BRITISH

go

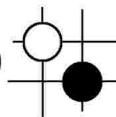# JOURNAL

Friendly Go Tournament Club

Enter our Promotional Members Only Tournament
£60 prize pool
exclusively for BGA Members!

We are running this promotion to help recruit more friendly players and Admins to enjoy regular casual tournaments with. Club tournaments use OGS automatic handicap so all ranks can compete together.

The promotional tournament will run on Saturday 2 October 2021, 1PM UK time. You MUST have a rank on OGS or you will be unable to register for the event.

Find us on OGS
(online-go.com/group/8463)
or simply scan the QR code

To claim your voucher you must place in the tournament and private message the group Admin with username 'F Nietzsche' on OGS quoting the below reference:

"FGTC - BGA Promotion Prize Pool 02/10"

Amazon, AppStore or GooglePlay vouchers will be sent by email based as follows:
1st - £30, 2nd - £20, 3rd £10
Ties will split prizes. Please don't share the above reference with non-BGA Members

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Editorial

British Go Journal 196

New Contributors

In this edition, we welcome two new contributors.

Alex Kent writes about his experiences 'at' the World Amateur Go Champi-
onships which, although hosted by Vladivostok on the east coast of Siberia, was
played online by most players (including Alex) because of the ongoing Covid-
19 pandemic. Alex presents positions from some of his games and poses the
question 'What should I have done?'.

In *Some Thoughts on Go Problems*, Paul Hazleden contributes a novel and
interesting article on the difference between a typical Go problem solution and
practical play during a game, and argues for a type of problem presentation
that better reflects actual game considerations. The Journal would welcome
readers' thoughts on this topic.

Printed Journals

There was discussion about printed copies of the Journal at this year's AGM.
The Journal is available as a pdf on our website[1] and while many members still
prefer to receive a printed copy, some do not. Toby Manning, in his *President's
Message*, reports on the AGM and the outcome of this discussion.

At the same time, with this edition we have changed printing company and are
able to provide a full colour Journal at less cost than our previous colour-cover,
monochrome-interior printed copies. I hope you find this an improvement –
please let me know. I would like to encourage all contributors to make good
use of this and send in lots of nice colour photos to accompany their text!

Pat Ridley
August 2021

Credits

Thanks to the many people who have helped to produce this Journal.

Contributions: Tony Atkins, Theo van Ees, Paul Hazleden, Richard Hunter,
Alex Kent, Toby Manning, and John Tilley.

Photographs: *Front cover*; Prizes at the Durham Go Tournament, 2019,
including the famous 'Goat Ornament'.

All photographs in this edition were provided by the article authors, or are
credited directly in the article.

Proofreading: Tony Atkins, Barry Chandler, Mike Cockburn, Brent Cutts,
Martin Harvey, Richard Hunter, Bob Scantlebury and Nick Wedd.

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[1]See *The Journal Online* on page 9.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Toby Manning

president@britgo.org

AGM

At the AGM in May, Joanne Leung, Pat Ridley and Neil Sandford stood down from Council; Pat continues as BGJ Editor. Andrew Ambrose-Thurman, of Durham, and Peter Rootham-Smith (Cambridge) were elected in their stead, leaving a vacancy. Council subsequently co-opted Mohammed Amin (Manchester) and Stephen Tweedie (Edinburgh).

At the moment all Members are eligible to receive the British Go Journal. A motion to make this a completely separate, self-financing service was defeated, but a compromise motion to give a reduced subscription to members who opted-out of receiving a printed copy was passed; subsequently Council determined that this discount would be £5/year.

As I have commented in previous Journals, we are proposing to convert to a Company Limited by Guarantee, and Council's motion to do this in principle was approved; a final set of proposals is to be put to the 2022 AGM for a substantive vote. A proposal to increase the number of votes required to change our status was defeated. During the period of time up to that AGM, we will be consulting widely with the membership to ensure that we have considered all the concerns of members, and that there is full understanding of the proposals.

Return to Normality

Members may be relieved to know that BGA membership has not fallen during the coronavirus outbreak.

While most play continues to be on-line, we are all starting to resume face-to-face play. Over-the-board tournaments are now being planned, with the Wessex planned for Bath in October.

As I write in early July, Clubs have started to resume face-to-face play, but always within the current guidelines.

British Congress and British Championship

Both the British Congress and the British Championship were cancelled in 2020, and did not take place in the Spring this year either. We have decided to hold a British Congress in the Autumn of this year, in its normal format (save that it will not incorporate the BGA AGM). For this year only, the British Congress will also encompass the British Championship; the top two players in

the Congress who meet the eligibility criteria (British nationality or five years' residence) will play off in a single match to become British Champion.

Youth

Our Youth programme continues in strength; we have over 20 youngsters registered for the annual summer "Go Camp" to be held in August, and the monthly youth tournaments continue. In 2020 four teams-of-three (Cambridge, Cheadle Hulme, Edinburgh and London) entered a prototype European Youth Team League (see Tony Atkin's *Youth News* on page 7). The EGF are intending to expand this tournament to all of Europe in 2021/22, and I hope that we can enter a number of youth teams.

The T Mark Hall Foundation

In BGJ 194 I reported that the Foundation was considering its future after most of its assets had been used to finance the purchase of the London MindSports Centre. With remaining assets of about £70k, on 28th May members of the Foundation decided to provide a further £20k to the London Go Centre for it to invest in the MindSports Centre, after which its remaining assets would be divided 50% to the LGC, 25% to the BGA and 25% to the Castledine Barnes Trust.

London MindSports Centre

Builders are currently refurbishing the London Mind Sports Centre in Ravenscourt Park, West London, and we hope it will open in August. The MindSports Centre will host the London Go Centre. (The LGC will be organising the European Womens' Go Championship in early September, however this will be held online.)

Lockdown makes you stronger?

The BGA subscribes to the European Go Database, which is used to determine every member's grade, and until recently the minimum strength recognised by the EGD was 20 kyu. Along with a number of other countries, we have felt for some time that this minimum should be lower, and at the 2019 EGF AGM a working party ("Commission"), which I convened, was set up to examine the issue.

During the subsequent year the Commission did a lot of analysis and modelling, and as a result concluded that the minimum should be reduced to 30 kyu and the algorithm which determines your grade should be amended. These changes were agreed at the 2020 EGF AGM, and the changes were activated earlier this year.

As a result of the amendments to the algorithm, most of you will have seen an apparent increase in your playing strength; the exceptions being around 20 kyu, where relieving the log-jam will have resulted in some players' grades reducing.

❏

UK News
Tony Atkins
ajaxgo@yahoo.co.uk

With all on-the-board events cancelled still (though some regulars turned up in Barmouth for a break during the planned tournament weekend), the only open UK event was the Durham Tournament on 19th and 20th June. Here is the report from organiser Andrew Ambrose-Thurman.

Durham

After cancelling the 2020 Durham Go Tournament, we were keen to run a tournament this year and the only way to do this safely was to take it online. We were not expecting huge numbers, but were quite pleased with the numbers a few days before. Then someone helpfully, without us knowing, advertised it with a banner on OGS, and numbers went up by half overnight.

On the morning of the tournament we had 90 people registered, of whom 70 actually played. In practice this meant around 50 per round as some people could only play certain rounds due to their time zone.

We had expected most of the entrants to be from the UK, but people played from twenty countries, including places as far afield as America, China, Russia, Finland and Syria. Some of the players were staying up late at night to finish their games, while others were getting up early to play. We even had some people who registered thinking this was their local tournament in Durham, North Carolina!

There was a good number of youth players entering the tournament, including eight from the new Tonbridge School Go Club. It was also good to see several people in the tournament who had been joining the Durham Go Club's twice-weekly online sessions over the past year, plus current and former club members.

We had set up a tournament management system that would set up the OGS games automatically. Even though we had tested it at a club session the week before, Round 1 still had a few technical issues to iron out; these were resolved, and the games started pretty much on time. After this, the tournament mostly ran smoothly.

We asked all the entrants to confirm before each round if they were planning to play, similar to an in-person tournament (where we would have checked who was in the room). In many ways this made things easier, but (just like at an in-person tournament where people arrive and ask to play just as the draw's being made) we had several people forget to confirm until the last minute.

It was working sufficiently well that we had lots of positive feedback at the end of the tournament; we are thinking of tidying it up and tweaking it to run another online tournament in the future.

It was interesting to see how the lockdown had been affecting people's ranks. Some people had played very little since 2019, while others had been playing a lot online and had outgrown their tournament rank. This wasn't helped by people who hadn't played in a European tournament before, as OGS and EGD ranks are not always well aligned.

The Durham Tournament normally has an 'all you can eat' BBQ on the Saturday evening – a chance for everyone, whether or not they played in the tournament, to get together, eating, drinking, chatting, and occasionally even playing Go, late into the evening. That wasn't possible this year, so instead we planned some alternative, online activities.

The first was a lecture from Sandy Taylor (3d), on "Mistakes that matter (and why most of them don't)". This was an interesting and accessible look at some of the tournament games from earlier that day, showing how if you have the wrong overall game plan then it can cause you problems even if all the individual moves you're making are good.

This was followed by a party over Zoom – which gave an opportunity to see people face to face, even if everyone had to provide their own food and drink. There had been going to be a second lecture as well on the cultural and historical side of Go, but sadly every one of the museums we asked for a speaker had been too busy preparing their post-Covid reopening – perhaps one for next year instead.

The Sunday continued pretty much the same, with another three rounds. No one managed to win all six of their games, but Leo Kai Mei (5d), Mani Sanford (4d, USA), Emmanuel Faubry (3k, France), Matthew Frye (6k, Durham), Franziska Kern (13k, Germany) and Christina Schramm (19k, Germany) all won five games. Leo was the champion on tie-break. Also Jan Novotny (8k, Czech Republic), Kamil Banul (8k, Poland) and Pavel Maljugin (10k, Russia) won all the rounds they entered.

It was great to have so many people along. Hopefully, all being well, this time next year we'll be able to run an in-person tournament again. Assuming so, you're all welcome to come to Durham for a fun weekend in June 2022 – although some of this year's entrants may find it a little far to travel!

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JOURNAL PROBLEM 1
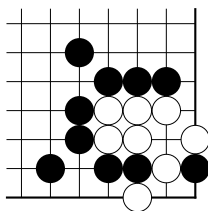
Black to play

YOUTH NEWS

Tony Atkins

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Hong Kong Super Go Match

This match continued in April. Gene Wong lost to Ka Yau Chau, but our Jayden Ng was victorious in the next game. This meant a last player showdown on Saturday 10th April. In a difficult game, Jayden fought bravely against Webber Tse 5d, but lost a big group and another in time trouble before finally running out of time. This made the Hong Kong team, put together by Liana Ao 4p, the winners 15-14. Game records and YouTube links are available in the Junior section of the BGA website at www.britgo.org/junior/hkmatch2020.

