

Event 4th World Amateur Championship, round
11th Place Playoff
Date 1982-03-20
Black Ernst Novak
White Rob van Zeijst
Black team Austria
White team Netherlands
Komi 5.5
Result Black wins by resignation
Place Nihon Ki-in

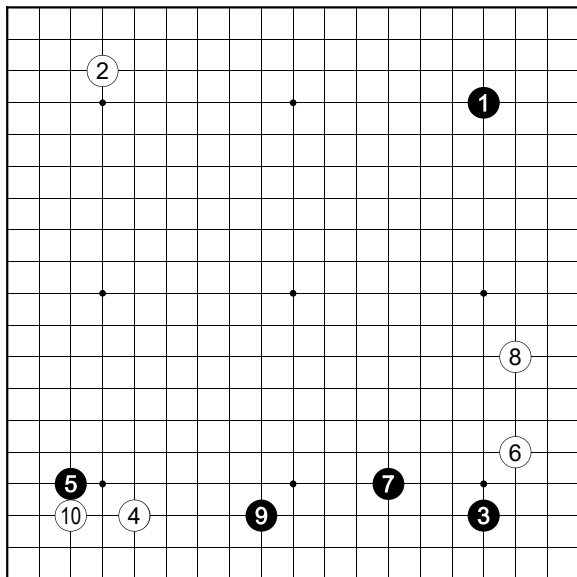


Diagram 1 (1-10)

1 You can view this game as a kind of documentary about how we in Europe thought about Go about 40 years ago.

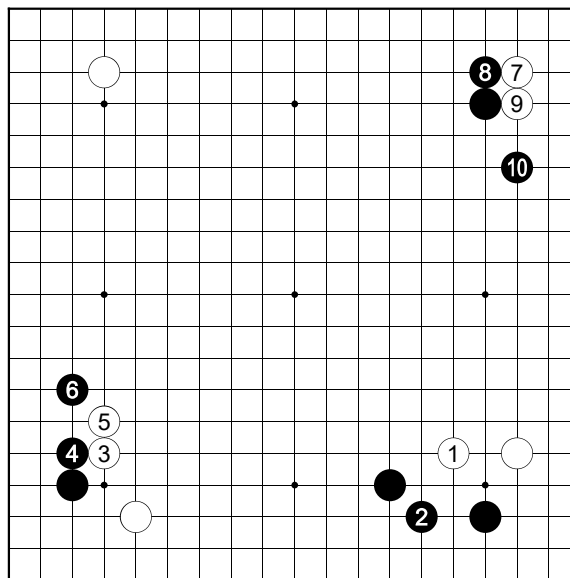
This was a game played in Tokyo during the World Amateur Go Championship in 1982. As the youngest person ever, I had become the European Champion just a few months earlier.

Not to make excuses, everything in Tokyo was so exciting for a 20-year-old, I slept too little while playing too many video games at night. And that was reflected in my play. Anyway, without further ado.

7 This was the first 'unusual' move.

In those days, amateurs would often try to freak each other out by playing 'unusual' moves.

These days, we have AI to evaluate that in an 'objective' way, but in those days, you needed to travel to Japan to get the expert-advice of a professional.



Variation 1

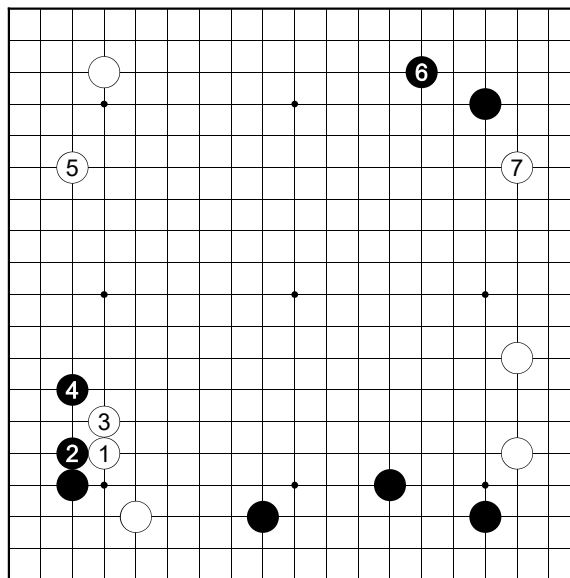
10 This is an AI variation - I just wonder about the 1 for 2 exchange.

(Diagram 1)

8 R8 seems reasonable these days, but it was a little slow.

9 In those days, we used to pincher. Yup! Laughable isn't it?

But there is a fine logic to it. The three black stones make a great position while attacking (taking away the base of White's marked move).



Variation 2

7 It's hard to come up with original ideas. Oops, no. Let me start over again. It is not hard to come up with novel ideas. It is difficult to improve on the existing common sense by yourself. White 1 and 3, then switching somewhere else, was simply 'not done'.

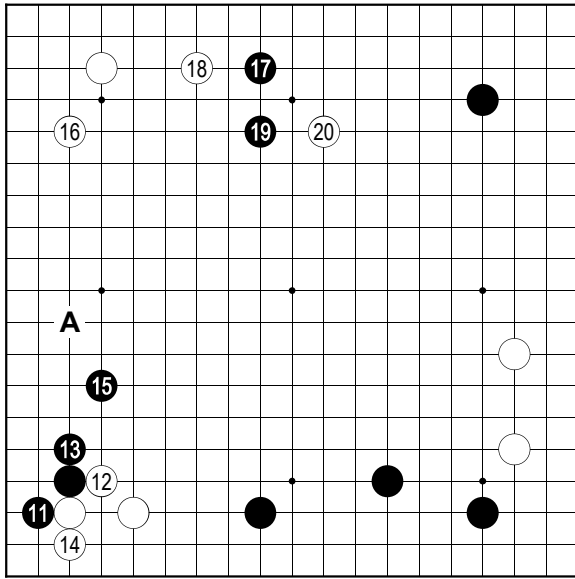
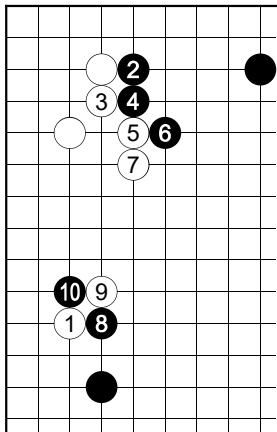
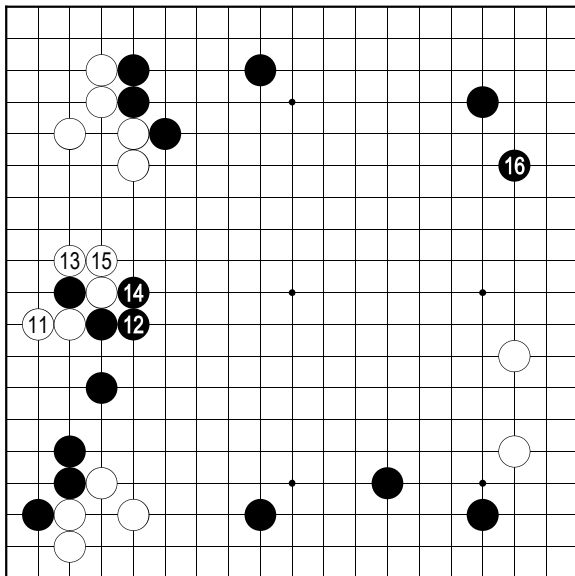


Diagram 2 (11-20)



Variation 3



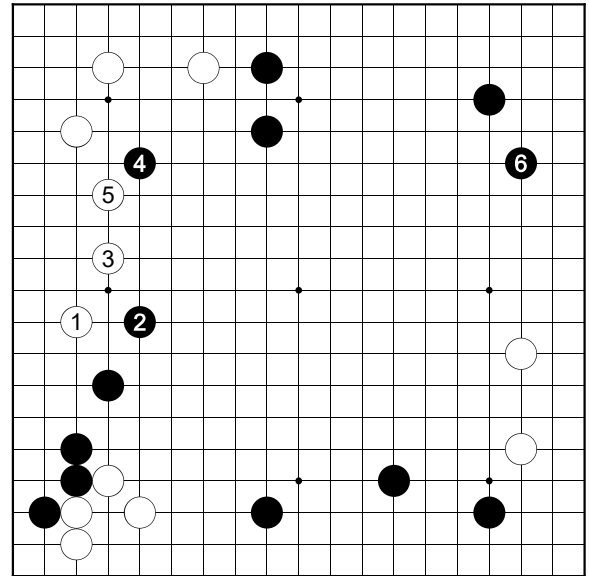
Variation 4

16 If White attacks on the left with 1, Black will kick with 2 and push with 3 and 5, before defending by crosscutting on the left. White becomes thick but also

overconcentrated and Black switched to the top right. That is an AI-generated sequence - it is these small differences that make AI so strong. Of course, the point is to make the opponent's opponents slightly less efficient than yours, as well as that you take sente.

