



Irish Go Association

Issue 5 - February 2010

The Editorial

Dear Readers,

Our reborn newsletter is now one year old, and that seems an appropriate moment to remind everyone that all contributions to it are very welcome. Have you read a new Go book recently please tell us what you thought about it. Have you attended a tournament recently? Then please feel free to share your experiences or games with us. You can send all contributions to president@irish-go.org. In this issue we have another review from our regular expert Wei Wang, a dubious effort from myself, and assorted news and reviews.

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Online Interprovincial Tournament

After a long break in play the final took place on KGS on the 27th of February. Connaught played well to win the first Interprovincial title, sweeping aside the supposedly rigorous line up of Ulster's Top 8 Titans on Boards 1 and 2. Who knows what will happen in the third place play-off between Leinster and Munster.

Ulster 1 - 2 Connaught

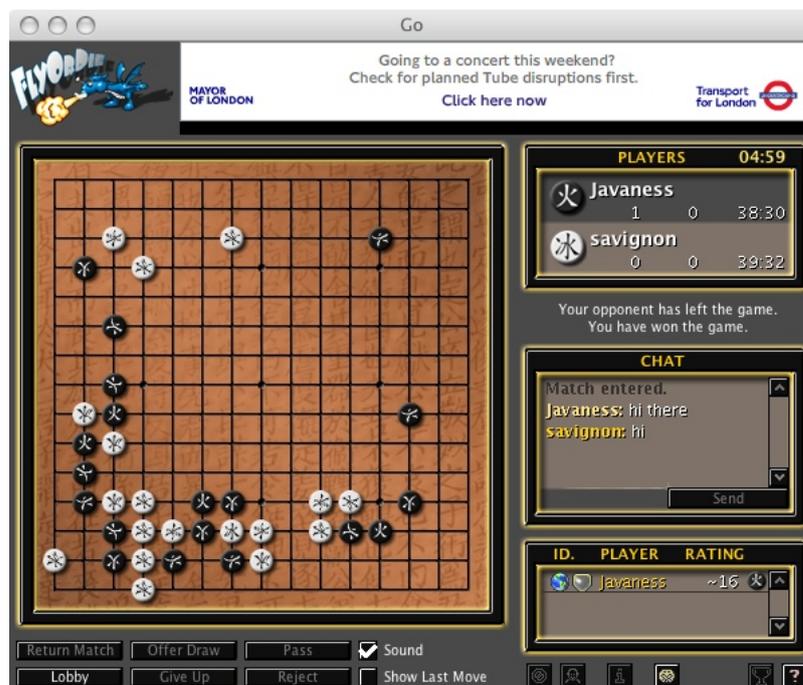
Board 1 Ian Davis (w) 0 - 1 Daniel Paraschiv
Board 2 James Hutchinson 0 - 1 Colin MacSweeny (w)
Board 3 Tiberiu Gociu 1 - 0 John Gibson (w)

For next year there are two suggestions for changes to the format. Please let me know which you would be interested in.

- 1: Turning the event into a round robin (all play all) format.
- 2: Adding in an Exiles team for those living abroad.

Review: The FlyOrDie server <http://www.flyordie.com/>

A lot of new players on KGS used the FlyOrDie server, so I thought I would check it out to see what it was like. The server seems quite like the old MSN Zone, there are lots of games you can try to play for free. Of course, I was only interested in Go. Registration was very easy, and all I needed to play was my web browser. Once I got in there, wow what a culture shock.



The server itself looks quite like Yahoo with its ELO based ratings, sorted into colour coded strength bands. The big shock comes with the first game. All you can play on is a 15x15 board, and there is no way to change the default time limits. On placing your first stone you are met with a computer generated ball of flame as the black stone hits the board (or a blue cloud for white stones). The stones also come with Kanji! There is also a whoosh-like sound effect. As such, it's quite reminiscent of some of the sequences you might see in the Hikaru No Go anime.