CCTV World Youth Amateur

A four-month gap occurred after the semi-finals because of Covid. In the finals, as expected, China beat Singapore and Huang Haicheng of China beat Alexander Qi of the USA.

European Team League

The team from London did very well in the prototype European Youth Team League, which featured teams from the UK and Germany playing online on 13x13 boards. London beat Cheadle Hulme A and then Düsseldorf to meet Frankfurt in the final on 15th May. For London, Scott Cobbold won his handicap game and Gene Wong won his even game, but Lea Wong narrowly lost both her games. Thus each part of the match ended 2-1 to the Germans, meaning Frankfurt were winners 4-2. For details see www.britgo.org/junior/teamleague2021.

China League

This continued from Round 4 through to Round 13 in June. This timing meant that the event ran into both the UK exam and cricket seasons, so that some games were not played on time and Jayden Ng had to withdraw after just three games. All games against the "Li Ang Yi Tao" were completed though, with just some same country matches to be arranged. Congratulations went to Sam Barnett who had eight wins out of eight (with four games to play). Li Yuze was the top Chinese player with 10 out of 12. For full details see www.britgo.org/junior/chinaleague2021.

Monthly Tournaments

These continued online on usually the first Sunday in the month (except when it clashed with Easter). The April Youth attracted 19 players. Winning all three handicap games were Derek Duan (13k Cambridge) and Caleb Monk (11k Epsom). Notable two wins went to Oliver Bardsley, who only lost his second by half a point, and Jan Kudla, whose only loss was at the wrong handicap. Ten players took part in the all-day rated May Youth. Congratulations went to Clare Chen (2d Oxford) who won it and Alexander Timperi (9k Imperial) who got the lower section prize. The June Youth was a rapid-play won by Sam Barnett, with Daniel Yang and Claire Chen placed next. Winning all three games were Chen Qin (10k Nottingham), Hanna Kudla (13k Edinburgh) and Noah Wilkinson (23k Aston). ❑

WORLD NEWS

Tony Atkins

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For summaries and sgf files of the UK matches in the Pandanet Go European Team Championships described below, see www.britgo.org/events/euroteams2020.

European Teams

Germany had been struggling in this year's B-League, but the grades of the team they fielded against the UK on 13th April suggested this match was likely to go their way. Four interesting games ensued and the top three boards were won by Germany, against Daniel Hu, Alex Kent and Jamie Taylor. However Alison Bexfield was our team's star player, with a very entertaining game giving her the only UK win of the evening. The match loss meant the team slipped to fourth position.

For the second match in a row Alison Bexfield was the team's star, with the only win against Finland on 4th May. Alex Kent, Jon Diamond and Jamie Taylor all lost so we lost the match three games to one. Germany won their match however, which moved our team down to fifth position.

For the final game of the season on 25th May our team had to play another mid-table team, Turkey. With Des Cann dropping out of the match at short notice, team captain Sandy Taylor stepped in and led the team to a three-one victory. Daniel Hu and Alison Bexfield were the other winners, but Jamie Taylor lost.

Netherlands ended top and were promoted to the A-League, but second-placed Italy missed out on promotion by losing the play-off against Serbia. Finland were third, but a win by Germany over Netherlands left them a point ahead of the UK; we ended up in fifth place.

In the C-League, Ireland drew with Norway in April, with wins for James Hutchinson and Matei Garcia, but losses for Karl Irwin and Philippe Renaut. The same team played Spain in May and won; James was the only loss, to Jesus Roldan. This left Ireland fourth, on second tie-break behind Lithuania. Denmark beat top team South Africa in the last round to end second, but they lost their promotion play-off against Croatia. Spain and Greece were relegated, with Slovenia and Bulgaria coming up from the D-League.

In the A-league Russia ended top on 15 points. Poland, France and Ukraine all scored 13 to place next; Austria was relegated.

World Amateur

The World Amateur Go Championship started on 3rd June in Vladivostok, on Russia's eastern seaboard. It ran in hybrid mode until the 9th. The elaborate opening ceremony was streamed on YouTube. It featured smoke and images, a choir, pop singers who sang in five languages, several speeches (including a special message from Vladimir Putin), a pop music tourist video and the list of players taking part either online or in person. Twenty players managed to get there in person and they could also play in the Russian Go Congress which was being held alongside.

The UK's player was Alex Kent, who was playing online. He lost to Timotej Suc of Slovenia, Karuehawanit

Wichrich of Thailand and Amir Fragman of Israel, but beat Matias Navia of Chile, Lorenz Trippel of Switzerland and Ricardo Quintero Zazueta of Mexico. He ended up 33rd out of 57 (*see Alex's report and some positions from his games on page *).

Gavin Rooney for Ireland also won three and was 31st (beating Finland, Madagascar and Lithuania, but losing to David Mitchell of Australia, Turkey and Brazil).

China's Ma Tianfang was the winner, with Chinese Taipei's Chan I-Tien as runner-up. Korea's Kim Dabeen was third. Lukas Podpera and Stanislaw Frejlak had the best results of all the European players, taking the next two places, the former only losing to the winner and the latter notably beating both China and Japan. Their games were all against top players as the event was played with a supergroup set at 4 dan.

❑

THE JOURNAL ONLINE

To access the full range of features, read the Journal online.

Journals and SGF files

Online copies of this, the preceding three journals and the SGF files for the problems and games, are available in the BGA Members Area at `www.britgo.org/membersarea`. Log in to see these recent editions.

Links to electronic copies of earlier issues, associated files, guidelines for submitting articles and information about other BGA publications appear on the BGA website at `www.britgo.org/pubs` (no login required).

Active Links

Online copies from BGJ 158 onwards contain active links to related information, including SGF files for the games and problems. The links are identified by blue text (according to your browser's set-up) – clicking on these will open the selected links on your computer (this feature may not be supported by some older PDF file browsers).

EXPERIENCE PLAYING IN THE 41st WAGC

Alex Kent

alex.kent1@hotmail.com

I recently had the privilege to represent the UK in the 41st World Amateur Go Congress. Nominally, this event took place in the historical Russian port city of Vladivostok on the Sea of Japan, but for obvious reasons more than half of the competitors (myself included) took part online this year.
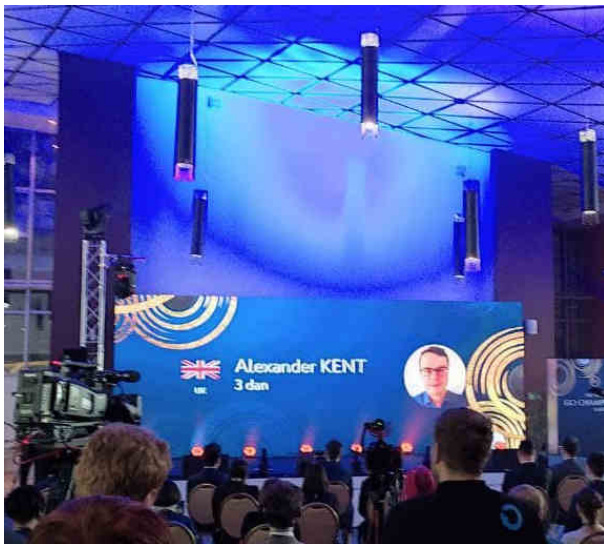
My introduction slide from the opening ceremony in Vladivostok

Despite taking part remotely I really enjoyed the experience. Before starting the tournament one of the organisers divined that luck would be on my side on account of my name: "Alexander" is a popular Russian name, and apparently "Kent" sounds similar to the word for "Bro" in an unofficial Russian language (there are many, and I haven't been able to work out which one).

I ended up winning three out of six games and could probably have done with a bit more luck, so this prediction didn't really pan out, but it was a nice sentiment to start the tournament with!

For this article I decided to analyse three positions from my games rather than doing a deep dive into a single game. I've posed these positions as middle-game problems and encourage the reader to have a think about these positions before looking at the corresponding solutions (which are in "*what I did*" vs "*what I should have done*" format).

The solutions are at the end of the article[1]

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[1]The sgf files for the games and solutions are at www.britgo.org/bgj/issue196.

My first game was as White against Timotej Suc 3d of Slovenia. This was a tough game, where I fell behind early in the middle game and then ended up in time trouble, so I missed some opportunities to come back later on.

Black has just won a ko on the right side with ㊸ by ignoring White's threat to push at ㊹. Next Black played the double peep of ㊼.
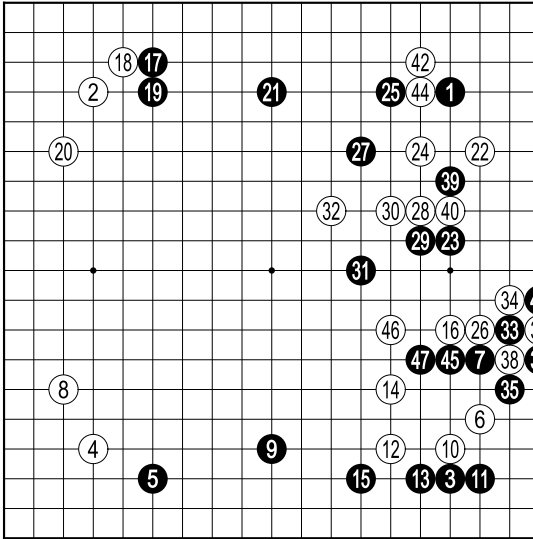
㊶ at ㉝

Problem 1

I had much easier games in rounds 2 and 3. The next problem comes from my game in round 4.

This was my first game against a higher rated opponent: Wichrich Karuehawanit 6d of Thailand (I was Black). The game was tight after the opening and I needed to make the best use of my influence on the top and right sides.

The game is difficult for Black and he needs to make the most of his thickness on the right side. White's move at ㊽ is natural and ㊿ is a nice response, taking aim at an invasion on the lower side.

What should Black's priority be after ㊻?

Problem 2

11
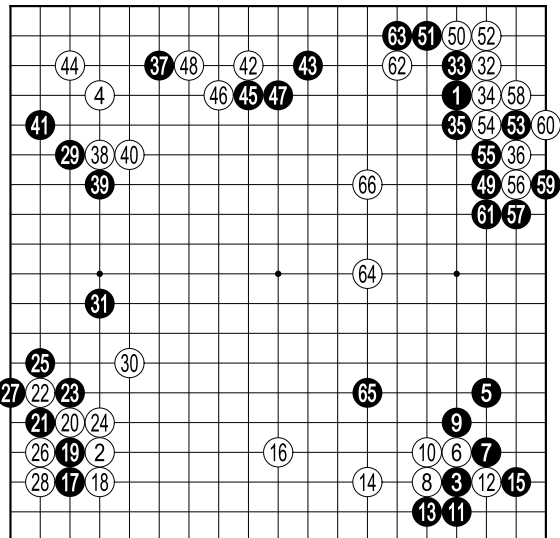
In the fifth round I struck back to win against Mexico's Ricardo Quintero Zazueta 3d.