(Diagram 2)

18 White 18 is a little slow. Maybe better at A.



Variation 5

6 White should attack with 1 and 3. However, Black can deflect the attack and get sente to defend the top right corner.

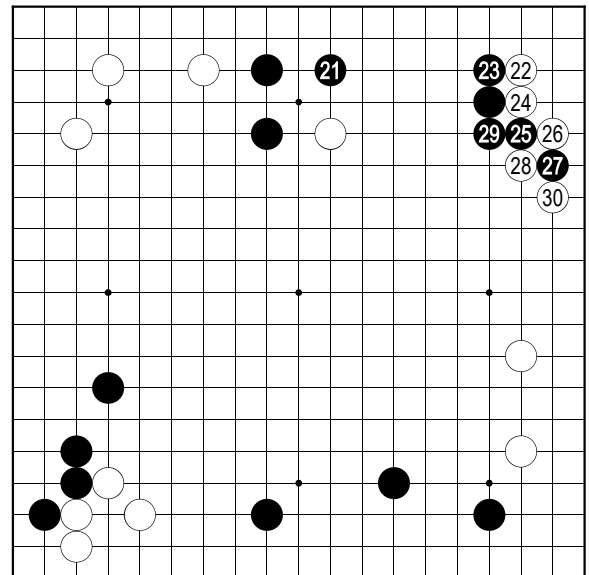


Diagram 3 (21-30)

22 The order of 20, 21, and 22 was a very sophisticated combination for White at the time. It cancels out the influence of Black's wall after White invades.

Nowadays, AIs have the same concept, i.e. to cancel out the influence of a wall. So in Europe we already understood that concept but not at a very advanced level.

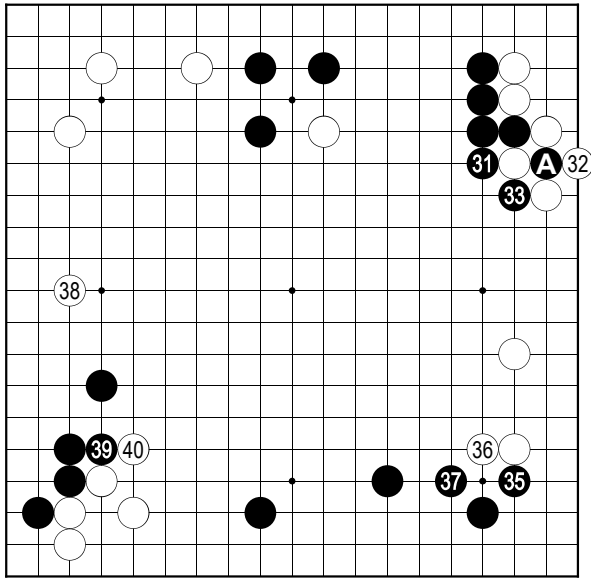
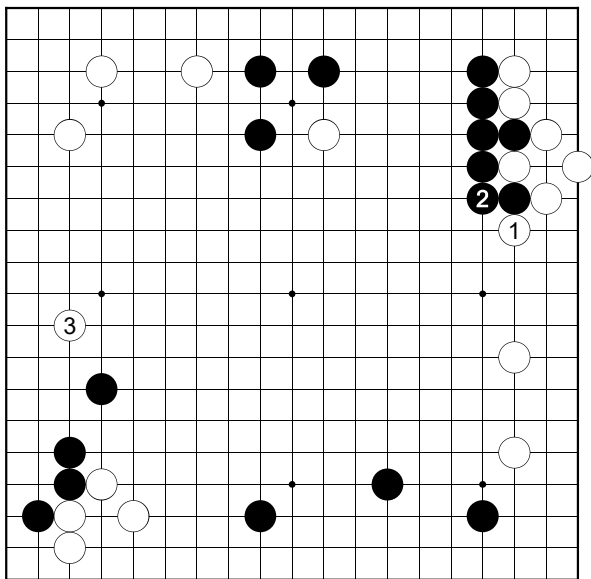


Diagram 4 (31-40)

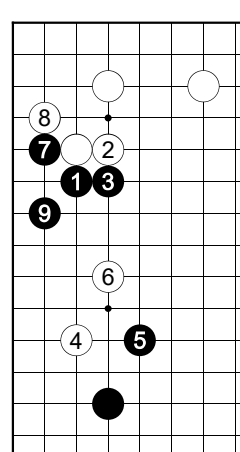
34 at A

33 Instead of capturing the corner, black 31 and 33 were quite normal at the time



Variation 6

- 1 White should have definitely played atari with 1.
- 3 White should have definitely played atari with 1 and, if Black defends with 2 (the move the AI recommends), White can take sente by attacking with 3.



Variation 7

(Diagram 4)

38 White 38 is 'nurui' (lukekewarm). He should extend one space farther.

9 Black should play on the left side - that is by far the largest area. So while Black expands his area, White invades it, leading to a fight.

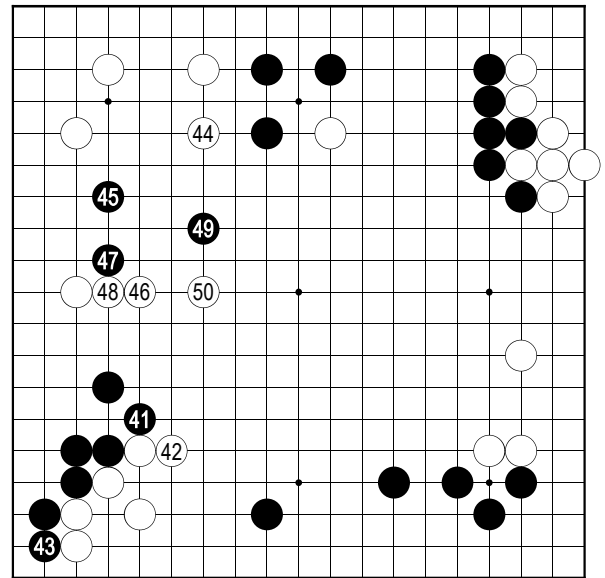
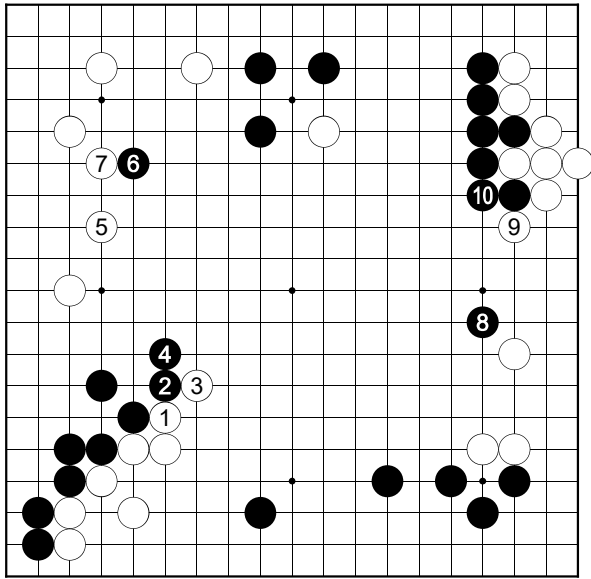
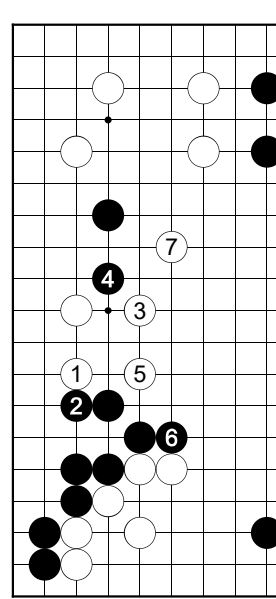