Features summary

- There is never komi for the white player, and there are no handicaps
- Fixed board size and time limits
- ELO based ratings divided into classes (Novice, Amateur, Intermediate, etc)
- Undo impossible, but offering a draw is possible
- Leaving the board seems to give an automatic loss. (no escaping)
- When observers talk about your game you are able to see what they say!
- There are no admins to resolve disputes about life and death.

I think this server is quite suitable for beginners to play on, especially younger players. They would probably enjoy the Hikaru style atmosphere. However for serious players I cannot say that they would be happy playing here. Though having said that, I must add the caveat that there appear to be regular players of a low dan level active on the server.

Irish Championship News

Top 8

The line up for this year's competition was markedly different to that of previous years. Three new faces appeared in the form of Eoghan Barry, James Hutchinson and Rory Wales. Familiar old faces were missing, with both Steve Flinter and Brian Gallagher being absent for perhaps the first time. Some strong players were also missing, Claas Roever, Terence McSweeney and Cao Tong Yu. The new Kick Off event took place in the grand setting of the Burlington Hotel after some skillful negotiations from Noel Mitchell. Here, amidst the complimentary Glacier mints, bottled water and notepaper, the Belfast players Ian Davis and James Hutchinson surged to an early lead with 4 wins apiece. Whilst the chasing pack was lead by Eoghan Barry and John Gibson on 2 wins each.



Remainder

As the competition progressed Ian and James maintained their position out in front, with James claiming top spot with a win over Ian at Belfast Boat Club. As the newsletter goes to press we are still waiting for Noel to play Michael to decide on third place. If Noel wins, then he will snatch third place from Eoghan at the last moment.

	ID	NM	JH	RW	EB	JG	CMS	MT	TOTAL
Ian Davis	-	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	6/7
Noel Mitchell	0	-	0	1	1	1	1		4/6
James Hutchinson	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	7/7
Rory Wales	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	1	1/7
Eoghan Barry	0	0	0	1	-	1	1	1	4/7
John Gibson	0	0	0	1	0	-	1	1	3/7
Colin MacSweeney	0	0	0	1	0	0	-	0	1/7
Michael Thai	0		0	0	0	0	1	-	1/6

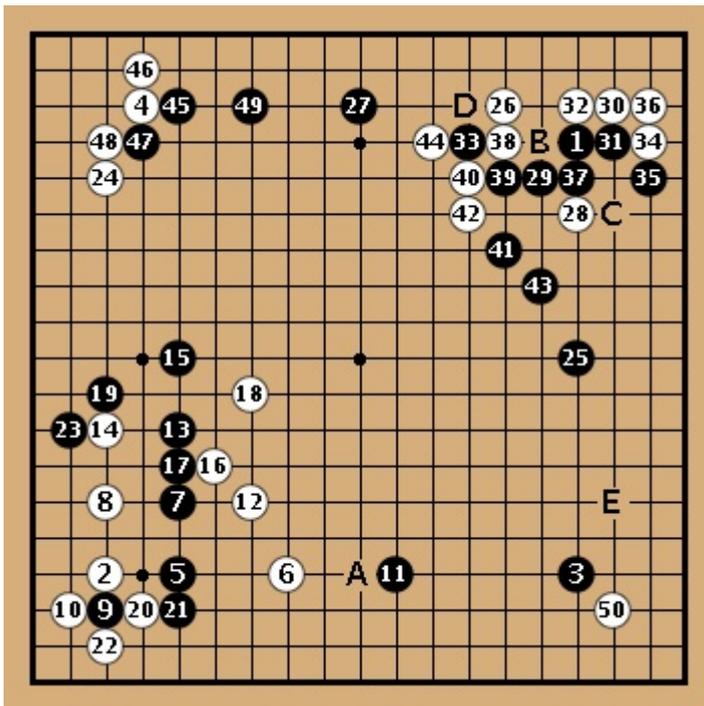
Irish Ladder

Participation in the Ladder is very weak so far. If you want to compete in the Irish Championship and get the chance to play in the World Amateur Championships you need to play in this event. The ladder gives you an easy opportunity to improve by letting you play against stronger opposition. Games can be played at your own Go club or over an internet server, and if you are lucky, you can have your game reviewed in the newsletter!