Round 6

In the final round I faced off against another 6 dan, this time Amir Fragman of Israel. This is probably the best game I've ever played and I would like to put together a detailed analysis of it another time (possibly a future article). I was Black in this game.
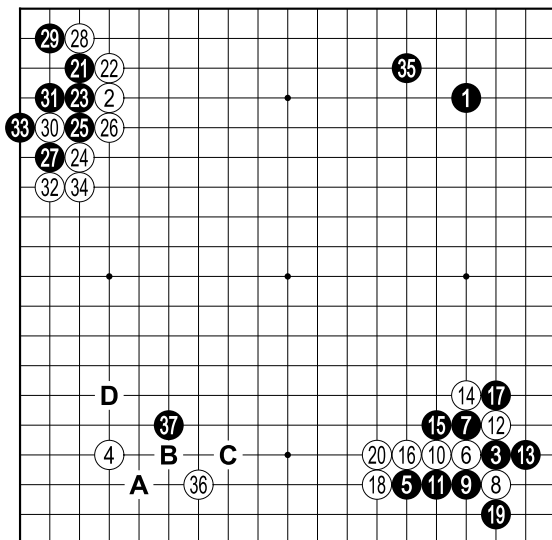
This AI-inspired cosmic-style move (37) is a new favourite of mine.

Prior to this game, I watched Alexandre Dinerchtein 3p's review of Stanislaw Frejlak 7d's game from round 5, where this move was played twice. Stanislaw ultimately lost that game, but I thought it was worth a test drive!

White has a number of possible responses, but in all cases Black is going to limit White's potential significantly.

Aside

White has been able to take advantage of Black's weaknesses in the lower right to create a territorial framework.

The game is very close and how much of this area White can convert into territory will be critical.

What is Black's best continuation on the right?
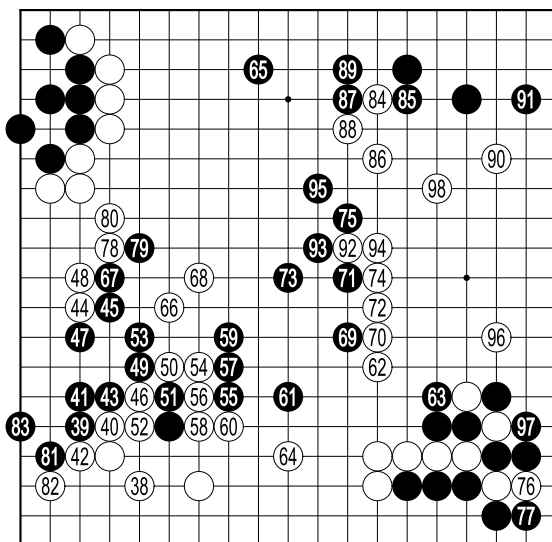
Problem 3

Solutions

Round 1 (Problem 1)
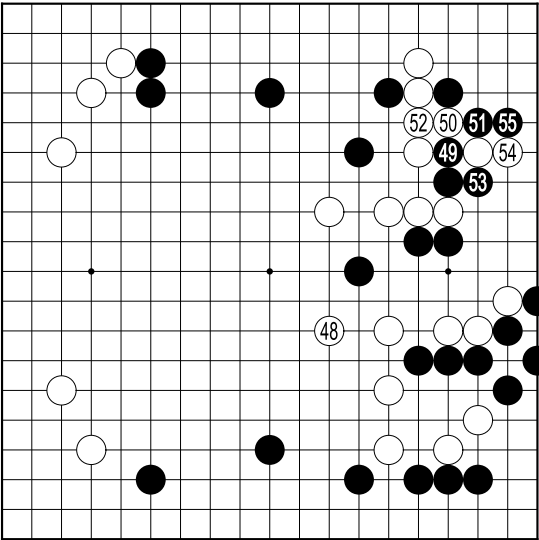
In the game White focused on the centre with ㊽ which allowed Black to return to the upper right corner and live there with the moves to ㊳.

The game is still playable, but it feels like White missed an opportunity.

Game Variation

This hane is a key move.

In this sequence Black gets to strengthen his stones on the right side but White gains a much stronger position in the upper right corner, making a lot of points.

This sequence is also likely to be sente for White, so he can then play the game move towards the centre and treat the stones in the lower right lightly.
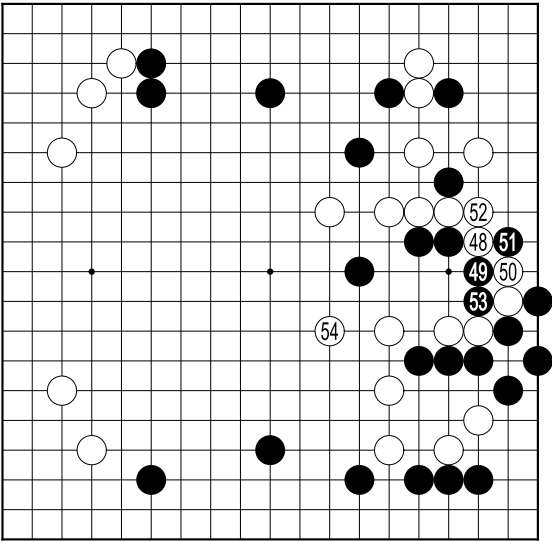
Solution to Problem 1
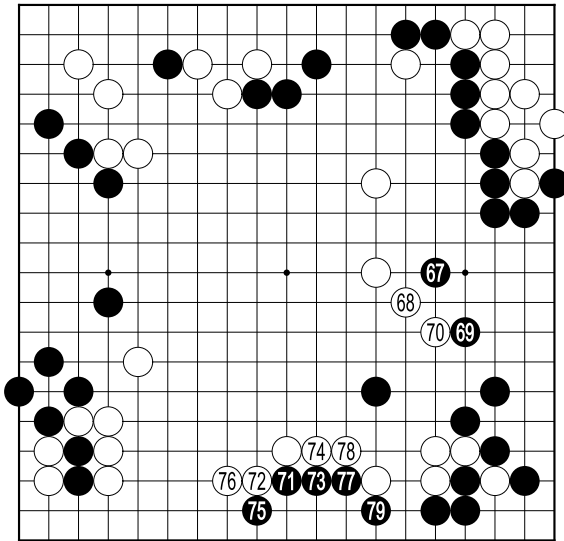
In the game Black played very tightly, trying to make points in sente on the right side before invading on the bottom.

This is the wrong choice strategically and White will take control of the centre.

Game Variation

It is much better for Black to immediately jump into the fray and separate White's stones.

Ultimately Black makes a lot of points while covering some of his weaknesses at the top, and it's unclear what profit White's central ponnuki is generating.

This seems like the best way for Black to keep in contention.
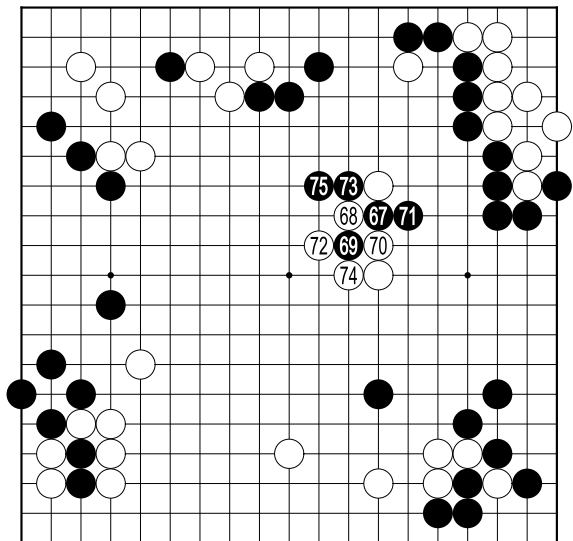
Solution to Problem 2
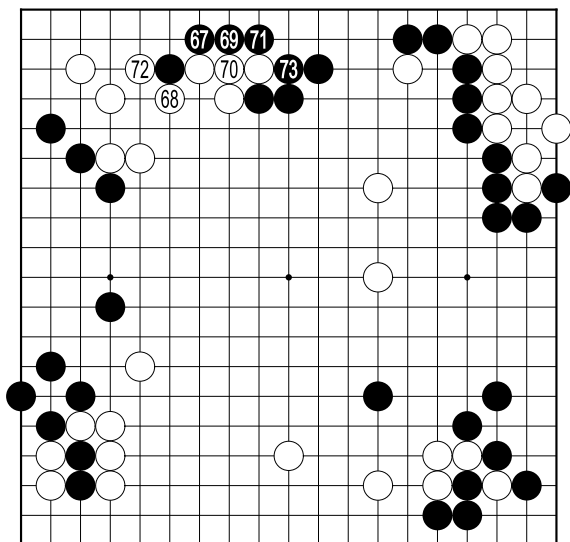
My tame AI program suggests that Black should hane here immediately as in this sequence.

This is huge territorially, but as a human I am definitely more focused on attacking the stones in the centre!

Solution to Problem 2 – Bonus Variation

Round 6 (Problem 3)

Black continued by pushing White down before playing tenuki and leaving some aji inside White's area.

This is somewhat unsatisfactory: White has been able to surround some solid territory and the black stones on the outside are filling dame.