Diagram 5 (41-50)

43 Black 43 is slow. The game is even again.

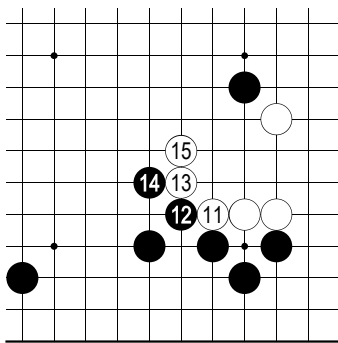


Variation 8



Variation 11

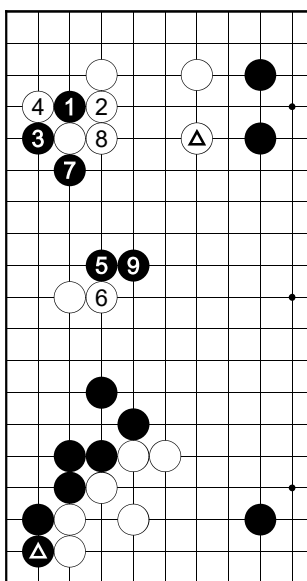
⑦ It would have been more sophisticated for White to exchange 1 for 2, the jump to 3. Black 4 is still a good peep, but now White can defend with 5, forcing black 6, in order to take the initiative with 7.



Variation 9

⑮ White can optimize his defense in the top left by first playing the 1-4 exchange, then falling back to 5 in a natural way. This is a concept called 'natural flow' where you play a few forcing moves to induce a sequence to make the move you wanted to play more natural - White wanted to defend in the top left and 1 to 4 before that, help White 1 to 4 before that, help White more than Black.

defend in the top left and 1 to 4 before that, help White 1 to 4 before that, help White more than Black.



Variation 10

⑨ White's marked stone is too close to Black's strength to the right. Black can make White overconcentrated with 1 to 7 and escape with 5 and 9. Notice that Black's marked stone comes in handy now because his stones are difficult to attack.

(Diagram 5)

④⑤ This is the hot area. But we, European amateurs, lacked sophistication. (See the previous diagram.)

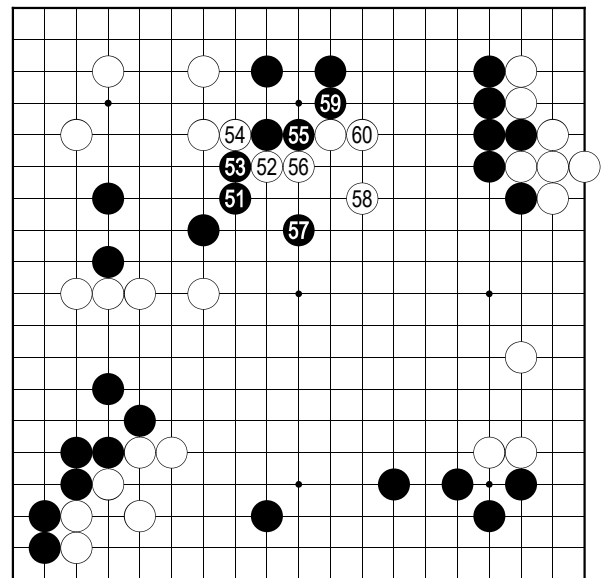
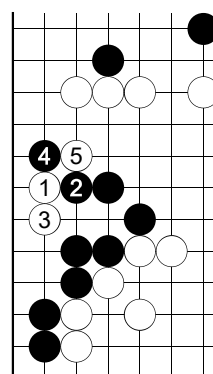


Diagram 6 (51-60)

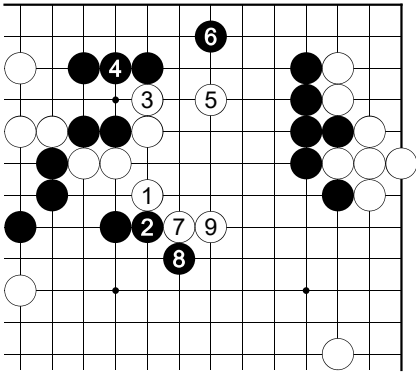


Variation 12

(Diagram 6)

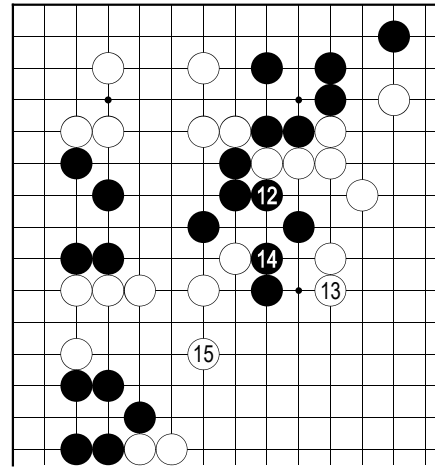
⑤② White is finally waking up and starts an attack.

⑤ Before starting his attack, maybe White should first ask with 1 to see how Black responds. If Black plays 2 and 4, White makes a lot of points by cutting with 5.



Variation 13

⑨ White should have followed this diagram to escape in style and keep the initiative.



Variation 16

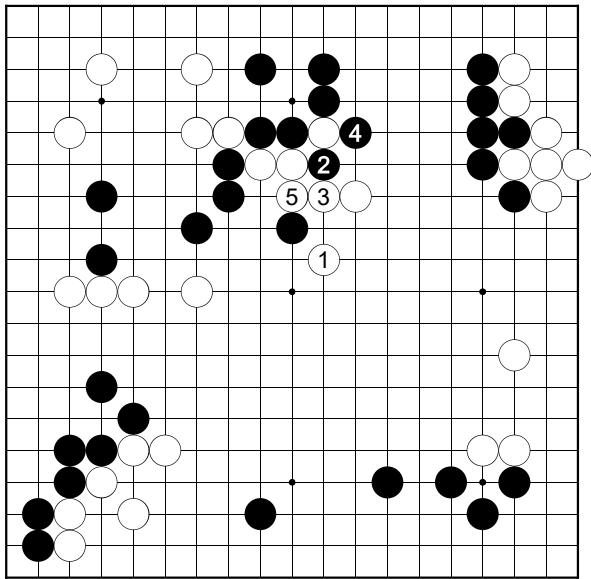
⑮ In this diagram, Black is more reasonable and jumps out with 2. White defends with 3 to be able to play at 7. Meanwhile, Black makes a base on the left while taking away White's. At any rate, the game is still even after white 15.

