



# Irish Go Association

## Newsletter, January 2015

### **Editorial**

It has been over 3 years since the last issue of the Irish Newsletter was published. During this time many wild rumours have circulated about the reasons for the delay in the next issue, and it is only right and proper that we set the record straight with regard to those before we go any further. There is no truth at all in the rumour that the entire editorial committee was rounded up and deported over the publication of a death in gote sequence played by a high ranking member of the organisation. Whilst there is some circumstantial evidence to suggest that certain members may be living slightly beyond the known boundaries of Ireland, this shallow evidence can only be described as an unimportant co-incidence. So without further ado, let us proudly deliver to you the next installment of the news in Irish Go.

### **News Round Up**

2014 saw four open tournaments take place across the country, each of which was won by a player from France!

- Belfast: Ngoc-Trang Cao (1-dan) came first in a field of 14 players
- Confucius Cup (Dublin): Fan Hui (2-pro) came first in the 43 strong field
- University College Cork: Philippe Renaut (2-dan), who had just moved to our country from France.
- Galway: Marie Julien (4-kyu) won the tournament which featured 11 players

The Irish squad played fairly well in Division C of the European Team Championship, which is played on the sponsor's server - IGS. In the end, the team took 4th place, just ahead of the United Kingdom, who sabotaged their own finish by failing to turn out for the last match. The 2015 season is not going as well so far, with a large number of players simply finding the playing night inconvenient.

The Irish Ladder was also won by Philippe Renault, who has taken the early lead in the 2015 Irish Championship League. The 2014 Irish Championship final is still in progress, as Roman Pszonka and James Hutchinson take their time to play the right moves. A new innovation for 2014 was the Irish Correspondence Championship. As far as is known, no other european country has run such a tournament. It was played on Dragon Go Server, was split into 2 divisions by strength, and used a round robin format. Top finishers were as follows

## **Open**

9/10 - James Hutchinson

8/10 - Irina Davis, Martin Klemsa, Noel Mitchell

6/10 - Ian Davis

## **Intermediate**

8/9 - James Aitken

7/9 - Kevin Doherty

6/9 - Julia Bohle, Arthur Cater, Kenneth Savage

Also running for the first time was the Ulster Championship, which saw James Hutchinson beat Tiberiu Gociu in the final. The Belfast club also had a team in the BGA's online league, which finished in second place in the 1st division. Another notable event of the year was an international challenge match, played out in Baggot Inn, between Leinster Select and the visiting team Clermont-Ferrand, who originate from a fine wine growing province in France. The result was a 6-6 draw. Internationally, John Gibson represented Ireland at the World Amateur Go Championship, and Thomas Shanahan made his debut in the Korean Prime Minister's Cup. Disappointingly, both players failed to win the event.

## **Annual General Meeting**

The excitement of the AGM is probably the highlight of the year for most Go players, so it is a shame that once again most of the membership missed the event. All the same, the turnout was something of a record with the numbers attending entering into double figures. Once again Rory Wales was elected as President, and also held on to the position of Treasurer. A new face on the committee was Philippe Renaut, a long time player but one who was new to Ireland, having only moved to here from France last year. Tiberiu Gociu will take up the position of Webmaster.

With regards to plans for next year, after Arthur Cater bravely volunteered to lead Leinster, the Online Interprovincial Championships are set to return - they were last seen in 2011. An Irish women's championship is also planned, but details of the proposed event are still being worked out. Plans are afoot to host a celebratory event for the 60th anniversary of JET (Japanese Exchange and Teaching program).

## **Tournament Director Basics**

The job of running a tournament can be a difficult one, especially if you've never done it before. There are a lot of things to consider, and a lot of things you probably wouldn't have considered. The latter are what will catch you napping.

### **Planning**

\* One of the main things to avoid is clashing with another tournament. If you do clash, make sure you don't clash with a similar one to yourself.

- \* Find a potential venue that is both accessible and large enough for your needs
- \* Keep the IGA informed of the tournament, this is especially useful if you're going to need equipment from them.
- \* Prepare a flyer or webpage with the Rules, Schedule, and Entry details well in advance.
- \* Learn how to set the clocks.
- \* Have some post-it notes to number the tables.
- \* Find a team to work with, because you will appreciate whatever help you can get.
- \* Always have lots of spare change handy - €5, €10, & €20 notes as lots of people will hand you €50 and expect you to have change.
- \* Bring a few envelopes for the cash prizes.