There must be a better way to take advantage of the weaknesses in White's shape…
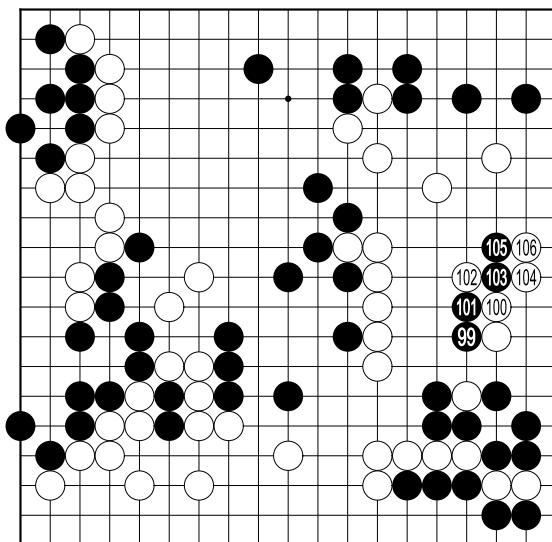
Game Variation
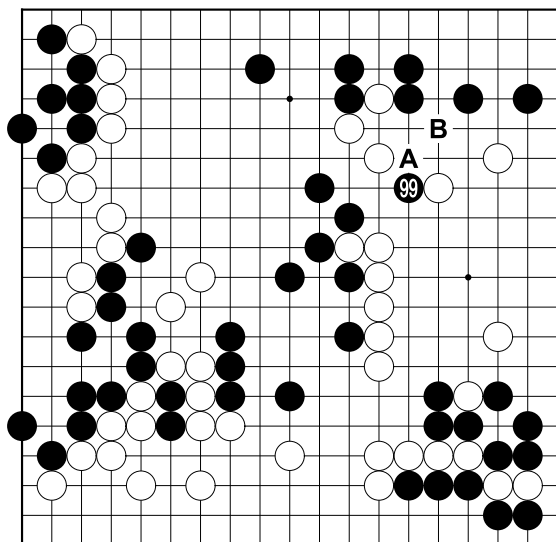
This attachment is a vital point, threatening to disconnect the White stones.

White has two promising candidates to consider here.

Solution to Problem 3

If White plays **A** in the diagram above then this sequence follows.

Unlike in the game variation, all of the stones Black has played are useful – it's much better!

Note that White cannot prevent Black from pushing through at ⑩③. If White takes this point instead of connecting then Black will play on the outside at △ and the whole white group is in danger.
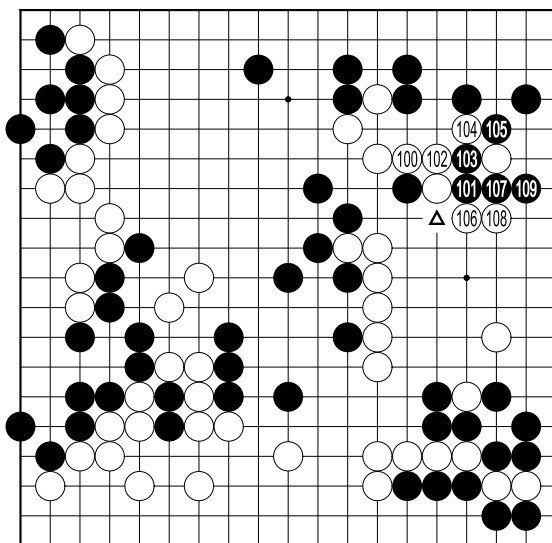
Solution to Problem 3 – Simple Way
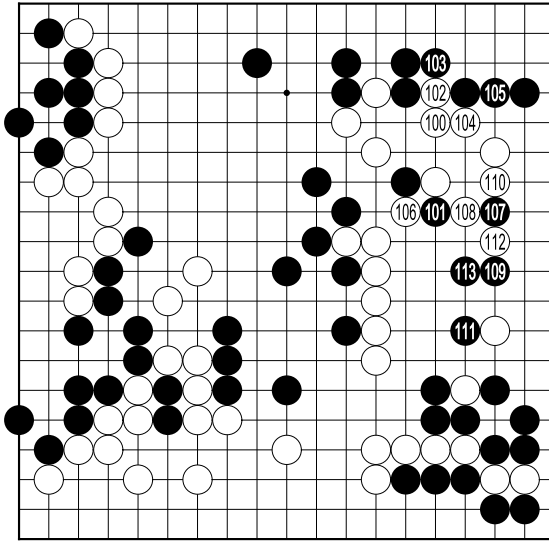
If White plays the peep instead then the situation becomes complicated.

What I've presented is one of the simpler AI variations, where the right side territory becomes split between the two players.

The game is still extremely close.

Solution to Problem 3 – Complicated Variation

Conclusion

Overall, I really enjoyed the experience and had lots of good games. I hope that one day I get to take part in person!

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JOURNAL PROBLEM 2

Black to play
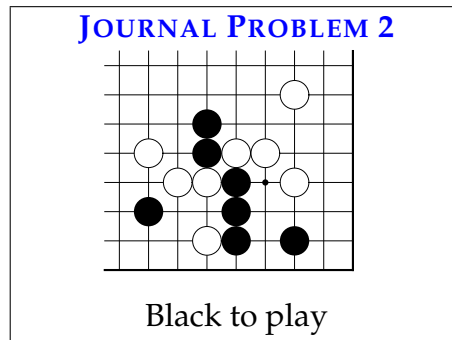
Richard Hunter

In the last part, we looked at a simple position with seven white stones in a row on the second line. That position is unsettled. If Black plays first, he can kill. If White plays first, she can live. But what if we have one more or one fewer white stones? We assume that the players will play locally alternately without playing away elsewhere on the board. With eight stones, White is alive. She can live even if Black plays first. With six stones, White is dead. She cannot live even if she plays first. These two positions are settled. There is Go proverb that nicely summarizes this. The English translation is 'Six die but eight live'[1], but I like the succinct Japanese, which is

<p align="center">六死八活</p>

or alternatively

<p align="center">六死八生.</p>

The expression is firmly embedded in my mind and seeing it in books brings to mind memories of Matthew Macfadyen telling a shaggy dog story about Batman trying to rescue people from a building on fire. I first heard that story told by the late Brian Castledine[2] in the mid 1970s, but he was probably not its creator.

Before moving on to the next stage, let me give a couple more important examples that often arise in games (either on the board or in reading out future possibilities). The answers

follow immediately as they are intended to be pattern recognition rather than a challenge to solve.
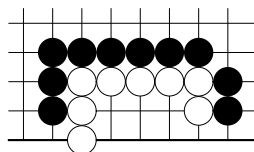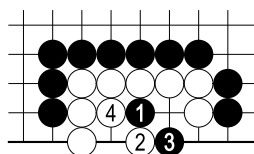

Problem 1 – Black to play

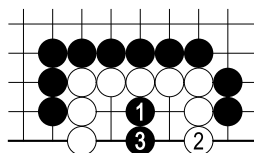This is a classic position used to illustrate the theme. It appears in many books.
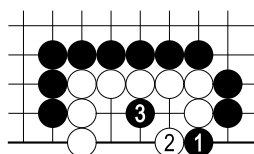
Diagram 1 – correct

Black reduces the eye space from the outside with ❶ and then occupies the vital point of White's five-point eye space.

Diagram 2 – failure

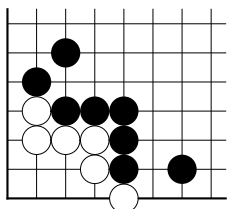If Black goes for the vital point first, White can make a ko for life.

Diagram 3 – mistakes by both sides

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[1] senseis.xmp.net/?SixDieButEightLive.
[2] Obituary at BGJ45, page 3.

In the position in Diagram 3 on the previous page, it is a mistake for White to take the point that Black should have played initially. Now Black gets a second chance to kill.


Problem 2 – Black to play

This is a standard position in life and death. White has an L group with one leg plus a hane on the first line. 'The L group is dead', but an L group with one leg is unsettled. So what effect does the hane have?
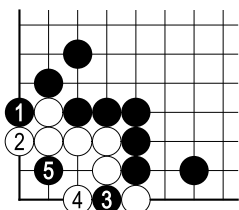

Diagram 4 – correct

Black reduces the eye space from the outside with ❶ and ❸ and then occupies the vital point of White's resulting five-point eye space with 5. The result is similar to the position in the previous problem. This illustrates how mastering basic techniques enables you to read out harder positions and get stronger.
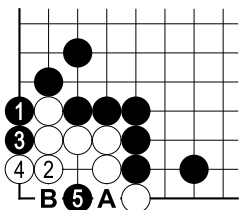
Diagram 5 – variation

If White takes the 2-2 point with ②, Black continues reducing the size of the eye space and then strikes at the vital point. White cannot live. The points A and B are *miai*. If White captures the two black stones, Black throws in to make it a false eye and stop her escaping along the side.
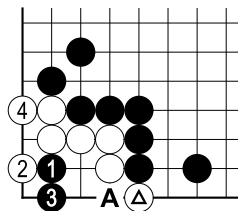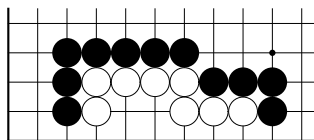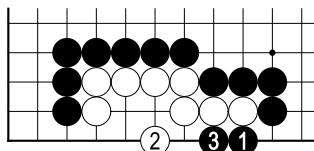

Diagram 6 – failure

If Black goes for the vital point first, White can live. This failure line demonstrates the effect of the white hane. It prevents Black from connecting out at A.

~ ~ ~

PROBLEMS FROM PART 2 IN BGJ 195

Problem 3 – Black to play

Diagram 7 – correct

Black should reduce White's eye space from the outside. ② looks like a promising way to divide the eye space into two, but Black just keeps on reducing from the outside with ③.
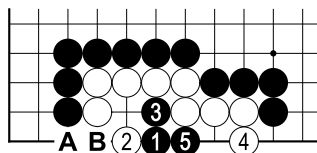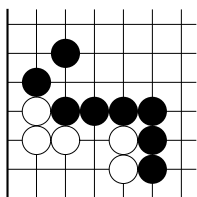
Diagram 8 – failure

❶ looks like a vital point, but that lets White widen her eye space with ④ after exchanging ② for ❸ to prevent Black from connecting out. If Black next plays ❺, he only makes a seki in gote. Later Black can play A in sente and White must answer at B, but she is alive in seki.
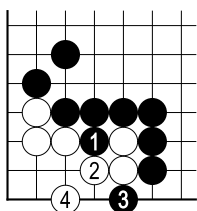

Problem 4 – Black to play

Diagram 9 – failure

Pushing into the hole in White's wall is sente, as is Black's hane at ❸. But these moves are unimaginative plays. While beginners might make such moves, the way to progress is to read further ahead and play moves that actually work. After ④, White is alive, though finding the correct continuation might be challenging.
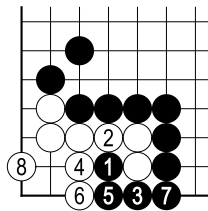

Diagram 10 – failure

❶ looks like a vital point. It is a move that many kyu players choose in games. Although Black can connect underneath, he does so in gote, so White is able to live with ⑧. This position is similar, but not exactly the same, as one that appeared in a game commentary in BGJ 186[3]. One key to getting stronger is repetition and breaking bad habits. It is hard to grasp new ideas the first time, which is why you should re-read problem books and encounter the same position in different books.
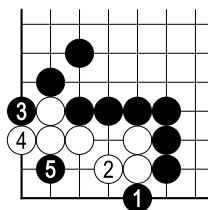

Diagram 11 – correct

Black should reduce White's eye space from the outside with the hane at ❶. If White blocks on the first line, Black can push down and capture the stones. If White gives way with ②, Black hanes from the other side and then plays the vital point at ❺. There are several other moves that White can try but they all fail. This is a standard position that appears in many books, where such variations are discussed. It is an important position to study in advance because it arises from a common joseki, so it appears in real games.
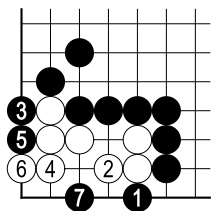
[3]BGJ 186, pages 21–24: see move 77.