James Hutchinson (w) - Colin MacSweeny (b)

Commentary by Wei Wang

Moves 1 to 50



Move 11: Normally at A to place more pressure on White.

Move 12: Interesting choice, see Variation 1 for the normal way.

Move 15: Very quiet, see Variation 2 for action.

Move 18: Makes no sense, a weak shape with no threat against Black

Move 20: Must be at 23

Move 25: A good move, see Variation 3 for another way.

Move 34: Bad, joseki is at B.

Move 37: Unspeakably bad - see Variation 4.

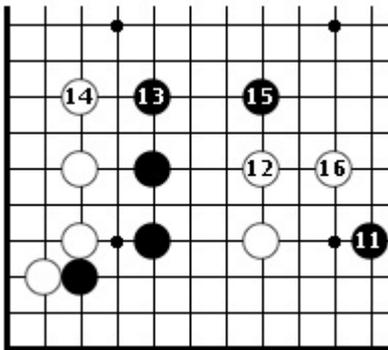
Move 41: Should descend to D

Move 43: Should protect at C

Move 44: Black feels bad now, he is behind in the game.

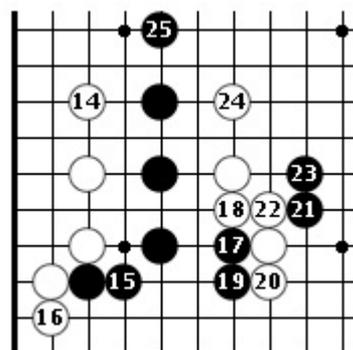
Move 45: Unnecessary, this takes away options against the corner - just two space extension at 49

Move 50: Better to try E here because Black has weakness on that side.



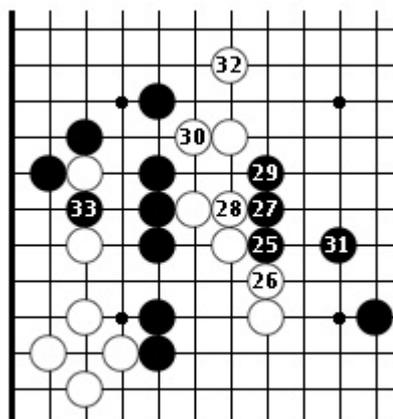
Variation 1

A common sequence here.



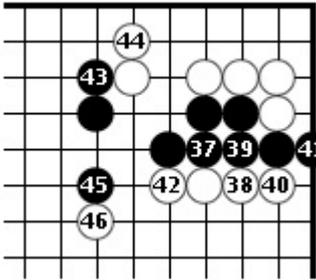
Variation 2

One possible line, Black feels happier because White's group at 22 has no eye.