(Variation 14)

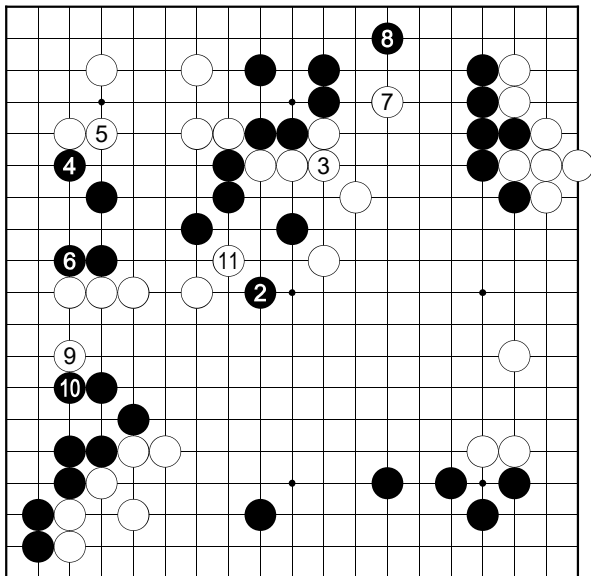
⑤ White should attack with 1. Black can capture one stone but that will severely weaken his group on the left. This is dangerous for Black.

(Diagram 6)

⑥⑩ White 60 is slow.



Variation 14



Variation 15

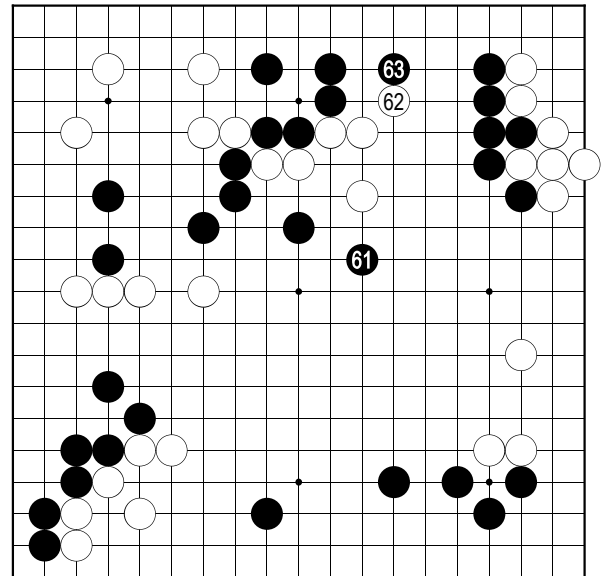
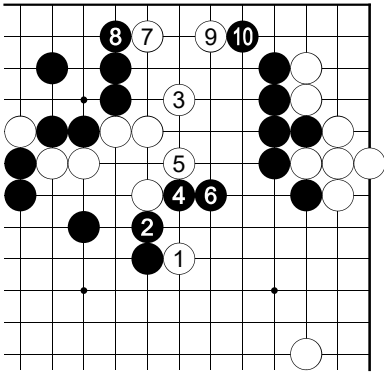
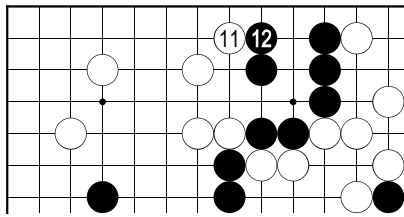


Diagram 7 (61-63)

⑥① Black grabs the initiative.



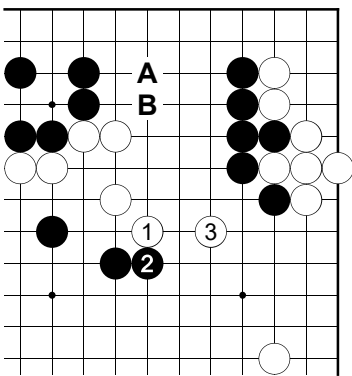
Variation 17



Variation 18

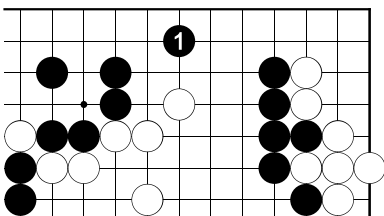
12 White 1 is more aggressive. If Black cuts with 2, now white 3 is a dangerous threat. If Black indeed cuts with 4 and 6, White starts a semeai with 7 to 12. White looks like winning this fight.

However, in the case of human players who are less confident about their reading, usually neither player will want to be so this aggressive and risk the danger of losing the game immediately.



Variation 19

3 Even just jumping out with 1 and 3 is good enough for White - later later he can aim at A. That is a lot better than first exchanging B for A.



Variation 20

1 This is 'honte', the honest move, i.e. the move that leaves less aji.

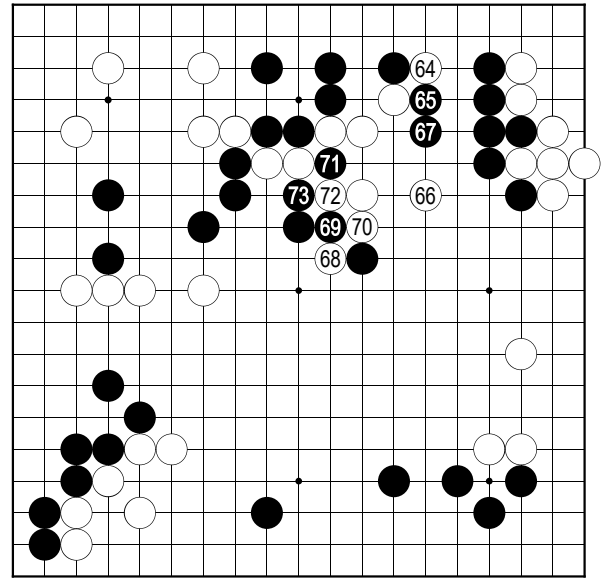
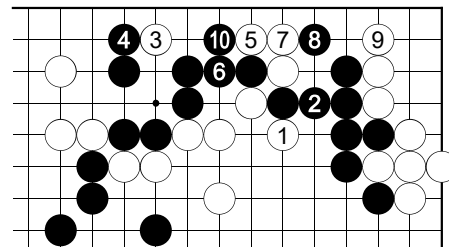
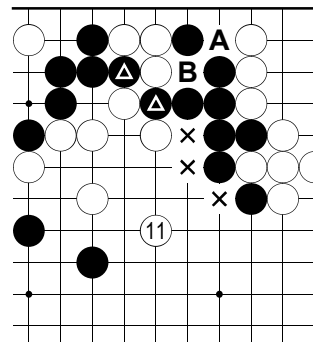


Diagram 8 (64-73)



Variation 21

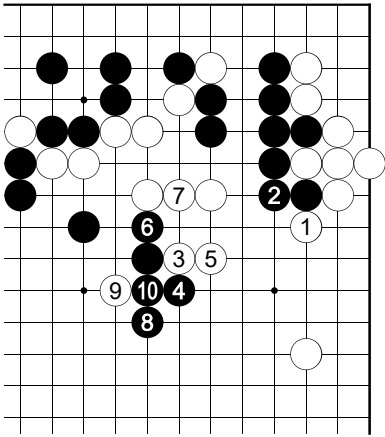


Variation 22

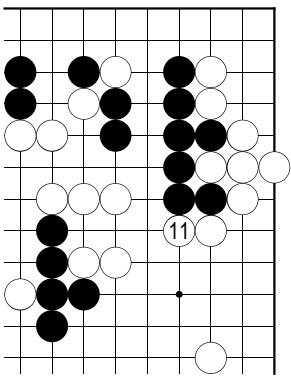
11 Black's marked combination was in fact quite dangerous. Here is an example of the aji. White can sacrifice a few stones in order to get sente moves later. Black does not have many liberties so he has to be careful.

(Diagram 8)

66 This move does the job of moving out but it lost 3 points.



Variation 23

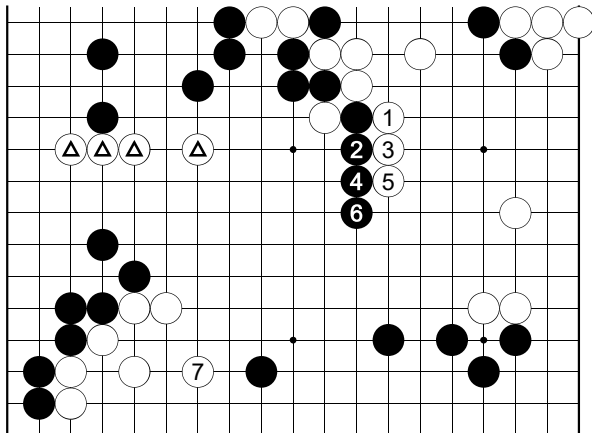


Variation 24

⑪ White should atari with 1 and attach with 3 to connect his stones. The game is about about even.