Diagram 12 – variation

I will show just one variation. ④ is often a vital point. But Black can just keep on pushing in, reducing White's eye space. The result after ❼ is similar to Diagram 5 on page . Once again there are many variations. For example, ❺ at ❼ also works. Study these on your own if you are interested. In a real game, it often helps if you know what the correct result should be (e.g. Black can kill), so you only need to read out the variation that White chooses.

Japanese

見合い *miai*

This is a term that you may hear western Go players using, but don't thoughtlessly use it when teaching beginners. The second half 合い comes up in the term *semeai*, which literally means 'attack each other' although it usually gets translated as 'a capturing race', which loses the literal meaning of both halves of the word.

六死八活 *roku shi hakkatsu*

六死八生 *roku shi hasshou*

These expressions contain two of the most important kanji that you should know if you have Japanese tsumego books. 死 means 'death' and 活 (or 生) means 'life'. The numbers six and eight are commonly seen in players' grades. The reading (pronunciation) *shou* is a less common alternative form. 八 is read *hachi* on its own and in words like *hachi dan*, but here it exhibits its combining form.
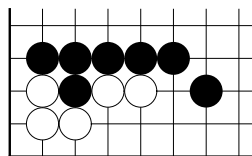
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PROBLEMS FOR PART 4

Below are two problems that I will discuss in the next part after an introduction to the theme.
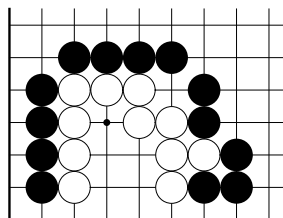
Problem 5 – Black to play

Problem 6 – Black to play

❑

TOURNAMENT HISTORIES IX: DURHAM

Tony Atkins

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Simon Shiu ran (and won) the first North East Go Tournament, a six round fast-play, in Darlington on 22nd April 1995. He claimed to like running a variety of events, so the following year, on the weekend of 13th March, he hosted the 29th British Go Congress at Van Mildert College, a modern part of Durham University set in parkland opposite the Oriental Museum. There were 82 players taking part, including the winner Alex Rix and runner up T Mark Hall.

Simon Shiu takes on youngest player Ali Brooks

Entrance in 2019

To celebrate the tenth anniversary of Durham Go Club, the first regular tournament was organised on the 17th and 18th April 2004 by Jenny Radcliffe and Edwin Brady. It was held in the Riverside Cafe of Dunelm House, the student union building, and attracted 39 players. Simon Shiu, now based in Bristol, was the winner.

Similar numbers attended in June each year, with 49 players in 2005 (which featured a two-way tie between Francis Roads and Tim Hunt) and 55 in 2010 (a three-way tie between Matthew Crosby, Matthew Reid and Yohei Negi).

The locations started off being usually at St John's College, but also it was held at St Aidan's College, College of St Hild and St Bede, Elvet Riverside, St Mary's College and latterly the Pemberton Building (thrice) on Palace Green and Elvet Hill House (thrice). The latter is situated right next to the Oriental Museum, which has some Go-related material on display.

Plate in Oriental Museum

$\triangleright$

Picnic in 2018

The British Go Congress returned in April 2012 and this time it was run by Andrew Thurman and Alice Ambrose-Griffith (now Andrew and Alice Ambrose-Thurman).

The Lightning Tournament was held in the magnificent Durham School dining room; former club members dominated, Andrew Kay beating Alex Kent. The Open (won also by Andrew Kay) was, by way of contrast, in the modern Dunelm House; it had 63 players.

2012 Durham was only a one-day event because of the British. It saw numbers drop to 19, but there was the added chance to see the Olympic Flame passing by.

Returning to two days, the numbers for subsequent years were usually in the thirties and these events were dominated by Andrew Kay who won every year from 2013 to 2017.

The Durham events have always been dominated by the Social activities – pub meetings, Chinese buffets, barbecues and parties, but also there were side events, sometimes a lunch speaker, home baking (such as cup cakes) and sometimes the Durham Regatta was on. Prizes have included Durham Brewery's best and the infamous Goat Ornaments (see Front Cover).

2020 was cancelled, but 2021 was held online, with 69 players - see report elsewhere.

Photo credits: A. J. Atkins and Durham Go Club

GO JOTTINGS 17
MORE TO THE ART OF SACRIFICE THAN MEETS THE EYE

John Tilley

john@jtilley.co.uk

I was going to use a game which shows sacrifice on a large scale, which has been in my Jottings file since 1968, as the basis of this article. This led me to revisit one of Honinbo Dosaku's games with a spectacular sacrifice sequence, which is in the book *Otake's Secrets of Strategy*, part of "The Heart of Go Discovery Series" (Hinoki Press 2007).

Honinbo Dosaku

Here the term "sacrifice" was being used to describe sacrificing one or two stones and "disposal" to describe sacrificing groups – both large and small. This seems to be something that

crept in during translation rather than written by Otake, which made me hesitate. I even bought the book in the original Japanese to check.


Otake Hideo

The lockdown gave me time to investigate further, as I wanted to look at just what "sacrifice" could cover and to check both games with AI. I have to say that I am still digging...

Sensei's Library gives a list of Dosaku's games with an English translation, which led me to re-read *Masterpieces of Handicap Go*, published twenty years ago by Slate and Shell. Hidden away in Volume 1 was the following position – without any diagrams and minimal commentary[1].

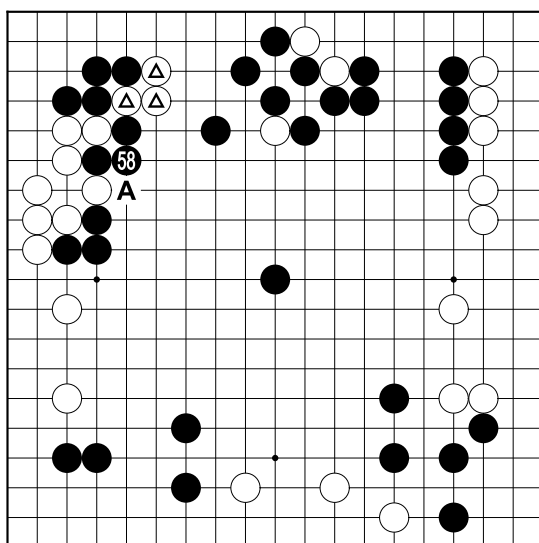[1]The game record is in *Go Games on Disk*, `gogodonline.co.uk` and also at `gowizardry.com/?p=9453`.
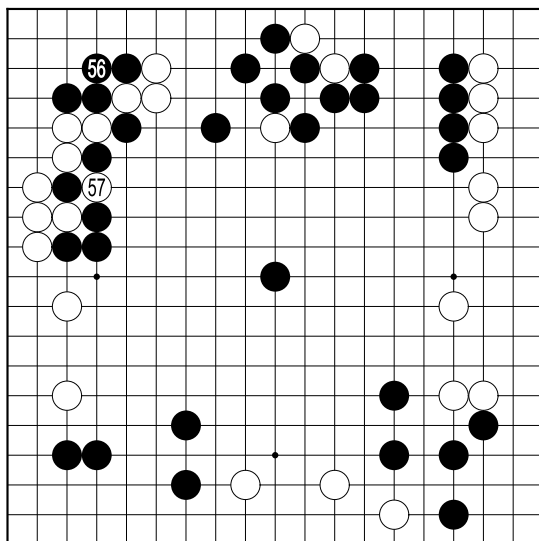
Diagram 1
A five stone teaching game – Black to answer ㊗.

Black has secured the top left corner with ㊽ and White then captures and pushes out at ㊗. The next move is key.
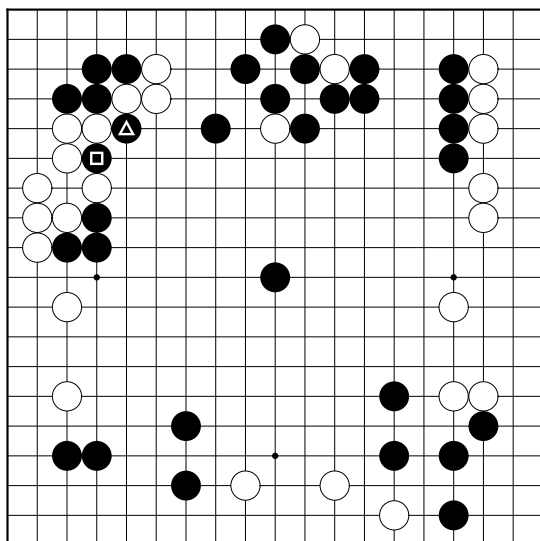

Diagram 2
Just connect – good move or bad move?

The obvious move is to connect at ⑤⑧, I have to admit that I too would have just connected here, it seems to be a no brainer. What do you think?

Step back and look at the whole board – always easier said than done!

After ⑤⑧, White's three stones (marked) at the top have four liberties, it is White to play and the push at A will reduce Black's three stone group to just two liberties.
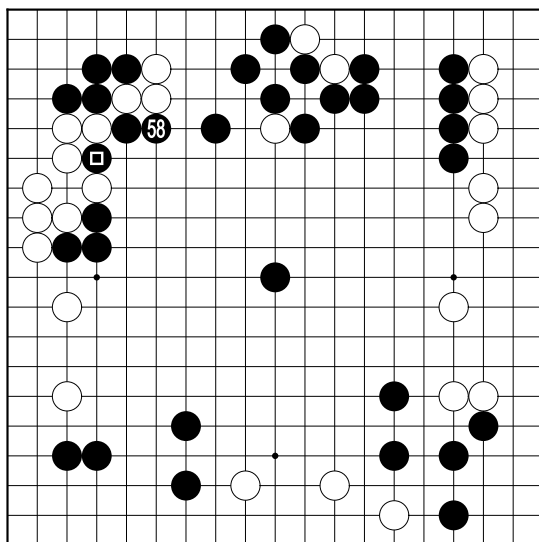
Diagram 3
Key stones and Junk stones

The key to this problem is to look at Black's two marked stones – are they strong stones or weak stones? Key stones or junk stones? ⬆ is a cutting stone, that makes it a key stone. ⬛ is not a cutting stone and it's not connected to the key stone, it's just clinging to White's strong position – it's a junk stone.