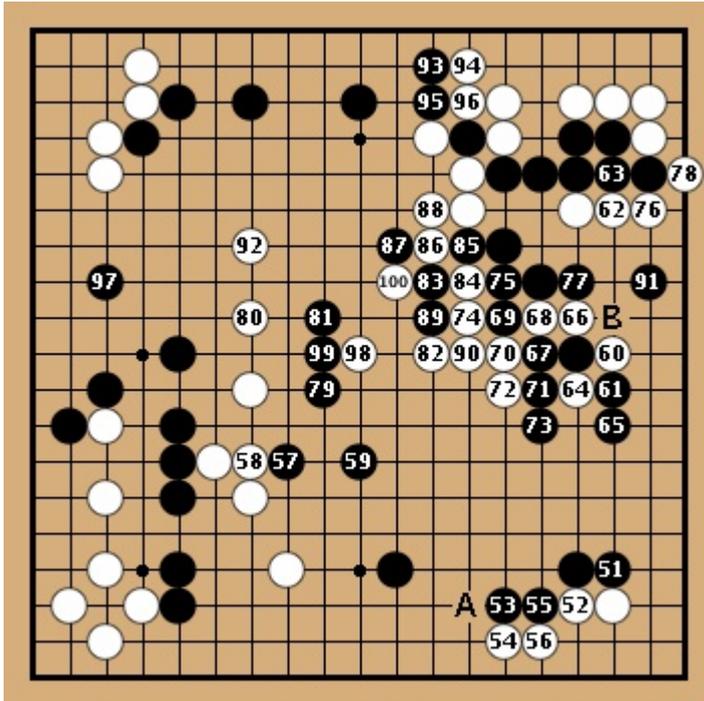
Variation 3

25 is the way to scare White. Black gets a wall and territory as the attack continues.



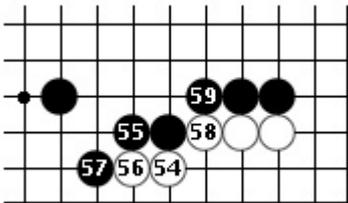
Variation 4

This is how to punish Black, we can see he gets exactly nothing here.



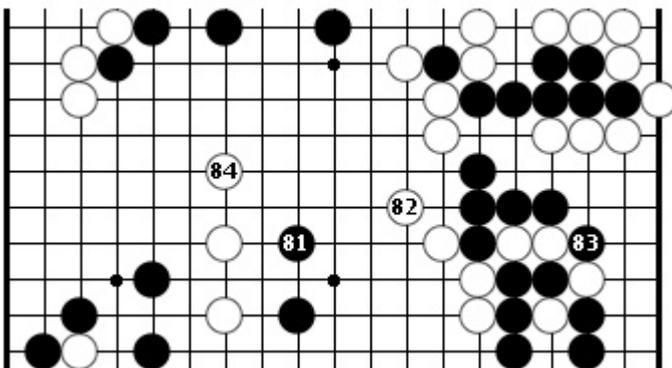
Moves 51 to 100

- Move 55: Inconsistent move, this should be at A - see variation 5.
- Move 60: Aggressive play.
- Move 79: Just like with a ladder, we should capture at B.
- Move 82: Dangerous play, see variation 6.
- Move 83: Good move.
- Move 91: Again it is better to take at B.



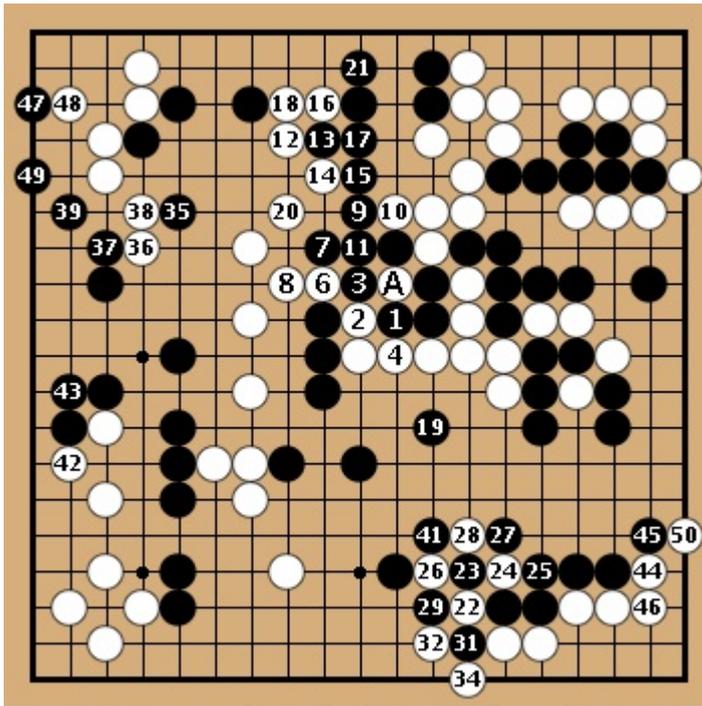
Variation 5

Normal way. Although Black lost sente, his large wall has a strong presence over the whole board, especially on White's weak central group. Therefore Black is satisfied.



