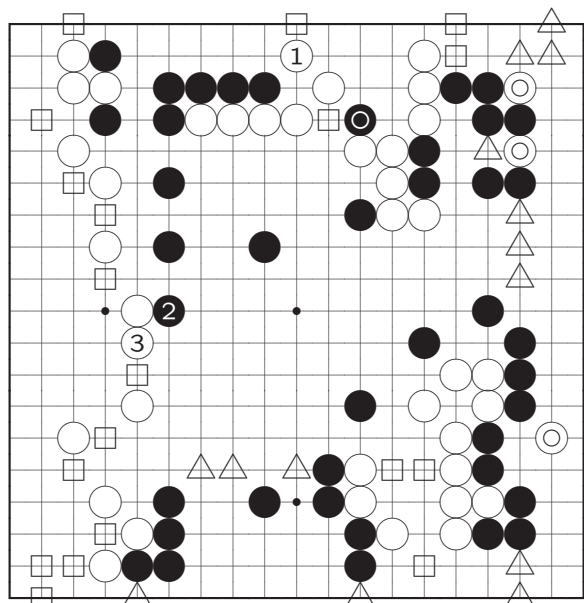
Instead of the kosumi at 82, playing at either A or B would be more active.



Variation 64 for 79

Since White didn't play at the top, reinforcing with 1 and 3 is also a good idea (instead of 79).

Let's evaluate the position at the time of 82 above...



Variation 65 for ⑧②

White should have played at ①. If Black attaches at ②, securing the left side with ③ is satisfactory.

Black:

Right side: 44, lower side: 19, and top to center: 2.

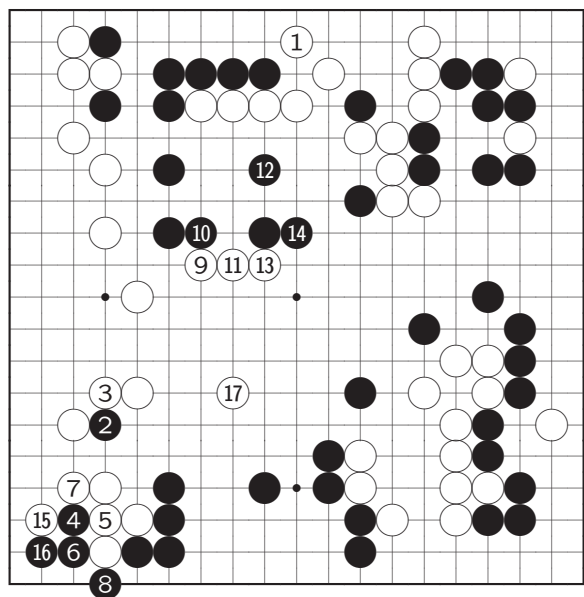
Total: 65 points.

White:

Left side: 48, upper side: 13, lower side: 4, and komi 7.5.

Total: 72.5 points.

It's Black's turn and Black has more potential in the center, so the game is actually closer than it looks. However, as we can see, White has more territory and is slightly ahead.

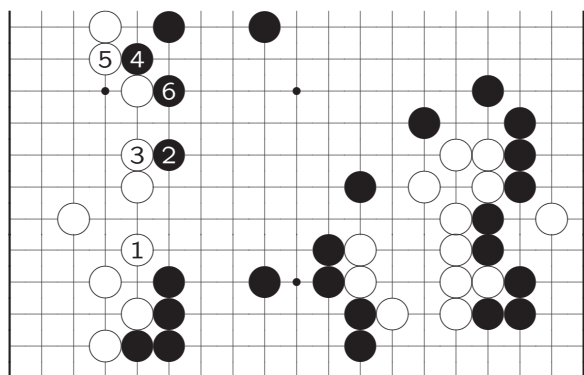


Variation 66 for ⑧②

If Black invades the left side or the corner—with ② to ⑥ for example—White can let him live small and attack Black's top group with ⑨.

Up to ⑰, White compensates for the territorial loss in the lower left while erasing Black's potential in the center.

The result is even.



Variation 67 for ⑧②

Reinforcing at ① isn't a good idea.

Black can easily develop the center with ② to ⑥ and this variation is good for Black.

Gu Li's Ingenious Probe

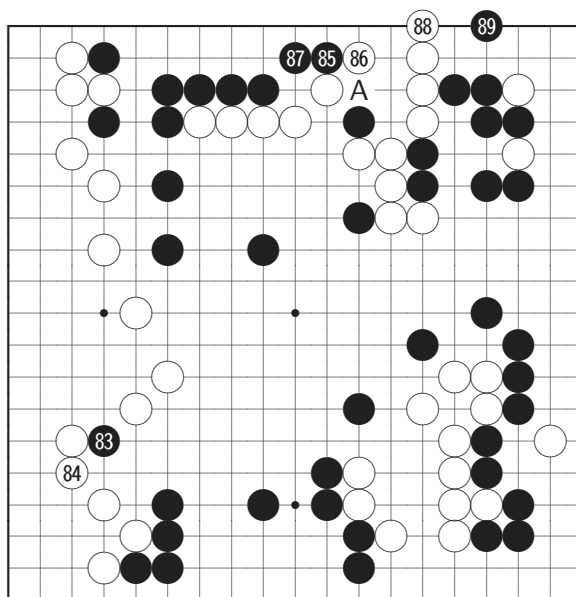
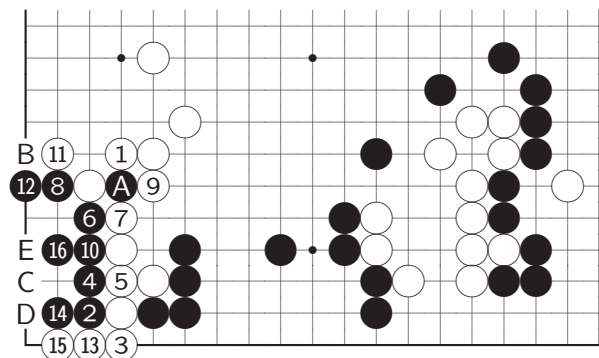


Diagram 16
(Moves: 83-89)

The attachment at ⑧③ was an ingenious probe. This exchange was of great help to Black later in the endgame. It's difficult to come up with this kind of move and falling back to ⑧④ was unavoidable.

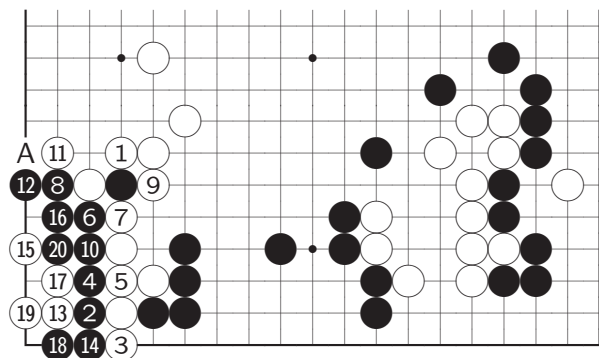
White ⑧⑧ protected A in sente, but gaining ⑧⑨ as part of the natural flow of play was enough for Black.



Variation 68 for ⑧④

If White responds to A (⑧③) at ①, Black will be able to live in the corner with the moves up to ①⑥.

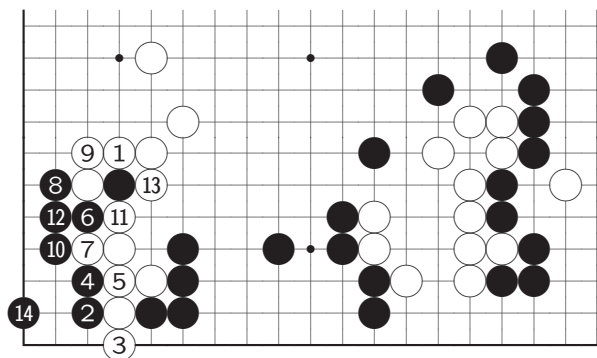
Note that blocking at B (aiming at C to E) will be sente for White.



Variation 69 for ⑧④

Attaching at ①③ is worth considering, but Black will still be able to live in seki up to ②⑦.

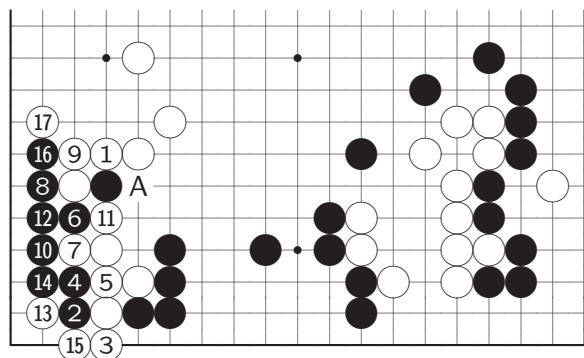
This is worse for White than the previous diagram, because he will lose territory on the left side when Black plays at A later.



Variation 70 for 84

It's very hard for White to capture Black's stones in the corner.

White may try ⑦, but Black lives with the sequence to ⑭.

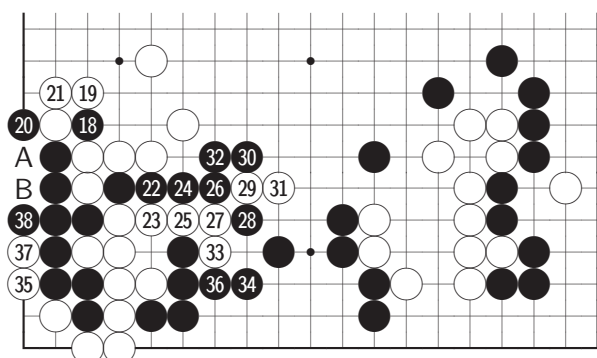


Variation 71 for 84

Instead of capturing the cutting stone at A in the previous variation, White might try to capture the corner with the clamp at ⑬.

Black can't make two eyes in the corner after ⑮ and ⑰, but the position is not that simple and we need to be mindful of our own weaknesses when attacking.

The variations are long, but let's have a look to make sure that White can't win the capturing race...

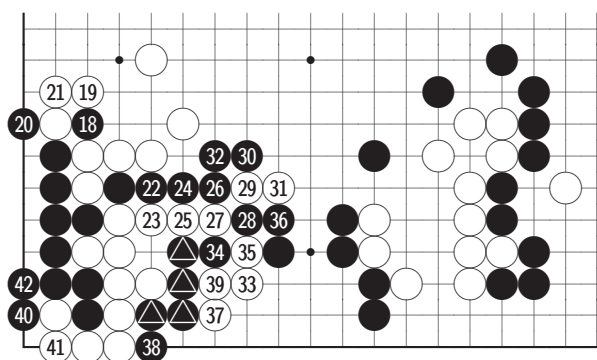


Variation 72 for 84

Cutting at ⑱ is a clever asking move.

The sente exchange of ⑳ for ㉑ effectively gains Black a liberty in the capturing race, and White is captured up to ㉘.

If White plays ㉗ at A, Black at ㉗ wins the race. If White tries ㉗ at B instead, Black A wins again.

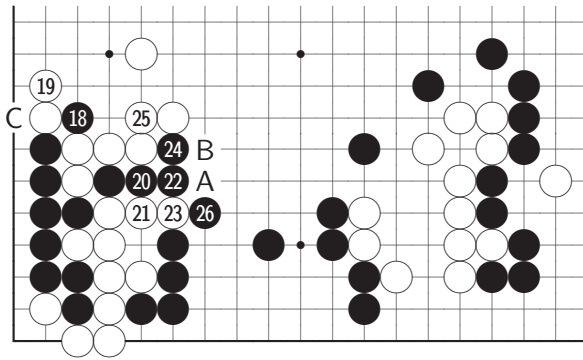


Variation 73 for 84

It's also worth considering the flanking maneuver at ⑬, turning to attack Black's marked stones instead.

Black will cut at ⑭ and can still win the capturing race with the precise combination of ⑳ to ㉒.

Playing ⑬ at ㉓ leads to a very similar result after ㉔, because ⑬ and ⑭ are miai next. White will face the situation in either this or the previous variation, and Black will win the capturing race either way.



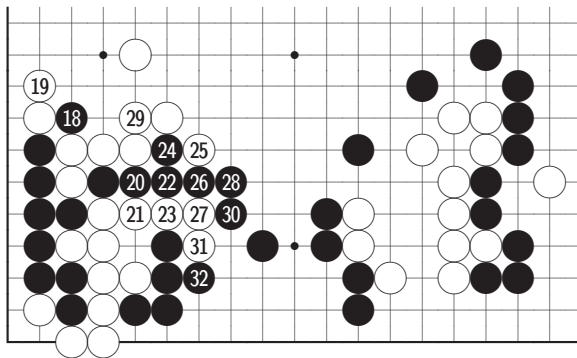
Variation 74 for (84)

Extending to (19) denies Black an extra liberty, but leaves behind bad aji of another kind.

After (23), (24) is a crude yet powerful move, which makes miai of (25) and (26).

Since the ladders starting at both A and B favor Black, White is in trouble.

Once Black blocks at (26), White has fewer liberties than in the previous variations, so preventing Black's atari at C doesn't achieve anything and White dies.



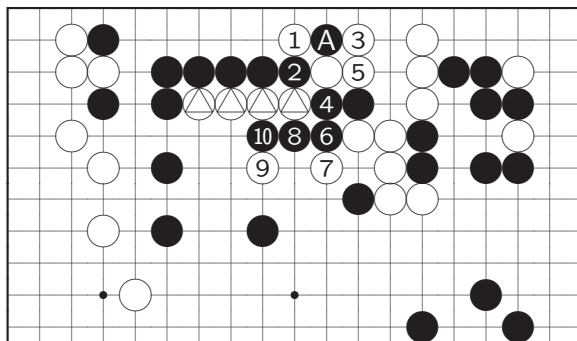
Variation 75 for (84)

Struggling to gain liberties with (25) to (27) accomplishes nothing.

Eventually White needs to go back to defend at (29), allowing Black to wrap up the situation nicely with (30) and (32).

White loses the capturing race yet again.

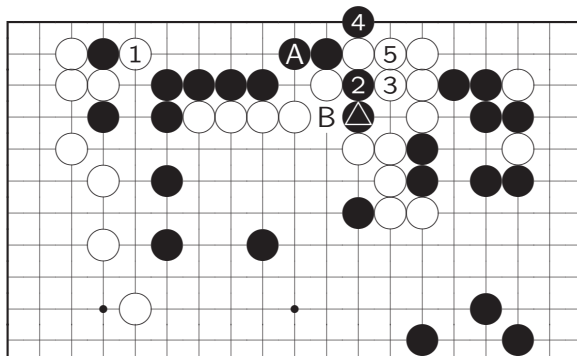
As we can see from the foregoing analysis, (A) ends in failure, which means Black can live in the corner.



Variation 76 for (86)

White can't resist (A) ((85) in the game) with the hane on the inside at (1).

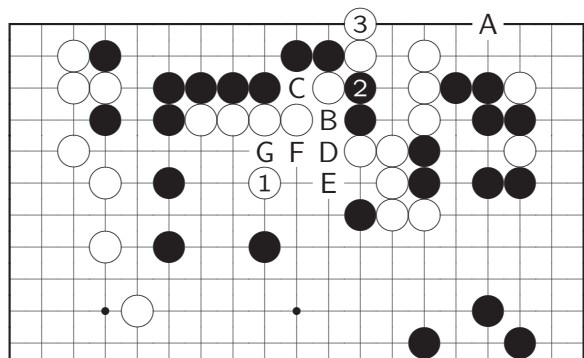
Black will fight back with (4) and (6), and will capture White's marked stones up to (10).



Variation 77 for (88)

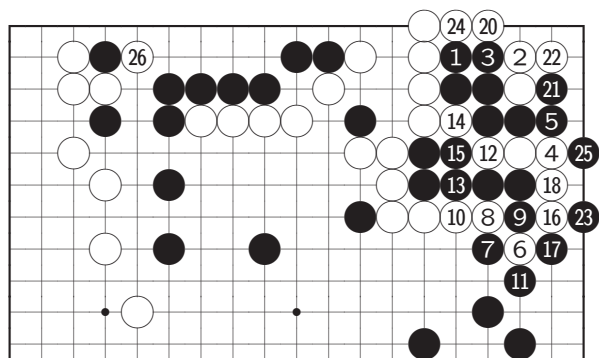
If White doesn't defend his group at the top after Black extends to (A) ((87)), Black can cut at (2) and destroy White's shape up to (5).

White has only one eye, and Black will even be able to save his marked stones by playing at B later.



Variation 78 for 88

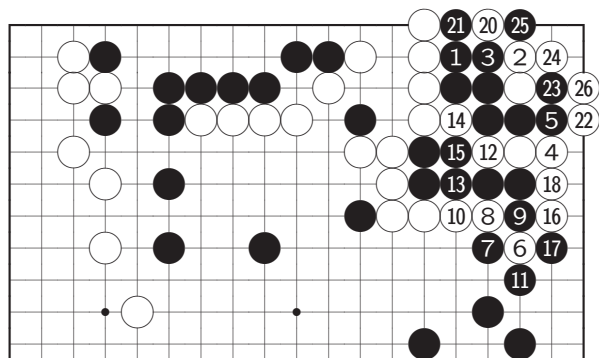
It would have been better for White to defend at ①. This preserves endgame possibilities for later, like White's small monkey jump at A. If Black tries to save his cutting stones with B, White is ready to counter with C to G.



Variation 79 for 89

19 at 6

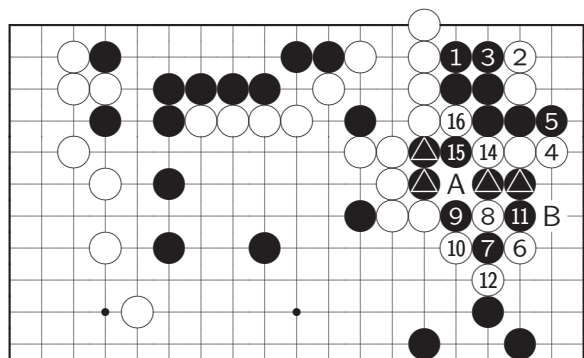
Blocking at ① looks like it secures a bigger corner for Black, but it leaves behind bad aji. White will poke at the corner, with ②, ④ and ⑥, until Black's position gives way—one way or another. For example, White will be very happy to reduce Black's corner territory in sente with the moves through to ②5. He can then use sente to take a big point, like ②6.



Variation 80 for 89

19 at 6

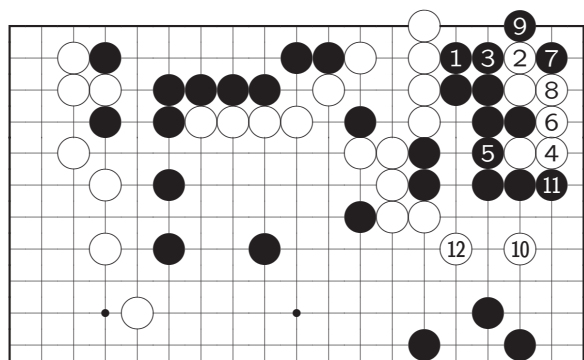
Black can't cut and capture White's stones with ②1. If he tries to do so, White will counter with ②2 and it will be Black who is captured up to ②6.



Variation 81 for 89

13 at 8

Switching to the atari at ⑨ doesn't help Black. The sequence up to ①6 is severe, and if Black connects at A next, White can capture Black's whole dumpling shape (marked) with B.



Variation 82 for 89

Even if Black connects solidly at ⑤ and plays to capture the invaders with ⑦ and ⑨, ⑩ is still effective.

After ⑩, ⑪ and ⑫ are miai, and White is satisfied.

Stay Connected

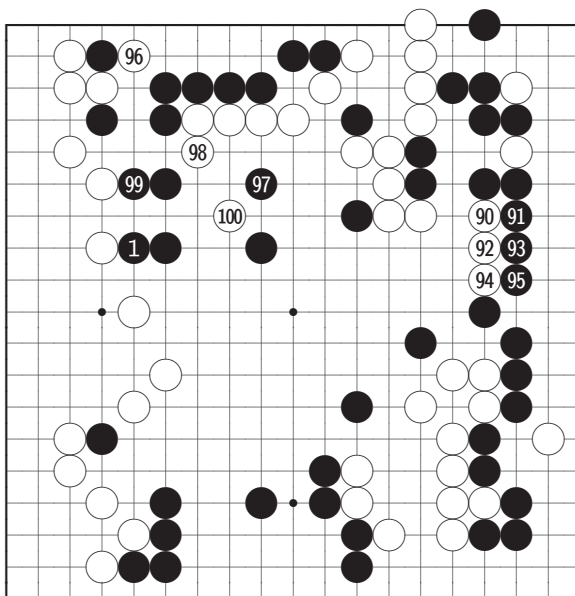
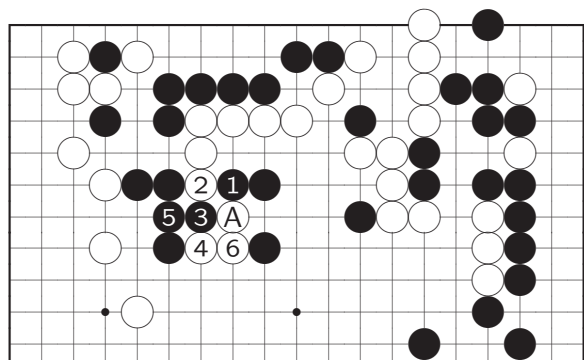


Diagram 17
(Moves: 90-101)

After reducing the right side in sente up to ⑨⑤, White returned to harassing Black's center dragon with ⑨⑥ to ⑩⑩. Forming a bamboo joint with ⑨⑨ and ⑩① (⑩①) was good style, staying connected and strong.



Variation 83 for 101

Black shouldn't try to cut off ①A with ① and ③.

Black's group will be split in two by ④ and ⑥, and the result is bad for Black.

Good Things Come to Those Who Probe

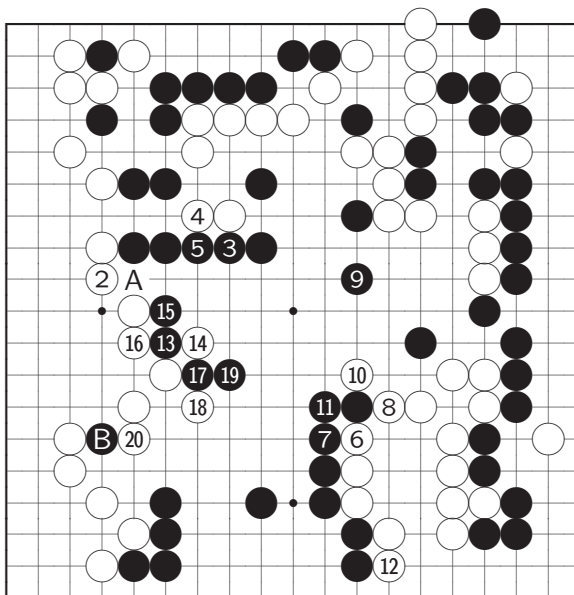


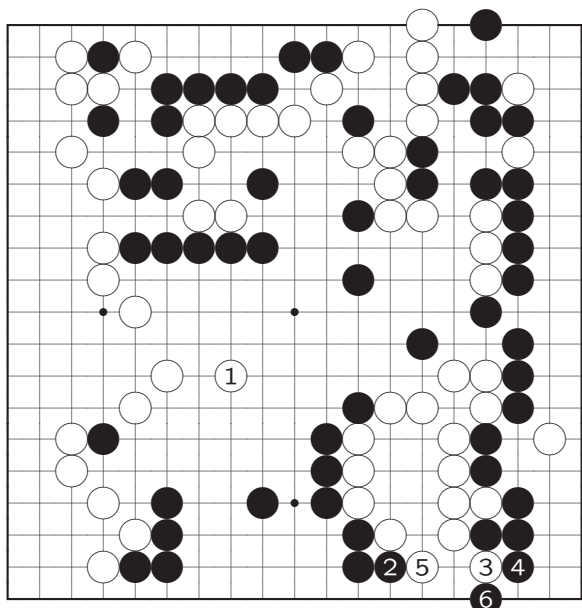
Diagram 18
(Moves: 102-120)

Lee regretted ②, and later said it was a mistake. White should have played at A instead and then ⑬ wouldn't have been anything special.

The combination of ⑩ and ⑫ was another small mistake. Jumping to ⑲ would have been better.

The razor sharp edge of ⑬ caught the light as it hit the board. Lee had not expected this move and was forced to parry frantically. White ⑭ was the best response, but it didn't greatly help White.

Black's masterstroke at ⑬ forced White defend at ⑳, so Black kept sente. All of this flowed from the wonderful probe at ㉑. With some patience, Black was able to enjoy the fruits of his earlier labor.

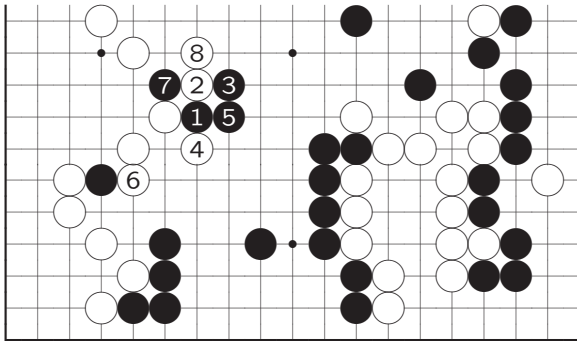


Variation 84 for ⑩

White should jump to ① instead of playing ⑩ in the game.

Black will bully White's bottom right group with ②, ④ and ⑥, but the game is still very close.

After ⑥, White can tenuki—managing to defend the bottom right in sente once again.

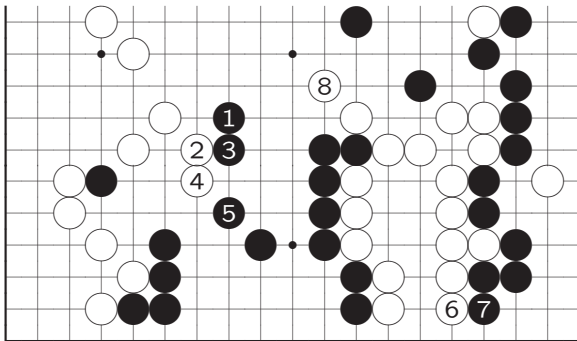


Variation 85 for 113

If Black attaches at ① (instead of ⑬ in the game) White will hane at ②.

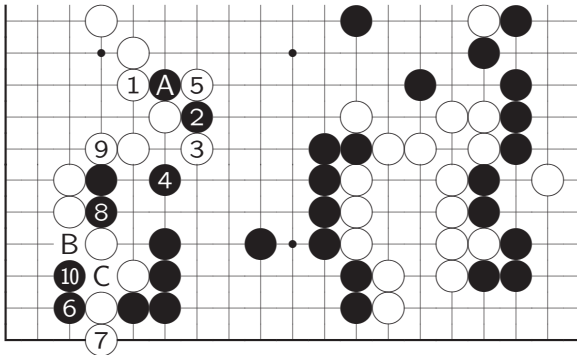
If Black now tries to play at ⑦, White can extend to ⑧ and capture his stone.

This is quite different to the result in the game.



Variation 86 for 113

If Black simply caps at ①, White will reduce Black's center area up to ⑧ and the game will be slightly better for White.



Variation 87 for 114

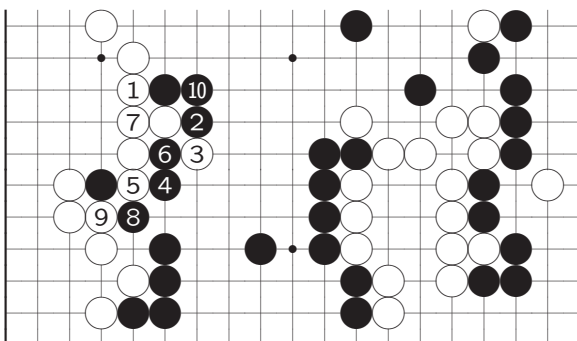
Let's see why A (⑬ above) was a brilliant move.

If White answers A with ① and ③, Black will unleash a formidable combination with ④ to ⑩.

Black ⑩ makes miai of B and C, and White is in trouble.

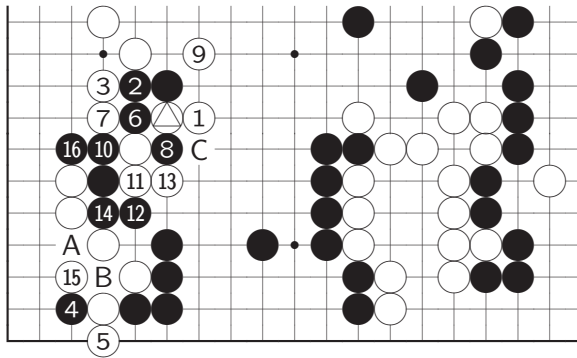
If White plays ⑦ at ⑩, Black at ⑦ is good enough.

Instead of ⑨, if White defends the corner at ⑩, Black breaks into White's territory with ⑨.



Variation 88 for 114

If White answers ④ with ⑤, Black will gain a huge number of points in the center up to ⑩.



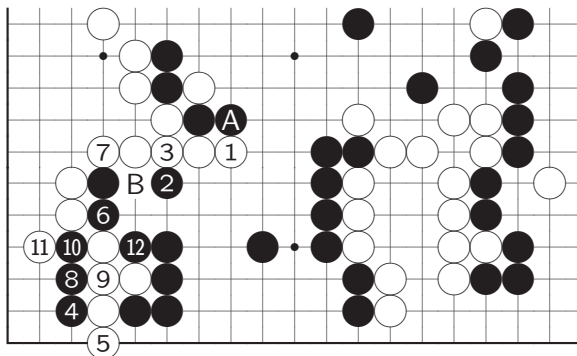
Variation 89 for 114

Extending at ① is White's strongest attempt at resistance, but Black will still break through up to ⑩.

Instead of ⑮, if White saves the left side with White at ⑮, Black will extend to ⑮, making A and B miai.

If White uses ⑦ to fall back at ⑩, Black still cuts at ⑧ and White can't capture any black stones.

If White ⑨ connects at ⑩, Black will push at C and White's marked cutting stones will be in danger.



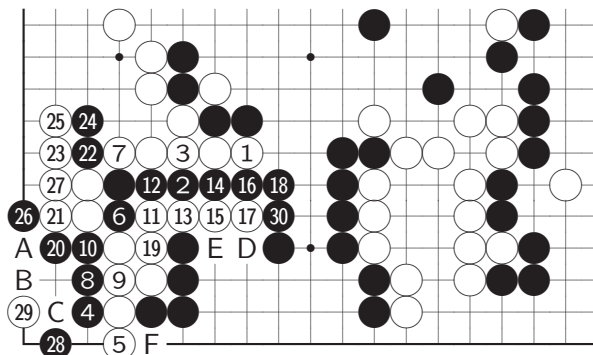
Variation 90 for 120

After ⑰ (at A), White defended with ⑳ at B in the game.

If White pushes at ① instead, Black can once again peep at ②, clamp at ④ and pinch with ⑥.

If White tries to resist, Black will capture White's corner stones up to ⑫.

The timing and placement of ④ is very important, as we'll see in a moment.



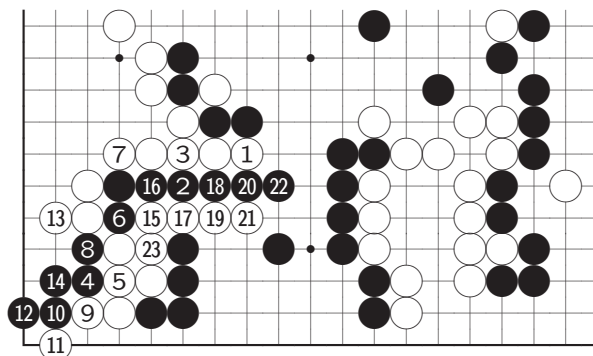
Variation 91 for 120

White can extend his liberties by pushing out with atari from ⑪ to ⑰ and connecting at ⑱.

However, ⑳ is a vital point and ㉘ is a tesuji for capturing races. White ㉙ stops Black from making two eyes, but Black gains liberties from the exchange.

Black will eventually win this capturing race.

Even if White tries to start a ko with A to C, Black will be fine as long as he just fills White's liberties from the outside with D to F.



Variation 92 for 120

Black's clamp at ⑨ in the previous variations was very important, because ④ and ⑧ don't work.

If Black continues with ⑩ and ⑫, White can capture Black's corner stones through to ㉓.

Thickness Still Pays in the Endgame

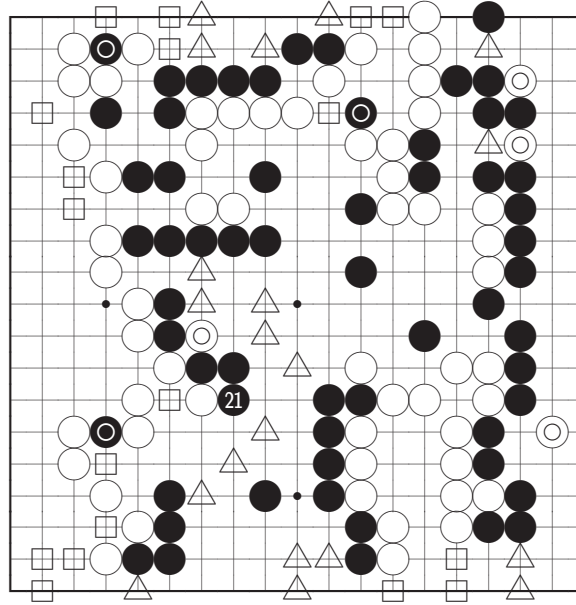


Diagram 19
(Move: 121)

The game was reversed when Black blocked at 21. Let's count and see how big Black's lead was.

Black:

Right side: 48, lower side through to center: 25, and the top: 4.

Total: *77 points.*

White:

Left side: 54, upper side: 6, lower side: 10, and komi 7.5.

Total: *77.5 points.*

The game still looks very close, but Black has more potential in the center and can expect to earn more points than White in the endgame. This is because Black's stones are stronger overall and this works in Black's favor to grant him invisible points.

In other words, Black can threaten and harass White more than White can harass him. So these invisible points will materialize as actual points in the endgame.

If this isn't completely clear right now, don't worry. We will observe how Black bullies White throughout the remainder of the game, to see how thickness works its magic in the endgame.

Take the Road Less Traveled, Especially When Behind

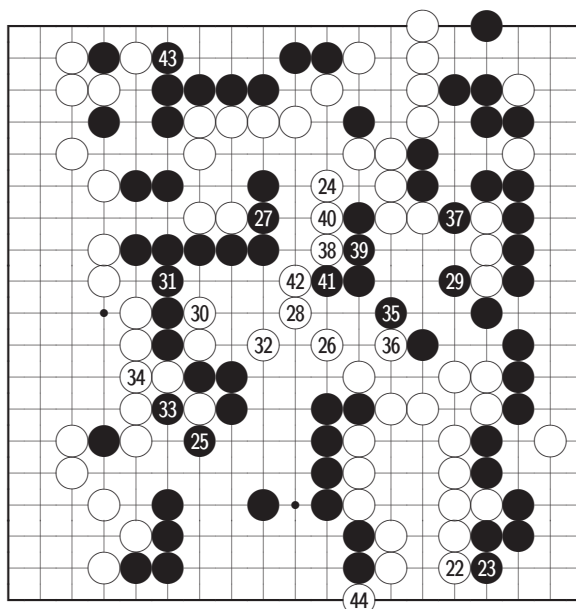


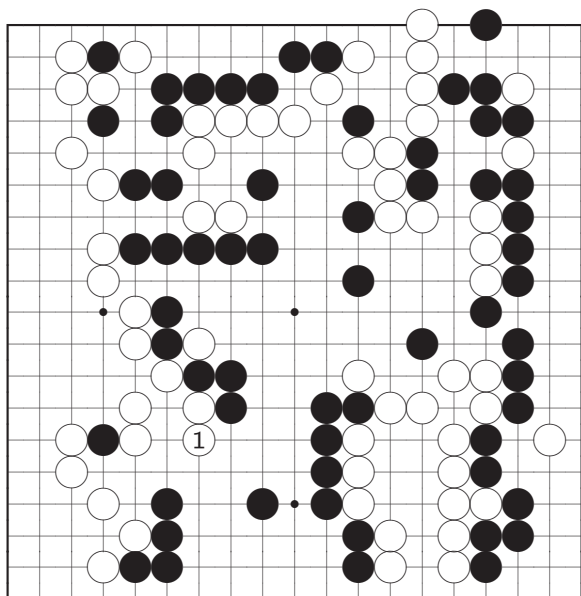
Diagram 20
(Moves: 122-144)

Lee reinforced with ②④, but he was already behind.

Black ataried at ②⑤, and moving towards the center with ②⑥ was the right idea for White.

He chose to continue on into the center with ②⑧ and ③⑩. This path made the endgame more complicated. When you're behind, it pays to look for interesting variations, rather than easily anticipated sequences.

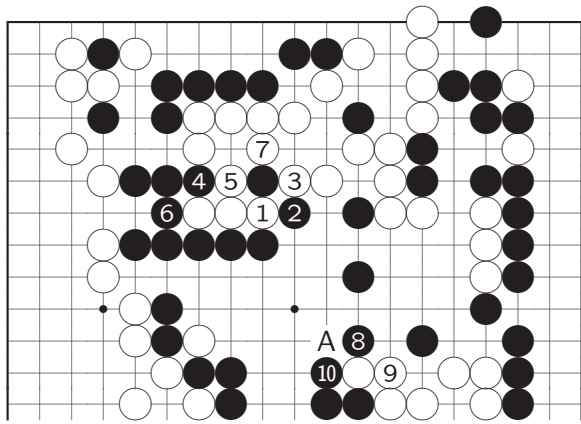
White isolated Black's group at the top up to ④②, intending to gain some points by bullying it. However, it wasn't easy to do so, because White had to worry about his own weaknesses too.



Variation 93 for ①②④

Instead of ②④ in the game, White could also extend to ①.

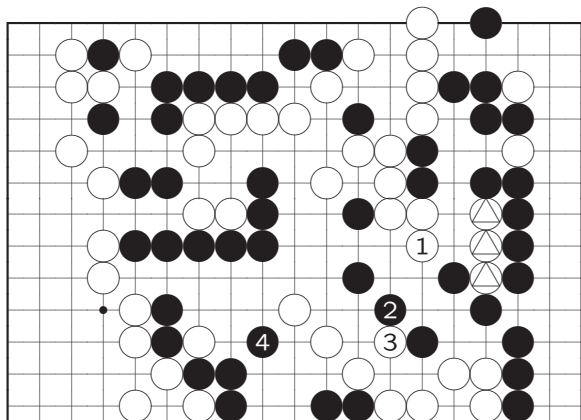
The game is still very close, but it's slightly better for Black.



Variation 94 for (126)

If White cuts with ① and ③, instead of stepping into Black's center area with A (②⑥), Black will sacrifice in sente and build a huge territory in the center.

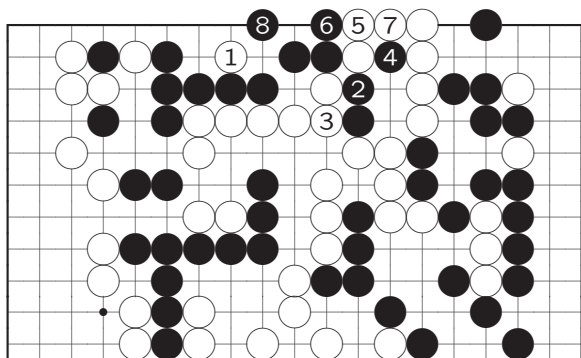
Black ⑧ is a nice tesuji in the midst of this sequence. It makes ⑨ and ⑩ miai.



Variation 95 for (130)

If White saves his marked stones with ①, Black will defend the center area with ④.

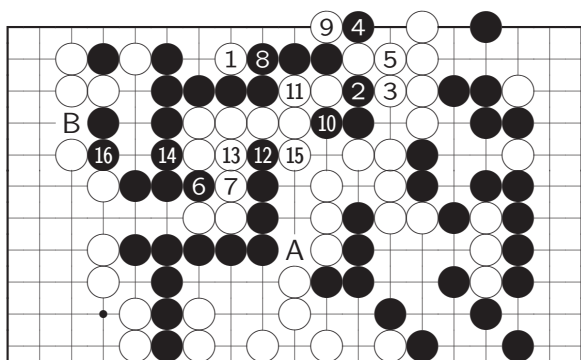
This is still slightly better for Black. The difference is about 1.5 points.



Variation 96 for (144)

Locally speaking, Black's eyespace at the top might appear to be unsettled, but there's aji in this position which ensures that Black's group is already alive.

If White tries to attack with ①, cutting at ② is a lovely tesuji. Black ⑥ becomes sente, so Black can easily make life up to ⑧.



Variation 97 for (144)

If White tries to resist with ③, Black can counter-attack and destroy White's eye shape in sente up to ⑮.

Black still won't face any problems living, because ⑭ makes half an eye in sente.

After ⑯, A and B are miai for Black and White is in serious trouble.

Even Dead Stones Still Have Value

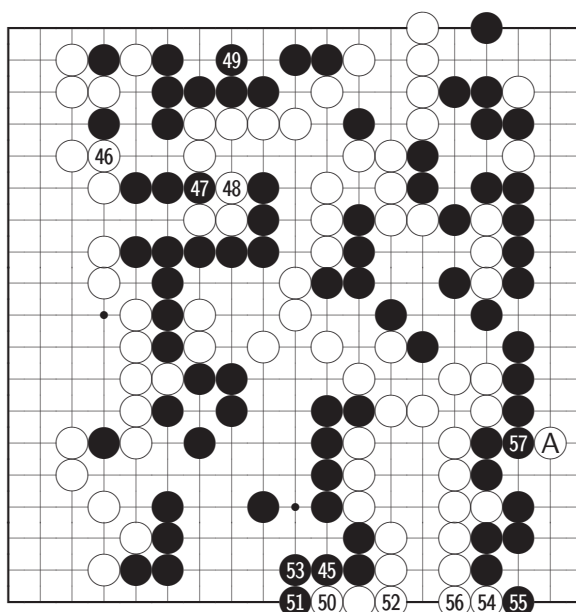
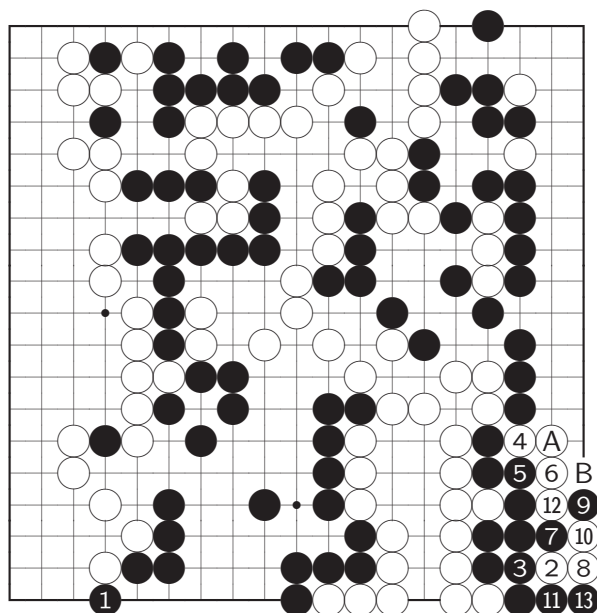


Diagram 21
(Moves: 145-157)

White ④⑥ invalidated the previous variation, so Black had to live up to ④⑨. Defending at ⑤⑦ was necessary too, because ⑤① still had some life in it. This meant that ⑤④ and ⑤⑥ were sente.



Variation 98 for ⑤⑦

⑤④ at ⑤⑧

If Black doesn't defend the lower right corner, instead playing at ⑤① or elsewhere, White can mobilize ⑤① with ⑤②, ⑤④ and ⑤⑥.

The sequence up to ⑤⑫ demonstrates good technique for reducing Black's liberties in the corner, and ⑤⑭ (at ⑤⑧) is a tesuji which makes miai of ⑤⑩ and B.

Black's whole corner is captured up to ⑤⑭, so Black would have to compromise after ⑤②.

Bully Weak Groups and Steal Their Lunch Money

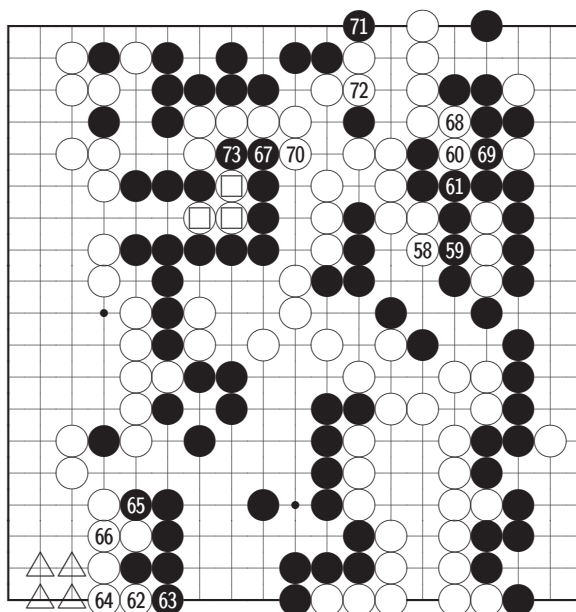


Diagram 22
(Moves: 158-173)

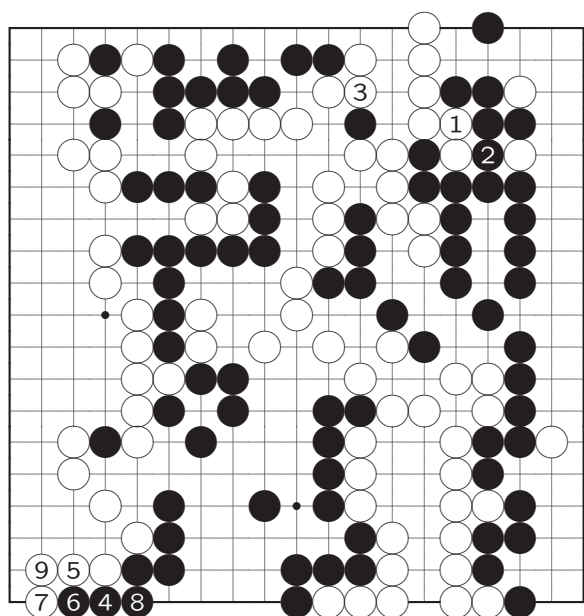
The hane at ⑥② was a big reverse sente endgame move, worth five points. White gained the four marked points inside his territory (by preventing Black's sente hane at ⑥④) and Black lost one point at ⑥③.

As a rule of thumb, reverse sente moves have the same value as the sente move they prevent.

Black bullied White with ⑥⑦. Lee couldn't save his three stones and had to defend at ⑦⑦ instead.

White ⑦② was also unavoidable, and Black stole White's lunch money with ⑦③ (the squared stones).

From ⑥⑦ to ⑦③ we can clearly see the power of thickness in the endgame. Observe how White's territory inevitably gave way to Black's relentless bullying, backed by thickness. The game was practically over.



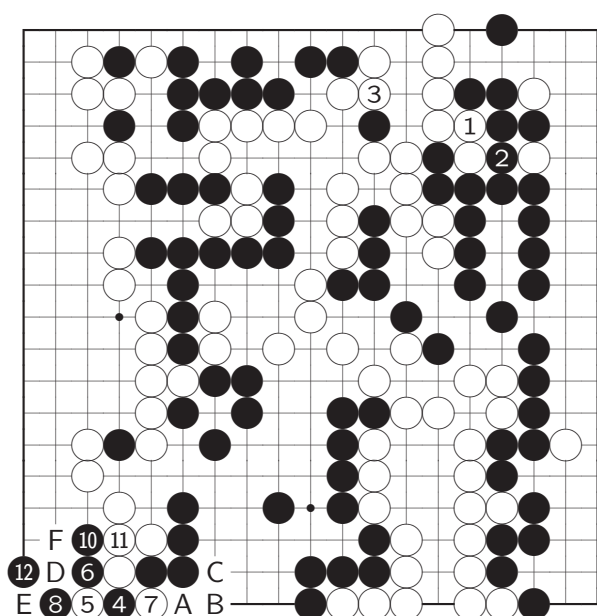
Variation 99 for ⑥②

If White plays at ③ instead, the hane at ④ will be annoying for White.

Falling back to ⑤ is the proper move, but Black has reduced White's corner greatly in sente.

Up to ⑨, we can see the justification for the marked points in the diagram above. White's territory is four points smaller and Black's is one point bigger in this variation.

Black is clearly winning the game after ⑥.



Variation 100 for (162)

⑨ at ④

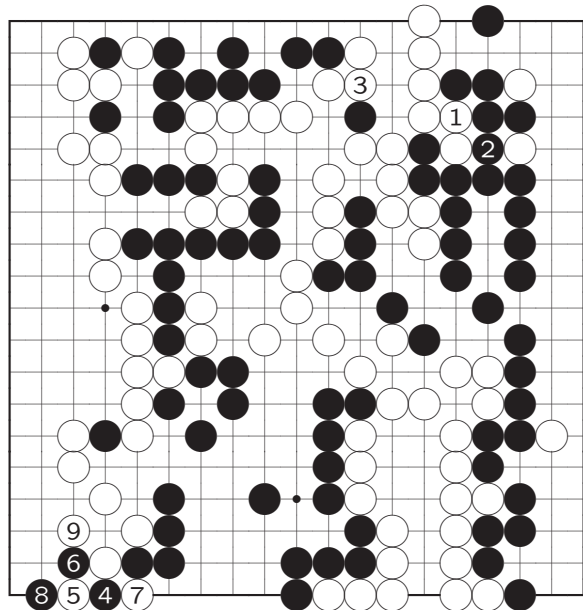
If White hanes at ⑤ and doesn't want to fight a ko, Black can live in the corner with ⑥ to ⑫.

Since Black's territory at the bottom isn't large and is quite thick, White gets the worse end of this deal.

White can only expect to exchange A for B in sente later, and White won't be able to capture anything with C.

If the bottom area were a large and valuable territory, and answering A at B wasn't possible, then trading like this might be acceptable for White.

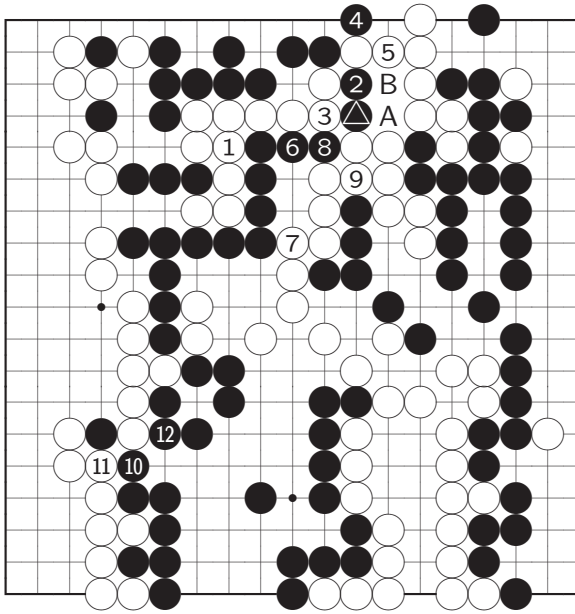
Instead of ⑪, if White plays at D; Black at ⑪, White E, Black A, White at ⑧ and Black F crushes White.



Variation 101 for (162)

⑩ at ④

White can resist at ⑨ and start a ko, but this is a picnic ko for Black.

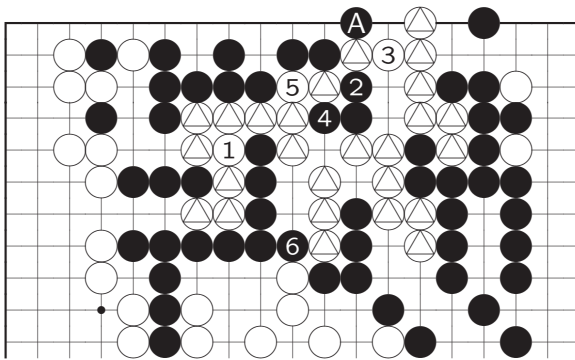


Variation 102 for (170)

Instead of (70) in the game, if White saves his the three stones with ①, Black will squeeze up to ⑨ in sente.

White will still have to capture the two marked cutting stones later (at A and B), so his territory will collapse like a paper bag.

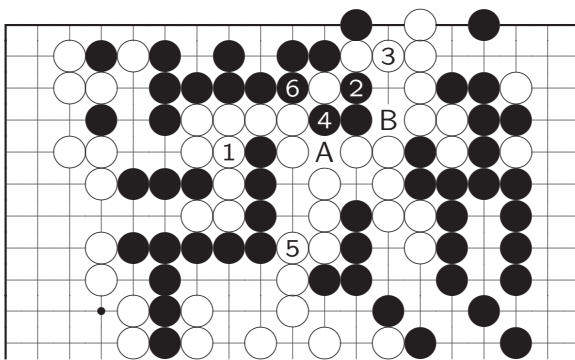
Black is winning by about 2.5 points at this stage.



Variation 103 for (172)

After A (71), if White tries to save his three stones with ①, Black will play ② and ④ in sente, before cutting at ⑥.

White's marked group only has one eye, so the game is over.



Variation 104 for (172)

Even if White connects at ⑤, Black will simply capture a stone with ⑥.

White can't save all his stones because A and B are miai for Black.

Gu Li Evens the Score

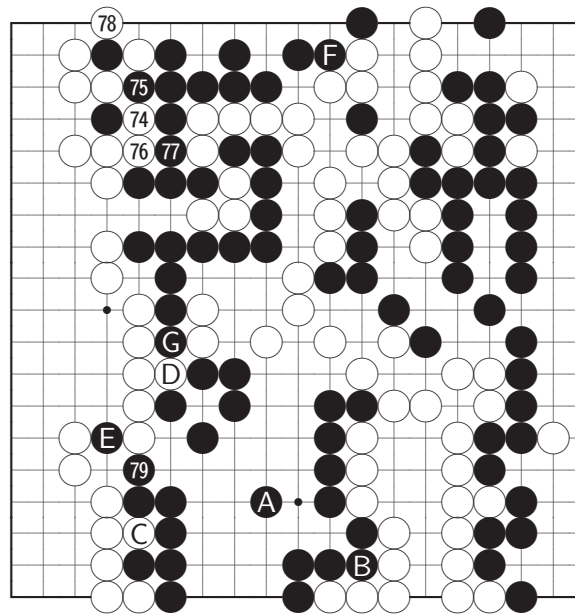


Diagram 23
(Moves: 174-179)

179 moves: Black won by resignation.

Black was winning by 3.5 points at this stage, so Lee resigned. The overall score for the Jubango now stood at 2–2, and Gu Li was on a winning streak.

This game was quite peaceful as far as games between Gu Li and Lee Sedol go, but if you look carefully you'll see that there were many subtle conflicts beneath the surface. They went unplayed because both players read deeply, but you'll discover many interesting variations when you study the game carefully.

The players started with a new pattern up to 27 (A), and the game was well balanced up to 75 (B).

Lee played some overly cautious moves with 76 (C) and 82 (D), and Gu took the initiative with 83 (E) and 85 (F).

Black 113 (G) was the winning move and Gu didn't give Lee any chances to catch up afterwards.

It was a game that was uncharacteristic of Lee and Gu. Firstly, there was no all out fighting. Secondly, the opening was playable for both and Lee thought he was ahead in the middle game (when he played C and D). Thirdly, Gu pulled ahead near the finish line and his endgame play was excellent.

Lee is usually behind after the opening and catches up again in the endgame against Gu, but Gu didn't allow that to happen this time.

This was Lee's fourth consecutive loss against Gu (including the games from other events). There had never been four consecutive wins between these two players before, so the next game was very important. If Lee couldn't turn the tide of the match soon, the situation would become desperate.

After the game, the players reviewed together for nearly an hour. They also talked and drank a lot at the dinner party afterwards; becoming good friends again over beer.

Both players were doing their best throughout each game, but they still got on well together once play concluded. They're very lucky to be such good friends, as well as rivals.

May 25, 2014, Shangri-La, Yunnan, China: *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

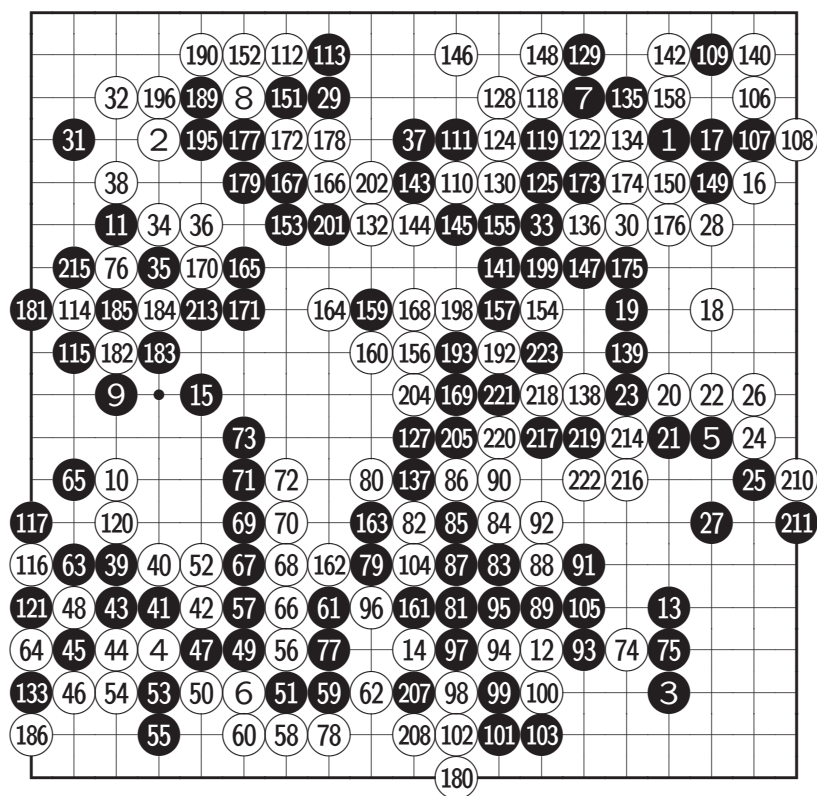


Diagram 1

(Moves: 1-223)

123 131 at 45, 126 at 48, 187 at 64, 188 194 200 206 212 at 182,
191 197 203 209 at 185

Shangri-La

The fifth game of the Jubango was played on May 25, 2014, in Shangri-La, Yunnan, China. Lee Sedol played black.

The character of the match changed dramatically when Gu Li defeated Lee Sedol in four consecutive games—including in games three and four of this match—and the overall score was tied at 2–2.

This game was very important for Lee, because another loss would make it difficult for him to overcome the psychological damage of losing five games in a row, while also being behind in the match.

From time to time, we see a long winning streak between two professionals of similar strength. The longer the streak goes on, the more the confidence of the losing player is crushed, and it requires immense willpower to break free of such a situation.

So, even though the score was objectively tied, the match was more difficult for Lee Sedol at this point. As Go players know, move order is important, on the board as well as in the metagame of a long match.

Shangri-La is a famous city in the Chinese highlands, on the Tibetan Plateau. The city—formerly named Zhongdian, but renamed in 2001 to promote tourism—was named after the fictional land of Shangri-La in James Hilton’s novel, *Lost Horizon*. The book itself is said to have been inspired by early accounts of the Tibetan borderlands, including Zhongdian, so there is a roundabout logic to it.

The venue for the match was more than 3,000 meters (10,000 feet) above sea level. In retrospect, it wasn’t the best choice of location.

The organizers presumably chose Shangri-La for its picturesque scenery of soaring mountain tops, dusted with snow and thickly iced with white clouds; and it really was spectacular.

Unfortunately, both players suffered from altitude sickness to varying extents as the game progressed, which made game five as much a physical challenge as a mental one. Go being what it is, we will be able to spot the moments where the players’ concentration began to fray just by looking at the game record.

On one level, this was disappointing for the Go community. It felt like a passer-by had clumsily spilled paint on an unfinished masterpiece. However, for the purposes of this book it also gives us an opportunity, because we’re able to see how the players dealt with one another’s mistakes.

Professionals’ games are sometimes too perfect, which can make it harder to learn certain skills when studying them. For example, we rarely see a one-sided attack. In this game, we’ll be able to analyze some more serious mistakes and see what the consequences were. That’s the silver lining inside those white, fluffy, oxygen-deprived clouds.

The Star Point Enclosure

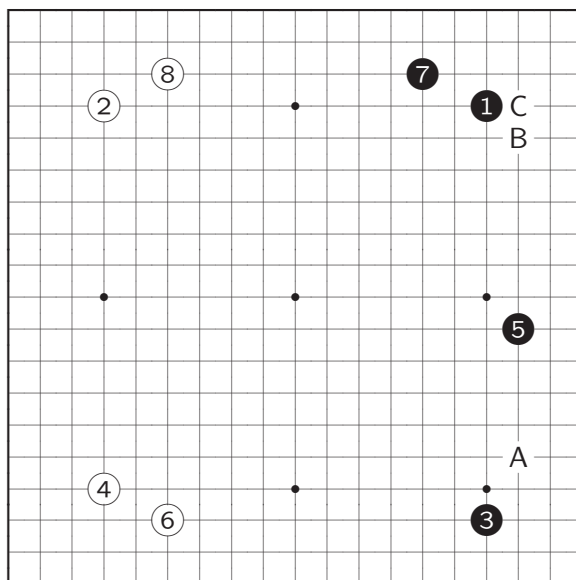


Diagram 2
(Moves: 1-8)

Once again, Lee Sedol started the game with the Chinese Opening of ①, ③ and ⑤ (explored in Chapter 3), and Gu Li responded with the enclosure at ⑥, which is his favorite move in this opening.

Enclosing the star point corners with a knight's move at ⑥, ⑦ and ⑧ may look strange to some readers, but doing so has become quite common in recent years and retains the full value of a move.

In times gone by, star point based corner enclosures weren't played very often in the early opening, because the best players of the day thought that such enclosures were inferior to corner enclosures founded on the 3-4 point.

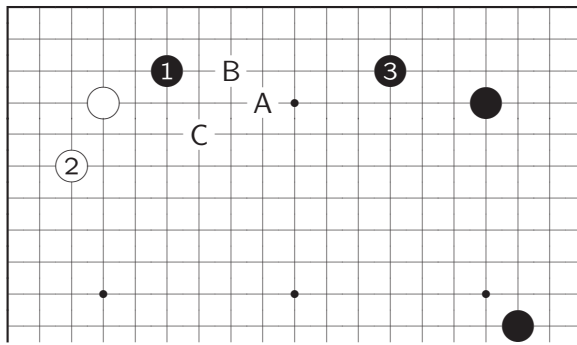
This conception was based on the idea that the 3-4 point corner enclosure (which could be formed in this game by ③ and A) 'completely' claimed the territory in the corner. In contrast, Black's enclosure in the top right (with ① and ⑦) doesn't completely control the corner and Black will have to add another move at B later if he wants to turn the whole corner into territory.

Because of this, star point enclosures were considered to be taboo for hundreds of years and most books at the time of writing still say that they shouldn't be played. However, contemporary players consider the star point enclosure to be almost as good as a 3-4 enclosure, with the difference being microscopic.

While Black's knight's enclosure in the top right doesn't grasp the corner territory as tightly, it has similar potential towards the right and slightly more power towards the top and the center. Compared to the 3-4 enclosure, it's harder for White to press the star point enclosure down and it's also more difficult to probe the corner and tenuki at C, because doing so erases other aji and helps Black.

This means the star point enclosure is wider and puts more pressure on White to do something in the top right soon.

Modern Go focuses more on creating balance across the whole board, and less on creating formations that are locally ideal. You should view the star point enclosure from that perspective.

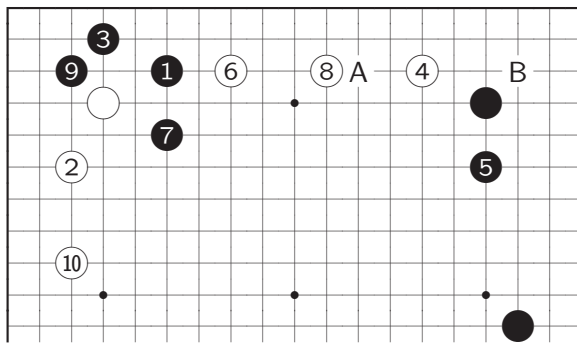


Variation 1 for ⑦

Black can also consider approaching at ①, and defending the corner with ② is standard.

There are many options for Black next and ③ is one possible choice.

Black ③ tries to establish balance between the positions at the top and on the right side. Locally, White can continue with A, B or C later.



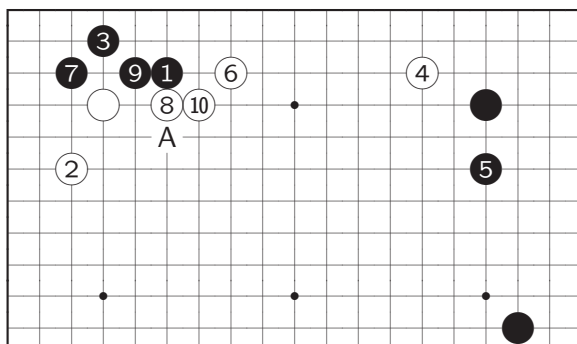
Variation 2 for ⑦

Approaching at ① and sliding to ③ is also common.

White ④ is a probe which is particularly effective in this opening. As we saw in Chapter 3, pinching at A in response to ④ doesn't work well after deploying a Chinese formation on the right (White B trades).

White can play both at the top and on the left side up to ⑩, but Black will make territory in the corner and take sente.

The result up to ⑩ is playable for both.

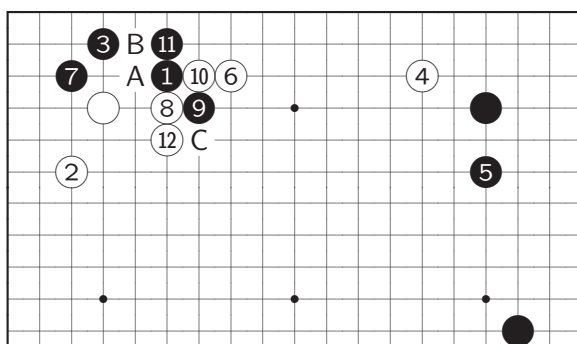


Variation 3 for ⑦

If Black uses ⑦ to take the corner immediately (instead of jumping to A), White will connect around the outside with ⑧ to ⑩.

Black's group is confined to the corner and White's opening is becoming wide.

This is what White wants.

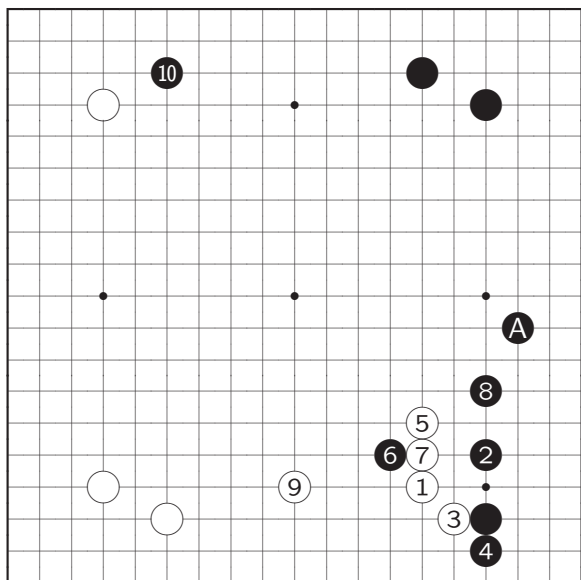


Variation 4 for ⑦

Black might consider inserting the hane at ⑨, leaving behind some aji in the cutting stone, but White will be content to have omitted the exchange of A for B.

Normally, in the joseki, White plays ⑧ at A, Black B, ⑧, ⑨, ⑩, ⑪ and White plays C or ⑫ (depending on whether the ladder works for White).

However, White prefers to avoid exchanging A for B, because this variation leaves him with more endgame potential in the corner. White doesn't mind extending to ⑫ when he already has support at ④.



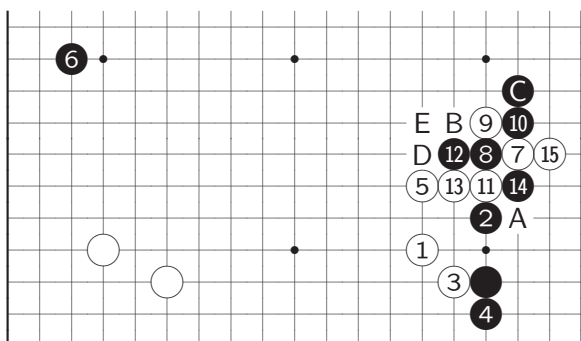
Variation 5 for ⑧

White ① to ⑨ is a strategy for developing a large moyo at the bottom. This line of play was quite popular from 2010 to 2012.

It may seem that ① is too close to Black's corner enclosure after ②, but because A is already on the board White's strategy is to force with ③ and ⑤, before extending to ⑨.

Black sneaks in the forcing exchange of ⑥ for ⑦, before defending at ⑧. This quick-witted move calls to mind the Go proverb "Force before defending."

Black develops the fertile land at the top and it's another game after ⑩.

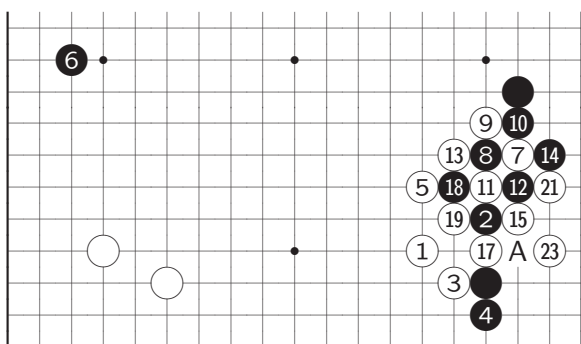


Variation 6 for ⑧

If Black doesn't reinforce the right side, White can invade at ⑦.

The result up to ⑮ is troublesome for Black, because ⑮ makes miai of A and B.

When you have a giant knight's extension along the side—like the shape formed by ② and C—you should be wary of moves in the vicinity of ⑤, D, E and so on. This is a simple but useful tip.



Variation 7 for ⑧

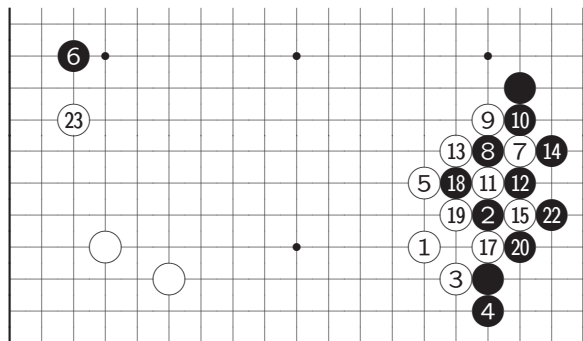
⑩ at ⑧, ⑫ at ⑪, ⑭ at ⑦

There are some players who like to play the counter-attari at ⑫ and connect under at every opportunity.

This technique can be effective at times, but there are limits to its application.

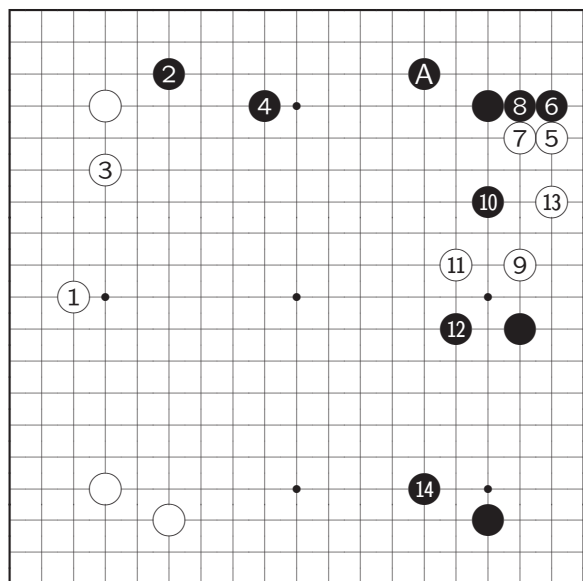
White will counter with ⑮ and ⑰, squeezing Black into a dumpling, and capture the corner up to ⑳.

Instead of ⑱, if Black extends to ⑲ White will recapture the ko at ⑦. We can expect Black at ㉑ and White A to follow.

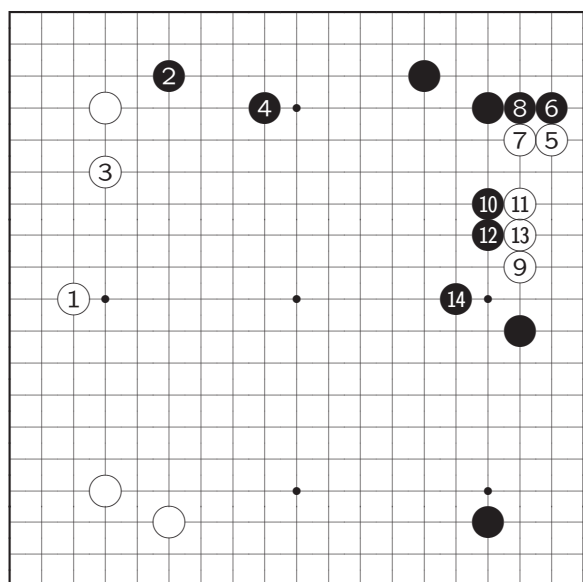


Variation 8 for ⑧

⑩ at ⑧, ⑪ at ⑪



Variation 9 for ⑧



Variation 10 for ⑧

Repeating the counter-atari at ⑩ may seem like it preserves Black's territory, but Black's position has been reduced in sente and White has become magnificently powerful in the center.

White uses sente to play ⑩ and the result is excellent for White.

There's a double ko shape on the right side and White's shape is light and flexible. If Black captures at ②, White can recapture at ⑦.

Black's enclosure at A makes miai of ① and ②.

If White plows the left side, with ①, Black will stake a claim to the top with ② and ④.

White ⑤ to ⑨ is a common tactic when invading this formation (we'll come back to this), but ⑩ is an asking move which is difficult to answer in this case.

The opening up to ⑭ is another game, but the result is slightly better for Black.

Locally speaking, White would like to connect his stones with ⑪.

The problem is that doing so will allow Black to exchange ⑫ for ⑬ in sente, before enclosing White with ⑭.

Do you remember what the fourth principle of attack and defense is? *Avoid being surrounded.*

Black develops a wide position up to ⑭ and White isn't yet alive on the right side.

Make Miai When Splitting

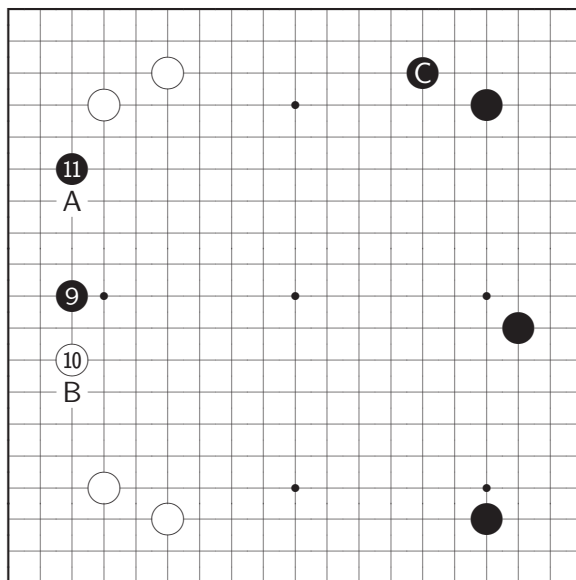


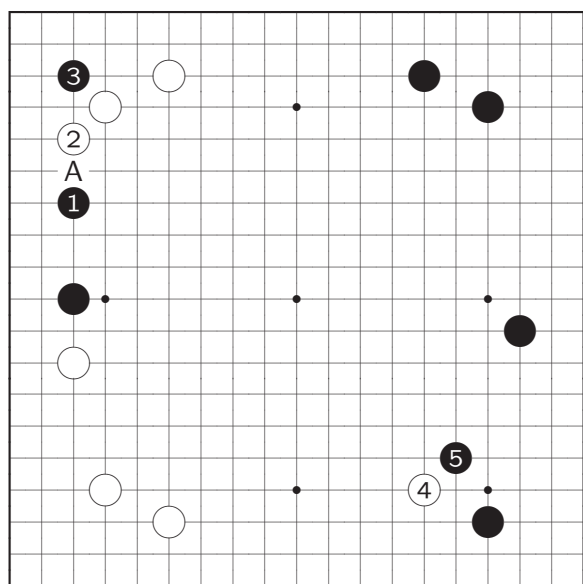
Diagram 3
(Moves: 9-11)

Black split the left side with ⑨. This prevented White from playing at ⑨ himself, and the value of the move was similar to a move which takes the key point between black and white corner enclosures.

When you make a splitting play like ⑨, you should think about the space on both sides before placing your stone. Generally, you want to have at least enough space to make miai of A and B.

Extending from the bottom left with ⑩ followed the direction of play, because the bottom promises White more potential for development later. As you can see, C limits White's potential at the top.

Approaching with ⑪, instead of extending to A, was an active way of playing.



Variation 11 for ⑪

Black can also consider the tighter extension at ①.

Both moves have advantages and disadvantages. Black ① is more solid, but can be checked by ②, whereas A is thin, but more flexible.

In Go, as in life, there is no technique or strategy that works all the time. Everything depends on context.

For example, tight moves are stronger and more dependable, yet they sometimes lead to heavy play. On the other hand, thin moves leave behind weaknesses, but they can also be light and flexible.

Park Junghwan 9 dan (Black) played the opening up to ⑤ against Gu Li 9 dan in game two of the 2012 Samsung Cup semifinal. Gu Li won by resignation.

Kill Two Birds with One Stone

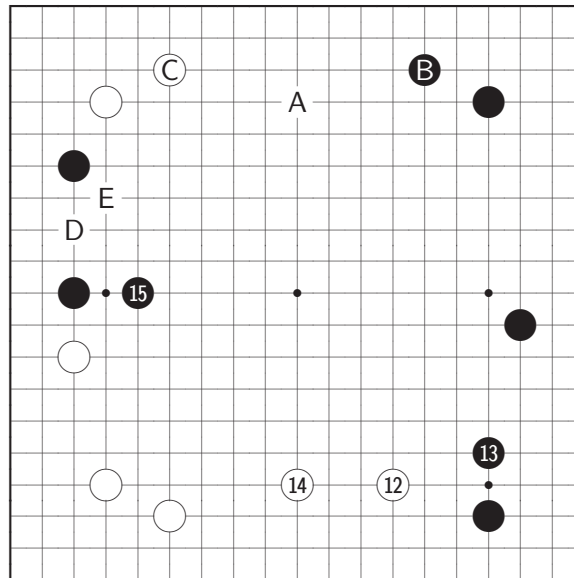
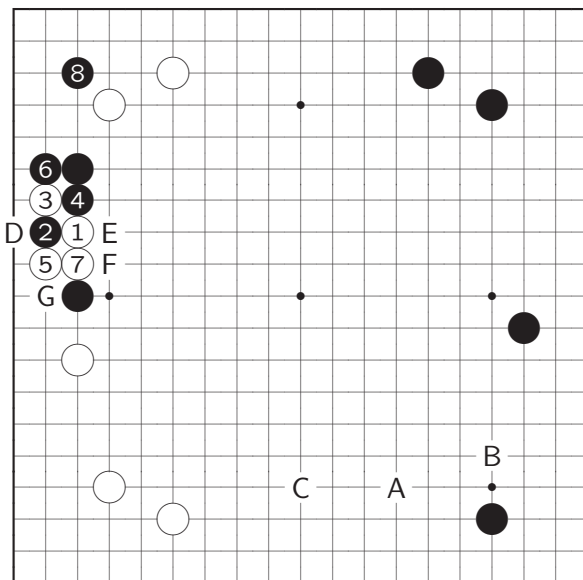


Diagram 4
(Moves: 12-15)

Playing at the bottom with ⑫ was wider and more valuable than extending to A at the top. Both players had already closed their doors with ② and ③, and the top became small in the process.

Black ⑮ killed two birds with one stone. It reinforced Black's left side group while reducing White's lower left indirectly. If White invades at D later, Black will fight back with E.

Lee's typical style of play is thick and powerful. He usually doesn't rush, especially in very important matches. He prefers a territorial yet thick game, and Black's jump at ⑮ exemplified that style of play.



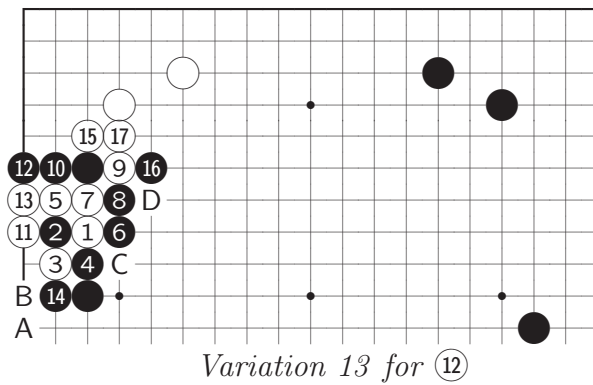
Variation 12 for ⑫

If White invades at ①, Black will respond with ② to ⑧. In the midst of this sequence, ⑥ is an interesting move which makes ⑦ and ⑧ miai.

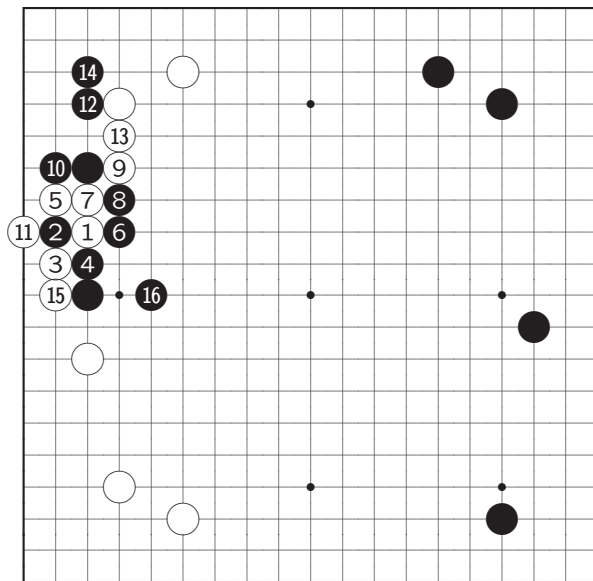
There are plenty of other paths for White and invading isn't urgent, but we can imagine that the moves up to ⑦ could form part of a large moyo after exchanging White A, Black B and White C. So reading up to here reveals one possible strategy.

The sequence up to ⑧ isn't played very often anymore, because White has some sharper and more interesting tactics available. We'll see those shortly.

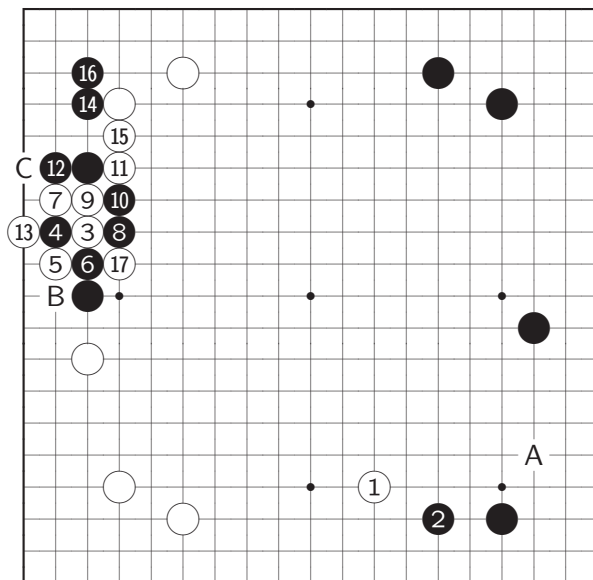
Instead of ⑦, if White captures at D, Black can force with Black E, ⑦, Black F and White G, before taking the corner at ⑧. The result is better for Black.



Variation 13 for ⑫



Variation 14 for ⑫



Variation 15 for ⑫

White can also think about the hane at ③.

Sacrificing with ⑫ is reminiscent of a 3-4 point joseki, and makes A or B sente for Black later. The problem is that White's profit with a star point corner is large.

Black might consider playing like this if he were significantly outnumbered and the ladder at C favored White, but this tactic is usually reserved for the three space extension from the smaller the 3-4 point corner.

Black still has weaknesses at C and D to worry about.

Since White gained too much profit in the previous variation, the attachment at ⑫ is a better idea when dealing with a star point corner.

This move refuses to allow White to take the corner so easily, making miai of ⑬ and ⑭.

Connecting at ⑬ is standard, and Black can easily live in the corner up to ⑮.

The result after ⑮ favors Black.

Given the previous variations, one interesting strategy is to exchange ① for ② before invading at ③.

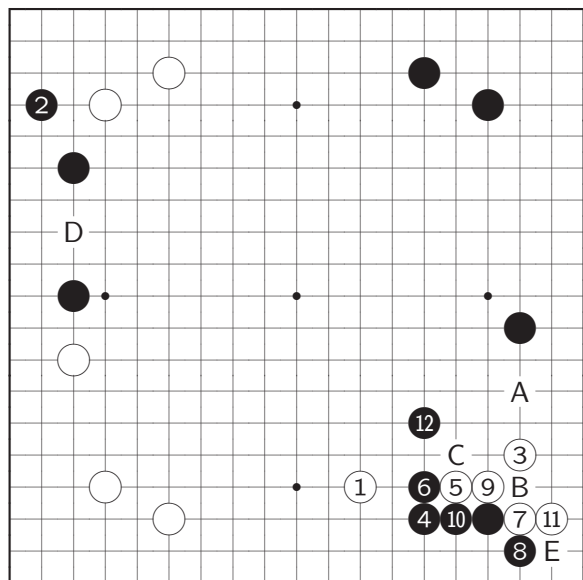
White ① makes miai of ③ and A, and ② is a great response locally, but the point of ① is that it's a ladder breaker.

If Black blindly continues with the standard moves up to ⑮, cutting at ⑰ (instead of B) is severe. Black has fallen into White's snare and is in serious trouble.

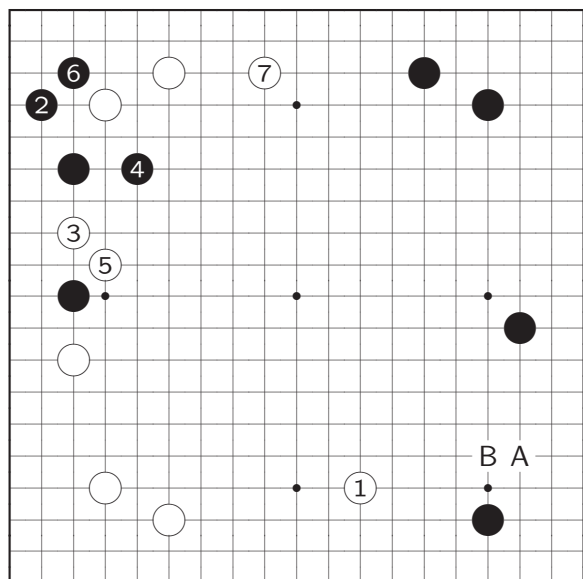
Because of this, Black will need to come up with another ploy in the top left.

Instead of ⑭, Black could consider giving White a large corner (with C) as in Variation 13, but the result is still better for White.

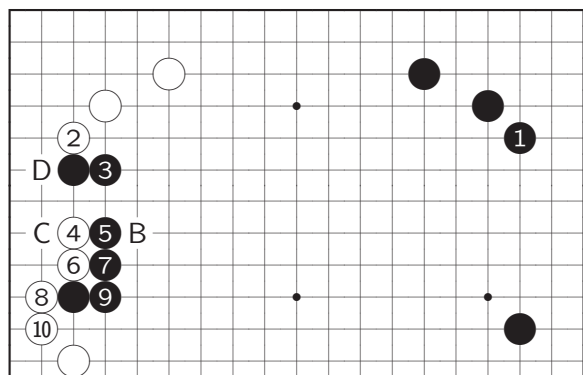
Let's consider how else Black might deal with ①.



Variation 16 for ⑫



Variation 17 for ⑫



Variation 18 for ⑮

White's approach at ① is very loose, so it's easier for Black to tenuki and fix the problem in the top left with ②.

Continuing with ③ is natural and White can settle his group in the corner with the sequence to ⑪.

Instead of ⑧, if Black pushes at ⑨, White can simply connect at B. We can expect Black C and White A to follow.

Instead of ⑩, if Black ataris at ⑪, White will break through at ⑩ and the result is good for White.

This is a good strategy for players who want to break Black's Chinese opening. After ⑫, White A is quite big next, but it's also possible for White to tenuki and invade at D (regarding A and E as miai).

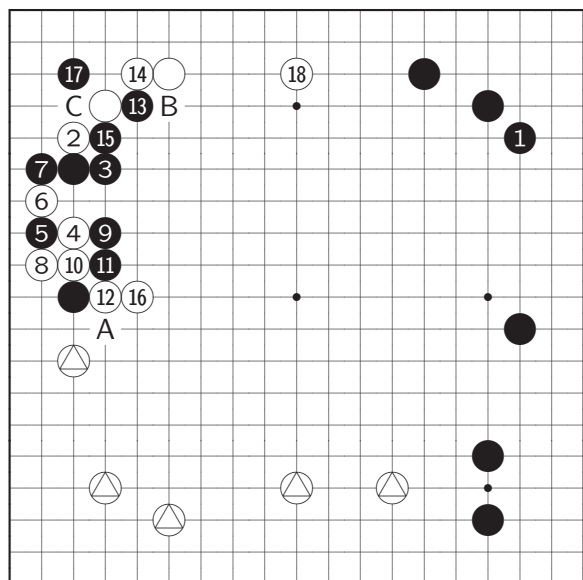
If White invades at ③ after ②, Black will jump to ④, making miai of ⑤ and ⑥.

Up to ⑦, it's another game. However, continuing in the bottom right with ③ at A or B is more active and shows fighting spirit.

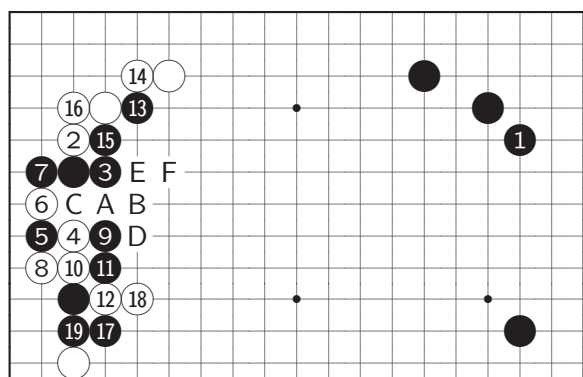
If Black plays elsewhere after ⑭ in the game (at ① for example), White plans to attack with ② and ④.

Attaching at ⑤ is the simplest way keep Black's stones connected, but it also allows White to carve out his base with ⑥ to ⑩.

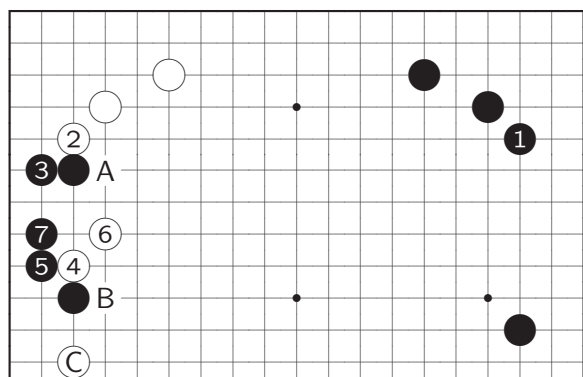
Sometimes enclosing White with ⑤ as the diagonal move at ⑦ can be a rigorous counter to White's invasion at ④, but in this case it will be met by White at ⑤, Black B, White C; leaving D and ⑧ as miai.



Variation 19 for 15



Variation 20 for 15



Variation 21 for 15

Attaching underneath with 5 is a better tactic, and the continuation to 12 can be expected.

Black's group isn't in trouble (locally), because 15 makes miai of A and 17, but 16 is also a very good move in this opening.

White develops a deep moyo at the bottom with 16, and can respond to 17 at 18. White B is sente, so White prefers to make the three space extension to 18 (if Black ignores B then C next).

Since White has ladder breakers at the bottom, he can also choose to play as in Variation 15, but the moves in this variation are more forceful and decisive.

If White defends at 16, Black will counter with 17 and 19. Cutting at A doesn't work for White, because White's cutting stone will be captured in the sequence from A to F.

This variation reveals the meaning behind 13 and 15. Usually such moves would be criticized as crass, but in this case they're strong because they cast furtive glances in two directions at once.

If Black doesn't exchange 13 and 15 in sente, and plays 17 to 19 immediately, he won't be able to handle White's cut at A.

Black's jump to 18 (15 in the actual game) warded off this situation.

If Black descends to 3, 4 and 6 comprise an interesting combination. After 7, White has good continuations at A and B.

In this game, B helps to create a large moyo.

Lee Changho 9 dan invented 4 and 6. He also opened our minds to the tactical advantages of the kick at 2 when White already has a stone at C.

Deploy a Submarine Against the Star Point Enclosure

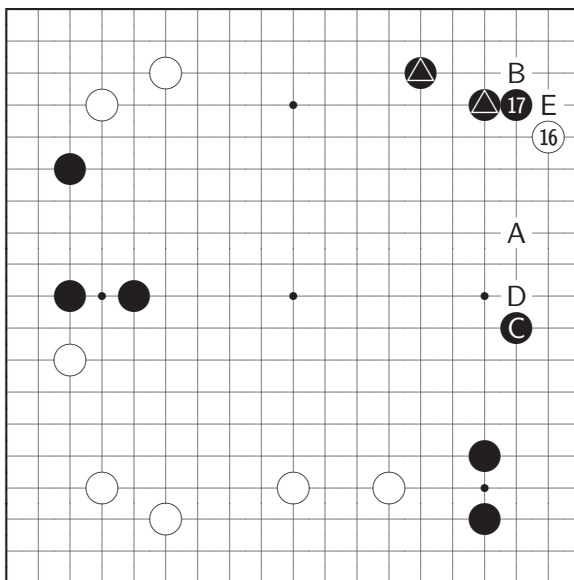
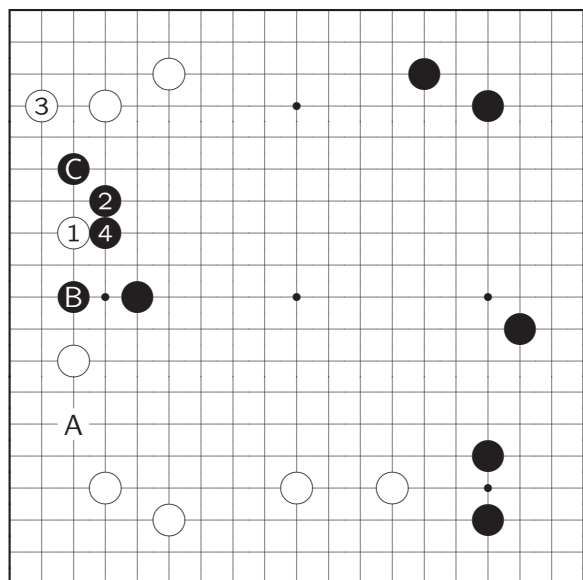


Diagram 5
(Moves: 16-17)

The submarine approach at ①⑥ is the most common technique for dealing with a star point enclosure (i.e. Black's marked stones). At a fundamental level, White will raise his periscope at either A or B, depending on Black's response. If ③C weren't on the board, ①⑥ could split at D instead.

White ①⑥ as the attachment at ①⑦ also used to be a regular occurrence, but it has rarely been played in recent years and we'll see why in a moment.

Protecting the corner with ①⑦ is one of the standard responses in this shape, but it was somewhat questionable in this opening. Attaching at E would have been better for Black.

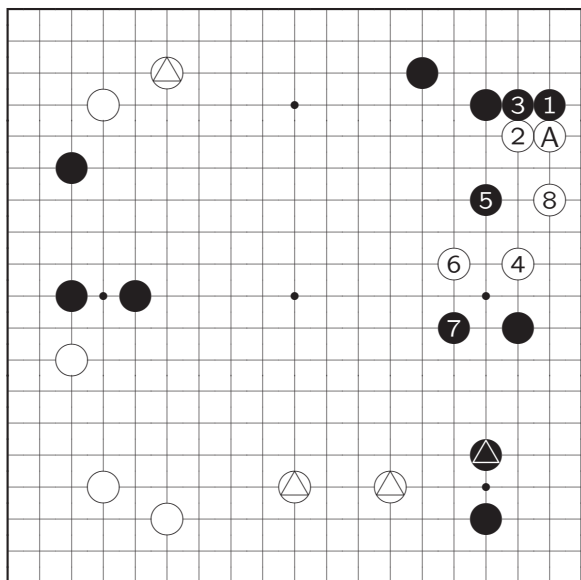


Variation 22 for ①⑥

White can complete the corner territory in sente by sacrificing a stone at ①, but Black's group will also become thicker in the process.

This exposes White's thinness around A and Black will be able to invade there later on.

When Black makes the three space extension as on the left side (from ③B to ③C), one of his aims is often to become thick like this if the opportunity presents itself, with the goal of invading at A later.



Variation 23 for 17

The submarine approach at (A) can be tricky to deal with, so let's explore some possible tactics for Black.

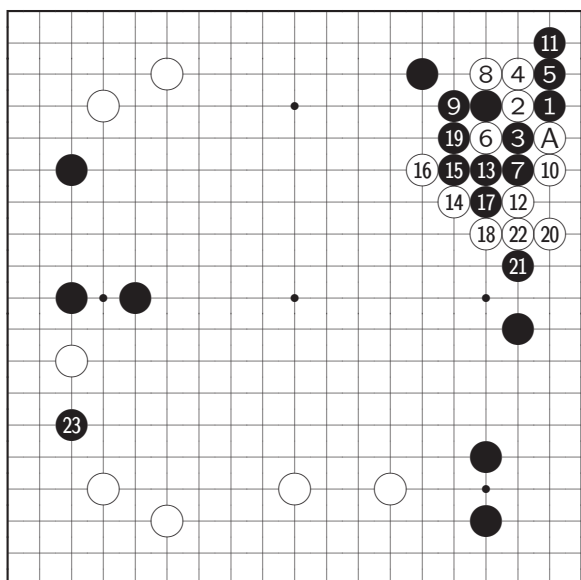
Attaching at ① is the simplest and most common response, and the game is still even up to ⑧.

We saw the same pattern earlier, in Variation 9, and concluded that it was better for Black.

If you compare both variations, however, you'll see that once the marked stones are in place Black's potential at the top and bottom is more limited.

This means that (A) and the moves that follow are playable at this stage in the game.

Once again we see that timing is the critical issue when entering our opponent's sphere of influence.



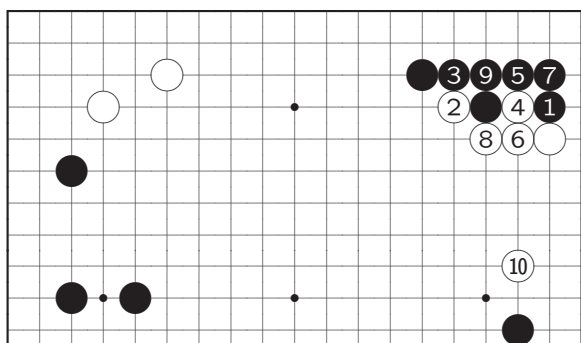
Variation 24 for 17

Wedging at ② was quite popular until the early 2000s, but the result through to ②② is now thought to be better for Black.

Black's corner is quite big, and he also has sente, so this variation has rarely been seen in recent years.

If White follows the obsolete joseki up to ②②, Black will take sente and invade at ②③.

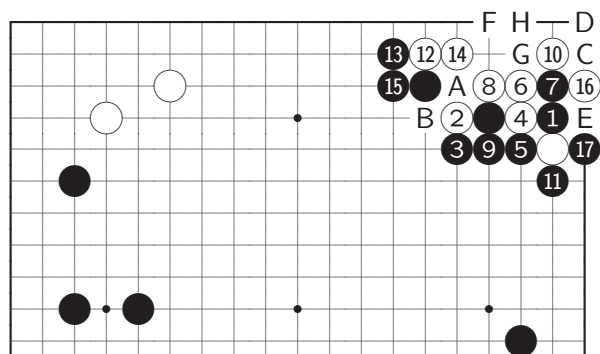
This variation also shows why White's immediate attachment at ② (instead of (A)) has fallen out of favor; ②, ③, (A), ①, ④ and ⑤ transpose to give the same result as this variation.



Variation 25 for 17

White ② is a trick play.

White wants Black to defend passively at ③, so he can force up to ⑧ and establish a firmer footing on the right side with ⑩.



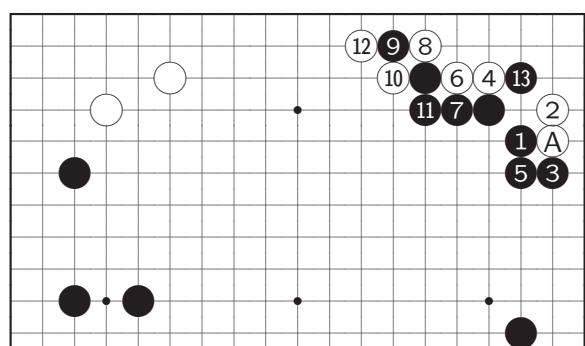
Variation 26 for 17

Black's best counter is ③, which makes miai of A and B for Black.

If White still wedges at ④, Black can cut from behind and resist with ⑤ and ⑦. Up to ⑪, White still isn't completely settled in the corner and Black's position on the outside has become very thick.

If White doesn't defend the corner, Black can start a ko at any time with the moves from C to G.

If White plays F at H, Black will capture at C and the result is still ko.

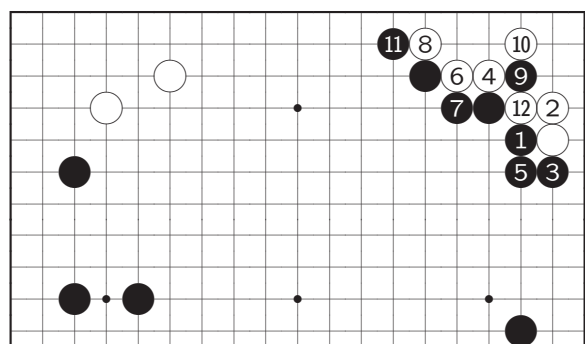


Variation 27 for 17

When White approaches at ①, the diagonal attachment at ② is an interesting tactic.

If White falls back to ③, Black will be pleased to block at ④, so fighting spirit usually demands ②.

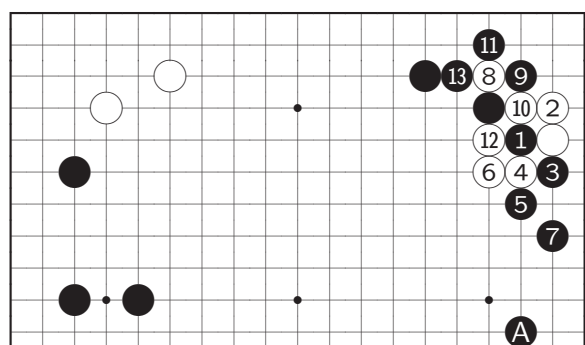
Attaching at ④ is a stylish way to settle in the corner and the result up to ⑬ is playable for both.



Variation 28 for 17

If Black exchanges ⑨ for ⑩ and double hanes with ⑪, White will cut at ⑫ and live in the corner.

It's yet another game.



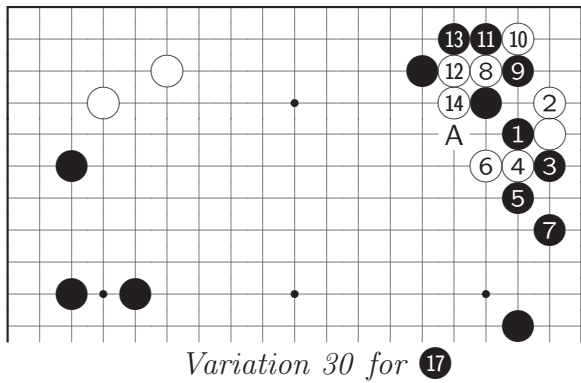
Variation 29 for 17

If White cuts at ④ first, Black can play ⑤ and ⑦ to form a robust connection with ①.

If White continues with ⑧ and ⑩, Black can play the moves up to ⑬ to attack White's group as a whole.

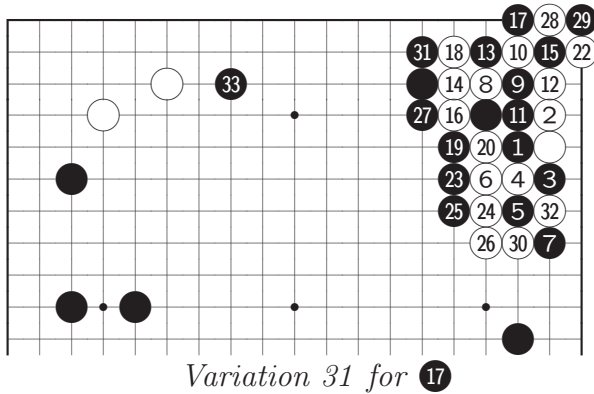
White's group is heavy and doesn't even have a single eye yet. This is what Black wants.

Since White is invading Black's sphere of influence, he shouldn't expect too much in the top right, but we can do better than this.



When the ladder that continues with Black A favors White (as it does in this game), the counter-hane at ⑩ is a delectable tesuji which helps White to avoid the heavy shape in the previous variation.

Black wouldn't usually play ⑪ and ⑬ unless the ladder worked for him.

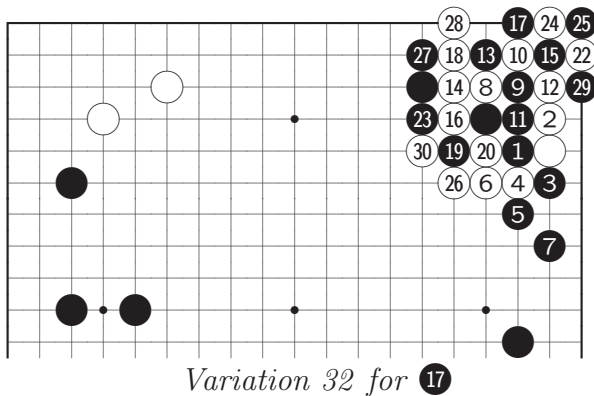


21 at ⑩

Black ⑪ is a strong way to resist White's counter-hane at ⑩. A complicated variation follows, but the result up to ③③ is even.

Black can't answer White's ko threat at ③① by connecting at ③②, because he won't have a large ko threat of his own after White recaptures the ko at ②⑧.

Black must atari at ②③ and ②⑤ before White plays ③②, otherwise White achieves a better result.



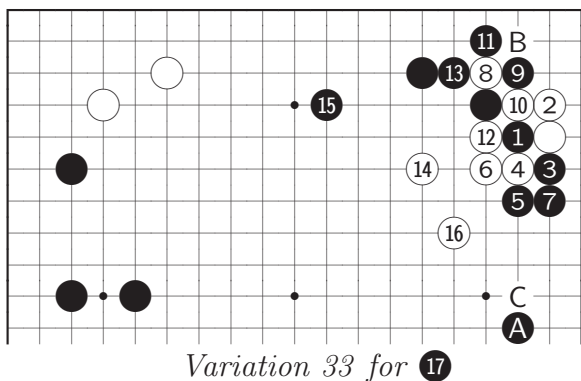
21 at ⑩

Blocking immediately at ②③ is a mistake. White can start the ko right away, and he now has a bigger ko threat at ②⑥.

The result up to ③① is better for White.

Once again, Black can't answer White's ko threat because he doesn't have a sufficiently large ko threat of his own.

The tongue in cheek Go proverb, "There are no ko threats in the opening," is usually reliable.



Black might connect solidly at ⑦, to deny White the ko threat we saw in Variation 31, but this leaves behind a thinner connection between ⑦ and A.

White won't counter-hane at B unless he has both a favorable ladder and a ko threat. Instead, White will be satisfied to expose Black's thinness up to ①⑥.

Black can't complete his moyo in the lower right in a single move, so ⑦ doesn't suit this opening. If A were at C, however, ⑦ would be a strong move.

Aim for More than Just Life

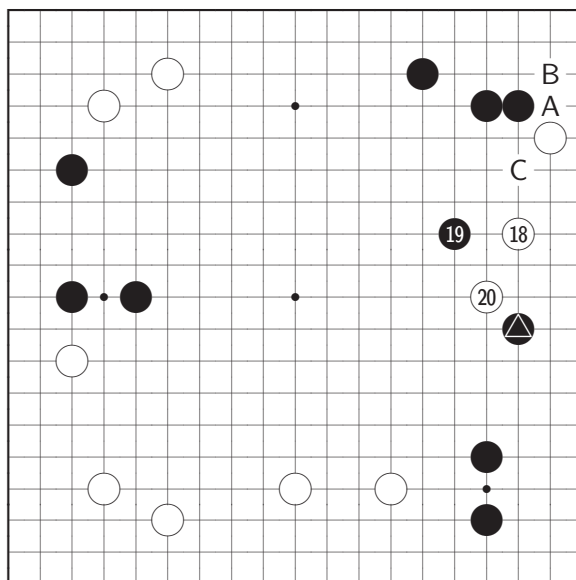


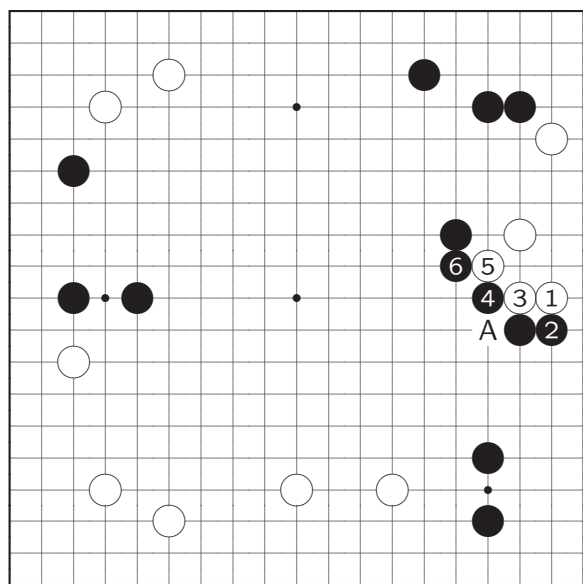
Diagram 6
(Moves: 18-20)

White omitted the exchange of A for B (which is common) and extended immediately to ⑱, tentatively putting down roots.

White's thinking was that if he reinforced around C later, he'd be able to jump into the corner at B at some point. Exchanging A for B also feels a little heavy for White in this situation.

After Black capped at ⑲, the shoulder hit at ⑳ was a flexible technique. Not only did it begin to move White's group into the center, it also separated ⑲ and the marked stone.

If Black plays ⑲ at A, White will just jump to ⑲ and the result will be satisfactory for White.



Variation 34 for ⑳

Trying to make two eyes by sliding to ① is generally a bad idea, unless your escape routes into the center are already thoroughly restricted.

The exchanges from ① to ④ make Black's position on the outside stronger, while White gains little. Moreover, it's possible for Black to block severely at ⑥ in this position and White's shape is becoming pathetic. Cutting at A doesn't work well for White.

The shoulder hit at ⑳ in the diagram above should be your first instinct in this kind of position.

It's not that White won't settle his group if the opportunity presents itself, but that ⑳ is better technique and avoids being browbeaten the way White is in this variation.

Guard Your Vital Points

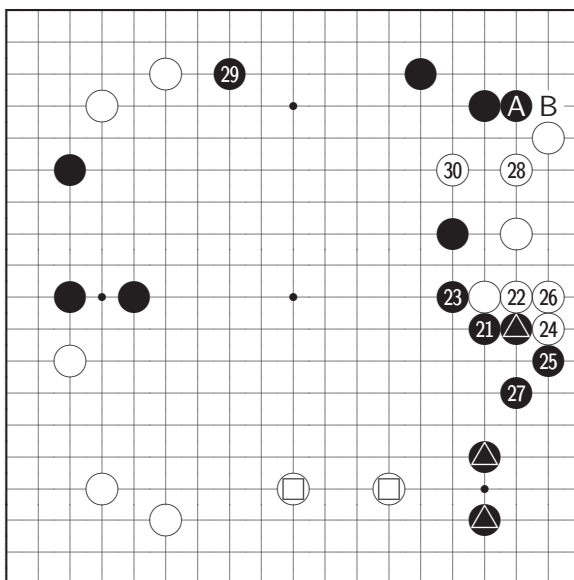


Diagram 7
(Moves: 21-30)

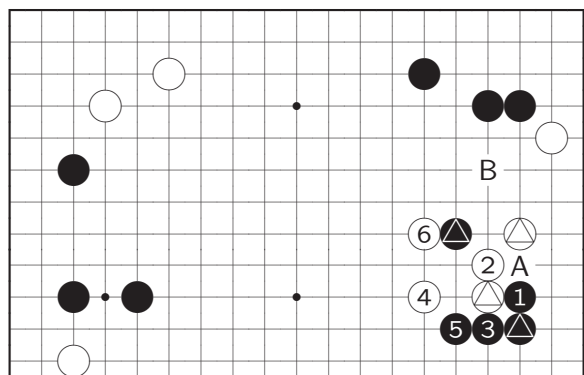
Pushing up at ②① was good move order and ②② was a skillful counter which guarded White's vital point while making miai of ②③ and ②④. Black's marked stones were slightly over-concentrated up to ②⑦.

The result up to ②⑧ was slightly better for White, and since Black didn't make any obvious mistakes we reach the conclusion that A was questionable. As we discussed earlier, B was the proper move.

White ③⑩ and claiming the area at the top were miai, so when Black played ②⑨, White jumped to ③⑩.

You can see that White established an unquestionably more comfortable base up to ②⑧ than he did in the previous variation. It's not unusual that aiming to either move into the center with good shape or settle your group bears more fruit than focusing solely on making two eyes or running away.

Note that White's marked stones help to erase Black's influence in the bottom right. If those exchanges weren't on the board, White would have chosen another path.

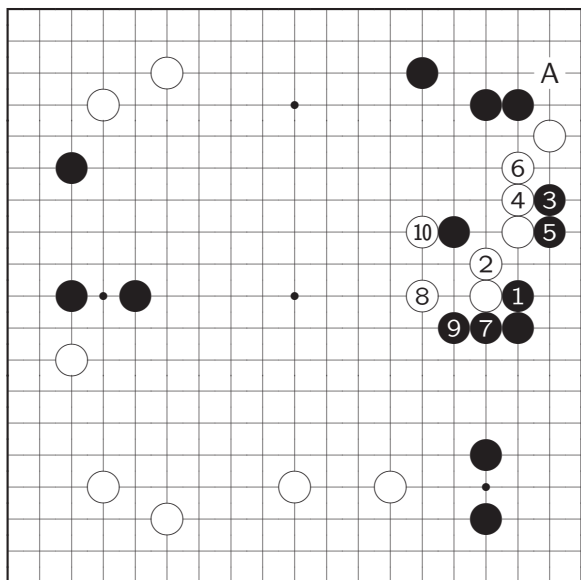


Variation 35 for ②①

Pushing first at ① isn't usually the right move order in the context of the marked stones, because if Black turns at ③ next White will be able to jump to ④ (making ⑤ and ⑥ miai).

Pushing up at ③ first makes it more difficult for White to make shape and we'll come back to this point in a moment.

Instead of ②, blocking at A is also conceivable and if Black cuts at ② next, White makes shape with B.



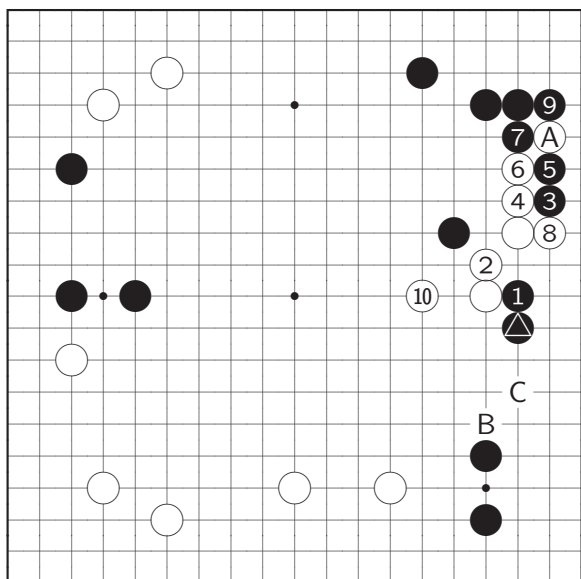
Variation 36 for 21

Black can gouge out White's eyespace with 3 and 5, but it's a bit early in the game to be playing such moves.

White can still move smoothly into the center up to 10, and the game is playable for White.

Because of the exchanges from 3 to 6, White will be able to jump into the corner at A later, without any trouble.

Instead of 7, if Black plays the knight's move at 8, White can push at 7.



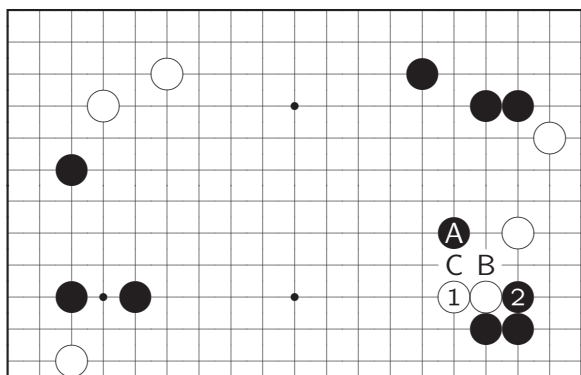
Variation 37 for 21

Capturing A with 3 to 9 is another technique, but usually these sorts of tactics are reserved for the middle game or early endgame.

At the very least, this tactic requires a little more strategic preparation to be genuinely effective.

Even though Black takes away White's base and gains some territory up to 9, White's shape becomes solid and he can easily develop his group with 10.

This variation weakens Black's marked stones and White is aiming to attack them with B or C later.

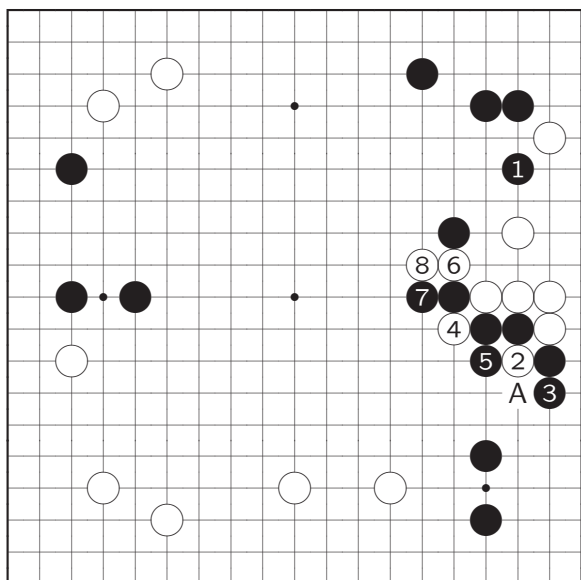


Variation 38 for 22

If White simply extends to 1, instead of playing at 2 (22 in the game), Black at 2 steals the vital point with glee.

The reason why 2 is the vital point is that it turns A into an eye stealing tesuji. The combination of 2 and A makes White's potential eye at B a false eye.

White would like to make shape at A next, but he can't because there's already a stone there. Whether he forms an empty triangle at B next, or plays 1 at C instead, he will end up with an inefficient shape.

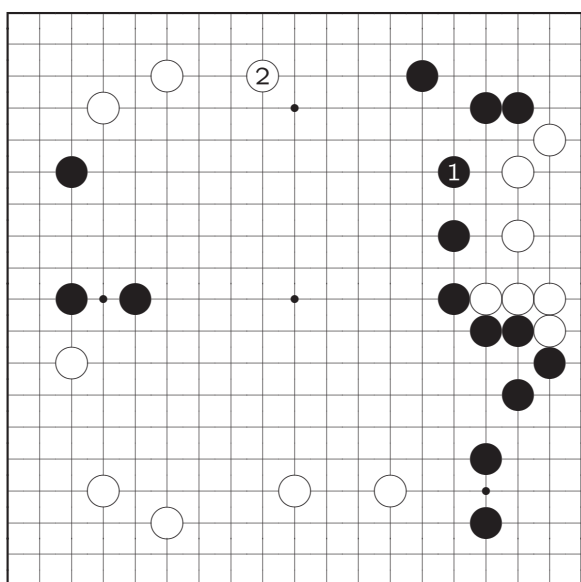


Variation 39 for 27

If Black doesn't reinforce the right side with the hanging connection at A (27), White can break out into the center with ② to ⑧.

This leaves Black's outside position in tatters.

Once you decide to enclose a group and take influence on the outside, connecting moves like A become important because they preserve the power you've already invested many stones into building.

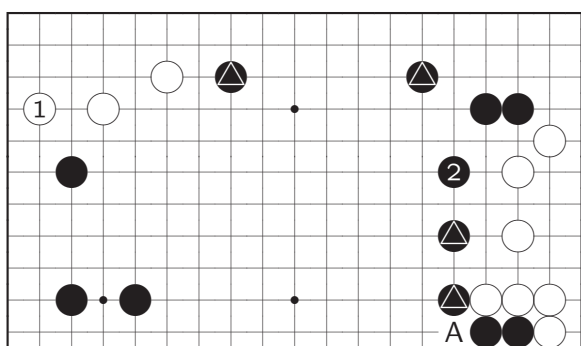


Variation 40 for 29

Enclosing White with ① feels good, but it's slack because ② reduces Black's influence.

The second principle of attack and defense is *surround your opponent*, but the fifth is *know your next moves*.

Since White already has a stable position on the right side, he doesn't need to flail his tentacles like an octopus and sealing him in lacks power. Black ① isn't that bad, but there's no continuation, no next move.



Variation 41 for 30

If White secures the corner with ①, instead of jumping to ② (30) in the game, Black can play ② and develop a large framework.

Even though ② doesn't threaten White's group on the right side, it's still a key point which makes the marked stones work together efficiently.

Black ② also reduces the importance of Black's cutting point at A, because Black's stones on the right side are all strong in this variation.

The Star Point Enclosure Is Stronger than It Looks

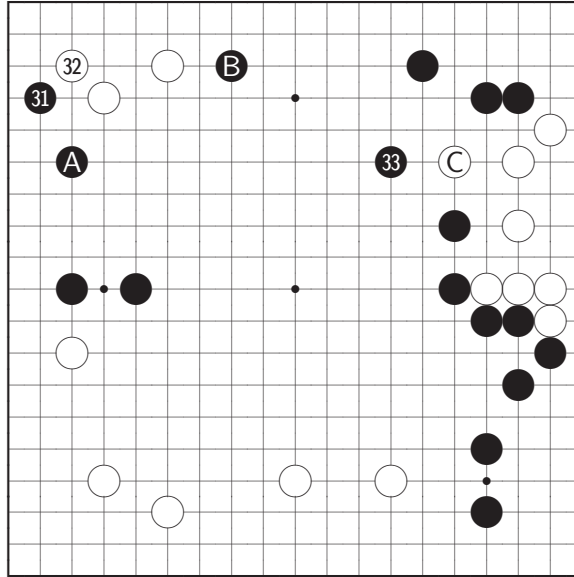
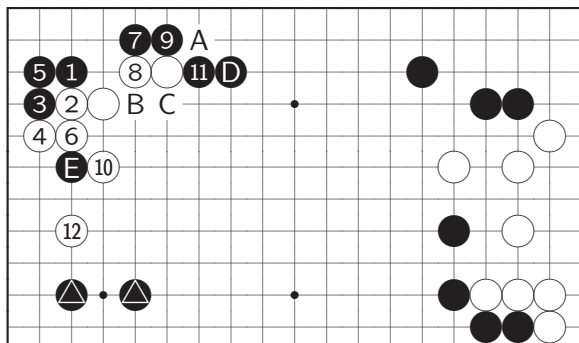


Diagram 8
(Moves: 31-33)

Sliding to 31 was the proper move, but 33 was a mistake. When Black double approaches the star point enclosure, at A and B, White at 31 is standard. This ensures a large and stable corner.

However, there's no urgent need to defend, so you can also tenuki to play an important move (like C).



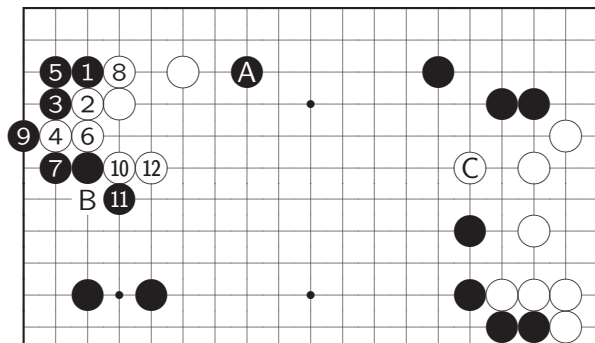
Variation 42 for 31

Invading at 1 looks severe and is also conceivable, but it can't be recommended in this game.

Black can take the corner up to 7, but 8 is a steady move and 10 makes miai of 12 and A.

Usually White can answer 7 at 9, but in this case Black would counter with Black at 8, White B and Black C—making full use of D and E.

Black's marked stones become weaker after White stabilizes his group with 12.

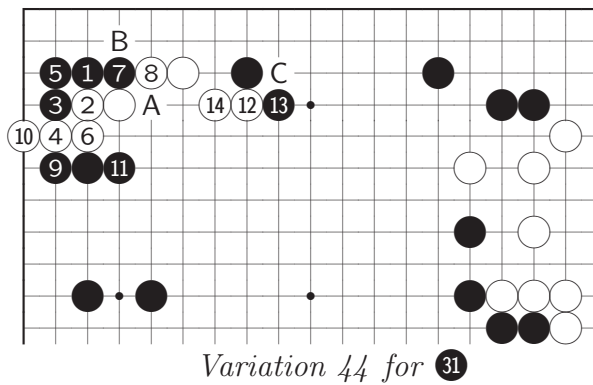


Variation 43 for 31

If Black blocks at 7, White can switch directions with 8.

After the moves to 12, A is weak and there's also a cutting point at B to look forward to.

This is acceptable for White because he already tenukied once to take the key point at C.

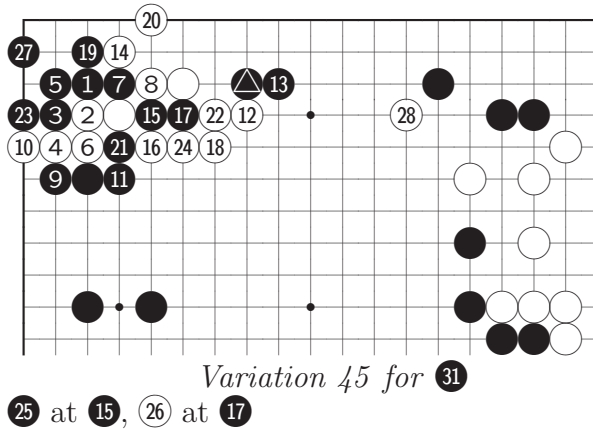


In light of the two previous variations, Black should consider the vigorous combination of 7 and 9.

This aggressive tactic seeks to unsettle White's group, while exposing a cutting point at A.

Nevertheless, attaching at 12 is an elastic response, which helps White to stabilize his position.

After 14, capturing the corner with B and settling White's group with C are miai for White.

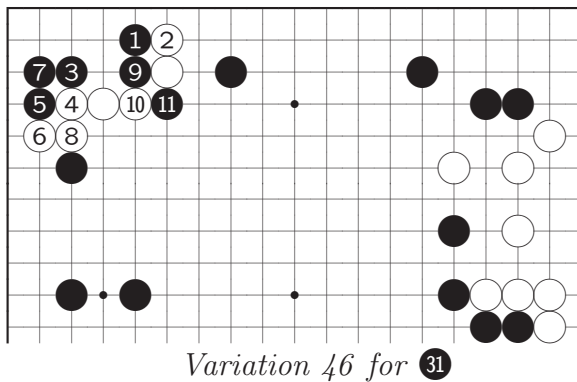


Quietly falling back with 13 doesn't help Black.

White can attack the corner with 14 and, if Black cuts at 15, White can capture Black's cutting stones in a net up to 18 (the net still works if 13 is at 15).

Black can live small with 19 to 27, but this isn't a problem for White because extending stoutly at 13 has made Black's marked stones heavy.

White can lightly counter-attack with 28, and the position is still good for White.

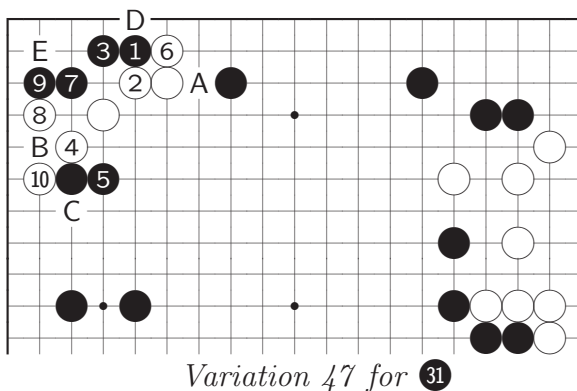


Since it appears that White can dodge Black's punch in the previous variations, exchanging 1 for 2 first is an artifice which Black might consider.

If White obediently complies with 2, Black can continue with 3 to 9 and the shape reverts to 'joseki'.

The only problem is that White has responded to 1 at 2, instead of playing 2 at 9, as we saw in Variation 42.

Cutting at 11 is severe and White is in trouble.

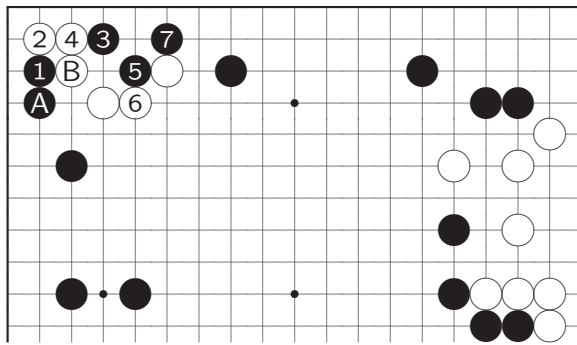


Bearing all this in mind, it becomes clear that 2 is the correct answer when Black plays 1.

If Black plays 3 at 7, the position will transpose to Variation 42. Similarly, if 3 is at 6, White settles after White at 3, Black A and White B.

Both of those choices make things too simple for White, so 3 is the toughest response.

However, 4 negotiates shrewdly, making miai of 5 and 6, and 10 makes miai of C and D. Black should live at E next, but White will settle with C.

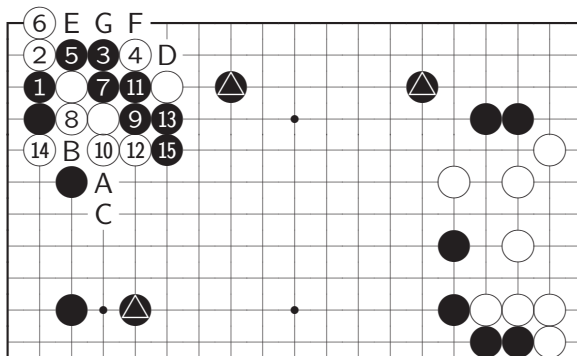


Variation 48 for 33

After exchanging ① for ②, pushing at ③ is another tactic for attacking White's corner.

Blocking at ② is an unimaginative response which turns ① into a good move. Firstly, because it makes ① for ② a profitable sente exchange and, secondly, because it leaves a vital point exposed at ③.

If White connects at ④, ⑤ and ⑦ leave him with nothing but the shirt on his back. White faces a painful future, begging for life in the center.



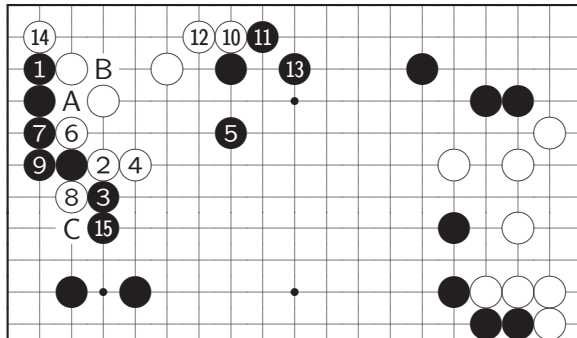
Variation 49 for 33

Attaching at ④ is an astute counter and ⑥ is a splendid tesuji which is stronger than it initially seems.

The trade from ⑦ to ⑮ is natural, but Black comes out ahead in this game because his marked stones are working well.

White ④ relies on a favorable ladder. If the ladder favored Black, he would play ⑪ at ⑫, White A and Black B, making miai of ⑪ and a ladder at C.

If ⑬ is at B, White at ⑬ and D to G crushes Black.



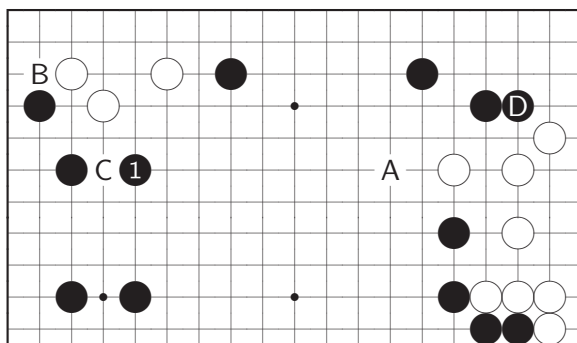
Variation 50 for 33

Often, the best way to deal with Black's marauding is a calm and unembellished leaning strategy at ②.

Black will maintain the pressure with ⑤, but exchanging ⑥ to ⑨ now leaves live embers at ⑧ while rendering ⑥ light. After ⑨, White answers A at B.

White is now free to solidify a comfortable base and make peace with ⑩ to ⑭. Black has to backtrack at ⑮ to prevent White C.

White takes sente and uses it to consolidate his lead.



Variation 51 for 33

Instead of A (33 in the game) Black should jump to ①, making miai of A and B.

This move prevents White's attachment at C and increases the pressure on his corner after Black B. For example, Variation 49 no longer works after ①.

The game will still be close if Black jumps here, though White is already slightly ahead because Black played ① earlier.

Feint to the East, Attack the West

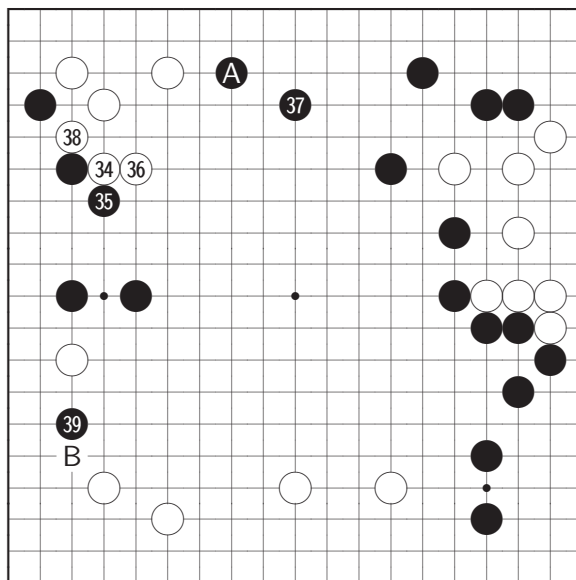
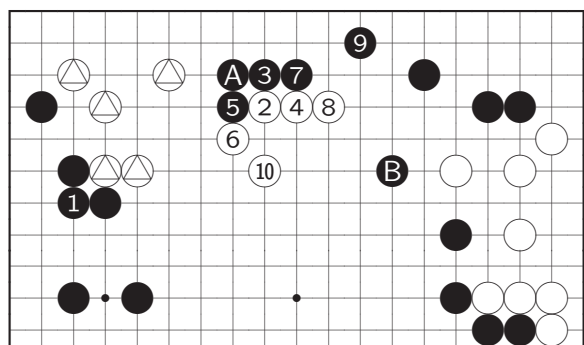


Diagram 9
(Moves: 34-39)

White feinted to the left with ③④, but he was actually eyeing A indirectly. Black, of course, knew what White's plan was and defended at ③⑦, but ③⑧ was White's compensation.

White could also play ③⑧ at B (preventing ③⑨). Either way, White was ahead up to ③⑨.

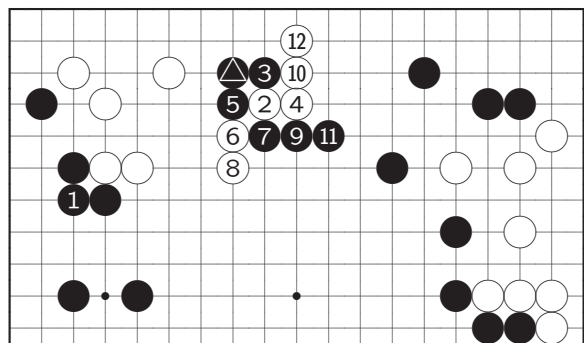


Variation 52 for ③⑦

If Black defends the left side with ①, White will press A down with ② and reduce Black's area at the top.

Pressing with ② is a flexible alternative to invading around ⑦. The sequence up to ⑩ exploits the strength of the marked stones, while avoiding draining them of their power in a protracted battle.

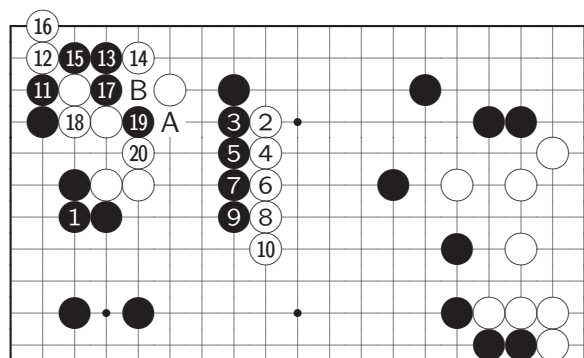
Up to ⑩, Black's potential at the top has been erased and B is practically a wasted move. At the same time, White's marked stones have become stronger.



Variation 53 for ③⑦

Black can't easily cut and fight with moves like ⑦, because White's position is stronger than Black's in this part of the board.

Up to ⑫, Black's marked stones are more or less captured, and Black has gained little in compensation.



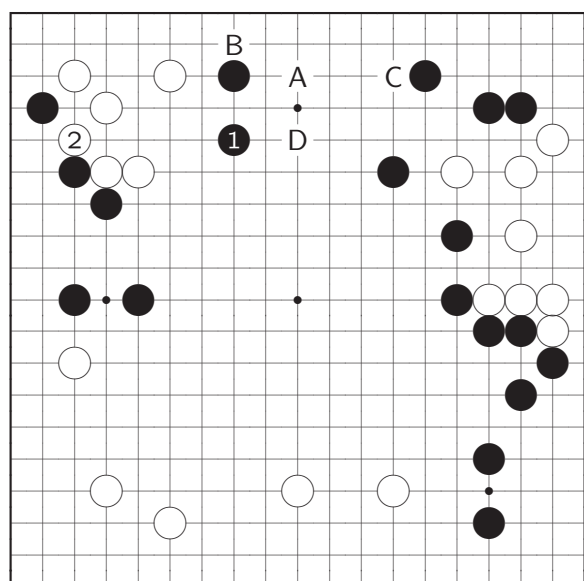
Variation 54 for 37

Pushing up at 3 may seem intimidating, but White is always one step ahead of Black from 4 to 10.

Even though Black isolates White's top left group, he can't bring his power to bear in any practical way, and 3 to 9 end up occupying dame.

For example, 13 comes to naught after 14 to 20 makes A and B miai. Variation 49 shows why Black B fails.

Instead of 4, White at 5 is also possible and leads to another game with many complicated variations.



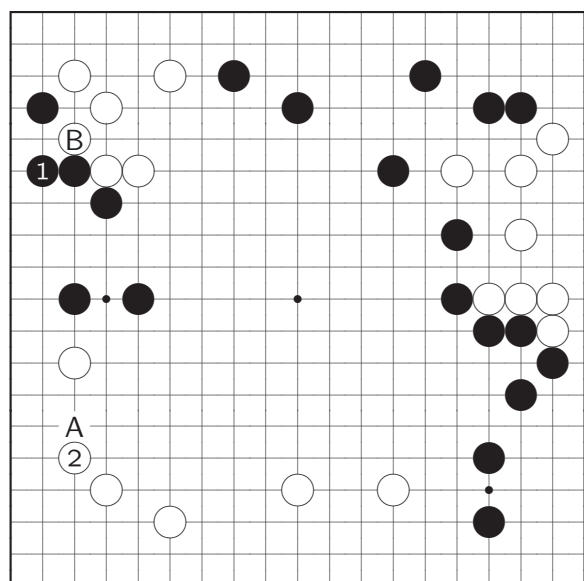
Variation 55 for 37

Jumping out at 1 (instead of the knight's move at 37) seems normal, but Lee didn't play there.

It appears that he was worried about White's potential invasion at A later on.

White will respond at 2 for now, which increases the power of White's top left group and gives him more scope for invading and fighting later.

After invading at A, White has good continuations at B, C and D, for example.



Variation 56 for 39

In the game, Black left his top left group in a precarious position and invaded at A (39).

In the local sense, 1 is the move, but White will gladly secure the corner with 2 and has managed to play both B and 2.

White is well ahead in this variation and is solid everywhere, so we can see that strategy trumped tactics—demanding Black's immediate invasion at A.

Do the Unexpected, Attack the Unprepared

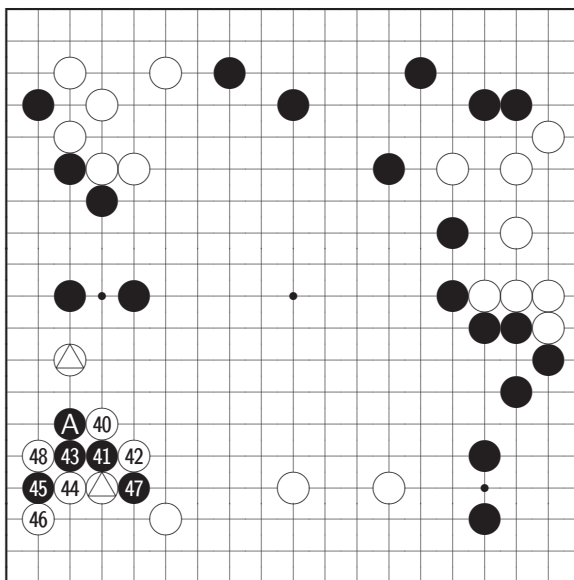


Diagram 10
(Moves: 40-48)

Black's sudden invasion at **A** (39) and his severe play up to 47 were well suited to the situation.

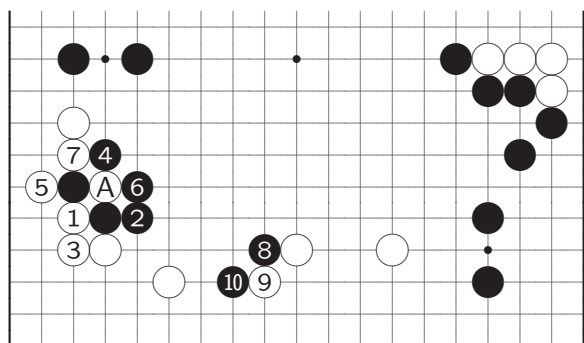
When you're behind, in particular, you should constantly be searching for a way to change the state of affairs in your favor. If you overplay though, you'll be crushed, so you need to bide your time.

As we've seen already, the giant knight's move (marked) and Black's invasion at **A** occur often, and 40 to 42 is the best response in most cases. Blocking off the corner with 44 was an appropriate decision in this game, because the corner was valuable and there wasn't much potential for White in the center.

Lee chose to complicate the position with 45 and 47 because he was behind. Cutting at 48 was the strongest and best response for White.

You need to be patient, but you cannot just play normally when you're behind. If you continue to do so for too long, you'll lose.

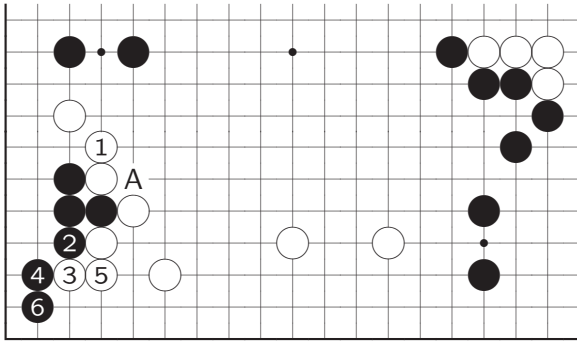
"Do the unexpected, attack the unprepared," is a strategic proverb from ancient China. It is used by Zhuge Liang in the loosely historical novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, but likely predates him.



Variation 57 for 42

White can also consider playing 1 to 7, but then Black will bully White at the bottom too, starting with 8 and 10.

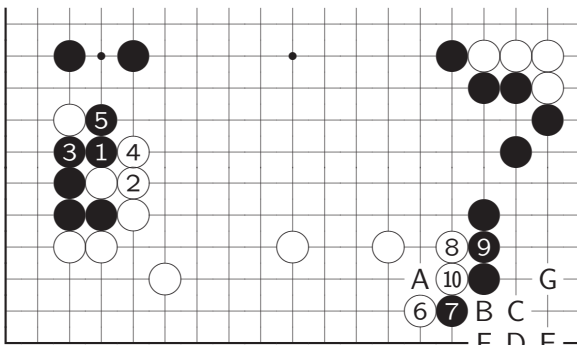
In general, giving up the stone at **A** isn't a good idea, because this sequence exchanges center influence for a small territory on the edge, and Black takes sente.



Variation 58 for ④④

Extending at ① is wrong in this situation.

Black can easily live in the corner up to ⑥, and White still needs to make another move to prevent Black from cutting at A.

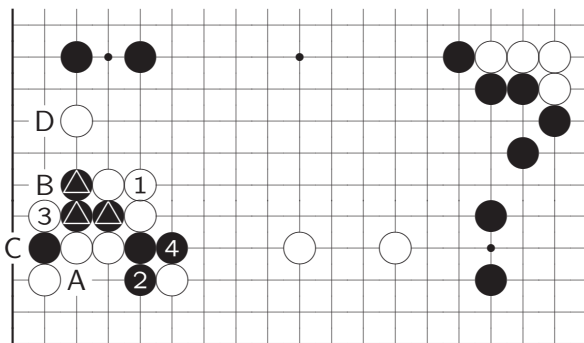


Variation 59 for ④⑤

Normally, Black is satisfied with ① and ③, but here they allow White to close off the bottom and simplify the game with ⑥ to ⑩. This result is good for White.

It's worth noting ⑥—an endgame technique for completing White's territory at the bottom—which is more advanced than simply playing at A.

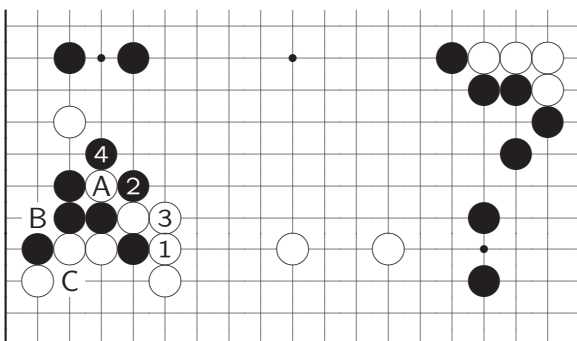
If Black doesn't defend at ⑦, White can reduce Black's corner in sente with White B, Black C, ⑩, ⑨, and D to G.



Variation 60 for ④⑧

If White connects at ①, Black will break through at the bottom with ② and ④.

Black can either squeeze the corner at A later, or save his marked stones with B to D.



Variation 61 for ④⑧

If White simply captures the cutting stone with ①, Black will be happy to double atari at ② and capture ① with ④.

Connecting at B will also be sente for Black later, because he can aim to cut at C next.

This gives Black a better result than Variation 59.