### **Advertising**

- \* Place details of the event everywhere you can in order to attract players.
- \* The IGA website, the IGA Facebook group, the IGA Google group
- \* The BGA Calendar and the gotalk mailing list run by the BGA. - Note! This is a plain text list.
- \* The EGF Calendar (for big events)
- \* List it on the LifeIn19x19 forum, and on Senseis Library tournament calendar, and list it on the EU Go Calendar on facebook

### **Running**

- \* You can use OpenGotha to make the draw for the tournament. It is really worth taking an hour to go through the program to check that you know how to use it. Run a dummy tournament to check that you've set everything up properly.
- \* If running a Handicapped Swiss tournament, choose 'Swiss with Categories', 'Swiss' on it's own won't allow you to specify handicaps.
- \* Pre-enter the players you expect to turn up into the tournament file in OpenGotha
- \* On the day check that everyone knows the rules and the schedule.
- \* Always ask players at registration time if they intend to play all rounds as it often happens that they plan to miss a game to meet a friend and forget to tell you.
- \* Make a backup of the tournament file after every round in case the software unexpectedly hangs or crashes and you lose everything.

### **Aftermath**

- \* Don't forget to report back the results to the IGA.
- \* Write a report on the tournament mentioning some highlights.
- \* In particular, if you want your tournament to be rated, send us the exported ratings file

## European Professional News

Back in 2013 the European Go Federation voted to begin a professional system. Things have been moving fairly slowly with the project so far. Details of the new Grand Prix have finally been [officially released](#), but it is clear that it has yet to capture the imagination of the member federations, with only 2 events so far applying to join the circuit. In 2015 the first Grand Slam final will be in Berlin over the easter holiday weekend, usurping Paris as the traditional home of the finale. Just before this tournament the next professional qualifiers will take place in Pisa, Italy. This will see 2 players being chosen to be the next EGF professionals. The 'academic system' is however in full swing, with 6 young professionals currently taking part in the second season of training in Beijing. Pavol Lisy and Ali Jabarin, the first 2 EGF professionals, are taking part. Accompanying them are Andrei Kravets, Jan Simara, Lukasz Podpera, and Dusan Mitic. All 6 are studying in a Go School in Beijing. Training, as well as regular study, consists in playing in a series of mini leagues, where success and failure will earn you promotion or demotion respectively. There are some details on [Senseis Library](#).

The high point so far has been to play in one of the tournaments of the Kansai Kiin, the same professional organisation of which Li Ting (professional 1-dan) is a member. It is she, in her position as EGF executive board member, who has been one of the main facilitators for the EGF professional deal.

### 11th Sankei Tournament

White: Saito Tadashi (8-dan) Black: Ali Jabarin (1-dan)

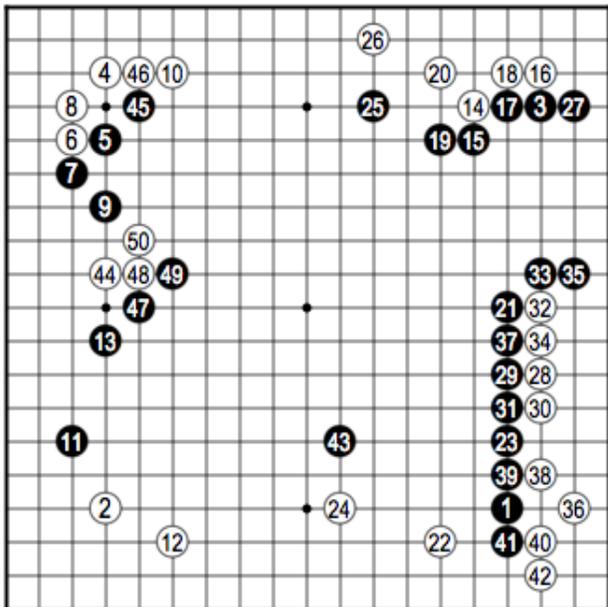


Diagram 1 (1-50)

Of course, White 50 forms an empty triangle, a good shape in this situation.