Variation 6

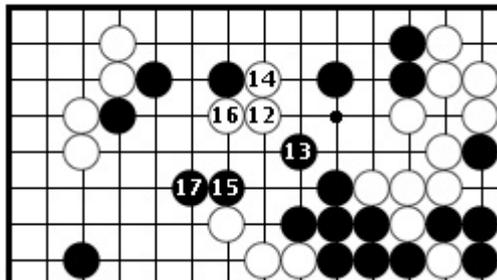
The normal sequence for both



5 at A, 30 at 24, 33 at 23, 40 at 22

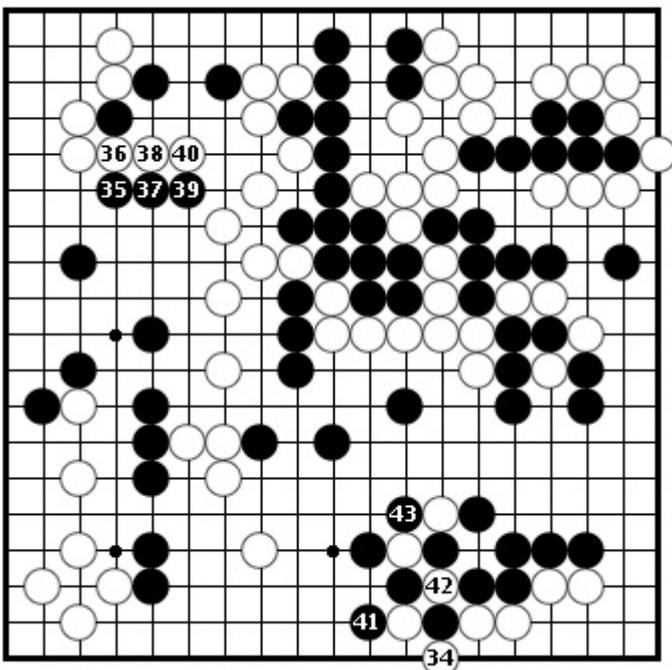
Moves 101 to 150

Move 109: Play at 120 to escape.
 Move 112: White displays a good sense of shape.
 Move 113: Bad shape, see Variation 7.
 Move 128: A mistake.
 Move 133: It seems that the game is over.
 Move 135: Over aggressive, see forcing sequence of Variation 8.



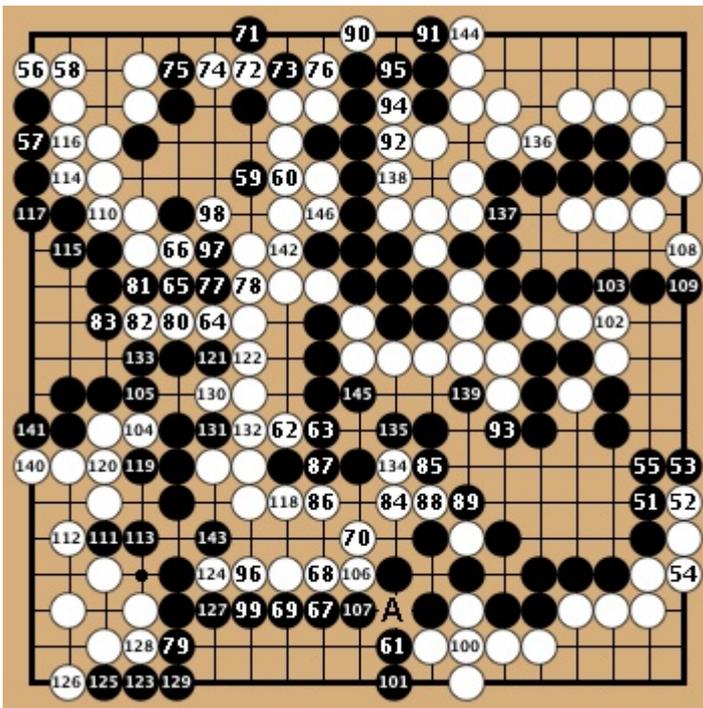
Variation 7

Black can fight this position.