The Conservation of Stones

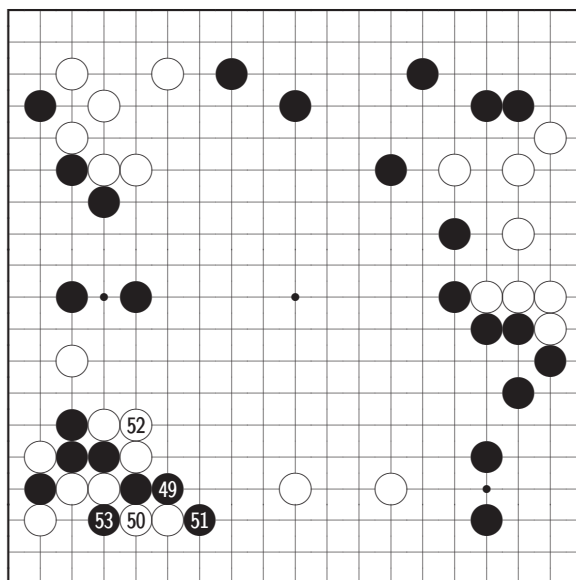
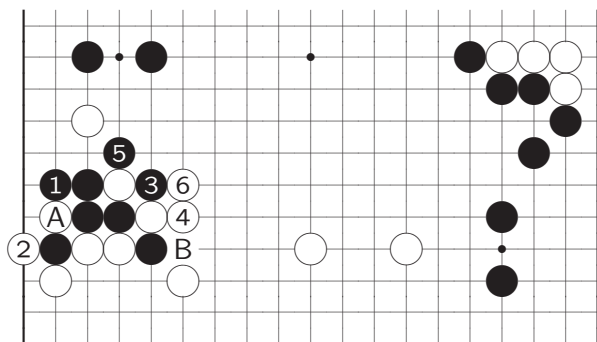


Diagram 11
(Moves: 49-53)

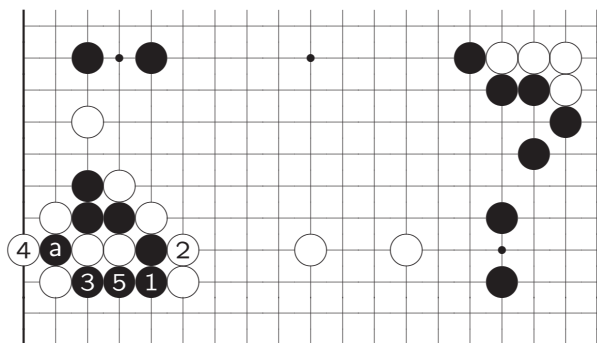
Extending to ④⑨ was the only move and connecting at ⑤② was sensible. Black ⑤③ was another sacrifice. Don't worry about sacrificing stones in Go. With proper play, their energy is usually conserved, because they are transformed into sente moves or ko threats elsewhere (though this is not a physical law!).



Variation 62 for ④⑨

If Black exchanges the atari at ① and double ataris with ③, the result is very different to the previous variation.

White has played at A instead of B, and that makes a huge difference in terms of efficiency, because White saves one move.

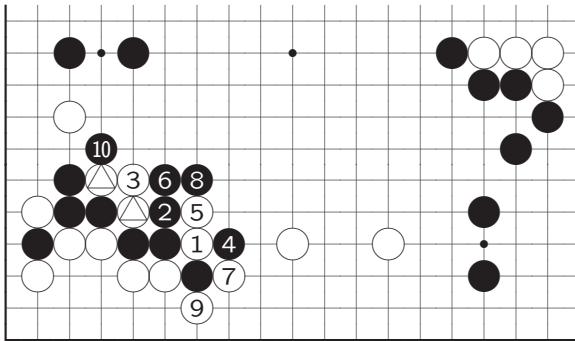


Variation 63 for ④⑨

Descending to ① doesn't work, because White can shut Black in with ②.

After White connects at ⑥ (a), Black collapses.

⑥ at a

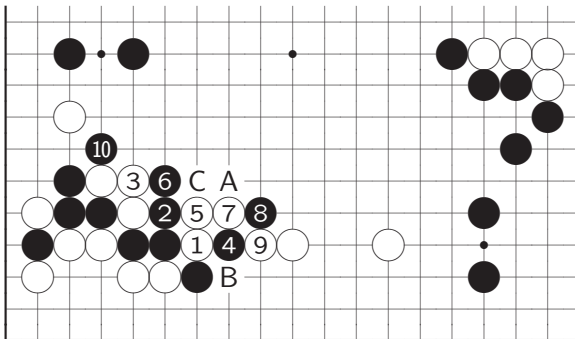


Variation 64 for 52

Cutting at ① and inducing ③ is often better technique, but it doesn't work in this case.

Black ④ is a clever haengma (which is very similar to ①). It sets up a double ladder and ⑩ traps White's marked cutting stones.

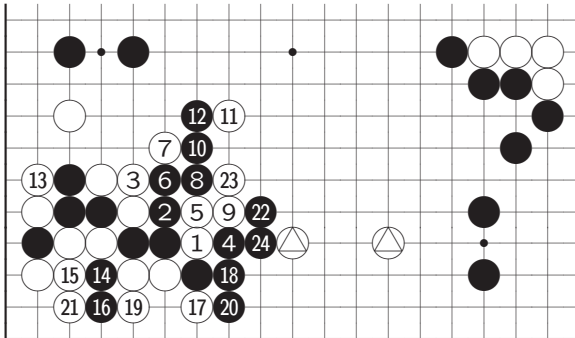
Black is overjoyed with the result up to ⑩.



Variation 65 for 52

Turning at ⑦ looks better, but the result is about the same after Black hanes at ⑧.

Black won't have any problems capturing White's stones in a ladder, because he can squeeze with A to C in sente if need be.



Variation 66 for 52

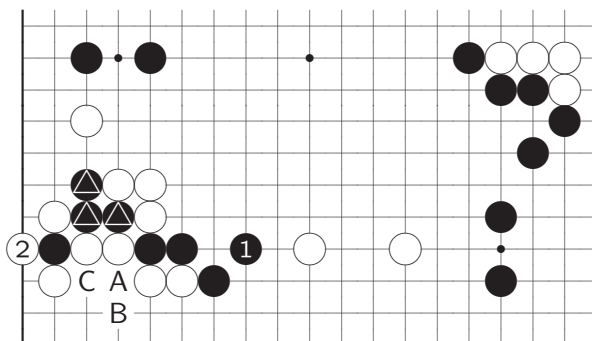
White ⑦ is another way to resist a double ladder.

Black will play to restore the double ladder with ⑩, but ⑪ is a brilliant double ladder breaker.

This tesuji (⑪) is called *zhen shen tou* in Chinese, which means 'pressing down the divine head'.

Despite White's brilliant tesuji, the result up to ②④ is good for Black. White's marked stones have become weak and isolated and his center stones are heavy.

Strategy trumps tactics, so White can't play ⑪.



Variation 67 for 53

Connecting at ① is slack because it gives White time to capture with ②

This nullifies Black's aji in the cutting point at A, while simultaneously capturing the marked stones. White will now answer A at B, rather than C.

Once Black loses his leverage against White's lower left group, his stones at the bottom become heavy and inflexible.

Enlarge the Sacrifice

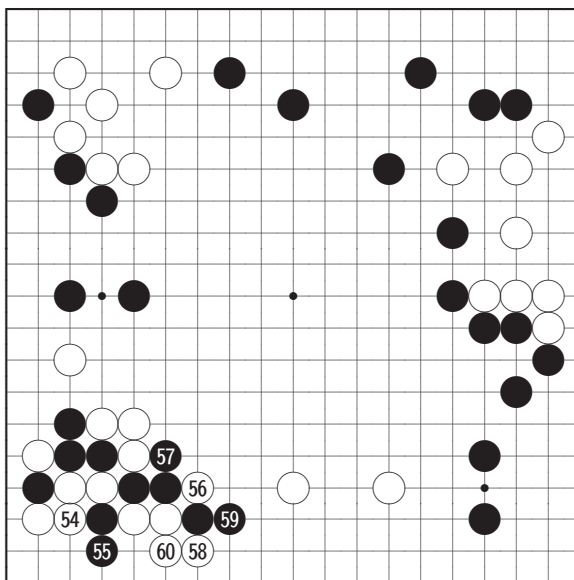
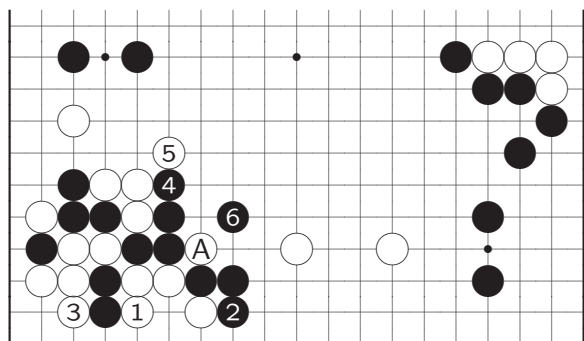


Diagram 12
(Moves: 54-60)

Black added another stone to his sacrifice with ⑤⑤. He knew that both stones would be captured but he wanted to provoke White into thrashing around up to ⑥⑥, to strengthen his center stones.

The solid connection at ⑥⑥ was an important move and is worth noting.

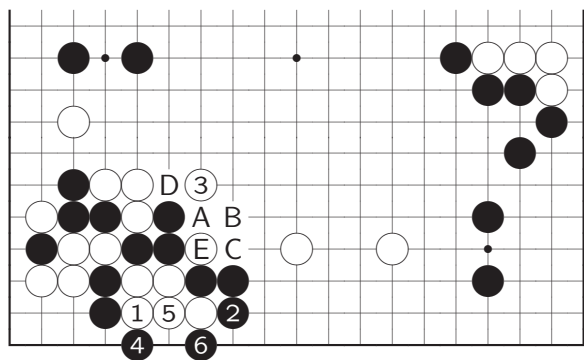


Variation 68 for ⑥⑥

The empty triangle at ① is the normal technique, because it reduces Black's liberties faster and maximizes White's territory in the corner.

However, it's wrong in this situation because it reduces White's liberties too.

Now Black can block at ② in sente, and the difference is significant. Black can capture ① with good shape up to ⑥.



Variation 69 for ⑥⑥

White would like to ruin Black's shape with ③ before defending at the bottom.

If Black ataris at A next, White will squeeze in sente with B to E, but ④ is a simple way to resist. Black wins the capturing race up to ⑥, so ③ is an overplay.

As we'll see shortly, this wouldn't have happened if White had only connected with ① at ⑤ (as in the actual game).

Don't Stop Reading at the First Sign of Trouble

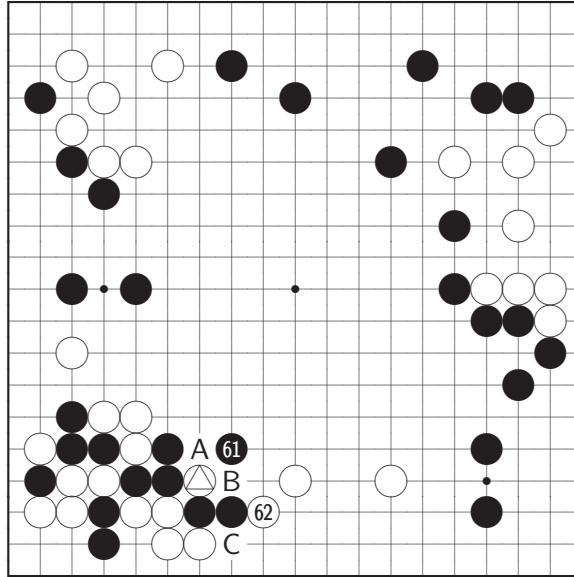
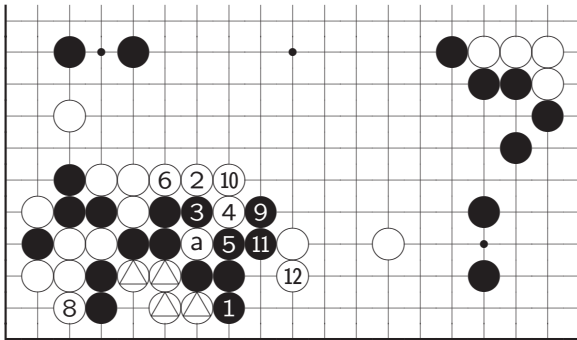


Diagram 13
(Moves: 61-62)

Feigning a net with 61 was a delicate haengma which occupied the vital point. Even though it doesn't appear to work, it was more effective than playing atari at A or B. White 62 made miai of B and C. Don't stop reading at the first sign of trouble. You need to persevere to discover the truth.



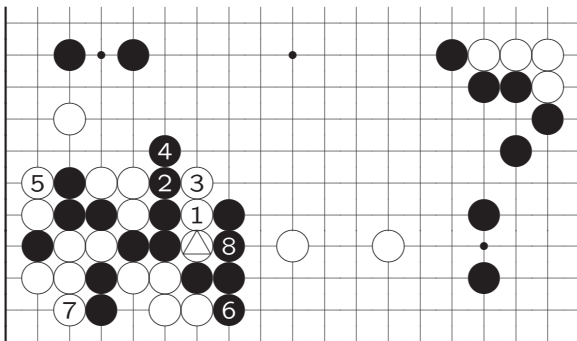
Variation 70 for 61

7 at a

Black doesn't have time to block at 1, because White can squeeze with 2 to 7 (at a).

This is possible because the marked stones have one more liberty than they did in the previous variation.

Up to 12, Black's group is heavy and is under attack. Even though Black drilled through White's shape with 9 and 11, Black also made bad shape for himself in the process, so it's tit for tat.



Variation 71 for 62

Moving the marked stone out with 1 and 3 is possible, but heavy.

Black now has time to exchange 6 for 7 in sente, and can connect solidly at 8.

It's hard for White to manage his three cutting stones in the center and, unlike the previous variation, White has two weak groups once again (as in Variation 66).

Keep Your Options Open

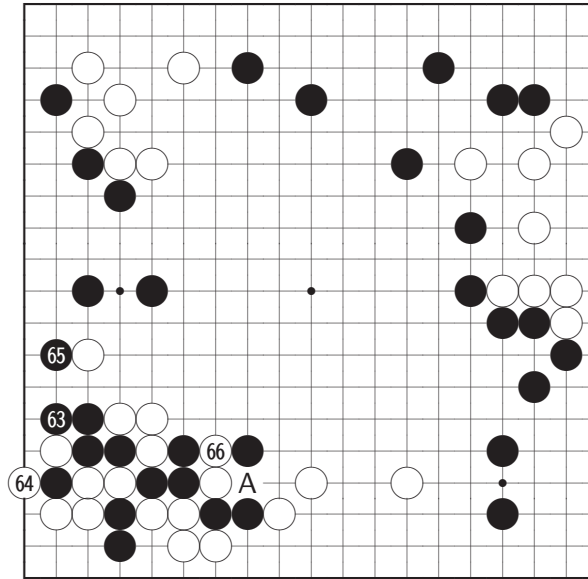
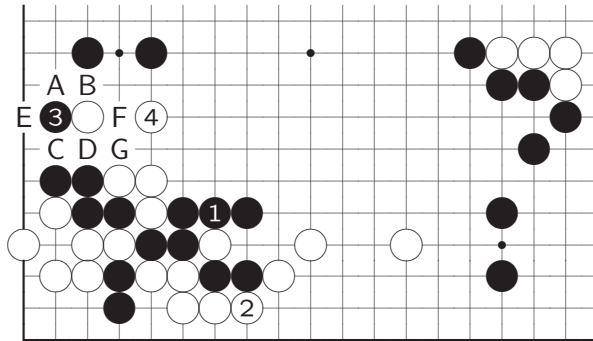


Diagram 14
(Moves: 63-66)

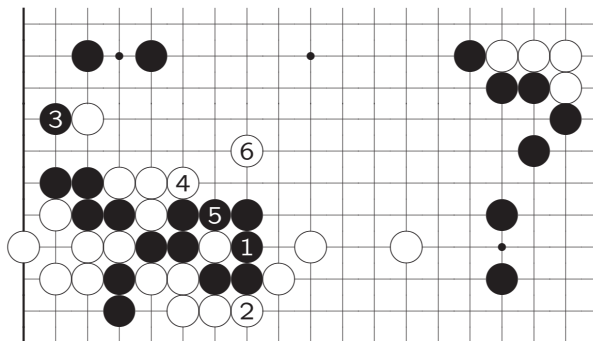
Lee chose to omit playing at ⑥⑥ or A for the time being and connected under with ⑥⑤. This kept Black's options open for later, so that he could see how things developed before choosing between ⑥⑥ and A. Since Black played ⑥⑤, ⑥⑥ became a reasonable move for subtle reasons. We'll see why in a moment.



Variation 72 for ⑥⑤

If Black exchanges ① for ②, before playing ③, White will make shape with ④.

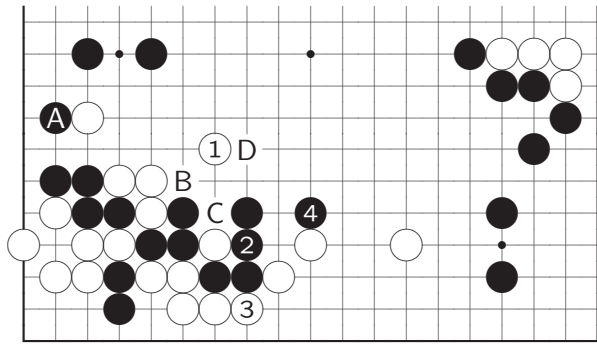
White can move into the center or start a ko with A to G next.



Variation 73 for ⑥⑤

Capturing the cutting stone with ① is a little heavy.

White can atari at ④ and attack with ⑥ next. Lee didn't like this prospect.



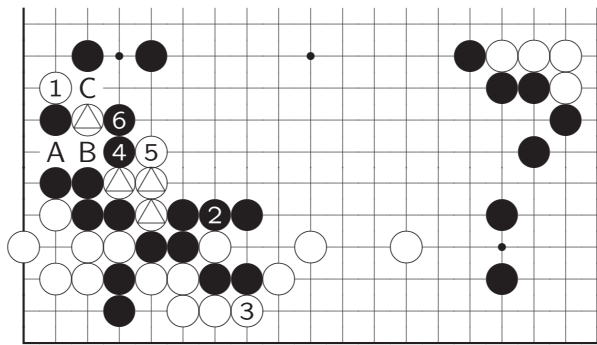
Variation 74 for 66

If White plays the knight's move at ① (after A), Black will have more information about the game after seeing ①, so he will choose ② and ④.

Since White has already spent a move at ①, allowing White a sente move at B isn't as significant anymore.

If ① is at B instead, Black C makes ③ and D miai.

Up to ④, White's development is slower than in the previous variation.

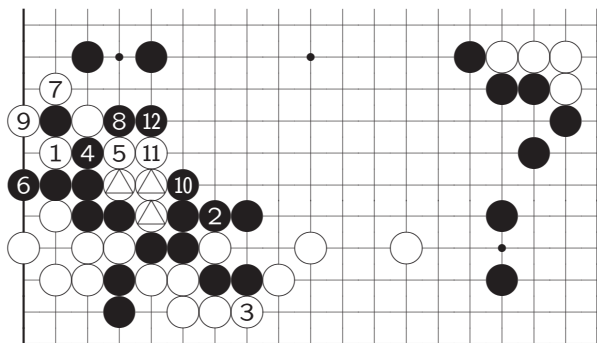


Variation 75 for 66

If White tries to fight with ①, Black can exchange ② for ③ in sente, before moving out up to ⑥.

After ⑥, if White ataris at A, Black connects at B. If White cuts at B, Black C captures.

White's marked stones are in trouble, so this variation isn't good for White.

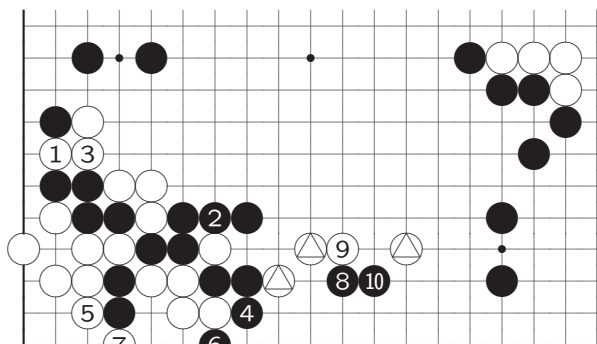


Variation 76 for 66

Since White has decided to sacrifice his marked stones (with 66 in the game), he might consider trying to create some ko aji with ① first.

Unfortunately for White, this won't go as planned.

Black can resist by exchanging ② for ③ in sente. Next, Black takes the vital point with ⑥, which makes miai of ⑦ and ⑧. With ⑫, White's cutting stones are captured in a ladder.



Variation 77 for 66

If White ataris at ③, Black can break through White's shape in sente with ④.

After White defends at ⑦, ⑧ is a severe blow to the vital point and White's marked stones are floating up to ⑩.

This variation favors Black.

Execute Your Plan Decisively

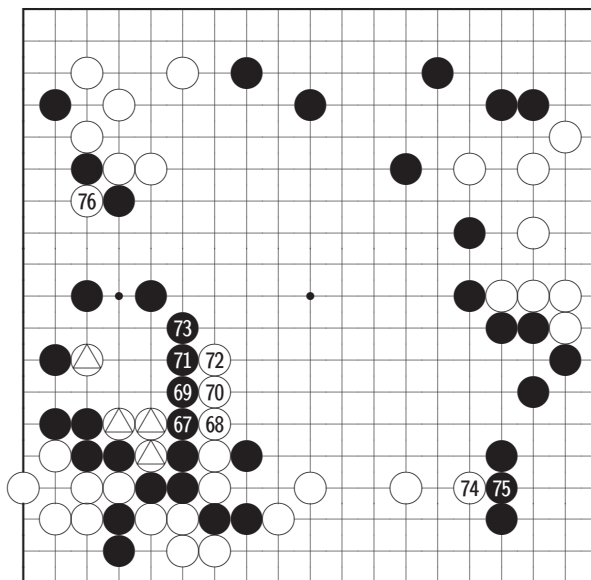
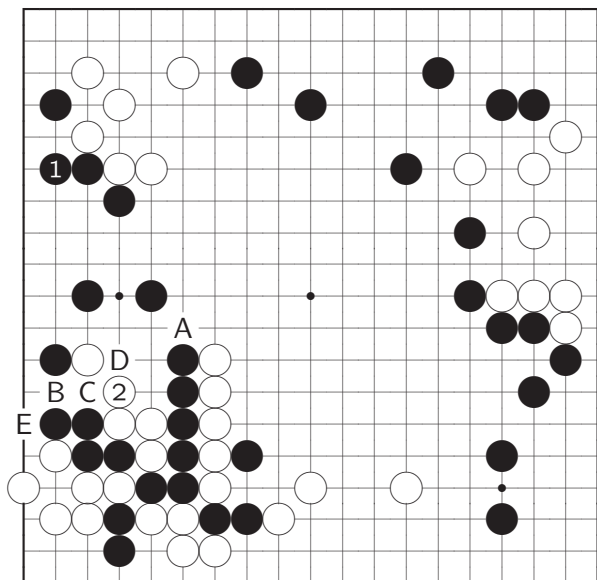


Diagram 15
(Moves: 67-76)

Once Gu chose to give up the marked stones, pushing up to ⑦② was inevitable and ensured that he squeezed as much as possible out of the sacrifice. You cannot change your mind once the die is cast.

White wanted to cut at ⑦⑥, so his plan was to resolve the situation in the bottom left in sente, and then cut. White's play in this diagram was decisive, and ⑦⑥ was worth more than 25 points.

Lee's play in the bottom left corner had been quite exquisite, and the game was even again up to ⑦⑥.

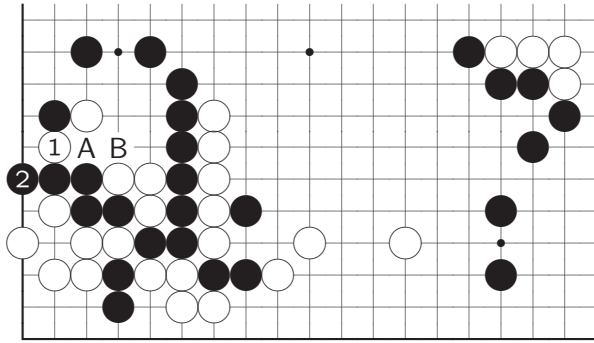


Variation 78 for ⑦③

If Black doesn't defend at A, and turns to ① for example, ② is a tesuji.

After ②, A and B are miai, so Black's position on the left side crumbles.

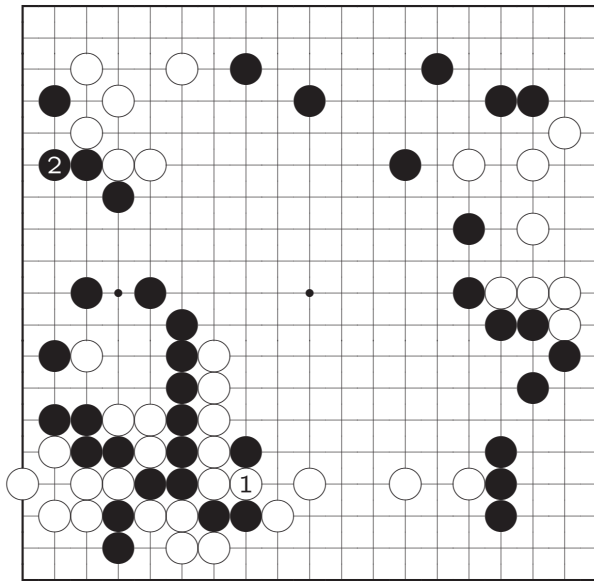
Pinching with Black C may look tough, but it achieves nothing because White D preserves A and E as miai for White.



Variation 79 for (74)

Some readers' eyes might still be drawn to ①, but ② is a strong response which makes miai of A and B.

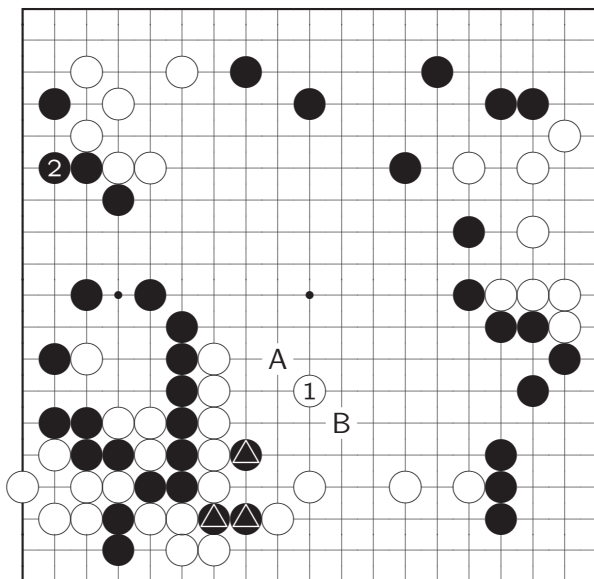
Rather than losing points with this exchange, White should save this aji for later and hane at ② in the endgame.



Variation 80 for (76)

White's position at the bottom becomes very thick and strong after ①, but it's somewhat slow.

Black takes sente and uses it to defend at ②, which as we know is huge.



Variation 81 for (76)

White can also consider capturing the marked stones on a large scale with ①.

Black will still defend the left side with ②, and can aim to reduce White's lower side with A or B later.

Assess Strength and Weakness Objectively

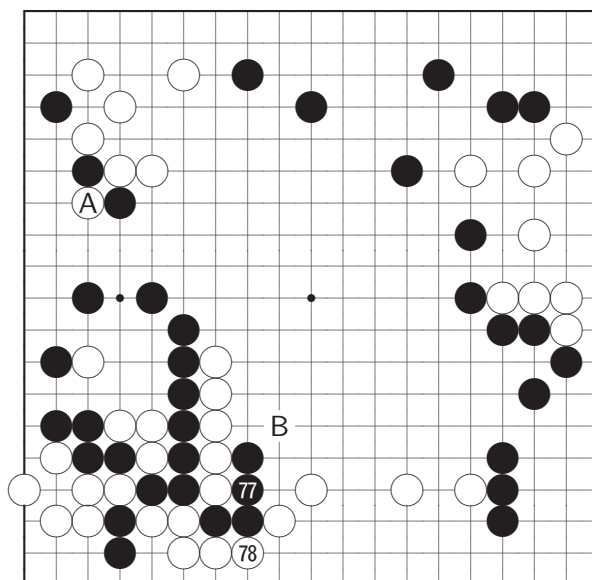
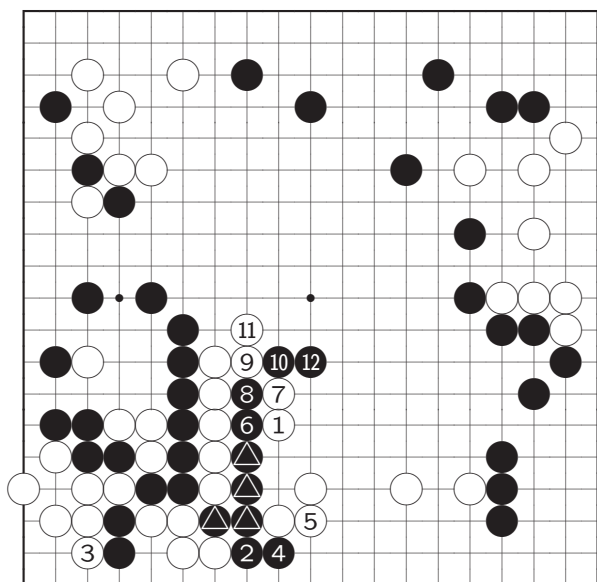


Diagram 16
(Moves: 77-78)

To exaggerate the capabilities of one's forces is just as dangerous as to underestimate the strength of the enemy.

—Georgi Zhukov, *Marshal Zhukov's Greatest Battles*

Since White took (A), Black set his stones in motion with (77). Defending at (78) was unavoidable, because White wasn't strong enough to attack at B. It's important that you don't overestimate your strength.



Variation 82 for (78)

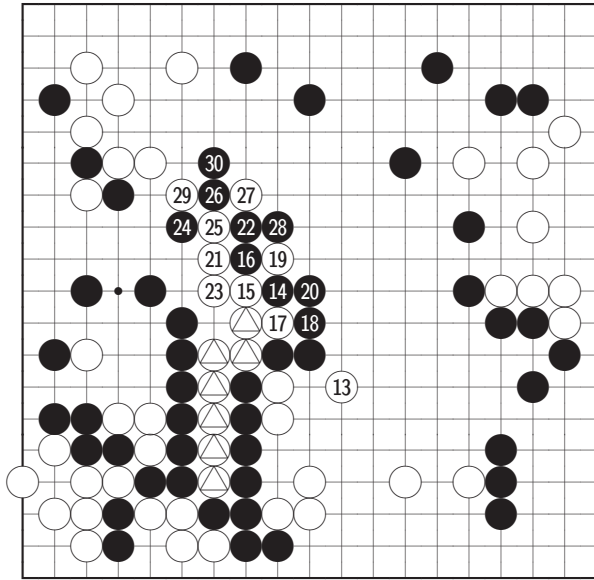
If White tries to capture Black with (1), Black will play (2) to (12).

To state the conclusion first, White's in trouble, because it's incredibly difficult to capture the marked stones.

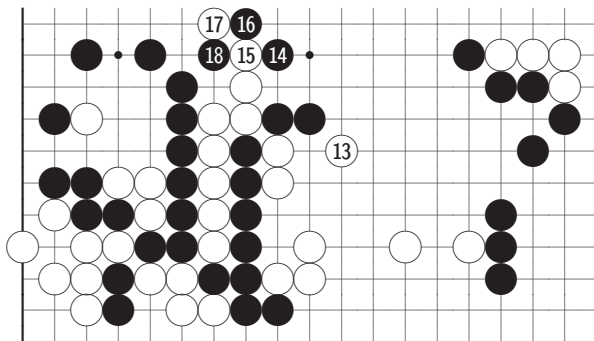
Proving that will require many diagrams, but we will attempt to satisfy the curiosity of readers below.

This will be a long (but tesuji rich) digression, so you can skip to the next heading if you trust the authors and want to get back to the game!

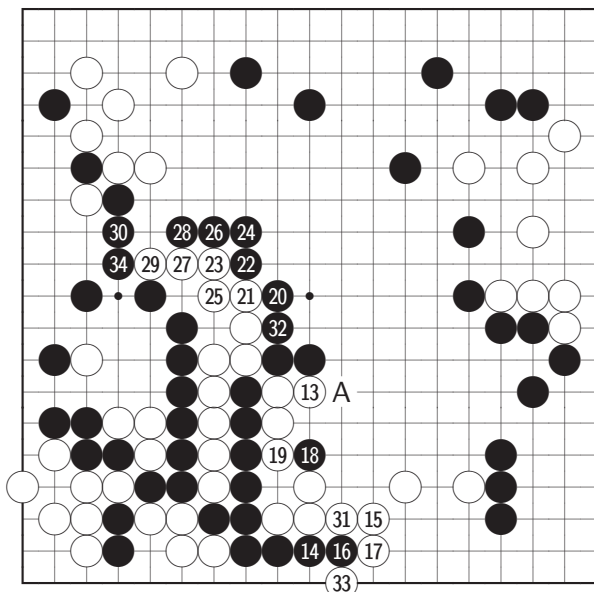
Gu Li spent a long time reading before playing (78), and the variations that follow will give you a glimpse of what the players see below the tip of the iceberg.



Variation 83 for 78



Variation 84 for 78



Variation 85 for 78

The first move to consider is ⑬.

Black's jump at ⑭ presses hard against White's marked cutting stones and this technique can at times be regarded as an advanced form of net.

Black has five liberties at the bottom, so he needs to hold White to four.

After ⑳, White's group is trapped and he doesn't have enough liberties to win a capturing race.

The moves up to ⑳ show that trying to escape is futile.

If White hanes at ⑰, Black can simply cut at ⑱ and White's stones are captured.

Since White's jump at A didn't work, grinding with ⑬ is worth considering.

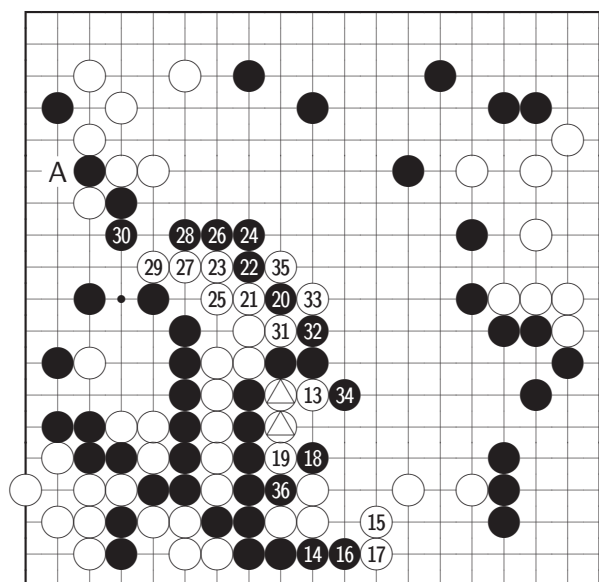
This is an ugly technique, but the empty triangle reduces Black's liberties and prevents the previous variation from working. It's also a blind spot for many players.

Even though ⑬ is sometimes powerful, it doesn't work here.

Black can extend his liberties in sente with ⑭ and ⑰, and ⑱ is an interesting asking move.

If White cuts at ⑲, Black A will be sente, so Black can press at ㉓ again despite ⑬ reducing his liberties.

White's group will be captured up to ⑳. You can see that White loses the capturing race after ㉔.



Variation 86 for 78

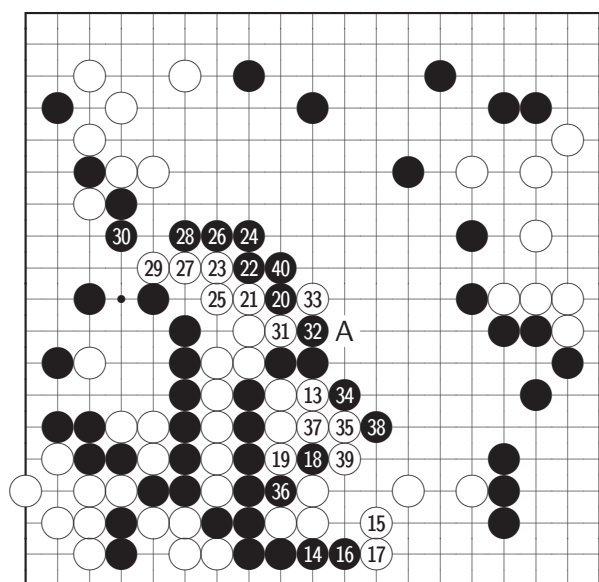
White can actually escape up to 35, but only at the expense of his marked stones at the bottom.

Since White was trying to capture Black, this can be regarded as a failure for White.

After 36, White's lower right group is very weak and his center group is still in trouble.

Meanwhile, Black has no serious weaknesses and can look forward to taking the big point at A, after first harassing White's weak groups.

Black 36 is an important liberty, so Black mustn't play 34 too early, lest he provoke White at 36. That's why Black trades in this variation.

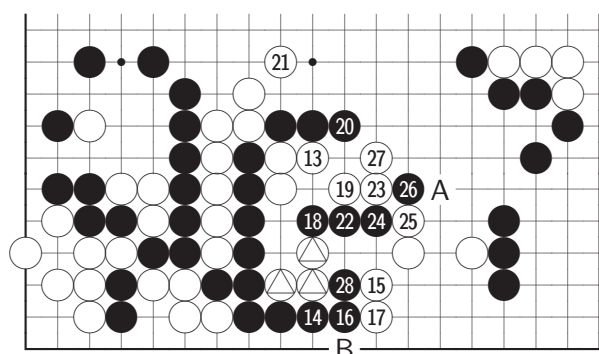


Variation 87 for 78

White might try to resist and set up a ladder with 35 (the ladder starts with White at A).

Black can defend against the ladder indirectly with 36 and 38, so White's tactic doesn't work.

Up to 40, White is still captured.



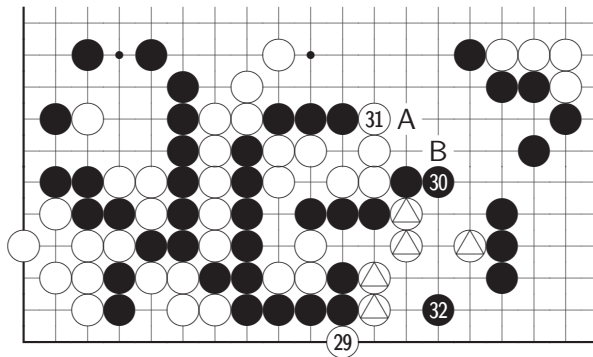
Variation 88 for 78

The diagonal move at 19 doesn't work either.

Black 20 hits the vital point and White must move out with 21 to avoid being captured by Black at 21.

After 22, White's shape is too weak to continue the attack.

The moves up to 28 are a one-way street and A and B are miai for Black. This variation is good for Black.



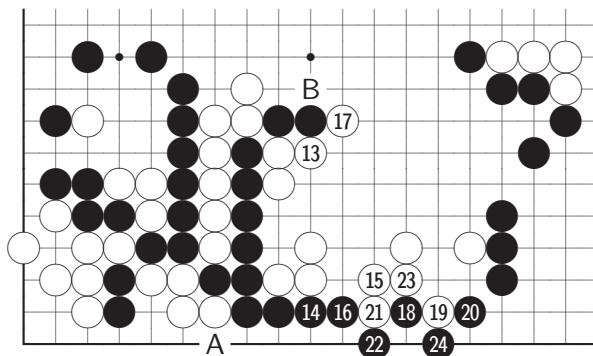
Variation 89 for (78)

If White tries to capture Black with (29), Black will counter-attack with (30) and (32).

White needs to push up at (31), otherwise Black will capture his stones with (31) (the net at A works too). However, there's no way for White to save the marked stones.

Up to (32), White is the one who is captured.

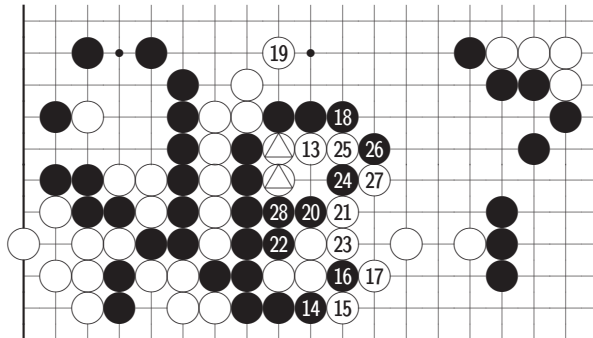
Instead of (29), forming a net at B is essential.



Variation 90 for (78)

If White doesn't answer (16), Black can create a ko at the bottom up to (24).

White can't win this ko, because Black has so many ko threats in this area (starting with A and B, for example).

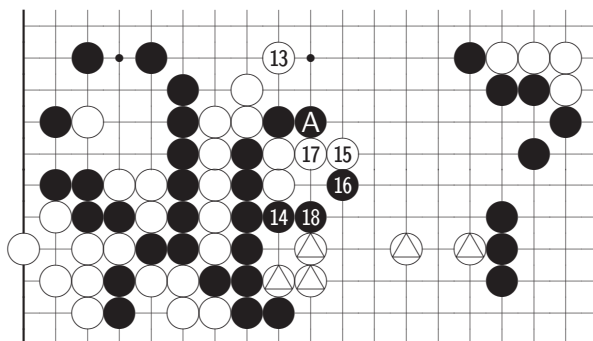


Variation 91 for (78)

If White hanes at (15), instead of jumping to (17) as in the previous variation, Black will throw in the cut at (16) and extend at (18).

Black (18) makes miai of (19) and (20), so the position is already quite simple for Black.

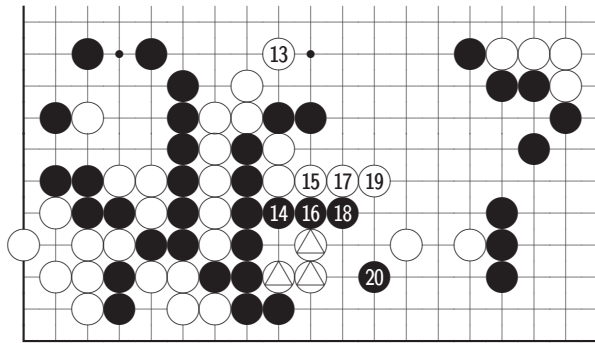
If White defends at (19), (20) to (24) captures the marked stones smoothly. If White insists on fighting up to (27), he is captured in a snapback after (28).



Variation 92 for (78)

If White takes care of his center group with (13) (after Black extends with (A)), Black can move out with (14).

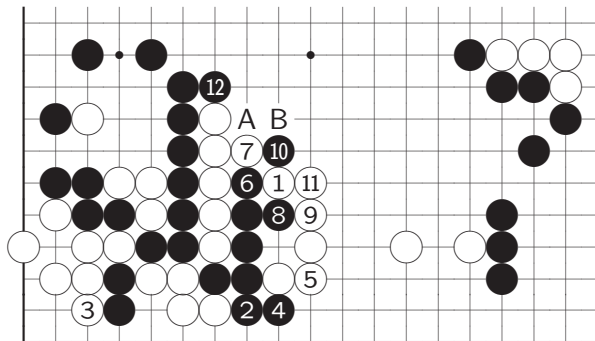
After (18), there's no way for White to hold Black in and White's marked stones are under attack.



Variation 93 for (78)

Walking out in front with (15) doesn't work either.

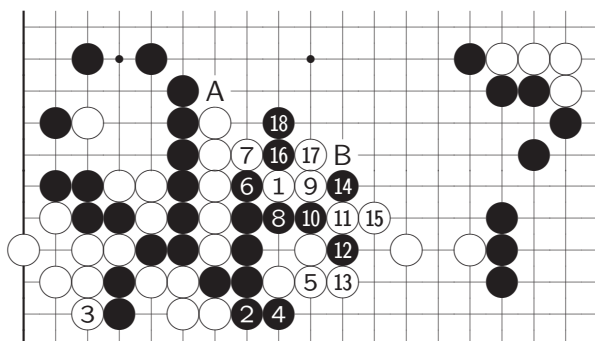
Up to (20), White's marked stones have been captured and White's center stones are still very weak.



Variation 94 for (78)

If White blocks immediately at (7), pushing at (8) is well timed.

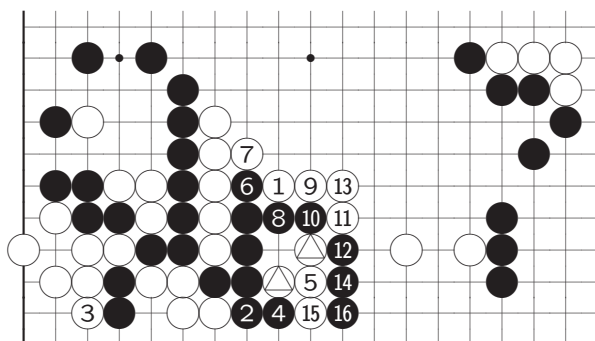
White's stones are captured in a ladder up to (12) (if White plays at A, Black B is a ladder).



Variation 95 for (78)

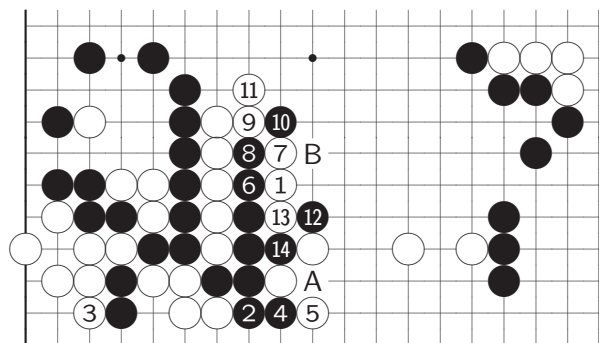
If White extends at (9), Black can still push through and cut with (12).

White is still in deep trouble up to (18), because A and B are miai.



Variation 96 for (78)

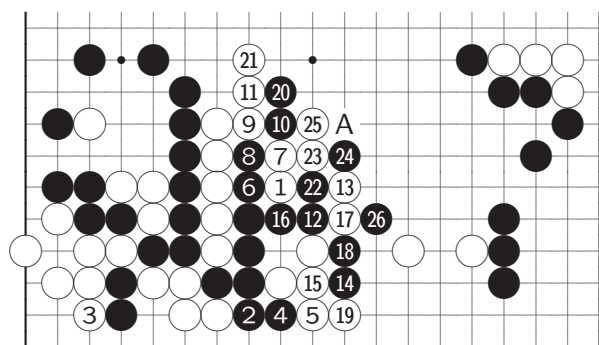
If White connects at (13), Black can capture White's marked stones with (14) and (16).



Variation 97 for ⑦⑧

If White blocks at ⑤ after Black pushes at ④, Black can exchange the moves up to ⑪ in sente.

Cutting across the knight's move with ⑫ is a powerful tesuji, and ⑬ doesn't work because A and B are miai for Black after ⑭.

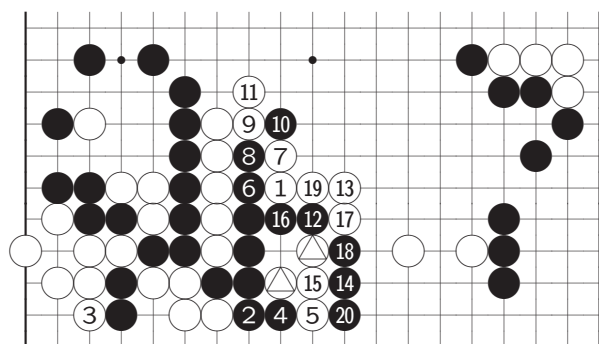


Variation 98 for ⑦⑧

White ⑬ appears to be a sharp haengma, but it still doesn't work.

Peeping at ⑭ is a timely exchange, and White can't save all his stones up to ⑮.

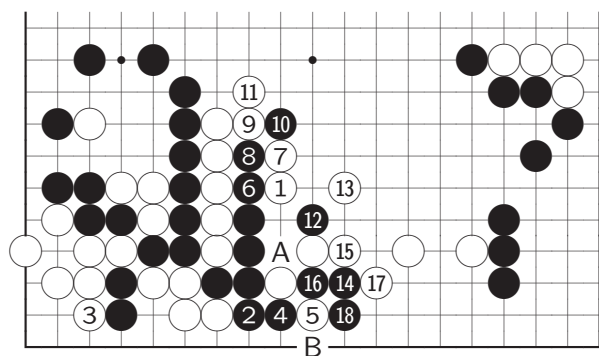
The atari at A is sente for Black at any time.



Variation 99 for ⑦⑧

If White connects at ⑱, ⑳ captures White's four stones once again.

The move order is quite different, but this result is very similar to Variation 96.



Variation 100 for ⑦⑧

If White resists Black's peep with ⑮, Black can calmly capture ⑤ and live.

A and B are miai for Black next, so Black already has two eyes at the bottom.

As we can see from the myriad variations above, attempting to capture Black with ① is an overplay.

Phew!

Attack Tight Stones Loosely

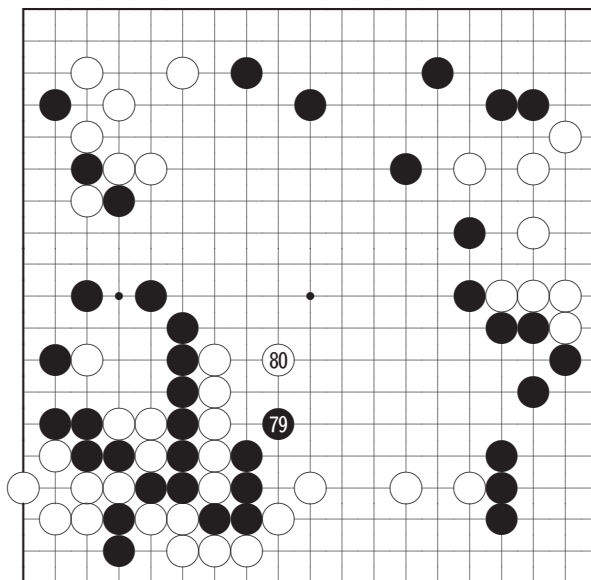
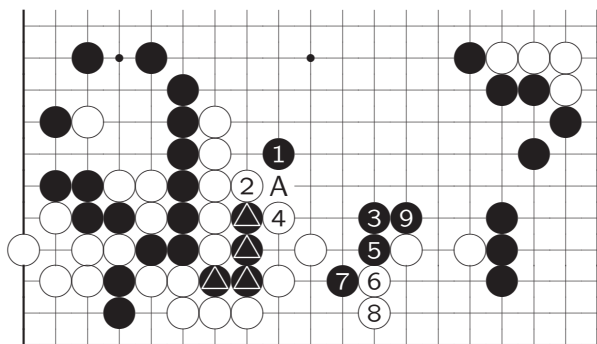


Diagram 17
(Moves: 79-80)

Up to White ⑦⑧, the players concealed their iron fists within velvet gloves, but ⑦⑨ hit the board with a clang. This move was dull, and slightly heavy; quite uncharacteristic of Lee's typical speed and power. This was the first sign of altitude sickness in Lee's play, and White's loose attack at ⑧⑩ felt perfect.

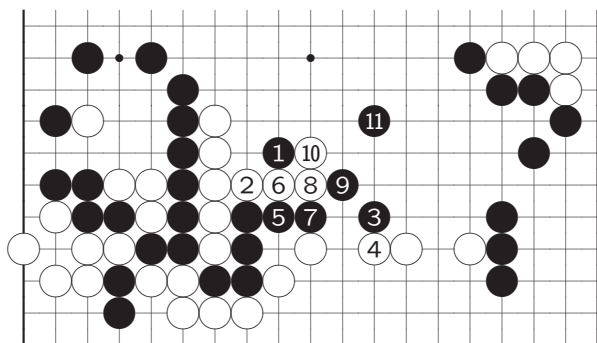


Variation 101 for ⑦⑨

Instead of ⑦⑨ in the game, ① and ③ form a beautiful combination which treats the marked stones lightly. White ④ and ⑤ are miai next.

Flying lightly to ① is more flexible than playing the kosumi at A, and Black's profit in the center is sufficient.

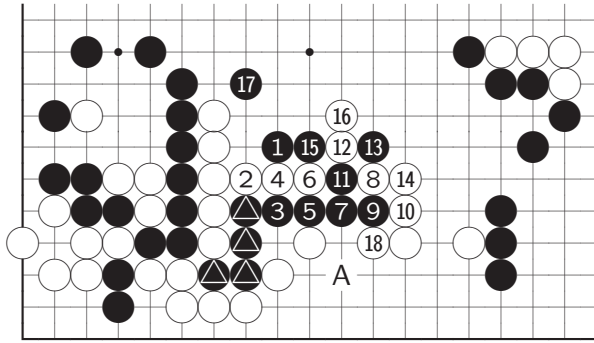
Black should have played like this in the game.



Variation 102 for ⑦⑨

If White defends at ④, Black can save his cutting stones with ⑤ to ⑨.

Pulling off this tactic and flying out to attack with ⑪ feels exhilarating, because White's center group is suddenly heavy and under siege.



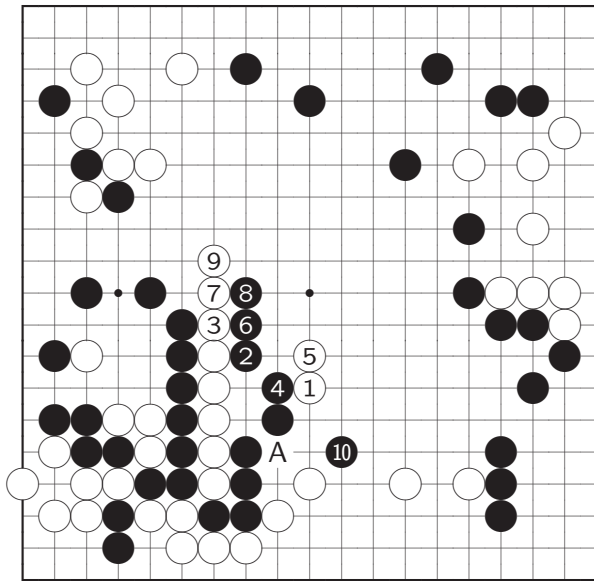
Variation 103 for 79

Black must prepare the ground before saving his cutting stones with ③.

If he doesn't, White will enclose his group with ⑧.

After the sequence to ⑱, Black's marked stones are captured.

Instead of ⑪, if Black jumps to A, calmly connecting with White at ⑪ captures Black's stones regardless.



Variation 104 for 80

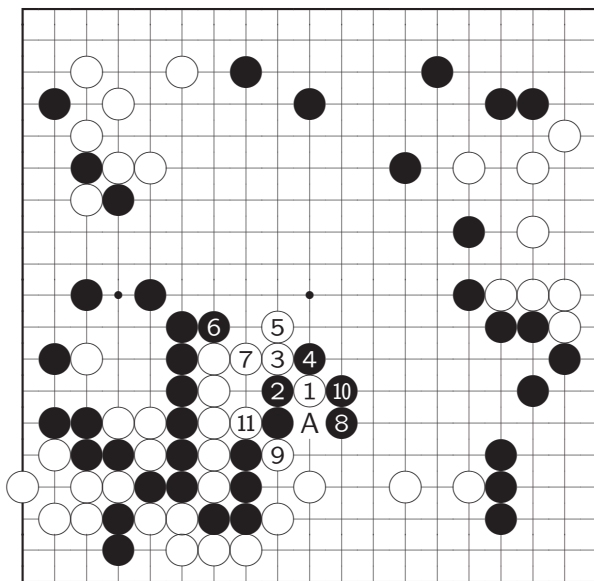
Enclosing Black with ① attacks too tightly, and Black can grind his way out with ② to ⑧.

Even though Black's play in this diagram is bad style (i.e. pushing from behind), there's no other way out.

Sometimes you just have to do what's necessary, so remember not to obsess over shape.

White's two center stones are in trouble after ⑩.

Playing ② at ⑩ appears superficially to be better style, but White will block at ④ in good form and aim to pinch at A next.



Variation 105 for 80

If Black tries to cut and fight directly, with ② and ④, White will parry up to ⑦.

Black might feel some momentary elation about forcing White into bad shape with ⑤ and ⑦, but he'll soon realize how much trouble he's in and will be dragged back down to earth.

Jumping to ⑧ is the haengma that Black would like to play, but ⑨ makes miai of A and ⑪, so Black's cutting stones are captured. Black ⑧ at A is the only choice, but this variation is bad for Black regardless.

Attack Loose Stones Tightly

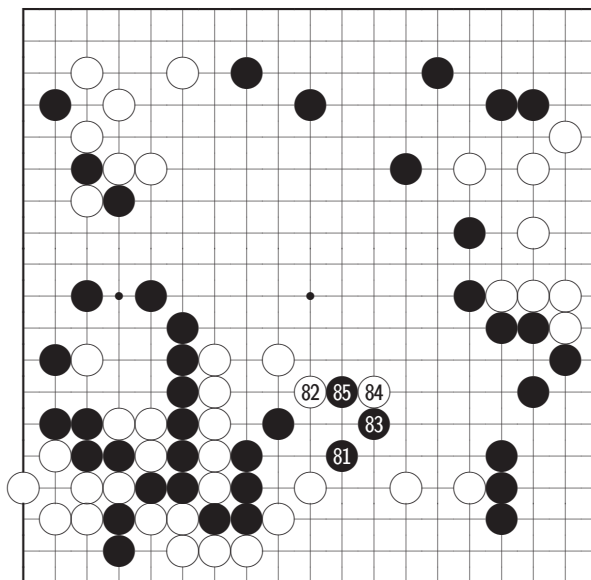
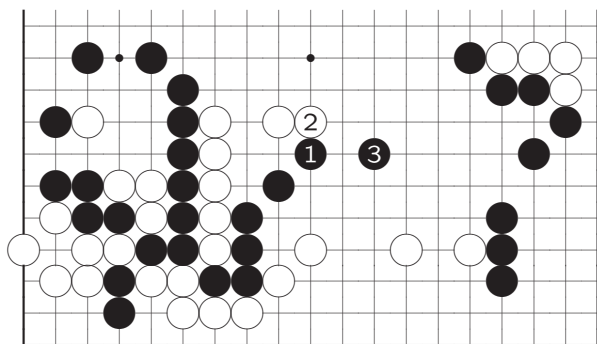


Diagram 18
(Moves: 81-85)

The knight's move at ⑧1 looked sharp, but ⑧2 clamped down tightly on Black's loose connection.

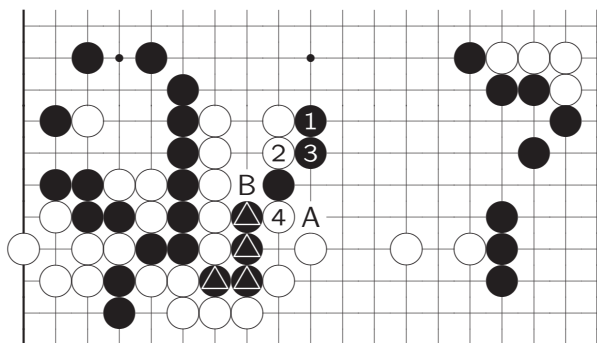
Attaching at ⑧4 maintained the pressure and wedging at ⑧5 was the strongest defense. Lee seemed to recover from his momentary daze and the masters exchanged a series of subtle moves in the fallout.



Variation 106 for ⑧1

The kosumi at ① looks passive, because it moves out slowly and helps White to become stronger in the center, but it's the proper move in this situation.

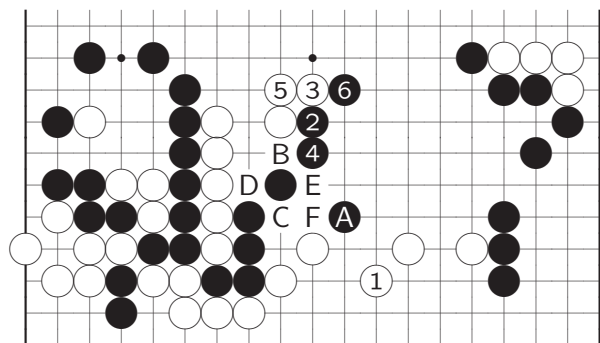
Since ① appears to be the vital point, Black had best play there himself and then skip away with ③.



Variation 107 for ⑧1

If Black attaches at ①, White can simply capture the cutting stones with ② and ④.

If Black ataris at A next, White B sets up a snapback.



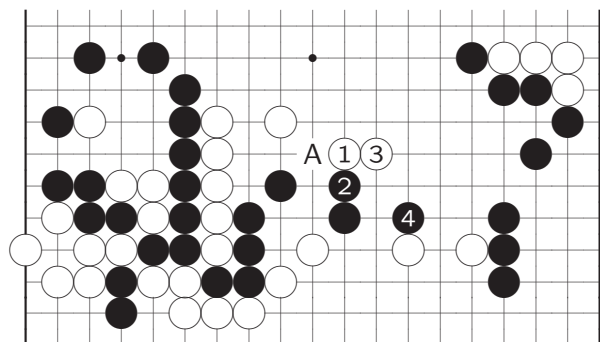
Variation 108 for ⑧2

The moves up to ⑥ are what Lee wanted.

After exchanging ① for ②, Black can move out more actively with the attachment at ②.

Bumping with ③ at B (as in the previous variation) doesn't work anymore. Black will respond at ④ and, after White pinches at C, he can connect at D.

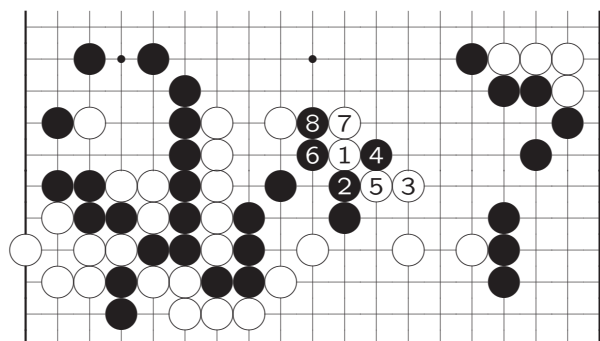
The cut at E is now protected by a ladder at F, thanks to ①.



Variation 109 for ⑧2

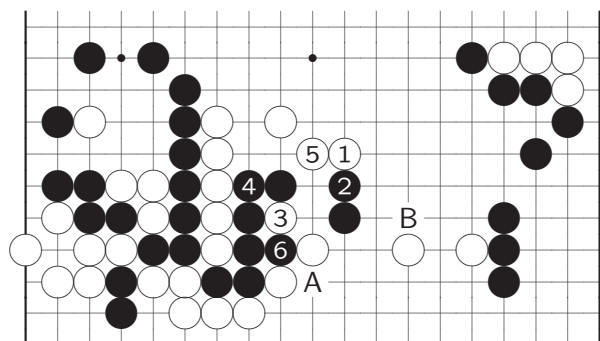
Attacking with the knight's move at ① also looks severe, but ② is a good way to defend and Black breathes a sigh of relief up to ④.

White's tight kosumi at A puts more pressure on Black's loose shape than ① does.



Variation 110 for ⑧2

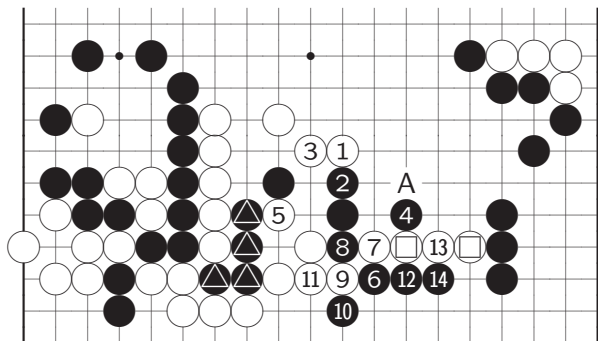
Even if White skips to ③, Black can break into the center with ④ to ⑧.



Variation 111 for ⑧2

If White tries to attack Black's shape with ③ and ⑤, Black can deflect with ⑥.

A and B are miai for Black next.

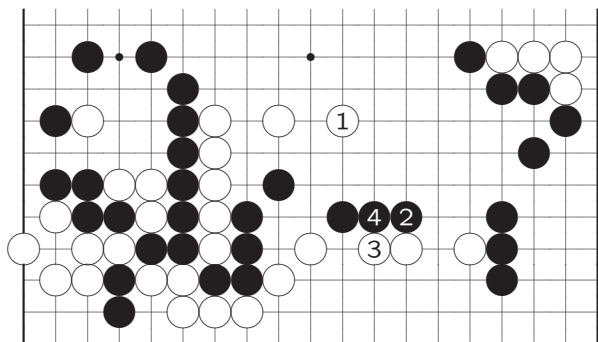


Variation 112 for ⑧2

Given the results of the last three variations, White might decide that ③ is the vital point and pull back there immediately. This makes miai of A and ⑤.

White can capture Black's marked stones with ⑤, but Black can counter-attack with ⑥ to ⑭ and White's marked stones are in trouble.

In conclusion, we can see that ③ is the key point and that White should get there quickly, rather than exchanging ① for ② first.



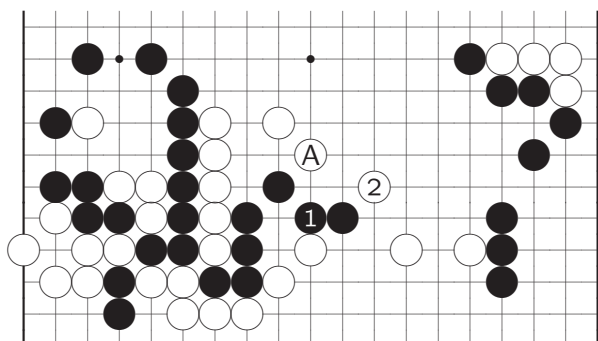
Variation 113 for ⑧2

Jumping to ① doesn't apply enough pressure to Black's shape, and he moves out smoothly up to ④.

An ancient Go proverb tells us to attack tight stones loosely and loose stones tightly.

It means that against a solid, heavy group we should keep our distance, outflank, and avoid a contact fight.

Against thin positions, however, we should hit vital points severely, to exploit weaknesses or make groups heavy. White ① attacks a loose group loosely...

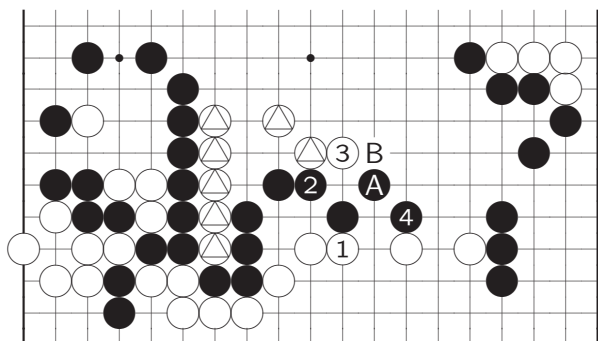


Variation 114 for ⑧3

After ① points a dagger at Black's throat, trying to stay connected with ② is naive.

White can completely surround Black with ②, and there's no way to escape.

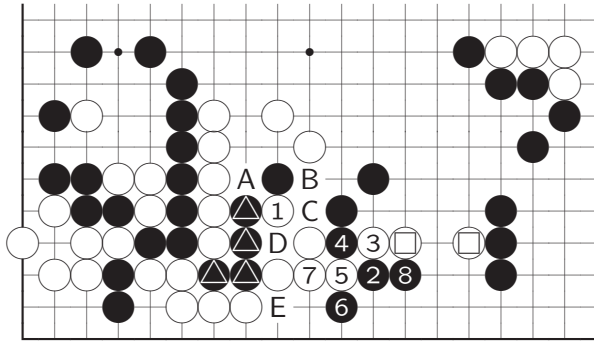
There's little point staying connected if you don't avoid being surrounded!



Variation 115 for ⑧4

After ①, defending at ① (instead of attaching at B) allows Black more leeway up to ④.

After this, White's attack runs out of steam and his marked center stones are weaker than they were in the game.

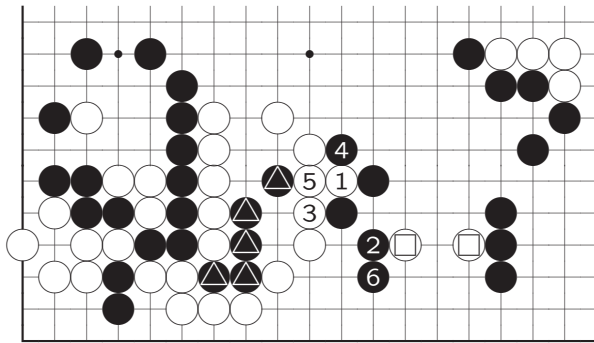


Variation 116 for 84

Grasping for the marked stones without enough preparation allows Black to trade with ②.

White succeeds in capturing the triangled stones, but only at the expense of his squared stones.

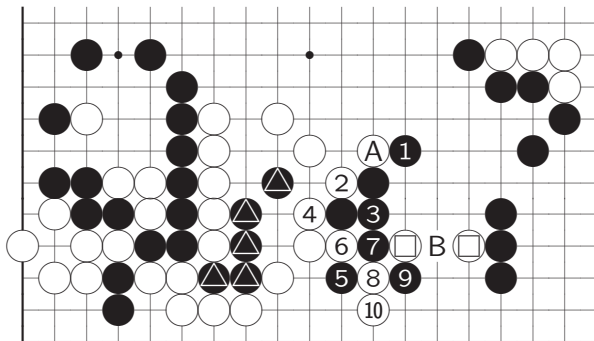
The result up to ⑧ favors Black. If White doesn't reinforce, Black's stones can wriggle free with A later (if White B, Black C makes D and E miai), because exchanging ⑥ for ⑦ leaves White short of liberties.



Variation 117 for 84

Pinching at ① is very severe, and allows White to capture the marked stones.

However, White will lose more points than he gains up to ⑥, because White's marked stones are also captured.



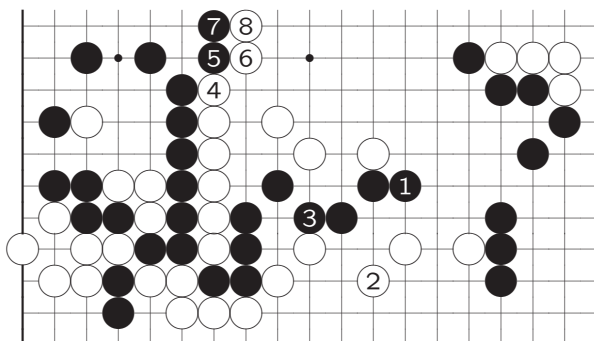
Variation 118 for 85

When White attaches at A (84 in the game), Black must be careful not to hane carelessly at ①.

If he does so, White will be able to pinch at ②.

Even if Black captures the marked stones with B, he no longer receives enough compensation for his own marked stones, so it's not a fair trade.

Compare this with the previous variation.



Variation 119 for 85

Extending carefully to ① is too slow.

White will reinforce the lower side with ② and the weaknesses we've seen in the previous variations remain in Black's shape.

If Black patches up his thin shape with ③, White moves into the center up to ⑧ and is satisfied with the result.

Form Follows Function

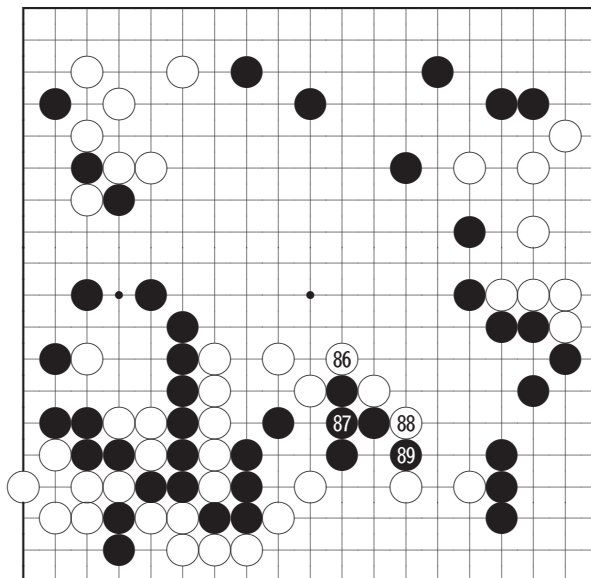
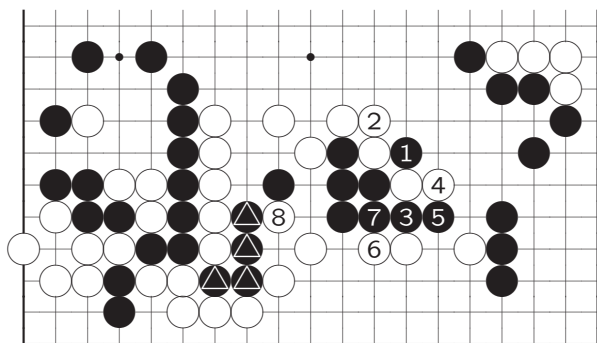


Diagram 19
(Moves: 86-89)

Black's shape up to ⑧⑦ was ugly, but it couldn't be helped. Practical lines of play are more important than shape. What makes a shape good is the effect it has. When a shape is effective most of the time we call it 'good shape', but good shape without purpose is empty. The results are what's important. As Deng Xiaoping said, "It doesn't matter whether a cat is white or black, as long as it catches mice."



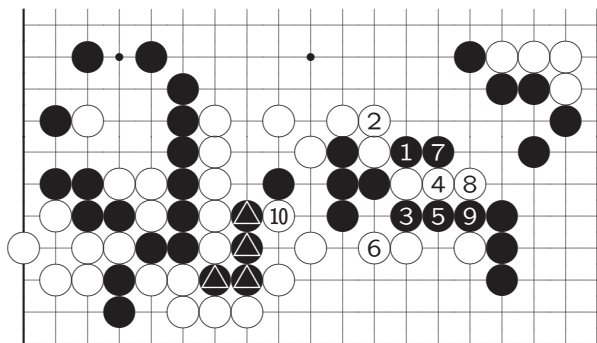
Variation 120 for ⑧⑨

Wedging with ⑧⑨ in the game was good style.

Thrashing around ① and ③ is what White wants.

You should generally avoid playing a series of ataris like this unless there's no other way to escape.

White can force at ⑥ in sente and capture the marked cutting stones with ⑧.



Variation 121 for ⑧⑨

Even if Black plays to capture White's three cutting stones with ⑦ and ⑨, White will gratefully capture Black's marked stones with ⑩.

Cut Off the Tail Once the Head Escapes

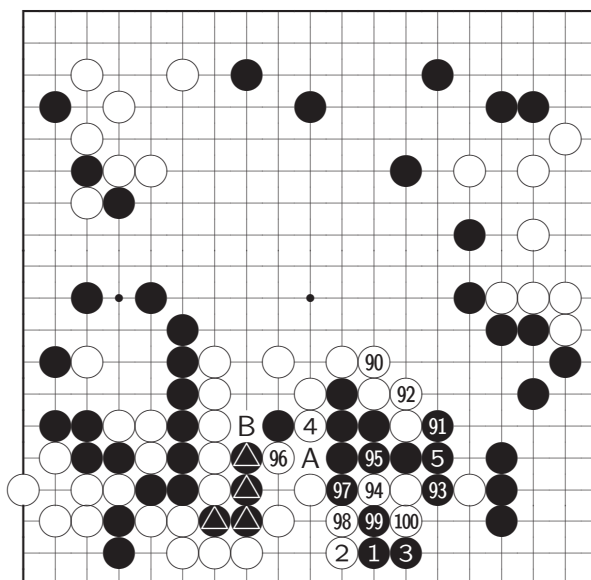
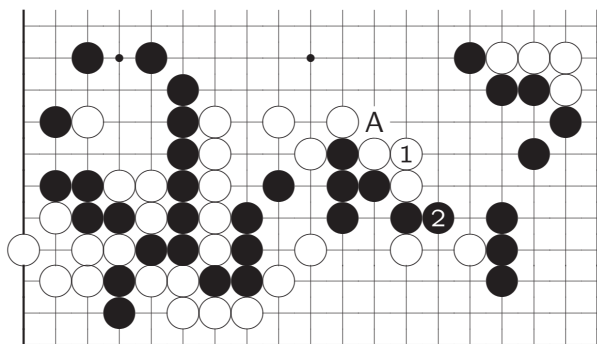


Diagram 20
(Moves: 90-105)

Once Black's small dragon broke free, White cut off the tail with ⑨⑥ (if Black A, B is snapback). White could have captured the marked stones earlier, but attacking the whole group first was more efficient. The marked stones weren't completely captured yet, so Black sought compensation with ⑨⑦ to ⑤ (⑩⑤).

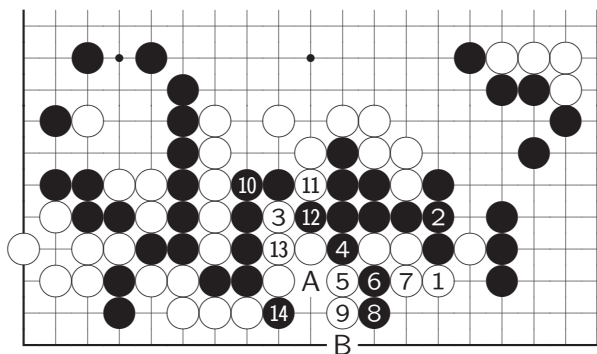


Variation 122 for ⑨⑥

Connecting at ① leaves a cutting point behind at A, and this will become a burden for White.

White's connection at A (⑨⑥) in the game was better.

If ① ataris at ② instead, Black double ataris at ①.

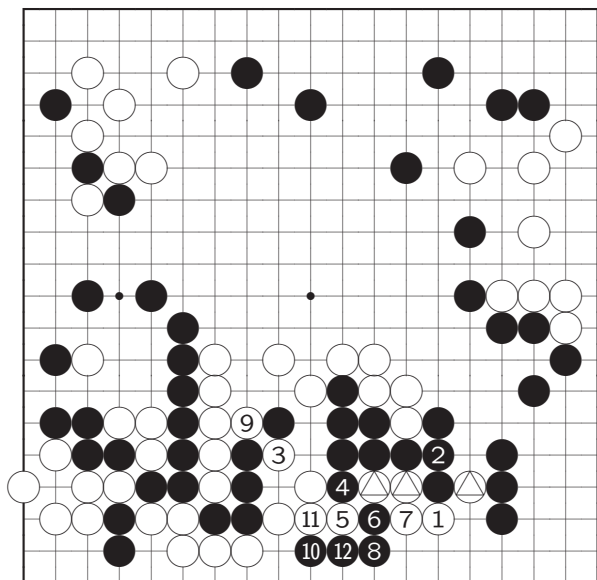


Variation 123 for ⑨⑥

Exchanging the atari at ① before snipping off the tail with ③ doesn't help White.

Black can connect at ⑩ after exchanging ④ to ⑨, and insisting on cutting with ⑪ and ⑬ leads White to disaster up to ⑭ (A and B are miai for Black).

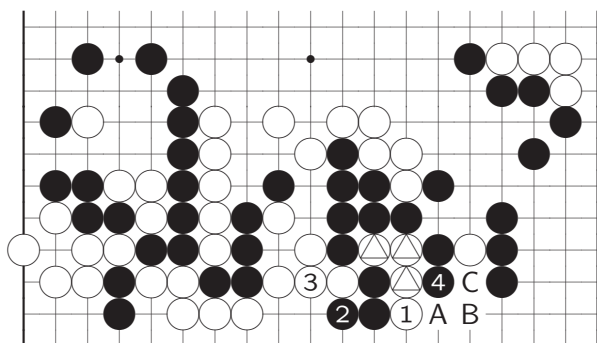
This happened because White exchanged ① for ②. If not for ②, Black wouldn't be able to cut at ⑫ because it would be self-atari.



Variation 124 for ⑨6

If White realizes that Black can escape and goes back to defend at ⑨, Black will show no mercy with ⑩ and ⑫.

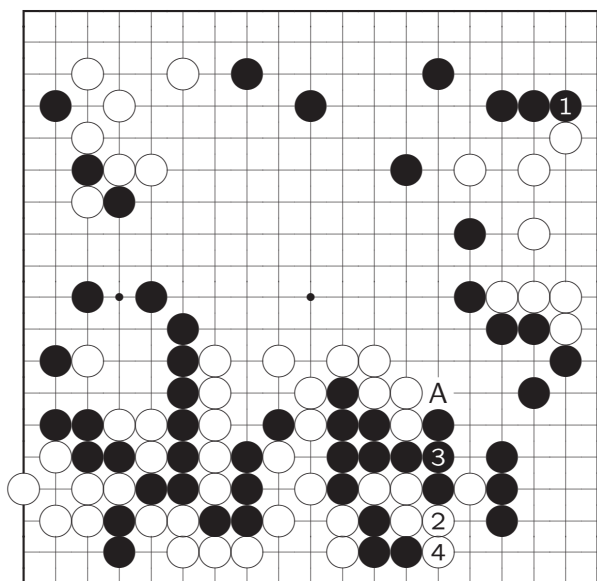
White's marked stones are all captured and Black has gained more profit than in the game.



Variation 125 for ⑩2

Even if White blocks on the other side with ①, Black can still capture the marked stones with ④ after playing atari at ②.

If White pushes at A, Black can block at B and White is too short of liberties to atari at C.



Variation 126 for ⑩5

Connecting at ⑤ in the game (③ in this variation) looked strange, but it was the most efficient move (preparing a strong response to A later).

If Black plays elsewhere—at ① for example—White will revive his dead stones with ② and ④.

Blocking at ① is quite large, but ② is even more valuable.

If You Cannot Succeed, Die Gloriously

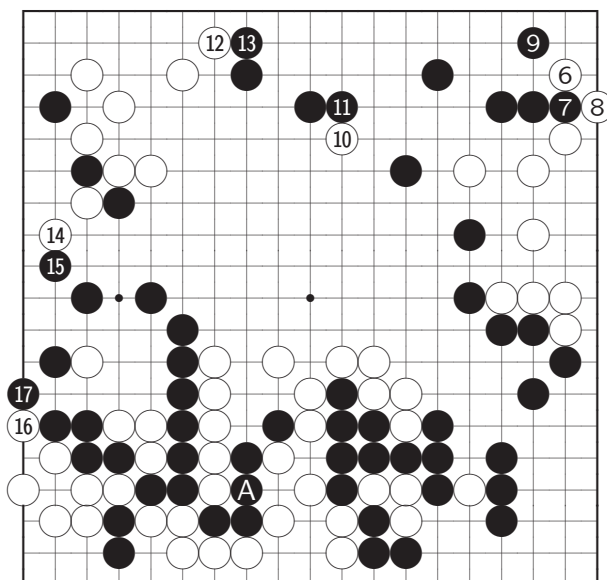


Diagram 21
(Moves: 106-117)

The moves from **A** to 17 saw White's situation improve. White was ahead, but the game was close. Gu Li's endgame from 6 to 12 was sharp, and defending at 13 was unavoidable for Black.

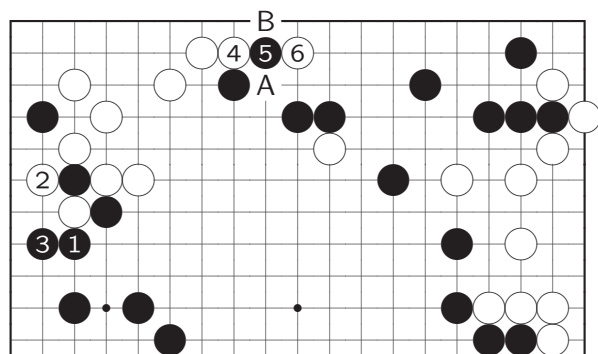
The hane at 16 was a sente endgame move and if White didn't play there, Black's descent at 16 would also be sente later. Black 17, however, was very risky.

Lee must have felt that he was behind, so he tried to make the game complicated. This was actually an overplay, but if you don't punish this sort of overplay swiftly, it can easily turn into a good move.

We've already talked about how the player who is behind needs to play unexpected moves and look for ways to turn the tide. In Korean, this is called 'shaking' the game, and Lee Sedol is a master of it.

However, Lee's judgment seems to have been affected by the altitude once again. He wasn't as far behind as he thought and it was too early for such desperate measures.

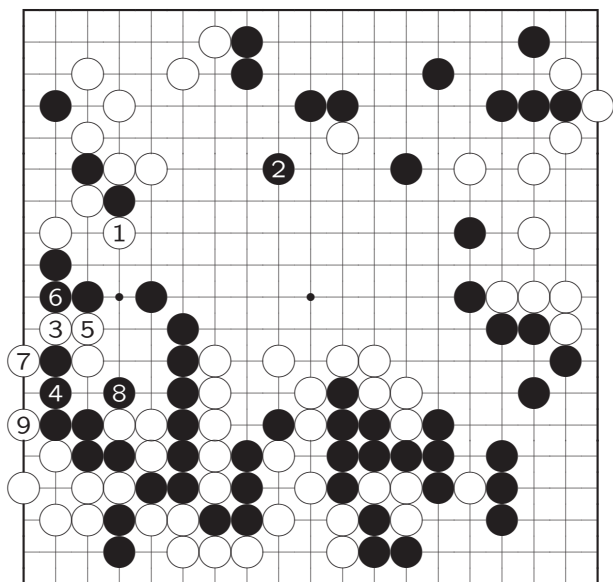
If you overplay, you give your opponent an opportunity to land a knockout punch. It's much better and more effective (though more difficult) to gradually complicate the game, while dancing just out of reach. If you really believe you cannot succeed, then die gloriously, but save that as the last resort.



Variation 127 for 113

If Black doesn't defend his territory at the top, 4 and 6 are annoying for Black.

A and B are miai next, and the loss is too big for Black to tolerate.

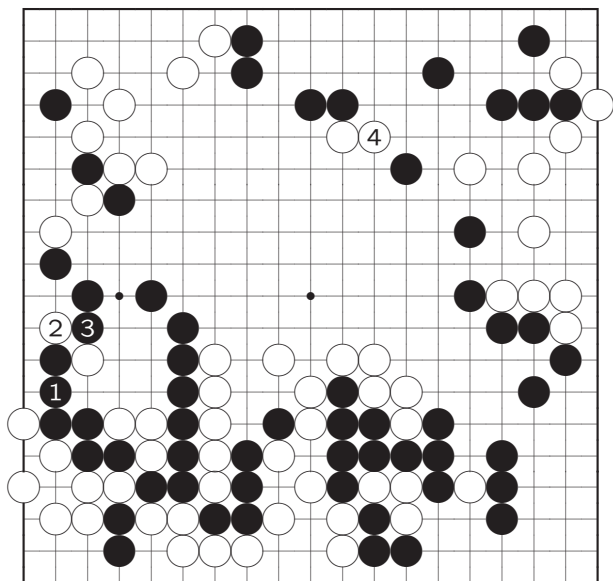


Variation 128 for 116

Instead of 16 in the game (9 in this diagram), the atari at 1 is another possible tactic for White.

If Black ignores 1 (to play 2 for example), White's aji around 3 is rekindled, and White can aim to play 3 to 9 later.

White has a comfortable lead up to 9, so 1 is sente on the left side.



Variation 129 for 117

If Black connects solidly at 1, which is the right move, it will still be a very close game.

White is slightly ahead up to 4.

Prepare Ko Threats Before Committing to Ko

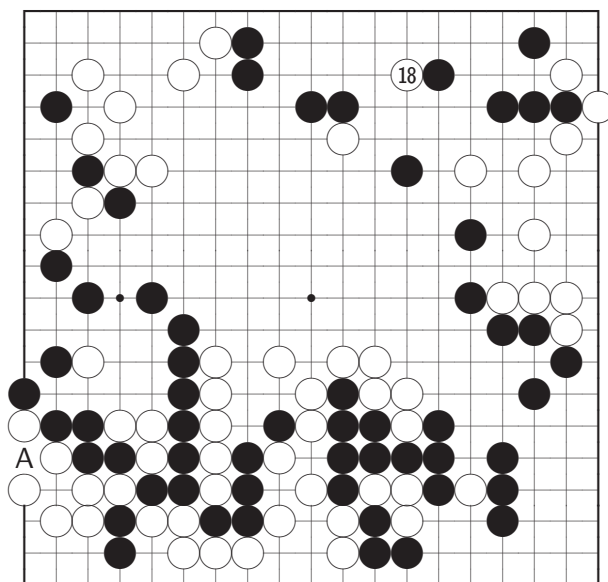
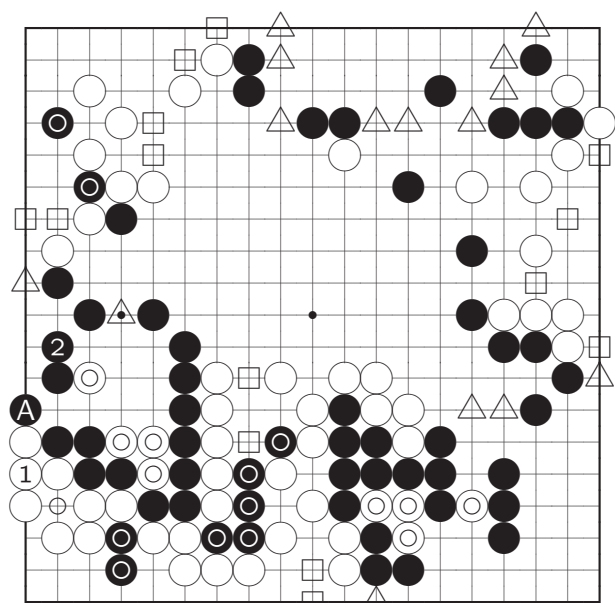


Diagram 22
(Move: 118)

White's attachment at ⑱ was razor sharp. When this move was played, it felt like the game was about to become very difficult for Black, and that Black would be forced to resign soon.

The purpose of ⑱ was to prepare some large ko threats before starting the ko fight at A. When you have time to do so, it's much better to consider what sort of ko threats you have before starting a ko. If you don't have enough ko threats of a sufficient size, look for a way to create some in sente.



Variation 130 for ⑱

If White connects passively at ①, Black ② will save a few precious points. Can White play like this?

Black:

Bottom right: 40, left side: 21, and top: 19.

Total: 80 points.

White:

Bottom left to center: 35, top left: 26, right side: 8, and komi 7.5.

Total: 76.5 points.

It's White's turn, and White has more center potential, but we can't say he has a certain lead.

We can also see after counting that insisting on A was logical, even though it was too much in this case.

Even a Good Marksman May Miss

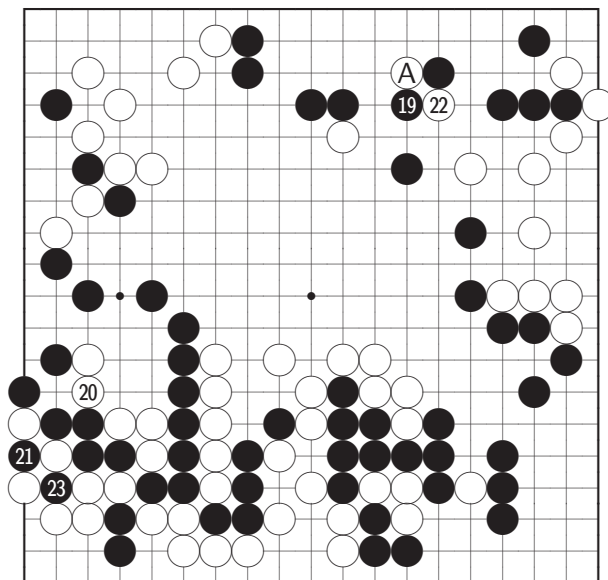
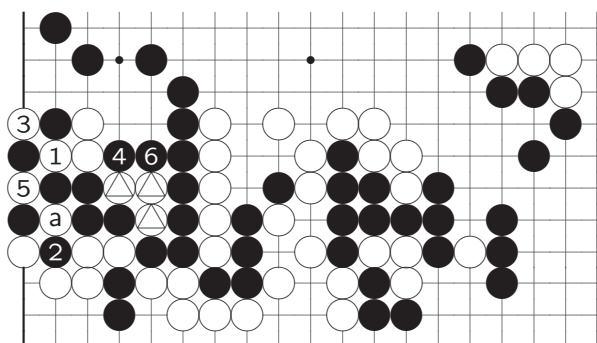


Diagram 23
(Moves: 119-123)

The crosscut at ②② was a severe threat, but it wasn't the best move. Gu Li's focus had begun to waver. White missed a chance to wrap up the game here, and everything became more complicated after ②③.



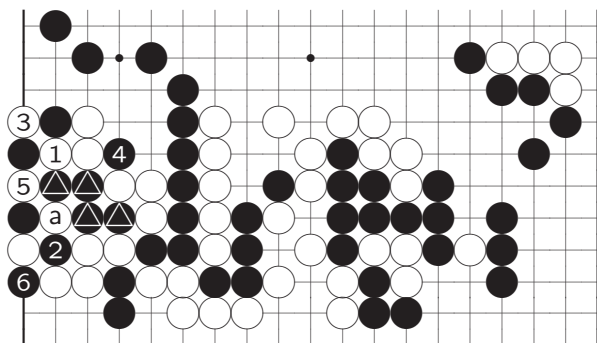
Variation 131 for ②②

⑦ at ①

The sequence from ① to ⑦ (at ①) is the surest path to victory.

Black captures White's three stones, but connecting under and reducing Black's territory dissolves the ko, and is good enough to win.

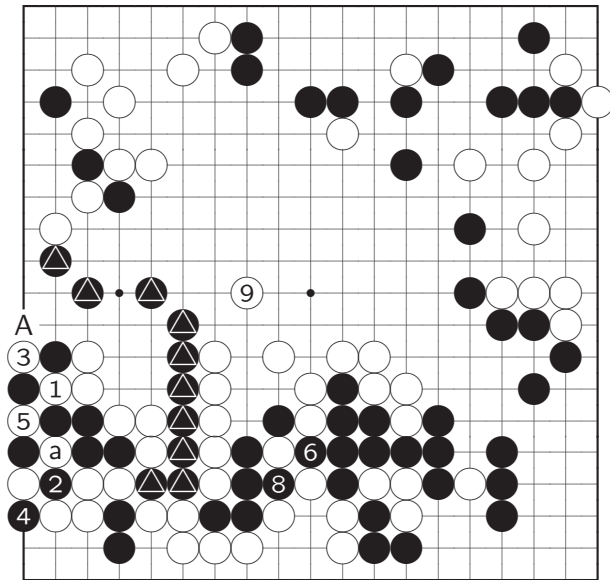
In the midst of this variation, ③ is a brilliant tesuji which both players overlooked.



Variation 132 for ②②

⑦ at ①

Capturing at ⑥ doesn't work either, because White captures the marked stones with ⑦ at ①.



Variation 133 for 122

7 at a

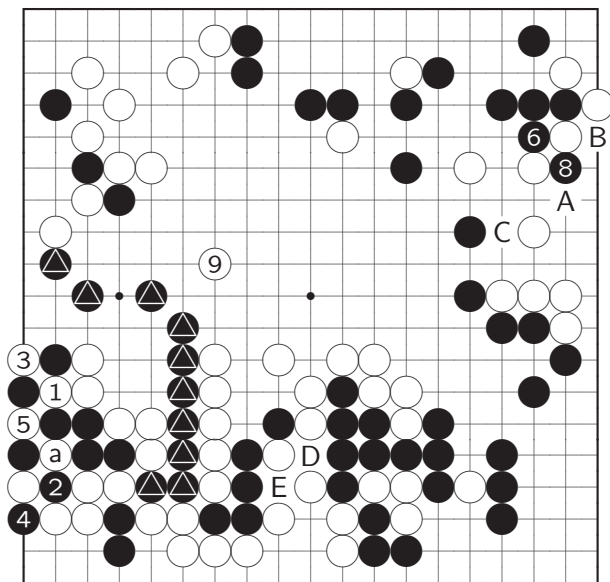
There are no sufficiently large ko threats for Black.

Black 6 and 8 don't gain enough compensation and Black's marked stones become very weak when White captures at a (7).

Taking White's stone at 8 is gote and White attacks the marked stones with 9.

Instead of 4, if Black captures at A White will take the other ko with a. We can expect 6, 5, 8 and 9 to follow, and the result will be practically the same as this variation.

White has a winning position after 9.



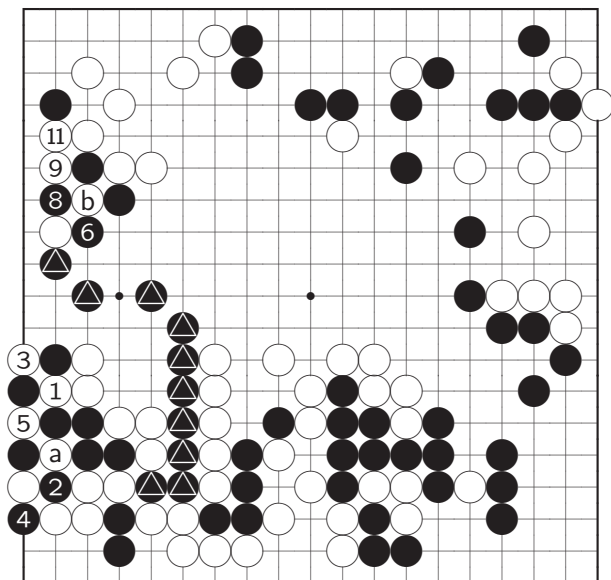
Variation 134 for 122

7 at a

Trading with 6 and 8 isn't big enough either.

White can still save his group by playing A to C later, and 9 attacks Black's weak group even more severely than in the previous variation.

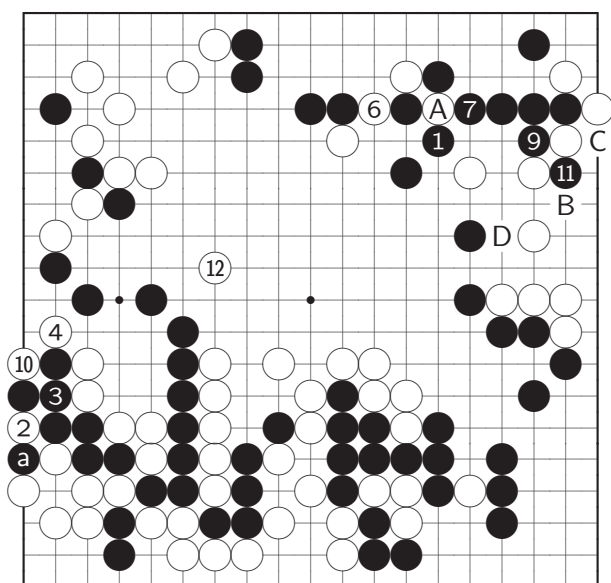
White can play more aggressively with 9 here, because Black D and E haven't made White's stones at the bottom weaker in this variation.



Variation 135 for 122

7 at a, 10 at b

Black may think about helping his marked group with 6 and 8, but it's still not good enough up to 11.



Variation 136 for 123

5 at a, 8 at 2

Answering White's crosscut at A with 1 allows White to continue the ko fight with 2 and 4.

The trade up to 12 is excellent for White.

Remember that White can still live on the right side later with B to D.

If the players had followed any of the variations in this section, the game would have been over and White would have won.

Force Your Opponent to Spend Ko Threats

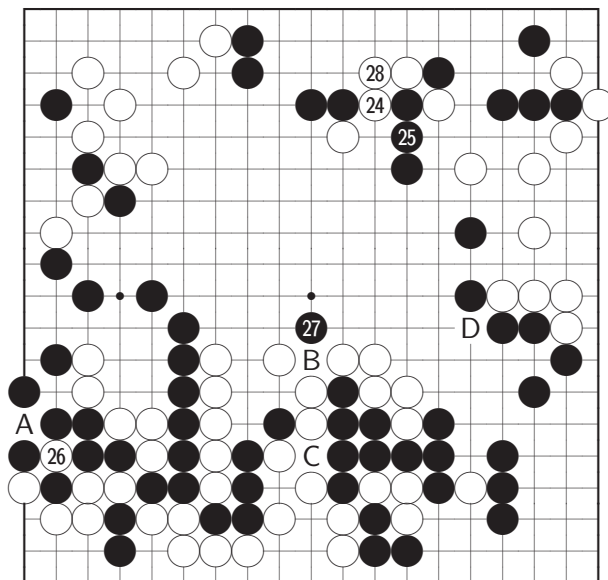
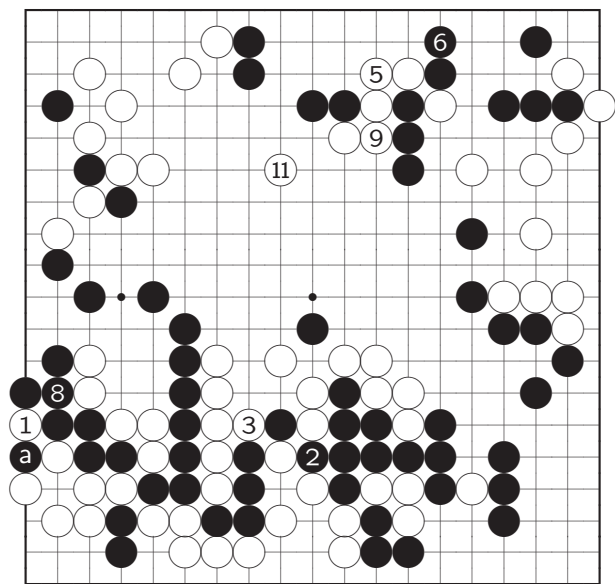


Diagram 24
(Moves: 124-128)

It was a bit too early to connect at ②⑧. White should have played at either A or B instead.

If White had taken the ko at A, Black would have been forced to play his next ko threat at C. Capturing the ko doesn't just use a ko threat, in many cases it also makes the opponent use up aji or lose points.

In this case, C fills Black's liberties in a way which exposes the cutting point at D later.



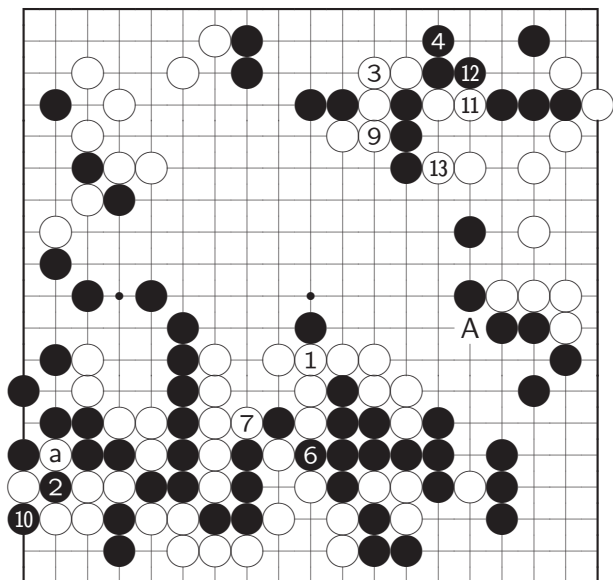
Variation 137 for ②⑧

④ ⑩ at a, ⑦ at ①

As we discussed above, White should have taken the ko at ① first, forcing Black to exchange ② for ③.

If Black eventually has to connect at ⑧, White can save one move.

This can be difficult to understand, but if you compare this variation to the result in the actual game, you'll see that if Black had a stone at ⑧, it would have ended up as a wasted move in the end.



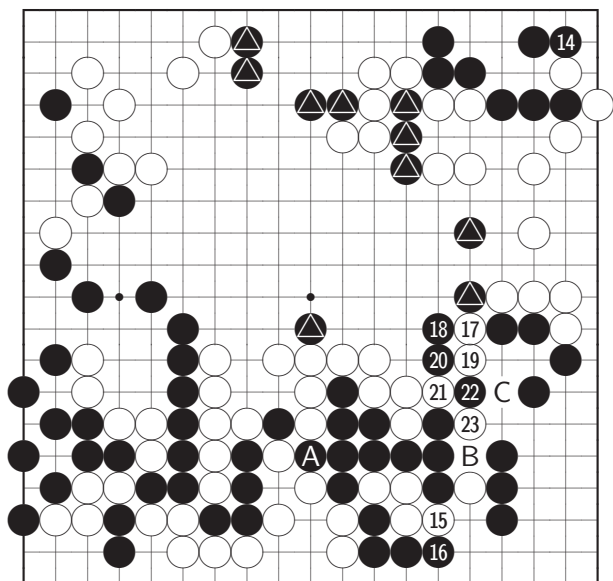
Variation 138 for 128

⑤ at ①, ⑧ at ②

Simply closing the tiger's mouth at ① would have been playable too.

In this case, Black needs to exchange ⑥ for ⑦ again (as a ko threat), which exposes Black's cutting point at A.

Continuing...



Variation 139 for 128

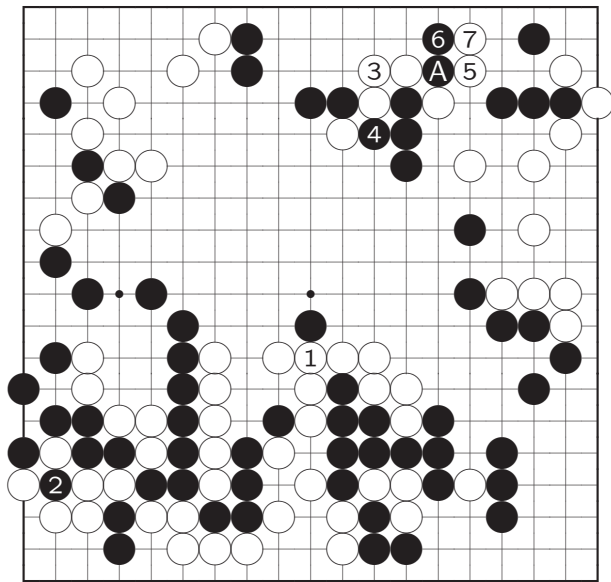
After Black loses a liberty at A, cutting at ①⑦ is possible.

For example, if Black defends the top right corner with ①④, White can exchange ①⑤ for ①⑥, before cutting at ①⑦.

Trying to capture with ①⑧ to ①②② doesn't work anymore, because ①③ is double atari.

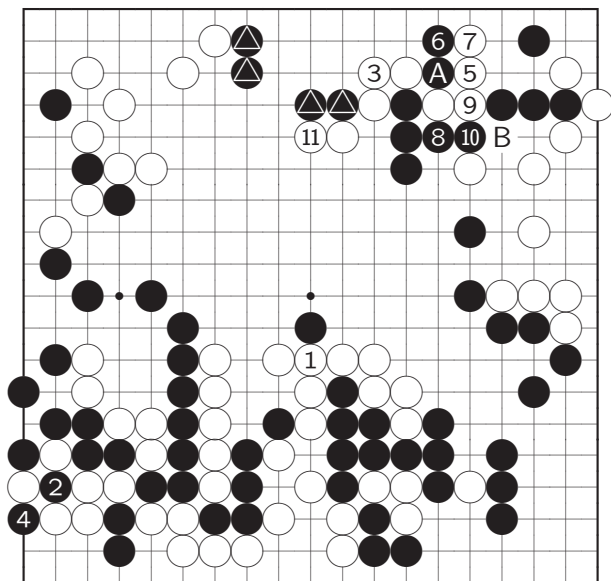
This variation should make the true cost of A clearer.

If Black exchanges B for C next, White is strong almost everywhere, while Black's marked stones are scattered pointlessly, like sand in the breeze.



Variation 140 for 128

If Black cuts at ④ instead of descending at ⑥, White can simply capture ①A with ⑤ and ⑦.



Variation 141 for 128

If Black ignores ③ to eliminate the ko at ④, White can capture ①A in sente up to ⑩.

This leaves behind a cutting point at B for later.

Victory Cannot Be Forced

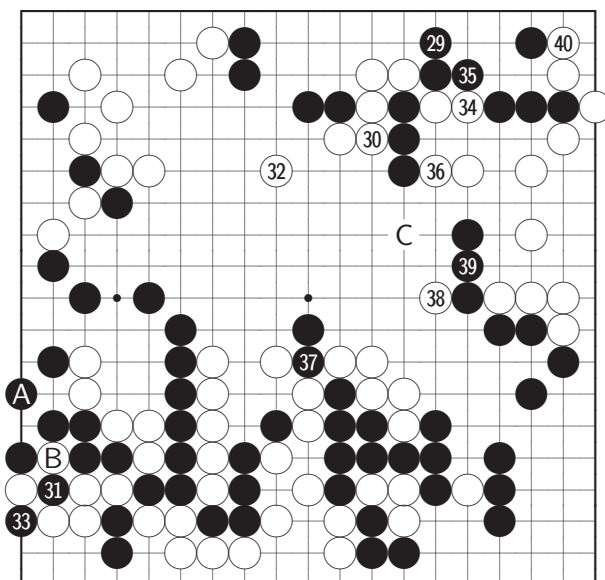


Diagram 25
(Moves: 129-140)

The skilled commanders of the past first made themselves invulnerable, then waited for the enemy's moment of vulnerability. Invulnerability depends on one's own efforts, whereas victory over the enemy depends on the latter's negligence. . . . Therefore it is said that victory can be anticipated, but it cannot be forced.

—Sun Zi, *The Art of War*

When Black played **A**, Gu missed a golden opportunity to settle the game. Lee had exposed his flank for just a moment, but Gu had failed to strike decisively and now anything could happen.

The knight's move at **32** was too gentle. White should have exchanged a ko threat at **34** instead, and then recaptured at **B** after **35**. Gu may have thought that he was already ahead, and he was, but the position was gradually becoming chaotic and difficult to resolve.

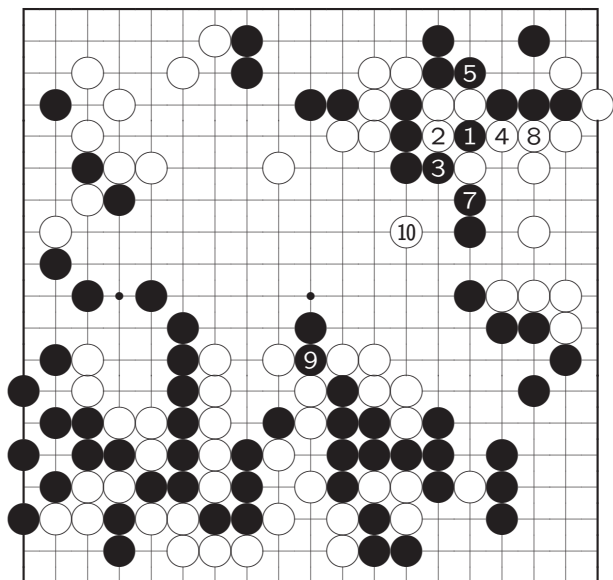
In chaos, there is opportunity; especially for the player who is behind. However, as Sun Zi makes clear, you cannot force matters against a player of equal skill. You can only ensure that your own positions are strong and bide your time. This is how games are won in reality and it requires great patience.

Black was relieved when he won the ko with **33**. Compared to Variation 131, where White won the ko, the difference was about 65 points, and **30** to **36** didn't provide adequate compensation.

In truth, Black's risky move at **A** had worked much better than it deserved to, and he could now afford to wait for an opening in White's position.

White **38** was a well timed probe, but **40** was a mistake. White should have continued at C immediately.

In the thin mountaintop air, a mist of uncertainty was enveloping both players, clouding judgment.

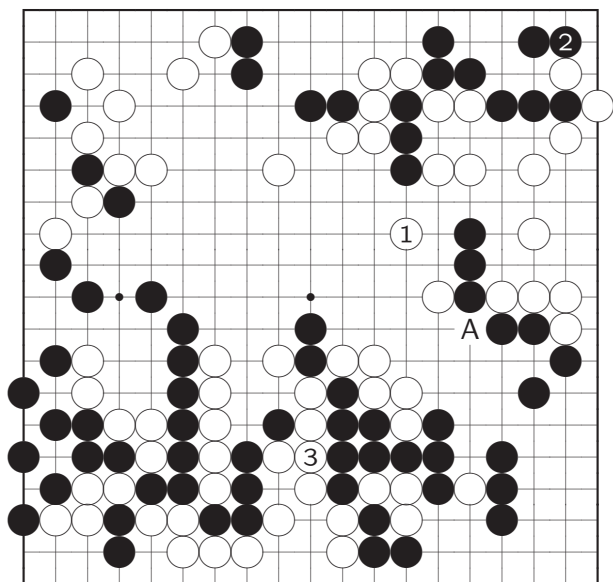


Variation 142 for ⑬⑤

⑥ at ①

Squeezing with ① is also conceivable, but White can eventually strike at the vital point with ⑩.

Since we can anticipate ⑩, it's better for Black if he doesn't fill his own liberties like this.



Variation 143 for ⑭⑩

Instead of ④⑩ (at ② in this variation), White should have played in the center with ①.

Black ② and ③ are miai next, and the game is still favorable for Gu.

Remember that White can also aim to cut at A after filling Black's liberties with ③.

Even a Brilliant Move Can Turn Sour

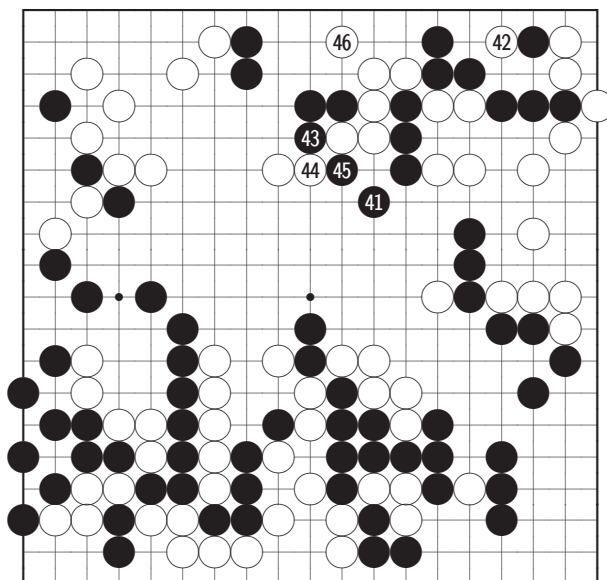
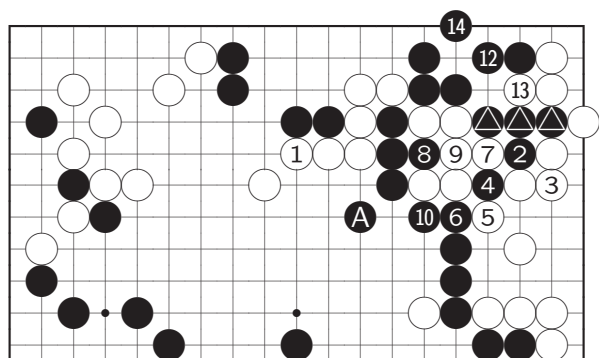


Diagram 26
(Moves: 141-146)

The kosumi at ④① was an excellent multi-purpose move and ④② was a sublime counter. However, Gu didn't follow up properly and ④⑥ soured ④②. Without the right continuation, ④② was but a mirage.



Variation 144 for ④②

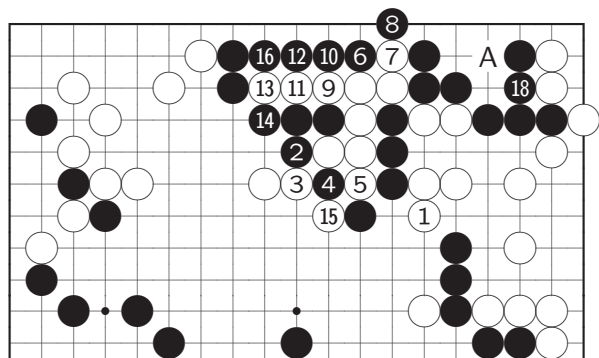
⑪ at ④

Black ①A peeks in both directions at once.

If White reinforces at ①, Black can squeeze with ② to ⑩ in sente.

After that, Black can live with ⑫ and ⑭ and White will be despondent.

Black's marked stones have completed their work after ⑪ (at ④), so they become light and dispensable.



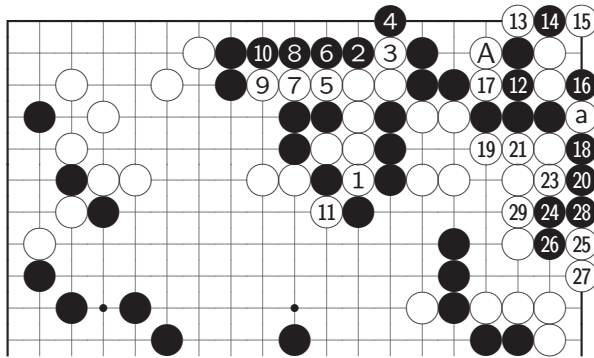
Variation 145 for ④②

⑰ at ④

If White tries to break into the center with ①, ② to ⑥ comprise a brilliant combination.

Black can miraculously save both of his groups at the top up to ⑱, and ① turns out to be small. If this happens, Black will have a clear path to victory.

When it was played, A (④②) appeared to be a brilliant counter which prevented this sequence from working, but Gu followed another path.



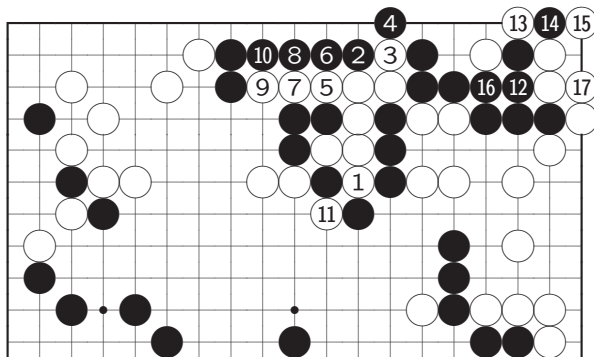
22 at a

After playing at A, White can atari at ①.

If Black still tries to save his top groups, with ② to ⑫, his whole group will die up to ⑲.

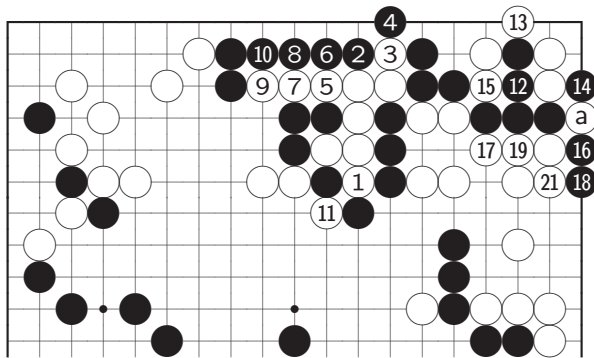
It's worth noting the importance of ⑰ in this sequence.

Unfortunately, Gu appears to have overlooked this possibility in the game.



Variation 147 for 146

Connecting at ⑬ doesn't help Black, because ⑰ makes an eye and Black can't capture any of White's stones.

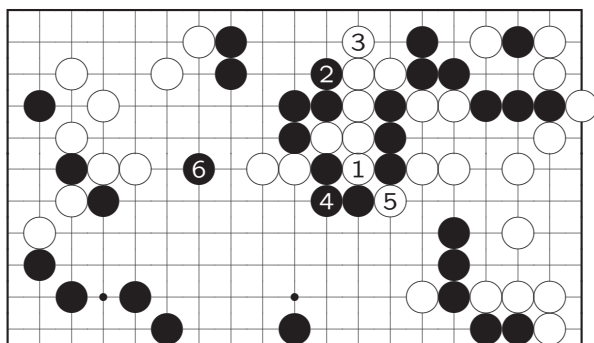


Variation 148 for 146

Black ⑭ doesn't improve the situation either.

Up to ⑳, Black is crushed.

20 at a



Variation 149 for 146

Therefore, if White ataris at ①, Black will have to change tack.

Black can block at ② in sente and develop with ⑥ in this case, but this is still far better for White than the actual game.

Doubt Your Own Ability to Capture

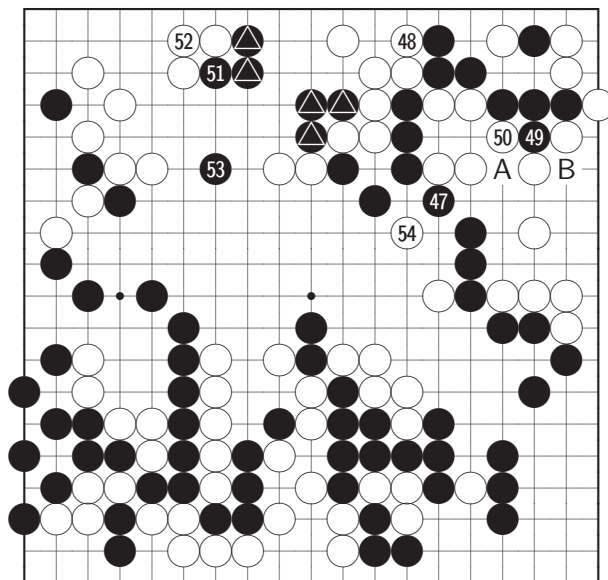


Diagram 27
(Moves: 147-154)

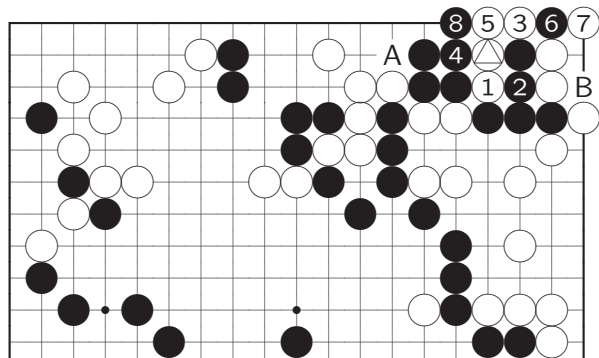
Blocking at ④⑧ was White's best choice for attacking Black's corner group, but bad aji remained in the corner.

Neither ⑤⑩ nor the solid connection at A could completely remove the corner aji, though both were playable. Since Black could live small after cutting at B, he was ahead at this point.

You should always doubt your own ability to capture and triple check for loopholes, especially in a complicated negotiation. If you accept a trade only to discover that you're saddled with bad aji, there is zero recourse in Go.

Living with B would have been gote, and was too small to play right now. Black moved his marked group out with ⑤① to ⑤③, planning to come back to B later.

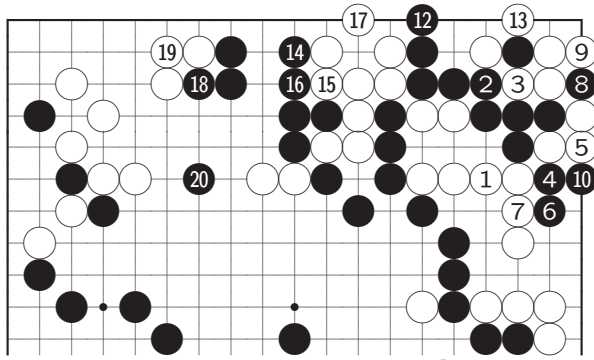
The peep at ⑤④ was another sharp move.



Variation 150 for ④⑧

Instead of A (④⑧), cutting at ① doesn't work.

Black can capture the cutting stones up to ⑧. If White connects at ⑥, Black B is snapback.

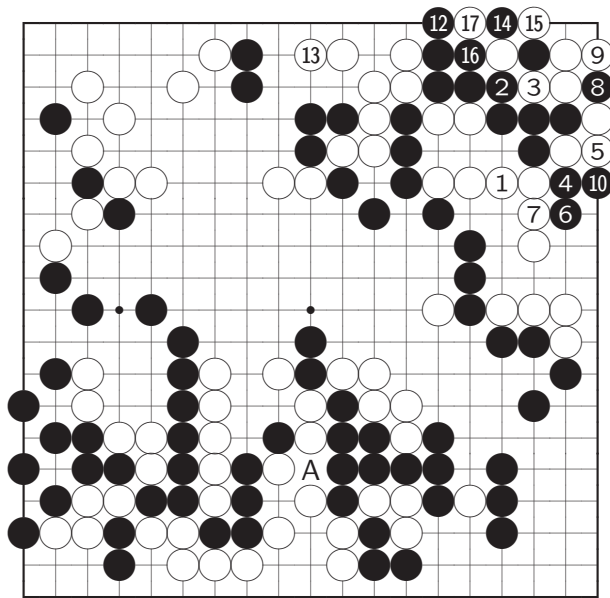


⑪ at ⑧

As mentioned above, defending at ① is also conceivable, but then ⑫ is sente.

Because of that, Black can play ⑭ to ⑱ in sente too, before moving out with ⑳.

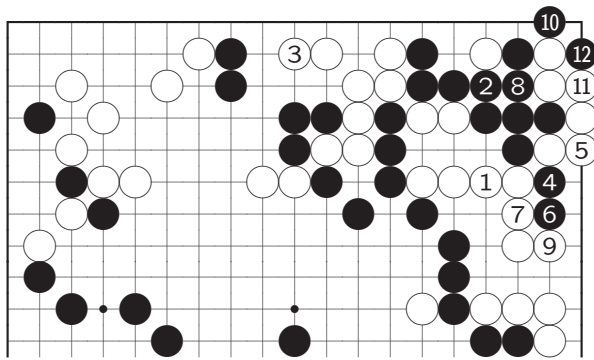
Black is content with this development.



⑪ at ⑧

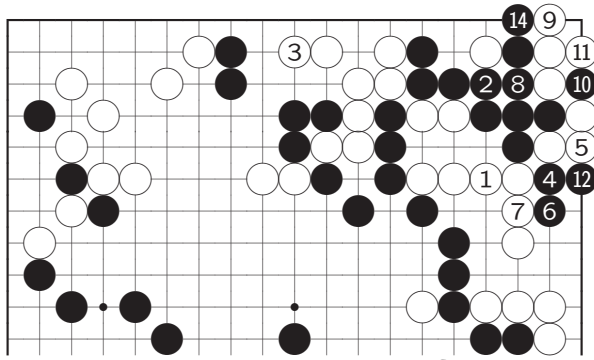
If White resists with ⑬, Black can create a ko fight up to ⑰.

This is a picnic ko for Black and he has some ko threats around A.



If White tries to change the timing of ③, Black can still create a picnic ko in the corner up to ⑫.

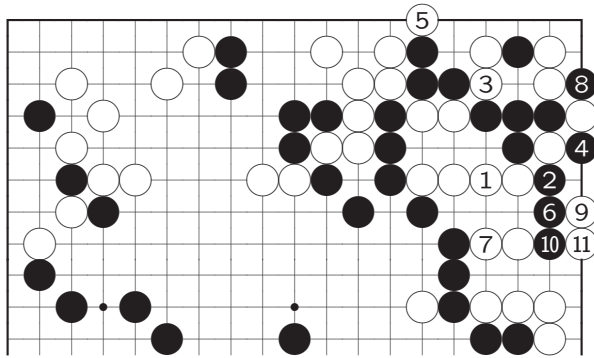
White ⑨ and ⑪ can be transposed in this variation.



Variation 154 for ⑮①

⑬ at ⑩

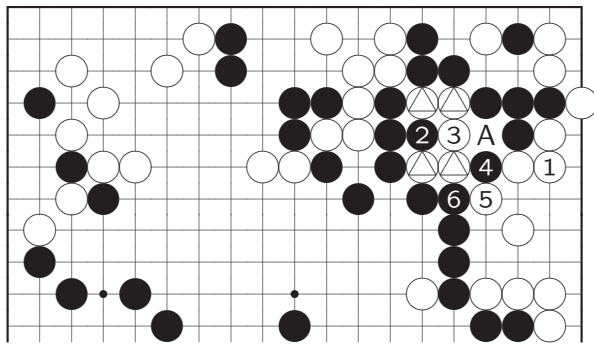
Extending to ⑨ doesn't work either, because Black can throw in at ⑩ and win the capturing race at ⑭.



Variation 155 for ⑮①

Cutting at ② immediately is careless.

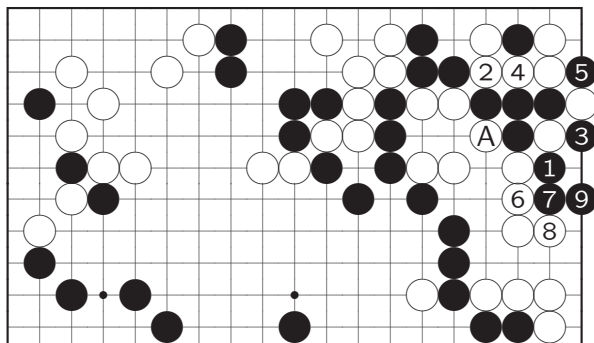
White can capture the whole Black group after cutting at ③ and attacking with ⑨.



Variation 156 for ⑮①

If White just connects at ①, Black can capture White's marked stones in a snapback up to ⑥.

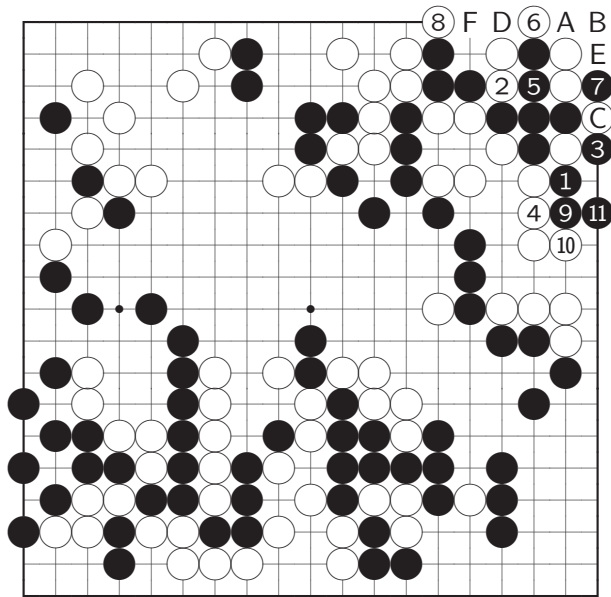
If White captures ④ at A, Black will play at ④ again to recapture six stones.



Variation 157 for ⑮①

After ① (50 in the game), Black can live in the corner through to ⑨ whenever he wants.

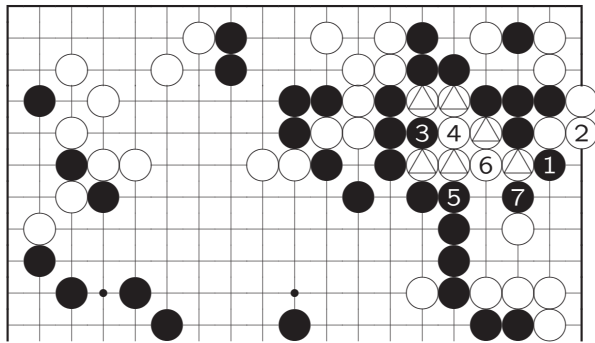
This is frustrating for White, because he has already spent several moves reinforcing this area.



Variation 158 for 151

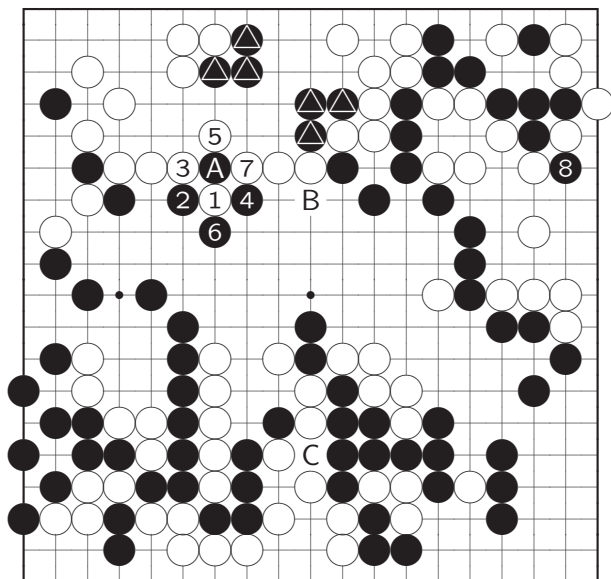
Even if White omits the atari at ⑤, Black can still live up to ⑪ because defending at ⑧ is necessary.

If White plays ⑧ at ⑨, Black A to E makes miai of A and F, so White ends up having to defend at ⑧ anyway.



Variation 159 for 151

White can't connect at ②, because Black can capture the marked cutting stones up to ⑦.



Variation 160 for 154

After Black jumps to A (53 in the game), White might play to capture the marked stones with ①.

However, Black will be happy to sacrifice them in sente, and he can still go back and live with ⑧ next.

Instead of ⑧, B and C are also good continuations.

Play Urgent Points Before Big Points

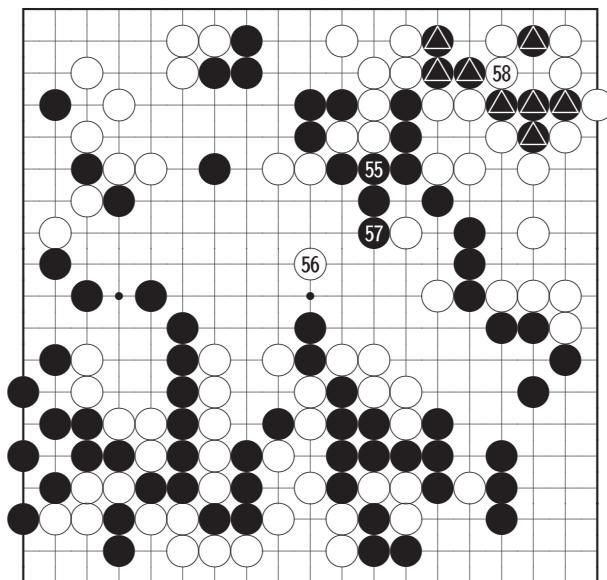
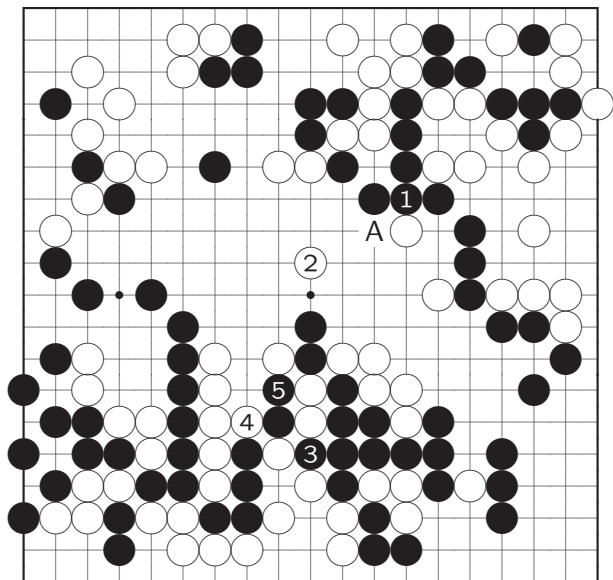


Diagram 28
(Moves: 155-158)

Black ⑤⑤ was another mistake. Lee wanted to fill White's liberties, but this was too much. Gu had a great chance to catch up again now, but he fumbled.

White's cut at ⑤⑧ was very big, because it completely captured Black's marked stones, but continuing in the center was urgent. White ⑤⑧ eventually became the losing move.

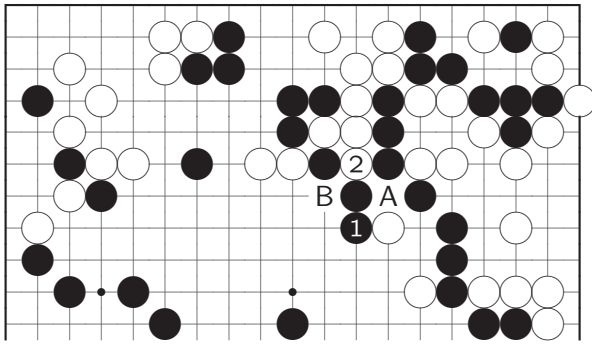
The difference between urgent and big points usually hinges on the possibilities of attack and defense. The top right is only a matter of territory at this stage, but the relative strength and weakness of groups is yet to be resolved in the center. That means taking the initiative in the center is urgent.



Variation 161 for ⑤⑤

Black should just connect at ①. Then he won't have to defend again at A later, and can play ③ and ⑤.

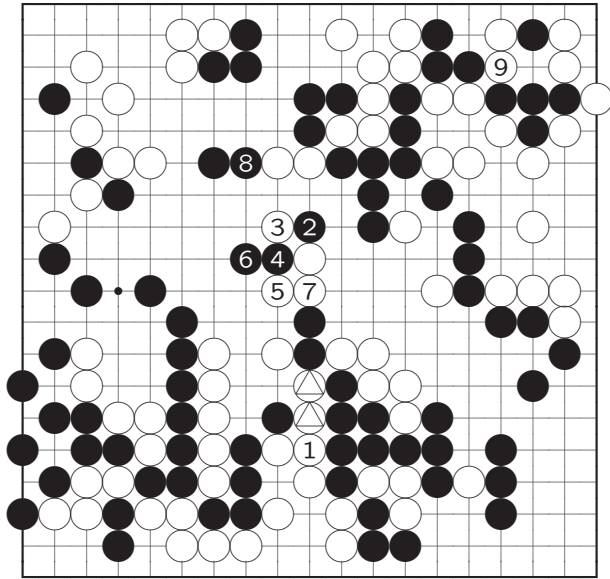
The game has already been reversed, and Black is winning. He doesn't need to do anything fancy at this stage, he only needs to proceed steadily.



Variation 162 for 155

If Black pushes at ① instead, White can atari at ②.

A and B are miai next, so this variation is a failure for Black.



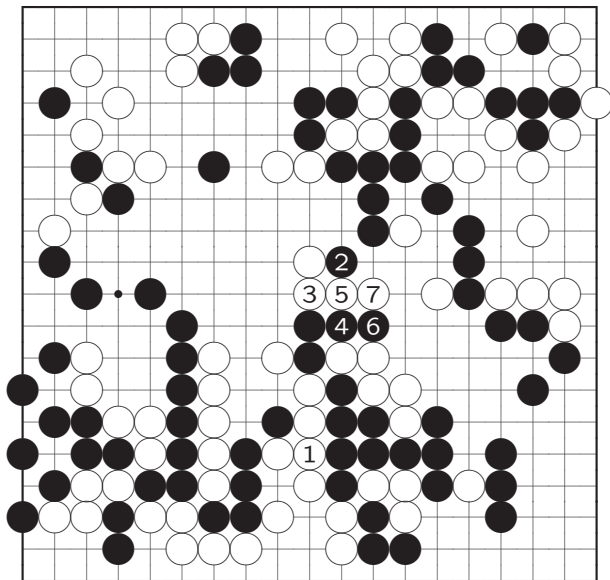
Variation 163 for 158

Instead of capturing Black's top right group, White should save the marked cutting stones with ①.

White's cutting stones are of vital importance in the center, because they affect the relative strength and weakness of groups.

If Black plays ② to ⑧, White keeps sente and can return to the top right with ⑨.

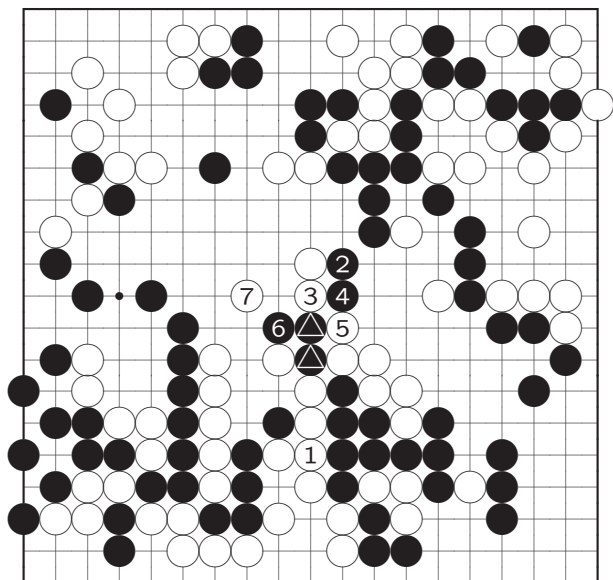
The game is very close after this variation.



Variation 164 for 158

Cutting with ② doesn't work, because White can break through with ③ to ⑦.

This result is good enough for White.

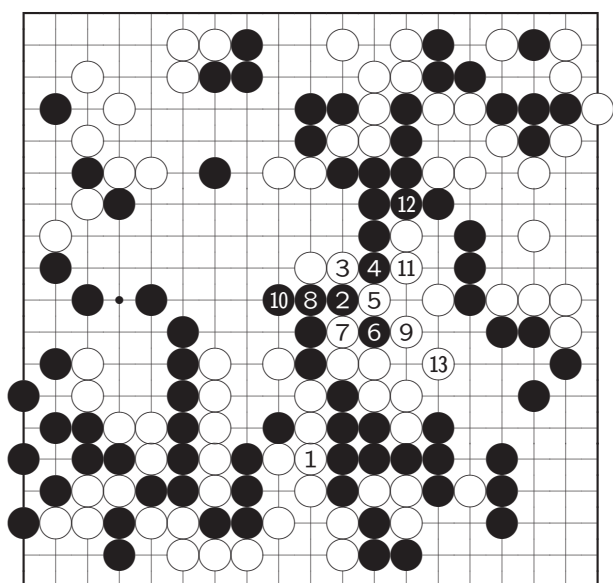


Variation 165 for ⑮⑧

Blocking at ④ doesn't work either.

White ⑦ captures Black's cutting stones in a net.

Though the position make feel thin, you'll find that there's no way for Black's marked stones to escape White's net.



Variation 166 for ⑮⑧

Cutting with ② and ④ isn't any better than the previous variations.

The cut and counter-atari of ⑤ and ⑦ tie Black in a knot, and White can live on the inside up to ⑬.

This variation is a great success for White.

Play Thickly When Winning

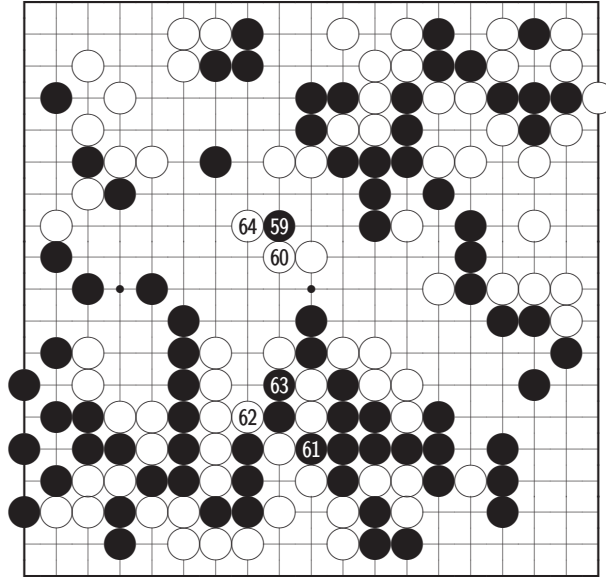
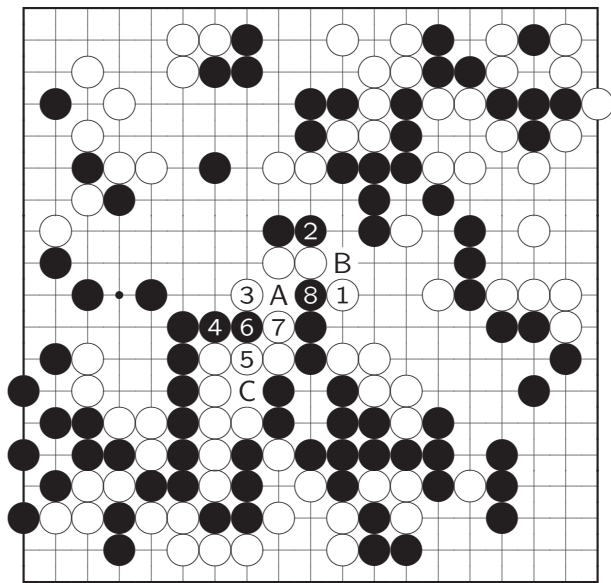


Diagram 29
(Moves: 159-164)

Black felt euphoric when he captured the cutting stones with ⑥① and ⑥③.

After this, Black's groups were all strong and there were no weaknesses to worry about. Black had finally charted a clear route to victory and set sail.

Defending in gote at ⑥④ was painful, but necessary. This was bad news for White.



Variation 167 for ⑥④

White can't connect his center stones after Black becomes thick and powerful in the center.

White ① and ③ are his best attempt, but Black counters strongly with ② to ⑧. After ⑧, A and B are miai (note that A is also sente, because it's atari).

Instead of ⑤, if White blocks at ⑥, Black can double atari with the throw-in at ⑤ (White can't capture at C because it's snapback).

Make Threats from a Distance

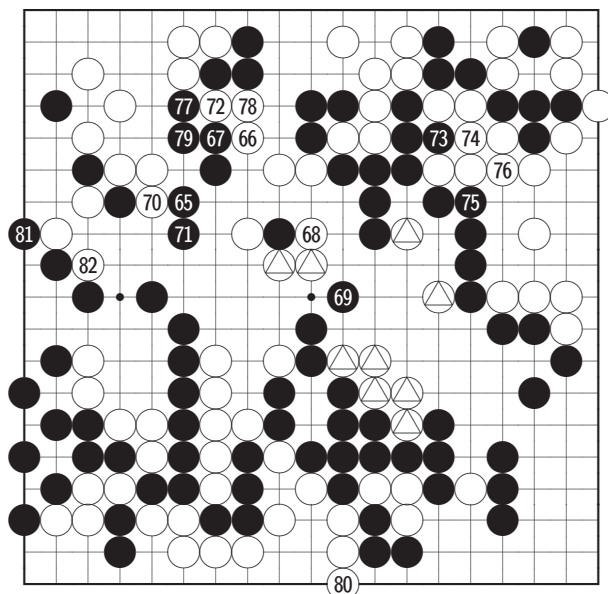
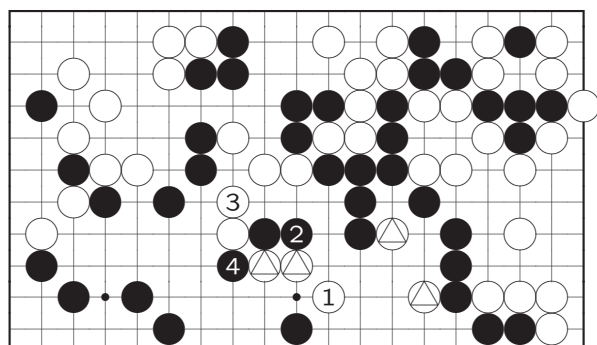


Diagram 30
(Moves: 165-182)

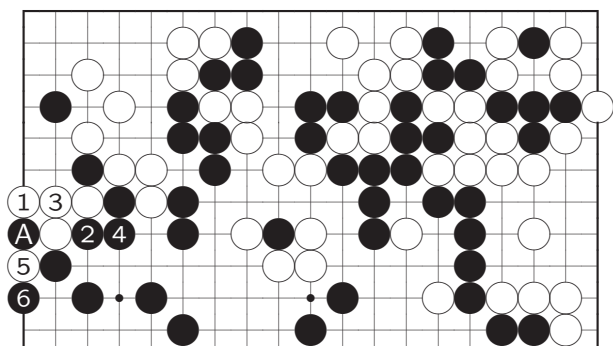
The kosumi at ⑥5 threw a lifeline to Black's group at the top, but its main aim was to attack White's marked stones. When a group cannot be captured, it's more efficient to make threats from a distance. Black completed his center territory with ⑥9, and after ⑦2 Black was leading by 13-14 points on the board. It was too late for White to reverse the game, because Black's positions were thick everywhere.



Variation 168 for ①68

If White tries to save his center stones with ①, Black captures them anyway with ② and ④.

This is why White defended at ② (⑥8 in the game).



Variation 169 for ①82

If White answers A (⑧1) at ①, Black plays ② to ⑥.

Black is now ahead by about 15 points on the board.

Don't Count Your Chickens Before They're Hatched

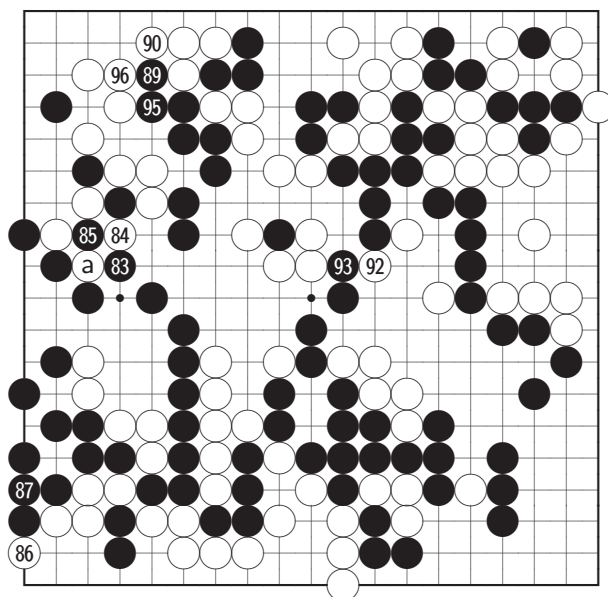
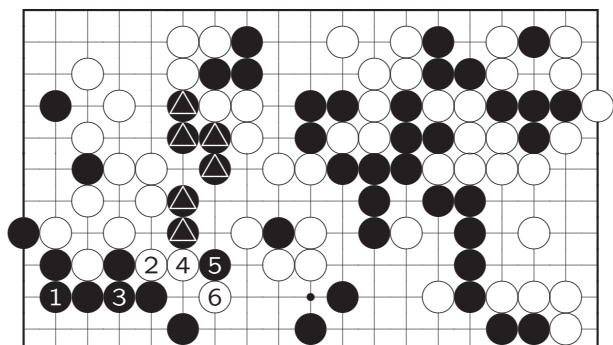


Diagram 31
(Moves: 183-196)

⊙188 ⊙194 at (a), ⊙191 at ⊙185

Even though Black was winning, he couldn't afford to relax yet. Just because the game is practically over, doesn't mean your opponent is going to take it easy. Pay attention! Black had to resist with ⊙85.