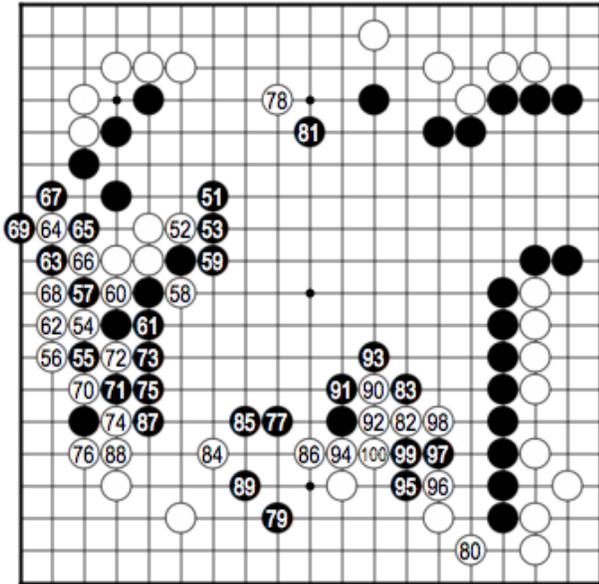


Diagram 2 (51-100)

At this stage of the game, the commentators suggested that White had been too generous in the moyo given to Black

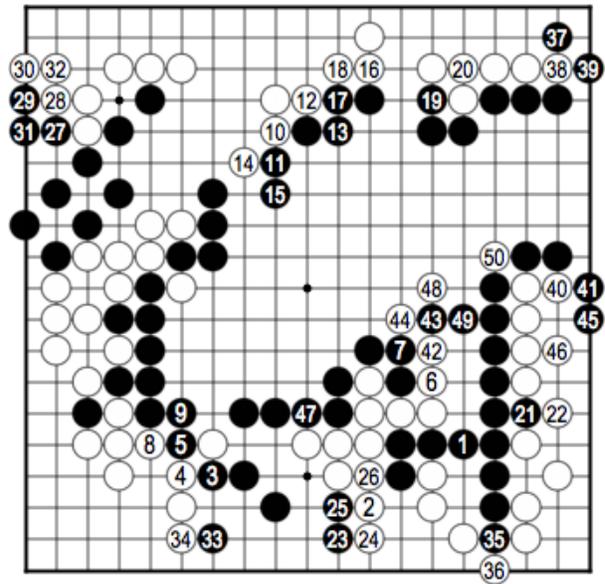


Diagram 3 (101-150)

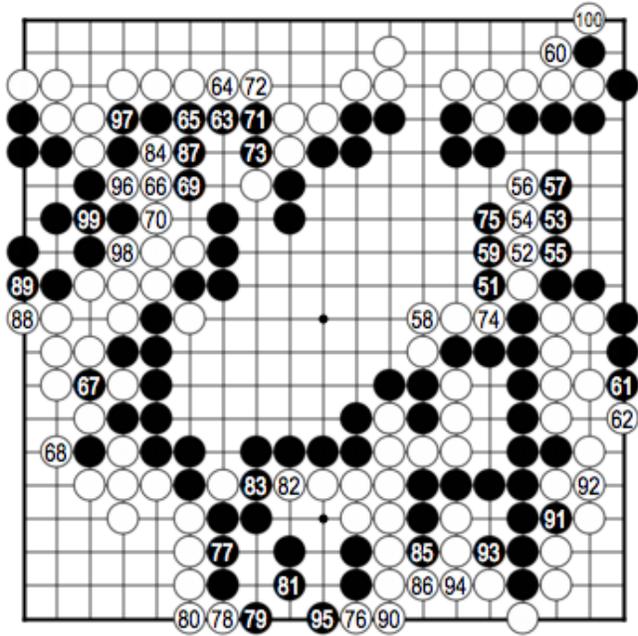


Diagram 4 (151-200)