(Diagram 8)

⑥⑧ White 68 is an overplay, typical of my style - hahaha. I don't think I was ever cured of this tendency to make overplays. I guess it's part of my Go personality. Your Go personality can be quite different of your normal everyday personality, but, obviously, it can be the same, too. There are various theories about this.



Variation 25

⑦ White can make the game simpler by not defending his two center stones and playing 1 to 6 and defend at 7 - this indirectly defends his stones on the left.

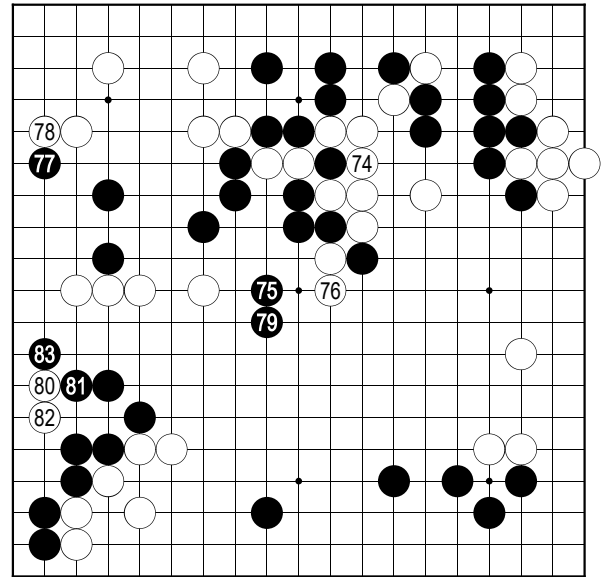
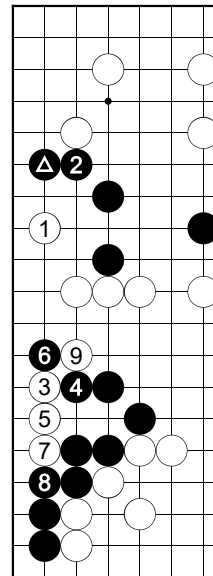


Diagram 9 (74-83)

⑨ The moment Black played the marked stone, White had a chance to make a base with 1 to 9. This would have put White in the lead.



Variation 26

(Diagram 9)

⑦⑨ Black 79 is slow but strong.

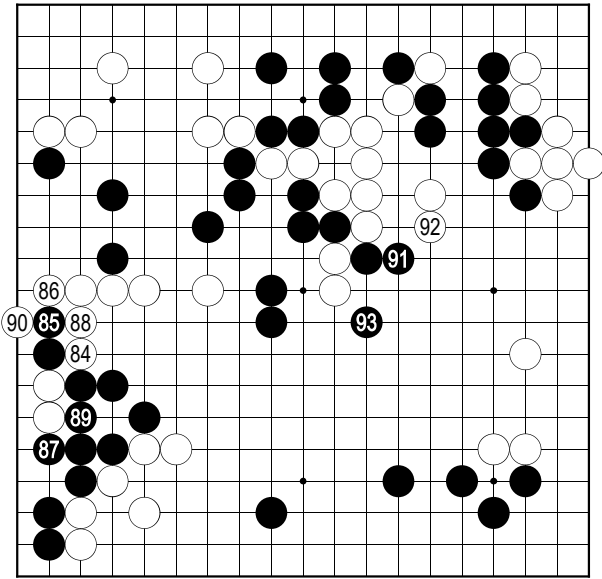
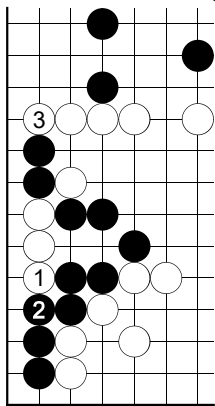


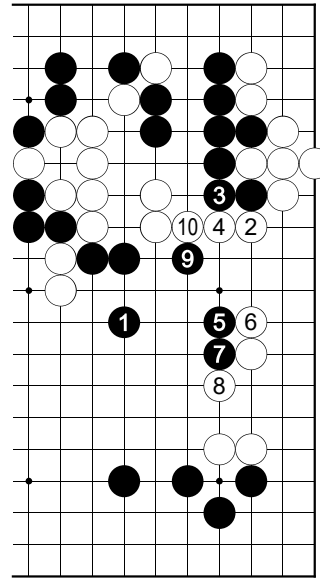
Diagram 10 (84-93)



Variation 27

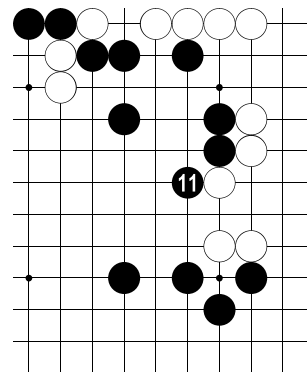
(Diagram 10)

- 86 Black 81 and 83 were a reading mistake but White made a mistake, too.
- 90 White 90 was slow.
- 91 Black grabbed his chance. With his clever sente sacrifice on the left to make his stones alive, Black now has his hands free to take the initiative on the right.



Variation 28

- 11 Black 1 is a more stable move and leaves no cut behind. This way, Black can take control of the center.



Variation 29

(Diagram 10)

- 93 Black plays a very forceful sequence starting with 93. I think this was Novak's strength.

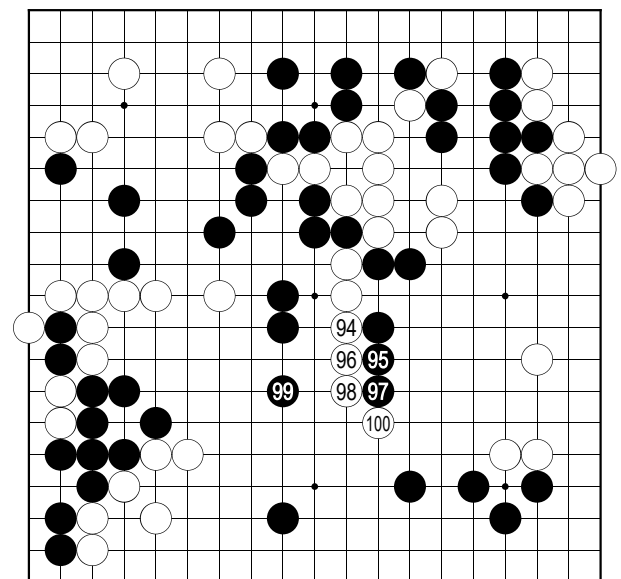
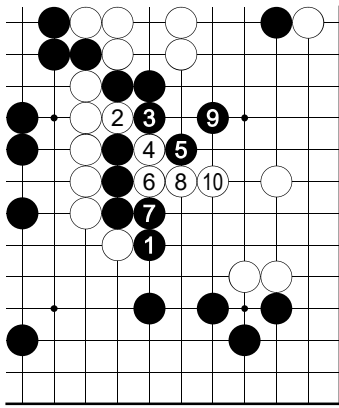
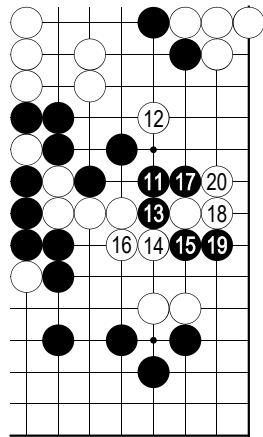


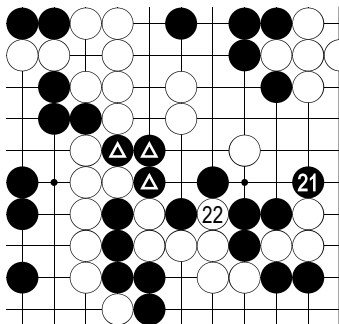
Diagram 11 (94-100)



Variation 30



Variation 31



Variation 32

(22) I think Black wanted to hane with 1, but after a lot of thinking time, Black decided that he might collapse. The moves through 22 are one example. If Black loses his pivotal marked stones in the center, it will be difficult for him to win this game.