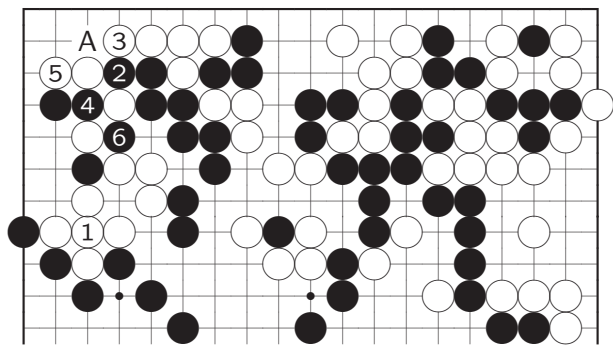


Variation 170 for ⊙185

Black can't fall back to ⊙1.

White will counter-attack up to ⊙6 and Black's marked stones will be captured.

This would be a tragic way for Black to lose the game.



Variation 171 for ⊙196

If White tries to finish the ko with ⊙1, ⊙4 makes miai of ⊙6 and A, and White's corner is razed up to ⊙6.

Gasping for Breath

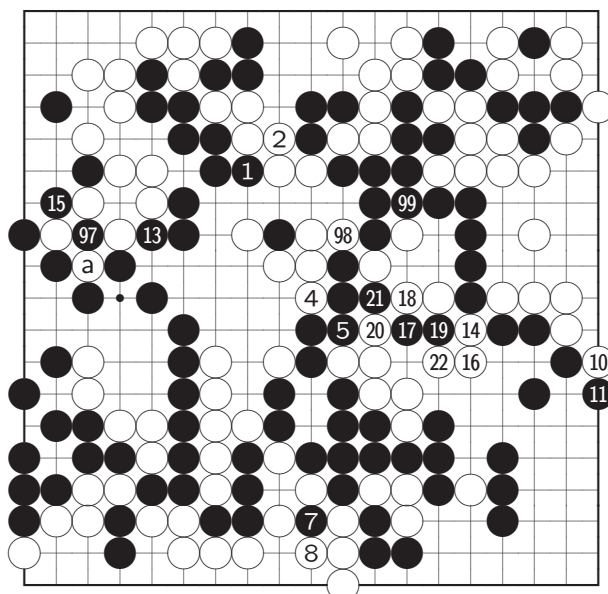


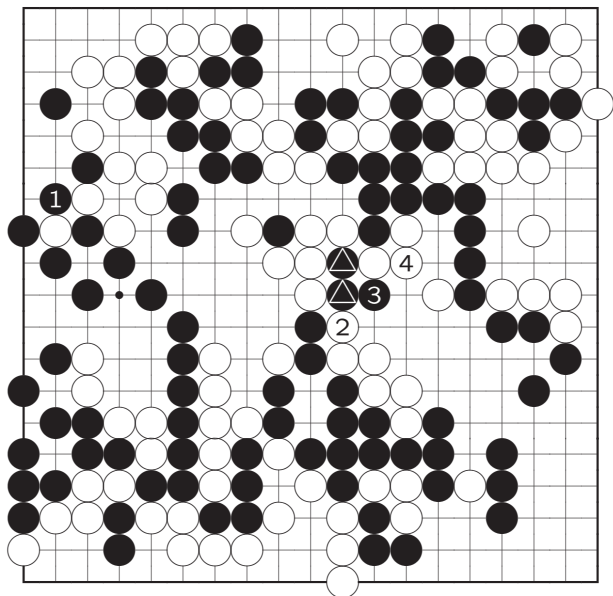
Diagram 32
(Moves: 197-222)

⊙200 ⊙206 ⊙212 at (a), ⊙203 ⊙209 at 197

At this stage, Gu was looking for a place to resign. The white stones didn't have any fight left in them, and neither did Gu.

He already knew that the cut at 14 (214) wasn't a ko threat, but he couldn't win the ko regardless.

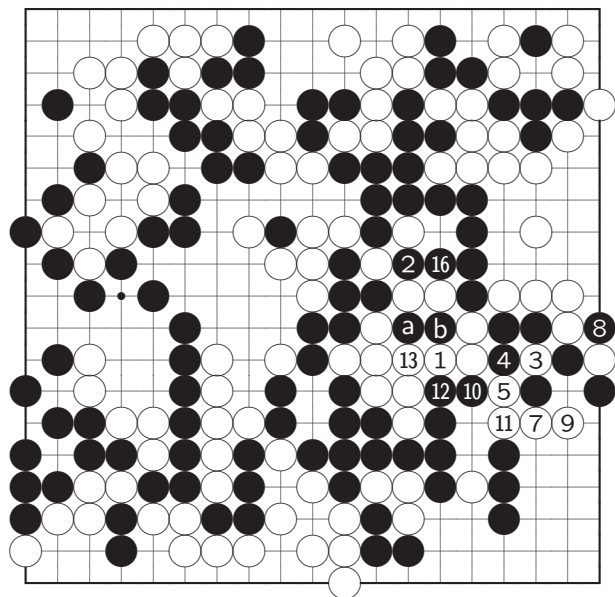
When professionals are going to resign, they often like to wait for a neat place to do so. This custom tests the opponent's reading and helps players to calm their minds, but is also for the edification of Go players who may replay the game later. Think of it as the players answering an unresolved question.



Variation 172 for ⊙205

If Black eliminates the ko with 1, instead of connecting at 2 (5 in the game), White will reverse the game with 2 and 4, capturing the marked stones.

This would be a disaster for Black.



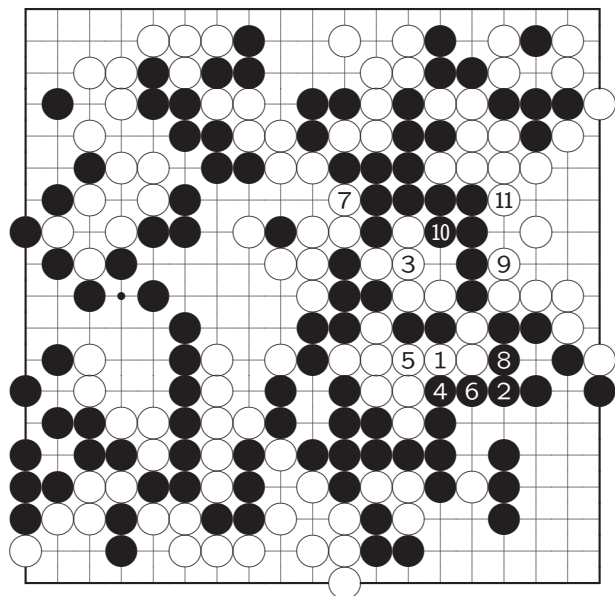
Variation 173 for 222

6 at 3, 14 at a, 15 at b

Even if White throws in and squeezes up to ⑦, it still doesn't work.

After ⑨, Black can cut with ⑩ and win the capturing race, so Gu resigned at 223 in the game.

Instead of ③, if White simply captures at ⑬, Black can defend at ⑤ and White can't make two eyes.



Variation 174 for 222

If Black defends at ② (instead of ③), White can win the capturing race after connecting at ③.

Remember that one eye beats no eye (most of the time).

Lee Sedol Ends His Losing Streak

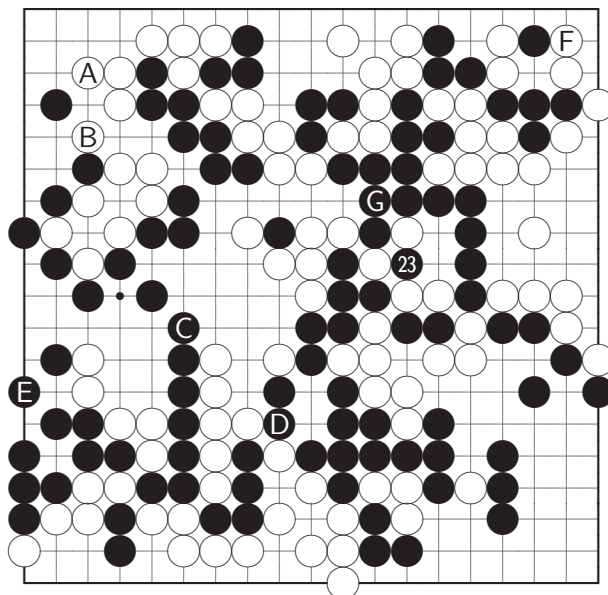


Diagram 33
(Move: 223)

223 moves: Black won by resignation.

This was a difficult game for both players, but for Gu it was tragic.

The opening up to ③② ((A)) flowed smoothly for both players and Gu took an early lead with ③⑧ ((B)).

He maintained his lead for a while with sharp play, but Black's tactics in the bottom left were exquisite and the game became even again up to ⑦③ ((C)).

Black ⑦⑨ ((D)) was dull, and we could see that Lee began to be affected by the altitude.

Black's atari at ①①⑦ ((E)) was a desperate overplay, even though the situation wasn't bad enough to warrant a do or die move. Gu had several golden opportunities after (E), but he let them slip through his fingers.

It looks like Gu Li's concentration really faded around move ①④① ((F)), and he played a number of other questionable moves. He clearly struggled with the high altitude in Shangri-La, which was such a pity.

Black ①④① ((G)) was an excellent move, and Lee's play in the second half of the game was tough and powerful, despite the adverse conditions.

Lee must have felt a great deal of pressure going into this match, because he'd already lost four consecutive games against Gu in the prior month. With this win, he took the lead again, with a score of 3–2 for the match so far.

On the other hand, the result was very unfortunate for Gu. His early play in this game was incredible, and he fought strongly until he started to make mistakes around the time of (E).

It might be difficult to follow parts of this game. The stones didn't flow as smoothly and clearly as they usually do when Lee and Gu play together. Both players struggled with the physical challenges of the location, but we can still learn many things by analyzing their mistakes.

July 27, 2014, Lu'an, Anhui, China: *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

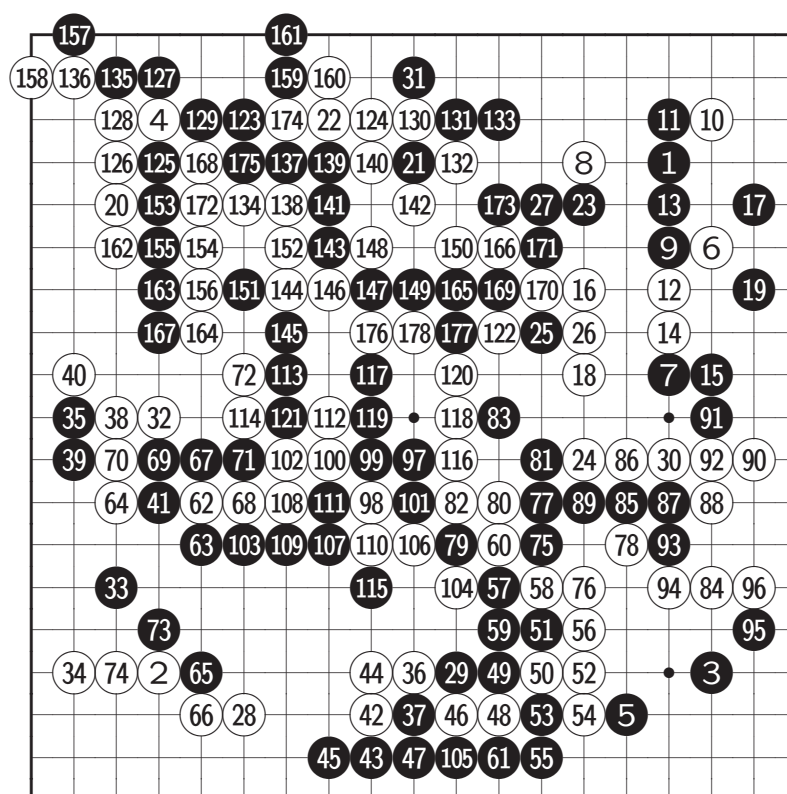


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-178)

Lu'an

Game six of the Jubango was held in Lu'an, Anhui, China, on July 27, 2014. Gu Li held black.

The game was played in the Dabie Mountains, a national park and popular holiday destination on the outskirts of Lu'an. Thankfully for both players, the altitude was nowhere near that of Shangri-La!

There was a two month break between games five and six, because of the 2014 FIFA World Cup. Chinese people like football as much as Go, so the sponsor decided not to schedule a game in June. No doubt Gu was grateful to be able to indulge in another one of his great passions.

Lee Sedol was winning the match 3–2, after a harrowing game in the mountains of Shangri-La.

Because Gu had just lost a ‘won’ game, he was under great pressure from the Chinese media and fans.

We saw earlier that Lee didn't play very well in game four, which was the game played on Lee's home turf in Korea. The weight of expectations in Korea put Lee under significant pressure, because the locals all expected Lee to win.

This game was more important for Gu, because winning it would tie the series at 3–3.

At the beginning of a long match, it's obviously not ideal to lose but you can afford to drop one or two games. As the contest nears its end, however, the situation becomes progressively fraught with each additional loss. Psychologically speaking, there are fewer chances to recover so the stakes increase.

The Parallel Opening

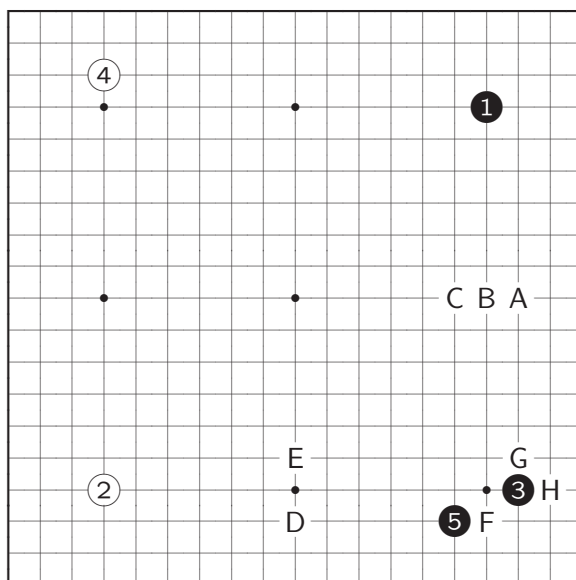


Diagram 2
(Moves: 1-5)

Gu chose to combine a star point at ① with a corner enclosure at ③ and ⑤. This well balanced and popular opening has stood the test of time; so much so that it's simply called the 'Parallel Opening'.

In Chapter 5, we talked about the star point enclosure, but we haven't yet devoted much attention to this standard enclosure, which hinges upon the 3-4 and 5-3 points (③ and ⑤).

Unlike the star point enclosure, the 3-4 point enclosure claims the corner territory in two moves.

This corner enclosure typically leads to a stable and territorial game. It's less active than Chinese style openings or Sanrensei, and when Black plays this opening he anticipates a longer, slower game.

When the standard enclosure is paired with the star point at ①, it combines the best aspects of both formations; the flexibility of the star point and the stability of the corner enclosure. This is why we describe the Parallel Opening as well balanced.

The primary direction of development for the standard enclosure is towards the right side (around A or B) rather than the bottom. This is because the enclosure is 'taller' on the right side than it is at the bottom.

You can see this by imagining a box sketched out by ③, ⑤, A and C. The resulting box is taller overall than one sketched by ③, ⑤, D and E. This means Black has more potential on the right side in this case, but if ③ and ⑤ were moved to F and G, the bottom would become the primary direction.

Even though this enclosure has more potential on the right side, it's more powerful towards the bottom. This is because the formation is solid and tight in its orientation towards the bottom.

Think of the enclosure as being like a sword. The tip points keenly towards the bottom while the handle is at ③. It's dangerous to come too close to the tip and easier to make contact with the handle around G or H. This analogy also applies to the star point enclosure.

This means the bottom becomes less interesting to White than the other three sides after ⑤, because it's not good to play too close to power and the potential at the bottom is already limited by ⑤.

Control the Options

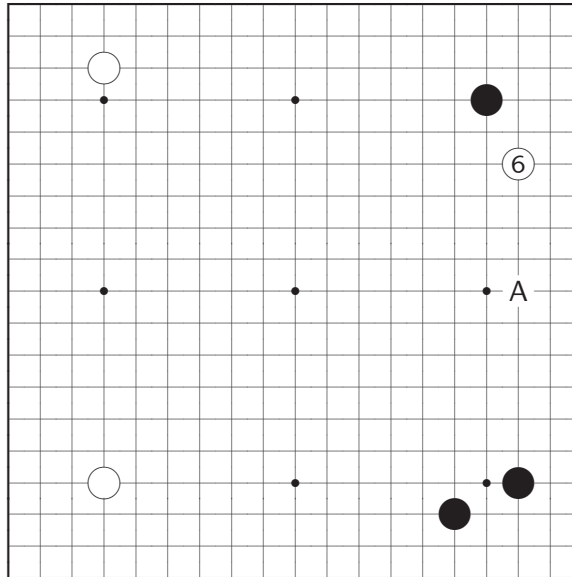


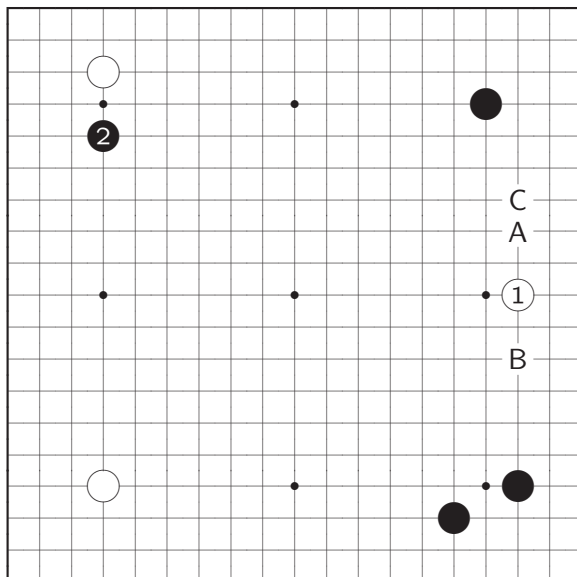
Diagram 3
(Move: 6)

Many players regarded splitting the right side at A as practically the only move in this formation, until around 2006. Surprisingly, this doctrine held sway for decades beforehand.

However, approaching at ⑥ has become more common than A, since about 2008.

When White plays ⑥, he seeks to retain the initiative and control Black's options on the right side. This leads to a more active and complicated opening for both players (compared to ⑥ at A).

Black can choose any card he wants, but he is playing the hand White has dealt.



Variation 1 for ⑥

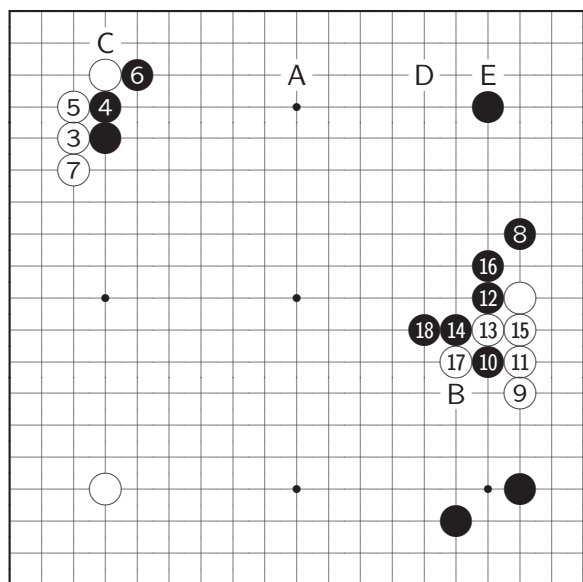
Splitting the right side with ① is still possible, and makes miai of extensions on either side.

This leads to another game.

The reason why it has become less common to play at ① is that Black can choose between moves like A, B and C later, depending on how the game develops.

For the time being, Black will approach around ②, planning to come back to the right side later, after seeing how White responds in the top left.

This idea will become clearer in the variations that follow.



Variation 2 for ⑥

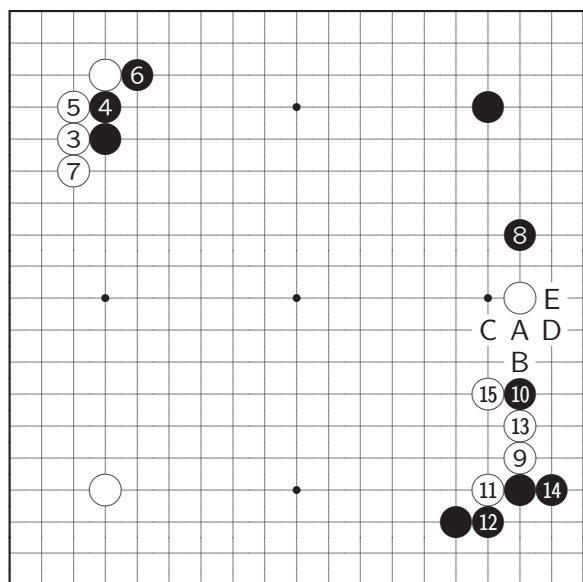
For example, one option is to take the corner territory with ③. This is a natural response in the top left, but Black is planning to exchange the initial moves of the avalanche joseki, from ④ to ⑦, and then tenuki to pressure White with ⑧.

Extending to ⑨ is also natural, but pressing White down with ⑩ and ⑫ is a technique which Black has already planned to employ.

The continuation up to ⑮ can be expected and Black has good followups around A, B and C. White would like to continue at B, C, D or E, but he can only choose one move.

Since Black has many options and a great deal of potential at the top through to the center, the position is like a textbook definition of *wide*.

More than wide though, this variation is simply better for Black.

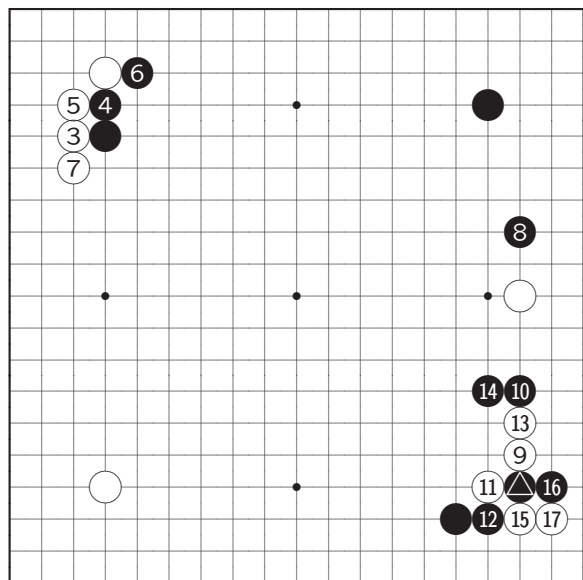


Variation 3 for ⑥

Attaching at ⑨ is an improvised solution, intending to counter Black's strategy in the previous variation.

Black ⑩ is a good way to resist, but White can still manage the situation up to ⑮.

Since Black can still attach at A later—and respond to B with C to E—there's a better sequence for White here.

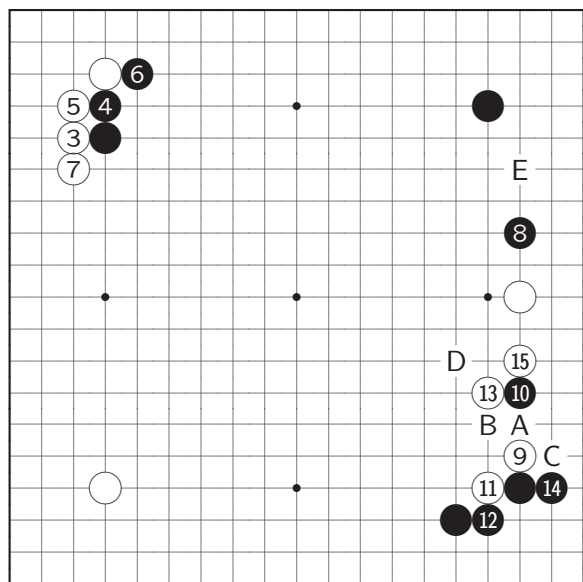


Variation 4 for ⑥

First, we should see how ⑬ works.

If Black extends solidly to ⑭, White is aiming to cut at ⑮. The result up to ⑰ is better for White because the marked stones are captured.

In other words, ⑬ is a tesuji which makes miai of ⑭ and ⑮.



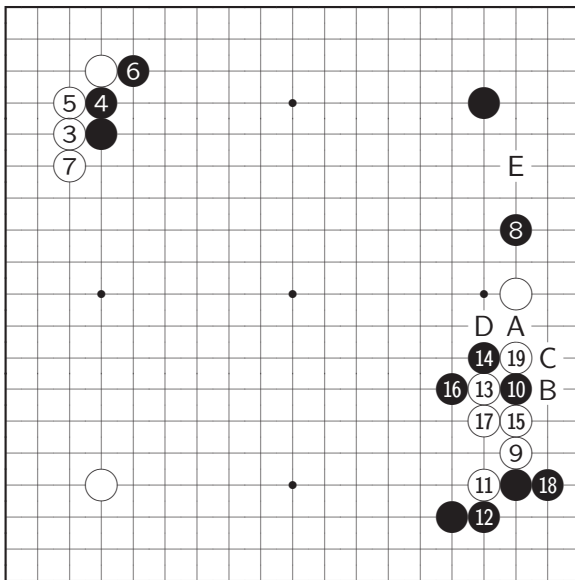
Variation 5 for ⑥

Attaching at ⑬ is lighter, and is a more sophisticated expression of the ideas behind ⑬ in the previous variation.

If Black still descends at ⑭, the result up to ⑮ is slightly better for White because the aji that we saw in Variation 3 isn't present here.

If Black continues with A to C, White will defend at D and his group is stronger than before.

Once White settles in the bottom right, Black's thinness around E is exposed.



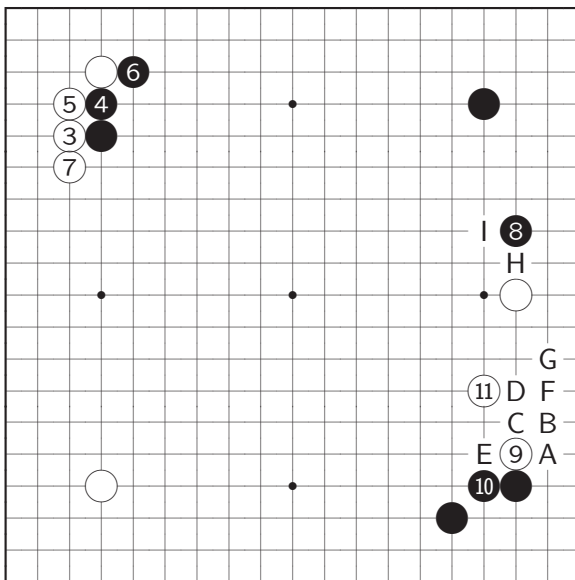
Variation 6 for ⑥

If Black knows what White's plan is, he should resist with ⑭ and force with ⑮ in sente before defending the corner at ⑱.

Up to ⑲, the local result is even. This is an example of the evolution of joseki.

If Black plays A to C later, White can counter-atari at D and crush the incursion.

However, most professionals still prefer to approach at E, as in Diagram 3, to avoid this situation entirely.



Variation 7 for ⑥

Extending stoutly to ⑩ is slack in this situation.

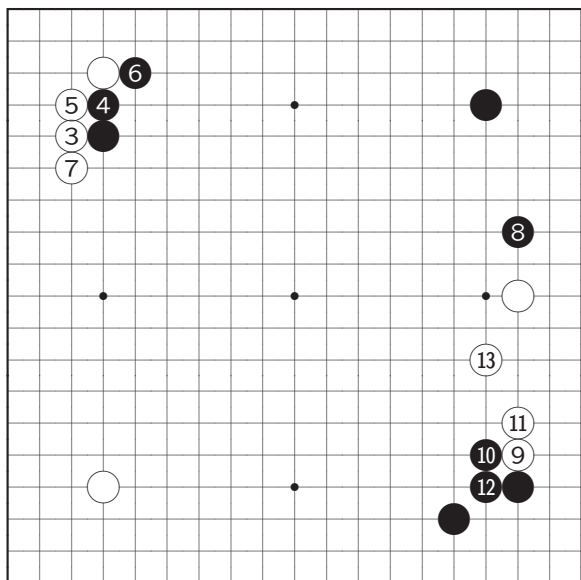
White will be happy to make shape with ⑪ and it's harder than before for Black to press him down.

If Black hanes at A later, White will adopt a scorched earth policy from White B to Black E, after which he can play elsewhere.

You can consider this tactic when your opponent attacks light stones with premature moves like A.

If Black ataris at F (after Black A to E and White's tenuki), fighting spirit demands that White further scorches the earth with G and tenukis once again.

Instead of F, Black G is a stronger followup, but White is ready to meet it flexibly with H. This makes miai of F and I.

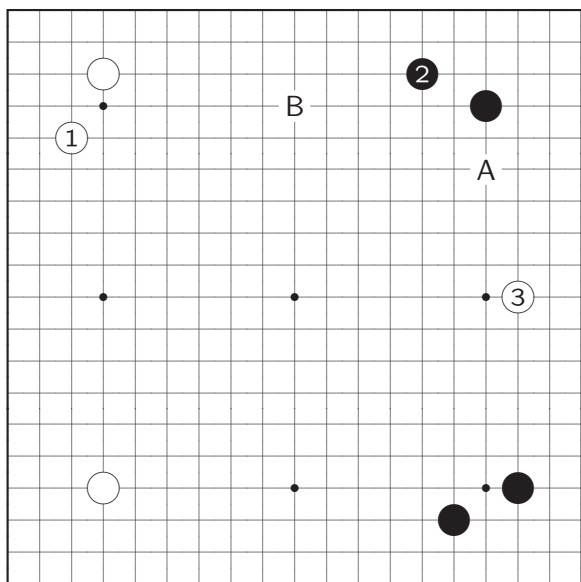


Variation 8 for ⑥

The hane and connection of ⑩ and ⑫ is also too soft on White.

Up to ⑬, White settles with an ideal shape on the right side and is much thicker and more powerful than in the previous variations.

Because White's group in the bottom right is thick, it will be harder for Black to manage his developing framework at the top.



Variation 9 for ⑥

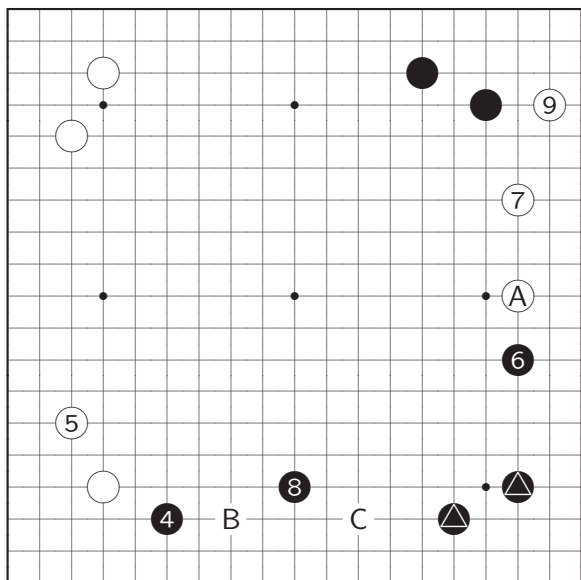
Enclosing the top left corner with ① leads to another game.

It used to be common for Black to develop the right side around ③ in this situation, but ② is more in keeping with the contemporary style of play.

If Black plays at ③ (instead of ②), White can approach from the wider side with ②; and if Black A and White B follow, White will build a position at the top to challenge Black's right side.

This is another example of how the emphasis of play has shifted to focus more on the whole board and less on ideal local developments. We'll discuss this in more detail in Chapter 7.

Continuing...



Variation 10 for ⑥

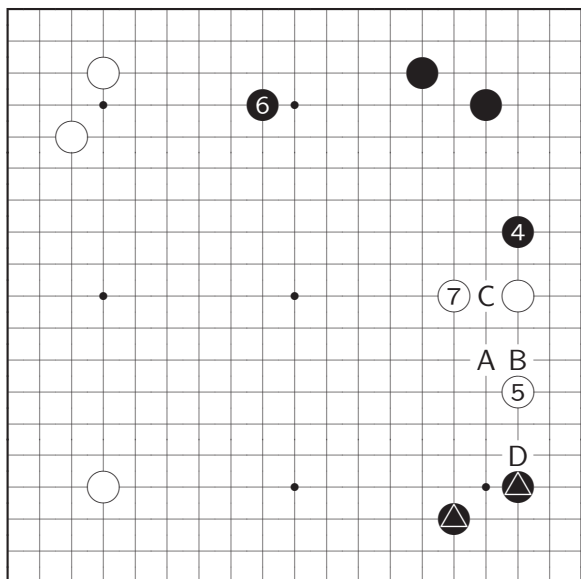
If Black plays to develop the bottom right quadrant with ④ to ⑧, White will slide into the corner with ⑨ and settle comfortably.

It used to be very common for Black to approach White's splitting play at A from the direction of his marked enclosure with ⑥.

This way of thinking seeks to develop the potential of the corner enclosure, but it isn't necessarily best because Black's potential on the right side has already been reduced by ①A.

White is able to settle his stones on the right side while taking territory and undermining Black's top right group slightly with ⑨.

Black can't easily complete his moyo at the bottom, because White can invade at either B or C later.



Variation 11 for ⑥

Corner enclosures don't just create potential, they also store power by establishing a tight and solid base.

When Black approaches at ④, he's thinking more about using the power stored in the marked stones than developing their potential on the right side.

White ⑤ doesn't threaten Black's corner enclosure because it's already strong, so Black will develop the top right quadrant with ⑥. Since Black aims to pressure White with A to C next, jumping to ⑦ is natural.

Compared to ⑨ in the previous variation, ⑦ in this variation is smaller and more constrained. This is because the standard enclosure grips the corner more tightly than the star point enclosure (both stones are on the third line), so it's hard for White to settle comfortably on the right side.

Instead of ⑤, White should attach at D, but the direction of play nevertheless requires ④ from Black.

Star Points Like to Pincer Firmly

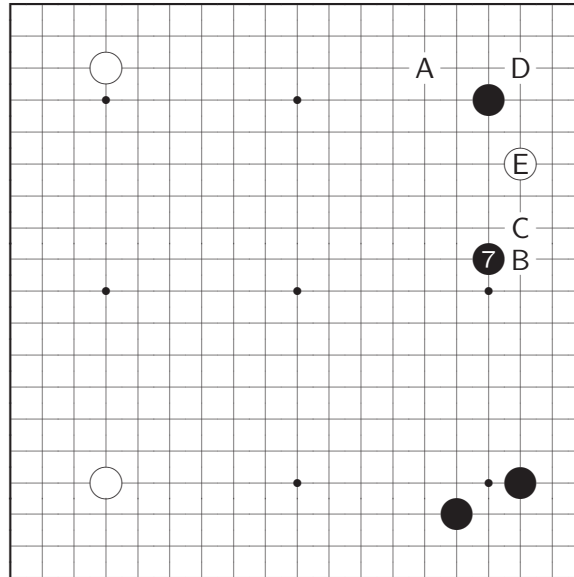


Diagram 4
(Move: 7)

Gu chose the two space high pincer at 7. Black could also consider playing at A, B or C instead.

There are always many paths, especially in the opening, so it helps to develop a feeling for what the stones would like to do when developing naturally.

The most important factor to consider is the whole board and what it asks of you. That is a deep topic, but we touch on it many times throughout this book. The next most important factors are the strengths, weaknesses and properties of the stones in the local position.

Star point stones are not as deeply rooted in the corner as 3-4 or 3-3 point stones. They float a little more lightly towards the center and this is what gives them their flexibility and influence.

The tradeoff is that they don't provide as firm a foundation for attacking with a pincer. Locally speaking, your opponent always has the option of trading with White D, as we saw in Chapter 2.

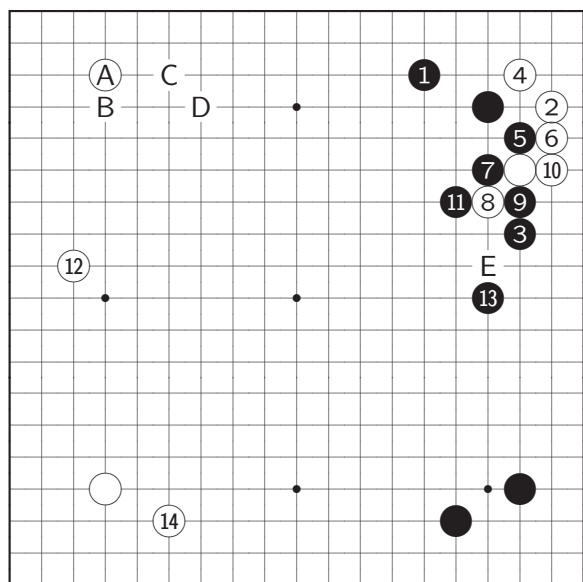
Because of these weaknesses, what the star point likes most of all is responding to the approach at E with the corner enclosure at A. This gives the star point a stronger base and prepares to attack a little later (rather than immediately with a pincer). It's another example of controlling the options.

If you decide to pincer for broader strategic reasons, the star point prefers that you play a firm pincer—one or two spaces away from E—instead of a loose three space pincer. This is because the star point itself is already a bit loose, and three space pincers typically allow the opponent more tactical leeway.

The preference for a firmer pincer when playing the star point is yet another example of controlling the options. If you give White too much leeway, he will be able to take the initiative with clever tactics.

This is by no means a hard and fast rule, and there will be many exceptions, but if you remember that star points like to enclose the corner or pincer firmly, it will serve you well.

These concepts are sometimes hard to grasp, so let's have a look at some practical examples.



Variation 12 for 7

Enclosing the corner with 1 is the most common move in this opening, and the joseki up to 11 can be anticipated.

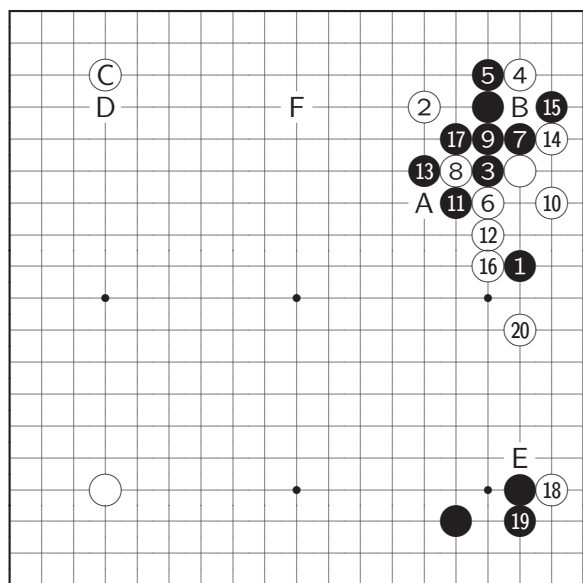
However, it's less desirable when White's top left corner stone is placed at A (rather than B).

That's because White can establish a Chinese style formation on the left side (with 12) in this opening.

This position is more efficient for White than if he'd started with a two star opening (A at B), because White will end up with better shape if Black approaches around C or D to expand his moyo.

Gu Li pincered at E (7) in the game because of this.

If A were at B, Black might play an asking move at C (instead of 3).



Variation 13 for 7

The two space low pincer and the joseki that follows (from 1 to 17) were popular between 2008–2009.

White 2, 4 and 6 are flexible tactics which aim to deform Black's shape and resist his pincer at 1.

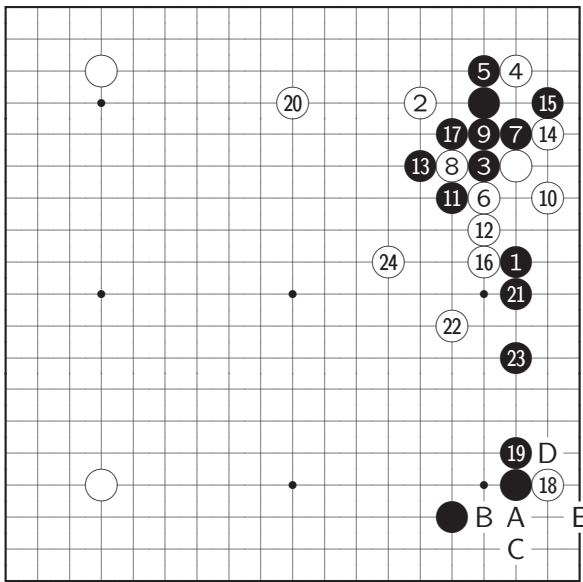
Pushing at 16 is the key move, making miai of 17 and 20. If Black plays 17 at 20, White can extend at 17 and the ladder at A and cut at B will be miai.

Lee (Black) and Gu played the moves up to 20 in the 13th LG Cup final, in 2009 (see Chapter 25).

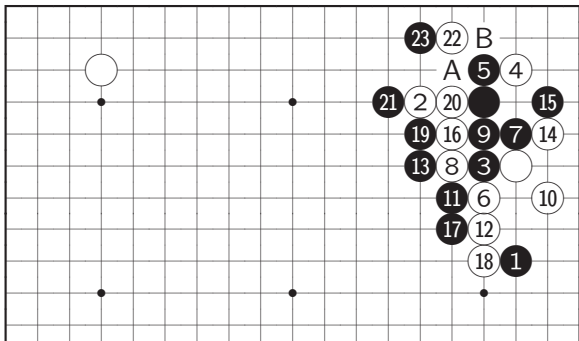
White C was placed at D, but the moves on the right side were the same.

In that game, White played 18 and 20. At the time, Gu's probe at 18 was a new move in this opening.

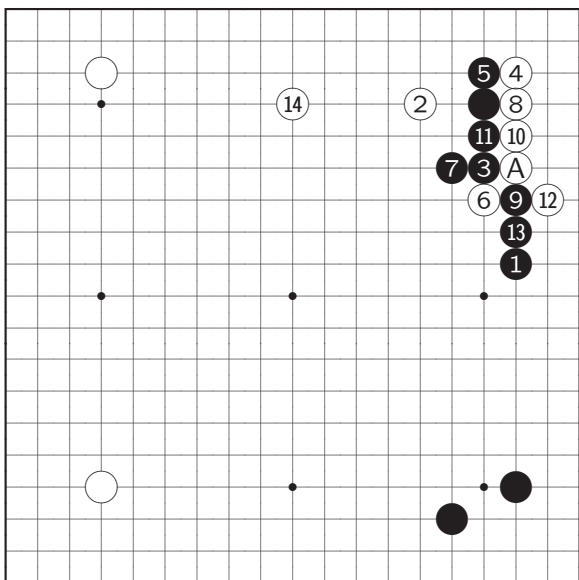
After 20, E and F were miai, and professionals concluded that the opening up to 18 is better for White.



Variation 14 for ⑦



Variation 15 for ⑦



Variation 16 for ⑦

If Black responds to White's probe with ⑱, White will play at the top with ⑳, because the right side has become smaller for both players.

Black will move out with ㉑ and ㉓, but White will be satisfied to move into the center up to ㉔.

White can still come back and live inside the corner with A to E later. That's why White plays ⑱ before deciding whether to tenuki.

White shouldn't rush to live in the corner with A, however, because the corner is small in the grand scheme of things and spending another move there is gote for either player.

We would expect A to come much later in the game.

Attempting to rescue the cutting stone with ⑱ is an overplay.

Black will attack with ⑱ and ㉑, after exchanging ⑱ for ⑱ in sente.

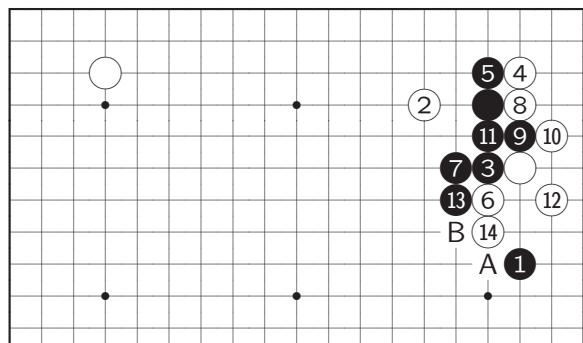
Black's attachment at ㉓ is a useful tesuji and White's four stones are paralyzed, because A and B are miai.

This is why White offers to trade at ⑱ instead of playing ⑱, as in Variation 13.

Extending at ⑦ is also possible.

White is aiming to connect ① and ④ with ⑧, and cutting at ⑨ is the right continuation for Black.

The result up to ⑭ is even.

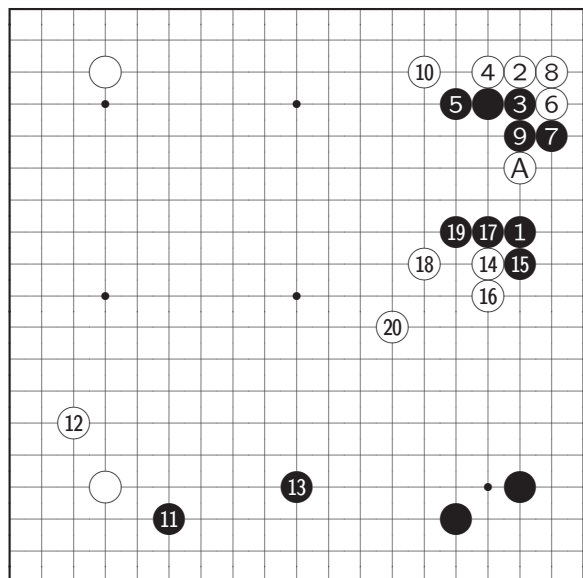


Variation 17 for ⑦

The wedge at ⑨ doesn't coordinate properly with Black's low pincer at ①.

As you can see, Black can't seal White in and Black's stones (① and ⑬) have been split in two by ⑭.

If ① is at A, the moves up to ⑬ are playable, because after ⑭ Black can block at B and A becomes a powerful hane.



Variation 18 for ⑦

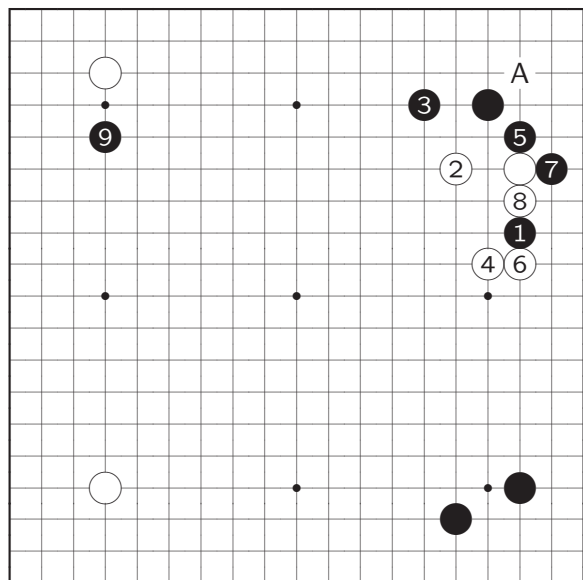
The one space low pincer used to be the most common move for Black in this opening and is still playable.

However, most professionals don't like ① in this opening anymore, because White can trade for the corner territory up to ⑩ and later reduce the right side at ⑭.

For example, if Black enlarges his moyo with ⑪ and ⑬, it's a good time for White to reduce at ⑭.

Black pushes with ⑮ and ⑰ to prevent White from playing at those points and utilizing A.

After ⑱, ⑲ is the vital point and White can skip away lightly with ⑳. White doesn't need to save all his stones when reducing like this. He only needs to maintain a viable group in this area.

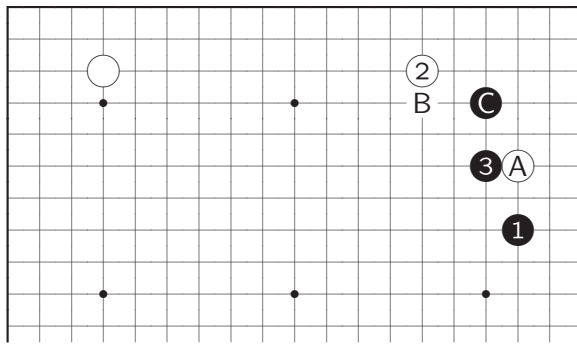


Variation 19 for ⑦

White sometimes used to resist Black's pincer by jumping to ② and pressing at ④.

When White does this, his plan is to stop Black from developing the right side into a large moyo, but trading at A as in the previous variation is better for White and most players don't like to play ② and ④ anymore, except in special circumstances.

Black is developing a large corner up to ⑦, and can take sente with ⑨, so he's quite satisfied.

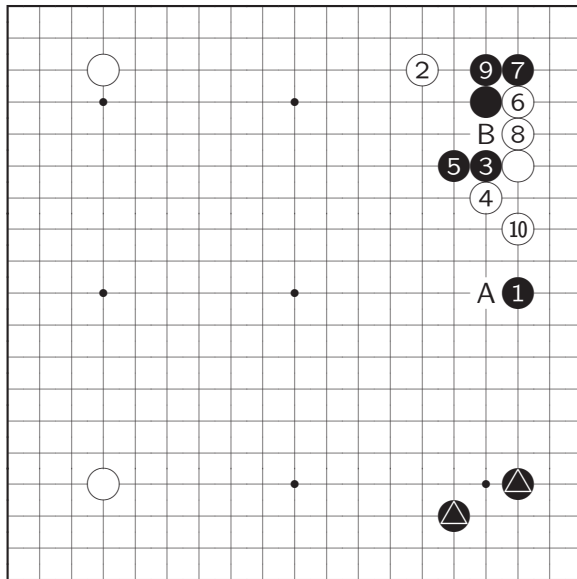


Variation 20 for 7

When you play a firm pincer like ❶, attaching at ❸ and sealing in ㊤ is generally the best response to a counter-pincer like ②.

There's a Go proverb which advises us to, "Attach to the stronger stone," which would mean attaching to ② at B in this case—the idea being to accumulate power in order to attack Ⓐ, but that's not best here.

Fundamentally, connecting ❶ and ❷ around the outside with ❸, and enclosing ④, is more important. Surround your opponent, and stay connected.



Variation 21 for 7

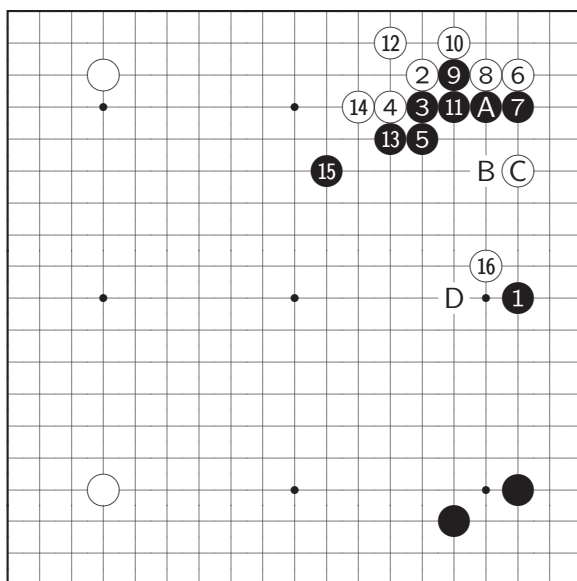
The three space low pincer at ❶ looks efficient in terms of developing Black's marked corner enclosure.

However, as we discussed earlier, three space pincers like **1** don't apply enough pressure to White when combined with the star point.

White can harass Black's corner with strong-arm tactics and ③ isn't good because Black can't connect to ①, and White becomes stronger up to ⑩.

Furthermore, Black can't easily capture ② and there's still a cutting point at B. White can also play like this when ① is at A.

In special circumstances ❶ might still be best. For example, if the position at the top of the board is already settled, and is small. However, those situations are rare and generally this pincer is too loose.



Variation 22 for 7

Because ❶ is far away, it isn't really possible for Black to connect ❶ and ❶ by attaching at B.

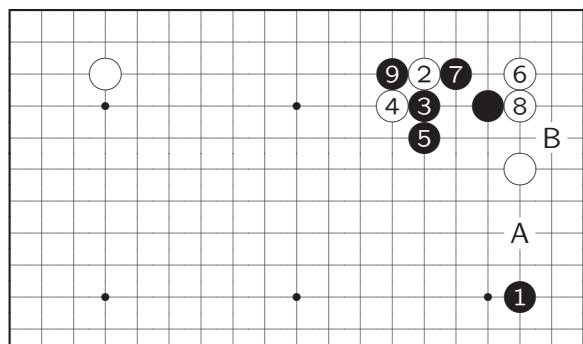
Because of that, aiming to attack ㊦ with the leaning attack at ③ is a better strategy than trying to connect with B (feint to the east, attack the west).

Entering the corner at ⑥ makes miai of ⑦ and ⑧, so it's the easiest continuation for White. Blocking at ⑦ works well in handicap games, but in even games it's slack because White gains too much territory.

Turning at 13 and flying to 15 are both important moves which occupy the pivot points for influence.

However, it's difficult for Black to use this wall effectively, and White can even play at (16) immediately.

If Black plays 13 or 15 at D, White will immediately seize the pivot point at 13 or 15 respectively.



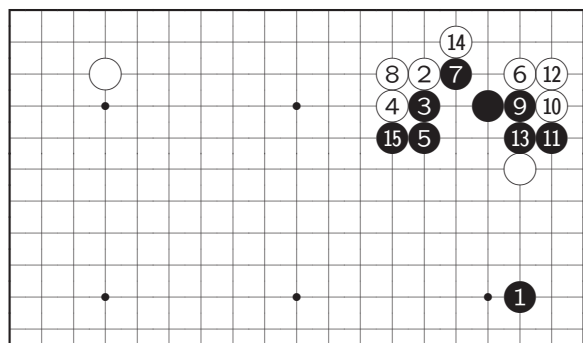
Variation 23 for 7

Instead of blocking at ⑧ (⑦ in the previous variation), forming a tiger's mouth with ⑦ is better style. This makes ⑧ and ⑨ miai.

Connecting with ⑧ is natural and Black can settle his group with ⑨.

White takes sente and ① ends up in the wrong place. It would be better if ① were at A (aiming at B next).

This means the result up to ⑨ is slightly better for White. He also has a more severe option for ⑧...



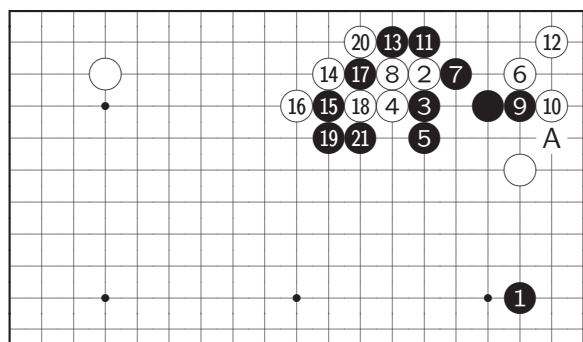
Variation 24 for 7

The previous variation was good for White, but connecting at ⑧ is energetic and fighting oriented. White aims to connect at ⑨ or ⑭ next.

If Black blocks at ⑨, White will trade with ⑩ to ⑭.

Black ⑮ is the pivot point for influence, but White has built a large corner territory in sente and can play at the bottom now.

This result is marginally better for White.



Variation 25 for 7

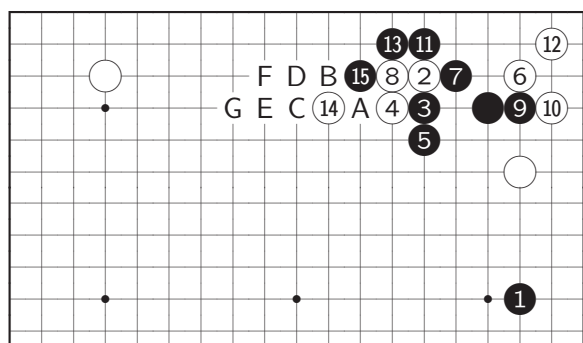
Resisting with ⑪ is active.

Connecting with ⑫ is a stylish response and ⑬ is an important continuation.

If White makes shape with ⑭, ⑮ hits the vital point and ⑰ is an excellent tesuji for squeezing White.

Black's group in the center becomes powerful and can't easily be attacked. This result is a little better for Black because ⑭ wasn't the best move.

If White plays ⑫ at ⑬, Black will hane at A.



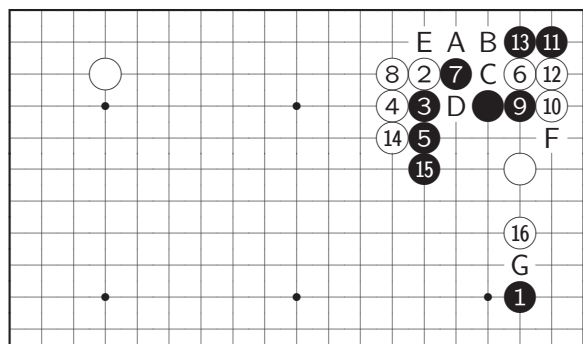
Variation 26 for 7

After ⑬, White's vital point is actually at ⑭, so White should play there without delay.

The simple looking hane at ⑮ is a surprisingly good move, which aims to make White heavy. If White connects at A, Black will settle with B to G in sente.

White doesn't want to lose sente in the opening, so he should tenuki to play at the bottom now.

Joseki books recommend ⑮ at B, but then White can sacrifice lightly with D, ⑮ and White C. Black ⑮ is more interesting, but White is still slightly better.



Variation 27 for 7

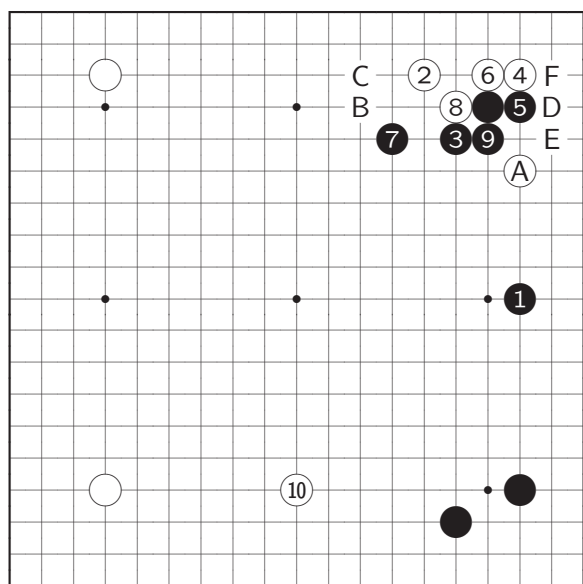
When Black has a pincer at ①, he needs to search for a path that makes it work efficiently.

Peeping at ⑪ is an interesting tesuji and Black can connect and settle with ⑬, even though it looks thin.

If White tries to cut with A to C, Black D makes miai of E and F.

After ⑯, ① is checking White's group nicely and the result is even. Both groups are stable for now.

If there were no pincer at ①, White would play ⑯ at G and the result would be better for White.



Variation 28 for 7

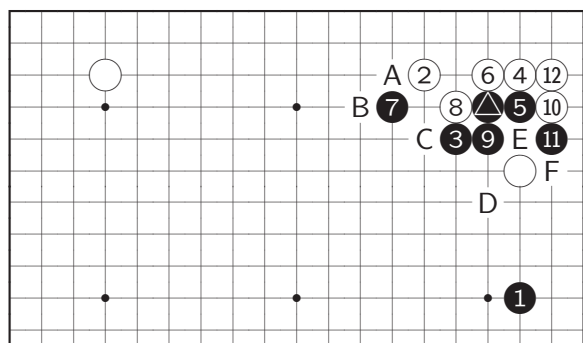
The kosumi at ③ is usually regarded as slack, except when it's used to take sente after ④.

However, taking sente after ④ doesn't make sense when Black has pincer at ①, because Black's original plan was to attack ①.

White's corner is already alive up to ⑧, so White doesn't need to play at B unless the potential at the top is very large.

White can take sente after ⑨, and ⑩ is a big point in this opening. This move reduces Black's moyo on the right side while developing the bottom left.

After ⑩, if Black plays at C, White can hane and connect with D to F. If Black plays at D, White can develop with B. These points are miai for White.



Variation 29 for 7

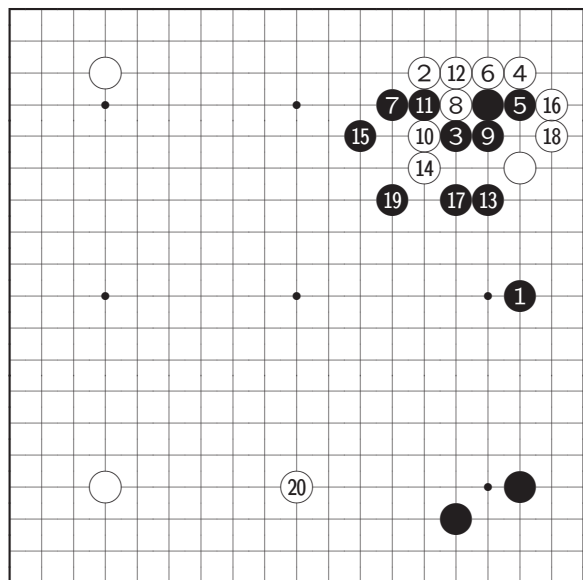
Black ⑦ makes a stronger attempt at pressing White down.

White shouldn't exchange A for B (and so on), because this gives Black the power he wants to develop.

If the ladder after White C favors Black, White can hane and connect with ⑩ and ⑫ instead.

Next, Black has to choose between D and E. Black D protects the cutting point at C (with a net), but leaves White with a big endgame move at F.

Black E is territorially tighter, but leaves bad aji at C. Professionals don't like this variation for Black, because ⑤ and the marked stone become useless.



Variation 30 for 7

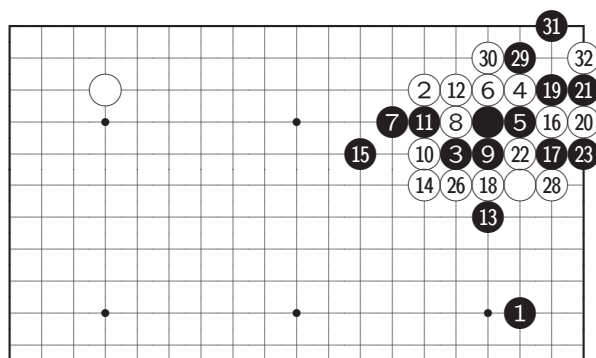
When the ladder favors White, he can also hane and fight with ⑩.

Pressing with ⑬ and extending to ⑭ is natural. Black plays at ⑮ to prevent White from pressing there.

White's hane at ⑯ looks innocent, but it's a dangerous move which aims to ensnare Black in a capturing race.

Making shape with ⑰ and capturing the cutting stones with ⑱ is correct, but White is nevertheless satisfied with ⑲ and ⑳.

Black is short of territory and White's corner is rather large. Capturing White's two stones isn't usually good enough in the early opening, but it's a plausible strategy in a cosmic style or handicap game.



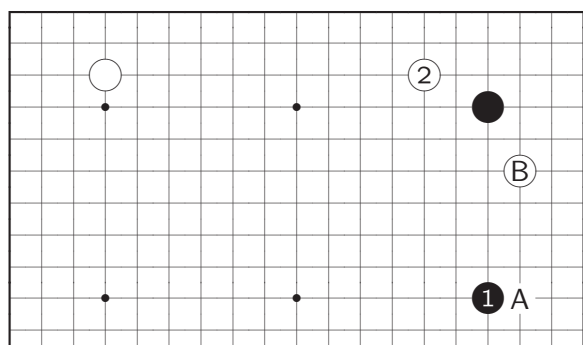
Variation 31 for 7

②④ ②⑦ at ①⑥, ②⑤ at ②⑩

Black would like to block at ⑰, but it's an overplay. White controls the options with ⑲ and Black is in serious trouble.

Descending at ⑳ initiates the tombstone squeeze, and throwing in at ㉔ (①⑥) is an important touch.

Up to ㉓ Black is crushed and his corner stones are dead.



Variation 32 for 7

The three space high pincer at ① is also a little loose when combined with a star point corner. It can, however, be effective if reducing White's right side potential is the most important factor.

The variations are similar to those we've reviewed for the three space low pincer at A, and we saw this pincer in Chapter 3, so we won't go over it again.

As you may appreciate from the last four pages, Black doesn't usually tenuki or play a loose pincer (e.g. ①) when White approaches the star point at ②, because counter-pincering at ② is quite forceful.

Attach to the Weaker Stone?

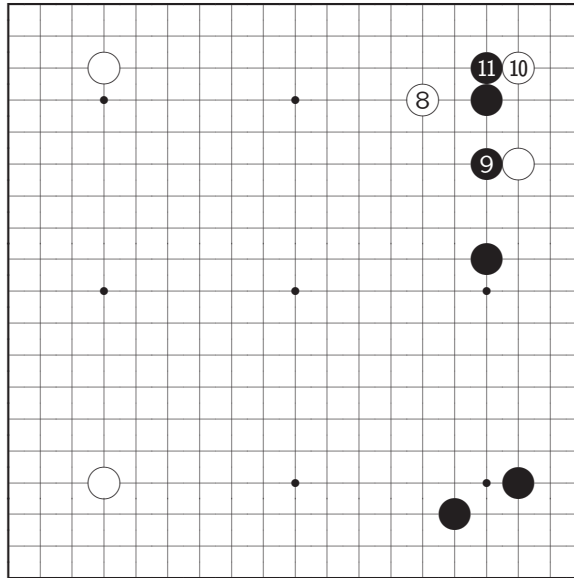
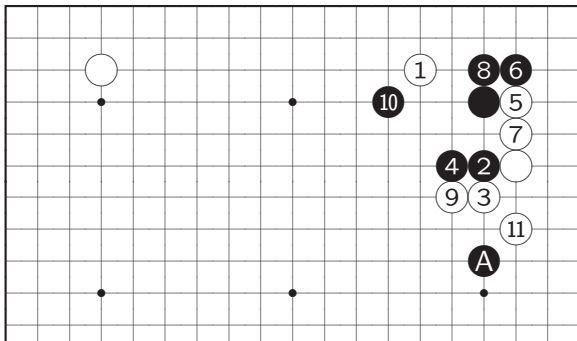


Diagram 5
(Moves: 8-11)

Usually, “Attach to the stronger stone,” is the right principle for attacking, but in this case White’s stones were both weak, and local tactical considerations were more important (so ⑨ was reasonable). If White spends many moves to prevent Black from connecting, Black will gain more profit elsewhere.

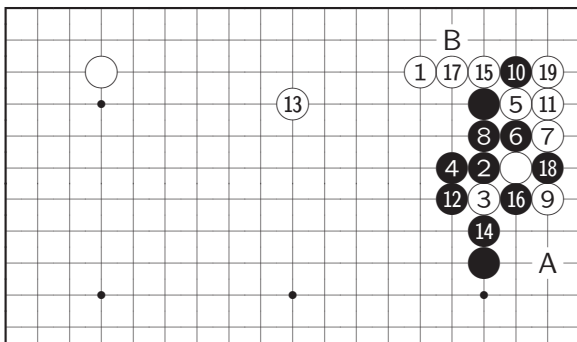


Variation 33 for ⑧

Counter-pincering at ① is also possible, and if White concentrates on separating ② and A, Black will gain the impetus to press at ⑩.

The variation to ⑪ is playable for both, but the continuation is quite complicated.

If you think this variation looks too unstable for Black, you can play ⑥ as the wedge at ⑦ and follow the moves in the next variation instead.



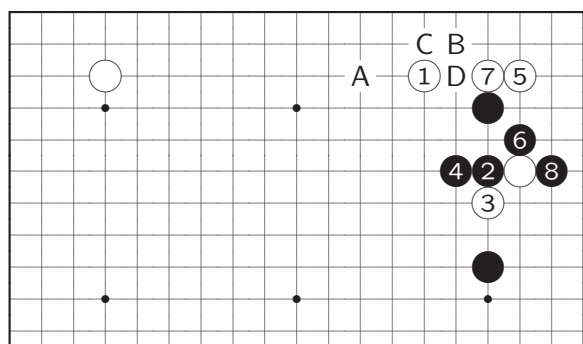
Variation 34 for ⑧

Wedging at ⑥ is an old fashioned joseki which allows Black to connect up to ⑫.

The atari at ⑭ is thick and if White connects at ⑮, Black will jump to A. The exchange will be favorable for Black after White is forced to cut at ⑮.

Black captures at ⑮ because he wants to force White to connect at ⑮ before playing ⑮ and B, but White resists again by connecting at ⑮.

Locally the result is a little better for White, but Black takes sente and the game is well balanced.



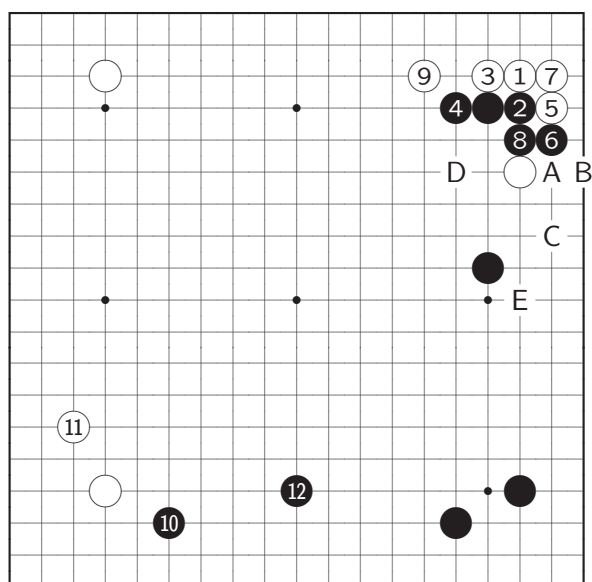
Variation 35 for ⑧

Exchanging ③ for ④, before ⑤, isn't a good idea.

The pattern up to ⑧ is an obsolete joseki and even though we saw these moves in Variation 25 of Chapter 3, those were special circumstances.

After ⑧, ③ and ④ turn into a bad exchange for White, because Black A threatens to strike at B next. If ④ weren't on the board, White could answer B with C, but since it is C and D are miai after B.

White usually prefers to play ③ at ⑤ to see how Black answers.

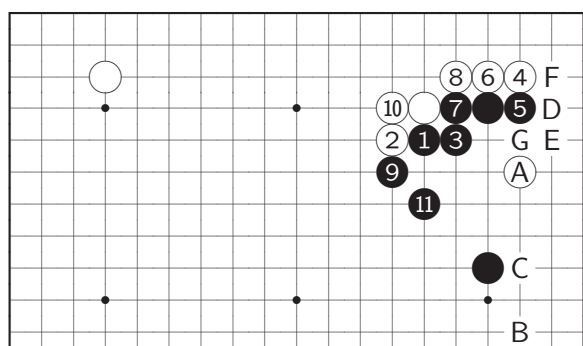


Variation 36 for ⑧

Trading with ① is also possible, and is generally playable provided that Black's right side doesn't become too overwhelming after ⑧.

The opening up to ⑫ is active and lively for Black, but White still has aji around A later.

For example, if Black answers White A with B, White can jump lightly to C. This makes miai of D and E.



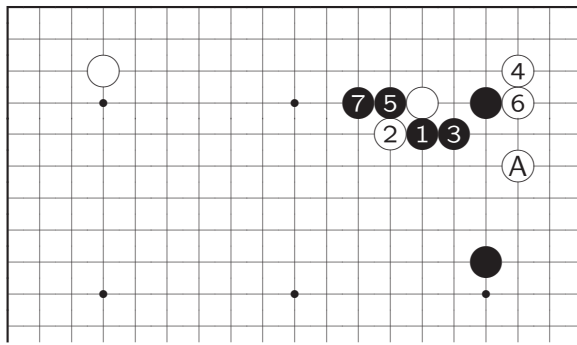
Variation 37 for ⑨

If Black wants to follow the proverb, "Attach to the stronger stone," then ① would seem to be indicated.

However, White will exchange ② for ③ (to leave behind some aji), before entering the corner at ④.

Building a wall from ⑤ to ⑪ attacks ① single-mindedly, but the result is already better for White.

White can harass at B later and, if Black defends around C, he can exchange D to G later still. Black's territory ends up being smaller than he expected.

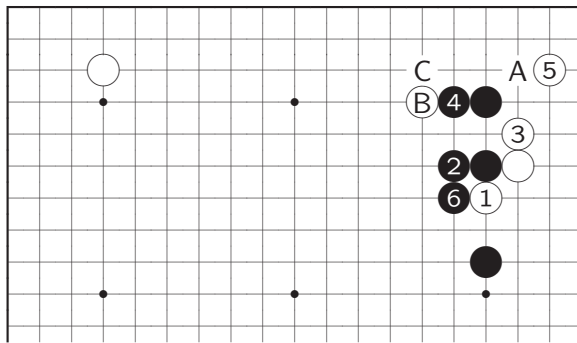


Variation 38 for 9

Cutting at ⑤ is stronger than blocking at ⑥.

Even though White connects to ① with ⑥, Black can extend to ⑦ and the position becomes wide.

This variation is even, but the game is more difficult for Black to manage. Because of that, most professionals prefer not to play this pattern as Black.



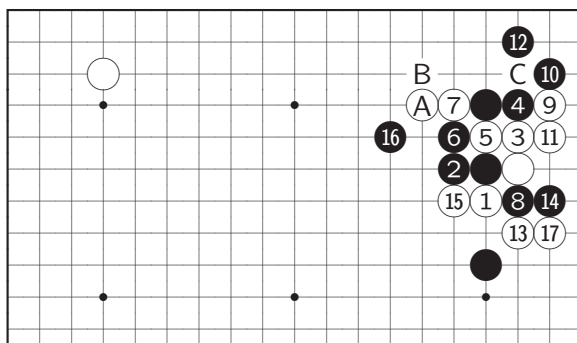
Variation 39 for 10

Instead of entering the corner at A (⑩ in the game), the hane at ① is also conceivable.

When White extends to ③, which is a vital point, Black has to connect with the bamboo joint at ④. This allows White to slide into the corner with ⑤.

Nevertheless, Black's position after turning at ⑥ is quite solid and powerful.

This result is favorable for Black. It's worth comparing it with Variation 35, where ⑥ was at C.



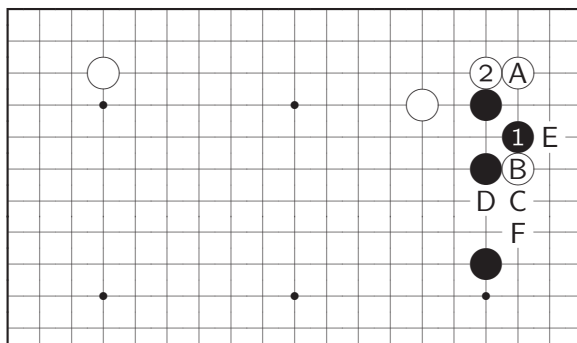
Variation 40 for 10

When White plays the high counter-pincer at ①, Black should form the bamboo joint at ⑦ (as above).

If Black blocks at ④, White can cut with ⑤ and ⑦. Note that if ① were at B, Black could dodge ⑤ with Black at ⑦, White at ⑥ and Black at ①.

Cutting at ⑧ is tit for tat, but ⑨ is an understated move which makes miai of ⑫ and ⑬.

Instead of ⑫, if Black descends at ⑭, White at ⑫ is a tesuji which wraps up the corner with good aji (cutting at C instead is good enough for White too).



Variation 41 for 11

After White plays at ①, Black can also suppress ② with ①.

If Black plans to spend another move at C next, his shape will become over-concentrated and his development will be too slow at this stage in the opening.

Black should only play ① when he plans to take sente after ②, otherwise he won't get a fair result.

It's another game, but White will be able to exchange C to F later. Some players dislike that prospect.

Flowing Water Doesn't Fight What Lies Ahead

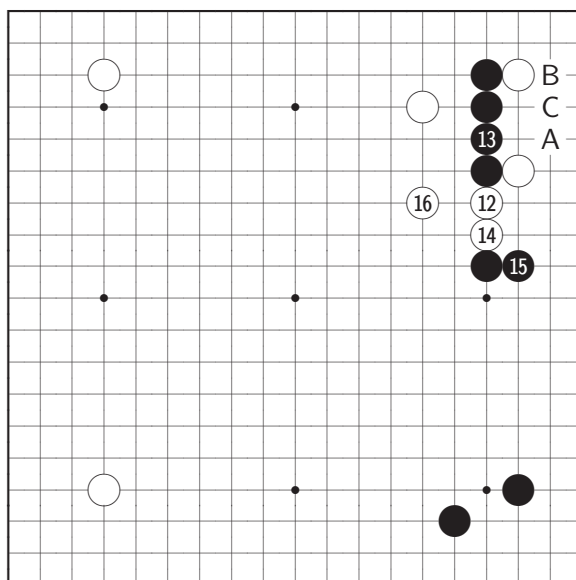
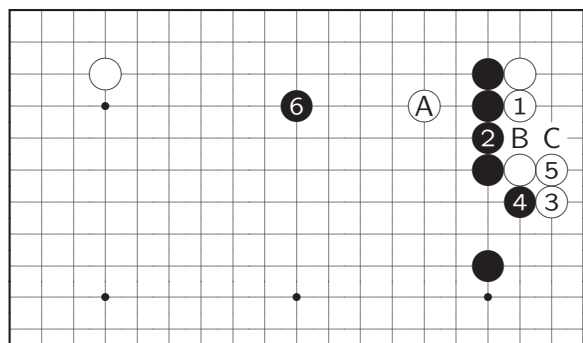


Diagram 6
(Moves: 12-16)

Takagawa Kaku 9 dan's credo was, "Flowing water doesn't fight what lies ahead." The stones only go where they can go; flowing downhill, unassumingly, away from strength, engulfing weakness.

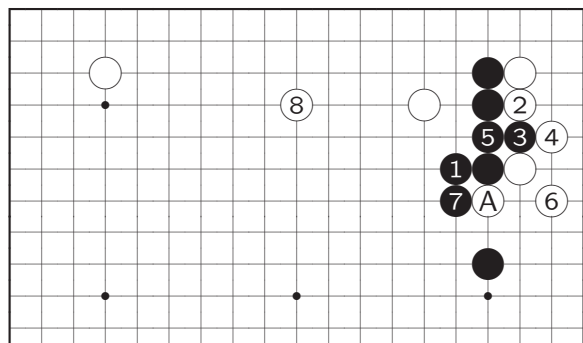
White omitted the exchange of A for B because he was aiming to play C later, but it was too ambitious.



Variation 42 for ⑫

Instead of ⑫ above, connecting the corner stone with ① is also conceivable, but Black can develop rapidly with ② to ⑥, and ① is lonely.

Black ② and the tesuji at ④ avoid exchanging B for C, because that would reduce Black's liberties and waste a ko threat.

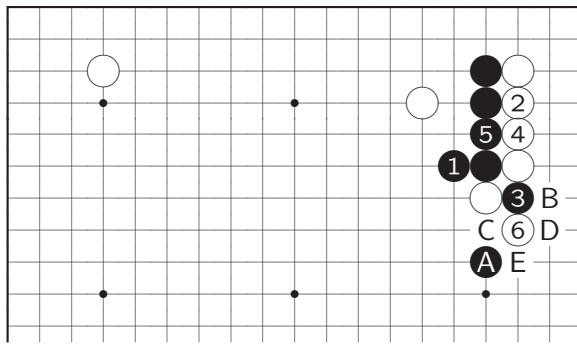


Variation 43 for ⑬

When White hanes at ① (⑫ in the game), extending with ③ isn't good enough in this situation.

White will be happy to take sente and play at the top with ⑧.

Constructing a wall and connecting with ⑦ isn't as valuable if White is able to take the key point at ⑧.

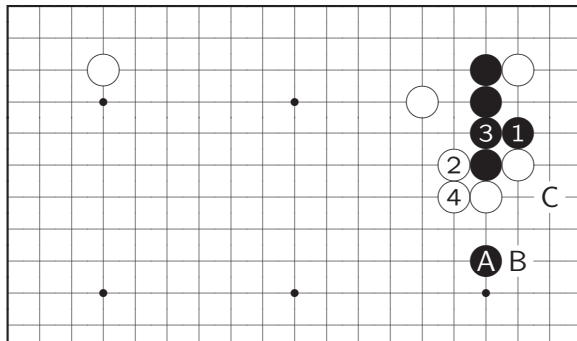


Variation 44 for 13

Cutting at ③ is an example of poor technique, because it has a bad relationship with ①.

If Black extends to B, White's connection at C damages ①, and White can answer D with E.

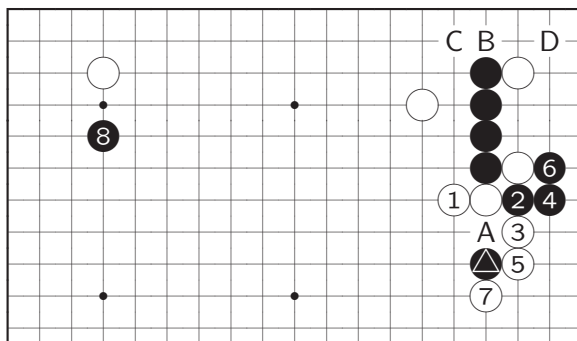
In contrast, if ① is placed at E instead, then Black can choose this variation. In that case, ⑥ would be met by Black B (making C and D miai).



Variation 45 for 13

Blocking at ① isn't a good idea either when Black has played the two space high pincer at ①.

If ① were at B, Black would be able to connect under with C, but it's not possible for Black to do so in this position.



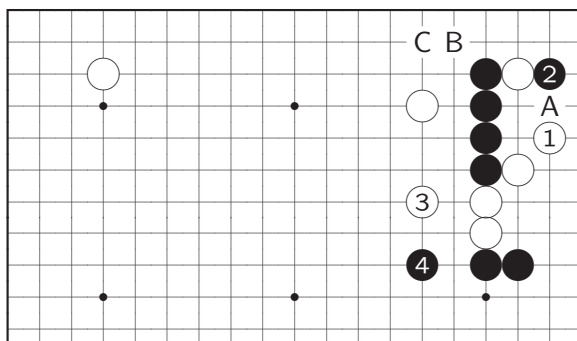
Variation 46 for 14

Extending at ① is slightly better for White than bumping at A (⑭ in the game).

If Black cuts at ②, which can be expected, ⑤ is a tesuji which makes miai of ⑥ and ⑦, and the continuation up to ⑦ flows naturally.

Black will take sente and approach the top left corner with ⑧, but this is better for White than the game.

There's still aji for White in the top right later, such as B to D, and the marked stone has been smothered.



Variation 47 for 16

Before jumping to ③, the kosumi at ① is natural. Black should defend the corner by clamping at ②.

It appears that Lee didn't want Black to jump to ④ and develop the right side. Furthermore, he wanted to play at A in the corner later, so he avoided the exchange of ① for ②.

White can continue at B or C, and this variation is also slightly better for White than the actual game.

Make a Fist Before Striking

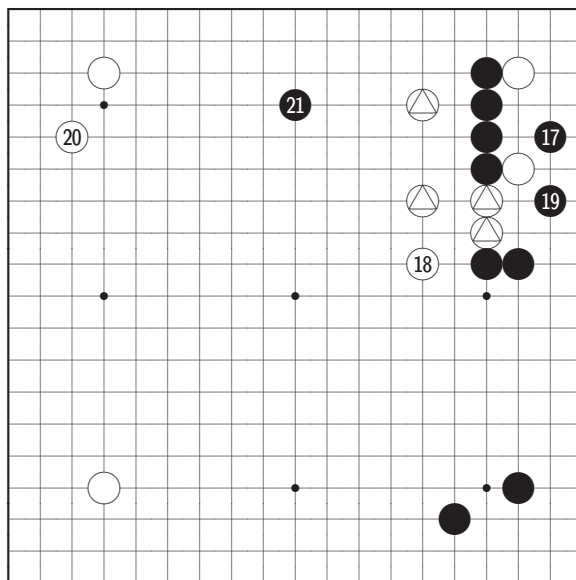
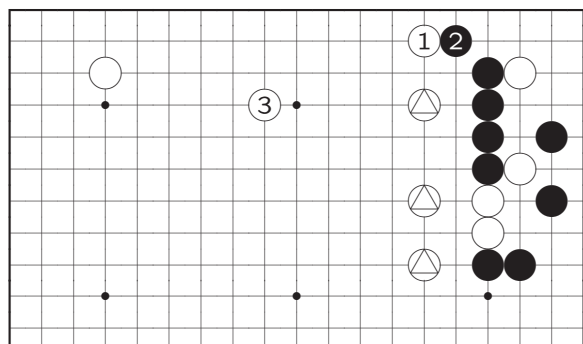


Diagram 7
(Moves: 17-21)

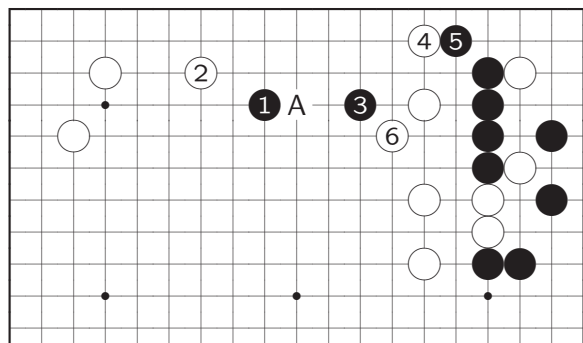
Black ⑰ was a vital point and ⑱ was the pivot point for influence, but Black was happy to connect under with ⑲. These moves may seem small, but connecting his groups with ⑰ and ⑲ stored power. Enclosing the corner at ⑳ was questionable, because ㉑ prepared to strike the marked stones forcefully.



Variation 48 for ㉑

Instead of enclosing the corner, developing the top with ① and ③ seems more natural.

White's marked influence is still a little thin, but it's hard for Black to exploit its weaknesses after ③, and the marked stones could form a powerful wall later.



Variation 49 for ㉑

Splitting at ① is also conceivable, but then White can fight back with ②, ④ and ⑥.

This variation isn't as good for Black as the actual game.

Black's play in the game showed that A was the key point in this opening.

Diffuse What You Can't Absorb

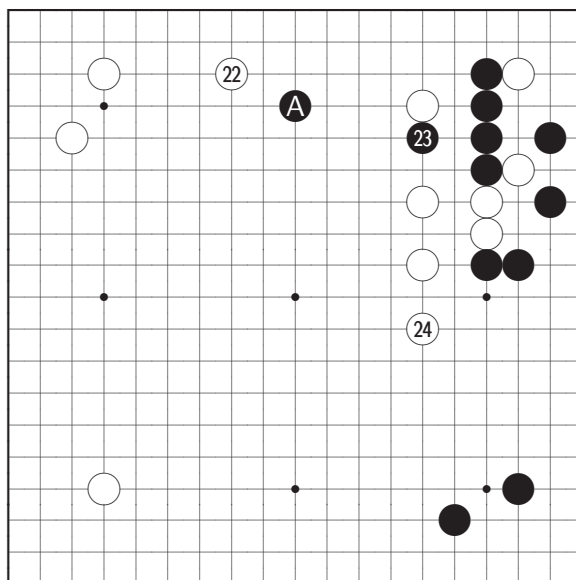
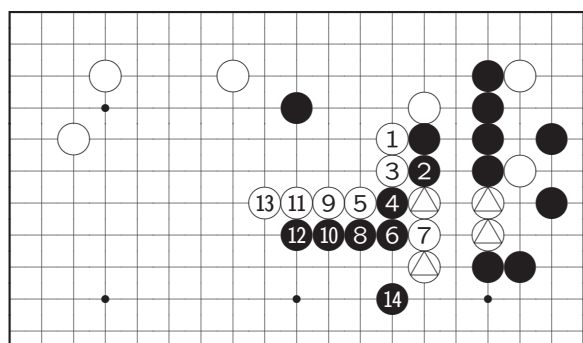


Diagram 8
(Moves: 22-24)

Counter-pincering **A** with 22 was natural, and very large, but 23 was a powerful blow. White didn't have an effective way to respond to 23 directly, so he diffused Black's attack across the center with 24. Sometimes your position is too weak to absorb a direct blow, and stubbornly trying to do so incurs serious damage. In such cases, you should dodge and spread the attacking force over a wider area.



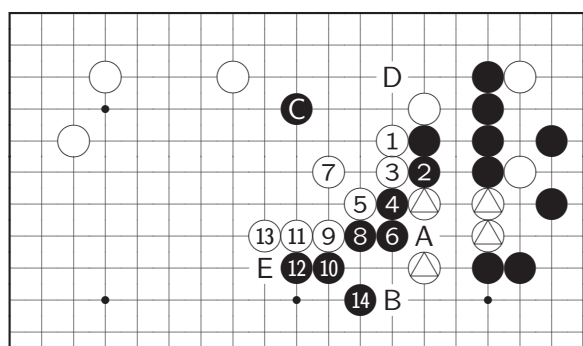
Variation 50 for 24

If White tries to fight back directly, with the hane at 1, he'll face the full force of Black's power with the cut at 4.

White can try to make shape with 5 and 7, but 8 to 12 is commanding.

White's marked stones are in trouble up to 14.

Normally fighting back with 1 would be fine, but Black is too thick and can develop an imposing moyo in this case, so another strategy is called for.



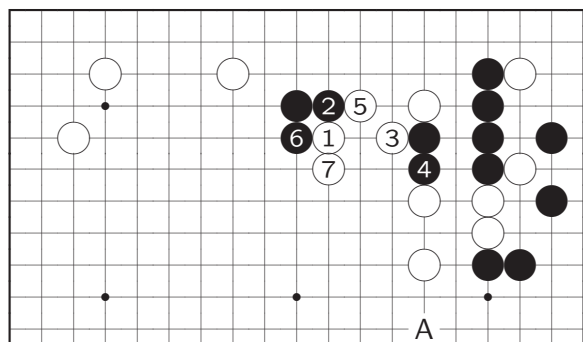
Variation 51 for 24

If White reinforces his weakness at 7, Black can still develop power with 8 to 12, before returning to 14.

After 14, White's marked stones are in a hopeless position, because A and B are miai.

Meanwhile, C still has some potential. For example, Black D is a sharp move, aiming to connect or live.

If Black plays 14 at B, turning at E becomes very powerful for White.

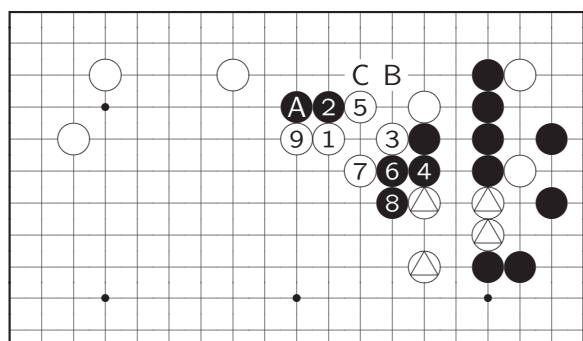


Variation 52 for ②④

White jumped to A (②④) in the game, but the shoulder hit at ① is another technique for diffusing the force of Black's attack.

If Black pushes with ②, White will be able to hane at ③ and fight.

The variation up to ⑦ is playable for both sides, and is more active than White's choice in the game.



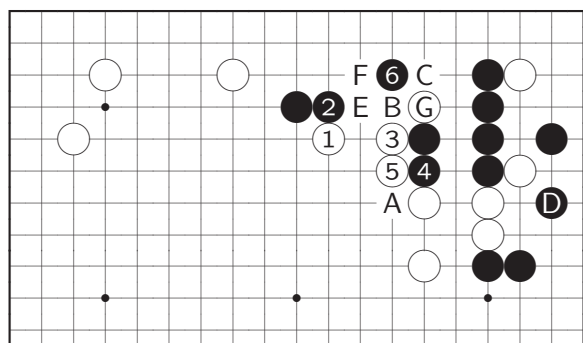
Variation 53 for ②④

If Black pushes out with ⑥, trading with ⑦ and ⑨ is also possible.

White's marked stones have already served their purpose (and are not completely captured), while A and ② are still important because the top is quite large.

Compared to Variation 51, White can now answer B at C, so Black's stones at the top are less flexible.

Because of that, the trade up to ⑨ favors White and White's stones are flowing very smoothly.

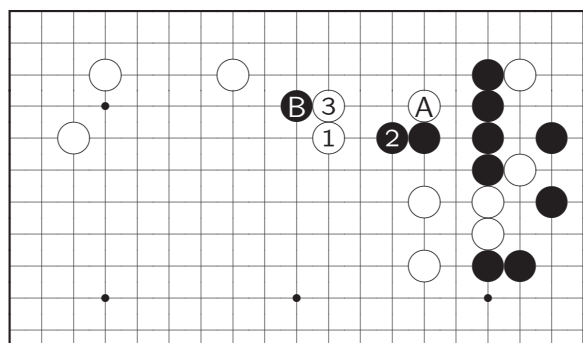


Variation 54 for ②④

Blocking at ⑤ looks natural, but it isn't the proper move because Black can connect his stones with ⑥, and a cutting point remains at A.

Black ⑥ is a tesuji for connecting which is very similar to D. After ⑥, B and C are miai.

Most of the time, it's not a good idea to peep where you can cut, but when the cut doesn't work well peeping is reasonable. If Black uses ⑥ to cut at B, White E, ⑥ and White F will lightly sacrifice G.



Variation 55 for ②④

If Black extends to ②, the trade up to ③ is also playable.

Both A and B are damaged in this variation, but B is more valuable because the top is large.

When the Dust Settles, Take a Big Point

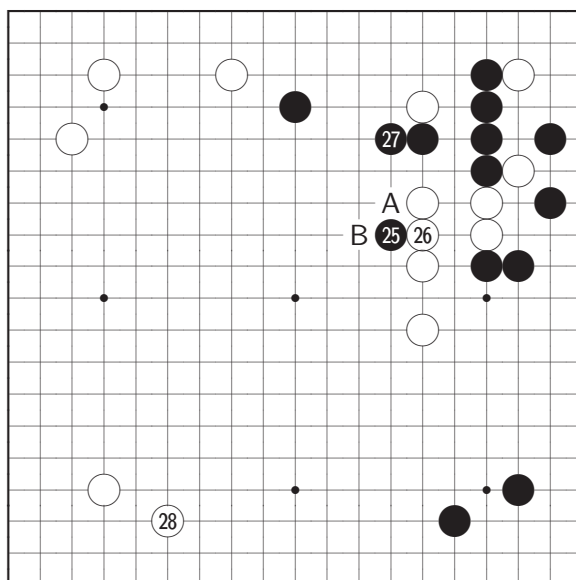


Diagram 9
(Moves: 25-28)

Black's peep at ②⑤ was well timed and connecting at ②⑥ was unavoidable. If White had resisted at A, Black would still have played at ②⑦, and then White would have had to spend another move at B.

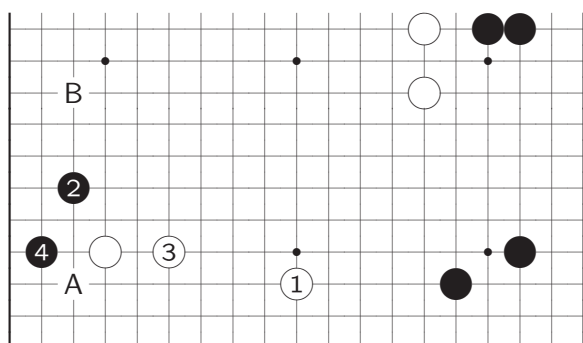
As we've come to expect, Gu took an early lead in the game up to ②⑦. Black had more territory than White and didn't have any weak groups.

White calmly enclosed his other corner with ②⑧. This was the last big point of the opening.

Lee is almost always behind in the opening when he plays against Gu, and he didn't appear to be too worried about it in this game. As we've said, it's important to be patient and not rush when behind.

With ②⑦, the fighting in the top right came to a natural pause. It's quite important to develop your feeling for this kind of situation, so that you know when to lift your head and survey the whole board.

When you sense this kind of moment, you should think about who's ahead and review your overall strategy for the game. If there's nothing urgent happening, you can take a big point.



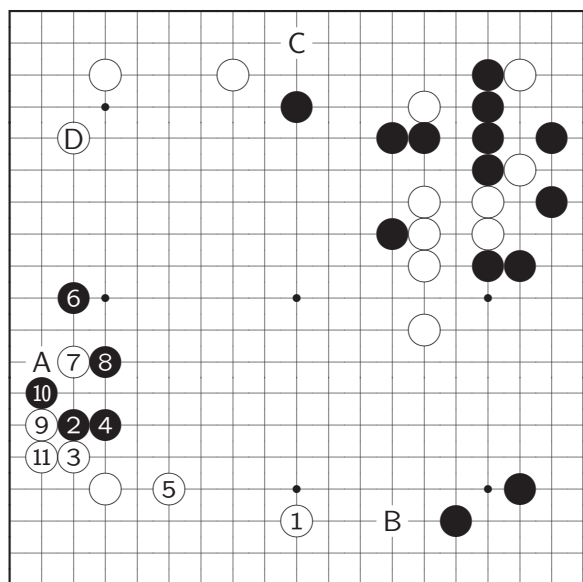
Variation 56 for ②⑧

Instead of enclosing the corner at ②⑧ in the game, extending at ① is also possible and approaching from the wider side with ② is natural.

If White just defends at ③, Black will slide to ④, making A and B miai.

It's another game, but White may not like Black sliding into the corner with ④, so he can consider other options.

For example...



Variation 57 for ⑳

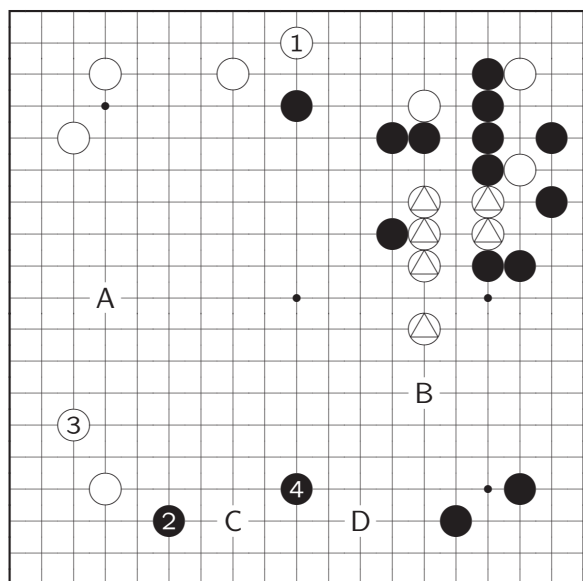
Kicking at ③ is also conceivable, and the moves up to ⑪ show another effective way of playing.

The exchange of ③ for ④ goes against classical Go theory, because Black becomes stronger with ④ and can extend further along the left side with ⑥.

However, White can disrupt Black's formation with ⑦ and promptly sacrifice this stone with ⑨ and ⑪. Classical theory primarily considers the efficiency of local positions, but strategy trumps tactics.

White consolidates the corner territory with ⑪ and Black should defend at A next. Moreover, B and C are miai, but B is slightly bigger. This means White can play B, and take sente again after Black C.

White has already established a solid position in the top left by enclosing the corner with ⑤, so he isn't worried about Black's thickness on the left side and Black's potential there is already limited.



Variation 58 for ⑳

Sliding at ① is very big locally, but it's a bit slack. Black will be excited to develop the bottom with ② and ④.

White's marked stones aren't completely settled, but they're not that weak either, because there's no clear way to profit from attacking them directly.

In this kind of situation, it's often a good strategy to create a large moyo nearby, as with ② and ④.

These moves are indirectly related to the marked stones, because White's movement is limited by his center group, which Black is aiming to attack soon.

After ④, if White plays around A, attacking at B develops the bottom and right sides. If White invades at C or D instead, Black will engineer a double attack against the invaders and the marked center group.

Act Indirectly

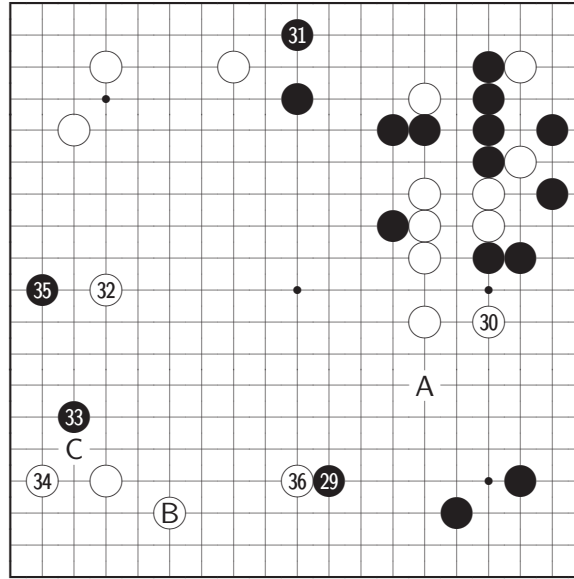


Diagram 10
(Moves: 29-36)

Extending to 29 made the situation similar to the previous variation, so White temporarily averted an attack at A by playing at 30, which also reduced Black's right side.

Completing Black's territory with 31 was worth about 25 points. White 32 was similarly large, but 31 gave Black cash in the bank, which means Black's finished territory was more certain.

Approaching at 33 was an unusual strategy, but Gu seems to like approaching here; even when White already has a pincer and an enclosure nearby (32 and B respectively). He played a similar move in game two of the Jubango and it appears to be one of the idiosyncrasies of his style of play.

This sort of approach is generally bad, because White can attack 33 immediately. White's stones at B and 32 will help White to attack this stone more severely, so we can't recommend 33.

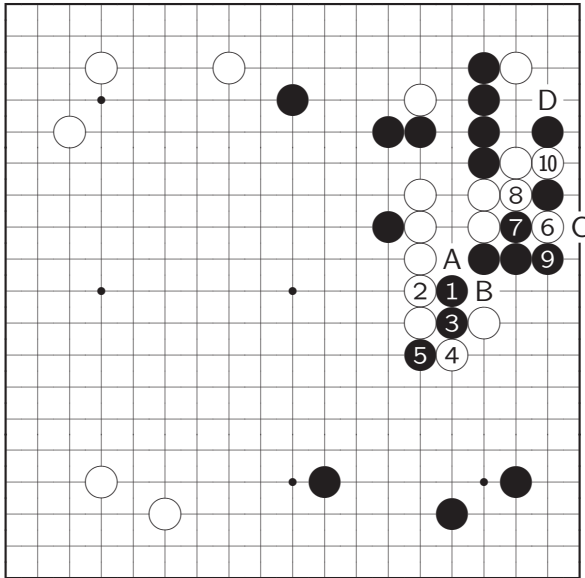
Instead of 34, kicking at C is the standard way to attack in this formation, but 34 is an interesting alternative. Compared to C, 34 is a slower and firmer way of taking profit while attacking. Lee didn't want to help Black to find a rhythm and move his group out, so he quietly completed the corner.

Leaning against 29 with 36 was wonderful, and it appears that White was already planning to play 36 when he jumped down to 34. In playing 36, White wasn't primarily interested in the situation at the bottom and was actually attacking Black's two stones on the left side indirectly.

As you improve at Go, you'll face opponents who are increasingly skilled in defense and sabaki. Direct attacks rarely bear fruit against skilled players, so you must practice the art of acting indirectly.

As B. H. Liddell Hart contends in *The Strategy of Indirect Approach*, "In strategy the longest way round is apt to be the shortest way home. . . . To move along the line of natural expectation consolidates the opponent's equilibrium, and, by stiffening it, augments his resisting power."

" . . . an examination of military history . . . [shows] that in almost all the decisive campaigns the dislocation of the enemy's psychological and physical balance has been the vital prelude to a successful attempt at his overthrow. This dislocation has been produced by a strategic indirect approach."



Variation 59 for 31

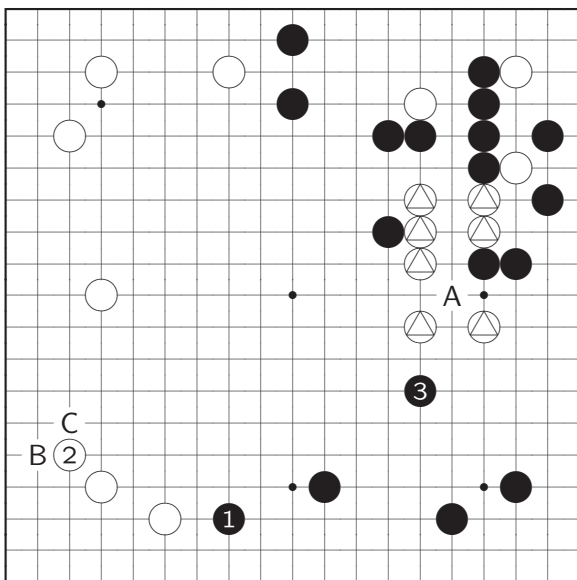
Peeping and cutting from ① to ⑤ is not as easy as it may seem, because cutting across the knight's move with ⑥ is a dexterous tesuji which White has already prepared.

Instead of ⑨, if Black connects at ⑩, White can capture Black's stones in a ladder with A, Black B and White at ⑨.

If Black captures at C after ⑩, White will clamp at D and Black's position at the top starts to become thin and vulnerable.

Black might consider ① to ⑤ as a way of developing a large territory in the bottom right, but it's hard for Black to consolidate the area with so much bad aji.

If Black plays ⑦ at ⑨, White will push at ⑩ and the result will be very similar to this variation.



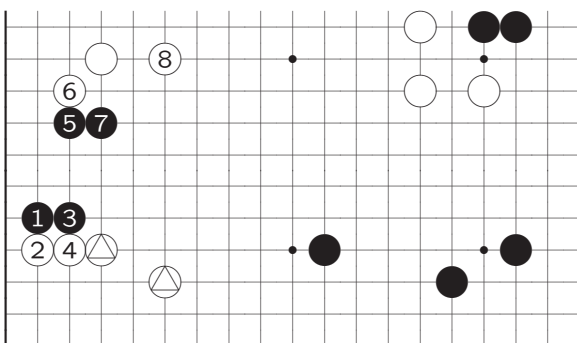
Variation 60 for 33

Extending at ① is also big. Black ③ is a strong followup, applying pressure to White's marked group.

It's hard for White to invade at the bottom, because he still has a weakness at A.

Approaching White's corner enclosure at ① prepares to rappel into the corner around B or C. This is because it gently pressures White's corner, while creating the possibility of connecting to ① after invading.

In other words, reinforcing the corner with ② is important, but ① also aims to attack at ③ next.

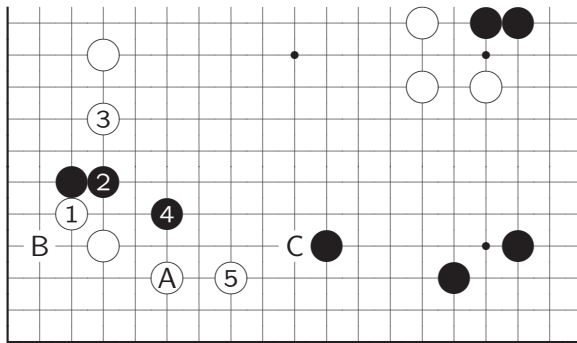


Variation 61 for 33

The submarine approach at ① is the most common technique for confronting the star point enclosure.

We've already seen this technique several times and you made it your own when we reviewed it in detail, in Chapter 5.

White will attack the invaders with ⑥ and ⑧, but this variation is still playable for both sides.

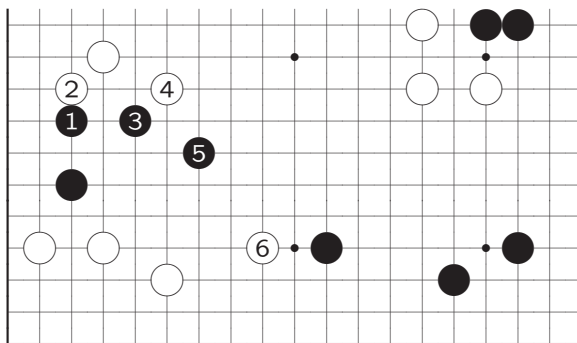


Variation 62 for ③④

Kicking at ① is the textbook response when White already has a stone at ⑤.

The sequence to ⑤ leads to another game, but Lee preferred jumping to B (③④).

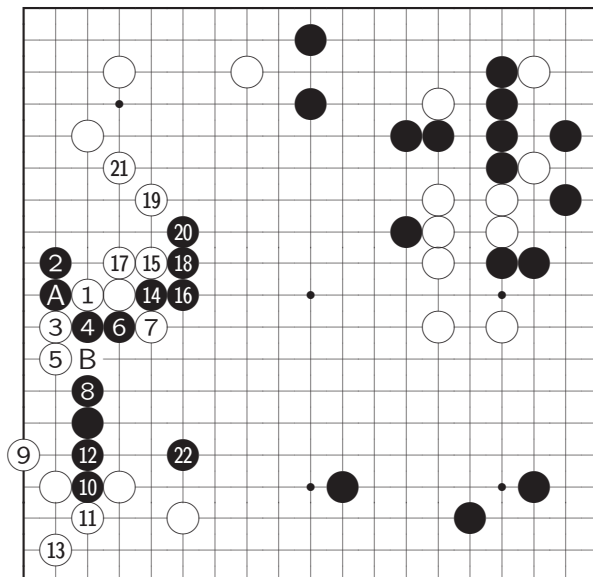
As we said above, Lee probably wanted to avoid helping Black to move out with ② and ④, and had already planned to attach at C.



Variation 63 for ③⑤

The one space extension at ① is the most common continuation in this shape, but White will kick with ② and the result up to ⑥ is satisfactory for White.

Black's four stones on the left side are still floating.



Variation 64 for ③⑥

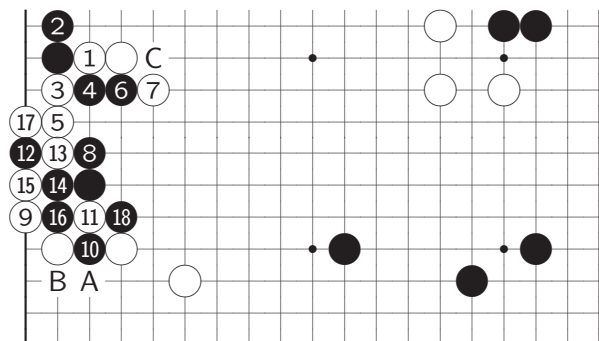
After Black slides to ⑤, bumping at ① is a technique which makes miai of ② and ③.

Wedging at ⑩ is a nice tesuji, and Black can sacrifice his two stones on the left side up to ②①. Connecting at B is sente for Black, so his influence is quite powerful.

White's territory in the top left quadrant is large, but it's only slightly bigger than Black's territory in the top right. Meanwhile, Black's bottom right territory is bigger than White's bottom left.

Since Black has more power in the center and White has a weak group, we can feel that Black is ahead. This is why Lee didn't choose ① in the game.

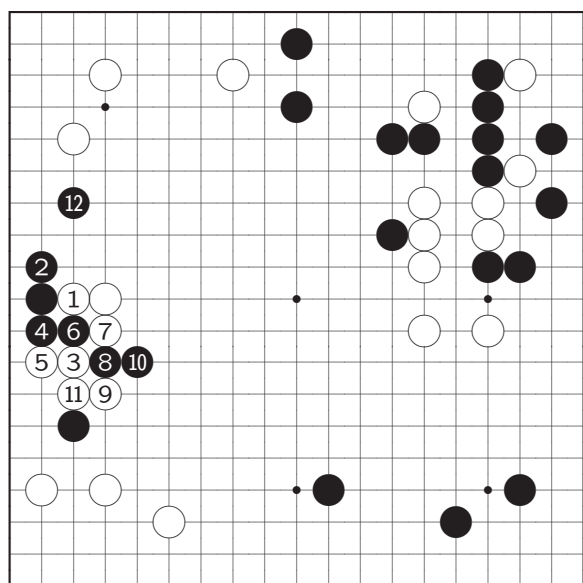
In the opening and early middle game, you don't necessarily need to count accurately. You can compare the relative power and territories for both sides and hone your intuition for who is ahead.



Variation 65 for ③⑥

The atari at ⑪ is an overplay, and ⑫ and ⑭ are strong moves.

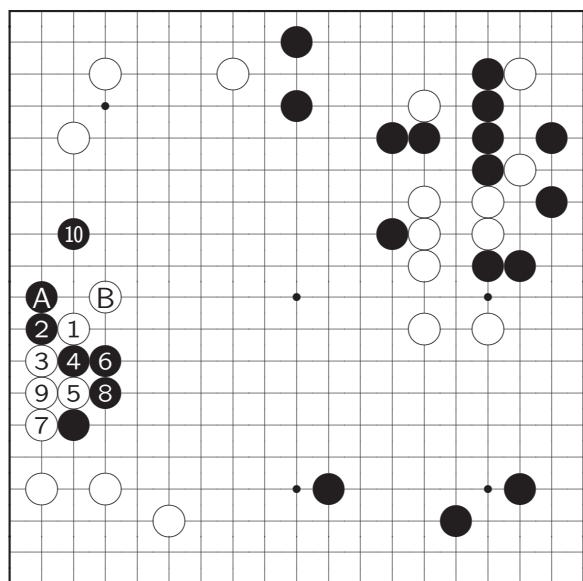
White is in trouble after ⑮. He needs to atari at A but then Black will start a burdensome ko with B and exploit the cut at C for ko threats.



Variation 66 for ③⑥

If White jumps at ③, Black can easily settle his group on the left side with ④ to ⑫.

This variation is successful for Black.



Variation 67 for ③⑥

Cutting with the diagonal move at ① is sometimes the strongest tactic when Black slides to A with the three space extension, but it doesn't always apply enough pressure.

In this case, Black will try to settle on the left side up to ⑩ and it isn't easy for White to continue his attack.

The kosumi formed by ① and B is brittle, and White doesn't have enough support for a large scale attack.

Consider Your Weaknesses Before Attacking

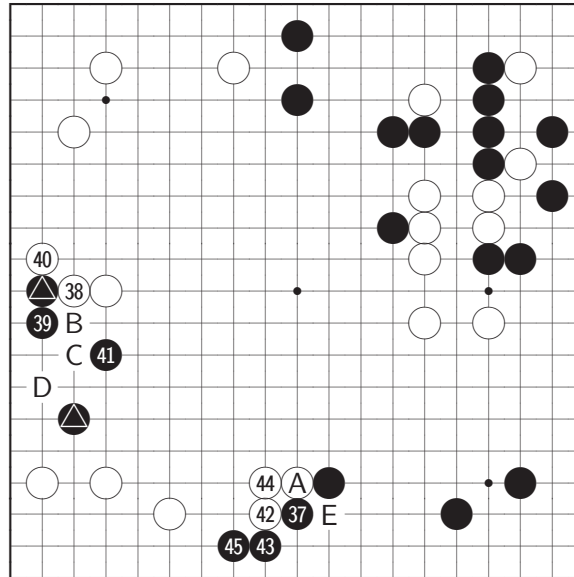


Diagram 11
(Moves: 37-45)

After ③⑧, Black had to fall back to ③⑨, because extending to ④⑩ involved a ladder. As we'll see shortly, part of the thinking behind ④① was to prepare a favorable ladder for White.

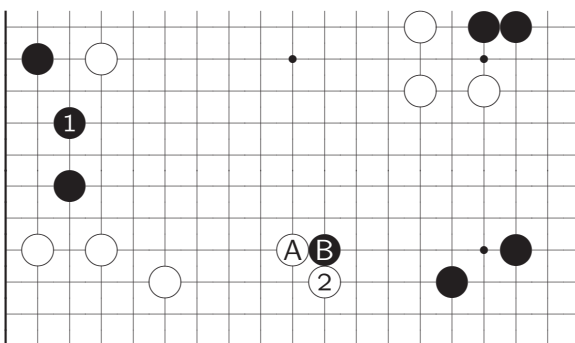
Black ④① was a swift haengma and White continued his indirect attack on Black's marked stones at ④②. Even though ④① left White with a tesuji combination from B to D, to steal Black's base later, moving out quickly with ④① was much more important than making a tight but heavy shape with C.

The double hane at ④③ was questionable, and ④④ was a natural response. Black could have connected at E, but he followed through with an overplay at ④⑤.

Playing powerful moves like ④⑤ feels good, but you need to be mindful of your own weaknesses when playing aggressively like this.

When you pressure your opponent severely, you force them to look for a way to fight back, which means you have to be confident about the strength of your position first.

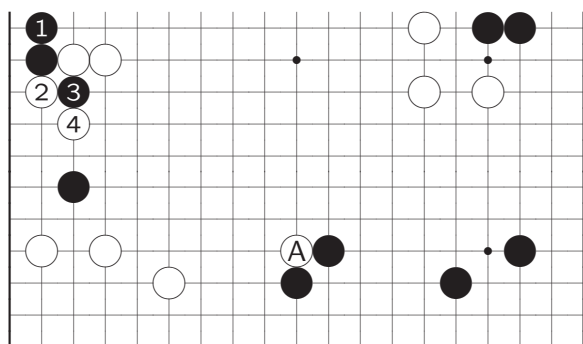
Black had a cutting point at E and his marked group on the left side wasn't completely settled yet. Because of this, he should have been more cautious about extending to ④⑤.



Variation 68 for ③⑦

If Black takes care of the left side with ①, after White attaches at ①A, White will be happy to follow through with the hane at ②.

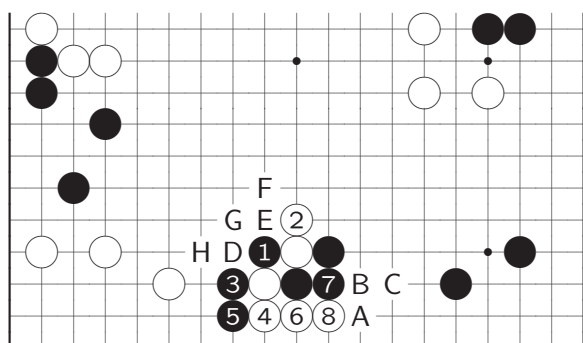
Being able to play two moves in a row like this feels great! If this happens, White will consider his indirect attack at ①A to be a success, because the potential of ①B has been depleted and it has turned into a bad move.



Variation 69 for 39

Extending to ① doesn't work, because the ladder starting at ④ favors White.

As you can see, White has already prepared for this possibility with ①.



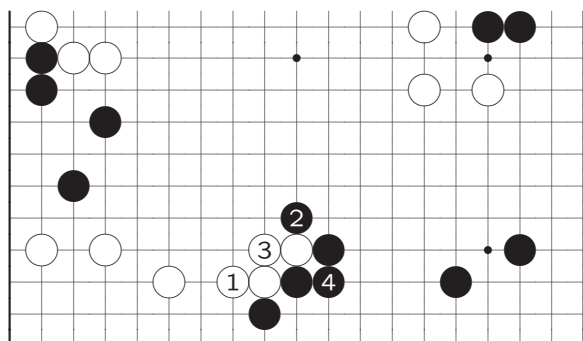
Variation 70 for 43

Fighting with ① and ③ focuses only on attacking and doesn't take Black's weaknesses into account.

Black is in trouble after White pushes at ⑧.

If Black blocks at A next, White can cut at B, and it's difficult for Black to manage the situation.

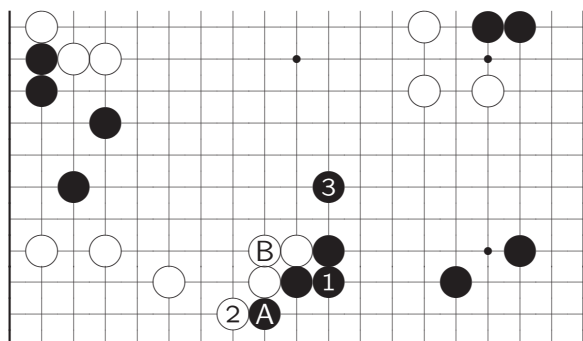
If Black jumps to C instead, White still has the cut at D up his sleeve and we can expect E to H to follow. Black ③ and ⑤ will be captured in the latter variation.



Variation 71 for 44

Extending at ① is too passive and leads to bad shape.

You should expect Black to force with the atari at ② and, after ③, ① becomes part of an empty triangle.



Variation 72 for 45

The modest connection at ① was the key point. Black should have played ① instead of the double hane at A (43 in the game).

After White connected at ②, Black had another chance to simplify the game by connecting at ①. The exchange of A for ② is a negative for Black, but it isn't too bad.

However, it's embarrassing to retreat like this after playing the hane at A, and Gu might have felt ashamed, even though this is better than the game.

Adapt to Changing Circumstances

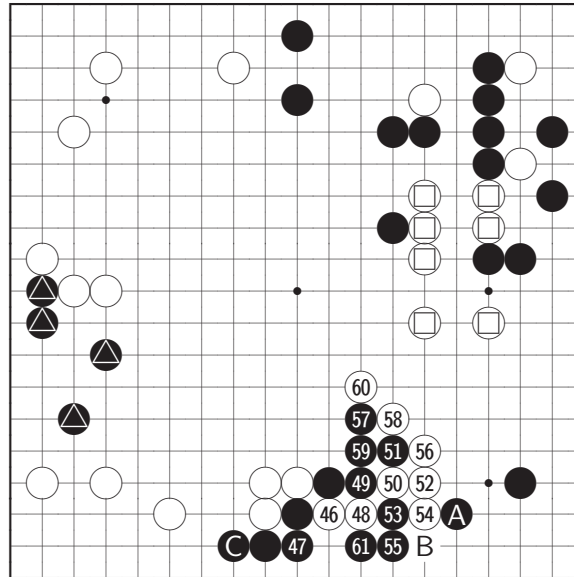


Diagram 12
(Moves: 46-61)

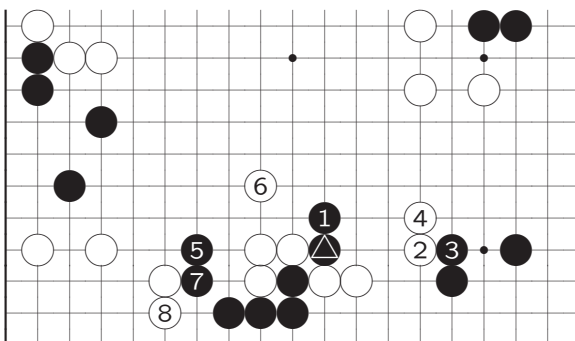
Moreover, I believe that he will prosper most whose mode of acting best adapts itself to the character of the times.

—Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*

White's counter-attack from ④⑥ and ⑤② was to be expected. Black maintained the pressure with ④⑨ and ⑤①, but these moves felt strained. If ⑤① were at ⑤③, White at ⑤⑨ would ladder Black's cutting stones.

Cutting at ⑤③ is usually bad style because Black's corner will be damaged after ⑤④, ⑤⑤ and White B, but Black had to connect his weak groups. After C (④⑤) to ⑤⑤, White had to reassess his strategy.

It was a choice between isolating Black's corner with B, and continuing his indirect attack on Black's marked group with ⑤⑥ to ⑥①. He chose the latter, bolstering his own marked stones at the same time.

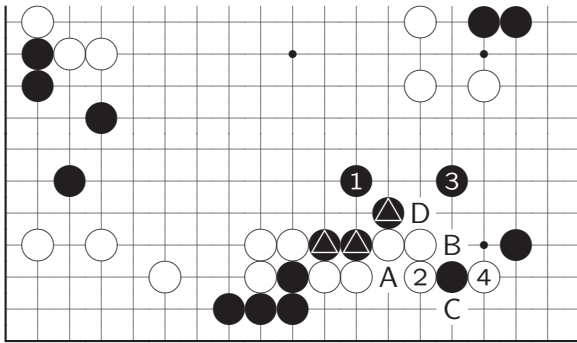


Variation 73 for ④⑨

Extending to ① is the normal technique for this shape, and the shoulder hit at ② is a standard haengma for moving a weak group into the center.

It appears to be a busy fight, with weak groups for both players, but the natural flow through to ⑧ leads to an easy game for White.

It's difficult for Black to save the marked cutting stones, because he already has a weak group on the left side and another at the bottom. If he pulls the marked stones out he will have three weak groups.

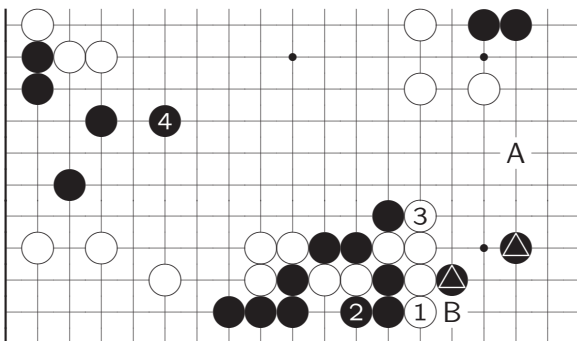


Variation 74 for 53

If Black plays the hanging connection at ① instead of cutting at A, ② is a powerful empty triangle which protects the cutting point while putting pressure on Black.

Black needs to seal White in with ③, so that White doesn't run out and isolate his marked stones, but ④ is a sharp continuation which shows the effectiveness of ② in this position.

After ④, B and C are miai. If Black plays ③ at B instead, White will casually walk out with D.

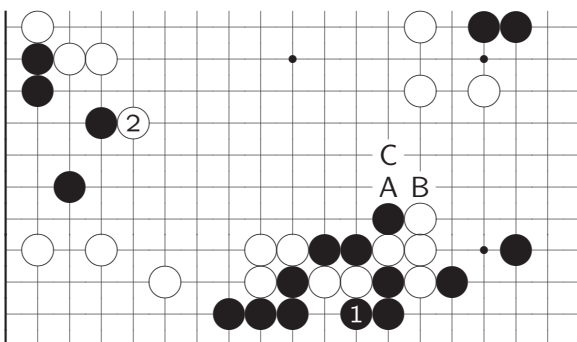


Variation 75 for 56

Blocking at ① is usually an excellent move, because it drills straight through Black's shape at the bottom and leaves the marked stones vulnerable.

However, Black will take sente to reinforce his left side group with ④ and White can't capture the marked stones.

A and B are miai for Black in the bottom right, so White doesn't have a severe attack in the corner.

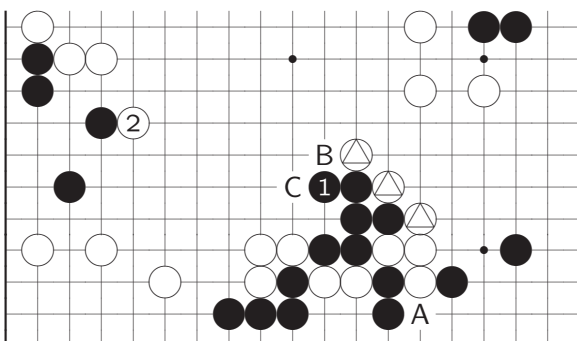


Variation 76 for 57

If Black immediately takes a liberty at ①, White will tenuki and play ② while aiming to atari at A later.

This variation is similar to the actual game, but not as good for Black because White had cutting points around B and C in the game diagram above (and the variation below).

All other things being equal, if there are cutting points for Black to aim at, that is better than if there are no weaknesses in White's position.



Variation 77 for 61

If Black extends at ①, all of White's marked stones become beneficial forcing moves and Black's shape has been crumpled.

White will tenuki and attack Black with ② for now, and can still choose between sente exchanges at A or B later.

If White has an opportunity to capture Black on the left side, he may even attach at C instead of A or B (but that is an extreme tactic, to be used only in moments of great need, or when the path is certain).

Catch Rain Where Rain Falls

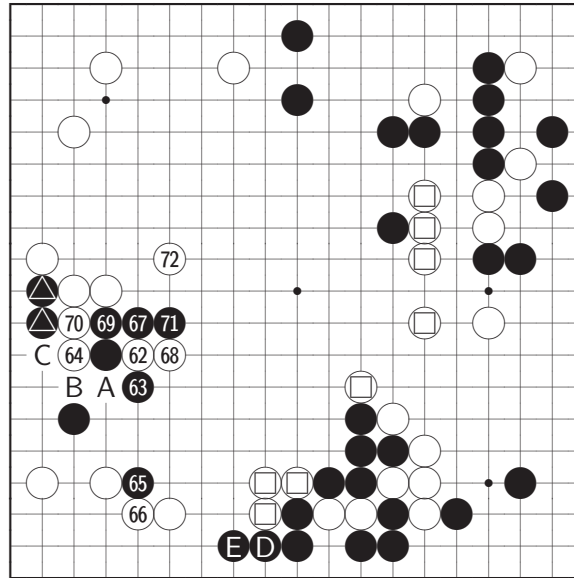


Diagram 13
(Moves: 62-72)

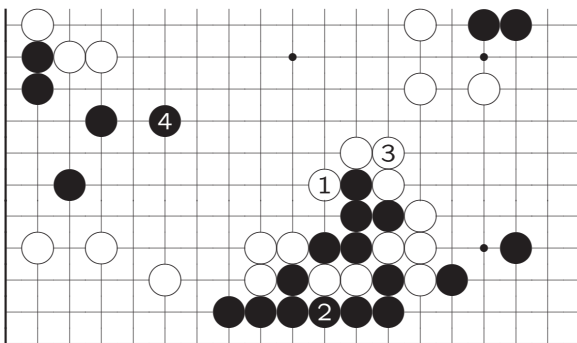
Attaching to weak stones, as White did with (62), is generally discouraged because it makes the opponent's stones stronger. However, Lee's moves were practical and efficient in this game.

White's marked center influence wasn't strong enough to attack the entire Black group severely, so Lee used it to take profit with the tesuji combination of (62) and (64) instead. Black's center stones were still unsettled up to (72). This is another example of attacking loose stones tightly.

Principles of play are incredibly useful, but they can only take you so far and *they are not laws*. Eventually two principles overlap or contradict one another, and you need to rely on your experience and reading ability to determine what is really happening. Catch rain where rain falls, rather than clinging to idealized theories.

Black's forcing exchange at (65) was cute, because it protected the cutting point at A indirectly. This move avoided exchanging B for C, so it also efficiently preserved the aji of the marked stones.

The game became slightly better for White here. This was because of Black's overplays at (D) and (E) (43 and 45 in the game).

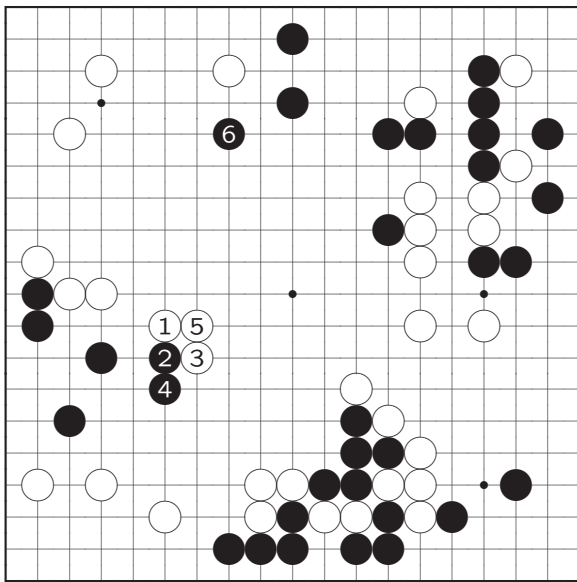


Variation 78 for (62)

Reinforcing White's weaknesses with (1) and (3) is a good continuation locally, but it's slack in this situation.

Black is pleased to take care of his weak group with (4) and White has missed his opportunity to attack.

The possibility of playing (1) in sente is quite useful in terms of attacking Black's group on the left side, but it's too early to make this exchange now.



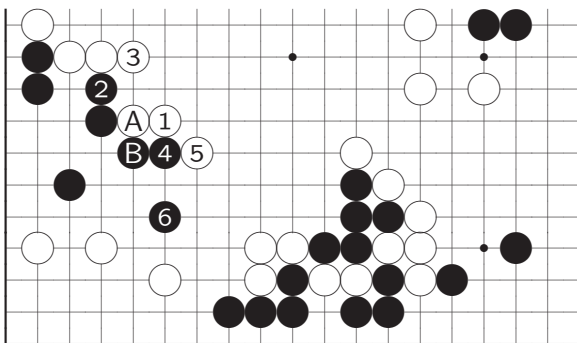
Variation 79 for 62

The conventional wisdom is that White should attack with a non-contact move, and the knight's move at ① seems to fit the bill.

The only problem is that it doesn't work properly in this game.

Black can settle his group easily with the expedient of ② and ④, and take sente to cap at ⑥.

It's hard to attack Black's left side group further, and the game is comfortable for Black.



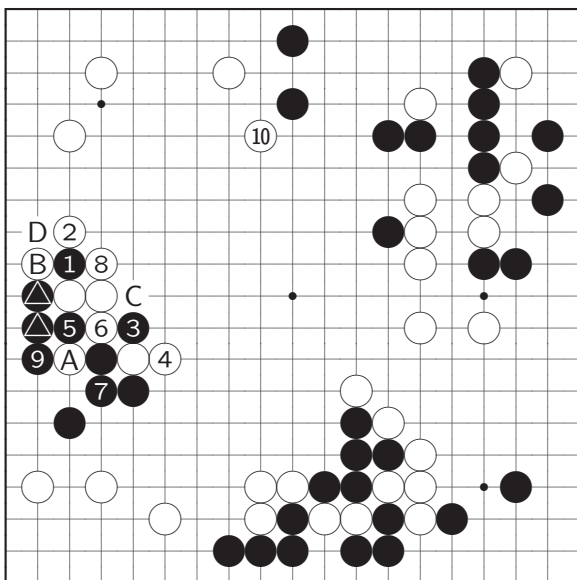
Variation 80 for 64

After ① and ③, extending at ① is the usual technique, but it's not good enough in this situation.

It's once again easy for Black to settle his group up to ⑥, and White doesn't profit from the attack.

The principle which warns against using contact moves to attack refers to precisely this kind of situation. If you attach and then play a normal continuation, you will make your opponent stronger.

Only break principles when you have a clear plan.



Variation 81 for 65

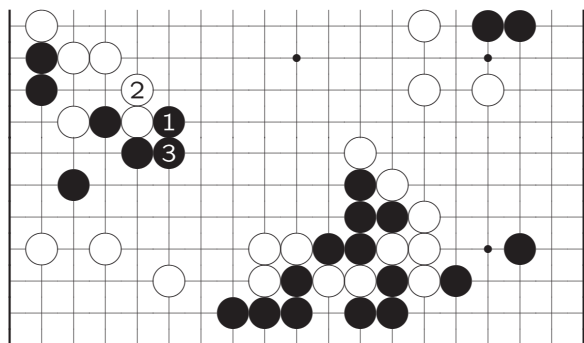
After White attaches at ①, probing with the cut at ③ is a great tactical resource for Black, but White can simplify the game with the continuation to ⑨.

Pressing at ⑩ becomes an excellent move and the game is better for White.

It has become difficult for Black to invade White's top left area so Black can't use ①, however tempting it may seem.

Instead of ①, if Black tries to cut immediately with ⑤, his marked stones will be captured after ⑥, ⑦ and White at ⑨.

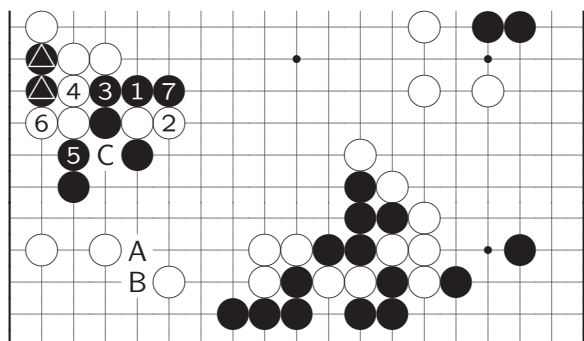
After Black exchanges ① for ②; ⑦ makes miai of the atari at ⑨, and capturing ⑤ with Black at ⑧, White C and Black D. That's why Black probes at ① first in this variation.



Variation 82 for 65

The atari and connection, at ① and ③, is also possible.

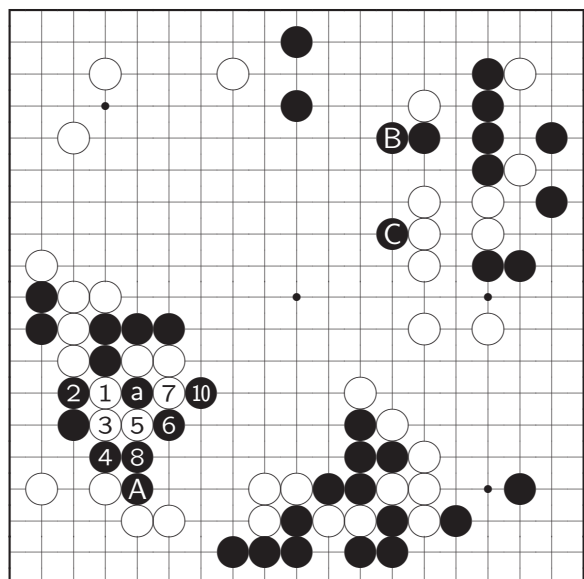
If Gu had thought the game still favored Black, he probably would have played like this. He didn't choose this variation, because the position wasn't good for him anymore.



Variation 83 for 65

If Black doesn't exchange A for B, he needs to exchange ⑤ for ⑥ instead (to protect the cutting point at C).

However, Gu didn't want to make that exchange, because it smothers Black's marked stones. He chose to play A in the actual game to avoid this.



Variation 84 for 72

Cutting at ① doesn't work after Black's attachment at A.

Black ④ and ⑥ are the key moves in this splendid continuation, and White's cutting stones are captured in a ladder up to ⑩.

Note the role that B plays in ensuring this ladder works for Black. Interestingly, even if B were removed from the board, the ladder would still work as long as Black had remembered to make the forcing exchange at C.

Reading out the ladder is left as an exercise for the reader.

⑨ at a

Timing is Everything

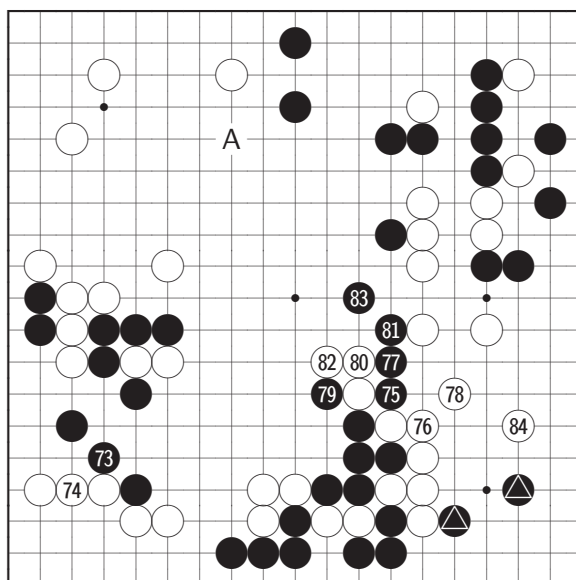
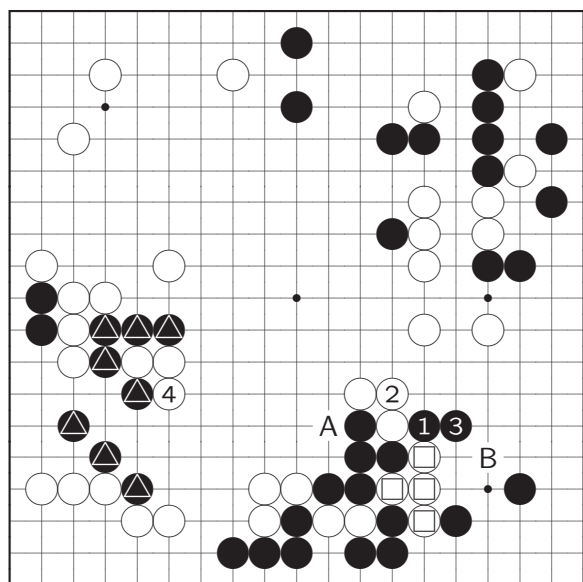


Diagram 14
(Moves: 73-84)

Black took sente up to ⑦④, and attacked White on the right side with the cut at ⑦⑤.

However, reducing White's top left area with A was urgent at this point, so ⑦⑤ arrived a little too early.

Nevertheless, the atari and extension of ⑦⑨ and ⑧① were nice haengma and reinforcing White's right side group with ⑧④ was necessary. Black's marked corner stones were further weakened by this sequence.



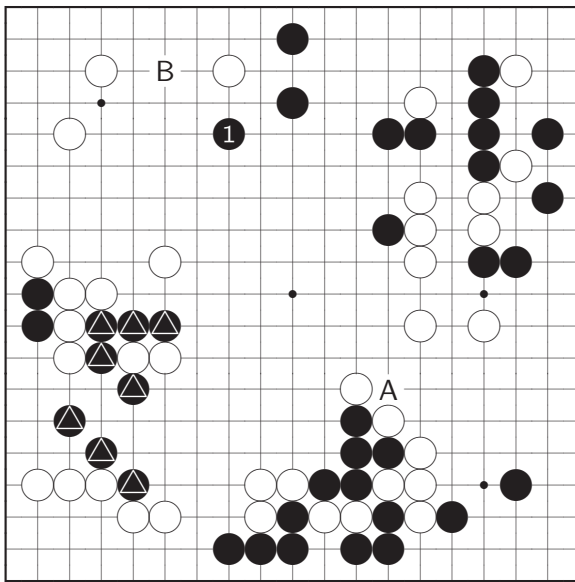
Variation 85 for ⑦⑤

If Black focuses on attacking White's marked stones with ① and ③, White will discard them and resume his attack on Black's left side group with ④.

When you want to attack, you should first check whether you have any weaknesses of your own, and then make sure that what you attack is large enough to retain the initiative. Otherwise, your opponent may counter-attack or sacrifice (or do both).

The atari at A is always sente for White, and there's bad aji at B later.

This variation is good for White.



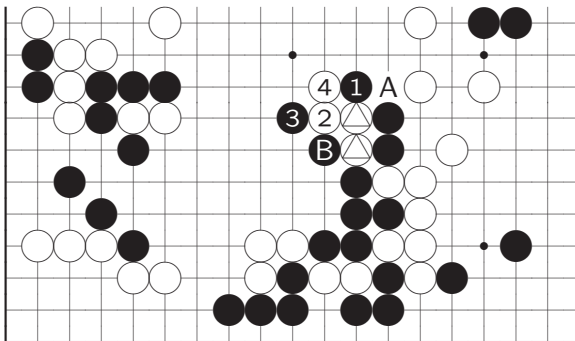
Variation 86 for 75

Capping at ① was urgent.

It's not easy for White to attack Black's left side group severely after ①, because the presence of ① and White's thinness around A leaves Black with several escape routes.

If White defends around B, Black can go back and cut at A later.

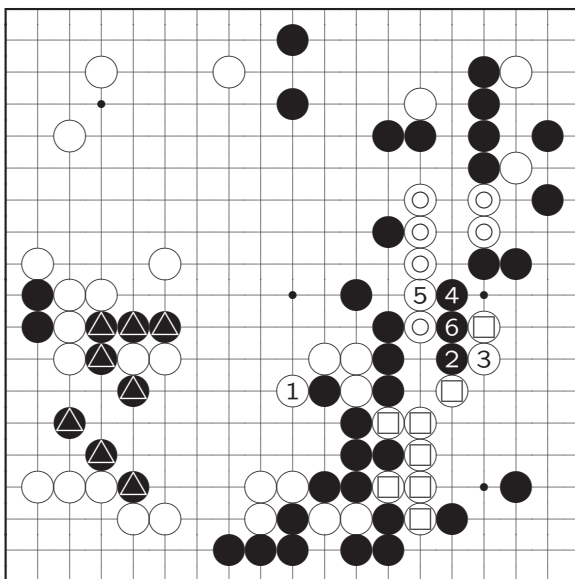
This would be better for Black than the actual game.



Variation 87 for 81

Extending at A in the game was good style. Black's atari at B was played to induce Black A and make the marked stones heavy.

However, Black shouldn't continue to atari with ① and ③, because the ladder doesn't work and it leaves behind too many cutting points.



Variation 88 for 84

White would like to atari at ① and aim to attack Black's marked stones further if possible.

However, Black will cut White's marked groups in two with a razor sharp combination from ② to ⑥, and White will be in serious trouble.

The Better Part of Valor Is Discretion

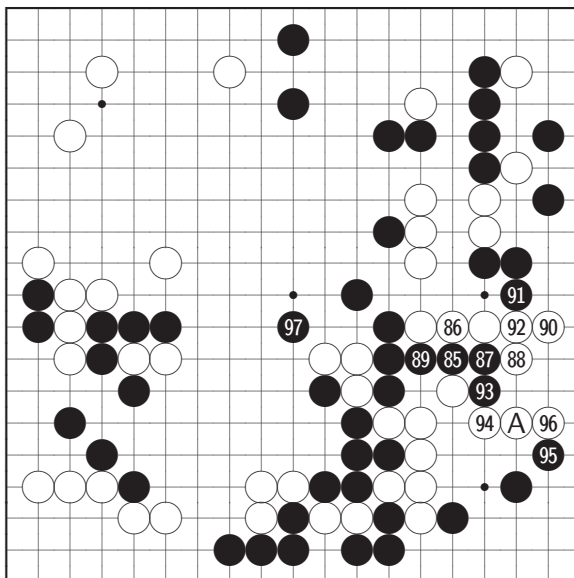
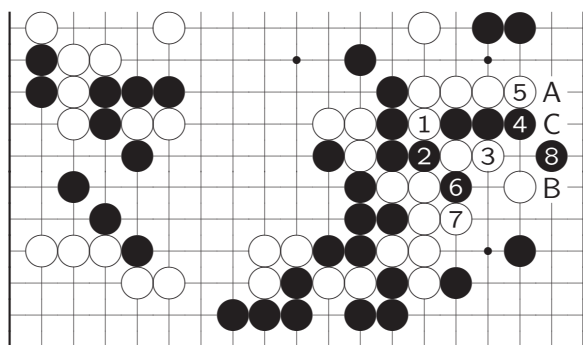


Diagram 15
(Moves: 85-97)

Connecting at ⑧⑥ was necessary, to prevent Black from cutting as in the previous variation, and ①A (⑧④) was well placed to maintain White's connection. This was White's plan when he played ①A. Lee defended patiently from ⑧⑧ to ⑧⑥, because there wasn't a good way to resist and Black was making himself too busy anyway. He knew that there would be an opportunity to attack in the near future.

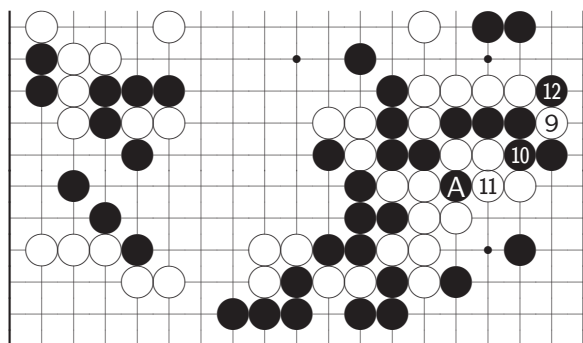


Variation 89 for ⑧⑧

Cutting at ① would be an overplay.

Black ⑥ and ⑧ form a delicate combination, and A and B are miai to rescue Black's cutting stones.

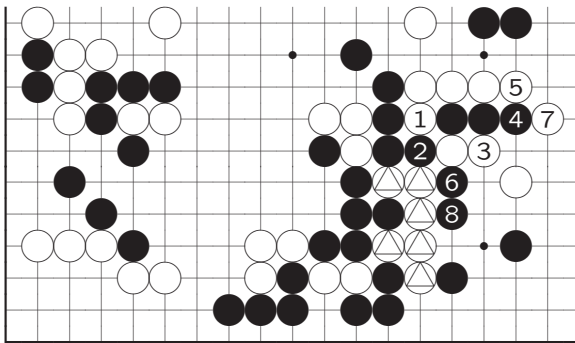
If Black doesn't exchange ⑥ for ⑦ before playing at ⑧, White will be able to atari at C and trap Black's stones against the edge of the board.



Variation 90 for ⑧⑧

The atari at ⑨ doesn't work after ①A.

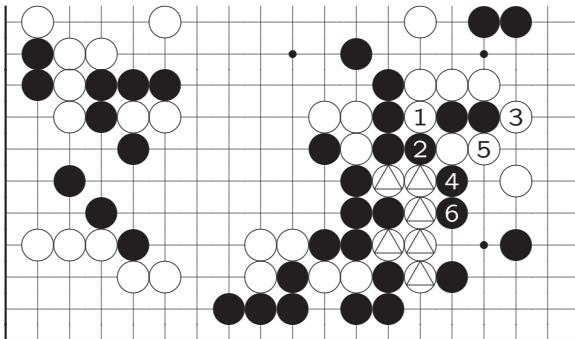
White is in deep trouble up to ①②.



Variation 91 for 88

Playing atari at ⑦ is the proper move after ⑥, but Black will be very happy to capture White's marked stones with ⑧.