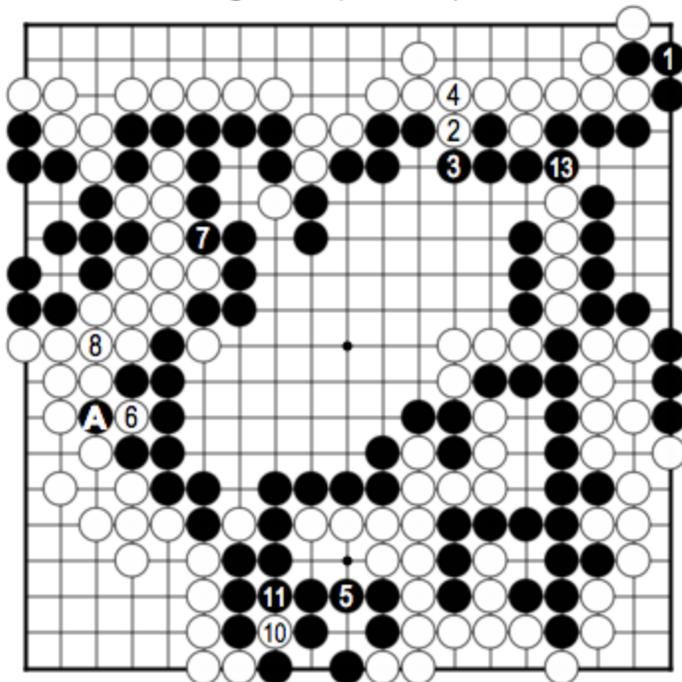


Diagram 5 (201-214)

⑨ ⑫ ko at A, ⑭ at A.

Black wins by 8.5 points!

# Irish Ladder 2014

## Ladder Battle 1 - 2014-08-22 - played on KGS

Black: ptitlou (2d)    White: jameshut (2k)

Komi: 6.50    Time: 1h 5x30s byo-yomi  
Result: Black wins by resignation

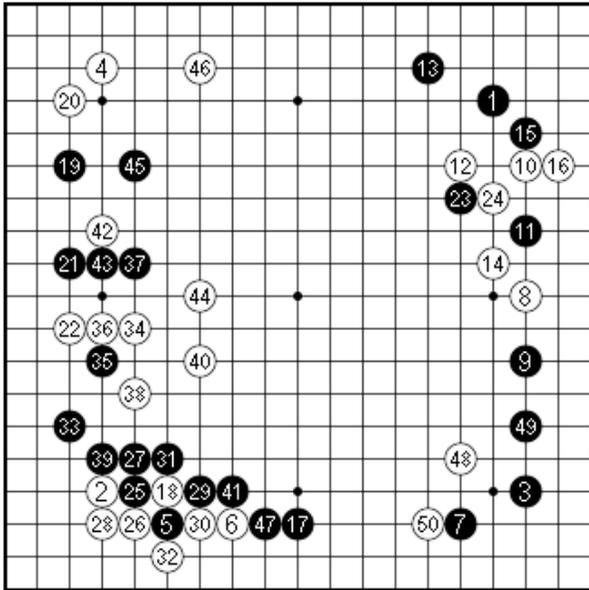


Figure 1 (1-50)

P : This was our first game James. I was quite nervous to play against the Ireland champion and didn't know your style at all. I wonder what was your feelings then...

J : I was very happy to receive your challenge Philippe. In Ireland we don't have enough dan level players, so one more to compete with is always a very welcome addition.

P : I wanted to play a mini-chinese fuseki but your pincer at 6 annoyed me. After that I played 23 as a ladder breaker to be able to throw in at 25 and I was quite happy with the result up to 33. May be 22 could be at 26 ?

J : Yes, 22 at 26 is a calm and steady option. I chose 22 because I wanted to put some pressure on your stones at 19 and 21. I think the chief problem in this sequence though is that I should have played 26 at 27, and take the outside. As we can see with the moves up to 47, there is no real attack to be had on the black stones at 19, and 21, while black becomes very thick with 41 and 47. I would almost say 26 is the game losing move!

P : With my move at 39, your move at 38/40/44 I discovered that you had a style quite close to mine : very thick and not much room left to create troubles, so I had to overcome you on points and strategy. That's why I embarked in very early big yose moves.

P : See ? 61 to 71 were already in this idea of getting big yose why I had the opportunity.

J : Yes, even at this early stage black's lead is close to game winning.

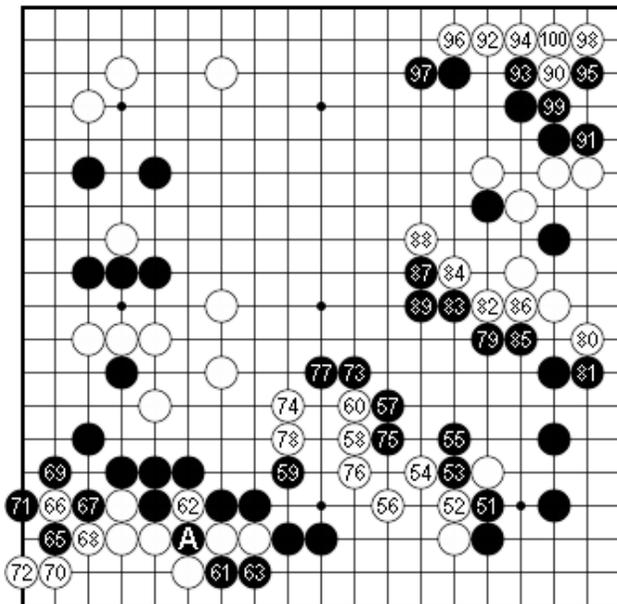


Figure 2 (51-100)

⊙64 at A.