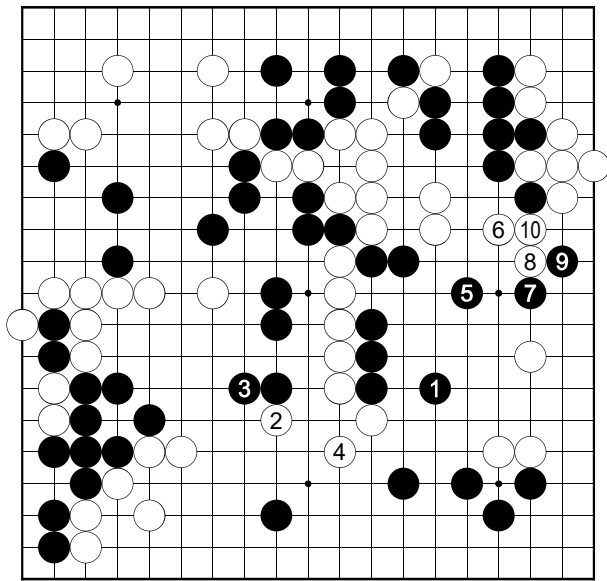
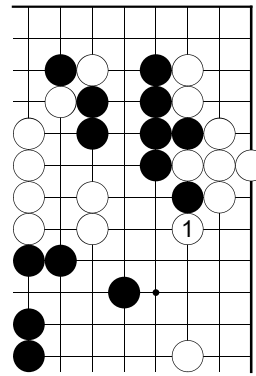


Diagram 12 (101-110)

- ① Black 101 is necessary.
- ② White fought back furiously.



Variation 33

① White should just play atari.

(Diagram 12)

⑩ White 106 and 108 are very bad now. Black gets 107 and 109 and launched a fierce attack.

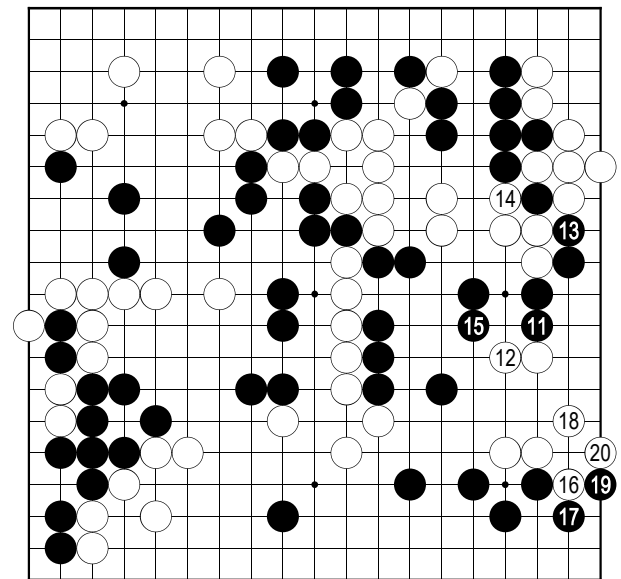
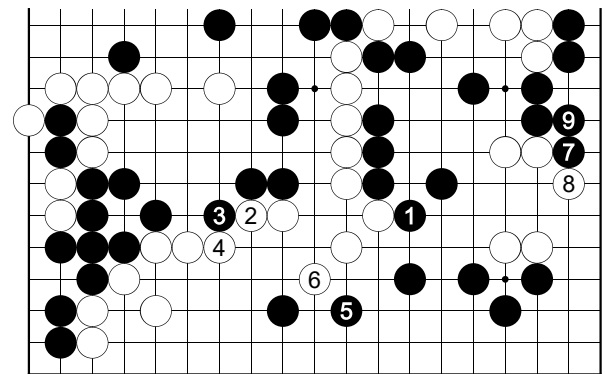


Diagram 13 (111-120)

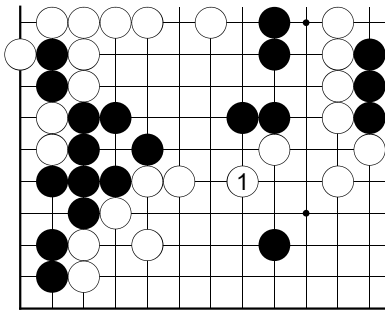


Variation 34

⑨ Black 1 would have been even more destructive. White now needs to defend his center stones but after 7 and 9, probably White will die on the right.

(Diagram 13)

⑮ White is officially in trouble now.



Variation 35

(Diagram 13)

- ⑱ White 16 and 18 are bad. This leads to a disadvantageous ko.
- ⑲ Black starts the ko and during the ko fight, he earns points steadily.

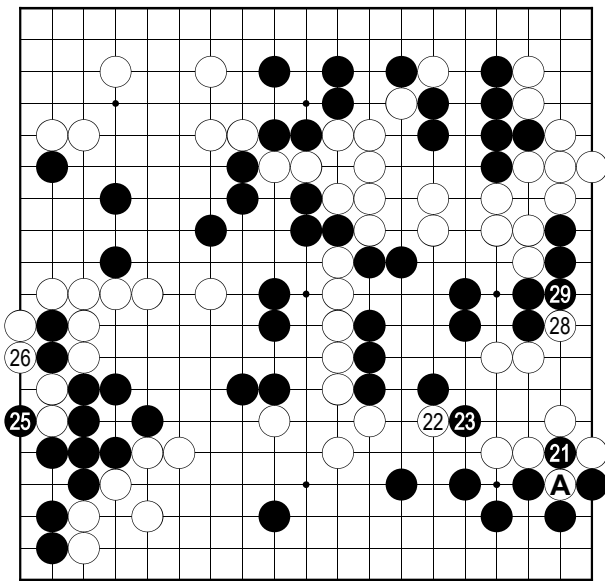


Diagram 14 (121-130)

⑳ at A ㉑ at B ㉒ at A

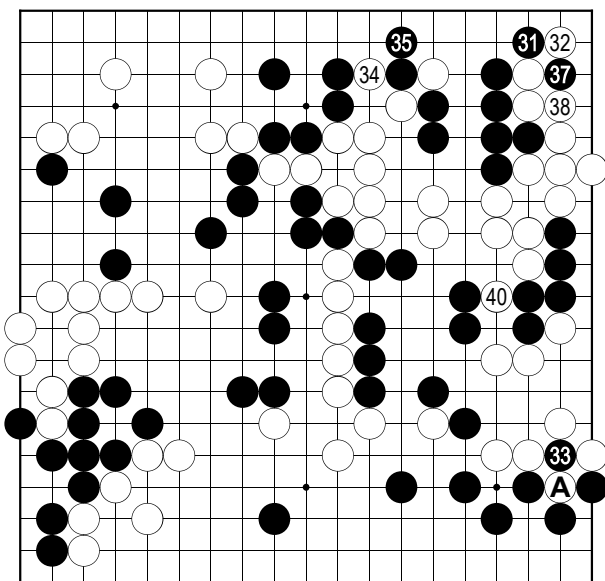


Diagram 15 (131-140)

㉓ at A ㉔ at B

④⑩ White 140 loses points.