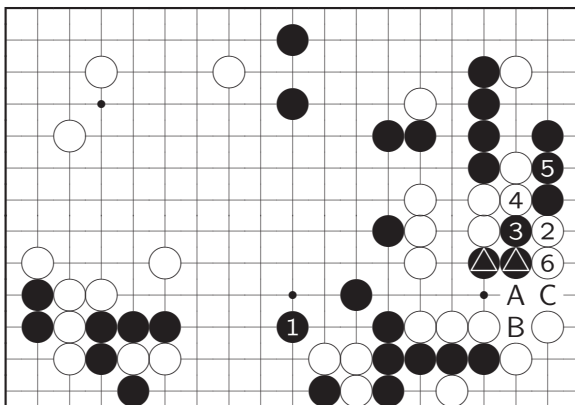
These stones are very important, because they separate several of Black's groups, so White can't afford to lose them.



Variation 92 for 88

If White ataris at ③, Black can once again capture White's marked stones up to ⑥.

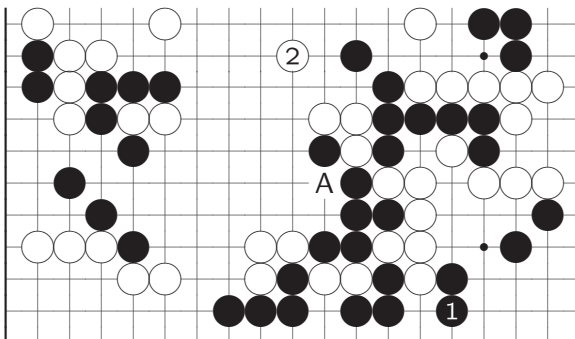
As we've just discussed, White shouldn't sacrifice these stones.



Variation 93 for 91

If Black doesn't exchange A for B, White can attach at ② and capture Black's marked stones up to ⑥.

It's too late to peep at A now, because White will connect at C instead of B.



Variation 94 for 97

Looking after the corner stones with ① is slack.

White will be happy to take the initiative in the center with ②, and now Black has two weak groups.

White's shape looks a little unusual after ②, but White can play the double atari at A at any time, so ② is stronger than it looks.

Divide Your Opponent's Forces

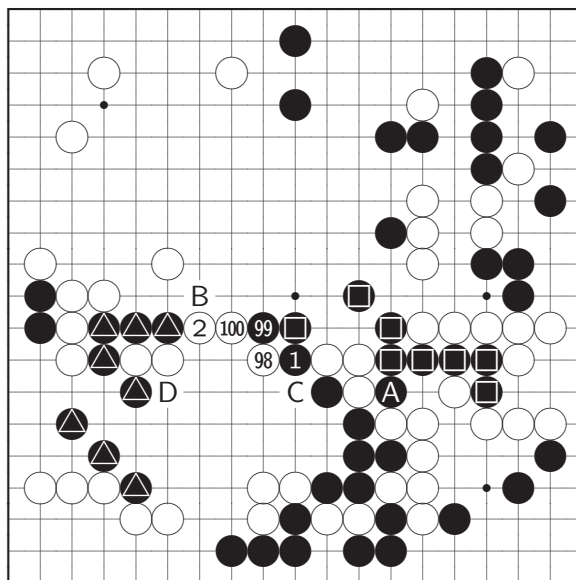


Diagram 16
(Moves: 98-102)

Black's lower right corner wasn't easy to capture, so White didn't touch it for the time being. The shape in the corner would be resolved in the endgame.

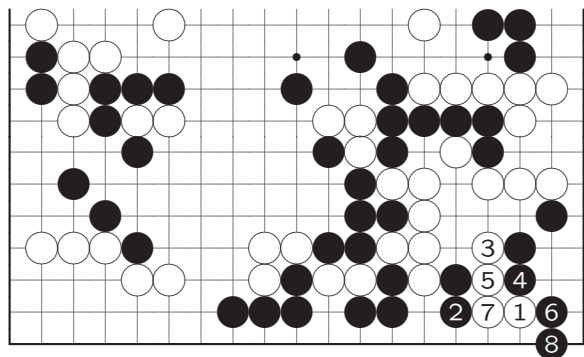
Jumping to ⑨⑧ was an exquisite haengma, which aimed to separate Black's marked groups.

White had managed his weak group on the right side very smoothly, and Black didn't gain any profit from cutting at A.

Pushing at ⑨⑨ was inflexible. Black should have played at B instead.

Black couldn't find a better move after ⑩⑩, so he pushed at ① (⑩①), but switching to ② was superb.

If Black continues with C, White can block at D and Black's lower left group will be trapped.

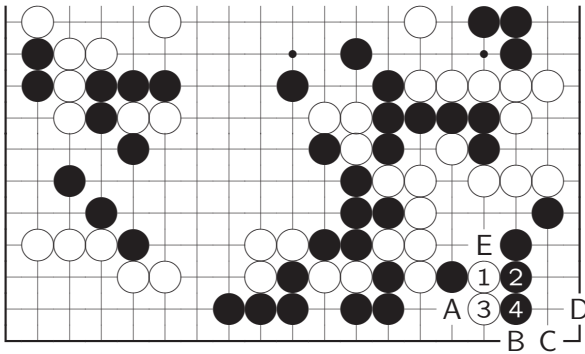


Variation 95 for ⑨⑧

If White attacks the corner with ①, ② and ④ are flexible responses, and Black can still live in the corner up to ⑧.

This could be a good sente endgame sequence for White later, but it's too early to settle the position now because there are other possibilities too.

White's moves in this variation might also make good ko threats if needed.

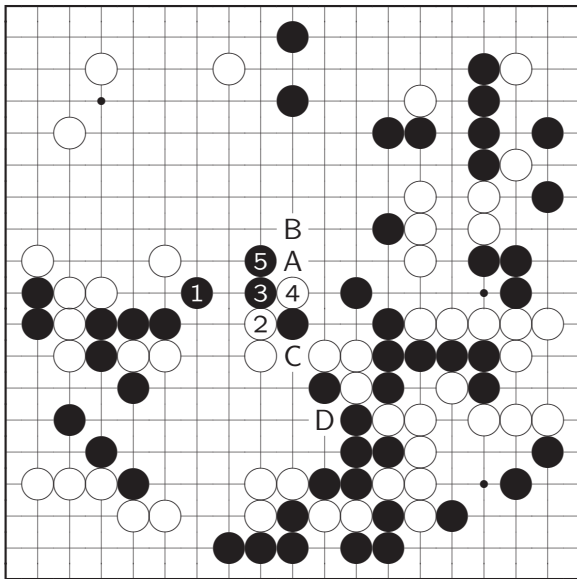


Variation 96 for 98

Attaching at ① doesn't work either. Black can live in the corner up to ④.

Locally speaking, Black's corner shape is unsettled, but it's alive here because Black can clamp at A.

If White already has a stone at A, he can capture the corner with B to D. However, playing at A isn't a good endgame move for White, because Black will be able to harass him at E before living with D.



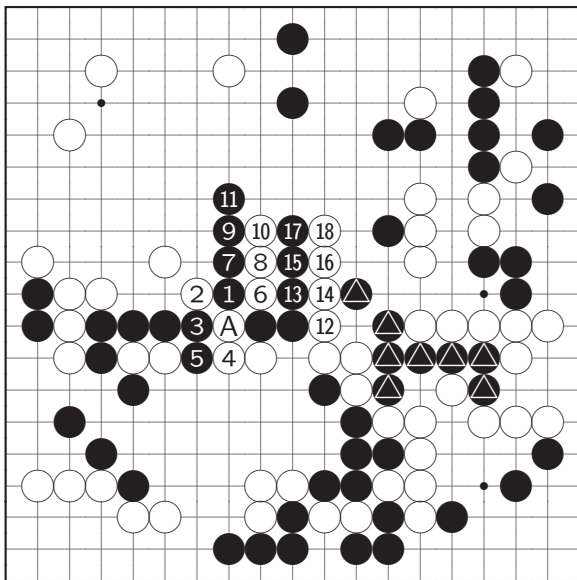
Variation 97 for 99

Stepping out with at ① is gentle and flexible.

If White pushes through and cuts with ② and ④, Black can simply extend at ⑤.

If White pushes at A next Black can hane at B, so it won't be difficult for Black to manage the center.

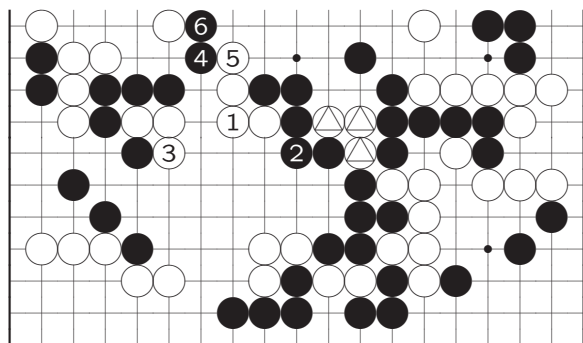
Instead of ①, pushing at C is careless. Black needs to remember that the double atari at D is always sente for White.



Variation 98 for 101

After ① (100 in the game), the hane at ① doesn't work. White can break into the center after exchanging ⑥ to ⑩.

Black can't stop White from breaking through with ⑫ to ⑯, and Black's marked stones are captured after ⑱.

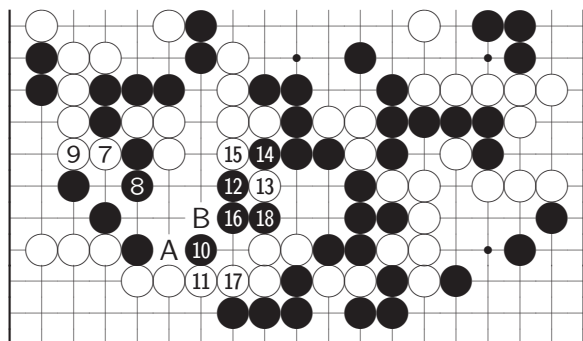


Variation 99 for ⑩②

If White connects at ①, Black will capture White's three stones in the center with ②.

Even if White tries to attack Black's left side group severely, with ③, Black can still move out up to ⑥ and it's not easy for White to capture the whole group.

Continuing...

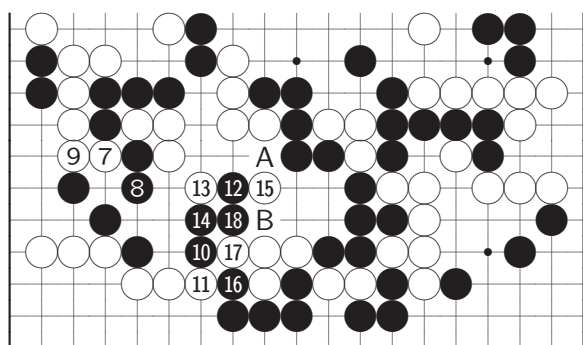


Variation 100 for ⑩②

White can cut with ⑦ and ⑨, but Black's stones are difficult to capture after ⑩ and ⑫.

If White continues with ⑬, Black can connect with the sequence to ⑱.

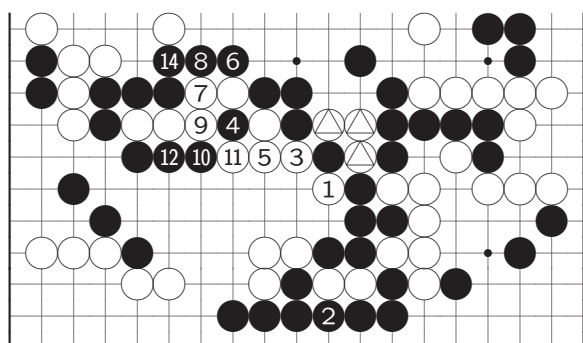
Instead of ⑪, if White pushes at A Black can extend to B and even if there's a ko, it's small (meaning Black doesn't risk much).



Variation 101 for ⑩②

White ⑬ and ⑮ look like sharp moves, but Black can manage the situation with the cut at ⑯ and the calm connection at ⑱.

After ⑱, A and B are miai.



Variation 102 for ⑩②

Black wants White to attempt to save the marked stones with ① and ③.

In response, Black can squeeze White's center stones in sente from ④ to ⑫.

Black will be very happy with the result after ⑭.

⑬ at ④

Sometimes the Empty Triangle Is Powerful

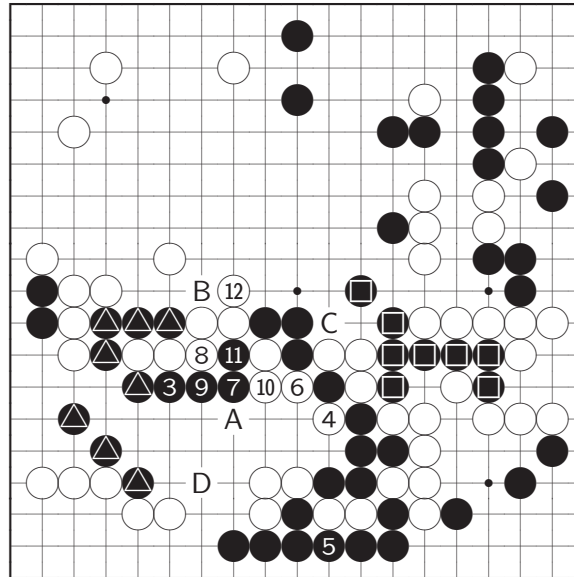


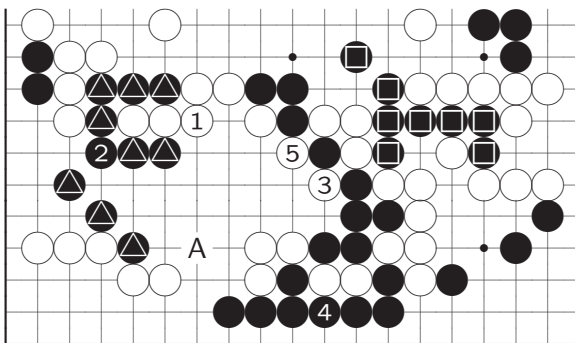
Diagram 17
(Moves: 103-112)

It was too early to save White's three stones with the atari at ④. White should have just connected at ⑧ instead. Jumping to ⑦ was very sharp, and it punished White's mistakes at ④ and ⑥.

Connecting at ⑧ is usually a good idea, because it saves two stones while threatening to cut at ⑨ and makes good shape up to ⑪. However, after exchanging ④ to ⑦, ⑧ should have been at ⑩. Black was given an opportunity to catch up with ⑨ at A. Unfortunately, he squandered his chance with ⑨.

The empty triangle at ⑫ was a brilliant move which reverberated around the board, and Black's marked groups were left bobbing in the wake. White ⑫ prevented the ladder starting at B, while simultaneously making miai of C and D.

In the opening, making good shape is usually more important in terms of efficiency, but in the middle game the most important question is whether a move works or not. If careful reading reveals a key point where different sequences overlap, you should play there in spite of any aesthetic sensitivities.



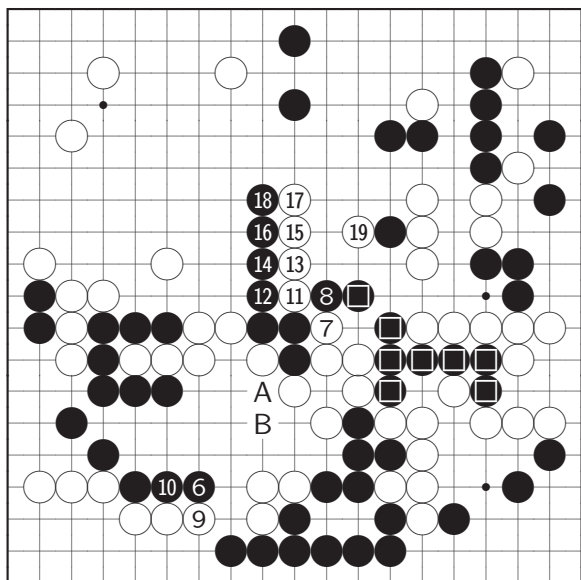
Variation 103 for ⑩

Instead of ④ in the game (at ③ in this variation), White should have just connected at ①.

Black doesn't have anything better than ②, because his group has become inflexible.

If White continues with ③ and ⑤, it's not especially hard for Black to save his triangled group with A, but Black's center group (squared) will still be weak afterwards.

Continuing...

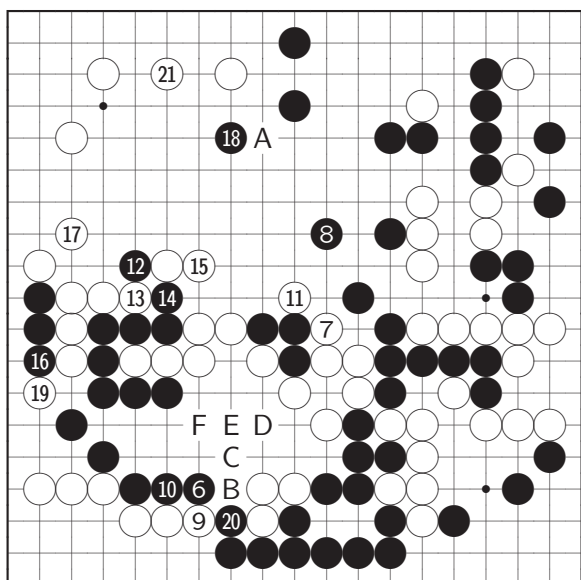


Variation 104 for 104

Pushing at ⑦ is severe and if Black blocks at ⑧, he'll have his hands full with ⑪ to ⑱.

White's clamp at ⑲ captures Black's marked stones, which gives White a firm lead.

If Black cuts at A, White will counter-atari with B.



Variation 105 for 104

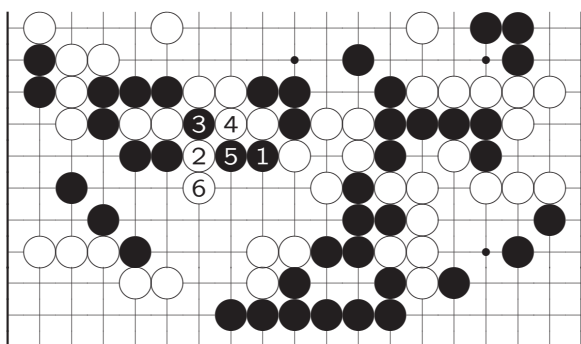
Falling back to ⑧ is a more balanced response. Both players want to take sente to play around A, but Black isn't completely alive after ⑪.

Black can live with ⑫ at ⑳, which makes B and C miai, but White will take sente and press at A.

Black's combination from ⑫ to ⑯ involves a sacrifice tesuji to take sente. White should cut with ⑬ and ⑮, but Black eventually manages to cap at ⑱.

White takes compensation with ⑲ and Black needs to live with ⑳. Up to ㉑, the result is slightly better for White.

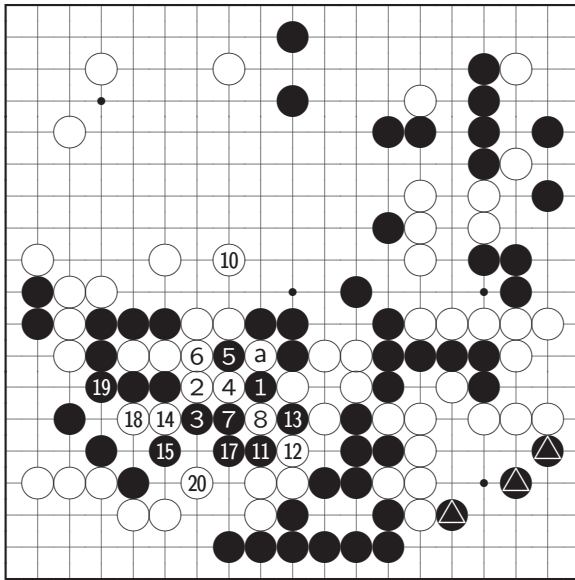
If White cuts at B, Black can live with C to E. However, if Black neglects to defend with ㉑, White will strike at F and capture Black's group.



Variation 106 for 107

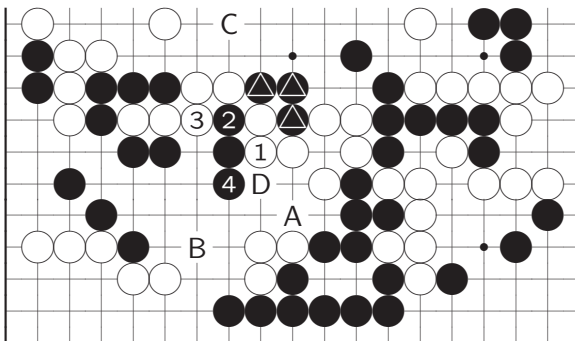
Instead of ⑦ in the game, cutting at ① is also conceivable, but White can resist with the hane at ②.

If Black continues with ③ and ⑤, he'll find himself in deep trouble after ⑥.

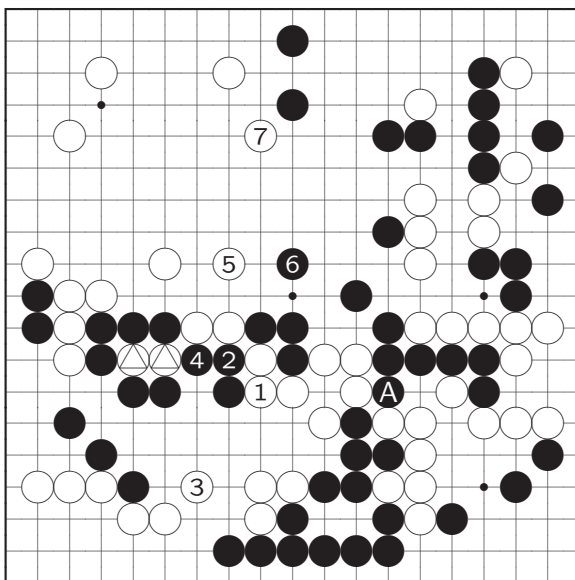


Variation 107 for 107

9 at a, 16 at b



Variation 108 for 108



Variation 109 for 108

Resisting with 3 to 7 is also conceivable, but starting a ko with 12 is a stern defense.

Black needs to answer at 15, but the ko is still a big burden for Black.

White has a ko threat factory in the lower right corner, because he can threaten to capture Black's marked stones. Black is still in big trouble.

Instead of 15, if Black ends the ko by connecting at 8, White will extend at 15 and capture Black's lower left group.

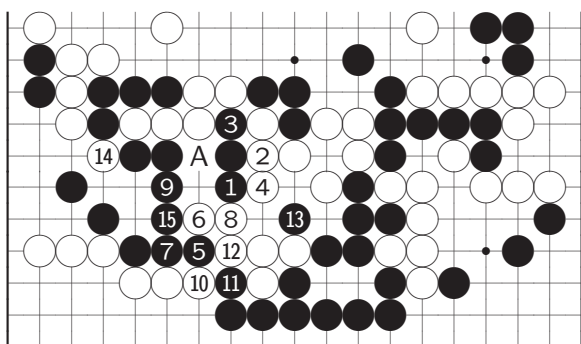
White should connect at 1 instead of 3 (8 in the game), and Black will cut at 2.

However, connecting at 3 is an overplay, because 4 makes miai of A and B, and things become difficult.

If White jumps at C next, Black will take a liberty with D, helping his marked stones indirectly.

Instead of rescuing the marked stones, as in the previous variation, White should simplify the game with 3 and 5.

Black can capture at 4, but the overall game is still good for White, because Black didn't gain anything after cutting at A.

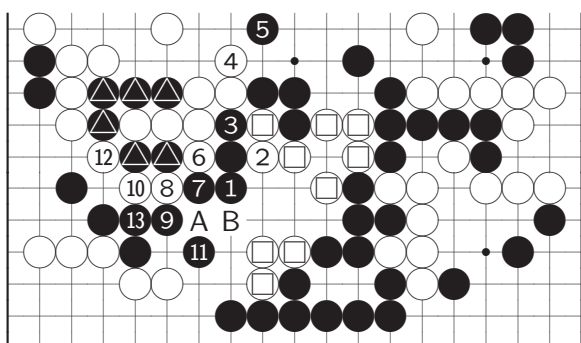


Variation 110 for 109

Rather than connecting solidly at A (9 in the game), extending outwards with 1 is more flexible.

If White tries to resist at 2 and 4, Black can counter-attack with 5.

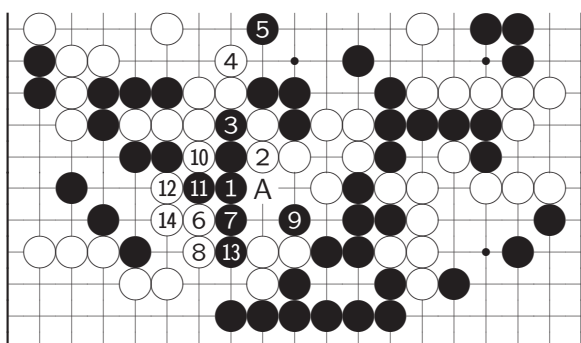
As you can see, White will lose the capturing race up to 15. Therefore, 2 and 4 are overplays.



Variation 111 for 109

If White pushes and cuts with 6 and 8, reinforcing at 11 is the right move, and Black comes out better when trading the marked stones.

Instead of 11, if Black connects at 12, White will cut at A. That makes 11 and B miai, so Black's whole group will die.

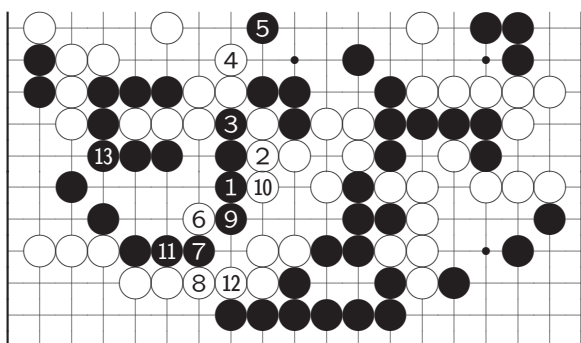


Variation 112 for 109

The knight's move at 6 is also conceivable. If Black just pushes at 7, White can cut with 10 and 12.

Pushing at 13 is better than cutting at 14, but the result up to 14 favors White. Black can do better than this.

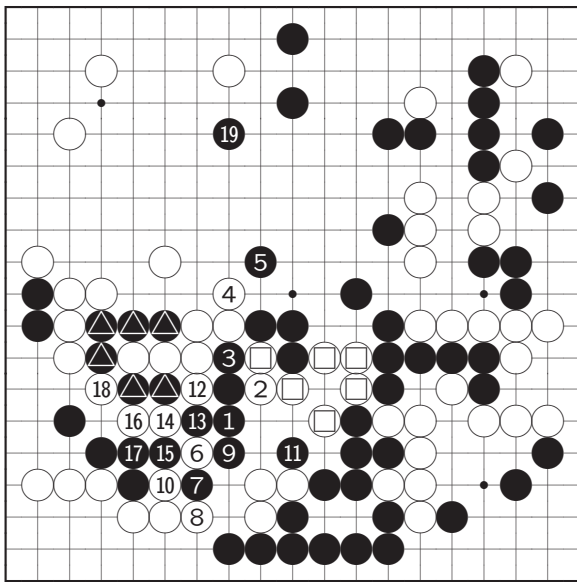
Black may consider turning at A instead of 7, but White will still cut with 10 to 12 and the result will be similar.



Variation 113 for 109

Attaching at 7 is a shrewd tesuji which helps to tide Black over.

Black will be happy to weather the storm and live comfortably up to 13.

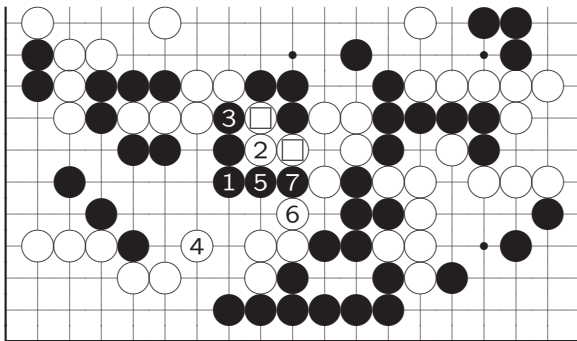


Variation 114 for 109

If White ataris at ⑩, the hane at ⑪ is the right response.

White can still capture Black's six stones up to ⑱, but he's already lost seven stones in the center.

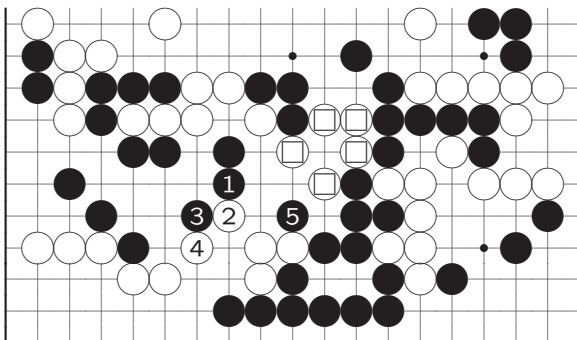
Furthermore, Black has sente to play at ⑲, so the result is very disappointing for White.



Variation 115 for 109

Connecting calmly at ④ is also possible.

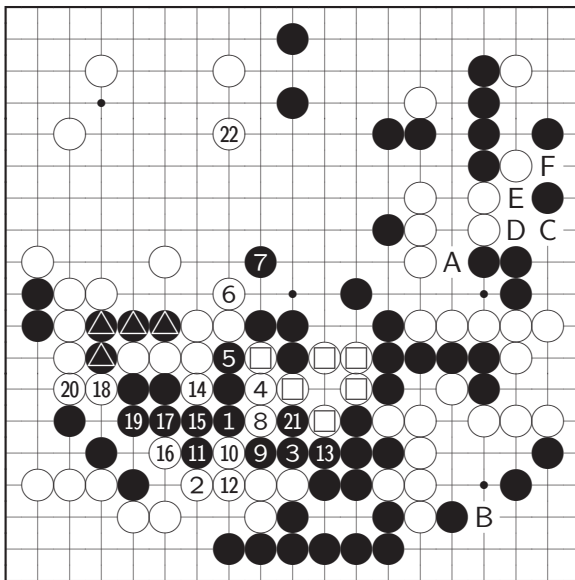
However, Black can capture White's marked cutting stones with ⑤ and ⑦, and White's attack runs out of steam without gaining anything.



Variation 116 for 109

If White attaches at ②, Black can isolate White's marked stones with ③ and ⑤.

This variation is also good for Black.



Variation 117 for 109

White's best response is to connect at ② first, before connecting at ④.

Cutting with ⑧ and ⑩ arranges to trade the marked groups, and ⑪ is necessary to avoid being caught in a ladder.

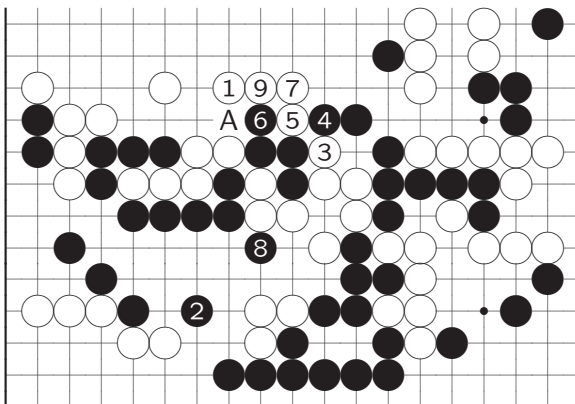
White can squeeze Black in sente with ⑫ to ⑳, and then take a big point with ㉒.

The game is slightly better for White up to ㉒, but Black is satisfied with the negotiations.

After Black captures White's marked stones he becomes quite thick and powerful in the center, which means he'll be able to attack White at A soon.

White will endure the attack, because he can still attach at B in the corner, but Black will profit.

If White wants to strengthen his right side group after ㉑, he can exchange C to F in sente, and then play A. However, White A isn't quite sente, so Black will play at ㉒. Jumping at ㉒ is better than C.

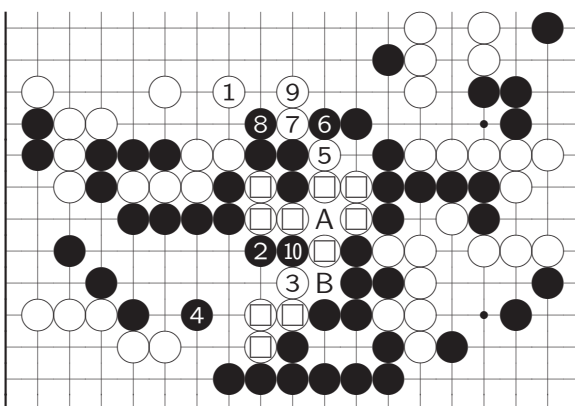


Variation 118 for 112

Jumping to ① forms a more pleasing shape than the empty triangle at A (⑫ in the game).

If Black connects at ②, White will still be able to cut and capture with ③ to ⑨ and the game will be practically over.

However, ② is a mistake and Black can do better...



Variation 119 for 112

Black ② and ④ constitute a powerful counter, and White's marked center stones are captured up to ⑩.

After ⑩, A and B are miai.

This variation shows why White didn't make shape with ① in the game.

Winners Can Be Generous

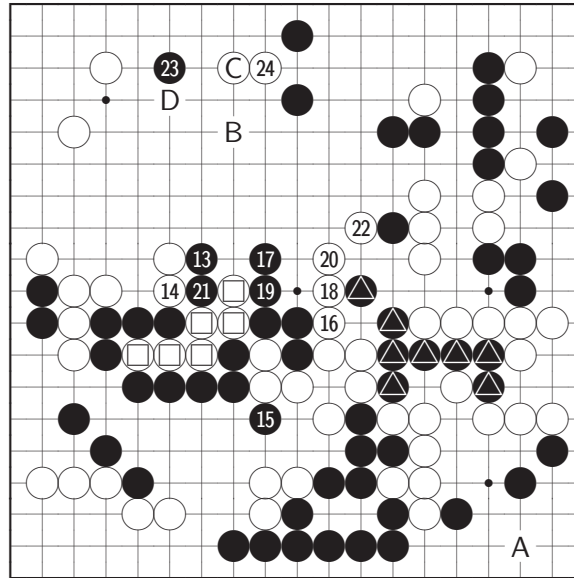


Diagram 18
(Moves: 113-124)

The attachment at ⑬ was a well timed probe. Gu Li spent a long time thinking at this stage, and was eventually able to minimize the damage with this move, but there was no way to completely resolve the crisis.

Trading with ⑭ was an excellent response, and ⑮ to ⑳ followed a one-way street. After ㉔, ㉕ and ㉖ were miai, so Black was still in trouble.

The players exchanged the marked stones with ㉕ and ㉖, but White gained much more than Black. White didn't just take profit with ㉖, he also made his right side group powerful. It became easier for him to bully Black's bottom right corner with A. Remember that thickness still pays in the endgame.

Invading at ㉗ was more aggressive than capping at B, but it was appropriate considering the circumstances. Black was behind, so he needed to complicate the game.

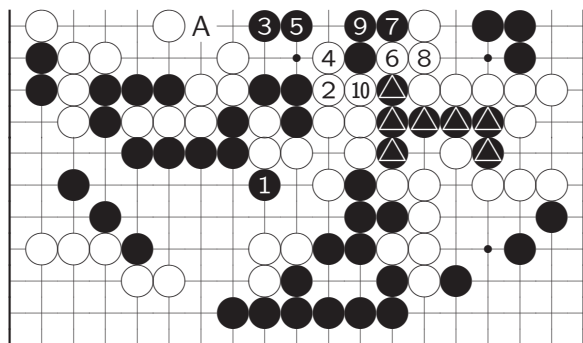
Peeping at ㉘ was typical of Lee Sedol's style of play. He doesn't usually retreat or avoid fighting unless the circumstances are dire.

However, in this case, he should have appraised the situation more calmly. White was winning by a few points on the board (not counting komi) before ㉗, so he could afford to be generous.

When Lee Changho 9 dan was at the height of his powers, he was very good at wrapping up this sort of 'won' game. He used his great positional judgment and technique to simplify his games and maintain the lead when he was ahead. He would gladly give up points to secure a certain victory.

Because of that, he almost never lost a game when he was ahead like this, and many of his opponents gave up on their games quite easily, even if they were only slightly behind.

Lee Changho's reputation was such that other players lost their fighting spirit when they were behind. Instead of ㉘, White should have sacrificed ㉘ by attaching at D, in exchange for a clearer game.

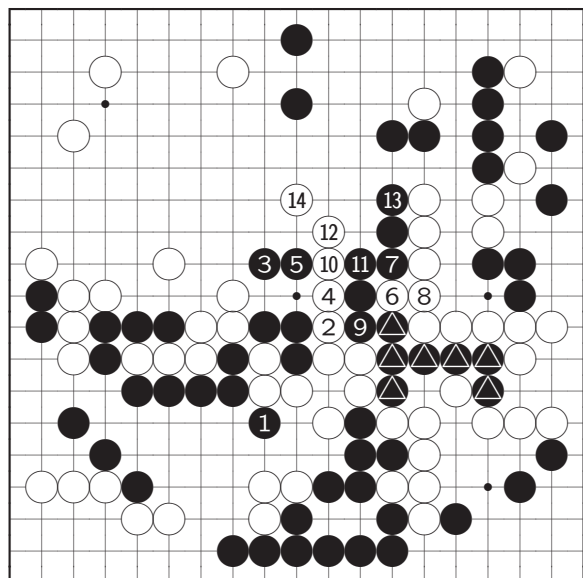


Variation 120 for 113

The hane at ① doesn't work as well as the attachment at A (⑬ in the game).

White will push through with ② and ④, and Black can't afford to form a bamboo joint with ⑤.

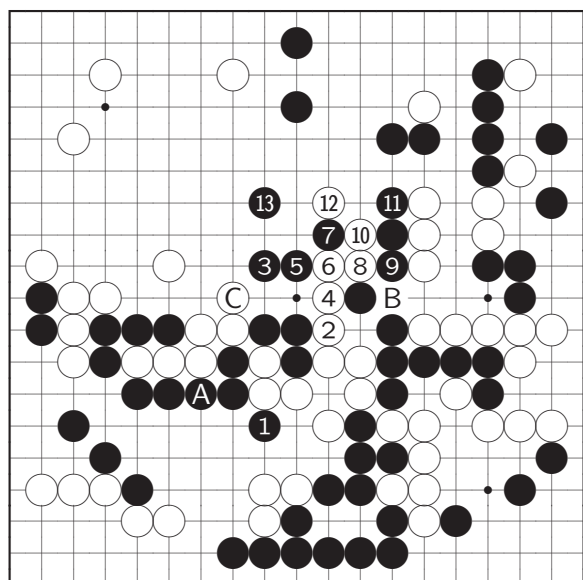
Pinching at ⑥ is a decisive tesuji, and Black can't save his marked stones on the right after ⑩.



Variation 121 for 113

If Black tries to save the marked stones with ⑨, ⑩ makes miai of ⑪ and ⑫.

White can move out with ⑫ and ⑭, and Black's center stones are in deep trouble.

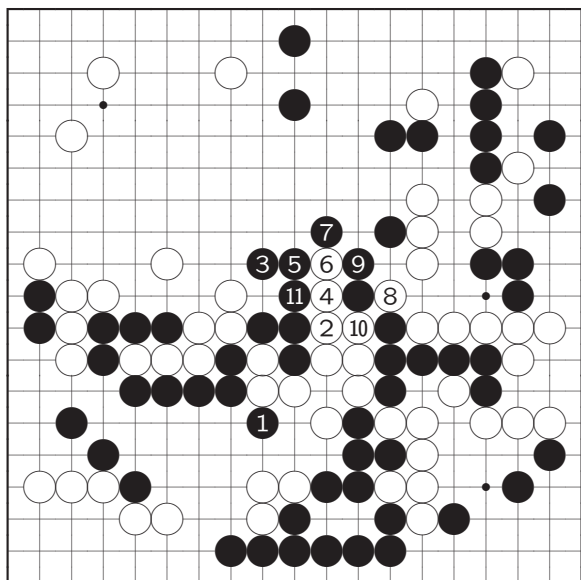


Variation 122 for 113

Apparently Gu misread the continuation when he played at A (⑩⑨ in the game).

Earlier on, he thought that White would move out with ⑥ and ⑧, and that the fight would be playable for Black up to ⑬.

However, as we saw in the previous variation, White can pinch at B instead of pushing at ⑥. Once Gu found that move (after C), it was already too late.

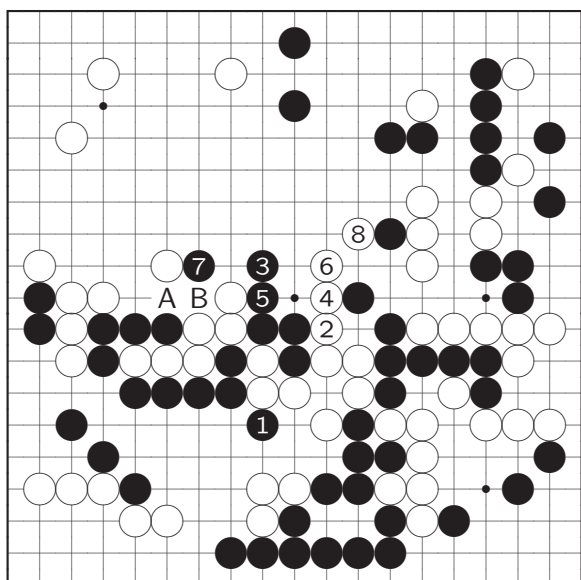


Variation 123 for 113

The exchange of ⑥ for ⑦ fills White's liberties, so he can't pinch at ⑧ anymore after ⑦.

When liberties are short, you need to be very careful about filling them without a good reason.

Black wins the capturing race with ⑪.

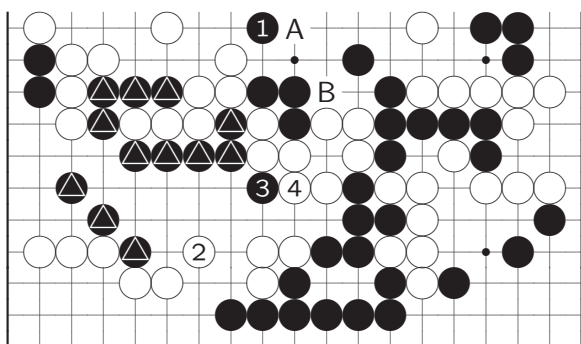


Variation 124 for 113

Black can consider connecting at ⑤.

The result up to ⑧ will be a trade which is quite similar to the actual game.

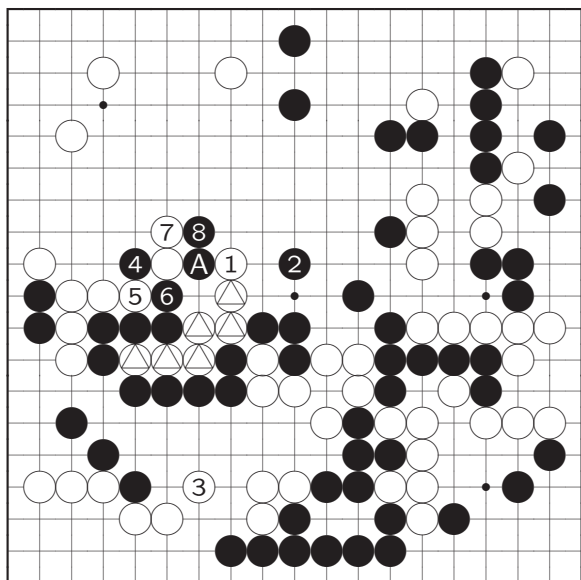
However, the sequence in the game was slightly better for Black, because the exchange of A for B benefited Black.



Variation 125 for 113

If Black just makes shape with ① (or A, or B), White can connect his stones with ②.

Black's marked group is in danger after ④.

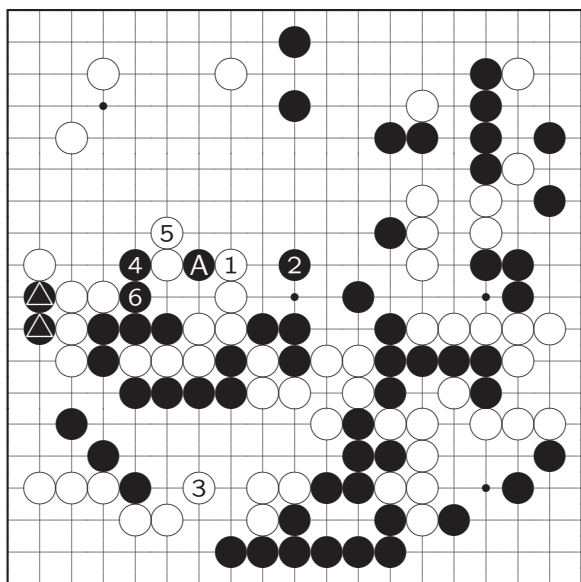


Variation 126 for 114

When Black probes at **A**, pushing at ① looks like a strong move, but it's an overplay.

Black can reinforce his cutting point while attacking with ②, and he can counter-attack with ④ to ⑧.

White's marked center stones are heavy and isolated.

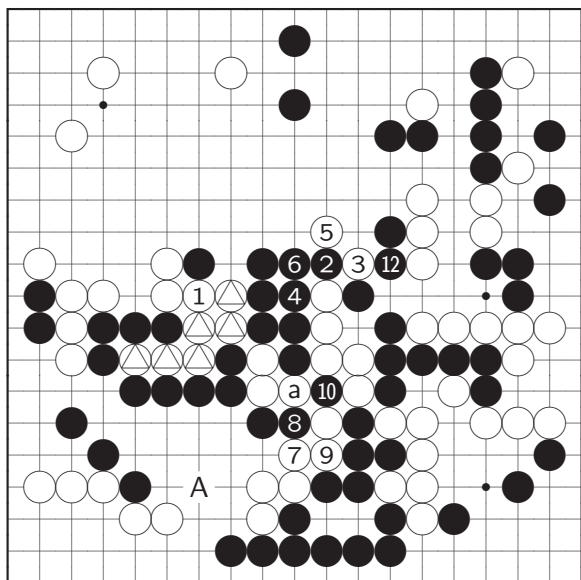


Variation 127 for 114

If White extends at ⑤, Black can connect at ⑥, and the game will become complicated.

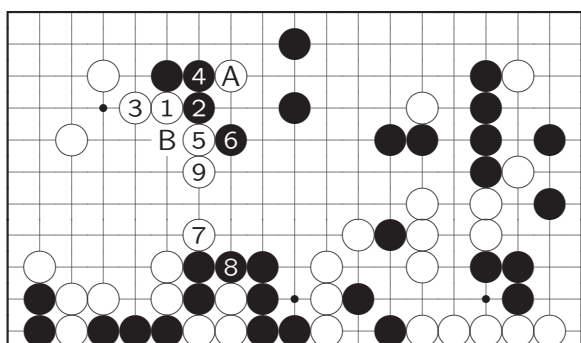
Black can move **A** out later, and he can also try to connect the marked stones on the left side.

Above all, White's left side territory will probably be damaged or destroyed, so this is an extremely risky way of playing.

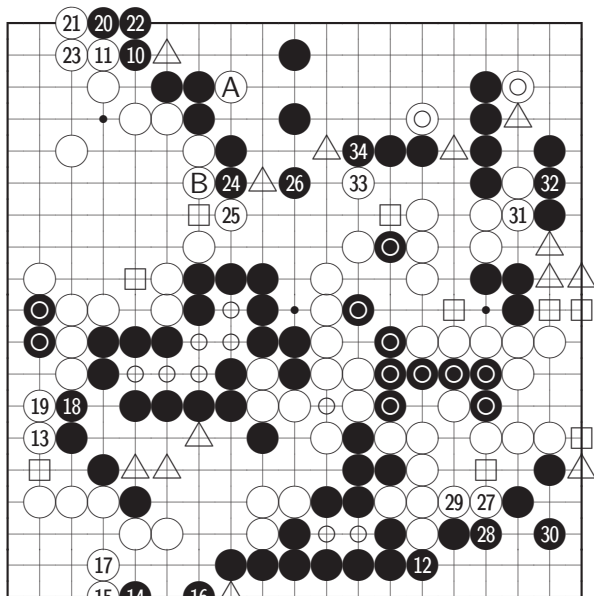


Variation 128 for ⑫⑩

⑪ at ①a



Variation 129 for ⑫④



Variation 130 for ⑫④

It would be greedy to save the marked stones with ① instead of extending to ② (⑫ in the game).

Black ② and ④ are stalwart moves which fill White's liberties, and Black can reverse the game up to ⑫.

White can still save his center group by playing at A, but his loss in the center is already substantial.

Considering White's lead in the game, he should have sacrificed ①A by attaching at ①.

The net result of the trade up to ⑨ is a loss of approximately 4–5 points for White, but White can sustain this loss and still has a comfortable lead with komi.

This is a safer and better way to win than getting embroiled in a dangerous fist fight with Black.

Instead of ①, capping at B leaves White a little thin. Even when sacrificing, you need to play firmly.

Let's evaluate the position after White sacrifices ①A.

Black:

Top right: 55, bottom: 24, and center: 16.

Total: 95 points.

White:

Left side: 59, right side: 33, and komi: 7.5.

Total: 99.5 points.

It's White's turn, so White is winning quite comfortably even after sacrificing.

If you look around the board after ①B (⑨ in the previous variation), you'll see that White's groups are all strong and there isn't anywhere for Black to make trouble or catch up. White's lead is solid.

Settle the Shape to Ensure Your Lead

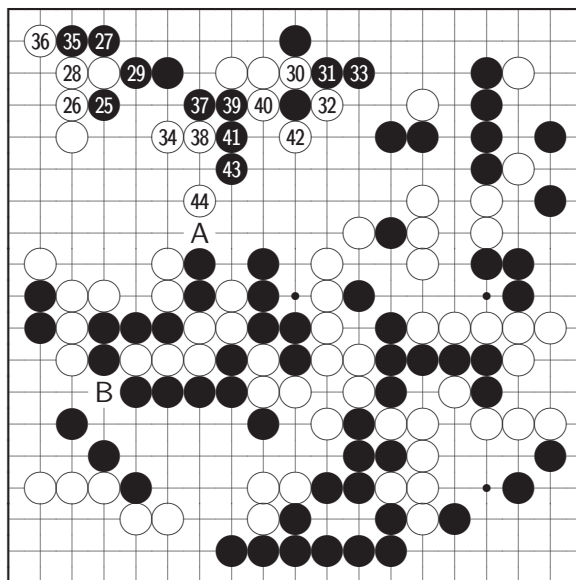


Diagram 19
(Moves: 125-144)

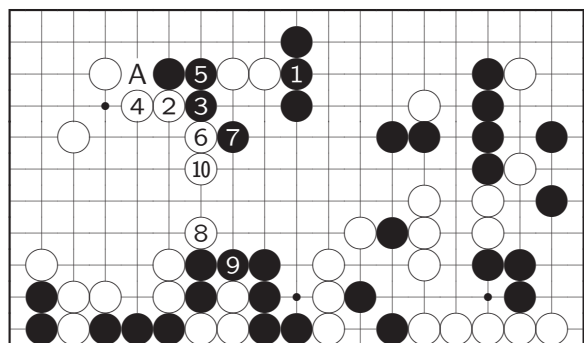
Black's combination from ②⑤ to ②⑨ resisted by denying White the straightforward sacrifice strategy we saw in the previous two variations. Black was behind, but he was beginning to make the game chaotic. Capping at ③④ flowed smoothly though, and the game was still good for White.

White ③⑧ and ④⑩ were strong. Even though Black drilled through White's shape, White was able to capture at ④②. You don't have to worry about matters of shape when you have a strong continuation.

Jumping at ④④ was a mistake. If White had exchanged the atari at A first the game would still have been easy for him to win, but he was reluctant to erase the atari at B because of its endgame value.

Strong players have a highly developed sense of aji and usually try to preserve it for as long as possible.

When you keep options alive you make your stones more flexible, but you also give your opponent more options in many cases, so this instinct can sometimes be a hindrance when it comes to winding up a clearly won game.

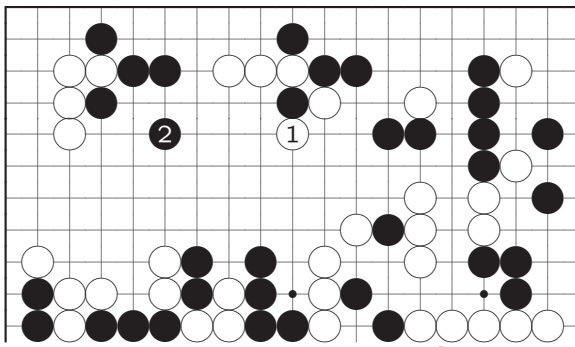


Variation 131 for ①②⑤

If Black just connects against the peep at ①, White has another opportunity to sacrifice with ② to ⑩.

Gu was trying to catch up, so he prevented White from choosing this variation in the game.

Instead of ③, if Black hanes on the other side at ④, White will cut at A and the result will be even better for White after Black ataris at ③ and connects at ⑤.



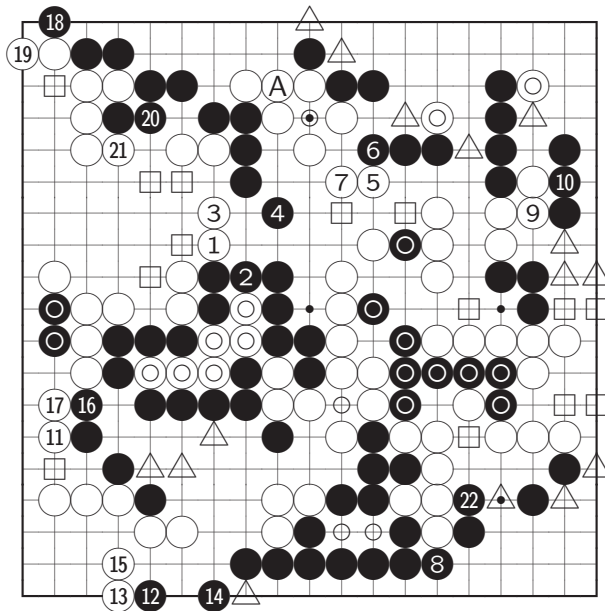
Variation 132 for 134

The atari at ① isn't as good as capping at ② (③④ in the game).

Black can easily jump out at ②, and it's hard for White to attack this group.

In addition, it's difficult for White to protect his left side territory now.

Capping at ② (③④) in the game forced Black to walk a crooked path.



Variation 133 for 144

White should have exchanged ① for ② before playing at ③ (④④). White can connect his weak group with ⑤, and he still has a clear lead.

Black:

Top right: 33, bottom: 25, and center: 16.

Total: 74 points.

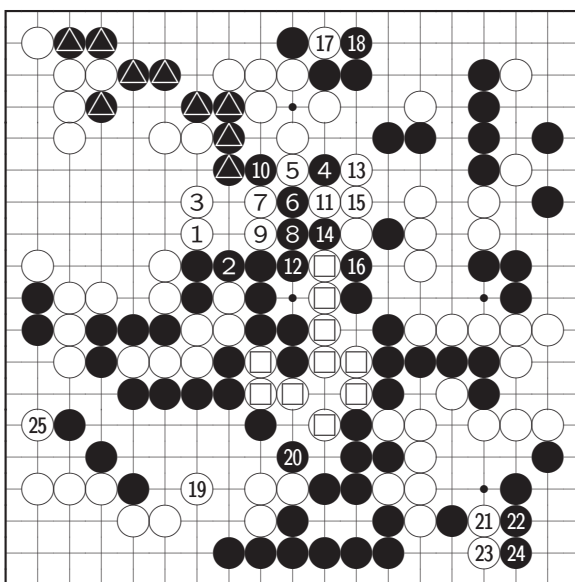
White:

Left side: 45, right side: 31, and komi: 7.5.

Total: 83.5 points.

As you can see, White is winning by almost 10 points now, so Lee's peep at A in the game wasn't a mistake, but ③ (④④ in the game) was.

White is 4 points better off than last time we counted, but paying 4 points to reduce risk and set up a certain victory is reasonable when you're this far ahead.



Variation 134 for 144

If Black attacks White's top group with ④ and ⑥, White can fight back with ⑦ and ⑪.

White will be happy to save his group up to ⑬, and ⑭ and ⑰ are miai for White next.

If Black cuts in the center with ⑭ and ⑰, exchanging ⑰ for ⑱ ensures that Black's marked stones are captured in sente—as we'll see in more detail later.

Black can capture White's marked center stones and revive his right side group, but the overall trade is good for White.

White is still leading by more than five points on the board up to ⑳ (not counting komi).

Sow the Wind, Reap the Whirlwind

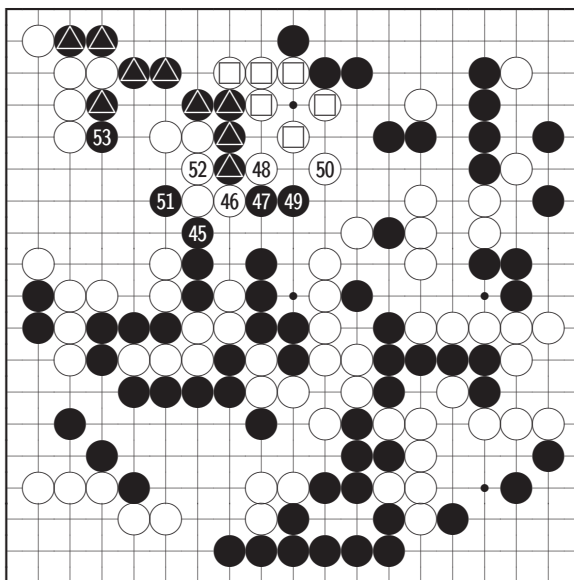


Diagram 20
(Moves: 145-153)

The game became complicated when Black played at ④⑤. This move looks innocent enough, but it was actually the beginning of an indirect attack on White's marked group.

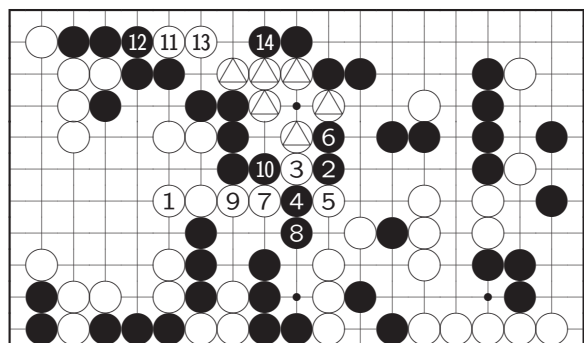
Pushing out at ④⑥ was necessary to assist White's marked stones, but White's shape became strained.

Stepping out with ⑤⑩ was essential, because White couldn't win a capturing race against Black's marked group at the top.

It looked like Black's marked stones were in danger, but Gu found an excellent sequence from ⑤① to ⑤③, which made the game even more chaotic. White had sown the wind and reaped the whirlwind.

The game had been hopeless for Black only 10 moves ago, but in this kind of all out fight the odds were closer to fifty-fifty.

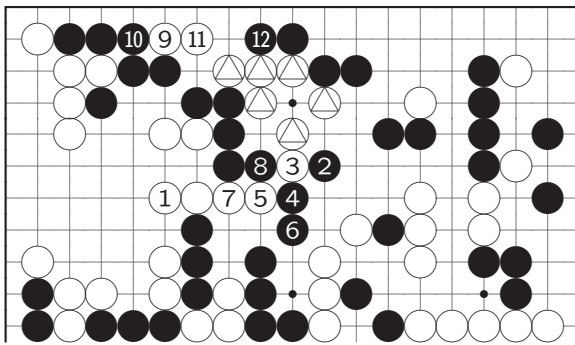
Here we see Gu Li's power and his ability to catch up from behind. Lesser players would have panicked in this kind of situation, but Lee kept his cool and soldiered on. White still had a small advantage.



Variation 135 for ④⑥

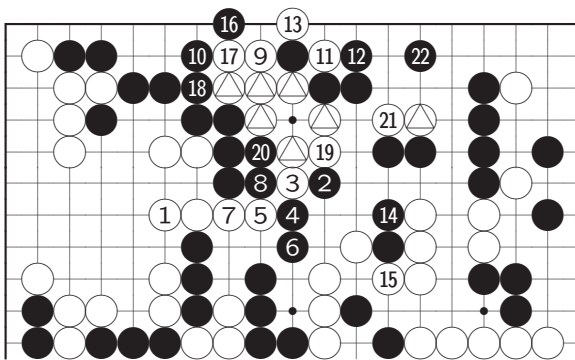
Falling back to ① is the right shape locally, but it allows Black to attack White's marked stones with ② and ④.

White doesn't have enough liberties to win the capturing race and Black will capture White up to ⑭.



Variation 136 for ⑭

Playing the hane at ⑤ first is slightly better for White, but Black can still win the capturing race by one liberty up to ⑫.

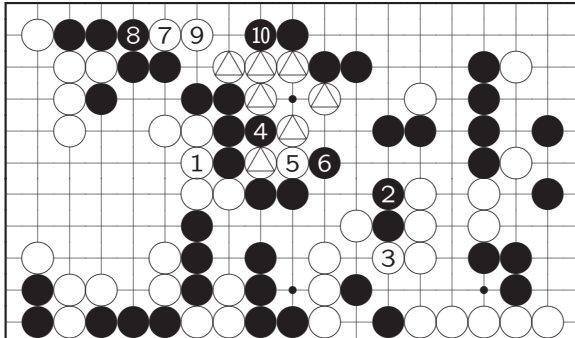


Variation 137 for ⑭

White can also think about blocking at ⑨, but the kosumi at ⑩ is the vital point for both players.

The continuation from ⑪ to ⑳ is complicated, but ㉒ is quietly powerful. It saves Black's three stones at the top, leaving White's marked stones in danger.

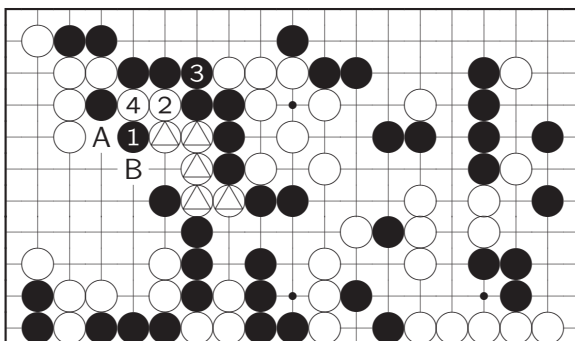
Therefore, Lee couldn't play at ① in the game.



Variation 138 for ⑮

If White removes bad aji with ① instead of moving out at ⑥ (⑤⑩), Black can attack White's group with ④ and ⑥.

White's marked stones will be captured once again up to ⑩.



Variation 139 for ⑮

If Black attaches at ①, instead of pushing at A (⑤⑩), White will be able to save his marked stones with ② and ④.

If ① is at B, White can still pinch at ② and then atari at A.

Keep Things Unsettled When Losing

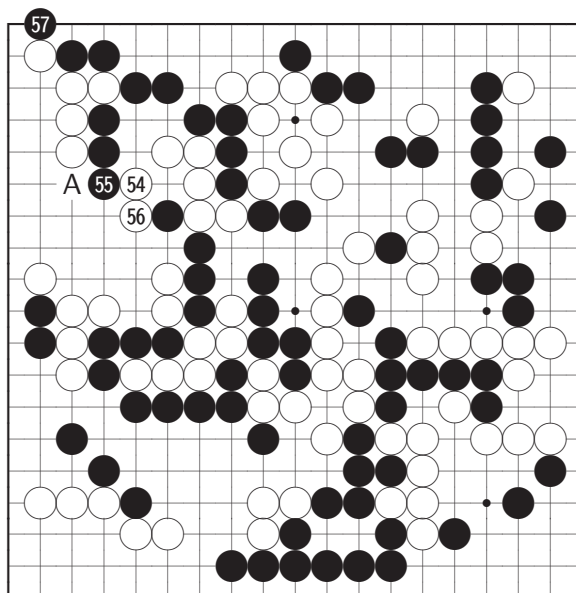


Diagram 21
(Moves: 154-157)

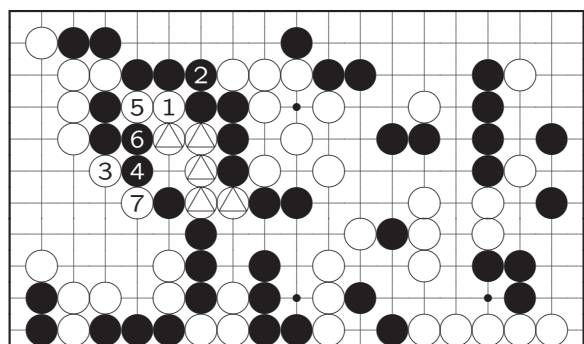
Act as the situation requires: concentrate or disperse, be strong or be weak, launch a sudden attack or a routine attack, be quick or be slow, be numerous or be few, be rested or be tired.

—Sun Bin, *The Art of War*

Stepping out with the kosumi at ⑤④ was the only way, and the game was approaching its climax. Unfortunately, ⑤⑦ struck the board cacophonously, and the music came to an abrupt stop.

The problem with ⑤⑦ was that it helped White to make shape for his weak group in the corner. Black should have blocked at A instead, and the game would have become incredibly complicated.

Earlier we talked about how it's good to settle positions when you're winning, to make things clearer and more certain. When you're losing, however, you want to do the exact opposite; keep everything unsettled for as long as possible and make the game turbulent and uncertain.



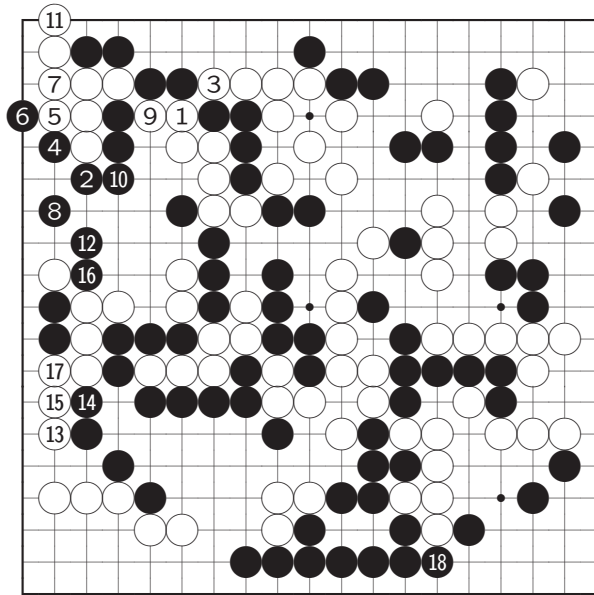
Variation 140 for ①⑤④

Instead of the kosumi at ④ (⑤④ in the game), White can also think about pinching at ①.

If Black connects naively at ②, White can save his marked stones with the hane at ③.

Even if Black resists with ④, White can still capture them with ⑤ and ⑦.

However...



Variation 141 for 154

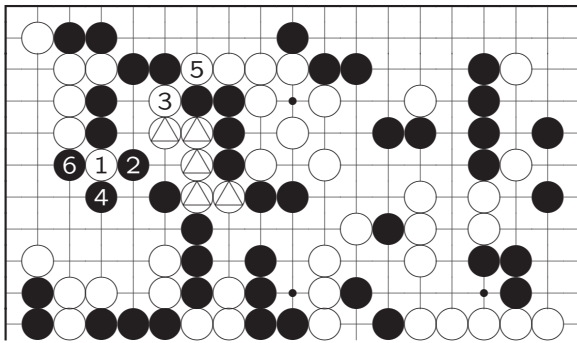
Black will resist with ② instead and pressure White's corner stones severely.

White can save the corner with the tesuji at ⑪, but Black gains momentum up to ⑩ and can peep at ⑫.

White doesn't even have time to connect at ⑬ and has to make a humiliating retreat with ⑭ to ⑰, while Black lives in sente.

White's left side territory has been destroyed and Black can come back to defend the lower right corner at ⑱.

This variation is very successful for Black, and the game becomes even again.



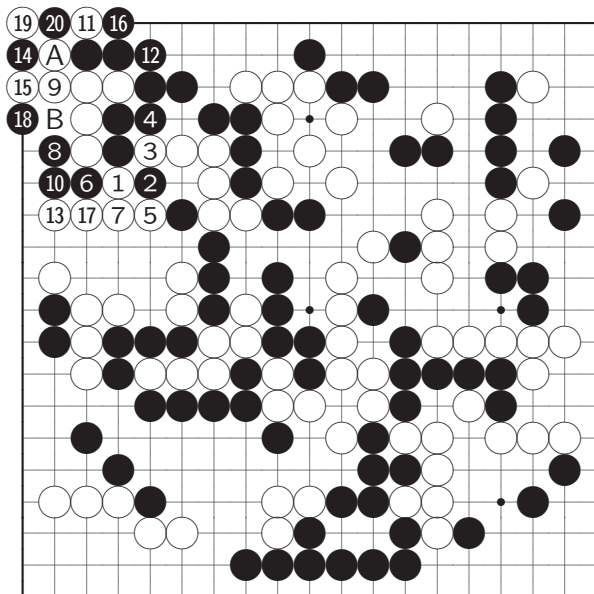
Variation 142 for 154

The hane at ① is also conceivable, but it doesn't work.

Black's atari at ④ is potent, and ⑤ and ⑥ are miai for Black.

This is even worse for White than the previous variation.

If White uses ⑤ to connect at ⑥, Black will connect at ⑤ and White's marked stones will be captured.

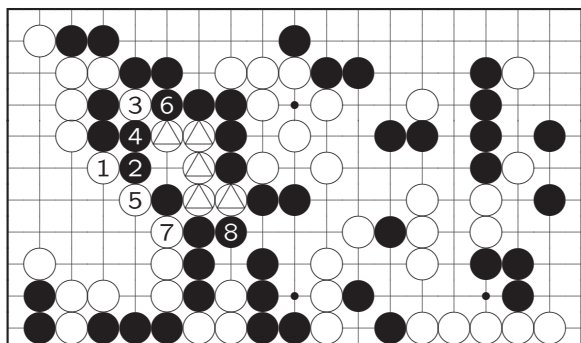


Variation 143 for 154

If White plays at ③ and ⑤, Black can counter with ⑥ and ⑧. Black can create a ko up to ⑳, which is an outstanding result for Black.

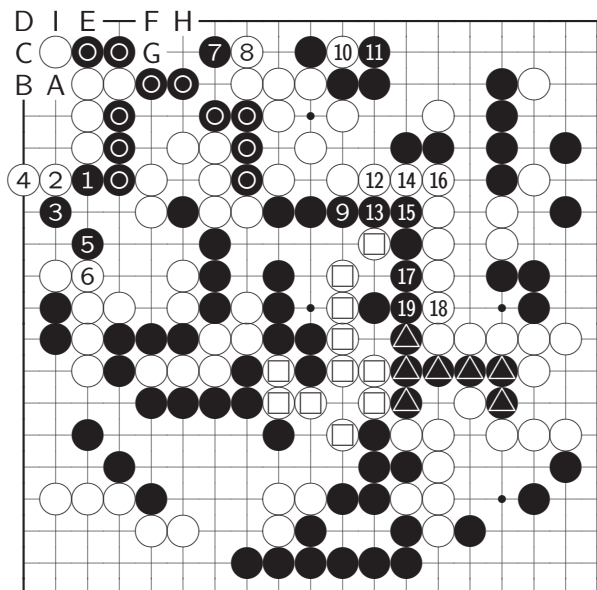
If White ataris at ⑩ instead of connecting at ⑨, Black will counter-atari at ⑨ and capture A after squeezing at B.

Instead of ⑮, the kosumi at ⑱ is also conceivable for White, but Black will exchange B for ⑮ and then atari at ⑯. No matter what White does now, the result is still a ko at best.



Variation 144 for ⑮④

Cutting at ③ first appears to be skillful, but ⑧ will capture White's marked stones in snapback.



Variation 145 for ⑮⑦

Instead of the hane at I (⑤⑦ in the game), Black should have blocked at ①.

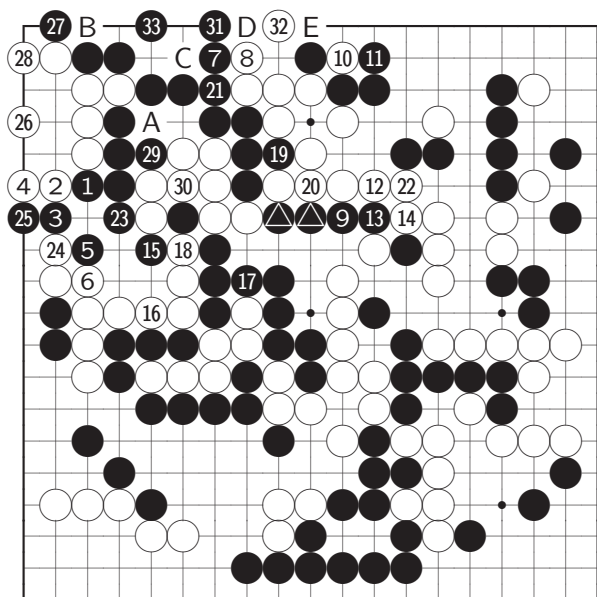
White can live in the corner with ② and ④, but the position is not yet certain.

Black isn't alive in the top left, but exchanging ⑦ for ⑧ makes his group resilient and leaves behind aji in the corner.

Pushing at ⑨ is a very important move, and an enormous trade takes place up to ⑲. Eventually, the triangled stones escape and the squared stones fall.

White still needs to finish capturing Black's circled group at E, otherwise Black will entangle the corner in a ko with A to I.

This variation leads to a very close game.



Variation 146 for ⑮⑦

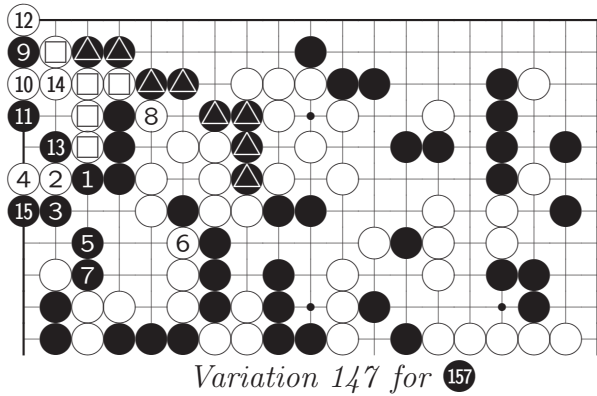
If White cuts at ⑭ (instead of playing at ②②), Black can hane at ⑮. This defends the marked stones in sente, after ⑰ and ⑱.

Black's continuation with ⑲ and ⑳ is precise, and White is forced to connect at ㉒.

Black ㉓ allows Black to protect the cutting point at A in sente with ㉔.

Black eventually lives with ㉓ and reverses the game.

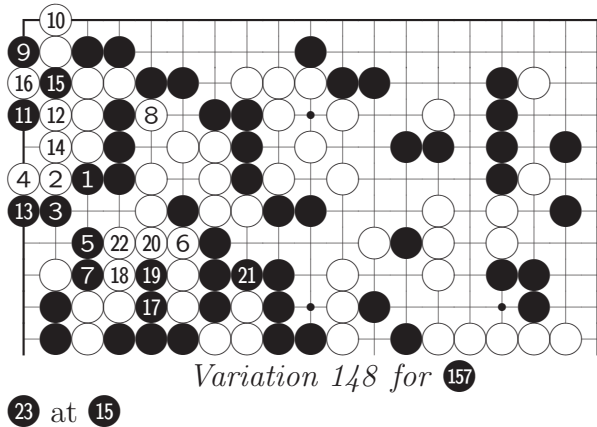
If White tries to capture Black with ㉓② at B, Black exchanges ㉓③ for White C and connects under with Black D, ㉓②, Black E.



If White cuts at ⑥, Black will be happy to return the favor at ⑦. White might cut at ⑧ next, but attaching at ⑨ is a well known tesuji and White can't avoid a ko in the corner.

If White ataris at ⑩, Black can counter-atari with the clamp at ⑪ and capture White's two stones up to ⑮.

After ⑮, we can still expect a ko between the marked groups, but it's a picnic ko for Black.

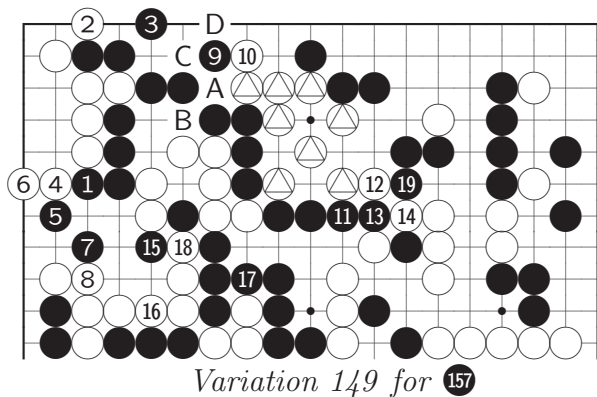


If White descends at ⑩, jumping at ⑪ still hits the vital point.

White ⑫ is the only move, and exchanging ⑬ for ⑭ before starting the ko shows impeccable technique.

We can expect a big ko up to ⑮, and the sequence from ⑰ to ⑳ is a ko threat for Black. Black continues with ㉑ to ㉒ because otherwise White will have a ko threat at ⑲.

After Black recaptures with ㉓, White doesn't have any threats of sufficient value.



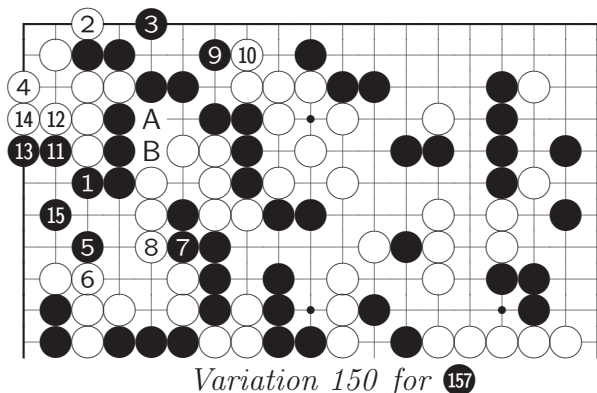
The hane at ② doesn't help in this fight.

Pushing with ⑪ and ⑬ is still powerful, and White doesn't have any special moves to manage the situation.

If White cuts at ⑭, Black can isolate White's top group with ⑲, after exchanging ⑮ to ⑱ in sente.

There's no way for White's top group to live on the inside, and the capturing race favors Black.

Because of ③, White can't capture ⑨ with A to D, which means the exchange of ② for ③ helps Black.



If White lives in the corner with ② and ④, Black can exchange ⑤ to ⑨ in sente.

After that, Black can make an eye on the left side up to ⑮, and the game will become very close.

Black doesn't need to worry about being cut at A, because he can atari at B.

Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea

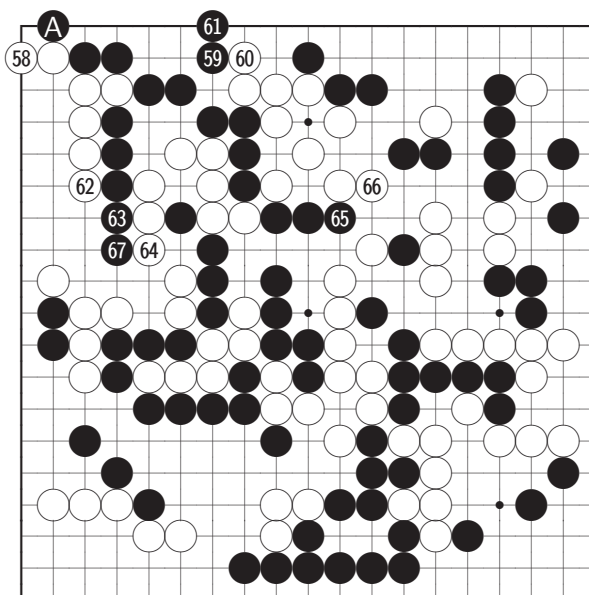


Diagram 22
(Moves: 158-167)

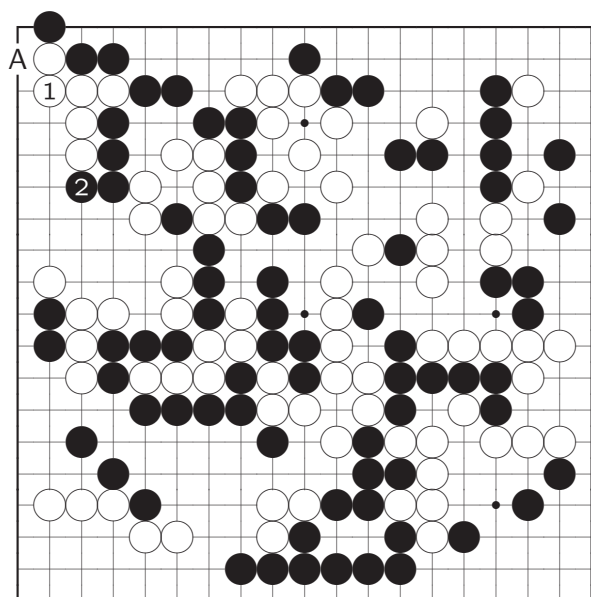
Extending at ⑤⑧ was the best response to A (①⑤⑦), and the exchange of A for ⑤⑧ backfired on Black.

The kosumi at ⑤⑨ was the right followup, but it was already very hard for Black to catch up.

Pushing at ⑥② was the finishing blow. The game was practically over once White played there.

Black was faced with a choice between the devil and the deep blue sea; between certain destruction or wasting away in an uneventful endgame.

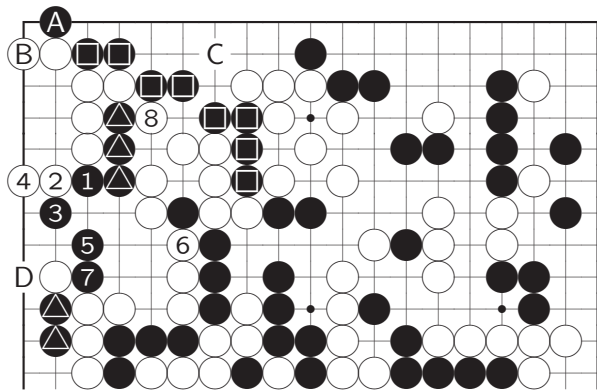
He tried to complicate the game with ⑥⑦, but it was too late for it to have any real chance of success.



Variation 151 for ①⑤⑧

Instead of extending to A (⑤⑧), connecting at ① is clumsy.

Black will be happy to block at ②, and White will struggle to live in the corner so the result will be even better for Black than the previous variations.



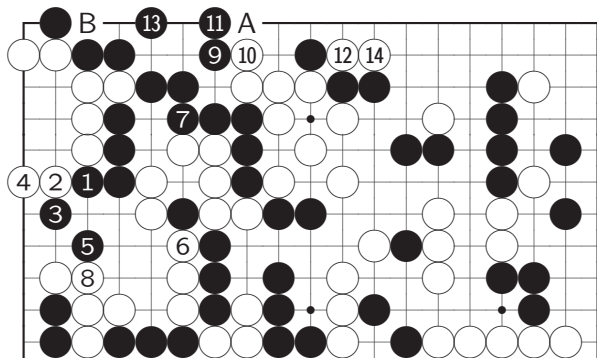
Variation 152 for 159

After Black has exchanged A for B, turning at 1 isn't particularly strong anymore.

If Black still plays 1 to 5, White won't connect at 7, and will cut at 6 instead.

If not for the exchange of A for B, Black could start a ko by attaching at B instead—as we saw in Variation 148.

One of Black's marked groups will die, because C and D are miai, so the game is decided in White's favor.



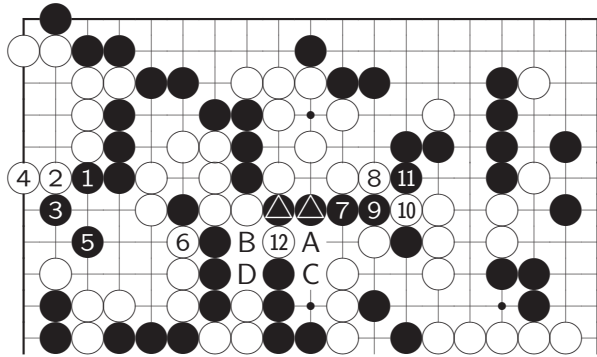
Variation 153 for 159

If Black connects at 7, White can connect at 8.

Even though Black can live on the inside up to 13, 12 is a tesuji which aims to prevent Black from connecting at A in sente.

If Black ataris 12 at 14, White B will capture Black.

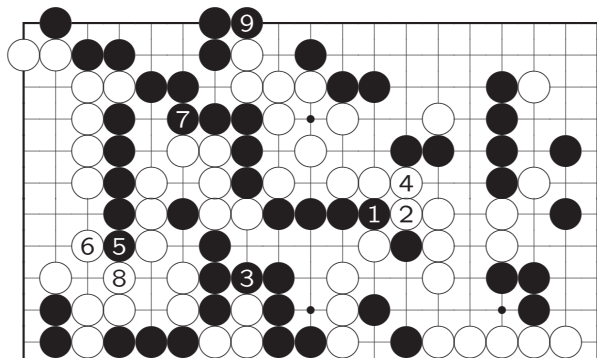
Exchanging 13 for 14 is unavoidable, but the damage to Black's top right territory is too much to bear.



Variation 154 for 159

Cutting with 7 to 11 doesn't work after 6, because White can wedge at 12 and Black's marked stones are trapped.

If Black ataris at A, White can connect at B, making miai of C and D.



Variation 155 for 167

This variation is one of the best remaining options for Black.

He manages to connect under with 9, but White maintains his lead and takes sente.

Gu didn't play like this because he knew that it wasn't good enough to win.

Black Looks for a Place to Resign

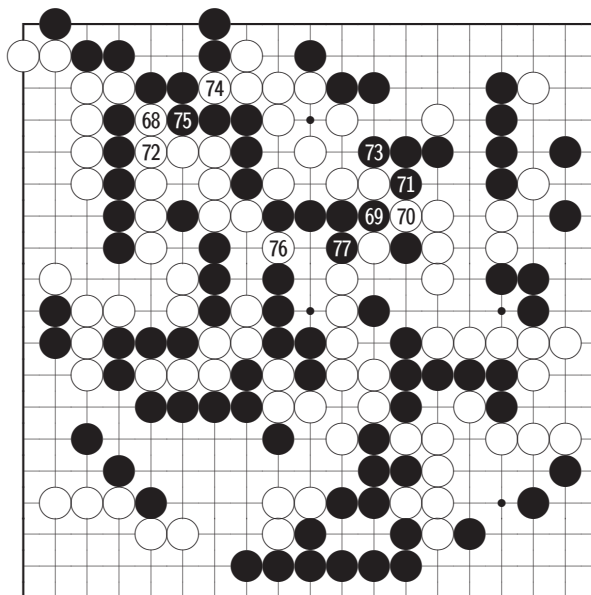
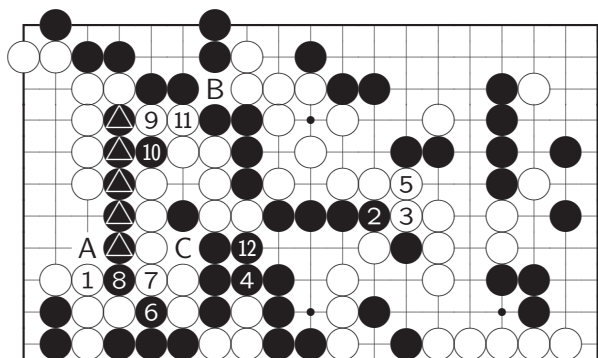


Diagram 23
(Moves: 168-177)

Cutting at ⑥⑧ settled the game cleanly, and there was nothing Black could do now.

Black pushed at ⑥⑨, but it was already too late. Connecting at ⑦② made ⑦④ and ⑦⑥ miai for White.

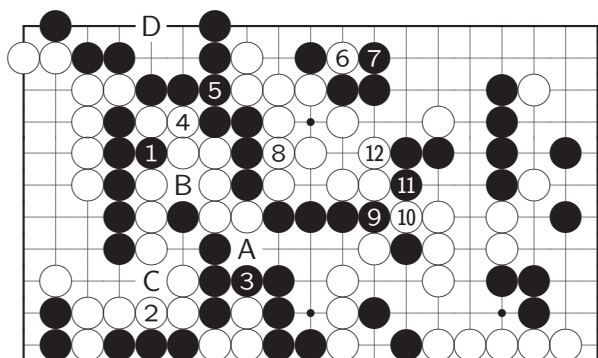


Variation 156 for ①⑥⑧

White mustn't connect at ①, because Black can play at ② and ④, making ⑤ and ⑥ miai next.

As you can see, Black's marked stones have one more liberty now. Instead of ①, if White connects at A, the result will be the same as the previous variation.

If White connects at ⑤, he loses the capturing race up to ⑫. If White plays ⑨ at ⑪, he still loses the capturing race after Black B, ⑨ and Black C.

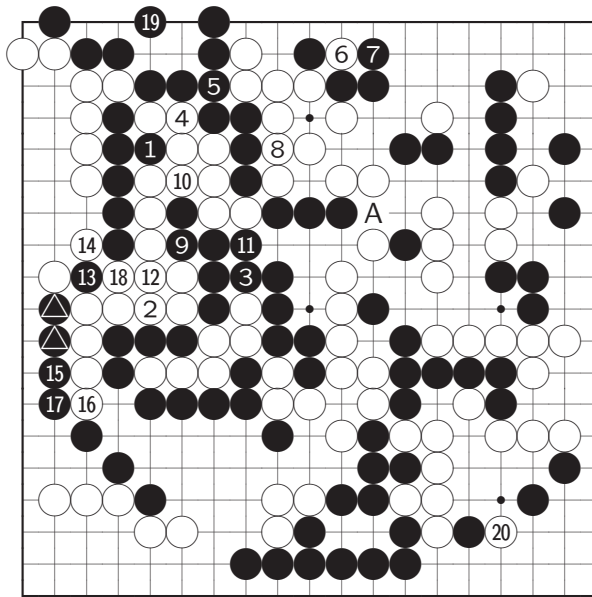


Variation 157 for ①⑥⑨

The atari at ① doesn't work because ② is sente.

If White doesn't exchange ② for ③, Black will capture White with A to C after he connects at ④.

White ⑧ is a clever move which allows White to take sente. After White makes two eyes with ⑫, Black will have to go back and live with D.

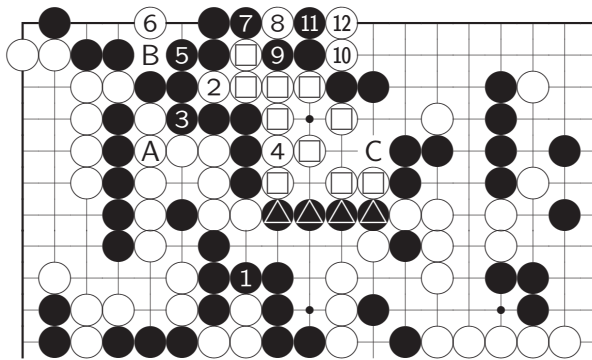


Variation 158 for ①⑥⑨

Instead of pushing at A, as in the previous variation, Black can squeeze White up to ①⑧ after cutting at ①③. He manages to save his marked stones and reduce White's territory in the process.

However, Black still has to spend another move at ①⑨, so White can take sente.

White ②⑩ is a big sente endgame move, and the game is still good for White.



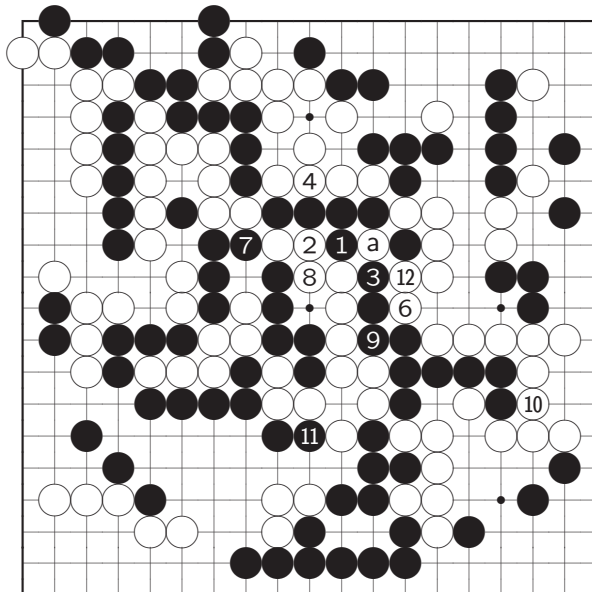
Variation 159 for ①⑦③

After A (⑦②) there's no way to capture White's marked stones at the top.

As we've seen, ① prevents Black's marked stones from being disconnected, but ② and ④ are strong.

Even if Black connects at ⑤, White can still capture up to ①② (⑧ and B are miai).

If Black attacks from the outside with ⑤ at C, Black will be short of liberties after White B, ⑤ and ⑥.



Variation 160 for ①⑦⑦

Black ataried at ① in the game, but ② was his cue to resign.

If Black keeps playing, White can capture Black's center group up to ①②, so Gu resigned after ①⑦⑧ (② in this variation).

⑤ at a

A Runaway Freight Train

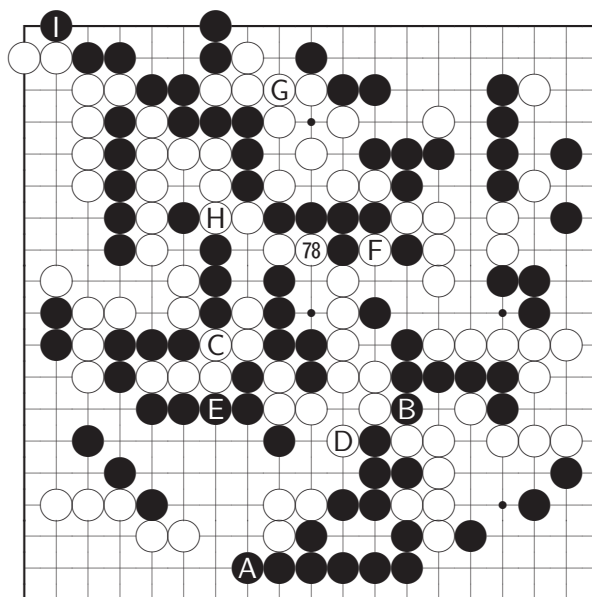


Diagram 24
(Move: 178)

178 moves: White won by resignation.

Lee Sedol won the sixth game, and the overall result now stood at 4–2 in Lee’s favor.

This game was an important opportunity for Gu Li to even the score, but he stumbled. He was under a great deal of pressure, and seemed to struggle to find his best form in Lu’an.

Meanwhile, Lee was greatly relieved. He had also struggled with his form, when he lost four consecutive games to Gu, but he managed to win this game and give himself some room to breathe. Now, having restored his two game lead and needing only one more victory to ensure (at worst) a draw, Lee was riding a runaway freight train.

Gu started the game with another successful opening, but extending at 45 ((A)) was an overplay and he lost his advantage.

The cut at 75 ((B)) came a whisker too early, and the result up to 102 ((C)) was better for White.

Cutting at 104 ((D)) was questionable, and this gave Black a chance to catch up. However, 109 ((E)) was a mistake, and White had a solid lead after 122 ((F)).

White 124 ((G)) was a little risky, and jumping at 144 ((H)) was a mistake. Black seized the opportunity to complicate the game, but 157 ((I)) was a blunder which became the losing move.

We hope that by studying this commentary you’ll feel the profundity and depth of both masters’ reading. The commentary in this book can only offer a glimpse of their strategies and plans, because space is limited. One could write a whole book, just about this game.

August

August 31, 2014, Lhasa, Tibet: *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

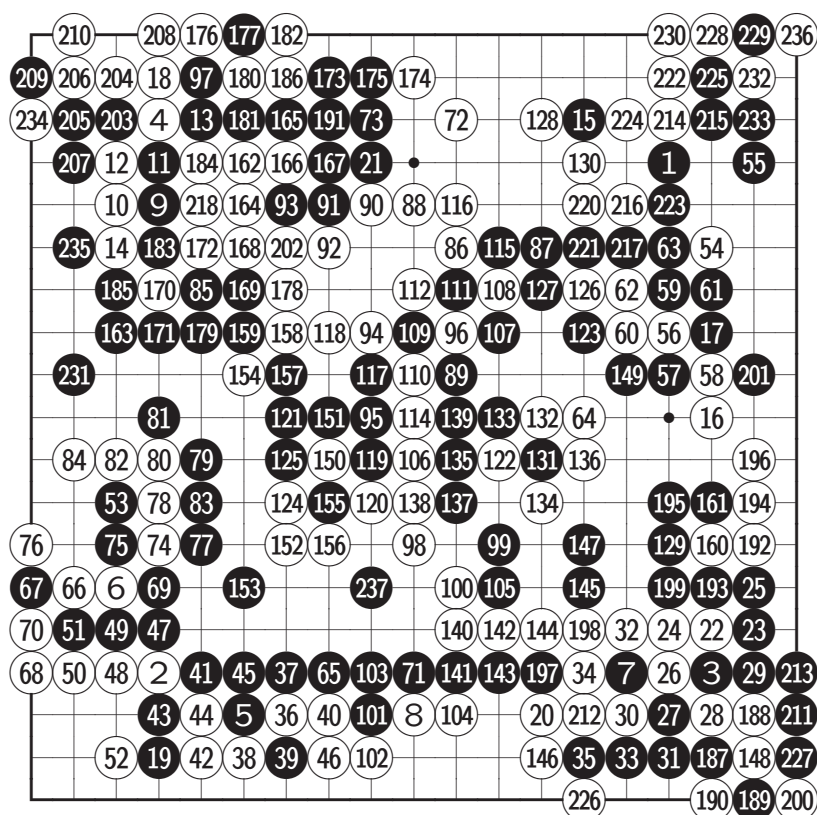


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-237)

113 at 96, 219 at 170

Lhasa

The seventh game of the MLily Gu vs Lee Jubango was played in Lhasa, Tibet, on August 31, 2014. Lee Sedol played black.

Lee Sedol was leading 4–2 going into this game, so it was very important for Gu Li to win. If he lost, Lee would extend his lead to 5–2, meaning that a draw would be the best result Gu could hope for.

In game six, Gu had a good chance near the very end, after Lee allowed him to complicate the game. Unfortunately, he failed to take full advantage of it and his prospects declined from a possible 3–3 score, to being two games behind.

Like Shangri-La, Lhasa is more than 3,000 meters above sea level, so the players were once again subjected to extreme conditions. In an interview after the previous game, Lee was asked how he would prepare for the high altitude. Buoyed by his win, Lee lightheartedly quipped that he would smoke less in the lead up to the game.

Some journalists and Go fans were concerned that the players would suffer from altitude sickness again, and questioned the choice of location, but both players learned from game five and traveled to the venue several days earlier to acclimatize.

The High Enclosure

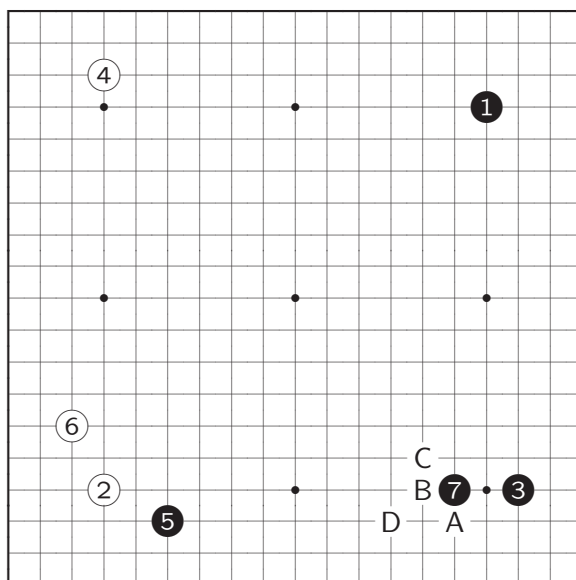
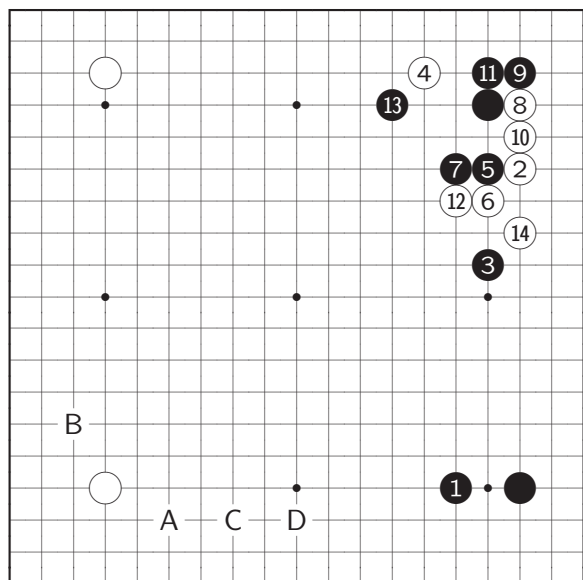


Diagram 2
(Moves: 1-7)

Black exchanged ⑤ for ⑥, and formed a high corner enclosure with ③ and ⑦. Compared to the standard enclosure, when ⑦ is at A, the high enclosure is thicker and more center-oriented.

When Black encloses with A instead, it's possible for White to press the corner down with the shoulder hit at B, but pressing ⑦ at C gives Black more territory (after Black B) and is usually bad for White.

This enclosure focuses more power towards the right side—because the shape is tighter—and less power towards the bottom, because the corner is open and White can approach at D. Black's potential on the right side is similar, but his potential at the bottom is larger after ⑦.



Variation 1 for ⑤

Lee Sedol played the moves up to ⑭ in the final of the 26th Asian TV Cup, against Kono Rin 9 dan. The game was about a two weeks before this one, on August 19, 2014.

This is another game, but since Lee played like this as White, Gu probably didn't want to follow this path. He would expect Lee to have researched this opening after the game and prepared some new moves.

It appears that Lee thought that exchanging A for B before playing the moves in the top right was good for Black. He was probably worried that if he approached at A later, White might pincer at C or D.

In Chapter 6, we criticized the pincer at D when combined with the star point, but this situation is different because White primarily wants to split the bottom and reduce the potential of Black's corner.

Loose Pincers Discourage Sacrifice

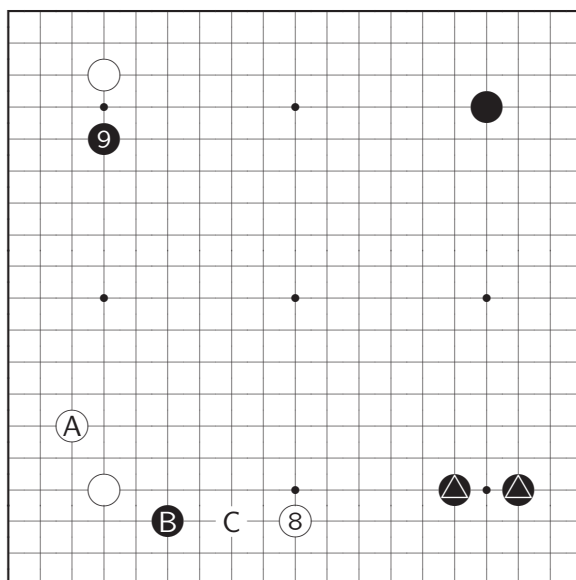
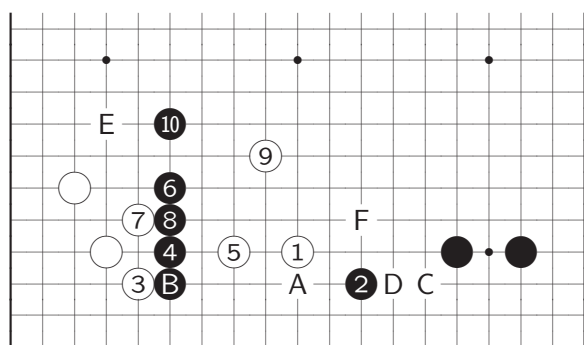


Diagram 3
(Moves: 8-9)

White immediately reduced Black's potential at the bottom with ⑧. After making a fist with ①, the loose pincer at ⑧ actually put more pressure on Black than C would have, because it made it harder to sacrifice ② and reduced the potential of Black's marked enclosure. If ⑧ were at C, Black would counter-pincer at ⑧ and develop the potential of Black's high enclosure on a larger scale.



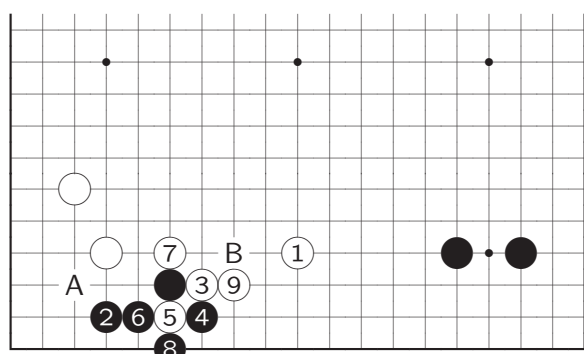
Variation 2 for ⑧

The three space high pincer at ① also feels nice in this position.

Compared to the low pincer at A (⑧ in the game), ① is lighter and moves into the center more quickly.

However, it doesn't attack ② as severely, and it's harder for White aim at moves like C or D later.

The sequence up to ⑩ is natural, and E and F are both good continuations for White.

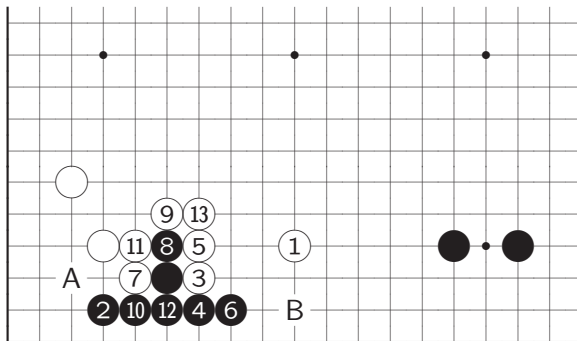


Variation 3 for ⑧

After ①, sliding to ② is natural and this variation shows the most common continuation.

If White defends the corner submissively at A, Black is planning to complete his base with B. This would be good for Black because it makes ① weak and out of place.

White ③ and ⑤ are tesuji which allow White to connect his stones while pressing Black down. The result up to ⑨ is acceptable for both players.



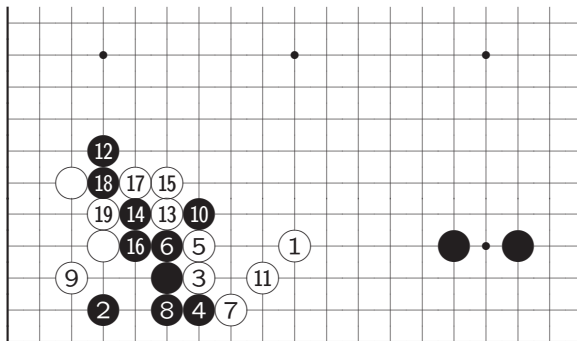
Variation 4 for ⑧

Since the crosscut tesuji (⑤) in the previous variation helps Black to make eye shape, professionals started to experiment with ⑤ in 2012.

This move was practically never played before, because in basic shape terms the exchange of ③ for ④ becomes bad for White after Black extends to ⑥.

However, ⑦ to ⑬ comprise a strong continuation and the result is reasonable for both players.

White can play A (or in rare cases B) in sente later.



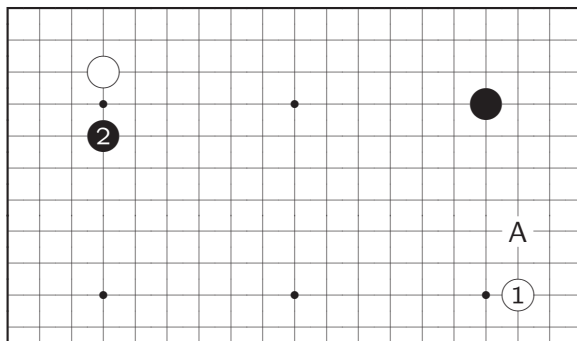
Variation 5 for ⑧

Jiang Weijie 9 dan played ⑤ against Lee Sedol in the 1st Bailing Cup, in 2012.

At the time, Lee tried to resist by pushing up with ⑥, but ⑦ and ⑨ were strong.

Black ⑫ was a creative and flexible looking move, but it proved to be too thin after White cut at ⑬.

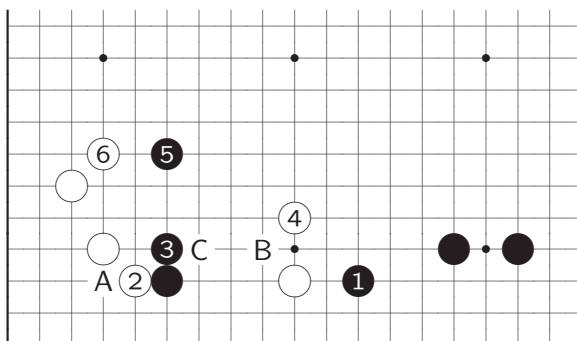
When Jiang tried ⑤ against Lee once again in June 2014, Lee played as in the previous variation instead.



Variation 6 for ⑧

Instead of the pincer at ⑧ in the game, splitting at ① is also possible. In response, Black will most likely play ② with an eye towards approaching at A later.

This opening strategy was discussed in detail in Chapter 6, so we won't repeat it here.



Variation 7 for ⑨

If Black counter-pincers at ①, White can kick at ② to make Black heavy, and the moves up to ⑥ flow naturally. This leads to another game.

Instead of ②, the iron pillar at A avoids helping Black to move into the center and is also possible, but it gives Black time to play the shoulder hit at B.

Using ② to press at C is a little slack, especially when it isn't easy to invade the bottom right later.

Develop Towards the Wider Side

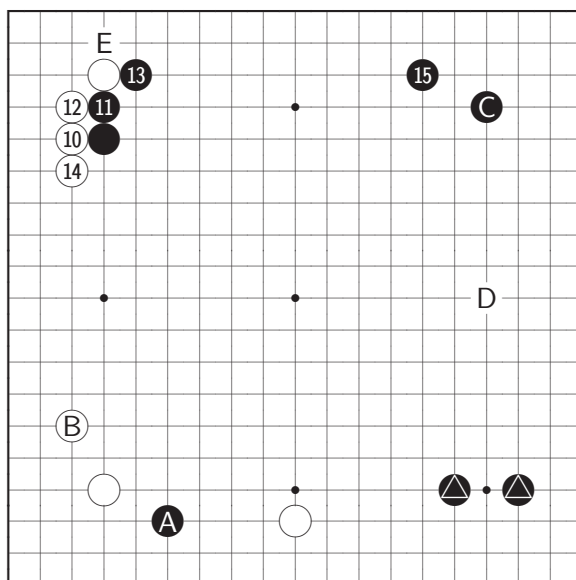


Diagram 4
(Moves: 10-15)

White attached at ⑩ to enlarge his territory in the corner, and starting the avalanche joseki with ⑪ and ⑬ followed the direction of play. This shape is named ‘avalanche’ because the colors were inverted when it was first played, and ⑪ and ⑬ (when white stones) resemble snow rolling down the mountain.

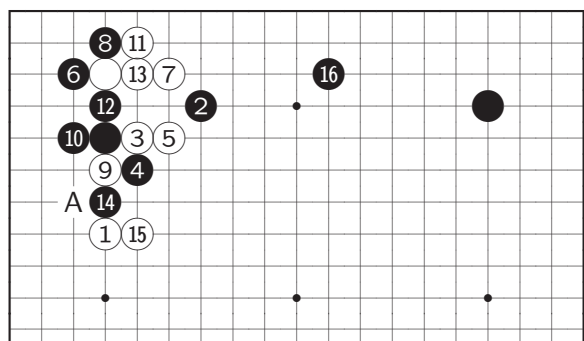
The top is more valuable than the left side in this opening, because Black has already exchanged ① for the low enclosure at ② on the left, whereas the top is completely open and untouched. In other words, there is greater potential at the top than on the left side.

The tenuki and enclosure at ⑮ were typical of the modern style of play. Black regarded his moves in the top left as forcing exchanges and treated them lightly (for now), while making miai of D and E.

We discussed the merits of the star point corner enclosure (⑮ and ③) in Chapter 5.

With respect to the right side, Black D (instead of ⑮) would form an ideal shape with the marked stones. However, as we’ve already discussed, modern Go focuses more on creating balance across the whole board.

We’ll investigate what happens if Black plays ⑮ at D below.



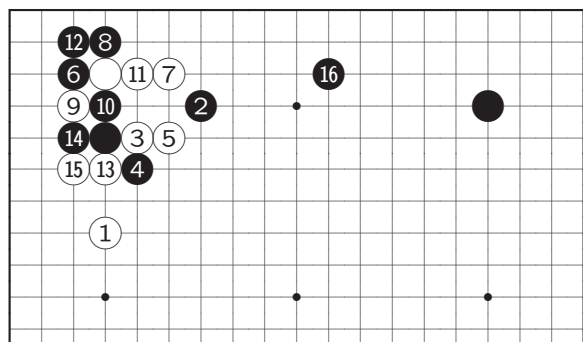
Variation 8 for ⑩

Pincering at ① (or A) appears to work well with White’s bottom left corner, but it’s not particularly interesting for White.

The large knight’s press at ② is elastic, and ③ to ⑤ can be expected.

Attaching at ⑥ is a flexible technique which aims to live in the corner and take sente.

Even though the result is even, Black is fleet of foot up to ⑮ and his position feels more active.

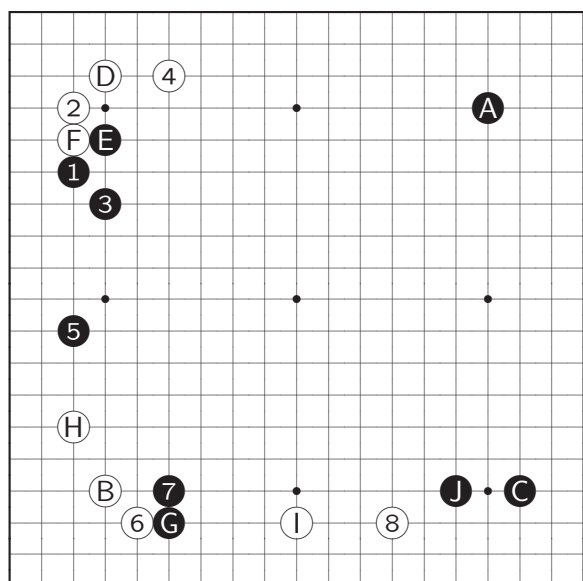


Variation 9 for ⑩

The counter-hane at ⑨ is also conceivable, but cutting at ⑨ in the previous variation is generally thought to be better.

In the final analysis, White has exchanged ⑨ for ⑫, which is slightly better for Black.

Black retains sente once again and takes the big point at ⑯, so this opening favors Black.



Variation 10 for ⑪

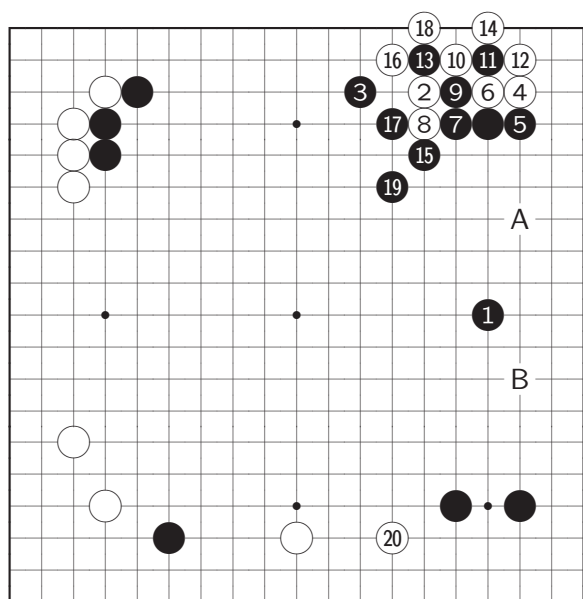
The hane at ① isn't ideal in this opening.

White has already closed off the left side with ⑨, so the potential on the left side is small.

However, ① to ⑤ are reasonable locally speaking and the main issues are that Black isn't developing his potential on the right side or making his unusual enclosure at ⑩ work efficiently.

White can kick at ⑥ and extend to ⑧, which is an excellent move. White settles at the bottom and develops rapidly, while reducing Black's potential in the corner and on the right.

It's as if the opening had been played as ①, ②, ③, ④, ⑤, ⑥, ⑦, ⑧, ⑨, ⑩, ⑪, ⑫, ⑬, ⑭, ⑮, ⑯, ⑰, ⑱, ⑲, ⑳ and ㉑. All the moves in this sequence are good except for ㉑, which becomes bad after ⑥ to ⑧.



Variation 11 for ⑮

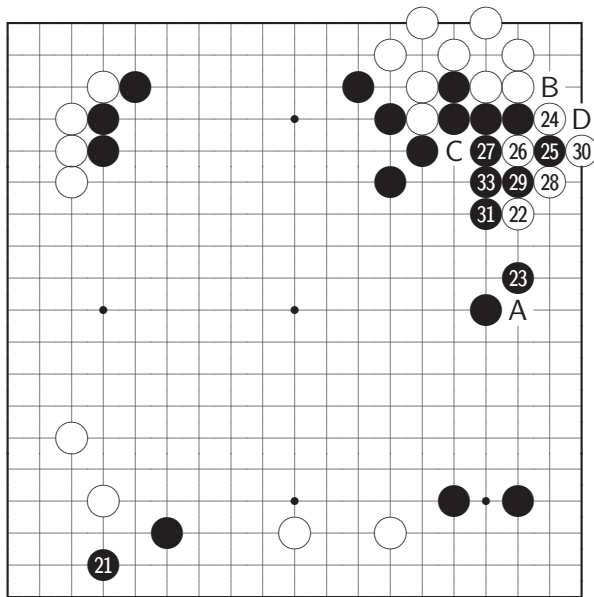
The key point at ① is also playable, and ② follows.

Even though Black's position on the right side is ideal, there's a vague feeling that he doesn't have any particularly effective way to bring his force to bear on ②.

Pincering with ③ and dodging into the corner with ④ are tactics we're quite familiar with by now. When Black already has a stone at ①, he can develop towards the wider side with ⑤, but ⑧ can be expected.

We first discussed this shape in Chapter 3, and you may recall that White takes the corner in sente, while leaving defects in Black's moyo around A and B.

Extending to ⑳ is important, because it limits Black's right side moyo. White can wait until later in the game to invade at A or B.



Variation 12 for 15

32 at 26

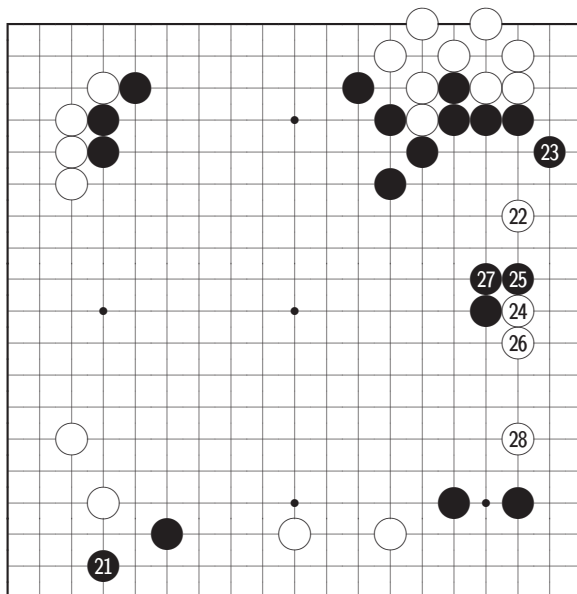
Let's investigate White's aji on the right side.

White 22 hits the vital point and makes miai of 24 and A. After 23, White unleashes a fierce tesuji combination from 24 to 28.

White won't play these moves at this stage in the game, because they make Black very thick, but this tactic will be available later on.

If Black plays 27 at B, White will crush his resistance with C, Black D, White at 27, Black at 24, and 28.

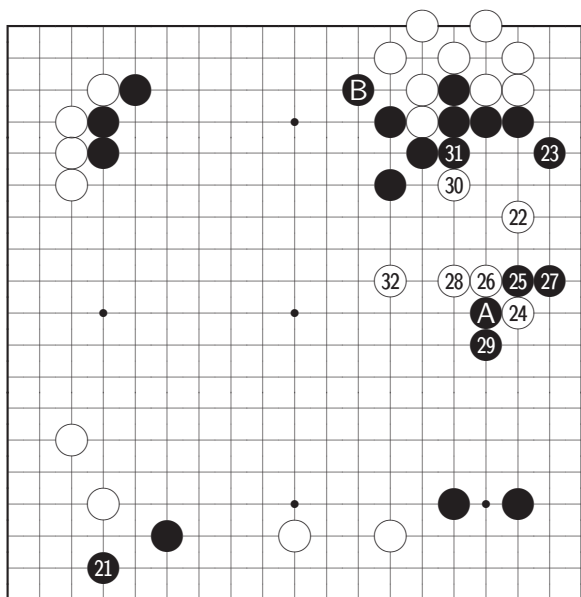
Instead of 29, if Black descends to 30, White will start a ko with 33. In most cases the ko is too heavy for Black to fight, so White can reduce the right side in sente with the moves in this variation.



Variation 13 for 15

If Black prevents White from connecting under, by playing the kosumi at 23, White can sacrifice and settle on the right side with 24 to 28.

Extending at 26 in this variation makes miai of 27 and 28, so White's stones are flexible.



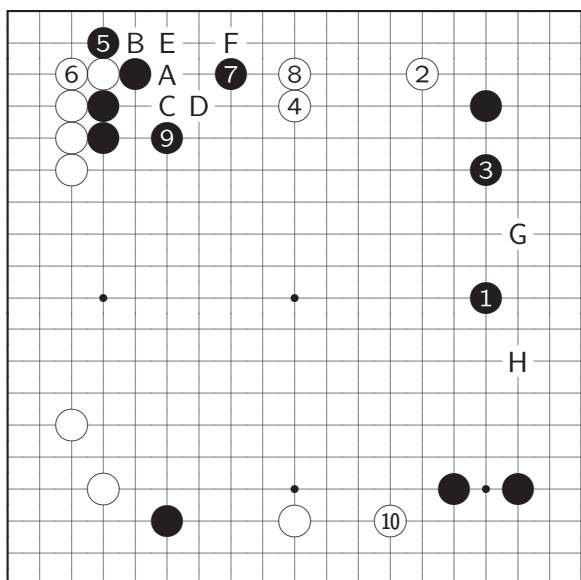
Variation 14 for 15

If Black's position in the bottom right is too thick, White can also crosscut at ②⑥ and propel himself into the center by sacrificing ②④.

Black's moyo on the right side has been dramatically reduced up to ③②, and there's still a little aji in ②④.

White's tesuji at ②② is quite effective and, as you can see, these tactics are flexible and annoying for Black.

This is why many professionals, including Lee Sedol, think twice about setting up this kind of formation with A and B (at the time of writing).



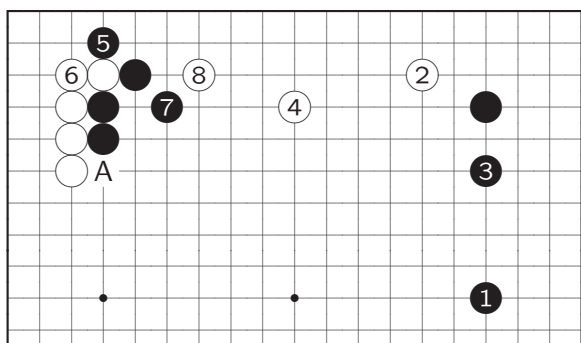
Variation 15 for 15

Answering ② at ③ is also possible, but White will be happy to take the key point at ④.

Black cobbles together a makeshift position in the top left with ⑤ to ⑦, but ⑧ is a calm move which closes the door to White's eyespace and aims to attach at A next.

Reinforcing at ⑨ prepares to resist White A with B to D. After ⑨, White can peep at E, but Black will make shape with Black B, White F and Black A. Instead of ⑨, C leaves a vital point at E exposed.

White takes sente and occupies the big point at ⑩. If you look at the whole board, White has potential in several places, while Black is concentrated on the right side and White can still invade at G or H later.

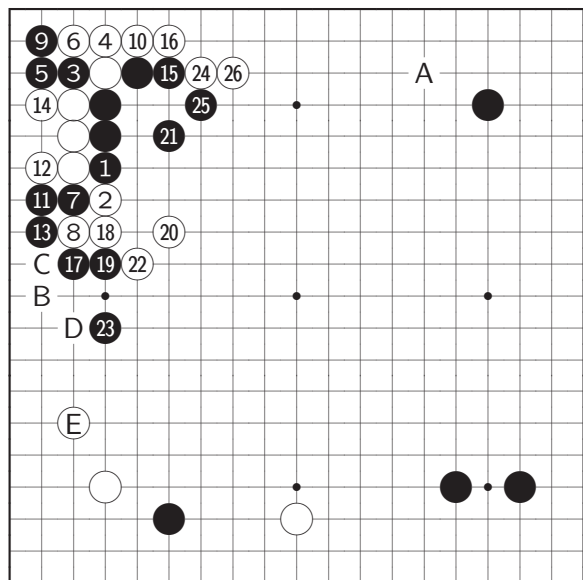


Variation 16 for 15

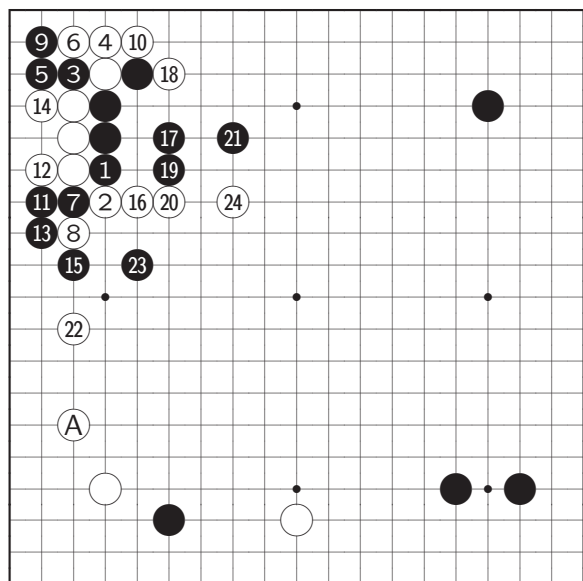
If Black tries to make shape with ⑤ to ⑦, ⑧ hits the vital point and Black's group is a little heavy.

If you review the example variations from the large avalanche joseki (given below), you'll be able to see that ④ will end up being a useful pincer if Black tries to continue with those patterns.

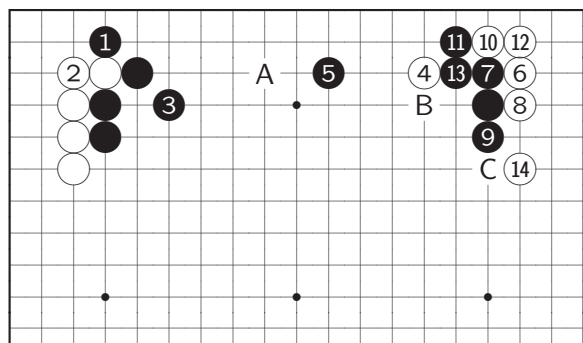
Therefore, continuing with ⑤ at A, after White plays around ④, isn't a good idea either.



Variation 17 for 15



Variation 18 for 15



Variation 19 for 15

Instead of A, continuing the large avalanche joseki with 1 isn't interesting in this opening.

The result up to 26 is slightly better for White, because he can easily remove Black's eye shape on the left with B to D.

Because of that, Black doesn't like to play the avalanche when White has a stone around E.

This is another example of why you should consider all your stones and strive to make them work together efficiently, instead of just sleepwalking through a joseki.

In this sequence, Black started out developing towards the wider side, but became preoccupied with tactics and ended up playing on the narrow side with 17, 19 and 23.

The variation up to 24 is also slightly better for White.

Since A is already on the board, White can induce 24 by exchanging 22 for 23, and Black ends up with two weak groups.

The large avalanche joseki was very popular in the late 1990s and early 2000s, but its popularity has declined since then.

These sorts of large scale josekis cover too much of the board. It's as if two elephants came and trampled all over the left side; crushing the buds of the opening before they had a chance to flower.

Contemporary players prefer wider and more flexible openings, and dislike this kind of large, settled shape.

Making shape with 1 and 3 is also possible, and is a good way to simplify the position in the top left.

If White approaches at 4, the pincer at 5 is a well balanced move and trading with 6 is natural. It's another game up to 14.

If White plays 4 at 5; Black A, 4, 13, White B and Black C is another path. If 4 pincers around A instead, Black counter-pincers around 5 and fights.

Black 15 in the game aimed to play 1 and 3 next.

Split and Tenuki to Take a Huge Point

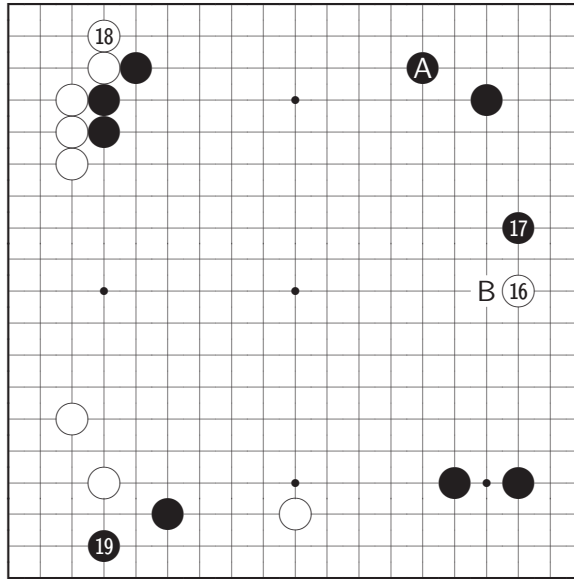


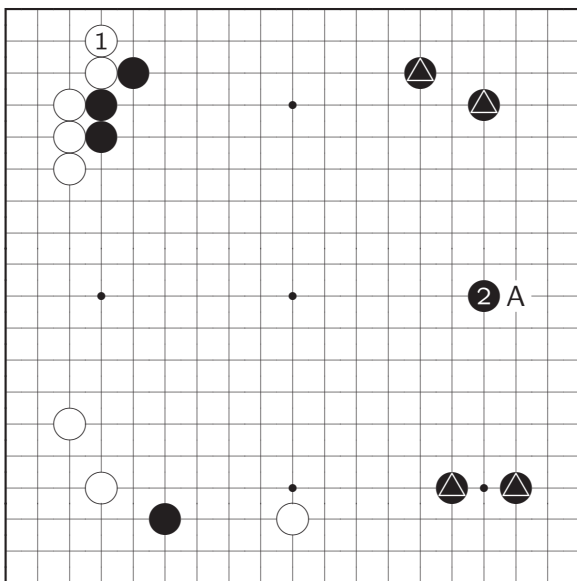
Diagram 5
(Moves: 16-19)

As we discussed in the previous section, **A** aimed to play at either B or ⑱ next.

Splitting the right side with ⑱ was more important than playing at ⑱ in this opening, but ⑱ was also large. White exchanged ⑱ for ⑳, before going back to the top left to take the huge point at ⑱.

After ⑱, it was as if White had played ⑱ at ⑱, and the game had continued with ㉑ and ⑱. Black ㉑ and ⑱ are both bad moves in this transposition, but Black has failed to establish an ideal moyo at B. This advanced strategy should only be used sparingly, as a way to take a huge point like ⑱.

Lee chose to slide to ㉒ next, but this move was somewhat questionable.



Variation 20 for ⑱

Descending at ① is very big and important, but Black will be overjoyed to form an ideal moyo on the right side with ②.

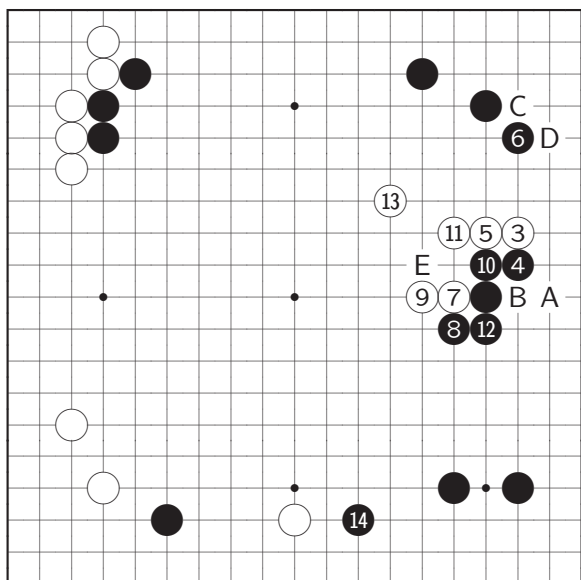
Black ② unites the two marked enclosures and allows their power to resonate across the right side. Instead of ②, A is also an excellent move.

Creating an ideal formation is only helpful if you know how to use it effectively.

When Black sets up a large moyo with ②, his plan is provoke White into invading, and to then take the initiative by attacking—converting his still indistinct moyo into territory and reaping benefits elsewhere.

If White doesn't invade, Black will eventually secure a huge territory on the right.

Let's investigate some practical continuations...



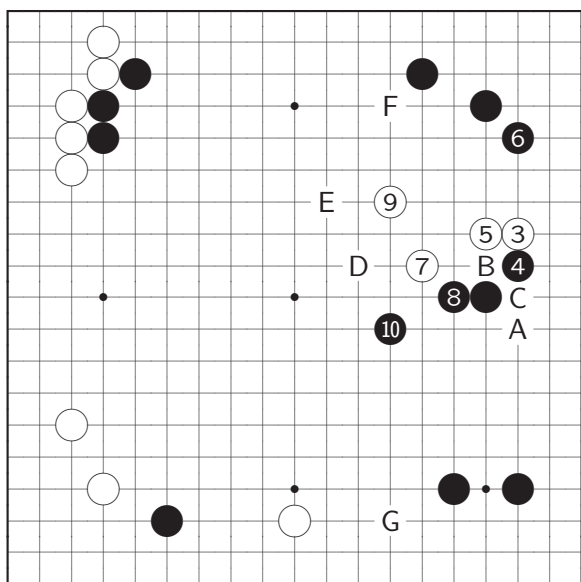
Variation 21 for 16

White ③ is the easiest place to invade, and aims to form a base on the right side (with A or B) or head into the corner (with C or D).

Kicking with ④ and tightening the vise with ⑥ is a pragmatic combination, frustrating both White's aims. Go books usually say that you shouldn't kick at ④ unless you're going to play at E or ⑨ next.

The reason why ④ is discouraged is that attaching at ⑦ usually helps White to make shape while pressing Black down. This tactic can be effective when Black's position on the right side is already quite tight and small, or when it seals Black into the corner.

However, in this variation it helps Black to consolidate territory on the right side and leaves Black with sente to take the big point at ⑭.



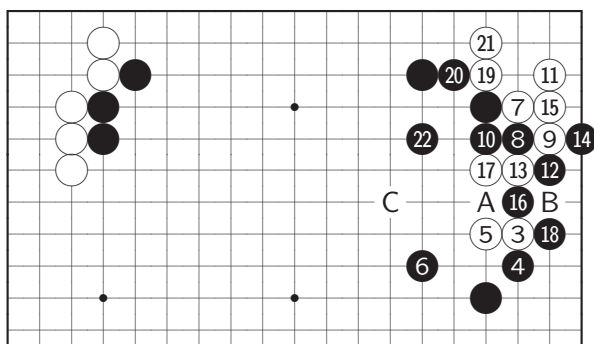
Variation 22 for 16

Flying out with ⑦ is more refined than the attachment at ⑧ (previous variation).

This move preserves the possibility of invading at A later, and keeps sente (helping to prevent ⑭ above).

Black ⑧ is the vital point—you can see this by noting that White can exchange B for C at any time.

After ⑩, D and E are miai for White, and he can also develop his group by pressing at F. White is quite mobile and has time to take a big point like G.

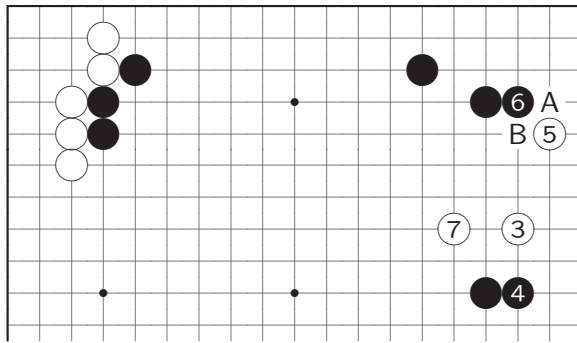


Variation 23 for 16

The knight's move at ⑥ is still a good point, but White will have a free hand to settle in the corner with ⑦ and ⑨.

Black can cut with ⑫ to ⑱, but White will live in the corner in sente up to ⑳.

The result looks reasonable for both players at first, but the problem for Black is that White can play A to C later on. This possibility is highly irritating.



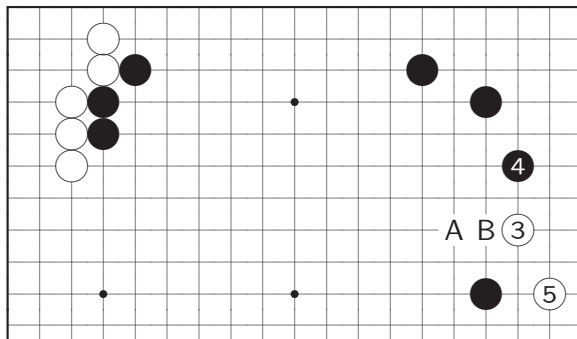
Variation 24 for 16

The iron pillar at 4 is a tried and true way of attacking and is another path for Black.

White can slide to 5, and 6 is the best response when White already has a stone at 3. If Black attaches at A, White will wedge at 6 and it will be hard for Black to cut at B, given the presence of 3.

Moving out with 7 is natural and it's another game.

Instead of 5, White can also attach at 6 and employ the tactics we saw in the previous variation.

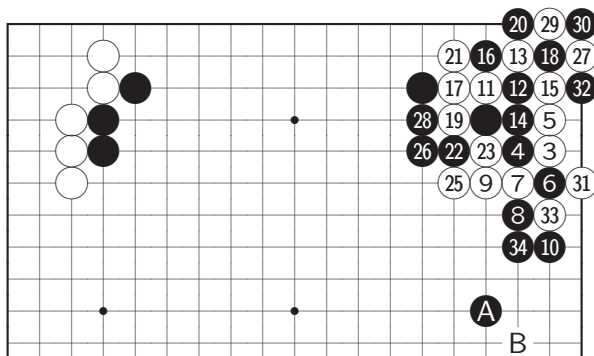


Variation 25 for 16

If Black pincers at 4, sliding to 5 is a good way to manage White's group in this game, because Black's right side is quite open and large, and the center isn't particularly interesting.

If Black plays on the right side, White can still jump out with A later. On the other hand, if Black seals off the center at A or B, White can move further into the right side.

Playing 5 at A is possible if the center is important.



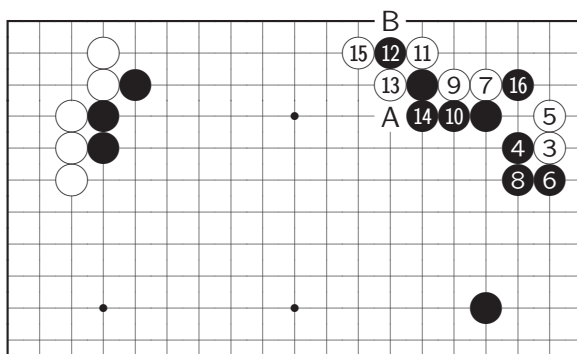
Variation 26 for 16

White can still consider the submarine approach at 3, but Black's stone at A makes Black's position stronger and tighter than when we reviewed this tactic in Chapter 5 (A was at B in that game).

If White cuts at 7, Black can fight severely with 12 and 14. White has to exchange 25 for 26 to prevent Black's ladder at 25.

After White's ko threat at 31, Black can play 32 and 34. White's group is heavy, with only half an eye.

24 at 13



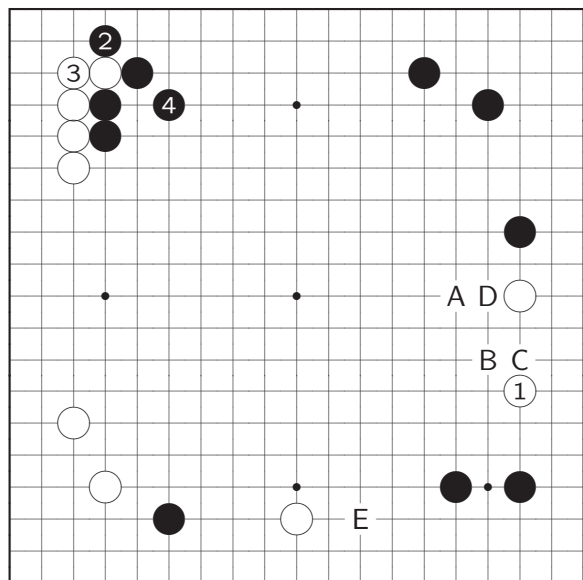
Variation 27 for 16

This being the case, White should make peace with the tesuji at 7.

The trade up to 16 is reasonable for both players. White can think about A or B (or tenuki) next.

Black's position on the right is solidifying, so he will be satisfied with this result.

You already made this pattern your own when we reviewed the submarine approach in Chapter 5.



Variation 28 for ⑱

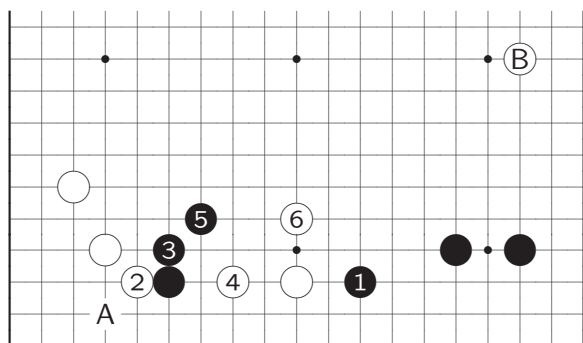
In the game, White descended to ② (move ⑱).

If White extends at ① instead, which is normal, Black will develop the top with ② and ④.

This another game, but it appears that Gu thought that the actual game was better for White.

If White doesn't reinforce at A next, Black plans to continue with B to D. We studied this tactic in detail in Chapter 6.

From Black's perspective, pressing with B to D and counter-pincering at E are miai.



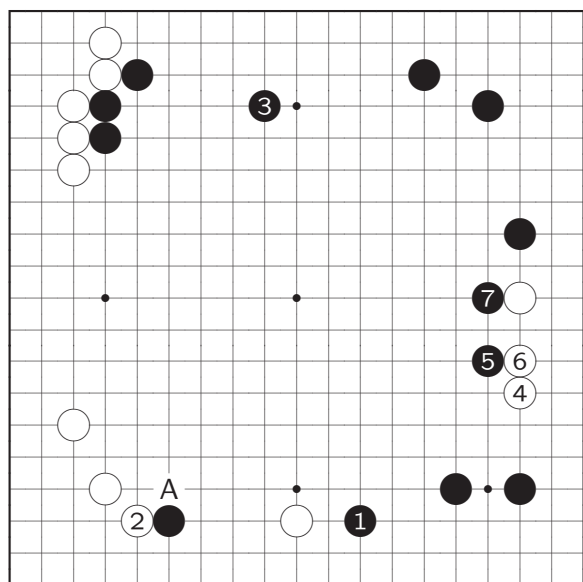
Variation 29 for ⑲

Instead of sliding to A, Black should have used ⑱ in the game to pincer at ①. White will kick at ② next.

In Variation 7, we said White would answer ③ at ⑥.

The difference now is that White wants to attack more severely and settle his group at the bottom, instead of starting a running battle in which ② could later become embroiled.

Black ⑤ works well with ① to maintain the pressure, but Black is a little heavy and Lee didn't like that.

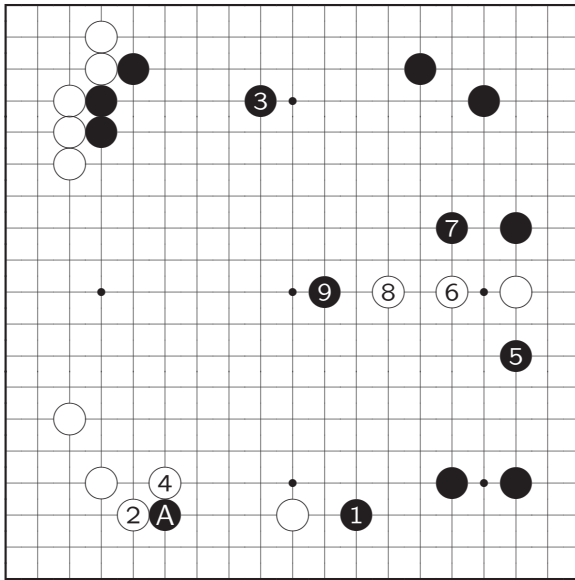


Variation 30 for ⑲

However, Black can also think about ignoring ② and playing at the top with ③.

If White extends at ④, Black can develop the top right area with ⑤ and ⑦.

This is another game, and Black can still aim to come back and stand at A later.

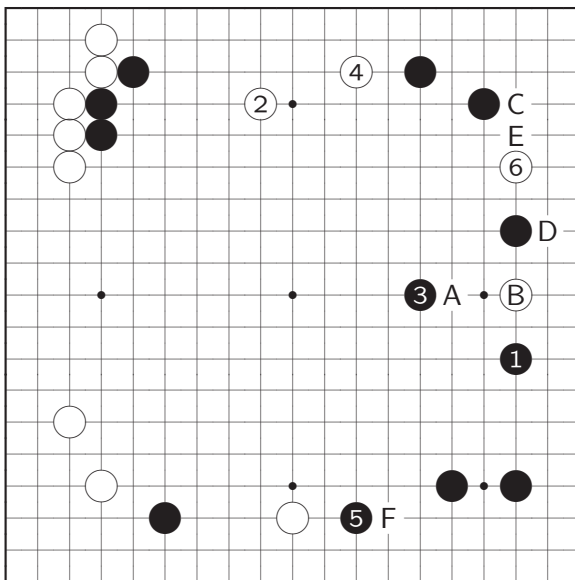


Variation 31 for 19

Smothering ① with ④ is also very big, but it's a bit too slow.

Black will pincer at ⑤, and the flow up to ⑨ is active for Black.

White is under attack and Black's large framework at the top will be converted into solid territory, while White struggles in the center.



Variation 32 for 19

If Black tries to punish White's tenuki by pinching immediately at ①, White will tenuki again and take another big point with ②.

The loose capping play at ③ is a good continuation, and this makes it harder for White to sacrifice ⑥ efficiently. Compared to capping tightly at A, the idea is quite similar to *loose pincers discourage sacrifice*, which we discussed a few pages ago.

However, ④ is also big because it reduces Black's moyo while dangling a lifeline which White can use at ⑥.

Since White still has aji around ⑥ (e.g. C and D are miai), this result is slightly better for White.

Instead of ⑤, if Black reinforces his corner at E, White will reduce Black's right side with F. Black's stones are over-concentrated, so he won't be satisfied.

Know Your Enemy and Know Yourself

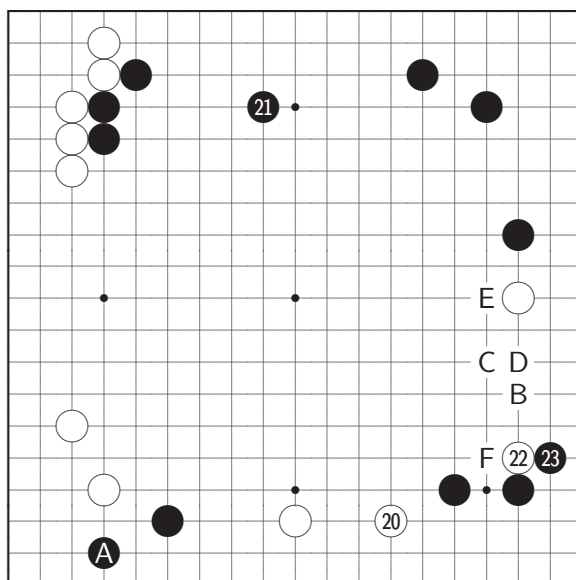


Diagram 6
(Moves: 20-23)

When Black slid at **A**, he made his lower left group stronger, so extending to **20** was natural. White **20** also weakened Black's corner enclosure and set up a brilliant continuation at **22**.

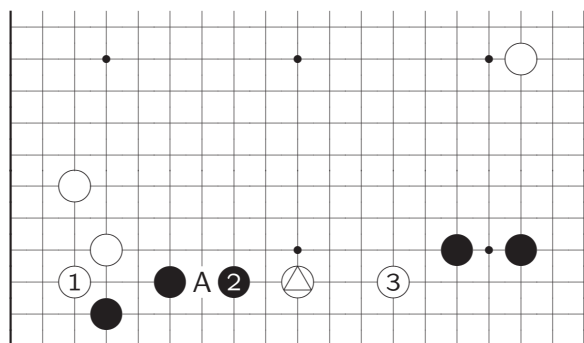
If White had used **22** to extend to B, Black would still be aiming to press White down with C to E later. By attaching at **22** instead, White short-circuited Black's plan.