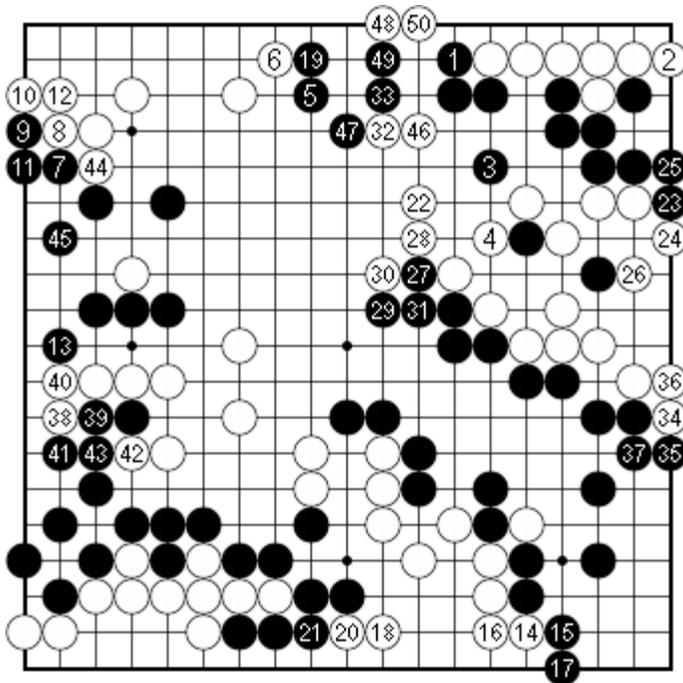


Figure 3 (101-150)

P : I wondered what would happen if you cut with 3 instead of living. I remembered we studied it after the game but what was the result ?

J : I think we decided that cutting was more likely to backfire on white. However, I think in hindsight white should try to cut, as white is not going to win playing safe.

P : 48 was a big yose mistake I think. You end up with gote connection and not removing much points while with 53 to 93 in the next figure I make quite a substantial amounts of points in the center.

J : Ah, byo-yomi...

P : You were really nice with me in the yose so I think I ended up with around 10 points lead on the game before your mistake in fig 5.

J : Looking back I can't believe I allowed you to play 167. It looks like such an obvious point to play reviewing over the game again!

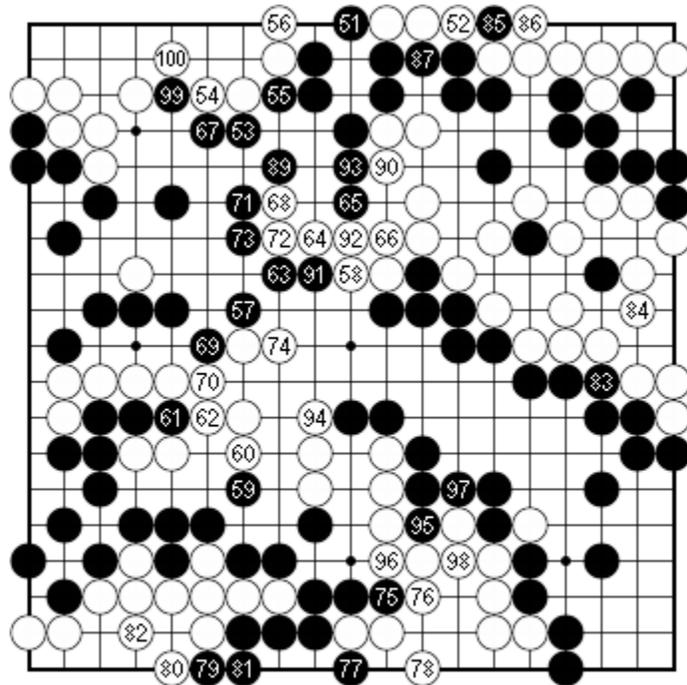


Figure 4 (151-200)