Solution – give it up, throw it away, discard it.

Diagram 4
Sacrifice the junk stone and attack White's three stones at the top.

Black should play at ❺❽ here, White's top three stones now have just three liberties and this Black move has cut them off. They looked doomed and Black can now count the whole top as his territory, plus the two lower corners.

Step back, look at the whole board. It can help to consider where someone would play if it were their move again, would Black now play to connect the square-marked stone? – hint - it's two points in gote.

This five stone teaching game was played in January 1937; Honinbo Shusai 9p was white.

Shusai was playing a young Fujisawa Tamotsu, aged 11 and still an insei – he became a professional three years later. Fujisawa later changed his name to Fujisawa Hideyuki. Hideyuki could also be read as Shuko and Fujisawa Shuko went on to become one of the great players of all time.

Honinbo Shusai

Fujisawa Shuko in 1963

Shusai just made a very brief comment on move ㊷, when the game was published in a magazine in 1937. Thirty nine years later Fujisawa selected this game for a book, probably as it was the only time he played Shusai. Fujisawa was then aged 50 and a year later he won the newly established top Japanese tournament – The Kisei – for the first time.

This game is not in Shusai's complete works (published in 1974), but it is in GoGod[2]. This game was a teaching game with an insei; I think Fujisawa would have been about five dan amateur then.

I found this game quite an eye opener and it is most interesting that apart from just one sentence, the key move ㊷ doesn't seem to have been covered in either of the original books – no mention of key stones or junk stones. However as this was a five stone teaching game, perhaps it was felt that there were other lessons to be learnt.

It's worth remembering that a nine dan professional would then give a one dan professional three handicap stones, so almost 70% of the games Shusai played as Honinbo were handicap games at two or three stones. Shusai had an amazing ability to give handicaps.

The concept of key stones and junk stones is written about in *The Basics of Go Strategy* – Kiseido (2007) and *An Encyclopedia of Go Principles* Kiseido (2015).

I started this Jottings article with a comment on trying to determine just what the term "sacrifice" can cover, which I am finding to be much larger and deeper than I had realised.

Iwamoto in the introduction to his Go Super Book *The Magic of Sacrifice* listed some ten reasons why stones could be sacrificed, which made me think. I then re-read the introduction to Sakata's book *How to sacrifice stones* in his "Sakata no Go" Series (first published in 1964) which just made the scale of possibilities larger. Sakata's games are not the easiest for mere amateurs to study as his reading skills were quite exceptional. However Sakata does write beautifully about the art of sacrifice in English in *Killer of Go*, this is something I must come back to in another Jottings.

I fell back on my "if in doubt buy another book" approach and so some "research" on Amazon Japan (searching for "Go" and "Sacrifice") resulted in me buying a copy of *Sacrifice Stones – an intensive course* by Mimura Tomoyasu 9p published in 2010 (302 pages), which had seven

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[2]See footnote 1.

reviews each of five stars. This exceptional book covers the basics and then lots of examples from amateur and professional games, which created more loose ends and left me in a bit of a quandary.

The deadline for the next BGJ was fast approaching so I have decided that this Go Jottings will look at just the handicap Go position above, then I will review the Mimura 9p book in the next Jottings, which hopefully can help address the width and depth of sacrifice and then perhaps finally I can at last present my 1968 position after that.

Note – All the books that I have mentioned (except those from Kiseido) are now sadly out of print,

although Sakata's *Killer of Go* is available in digital format[3]. The books in English might turn up on AbeBooks or eBay. Second hand books in Japanese can be bought from Yahoo Auctions Japan or Amazon Japan, using a proxy service such as Buyee – if you need help please email me.

Note – The Japanese word "sute(ru)" is the basis of "sute-ishi" – sacrifice stone or stones. I was interested to see that in Otake's book the Japanese word "sute(ru)" had been translated as both "sacrifice" and "disposal". Japanese dictionaries give both "sacrifice" and "disposal" for "sute", perhaps "sacrifice stone(s)" rolls off the tongue better.

Photo Credits: Honinbo Dosaku – Wikipedia; Otake Hideo – Sensei's Library; Honinbo Shusai – archiwum.go.art.pl; Fujisawa Shuko – Nihon Ki-in.

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JOURNAL PROBLEM 3

Black to play and reduce White
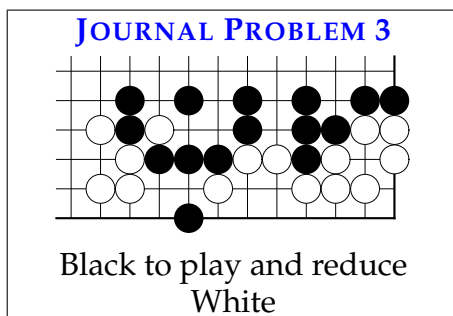
The Slow Way West: or how baduk travelled from China to Europe – Chapter 4

Theo van Ees

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Continued from Chapter 3 in BGJ 195, this is based on an article written for Myong-Ji University, Korean baduk university, in 2005, adapted for the British Go Journal.

In the beginning of the 19th century several books were written by people in one way or other connected with the Dutch settlement on Deshima in Japan.

Philipp Franz von Siebold (1796 – 1866) was a great scientist and can be compared to Matteo Ricci as a pioneer of cultural exchange between Europe and Asia. What Ricci did for China, von Siebold accomplished with Japan. He was born in Würzburg in Germany and started as a physician. He went to Holland and from there to the Dutch East Indies. He was appointed physician and scientist at Deshima in 1825. He studied and collected Japanese flora and fauna and introduced Western medicine into Japan.

He ran into trouble with the Japanese government about very detailed Japanese maps in his possession and had to return to Holland in 1829. He settled in Leiden where the largest part of his collection of Japanese flora and fauna and all kinds of things Japanese was safely stored in different museums; it is still of great scientific significance. He published many books about Japan, the most important being his 'Nippon'[1], a standard work in seven volumes.

The information collected in Nippon contains a section about Korea where an interesting illustration has been found. It shows fishermen while playing and observing a game of baduk.

Korean fishermen

These fishermen were shipwrecked off the Japanese coast and sent to Nagasaki where Von Siebold had the opportunity to visit them. He wrote, among other things, the following about their pastimes:

> 'I have often seen them play Japanese checkers and Go-ban, with a whole group of people sitting around them, absorbed in the game. They place black and white pieces on the square fields of the board, and try to surround the

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[1]Siebold, Philipp Franz von *Nippon: Archiv zur Beschreibung von Japan* etc., 7 vols. Leiden, 1832–1852. *Nippon VII: Die Neben – und Schutzländen von Japan. Nachrichten über Kooraï* etc. Textband II, p. 1163.

pieces of their opponents, or push them back, to claim territory'.[2]

It is good to see that at that time baduk was not only the game of the elite, but that it had evidently reached the lower classes. This is the earliest Western mentioning known of the game there. After the Chinese Confucian mandarin and the Japanese samurai, we can now add the Korean fisherman to the stereotypical oriental baduk player.

Gustaaf Schlegel (1840 – 1903) was the first university professor of Chinese in Leiden, where a collection of oriental literature had been collected over the course of centuries. His dissertation was devoted to Chinese games and habits; it was published in 1869 at the University of Jena. He analysed various Chinese games, many for the first time in Europe. Schlegel describes baduk in the chapter on draughts, but he never gives us the Chinese name of the game. He just calls it draughts, but a *'more difficult variation'*. I guess that since his thesis was about Chinese games in Europe, he chose the name draughts for baduk, so Europeans could relate to it. For the record, the game of draughts wasn't even known in China.

Schlegel provides references from Chinese history and literature. He says that the game has an astronomical origin and he gives the Chinese names for all the 19 lines on the board. He also tells about the original connection between the game and earth, day versus night, and so on. Schlegel gives a cute excuse for why he doesn't explain how the game should be played.

> *'It would be getting too far off the subject to enter at length into the way of playing of the game, because it would be impossible to do so without giving a good representation of a diagram of the board'.*[3]

Antonius van der Linde (1833 – 1897) compiled bibliographies on chess that are considered milestones in the field. In his work *Geschichte und Literatur des Schachspiels* (History and literature of chess) from 1874, he ordered all his material in a historical framework with many comments and further information based on original historical research. He also investigated the literature and the history of chess variants, of draughts, even of playing cards.

While describing Chinese chess, he provided information on a few old Chinese books on wei–chi; he also reported that Go had been mentioned in the USA in 1860 by the Japanese diplomatic mission.[4]

The most interesting information that van der Linde provides on baduk, however, can be found in *Quellenstudien*, his later book.[5] Van der Linde directly asked Johann Joseph Hoffmann (1805 – 1878), professor of

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[2]Walraven, Boudewijn *Korean Studies in Early-Nineteenth Century Leiden* Korean Histories, 2010, Vol. 2, nr. 2, p. 75-85. Baduk: p. 83.

[3]Schlegel, Gustav. *Chinesische Bräuche und Spiele in Europa : Inaugural-Dissertation der philosophischen Facultät der Universität zu Jena.* – Breslau : s.n., 1869, p. 12-14. reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb10445825_00001.html

[4]Linde, Antonius van der, *Geschichte und Literatur des Schachspiels : erster Band (mit 415 Diagrammen.)* Berlin: Verlag von Julius Springer, 1874, p. 91-92, 94, 95.

[5]Linde, Antonius van der, *Quellenstudien zur Geschichte des Schachspiels* Berlin: Verlag von Julius Springer, 1881. p. 270-273, 278.

Chinese and Japanese languages in Leiden, for information on baduk. Hoffmann gave him new references from old Chinese and Japanese sources.

Van der Linde was an opiniated man who wasn't afraid to change his views. He was blessed with an enormous zest for work. He was critical, sharp-witted and sometimes very funny, but he was also quarrelsome and insulting to his opponents. We will see that in his review of Schlegel's thesis in the second volume of his *Geschichte*[6] in the part on card games. This is an unexpected place. He received a copy of the dissertation in July 1874 after three years of searching in vain. His *Geschichte* was about to be published and he felt that he had to write about this thesis. The only way he could incorporate this information was to put it in a note in the chapter he was working on.

Van der Linde was a man of temper and he had a way of putting down people who were of a different opinion, especially if he got the impression that they delivered sloppy work. The long awaited thesis didn't hold up to Van der Linde's standards. He was allergic to claims of great antiquity of games without proof, like myths on origin of all kinds of games. We can see all of that in some examples of Van der Linde's treatment of Schlegel's text.