In *The Art of War*, Sun Zi says "Know your enemy and know yourself, and you can fight a hundred battles without peril." The word *enemy* is slightly excessive with respect to Go, but the point remains.

It's very important in Go to consider what your opponent wants, as well as what you want. Having this kind of empathy will help you to anticipate your opponent's plans and play a more reasonable and well balanced game. It will also help you to win more games.

Once you know what your opponent wants, you can think about whether you should allow it, or whether you should resist. Neither always resisting, nor always giving ground is best. An appropriate strategy can only be determined by understanding the current position. That's part of knowing yourself.

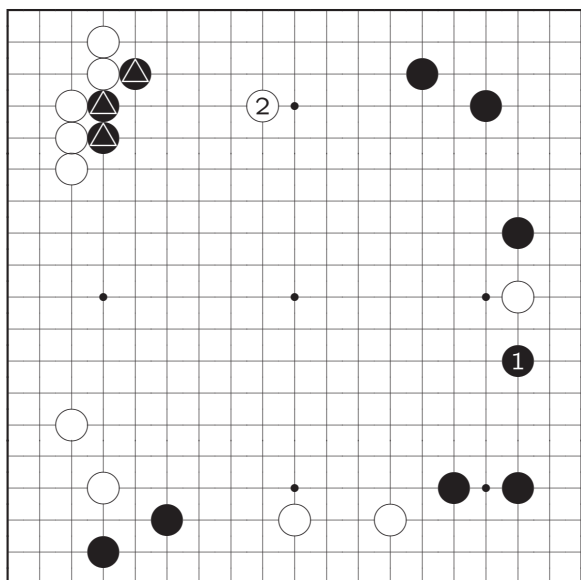
The hane underneath at **23** was very unusual, but Lee didn't expect a good result after **23** at F.



Variation 33 for **20**

Exchanging **1** for **2** helps Black and weakens White's marked group.

White isn't yet sure whether it will be better to play at **1** or A, so he should defer that decision until later if possible.



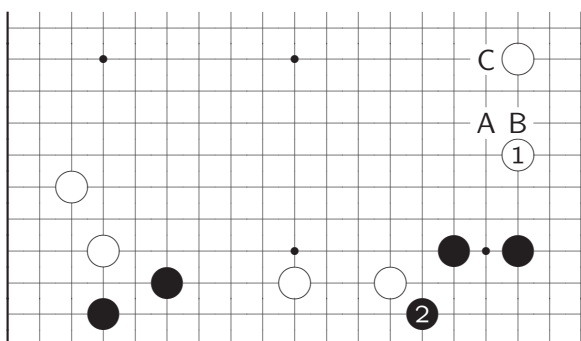
Variation 34 for ㉑

If Black extends on the right side at ①, instead of extending to ㉑ in the game, White will play at the top with ②.

Black's marked stones were light, but they begin to feel heavy when White surrounds them on a large scale, because the area is too large for Black to simply discard them.

Even light stones can become heavy if you surround them inside a large enough sphere of influence.

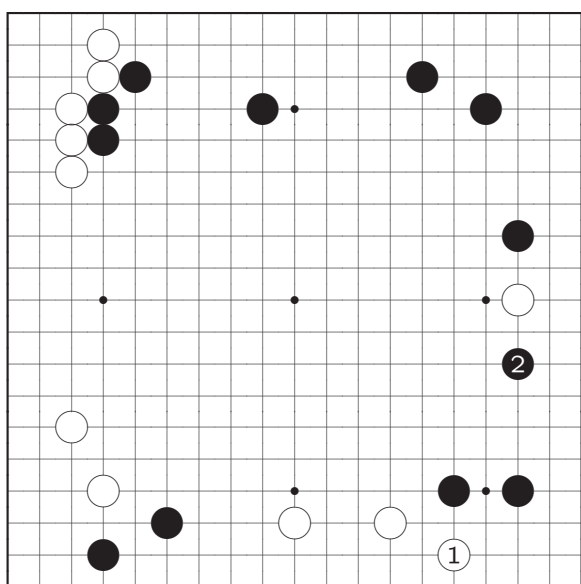
The corollary of this is that managing weak stones lightly isn't just about playing clever tesuji, but is also about whole board judgment and strategy.



Variation 35 for ㉒

Instead of ㉒ in the actual game, extending to ① is normal, but it's too pedestrian.

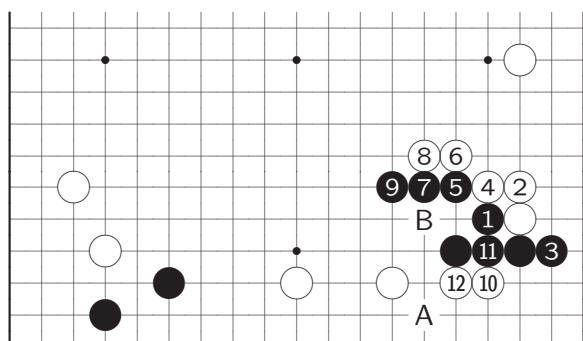
Black will be happy to secure the corner territory with ②, and is still aiming to enclose White with A to C later.



Variation 36 for ㉒

Sliding to ① heads in the wrong direction, because it provokes Black to pincer at ② while making a base.

The direction of play demands that White plays on the right side at this time, rather than reinforcing an already strong group.

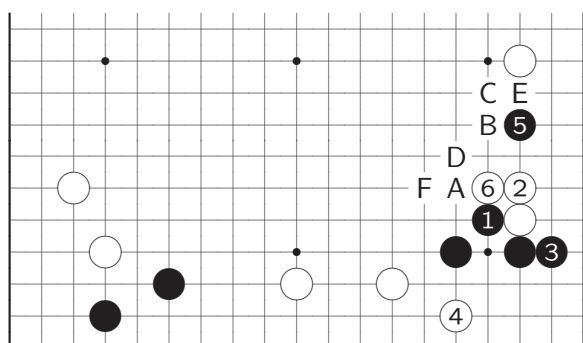


Variation 37 for 23

After the hane at ①, descending to ③ allows White to turn forcefully at ④.

If Black pushes back with ⑤ to ⑨, White will gouge out the corner territory with ⑩ and ⑫.

This result is hopeless for Black, so he should play ⑤ at A instead, but this allows White to block off the center with B.



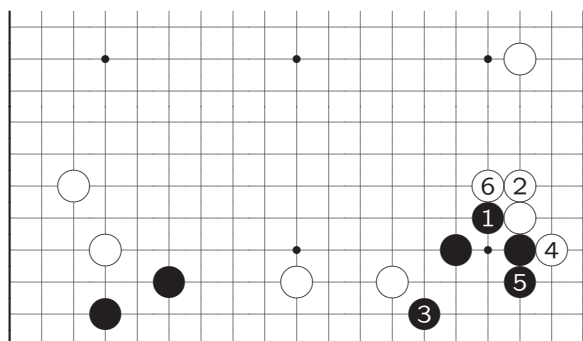
Variation 38 for 23

As an alternative to the previous variation, White can also slide with ④.

If Black invades at ⑤, White will fight back with ⑥.

This variation is also playable for White.

If Black continues with the hane at A, White will attach at B and meet Black C with the bulge at D. This makes miai of E and F.

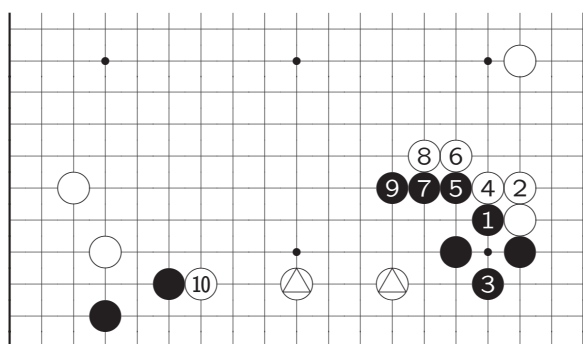


Variation 39 for 23

After exchanging ① for ②, attempting to defend the corner with ③ is pathetically uncoordinated.

White can exchange ④ for ⑤ is sente, and then turn at ⑥.

Black's corner is folding itself into a crumpled heap.



Variation 40 for 23

Adopting a more defensive stance with ③ is also possible.

This shape defends the corner territory effectively, but White can settle his group on the right in sente up to ⑨.

Since Black becomes very thick and powerful in the bottom right, White will use sente to attach at ⑩ and help his marked stones.

White's flow from ② to ⑩ is seamless, and he will be happy with this development.

Be like Water

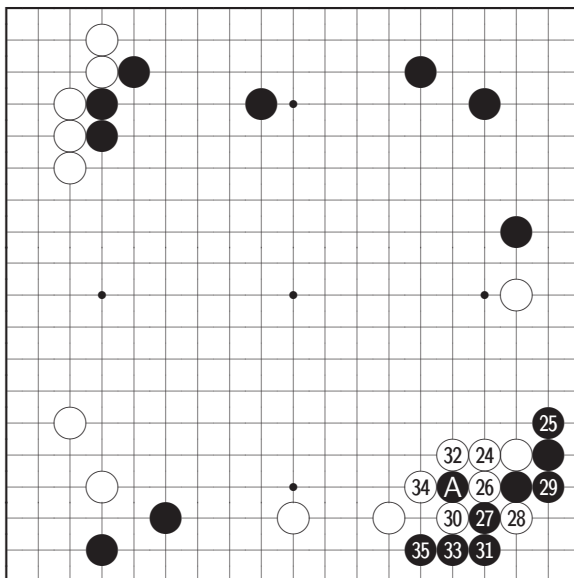


Diagram 7
(Moves: 24-35)

Empty your mind, be formless, shapeless—like water. Now you put water in a cup, it becomes the cup; you put water into a bottle, it becomes the bottle; you put it in a teapot, it becomes the teapot. Now water can flow—or it can crash. Be water, my friend.

—Bruce Lee, *A Warrior's Journey*

The shape was very unusual, but ②④ was well suited to the situation and made miai of ②⑤ and ②⑥. Black's extension at ②⑤ was unexpected, and the variation up to ③⑤ had never been seen before in professional Go.

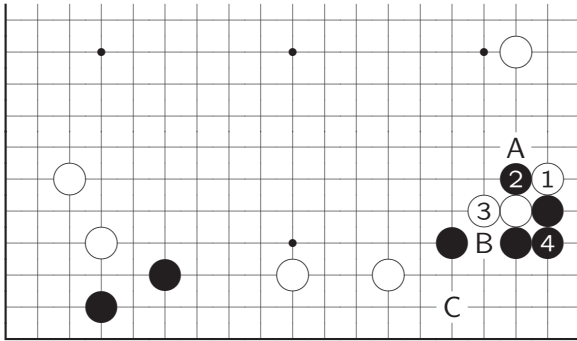
Blocking at ②⑦ was natural, because it ensured that White's stones were cut along with Black's. This helped Black to extract the maximum possible value from A.

Extending to ③⑤ looked small, but it was important because it was the vital point for eye shape and was also reverse sente. The stones flowed in a natural sequence composed of the best moves.

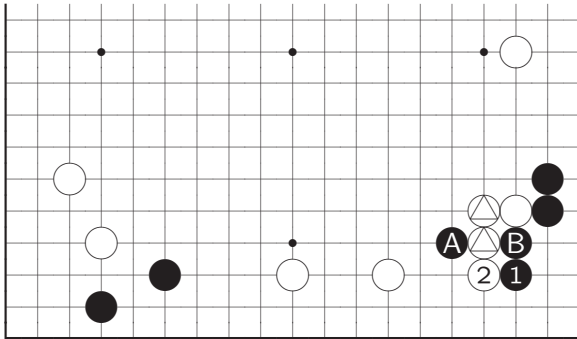
The cause and effect (and implications) of the fundamental principles and tactics of Go give the stones a natural tendency to flow. Once you have a decent grasp of the basic principles and techniques, your focus narrows to the possible rather than the impossible, and similar patterns repeat again and again.

Practically every local situation has one or more good continuations, and when a series of good moves are strung together, to form a sequence, we call that the natural flow. The first step to finding your flow is to pay attention to the progression of the stones as you play or replay games. The second is to strive to harmonize the flow with the whole board, choosing appropriately amongst the many paths.

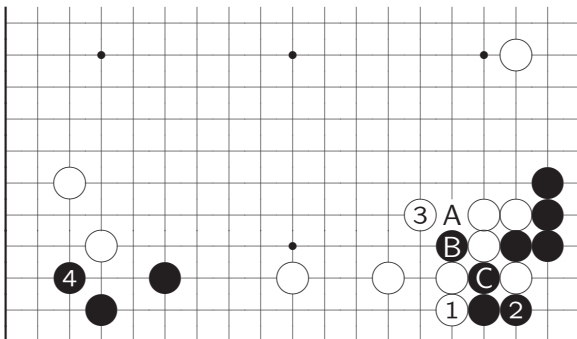
Complicated situations, which most players refer to as 'fighting', have their own flow, sense of balance and beauty. Flowing naturally doesn't imply always being gentle and peaceful, because sometimes the natural thing to do is to cut, resist or capture. Always remember that water can flow—or it can crash.



Variation 41 for 24



Variation 42 for 27



Ride the Wave While It Lasts

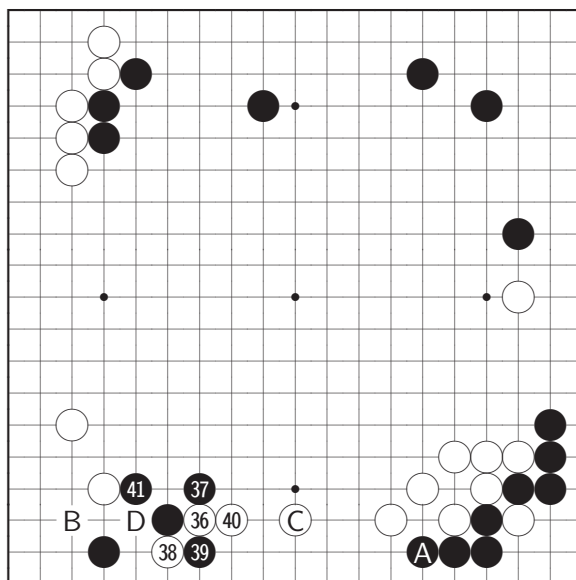


Diagram 8
(Moves: 36-41)

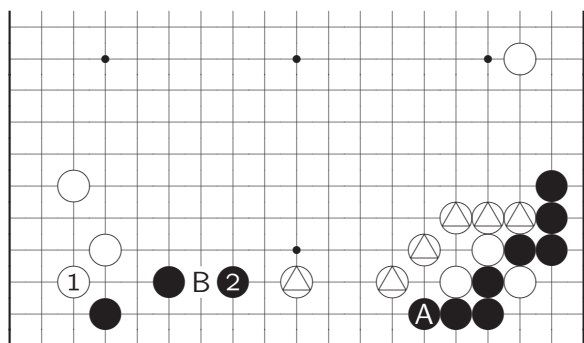
White's influence in the bottom right was difficult to use effectively after **A**, but Black's corner territory had been greatly reduced and White took sente, so the game became better for White.

Riding on the crest of a wave, White attached at **36**. This energetic tesuji aimed to utilize White's thickness at the bottom, and was more active than claiming the corner at B.

Black **37** was played to resist being pressed down. This avoided giving White more control over the center. The counter-hane at **38** is rarely seen; but it's natural after **37**, when White has a stone at **C**.

Cutting at **39** was the right response, because extending to D instead was what White wanted, and Black's tiger's mouth at **41** was an interesting haengma which intended to trade the corner for influence.

When you have momentum on your side, you should seek to gain as much as possible by caroming from one attack to another. Seize successive opportunities—keeping your opponent off balance for as long as you can—then consolidate your gains. Ride the wave while it lasts, but not until it breaks.

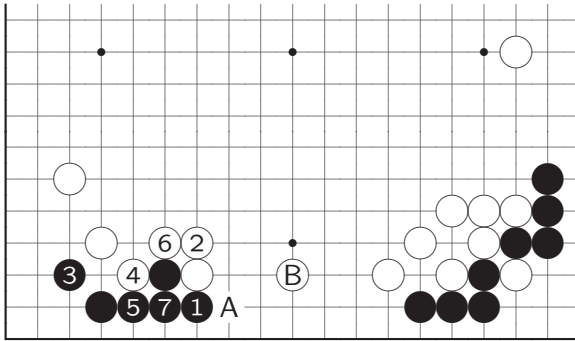


Variation 45 for 36

If you evaluate White's marked influence as being quite strong, you might come up with **1** to push Black towards White's power.

The problem is that White's influence isn't as powerful as it looks after **A**, so **2** weakens the marked stones and White lacks an effective continuation.

In contrast, **36** above (at B) aimed to compound White's influence in the center. Since Black resisted, White gained profit in the corner instead.



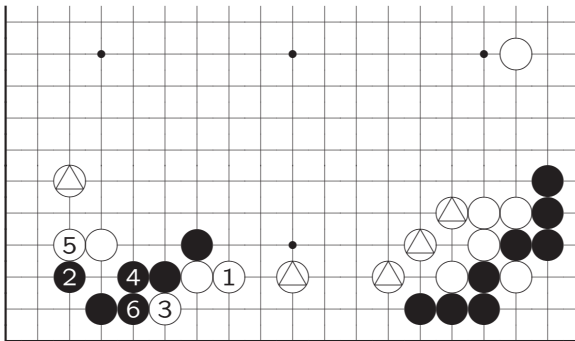
Variation 46 for 37

If Black hanes underneath at ①, White will extend at ②, as we saw earlier.

In this case, playing ③ at A is risky because of the presence of ⑥, so Black will move into the corner with ③ instead.

White can exchange ④ to ⑦ in sente, and then take a big point (to expand White's moyo, for example).

The center is becoming very white, and this is what White wants.

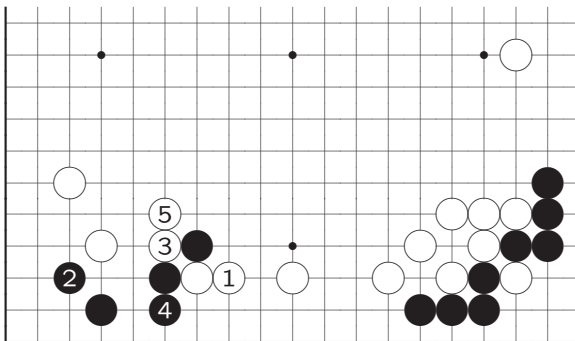


Variation 47 for 38

Extending at ① seems natural, but it's slack in this situation.

Black will be happy to settle in the corner up to ⑥.

White isn't stretching his marked stones to their maximum potential.

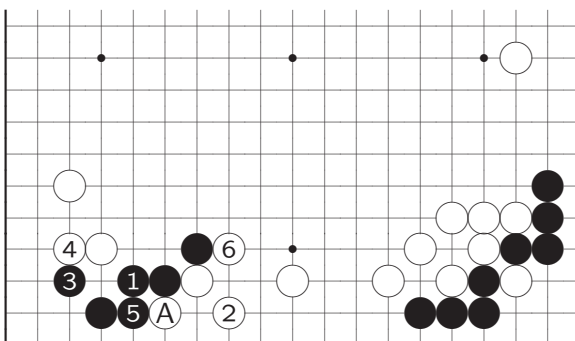


Variation 48 for 38

Cutting at ③ can be good when White wants to create thickness, but since White loses sente Black has time to reduce White's potential in the top left.

Moreover, White's potential at the bottom is already fairly limited, so cutting is a little slow in this game.

Compared to Variation 46 above, the key difference is that White loses sente in this variation.



Variation 49 for 39

If Black extends to ① (instead of 39 in the game), White will connect with the tiger's mouth at ②.

White ② is protecting ① and Black's corner group isn't completely alive yet, so this is quite different to Variation 47.

Let Go of Unimportant Plans

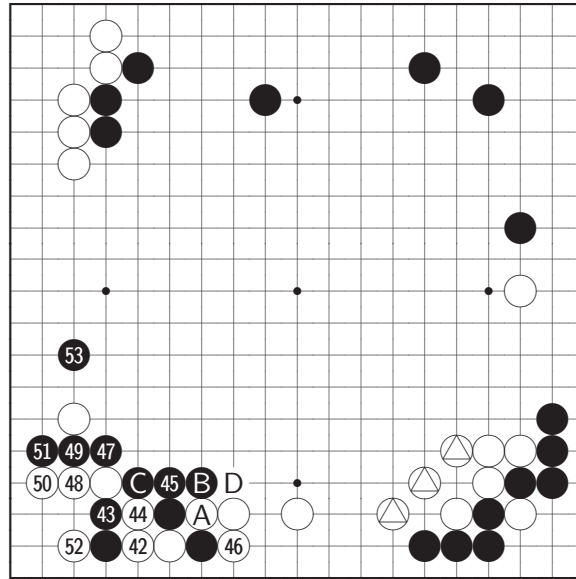


Diagram 9
(Moves: 42-53)

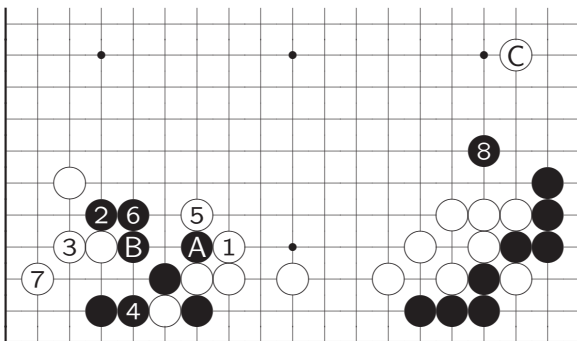
We've just seen how White's attachment at (A) aimed to develop the center and use the influence of the marked stones. However, Black resisted with (B) and (C) and it became harder for White to do so.

If White had stuck with his original plan, his best choice would have been the mediocre turn at D (which we'll explore below). Not every plan you make, or stone you play, is important. Your plans should ideally factor in multiple contingencies, rather than focusing on a fixed goal.

As Helmuth von Moltke argues in his essay, *On Strategy*, "Strategy is a system of expedients; it is more than a mere scholarly discipline. It is the translation of knowledge to practical life, the improvement of the original leading thought in accordance with continually changing situations."

When your opponent resists one plan, he has to stretch his stones further in a particular direction, and that often leaves behind a weakness at his flank. This is the weakness that you will exploit.

In these sorts of situations, the natural thing to do is to change course slightly, and switch from taking influence to territory (for example). By staying detached, you become more flexible. Gu let go of his plans in the center and took territory in the corner up to (52). White was still ahead.



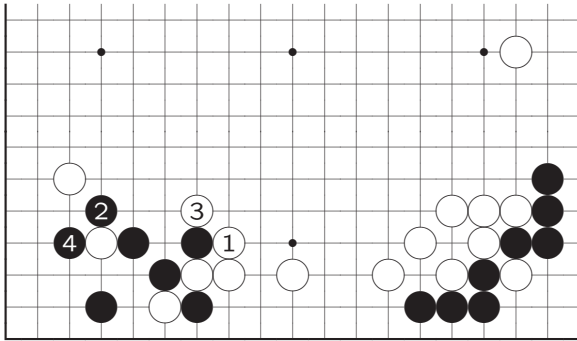
Variation 50 for (42)

If White becomes too attached to the center, he will want to continue to develop it with (1).

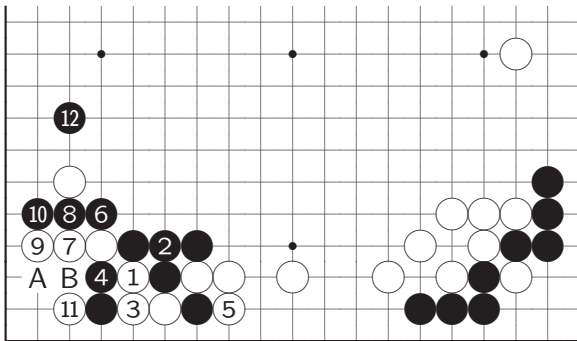
However, after (A) and (B), the center is already too small and White is over-concentrated up to (5).

Black can manage his group in sente from (2) to (6), and reduce White's small moyo while simultaneously attacking (C) with (8).

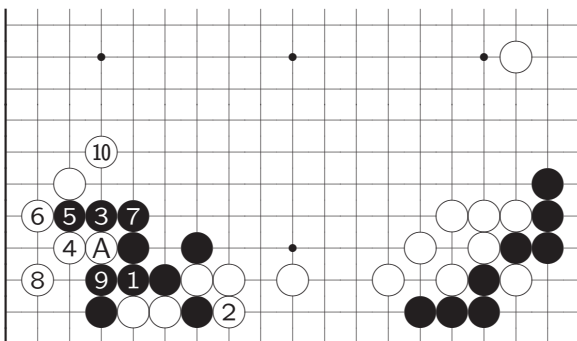
Additionally, White's lower left group is quite thin.



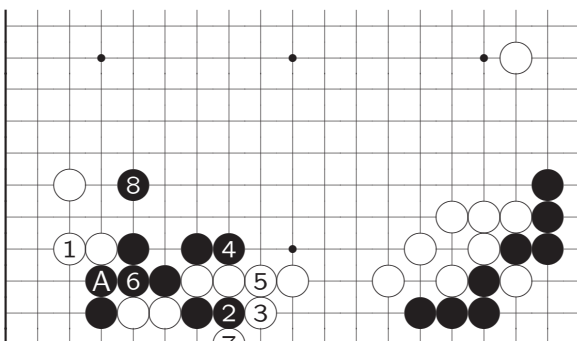
Variation 51 for 42



Variation 52 for 42



Variation 53 for 43



Variation 54 for 44

Ignoring 2 to atari at 3 is even worse for White, but this kind of thing can happen when you become too emotionally invested in a certain part of the board.

Black takes over the corner with 4 and White has little to show for it.

These are the pitfalls of refusing to let go.

If White ataris at 1 first, Black will break through the left side with the moves to 10, and the result after 12 is exactly the same as the actual game.

Playing at 3 (42) before exchanging the atari with 1 and 2 demonstrated a more refined technique, but both roads led to the same destination.

White can't take sente by playing 9 at A, because after Black descends to 10, White will still have to defend at B or 11.

Blocking at 1 in order to connect at 9 is too single-minded.

The hane at 3 seems nice, but White can save his key stone (A) with 6 and 8, and Black is floating.

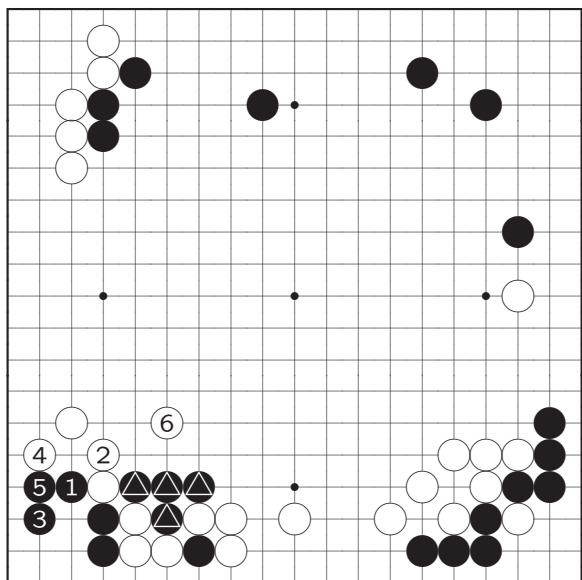
When saving all of your stones leads to a bad result, you are taking a loss either way, so it's better to sacrifice and receive something in compensation.

Sometimes you have to let go of your stones, especially when they represent unimportant plans.

After Black bumps at A, if White takes care of his corner with 1, Black will push at 2.

Even though White captures Black's two stones at the bottom with 7, Black will be satisfied with the forcing exchange at 4 and will make shape up to 8.

Once again, White's lower left group is thin.



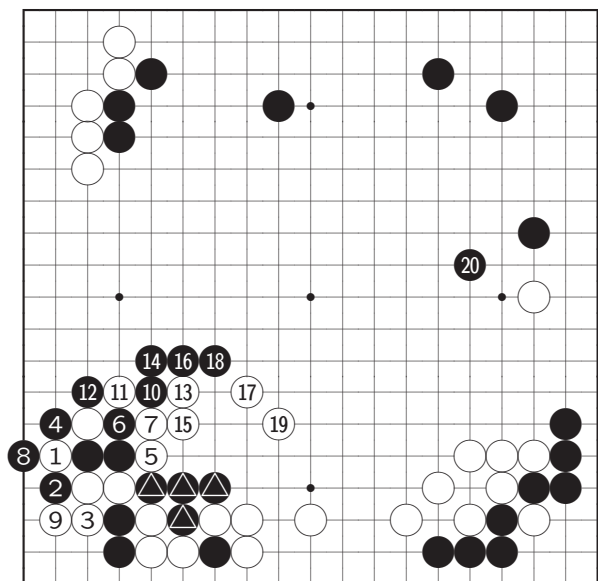
Variation 55 for 47

Rather than sacrificing Black's corner stones with ②, Black can still live in the corner with ①.

This isn't a good idea though, because the result up to ⑥ favors White and Black's marked stones are paralyzed.

White's influence over the center is overwhelmingly better than Black's corner territory in this variation.

This variation shows once again why you should let go of unimportant stones.



Variation 56 for 50

You might think that ① is good in terms of shape, because it's similar to the situation we discussed in the bottom right earlier.

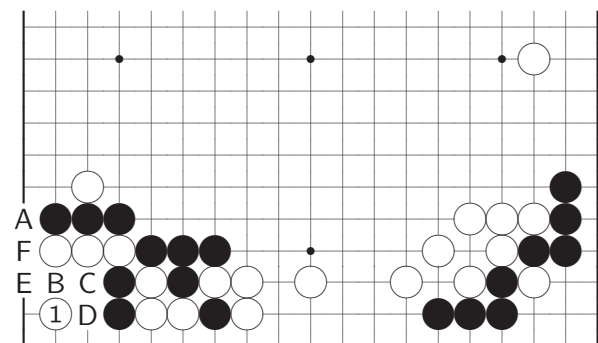
That's true, but it doesn't work in practice here because Black can capture ① with ② and ④.

Even if White aims to cut from behind with ⑤, he'll eventually have to repay his loan in the corner at ⑨.

This gives Black time to sacrifice in good style up to ⑱, and take sente to play ⑳.

It's natural for Black to sacrifice the marked stones too, because White is already strong at the bottom and he only gains an extra 15 points up to ⑲.

Meanwhile, Black's group is incredibly thick and White's potential on the left has become Black's territory. This is an excellent result for Black.



Variation 57 for 52

White can also consider jumping at ①, but then descending at A will be sente for Black later because it aims to squeeze and capture with B to F.

That's why clamping at D (52 in the game) was best, even though it leaves a big endgame move at F.

Play Safely Against Strength

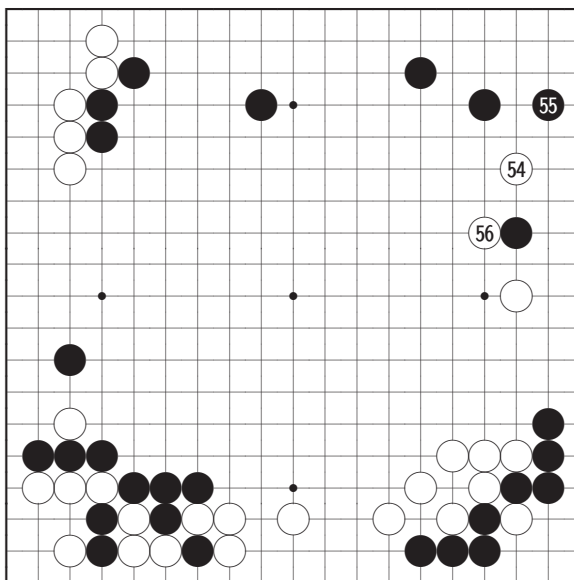
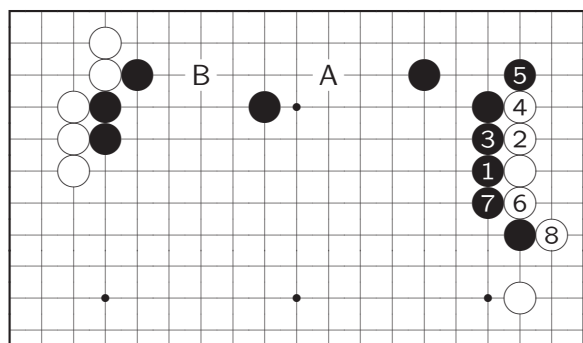


Diagram 10
(Moves: 54-56)

White's invasion at ⑤④ was well timed and Black fortified the corner with ⑤⑤.

Since White was already ahead and ⑤⑤ was low, White regarded ⑤④ as a forcing move and immediately sacrificed it with ⑤⑥. You should play safely against strong positions to avoid severe attacks.



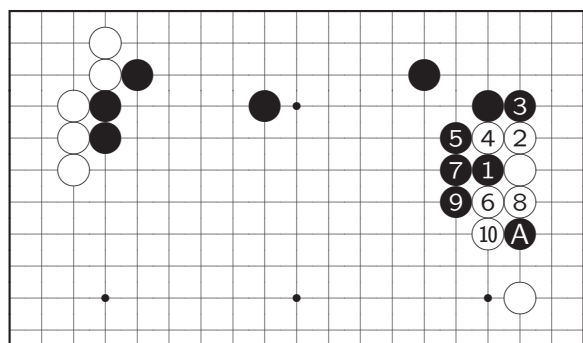
Variation 58 for ⑤⑤

If Black attaches at ①, White can easily connect under with ⑥ and ⑧.

Black's influence isn't especially useful, because it's hard to enlarge his moyo at the top.

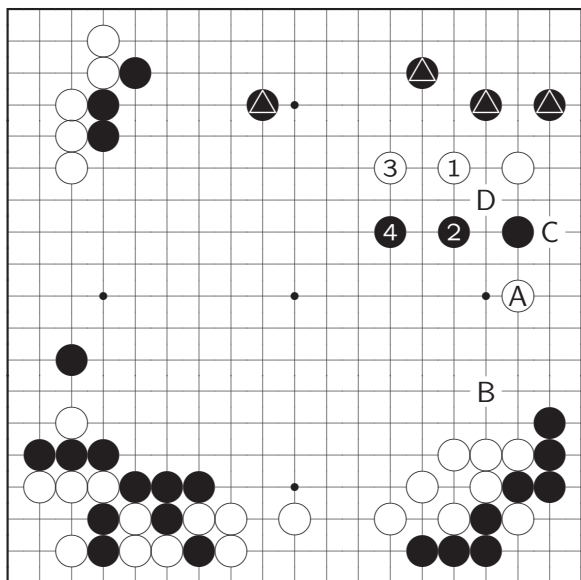
White's influence at the bottom limits Black's potential in the center, and White can also invade easily at A or B later.

If ① is at ⑦, White trades for the corner with ⑤.



Variation 59 for ⑤⑤

Blocking at ③ is also conceivable, but White will be happy to swallow up A through to ⑩.



Variation 60 for 56

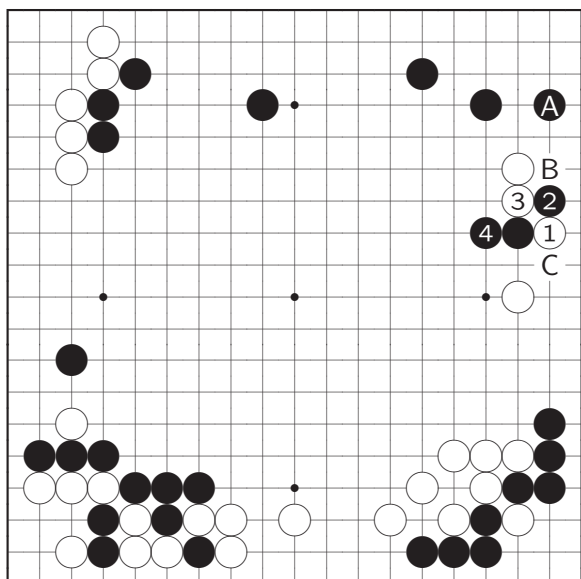
Jumping out with ① isn't a good idea.

Black can follow White with ② and ④, and White's three stones end up floating in the center.

White ① will be isolated after Black plays at B, but White doesn't have time to defend.

If White attaches at C at any time, Black can counter with D.

Since Black has a strong position at the top (marked), White should play safely and avoid starting a running battle with ①.



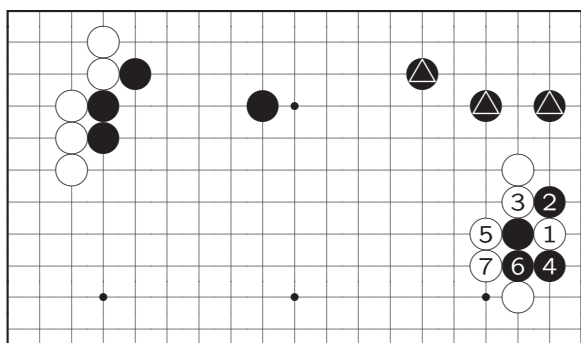
Variation 61 for 56

Attaching underneath with ① is more common than attaching on top (at ④).

This technique also aims to sacrifice a stone, by playing on the less important side first, but Black can use ① to resist with ② and ④. This makes B and C miai.

White will end up with a heavy group no matter where he plays next.

Tactics like this are possible when you have a stone like ① on the second line.



Variation 62 for 56

The atari at ④ is what White wants, and it's too passive in this situation.

White will be happy to play forcing moves at ⑤ and ⑦, while sacrificing ①.

By allowing White to play ⑤, Black is placing too many stones on the second line and failing to make use of his nearby strength (marked).

Probe Your Opponent's Weaknesses

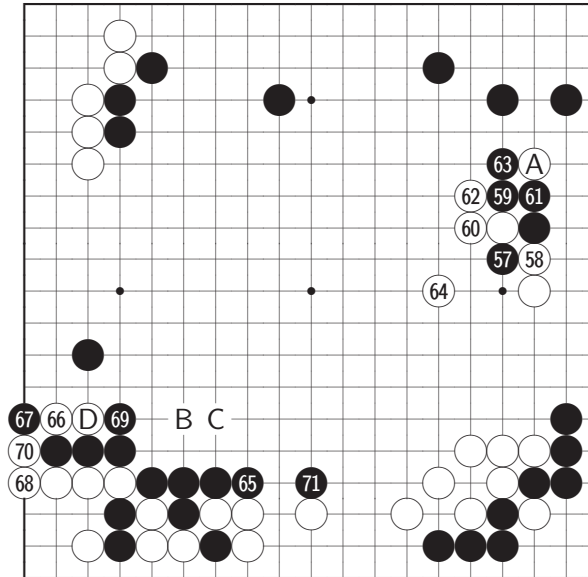


Diagram 11
(Moves: 57-71)

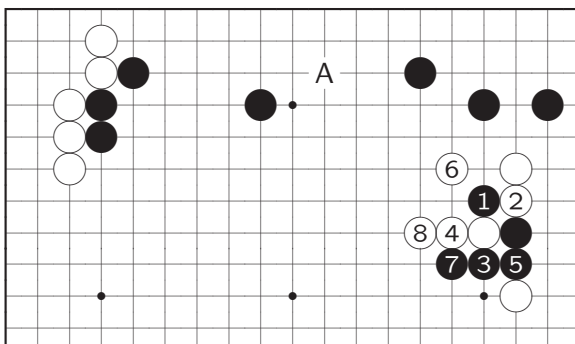
White sacrificed (A) with (58) to (64). The trade was acceptable for both, and White maintained his lead. Black took sente, but he used it to push at (65), which was questionable. Reinforcing at B or C would have been better.

White activated (D) with (66) at the opportune moment and, even though Black's hane at (67) was the right response, descending to the first line with (68) was an incredibly clever and unexpected jab.

Blocking at (69) was unavoidable and White consolidated his lead with (70).

Black (71) reinforced Black's weak group while reducing White's potential at the bottom.

When White probed Black's weaknesses with (66) and (68), he mainly wanted to see how Black would respond, but when Black resisted with (69) White seized the opportunity to take profit.

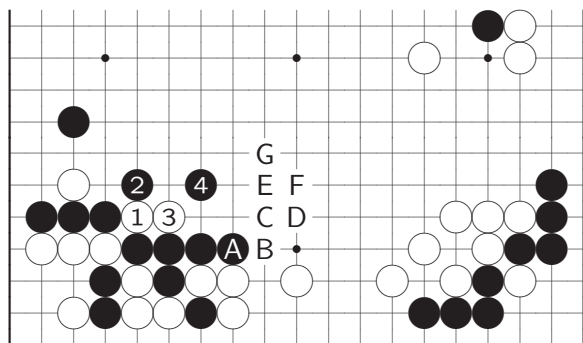


Variation 63 for (57)

The hane on the other side, at (1), doesn't follow the direction of play.

Black can't easily build territory on the right side, because White has already played in the bottom right and Black's bottom right corner stones are low.

Once White's center group becomes strong with (6) and (8), Black's potential at the top is reduced and it becomes easier for White to invade around A later.

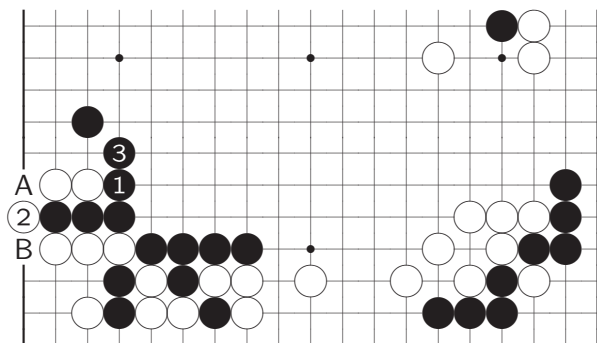


Variation 64 for 66

Cutting at ① doesn't work anymore after A.

White shouldn't respond to A with the bulge at B, because Black will be very happy to enlarge his left side from C to G.

As you can see, there is more potential on the left side than at the bottom.



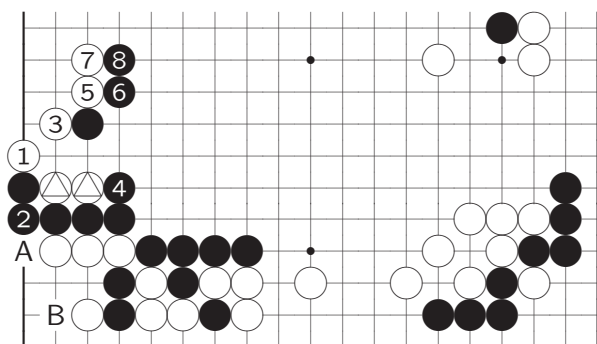
Variation 65 for 67

Falling back to ① before exchanging A for B is too soft.

White will be happy to connect under with ②, and Black still needs to spend another move at ③ to connect his stones.

Black has gained nothing on the left side and has ended in gote, so this variation is bad for Black.

Instead of ①, if Black hanes on the other side with B, White will step out towards the center at ③.

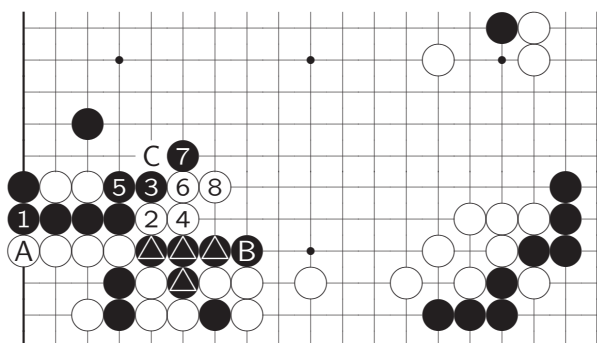


Variation 66 for 68

Moving the marked stones out with ① and ③ is a little heavy.

Black will be satisfied with his strong wall up to ⑧.

Black has large endgame moves at either A or B (depending on the situation), so descending to A with ⑥ in the game was much better.



Variation 67 for 69

If Black connects at ① in response to A, White will cut at ②.

Black eventually has to come back and defend at ⑤, because the ladder starting with ⑤ at ⑥ doesn't work and the net at ⑧ will meet White's atari at ⑤.

White can save his cutting stones up to ⑧, and Black's marked stones are in trouble.

Black B is napping in this variation and White can still cut at C. This is why B was questionable.

Secretly Cross at Chencang

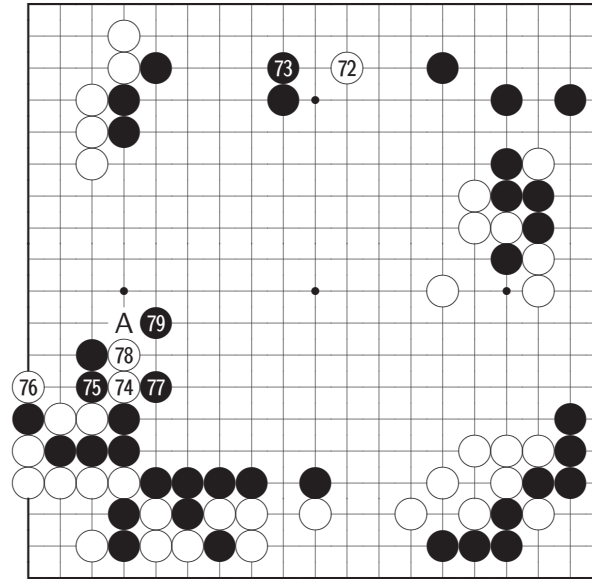


Diagram 12
(Moves: 72-79)

One famous episode in Chinese history occurred when Liu Bang (later the founder of the Han Dynasty) asked his general, Han Xin, to plan an attack on the Western Chu Kingdom, whose army was led by Zhang Han.

Han Xin sent some men to make a show of repairing the road along the mountain pass, while secretly preparing a detachment to sneak across at Chencang.

Zhang Han's scouts spotted the workers repairing the road and, assuming that Liu Bang's army was eventually going to approach from that direction, he sent his forces to prepare a defense.

While he was distracted by this decoy, Han Xin and his troops crossed at Chencang and successfully executed a surprise attack on Zhang Han's divided forces, from an unexpected direction.

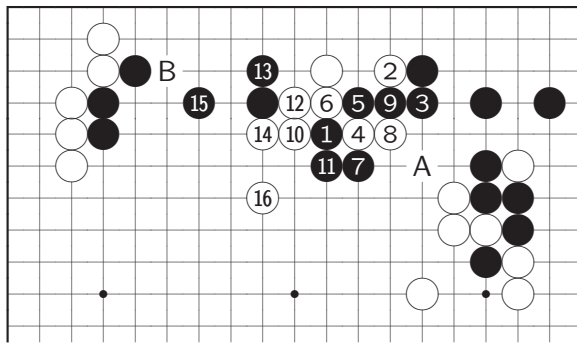
These events are said to have transpired in 206 BC, and the story later formed the basis of one of the *Thirty-six Stratagems*; "Openly repair the road, but secretly cross at Chencang."

To put it more succinctly, the strategy is to use a decoy to distract your adversary and divide his attention, and then suddenly attack his weak point while his focus is elsewhere.

The iron pillar at 73 was a strong defense against White's invasion at 72, but 72 was a decoy.

The hane at 74 came swiftly, and the ladder starting at A didn't work because 72 was a ladder breaker!

It was difficult for Black to defend cleanly, so he was forced to sacrifice two stones with 79. This sacrifice tactic allowed him to maintain his balance and was quite skillful, but White still gained ground with his cunning stratagem at the top.



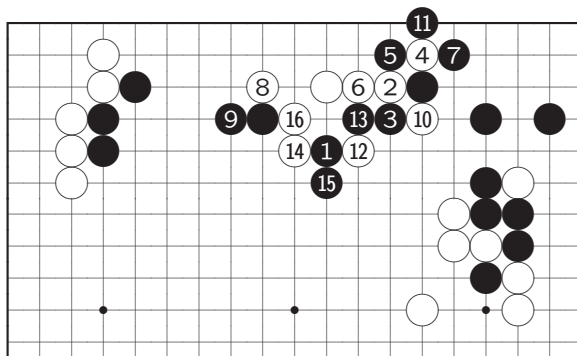
Variation 68 for 73

Even if Black anticipates the ladder and attacks from above with ① (which maintains Black's ladder), White can break out with the attachments at ② and ④.

Black ⑦ and ⑨ are stylish haengma, but White still breaks into the center without any worries.

After ⑩, A and B are miai for White, and the possibility of the ladder has been rekindled.

This result is good enough for Gu, so he wasn't particularly worried about Lee discovering his strategy.

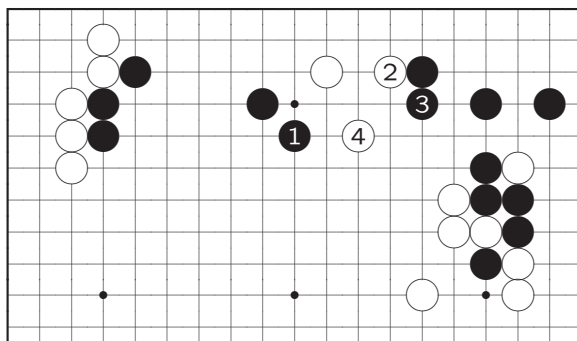


Variation 69 for 73

If Black hanes at ③, White can try to settle his group with the counter-hane at ④.

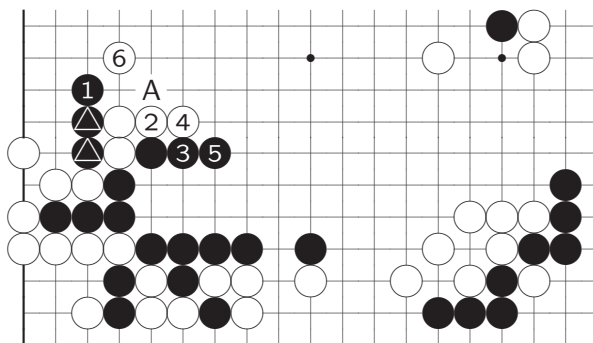
Black might resist with ⑤ and ⑦, but then White can break out into the center with ⑧ to ⑩.

This result is also good for White, and capping at ① isn't a good tactic.



Variation 70 for 73

If Black plays the kosumi at ①, instead of the knight's move in the previous variation, White can easily run into the center with ② and ④.



Variation 71 for 79

Instead of sacrificing with ⑦⑨ at A, extending at ① is heavy and Black will become embroiled in a difficult fight.

White can push with ② and ④ in sente, before pressing Black's marked stones with ⑥.

Black is in trouble up to ⑥ and once again we see the advantages of a sacrifice strategy, by juxtaposition with this failure.

Strengthen Yourself to Weaken Your Opponent

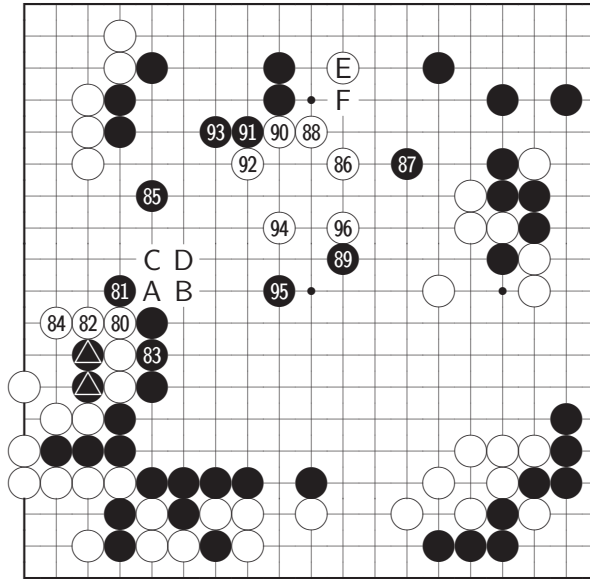


Diagram 13
(Moves: 80-96)

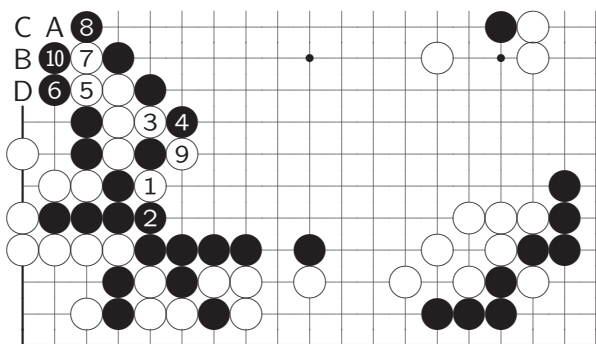
Black sacrificed in sente from (80) to (83), and lightly defended his cutting point with (85), while also connecting his groups at the top and the bottom. Black was planning to meet a cut at A with B to D. Descending cleanly to (84) demonstrated good technique. Black's left side potential was all gone, and White profited from capturing Black's marked stones.

This result was satisfactory for White, and White was still in the lead. The consolation for Black was that, by sacrificing, he had made himself stronger in the center from (77) to (85). This had the effect of indirectly weakening (E).

White moved out lightly with (86), which was an appropriate haengma considering that Black was now strong everywhere. When you sacrifice your weak stones, you end up with fewer weaknesses, even if you lose territory. This means you can aim to recoup your losses later, by using your power to attack.

Black (87) aimed to cut at F, so the kosumi at (88) became necessary.

Black wasn't thick enough to capture White, so he capped at (89) to develop the center instead. White raised a flag with (96).



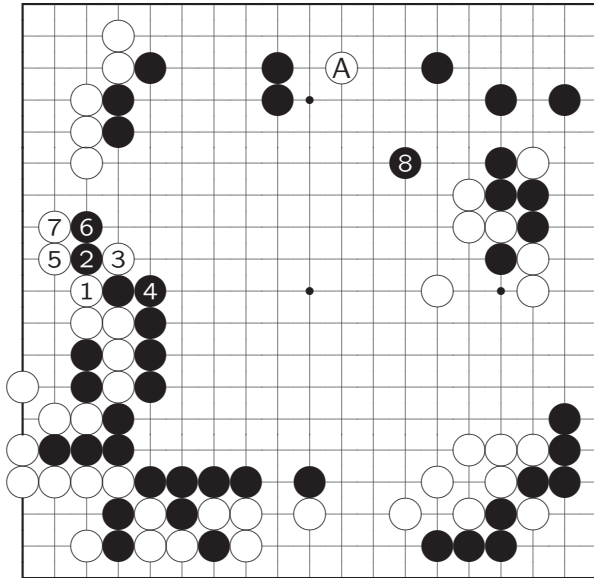
Variation 72 for (82)

White wants to break through into Black's center, but (1) and (3) are too greedy.

Black (4) and (6) form a beautiful combination, which traps White in a spiral ladder.

Instead of (9), if White continues towards the edge with (10), Black will block his path with A to C and, after he captures at (9), squeeze with Black D.

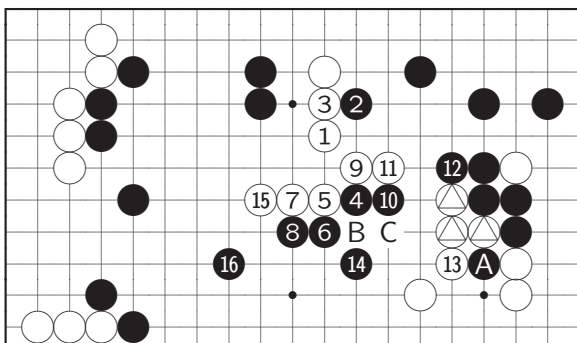
Instead of (1), if White pushes at (3), it's still a ladder after (4).



Variation 73 for 84

Pushing at ① is also conceivable, but then Black can exchange ② to ⑦ in sente, while aiming indirectly at A.

Black ⑧ is a key place for developing Black's moyo at the top, and A is in danger of being swallowed whole.



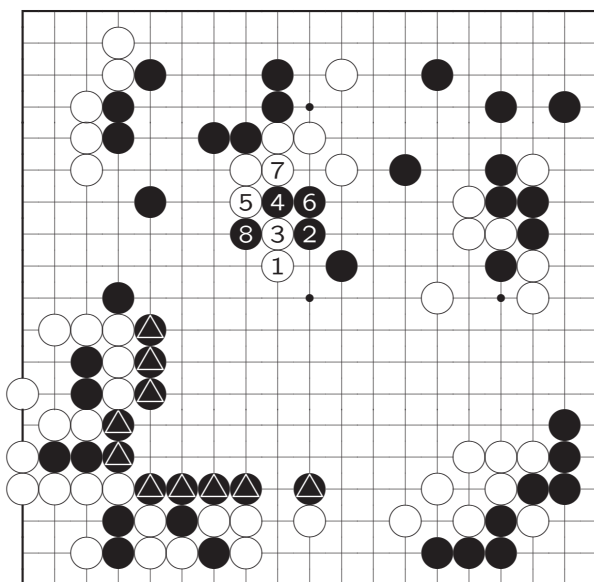
Variation 74 for 86

Jumping out with ① is too heavy in this situation.

Black will exchange the peep at ② in sente, to make White even heavier, and then attack with ④.

White can't easily connect because ⑫ threatens to save A. So ⑬ is necessary and Black can develop the center while attacking up to ⑯.

Instead of ⑬, if White cuts at B, Black C, White at ⑭ and Black at ⑬ captures the marked stones.



Variation 75 for 94

Flying out with ① is too thin.

Black can separate White's stones with ② and ④, and the context of this fight is highly favorable for Black.

Black's marked influence will be very helpful in any fight that starts in this part of the board.

Protecting Begets Protecting Further

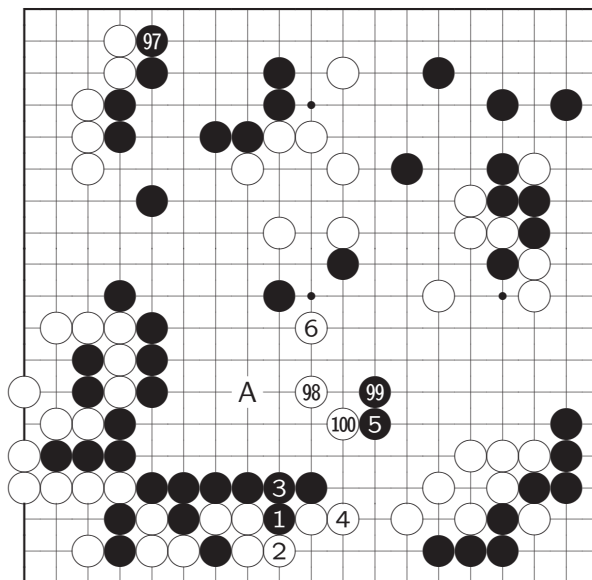


Diagram 14
(Moves: 97-106)

Blocking at ⑨⑦ was very big. It wasn't just an endgame move, it also strengthened Black's group at the top and maintained Black's thickness.

White ⑨⑧ was an appropriate reduction, and Black couldn't abide protecting his territory at A.

As Thucydides warns in *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, “. . . concessions to adversaries only end in self-reproach, and the more strictly they are avoided the greater will be the chance of security.”

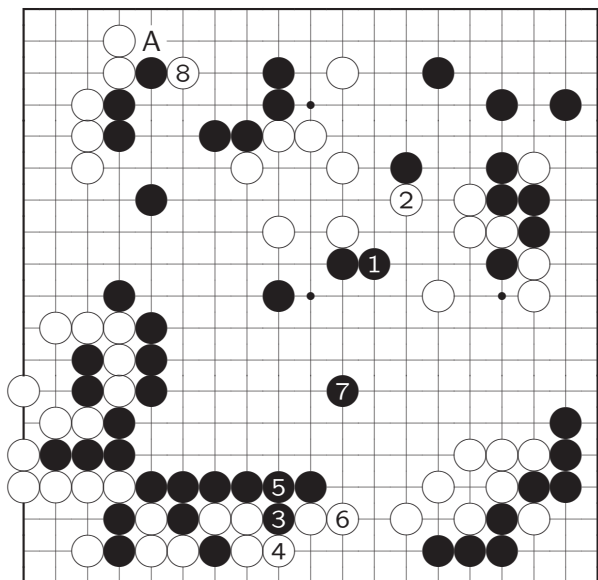
In Go terms, if you fall back and protect your territory once, your opponent will be able to reduce it and play endgame moves on all sides in sente. This is because the more stones you commit to an area, the less you can afford to give it up. So protecting begets protecting further.

Think of it as your territory becoming heavy. When you've only played a few stones in an area, you can afford to trade and play flexibly, but once you've played many stones it's difficult to allow them to become worthless—so your whole body stiffens. In this respect, groups and territories are similar.

Resisting with ⑨⑨ was natural, and even though Black's center territory could now be destroyed, his strategy was to exchange it for compensation elsewhere by attacking.

White moved out slowly but surely with ⑩⑩, and ① (⑩①) to ③ prepared a leaning attack in combination with ⑤.

Moving away from Black's power at the bottom with ⑥, while reducing Black's center area, was a sensible strategy.

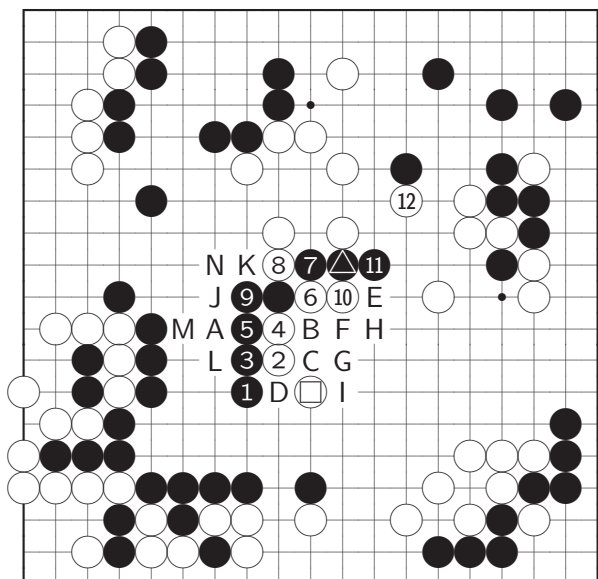


Variation 76 for 97

If Black tries to develop the center up to 7, instead of defending at A (97), White can attack at 8 to destroy Black's top left area and destabilize his group.

The actual game was still slightly better for White—White had more territory, but Black had more power. In this kind of game you need to preserve your power and prevent cracks from forming on the surface.

If White can attack Black with 8, he'll be able to take the initiative and the game will become too easy for him. It will be even more difficult for Black to catch up afterwards.



Variation 77 for 99

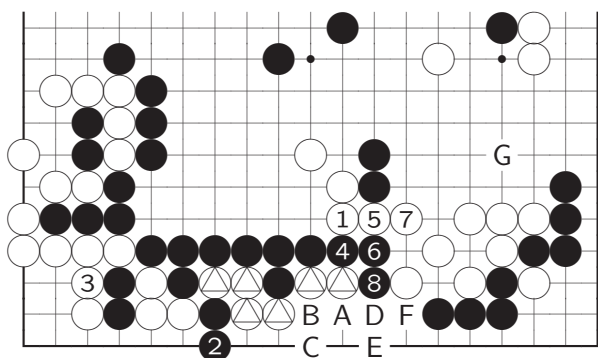
Protecting Black's territory with 1 allows White to bully Black with 2 and 4. Black 1 commits Black to repeatedly protecting his territory with 3 and 5.

After 5, White can cut with 6 and 8, and Black's marked group feels forsaken up to 12.

Instead of 5, pulling back at 9 is often tougher, but Black will still be in trouble after White at 5, Black A, 6, 7 and 8. To satisfy curious readers...

After the above, Black may fight with Black B, 10 and C to I; but White strikes back with J to N, capturing the cutting stones in a loose ladder. Even though it looks precarious, you'll find that there's no way to capture White's squared group, thanks to L.

Neither sequence works for Black, so Black shouldn't passively protect his territory with 1.



Variation 78 for 106

If White tries to escape with 1, Black will exchange 2 for 3, before breaking through White's shape up to 8.

Black can play D in sente at any time, and he can even play A to E to capture the marked stones, if he's prepared to fight a ko.

If White blocks at D, Black can cut at F in sente and go back to attacking White in the center with G

Wait for the Opportune Moment

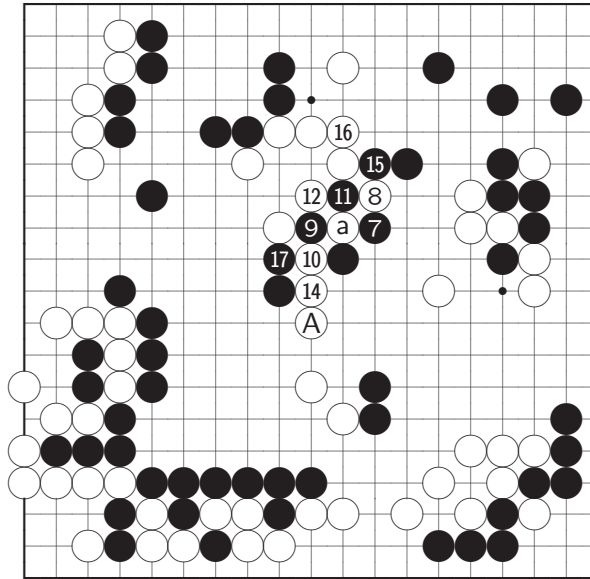
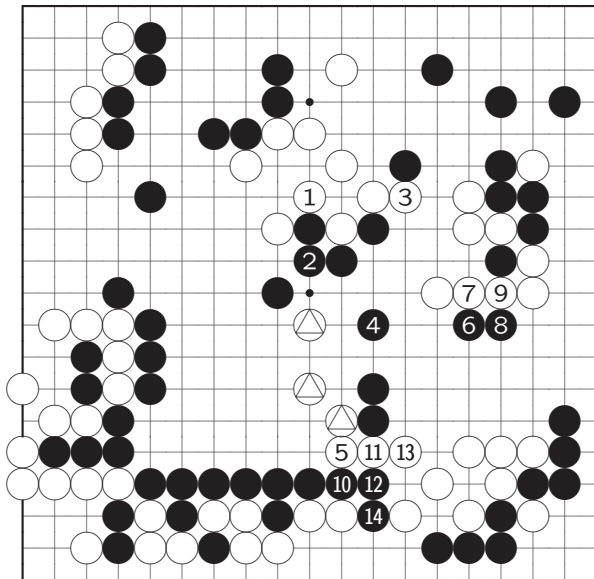


Diagram 15
(Moves: 107-117)

113 at (a)

A direct response to (A) (106) didn't seem promising, so 7 shifted the field of battle to the top, waiting for a better opportunity. Sun Zi's *Art of War* directs you to, "Take action only if it is to your advantage. Otherwise, do not. For an enraged man may regain his composure and a resentful person his happiness, but a state which has perished cannot be restored, nor can the dead be brought back to life."

White 10 to 14 was an evasive technique, which helped White to avoid the main thrust of the attack. When Black cut at 15, the empty triangle at 16 protected all of White's weaknesses simultaneously.



Variation 79 for 110

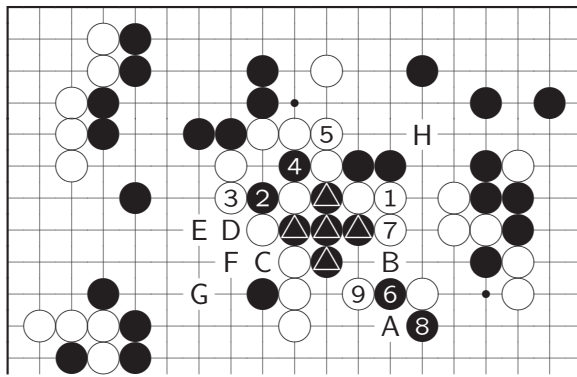
Responding at 1 seems normal, but that's what Black wants.

White's marked stones will be isolated up to 4.

If White walks out with 5, Black can exchange 6 and 8 in sente, before coming back to cut with 10.

White's dragon in the bottom right will be harassed and he will lose his territory at the bottom up to 14.

In this variation, Black takes the lead.



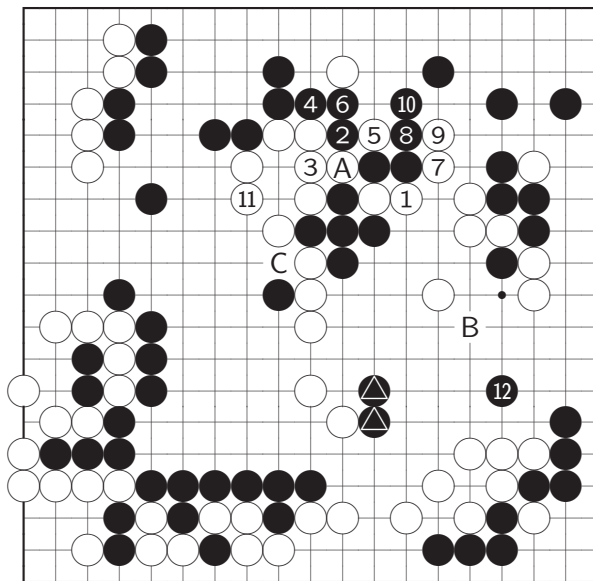
Variation 80 for ⑪⑥

Instead of ⑪ in the game (⑤ here), White can also consider saving his cutting stone with ①.

If Black fights back with ② to ⑧, ⑨ is a deadly tesuji and Black's marked stones are suddenly captured.

Instead of ⑧, if Black extends to A, White will exchange B for Black at ⑨, and then connect at C.

After White connects at C, Black can't cut at D because E to G creates a net. White is also aiming to net at H, so this variation is hopeless for Black.



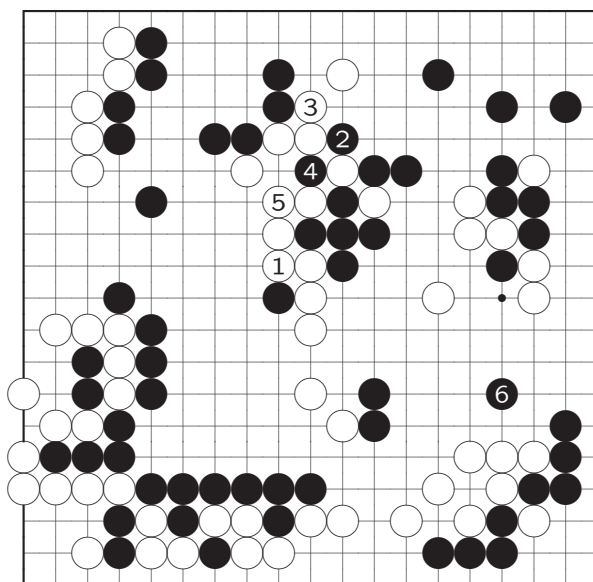
Variation 81 for ⑪⑥

Therefore, after White extends to ①, Black should atari immediately at ②.

White can't afford to connect at ④, because allowing Black to capture ① would make ① worthless.

The trade up to ⑫ is slightly better for Black, so the game would become even again if this happened.

It's hard for White to capture the marked stones and Black has useful aji around B and C, so Gu didn't choose this variation.



Variation 82 for ⑪⑥

Connecting at ① is slack.

Black will become strong with ② to ④ in sente, and can take a big point at ⑥.

The game would be reversed if this happened.

Strive to Defend Efficiently

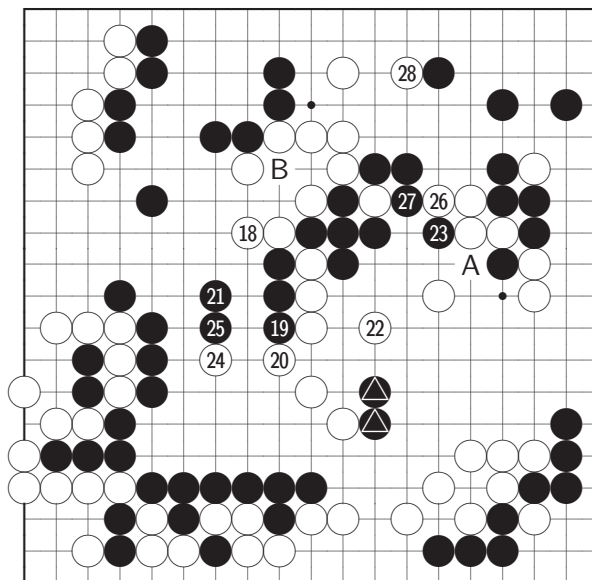


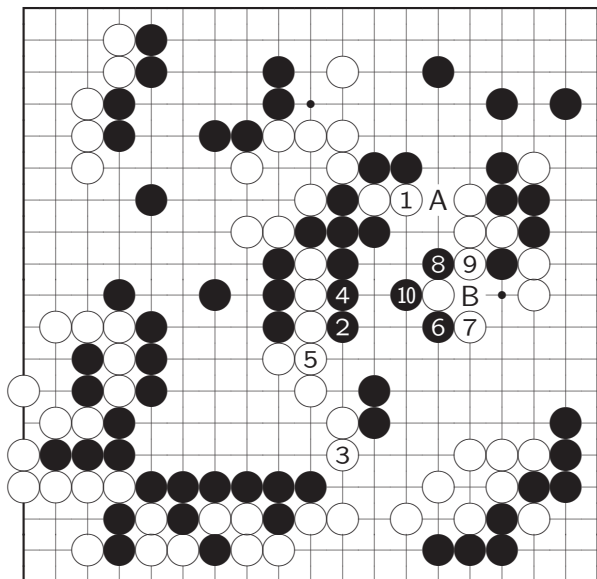
Diagram 16
(Moves: 118-128)

White's extension at ⑱ was necessary, and pushing at ⑲ filled White's liberties before jumping to ㉑.

When you defend, you should strive to do so efficiently. For example, jumping at ㉒ isolated Black's marked stones while defending, and the game was still going smoothly for White.

Reinforcing at ㉓ was interesting and efficient, and it made the bad exchange of ㉔ for ㉕ necessary in order to keep sente. If White had ignored ㉓, Black would have saved his cutting stone with A.

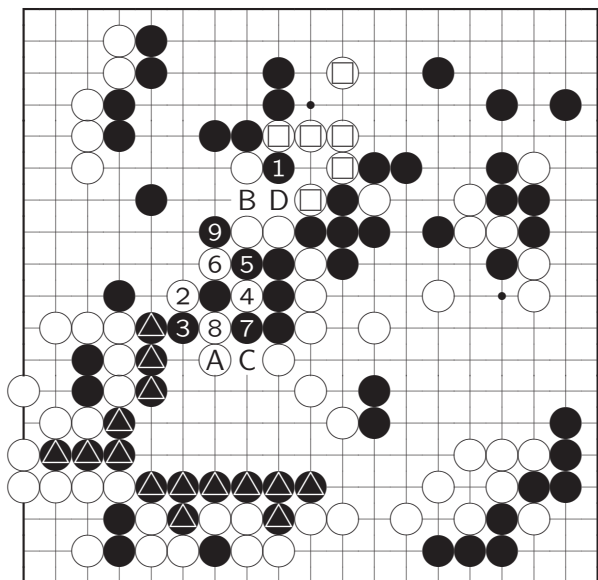
Attaching at ㉘ was also efficient, aiming to make life at the top instead of just living small with B.



Variation 83 for ㉒

It's a bit too late to save the cutting stone with ①, because the attachments at ② and ⑥ are strong counters.

Black can easily manage his center group with the moves to ⑩, and A and B are miai.



Variation 84 for 125

⑩ at ④

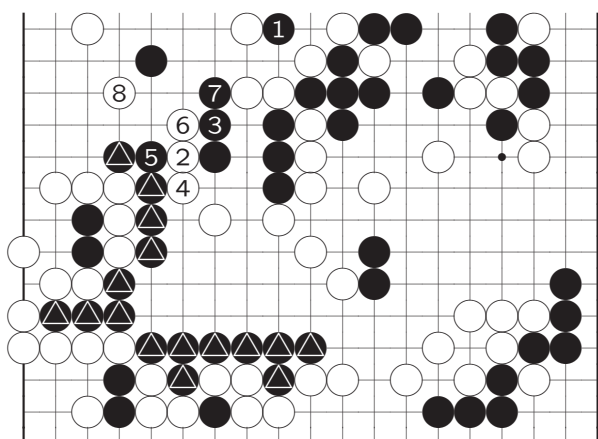
After White jumps to ①, Black might think about capturing White's group at the top with ①. This is a powerful move, but it's too early to play this way.

White's attachments at ② and ④ form a sharp tesuji combination, and Black will be in trouble up to ⑩.

It's a ko, but Black doesn't have enough sufficiently large ko threats and White takes the ko first with ⑩.

Black can still capture White's marked stones with B to D, but White will become incredibly powerful in the process and Black's marked stones will die.

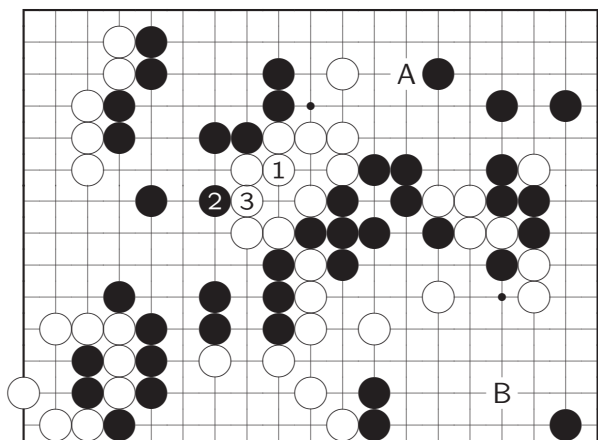
If you count the number of stones exchanged, you can see that White clearly gets the better end of the deal when trading the marked groups.



Variation 85 for 125

Extending at ③ is also conceivable, but ② to ⑧ flow naturally and Black's marked group will die once again.

There's no way for Black to escape or make two eyes after ⑧.



Variation 86 for 128

If White simply makes two eyes with ①, instead of attaching at A (28), Black will force with ② before taking sente to play the knight's move at B.

White still lives in this variation, but it's too passive and slow.

Black would catch up again if this happened, so White should aim for more than just life.

Fuse Speed with Secrecy

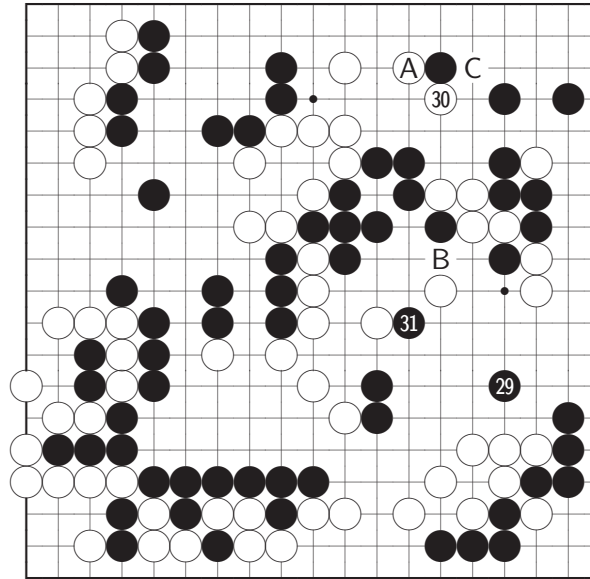


Diagram 17
(Moves: 129-131)

The knight's move at 29 was a good reduction. It looked innocent enough, but it concealed the possibility of a razor sharp attack.

White's hane at 30 also seemed natural, and may have been motivated by fighting spirit after Black ignored A (128), but it was a critical mistake which caused the flow of play to change course abruptly.

Black struck like lightning at 31, and the game was reversed with a single blow. White was caught off guard and everything became difficult for him from this point forward. Surprise attacks like 31 can be overwhelmingly powerful, but opportunities to execute such maneuvers appear rarely and are fleeting.

Carl von Clausewitz suggests that, "The two factors that produce surprise are secrecy and speed," and emphasizes the effectiveness of surprise tactics. This implies that the key ingredients are an opponent who is unaware of your plan and a swift reaction, to take advantage of their oversight.

However, Clausewitz also goes to great pains, in *On War*, to explain that while ". . . surprise lies at the root of all operations without exception . . . it is equally true that by its very nature surprise can rarely be *outstandingly* successful." Therefore, you cannot rely on the element of surprise as a fundamental part of your strategy. It is a ubiquitous force in all battles, but it cannot be tamed.

In other words, a devastating surprise is not generally planned, but rather seized in a moment of luck. Your plans mustn't depend on your opponent making a mistake. That is unreliable and dangerous.

In this game, Lee knew that 31 was a powerful continuation when he played 29, but he played 29 because it was a good move, not because he expected to cut at 31. In fact, Lee expected Gu to defend at B, and he was then planning to go back to the top to play at 30.

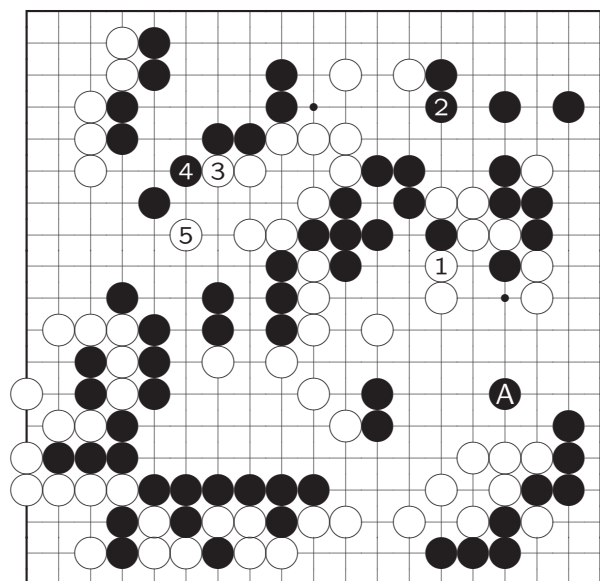
Gu, of course, knew that Black could cut at 31. His mistake wasn't in overlooking this possibility, but in underestimating its effectiveness.

When this kind of fleeting opportunity occurs in your games, you must plan carefully and then move swiftly to seize the advantage. If you need to exchange some forcing moves to prepare, then do so, but don't delay your attack any longer than necessary.

If you delay your attack, your opponent might play moves which repair the weakness—sometimes inadvertently, without even realizing the nature of the problem.

For example, if Black had protected his corner territory at C, White would have reinforced at B and Black's one chance would have evaporated.

White ③⑩ became the losing move.

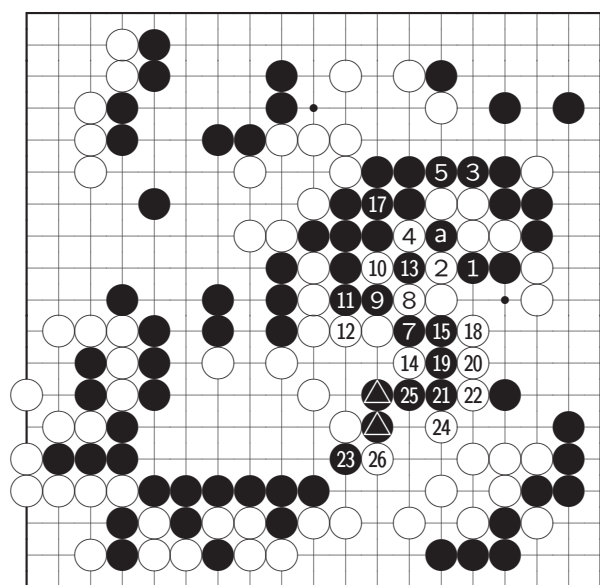


Variation 87 for ⑬⑩

Defending at ① is essential, and Black also needs to go back and defend at ② next.

After that, White can take care of his weak group with ③ and ⑤. This variation is best for White, and he maintains a small lead up to ⑤.

However, the exchange of A for ① is still profitable for Black, so Black catches up little by little.



Variation 88 for ⑬①

⑥ at a, ⑬ at ⑩

If Black squeezes with ① to ⑥, before cutting at ⑦, it will be difficult for him to fight in the center afterwards.

White will counter ⑦ and ⑨ with ⑩ to ⑭.

Up to ②⑥, Black's marked cutting stones are captured.

This is why Black cut immediately with ③① in the game (⑦ in this variation).

Divide and Conquer

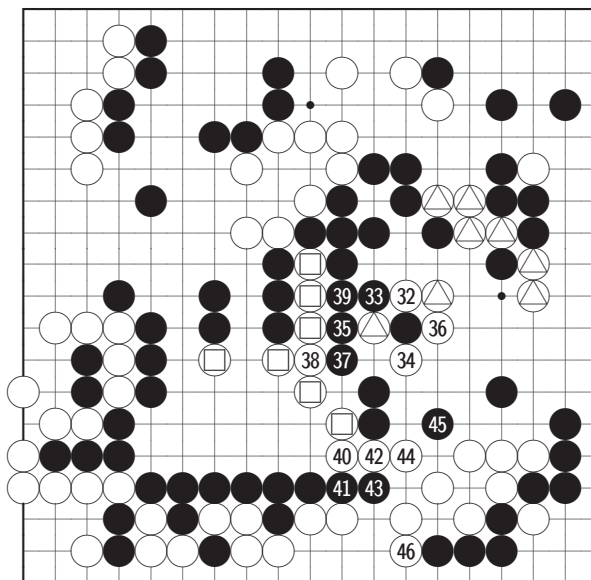


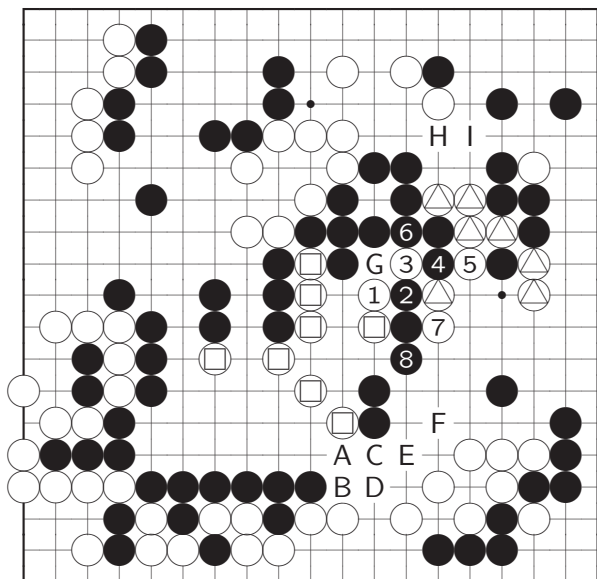
Diagram 18
(Moves: 132-146)

When you attack a single group directly, it becomes relatively easy for your opponent to defend it, because they can focus all their energy on doing so. Defending is generally much easier than attacking.

The real art of attacking is to play moves which make multiple simultaneous threats. These kinds of moves are highly efficient, because your opponent can only defend in one place at a time.

We talked about indirect attacks earlier, but when a direct attack can be made against multiple groups simultaneously, it's called a splitting attack. In such cases, it may be possible to capture a group.

Black 35 to 43 attacked both marked groups. The game was practically over when Black struck at 45.



Variation 89 for 132

Extending at ① doesn't work either.

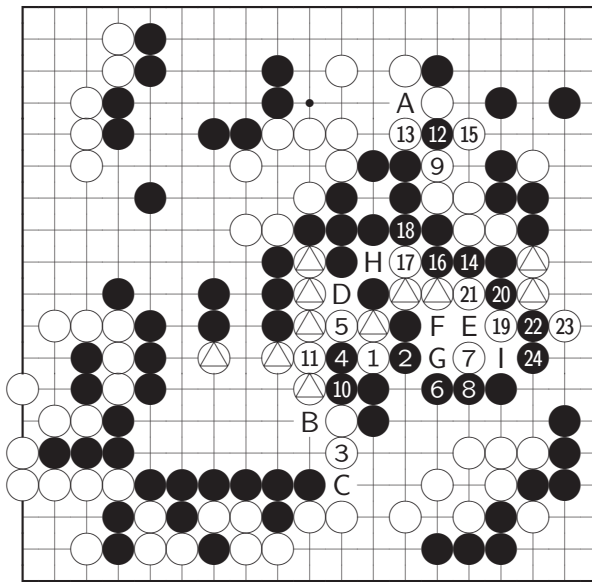
Black can still cut with ② and ④, and it's impossible for White to manage both of his marked groups.

If White plays at A next, Black can continue his splitting attack with B to F and the result will be quite similar to the actual game.

Black's center group is safe because connecting with G or H is miai.

If White plays at I next, pinching at H is fine for Black.

In general, you should try to avoid having two weak groups on the board at the same time, because of the awesome power of splitting attacks.



Variation 90 for 134

White's best hope for survival is ①, because it prevents Black from cutting from behind at ⑤.

Black ② and ③ are natural, and forcing at ④ before defending at ⑥ is usually good technique. This is the right move order for this position.

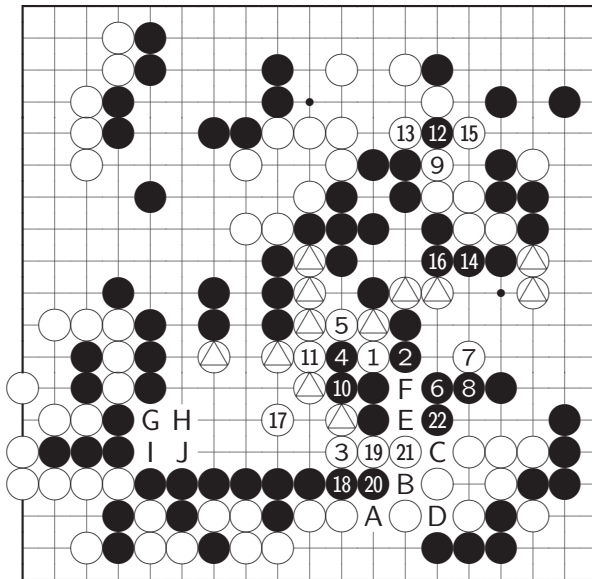
White can complicate the game with ⑦ and ⑨, but ⑩ is a sturdy move which seeks to simplify it again.

Wedging at ⑫ makes miai of A and ⑭, and White is in trouble on the right side up to ⑯.

White tries to fight back with ⑰ to ⑳, but White's marked stones are all captured up to ㉔, because B and C are miai for Black.

If White ataris at D next, Black still captures everything with E to I.

Instead of ⑪, if White connects at ⑬, Black cuts at ⑪ and is ahead by about 15 points on the board.



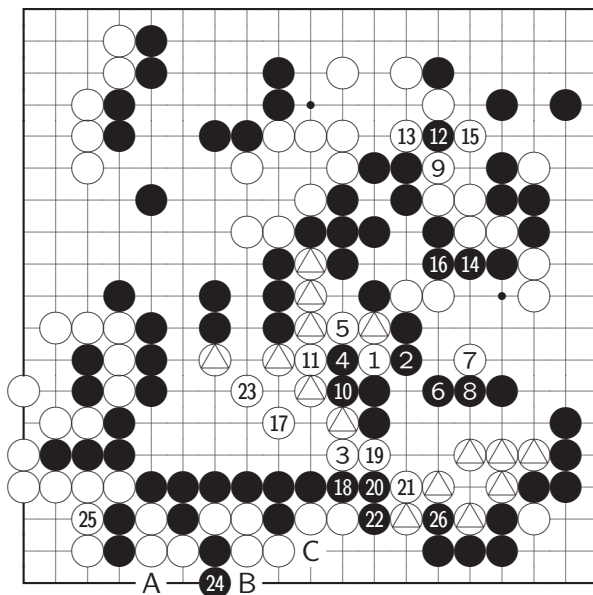
Variation 91 for 134

If White connects at ⑰, Black will push through with ⑱ and ㉓.

Black ㉔ knocks the wind out of White; afterwards A and B are miai, and C and D are miai, so the marked stones are still captured.

Instead of ㉑, White can also consider playing at ㉔, but White will only have a false eye after Black at ㉑, White E, Black F and White B.

If White ataris at G at any time, Black will sacrifice with H to J and the marked stones will still be captured.



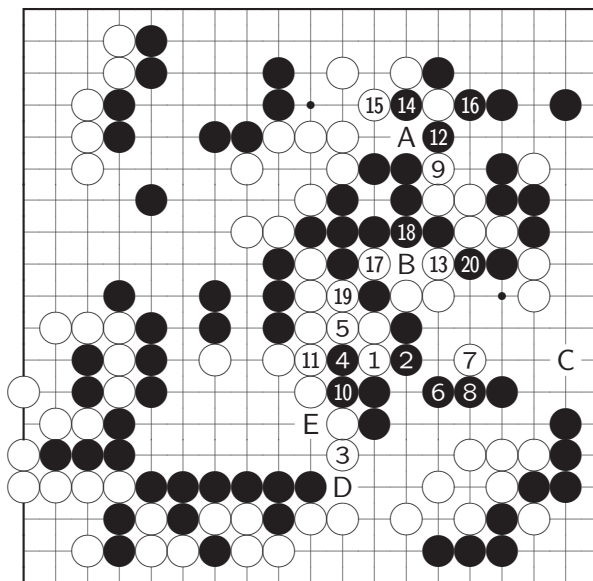
Variation 92 for 134

Blocking at 21 is an interesting move, but Black will push at 22 and White can't connect.

If White makes an eye with 23 next, 24 is well timed and A and 26 are miai. White's marked group is captured once again in this variation.

If White plays 25 at 26, he can save the marked stones, but Black will atari at A and White's stones at the bottom will be captured. When this happens, White's territory will become Black's territory, so this is a hopeless alternative for White.

Instead of 25, if White ataris at B, Black will still capture the marked stones with 26 and will be able to double atari at C at any time.



Variation 93 for 134

As we've seen in the variations above, playing atari at A isn't promising, so White should consider 13 instead.

However, 14 is quite big and Black's shape at the top becomes solid after 16.

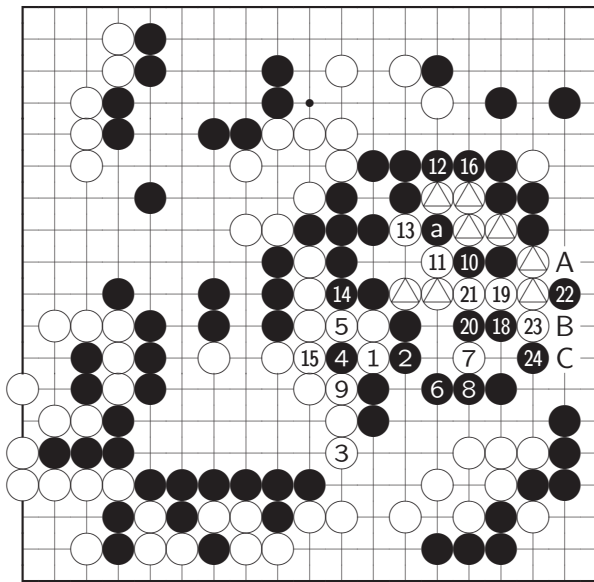
The throw-in at 17 is a clever tesuji, but 18 is a calm and determined response.

If Black plays 18 at B, White will start a ko at 18 and his weak groups will become more resilient.

Up to 20, Black has gained enough profit in the top right to win the game. Black is about 15 points ahead on the board.

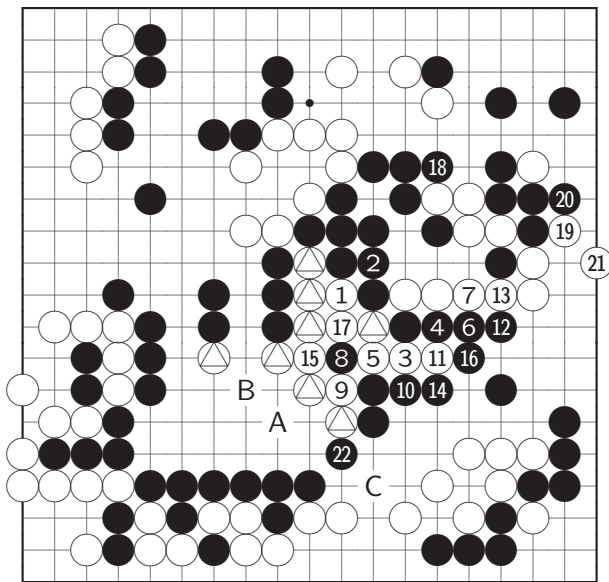
White can still save his center dragon with C, but it's meaningless.

Instead of 17, if White captures at 18, Black should connect at 17, once again making miai of D and E.

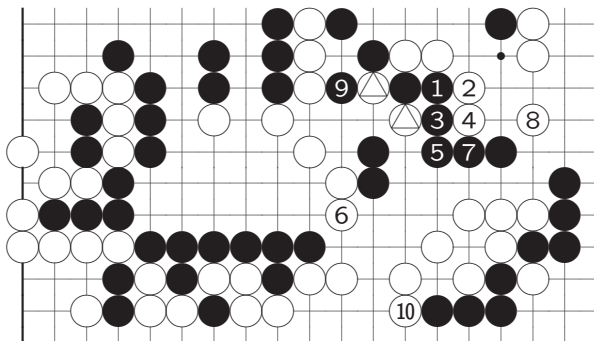


Variation 94 for 134

(17) at a



Variation 95 for 134



Variation 96 for 135

White can save his center stones by cutting at ⑨, but this leaves his marked group at Black's mercy.

Squeezing with ⑩ to ⑯ is tight, and ⑱ to ㉑ leaves White with only one and a half eyes.

Attaching at ㉒ is a striking tesuji which makes miai of A and B. There are other ways to capture in this case, but ㉒ is the cleanest technique.

Even if ㉓ is threatening (it isn't in this case), Black can just block at ㉔ and A and B are still miai.

Compare ㉒ to playing at B. Both moves capture White in this case, but Black will have to answer ㉓ at C if he chooses the latter tactic.

If White ataris at ① and moves out up to ⑤, ⑥ and ⑧ form a powerful combination.

Black can squeeze White up to ⑰, and seal him in with ⑱.

White can save the right side group with ⑲ and ㉑, but his marked stones will die after ㉒.

A and B are miai in the center, and C is sente, so there's no way for White to continue.

Cutting from behind with ㉓ in the game was the best move (⑨ in this variation).

Black shouldn't save his cutting stone with ①, because White will extend to ⑥ after exchanging ② to ⑤ in sente.

Black can connect at ⑦ and capture the marked stones with ⑨, but eventually White will block at ⑩. White's groups are already alive on both sides, because he was able to play ⑥ and ⑧ in sente.

No Answer Is Also an Answer

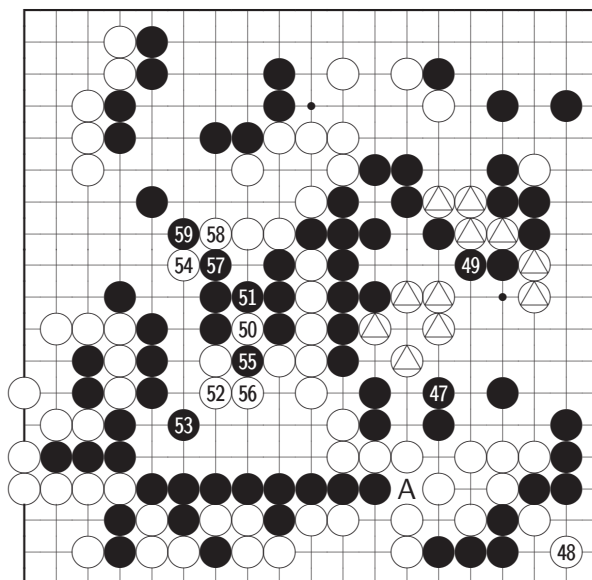
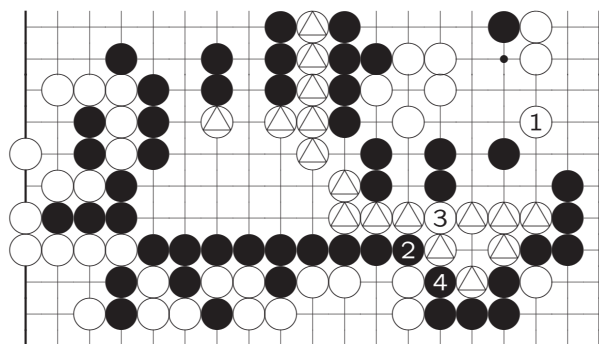


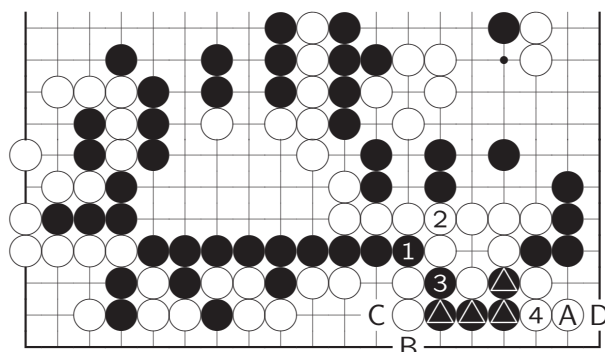
Diagram 19
(Moves: 147-159)

The bamboo joint at ④⑦ made the situation clear—A and ④⑨ were miai for Black. White ④⑧ was a crafty way to reinforce the weakness at A, but Black ignored it and stormed White's marked group. No answer is also an answer. Gu shook the tree with ⑤⑩ to ⑤④, but Black countered precisely up to ⑤⑨.



Variation 97 for ④⑧

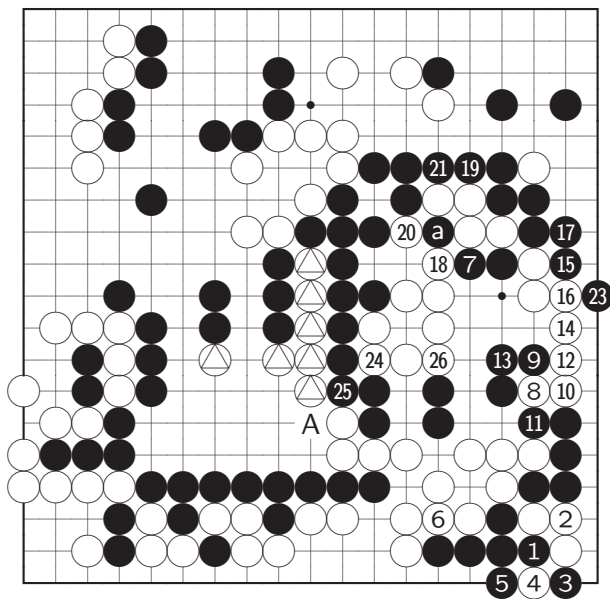
If White looks after his right side group with ①, Black can cut and capture White's big dragon with ② and ④.



Variation 98 for ④⑨

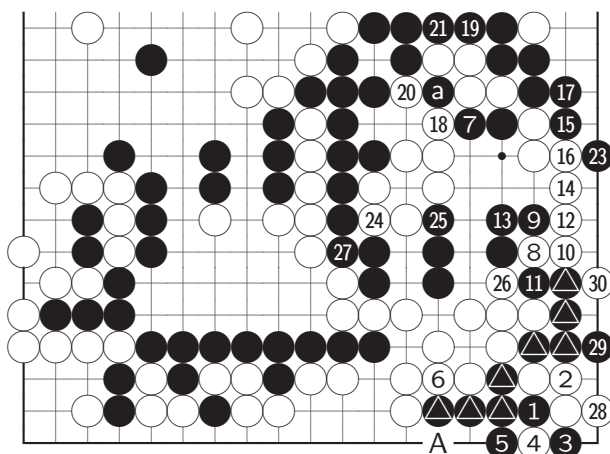
After White's kosumi at A, ① and ③ don't work properly anymore.

White will play at ④ to attack the marked stones and it will be a ko after Black plays B to D, but fighting a ko is an unnecessary risk for Black.



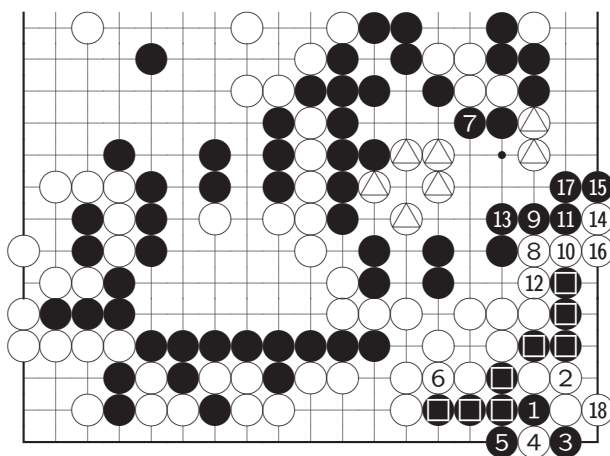
Variation 99 for 149

22 at a



Variation 100 for 149

22 at a



Variation 101 for 149

If Black responds locally with ① and ③, White will come back and defend with ⑥ (which also reduces Black's liberties).

Black ⑦ is still a powerful way to attack, but White can offer to trade with ⑧ and ⑩.

If Black defends his corner group, White can make two eyes up to ②⑥.

Black can cut at A and capture the marked stones in the center, but they're far smaller than the right side group.

Trying to capture with ②⑤ doesn't work, because ②⑥ makes miai of ②⑦ and ②⑧.

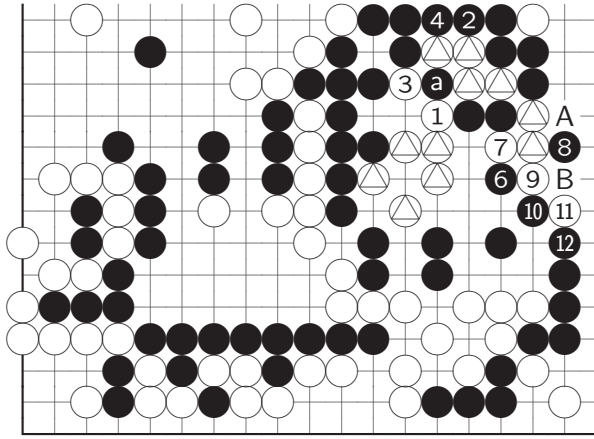
Black's marked group dies up to ③⑩, and the game is reversed.

If Black connects at ④, White will hane at A.

Black ①① accepts the trade White offers with ①⑩.

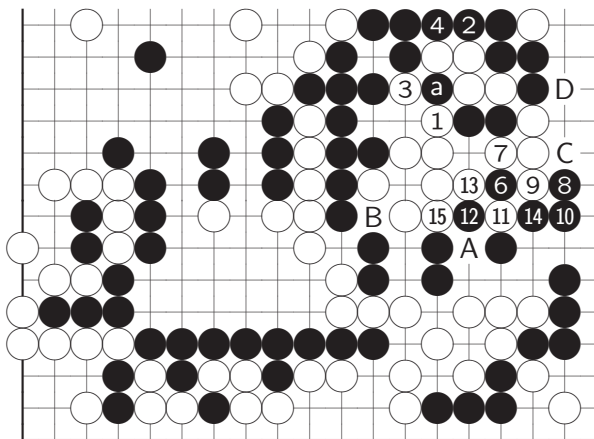
Black can capture White's marked group with ①③, but White can sacrifice in sente up to ①⑥ and Black's profit is becoming smaller.

White takes the marked stones in compensation, with ①⑧, and once again the game is reversed.



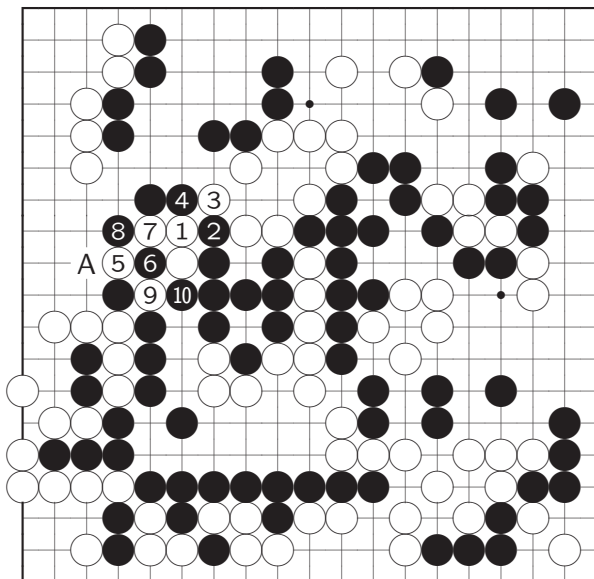
Variation 102 for (150)

(5) at (a)



Variation 103 for (150)

(5) at (a)



Variation 104 for (158)

White can't save his group with (1) to (5), because (6) and (8) are severe.

Up to (12), A and B are miai and White's marked stones are dead.

This time, Black's meticulous tesuji at (8) is absolutely necessary. Let's see what happens if Black plays (8) at B instead...

After (1) to (8), White will push at (9) and answer (10) with (11) to (15).

White lives with (15), because A and B are miai to form a second eye.

Instead of (10), if Black blocks at (14) as in the previous variation; White C, (10) and White D makes life.

The advantage of playing (8) at C is that it allows Black to answer (9) with (14) without any problems. It may look a little strange, but it's a wonderful tesuji.

Falling back at (1) ends in failure, because (6) is a tesuji which sets up a squeeze.

White's cutting stones will be captured up to (10), because A and (6) are miai.

Simplify the Game When Ahead

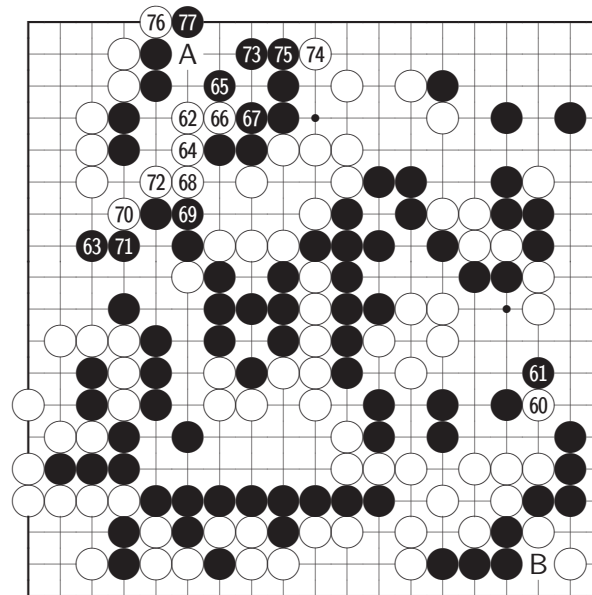


Diagram 20
(Moves: 160-177)

White probed Black's weaknesses with ⑥0 and ⑥2, but Black dodged easily up to ⑥3.

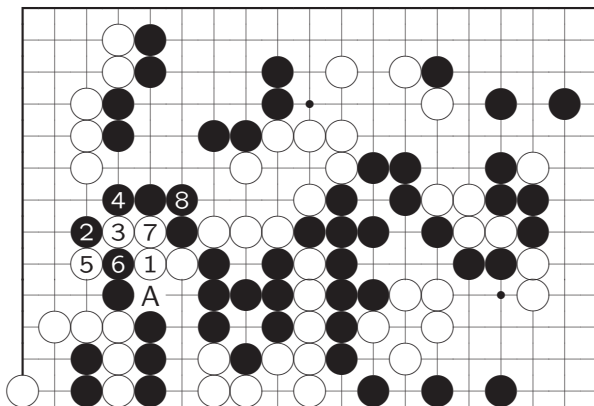
The moves from ⑥4 to ⑦6 were the best that White could manage, but he couldn't find any opportunities to catch up.

Instead of ⑦7, falling back at A would have been safer and easier, but ⑦7 was typical of Lee Sedol's uncompromising style.

It appears that Lee thought sacrificing as he did in the game was clearer than saving his stones with A. In the game, he took sente to reinforce the bottom right corner at B.

Since he was winning, and he was concerned about the aji in the bottom right, ⑦7 wasn't a mistake.

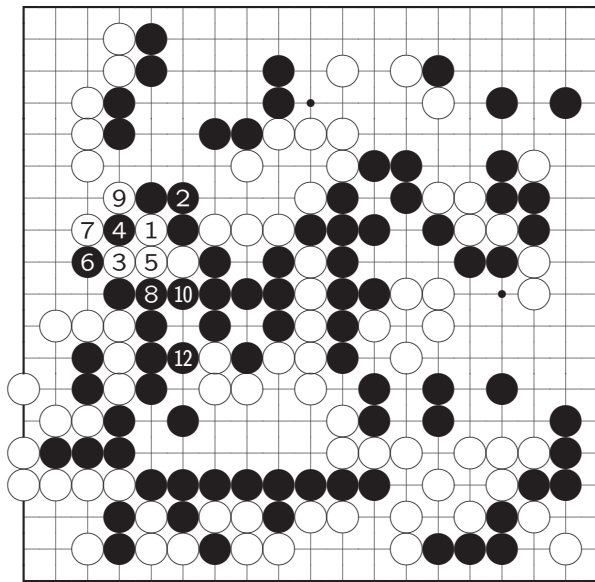
Gu is extremely talented at making use of bad aji, so ⑦7 was Lee's way of playing safely.



Variation 105 for ①60

If White extends to ①, ② is a fantastic net!

White can't cut at A after ⑧, because it's self-atari.

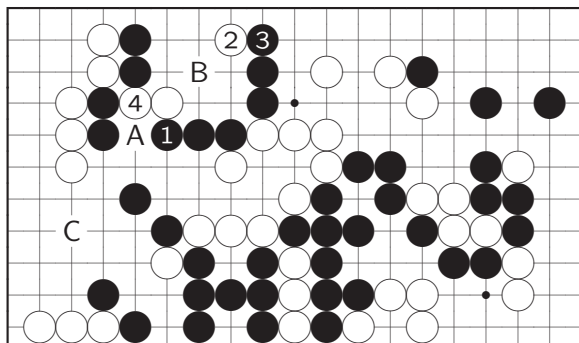


Variation 106 for ⑩

⑪ at ④

White can pull his cutting stone out with ① and ③, but Black can make two eyes up to ⑫.

This isn't good enough for White.

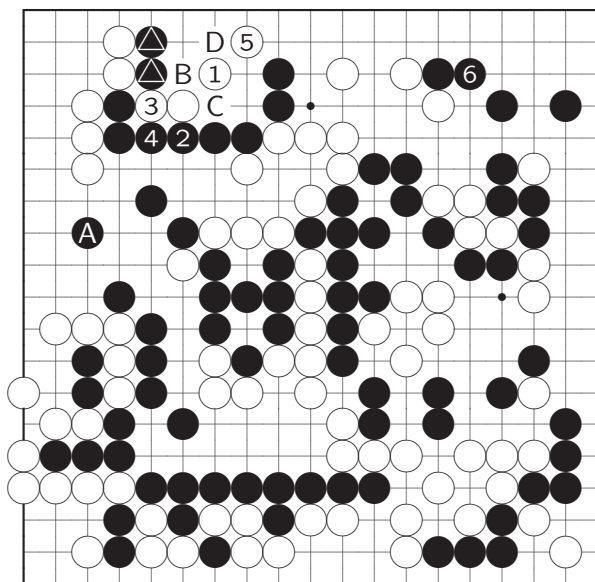


Variation 107 for ⑩

Responding directly with ① is what White wants.

White ② and ④ make miai of A and B, and this is irritating for Black.

Black didn't need to play so tightly, so he dodged to C (⑥ in the game).



Variation 108 for ⑩

After ①, if White continues with his plan in the top left, Black will sacrifice the marked stones and take sente.

If White doesn't play at ⑤, Black will play B to D to capture.

Pulling back at ⑥ or reinforcing the bottom right corner is good enough for Black.

Trade to Simplify the Game

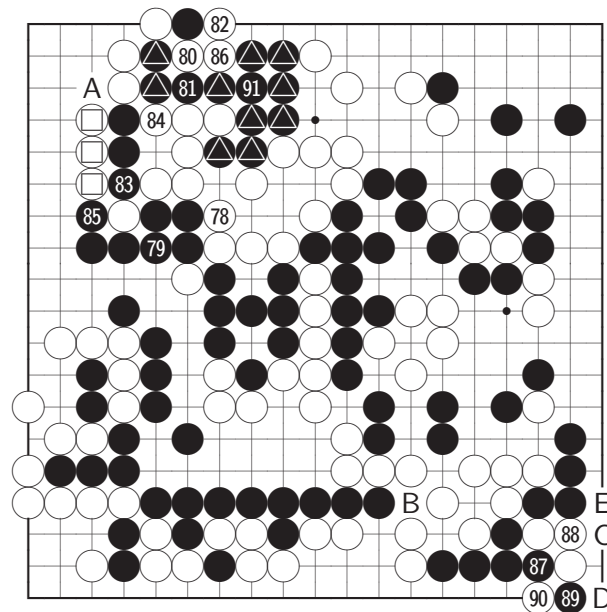


Diagram 21
(Moves: 178-191)

Cutting with 83 was the right move. Lee thought this was better and clearer than saving his group in gote.

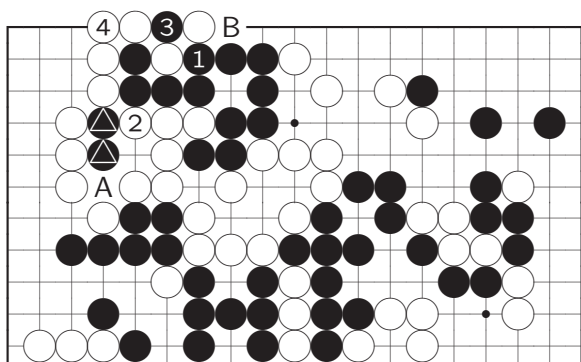
Even though White captured Black's marked group, it wasn't as big as it looked.

Firstly, Black took sente to ensure his advantage in the bottom right, and secondly, Black could cut at A later to capture White's marked stones (and reduce White's corner territory).

Lee had plenty of time left on the clock, and he'd already read everything out in the top left and bottom right, so he thought that 87 was the natural way to punish White for getting distracted in the top left. This was nerve-wracking for spectators though, because it seemed like Lee was taking unnecessary risks.

White's response at 88 was necessary to maintain the connection of his center group (otherwise Black can cut with B).

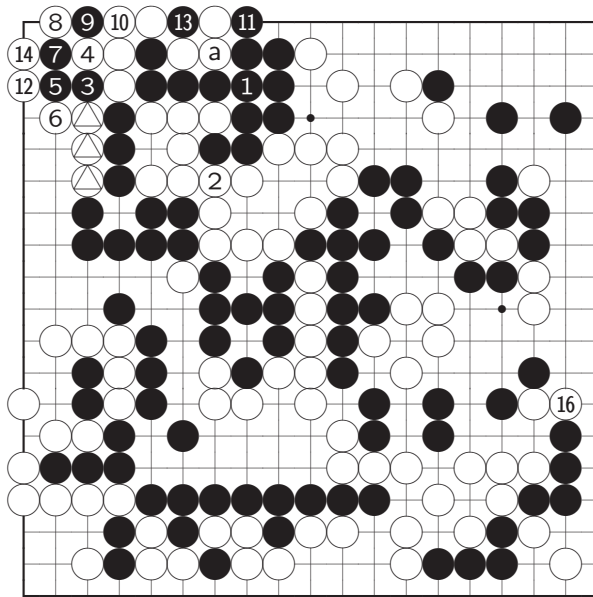
Black returned to the top with 91, but playing C to E first would have been simpler.



Variation 109 for 183

If Black ataris at 1, White will cut at 2 to reinforce his cutting point at A.

Black still needs to play one more move at B to live, which means Black gives up the marked stones for nothing.



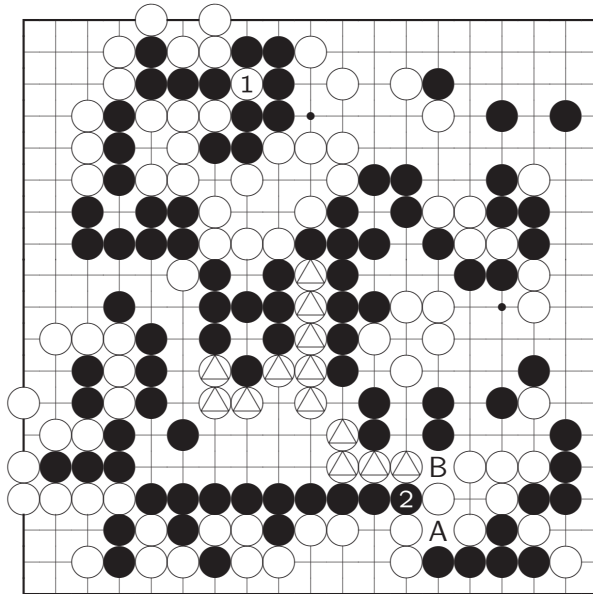
Variation 110 for 187

15 at a

Black still has aji in the top left after 1.

If White tries to save the marked stones with 6, Black can revive his group up to 15.

However, after that, White will return to the lower right with 16. This is what Lee wanted to prevent in the game.



Variation 111 for 188

If White removes the aji in the top left, with 1, Black will wedge at 2.

This makes miai of A and B, and White's marked stones will be captured.

Game Over

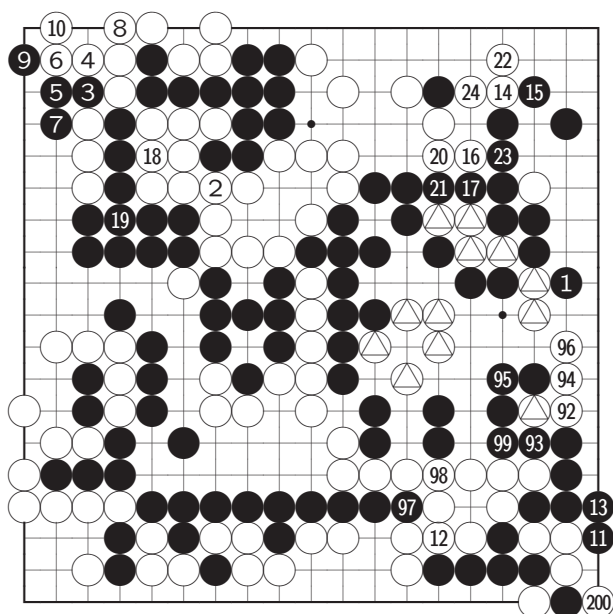
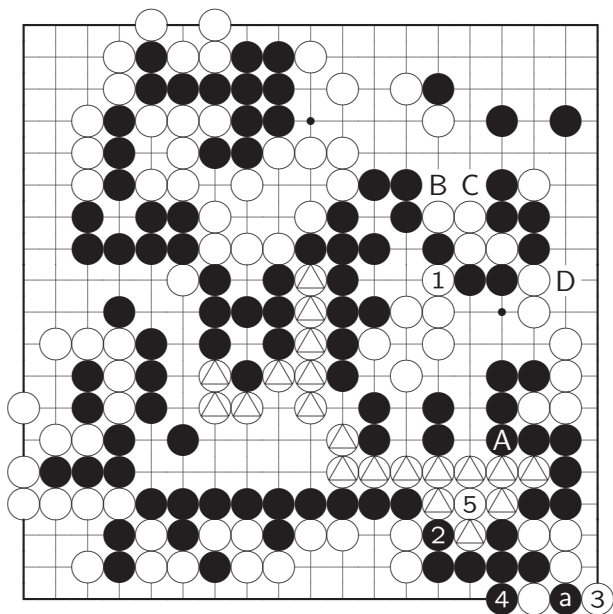


Diagram 22
(Moves: 192-224)

Gu tried to make something happen on the right side, from ⑨② (①⑨②) to ②①①, but it was too late.

White's marked stones were all dead after ① (②①). Next, Black took his compensation in the top left, from ③ to ⑩.

The attachment at ⑭ was a stylish endgame tesuji, but the game was already over.



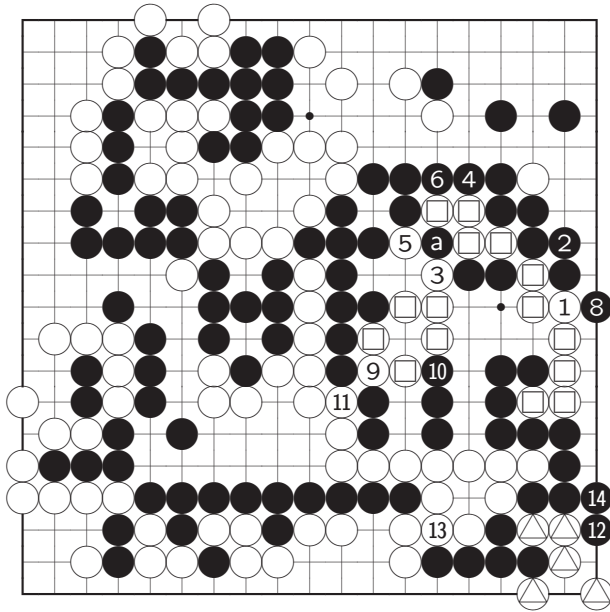
Variation 112 for ②①①

⑥ at ①

White can't cut at ① after ⑨⑨ (at ①), because Black can start a picnic ko for the life of White's marked dragon up to ⑥ (at ①).

This ko is huge and White doesn't have many big ko threats, whereas Black has ko threats on the right side, starting with B, C and D.

This is a one-move approach ko for White.

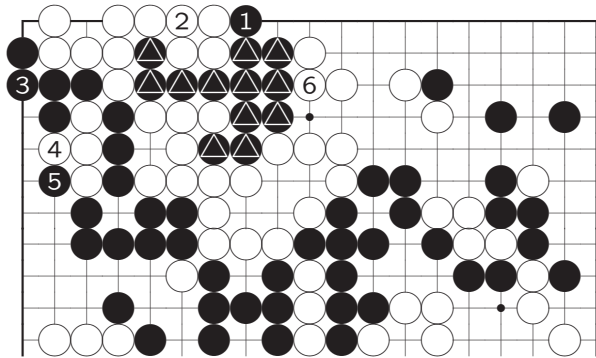


Variation 113 for 202

⑦ at ②

White can't start a capturing race with ① to ⑪ anymore, because ⑫ captures White's triangled stones firmly.

White still doesn't have two eyes on the right, so his squared group is dead.

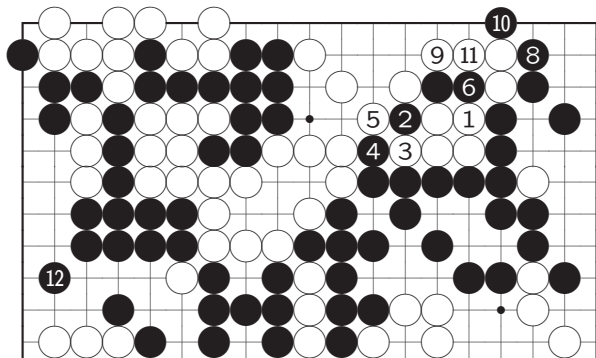


Variation 114 for 211

Black can't win the capturing race in the corner with ① to ③.

White ④ is a basic tesuji which fills Black's liberties and effectively gains one more liberty for White.

After ⑥, the marked stones are captured.



Variation 115 for 224

⑦ at ②

White ②④ in the game may look strange, but if White plays at ① instead the result is even worse.

Black's cut at ② is an endgame tesuji, and Black can squeeze in sente with the sequence to ⑩.

Next, ⑫ is the biggest move.

Playing for a Draw

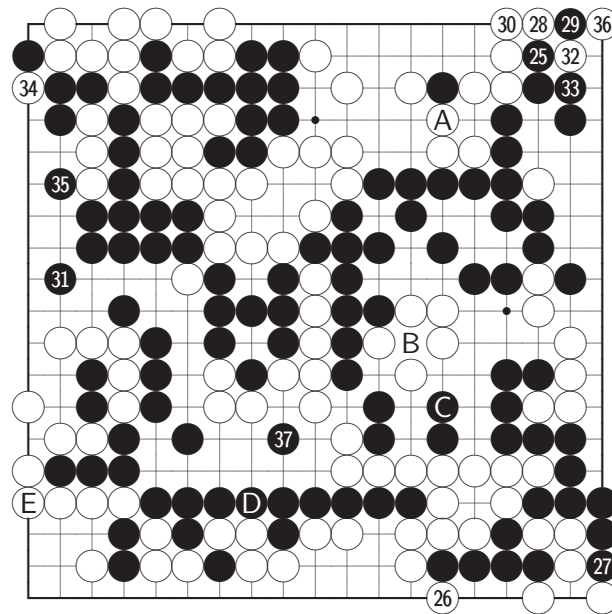


Diagram 23
(Moves: 225-237)

237 moves: Black won by resignation.

White resigned after 237, because Black was already comfortably ahead and White had exhausted all possibilities for reversing the game.

This was another regretful game for Gu Li, because his play in the opening and early middle game had the makings of a masterpiece, but it turned to ashes after a single mistake at 130 (A).

Lee Sedol's attachment at 131 (B) was devastating and his play afterwards was relentless.

From the professional perspective, the game was clearly over when Black defended at 147 (C), but it was too important, so Gu couldn't resign so early. He needed to try his best to reverse the game in order to clear his mind of regret.

On the other hand, Lee Sedol was slightly behind in the early part of the game, after defending improperly at 65 (D) and absorbing a blow at 68 (E)—an ingenious move on White's part.

Lee didn't overplay in a hasty attempt to catch up, but bided his time until an opportunity presented itself.

After taking the lead with C, Lee's play was fastidious—in stark contrast to game six—and Gu didn't have any chances to catch up.

Now that Lee Sedol was ahead 5-2, it was impossible for him to lose the Jubango. Meanwhile, Gu Li was now playing for a draw, which must have sapped his fighting spirit.

Gu would face a kadoban (a match deciding game) for all three of the remaining games, so his prospects were fading away.

September

September 28, 2014, Chongqing, China: *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

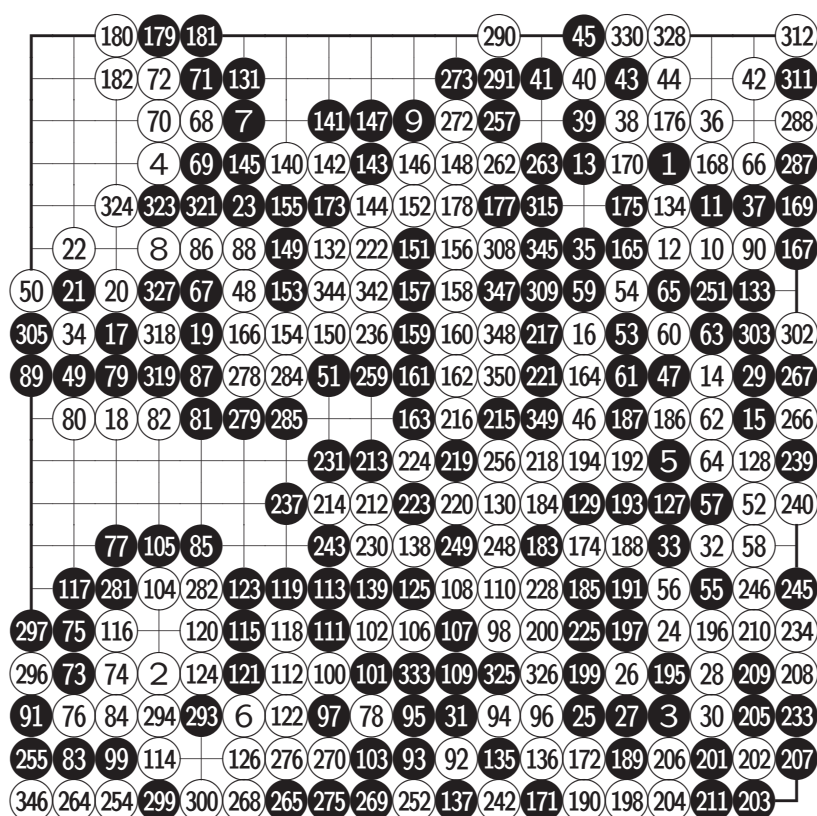


Diagram 1

(Moves: 1-350)

(226) at (174), (227) at (188), (229) (235) (241) (247) at (223),
 (232) (238) (244) (258) (320) at (224), (250) at (92), (253) (332) at (1), (260) at (138),
 (261) at (212), (271) (277) (283) (289) (295) (301) (307) (313) (339) at (137),
 (274) (280) (286) (292) (298) (304) (310) (336) (341) at (252), (306) at (21), (314) at (135),
 (316) at (134), (317) (322) at (219), (329) at (12), (331) at (40), (334) at (239),
 (335) at (78), (337) at (230), (338) at (249), (340) at (299), (343) at (296)

Chongqing

Game eight of the MLily Gu vs Lee Jubango was played on September 28, 2014, in Chongqing, China. Gu Li held black.

Chongqing, Gu's hometown, was one of two locations chosen by the organizers for its personal connection to the players. The other was Jeung-do (Chapter 4).

As a local, Gu has played on Team Chongqing, in the Chinese A League, since the current format began in 1999. Team Chongqing has dominated the league, winning nine times so far. No other team has topped the league table more than three times.

Chongqing is a major economic hub near the center of China. The area is heavily industrialized, with a large manufacturing base. The region has been growing and urbanizing rapidly since being designated as one of China's four 'direct-controlled municipalities' (a city which is equivalent to a province) in the late 1990s.

The score going into this game was 5–2 in Lee Sedol's favor, which meant that it was a kadoban and that Gu had to win to stay in the match.

In game seven, Gu played a wonderful opening and managed the game very smoothly until the middle game. Tragically, he made one careless move and Lee reversed the game with a single blow.

After Gu lost game seven, the atmosphere of the match changed substantially, and, regretfully, many Chinese journalists and Go fans lost interest in the Jubango. That's because even if Gu won all three of the remaining games, the best result he could achieve was a tie.

Gu Li, however, was not intending to give up so easily.

The High Chinese Opening

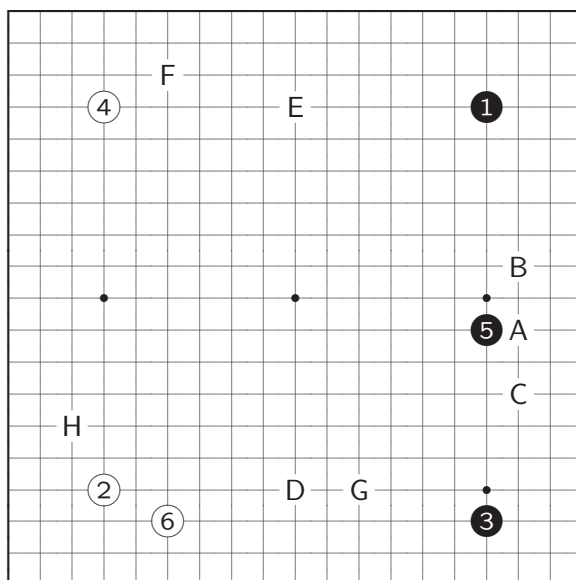


Diagram 2
(Moves: 1-6)

Gu Li started with the High Chinese Opening of ①, ③ and ⑤ ('high' since ⑤ is on the fourth line).

Lee Sedol met Black's opening with a flexible two star formation at ② and ④, and then played 'Gu Li style' with the corner enclosure at ⑥. We investigated this move together in Chapter 5.

If ⑥ were around D instead, Black could expand the Chinese formation around E, F or G next. He could also reduce White's moyo around H. We explored the (low) Chinese Opening in Chapter 3, and some continuations are similar. Below, we'll look at some variations which weren't covered earlier.

Presently, the High Chinese Opening is rarely seen in top professionals' games, because the pattern is less flexible and more difficult to manage than the standard Chinese formation (where ⑤ is at A).

Placing three stones on the fourth line, with respect to the center, makes the High Chinese similar to the Three Star Opening (Sanrensei), but the former is more finely balanced between territory and influence. Compared to the standard Chinese Opening, it places more emphasis on the center.

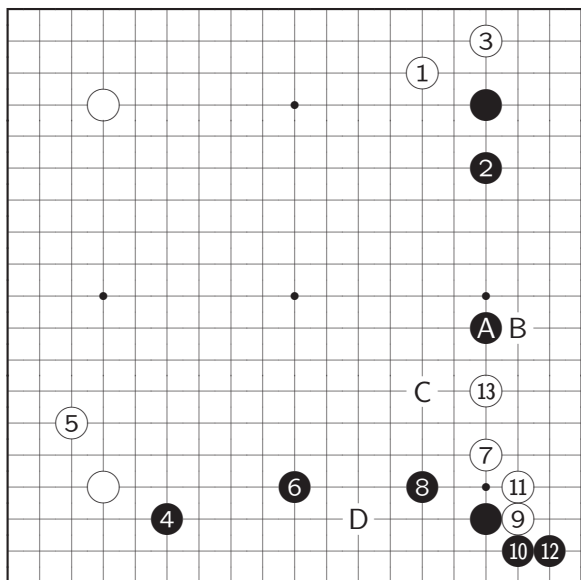
The reason why the high formation is more difficult to manage is that placing ⑤ on the fourth line makes it harder to convert Black's moyo into territory later on.

For example, if White invades around B or C at some point (not necessarily good moves right now), Black will wish that ⑤ were at A.

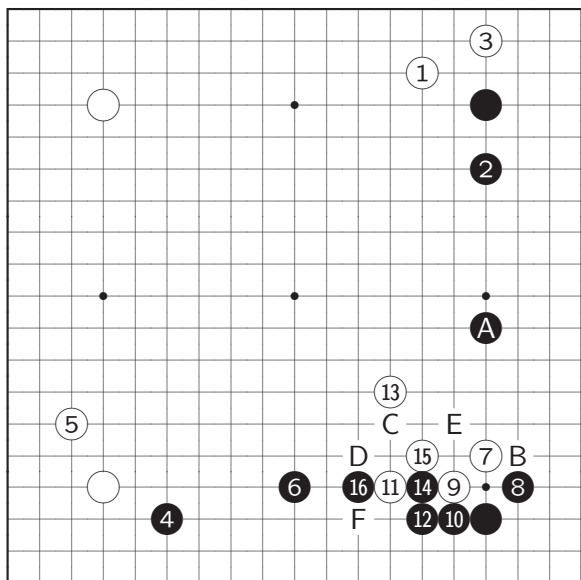
However, Black's game plan is to create a deep moyo by extending around D or E, eventually provoking Black into invading. When that happens, Black will attack.

By attacking White, Black hopes to hold the initiative and create territory naturally, while White struggles to settle his invading stones.

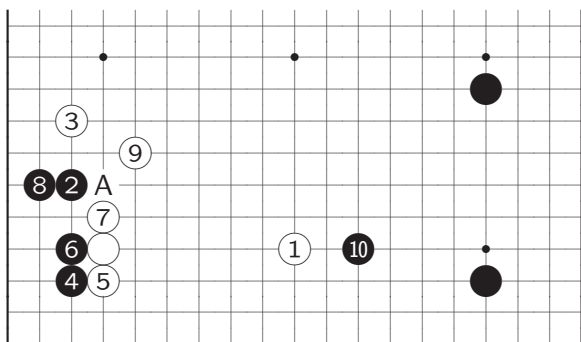
This strategy plays to the strengths of Black's opening, and he will strive to mask the weaknesses of the High Chinese by playing a wide game and putting as much pressure as possible on White.



Variation 1 for ⑥



Variation 2 for ⑥



Variation 3 for ⑥

We discussed ① and ③ in Chapter 3, and suggested that Black might tenuki to play ④ and ⑥.

Once Black has developed a large framework on both sides, with A and ⑥, the time is ripe for White to approach at ⑦. This prevents Black from giving body to his moyo by playing at ⑦ himself.

The knight's move at ⑧ is a typical continuation when playing the standard Chinese Opening, but it's a little slack when combined with the High Chinese.

That's because ⑬ makes miai of B and C, and Black doesn't have any particularly effective continuation afterwards.

White can invade at D later, so this variation isn't as good for Black as when he plays A at B.

When Black has a high stone at A, the kosumi at ⑧ is more effective.

If White blocks at B, Black will attack at ⑨ and White will be too heavy. We saw a similar variation in Chapter 3.

Because of that, ⑨ is a clever move which aims to reduce Black's moyo lightly and avoid a severe attack.

Black ⑩ to ⑯ is natural, and demonstrates one possible continuation. The result is even.

Defending the cutting point using a ladder, with ⑬, is light and flexible.

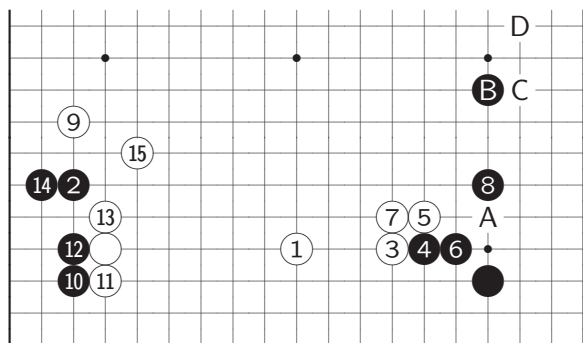
If White connects at C instead of ⑬, Black will exchange ⑭ for ⑮ and peep with D and E before jumping at F. White will become heavy in this case.

Extending to the key point at ① is the simplest way to deal with Chinese openings.

Approaching at ② to curtail White's budding moyo is natural, but pinching at ③ isn't a good idea.

White loses sente after ⑨ and Black will reduce White's potential at ⑩, so Black is satisfied.

We discussed A instead of ⑧ in Chapter 7, but since Black can reduce with ⑩ in this case, he doesn't want to make White's position thicker by pushing at A.



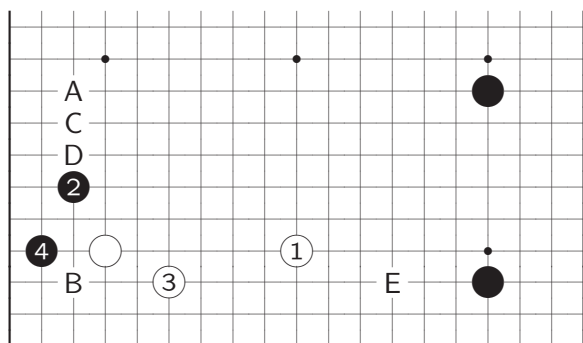
Variation 4 for ⑥

If White really wants to pincer at ⑨, he should exchange ③ to ⑧ first.

Black attaches at ④ instead of enclosing the corner at A, because White already has a stone at ① and this sequence makes him slightly over-concentrated.

Black ⑧ doesn't work as well as C to complete Black's territory in the bottom right (White D will be annoying later), but it helps more to reduce the potential of White's center moyo.

This is a well balanced opening for both players.



Variation 5 for ⑥

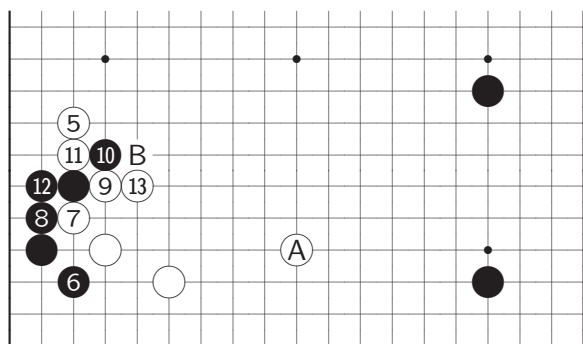
The knight's move at ③ is calmer and more flexible.

Sliding to ④ is usually good, and extending around A or approaching the top left is also conceivable.

In this case White already has an extension at ①, so he can tenuki if he wants to, but ④ is still fine.

White can choose between continuations like B, C and D next, but he may prefer to defer his choice.

If Black plays at B after White tenukis, White will approach at E and aim to take sente again.



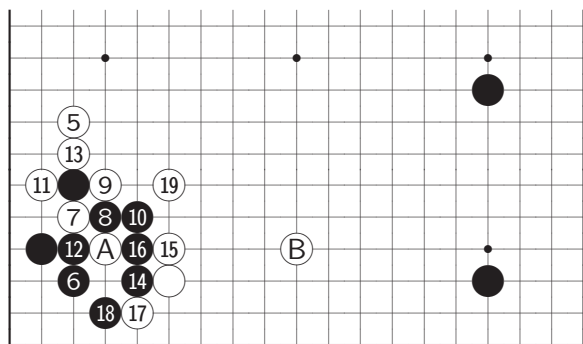
Variation 6 for ⑥

Pincering at ⑤ is a good continuation for White.

Black will move into the corner with ⑥, but White can enclose him with ⑦ and ⑨.

The double hane at ⑩ is a tesuji for leaving behind a weakness, but White will simply extend at ⑬.

Since White has an extension at (A), his group at the bottom is already strong. Accordingly, he doesn't need to capture ⑩ in a ladder with B—doing so would only allow Black to play a ladder breaker later.



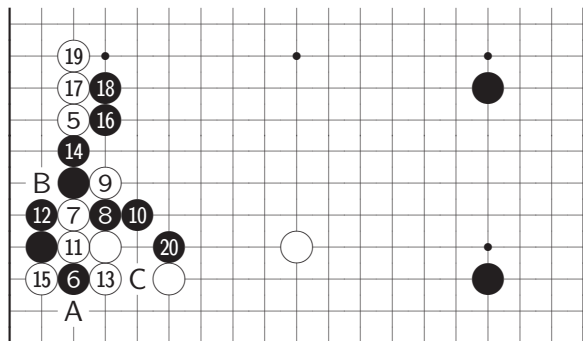
Variation 7 for ⑥

Resisting White's enclosure with ⑧ is also conceivable, but this tactic doesn't usually bear fruit.

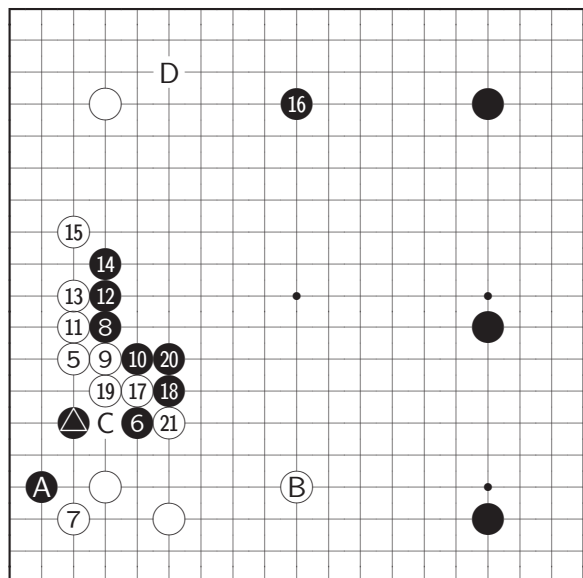
White should counter with ⑨ and ⑪, and if Black captures (A) in a net with ⑭, ⑮ to ⑲ form a splendid combination for enclosing Black and connecting.

The order of ⑮ and ⑰ is important. If ⑮ is at ⑰, Black will bulge at ⑮, and ⑲ won't work anymore.

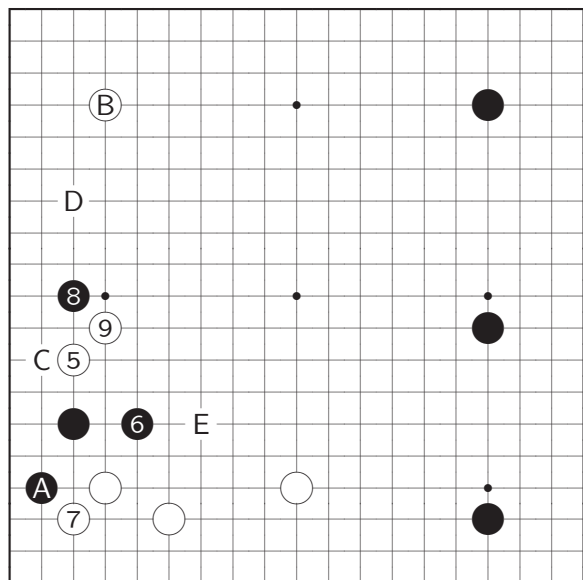
Playing ⑭ at ⑮ is inadvisable here, because White will extend to ⑭ and (B) will help him to fight.



Variation 8 for ⑥



Variation 9 for ⑥



Variation 10 for ⑥

After ⑧, connecting at ⑪ falls into Black's trap.

Black will connect under with ⑫, and it becomes necessary to turn at ⑬. Next, bumping at ⑭ aims to extend at A, so cutting at ⑮ is sensible.

However, ⑯ to ⑳ is powerful and White has to worry about Black A, as well as a pincer on the left side.

Instead of ⑬, if White ataris at B, Black C is devastating.

White needn't worry about Black jumping to ⑥, because defending the corner with ⑦ is good enough.

Pressing at ⑧ is natural after jumping to ⑥, but White develops smoothly with ⑨ to ⑮.

Usually Black can take sente after ⑮ (e.g. ⑯), but the problem here is that he has effectively exchanged A for ⑦, which makes his group inflexible and heavy.

Cutting with ⑰ to ㉑ is powerful, and Black is in trouble. In the absence of B, ㉑ can cut at C instead.

If Black hadn't exchanged A for ⑦, he would be able to trade with Black at ⑦ now, but in this case Black's marked group is as good as dead.

Black should use ⑯ to reinforce at ⑰, but enclosing the corner at D gives White a comfortable game.