⊗ at ⊗

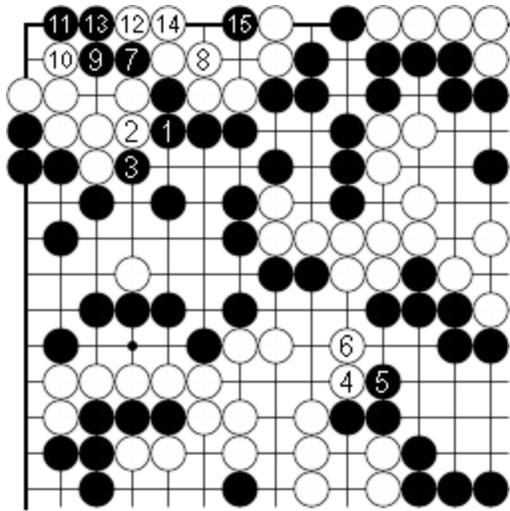


Figure 5 (201-215)

P : I guess this game was more a way to say hello and assess our strength than a real fighting game. If we look well, there was not that much fighting in it, I guess we were both of us a bit over cautious during the game !

J : Yes, although I was impressed at how well you converted your early lead into a win!

### Ladder Battle 4 - 23/11/2014

This was the fourth challenge of James in the ladder tournament and I could feel his confidence growing as we started to know each other and to know our respective styles.

Date : 2014-11-23 played on KGS

Black: jameshut (2k) White: ptitlou (2d)

Komi: 6.50 Time: 1h 5x30s byo-yomi Result: White wins by 8.5

Comment by Philippe Renaut

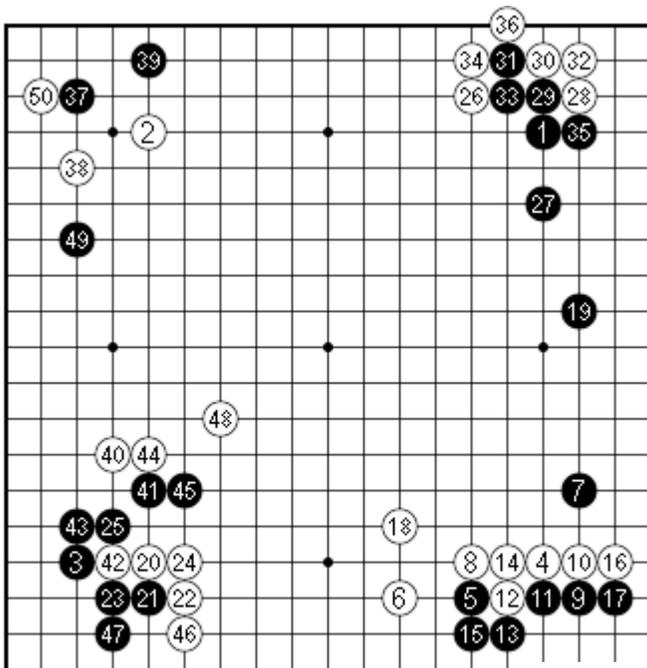


Diagram 1 (1-50)

W34 was a big mistake in Joseki. Normal joseki is shown in Fig. 1

B35 was a nice punishment and white is now pressed with bad shape on the top of the board.

B49 was too early as an invasion. The left side territory is still open with the 43 and 40 configuration of stones, so there is no hurry to invade. Probably a play at 59 directly in next Diagram is enough.

Thanks to the invasion at 49, W has taken the initiative all over the board and can attack the left group, then the bottom group and finally the top group and end up in sente to take the big point of 88. Black took time to evaluate the game at this stage and decided to sacrifice the black 7 stone staking the game on stabilizing the top group and invading the bottom thanks to the ponnuki at 99.