'This looks very 'historical' and 'philosophical', that is why we will also look at the other games and dress them down with 'professional rudeness. According to an old tradition [Schlegel had

promised us 'historical notes', not old wives' tales!] Emperor Yao [nice to meet Your Majesty again], 2357 BC, would have taught the game to his son Tanschu [This family image is touching, just like the precision of the year]. This game has absolutely nothing to do with the game of draughts! It is eternally the old history of blunt board game mix-up by an incompetent scribbler'.

Van der Linde does believe that all kind of myths and stories can be found in books, but he also demands a critical evaluation of its contents. If this isn't done he gets angry.

Hoffmann provided van der Linde with the same kind of information, but mostly from Japanese sources that quote Chinese texts. Van der Linde however judges that information 'critical' and treats Hoffmann respectfully. He ends with mentioning that the Japanese museum in Leiden possesses a beautiful baduk board. This museum still exists, but the board has mysteriously disappeared.

Baduk board (Photo: National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden)

That is to say, I asked the museum if this board was still in their possession,

[6]Linde, Antonius van der, *Geschichte und Literatur des Schachspiels*: zweiter Band (mit 125 Diagramme) Berlin : Julius Springer, 1874. p. 382-383.

but all they were able to find was this heavily damaged board with only two remaining legs. This board was probably part of Siebold's collection.

Conclusion

What is the result of almost four centuries of contact between the Western world and the Far East? To sum it up:

A short, incomplete, but widely published reference to a Chinese game with many playing pieces, which is played by the elite; an almost complete description in a game book in Latin with the name of the game; some pictures which could depict the game and one good illustration; a printed diagram and a baduk board with only two legs in a museum.

So we cannot say that baduk travelled far; we have found only a few vague footsteps. On the other hand, what more could we expect, given the limited possibilities for direct contact between potential players?

We should bear in mind that the history of Go in Europe is still little investigated, and it should be possible to find further sources. The task of reading countless travel journeys, with the aim of extracting any quotation about Go, is a hard one however, especially because old items, unpublished in part, are kept in many different libraries and archives.

To be continued ...

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JOURNAL PROBLEM 4
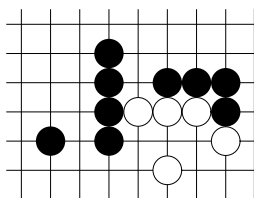
Black to play

SOME THOUGHTS ON GO PROBLEMS

Paul Hazleden

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Introduction

For some time now, my main engagement with Go has been through Go problems: I can use the odd five or ten minutes to work through a few problems, and feel I have gained something. But I'm increasingly concerned that I'm learning to ask the wrong questions, and learning to play the wrong moves.

It seems possible that the Go problems I am familiar with are, in some ways, leading me astray, and are not helping me where it is actually needed. Go problems provide a certain kind of benefit, and perhaps I'm being unreasonable in wanting them to provide something else – but I think they could be used to provide something much more helpful.

Perhaps my problems are unusual, and these ideas are not worth pursuing. Or perhaps this is all old, familiar territory, and I have just missed it. But, just in case, here are some thoughts which might provide the starting point for something others would find helpful.

And perhaps the answer is simply to stop working on problems, or find a better set of problems. But I have used a variety of sources – including several books, several online sources and several smartphone apps – and they all do essentially the same thing, so maybe it not all down to my poor choice of resources... unless the sort of thing I'm looking for is available, behind paywalls – in which case, I would be interested to hear more about what *is* available, and where. I'm thinking here mainly of life-and-death problems: partly because they are the majority of the examples I have found, and partly because they illustrate my concerns most clearly.

The typical problem shows me a diagram, and sets a challenge: 'Black to live' or 'Black to kill', for example. The answer consists of the sequence which achieves this task, often with some alternative sequences which fail, and sometimes with some brief notes.

As a result of these problems, I can sometimes recognise opportunities in a real game: "This looks like a 'Black to kill' situation! Let's see if I can work it out." And, surprisingly often, I manage to do so – either by living, or by playing the best responses and forcing my opponent to find all the right moves to kill, or make it clear he can kill, my group. I play in the situations I recognise, and play the sequences I have learned. But, too often, I'm playing the wrong situations, and the wrong sequences.

So what might be more helpful?

For a start, each problem can provide more than just a correct sequence and several incorrect sequences – every problem can provide several learning points. Given any specific problem diagram, there are a number of valid questions.

- Status?
- Value?
- Best sequence for each player?

Status

When the problem tells me what I am trying to do ('Black to live'), this immediately shapes what I am

looking for in the diagram. But, in a game, nobody tells me 'you can kill that group!' Working out the status of the position is what I need to do in the game, so why not get some practice doing this?

The status might be something simple and familiar, such as 'Black can kill, White can live,' or 'Black can kill, White can live after winning a ko.' Or it might be something less familiar in a problem, such as 'White can live, Black can threaten to kill,' or even 'Black is alive'. I need to learn to recognise the situations to avoid, as well as those to play in.

Value

The most important missing ingredient in problems is the value of the right move. In a game, simply knowing that 'Black can kill' does not help me very much: I need to know whether I want to make the first move there or elsewhere. It is the value of that move which should direct where I play in the game.

The real challenge of the game is not to find the best local move in any situation, but to find the biggest move on the board. To do that, I need to learn to estimate the values of my possible moves – so I need practice in working out the value of playing in various situations.

The value of a move can be understood as two parts: the territory it actually wins, and the territory it threatens to take. Ideally, a move should do both, but with many of the positions given in problems, there is only actual territory – which is why the correct sequence is almost always gote.

The first move in any given position always has a given value, whoever can play next: if it is worth 15 points

to Black, then it is also worth 15 points to White. If there are a number of isolated life-and-death problem situations on the board, the players want to move around the board, taking the first move in each situation in turn.

But even if there is only the one 'problem situation' on the board, I still need to decide whether to kill the group or invade the moyo – and to make that decision, I need to be able to estimate the value of each opportunity.

So the status I need to understand, describing a situation given in a problem, is not 'Black to kill,' but 'Black to kill for 23 points.'

Sequence

The solution to a problem is generally given as a sequence of the strongest moves for each player. But this is hardly ever the sequence which should be played out. Just as you read a ladder to determine whether it works, and then you don't actually play the ladder, the point of reading a problem (if you are defending) is to avoid actually playing it.

In a traditional 'Black to live' problem, each player gets to make maybe three or four moves, with Black making the first and last, and White's responses forcing Black to play the appropriate counter move at each point. But in a real game between players of roughly equal strength, after Black has found the correct first move, White should play elsewhere – leaving the 'correct' move according to the problem analysis as a ko threat.

The solution to the problem works, so it is never in the interest of the second player to play it out: there is always a better move on the board, perhaps taking the first move in an unsettled

situation elsewhere, or perhaps simply rescuing some stones which would have been lost if the sequence was played out to the end.

And this changes the value of the first move. You can't use the problem's solution diagram to calculate what has been gained by the first move, because it shows moves which should never be played. Because the second move in the 'strongest' sequence achieves nothing, a different second move should be played, and the value of the first move must be determined by the response you expect your opponent to actually make.

So a full solution to the problem ought to provide two sequences: the one with the 'strongest' response, demonstrating that it does not work, and the one with the local optimal response, demonstrating how the value of the first move should be calculated. In a real game, of course, the second play may choose not to make the local optimal response, and play elsewhere; but you have to make some assumptions in calculating the value of the move, and this seems like the most reasonable assumption available to you.

And while we are thinking about using problems more effectively, why only ask about the moves for one player? If Black can kill, then White can live, so why not also ask for White's living move(s) as well as Black's killing ones? It may be easier to find, but then you are making the problem useful for a wider range of players.

And in any case, you need to understand the consequence of allowing the other player to move first, in order to calculate the actual value to you of moving first. In some complex situations, you may again need to work out two sequences after the other player moves first: the 'strongest' response, to demonstrate that it does not work, and the 'local optimal' response, to enable you to calculate the expected consequence of allowing the other play to move first in a real game.

Example

Let's have a look at how this works when considering an actual problem. This example, both the problem and the 'correct' solution, have been taken almost at random from the Tsumego Pro app, which is available on a variety of platforms[1].
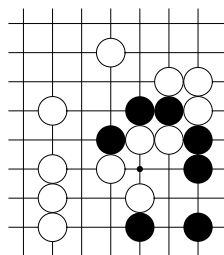
Diagram 1 – Black to kill

The problem as given is 'Black to move' and is identified as an 'easy' problem. It is, as expected, not too hard to find the killing move: ❶ in Diagram 2. The correct solution to the problem shows White playing at A, but (I suspect) White's optimal local response is to play at B instead.

[1]See www.browsercam.com/tsumego-pro-go-problems-pc/ for further details.
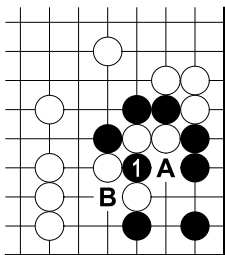
Diagram 2 – killing move

In the correct solution, White captures ❶, Black atari, White connects, then Black does three more atari before it is clear that White cannot escape.

④ at ▲
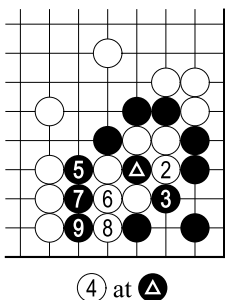
Diagram 3 – correct solution

A plausible sequence to complete this local position is given in Diagram 4. Many of these are moves which would not be played out in a single sequence in a real game, but if we follow through from the given solution to the problem then these moves, or something like them, might be played out eventually. The value of the first move is the value at the end of the game once all the moves have been completed. Counting everything in the 8x8 corner, and assuming White gets the outside territory, then White gets 1 prisoner and 13 points of territory, Black gets 8 prisoners, and gains 17 points of territory, making a gain of 11 points for Black.
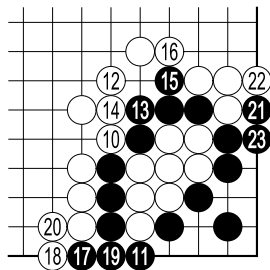
Diagram 4 – solution completed

If White moves first and makes the bamboo joint, Black has two weaknesses and cannot defend both, so dies, as seen in Diagram 5. White gets 47 points of territory and 10 prisoners, giving White 57 points. So if we calculate from the correct solution, the value of playing first is $11 + 57$, or 68 points.
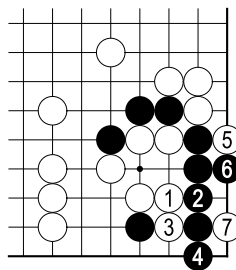
Diagram 5 – White moves first

But if White plays second and makes the better response of B in Diagram 2, then after a plausible sequence we get to the position in Diagram 6. White gains 19 points of territory, and Black gains 2 prisoners and 11 points of territory – an overall advantage of 6 points to White. So the actual value of playing first turns out to be $57 - 6$, or 51 points.
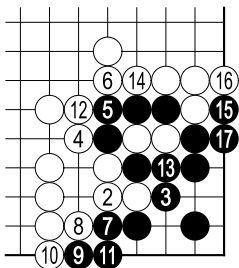
Diagram 6 – White's best response

Finally

In an ideal world (my ideal world, anyway), an online Go problem would give me a position, and ask me to determine the status (what can each player achieve through moving first here?) and the two values of that move (the territory it actually takes and the territory it threatens to take if the opponent does not respond), then invite me to play, both as Black and White, the initial move and then the two sequences which follow the two responses – the strongest and the local optimal. So it would ask for one status, two values and four sequences (some of which might be tenuki). And after responding, it would give me all the correct answers to compare mine against.