Jumping at ⑥ (after exchanging A for ⑦) is only worth considering when pincering at ⑧ is a powerful move, but usually it isn't.

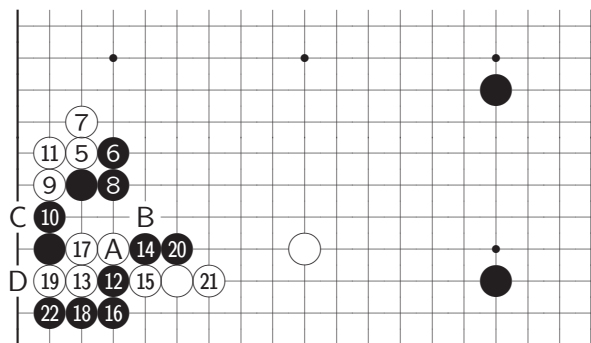
In this game, ⑥ and ⑧ turn out especially badly for Black, because B controls the top left corner.

After ⑧, ⑨ is a patient haengma which moves out slowly while preventing Black from connecting at C.

Black has two weak groups, while White has only one, so this fight will be difficult for Black. Attacking at D or E is miai for White next.

If Black has a strong position in the top left, around B, this variation might be conceivable because ⑧ wouldn't be particularly weak in that case.

However, ⑥ and ⑧ are overplays in this position.



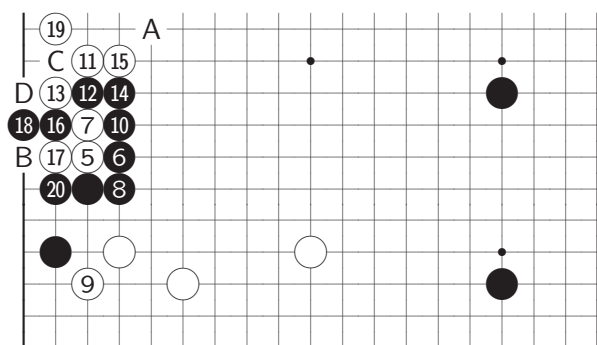
Variation 11 for ⑥

Attaching at ⑤ is a sharp way of playing, but it fell out of fashion around 2012.

Black ⑧ was rarely played in the past, because the accepted wisdom was that A would become an eye stealing tesuji after ⑨ and ⑪.

However, ⑫ and ⑭ comprise a brilliant counter!

After ⑬, ⑮ and ⑯ are miai. Next, ⑰ makes miai of ⑱ and ⑲. As long as the ladder at B favors Black, ⑧ is surprisingly powerful. If White C, D suffices.



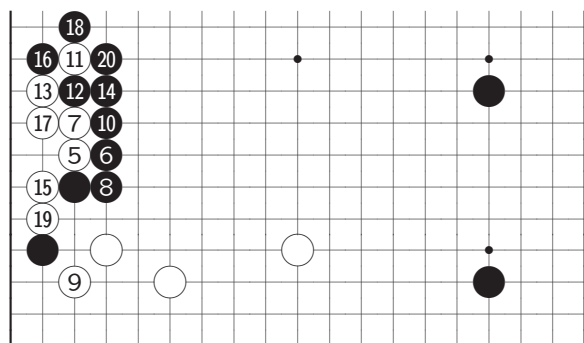
Variation 12 for ⑥

Because of the moves in the previous variation, White defends the corner at ⑨ instead.

Simply pushing at ⑩ is a strong way to take advantage of White's tenuki on the left side, and if White jumps lightly to ⑪, Black can settle with ⑫ to ⑳.

Instead of ⑮, if White crouches down with ⑲, Black will fly out to A and control the center. White's position is very low in that case.

If ⑲ is at B: Black C, White D, Black at ⑲ captures.



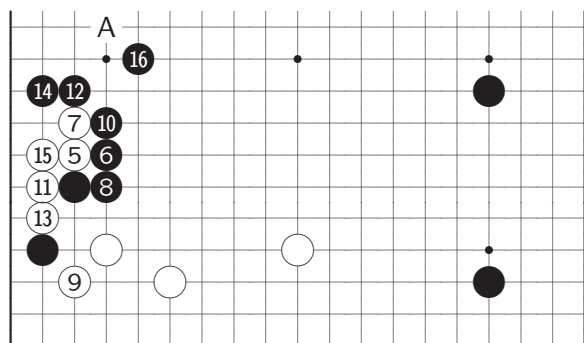
Variation 13 for ⑥

Backing up with the hane at ⑮ is conceivable, but ⑯ leaves White in a bind.

Trading with ⑮ and ⑲ is best, but Black is nevertheless satisfied to capture ⑪ in a ladder.

Capturing the ladder as soon as possible with ⑳ is good style when you're ahead.

This variation is better for Black, because Black's power in the center is magnificent.



Variation 14 for ⑥

If White wants to ruin Black's eye shape with ⑪, the best time to do so is after ⑩.

Black will, however, be unperturbed and will trade with the hane at ⑫.

Compared to the previous variation, this one isn't as bad for White. It's still regarded as being slightly better for Black, but in the right game these moves could be playable for White.

Playing ⑪ at ⑫ is heavy; Black will press at A.

The Inside Can Still Be the Wider Side

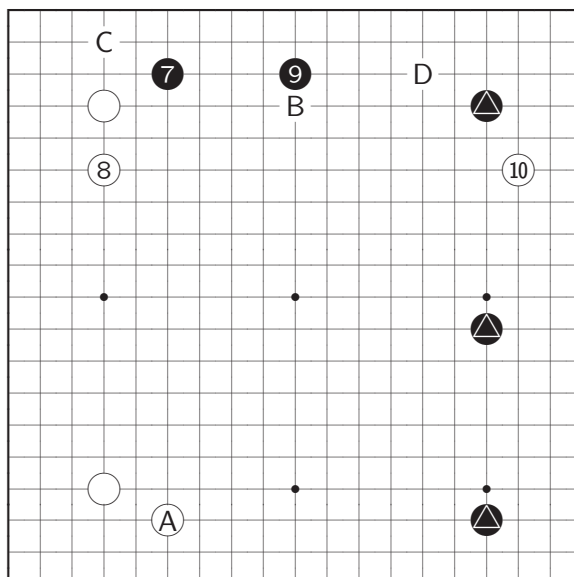
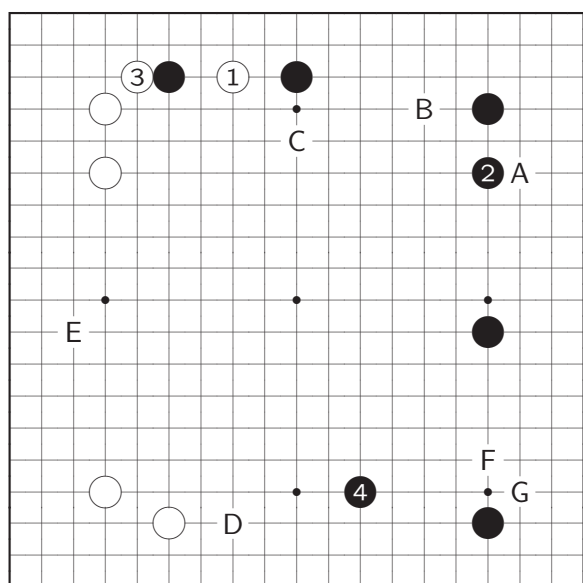


Diagram 3
(Moves: 7-10)

After ① reduced the potential at the bottom, ⑦ developed Black's High Chinese formation at the top. White responded with the high enclosure at ⑧, because he was conscious of the influence of Black's marked stones and wanted to contest the center.

The three space extension at ⑨ was unusual (B and C are more common). This move was one of Kobayashi Koichi 9 dan's favorites during his heyday in Japan, but it has rarely been seen since.

White ⑩ approached from the 'inside', but since Black already had extensions on both sides, ⑩ was also the wider side. D would be even more constrained and, after ⑨, it was the time to play ⑩.



Variation 15 for ⑩

Black doesn't need to worry about White's invasion at ①, because it's too early to play such small moves.

Reinforcing Black's moyo with the high enclosure at ② is more valuable, and that's why it was time for White to approach at A in the game. Black plays ② (not B) partly because he plans to expand at C later.

In Chapter 3, we said that approaching from the inside at A was bad for White, but the situation is different once Black has developed the top.

If White consolidates his profit at ③, ④ makes miai of D and E next and Black's moyo is becoming large and firm.

It's already difficult for White to invade around F, because after ④ Black will respond severely with G.

Compress Stones Which Approach from the Inside

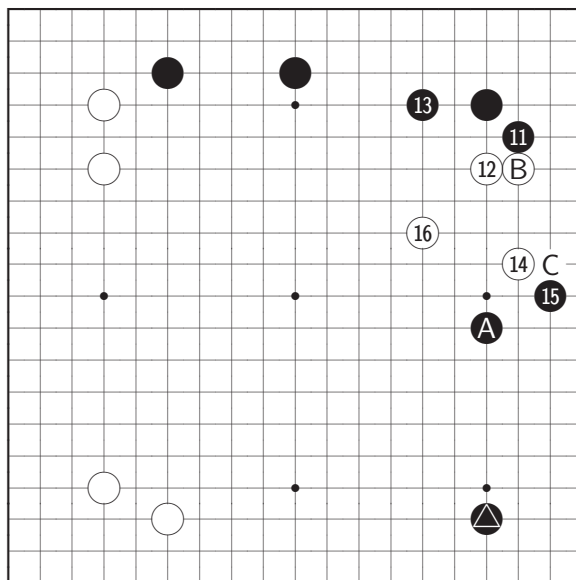


Diagram 4
(Moves: 11-16)

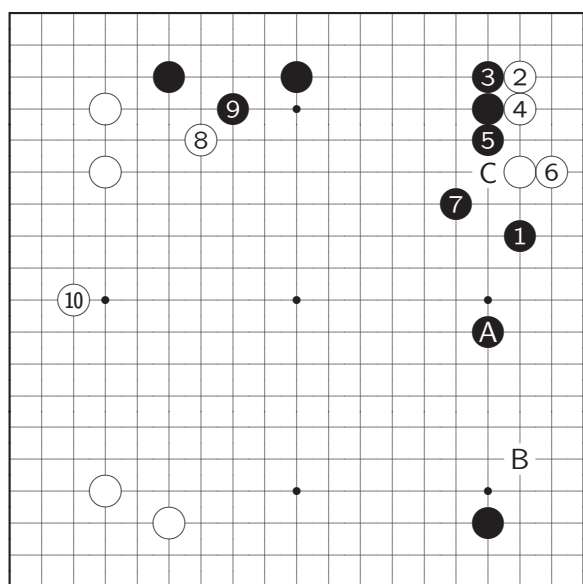
Since Black had a (very) loose pincer at **A**, we can regard **B** as an approach from the inside.

To make efficient use of **A**, kicking with **11** and jumping to **13** was the proper way to attack.

After White made a small base with **14**, the foot-sweep at **15** was a strong move. Black **11** to **15** is a textbook style attacking combination for when White enters Black's High Chinese formation at **B**.

When stones approach from the inside, you should compress them from both sides like this.

The large knight's move at **16** was light and flexible. White avoided helping Black to consolidate his moyo in the bottom right, by omitting moves like C.



Variation 16 for 11

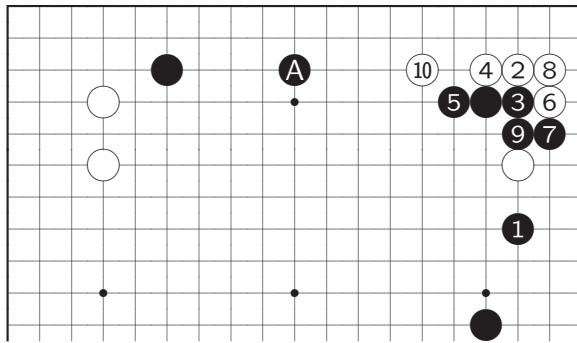
Pincering at **1** places too much emphasis on taking away White's base and doesn't use **A** efficiently.

As we've seen several times already, White can force a trade which Black doesn't want to accept with **2**, and will live in the corner in sente up to **7**.

White can then immediately reduce Black's potential at the top with **8**, and the result up to **10** is satisfactory for White.

Black **A** seems out of place in this variation and Black would prefer for it to have been played around **B** instead.

If Black neglects to connect with **7**, pushing at C will be a powerful move for White.



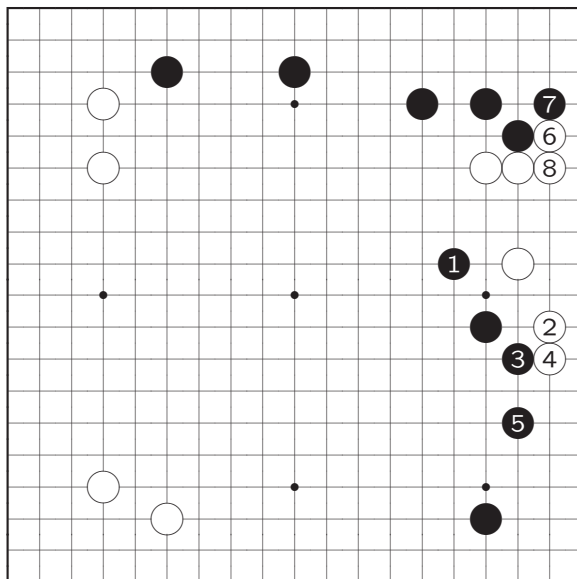
Variation 17 for 11

As you know from previous chapters, blocking at ③ doesn't improve the result for Black.

Black ① is poorly placed after ⑩.

If Black had already committed many stones to the bottom right and ① completed his territory, or if White already had a flat position at the top, this variation might be playable for Black.

However, situations like that are quite unusual.



Variation 18 for 15

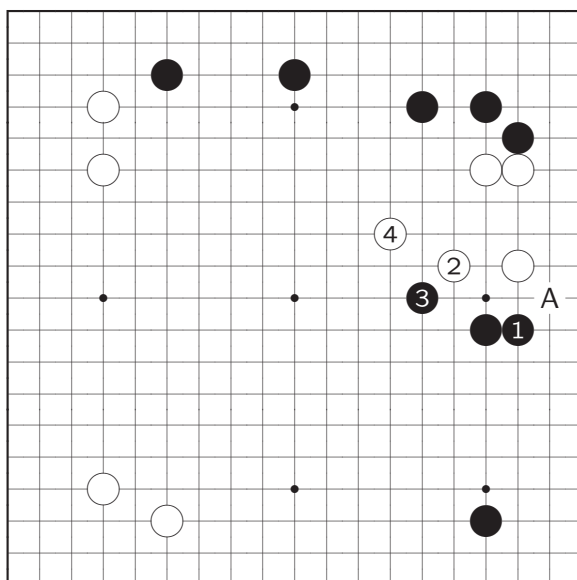
It's too early to cap at ①, because White can slide to ② and establish a comfortable base up to ⑧.

Black's attack runs out of steam too quickly after White settles his group.

This means Black doesn't have any future attacking possibilities to look forward to, and it's not yet clear whether ①, ③ and ⑤ will be used efficiently.

When you're attacking, you want to do it slowly and firmly, to keep your opponent's stones unsettled for as long as possible.

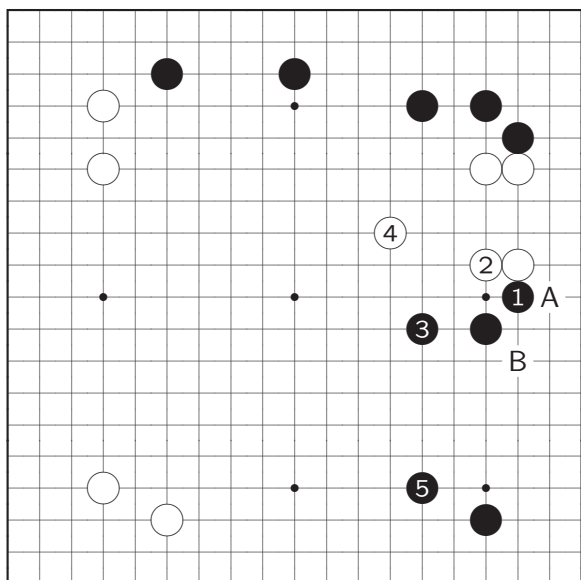
By doing so, you'll create more possibilities for yourself later in the game. You'll also constrain your opponent's choices later on, because they'll have to live in constant fear of a splitting attack.



Variation 19 for 15

The iron pillar at ① is also conceivable, but attacking with ① and ③ applies less pressure to White than the foot-sweep at A does.

White ② and ④ are good haengma and White is almost alive already.

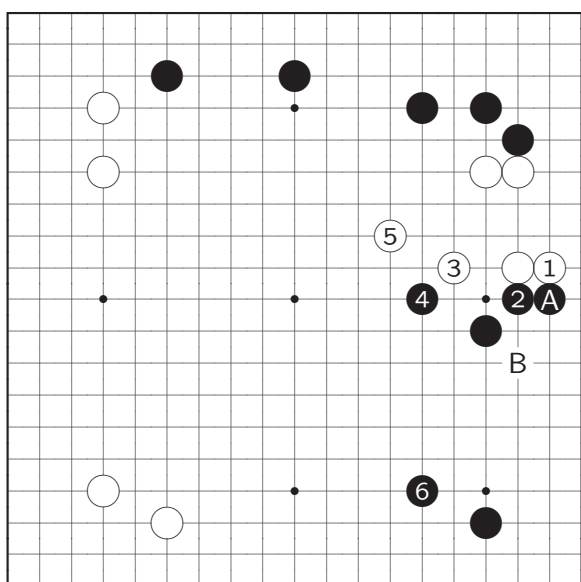


Variation 20 for 15

Kicking at 1 isn't as good as the foot-sweep at A either, but it's still playable.

The progression to 4 can be expected and Black can reinforce his moyo with 5.

If White plays at B later, it will be somewhat irritating for Black, which is why most players prefer to play 1 at A instead.



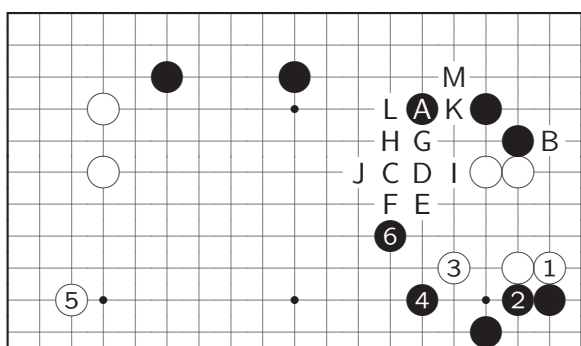
Variation 21 for 16

After A (15 in the game), blocking at 1 is a little slow.

Black can exchange 2 and 4 in sente, and can develop his bottom right corner up to 6.

Black will be satisfied with this result.

The bottom right moyo isn't completed yet, but compared to the previous variation there's no weakness around B, so it's much firmer.



Variation 22 for 16

If White ignores 4, Black can encircle him with 6, creating good relationships between 4, 6 and A.

If White doesn't break free, Black B will be sente.

White's swift haengma at C escapes, and Black can't cut with D because E to K makes miai of L and M.

However, after White C, Black B is still sente because it aims to cut with I next. Therefore, 6 magically makes Black's corner large and secure either way.

Approach High Positions from Below

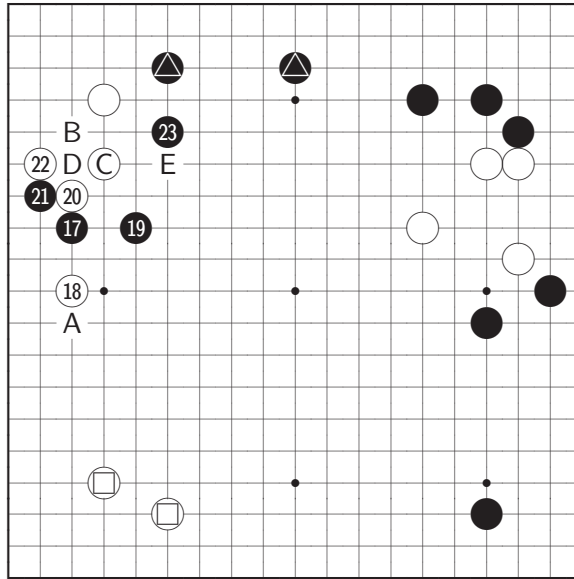


Diagram 5
(Moves: 17-23)

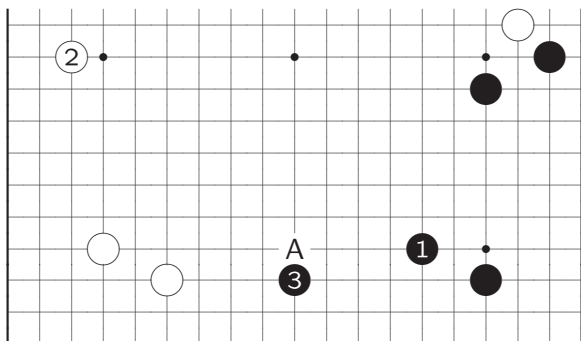
Black 17 was the vital point for approaching White's high enclosure. This move created continuations like A, B or 22 next. In that respect, 17 resembles a knight's approach to the star point—Black can either make a base with A, offer to trade with B, or slide to 22, depending on White's response.

In general, approaching high positions (fourth line positions) by playing on the third line is the most flexible technique. If you approach on the fourth line your followups will be more limited, whereas approaching on the second line gains little and is usually reserved for deep invasions.

Because of 17, White doesn't usually jump at C, preferring the knight's enclosure at D instead.

White pincered at 18 to maximize the potential of his marked corner enclosure, and also because it worked well with his planned continuation at 20.

Black's hane at 21 was a light move, which aimed to take sente to play at 23 next. Jumping to 23 was better style than capping at E because it aimed more intently at White's weakness around B, while also creating a better relationship with Black's marked stones at the top.



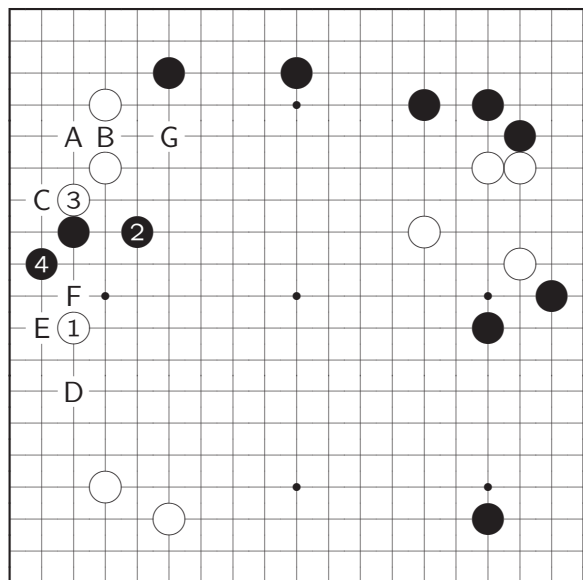
Variation 23 for 17

Enclosing the bottom right corner with 1 would be a more stable approach to the opening.

This strategy makes miai of 2 and 3.

If White plays at 2 and allows Black to extend to 3, Black's position seems slightly better than White's.

Because of this, White should play 2 around A, but then Black can approach at 17 (as in the actual game) and the exchange of 1 for A is good for Black.



Variation 24 for 18

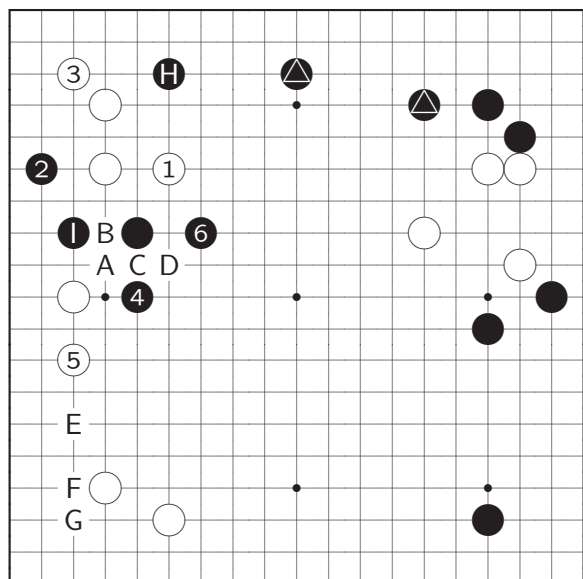
The two space pincer at ① is also conceivable, but White doesn't usually play this way if he's planning to kick at ③ next.

That's because the two space pincer gives Black enough leeway to play the flexible haengma at ④.

This diagonal move creates stylish continuations for Black, like A to C, or D (aiming at E next).

If ① were at F, it would be on the vital point after ④, so Black wouldn't choose this shape.

In this opening, Black would probably still play C and G (as he did in the game), but ④ is a shape worth learning for your own games.



Variation 25 for 20

Jumping out with ① is also possible, but it's a bit loose for White in this opening.

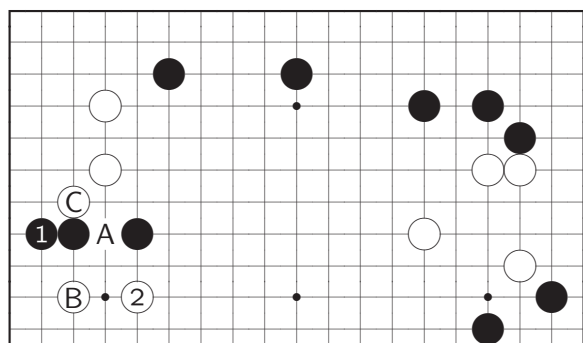
Black can strengthen his group with ② and ④ in sente, and then move out with ⑥.

Playing tightly with ⑤ aims to cut with A to C later, but jumping to ⑥ reinforces the weakness indirectly. After ⑥, Black can answer White A with B to D.

The bottom left still isn't White's territory, because Black can invade at E, F or G later.

After Black has established a position at the top with the marked stones, ① isn't very interesting, because White's prospects of attacking H seem dim.

White ① is better suited to situations where it convincingly makes miai of attacking H or I next.



Reverse the Roles of Guest and Host

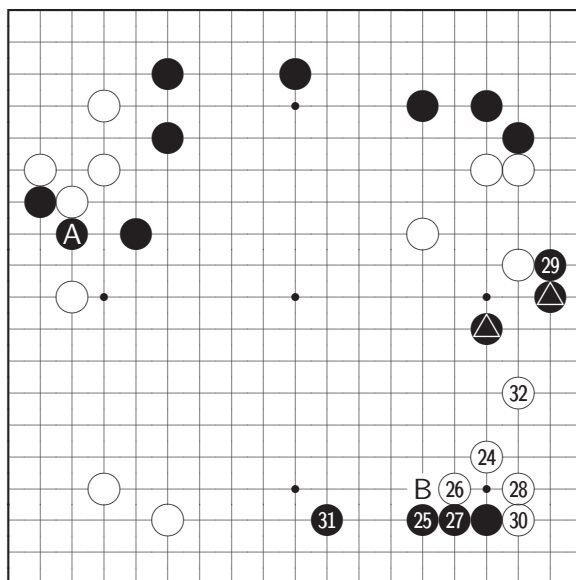


Diagram 6
(Moves: 24-32)

One of the *Thirty-six Stratagems* is, “Reverse the roles of guest and host.”

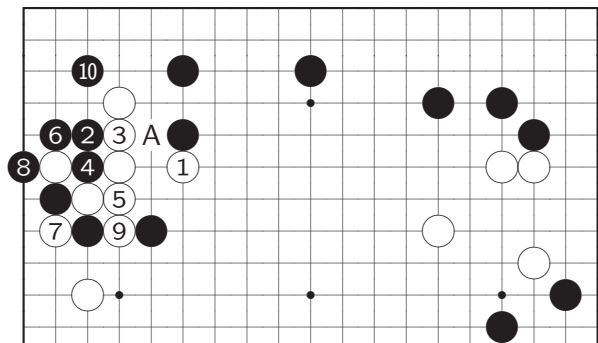
In ancient Chinese military terminology, an army that defended its own territory was called the *host*, while *guest* referred to an invading force. Think of it as the home team and away team in sport.

Usually the host has an advantage, because their forces occupy the best terrain and face fewer logistical challenges, but there are times when the tactical nature of a position allows you to pull the rug out from under the host and usurp their role. An awareness of this may help you to spot such opportunities.

Invading at ②④ was the biggest move on the board at this point. Even though White was playing the role of the guest, Black’s marked stones were not that strong, so White aimed to attack them later.

Black stayed low with ②⑤ in an attempt to prevent White from building power to attack the marked stones, but ②⑥ and ②⑧ comprised an unusual yet effective technique for doing so anyway.

Black didn’t want to follow White’s plan, so he ignored ②⑧ and took the key point for power at ②⑨. However, this allowed White to take control of the strategic location in the corner and the guest became the host up to ②⑩. This outcome could have been avoided if Black had played A (②⑪) at B earlier.

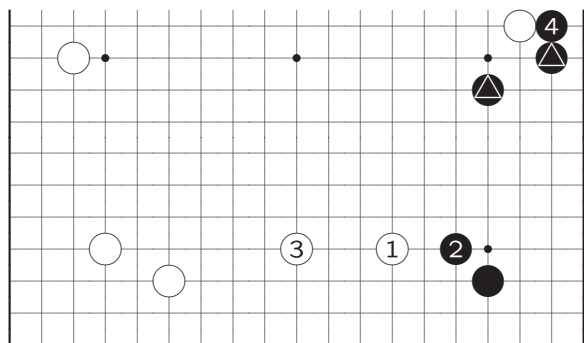


Variation 27 for ②④

The attachment at ① is also conceivable, but Black will peep at ② immediately.

The result up to ②⑩ is good for Black, because the corner territory has changed hands in Black’s favor.

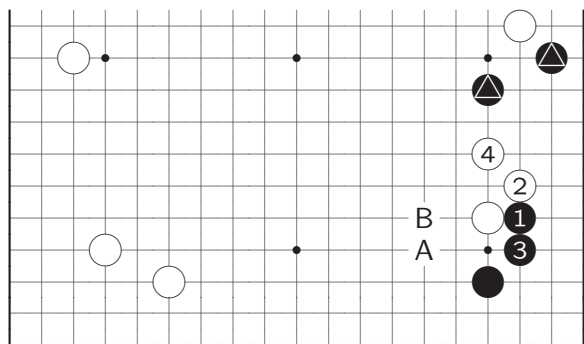
Instead of ③, if White connects at ④, he will struggle to continue after Black plays the double peep at A.



Variation 28 for ②④

Approaching at ① is possible, but it's a little soft.

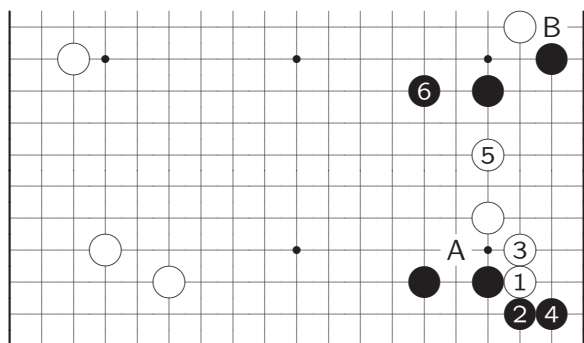
Up to ④, Black has a large moyo and has been able to fortify his marked stones.



Variation 29 for ②⑤

Attaching at ① isn't a good idea in this situation, because the marked stones become weaker after ② and ④.

Instead of ①, if Black plays the knight's move at A, White will lean and build power with the attachment at B.

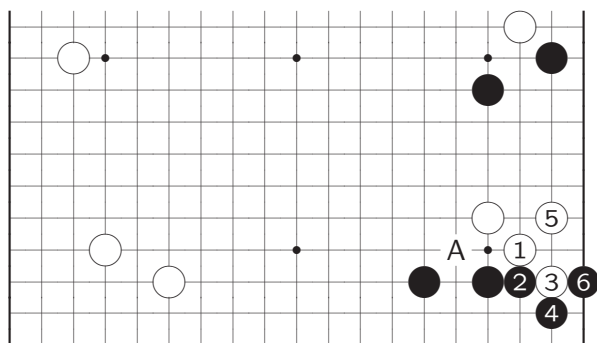


Variation 30 for ②⑥

The usual tactic is sketch out the beginnings of a base with the attachment at ① and extension to ⑤.

This is possible, but White doesn't want to exchange ⑤ for ⑥ in this case, because that helps Black to escape into the center and weakens the group above.

White's plan in the game was to prepare a flexible shape in sente with A, ③ and so on, and then take the key point for eyespace with B.

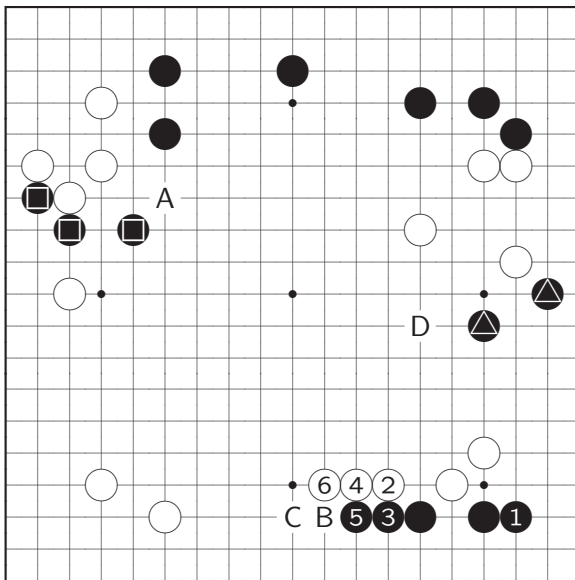


Variation 31 for ②⑥

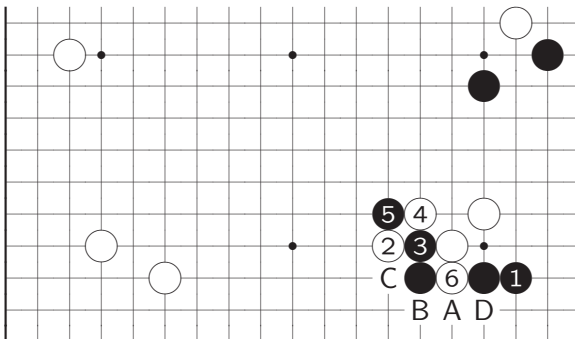
Stepping into the corner first with ① isn't the right move order, and is a common mistake made by beginners.

This isn't the same as what White did in the game, because White's peep at A isn't sente anymore.

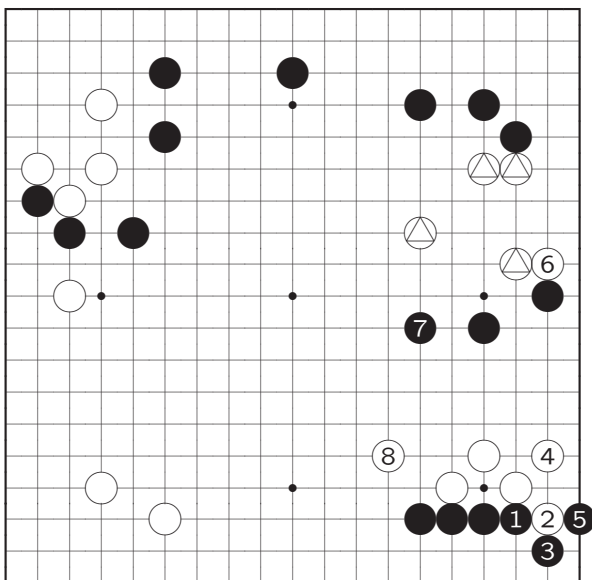
White is worse off in this variation.



Variation 32 for 27



Variation 33 for 27



Variation 34 for 29

Resisting with ① doesn't lead to a satisfactory result, because White can develop power in the center with ② to ⑥.

In doing so, White is eyeing Black's marked weak group on the right side.

He also aims to attack Black's marked stones on the left side (e.g. starting with A) as the fighting spreads.

Turning at B is now a profitable followup for White, but if Black jumps at C next, the overall situation will become dire after White caps at D.

Pushing and cutting with ③ and ⑤ is an overplay.

White can calmly counter with ④ and ⑥, and Black can't connect at A.

If Black plays a stone at A, White plays B to D to capture it.

If Black defends the corner at ①, White plans to exchange ② to ⑤ in sente, before taking the key point for eyespace at ⑥ as part of the flow of play.

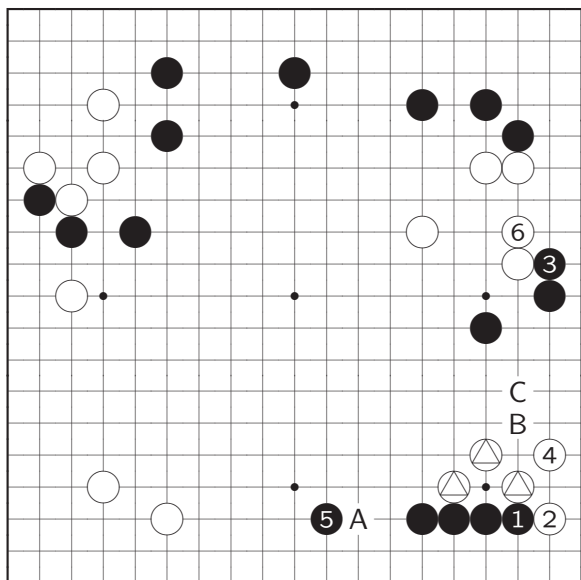
Even though they often look small, key points for eyespace are an important type of key point for power.

Black can move out with ⑦, but White runs out with his newfound friend up to ⑧.

White's shape in the bottom right is designed for moving out quickly, rather than forming a base in the small space available.

In this variation, White's marked stones become strong after ⑥, which means White's bottom right group is also stronger than it looks.

The result up to ⑧ is favorable for White.



Variation 35 for 29

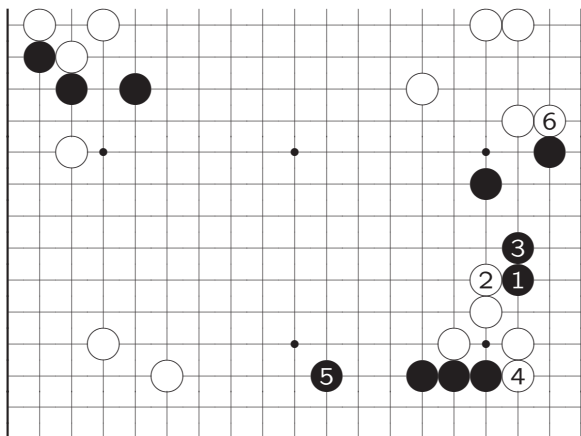
If Black exchanges ① for ②, and then tenukis to play ③, White will make excellent shape with ④.

Even though it may seem strange, this shape is better for White than the result in the game.

That's because Black should still extend to ⑤, to prevent a pincer at A, and this gives White time to look after his top right group with ⑥.

Afterwards, B looks like a vital point and Black would like to attack there, but C is a stylish counter-tesuji for White and the exchange of B for C works against Black.

Black doesn't have any particularly strong move against White's marked group, so it's already safe.



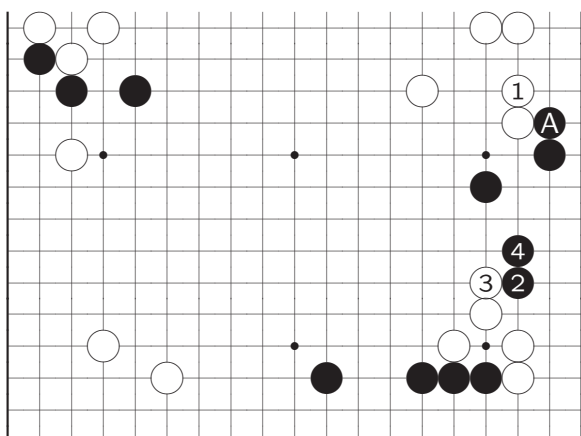
Variation 36 for 29

Black ① is also a vital point, but White can improvise a makeshift defense by exchanging ② to ⑤ in sente.

After that, ⑥ is the key point for power, because it affects the shared eyespace of both groups.

White's lower right group isn't quite settled yet, but it's hard for Black to attack it because his right side group isn't settled either. Recall that running is more fun with a friend.

We can regard ① and ⑥ as miai.



Variation 37 for 32

If White reinforces at ①, instead of extending to ④ (32) in the game, Black will strike at White's vital point with ②—simultaneously making a base and attacking White.

This is another example of the importance of being the first to occupy mutual eyespace.

Compared to the variation above, Black has taken both the key points for power, at A and ②, and has become strong.

Meanwhile, White's lower right group still isn't completely settled and is weaker because it's surrounded by strong Black groups.

Prevent Box Shapes in the Center

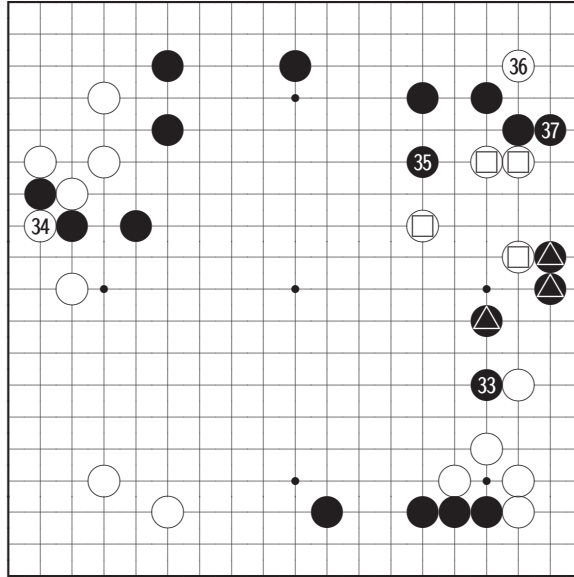


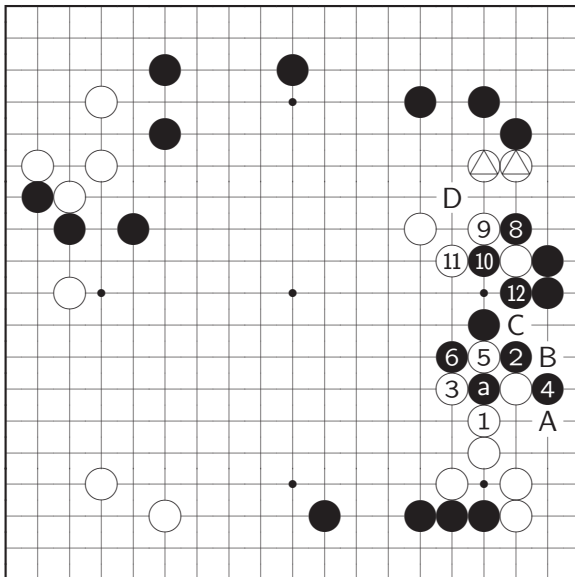
Diagram 7
(Moves: 33-37)

Normally, after Black's attachment at 33 White would respond locally, so 34 was extraordinary.

Black 35 dealt a heavy blow at the vital point of White's marked stones. Remember that when you want to make a base in the center, you need to create a box like shape, so White wants to play 35 too.

By playing at 35, Black prevented White from raising a flag. This move is very similar to playing a pincer on the side. Try to feel the way 35 pincers White's marked group against Black's marked stones.

White probed at 36 and 37 is usually the strongest response, but it was questionable in this game.



Variation 38 for 34

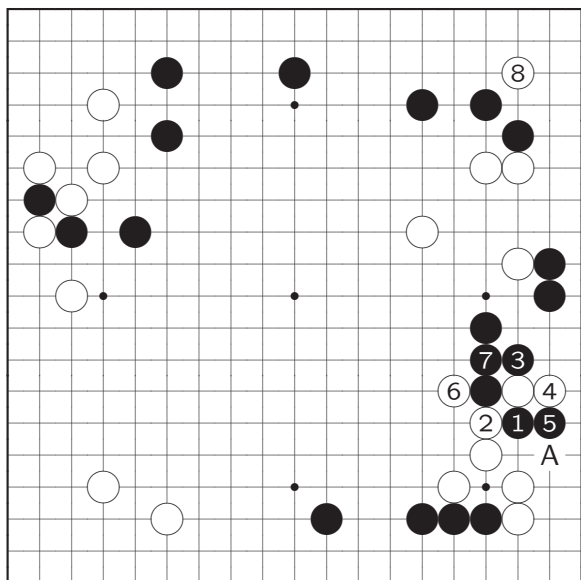
7 at a

If White responds at 1, Black will exchange the moves from 2 to 7 (at a) in sente, and will begin to settle on the right side.

The hane at 8 is a good continuation and the result up to 12 is satisfactory for Black.

Black's extension at A will be annoying for White later, but if White cuts at B now, Black will tenuki.

Instead of 9, if White cuts at C, Black will exchange 12 for White B and then enclose White's marked stones with D.

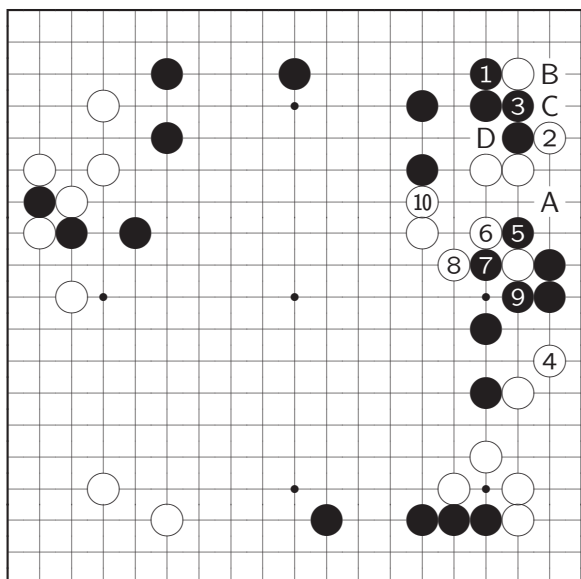


Variation 39 for 35

If Black hanes at ①, the result is quite different to Variation 37.

That's because White can atari at ⑥ in sente, and attaching at A will also be sente later.

White's bottom right group is practically alive, so White can probe the top right corner at ⑧.



Variation 40 for 37

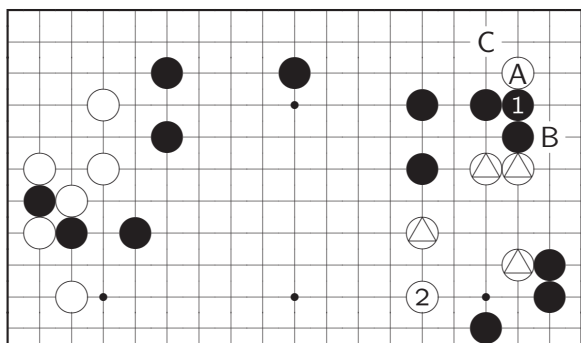
Falling back with ① is usually a bad tactic in this kind of situation.

That's because White will bully Black with ② and Black isn't gaining anything from the transaction. He's only protecting what he already has, and ending up with less in the process.

After ③, White A aims to continue at B next, so White will pressure Black at ④ intending to turn A into a double threat later.

Black will resist with ⑤, but White can make a surprisingly flexible shape up to ⑩.

If Black plays ③ as the hane at C, White will atari at ③ and will still play ④ after Black B. White will be able to play either A or D in sente later.



Variation 41 for 37

The empty triangle at ① is another good way to respond to ①.

Usually you want to choose between ① and B, depending on the situation. When the marked stones are difficult to attack or the right side is small (as in this game), ① is better.

White will jump at ② now and still has some aji at C later. This is another game.

This variation is better for Black than the game.

True Strength Is Light as a Feather

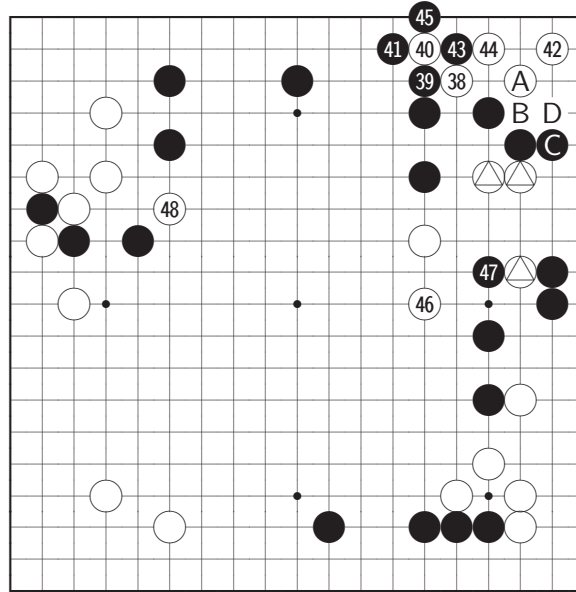


Diagram 8
(Moves: 38-48)

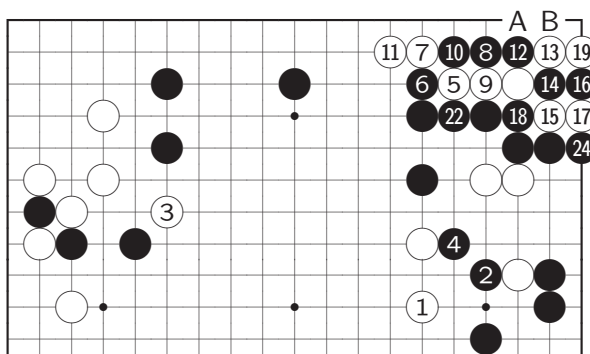
When White probed at (A), he expected Black to answer at B and intended to continue at (46) next, but when Black descended to (C) he amended his plan and exchanged (38) to (45) in sente first.

After (45), White could live in the corner with D at any time, but he lightly sacrificed his marked stones with (46) and tenukied again to split Black with (48).

It might seem strange that White played (38) to (44) and then tenukied instead of making life, but he did so to settle the shape in the corner before sacrificing the marked stones—extracting maximum value from them. White's stones were half alive in the corner and Black didn't have time to capture them.

The knight's move at (48) was a well timed counter-attack, which changed the flow of the game.

White's stones drifted across the board like snow, so lightly that they floated just out of reach. White took the lead up to (48).



Variation 42 for (38)

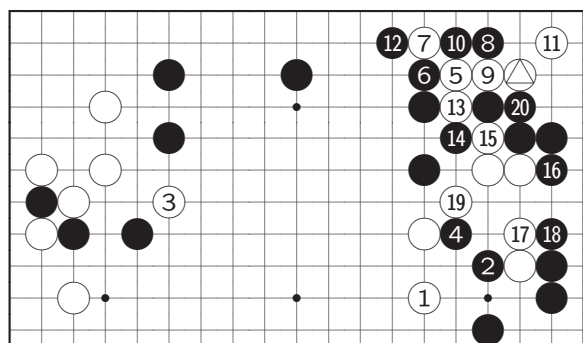
(20) (23) at (14), (21) at (16)

If White exchanges (1) to (4) without settling the shape in the top right corner, Black might respond differently later.

For example, if White still plays (5) and (7), (8) hits the vital point while making miai of (9) and (10).

If White extends at (11), his corner stones will be captured in a tombstone squeeze up to (18).

Black wins the capturing race efficiently with (24). If White hanes at A next, the throw-in at B captures him in a snapback.



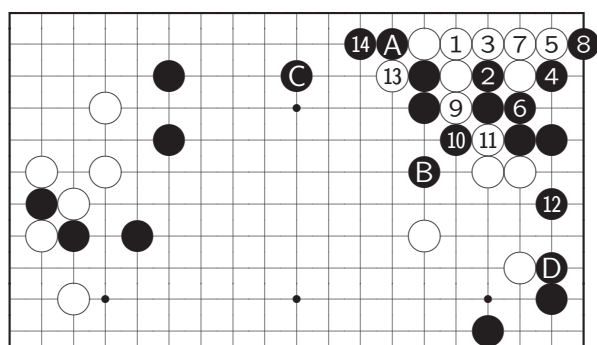
Variation 43 for ③⑧

Instead of extending to ⑫ (⑪ in the previous variation), the kosumi at ⑪ is still a potent resource.

Black has to atari at ⑫, and this gives White time to push and cut with ⑬ and ⑮.

However, turning at ⑯ is strong and White's marked group dies up to ⑳.

These variations show why the seemingly unusual exchanges from ③⑧ to ④④ in the game were in fact perfectly timed.

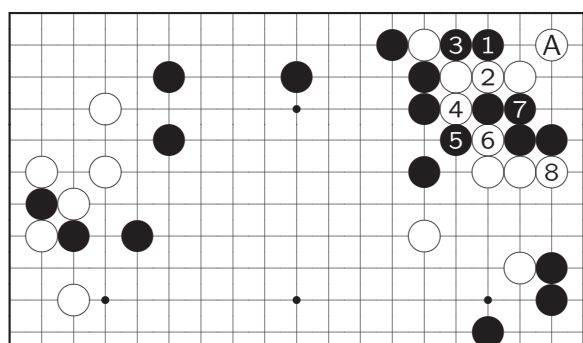


Variation 44 for ④②

After A (④① in the game), connecting at ① would usually be effective, but it doesn't work in this case because Black's position on the outside is too strong (with B, C and D).

Pushing and clamping with ② and ④ is severe, and White can't make two eyes in the corner.

Usually, White could fight with ⑨ to ⑬, but Black can connect under with ⑫ and cutting at ⑬ doesn't work either, so the whole corner will be captured.

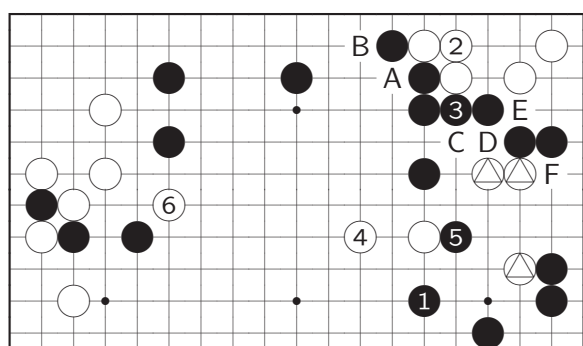


Variation 45 for ④③

White's kosumi at A (④② in the game) was the best way to make a living shape (White's later tenuki notwithstanding).

Attacking at ① doesn't work, because of the weakness at ④ and the continuation to ⑧.

Rather than capturing White, Black will find that it is he who is dead in the corner.



Variation 46 for ④③

It's too early for Black to pincer at ①, because doing so will allow White to connect at ② in sente.

After ③, White is completely alive in the corner and Black's moyo at the top is thin around A and B.

White was planning to sacrifice the marked stones anyway, so giving White more profit in the corner in order to attack them falls in with White's plans.

If Black doesn't connect at ③, White will cut with White at ③, Black C and White D. This makes miai of E and F, so the marked stones will be rescued.

Attack Light Stones on a Large Scale

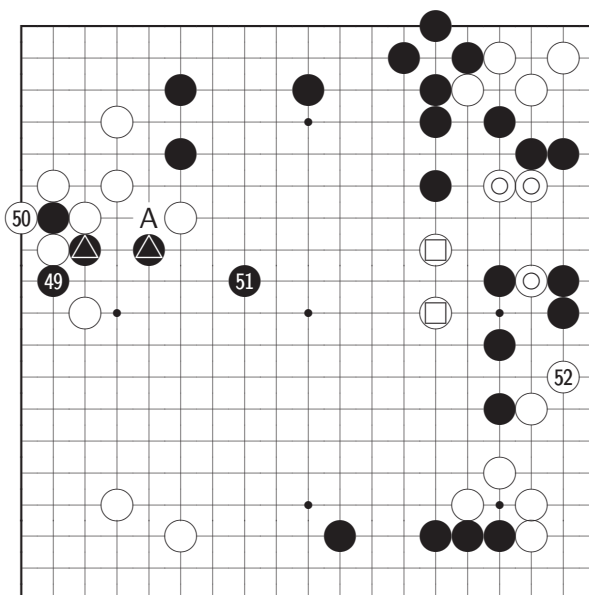


Diagram 9
(Moves: 49-52)

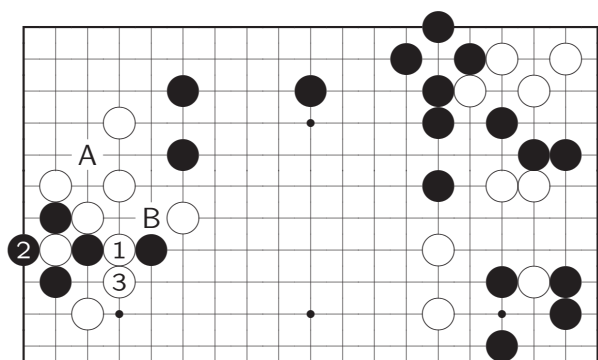
He knows how to win as he knows how to quench fire with water. . . . There is no end to the interchange between direct and indirect tactics. It all depends on how you deploy your forces.

—Sun Bin, *The Art of War*

Direct attacks against light groups are rarely successful, because the stones tend to slip between your fingers as you tighten your grip, and you exhaust yourself while gaining little profit. If you cannot make a group heavy before attacking, it's better to surround it gradually, from a distance, while achieving other things; never concentrating your full force in one area, but still indirectly aiming to capture.

Flying out with ⑤1 showed Gu's exquisite sense of play in the center. This move helped Black's marked stones and aimed to cut at A, while beginning to surround White's squared stones on a large scale.

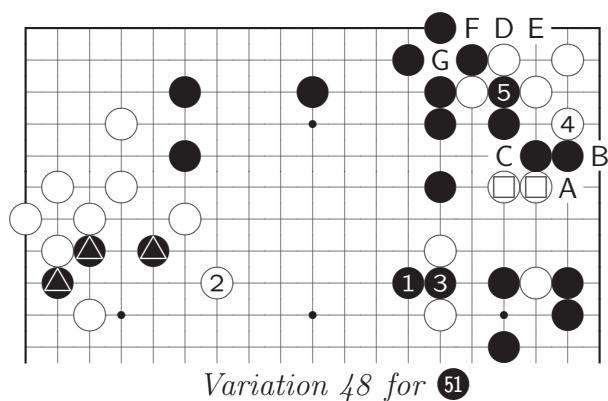
White's kosumi at ⑤2 was also very sophisticated. Lee aimed to provoke Black into completely capturing the circled stones, extracting further profit from his sacrifice while simplifying the game.



Variation 47 for ⑤0

Instead of ⑤0 in the game, White shouldn't cut Black with ① and ③.

If he does, Black can choose between A and B later, and there's still some bad aji on the left side too.

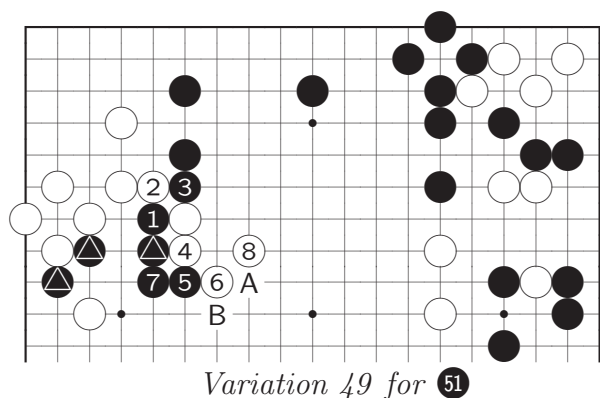


The direct attack at ① is too single-minded, and White will trade for Black's marked stones with ②.

After ③, White can practically live in the corner in sente with ④. This is because ④ aims to revive White's marked stones with A to C.

Since protecting begets protecting further, Black is compelled to cut at ⑤ and White takes sente.

Black can start a ko by exchanging D for E later, but the ko is heavy because if White wins it he will capture at F and G (rekindling the threat of A).

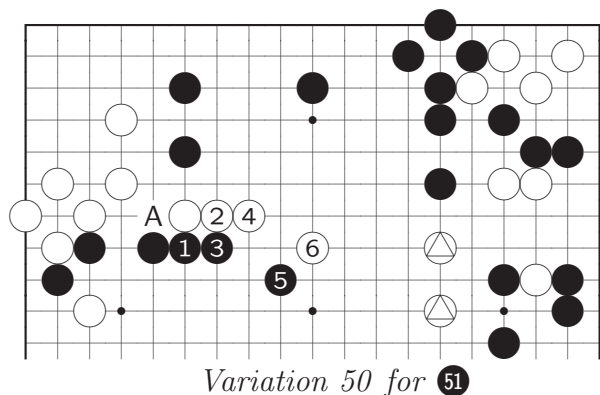


Black's exquisite move at A (51 in the game) aimed to cut with ① and ③.

Cutting without any preparation, from ① to ③ in this variation, is heavy.

White can make shape up to ⑧, and it's very hard for Black to continue attacking White's center group because his marked stones are too weak.

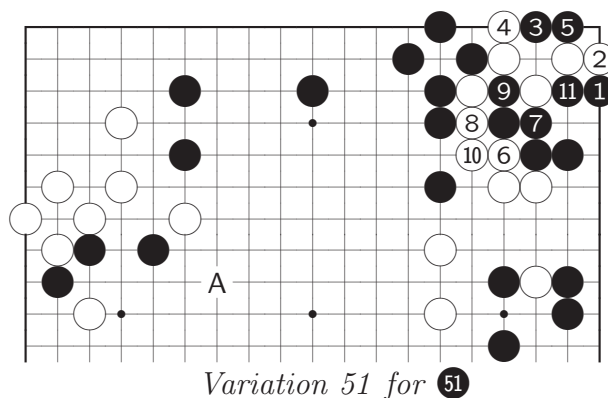
Observe, however, that if Black has a stone at A he can play ⑦ at B and crush White's resistance.



Pushing with ① and ③ isn't very good either, because White only has to walk out nonchalantly, ahead of Black, to get a good result.

Black's moyo at the top has been erased and ⑥ reaches out towards the marked stones.

It's very hard for Black keep the pressure on White in this battle, because cutting at A is gote.



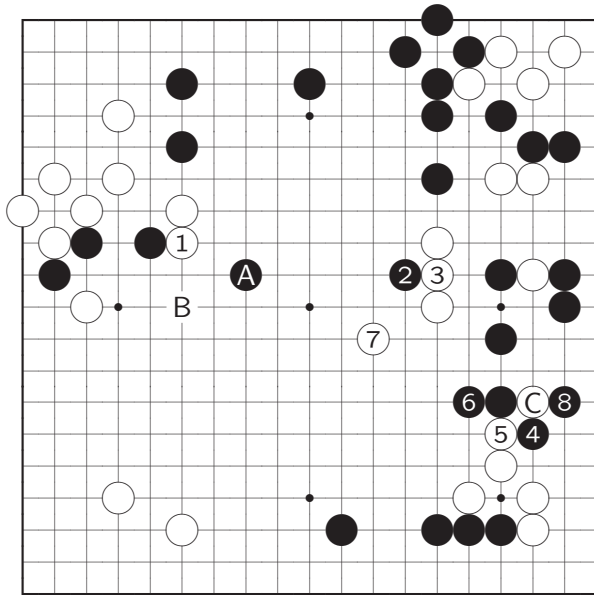
White's group in the corner isn't alive yet.

If Black wants to capture it, he can do so with the combination of ① and ③.

In this case, White can try to resist with ⑥ (or ⑧) but neither amount to much after ⑨.

Black wins the capturing race in the corner up to ⑪.

Black didn't play at ① in the game because it was too small. White would ignore ① and trade with A.



Variation 52 for ⑤②

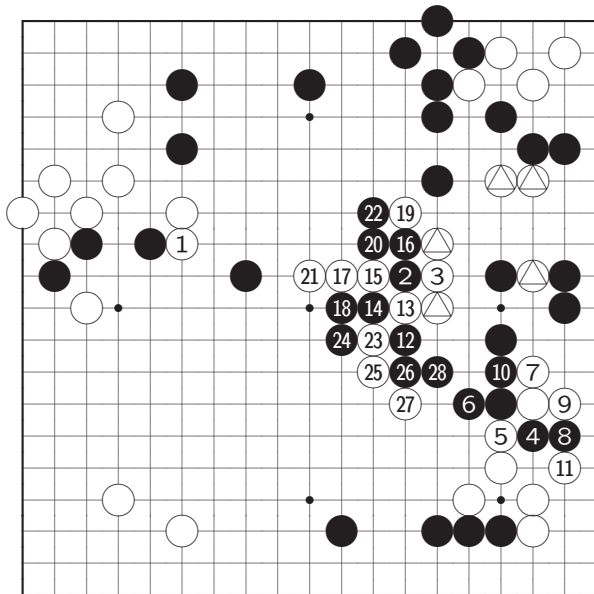
If White reinforces at ①, Black will attack White's right side group with ② to ⑥.

After Black has played A, it's harder for White to ignore ②, because he no longer has an effective way to trade on the left side.

If White ignores ② and jumps to B, for example, his gain will be smaller than in Variation 48 and the exchange of A for ① will become excellent for Black.

Escaping with ⑦ is unavoidable, and Black will be happy to capture C with ⑧.

This variation is what Black was aiming at when he played A.



Variation 53 for ⑤②

If White extends to the vital point at ⑦, Black will resist by enlarging the sacrifice with ⑧.

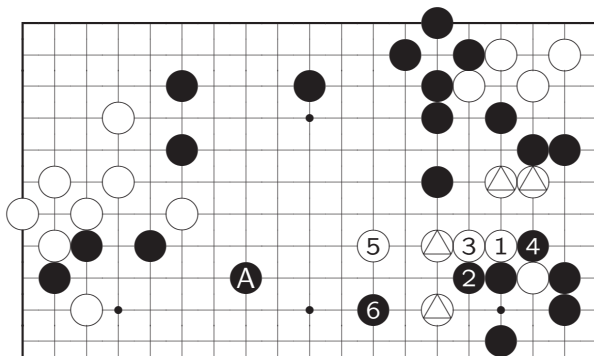
Once Black becomes thick enough, he can play to capture White's whole right side with ⑫.

Even though ⑫ looks crude, it's surprisingly powerful and White doesn't have a good response.

White can try to fight back with ⑬ and ⑮, but he can't capture any of Black's cutting stones, so his marked stones will be captured on a large scale.

White was happy to sacrifice some of the marked stones earlier, but allowing Black to swallow them up inside a large territory like this is too much.

You never want to solidify your opponent's territory from the inside!



Variation 54 for ⑤②

Trying to save all of White's marked stones with ① and ③ is incredibly heavy and slow.

Black will hit White's vital point at ⑥ (preventing a box shape once again) and White's position is becoming increasingly heavy and passive with each move.

Black A was already an excellent move, but this variation makes it even better, because A attacks the marked stones and has a good relationship with ⑥.

If White plays like this, Black will control the game.

Success Depends on Preparation

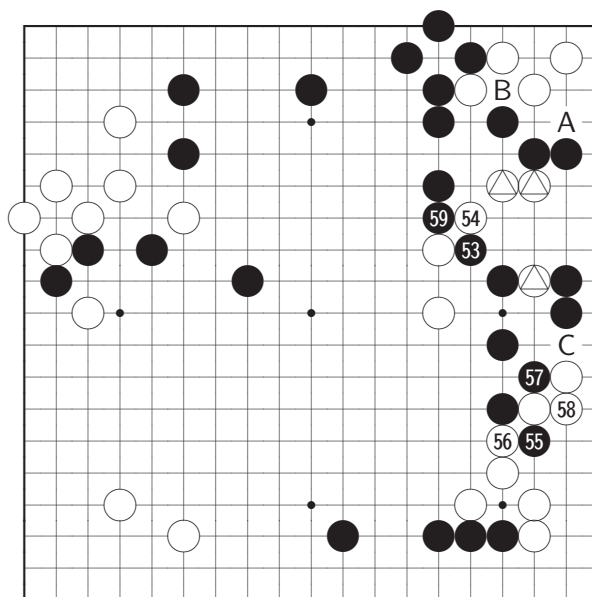


Diagram 10
(Moves: 53-59)

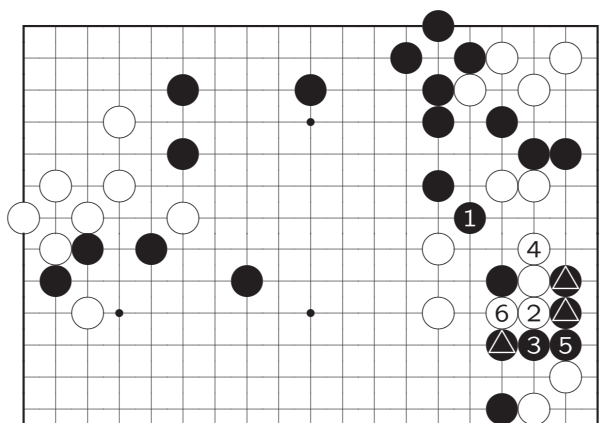
In all things success depends on previous preparation, and without such previous preparation there is sure to be failure.

—Confucius (through Zisi), *The Doctrine of the Mean*

Black's attachment at ⑤③ was a sharp move, which cut off White's marked stones. Lee enlarged the sacrifice with ⑤④, but ⑤⑤ was a well timed probe and Black's exchanges to ⑤⑧ proceeded as planned.

Cutting immediately with ⑤⑤ at ⑤⑨ wouldn't have worked well for Black, so meticulous planning was called for. If Black had played ⑤⑨ at C, White would have connected at ⑤⑨. The timing was just right.

Because of ⑤⑤ to ⑤⑨, ⑤④ became a bad move. White should have just exchanged A for B and tenukied. Black caught up a little here, but White was still slightly ahead.

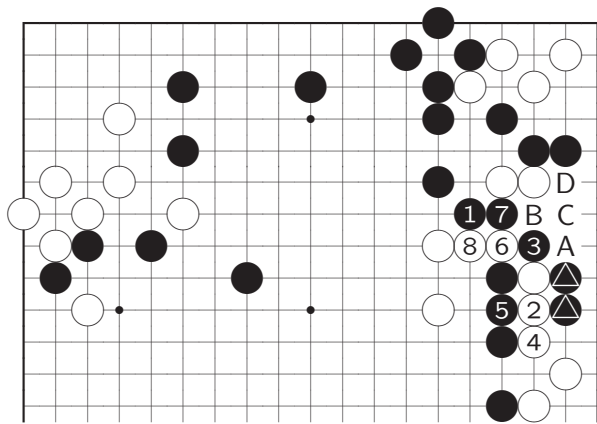


Variation 55 for ⑤③

The kosumi at ① is too stiff.

White will spring into action with ② and if Black blocks at ③, ④ makes miai of ⑤ and ⑥.

After ⑥, Black's marked group is also weak, so White can switch from sacrificing to fighting.



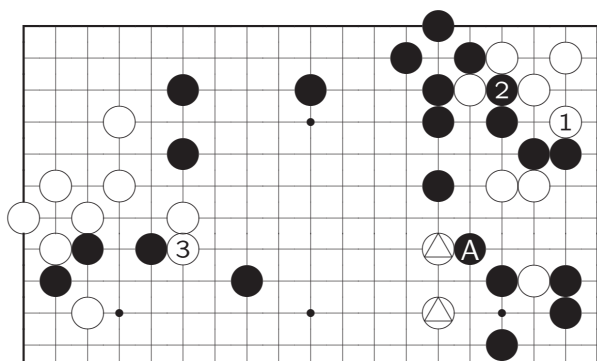
Variation 56 for 53

If Black blocks from the other side with ③, White will fight with ④ and ⑥.

Black has to worry about White cutting at A and capturing the marked stones, so he must atari at ⑦ instead of ⑧.

White can fight in the center after connecting at ⑧.

After ⑦, White A will be met by B to D. If ⑦ is at ⑧ instead, White will have enough liberties to capture the marked stones after cutting at A.



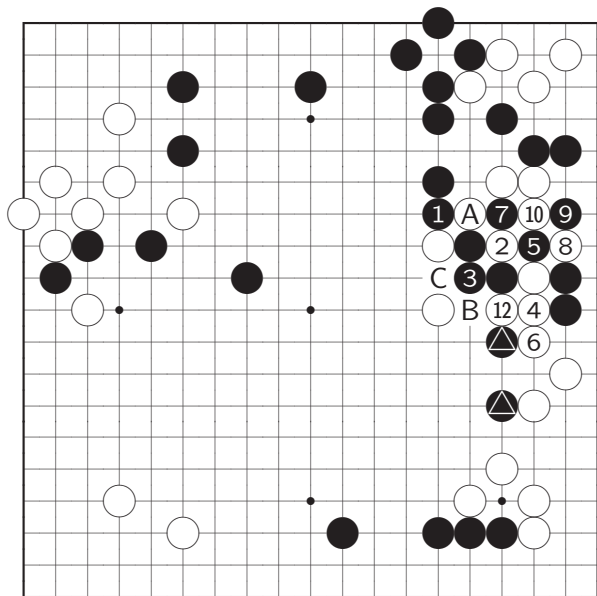
Variation 57 for 54

White's marked stones became lighter after Black protected at A, because Black had spent yet another move on the right side, giving White sente again.

Because of this, White should have been satisfied with the work they had already done and pushed at ③ after exchanging ① for ②.

After ① and ③, if Black attacks the marked stones directly, White can ignore him and play elsewhere.

This variation is better for White than the game.



Variation 58 for 55

After A (54 in the game), cutting at ① immediately is what White wants.

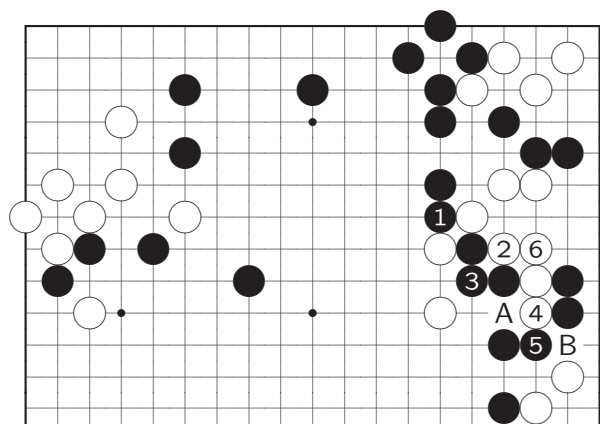
White will atari with ② and push at ④.

Black ⑤ is Black's best response, but it doesn't lead to a good result, because ⑧ is an excellent tesuji.

White can squeeze Black up to ⑫ and, since B and C are still sente for White, Black's marked stones will become isolated and useless.

As you can see, Black's right side is over-concentrated and the result is very good for White.

11 at ②

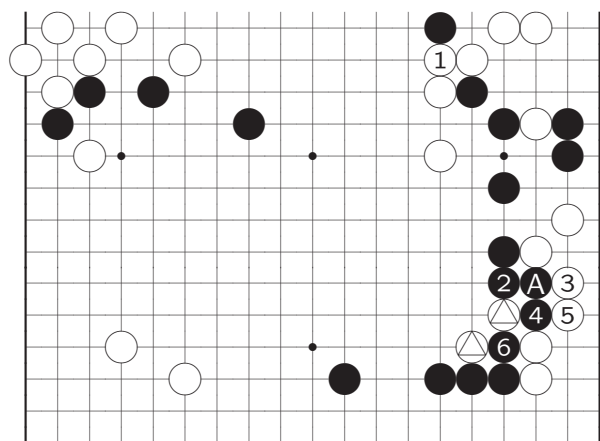


Variation 59 for 55

Blocking at ⑤ is even worse for Black than the previous variation.

White will connect at ⑥, making miai of A and B.

This is a disaster for Black.

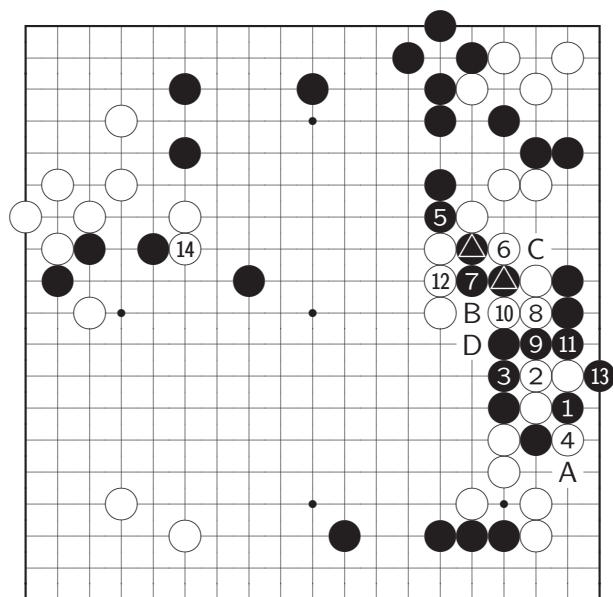


Variation 60 for 56

After Black hanes at A (55), connecting at ① is dangerous.

Black will be pleased to cut off White's marked stones up to ⑥, and Black's center suddenly becomes very thick and solid.

After this, White's center group is heavy and is situated too close to Black's power.



Variation 61 for 57

The atari and connection of ① and ③ look nice, but ⑥ to ⑩ is an impressive counter.

The trade up to ⑬ is favorable for White and he'll be happy to return to the left side with ⑭ after making himself strong in sente.

If you prefer to play more safely, ⑭ at A is also conceivable.

Instead of ⑪, Black can save the marked stones with B to D, but White will cut at ⑪ in that case and Black doesn't gain any compensation.

Practice Calm Detachment

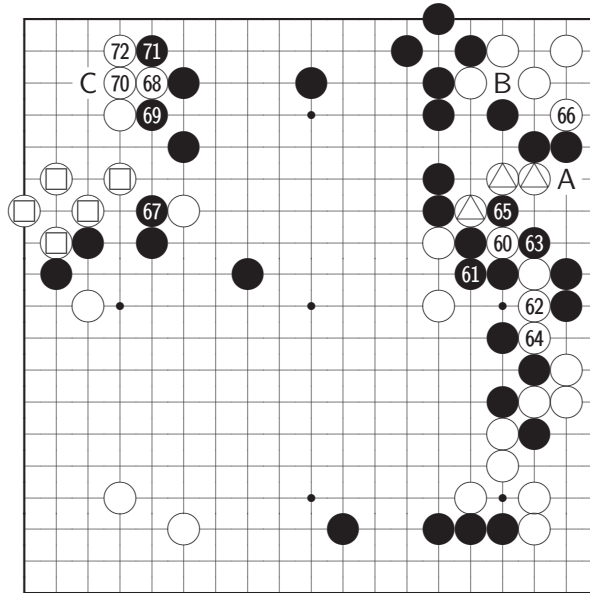


Diagram 11
(Moves: 60-72)

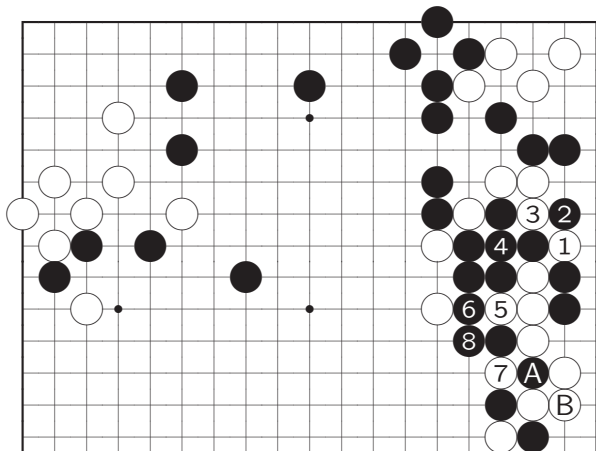
White ⑥① and ⑥② was an excellent combination for reducing Black's territory, and ⑥③ was inevitable. White saved two stones with ⑥④ and capturing at ⑥⑤ was necessary. Black had caught up a little, but White still managed to sacrifice efficiently. Living with ⑥⑥ was very big and maintained White's lead.

As we know from earlier, ⑥⑥ prepared to continue with A. However, Black's area on the right side had already become thick and strong up to ⑥⑤, so defending at A or B would leave him over-concentrated.

In his essay, *The Way of the General*, Zhuge Liang writes, "Detach from emotions and desires; get rid of any fixations. Elevate subtle feelings to presence of mind and sympathetic sense. Be patient in tight situations as well as easy ones; eliminate all pettiness."

Since White A no longer threatened Black, it stopped being an issue of strength and weakness and became a matter for the endgame. Ignoring ⑥⑥ to cut at ⑥⑦ showed experience and detachment.

Black ⑥⑨ and ⑦① are usually bad style, but they were perfect here because there was no aji around C.

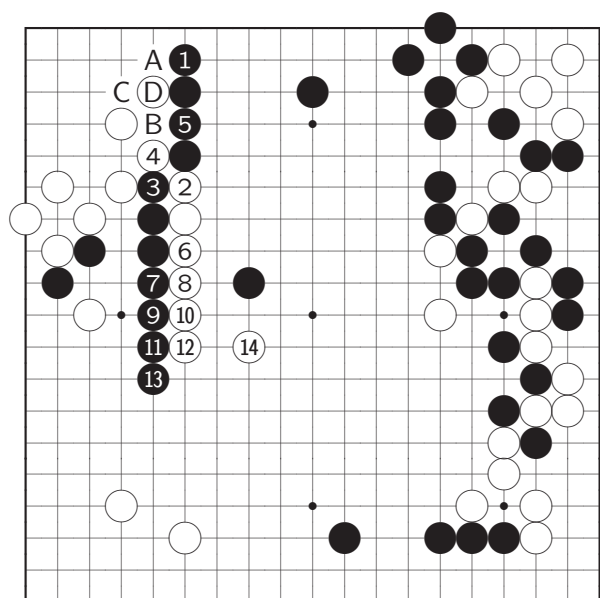


Variation 62 for ⑥⑥

If White still tries to cut and squeeze with ① and ③, it doesn't work anymore.

Black's ingenious exchange of A (⑤⑦) for B ensures that ⑥ is atari.

This apparently minor change has major ramifications, because Black can resist White's squeeze and break out of his encirclement up to ⑧.



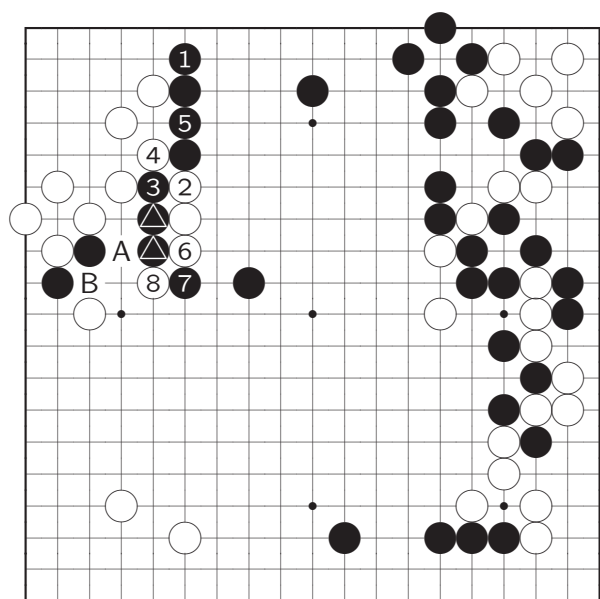
Variation 63 for 69

Simply descending to ① and aiming to enter the corner later is normal, but ② and ④ are a sharp combination, and Black is in trouble.

If Black connects at ⑤ next, White can push out with ⑥ to ⑫. The result up to ⑭ is good for White, because Black's potential in the center has been erased.

If ① is at A, White will still play ② to ⑭. That's why Black exchanged B (69) for C in the game.

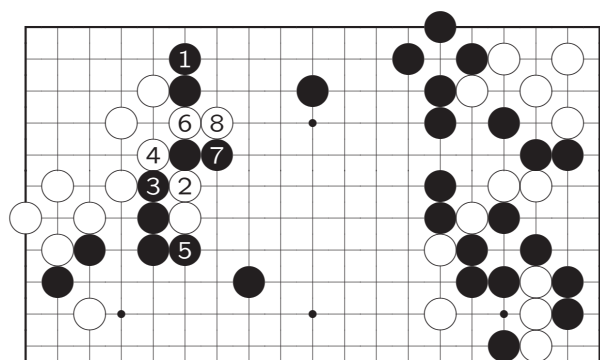
Saving ④ from being captured isn't as important as playing in the center.



Variation 64 for 69

The hane at ⑦ doesn't work because White can cut immediately at ⑧.

A and B are miai, so Black's marked stones are captured.



Variation 65 for 69

If Black reinforces the center with ⑤, White will break into Black's area at the top with ⑥ and ⑧.

Black is in trouble.

Defend by Expanding

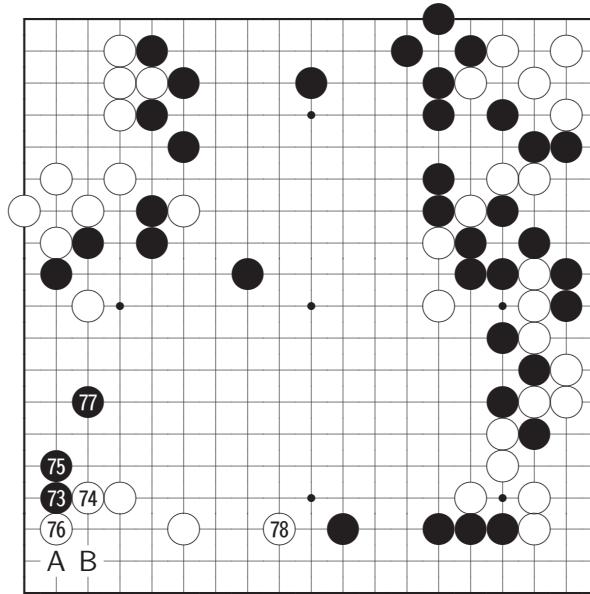
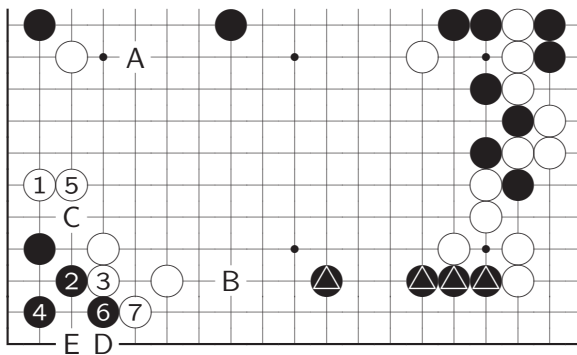


Diagram 12
(Moves: 73-78)

Black played a deep submarine approach at 73, and bumping at 74 was the standard response. After 75 there was bad aji at A, but defending tightly at B would be too slow. Expanding with 78 was the best tactic and it made the aji around A unimportant. This extension was worth more than 20 points.



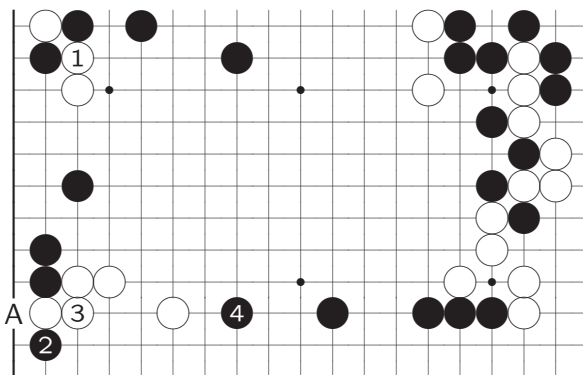
Variation 66 for 74

Considering only the local position, pincering at 1 is also possible, but it's inappropriate here because neither the left side nor the bottom are valuable.

Black has a solid group in the bottom right (marked) and can take sente to play A or B after 7.

In the midst of this sequence, crouching with 4 is a stylish move which makes miai of 6 and C.

If White ataris at D later, Black E lightly starts a ko for life.



Variation 67 for 78

Cutting at 1 is safer, but too slow.

Extending at 4 is huge and exchanging 2 for 3 first is also profitable.

Black can aim to connect under at A later.

Principles Can Be Broken

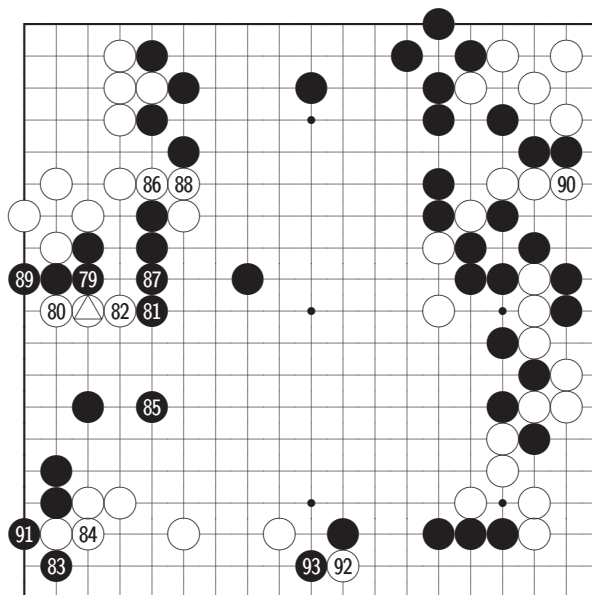


Diagram 13
(Moves: 79-93)

Trading with ⑧1 to ⑧9 was remarkable. Most players wouldn't consider this sequence because the basic principles of shape scream out for ⑧7 to cut at ⑧8. Locally speaking, ⑧8 was outstanding for White.

Nevertheless, Black captured White's marked stones and the local result was even, which shows the strength of Gu's intuition and judgment.

Throughout this book, we've emphasized general principles of play and strategic concepts in order to provide you with a diverse range of practical models, which you can apply in your own games.

Yet, we want to stress once again that they are principles, not laws. As Carl von Clausewitz remarks in *On War*, "... principles and rules are intended to provide a thinking man with a frame of reference."

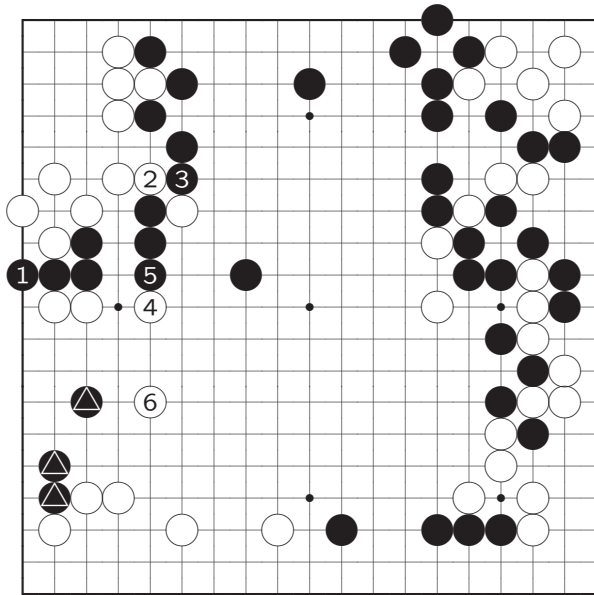
However, he adds, "... talent and genius operate outside the rules, and theory conflicts with practice."

In other words, principles are only a guide and cannot be allowed to become dogma. There will always be situations that don't fit the mold, where you must fall back on reading, intuition and experience.

Players like Gu Li and Lee Sedol can wander outside the rules more easily than most, but every player has to do so from time to time. Never trust anyone who claims to have a complete 'system' for Go.

Black caught up a little more with ⑨9, but White maintained a slight lead with ⑨0. Since White had played a large endgame move at ⑨0, Black maintained the balance of territory and weakened White's corner with ⑨1.

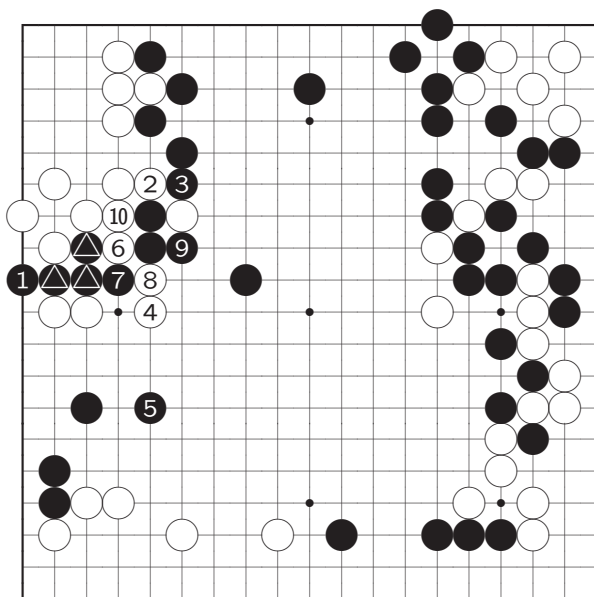
The attachment at ⑨2 was typical of Lee's style of play, and Gu resisted with ⑨3. As one battle drew to a close, another began.



Variation 68 for 81

Descending immediately at ① shows poor timing.

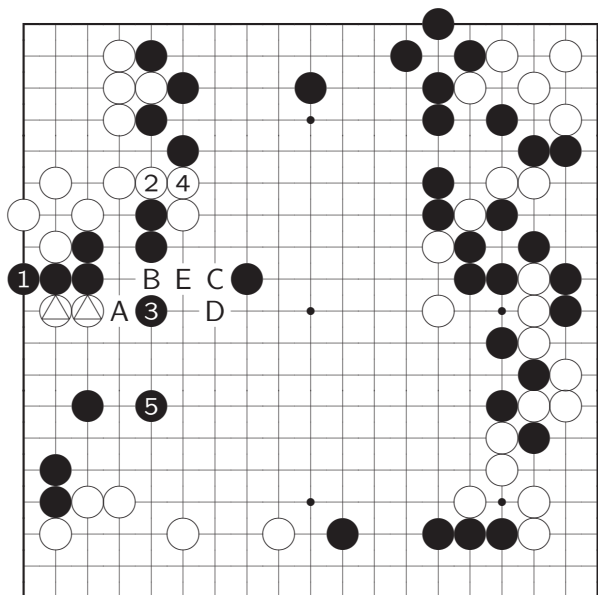
White can counter-attack with ②, ④ and ⑥, and Black's marked stones are in danger.



Variation 69 for 81

Black doesn't have time to move out with ⑤, because White's tesuji combination at ⑥ and ⑧ is severe.

Black ⑨ and ⑩ are miai, so Black's marked stones are captured.

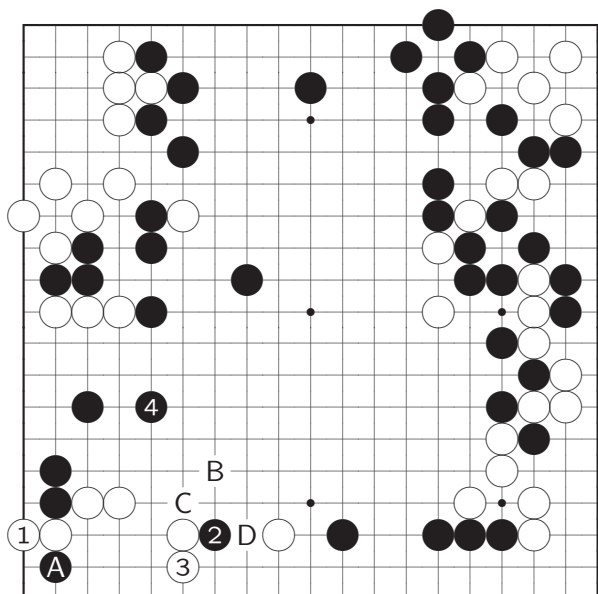


Variation 70 for 81

Black can still regain his balance by making shape at ③, but White will connect at ④ and the result is better for White than the actual game.

In this variation, Black only captures two stones (marked) and his shape is thinner because White hasn't exchanged A for B.

Later on, White might exchange C to E and Black's weakness at B will be troubling.

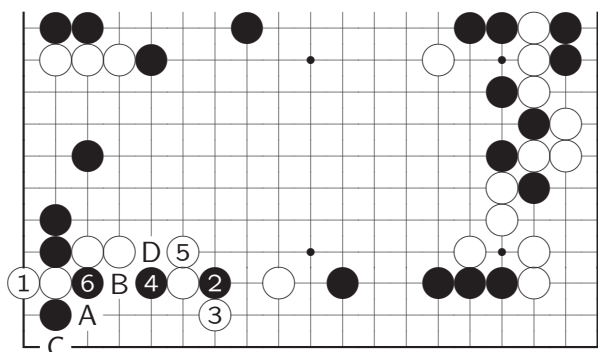


Variation 71 for 84

When Black clamps at A (83), cutting with ① is generally a bit greedy.

The attachment at ② works in concert with A, and descending at ③ is White's best response.

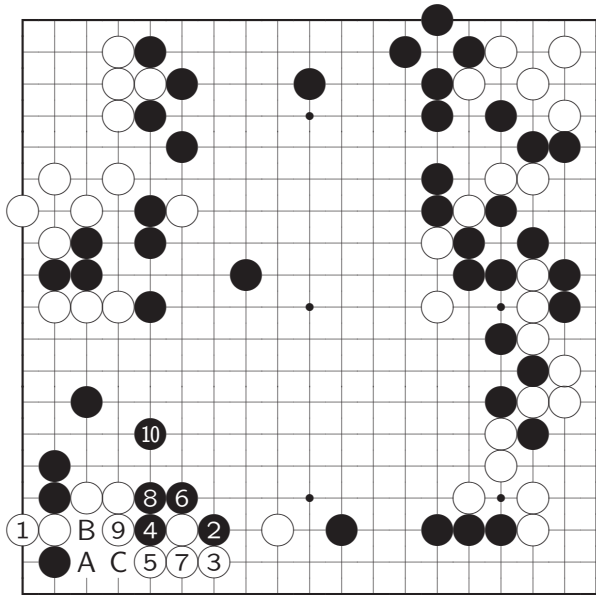
This exchange is profitable for Black, because he can continue with moves like B, C or D later.



Variation 72 for 84

The hane underneath at ③ is an overplay and Black's attachment at ④ is a sharp counter.

White is in trouble after ⑥, because A and B are miai. If White plays A to C, Black will push at D.



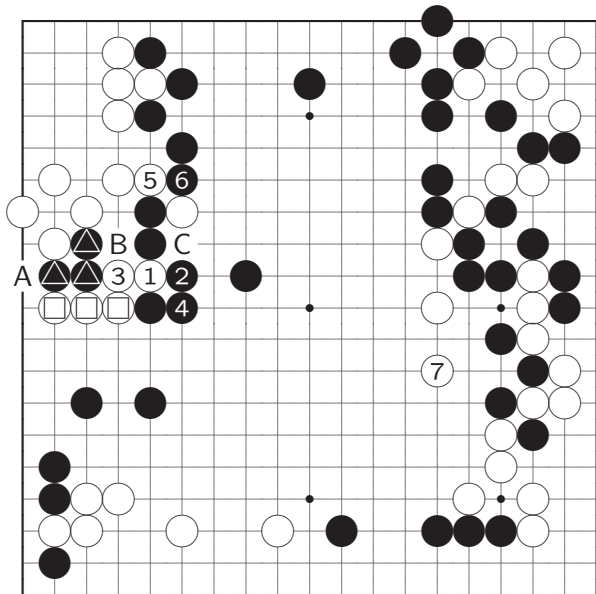
Variation 73 for 84

Crouching down with ⑤ doesn't improve White's prospects.

Black will continue up to ⑩, after which his group has become very thick.

That's because Black can still play A to C and squeeze White from the outside later. White's corner territory will crumble away as Black does so.

Instead of ⑨, if White extends to C, Black can cut at B. This makes miai of A and ⑨.



Variation 74 for 86

Before pushing at ⑤ (⑧6 in the game), White should have wedged at ①.

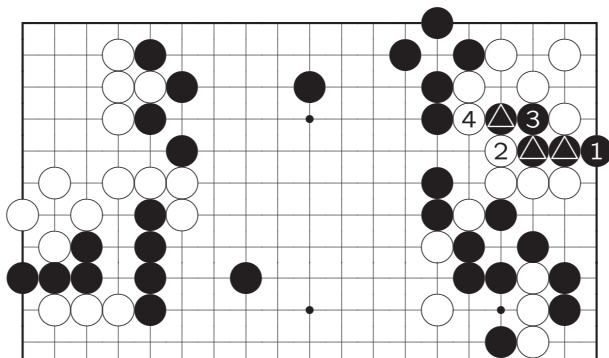
If Black defends with ② and ④, White can exchange ⑤ for ⑥ in sente and then take a big point like ⑦.

After ⑥, White's marked stones are safe because A and B are miai. Moreover, since B is sente for White later, Black's marked stones are effectively captured.

If Black cuts from behind with ② at ③, we can expect White at ② and Black C. After that, White will be able to atari at A and connect under in sente.

If Black ⑧7 in the game had been the cut at ⑥, White would have wedged at ① and the same position would have been reached.

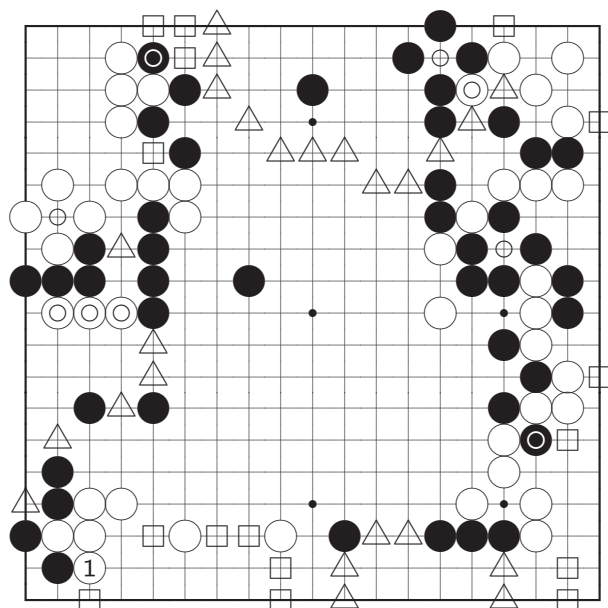
This is why Gu played ⑧7 as the bamboo joint at ①.



Variation 75 for 91

If Black tries to separate White with ①, White will pinch at ② and cut at ④.

Black marked stones are captured, so Black ① is unreasonable.



Variation 76 for ⑨②

Playing ⑨② at ① is also conceivable. Let's count together and see who is leading if White defends here.

Black:

Top: 28, left side: 20, and bottom: 8.

Total : 56 points.

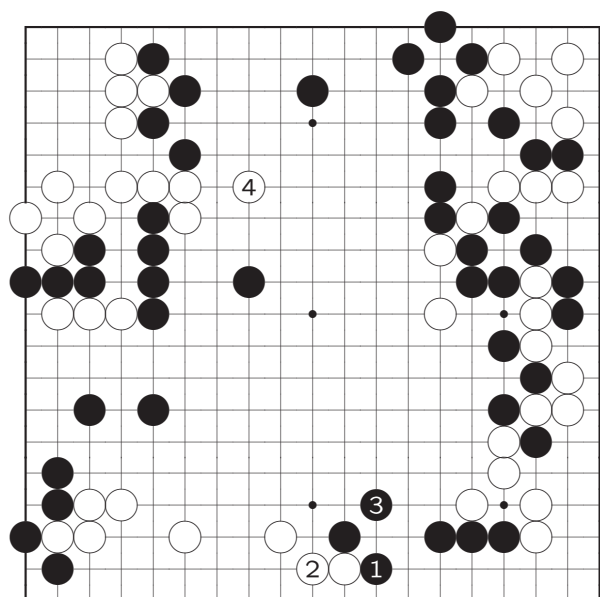
White:

Top left: 22, bottom right: 13, bottom left: 11, top right: 7, and komi: 7.5.

Total: 60.5 points.

White has more territory, but Black has sente and more potential in the center area. The game is almost even after ①.

Therefore, we can see that ① is a bit slack, and also that ⑨② and ⑨③ in the game were par for the course.



Variation 77 for ⑨③

Now that you've counted, you can see that falling back to ① is too passive.

White ② and ④ sail smoothly towards victory.

This is why Black resisted with ⑨③ in the game.

Mulberry Fields Turn to Blue Seas

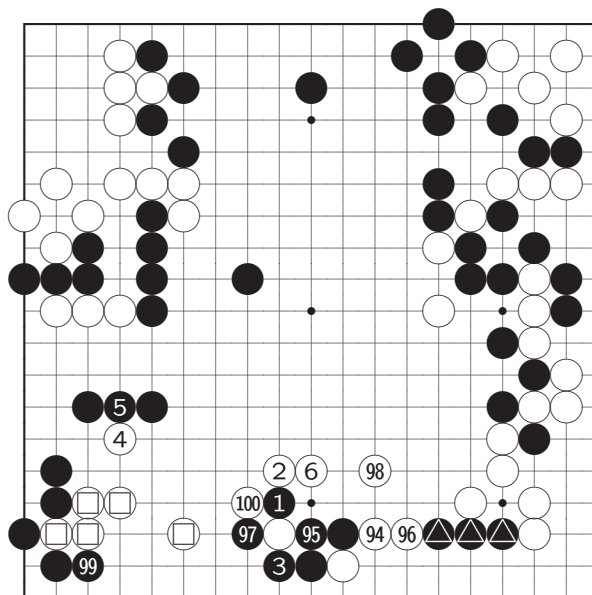


Diagram 14
(Moves: 94-106)

Centuries of human existence, prodigy and fate intertwined in conflicts, mulberry fields turned into open sea, enough's been seen to melt the heart.

—Nguyen Du, *The Tale of Kieu*

White's counter-hane at ⑨④ was very severe, and it became difficult for Black to manage the situation. Counter-attacking with ⑨⑤ to ⑨⑨ was wise—Black ⑨⑨ was the vital point for White's eyespace.

White managed his weak group lightly with the hane at ⑩⑩. He had already captured three Black stones in the bottom right, so he didn't need to save all of his marked stones.

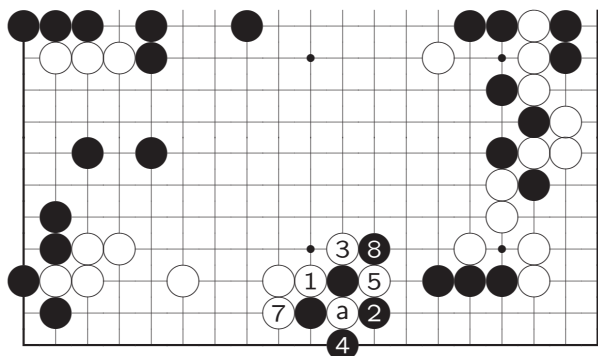
The flow of play as the marked groups changed hands was breathtaking. Go players describe this kind of situation as *mulberry fields turning to blue seas*.

This refers to an Asian legend where one immortal remarks to another, "I have thrice seen the East Sea change into mulberry fields. . . . I am afraid it will soon turn to mulberry fields again." The story alludes to the evanescence of life and the inescapable passage of time. Seas turn to mulberry fields and mulberry fields to seas. Go stones live and die, and live again. Nothing is safe, or permanent.

In Go, this expression is used to describe a large scale exchange, like the one that just occurred in the game. Usually it implies that both players can continue playing.

This game (as well as game seven) contains many examples of light and flexible play, which are well worth studying. When you find yourself inside your opponent's sphere of influence, the most important thing is to establish a workable position, rather than trying to save all your stones.

Being open to all kinds of trades—even dramatic exchanges—is how professionals maintain their balance. If you open your mind to the possibilities, there are more paths than you could ever imagine.

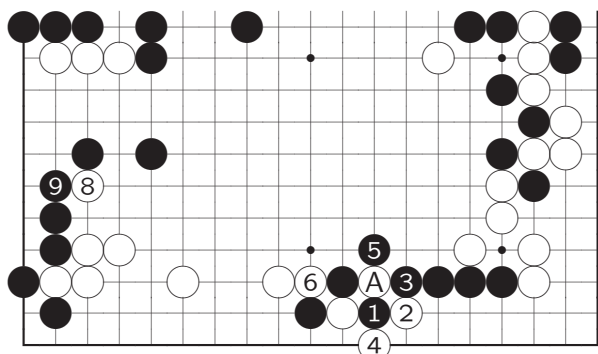


Variation 78 for 94

6 at a

Cutting at ① is normal, but uninspired.

As you can see, White gains little up to ⑧.



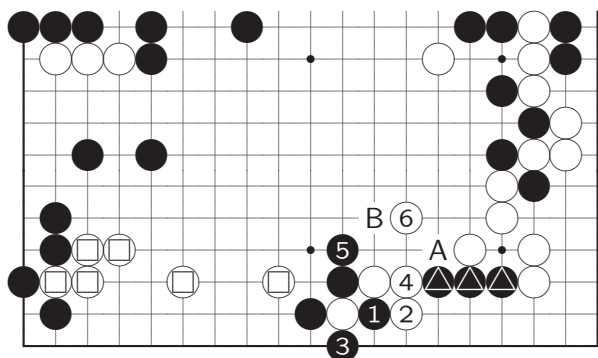
Variation 79 for 95

7 at 1, 10 at A

If Black cuts at ① after A, White will atari at ②.

Black can create a ko with ③ and ⑤, but ⑧ is an excellent ko threat.

Black must answer at ⑨, but he doesn't have a sufficient threat of his own after ⑩ (at A).

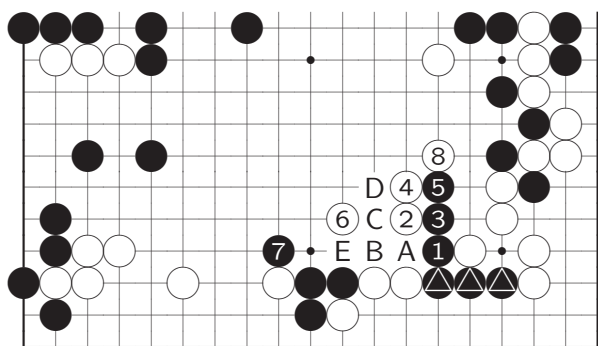


Variation 80 for 95

If Black just takes White's stone with ③, White will be happy to capture the marked stones up to ⑥.

White ④ in this sequence makes miai of A and ⑤, and after ⑥, White will respond to A with B.

Compared to the game, it's hard for Black to attack White's marked group in the bottom left.

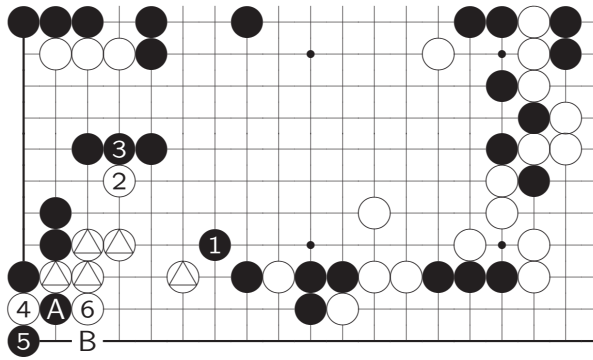


Variation 81 for 97

It's difficult for Black to move the marked stones out right away.

White presses smoothly with ② and ④, and ⑥ makes miai of ⑦ and ⑧.

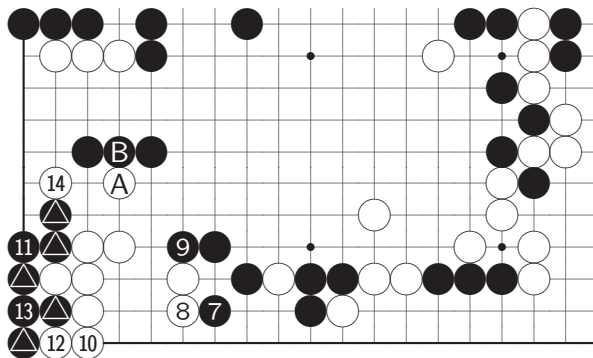
Instead of ③, if Black pushes and cuts starting with A, White can respond with B, Black C, ⑥, Black D and White E; making miai of ③ and ⑦.



Variation 82 for 99

If Black attacks White's marked stones with ①, White will exchange ② for ③, throw in at ④ and block at ⑥.

White's group is practically alive already, because White can capture ① and ⑤ after descending to B. This is why Black pushed at ⑥ (99 in the game).

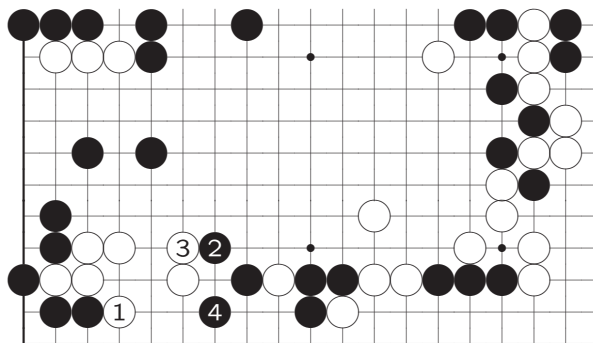


Variation 83 for 99

If Black tries to attack with ⑦, White can descend to ⑩ and Black can't stop White from capturing some stones.

If Black stubbornly persists up to ⑬, the nose tesuji at ⑭ captures all the marked stones.

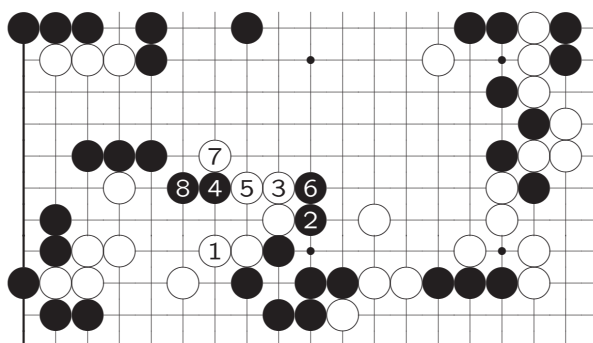
Note the importance of exchanging ① for ② earlier on in this sequence.



Variation 84 for 100

If White slavishly protects his eyespace with ①, Black will attack with ② and ④.

White doesn't have enough space to make two eyes, so blocking at ① is heavy in this case.



Variation 85 for 106

In the game, White used ⑩⑥ to extend to ②.

Extending at ① looks safer, but it's slack and heavy.

Black ② and ⑥ close White off from support, and ④ steals White's eye shape.

White's group is desperately adrift up to ⑧.

By Indirections Find Directions Out

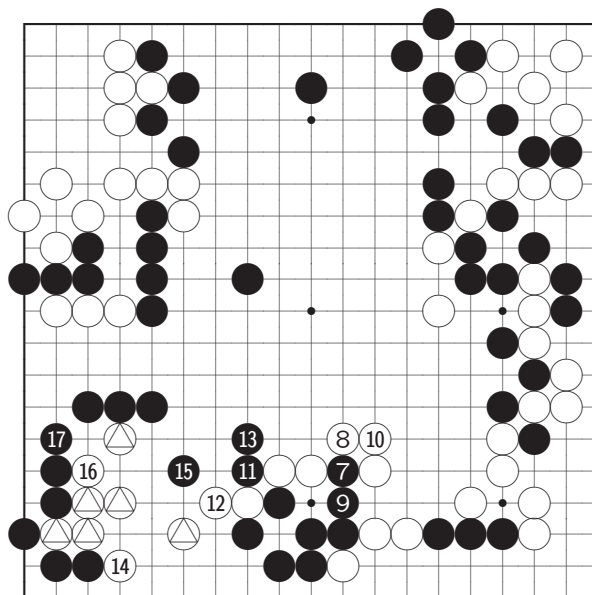
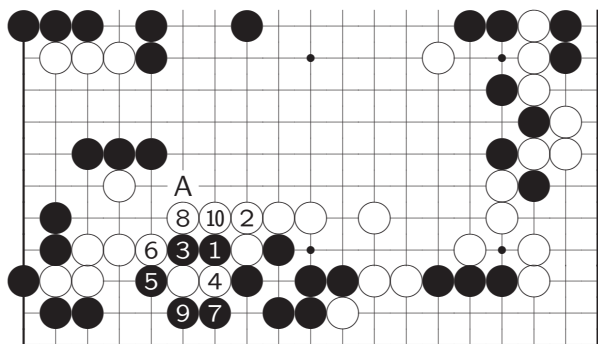


Diagram 15
(Moves: 107-117)

The wedge at ⑦ was an incredible indirect tactic, aimed at White's marked stones. Depending on how White answered, Black planned to choose between ⑪ and ⑫. In this sense, it was an asking move.

"By indirections find directions out." —William Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Act 2, Scene 1*

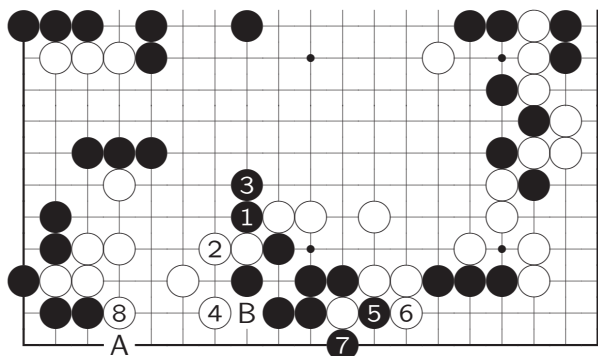


Variation 86 for ⑩⑦

The atari and push of ① and ③ are too pedestrian. White will gladly sacrifice two stones and connect up to ⑩.

Black gains more points than he did in the game, but White's position becomes connected and powerful.

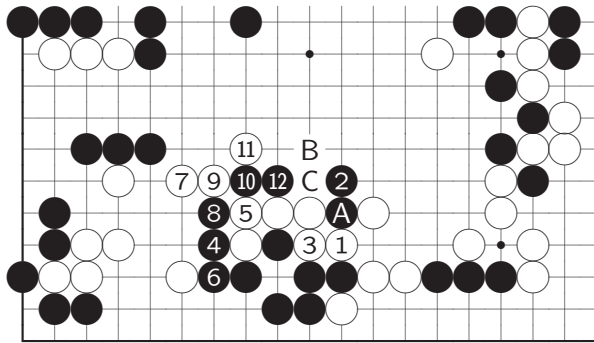
If instead of ③, Black connects at ④, White can connect in style with A.



Variation 87 for ⑩⑦

On the other hand, if Black just cuts at ①, pressuring Black with ④ is sente.

White can settle his group with ⑧, because he can play A and B in sente.



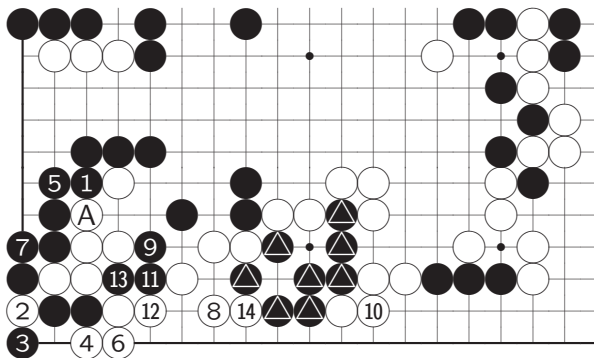
Variation 88 for 108

Cutting from behind with ① seems like the natural way to punish ①A, but ② is sente and conceals a secret aim.

Black will exchange ④ to ⑦, before cutting with ⑧ and ⑩, and White can't capture the cutting stones!

If not for ②, White could net at B or ladder at C.

This is a disaster for White.



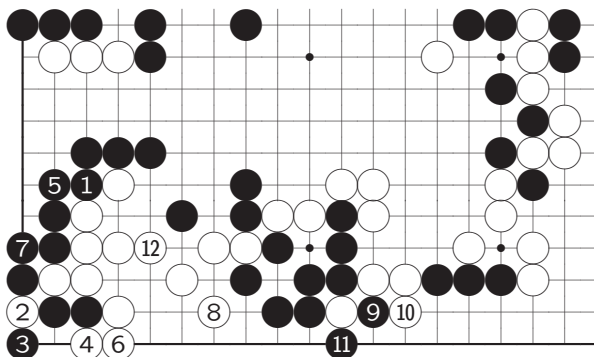
Variation 89 for 117

White ①A (①6) in the game was a resourceful move.

If Black responds at ①, White exchanges ② to ⑦ in sente, and continuing with the kosumi at ⑧ is clever.

Black can steal White's eye shape with ⑨, but White can counter-attack with ⑩ and Black's marked stones will be in grave danger.

White will win the capturing race after ⑭, and will be delighted that Black agreed to this one-sided deal.

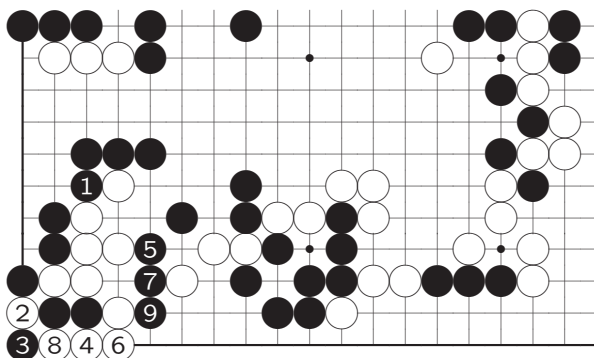


Variation 90 for 117

Black should consider his weaknesses before attacking, and defend at ⑨.

White, however, will be happy to live with ⑫.

The game is hopeless for Black now, because White has too many points.



Variation 91 for 117

Attaching at ⑤ earlier in the sequence is also conceivable, but White won't defend at ⑦.

Instead, White will connect at ⑥ and live in the corner.

Locally speaking, the trade up to ⑨ is fair, but White takes sente and the game still favors him.

The Simplest Things Are Difficult

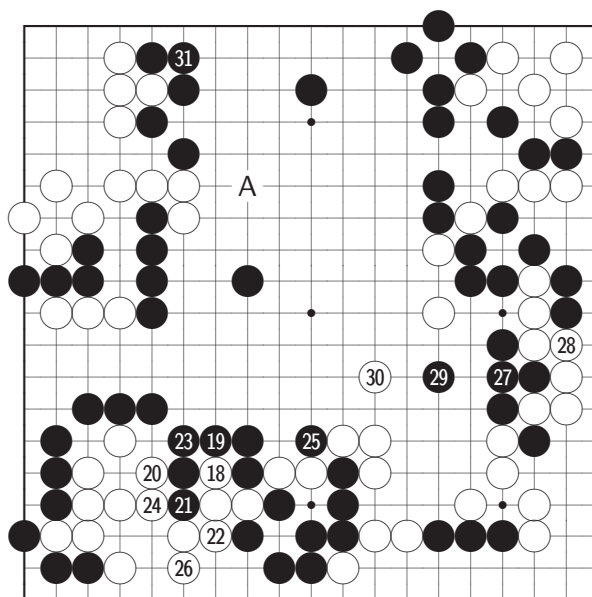
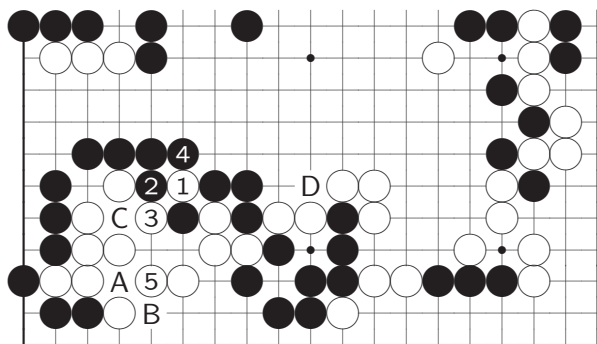


Diagram 16
(Moves: 118-131)

Clamping at ②① was a misstep which allowed Black to play ②⑤ in sente. White had to play once more at ②⑥ to live. Connecting at ③① was big, but playing at A would have been slightly better.

As Clausewitz laments in *On War*, “Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult.”

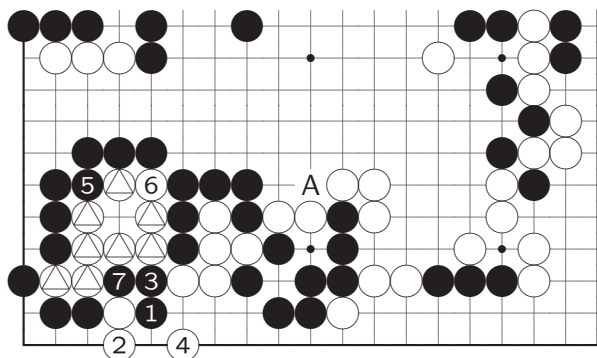


Variation 92 for ①②①

White should have sacrificed a stone with ① to ③, and then made shape with ⑤.

Now White is completely alive, because he already has an eye at A and can make another at B or C.

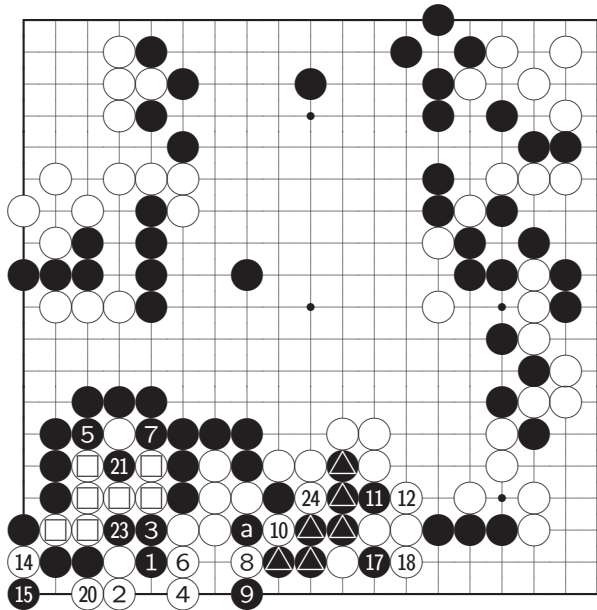
In this variation, if Black cuts at D, White can tenuki. This is better for White than the sequence in the game.



Variation 93 for ①②⑤

Instead of cutting at A (②⑤ above), ① and ③ is a tesuji combination for stealing White’s eye shape.

White would like to protect his eye by answering ⑤ with ⑥, but he can’t do so because Black will atari the marked stones with ⑦.



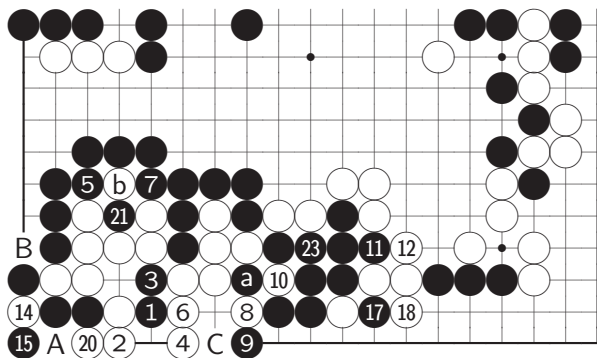
Variation 94 for 125

13 19 at a, 16 22 at 10

Consequently, White should exchange ⑥ for ⑦ and create a ko with ⑧.

Once the players start down this path, a ko fight is unavoidable, but Black doesn't have enough ko threats to win.

Even if Black captures White's marked stones up to 23, the result favors White, because Black's marked stones are worth more.

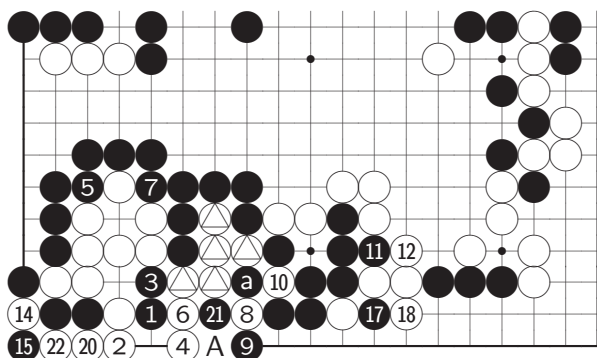


Variation 95 for 125

13 19 at a, 16 22 at 10, 24 at b

If Black falls back to 23, White recaptures the ko with 24 (at b) and Black runs out of steam.

If Black plays elsewhere, White will capture the corner stones with A; and if Black connects at B, White can live with C.

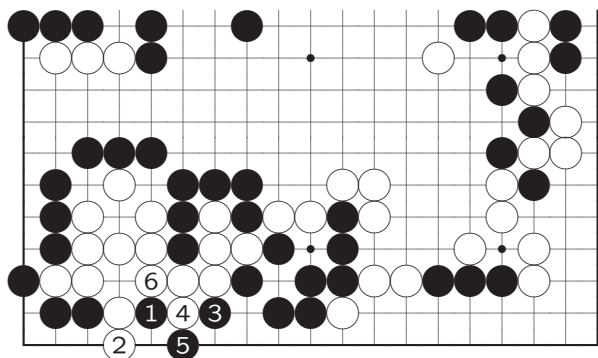


Variation 96 for 125

13 19 at a, 16 at 10

If Black eliminates the ko with 21, White will capture the corner stones with 22.

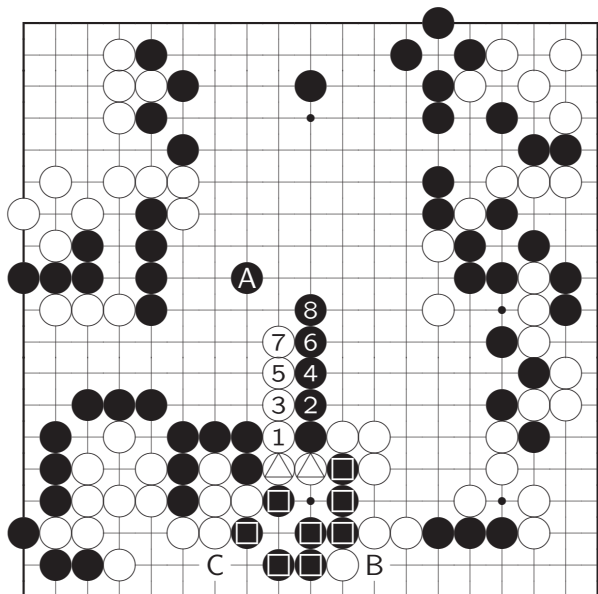
Even if Black captures the marked White stones with A later, he doesn't gain enough profit to catch up.



Variation 97 for 125

The hane at ③ doesn't work.

White can live outright with ④ and ⑥.



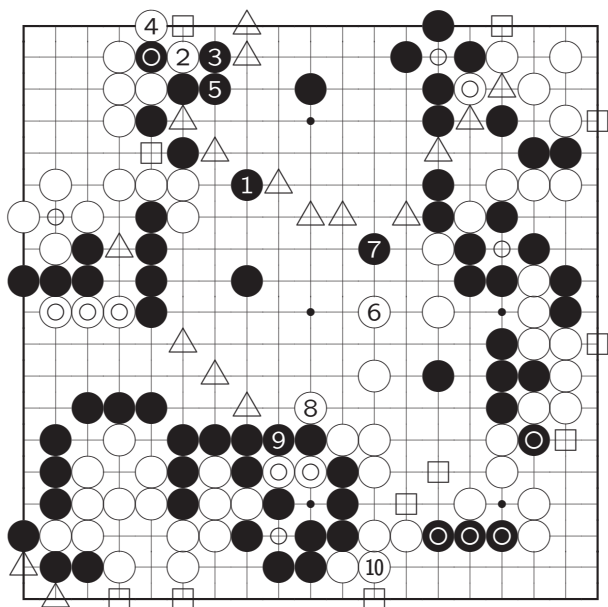
Variation 98 for 126

Attempting to save White's cutting stones with ① is too greedy.

Black can simply extend from ② to ⑧ and Black's existing stone at A encloses White perfectly.

White can't escape and he can't win the capturing race between the marked groups either.

Black can extend his liberties with moves like B and C if he has to.



Variation 99 for 131

Black ① would have been slightly better than ③① in the game. Let's evaluate the position after ① to ⑩.

Black:

Top: 37, left side: 27, and bottom: 6.

Total: 70 points.

White:

Top left: 22, bottom right: 34, bottom left: 5, top right: 7, and komi: 7.5.

Total: 75.5 points.

It's Black's turn and he has more potential in the center, so the game is closer than it looks, but White still has a very small lead.

Avoiding Complications Is Costly

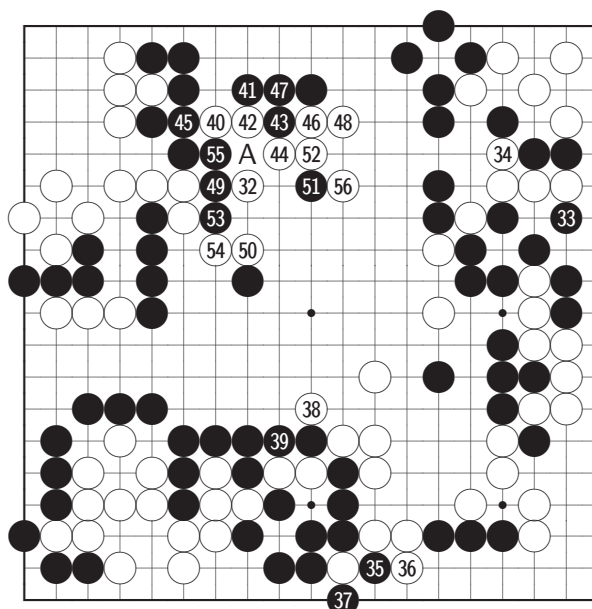
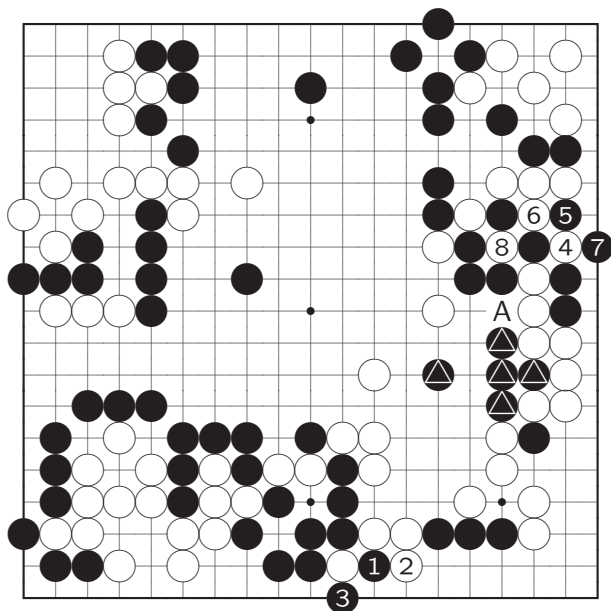


Diagram 17
(Moves: 132-156)

The endgame proceeded from ③② to ④④, and connecting at ④⑤ aimed to exploit White's weakness at ④⑨. White's attachment at ⑤⑩ was flexible, but Black's peep at ⑤① and the continuation to ⑤⑤ were sharp.

White wanted to connect at A, but doing so was risky. The hane at ⑤⑥ was the best way to manage the situation (giving up A), but it only bought a temporary reprieve at a cost of about four points.

Avoiding complications is rarely free. As Niccolò Machiavelli observes in the *The Prince*, "The Romans, therefore, foreseeing evils while they were yet far off, always provided against them . . . since they knew that war is not so to be avoided, but is only postponed to the advantage of the other side."

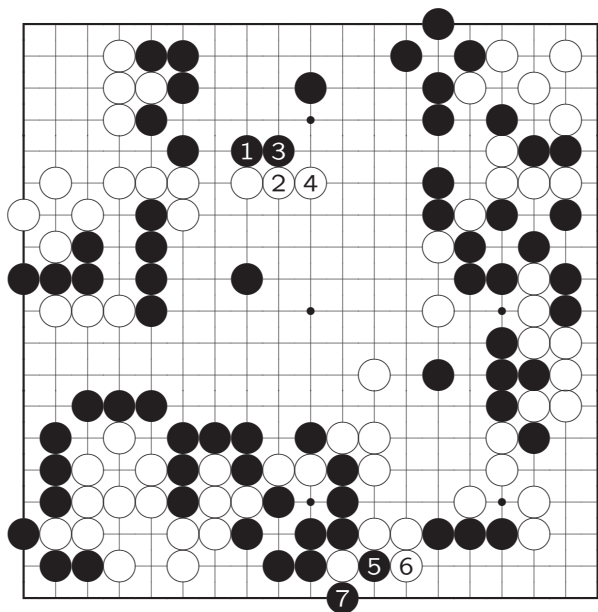


Variation 100 for ①③③

There's bad aji on the right side.

If Black doesn't defend (e.g. at ③③ in the game), White can start a ko with ④ to ⑧.

If Black connects at ④, White will cut at A and the marked stones will be captured.

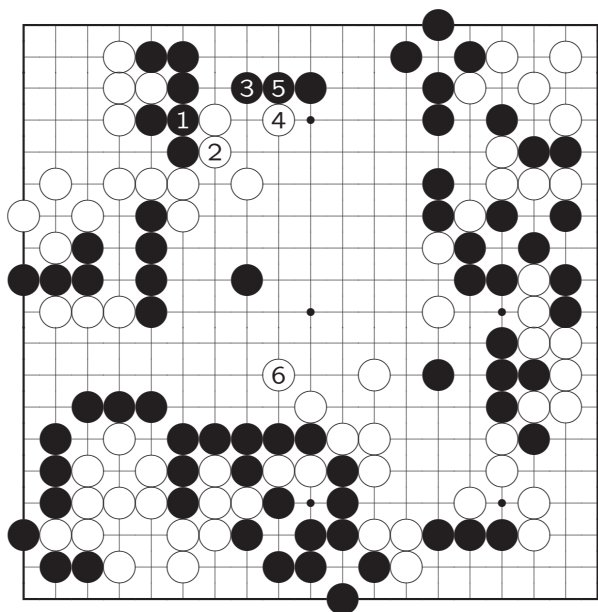


Variation 101 for 135

Instead of 35 (at 5 in this variation), Black should have exchanged 1 to 4 in sente.

If White hanes at 3, instead of 2, Black can cross-cut at 2 and the resultant fighting will suit Black nicely.

If White plays 2 and 4, as expected, Black can return to the bottom to capture at 5.

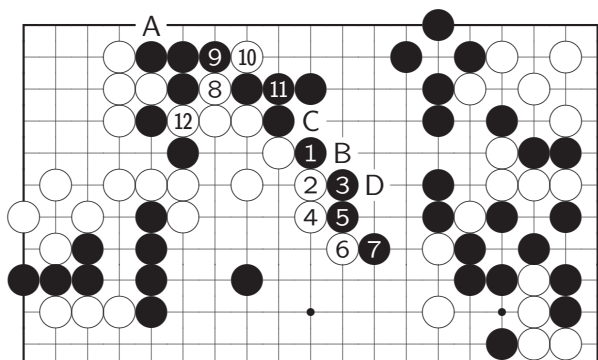


Variation 102 for 141

Black could also play 41 at 1.

In that case, 2 and 4 are sente and White will simplify the game up to 6.

Allowing White to simplify the position is bad for Black, because he's behind.



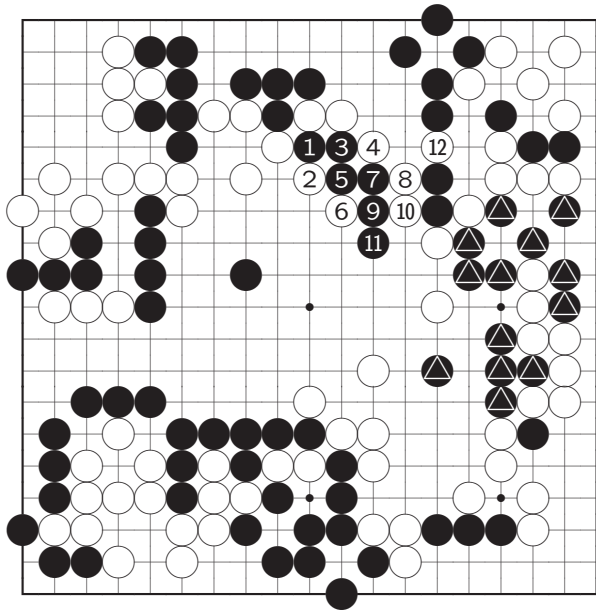
Variation 103 for 145

Black 45 connected at 12 in the game, but Black can also think about enlarging his center territory with 1 to 7.

However, cutting at 12 nets White adequate compensation, and White's hane at A will be sente later.

Instead of 5, if Black backtracks to connect at 12, White will capture 3 in a ladder with B to D.

If 3 is at B instead, White still cuts at 12.

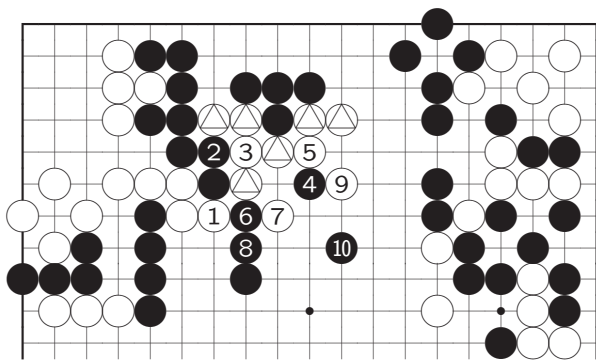


Variation 104 for ①⁴⁹

Cutting at ① is also conceivable, but it's dangerous.

Even though the ladder starting at ② doesn't completely work for White, he can still manage the situation up to ⑫.

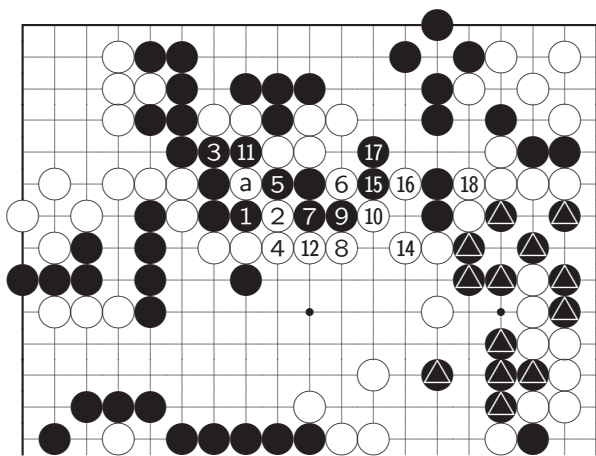
Black's marked stones will suddenly find themselves under attack.



Variation 105 for ①⁵⁰

If White tries to save all his stones with ① and ③, ④ and ⑥ unleash a severe attack.

White's whole group is in danger after ⑩, so this variation is too risky for White to entertain.



Variation 106 for ①⁵⁵

⑬ at a

If Black pokes at ①, instead of connecting at ③ (⑤ in the game), White will connect with ② and ④.

Black still wants to cut with ⑨ and ⑮, but White can sacrifice from ⑥ to ⑰.

After White connects at ⑱, Black's marked stones are in danger yet again.

Lead Away a Goat in Passing

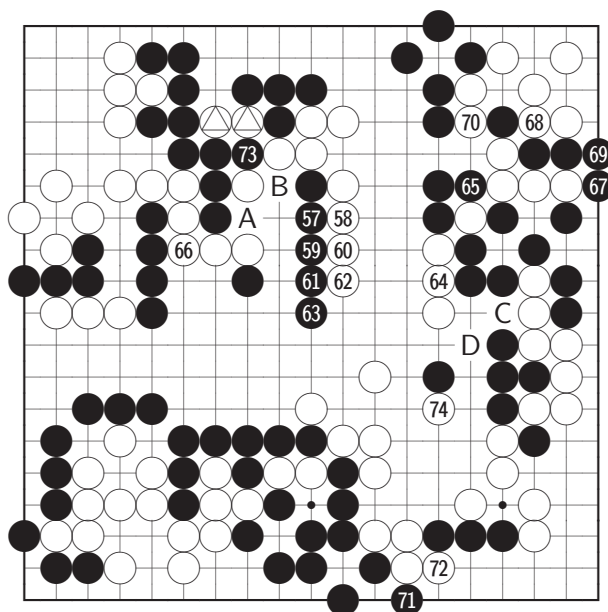
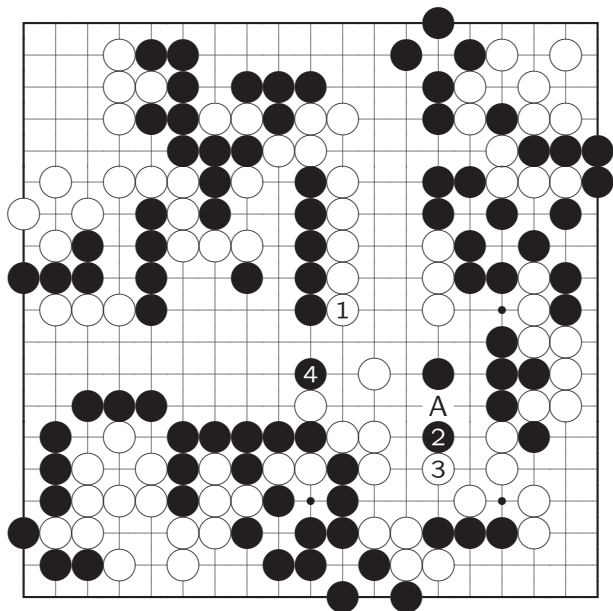


Diagram 18
(Moves: 157-174)

Extending with ⑤⑦ to ⑥③ was unavoidable, and White connected with ⑥④ and ⑥⑥. Black finally captured the marked stones while separating White with ⑦③. This made A and B miai, so White couldn't connect.

White ⑦④ was an exemplary indirect defense; grabbing some quick profit before returning to defend the center more firmly. It was difficult for Black to resist because of his weakness around C and D.

The *Thirty-six Stratagems* advise us to, "Lead away a goat in passing." While this may sound strange to contemporary ears, it means that we should always be on the lookout for opportunities to take small profits, in the course of managing our overall strategy. White ⑦④ was an excellent example of this.



Variation 107 for ⑦④

If White pushes from behind at ①, Black will attach at ④ to enlarge his center area.

However, before that, he can exchange ② for ③ in sente and White didn't want to see that happen.

This is why White interposed a quick jab at A (⑦④) in the game.

When Riding the Tiger, It's Difficult to Get Off

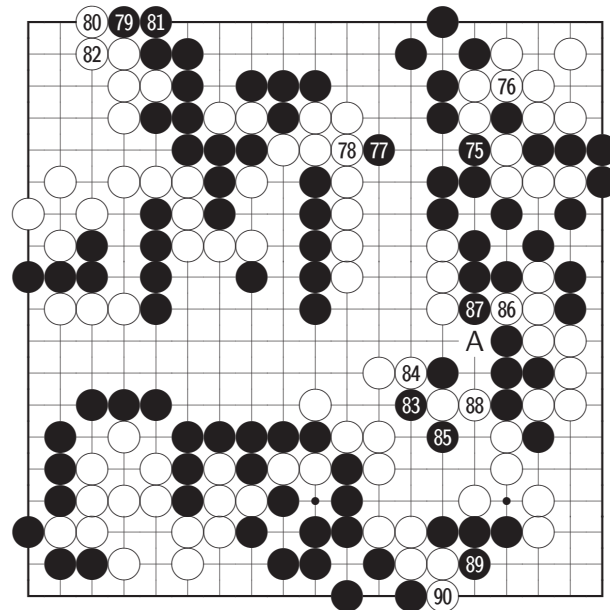


Diagram 19
(Moves: 175-190)

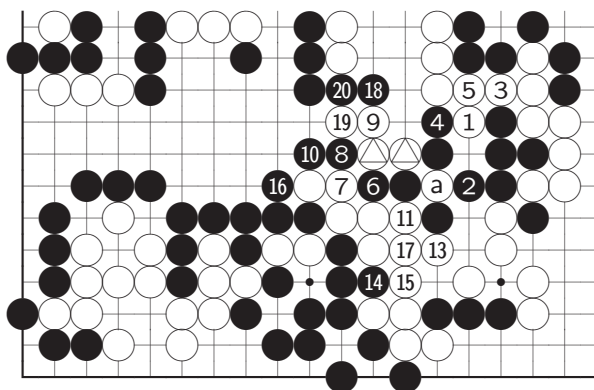
Gu Li was in byo-yomi at this stage, so he had five overtime periods of one minute each. Lee Sedol still had about half an hour left on the clock. Gu exchanged 75 to 81 in sente to give himself more time to think. His next move was important, so buying time with sente endgame moves was sensible.

Gu was reading the hane at 83 carefully, because if he played elsewhere it would be very difficult for Black to catch up after White reinforced at 84.

Extending to 88 was a startling yet powerful move. Korean professionals who were watching the game were surprised and worried when Lee played here, because they hadn't read as deeply as Lee yet.

Since White played at 88 instead of A, Black had to make something happen inside White's lower right area. His plan began with 89.

There's a Chinese proverb warning us that when we ride on the back of a tiger, it's difficult to get off. Sometimes, once you commit yourself to an action, you can't afford to stop halfway. At this point in the game, both players were holding on for dear life, white-knuckled, on the back of the tiger.



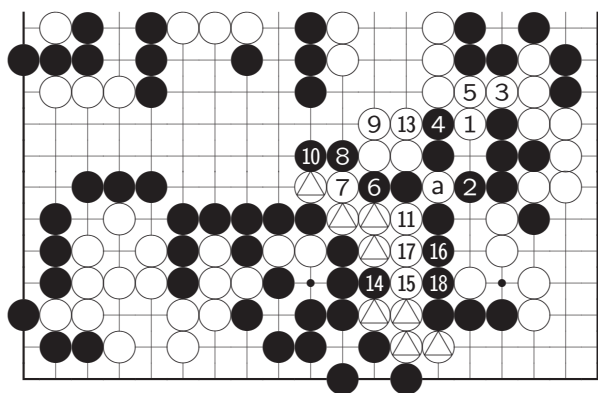
Variation 108 for 186

12 at a

Attaching at 1, instead of pushing at 3 (86), is a crude technique.