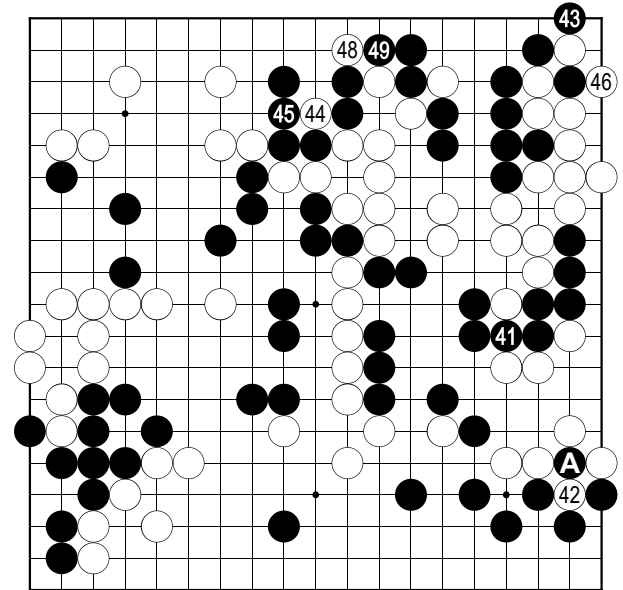
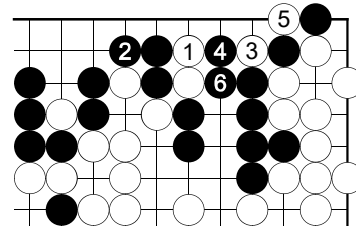


Diagram 16 (141-150)

④⑦ at A ④⑩ at B

④④ White 144 loses points.



Variation 36

⑥ White had this sente sequence that made a lot of point.

(Diagram 16)

- ④⑧ White 144 and 148 lose at least 2-3 points.
- ④⑨ This move eliminates aji at the top.

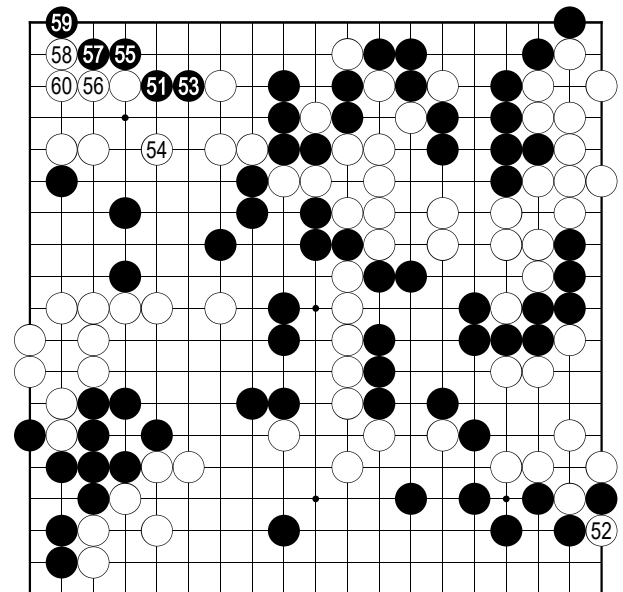


Diagram 17 (151-160)

⑤② White decided to ignore Black's threat and save his group in the lower right.

Black is already ahead at this point, and therefore, White should have just prolonged the ko fight.

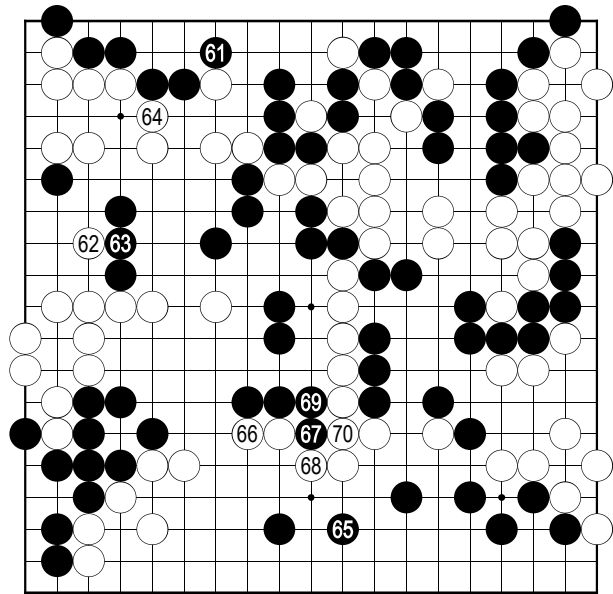
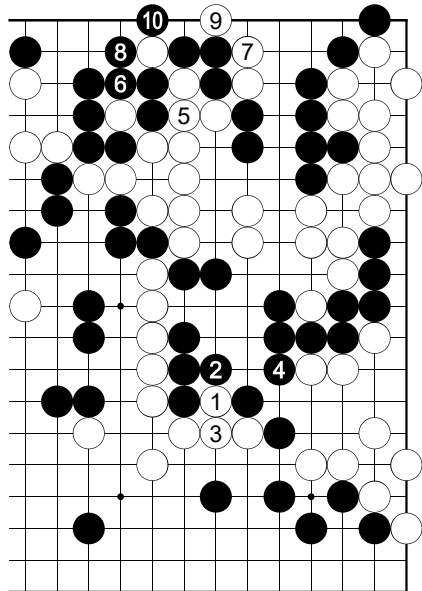
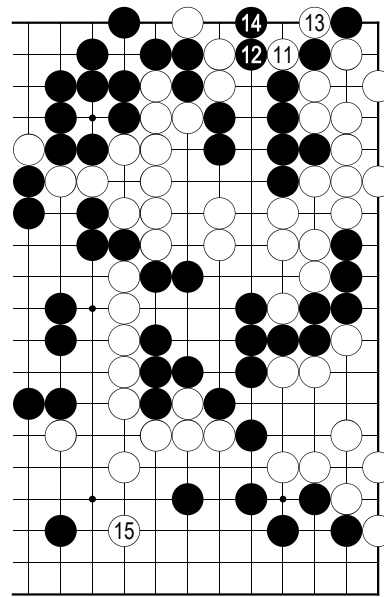


Diagram 18 (161-170)



Variation 37



Variation 38

- ⑮ Even with perfect AI play with the sequence from 1 to 15, Black is still slightly ahead.
- (Diagram 18)
- ⑥④ White 164 might be the losing move.
- ⑥⑤ Black firmly takes the lead with 165 and after that, White never gets a chance.

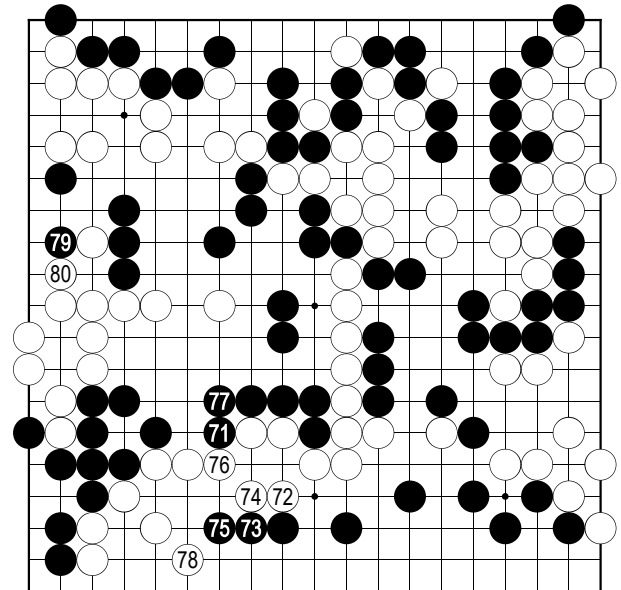


Diagram 19 (171-180)