Variation 8

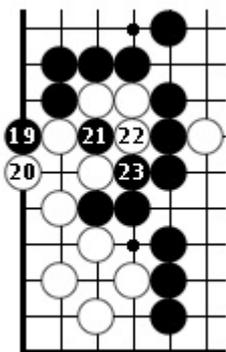
This forcing sequence is the best way.



Moves 151 to 246

- Move 158: Small, better at A
- Move 159: Doesn't make any sense
- Move 164: 165 is the correct way to protect
- Move 168: This should be at 169
- Move 175: A mistake.
- Move 190: A big point
- Move 200: White secures another big move.
- Move 219: Wrong order, see variation 9.

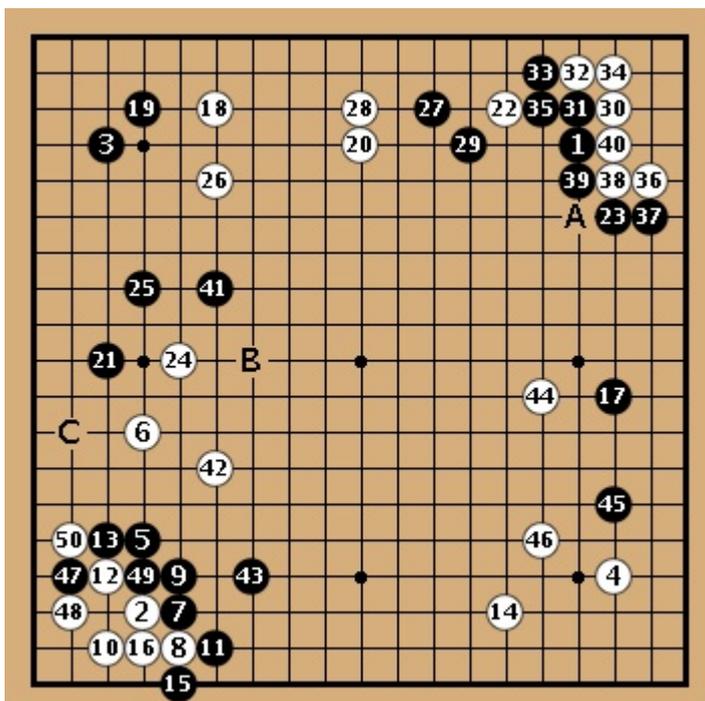
White went on to win by resignation. Actually Black played well in the middlegame, but lost too much in the upper left corner. Good game from both players.



Variation 9

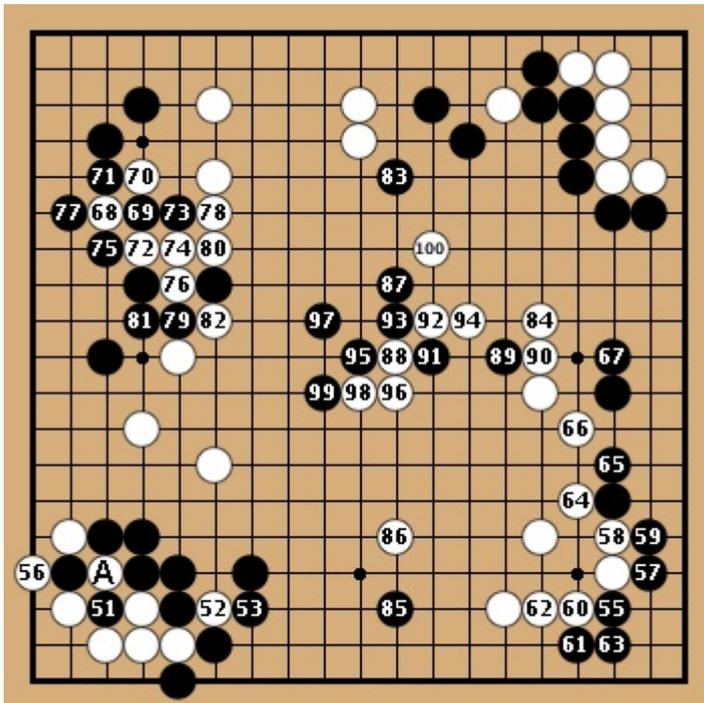
A tesuji to allow Black to eat stones.