Giving this ponnuki was very big for W, who could not then just play a

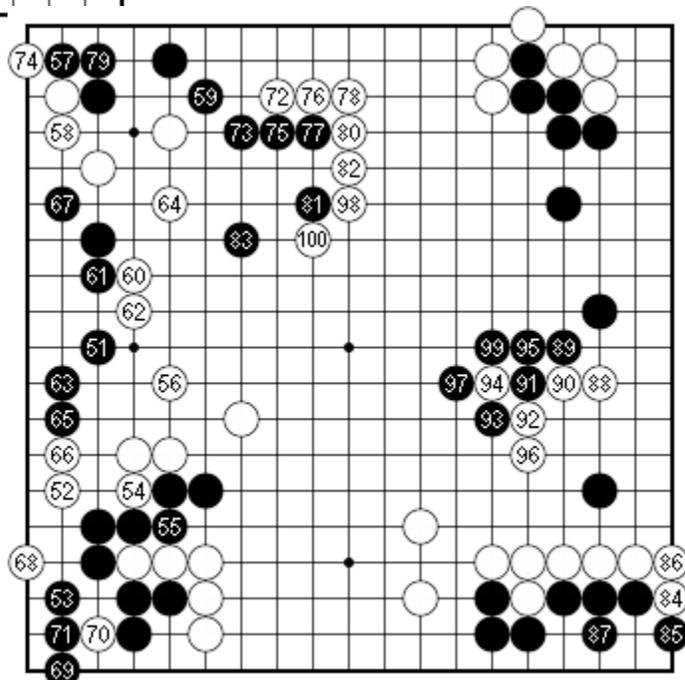


Diagram 2 (51-100)

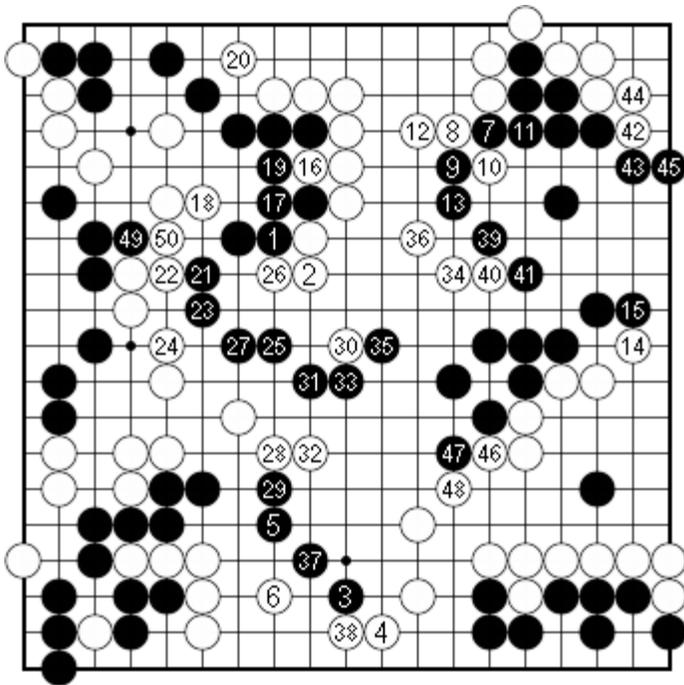


Diagram 3 (101-150)

leisurely game and had to stay very active all over the board.

The 3-5 combination aimed by Black when he played for the ponnuki in the center was not very effective and lost big yose move like the monkey jump from the bottom right corner.

20 was a very big move giving what seems a definitive lead to W. It is both a big yose move and deprives black of two eyes letting again W chase black group in the center. But the attack was not well driven. 26 was looking for too much and at the end of the sequence from 21 to 45 the white group on the left has been weakened tremendously. W feeling ahead was over confident in his

ability to make two eyes locally with this group but suddenly...

...with the sequence from 47 to 61, W is surrounded. And white make a big mistake with the move at 64 in the order of play. If 64 is played at 65, the W group can live but here the black answer at 65 instead of answering at 70 suddenly deprives W of the eye in this area. W launches a tricky sequence on the left side with 82 to 90, and in byo-yomi black misread the sequence and answer at 91 instead of 93. With this trick, 92 becomes sente and W finds a second eye locally which gives him a lucky victory.