Black will cut at 8, and White's shape is riddled with weaknesses.

If White reinforces with 11 and 13, Black will attach at 18 to capture White's marked cutting stones.



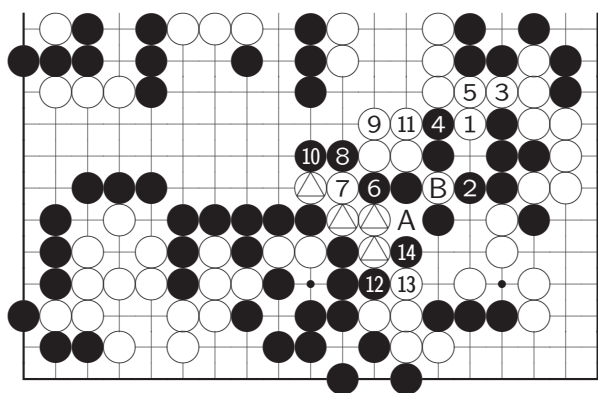
Variation 109 for 186

12 at a

If White takes care of his center stones with 13, Black will push at 14.

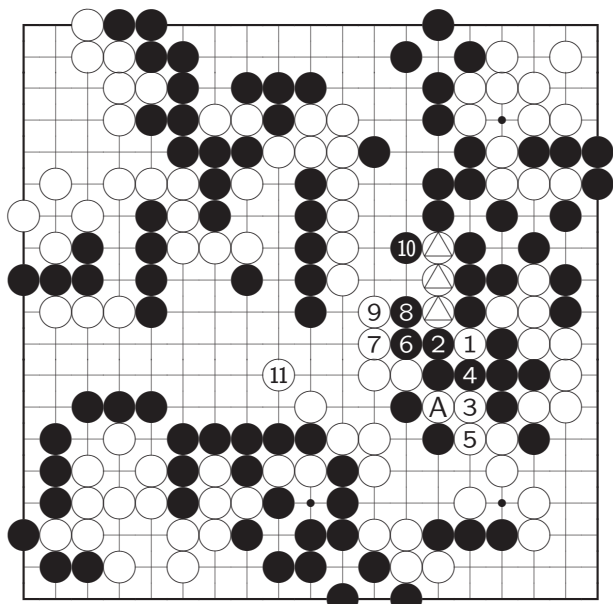
Connecting at 15 is meaningless, because 16 and 18 capture all the marked stones anyway.

If White plays at 16, instead of 15, Black will be satisfied with cutting at 15 and capturing White's four stones at the bottom.



Variation 110 for 186

Even if White doesn't exchange A for Black at B, Black can still cut at 14 and capture White's marked stones.



Variation 111 for 188

Rather than playing Lee's bold move at 3 (88 in the game), most professionals would cut at 1 to simplify the game.

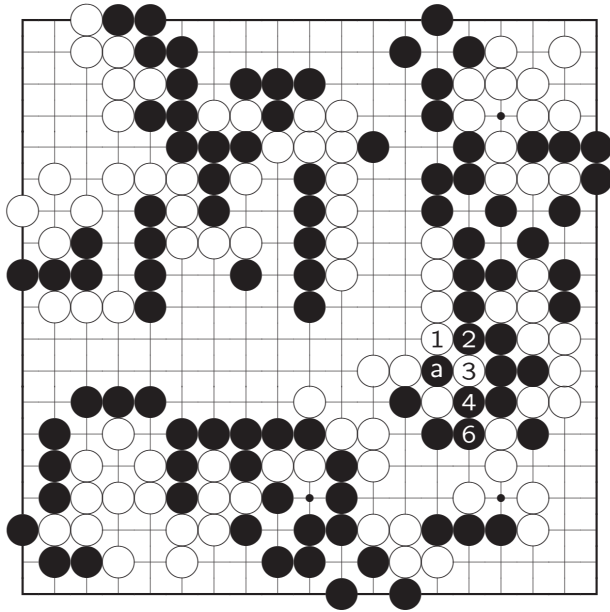
The atari at 2 is the only move and White can save A with 3 and 5.

Even though Black captures White's marked stones, White has a comfortable half point lead up to 11.

Because the games in this match were played using Chinese rules, area scoring was used. Counting when using area scoring is a bit different, and at this stage it seems likely that White will win by 0.5 or 2.5.

The difference depends on who gets to play the last move, because every stone played is worth a point.

Therefore, even if we count White as leading by 1.5 points, he still may only win by half a point, but that's more comfortable than a mere half point lead.



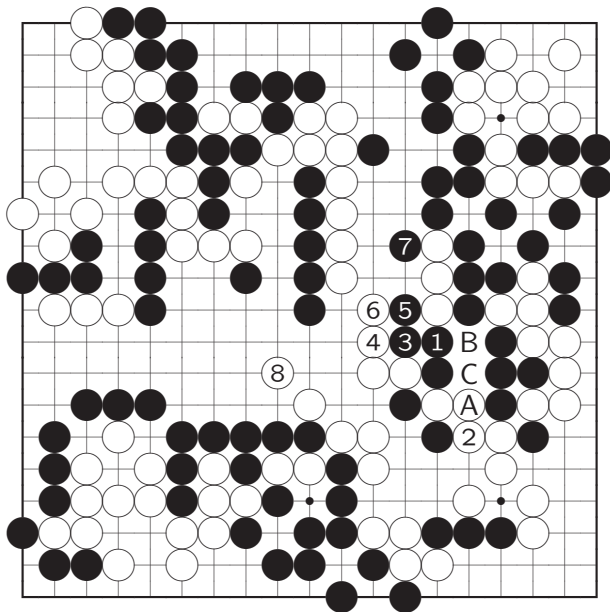
Variation 112 for 188

⑤ at a

Playing atari at ① is a mistake.

Black can connect to his main group with ② to ⑥, and the game will be reversed.

Instead of ③, it might appear that White can still cut by playing at ④, but he'll be caught in a snapback after Black ataris at ⑥.

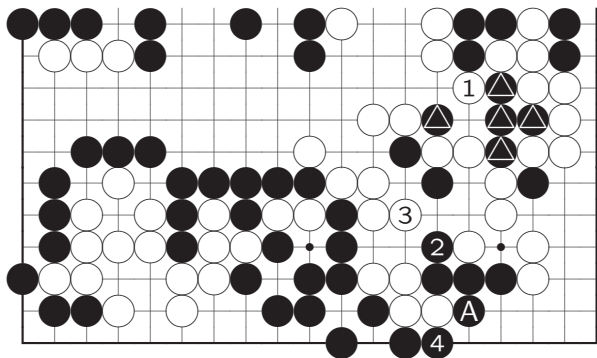


Variation 113 for 189

After A (88), if Black still plays at ①, White will follow the same sequence as in Variation 111 above.

White saves two points compared to the earlier variation, because he avoids exchanging B for C.

White would surely win the game if this happened.



Variation 114 for 190

White doesn't have time to capture the marked stones with ① after A (89), because Black can trade up to ④.

Black is satisfied with this result and the game is reversed.

Lee Sedol's Ghost Move

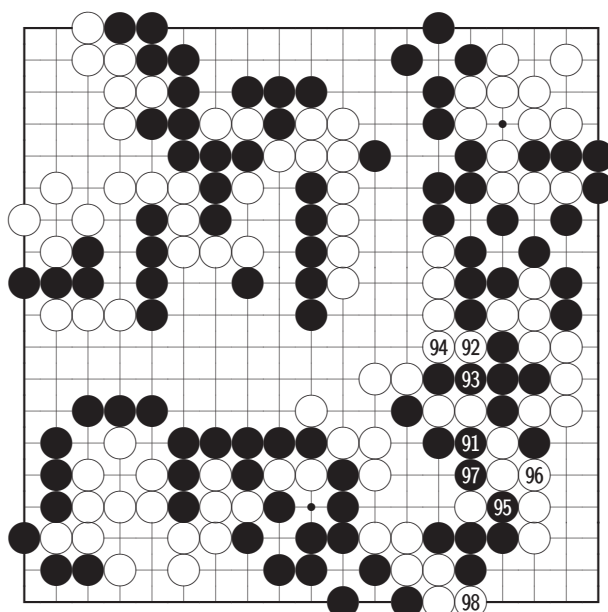
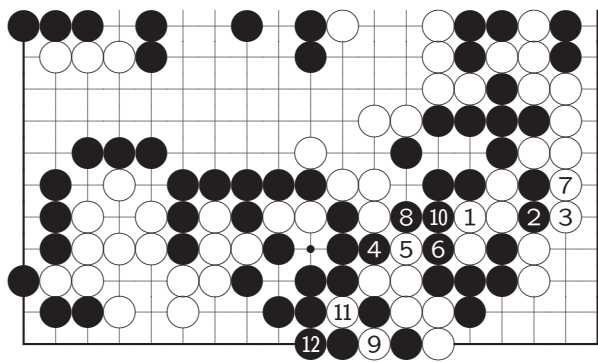


Diagram 20
(Moves: 191-198)

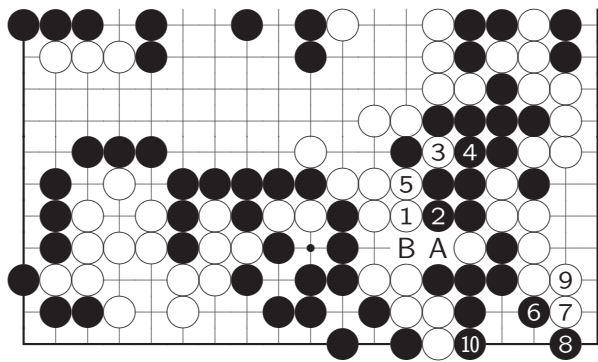
Black went all out, and ⑨⑤ appeared to be a brilliant move. Most observers thought Lee had collapsed, but, when Black cut at ⑨⑦, pushing on the first line with ⑨⑧ was an amazing ‘ghost move’. This technique is incredibly rare and hardly anyone saw it before it was played. It appears that Lee had already found this move when he played ⑧⑧ (or even earlier), which is remarkable.



Variation 115 for ⑨⑥

If White connects at ①, he'll fall into Black's trap.

Cutting at ② is tesuji and Black can create a favorable one-move approach ko up to ⑫.



Variation 116 for ⑨⑧

Threatening to cut with ① doesn't work.

Even though White removes Black's eye shape with ③ and ⑤, Black can make another eye in the corner with ⑥ to ⑩.

Instead of ①, if White plays at A, Black will atari at B and the sequence is practically the same afterwards.

After Victory, Tighten Your Helmet

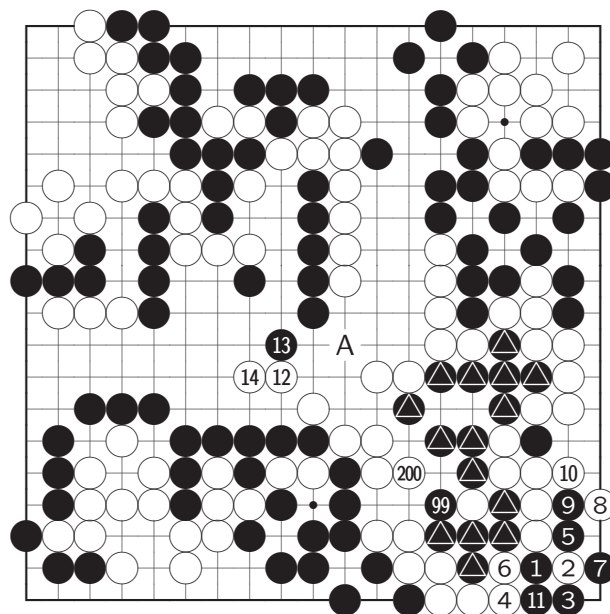


Diagram 21
(Moves: 199-214)

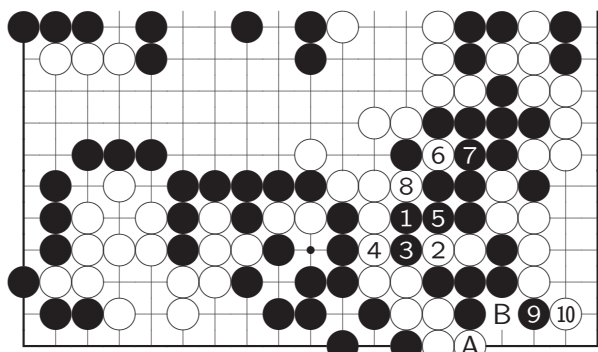
White ②①① was the coup de grâce. When Black hanged at ③ (②①③), ④ captured the marked stones without fighting a ko. The result up to ⑫ was excellent for White and the Jubango was practically over.

Even though Black made a small life in the corner, he lost almost 10 points in the negotiations.

However, after ⑬, White should have defended at A. Had he done so, he would have won without question, and this game would have become Lee Sedol's masterpiece.

White ⑭ was a huge oversight. This kind of situation, where an important game is practically over, is the most critical time to maintain your attention. This is true for professionals and amateurs alike.

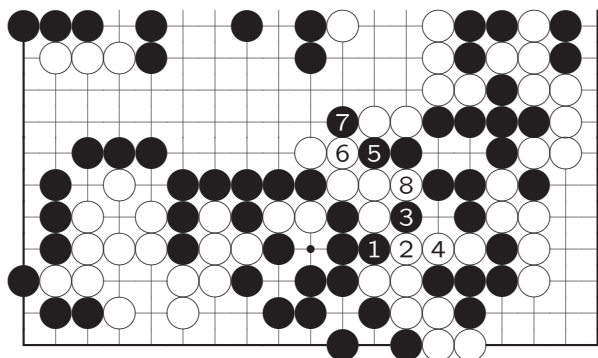
At the conclusion of the Battle of Sekigahara in Japan, while surveying what remained of the battlefield, the future shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu requested that his helmet be brought to him. This seemed an odd request, as he had not worn his helmet in the heat of battle, but Tokugawa purportedly uttered a phrase which would become famous throughout Japan, "After victory, tighten the cords of your helmet."



Variation 117 for ①⑨⑨

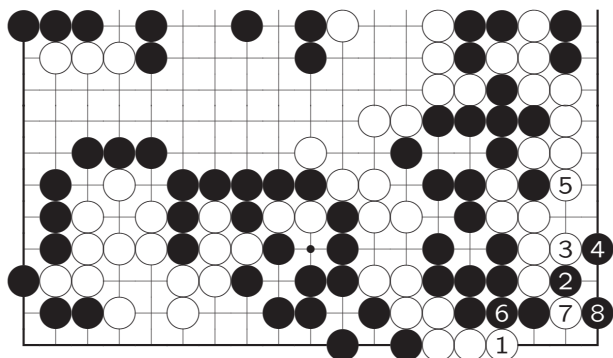
If Black attaches at ① (for ⑨⑨), White extends to ②.

After ⑩, Black can't make another eye in the corner because ① ensures that he only has a false eye at B.



Variation 118 for 199

Black can also think about cutting at ① and ③, but there are no moves left at all after ⑧ crushes him.

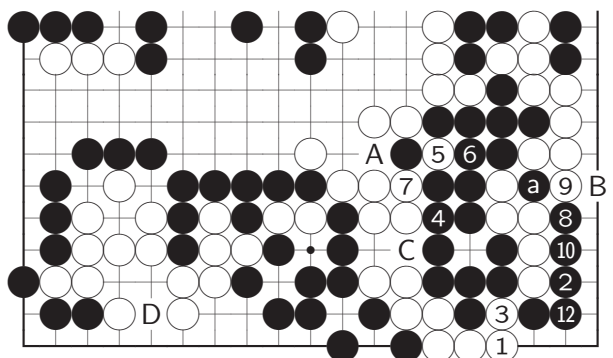


Variation 119 for 202

Extending to ① before playing the hane at ⑦ (202) is clumsy.

Black's hane at ② is diabolical, and he manages to eke out a ko with ④ and ⑧.

This is an absolute disaster for White.



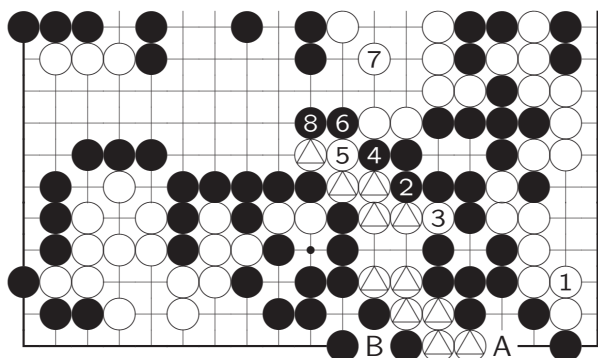
Variation 120 for 202

If White cuts at ③ instead, Black will come back to ④ to extend his liberties.

White steals Black's second eye with ⑤ and ⑦, but Black can squeeze from ⑧ to ⑪ and White will be in deep trouble after ⑫.

We can expect a direct ko after A to C, but Black has some good ko threats around D, so it's another disaster for White.

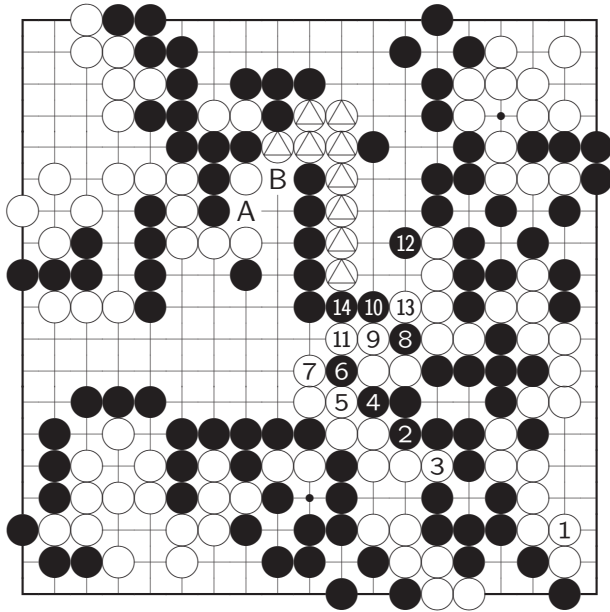
⑪ at a



Variation 121 for 204

If White connects at ①, rather than extending to A, Black can push and cut with ④ and ⑥ in sente.

White's marked group is in serious trouble after ⑧, and White will have to fight a very disadvantageous ko at B.

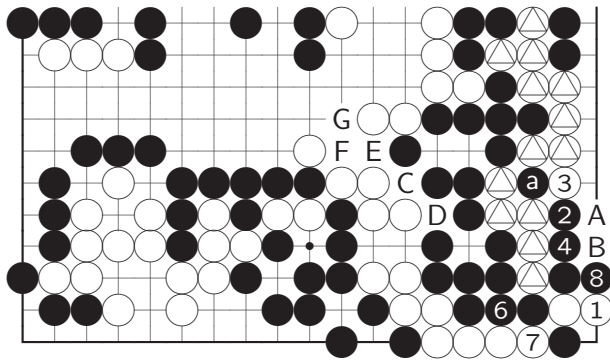


Variation 122 for (204)

White may try to extend his liberties with ⑦, but Black will be unperturbed.

Black ⑧ and ⑩ comprise a severe tesuji combination and White's marked stones are captured up to ⑭ (remember that A and B are miai).

Instead of ⑨, if White captures immediately at ⑪, Black will still hane with ⑫ and the situation is about the same.



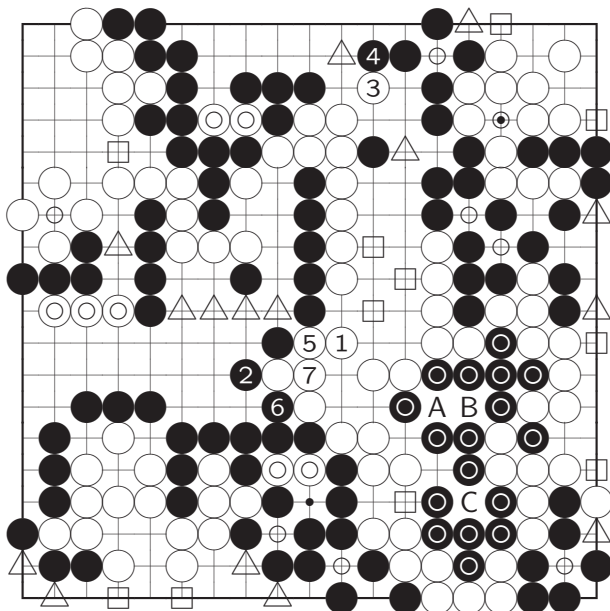
Variation 123 for (206)

⑤ at a

White might consider extending to ① in an attempt to capture everything, but this is an overplay.

Black can squeeze in sente with ② and ④, and White's marked stones are captured up to ⑧.

If White plays ⑦ at A, Black will exchange Black at ⑦ for White B in sente, and then play C to G as in the previous variation.



Variation 124 for (214)

White should have played ⑭ in the game at ①.

Let's count together one last time...

Black:

Top: 27, left side: 32, bottom: 10, bottom right: 3, and prisoners at A, B and C: 3.

Total: 75 points.

White:

Top left: 16, bottom right: 50, bottom left: 5, top right: 8, and komi: 7.5.

Total: 86.5 points.

White is clearly ahead on the board, so the game would have been over.

Scour the Board for Aji When Behind

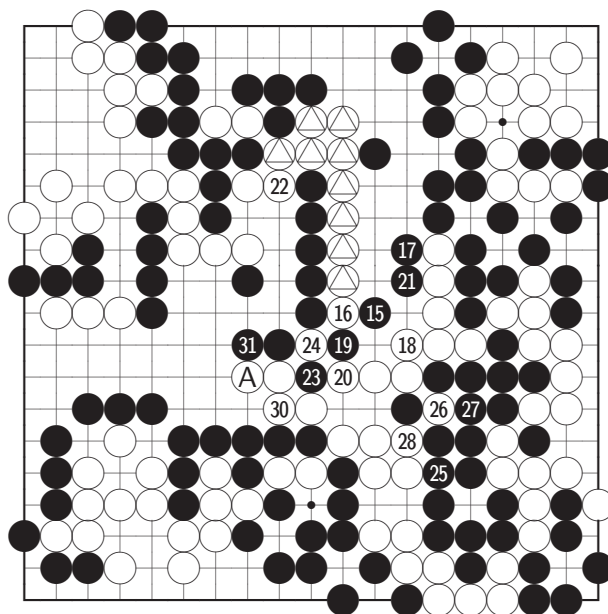


Diagram 22
(Moves: 215-232)

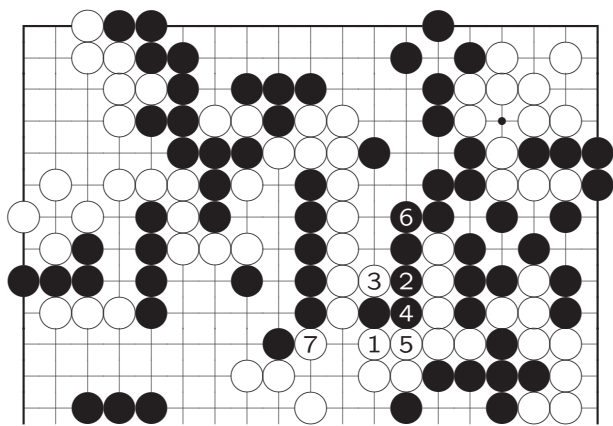
229 at 223, 232 at 224

Gu Li had been scouring the board for a way to catch up, and when White extended to ① he pounced. Black 15 was razor sharp, and 17 was a tight followup. Black exploited White's bad aji ruthlessly, and the game suddenly became tense again.

Connecting at 18 was a good move, but White's shape had already become brittle. Black separated White's marked stones from the right side with 19 and 21, and 22 became necessary in order to connect.

An unlikely ko began with 23, providing a feasible resistance for Black. It's very difficult to come up with this sort of move here, but since White didn't have many liberties at the bottom it worked surprisingly well.

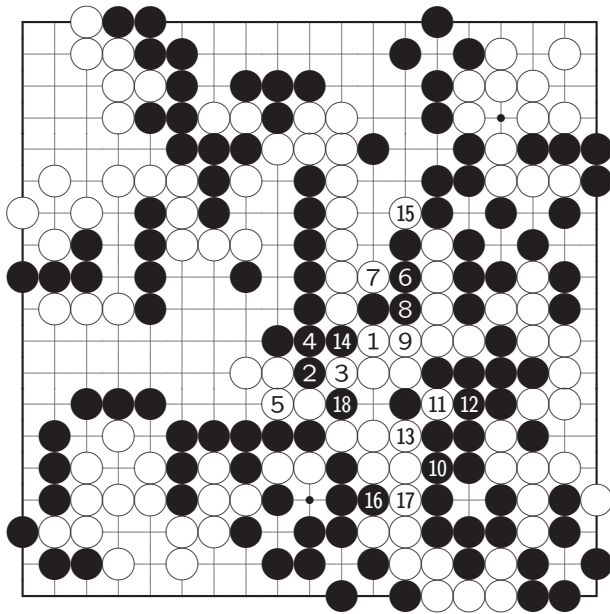
Black was trying to make the game complicated, and he was succeeding so far. White didn't have enough ko threats, so he connected at 30, but Black maintained the pressure at 31.



Variation 125 for 218

Instead of connecting at 18 above, responding at 1 is also conceivable.

If Black plays at 2, White will gladly manage the center up to 7, but Black has a better plan...

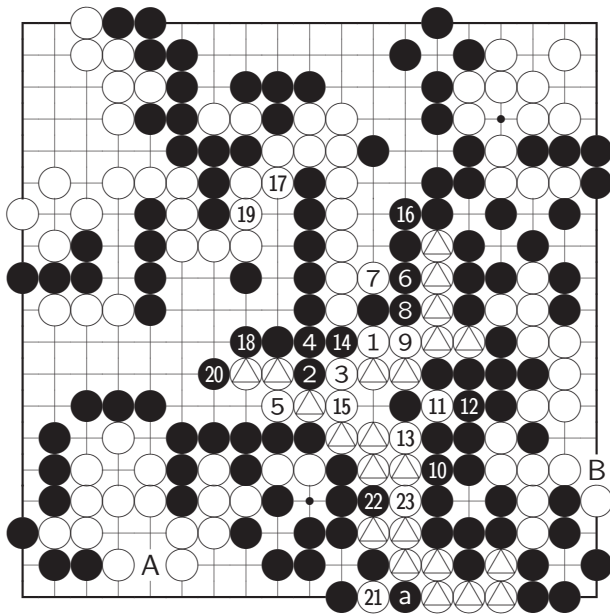


Variation 126 for 218

Clamping at ② reduces White's liberties, and White eventually finds himself in trouble.

Black can come back to ⑥ after exchanging ② to ⑤, and White should be wary of his shortage of liberties.

If White still ataris at ⑦, Black will revive his dead group with a snapback at ⑱.



Variation 127 for 218

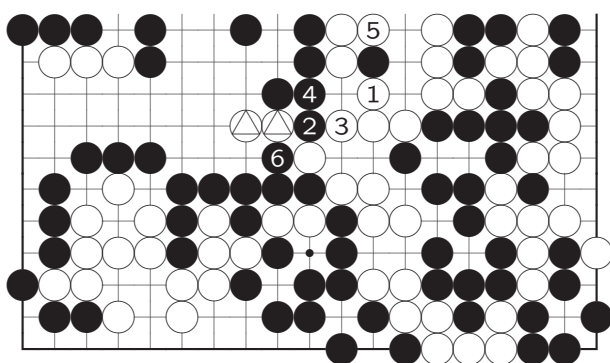
24 at a

If White connects at ⑮ instead, Black will save his cutting stones with ⑯.

White should connect his center group with ⑰ and ⑲, but Black can block at ⑳ while White connects his stones.

As you can see, White's enormous dragon at the bottom is in deep trouble up to 24 (taking the ko at a).

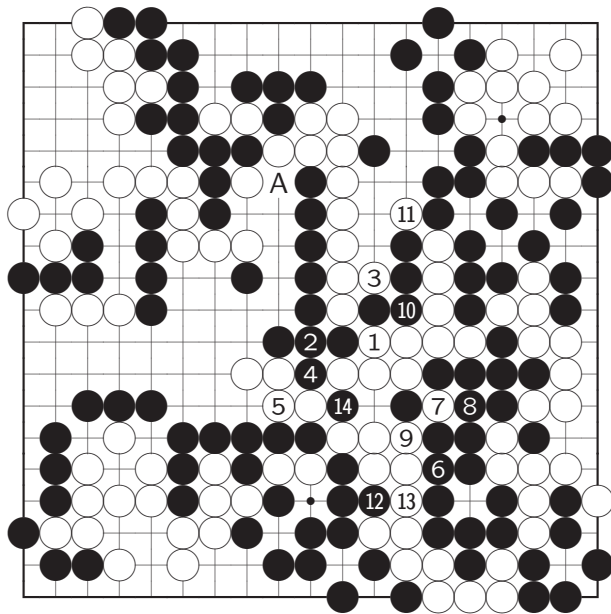
There are no ko threats for White, but Black still has some ko threats at A and B.



Variation 128 for 218

White should reinforce his weakness with ⑤, but Black will cut at ⑥ and the marked stones will be wasted.

This would be a big loss for White, but he can still play like this because he was winning by more than 10 points earlier.

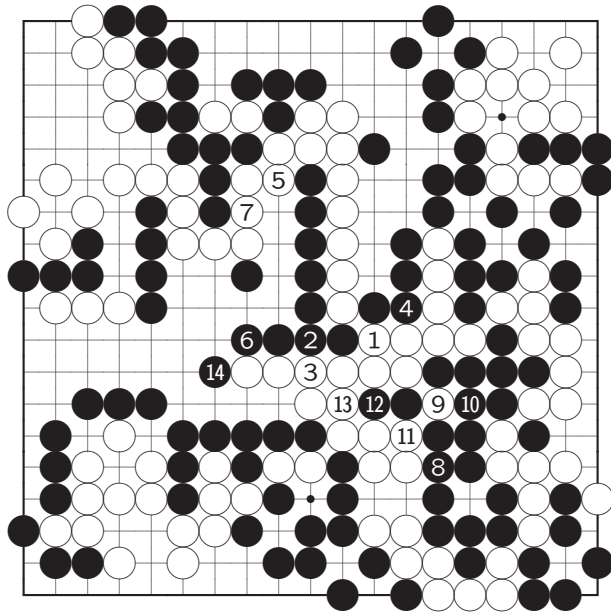


Variation 129 for (22)

If White cuts with ① and ③, instead of connecting at A (②), Black will clamp at ④ and threaten to cut.

Even if White connects at ⑤, Black can still cause trouble with a snapback up to ⑭.

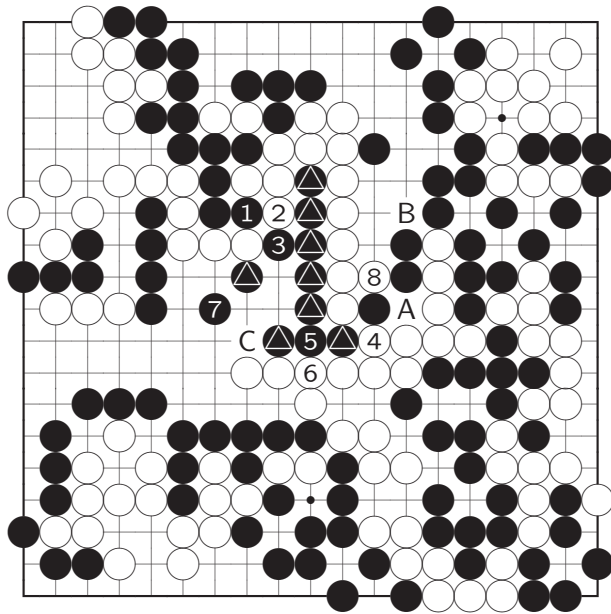
In the end, the result is the same as in Variation 126.



Variation 130 for (22)

Connecting at ③ is also conceivable, and the result will be a one-move approach ko for Black up to ⑭.

However, Lee thought that the moves in the game were safer than this variation and he was right.



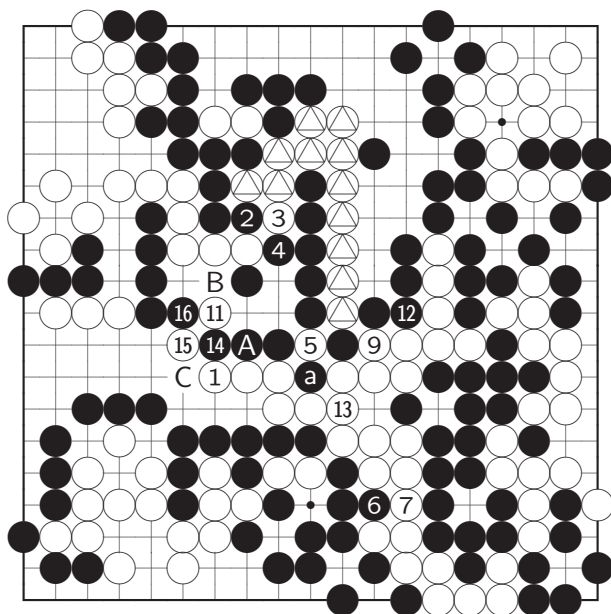
Variation 131 for 223

Pushing and cutting with ① and ③ is premature. White can connect at ⑥ in sente, and connect his center group with ⑧.

White ⑥ in this sequence fixes White's liberty problem at the bottom and makes miai of ⑦ and ⑧.

After ⑧, A and B are miai.

If Black omits ⑦ to connect at B, White at ⑦ captures the marked stones. If liberties are ever an issue, turning at C captures them more quickly.



Variation 132 for 232

⑧ at a, ⑩ at ⑤

After Black pushes at A (31), White really wants to extend at ①, but it doesn't work.

Black can isolate White's center group with ② and ④, and White can't win the ko at ⑤ because Black has more ko threats.

As you can see, B and C are miai for Black, so White's marked stones die after ⑩.

Battles Are Not Won by Strength Alone

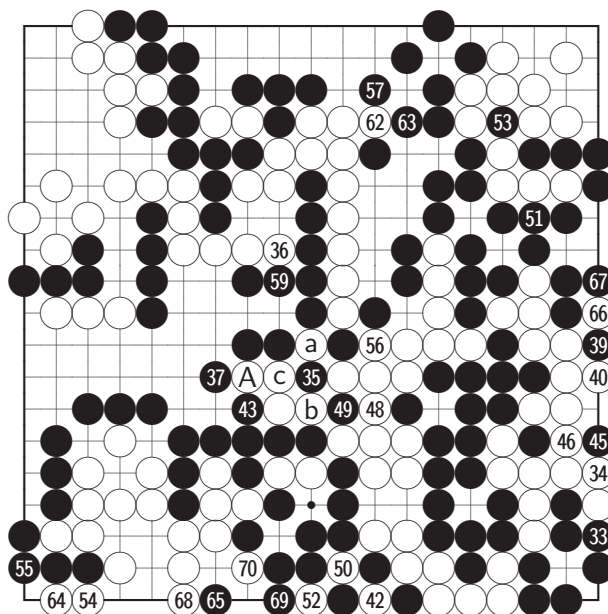


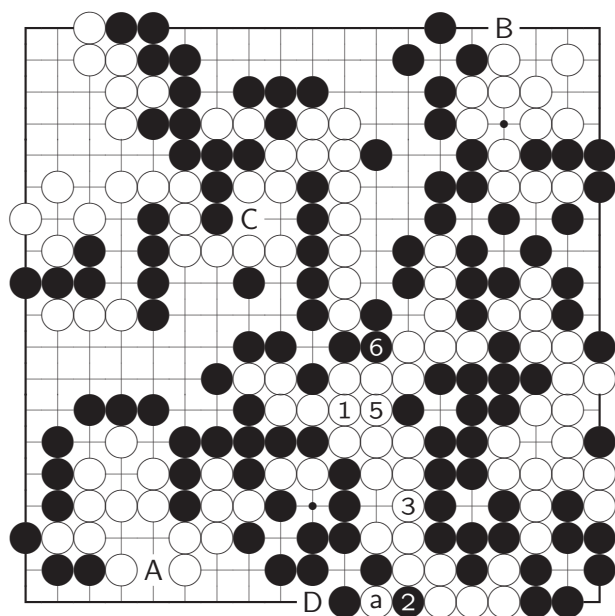
Diagram 23

(Moves: 233-270)

⊙238 ⊙244 ⊙258 at ⊙a, ⊙241 ⊙247 at ⊙235, ⊙260 at ⊙b, ⊙261 at ⊙c

The game had become complicated again, because of White's overplay at ⊙A (⊙214). The atari at ⊙48 was the right move, but White had already lost a lot of points here.

However, Lee stayed calm, even though the game took a disappointing turn, and eliminating the ko with ⊙52 ensured his lead. Battles are not won by strength alone; your mental state is also important.



Variation 133 for ⊙248

⊙4 at ⊙a

If White connects at ⊙1, Black will be able to create a more serious ko up to ⊙6.

This is a one-move approach ko, and it's a heavy burden for White.

Black still has some large ko threats, like A, B and C, but White has only one at D.

A Relentless Endgame

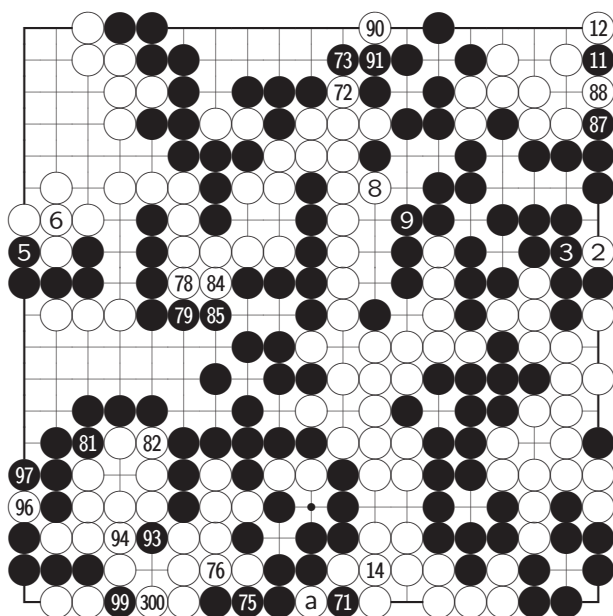


Diagram 24
(Moves: 271-314)

⊙274 ⊙280 ⊙286 ⊙292 ⊙298 ⊙304 ⊙310 at (a),
●277 ●283 ●289 ●295 ●301 ●307 ●313 at 271

Gu Li fought on relentlessly, even though his flame was waning. Given the importance of the game, his fighting spirit was understandable. Chinese culture places a high value on perseverance.

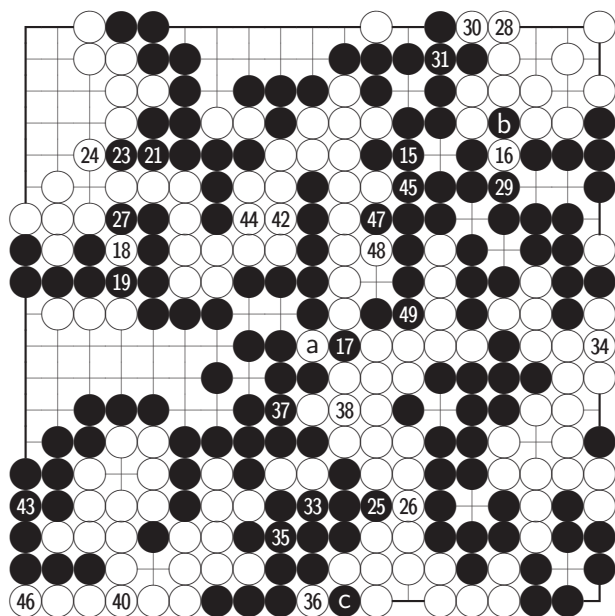


Diagram 25
(Moves: 315-349)

⊙320 at (a), ⊙322 at 317, ⊙332 at (b), ●339 at (c), ●341 at 336

The game continued all the way to the end, as in this diagram.

Lee Sedol Wins the Match

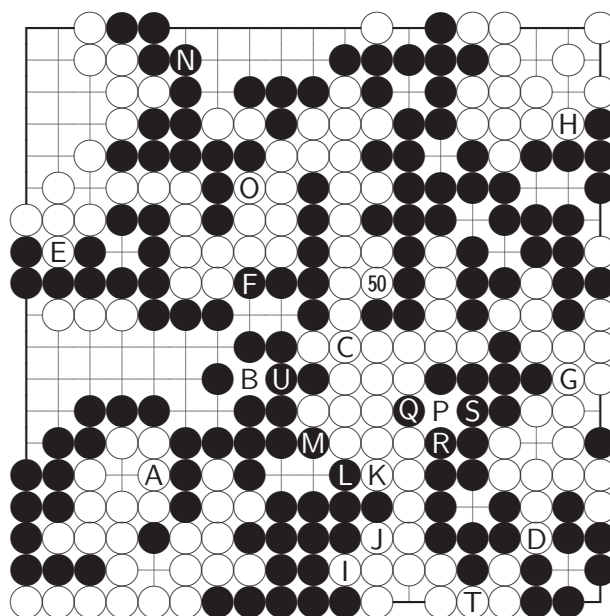


Diagram 26
(Move: 350)

350 moves: White won by 2.5 points.

Lee Sedol won the MLily Gu vs Lee Jubango with a 6–2 score! Since Lee won after eight games, the last two scheduled games were not played, which was a little disappointing for Go fans. These were the rules agreed upon at the start of the match.

Lee Sedol received a prize of 5,000,000 RMB, which was worth more than \$800,000 USD at the time. It was the largest prize for any Go match in the world to date.

Lee made a small mistake at ⑫⑩ (A), but he was able to maintain his lead, and his play in this game was almost flawless up until ⑫④ (B). If he'd played B at C, the game would have been over much earlier and it would have been his masterpiece.

The overall match must have been very disappointing for Gu Li by this stage, but he maintained his fighting spirit until the very end and never let up on Lee.

The guest became the host with ③⑩ (D) and White was leading up to ③④ (E). Black ⑤① (F) was an excellent move and ⑤② (G) was a very clever response, which incited a complicated trade. White didn't sacrifice perfectly, but he maintained his lead with ⑥⑥ (H).

White ⑨② and ⑨④ (I and J) formed a razor sharp combination and White pulled ahead up to ⑨⑧ (K). Black ⑩⑦ (L) was a brilliant tesuji, and Black gained ground up to ⑩⑤ (M), but White was still ahead.

Black ⑩① (N) was a small mistake, which should have been at O. White ⑩⑦④ (P) was a clever jab and White established a clear lead. Black resisted with ⑩③ and ⑩⑤ (Q and R), which was appropriate because he was behind. However, ⑩⑧ (at S) was powerful and unexpected, and it became the winning move. White's ghost move at ⑩⑨ (T) delivered the coup de grâce.

The game should have been over after White played at ⑩⑫ (at U), but White momentarily faltered with ⑩④ (B) and Gu was able to complicate the game again with his sharp and forceful play. Black earned almost 10 points afterwards, but it wasn't enough to change the result.

Part II

Lee Sedol vs Gu Li

2004 Chinese A League: Round Nine

June 17, 2004, Guizhou, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Gu Li 7d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

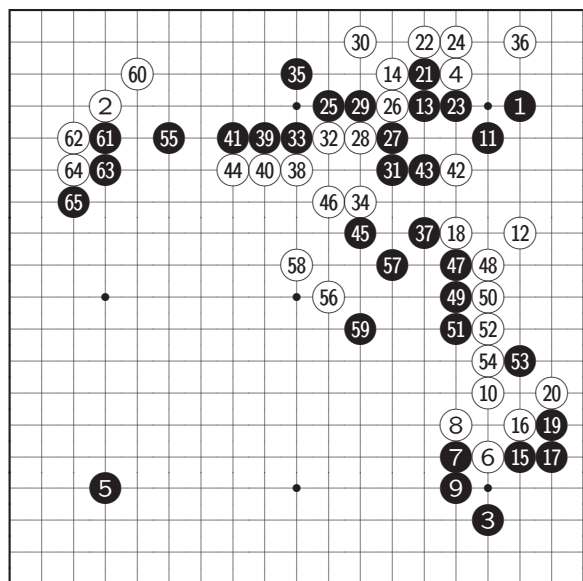


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-65)

This was Lee Sedol and Gu Li's first game together.

Black played a Shusaku style opening with ①, ③ and ⑤, which still enjoyed some popularity at the time.

White ⑱ was slack. It should have been at ②⑥.

Pressing with ②⑤ was strong, and the flow was good for Black up to ③①.

Living with ③⑥ was necessary and ③⑦ was a tesuji for moving out.

White ④④ was unnecessary. Playing at ④⑦ would have been better.

Black made some beneficial exchanges in sente, from ④⑤ to ⑤④, and was in a good mood up to ⑤⑤.

White exchanged ⑤⑥ to ⑤⑨ to reinforce his center group, before taking sente to play a big move at ⑥①.

Black ⑥① to ⑥⑤ were active and strong, and Black controlled the flow of play.

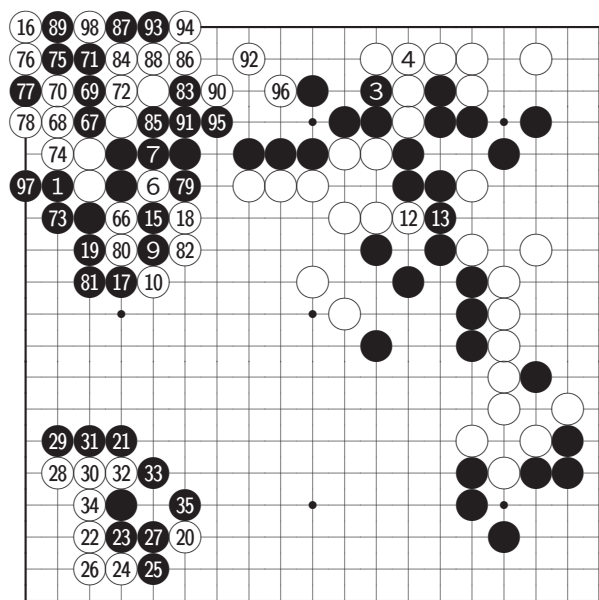


Diagram 2
(Moves: 66-135)

99 105 111 at 87, 100 at 93, 102 108 114 at 98

Black 67 set up an excellent sacrifice, in order to squeeze White, and the continuation up to 83 was accurate.

White 86 was careless. It should have been at 87 instead.

Black 93 was delicate, and the corner became troublesome for White.

Black created a picnic ko up to 2 (102), so the result was a success for Black.

Capturing White's cutting stones with 17 provided adequate compensation for the ko, and Black solidified his lead.

White 22 was thin, but he was trying to catch up in terms of territory.

Black 35 was solid and thick, making it tough for White to catch up.

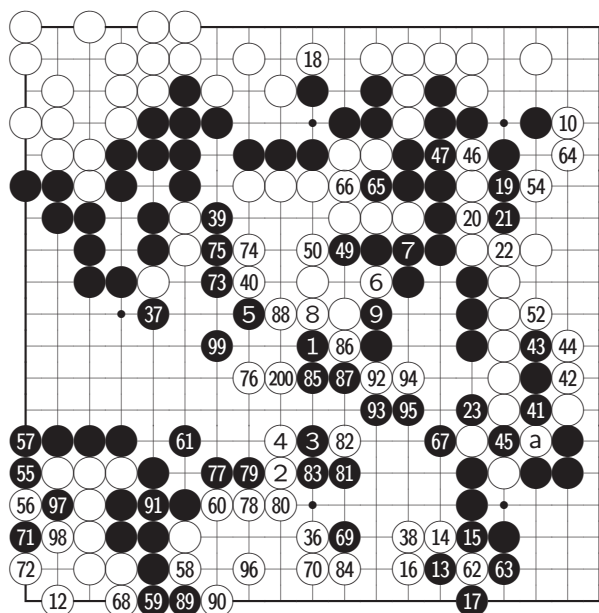


Diagram 3
(Moves: 136-223)

148 153 at a, 151 at 145, 211 at 156

Black 37 was slack. He should have played at 39 first.

White 38 was big, and 40 was correct. White caught up a little up to 54.

White 64 was too small. It should have been played around 83.

Black 67 was solid and 69 was a sharp tactic for reducing White's area at the bottom.

Black 85 was the key point in the center, and Black's endgame afterwards was solid and careful.

The game was practically decided after 23 (223).

223 moves recorded: Black won by 5.5 points.

9th Samsung Cup: Semifinal, Game One

November 16, 2004, Ulsan, Korea: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 7d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

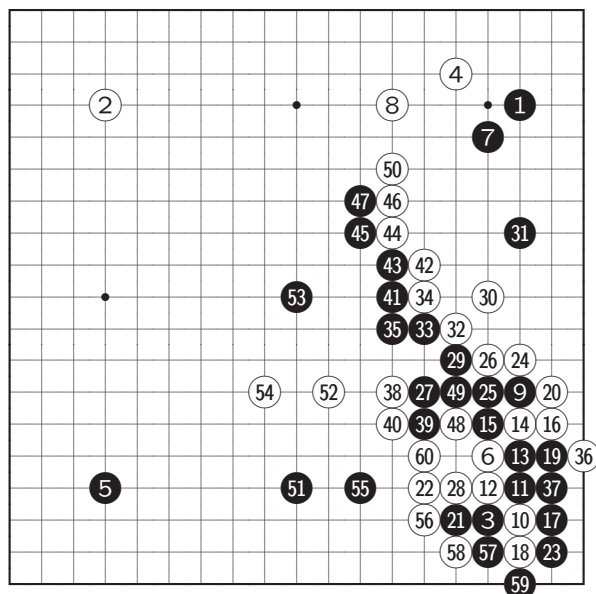


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-60)

The semifinal of the 9th Samsung Cup was Lee Sedol and Gu Li's first best of three match together.

We see another Shusaku style opening with ①, ③, ⑤ and ⑦. Approaching immediately at ④ later fell out of fashion, because playing ⑤ at ⑧ is effective.

The hane on the inside with ⑪ wasn't a good choice, because ⑩ made miai of ③① and ③②.

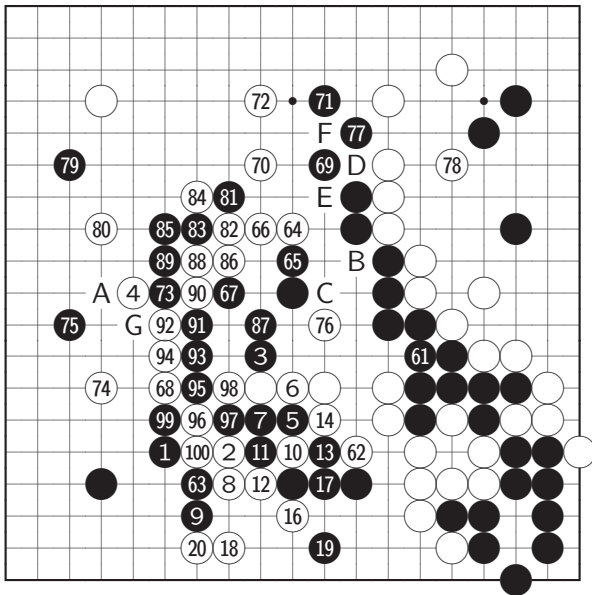
Saving two stones with ②⑩ was active, because it opposed Black's plan of developing the right side.

Black ③① was played to support Black's top right, but it was questionable.

Making shape with ③② and ③④ was natural, and ③⑧ was a sharp tesuji which deformed Black's shape.

Black strengthened his center group with ④① to ④⑦, but White took a small lead from ④⑪ to ④⑩.

Black developed the bottom from ④⑤① to ④⑤⑤, but Black's center group became thinner in the process.



9th Samsung Cup: Semifinal, Game Two

November 18, 2004, Ulsan, Korea: Komi: 6.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 7d*

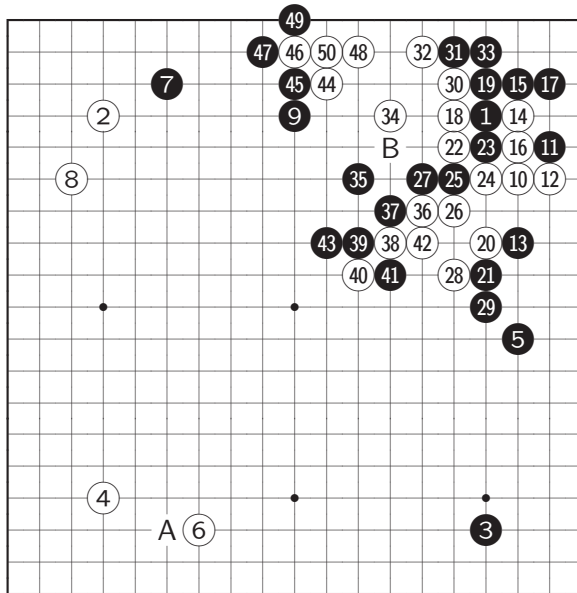


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

Black played the Chinese Opening with ①, ③ and ⑤. Professionals were experimenting with ⑥ at the time, but *Gu Li style* at A wasn't yet popular.

Black ⑪ and ⑬ were unusual in this opening, and ⑭ to ⑱ formed a joseki.

Offering to trade with ⑳ was interesting, and ㉑ was a mistake. Black should have traded at ㉒.

After ㉑, continuing with ㉓ was also slack. It would have been better to consolidate the top with B.

White was happy to stabilize a group at the top with ㉔, and it was hard for Black to attack afterwards.

White ㉖ and ㉘ was a strong and active way to take sente on the right side and return to the top.

White's top group was completely settled up to ㉚.

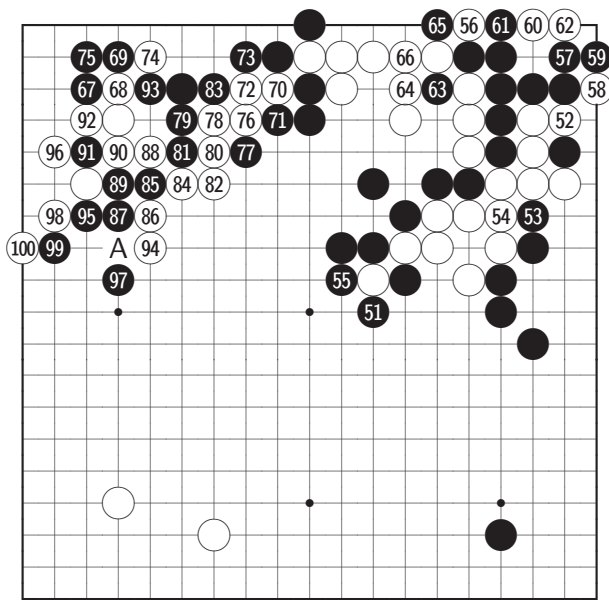


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

Black 51 showed fighting spirit, but it was too much. Sacrificing the top right corner with 55 wasn't a good decision, because it was too big to give away.

White 70 was a well timed cut, and White maintained his lead with a smooth flow up to 84.

Black 87 and 89 were aggressive but proper moves, and 88 and 90 were the right responses.

Exchanging 91 for 92 was inevitable, to forestall the ladder at A while giving Black time to cut at 93.

Black 97 was too gentle. Since Black was behind, he should have played at 98.

White was relieved to settle without any trouble up to 100.

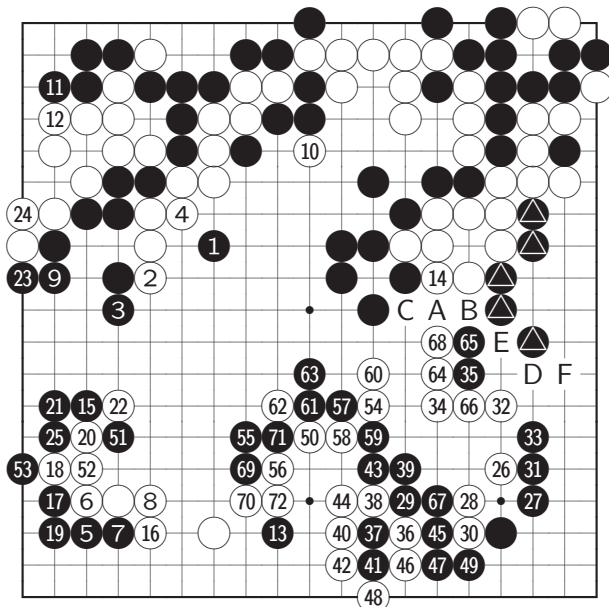


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-172)

Black aggressively attempted to catch up with 5 (105), 13 and 15, but 10 and 14 were solid and careful.

White 26 was big, and White maintained his lead because he was thick and strong everywhere.

Simplifying the game with 40 and 42 showed good judgment, and it was difficult for Black to catch up.

White 50 and 54 safely carried White's lead home.

Black 57 and 59 were Black's last hope, but White managed his group skillfully up to 68, and the game was decided.

If Black tries to cut at A, White will counter with B to F, and Black's marked stones will be captured.

172 moves: White won by resignation.

9th Samsung Cup: Semifinal, Game Three

November 19, 2004, Ulsan, Korea: Komi: 6.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 7d*

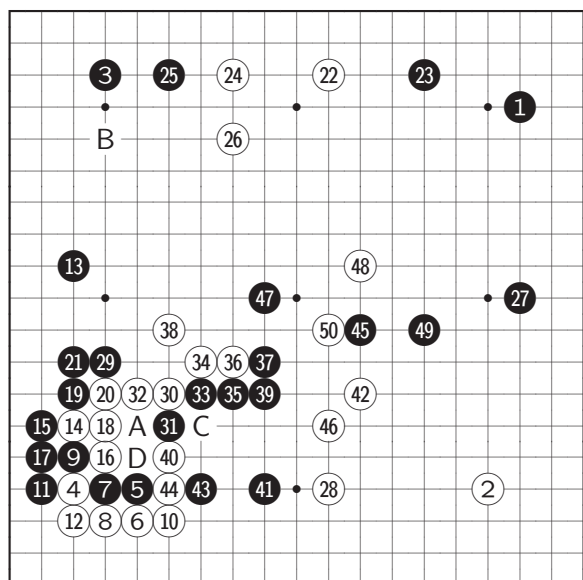


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

Black set up a Chinese style formation with ⑤ to ⑬.

Clamping at ⑭ was severe, but ⑮ managed flexibly.

Recently, professionals prefer to pincer with ⑭ at ⑲—Black A and ⑳ can be expected to follow. This aims to develop power and approach around B.

The variation from ⑮ to ㉑ was popular at the time, and the opening up to ㉔ was well balanced.

White ㉓ was questionable. Playing ㉓ at ㉖ would have created a stronger shape.

Black ㉗ was a sharp tesuji, which strained White's shape, and defending at ㉘ was too stiff.

Instead of ㉘, White C, Black at ㉘, ㉚, Black D, White A, ㉗ and White A (again) is better.

Black ㉜ was an overplay. It should have been at ㉚.

White attacked Black's whole group with ㉚, and ㉞ stored power for the upcoming battle.

Cutting Black with ㉚ and ㉞ was forceful.

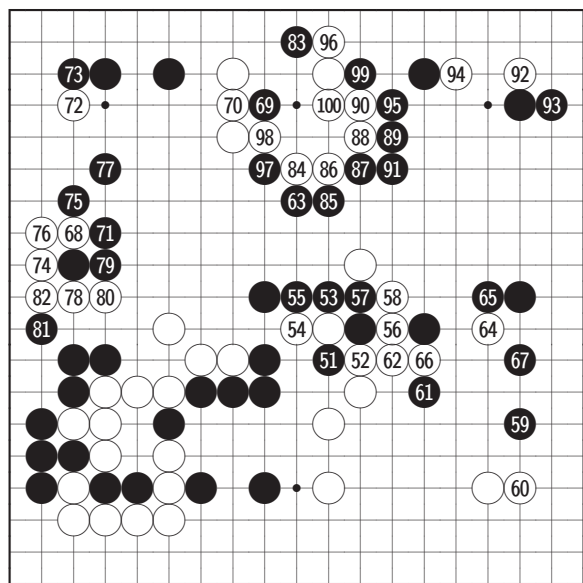


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

Black's responses from ⑤1 to ⑤7 were correct, and ⑤9 and ⑥1 were light and beneficial exchanges.

White ⑥4 was too gentle. Invading at ⑥7 was best.

White ⑦4 was a serious mistake. He should have extended to ⑦5 instead.

Black ⑦5 and ⑦7 comprised a strong counter and established a firm lead for Black.

Black ⑧3 was sharp. Black's lead solidified up to ⑨1.

The game was becoming desperate for White, so he went all out with ⑨2 and ⑨4.

Black ⑨5 to ⑨9 was the start of an exquisite sequence which reinforced Black's surrounding position.

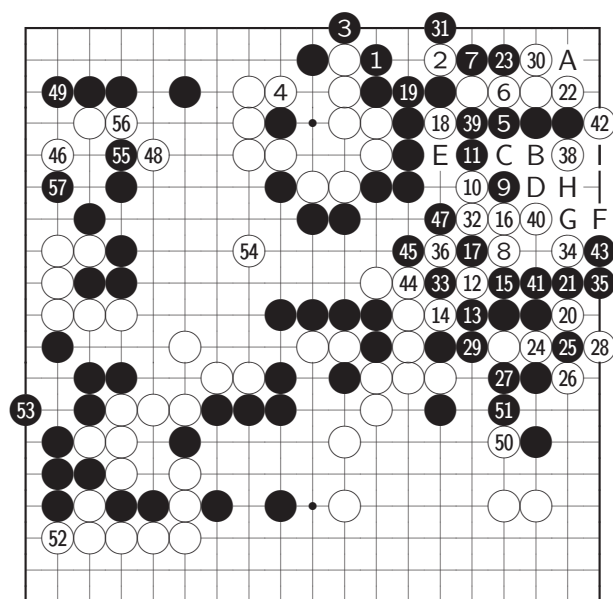


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-157)

⑬7 at ⑪2

Black ① (⑩1) was bold, and White's corner stones were practically captured up to ⑤.

White ⑥ was a tricky move, but Black's response at ⑦ was accurate and White's corner group died.

After ⑦, ②3 and A were miai for Black.

White played very aggressively with ⑬6, ⑬20, ⑬26 and ⑬38, but Black's responses were impeccable and White couldn't make anything happen in the corner.

White can't live with B to F, because G is a tesuji—if White captures at H, Black throws in again at I.

White kept trying hard on the right side afterwards, but he was unsuccessful because Black defended solidly and precisely.

157 moves: Black won by resignation.

4th CSK Cup: Round Three

May 3, 2005, Seoul, Korea: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 7d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

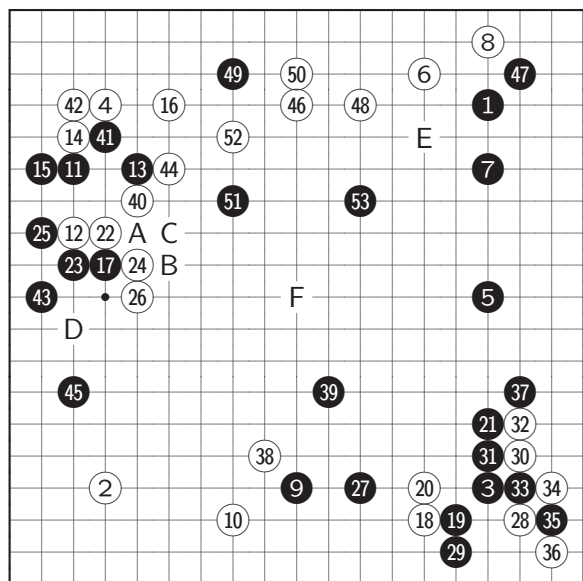


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-53)

The Three Star Opening of ①, ③ and ⑤ (Sanren-sei) is one of Gu Li's favorites. When playing this opening, he expects a fighting oriented game.

If Black had played ②③ at A, we would expect a ladder after ②④, Black at ②⑥, White B and Black C. The ladder favored White, so ②③ made miai of A and ②⑤.

Black ②⑦ hit the vital point of ①⑧ and ②⑩, so trading them for the corner with ②⑧ was a good strategy.

The opening was well balanced up to ③⑨, but ④⑩ headed in the wrong direction. Developing the bottom left with D would have been better.

The flow of play from ④⑩ to ④⑤ limited White's potential on the left side naturally.

White ④⑧ was a little passive; ④⑧ at E was better.

Black ④⑨ and ④⑤① delicately reduced White's moyo at the top, but ④⑤③ should have been around F.

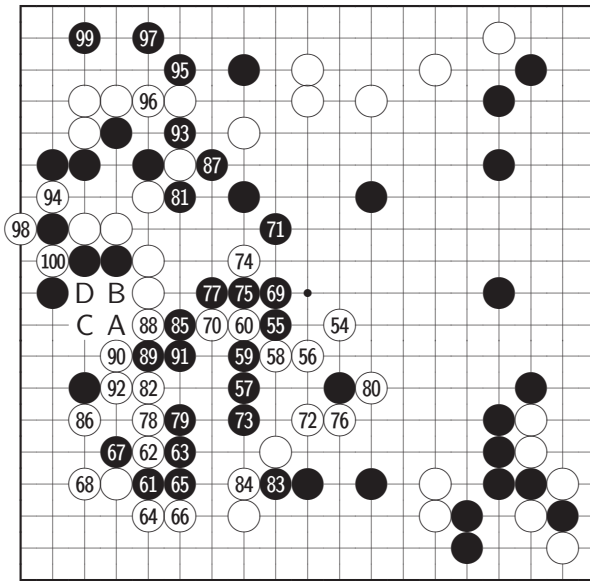


Diagram 2
(Moves: 54-100)

Reducing Black's center with ⑤④ was just right, and attacking with ⑤⑦ was too direct. Invading around ⑥⑥ would have been more interesting for Black.

Black ⑥① looked strong, but ⑥④ and ⑥⑥ were calm and flexible. Black didn't gain enough from his attack.

Black ⑦③ was a little slack, and the way White managed his weaknesses with ⑦④ and ⑦⑥ was exquisite.

Black ⑧① was severe, but White managed the situation flexibly up to ⑧⑧.

Black ⑨③ threatened both the top and the left side, but ⑨④ was a brilliant move which protected the cutting point at A. After ⑨④, if Black cuts at A, White responds with B to D.

Destroying White's territory in the top left with ⑨⑤ to ⑨⑨ was aggressive and powerful, but White was happy to trade his corner for the left side up to ⑩⑩.

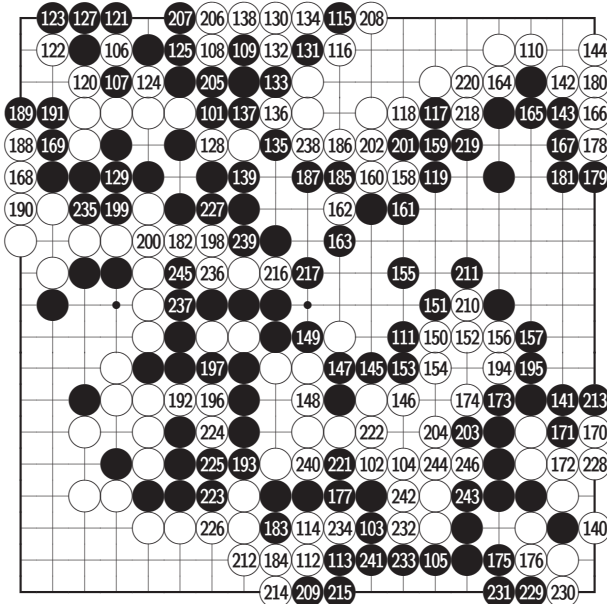


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-246)

⑫⑥ at ⑩⑥

Black captured White's top left group with ⑩①, but ⑩② to ⑩⑩ was a wonderful endgame sequence which consolidated White's lead.

White ⑬⑩ was very tricky, but ⑬① and ⑬③ were shrewd and the game became closer up to ⑬⑨.

The hane and connection of ⑭② and ⑭④ was big because it promised the sente endgame sequence to ⑭①.

Reducing Black's center territory with ⑮② was clever.

White ⑰⑦ was the last big endgame move, and White didn't give Black any chances to catch up afterwards.

White's endgame from ⑭④ onwards was superb.

246 moves: White won by 2.5 points.

2005 Chinese A League: Round Nine

August 6, 2005, Guizhou, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Gu Li 7d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

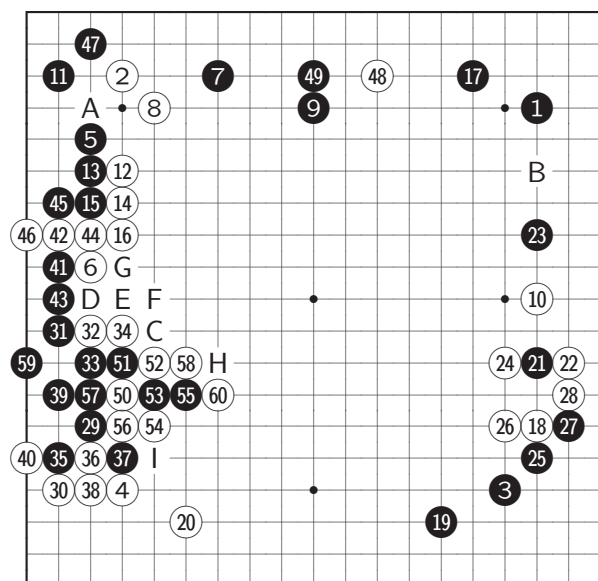


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-60)

When White pincer at ⑥, Black developed rapidly while proposing a trade with ⑦ and ⑨. We discussed this tactic in Chapter 2.

Since White split the right side with ⑩ (instead of playing A), Black was able to take the corner in sente with ⑪ to ⑯ and his opening up to ⑰ was swift.

Clamping with ⑳ looked slow, but White's thick and solid group left Black thin around B.

Black ㉑ was creative and practical, and ㉒ was the proper response.

Black ㉓ was questionable; it should have been at ㉔.

White played a brilliant probe at ㉕ (*Secretly Cross at Chencang*), and ㉖ should have been at ㉗.

White ㉘ was severe, and ㉙ prevented the ladder starting with ㉚ at C, ㉛, followed by D to H.

If ㉜ is at ㉝, Black at ㉞ makes miai of C and I.

The result up to ㉞ was successful for White.

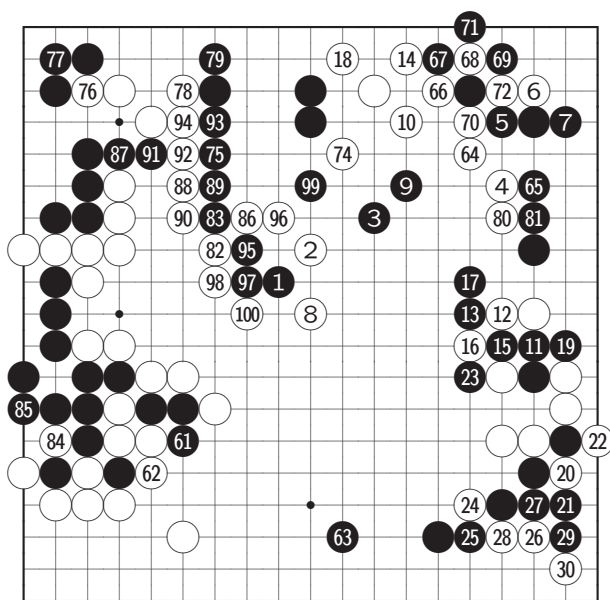


Diagram 2
(Moves: 61-130)

73 at 68

White's reduction from 64 to 74 was skillful, and White was still in a good mood.

Creating weaknesses with 83 was interesting.

White overplayed with 86; it should have been at 95.

Dividing Black's forces with 99 and 3 (103) was a good idea, but 4 to 8 formed an exquisite sequence for managing both sides.

Black 11 and 13 comprised an excellent combination, and reinforcing with 14 and 18 was unavoidable.

Black was catching up, and the game was almost even again up to 23.

Exploiting the corner aji to support White's group in the bottom right—with 24 and 26—was clever, but playing 28 at 29 would have been more flexible.

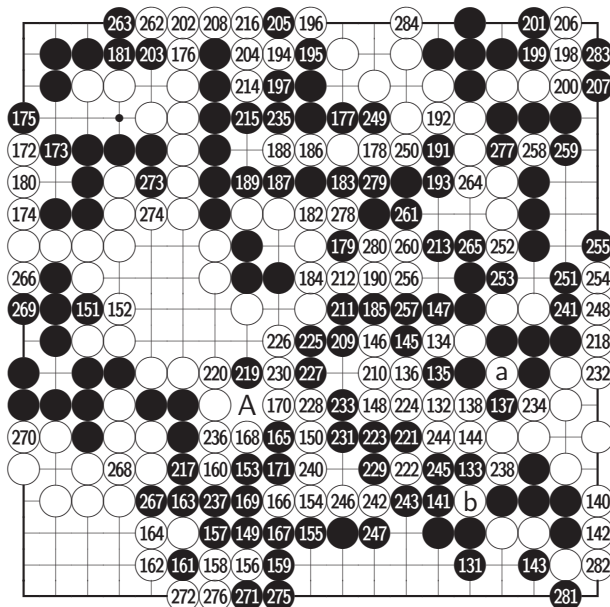


Diagram 3
(Moves: 131-284)

139 at a, 239 at b

Black caught up and the game was even up to 149.

White 156 was nice endgame tesuji, and the game was still very close up to 170.

The monkey jump at 172 was quite big, and White took the lead again.

However, 190 was an overplay—simply 211 was better.

Black 217 was very big, and Black took the lead.

White 218 was too much, but 225 failed to seize the opportunity. Black should have isolated White's right side group with A, 236 and 228.

White 240 and 242 were the winning moves, and White scraped by with the slimmest of reversals in the end.

284 moves: White won by half a point.

10th LG Cup: Semifinal

October 19, 2005, Beijing, China: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 7d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

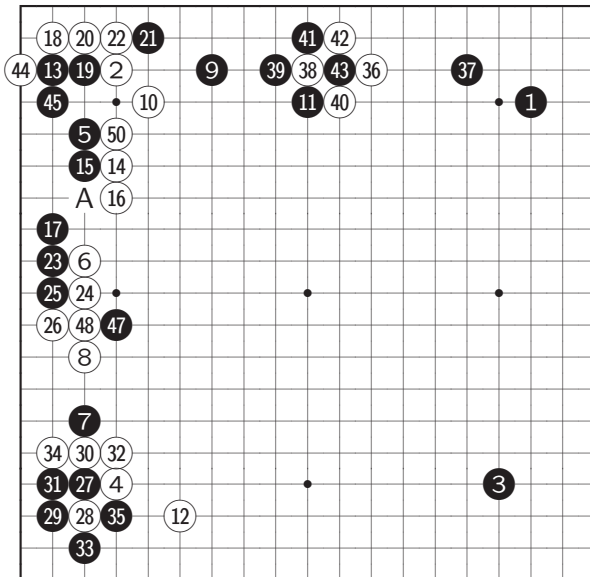


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

④⑥ at ③⑧, ④⑨ at ④③

Gu Li counter-pincerd with ⑨ once again, but this time he interposed the exchange of ⑦ for ⑧.

The opening up to ⑫ was quite popular at the time.

Black ⑬ to ⑰ were territorial. Since the last game, Gu Li had decided that ⑰ was better than A, because it leaves more weaknesses in White's position.

White played ⑱ to strengthen his group, but blocking at ⑲ would have been better.

Black ⑳ was also territorial, and Black was ahead in terms of territory up to ㉓.

Black ㉓ was unusual, but that was Gu Li's preference. Playing ㉓ at ㉓ is more common.

White was looking for a way to use his power in the top left, and ㉔ to ㉔ was an interesting tactic.

The ko became very important for both players.

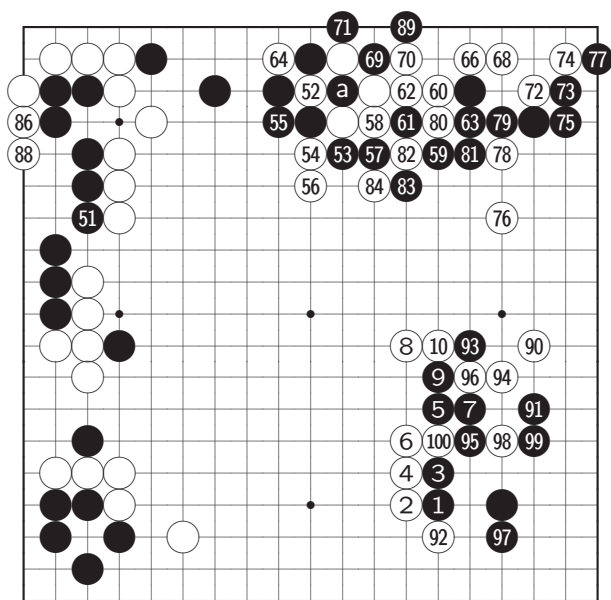


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-110)

65 at a, 67 at 52, 85 at 61, 87 at 82

Black managed the ko deftly with 53 to 63, and the trade up to 71 favored him, so Black took the lead.

White complicated the game with 76 to 80, and another ko was created up to 84.

White used the ko to trade his weak group in the top right for Black's top left group. The exchange up to 89 was fair, but Black maintained his earlier lead.

Capping at 93 showed too much enthusiasm. Simply jumping to 7 (107) would have been preferable.

White 98 and 100 were sharp tesuji, which aimed to seal Black in, and White began to catch up.

Black 1 was a resourceful counter-tesuji, but White still managed to enclose Black and fence off the center after taking the key point at 8.

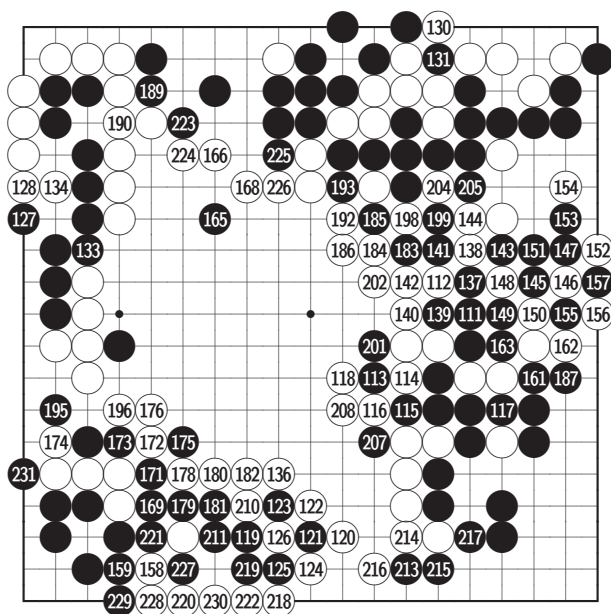


Diagram 3
(Moves: 111-231)

129 135 167 177 191 197 203 209 at 121,
132 164 170 188 194 200 206 212 at 126, 160 at 146

Black 111 and 113 created weaknesses, and forming a ko with 119 to 125 was a flexible sabaki technique.

White 128 and 136 were strong, and 137 seized the ideal moment to move out.

Instead of 145, connecting solidly at 148 was better.

Attaching at 146 was razor sharp, and White caught up a little more up to 164.

Black 167 should have been at 168, and White was sailing on an even keel once again after playing 168.

However, 170 was the losing move. White should have sealed off the center with 178 instead.

Black 171 to 183 proceeded smoothly, and 187 clearly settled matters in Black's favor.

231 moves: Black won by resignation.

2005 Chinese A League: Round 20

December 10, 2005, Chongqing, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 7d*

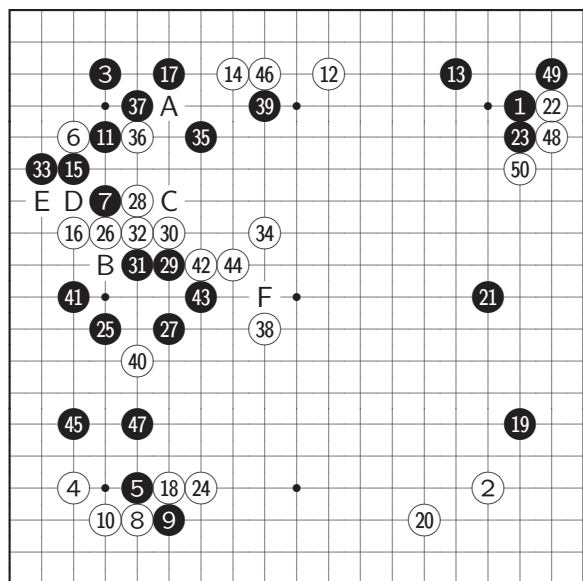


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

The one space high pincer at 7 aims to elevate the corner by inducing 36, Black A, White B, Black C, White D and Black at 12.

Instead of 7, if Black immediately sets up a Chinese style formation at 12, White can press at 37.

The opening up to 25 was peaceful and well balanced.

Black 29 was a sharp haengma, but 33 was slack. It should have been at E instead.

Black developed from the wrong direction with 35. The horses head haengma at F was better.

White 38 occupied the pivot point for power in the center, and 42 to 44 were calm and solid.

Black 45 and 47 were solid, but too slow.

Setting things in motion with 48 was quite large.

The opening up to 50 was satisfactory for White.

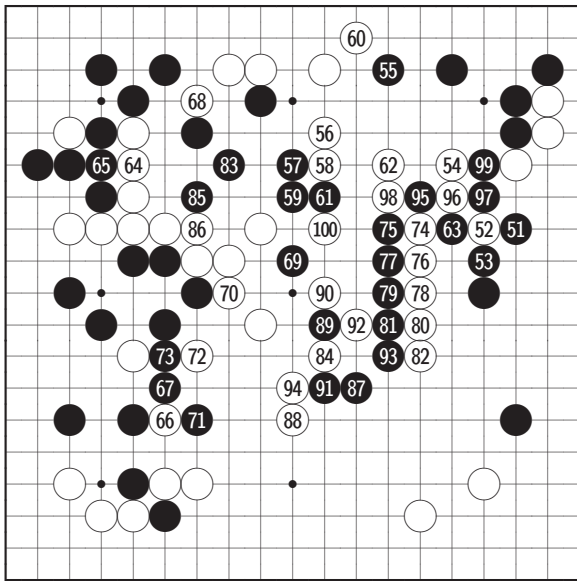


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

White ⑤② and ⑤④ were lively haengma, and White was happy to connect his groups up to ⑥②.

Cutting with ⑥⑧ was severe. This move established a clear lead for White.

White ⑦④ attacked indirectly, but ⑦⑤ was ingenious.

Black ⑦⑦ to ⑧③ was practical, however, White didn't have any complaints because he was still ahead.

White ⑨① was a sharp tesuji for attacking, and White solidified his lead up to ⑨④.

Black tried to restore the balance of territory and catch up with ⑨⑤ to ⑨⑨, but it was too much.

White's tesuji at ⑩① landed a heavy blow, and Black was in trouble.

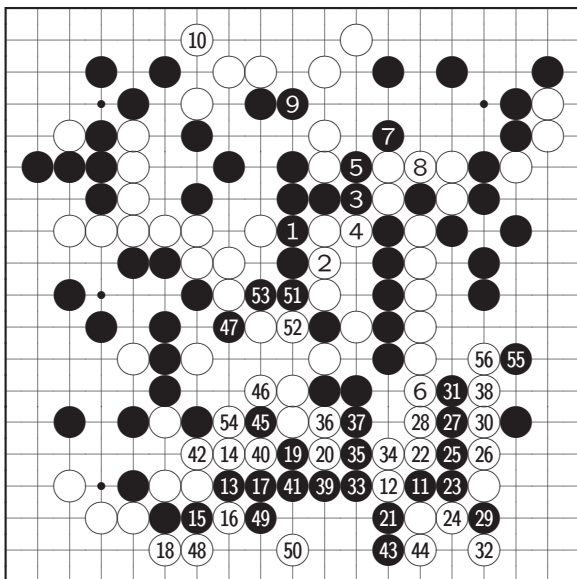


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-156)

Black saved his group at the top up to ⑤ (⑩⑤), but his center dragon was left to fend for itself.

Probing with ⑪① and ⑬③—in order to complicate the game—was typical of Lee Sedol's style, but Gu Li's responses were calm and accurate.

Black ⑬⑨, ⑬① and ⑬③ were also difficult to answer properly, but White played perfectly.

White proceeded safely and solidly with ⑬⑧, and the game was becoming desperate for Black.

Black went all out with ⑬⑦, threatening to capture White's left side group, but ⑬① hit the vital point and Black's center dragon died. The game was over.

156 moves: White won by resignation.

5th CSK Cup: Round Three

May 3, 2006, Oita, Japan: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

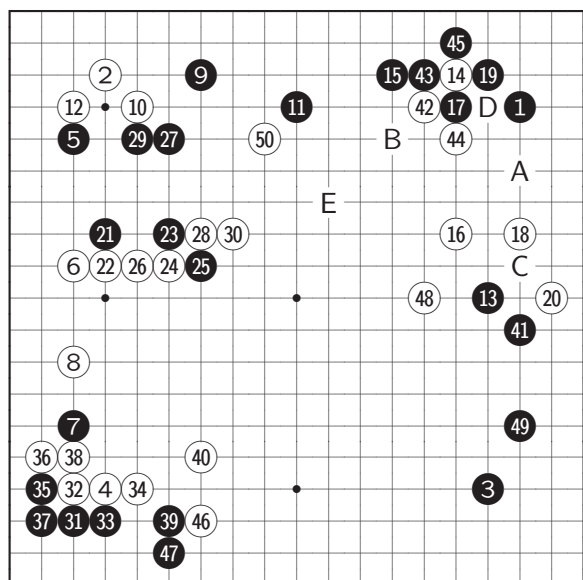


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

The opening up to 11 was one of Gu's favorites at the time, and Lee didn't seem to mind it as White.

This time, White reinforced the corner at 12 (which is normal) and Black developed rapidly with 13.

Since Black already had a stone at 11, 14 was a probe which anticipated 15 and created aji in the corner.

Considering 11, 13 and 15, reducing with 16 was just right. Jumping or pincering instead would be heavy.

Instead of 17, if Black plays at 18, White plans to jump to 44 and make miai of A and B. If 19 kicks at C, White will wedge immediately wedge at D.

The trade up to 20 was satisfactory for both players.

Black 27 was flexible, but 28 and 30 were thick.

Black came back to 31, but 40 created an ideal moyo.

White 48 emphasized the center, and 49 was calm. The game was still well balanced.

White 50 was a little deep; E would have been better.

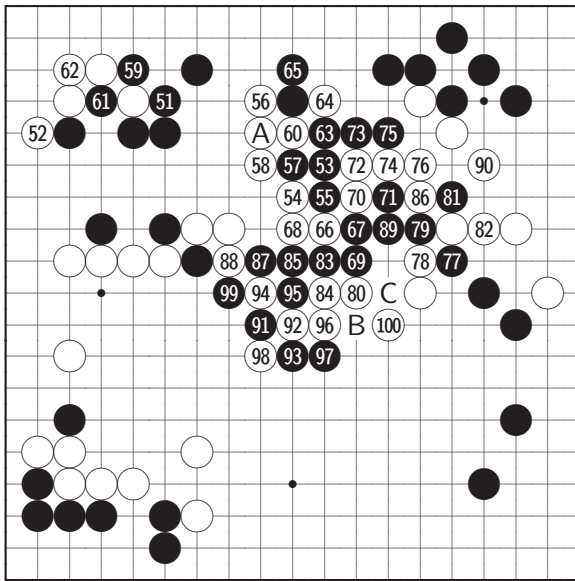


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

Black punished ⑤⑩ (at A) with ⑤① and ⑤③, and White's center became thinner up to ⑤⑤.

Black ⑤⑨ was a well timed atari, and Black was doing well up to ⑥⑤.

White ⑥⑥ was strong, and both ⑥⑨ and ⑦⑩ showed fighting spirit.

Cutting with ⑦⑦ and ⑦⑨ was an overplay. Black should have just jumped to B.

White ⑧⑩ was a tesuji to make Black's center group heavier, and White began to dictate the flow of play.

Black tried to escape with ⑨① to ⑨③, but ⑨④ was a brilliant tactic to cover White's weakness at C.

Black's center group was in great danger after ⑨⑧.

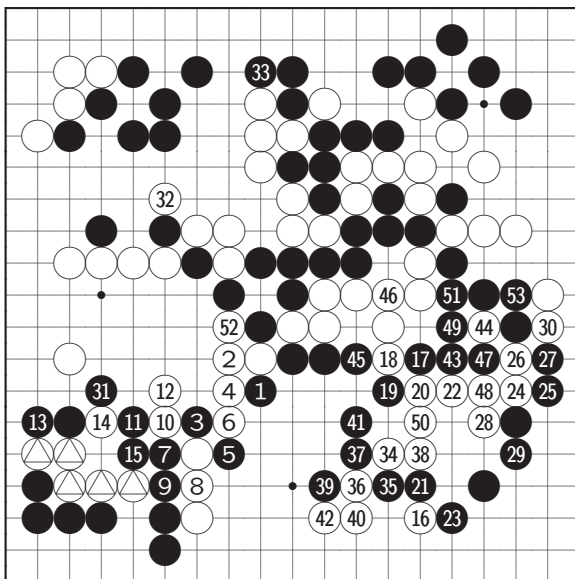


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-153)

Black sacrificed his center group with ① (⑩①) and ③.

White ④ was too cautious; extending to ⑤ was best.

Black ⑬ took the marked stones in compensation, and ⑮ prevented a ko shape. The game was close.

The combination of ⑰ and ⑲ exploited White's bad aji in the center area, and Black's indirect attack was successful up to ⑳.

White ⑳ was the losing move. White should have extended firmly at ㉑.

Black ㉓ was severe, and Black made exquisite use of his dead stones with the sequence from ㉔ to ㉖.

Suddenly, White's group in the center was entangled in a capturing race and the game was over.

153 moves: Black won by resignation.

2006 Chinese A League: Round Five

June 10, 2006, Chongqing, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

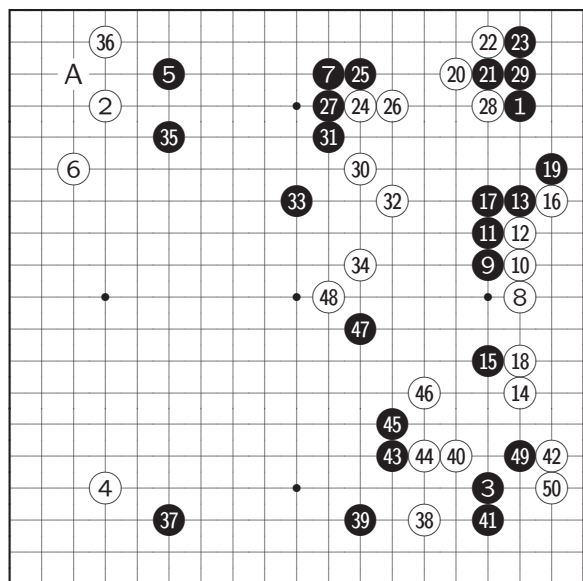


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

Black ① to ⑦ formed the Mini-Chinese Opening.

Pressing at ⑨ developed Black's moyo at the top, and continuing up to ⑬ was popular at the time.

Both ⑮ and ⑯ were well timed moves, and ⑰ made miai of ⑱ and ⑲. The result up to ⑲ was acceptable for both players.

Invading just before territory was completed, with ⑳, was urgent. White's play up to ㉔ was nimble.

Jumping to ㉕ was a steady way to develop the top, and ㉖ was a calm response which nipped the growing threat of an invasion at A in the bud.

Because of A, enclosing the corner with ㉖ is more important than it seems and is common after ㉕.

White ㉘, ㉚ and ㉜ were unusual, but powerful.

Black's counter-punch from ㉛ to ㉟ was fearless.

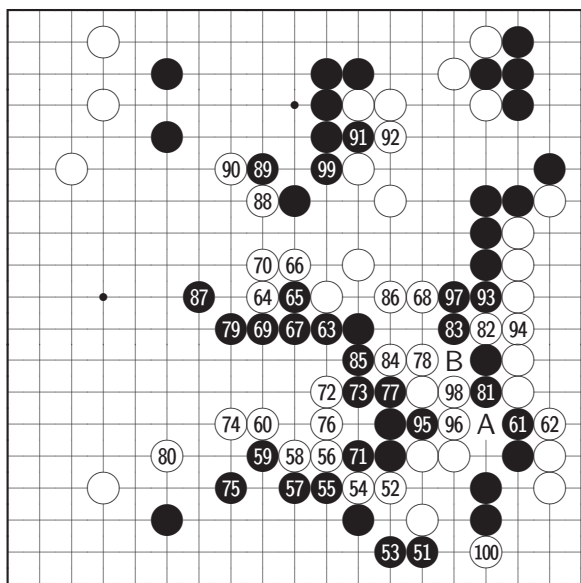


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

Black rescued the corner with ⑤① and ⑤③, but this allowed White to break into the center with ⑤④ and White's stones flowed smoothly up to ⑥⑦.

Cutting at ⑦① was premature, but ⑦⑥ missed a good chance to deform Black's shape by clamping at ⑦⑦.

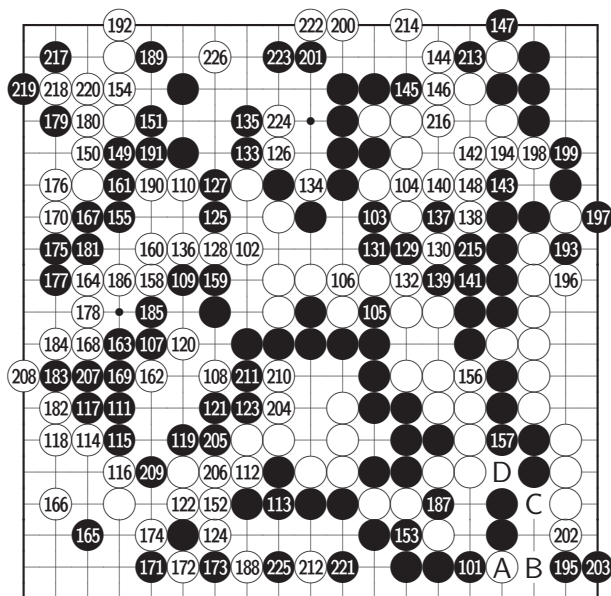
Black ⑧③ was a crucial mistake. Black should have connected at A, to make miai of ⑨⑤ and ⑧⑥.

White was relieved when he was able to save all of his stones with ⑧④ and ⑧⑥.

After ⑧⑥, Black couldn't push and cut with ⑨⑤, ⑨⑥ and Black at ⑨⑧, because White's atari at A would make miai of B and ⑨⑦.

The attachment and counter-hane at ⑧⑧ and ⑨⑨ was a good sabaki technique, and ⑨⑨ was the best response for Black.

White ⑩⑩ was an incredible probe, played with impeccable timing.



2006 Chinese A League: Round 16

November 11, 2006, Guizhou, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

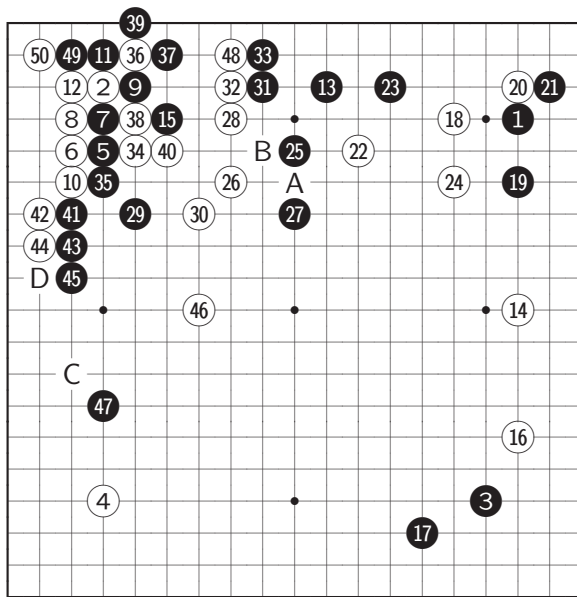


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

Once again, Black played Chinese style up to 13.

After White split at 14, Black began to put some body into his moyo with 15.

The opening up to 18 was even, and 22 and 24 were light and animated.

White 26 was a subtle reduction which aimed at both 28 and A, and while both 27 and 28 were motivated by fighting spirit, they were also hard-working moves.

If 27 is the spiritless double defense at B, White will regard it as a forcing exchange and tenuki.

White 34 was an eye-popping tesuji, but Black managed the situation confidently with 35.

White had been aiming to cut with the combination of 36 and 38, but Black was unperturbed up to 45.

Extending to 47 was better than C, because the door was open at D. The game was still well balanced.

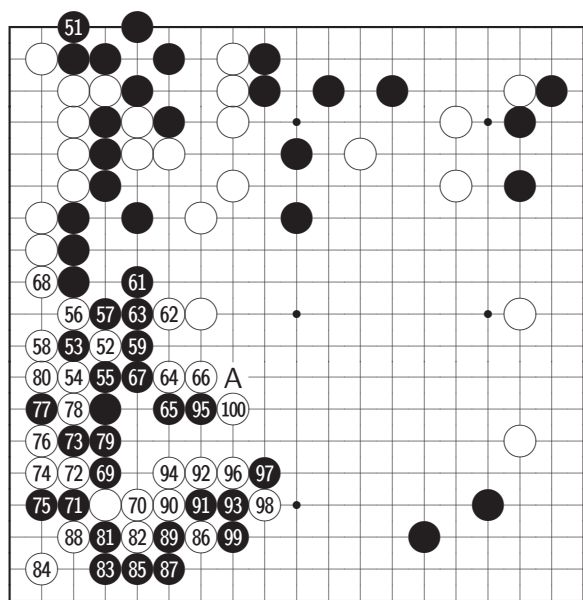


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

60 at 53

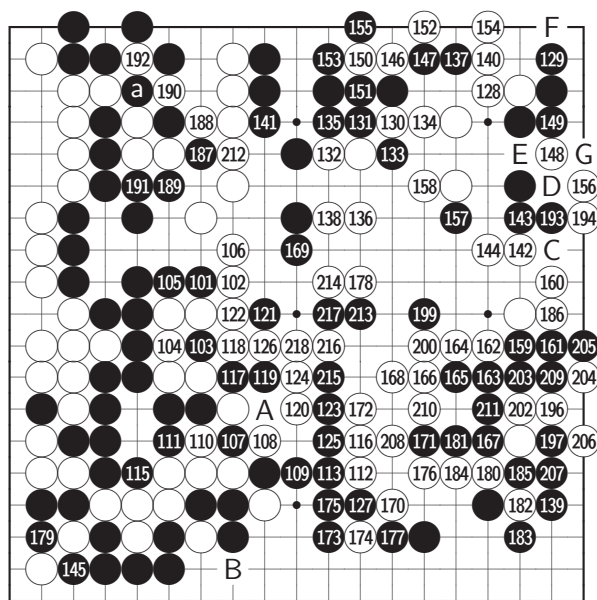


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-218)

114 at 107, 195 201 at a, 198 at 192

Attacking with 52 was severe, but Black parried accurately with 53 to 61 and moved into the center.

Black could play 67 at 68, but that would provoke White into jumping to 73, helping White's corner.

Black 69 and 71 were forceful tesuji, but 72 was strong.

White 84 landed a blow at the vital point, and trading with 85 to 91 was the right decision.

The continuation up to 96 was still playable for both, but the hane at 97 was too greedy. Black should have played 97 at A in order to help his center dragon.

White 98 and 100 were powerful moves, and Black's group on the left side was enclosed unexpectedly.

Black lived with a desperate tesuji combination from 101 to 107, but White had already taken the lead.

Instead of 109, Black could double atari at 117, but White would trade with 118, Black A and White at 109. White would have a tesuji at B afterwards.

Black 117 neatly put a stop to White's marauding at the bottom, and Black caught up a little up to 127.

White 130 to 138 were solid but slack moves, and the game became nearly even again.

Black took a big point with 139, but he should have played at 142 to prevent the attack that followed.

Black 145 was careless and White struck like lightning with 146 and 148, revealing a devastating secret plan.

White's continuation from 150 to 156 was exquisite, and suddenly Black was dead. Black C, 160, Black at 194, D to F, 193 and White G dies.

Black made a furious attempt to catch up from 159 onwards, but White's play was calmly fastidious.

218 moves: White won by resignation.

2007 Chinese A League: Round 13

October 13, 2007, Chongqing, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

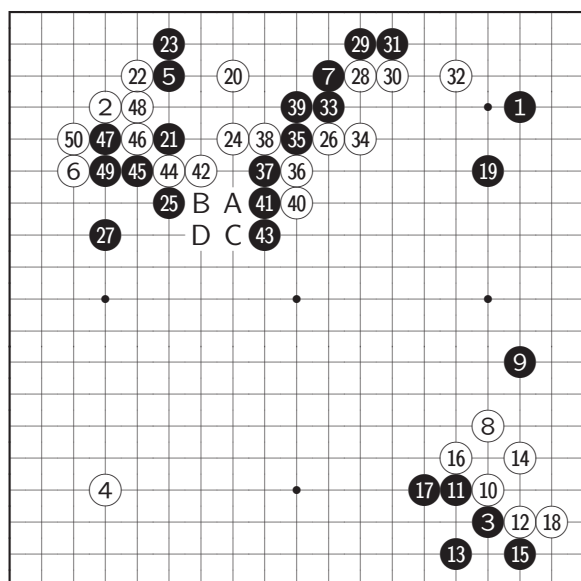


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

White met Black's Mini-Chinese Opening with the two space high approach at ⑧. He played like this to reduce Black's potential on the right side.

This approach is light and flexible. Paradoxically, it offers stronger continuations in the corner than either of the one space approaches do (if Black tenukis).

Black pincer at ⑨ and the variation up to ⑱, though rarely seen, is joseki.

Black ⑲ was well balanced, supporting ⑨ indirectly.

White ⑳ to ㉔ was active, whereas ㉗ was placid.

White attacked forcefully from ㉘ to ㉚, and Black counter-punched with ㉛ to ㉟.

White ㉡ was a sharp haengma, and ㉣ was inevitable. Black ㉤ at ㉦ encounters White at ㉤, followed by A to D. White breaks free either way.

White isolated three Black stones with ㉨ to ㉪, but the game was still well balanced.

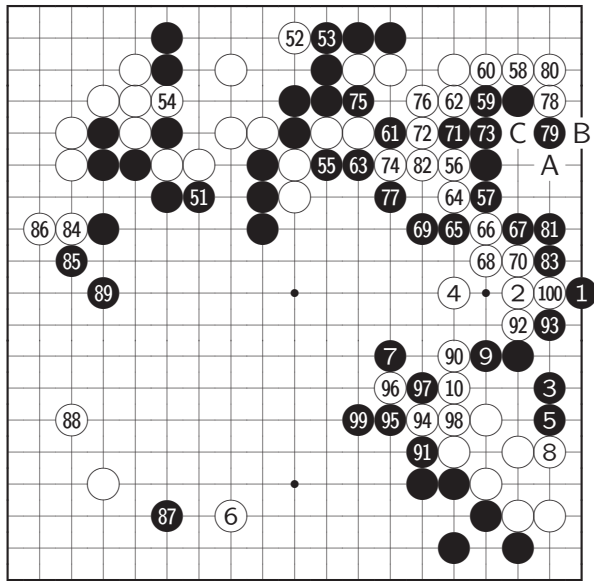


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-110)

Cutting at 55 was strong, and 56 should have gone directly to 58.

The nose attachment at 61 was razor sharp, and Black's center became powerful with 63.

However, 65 was too much. Quietly extending to 66 would have been better.

White 66 was severe, but 70 was questionable, and Black's center became even thicker up to 77.

Instead of 70, White should defend the corner with 78, 79 and the tesuji at A, making miai of B and C.

White 90 headed the wrong way; 91 would be better.

White 100 and 2 (102) were unnecessary exchanges. Playing at 6 immediately would be more refined.

Black bullied White's right side group with 5 to 9. The game was gradually becoming worse for White.

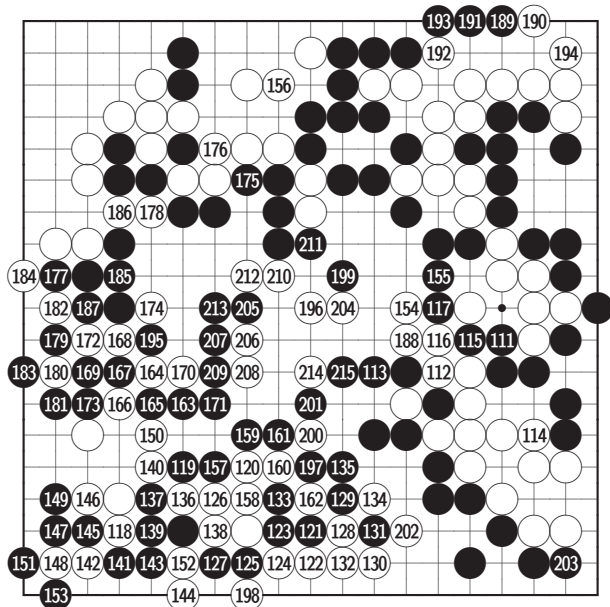


Diagram 3
(Moves: 111-215)

White had to live with 114, and Black took the clear lead with 117.

White 122 was a probe, but Black gave White a sharp reprimand with 123 and 125.

Both players persevered with 133 and 138, and 144 struck the vital point.

However, trading up to 153 was satisfactory for Black.

Black 157 to 163 was a bold and practical strategy to simplify the game. White went all out with 164.

Black 173, 179 and 185 were accurate moves, and 187 was decisive. The game was over.

215 moves: Black won by resignation.

21st Fujitsu Cup: Quarter Final

June 7, 2008, Beijing, China: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

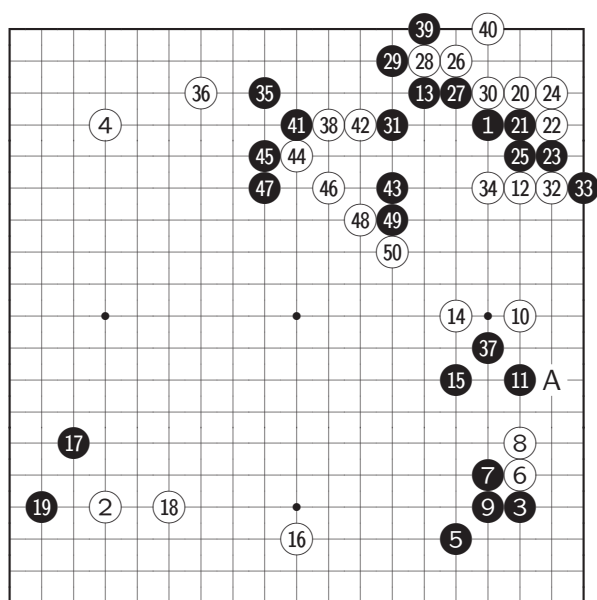


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

Black played the Parallel Opening with ① to ⑤.

Attaching at ⑥ was an experimental alternative to splitting at ⑩, but it wasn't successful.

Black ⑪ and ⑮ were typical of Gu Li's vigorous style of play.

White ⑳ was played a little early, and blocking with ㉑ and ㉓ followed the direction of play.

The result up to ㉓ was playable for Black, because White's right side group became thin.

Black ㉗ was solid and practical. It prevented White from connecting with the attachment at A.

White ㉘ was bold, but premature, and both ㉙ and ㉚ were motivated by fighting spirit.

Black's play from ㉛ to ㉞ was energetic, but fighting back with ㉟ to ㊱ was also strong.

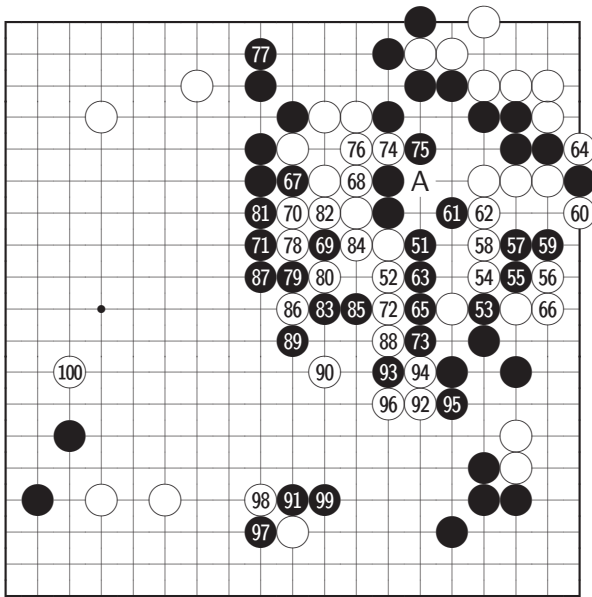


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

White ⑤⑥ to ⑥① was a clever sequence, but ⑥④ was a critical mistake. White should have blocked at ⑥⑤.

Black became thick and powerful with ⑥⑤, and White became thin and weak.

White ⑥⑥ was big, but ⑥⑦ began a severe attack, and ⑥⑨ to ⑦① made shape flexibly while attacking,

Descending at ⑦⑦ was an efficient tactic for attacking, which prevented White from making an eye at the top while indirectly managing the weakness at A.

Black built a great wall up to ⑧⑨, and the game was becoming difficult for White.

Black ⑨① was a well timed leaning attack, and defending White's center group with ⑨② to ⑨⑥ was necessary.

This allowed Black to take profit with ⑨⑦, and the game was progressing very smoothly for Black.

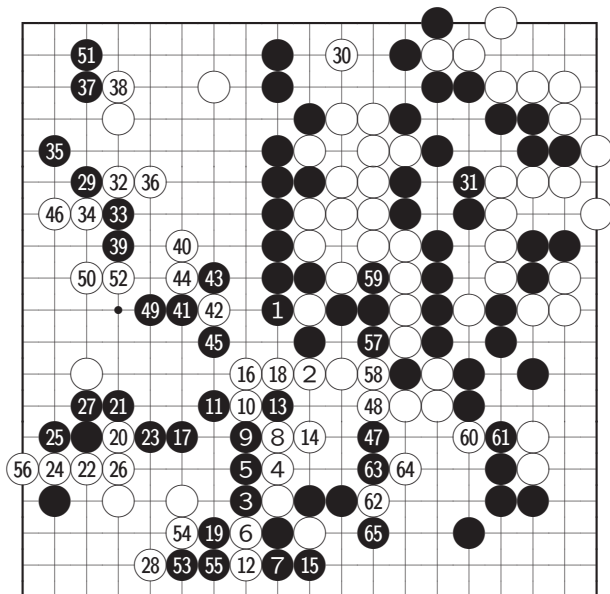


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-165)

Maintaining the pressure with ③ (⑩③) to ⑪ was powerful, and Black consolidated his lead up to ⑱.

Simplifying the game with ⑳ and ㉑ was wise.

White ㉒ and ㉔ was a tricky combination, but Black's responses up to ㉑ were accurate.

Black traded ⑤① for ⑤② to ensure his advantage.

Black continued to play safely with ⑤③ and ⑤⑤, and the game was practically over at this point.

Eventually, Black captured White's huge dragon in the center with ⑤⑨.

165 moves: Black won by resignation.

2008 Chinese A League: Round 11

June 21, 2008, Hunan, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

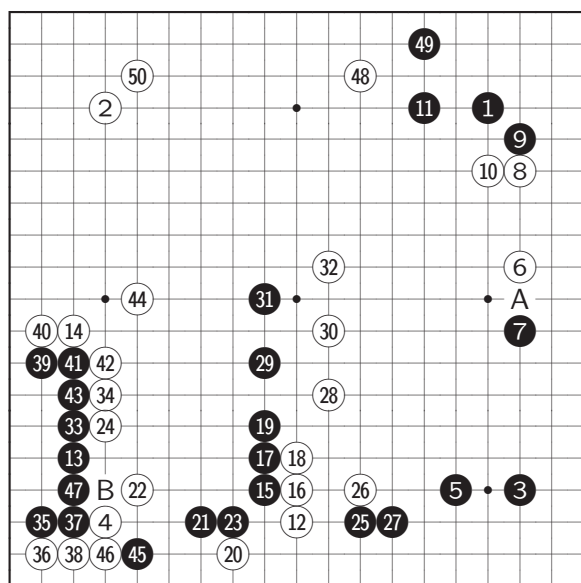


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

The High Parallel Opening, with ①, ③ and ⑤, was quite popular at the time.

As we can see from ⑥, Lee was still investigating alternatives to the splitting play at A.

Pressing at ⑮ was creative, and the flow up to ⑳ gave Black the impetus to pincer at ㉕.

Moving out with ㉖ to ㉓ was a firm way of playing and the opening was still well balanced.

Black lived in the corner with ㉓ to ㉗, but White's outside influence provided adequate compensation.

Making life with ㉗ was slack. Black should have pinched at B to take sente.

Enclosing the top left corner with ㉙ was the proper shape in combination with White's left side influence.

The game was slightly better for White.

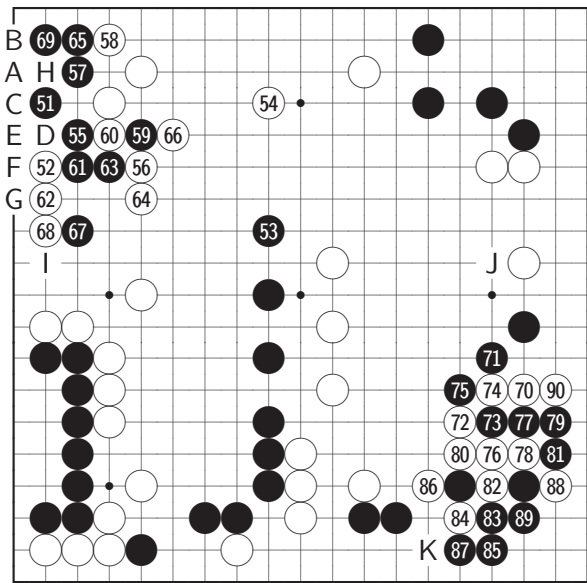


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-90)

Invading at ⑤① was urgent, and pinching at ⑤② was the right tactic in this case.

Black ⑤⑨ and ⑥⑦ were sharp tesuji, and Black lived in the corner up to ⑥⑨.

If White tries to capture the corner with A, B to H will follow and Black lives because F and I are miai.

White ⑦⑩ was a severe invasion, and ⑦③ was too hasty. Black should have attached at J to strengthen his own stones first.

White ⑦④ to ⑧④ was natural, and playing ⑧⑤ instead of ⑧⑨ avoided a ko after ⑧⑥, ⑧⑦ and White K.

White ⑧⑥ was the right response. If White blocks at ⑧⑦ instead, Black will play ⑧⑥ and seal White in.

White revealed a scintillating unexpected tactic with ⑧⑧ and ⑨⑩, and suddenly Black was in deep trouble.

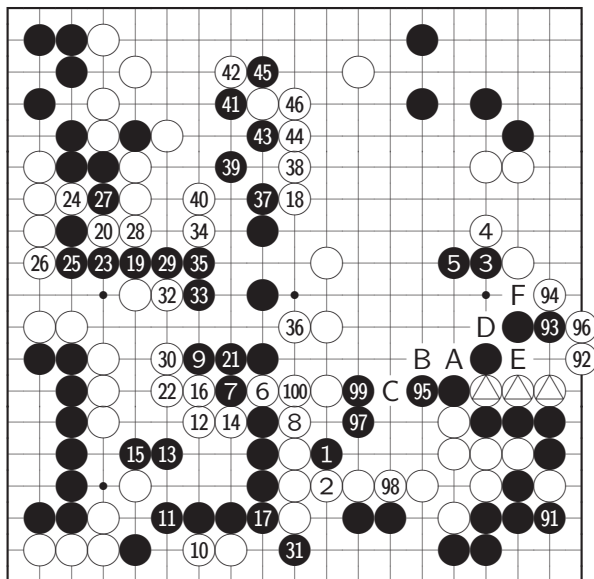


Diagram 3
(Moves: 91-146)

White ⑨② and ⑨④ formed an ingenious combination, and there was no way to capture the marked stones.

If ⑨⑤ is at ⑨⑥, White will play A, ⑨⑤, and B to F.

After White saved the marked stones with ⑨⑥, Black's center right group became very weak and the balance of the game collapsed.

White ⑪② (⑪②) was a sharp attack, and Black went all out with ⑬③ to ⑮⑤.

Black's center dragon found itself in great danger after ⑮⑧, and eventually it was overcome.

Black tried his best to save his group, but there was no way out and Black's top left group had become unsettled again too.

146 moves: White won by resignation.

10th Nongshim Cup: Game 13

February 19, 2009, Shanghai, China: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

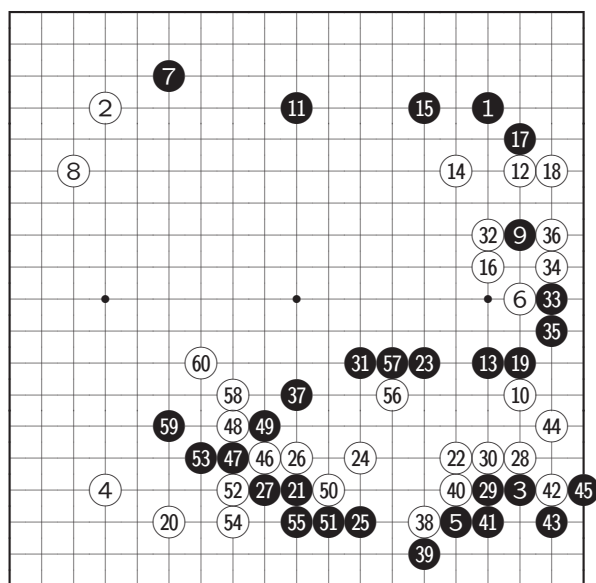


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-60)

The Nongshim Cup is a win and continue team tournament between China, Japan and Korea.

Gu Li was the last man standing for China, whereas Korea had Lee Sedol, and Lee Changho in reserve.

Black 13 was an interesting probe. White resisted with 14 and 16, but enduring 19 was painful and Black was content with his opening up to 21.

White 22 to 30 comprised a delicate sequence for reducing Black's moyo. After 23, White also had to be wary of Black's push at 32.

Black 33 was a well timed probe, and 37 struck at White's vital point.

Cutting at 49 was severe, as was 52.

The game became complicated and intense up to 60, but the flow of play still favored Black.

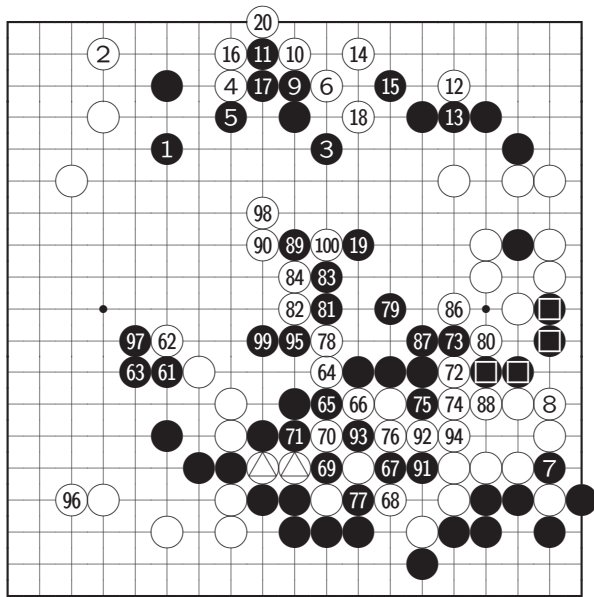


Diagram 2
(Moves: 61-120)

85 at 69

Cutting with 64 and 66 was very sharp, but 67 and 69 formed a delightful combination which exploited shortage of liberties to trap White's marked stones.

Nevertheless, White had been aiming to wedge at 72, which was another severe tactic. Up to 80, he was able to capture Black's four marked stones.

If Black plays 75 at 80, White at 79 hits the vital point. White wins the capturing race that follows.

Black 91 began a meticulous sequence, and cutting at 95 was a safe way to maintain Black's lead.

White played 96 and 2 (102) in an attempt to restore the balance of territory, but Black continued playing solidly with 1 and 3.

Invading with 4 and 6 was incisive, and White's splendid move order from 12 to 20 made the game complicated again.

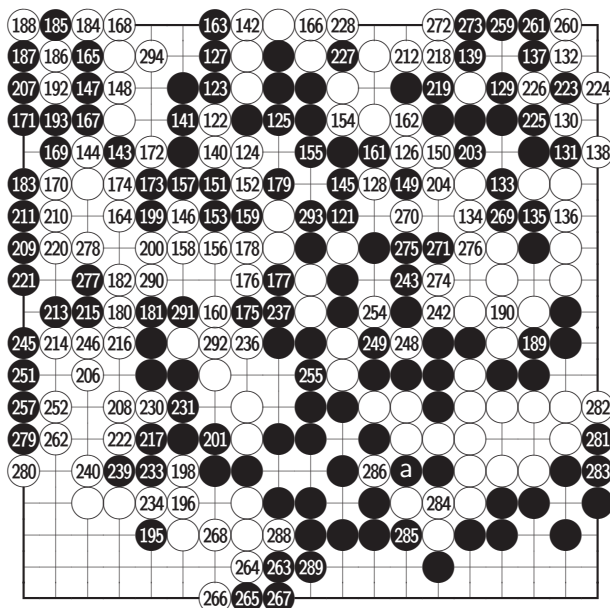


Diagram 3
(Moves: 121-294)

191 197 205 at 185, 194 202 at 188,
229 235 241 247 253 258 at 223, 232 238 244 250 256 at 226,
287 at a

White 128 and 132 were both razor sharp moves, and the flow suddenly eddied under the force of Lee's will.

Saving the cutting stones with 140 and 142 was remarkably powerful, and Black was in trouble after 146.

Playing lightly at 156 was a mistake. White should have cut at 157 instead, and if Black extends to 156, White's amazing move at 179 wins the capturing race!

Black 165 was a brilliant probe, which made miai of 167 and 168. The game became even again up to 179.

However, Black became too greedy with 183. He should have made life at 187 instead. The ko which began after 184 was a burden for Black.

Black eventually resolved the ko with 207, but White gained territory and took the lead again with 208.

Another ko started in the top right, but ending it with 258 was a good decision. White was still ahead.

294 moves: White won by 3.5 points.

13th LG Cup: Final, Game One

February 23, 2009, Gangwon, Korea: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

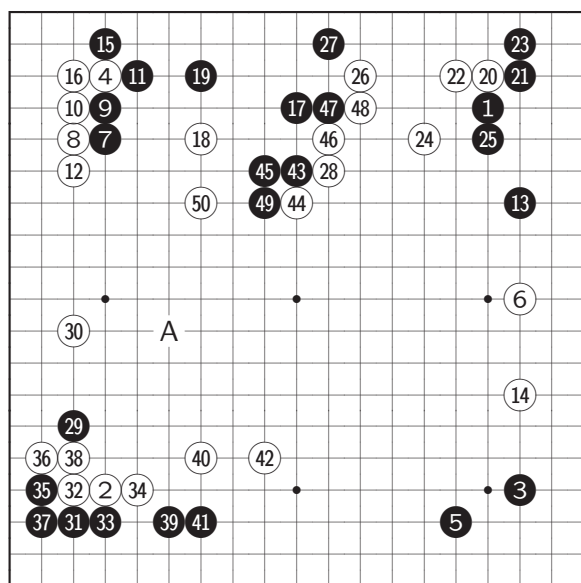


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

This was Lee Sedol and Gu Li's first international final together.

White split Black's Parallel Opening with ⑥, and Black played ⑦ to see how the game developed.

After ⑧ to ⑫, ⑬ followed the direction of play, and Black formed an ideal position up to ⑰.

White made a light reduction with ⑱, and ⑳ to ㉔ could be described as a joseki for the middle game.

White ㉘ was light and flexible, and the opening up to ㉚ was reasonable for both players.

However, jumping to ㉜ was questionable. It would have been better to play around A.

Moving into the center with ㉞ was natural, and ㉟ was important because it helped White to develop the left side.

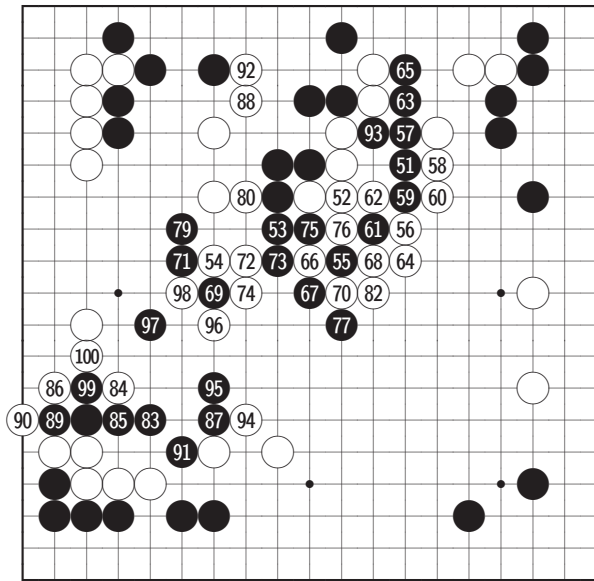


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

(78) at (66), (81) at (55)

Black (51) hit White's vital point, and walking solidly into the center with (53) maintained Black's shape.

Further developing the left side with (54) was natural.

Black (57) was severe, and Black's move order up to (63) was accurate.

White (64) was a serious mistake. White should have attached at (66) first, to see how things developed.

Black (67) and (69) constituted a brilliant combination for reducing White's left side, and (64) was wasted.

Black (69) worked because (73) and Black at (74) both aimed to connect at (76); holding sente in abeyance.

Black harvested the fruits of his labor with (71), and the game proceeded smoothly for him up to (82).

Black's moves from (83) to (87) were courageous. Reinforcing with (91) after this deep reduction was sensible.

White (96) and (98) were slack, and Black continued reducing the left side with (99).

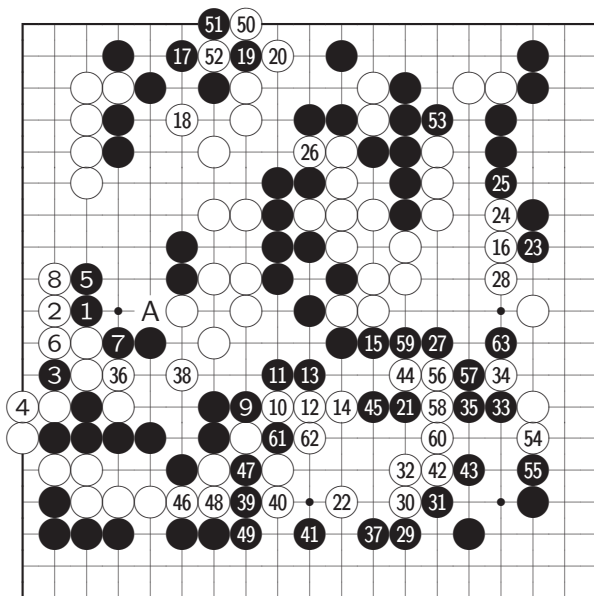


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-163)

Black (1) ((101)) to (5) was an elegant combination, and (6) was another mistake. White should have exchanged A, (7), and (36) to complicate the position.

Black (9) was thick and safe, and after (16) it was time to revive Black's top left group with (17) and (19).

Black (33) was a leaning strategy, which targeted White's group at the bottom, and (37) was the vital point as well as being a large sente move.

White ignored Black's attack and went all out with (36) and (38), because he was already far behind, but (39) and (41) captured White's group with precision.

White tried to live, but Black gave no quarter.

163 moves: Black won by resignation.

13th LG Cup: Final, Game Two

February 25, 2009, Gangwon, Korea: Komi: 6.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

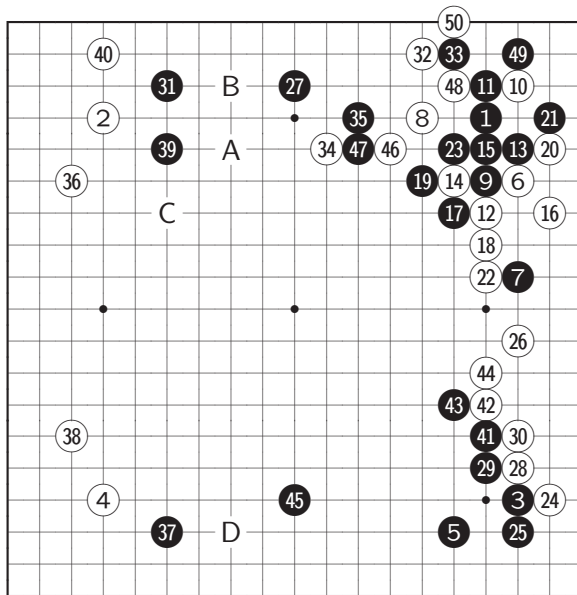


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

Approaching at ⑥ was becoming the prevalent countermeasure against Black's Parallel Opening.

Pincering at ⑦ was also fashionable, and the variation up to ②③ was a cutting edge joseki at the time.

White ②④ was Gu Li's newly researched innovation and ②⑥ made miai of ②⑦ and ②⑧ (see Chapter 6).

Because of ②④, the opening up to ③⑩ was slightly better for White, so ②⑦ began to decline in popularity.

White ③② and ③④ were questionable probes, and developing the top with ③⑨ became a good strategy.

Black also developed the bottom with the peaceful flow of ③⑦ to ④⑤, exchanging ③⑨ for ④⑩ in the process.

White ④⑥ was an overplay and ④⑧ was a thank you move. Instead of ④⑥, reducing with White A, Black B and White C makes miai of ④⑥ and D.

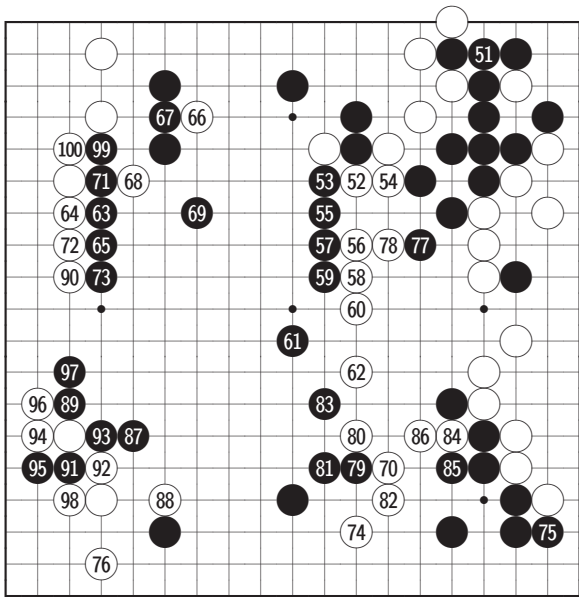


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

Cutting at 53 was better than cutting at 54, and the flow of Black's stones up to 61 was seamless.

Pressing at 63 was the key tactic for enlarging Black's center, and the game was slightly better for Black.

White 66 and 68 were sharp exchanges, and going back to reinforce at 71 was thick and safe.

Black 79 was inventive and practical, and Black successfully walled off part of the center up to 83.

White 84 was safe, but slack, and 87 was another key point for completing Black's center territory.

White's resistance at 88 was to be expected, but 89 was natural and resisting with 90 became necessary.

Black's sacrifice tactic at 91 tidied up the center, and the game proceeded at a rhythm set by Black.

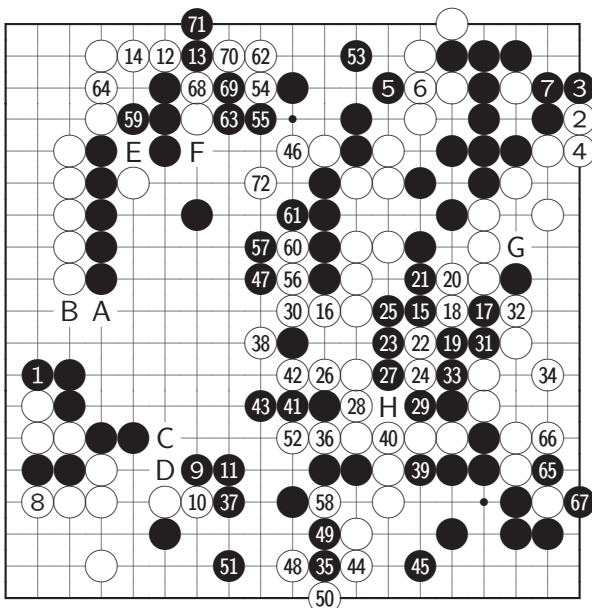


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-172)

Black completed his center territory with 9 (109) and 11, establishing a solid lead in the process.

White 12 and 14 weren't only big endgame moves; they also exposed bad aji for later.

Black 15 was careless. Black should have wedged at 64 first, to remove the bad aji by making 59 sente.

The aji we are talking about arises after 16, Black at 30, 26, Black at 42, A to D, 68, Black at 70 and White E. If Black doesn't have an answer to E, he needs to answer 68 at F and give up 13.

Black 17 should have been at 30 and 18 was excellent.

Black should play 19 at 20, White at 19, Black at 22, 24, Black at 32, White G, 23, 26, 27, 28, Black H, 40 and 29. This makes miai of 30 and 31.

The balance of territory collapsed when White broke into the center with 30. This was the winning move.

172 moves: White won by resignation.

2009 Chinese A League: Round Eight

June 27, 2009, Zhejiang, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

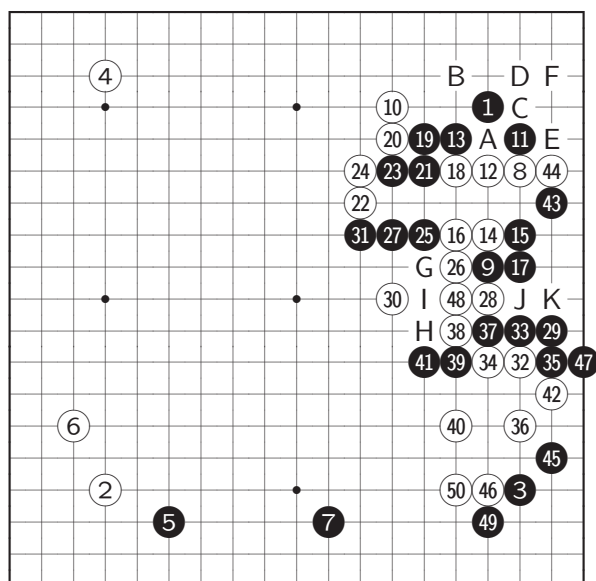


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

This was the first game between Lee Sedol and Gu Li after Lee announced his intention to retire.

Professionals were experimenting with ⑩ at the time, and ⑪ and ⑬ formed the strongest response.

White ⑭ was the proper haengma for the situation, and White's play up to ②② was calm and fluid.

If White plays ⑭ at A, Black is fine after B to F.

Black avoided being surrounded with ②③ and ②⑤, but before ②⑦ he should have exchanged the hane at ④⑧ for G, to support his right side stones and induce ②⑦.

White ②⑧ and ③② were dominating moves, though Black fought back staunchly with ③⑦ and ③⑨.

White began to make shape for his bottom right group, with the contact play at ④⑥, and the flow of the game was still slightly favorable for White.

If ④⑦ is at H; ④⑧, Black I, White J, Black K and White at ④⑦ lead to Black's untimely demise.

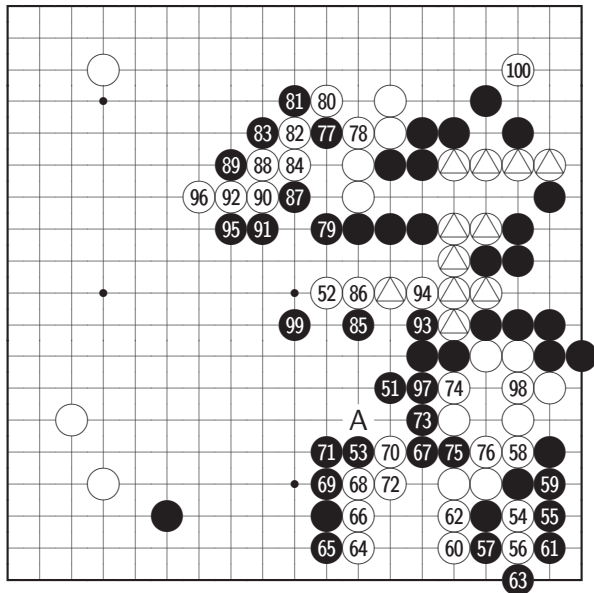


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

Cutting at ⑤④ was a sacrifice tesuji which set up the squeeze to ⑥③. White settled his group up to ⑥⑥.

White ⑦⑦ was sharp, and ⑦① was questionable. Extending to A would have been better.

Connecting at ⑦② was a calm move which saddled Black with bad aji in the center, around A.

From ⑧① to ⑧⑤, Black used a driving technique to develop power and attack White's marked stones indirectly, but this extreme strategy was too ambitious.

White ⑧② to ⑧⑥ illustrated Lee's fearless style of play and the game became desperate for Black.

Eventually, Black went all out and attacked ferociously with ⑧⑨, but ⑧⑩ was a well timed probe.

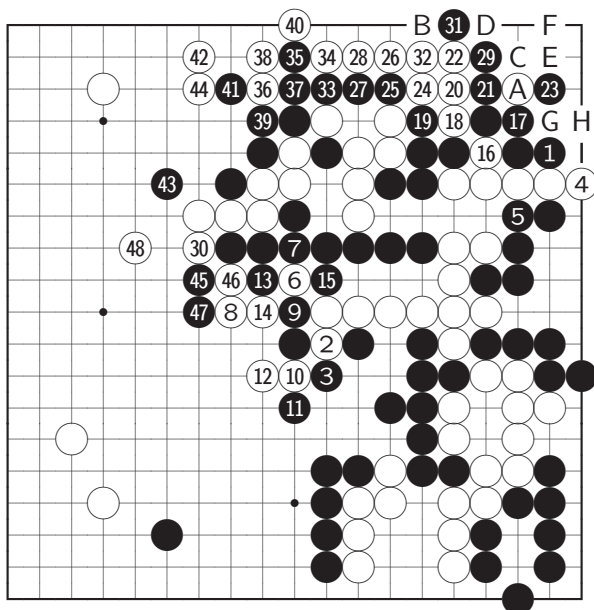


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-148)

After ① (⑩①), flying to ⑧ showed exquisite haengma.

Cutting with ⑨ was Black's best choice, but ⑩ was a strong counter which deformed Black's shape.

White was aiming at ⑩⑥ when he probed at ⑩⑩ (A).

Black ⑩⑦ was unavoidable and ⑩⑧ was severe. White counter-attacked with precision, descending to ⑩②.

Black was in deep trouble, and he had to defend his corner group with ⑩⑨.

If Black omits ⑩⑨ to extend at ⑩③, White B makes miai of blocking at ⑩④ or capturing the corner with C, ⑩⑨ and D to F. If E is at F, White G to I still captures.

White finally enclosed Black's center group with ⑩⑩ and there was no way to escape.

Black ⑩③ was the Black's only hope, but White's responses were calm and accurate. The game was over.

148 moves: White won by resignation.

2009 Ancient City of the Phoenix Cup

August 29, 2009, Hunan, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

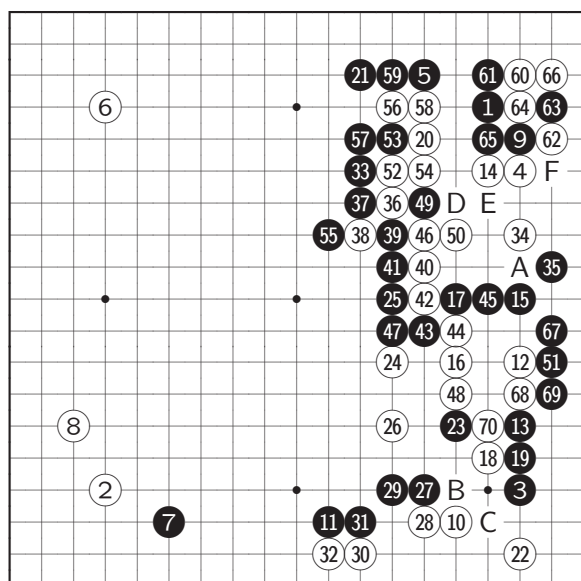


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-70)

This was a lightning game played at an exhibition match with martial artists on an enormous Go board.

White's asking move at ④ disrupted Black's Mini-Chinese Opening strategy. If Black uses ⑤ to pincer around A, ⑥ may approach at B instead.

If ④ is at ⑥; ⑦, ⑧ and ⑪ follow. If White plays ④ next, Black pincers. In the game, if Black still plays Chinese style, with ⑨ at ⑪, White extends to ⑮.

Playing ⑬ instead of ⑱ or C made ⑮ more severe.

White ⑭ was too much—after ⑬, A is better.

Black's attack flowed naturally from ⑮ and ③③.

White ③⑧ and ④① formed a subtle combination, and both ④④ and ④⑤ were strong moves.

The result up to ⑤⑤ was satisfactory for Black, but ⑥⑦ was careless. Black should have exchanged D for E first; taking sente by threatening to cut at F next.

White was lucky to have time to play ⑥⑧ and ⑦①, and the flow of the game changed course in his favor.

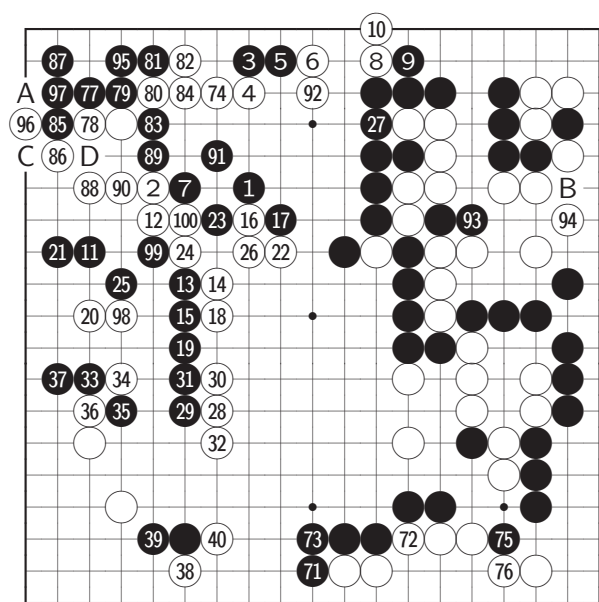


Diagram 2
(Moves: 71-140)

White 74 limited Black's potential at the top.

Black 77 and 89 were aggressive, but proper, moves which used Black's power to restore the balance of territory. The position became complex up to 95.

If 88 is at 96, Black can fight a ko with A. Black has too many ko threats, starting at B. White can't connect at C because Black D makes the ko heavier.

Black 99 was combative and resisting with 100 and 2 (102) was typical of Lee's style of play.

However, it was too much, and the game became even more complicated with 11 and 13.

White made shape skillfully with 20 and 22, but 33 was the vital point and the position was even again.

The game became exciting and tense after White's ingenious tesuji at 38.

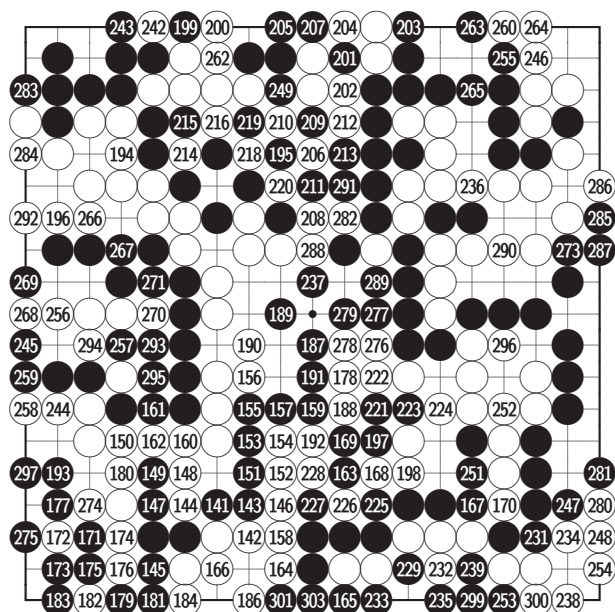


Diagram 3
(Moves: 141-303)

185 at 182, 217 at 214, 230 at 226, 240 at 218, 241 at 201,
250 at 209, 261 302 at 199, 272 at 163, 298 at 242

Both 150 and 151 were spurred on by fighting spirit, and Black attacked with good technique at 159.

Black 163 was strong, but 164 and 166 were tenacious.

White 172 was a brilliant tesuji. White reclaimed the lead up to 176, but 178 was overconfident and chaos immediately ensued.

Harassing White with 199 to Black 207 was exquisite, and the game was still chaotic.

However, Black made a crucial misread with 215 and his stones were captured in a double ko up to 220.

Black 229 to 235 was a severe tactic, but 238 was calm and accurate, and the game was decided.

303 moves: White won by 4.5 points.

23rd Fujitsu Cup: Quarter Final

April 14, 2010, Tokyo, Japan: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

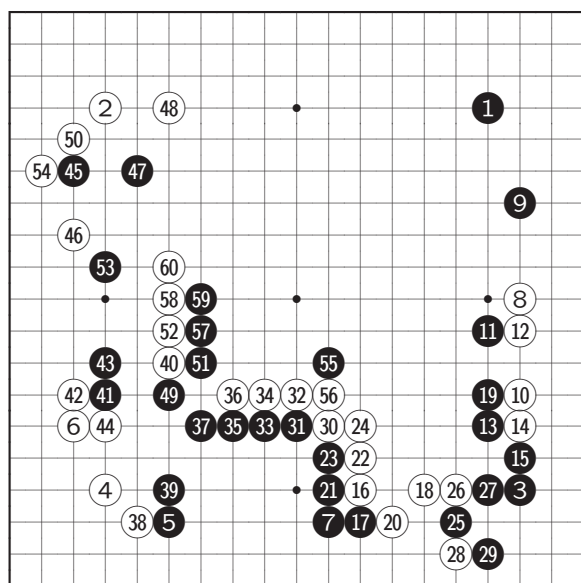


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-60)

This was Lee Sedol and Gu Li's first game after Lee came out of retirement.

Black played the Mini-Chinese Opening, and continuing with 11 and 13 was in style at the time.

White 16 was the key point for reducing Black's moyo at the bottom, and 19 was thick.

Taking sente with 28 was sharp, and turning with 30 and seizing the pivot point up to 40 next was natural.

White had a small lead and 41 to 45 intended to disrupt the left side, but 47 should have been at 49.

White played 50 to turn 47 into a heavy move, and 51 showed fighting spirit.

White 52 looked heavy, but was in keeping with Lee's style. Black 55 began to engineer a splitting attack.

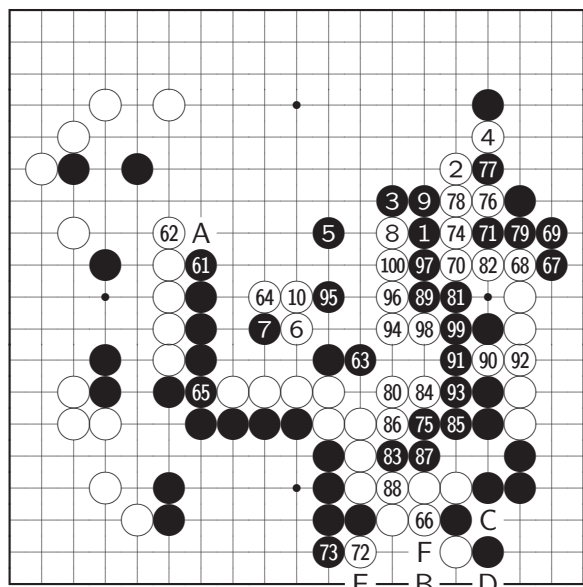


Diagram 2
(Moves: 61-110)

Black 63 was severe, but White had prepared 64.

Connecting at 65 was slack. Pushing at A was better.

Turning to attack White on the right side with 67 was a dynamic strategy, and peeping at 71 was severe.

White 72 was a subtle probe, and 73 was too obedient. Black should have capped at 100 instead.

White exchanged 72 so that he could make an eye at B later (even after Black connects at C). After B, White answers D with E. If White plays 72 later (after Black C), Black might go all out with 73 at F.

Black resumed his attack with 75, but White resisted sharply with 76 and 80.

Black attacked in earnest from 83 to 89, but White's responses up to 94 were unyielding.

Black 7 (107) was a sharp jab, but 8 and 10 escaped.

