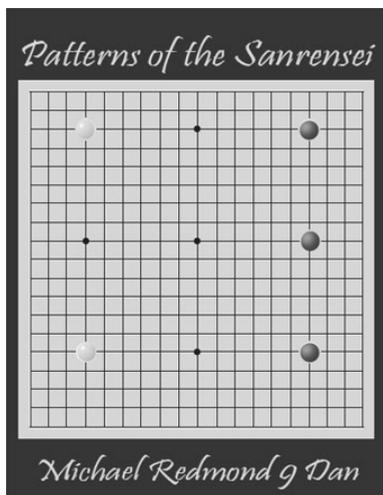


PATTERNS OF THE SANRENSEI

Francis Roads

francis.roads@gmail.com



Author: Michael Redmond (9p)

Publisher: Slate & Shell¹

ISBN: 1-932001-63-8²

I discovered the San Ren Sei pattern (Black's moves in the diagram) in 1970, when I opened my copy of *Modern Joseki and Fuseki, Vol. 2* by Eio Sakata, then recently published by the Ishi Press. I was immediately attracted by it, and have been using it in tournaments on and off ever since. The opening was virtually unknown in professional even-game Go before the Shin Fuseki experiments of the 1930s, when the old ideas about taking a firm grip on territory in the fuseki were being challenged by the techniques of building strength and influence in the centre, often resulting in large side or central moyos. It has remained in professional use since

then, though in recent years it has been rather displaced by the Chinese fuseki, with its balance between territory and influence.

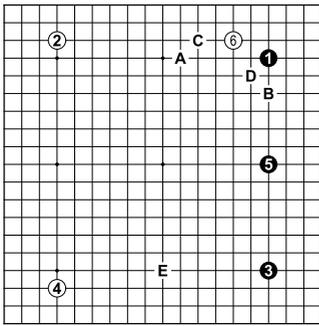
Michael Redmond, originally of the USA, is the only Western player to have reached the top level in professional Go. He too is a San Ren Sei enthusiast, and has shared his knowledge and experience with amateur players in this new book. It benefits from having been written by a native English speaker with a good understanding of the mindsets of Western amateur players. Translations, however well done, often read like translations.

The book is in two unequal parts. Part 1 classifies the fuseki into six basic types, and shows a few very commonly played variations for the first few moves, explaining the purpose of each.

The much longer Part 2 shows twenty of Michael's games in which one player, usually himself, chose to play the San Ren Sei. They represent all the patterns described in Part 1, and are analysed in some detail. Most diagrams cover only a few moves; some only a single move; and most are annotated, though the notes tend to become more sporadic in the endgame stage. The author includes some of his losses as well as wins, and is happy to criticise his own moves as well as his opponents'.

¹www.slateandshell.com

²The eagle-eyed reader will spot that the picture above has the board position displaced one line upwards – but that is how it is on the cover.



It is interesting to see how the professional view of the San Ren Sei has changed in 42 years. In the line shown in the diagram above, Sakata's book recommends the two-point high squeeze at A. This usually leads to a Black wall facing outwards towards the other two stones, while White

takes the corner and side territory. B was a simpler alternative answer to ⑥. Nowadays, C is recommended if you want to play a squeeze, and D is preferred to B. Also recommended is the tenuki move at E.

The book's format with its numerous diagrams makes it suitable for reading when no Go set or electronic equivalent is available. It would be nice to be able to call it a useful pocket book, but its size (21 x 27 cm) prevents this. Nonetheless, I shall study it in detail, as should any other San Ren Sei enthusiast. You might also find it useful if you think you might be playing against one.

The review copy was kindly provided by Slate & Shell.