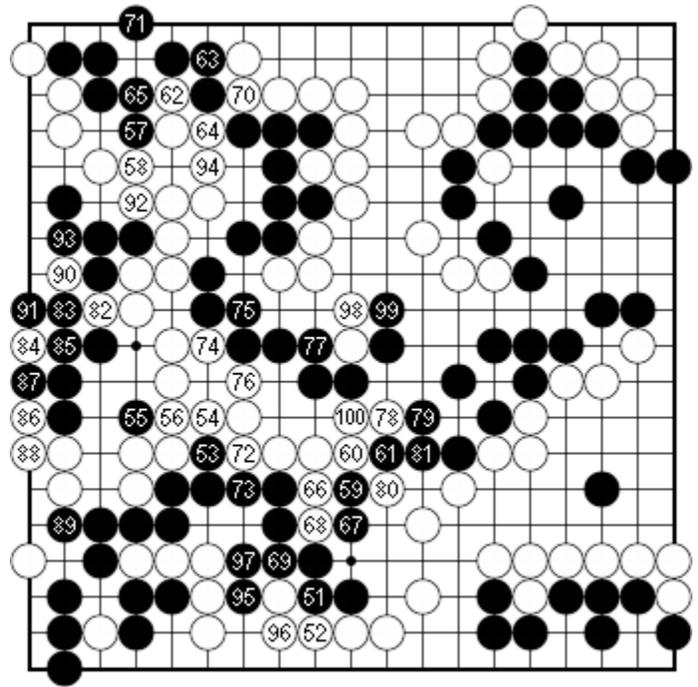
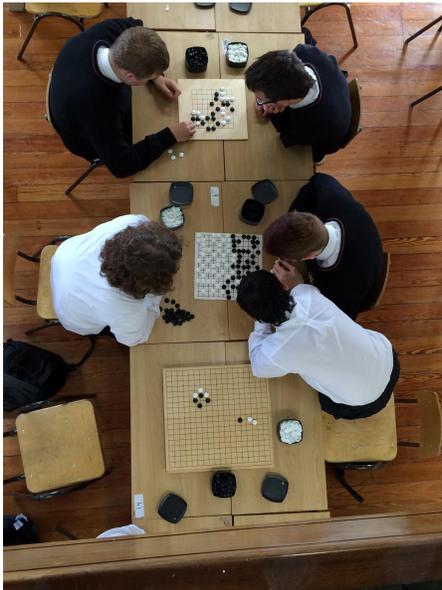


Diagram 4 (151-200)

## Galway “Warming Up” Tournament

On the 18th of January, a great crowd of players gathered from all over Ireland to meet in Galway for a fun and relaxed one day tournament. The idea was also to have a specific under 18 tournament with some of the students of St-Mary’s College which hosts, every Monday at 1pm, a go training session with me.

The student club is quite active with from 8 to 20 students meeting there, playing, laughing, and acquiring slowly the basics of the game.



For the “Warming Up” tournament 14 players came from Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick and of course a nearly full representation of the Galway go club, and 4 under-18 players joined the tournament.





Each game was half an hour by player. The first round started with some lovely sunshine and a joyful atmosphere. But quickly the game took over the players, and a deep concentration could be

felt...



with the last game of the first round between Tiberiu Gociu and Dan Groza attracting a huge attention...



The second round was still the occasion of huge fights all over the room, even on the under 18 boards where Alexandre and Jarek ended their game on a 4.5 points difference.

But soon came the time of the lunch break and of the delicious cakes cooked by Michèle for the pleasure of all players, old and youngs !



After the lunch, with the first results known, a palpable tension could be felt with the 2 victories players starting to fight for the title and the prize a nice Knappogue Castle 12 years old...

Soon a few decisive battles could be seen. James Hutchinson from Belfast beat Dan Groza, ensuring him of at least a third place.



Soon a few decisive battles could be seen. James Hutchinson from Belfast beat Dan Groza, ensuring him of at least a third place.

Venkata and myself survived our third games, seeing both of us with three victories before the final round. It was decided that a 2d - 24kyu game was not to be seen in such a pleasant day and the final pairing saw a much more exciting final game between Venkata and David from Galway, both very close in level.

Venkata managed to keep its lead to the end despite a very good come back from David who captured a whole corner just before the end.



And it was already the end of this exciting day with Alexandre Renaut winning the under 18 prize, a great sweets hamper generously offered by McCambridge's of Galway... and Venkata the great whisky bottle !



The Belfast team definitely deserved that, furthermore considering their way back to Belfast saw them stuck in traffic jams for hours, an incident that couldn't affect the mood of the winning team !

We in Galway were more than excited to see so many players and some students joining and we are now ready to host you in even better conditions for the main Galway tournament on the 25th and 26th of April !

Philippe Renaut, Galway Go Club <https://www.facebook.com/galwaygoclub>

#### **Newsletter Credits**

Ian Davis, James Hutchinson, Philippe Renault, Rory Wales