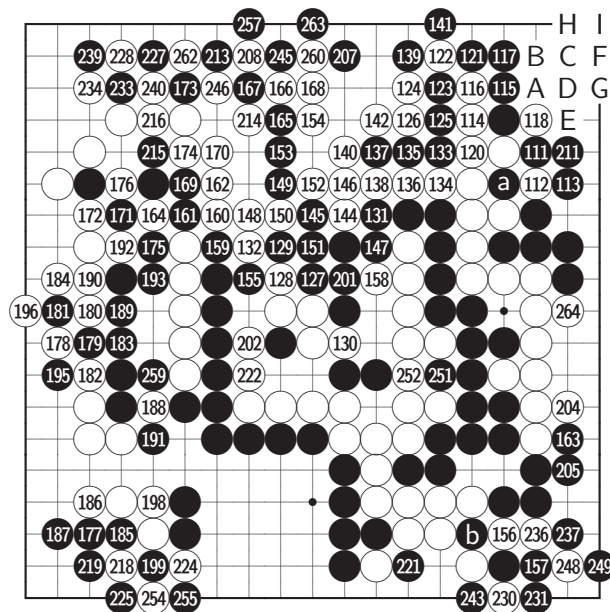


Diagram 3
(Moves: 111-264)

119 at a, 143 at 122,
194 200 206 212 220 226 232 238 244 250 256 at 164,
197 203 209 217 223 229 235 241 247 253 258 at 171, 210 at 112,
242 at b, 261 at 167

Leaving bad aji behind with 118 was good technique, and the game became slightly better for White.

Cutting with 123 was reasonable, because of the bad aji in the corner, but 124 to 126 were also strong.

Black 133 was natural, but White broke out up to 144.

Black can't use 139 to block at 146 because White at 139 makes miai of 140, or a ko after White A, Black B, White at 211, Black at 112 and C to I.

Black 155 was a mistake and 158 was an excellent move, which gave White sente after Black lived with 163.

If Black answers 158 at 201, White lives with 202, and if Black doesn't play 163, he dies after White at 205.

The game was practically decided after 164, but 178 was questionable and Black gained ground with 185.

Nevertheless, White was still in the lead with the ko after 192, and he didn't give Black any more chances to catch up.

264 moves: White won by resignation.

15th LG Cup: Round One

June 7, 2010, Gyeonggi, Korea: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

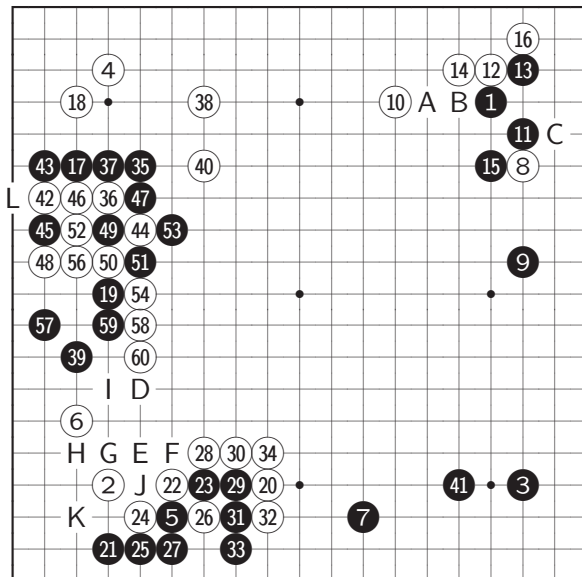


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-60)

55 at 49

Lee invented the pattern from ⑩ to ⑯; first playing ⑫ against Kong Jie 9 dan in the 2nd BC Card Cup.

If White plays ⑩ at A, he can't follow the variation in Chapter 25 because ⑤ is a ladder breaker.

If ⑬ is at ⑭, White at ⑬ makes B and C miai.

White ⑳ was aggressive, but playing at ㉑ would have been slightly better.

Black ㉒ was active and developing power with ㉔ to ㉖ was appropriate, but Black was ahead up to ㉙.

Black ㉚ at D, aiming to play E to K, was better.

White ㉜ to ㉞ was an ingenious combination.

Black ㉟ and ㊱ were good, but ㊲ was another strong move. If ㊳ is at ㊴, White will trade with ㊵, Black L and White at ㊶. So ㊶ was right.

Black ㊷ was the vital point and White's sacrifice strategy from ㊸ to ㊺ was bold.

15th Samsung Cup: Quarter Final

October 14, 2010, Daejeon, Korea: Komi: 6.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

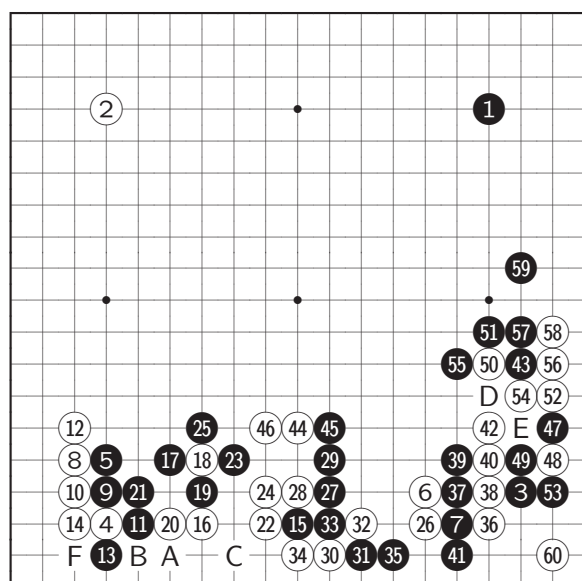


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-60)

Asking at ⑥ disrupted Black's planned Chinese style formation, but Black continued with ⑨ to ⑬ anyway.

White's attacking invasion at ⑬ aimed to make ⑥ work efficiently. For example, by blocking at ②⑥ later.

White ②② was a new move, and the result up to ②⑥ was acceptable for both players.

Black ②⑦ and ③① were strong moves, which separated White's stones, but ③⑥ was a well timed counter.

Black ③⑦ to ④① showed fighting spirit, and the trade up to ④② was well balanced.

Moving out with ④④ and ④⑥ was urgent for White, but ④⑦ to ④⑨ were also severe.

If Black plays ④③ at ④④, White lives with A to C. Peeping at C instead is too small; White will ignore it and play at ⑤⑦, and he can still play ④⑥ or F later.

White demonstrated good sabaki technique with ⑤⑩ and ⑤②, though ⑤③ and ⑤⑤ were still severe,

Connecting at ⑤⑦ was questionable. Black should have exchanged D for E, and then blocked at ⑤⑧.

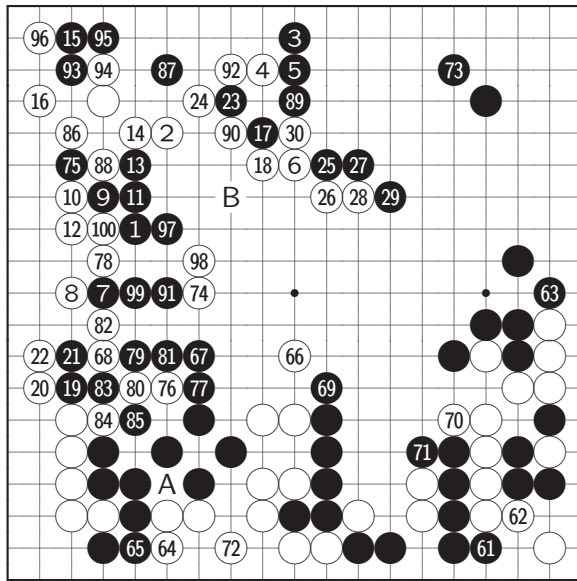


Diagram 2
(Moves: 61-130)

Black 63 was slack, and 64 and 66 were agile.

Living with 72 was a firm way of playing, and the game became easier for White.

White 90 was a farsighted indirect attack, which aimed to establish power at the top before dropping the hammer at A.

Black, of course, saw through this and resisted with 91, but 92 was only White's first dividend.

Instead of 91, living with A is also possible.

Up to 2 (102), White completed a large territory while attacking. This consolidated White's lead.

Reducing at 6 was too shallow, and the exchanges from 9 to 23 were sophisticated and profitable.

White 6 should be B—Black A and 26 follow.

Black started to catch up when he began enclosing the top right on a huge scale, with 25.

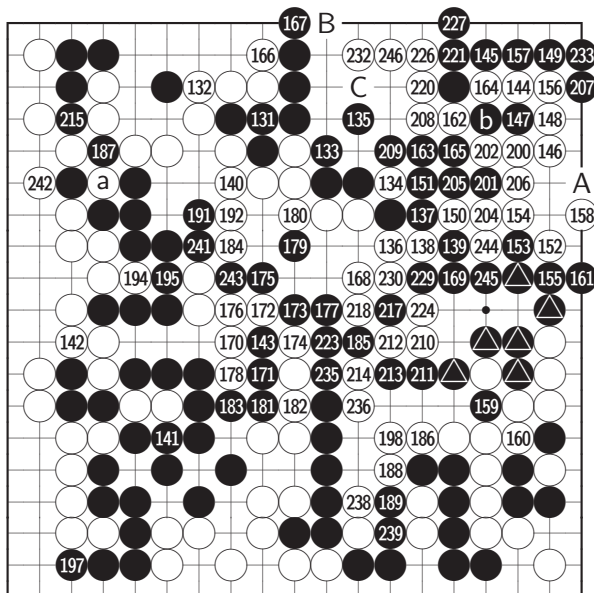


Diagram 3
(Moves: 131-246)

190 196 216 222 228 234 240 at a,
193 199 219 225 231 237 at 187, 203 at b

The game became quite close up to 143, but White's keen invasion at 144 was very difficult to deal with.

White's spectacular tesuji at 162 earned 166 in sente.

Black can't answer 162 at 165, because White can live with the crosscut at 202. Note that this leaves bad aji at 163 and that moves like 206 are sente (aiming at A).

If Black ignores 166, White lives with 200 to 209, 220, 221, 226, 227, 232, 233, White B, 167 and White C.

White's endgame moves from 168 to 186 flowed like a gentle autumn breeze, calmly maintaining his lead.

Black 187 was poorly timed. Playing at 188 is better.

White 200 to 209 was an exquisite sequence, and 210 to 214 delivered the finishing blow.

Black couldn't win the ko after 214, and 246 won the capturing race (Black's marked group died).

246 moves: White won by resignation.

3rd BC Card Cup: Final, Game One

April 23, 2011, Seoul, Korea: Komi: 6.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

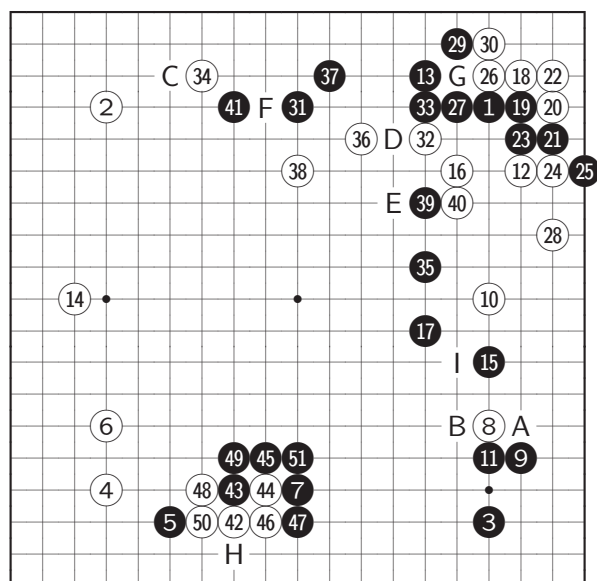


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-51)

Lee and Gu met in their second international final.

Black played the Kobayashi Opening with ① to ⑦ and White approached lightly with ⑧.

If ⑧ is a one space approach at ⑨ or ⑪, ⑦ will help Black to attack severely after he pincers around ⑮.

White ⑩ made miai of A and ⑫. If ⑩ is at A, Black may attack with ⑪, White B and Black at ⑩.

Approaching at C was bigger than ⑮, and ⑰ should have been at ⑳. White ⑱ was a well timed invasion.

Instead of ⑳, making shape at D makes miai of E and F. White's sharp jab at ㉓ aimed to wedge at G.

Black ㉕ could be at ㉖; then White at ㉕, Black H and White at ㉗ creates a ladder. The ladder favored Black, but it appears that he was concerned about White breaking it with a fight around I.

The result up to ㉕ was reasonable, but the overall game favored White.

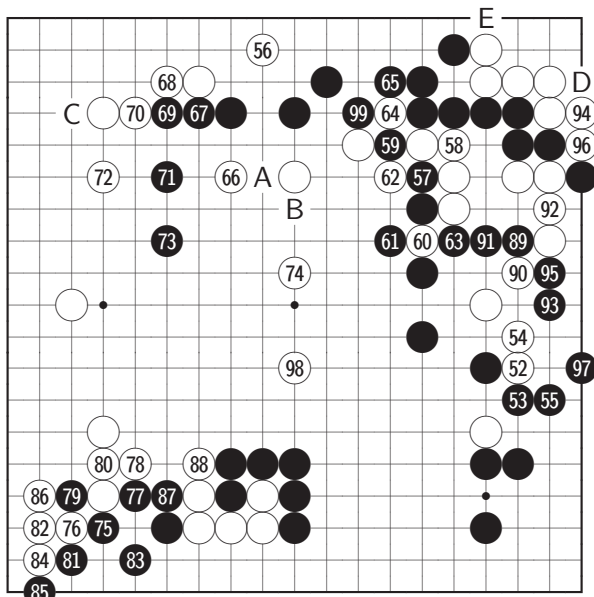


Diagram 2
(Moves: 52-100)

100 at 59

White 56 was a gentle and profitable way to attack. Black 57 and 59 were crucial mistakes, and 60 was an excellent tesuji to punish Black.

Instead of 57, Black should exchange A for B and attach at C. If 61 connects at 62, White plays at 61.

Up to 64, Black's top group became weak and White was ahead. Black 65 should be A, B and 65 instead.

White consolidated territory naturally with 66 to 72, and calmly surveyed the whole board with 74.

Black 75 to 87 formed a skillful sequence for living in sente, but White was content to become thick.

Black 89 to 93 was sharp, but White traded with 94.

If White connects at 95 instead, Black hanes at 94, and White D, Black E leads to a ko at 96.

Black earned 20 points up to 97, but White maintained his lead with 98.

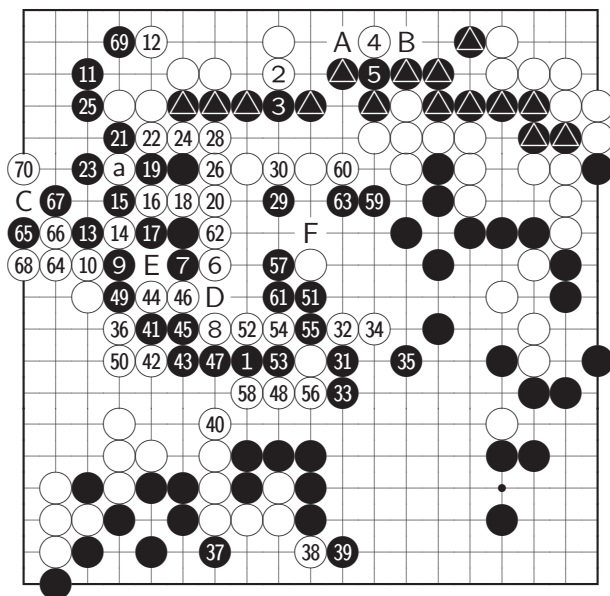


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-170)

127 at a

White prodded Black with 2 (102) and 4. If 5 is at A, Black still has only one eye after White B.

White attacked to consolidate the left side and the center in a leisurely manner, with 6 and 8.

Black 11 and 13 were probes, but 14 to 18 countered forcefully, and Black's dragon at the top was isolated.

Playing 13 at 14 was safer, but it wasn't good enough to catch up, so Black went all in with a bet on 13.

White traded up to 28 and Black's marked dragon was completely captured.

Even though Black took over White's top left corner, it wasn't enough. The game was practically decided.

Black kept trying to catch up, with 51 and 57, but 70 was the coup de grâce—if Black connects at C, White D makes miai of E and F.

170 moves: White won by resignation.

3rd BC Card Cup: Final, Game Two

April 24, 2011, Seoul, Korea: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

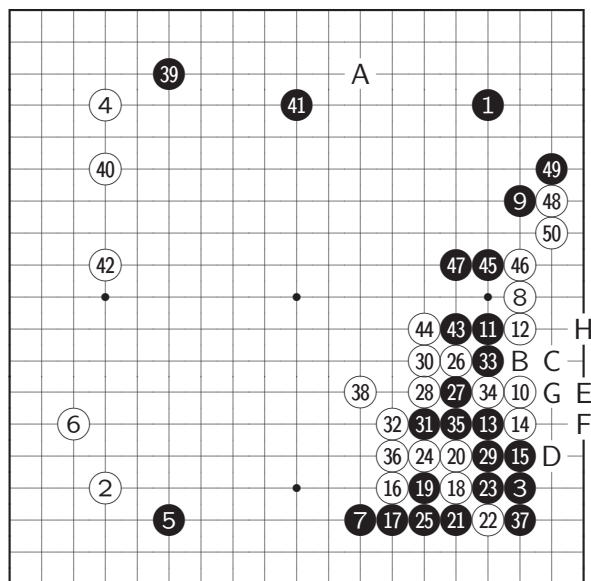


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

White split Black's Micro-Chinese Opening (① to ⑦) with ⑧. We reviewed this opening in Chapter 1.

Black developed the bottom with ⑬ and ⑮, and ⑯ began a well timed reduction.

White's sophisticated move order from ⑳ to ㉔ aimed to take sente, but resisting at ㉗ left White with a cutting point and connecting was necessary.

Black played ㉓ to ㉙ to make White's stones heavy and take sente, but the result up to ㉘ was even.

White ㉚ was questionable. White should have invaded at A immediately, and doing so would have made it harder for Black to move out with ㉛.

Black ㉛ to ㉟ were firm haengma, and the flow of the game began to favor Black.

Expanding White's base with ㊸ and ㊺ prevented Black from bullying White with B to H later.

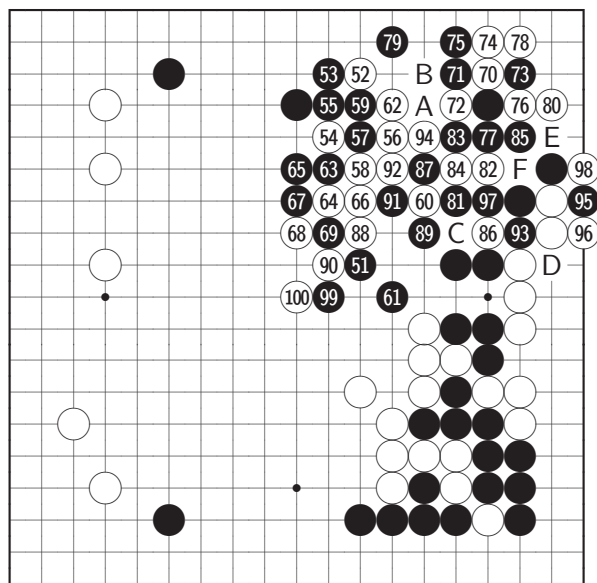


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

Black 51 developed the top and controlled the center area. This made invading at 52 quite urgent.

White's reduction from 52 to 60 was light and flexible, and 61 was slack—it should have been at 62.

White 62 was very big, because it reduced Black's territory and helped White to settle his group.

White's sabaki from 70 to 80 was bold. Black was too thin to attack severely, so 75 should have been A, White B, 83, White at 75 and Black at 94. The result would have been acceptable for both players.

Black attacked with 81, but 82 was a superb tesuji, and the sequence to 88 revealed a marvelous counter.

If 89 connects at 90, White ataris at C to connect.

White 96 was startling. It looks foolhardy, but if Black plays D, White E makes miai of F and 98.

After 97, White took the lead with 98.

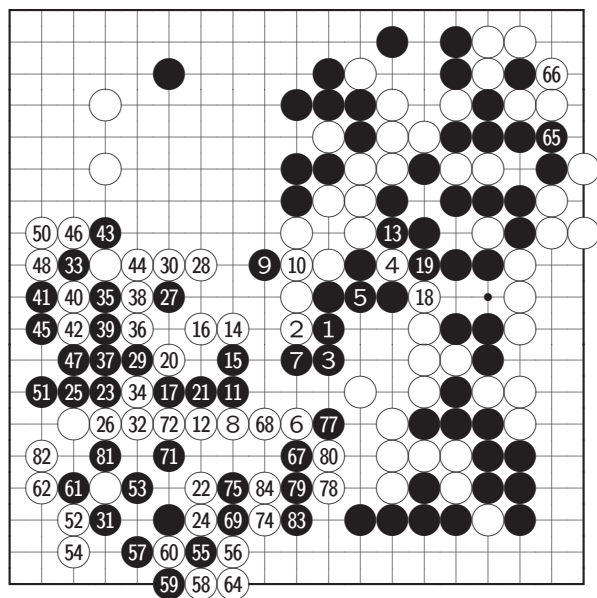


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-184)

149 at 140, 163 173 at 155, 170 176 at 160

Moving out with 6 (106) and 8 was natural, and eventually Black returned to connect at 13, preventing White from cutting with 18.

Black threatened White with 27, but White parried gently with 28 and 30.

Black 31 was a mistimed probe, and Black's power melted away after 34—playing 31 at 33 was better.

If 33 connects at 34 instead, White continues at 52.

White 40 set a splendid sacrifice tactic in motion, and Black was in deep trouble.

Black 41 to 47 were the only moves, but Black took gote up to 51 and White returned to 52. If 47 connects at 48 instead, White can atari at 51 in sente.

Black 53, 67 and 77 were tricky, but White's responses were precise and 78 decisively quelled Black's incursion.

184 moves: White won by resignation.

3rd BC Card Cup: Final, Game Three

April 26, 2011, Seoul, Korea: Komi: 6.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

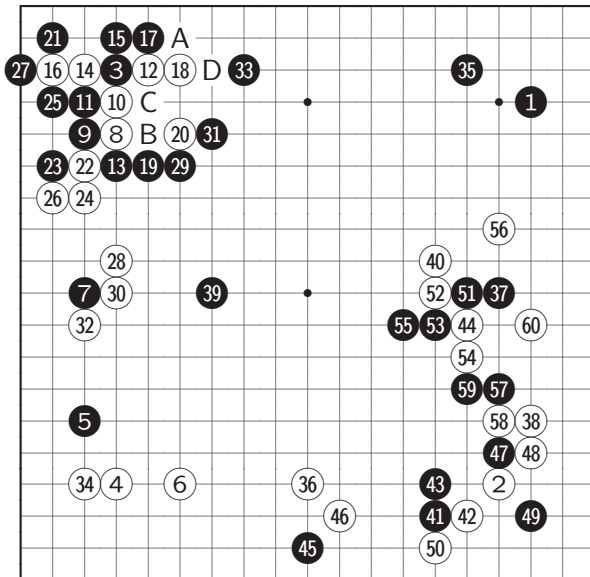


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-60)

Black 7 was unusual, and White developed towards the wider side with 10 because 7 occupied the left.

The small avalanche joseki from 13 to 27 was fair. White 18 makes miai of A and 22, by relying on a favorable ladder after 19 at A, 22, and B to D.

Black 31 was questionable. Playing at 32 was better.

White came out ahead in the trade up to 34.

Enclosing the corner at 35 made miai of 36 and 37.

Reducing at 40 showed Gu's delicate sense of play and dividing with 44 directed the flow of the game.

Black made a series of probes with 45 to 49, but 46 and 50 constituted a steadfast resistance.

Since Black couldn't find a good local response to 50, he accepted White's proposed fight with 51 and 53.

Black 57 was sharp, but 60 was a strong counter and the position was still better for White.

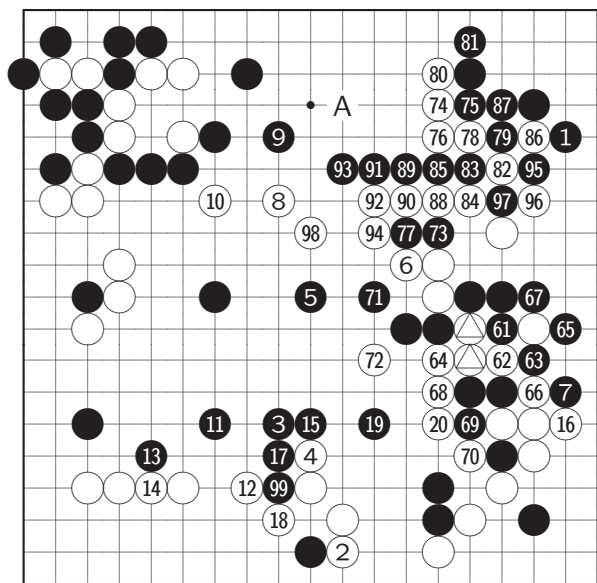


Diagram 2
(Moves: 61-120)

100 at 82

Trading with 61 to 67 followed the flow, because there was no way to capture White's marked stones.

Hitting the vital point at 73 suppressed White's cutting stones, but 74 maintained a comfortable lead.

White 82 was greedy, and 83 was a severe counter. White should have extended around A instead.

The moves from 84 to 94 followed a one-way street, and Black consolidated a huge territory at the top. Black caught up a little, but he was still behind.

Black's play from 3 (103) to 7 was light and flexible. It wasn't easy for White to play aggressively, because his group on the right side wasn't completely alive.

White 10 was too cautious. Pushing at 17 was better.

Black developed swiftly with 11 to 19. With each stanza of play, the game became closer and closer.

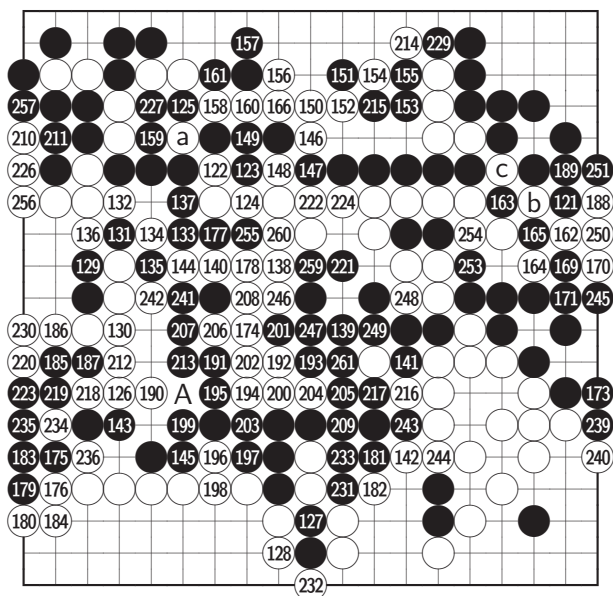


Diagram 3
(Moves: 121-261)

167 at a, 168 at b, 172 228 at c, 225 258 at 163,
237 at 234, 238 at 127, 252 at 165

Black 129 was a subtle probe. If 130 extends to 131 instead, bad aji remains after Black hanes at 186.

White held on to his lead from 130 to 136, but 142 was too small—expanding the left side with A was better.

White tried to make something happen at the top with 146, but 151, 153 and 157 were accurate responses.

White's ructions up to 161 eventually cost him a couple of points, and the game became almost even.

White 164 was another small mistake. Instead, simply connecting at 165 would have been better.

The game was still very close when Black played 173, but the tide had already turned against White.

Black 175, 177 and 187 were careful endgame moves, and Black reversed the game by the smallest of margins.

261 moves: Black won by half a point.

3rd BC Card Cup: Final, Game Four

April 27, 2011, Seoul, Korea: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

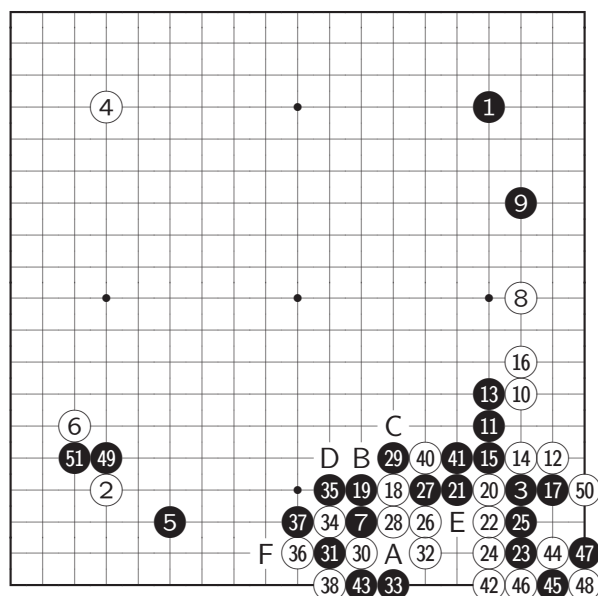


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-51)

39 at 34

The Micro-Chinese Opening was gaining popularity and the continuation up to 16 was common at the time. We analyzed 17 together in Chapter 1.

Exchanging 18 for 19, and cutting at 20 led to a difficult variation. Playing 20 at 29 would be normal.

Playing atari from above with 21 was best, and the moves up to 26 walked the only viable path.

Black 27 should have been 29, 40 and 41. The variation that follows is complicated, but favors Black.

White fought back by offering a ko with 30 and 32, but Black declined with 33 (if 43, White at 33).

The sequence from 34 to 42 was very sophisticated. If 37 is at 38, 40, 41, White at 37, Black A, White B, Black C, and White D leads to a ladder squeeze.

Cutting at 43 was the right choice. If Black plays at 44 instead, White at 43 makes miai of E and F.

The ko from 44 to 47 was unavoidable, and 49 was a powerful threat. The trade up to 51 was even.

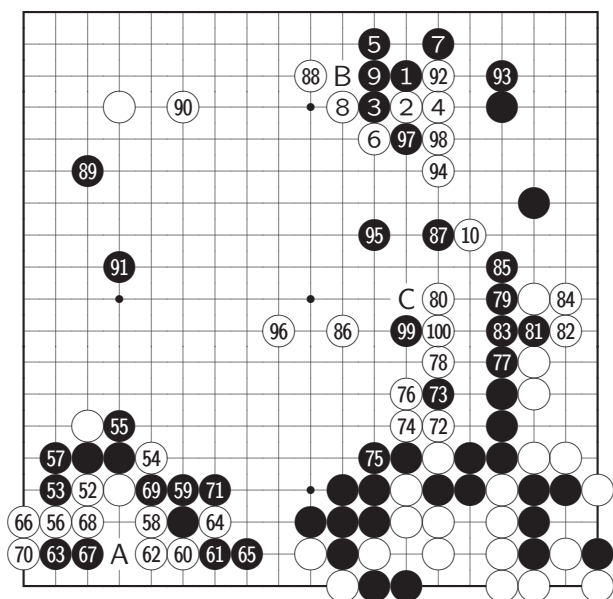


Diagram 2
(Moves: 52-110)

White managed the corner with ⑤② to ⑥①, and the position up to ⑦① was still well balanced.

If ⑥① connects at ⑥⑨ instead; ⑥③, ⑥⑥ and Black A form a tesuji combination to steal White's base.

Both ⑦② and ⑦③ showed fighting spirit, and helping White's center group with ⑦⑧ and ⑧① followed the direction of play. The game was still even up to ⑧⑦.

Playing ⑧⑧ at B to support ⑨② later is slightly better.

White ⑨④ occupied Black's vital point and aimed at ⑩①, but countering with ⑨⑦ to ① (⑩①) was sharp.

Crouching at ⑤ was a skillful haengma, but Black should have attacked White's center group at C first.

White ⑩ was a timely counter, and another complicated fight erupted.

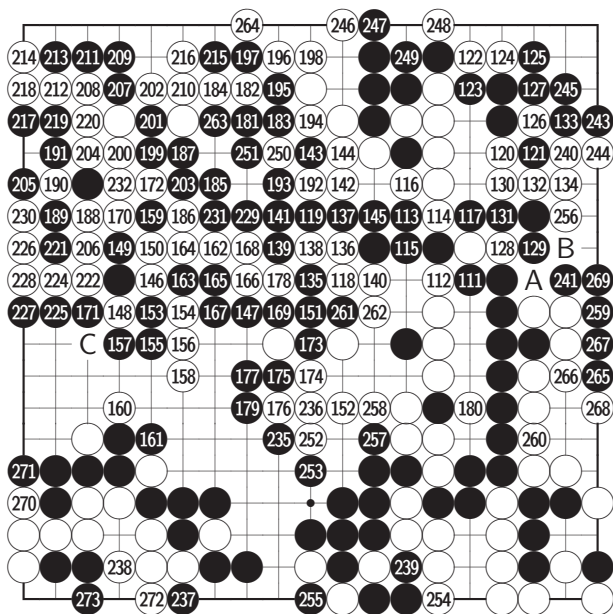


Diagram 3
(Moves: 111-273)

②③ at ①④⑧, ③③ at ①⑤⑨, ③④ at ①⑨①, ③② at ①②⑥

Connecting with ①①① to ①①⑦ was clever, but ①②① to ①③④ was a delightful rejoinder and White took the lead.

If ①②⑨ ataris at ①③① instead, White ①③②, ①③③, White at ①②⑨, Black A and White B makes miai of ②④① and ②⑤⑥.

White ①④⑥ to ①⑤① unleashed a masterful leaning strategy and Black's resistance from ①⑤③ to ①⑤⑨ was fierce, but ①⑥③ was too much. Connecting at ②③① was better.

Before ①⑦①, White should have exchanged ①⑦① for Black C, because ①⑦① removed Black's bad aji on the left.

White ①⑦② was another small mistake. White should have jumped to ①⑧⑤, to focus his attack on the center.

Black ①⑧① to ①⑧⑦ comprised a razor sharp tactic for managing the center, and White was in a quandary.

Black ②①⑦ was the winning move, and Black's continuation up to ②②⑨ was perfect.

Black took the cutting stones and the game was over.

273 moves: Black won by resignation.

3rd BC Card Cup: Final, Game Five

April 28, 2011, Seoul, Korea: Komi: 6.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

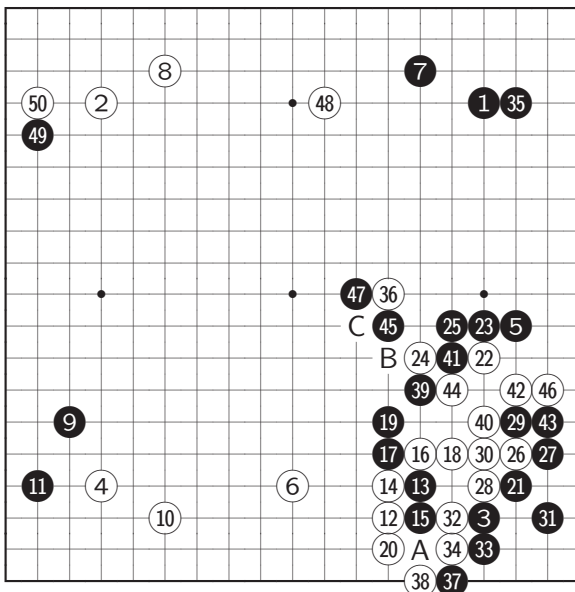


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

This was the deciding game of the 3rd BC Card Cup.

Black deployed the Chinese Opening with ① to ⑤ (reviewed in Chapter 3) and both sides enclosed their respective corners with ⑦ and ⑧ (see Chapter 5).

Black answered ⑫ with ⑬ to over-concentrate ⑥. The players' fighting spirits clashed with ⑯ and ⑰.

White ⑳ and ㉔ were sharp, but sacrificing with ㉑ to ㉓ was flexible. Black ㉕ was solid, and ㉖ took the pivot point—the corner and the center were miai.

Black ㉗ was a sublime probe, which created a tesuji at ㉙. If ㉚ is at A instead, White will lose four points in exchange for nothing, so it's a difficult choice.

If ㉜ connects at ㉝, Black will push at ㉜ and White can't cut because ㉗ has reduced his liberties.

Black ㉞ and ㉟ smothered the once bright flame of ㊱, and the game became better for Black.

If ㊲ moves out at B, Black will extend to C and sacrifice three stones, so ㊲ took a big point instead.

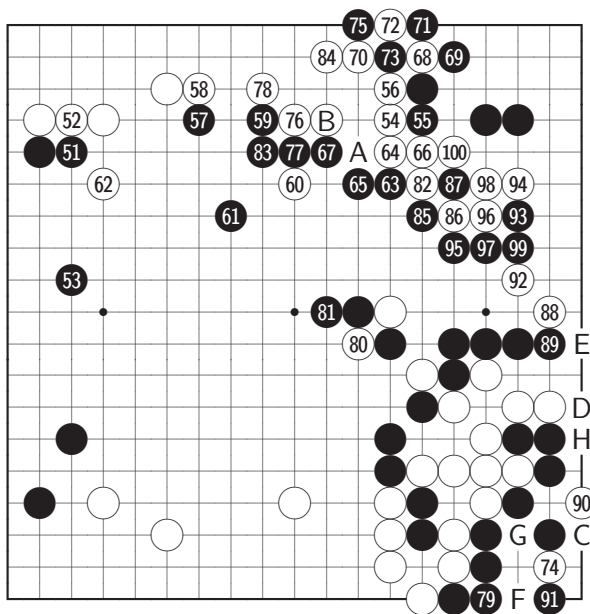


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

Black 51 and 53 were natural, and 56 was practical. If Black hanes at 64 next, bulging at A develops the top. White's stone at B, makes the hane less severe.

White 62 should have been at 63 instead.

Cutting with 65 and 67 was an extraordinary idea. Most players would find it hard to abide 66.

Starting a ko with 68 to 72 was an overplay. White backed down without any compensation up to 78.

If White uses 76 to capture Black's bottom right corner, Black at 76 takes the better end of the deal.

Black 87 was spirited and 88 to 94 was refined.

Answering 90 with 91 minimized Black's loss. Blocking at C instead makes White D a double threat—aiming to connect at E or capture with F to H.

Black maintained his lead by trading with 95 to 99.

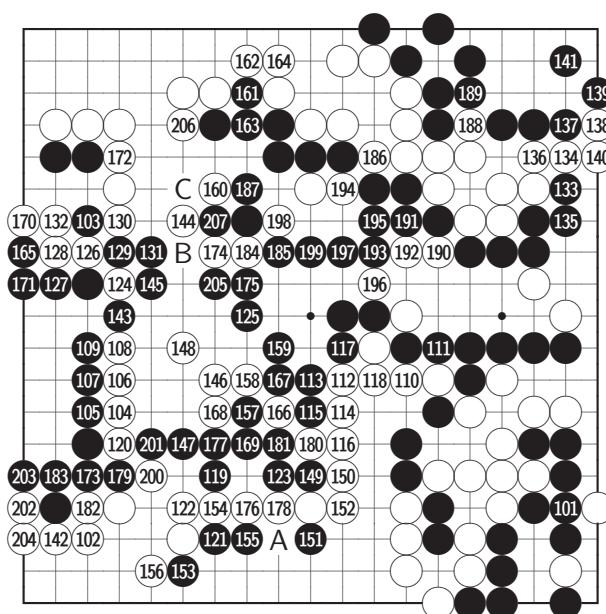


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-207)

Black 101 was a huge reverse sente endgame move, but 103 would have been better at 106 because 104 seized the pivot point for the influence.

White had been aiming at 110 and 112, and he caught up a little with the moves to 124.

Black played 125 to 133 to simplify the game, but White gained some more points from 126 to 132.

After 142, the game became quite close.

Black 151 was a sharp tesuji, which intended to answer 178 with Black A, 176 and Black at 154.

White 176 was well timed and 177 was necessary. Black was only marginally ahead after trading 178 for 179.

White 196 and 198 were cunning, but Black was unflustered and White wasn't able to reverse the game.

After 207, B and C were miai, so White resigned.

207 moves: Black won by resignation.

1st Bosai Cup: Round Two

May 11, 2011, Chongqing, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

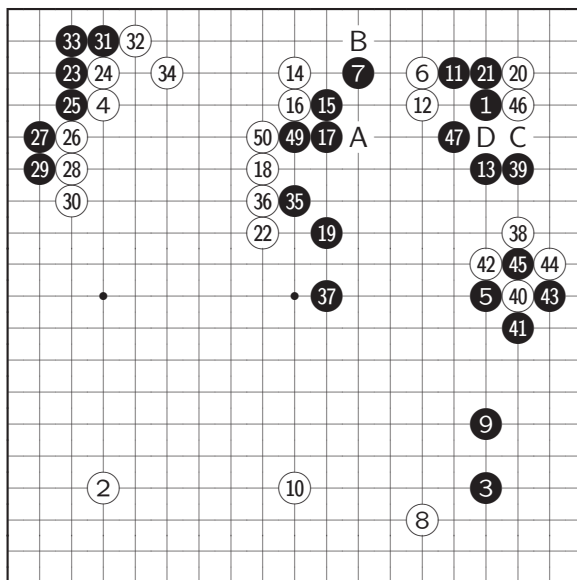


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

④⑧ at ④⑩

The 1st Bosai Cup was an invitational match, attended by Lee Sedol, Gu Li and Iyama Yuta 9 dan.

Gu dusted off the dependable Three Star Opening.

White probed with ⑥ and ⑧, and ⑩ was a matter of taste. Since White ignored ⑦, Black kicked at ⑪.

Developing the top left with ⑭ was a good strategy, because saving ⑥ and ⑫ would lead to heavy play.

Black ⑮ was the proper haengma. If Black jumps to A instead, White can attach at B later.

The opening up to ⑫ was quite unique, but playable.

Black ⑳ felt premature, but was well timed. If Black plays ㉓ and ㉕ instead, White will consolidate at ㉔.

Enlarging Black's moyo with ㉕ and ㉗ was practical, but ㉙ at C would have better solidified the corner.

Creating a ko with ㉚ and ㉜ was an interesting idea.

If Black ignores ㉞, White D makes ㉟ and C miai.

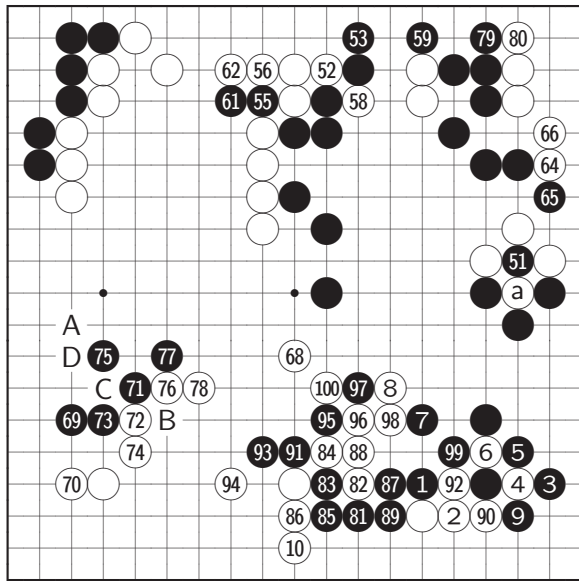


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-110)

54 60 67 at (a), 57 63 at 51

White lived in the corner with 66, and Black finished the ko with 67 (at a). The result was well balanced.

White 68 occupied the intersection of two moyos, and reducing White with 69 followed the natural flow.

White 70 was solid, and 71 was lively. If 71 is at A, White expands the bottom by attaching at 73.

White 72 was unusual, but the idea was to develop the bottom. White's tactic was successful up to 78.

If 73 is at 76, White B makes miai of 78 and C. This is better than the immediate cut at C. If 75 is at 76, White at 75, Black C and White D attacks.

Invading at 81 was urgent and 86 was the right choice, because the bottom left was most valuable.

After 90, 91 and 92 were compelled by fighting spirit, and 3 (103) was a brilliant haengma to attack the corner. If Black play 4 instead, White at 9 lives.

The move order from 5 to 9 was precise, and 10 was a large endgame move. The game was still even.

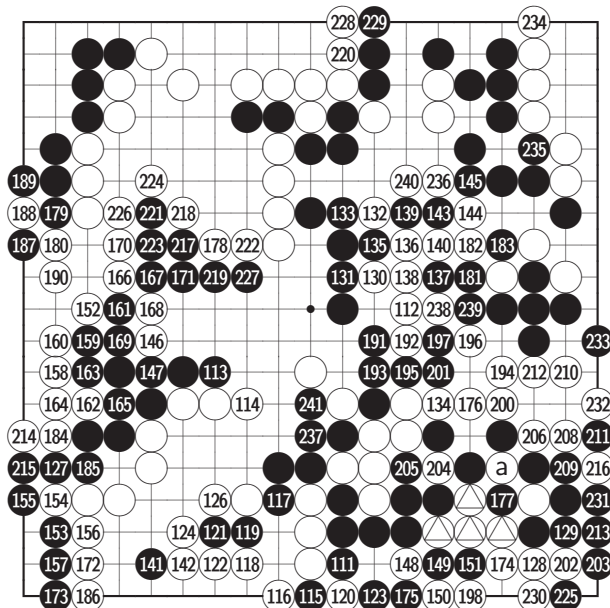


Diagram 3
(Moves: 111-241)

125 at 115, 199 at 149, 207 at (a)

White 112 was big, but it would have been better at 127. The latter move also creates attacking potential.

Playing 115 to 119 was unnecessary, and 124 at 115 would gain more points. Lee was worried about bad aji, but there would have been aji in the marked stones too.

Reinforcing Black's left side group with 127 was quite big, and was also efficient. Black took the lead.

Black cemented his lead with the excellent tesuji combination of 149 and 151. White couldn't live.

White 158 and 162 were severe, but Black handled the attack deftly and his group was safe up to 171.

White probed at 194, but 197 cut boldly. The game was practically over after White's center stones fell.

Even though White broke into the right side up to 210, it wasn't enough to compensate for his dead stones.

241 moves: Black won by resignation.

2012 Samsung Cup: Group Stage

September 5, 2012, Beijing, China: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

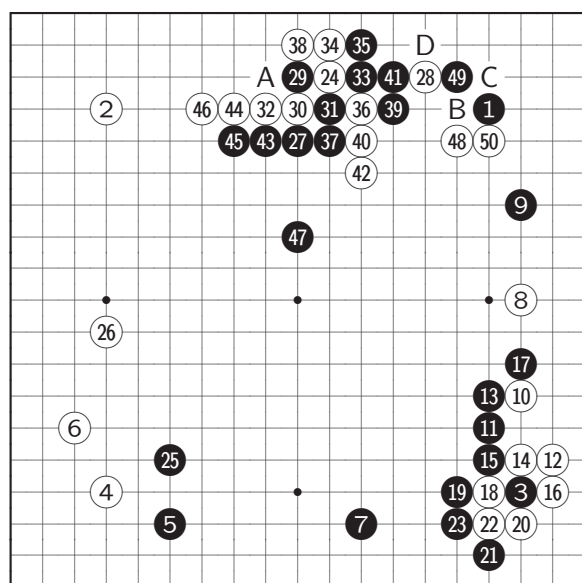


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

This is the renowned quadruple ko game.

It was the 17th Samsung Cup, but starting in 2012 Samsung used the year in the official title instead.

We've seen ① to ⑮ before. White pushed at ⑮ and Black resisted with ⑮. Playing ⑮ at ⑮, White at ⑮ and ⑮ is also possible. The result to ⑮ was even.

Emphasizing the center with ⑮ was an interesting strategy and ⑮ provoked ⑮. If ⑮ is at ⑮, Black develops the center with ⑮, ⑮ and Black at ⑮.

If ⑮ is the hane underneath at ⑮, Black happily extends to A. Wedging at ⑮ instead vigorously defied Black's intent, and ⑮ to ⑮ met steel with steel.

Interposing the cut at ⑮ (before defending at ⑮) exploited the favorable ladder, so ⑮ was necessary.

Black ⑮ to ⑮ was natural and ⑮ hit the vital point.

If Black plays ⑮ at ⑮; White B, Black C and White D will capture Black's four stones.

White ⑮ was a powerful continuation, and the game was still playable for both sides.

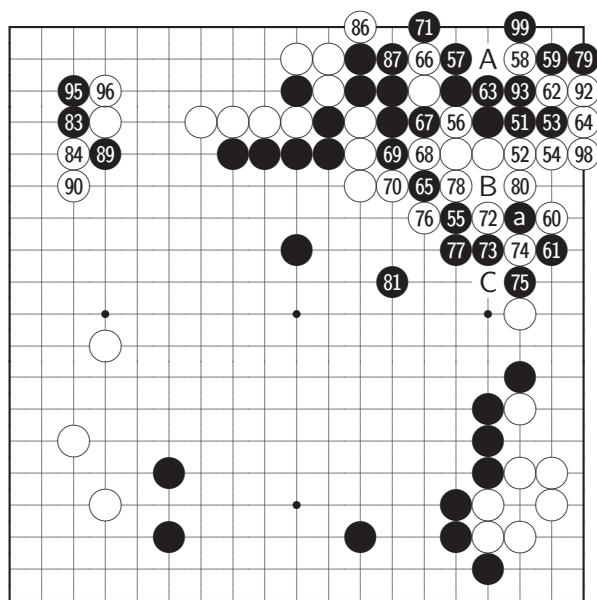


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

82 88 94 100 at 74, 85 91 97 at a

White 54 was an overplay and 55 countered forcefully. White should have jumped to 55 instead.

White 62 was a brilliant tesuji, but sealing White in with 65 was shrewd. If 63 is at 93; 66, 67 and 98 form a stunning riposte which makes A and 74 miai.

White broke out with the ingenious move order of 72 to 76, but 79 defended the corner while keeping the pressure on White.

If 77 is at 78; White at 77, Black B, 80, Black at 72 and White C captures Black. If White doesn't exchange 74 for 75, before 76, Black can play 78.

White 80 was careless. It should have been at 81.

Black 81 was the pivot point for power in the center, and the ko at 82 (74) became desperately important.

Black 83, 89 and 95 were good ko threats, and Black's position looked promising.

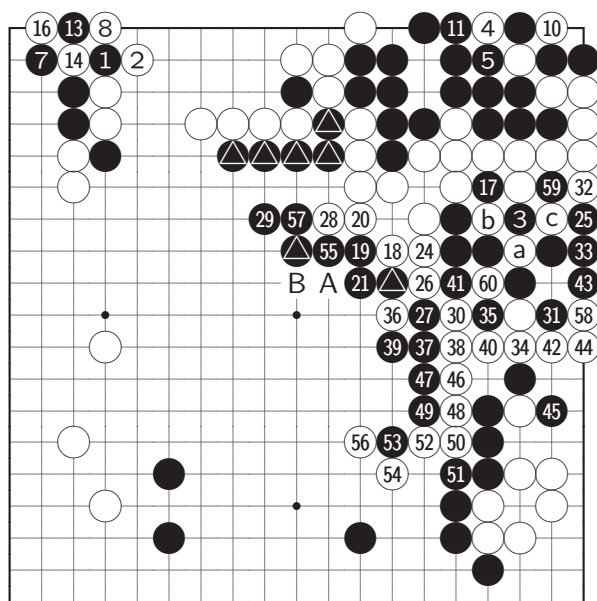


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-163)

106 112 123 at a, 109 115 at 103, 122 at b, 161 at 117,
162 at c, 163 at 135

Black created another ko with 13 (113), and going all out with 16 was necessary to avoid a double ko.

Black 25 was too much. Black should have blocked at 26. He would have been ahead, had he done so.

White broke through Black's containment line with the outstanding combination of 28 to 34. It was becoming difficult for Black to capture White's group.

Black 39 was necessary. If Black cuts at 41 instead, White will play 55, Black A and White B, and Black's marked stones will all be threatened.

Black 43 was an excellent way to extend Black's liberties, using a ko shape, and 45 was also strong.

Since Black had lost control of the game, he accepted the quadruple ko by taking a liberty at 55 and White extended his liberties with 56.

The position became repetitive after 63, and the game was stopped in accordance with the rules. It was the first quadruple ko in an international match.

163 moves: no result, stopped by referee.

2012 Samsung Cup: Group Stage, Rematch

September 5, 2012, Beijing, China: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

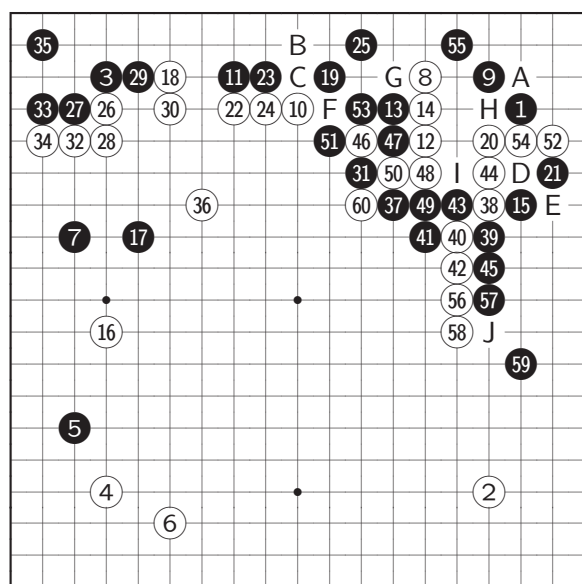


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-60)

Lee and Gu had to play an immediate rematch, with less thinking time (1 hour + 5 × 1 minute byo-yomi).

White ⑧ made attaching A or extending to ⑩ miai.

White ⑱ was active, but reinforcing at B is standard.

Black ⑲ showed fighting spirit. If Black defends the corner at ⑳ instead, White will attach at ㉒.

White ㉒ was questionable. Black connected easily with ㉕, so White should have fought with C instead.

Defending with ㉖ to ㉚ demonstrated good technique, but ㉛ began a splitting attack.

Sealing White in with ㉞ was powerful. The fierce clamp at ㊱ ensured that White couldn't escape.

White's move order from ㊲ to ㊴ was impeccable, and simplifying the position with ㊵ was sensible.

If ㊵ is at ㊶; White D, Black E, White at ㊵, Black F and White G lives (H and I are sente).

White's group was in great danger, but ㊹ was slack. Black ㊹ at J would have made it harder to sacrifice.

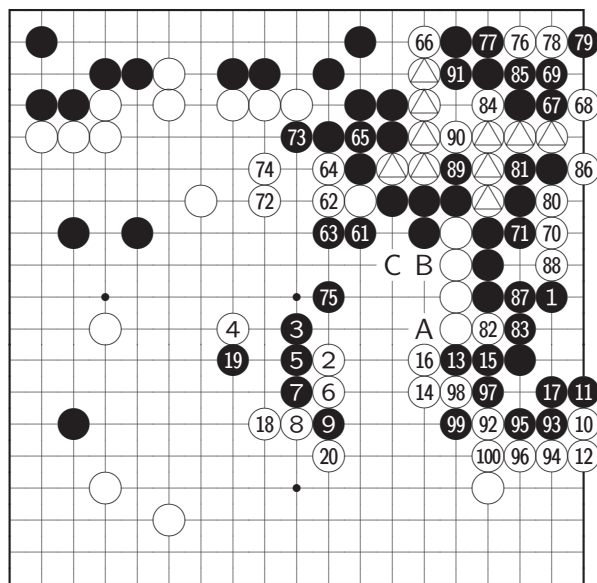


Diagram 2
(Moves: 61-120)

White's marked group died, but ⑥⑥ to ⑦⑦ was a sophisticated sequence which extended White's liberties, and ⑧⑧ to ⑧⑧ extended them further.

Enclosing Black with ⑨② to ⑨⑧ was a tight combination. Black couldn't resist because he had to live.

Consequently, White's sacrifice strategy was successful and reinforcing at ① (101) became necessary.

White's moves from ② to ⑧ were carried by the natural flow of the stones. Black had to submit to avoid a capturing race with White's marked group.

White was happy to enlarge the bottom through to ⑧, and Black tried to prevent that with ⑨.

However, White's flow from ⑩ to ②① was superb and White built a huge territory up to ①⑧.

White wasn't worried about Black cutting around A, because B or C were sente at practically any time.

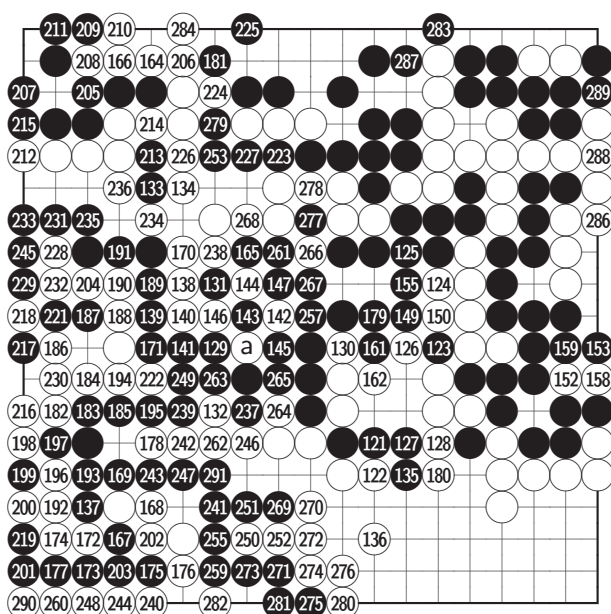


Diagram 3
(Moves: 121-291)

①④⑧ ①⑤① ①⑥① ①⑦① at a, ①⑧① ①⑨① ①⑩① ①⑪① at ①④③, ①⑫① at ①⑫③,
①⑬① at ①⑨③, ①⑭① at ①④④, ①⑮① at ①⑥⑥

Defending with ①③① and ①③② was efficient, and the game was nearly even. White ①③① prevented Black at ①⑥②.

White ①③⑧ unleashed a razor sharp sequence and ①④② aimed to cut at ①⑦① or ②⑤⑦, so the ko was unavoidable.

If Black avoids the ko by squeezing at ②⑤⑦, White connects at ①④③ and makes cutting at ①⑦① or ②⑥③ miai.

Black ①⑥⑤ gave up the top left corner for the ko. This gave Black sente to play ①⑥⑦ and the trade was even.

White ①⑧② was sharp and irritating; ①⑧⑦ should be ①⑨⑦.

Living on the left side with ①⑧⑧ to ②①④ was remarkable, and the game was reversed.

However, ②①⑦ was a brilliant tesuji which ensured that the game remained unsettled.

White ②③⑧ was the losing move. It should have been at ②④⑥. The game was reversed again after ②③⑨.

291 moves: Black won by resignation.

2nd Bosai Cup: Final

September 16, 2012, Guilin, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

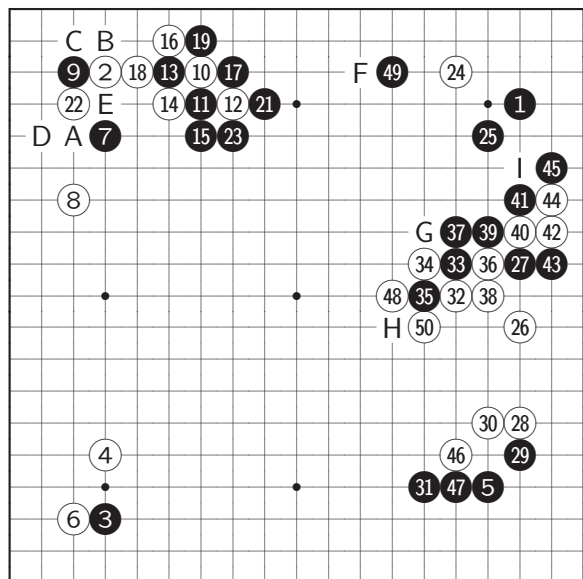


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

⬤ at ⬤

The 2nd Bosai Cup was another invitational, between Lee Sedol, Gu Li and Yoda Norimoto 9 dan.

Black played ③ to make A and ⑤ miai. Approaching immediately at ④ discouraged A, so Black played ⑤.

The combination of ⑧ and ⑩ was gaining popularity at the time, and ⑪ was an experimental move. White ⑩ was discussed in Chapter 2.

If Black plays ⑪ at B, White's counter-hane at ②② is severe, but if ⑫ is at ⑬ Black can hane at B and meet ②② with Black at ⑱—trading for the two stones.

Splitting at ②⑥ was a good idea. If White extends to F instead, Black will develop the right side at ③⑧.

White ③② was calm and solid, and ③⑤ was a little too much. It should have been at ③⑦ instead.

White ④⑩ was well timed, and the continuation up to ④⑧ was powerful. If Black extends at ⑤⑩, pushing at G makes miai of H and I. The result favored White.

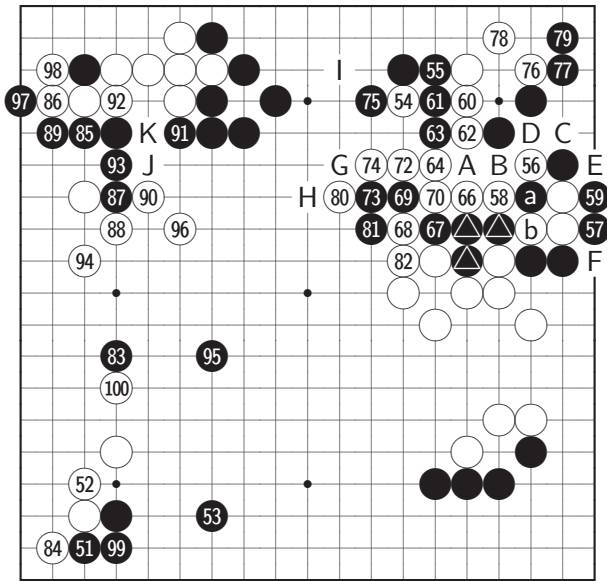


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

65 at a, 71 at b

White's play from 54 to 60 was fantastic, and it was difficult for Black to attack White's stones.

White 64 was excellent. If 65 (a) cuts at A; 66, Black B and White at 67 captures the marked stones.

If 64 is at a instead, Black plays 66 followed by C to F and White's cutting stones are still captured.

Black cut with 69, but White escaped without any trouble. If 75 is at 80, White counters with G to I.

Exchanging 87 for 88 before playing 89 was necessary. If Black goes straight to 89, J encloses him.

Black played 89 to isolate White's left side stones, but White managed the situation gently, with 90 and 94, and maintained his lead.

Instead of 92, White could also form a flower by capturing at 93. However, it would be squashed against Black's solid wall after Black K, so its power would be limited. Gu thought that 94 was more useful.

White 96 aimed to start a ko at K later, and settling the bottom left group with 100 was practical.

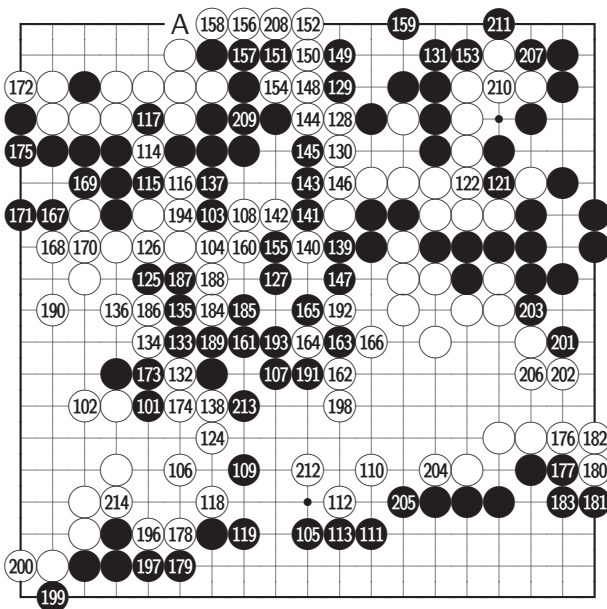


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-214)

120 195 at 114, 123 at 117

Black 105 was a big point, but White continued playing solidly with 106 and 108.

White only needed to make a shallow reduction at the bottom, with 110 and 112, and starting a picnic ko with 116 consolidated his advantage.

Black 127 was flexible, but 132 and 134 were severe.

Black 137 dissolved the ko, but White completed a large territory with 138.

Black attacked with 139, but 142 and 144 revealed a wonderful combination for escaping. If Black blocks at 148, White at 147 traps Black's cutting stones.

White 156 was a tesuji for connecting. If 157 cuts at 158 instead; White at 157, Black at 208, White at 157 (again), Black at 156 and White A captures.

Black had to live with 159, but 162 to 166 was too big and Black wasn't able to catch up.

214 moves: White won by resignation.

2012 Samsung Cup: Final, Game One

December 11, 2012, Shanghai, China: Komi: 6.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

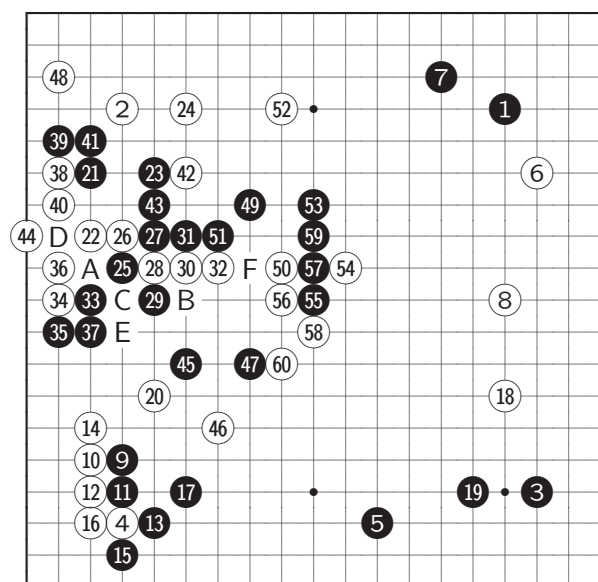


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-60)

Black ③ and ⑤ set up a Chinese style formation and ⑨ to ⑮ maintained balance with Black's opening.

Exchanging ⑮ for ⑲ reduced Black's moyo, and ⑳ flew to the pivot point. The opening was peaceful.

Black jumped to ⑳ and pressed at ㉕ to limit White's left side, but White resisted vigorously with ㉖ and ㉘. Playing ㉘ at A would be too passive.

Black ㉙ and ㉛ set up a ladder and ㉞ defended in an interesting way. However, turning at B instead would have helped more in the battle on the left side.

If ㉞ is at C instead; Black A, White at ㉛, Black at ㉞, White D, Black at ㉜, White at ㉝, ㉟, White E and Black at ㉞ preserves the ladder.

White had to live with ㉜ and ㉞, but this damaged his positions in the corner and on the left.

White ㉠ occupied the key area for eyespace, but Black's stones flowed smoothly from ㉡ to ㉤. If ㉤ connects at ㉦, Black will cut with the wedge at F.

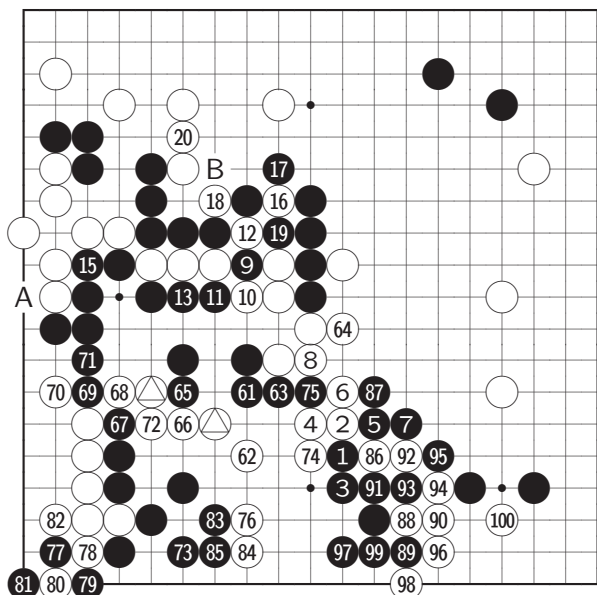


Diagram 2
(Moves: 61-120)

114 at 109

From 65 to 72, White's marked stones were isolated.

White countered at 76, and Black made life up to 85.

White continued to push back, looking to establish a rhythm with 88 and 90, but 89 to 95 comprised a strong counter. Black was dictating the flow of play.

White 100 was natural, but Black had 1 (101) up his sleeve. Black solidified his lead as 2 to 6 broke free.

After 8, Black was surrounded on the left side. He managed the situation adroitly with 9 to 13, and 15 was the vital point for the eye shape of both groups.

White 16 to 20 were persistent and spirited moves, and the position became surprisingly complex.

If White uses 16 to defend at A, Black reinforces at B and the game still favors him. White was behind, so he preferred to instigate a complicated negotiation.

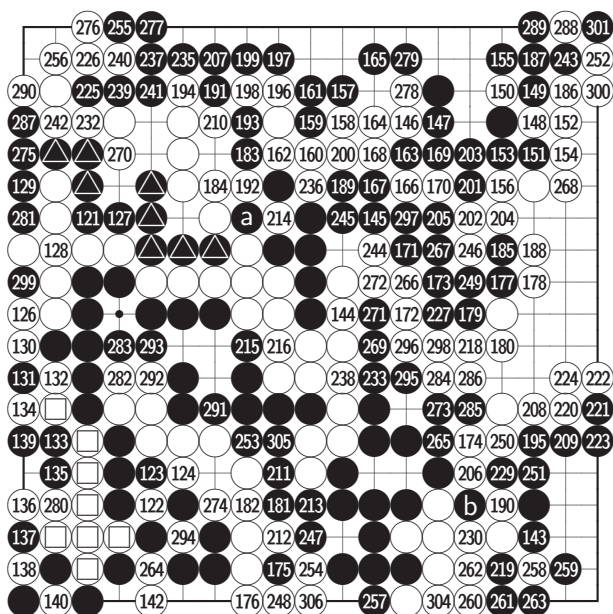


Diagram 3
(Moves: 121-306)

125 at 122, 141 at 131, 217 231 at a, 228 234 at 214,
302 at b, 303 at 288

Both players trod a perilous sole path from 121 to 135.

The game will soon make it apparent that White's exchanges from 122 to 125 were beneficial and timely.

If Black offers to trade the marked groups, with 129 at 133, White will play at 129 and come out ahead.

White 136 was brilliant, and the ko at 137 was natural.

White didn't have a sufficient ko threat in the reserve, so he traded up to 142. Despite giving up his bottom left group, Black preserved his advantage with 143.

Eyeing Black's center group indirectly, with 146 to 156, was active. White had caught up a little by 170.

Black 177 to 189 pursued a 'safety first' strategy and Black's solid play up to 219 maintained a small lead.

Black 225 and 227 were the losing moves. White reversed the game with 232 and 238. Black 225 should have been 226, and 227 should have connected at 232.

306 moves: White won by half a point.

2012 Samsung Cup: Final, Game Two

December 12, 2012, Shanghai, China: Komi: 6.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

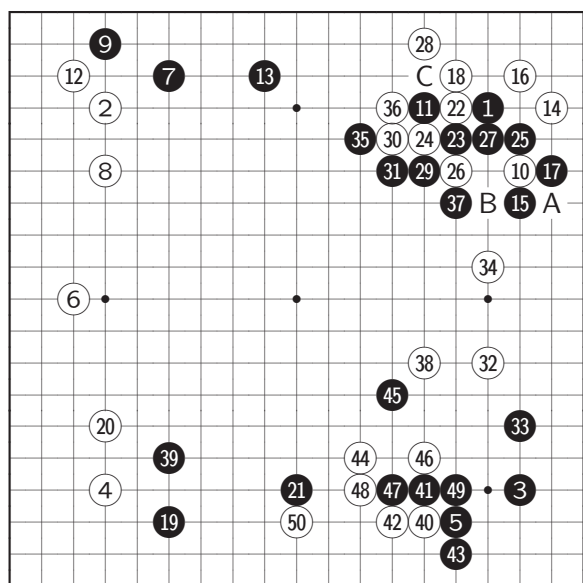


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

Black deployed the Parallel Opening from ① to ⑤. White ⑥ was unusual—Gu Li is its main proponent.

White ①⑥ was also unconventional (A or B is more common) and ①⑧ was a new move. These swift plays were more concerned with the top than the right side.

Black ①⑨ was a mistake. Blocking at C is better.

Cutting at ②④ was severe, and the result up to ③① favored White because Black still owed a debt at ③⑦.

White reduced the value of Black's power in a light and flexible manner, from ③② to ③⑧.

White ④④ and ④⑥ demonstrated a fine sense of play.

Black split White with ④⑤, but continuing with ④⑥ to ⑤① was an effective response and restoring the balance of territory became a matter of concern for Black.

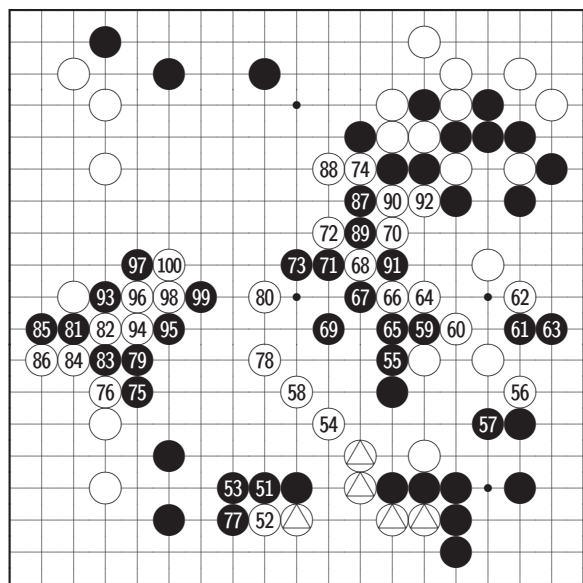


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

Black ⑤① and ⑤③ showed patience, but it was hard to attack White after ⑤④. If ⑤① hanes at ⑤② instead, White's crosscut at ⑤① manages the situation lightly.

Black continued his splitting attack with ⑤⑤ and the expediency of ⑤⑥ was appropriate, because moving the marked stones out with ⑤⑧ was becoming urgent.

Black ⑥① hit the vital point, but White withstood the attack expertly up to ⑦④, establishing a clear lead. Hence, Black had to attack severely at the bottom.

Black started a leaning attack with ⑦⑤, but the game was already becoming worryingly simple by ⑧①.

Black ⑧① was the beginning of an indirect tactic aimed at White's marked dragon, and the trade from ⑧⑦ to ⑨② helped to accumulate power in the center.

Driving White with the broken ladder tesuji from ⑨③ to ⑩① was extraordinary, but White responded boldly up to ⑩②, extracting the maximum price from Black.

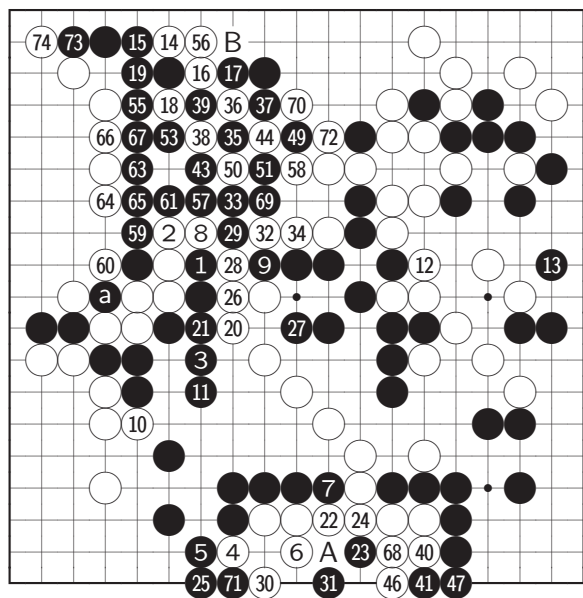


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-174)

⑭② ⑭⑧ at ⑭③, ⑭⑤ ⑭⑤ at ⑭③, ⑭⑤ at ⑭③, ⑭⑥ at a

White ④ (⑩④) and ⑥ were well timed probes. Black ⑦ captured most of White's stones at the bottom, but White retained the option of living small with ③①, Black at ②②, White A and Black at ②④ later on.

This, and the aji around ②⑧, left Black with a nasty case of indigestion, so White was still ahead.

White unleashed an incredible strategy for exploiting his dead stones, starting with ⑭④. If ⑭⑤ hanes at ⑭⑥, White's crosscut at ⑭⑥ makes miai of ⑭⑨ and B.

White's play from ②① to ②⑦ was sente, and Black's responses were accurate in terms of life and death.

Next, White engineered a ko with the wonderful combination of ③⑥ and ③⑧. Black was in deep trouble because ⑤① and ⑤⑥ were miai for White.

Squeezing from ④⑨ to ⑤⑤ felt so good! However, Black was riddled with cutting points afterwards, so the result wasn't as successful as it might seem at first.

In the end, Black couldn't make two eyes at the top, and he couldn't win the capturing race either.

174 moves: White won by resignation.

2012 Samsung Cup: Final, Game Three

December 13, 2012, Shanghai, China: Komi: 6.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

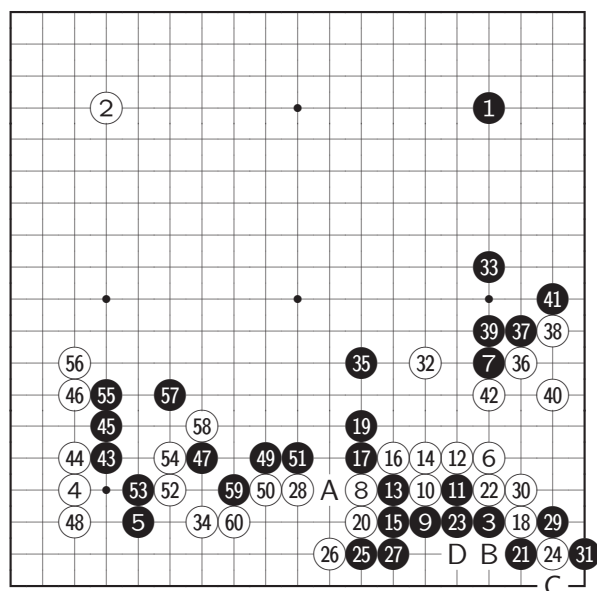


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-60)

This was the title deciding game.

White ④ is sometimes played as an anti-Chinese style opening—if Black ⑤ is at ③⑦, White plays ⑤.

White ⑧ was unusual, and made things complicated.

Black ①⑨ and ②⑩ both showed fighting spirit. If ①⑨ ataris at A instead, White will atari at ①⑨ in sente.

Gaining liberties with ②⑤ was essential. If Black plays ②⑨ to ③① immediately, White captures with B to D.

A new pattern arose up to ③① and the result was even.

White settled his group confidently with ③⑥ to ④②.

The game was even after ④③ to ④⑦ enclosed White, and ④⑧ defended his bottom group indirectly.

Black ⑤⑤ and ⑤⑦ were the right haengma to hold White in, and ⑤⑧ left behind a weakness for later.

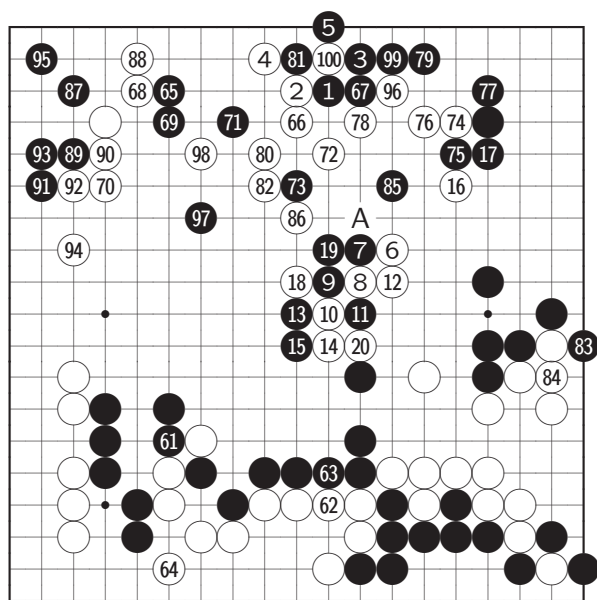


Diagram 2
(Moves: 61-120)

White lived up to ⑥4, and the game was still even.

White pincer at ⑥6 to reduce Black's moyo as much as possible and Black counter-attacked with ⑥7 to ⑦3.

White ⑦4 was a creative but unsuccessful tactic. Black developed a large territory up to ⑦9.

Black ⑧1 was a little passive; playing at ⑨7 was better.

Nevertheless, enlarging the right side with ⑧3 and ⑧5 was efficient, and Black established a slight lead.

Black invaded at ⑧7 and White struck back with ⑧8 to ⑨6, attacking Black's stones at the top.

Black ⑤ (105) was small. White seized the initiative with ⑥, so Black should have played at A instead.

White's powerful hane at ⑩ complicated the game.

White ⑩6 was sharp, and ⑩8 was a strong move which widened the field of battle.

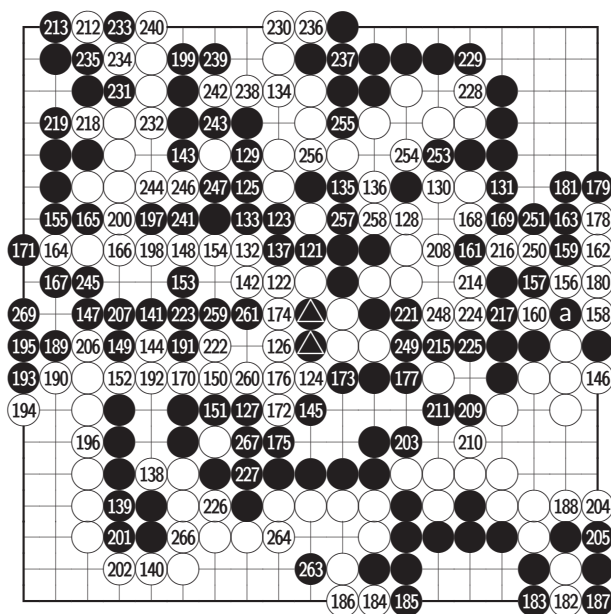


Diagram 3
(Moves: 121-270)

②20 at a, ②52 at ①61, ②62 ②68 at ②12, ②65 ②70 at ②33

Black ⑩23 should have been at ⑩37. Lee entered his last overtime period (byo-yomi) just before playing ⑩25.

The game was reversed when ⑩26 captured the marked stones, and ⑩40 consolidated White's lead.

White ⑩46 was sente, but Black ignored it to play a do or die move at ⑩47 because he was behind.

White ⑩56 missed a good opportunity. It should have been at ⑩250, Black at ⑩216, White at ⑩251, ⑩169, ⑩156, ⑩157 and ⑩180 to put a major dent in Black's right side territory.

Black ⑩61 and ⑩67 were efficient moves, and Black caught up inch by inch.

White ⑩70 should be ⑩191, and ⑩188 was smaller than ⑩189.

The game became very close after ⑩189, and ⑩208 was the losing move. It should have been at ⑩211.

Black successfully reversed the game with ⑩209 and ⑩211.

270 moves: Black won by half a point.

2013 Tianxin Pharmaceuticals Cup

March 20, 2013, Jingdezhen, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

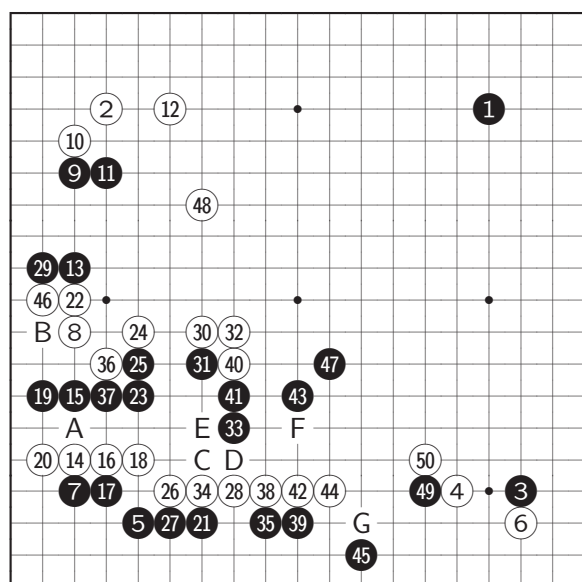


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

We investigated the opening up to ⑦ in Chapter 2.

White ⑭ was too much. Extending at A was better.

Dividing White with Black ⑮ and ⑲ was severe.

Bumping at ⑳ denied Black's connection at B and ㉔ aimed to cut at ㉗, but was warded off by ㉕.

White ㉘ and ㉚ were light haengma, the latter factoring in ㉞ in sente, but the flow to ㉛ favored Black.

If ㉙ pushes and cuts at ㉜; White C, Black D and White E builds momentum in the center while sacrificing ㉘. This hurts Black's weak groups.

Black's stones rolled seamlessly to ㉛. If ㉛ is at ㉞, White F is the key point for attack and defense.

White attacked Black's top left group with ㉞ and ㉟, but he should have reinforced with G first.

The attachment at ㊱ launched a powerful leaning attack against White's bottom left dragon.

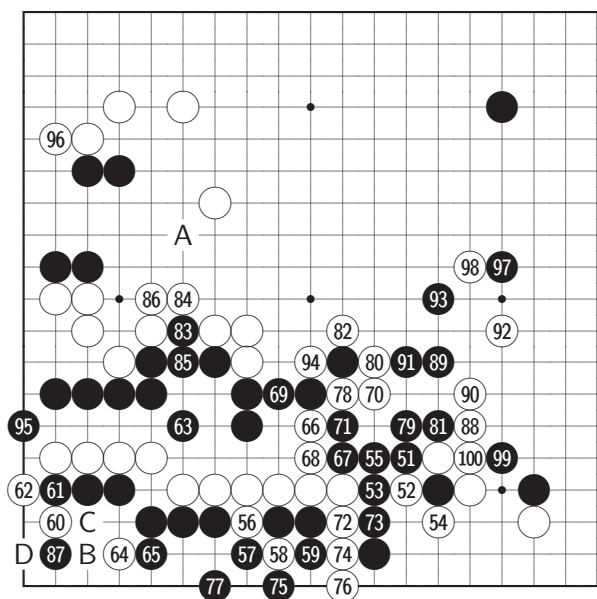


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

White ⑤② and ⑤④ showed fighting spirit, even though White's bottom left group was in danger after ⑤⑤.

Black ⑥③ was a mistake. Exchanging ⑧③ to ⑧⑤ instead would be better, because it makes miai of ⑦① and A.

The sequence from ⑥⑥ to ⑦⑦ was exquisite, and the tide turned in White's favor through to ⑦⑧.

Black had no choice but to limp away with ⑦⑨ and ⑧①, and White was content to seal Black in with ⑧②.

Black ⑧③ to ⑧⑦ attacked White with the right move order. Meanwhile, White harassed Black from ⑧⑧ to ⑨③, before completing his thickness with ⑨④.

Black ⑨⑤ was necessary to completely capture White's dragon. If Black plays elsewhere, White can make a ko with B to D later.

White was unperturbed by the fall of his dragon, and consolidated his own large profit with ⑨⑥. The overall position after the trade favored White slightly.

Black ⑨⑦ took a big point, and ⑨⑧ was persistent.

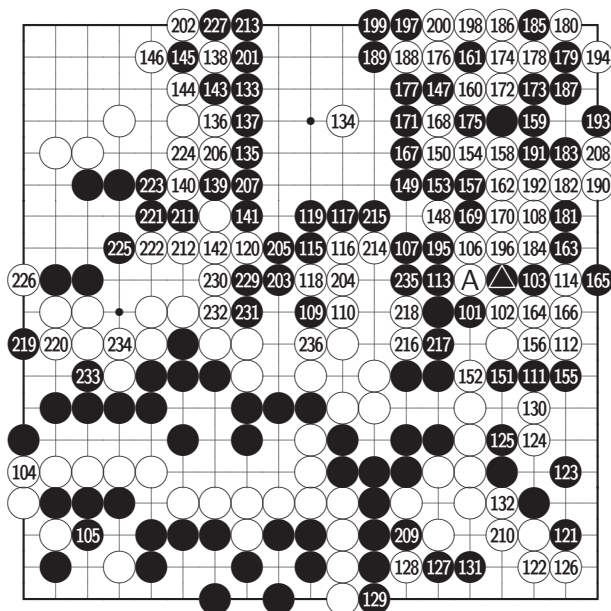


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-236)

Descending to ⑩③ was an overplay. Black should have laddered A with ⑩⑥ instead.

White captured the marked cutting stones with ⑪④, and reinforcing efficiently up to ⑪⑩ preserved his lead.

White ⑪④ and ⑪⑥ were accurate, and ⑪⑦ prevented White from connecting under with ⑪⑨. If White finds an eye for his slain dragon it will be revived in seki.

Black ⑬③ to ⑬⑦ developed the top with a highly refined move order, but ⑮⑩ was a razor sharp reduction.

Black searched for a way to counter ⑮⑩ or gain compensation, but White's responses were perfect.

Exchanging ⑮⑥ for ⑮①, before connecting at ⑮②, was good move order. Black ⑮⑤ couldn't recoup the loss.

The sequence from ⑮⑦ to ⑮⑨ was beautiful, and the game was decided when a seki formed in the corner.

236 moves: White won by resignation.

②②⑧ at ①④⑤

2013 Chinese A League: Round 17

October 20, 2013, Chongqing, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

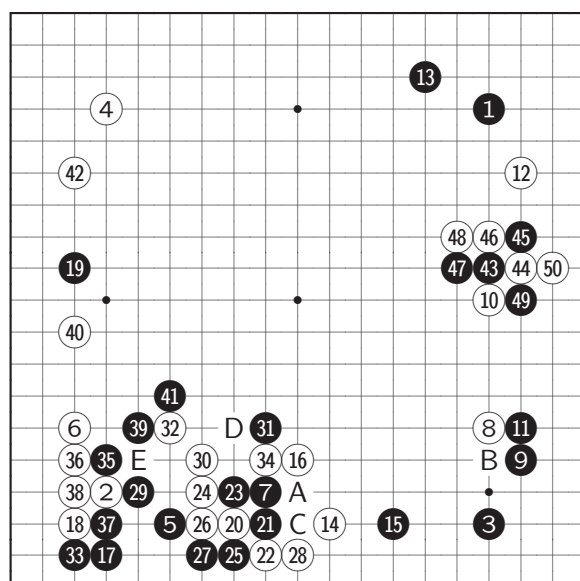


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

This was the last game before the Jubango began.

Black started with a modified Kobayashi Opening up to ⑦, and ⑧ to ⑩ made miai of ⑪ and ⑫.

White ⑧ can also be at ⑪, and because Black played ⑦ instead of A, approaching at B is also conceivable.

Invading with ⑭ and ⑯ was light and flexible, and ⑰ should have been at ⑳ or C.

White ⑳ struck at Black's vital point and ㉔ was severe. If Black cuts at ㉖ instead of ㉕, White will connect at ㉕. Either way, ② is a ladder breaker.

Black ㉑ was the best haengma for managing Black's bottom left group, but the unassuming power of ㉓ allowed White to capture the cutting stones with ㉔.

If Black plays ㉓ at D, he finds himself in a tight spot after White at ㉓, ㉕ and White E.

Black ㉑ was thick, but ㉒ was big and the opening was better for White.

Black harassed White with ㉑ and ㉒, but White's responses up to ㉒ were strong.

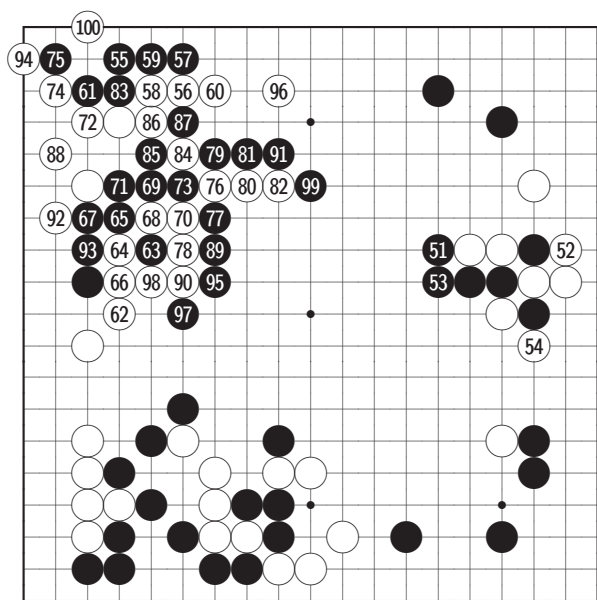


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

Black 51 was the right continuation and the result up to 54 was playable for both sides.

Black approached at 55, and 56 was thick and solid. However, 58 was a thank you move. Simply playing 60, 61 and 72 would have been better.

White 64 was a mistake, and 67 damaged White's position. Instead of 64, he should have pressured Black with 98. Doing so makes miai of 64 and 78.

White 72 prevented Black from connecting, but 76 should have ataried at 83 first.

Black 83 revealed a surprising vital point and quietly redirected the flow of play in Black's favor.

Pushing at 91 was the right choice, even though it allowed 94 to occupy the key point for eyespace.

The powerful hane at 99 realized Black's advantage.

Eventually, White needed to play once more at 100 to capture Black, demonstrating the potency of 83.

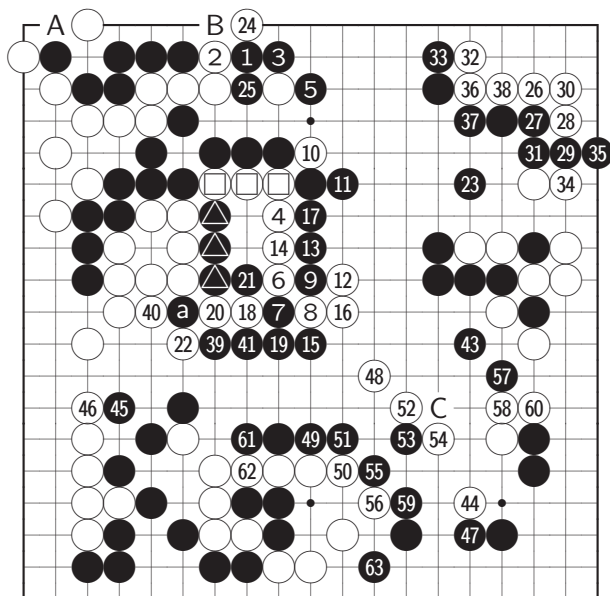


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-163)

142 at a

Black 1 (101) and 3 were quick-witted moves, which exploited Black's dead stones. If White blocks at 3, instead of 2, Black at 2 makes miai of 25 and A.

Black became thick at the top after 5, and could also aim to save his corner stones with B later.

Black 7 and 9 were severe, and White found it difficult to fight because of Black's center thickness.

The marked stones lived in seki after 12 to 22, while Black consolidated his lead with 23.

Black adopted a firm posture with 25 and 43. His calm play sparked feelings of desperation in White.

White went all out with 48, but Black's responses from 49 to 59 were solid and precise. If White plays 58 at 59, cutting at C captures White's center group.

White saved his center stones by connecting with 60, but 63 captured White's large group at the bottom.

163 moves: Black won by resignation.

4th Zhaoshang Cup: Round Two

March 23, 2014, Hangzhou, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

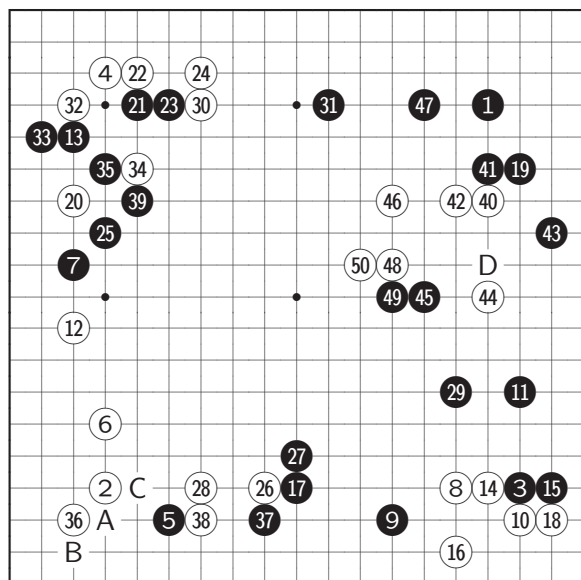


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

This game was played between games two and three of the Jubango. Lee was winning the match 2–0.

Lee came up with 7 after game one of the Jubango.

Black 9 and 11 began a popular joseki of the time.

The opening up to 19 was peaceful and well balanced.

White sacrificed a stone at 20 to develop territory at the top in sente. The continuation to 25 is joseki.

Probing at 26 was timely, and 28 was natural.

Black 29 was slack and ambiguous. Black should have played A; he can answer 36 at B or C next.

White 36 was very big and White took the lead.

Black 39 was thick, but too slow. Playing around D is better, even though it's slightly over-concentrated.

White seized the opportunity to reduce at 40, and the flow of the stones up to 50 favored White.

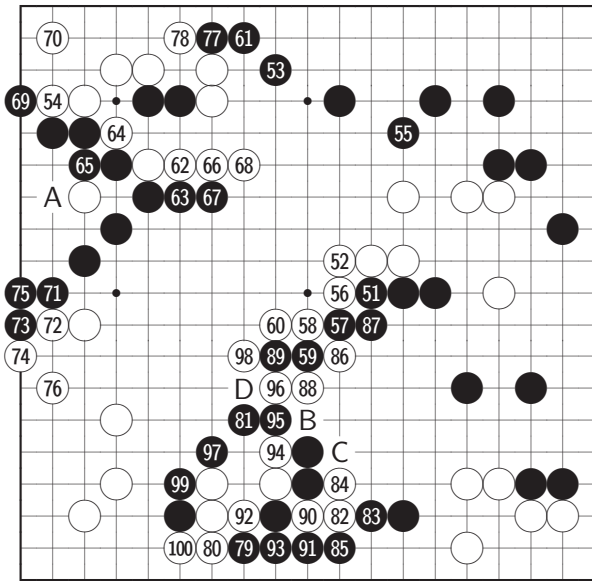


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-100)

Black 53 and 55 were efficient moves which secured Black's territory in the top right on a large scale.

However, White continued to play calmly and solidly, from 56 to 60, because he was still ahead.

Black 61 was questionable. Playing at 62 is better.

White gained some extra profit from 62 to 68.

Black played 71 to 76 to erase the bad aji around A, but it made his position thin. We usually only see this kind of thin play when Lee is in poor form.

Black 79 was also thin. It should have been at 94.

White punished Black's thinness with a razor sharp probe at 82. Black 83 should have connected at 90.

White's continuation from 86 to 94 was exemplary.

White 96 was wonderful, and 98 established a clear lead. If 97 extends to 98 instead; White B, Black C and White D captures 81 and 95.

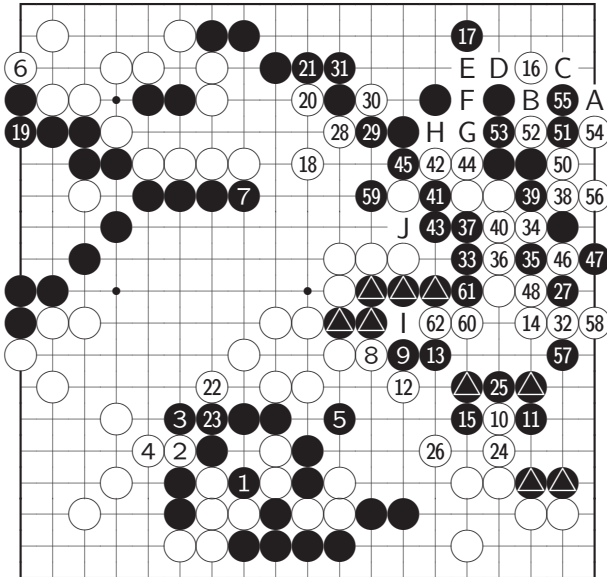


Diagram 3
(Moves: 101-162)

149 at 146

After White cut at 2 (102) he was solid everywhere, so it became very difficult for Black to catch up.

White 16 was a probe, and 17 was the best way to minimize White's aji in the corner.

Black went all out with 33, because the game was too far gone for a normal endgame.

Black 37 and 41 were severe, but White had a tesuji at 46 up his sleeve to reduce Black's liberties.

White 50 to 56 formed an excellent continuation, and Black was hopeless. If Black plays at A next, to start a ko, White can raise the stakes with B.

Black 59 was necessary because White was aiming to play B to H, but 60 and 62 were accurate moves and Black's marked dragon was captured.

After 61, White couldn't make two eyes, but 62 made I and J miai. It became a "Big eyes beat small eyes," capturing race on the right. White won the race.

162 moves: White won by resignation.

10th Chunlan Cup: Round of 16

March 28, 2014, Jiangsu, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

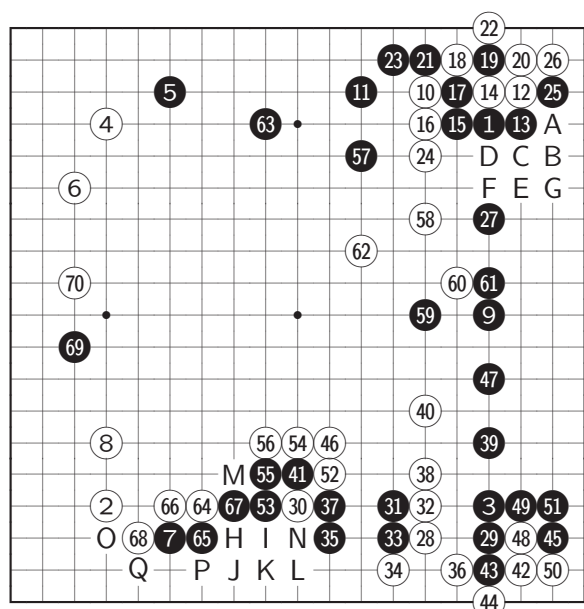


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-70)

It was two days before game three of the Jubango.

The opening from 5 to 9 was active. Black was willing to sacrifice 5 and 7 to develop rapidly.

Instead of 23, the hane at 24 is normal, but Gu Li's style emphasizes fighting and 23 is another path.

Exchanging 25 for 26 prevented White A to G.

Black 29 and 31 were creative. If White pushes at 33, instead of 32, Black will block at 32.

White 34 and 36 were typical of Lee—concentrating more on territory and eyespace than moving out.

The game was acceptable for both players up to 41.

White's play from 52 to 56 was thick and solid, and 57 to 63 secured territory at the top while attacking.

White 64 hit the vital point prepared by 56. If 67 is at 68, White squeezes with H to J, 67 and K to Q.

Splitting at 69 was a proper move, because the bottom left was most important. The position was even.

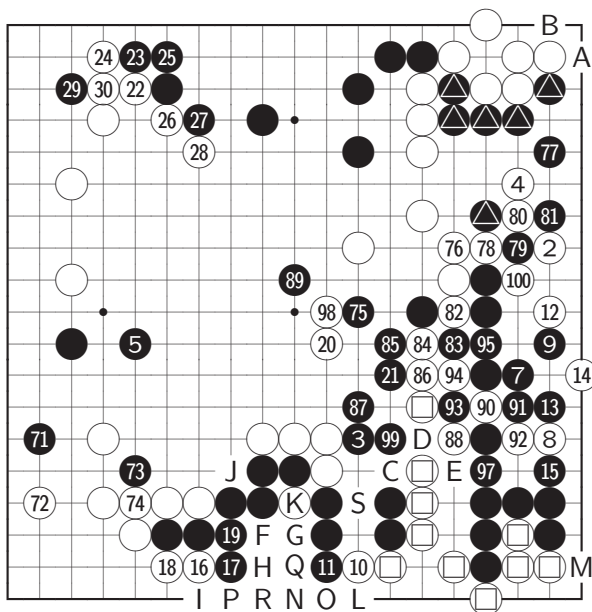


Diagram 2
(Moves: 71-130)

96 106 at 90, 101 at 93

White probed at 76, and 77 defended efficiently while promising Black the sente exchange of A for B later.

White 88 was a subtle probe and 89 was a spirited resistance. White had hoped for 89 at 90 instead.

The sequence from 90 to 98 was exquisite, but 99 was a well timed counter and Black took the lead.

White 100 was sharp. If 1 (101) is at 4; White C, Black D, and White at 93 makes miai of 7 and E.

The players traded the marked groups up to 4, but the result was better for Black because he took sente.

White 16 was a brilliant tesuji, with which White eked as much value as possible from his dead stones and caught up a little.

If Black plays 17 at 18; White at 19, 17 and F to P starts a ko. Instead of O, if Black ataris at Q; White R, Black O and White S revives the squared stones.

Black 23 was territorial, but should have been at 26.

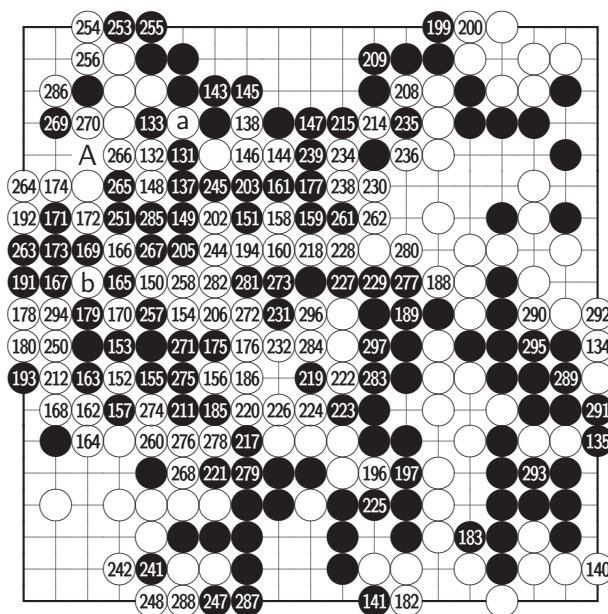


Diagram 3
(Moves: 131-297)

136 142 at a, 139 at 133,
181 187 195 201 207 213 233 243 249 259 at 165,
184 190 198 204 210 216 240 246 252 at b, 237 at 214

Using a ko to resist, with 132, was an extraordinary tactic. By 154 the game was almost even again.

Black 165 to 167 was a sabaki technique, but 168 was also big. If Black 165 is at 168, White attacks with 294.

White 178 and 180 attacked severely, and the game was reversed. However, 204 was a mistake (205 was better).

Black 205 was vital and the position after 217 was even.

White 218 should have exchanged 221 for 279 first. Black's endgame tesuji at 219 exploited this oversight.

White 250 was the losing move. Had White connected at 257, the game would still have been very close.

Black's move order from 251 to 257 was delicate. If White answers 251 at 267, 285 makes miai of either 257; or 265, 266, Black at 256, White at 253 and Black A.

Black was ahead by 1.5 points when White resigned.

297 moves: Black won by resignation.

2015 Chinese A League: Round Seven

June 13, 2015, Chongqing, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Lee Sedol 9d (Black) vs Gu Li 9d*

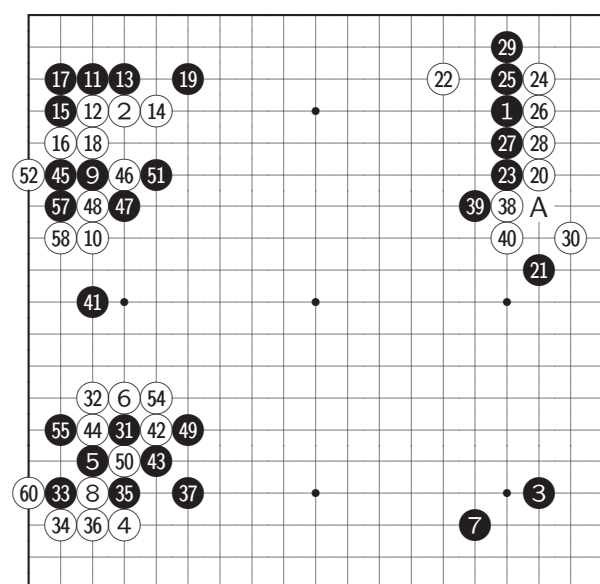


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-60)

53 59 at 31, 56 at 50

This was Lee and Gu's first game after the Jubango.

White ⑧ was unusually territorial. Normally White would play ⑤⑩ instead, but ⑧ is also reasonable.

Connecting along the right side with ②⑥ followed the direction of play, because ①⑨ made the top small.

White ③⑩ was gentle. If ③⑩ is at ③⑧, Black cuts at A.

Black ③① was a new move, and Black's continuation up to ③⑦ was light and animated.

However, ③⑧ was quite thick; reducing Black's potential while aiming to attack Black at the top later.

Black ④① was aggressive and ④② and ④④ were proper responses, because it was hard to attack ④① directly.

Black created some powerful ko threats, with ④⑤ and ④⑦, before continuing with his plan from ④⑨ to ⑤⑤.

White ⑥⑩ was a canny threat, and the game was still playable for both sides.

The opening was quite interesting and unique.

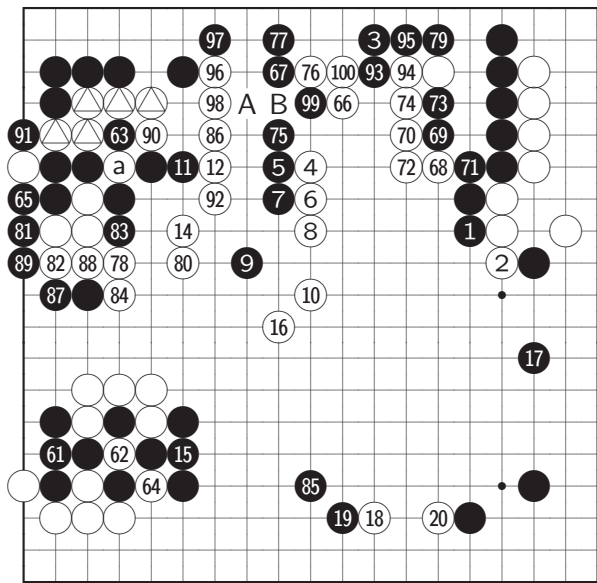


Diagram 2
(Moves: 61-120)

113 at a

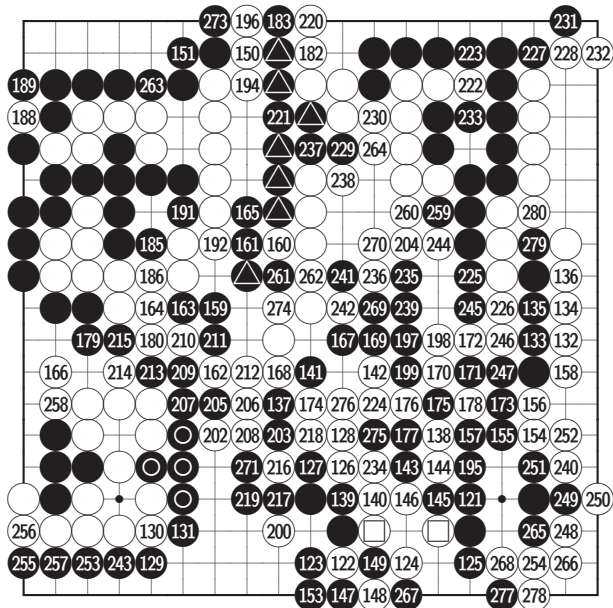


Diagram 3
(Moves: 121-280)

152 at 122, 181 187 193 at 175, 184 190 at 178, 201 at 149,
272 at 203

White traded with 64 because he was out of threats. The result up to 65 was well balanced.

Settling a group at the top while attacking Black's wall, from 66 to 76, was skillful.

Black 79 was a mistake, and 80 took the pivot point.

Black 85 was quite large, but so was rescuing the marked stones with 86 to 92. If 93 is at 11, White can peep at A to maintain his connection.

Stealing White's base with 93 was a sharp continuation, but 96 to 98 were timely and purposeful moves.

Defending at 99 prevented White from wedging at B, so 98 induced 100, and 4 (104) to 10 flowed naturally.

White was ahead after he connected at 14.

The solid kosumi at 16 radiated power and prepared to play at the bottom or on the right side next.

After 17, it was time to invade the bottom at 18.

White 122 to 128 glided smoothly, and 129 was very big.

Black attacked with 143 to 147, but White parried deftly through to 158.

Black achieved his aim of a ko with 175 and 177, but he didn't have enough threats to impose his will.

Black traded his triangled stones for White's squared group up to 197. The negotiation ended up even, but White maintained a slight lead overall.

Black 205 was a good endgame tesuji, and connecting at 208 was necessary because the game was quite close.

Black revived his triangled stones up to 215 (in seki). However, 216 came as a stinging retort, taking the squared group back and maintaining White's lead.

If Black 217 connects at 218 instead, White at 217 isolates Black's circled stones and the seki collapses.

Black 243 and 248 were miai, as were 253 and 254.

White maintained a small but unassailable lead. He was ahead by 2.5 points when Black resigned.

280 moves: White won by resignation.

2015 Chinese A League: Round 18

October 28, 2015, Jiangsu, China: Komi: 7.5 – *Gu Li 9d (Black) vs Lee Sedol 9d*

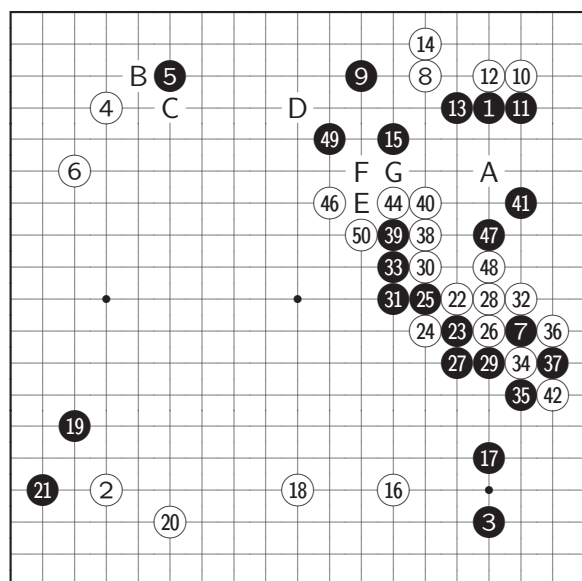


Diagram 1
(Moves: 1-50)

43 at 7, 45 at 34

Black exchanged ⑤ for ⑥, then set up a Chinese style formation. White ⑧ made miai of attacking ⑤ or taking the corner, and Black assisted ⑤ with ⑨.

If ⑨ is at A instead, White attacks with B to D.

Black ⑨ to ⑮ is rarely played with the Chinese Opening, because ⑦ ends up in an awkward position. Black would prefer to move ⑦ to ⑳ (see Chapter 3).

Reducing at ㉒ was appropriate, and Black resisted with ㉓ to ㉕ instead of meekly defending at ㉘.

Black ㉓ was a strong and perceptive move. If Black connects at ㉔ instead, White moves out at ㉓.

Black ㉗ was appropriate, because extending to ㉚ instead would not apply enough pressure in this case.

White ㉚ was premature. White should play ㉚, Black E, ㉚, ⑦, White F, Black G and ㉔ instead.

Black filled the ko and felt contented up to ㉙.

White ㉙ prevented Black from cutting at E.

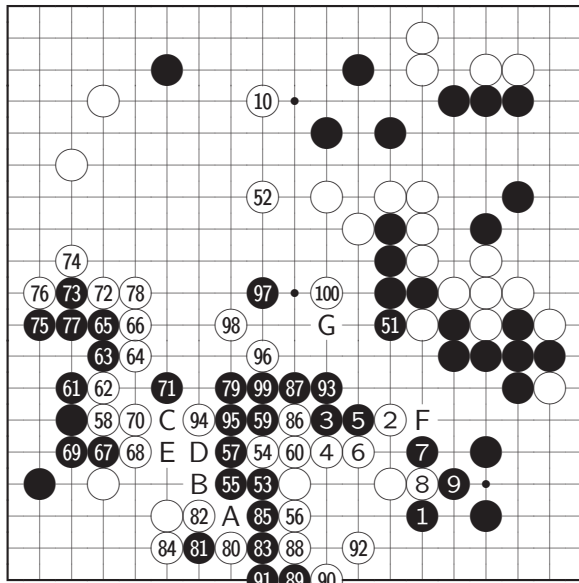


Diagram 2
(Moves: 51-110)

Black 53 was an opportune probe, and 54 was a strong response. If White hanes at 85 instead, Black A, White at 55 and Black at 54 makes 56 and B miai.

Wedging at 67 left weaknesses in White's wall. If Black extends to 72 instead, White will cut at 95.

Black 71 prepared a driving tesuji. If White cuts at 95; 79, 94, Black C, White D and Black E follow.

Crimping Black with 72 to 78 became White's right.

Black 81 was a sharp tesuji for disrupting White's connection, and Black was slightly ahead up to 93.

White 100 was a key point in the center, but 1 (101) was also big. Black was able to solidify his corner and reinforce the center concurrently with 1 to 9.

White 10 was a mistake. It would have been better to exchange White F for Black G, and then play 10.

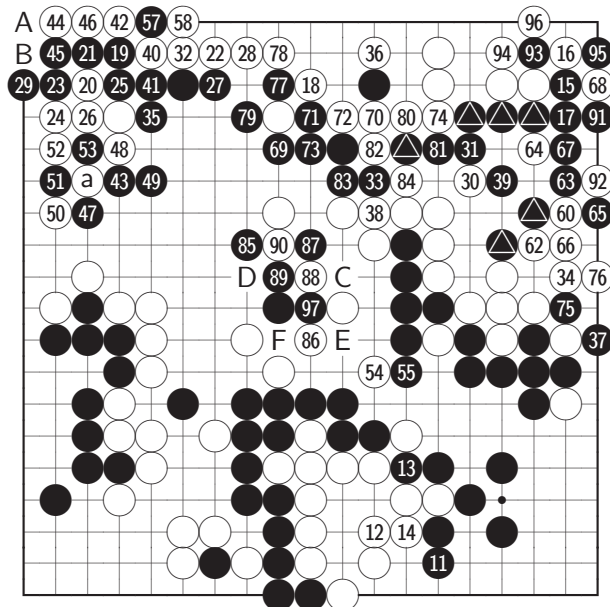


Diagram 3
(Moves: 111-197)

156 161 at a, 159 at 153

The exchanges from 11 to 14 were painful for White, and Black secured a clear lead.

White 18 was an efficient indirect defense, which supported both the top and the top right corner.

White attacked aggressively with 22, and 23 to 29 defended. If 44; 45, White A and Black at 32 lives.

Black was far ahead, so White went all out with 42.

The tesuji at 44 sought to reduce Black's liberties. If 45 is at 46, White at 45 and Black B reduces them.

However, 45 and 47 were clever responses, and the ko up to 52 was unavoidable.

Connecting the ko with 61 was farsighted. White captured the marked group with 62, but he couldn't swallow it cleanly and was burdened with bad aji.

White confined Black with 80, but 85 and 87 formed a powerful counter. If White answers 97 at C, Black D makes miai of E and F. White can live in seki, but then Black's marked stones will rise from the dead.

197 moves: Black won by resignation.

Notes

Formatting of Names

The custom in Asia is to write the family name before the given name. This means that Lee and Gu are the family names of the players, while Sedol and Li are their respective given names.

Throughout this book, we have followed the convention of writing family names first for people whose names would normally be formatted in that way. For Western names, we have written the given name first, as is standard in the West.

The only exceptions to this convention are the names of the professional author (An Younggil 8 dan), and the cover designer (Xue Jingning). Their names are written in the Western style (Younggil An and Jingning Xue) in the front matter of the book.

This is partly to avoid confusion when people who are not familiar with Go or Asian culture copy the names of the authors for use elsewhere (for example, in a library database). In addition, Younggil and Jingning both live in Australia and prefer to write their given names first. Obviously, there is always going to be some degree of confusion either way.

Romanization of Names

All names in this book have been romanized using the preferred form of the person in question (where known) or the culture of which they are a part. Transliteration of names and text (from one language and script to another) isn't always perfect and is sometimes controversial.

For example, when referring to the ancient Chinese generals Sun Zi and Zhuge Liang, we've used the pinyin system of romanization. With Sun Zi in particular, early English translations of *The Art of War* rendered his name as Sun Tzu (and that name is still used by many today), but Sun Zi is preferred by the Chinese people. The same applies to Lao Zi.

With Korean names, in particular, there are multiple ways to romanize them. Once again, the authors have stuck to the forms preferred by the people themselves, or the Korean people, as much as possible.

Sun Zi, Sun Bin and The Art of War

The Art of War is an ancient Chinese military text, which was written some time in the 5th or 6th centuries BC. Most people have heard of the text and its reputed author Sun Zi, who is thought to have been a great general and military strategist from that period. Regrettably, the mists of time have made the exact details of Sun Zi's life uncertain.

In Chinese culture, *Zi* is an honorific term given to great thinkers and teachers from the past. Sun Zi's original name was actually Sun Wu, but *Zi* was later bestowed upon him as a mark of respect. As noted above, *Zi* has also been translated into English as *Tzu*, as well as *Tse* or *Tsu* at times.

More than 160 years after the time of Sun Wu, another general, named Sun Bin, also wrote a text titled *The Art of War*. Consequently, there are actually two texts, now known as *Sun Zi: The Art of War* and *Sun Bin: The Art of War*.

Sun Bin is thought by some to be a descendant of Sun Wu, but historical evidence for that is unclear. It is known that he existed, and that he was a commander in the state of Qi during the Warring States Period. During that time, knowledge was often passed through families verbally, as well as being written down on bamboo strips, so it is possible that they were related. Some historians even argue that Sun Wu was Sun Bin's (or someone else's) fictional creation...

Unfortunately, in the chaotic years following the collapse of the Eastern Han Dynasty, Sun Bin's *Art of War* was lost. Due to the tendency to refer to both the great masters as 'Sun Zi', and the loss of Sun Bin's writings, many scholars eventually came to believe that they were the same person.

Stories of Sun Bin survived in other historical texts, though his exploits were not always attributed to him. For example, the *Thirty-six Stratagems* (another Chinese military text by an anonymous author) included the stratagem, "Besiege Wei to Rescue Zhao," based on the state of Qi's victory over the state of Wei, and Sun Bin's revenge against Pang Juan.

It wasn't until 1972, when archaeologists excavating a Han tomb in Shandong discovered two different copies of *The Art of War*—one by Sun Zi of Wu and the other by Sun Zi of Qi—that Sun Bin's *Art of War* was rediscovered.

The word 'Go'

The name of the board game *Go* isn't a proper noun in English and therefore doesn't strictly need to be capitalized. Some people, including the authors, choose to capitalize it anyway to make it easier to distinguish from the English verb *go*. This avoids confusion and makes text more readable.

It would be less confusing for everyone if early translators had chosen to call the game *igo* or something else in English, but that cannot be helped now.

Further Reading

A large number of texts were referred to in the preparation of *Relentless*. We primarily relied on English translations of important books, but also referred to Chinese and Korean texts at times, and drew on our existing knowledge.

Given this complicating factor, along with the fact that this is a Go book and not an academic work, and that time and space are limited, we have chosen not to include an exhaustive list of references at this time. We have, nevertheless, taken great care in verifying the authenticity of quotes throughout the text and crediting the books where they originally appeared. You are welcome to contact us if you require further details about where a particular quote was sourced.

We include below an incomplete list of the English language texts we used, for the benefit of enthusiastic readers:

- Sun Zi and Sun Bin, *The Art of War*, trans. Lin Wusun (Foreign Languages Press, 2007).
- Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Thomas Cleary (Shambhala, 2003).
- Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, trans. Gia-Fu Feng and Jane English (Vintage, 1989).
- Wang Xuanming, *Thirty-six Stratagems: Secret Art of War*, trans. Koh Kok Kiang and Liu Yi (Asiapac, 2003).
- Ma Xiaochun 9 dan, *The Thirty-six Stratagems Applied to Go*, trans. Roy C. Schmidt (Yutopian, 1996).
- Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Richard Crawley (Barnes and Noble Classics, 2006).
- Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton University Press, 1976).
- Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. N. H. Thomson (Dover Publications, 1992).
- Baltasar Gracián, *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*, trans. Christopher Maurer (Doubleday, 1992).
- B. H. Liddell Hart, *The Strategy of Indirect Approach* (Faber and Faber, 1942).
- Georgi K. Zhukov, *Marshal Zhukov's Greatest Battles*, trans. Theodore Shabad (Cooper Square Press, 2002).
- Helmuth von Moltke, *Moltke on the Art of War: Selected Writings*, ed. Daniel Hughes (Random House, 2009).
- John Fairbairn and T. Mark Hall, *The Go Companion: Go in History and Culture* (Slate and Shell, 2009).

Readers who are not yet satisfied can find a wealth of information about Go on our website: <https://gogameguru.com>

Glossary

Before you start, the pieces in Go are called ‘stones’, and *italicized* words in the definitions also appear in this glossary.

It’s useful to know that the center of the board is usually imagined to be the sky, while the side of the board is thought to be earth or the ground. This idea is implicit in many Go terms, and knowing this may help with understanding them.

Aji: The latent potential which lingers in a position and might allow variations to arise at some point. Usually, aji refers to possibilities in positions which appear (superficially) to be settled already. In Japanese, aji literally means ‘taste’.

Ask: To ‘ask’, means playing a move to see how the opponent will answer it, giving you more information. See *probe*.

Alive: See *life*.

Another Game: A phrase used by Go commentators to indicate that the moves in a variation are playable for both sides, while avoiding too many long and tangential discussions. It’s the Go player’s way of saying, “But that is another story and shall be told another time.” (apologies to Michael Ende)

Approach: Drawing near to an opposing *group* without making *contact*, usually in the corner or on the side.

Approach Ko: A *ko* where a player must ignore *ko threats* to remove *liberties*, before it becomes a direct ko.

Atari: The situation where a stone, or *string* of stones, have only one *liberty* remaining. If such stones are not defended, they can be *captured* by playing a move which reduces their liberties to zero. Literally ‘hit’ in Japanese.

Attach/Attachment: A move which makes *contact* with an opposing stone, by playing right next to it.

Avalanche: A poetic term coined by the famous Japanese Go writer Mihori Sho. It refers to a class of *josekis* which begin with moves 2 to 6 of Variation 8, on page 81. As mentioned on page 394, when it was first played by White the shape resembled white snow cascading down a black mountain face, hence the name.

Bamboo Joint: A shape formed by two parallel *solid extensions* with one line separating them. A clear example can be seen in Variation 50, on page 29. Usually the bamboo joint cannot be cut, because *connecting* on one side or the other is *miai*.

Base: A small *territory* (or potential territory) which stabilizes a *group* by providing *eyespace*.

Bulge: A *hane* which turns a one space *jump* into a *tiger’s mouth*. Usually such moves are very good, making the place where a bulge can be played a *vital point* for both players. An example is White B in Variation 64, page 417.

Bump: A *solid extension* which makes *contact* with an opposing stone. Move 14 in Diagram 6, page 339, is a good example of a bump.

Byo-yomi: Games in Go tournaments are usually timed to ensure that both players are allowed an equal amount of thinking time. The allotted time is split into main time and byo-yomi. A player’s clock runs whenever it’s their turn. When they play a move, their clock stops and the opponent’s starts.

Once a player expends all of their main time, they enter byo-yomi—a kind of overtime period. It’s not uncommon to have five overtime periods which are one minute long, as in the Jubango. This means that players who have entered byo-yomi should try to play each move in less than one minute.

You can think of five overtime periods as being crudely similar to having five lives in a computer game. Each time a player in byo-yomi takes more than one minute to play their move, they lose one life. If they lose all their lives, they lose the game. Byo-yomi is a Japanese term which literally means ‘reading seconds’. A looser translation is countdown.

Cap: A move played one or two spaces away from an opposing stone, on the point where the opponent could *jump*. Such moves are usually closer to the center of the board than the stone they cap, creating the feeling that they block the route to the center. In Variation 32, on page 403, moves at 3 or A are both examples of capping White B.

Capture: Taking stones off the board after removing their *liberties*, or surrounding a *group* in a way that makes it *dead*.

Cash: Solid *territory* which is ‘in the bank’, in contrast with the promise of a return on an investment—which may or may not eventuate depending on how the game unfolds. *Moyo* and *power* are examples of investments here.

Check: To forcibly prevent a *group* from *extending* further, and constrain its *base*, by *approaching*. Compare to *pincer*.

Chinese Opening/Chinese Style: A class of openings which are characterized by a 3-4 point corner combined with an *extension* four or five spaces along the side. See pages 12 and 138 for examples.

Clamp: When an opposing stone is already in *contact* with a friendly stone, a clamp is a contact play on the other side of that opposing stone, such that it is sandwiched between two friendly stones. The opposing stone ends up at the center of a one space *jump*. Black 2 in Variation 47, on page 340, is an example. When such a move works, it is a *tesuji*.

Connect: A move which links two or more stones together in such a way that they cannot be *cut*. The term is also used more broadly to describe loosely uniting stones in a manner which can technically be cut (or *separated*), but not in any way which is particularly advantageous to the opponent at the time.

Connect Under: *Connecting* along the edge of the board.

Contact: When a stone is adjacent to an opposing stone, in way that occupies one of its *liberties*, it is said to be in contact with it. The term usually only applies to stones that are orthogonally (not diagonally) next to one another.

Crosscut: The most primitive form of *cut*, where two opposing diagonal moves cut one another. White A and 22 in Diagram 23, page 295, show an uncluttered example of a crosscut. In the right circumstances, the crosscut is a *tesuji*.

Cut: A move which prevents two *groups* from connecting at such close range that it makes *contact* with both these groups as it does so. In Diagram 5, on page 203, Black 19 cuts White into two groups (one of the two is a single stone).

Dame: A neutral point between opposing stones which cannot be turned into *territory*. In Japanese, it means ‘useless’.

Dead: The state of a *group* which cannot make *life*.

Descend: To make a *solid extension* towards the edge of the board.

Develop: Adding stones to a *group* in a way that serves some tactical purpose. For example, *running* away, *extending* to make a *base*, expanding a *moyo*, or accumulating *power*.

Diagonal Move: A move which is placed diagonally next to a friendly stone. White 3 in Variation 3, on page 9, is an example of a diagonal move in relation to White 1. The Japanese term *kosumi* is also used to describe a diagonal move.

Dragon: A large *group*. Usually, a dragon has to make *life* in the center area, possibly by *capturing* other stones.

Dumpling: A clump of friendly stones which is very inefficient. A square made by a *string* of four stones is one example.

Elephant’s Step: A double *diagonal move*, which is similar to a one space *jump* in the diagonal direction. In Western chess, there is a bishop, which moves diagonally. In Chinese chess (xiangqi), Black’s equivalent piece is called ‘xiang’, which means elephant. This piece can only move diagonally, two places at a time. When a group is *developed* using a *shape* that appears to resemble the way the elephant moves in Chinese chess, it is called an elephant’s step in Go. On page 53, you will find an explanation of the elephant’s step accompanying Diagram 22.

Enclosure: A formation which aims to control the space in the corner, or the act of surrounding a group.

Endgame: The final stage of the game, where the positions are largely settled and most remaining moves involve expanding the borders of your territory slightly, or reducing the opponent’s. Such moves are called endgame moves.

Escape: To evade *capture* by *running* into the center, possibly after breaking free from an attempted *enclosure*.

Exchange: For every move you play, the opponent can also play a move. This means that any pair of sequential moves can be thought of as an exchange of moves (in the standard English sense of the word). In general, you want to gain as

much (or slightly more) than your opponent in the majority of exchanges you make, so exchanges can be good or bad.

Exchange can also be used in the sense that it is in other games, like chess—where you allow one *group* to be *captured* in exchange for the capture of another group. In other words, a *trade*.

Extend/Extension: A move near the edge of the board which has a relationship with another friendly *group* situated nearby, along the side or in the corner. Extensions are mostly played on the third or fourth *line*, and serve to secure a *base* or expand a *moyo*. Usually, extensions stretch between one and five spaces from the group they are related to. Extensions that reach further than five spaces are difficult to maintain, because the opponent can often invade and form his own extension within yours. Some players do not regard extensions that are longer than five spaces to be extensions.

Eye: A small *territory*, completely surrounded by a perfectly *connected* group of stones. Such territories provide *liberties* which are difficult to remove. When a *group* has two independent eyes (or can form them if required), it can never be captured because it will always have at least two unremovable *liberties* where its eyes are. Such groups are said to be *alive*. In Variation 42, on page 215, Black forms a complete eye after capturing White's stone at A.

Eye Shape: A property of a *group* pertaining to its ability to form *eyes*. Groups with good eye shape are rich in potential eyes, can easily *live* and are strong. Groups with bad eye shape are often weak and can be attacked.

Eyespace: A small area of *territory* (usually three or more spaces) where a *group* can ideally form two *eyes*.

False Eye: A point which appears superficially to be an *eye*, but will eventually have to be filled to evade *capture*.

Fight: A finely balanced (and usually complicated) negotiation in a position that is not yet *settled*.

Fly: The verb used to describe making a *knight's move*. This comes from the Chinese term 'fei', which means fly.

Foot-Sweep: A *knight's move* towards the edge of the board, which aims to undermine the opponent's *base*.

Flower: The *shape* formed by capturing one stone with four stones. Also called ponnuki, flowers can be very *powerful*.

Forcing Move: An incidental *exchange* made in *sente*, which is more beneficial for the player who initiates the exchange.

Framework: A large area of potential, sketched out in the opening by (mostly individual) stones of the same color. Many English speaking Go players describe this using the Japanese term *moyo*, though *moyo* has other meanings too.

Fuseki: The Japanese name for the *opening*. See opening.

Gote: A move which lets the opponent take *sente*. Gote is not necessarily bad, and can lead to taking *sente* again later.

Group: A collection of one or more (possibly loosely) connected stones of the same color. Sometimes people refer to a *string* as a group, particularly when teaching beginners, but 'group' is mostly used more broadly, as defined here.

Haengma: A localized technique for *developing* a *group*. Haengma is a Korean term which literally means 'moving horse' (a horse is a group). This dynamic way of thinking about the game imagines that groups are moving as stones are added to them. Basic examples of haengma are the *jump*, the *knight's move* and the *hane*. Haengma can be good or bad. Good haengma efficiently balances speed of movement with strength of connection in the local context.

Handicap: When players are not evenly matched, allowing the weaker player to place several stones before the stronger player moves (or adjusting *komi*) is called a handicap. Some rules require handicap stones to be placed on *star points*.

Hane: When an opposing *group* is already in *contact* with a friendly stone, a hane is a *diagonal move* which takes another liberty from that opposing group. Such moves often appear to bend in front of the opponent and prevent them from *walking* in a straight line. Examples: Black 47 in Diagram 16, page 34, and White 74 in Diagram 20, page 107.

Hanging Connection: A *connecting* technique which uses a *tiger's mouth* to protect a *cutting point*.

Headbutt: A more vivid synonym of *bump*.

Heavy: Stones which are inflexible and difficult to manage (e.g. by *settling*, *sacrificing* or *moving out*). Such stones are usually weak and become a burden to deal with. As more and more stones are added to a position, it becomes increasingly difficult to give them up. Other situations which create a burden can also be described as heavy, such as an important *ko* which is difficult to manage, or an overly slow *haengma*.

High: Stones which are closer to the center. In particular, fourth *line* stones are often described as high in the opening.

Honte: A down-to-earth move which simplifies a position, by removing weaknesses before they can become a problem.

Horse's Head: A triangle formed by two large *knight's moves*, where the base is a one space *jump*. See page 14.

Influence: The ability of stones to affect play elsewhere. How distantly depends on the strength of the influence. You can imagine influence to be a field radiated across the board by *powerful* stones, gradually diminishing in intensity.

Invasion: A move which ventures deep into the opponent's *moyo* with the intention of *living* or *escaping* into the center.

Iron Pillar: A *solid extension* on the third and fourth *line*—usually aiming to protect a *moyo* and/or attack an *invader*.

Joseki: A local pattern of play, thought to offer an even result to both players. Joseki sequences are worked out by strong players over time, and often evolve as better moves are discovered. Most, but not all, josekis involve the corner.

Jump: A move which *develops* by playing one or two spaces away from another friendly stone, horizontally or vertically, along a straight line. White 1 and 3 in Variation 60, on page 415, form a one space jump (as do Black 2 and 4 in the same variation). On page 9, in Variation 2, you can see an example of a two space jump from Black 2 to Black 4.

Kadoban: A match deciding game, or a game where one player risks demotion (resulting in a change of handicap).

Kick: A *diagonal move* which *attaches* to a single opposing stone, perhaps to make it *heavy* or *over-concentrated*.

Knight's Move: A move which *develops* in an L shape, in the same way that the 'knight' moves in Western chess. Black 3 and 5 on page 321 are an example of the standard knight's move, which skips one space in one direction and is offset by one line in the other direction. The large knight's move skips two spaces and the giant knight's move three.

Ko: A situation where two opposing *tiger's mouths* (or similar shapes) repeatedly alternate between *capturing* a single stone. In order to prevent the game from continuing indefinitely, immediately recapturing a ko (in a way that would repeat the exact board position from earlier) is not allowed.

This means that when your opponent captures the ko, you must play elsewhere for one turn, presenting them with a choice between ending the ko and responding to your move elsewhere. When a ko contests an important point, it often leads to a large scale *trade*, after a *ko threat* is ignored. An example of a ko can be seen in Variation 71, on page 115.

Ko Threat: A *sente* move which aims to distract the opponent for one move, so that a *ko* can be recaptured.

Komi: A fixed number of points (usually) given to White, in compensation for Black having the first move.

Kosumi: See *diagonal move*.

Ladder: A basic technique for *capturing* stones, which involves repeatedly playing atari in a staircase-like pattern, until the opposing group reaches the edge of the board and runs out of *liberties*. Experienced players rarely play ladders out.

Ladder Breaker: A move which seeks to interfere with a *ladder*, by placing a stone in its path, often leading to a *trade*.

Lean: A tactic which builds momentum by *pressing* or *attaching* to a nearby *group*, usually to attack another group.

Liberty: An unoccupied point directly adjacent to a stone, or *string* of stones. Stones which are completely *connected* (i.e. cannot be cut) share their liberties. Stones which have no liberties are *captured* and removed from the board.

Life: The property of a *group* with two *eyes*, or the ability to form them as required, such that it cannot be *captured*.

Light: The opposite of *heavy*. Light stones or positions are flexible and easy to give up—either by actively *sacrificing* them or simply choosing to *tenuki*. Light stones are not overly committed and are difficult to attack profitably.

Line: Obviously a line. Less obviously, lines are counted starting at the edge of the board. 'First line' refers to the line along any of the four edges of the playing grid. The next line (one line closer to the center) is called the second line, etc.

Loan: When you *tenuki* from an *unsettled* position to *fight*, but have to go back to defend the original position eventually, it's called 'taking out a loan'. Such a strategy can be valid, but is often difficult to manage, because going back to defend (repaying the loan) may eventually require abandoning the fight and allowing the opponent two moves in a row there.

Low: Refers to stones that are placed on the third *line* or below. Recall that the edge of the board is the ground.

Make Shape: The act of putting the *shape* of a *group* in order, as part of managing that group.

Miai: A pair of practically equivalent moves, or moves of similar value, such that if the opponent takes one, you can take the other and maintain your balance. More simply, 'making miai' means you've prepared plan A and plan B.

Metagame: The psychological battle between the players, waged beyond the Go board, especially in a long match.

Monkey Jump: A large *knight's move* from the second *line* to the first. Usually reserved for the *endgame*.

Move Out: To *develop* a *group* into the center in order to avoid being surrounded and/or to *separate* opposing groups.

Moyo: A field of potential *territory* created by stones of the same color. It is not yet certain and may be disrupted by the opponent, but can be *traded* for compensation elsewhere through skillful play. A Japanese word, *moyo* is often used to describe a large *framework* in English, but *moyo* can be smaller too. The Korean reading, 'moyang', means *shape*.

Net: A technique for capturing a *group* of stones by jumping in front of them and heading off all escape routes. It looks like a net has been thrown around the stones, trapping them. An example is White 31 in Variation 85, on page 171.

Nose: The point where a *solid extension* could be made, to extend a *string* of stones in a straight line. When an opposing stone *attaches* at this point, it's called a nose attachment or nose *tesuji*. See White 14, Variation 83, page 482.

One Thousand Dollar Turn: A *turn* which is of great strategic value. In Asian culture, the prefixes one thousand and ten thousand are often used to describe things which excel within their category. See *turn* for more information.

Opening: The early stages of the game, where the players typically stake their claims to areas of large potential.

Over-concentrated: Used to describe an inefficient position comprised of some redundant stones. There is an ideal number of stones required to maintain a given connection, secure a territory etc. Exceeding it leads to over-concentration.

Peep: A move which threatens to *cut*, by playing near an opponent's weak point and looking through to the other side.

Picnic Ko: A *ko* in which one player has practically nothing to lose, and can hence fight it with the same gay abandon as one might enjoy a picnic. The original Japanese term, *hanami ko*, literally means 'flower viewing ko'. This refers to the custom of enjoying the fleeting bloom of the cherry blossom, which often involves picnicking with family and friends.

Pincer: A move which prevents or obstructs an opposing *group* from *extending* and establishing a *base*. In contrast to *checking* a group, *pincering* refers to *approaching* a group which has less prospect of a forming base and can be attacked.

Pinch: The act of *wedging* into one side or the other of a *diagonal move*, threatening to cut. Also called 'angle *wedge*'.

Power: Refers to the capacity of stones to *influence* the stones around them, and potentially other parts of the board. Another way of thinking about it is that power is the accumulation of energy within stones. This energy can be released by attacking, invading and fighting, transforming it into *territory* in the process. We regard stones as being powerful when they are well connected, have few weaknesses and are rich in *eye* potential. In other words, when they are strong.

Press: A technique which attempts to force an opposing *group* in a specific direction, usually towards the edge of the board. Typically the intention of a press is to reduce a *moyo*, assist a weak group, accumulate *power* for use elsewhere (*leaning*), or to *capture*. The most common example is the *shoulder hit*, as shown by Black 2 in Variation 20, page 16.

Probe: A move played primarily to see how the opponent will respond at a particular point in time. Once the opponent answers your probe, you have more information about how the shape may be *settled*, helping you to choose a strategy. Often, if the probe were played later, the opponent might respond differently. See Black 4 in Variation 4, on page 79.

Prophylaxis: A move or strategy designed to frustrate the opponent's plan, often leading to a more leisurely game.

Push: A *solid extension* which comes into *contact* with opposing stones, usually exposing some sort of weakness. 'Pushing from behind' means pushing against another group in a way that allows it to keep *walking* ahead of you.

Raising a Flag: The process of *developing* a *base* in the center, as explained starting on page 99.

Reduce/Reduction: Reducing means playing to curtail the opponent's potential. More specifically, *reduction* is often used to describe techniques for shallowly erasing potential (e.g. with a *shoulder hit*), as opposed to deeper *invasions*. When a *moyo* is reduced, it frequently helps the remainder to become *territory*. Variation 62 on page 110 is an example.

Run: Moving an unsettled *group* out to avoid being surrounded. Similar to *move out*, but more exciting.

Sabaki: A skill for managing difficult positions, with an emphasis on *light*, flexible play, and clear whole board judgment.

Sacrifice: The strategy of deliberately allowing a *group* to be captured, generally in *exchange* for some benefit elsewhere.

Sanrensei: An *opening* which places stones on three *star points*, forming a line. Literally 'three linked stars' in Japanese.

Seal In: Surrounding a group so that it is trapped (generally) against the edge of the board and must struggle to *live*.

Seki: Mutual life. A situation where opposing *groups* share liberties and neither can play on the shared liberties without

themselves being captured. Variation 143 on page 72 gives one example, and Variation 69 on page 226 gives another.

Sente: A player has sente if it's their turn to move and they don't need to respond to any immediate threat, meaning they hold the initiative for the time being. A move is sente if the opponent should respond to it, because failing to do so will incur a loss which is too great to bear. The term is imported from Japanese, where it literally means 'play first'.

Separate: Preventing *groups* from *connecting*, without necessarily making *contact*. A *cut* separates at very close range.

Settle: Deliberately resolving a position—at the expense of *aji*, flexibility and nuance—to make the local situation clear. Settling a *shape* means *exchanging* moves to bring the position closer to its final form. Settling a *group* is making *life*.

Shape: The pattern in which a *group* of stones is arranged, focusing on both the relationships between friendly stones (within the group) and the way it may be affected by nearby opposing stones. The concept of shape overlaps with *haengma*, but views Go using a more static paradigm. 'Good shape' efficiently protects its own *vital points*, usually has *eye* potential, and is either *connected* or flexible. Bad shape is (or can be forced to be) inefficient, *heavy* or brittle.

Shoulder Hit: A stone played on a diagonal point next to an opposing stone, where the opponent could make a *diagonal move*. Usually, shoulder hits are played from the direction of the center, *pressing* the opponent towards the edge.

Snapback: A tactic for *capturing* a *string* of stones, whereby if the opponent captures your single stone, you recapture three or more stones in response. The mechanics of snapback are explained in Variation 156, on page 307.

Solid Extension: A basic technique which forms a *string* of two stones, or extends an existing string in a straight line, by placing a stone so that it is directly adjacent to another friendly stone. See White 4 to 10 in Variation 54, page 266.

Sphere of Influence: The space upon which a player's *influence* operates, within which they can exercise their *power*.

Spiral Ladder: A tactic which rolls an opponent's *group* into a *dumpling* and eventually eats it (*capturing* the group).

Splitting Attack: The strategy of attacking two or more groups simultaneously, by *separating* them at close range.

Splitting Play: A move made to divide a large opposing *moyo*, usually by making *miai* of one *extension* or another.

Squeeze: A *sacrifice* tactic which compresses an opponent's *group* into a *dumpling*, or which fills the opponent's outside *liberties* in sente by exploiting a race to *capture*. The latter variant of the tactic reaps compensation from *dead* stones.

Star Point: The points on the board which are marked with a dot. If the center is the sky, these points are the stars.

Step: A verb which describes playing a *diagonal move*.

String: Two or more friendly stones, which are literally *connected* along the lines of the board and share their *liberties*.

Submarine Approach: An *approach* move on the second *line*, often against *star point* formations. See page 254.

Taisha: A class of *josekis* which begin by *pressing* with a large *knight's move*, from a 5-3 point corner stone, against an opposing 3-4 point stone. Black 2 and 4 in Variation 3, on page 79, illustrate the basic *shape*.

Tempo: A unit of time measured in terms of individual moves, or turns. If one player 'gains a tempo', it means they effectively gain a move. The opponent plays one move for every move you play, but a sacrifice tactic can force them to spend several strategically unimportant moves capturing while you play important moves. The practical effect is that it is as if you gained a move. Exploiting *ko* is another way to gain a tempo, and disrupt otherwise impregnable positions.

Tenuki: Ignoring the opponent's last move to play elsewhere on the board. In Japanese, it pertains to omitting steps.

Territory: The open points completely controlled by one player, after surrounding them with stones. Unlike *moyo*, which is only potential territory, actual territory cannot usually be disrupted (except using supernatural tactics like *ko*).

Tesuji: A highly effective close range tactic, which can be identified by recognizing specific patterns and *vital points* in *shapes*. If we imagine Go to be a mental martial art, tesuji are the key techniques of hand to hand combat. Examples of common tesuji include tactics for efficiently *capturing*, *living*, *escaping*, *connecting*, *cutting*, *sacrificing*, *trading* etc.

Thick/Thickness: Thick describes a position which is strong, and difficult (or impossible) to attack—a position with few weaknesses to exploit. Thick *groups* cannot be cut or easily threatened. Thick territories cannot be *invaded* successfully (except perhaps using *ko*). Thickness is the property of being thick, and is another word for *power*.

Thin: The opposite of *thick*. Thin *groups* are easily separated and exploited. Thinness is the property of being thin.

Throw-in: A single stone *sacrifice* played at the opponent's *vital point* to deform their *shape* and attack (often severely).

Tiger's Mouth: The *shape* formed by three stones which *atari* one stone, but in cases where the ataried stone is instead an open point. If the opponent plays in the tiger's mouth it can eat the stone. If they *peep* the tiger's mouth, it can be closed by playing a friendly stone in the mouth. White 1, 3 and 5 in Variation 22, on page 145, show the basic shape.

Tombstone Squeeze: A powerful *squeeze* tactic which can only be used at the very edge of the board, so named because the resulting shape resembles a Japanese style tombstone. It involves first sacrificing two stones and then another, collapsing the opponent's *shape*. Variation 31 on page 335 shows an example.

Trade: Giving up something and receiving something in return. For example, *groups*, *moyos* and *sente* can be traded.

Transposition: When a sequence of moves arrives at exactly the same position as another sequence, the two sequences can be said to transpose. Transposition can also be used as an analytical technique, by imagining another move order which would lead to the same position. This potentially helps one to identify and understand the causes of inefficient moves. This approach is also known as move order analysis or tewari analysis (though tewari involves further techniques).

Turn: Like a *hane*, but solidly *connected* such that it is not possible to *cut* or *peep*. A turn is very *thick* and strong, creating potential while limiting the opponent's. The *shape* is formed by Black 14, 16 and 18, in Variation 96, page 48.

Two Stage Ko: A *ko* which leads to another ko after the initial ko is won by one player. Compare to *approach ko*.

Unsettled: The opposite of *settled*. When referring to a *group*, it means not yet *alive* and therefore able to be attacked.

Vital Point: A key point in any position, which confers a significant advantage to whoever plays there first.

Walk: A verb used to describe making a *solid extension*.

Wedge: A tactic which barges in between opposing stones, as part of a sequence which cuts (or threatens to cut). Playing at the center point of an opposing one space *jump* is an example, as shown by Black 7, Diagram 15, page 483.

Wide: Refers drawing the whole board into play and increasing the possibilities. This is discussed on page 10.

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