This is obviously more work than adding a standard 'Black to kill' problem to a database, but perhaps the additional work would provide an appropriate level of additional benefit?

❏

JOURNAL PROBLEM 5
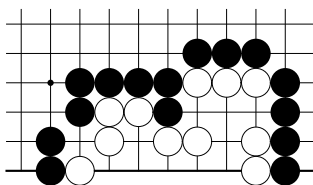
Black to play

SOLUTIONS TO THE JOURNAL PROBLEMS

The SGF files for these problems, showing a fuller set of lines, are to be found at www.britgo.org/bgj/issue196.

Solution to Problem 1
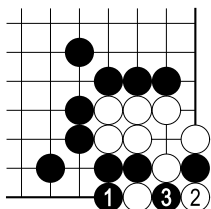
Diagram 1a (failure)

❶ This is the wrong play: it ends in ko.

Diagram 1a (correct)

❶ This is the correct play as it catches White short of liberties.
② This is self-atari.

Diagram 1b (failure)

❶ This inside play does not work either.
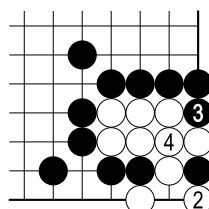
Diagram 1b (correct, variation)

④ Only one eye.

Solution to Problem 2
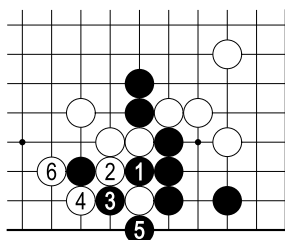
Diagram 2a (failure)

❶ Black can capture a stone with this sequence.
⑥ However White gets an outside position and the two Black stones in the centre are drifting.
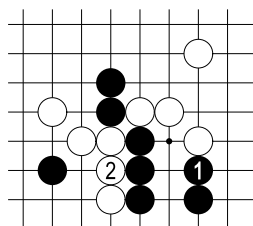
Diagram 2b (failure)

❶ Anything in the corner allows White to patch up the shape.
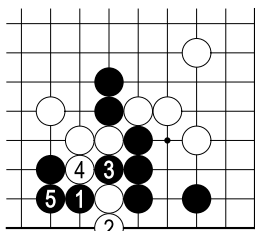
Diagram 2c (correct)

❶ This is the play that keeps the Black edge stones connected together and now White is drifting too.

② This does not help.
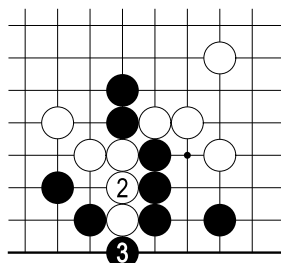
Diagram 2d (correct, variation)

② Nor does this.

Solution to Problem 3
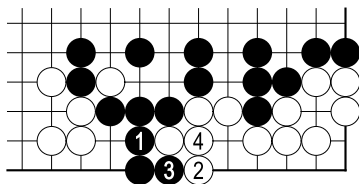
Diagram 3a (failure)

④ White is not damaged in this sequence.
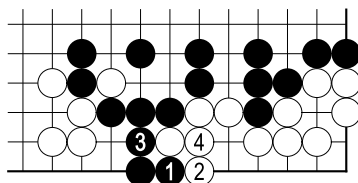
Diagram 3b (failure)

② Nor this.
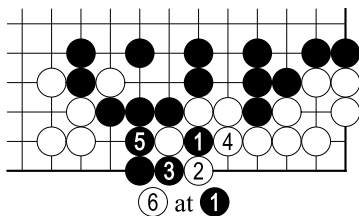
Diagram 3c (failure)

⑥ at ❶

⑥ This is no different score-wise.
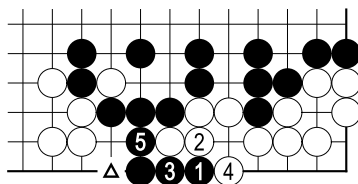
Diagram 3d (correct)

❶ This is the move that takes away the most points from White.

❺ The bamboo joint at △ is possible too and maybe slightly better, but would leave a ko threat.
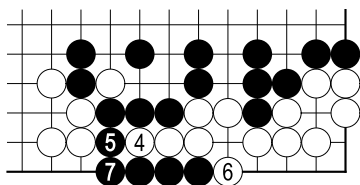
Diagram 3e (correct, variation)
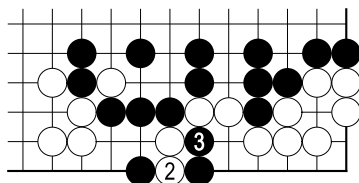
Diagram 3f (correct, variation)

④ Pushing here damages White to the left a little.

② Clearly White cannot intercept.
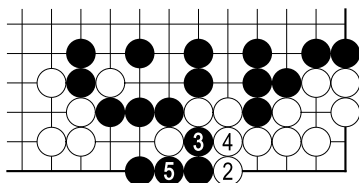
Diagram 3g (correct, variation)

②This loses a stone too.

Solution to Problem 4
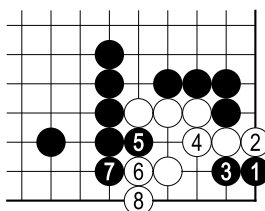
Diagram 4a (failure)

❶ If Black tries this then White can expand the eye space and live.
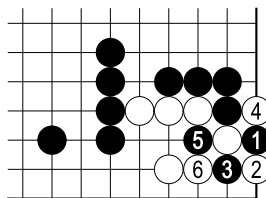
❼ at ❶

Diagram 4b (failure)

❶ This reduces the eye space but leads to ko.
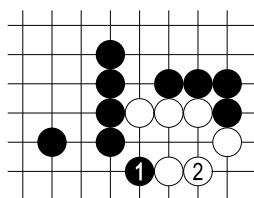
Diagram 4c (failure)

❶ Playing from the side allows White to make eyes easily.
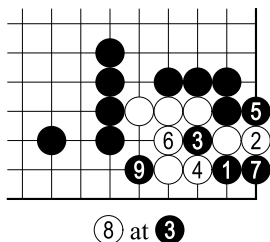
Diagram 4d (correct)

⑧ at ❸

Diagram 4e (failure)

❶ This is the correct first play.
❸ This is the play that ruins White's liberty count.
❾ White dies.
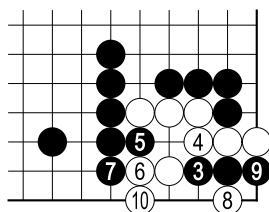
❸ Black should not play here because White lives.
⑩ This is not a dead shape.

Solution to Problem 5
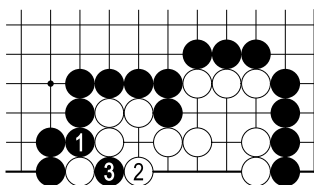
Diagram 5a (failure)

❶ Black should not start here as White can make ko.
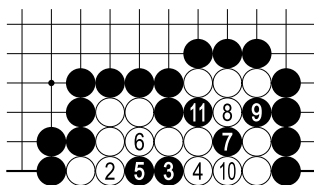
Diagram 5b (mistake by White)

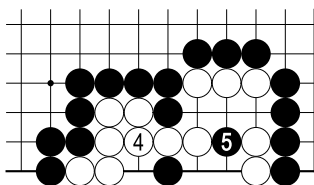② However, if White connects here the stones just die.
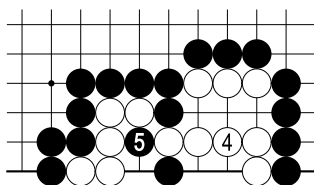

Diagram 5c (mistake by White)

Variation of 5b – White still dies.

Diagram 5d (mistake by White)

Another variation of 5b – White still dies.
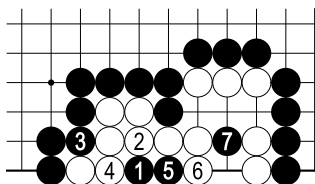
Diagram 5e (correct)

❶ This is the vital point.
❸ Now Black can play here.
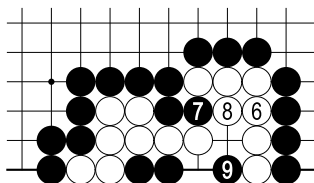❺ This is key to stopping a second eye.
❼ Then this stops the eye here.

Diagram 5f (correct, variation)

⑥ If White tries to make this eye…
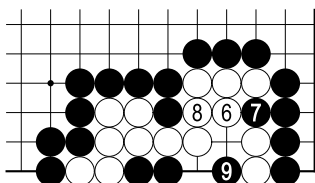❾ …then White is out of liberties.

Diagram 5g (correct, variation)
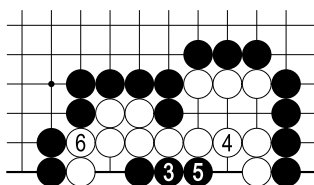
❾ Again White runs out of liberties.

Diagram 5h (failure)

❸ This may look like an eye stealing move but White can make seki.
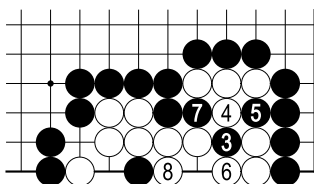

Diagram 5i (failure)

❸ Trying to take this eye away too early fails.
⑧ White is alive.

❑

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Use the links on the Help page of our website to join these lists.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE JOURNAL

The copy date for the next issue of the Journal is 1st **October**.

Contributions are welcome at any time and the earlier the better. Those received after the copy date are likely to be too late for inclusion in the next issue. Please send them to journal@britgo.org. The Editor will be glad to discuss the suitability of any material you may have in mind.

The BGA website has guidelines at www.britgo.org/bgj/guidelines for those wishing to contribute material.

GoBadukWeiqi.ai:

A community project using machine learning to excavate the near infinite probability space within go/baduk/围棋, observing analysis generated by open source neural networks in the millennia old search for the fundamental truth(s) at the bottom of one of the most ancient human institutions.