James Hutchinson (w) - Ian Davis (b)
 Commentary by Ian Davis



Moves 1 to 50

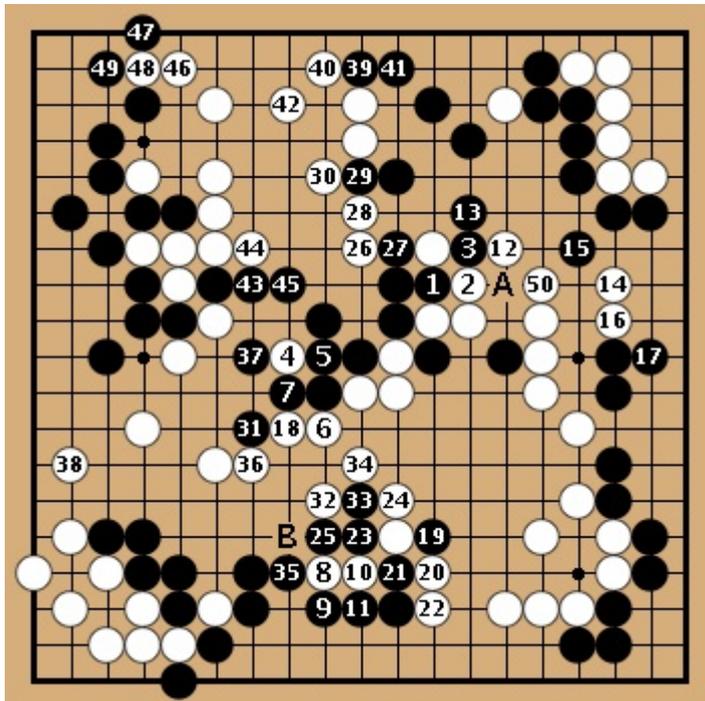
- When this game was played both of us had qualified for the Final, so this game was only for honour. :)
- Move 10: This is not joseki and I was a little unsure of how to answer. In the game White is sent to the corner, but at least has sente to take 14.
 - Move 19: Quiet. A pincer is another choice.
 - Move 21: Not sure about this move, it allows White to set up a good framework on the top. Perhaps it should be at 27, especially with C open. I also considered pincer one space higher.
 - Move 41: Starting a fierce attack and not bothering to protect the cut at A
 - Move 43: Stopping a fierce attack, probably should be B.



54 at A.

Moves 51 to 100

Move 56: White ends the ko for the corner, Black did not have enough threats to kill.
 Move 66: Threatening to push and cut, killing with damezumari, so Black defends at 67
 Move 79: A misjudgement, this is much better at 80, now White has good moyo potential.
 Move 85: Slack, better 1 space higher to erase all moyo.
 Move 86: Very appropriate. White's stones are working well together.



Moves 101 to 150

Move 114: Seems a slack choice after 115 when the cut at A becomes very big.
 Move 135: Why not at B?
 Move 150: Very large, Black should have taken A long ago.

The game is probably still quite balanced, but White played better yose and went on to win by 4.5 points, which just proves that learning joseki is bad for your game. :)

The final will take place later in the year.