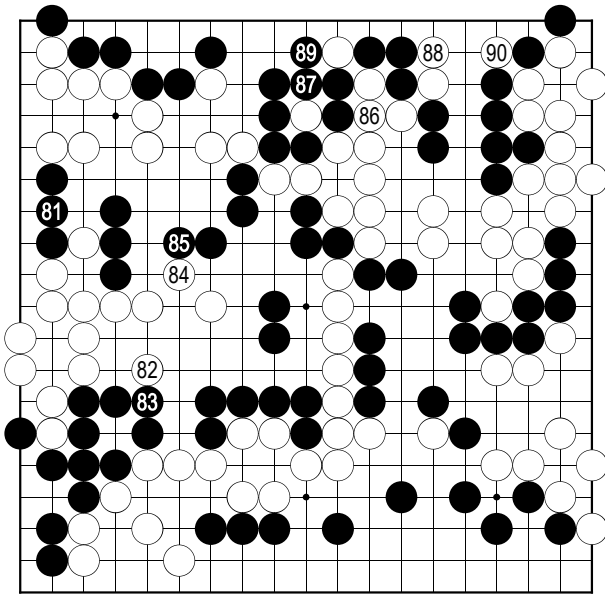


Diagram 20 (181-190)

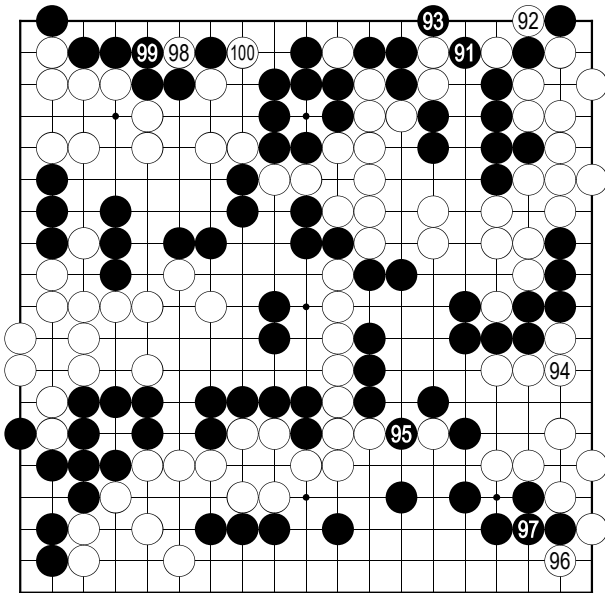


Diagram 21 (191-200)

⑨⑧ At this point, White is far behind (about 10 points). So he decides to start an unreasonable fight.

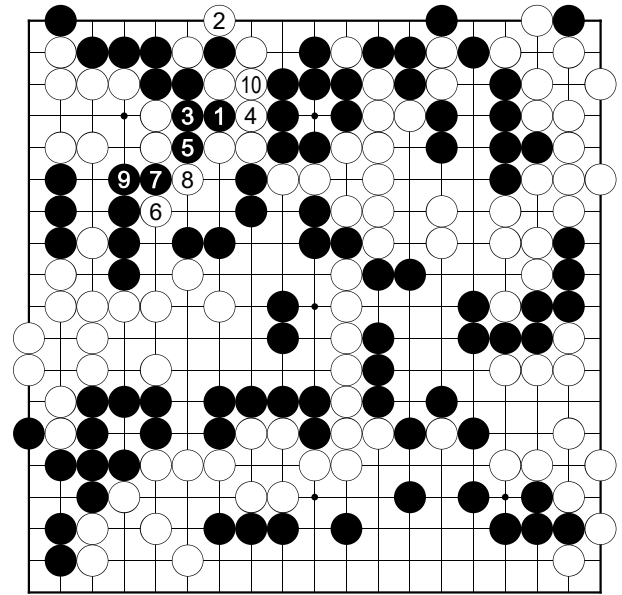


Diagram 22 (201-210)

⑤ However, Black responds correctly and now the game is definitely over as he cuts through and kills either of White's groups.

In this game, Novak showed that he was a fighter - he didn't give up easily and he grabbed his chance whenever he saw one.

In the weeks that followed after this game, we stayed at the house of a Japanese amateur player who was famous for beating middle-ranked professionals without even fighting. We became friends and explored the Kansai area, visiting the temples in Kyoto and Nara and having fun in Osaka.

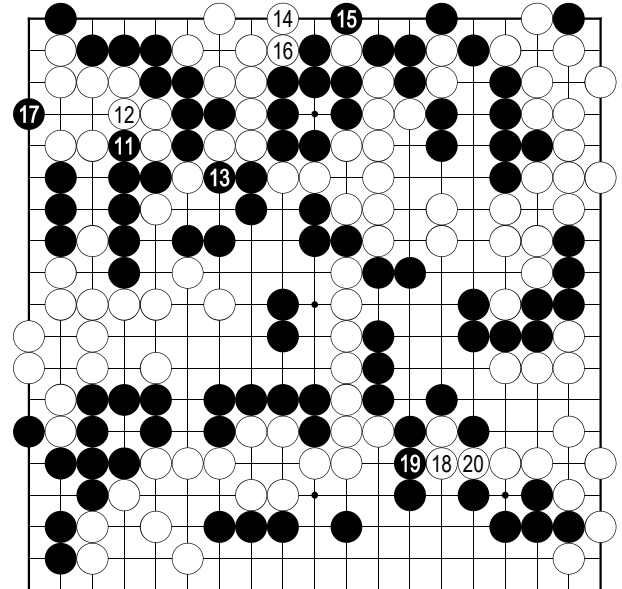


Diagram 23 (211-220)

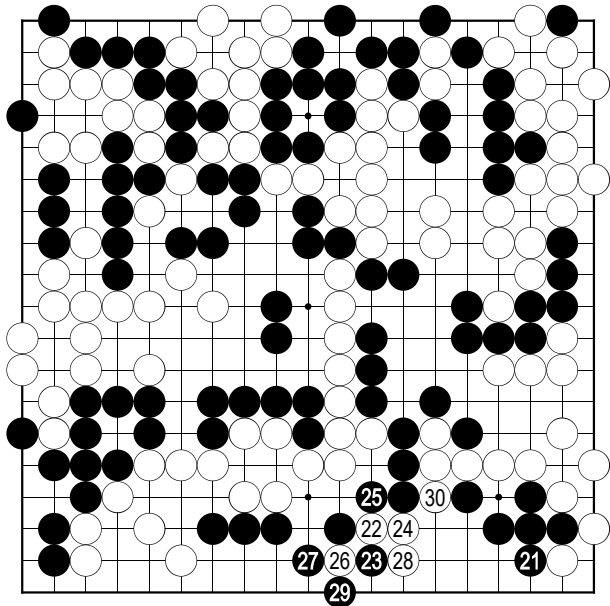


Diagram 24 (221-230)

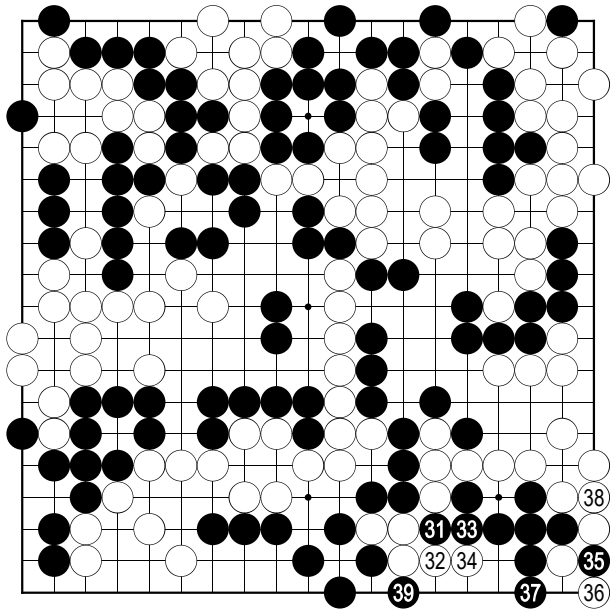


Diagram 25 (231-239)