



Irish Go Association

Issue 9 - March 2011

The Editorial

Dear Readers,

Welcome to another addition of the Irish Go Association's Newsletter. Once again we have a good selection of games to play through and study, as well as some top class theory on ripping off your opponent. Gavin Rooney also gives us an introduction into his Baduk education in Budapest. Plus, all the usual news round up from home and abroad.

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Top 8 News

The 2011 Top 8 followed a very similar pattern to that of last year's event. Organised in the comfortable Burlington Hotel, a venue again ably secured by Noel Mitchell, the Kick Off weekend was an enjoyable success. The rest of the games were played by arrangement at the players' leisure. The top 2 positions were reversed, with Ian pushing out James at the top of the table. Will the result of final also be reversed? Colin MacSweeney put in a good performance to clinch 3rd spot on 5 wins, pushing an unlucky Noel Mitchell into 4th spot.

	ID	JH	NM	EB	CR	CMS	JG	RW	TOTAL
Ian Davis	█	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7/7
James Hutchinson	0	█	1	1	1	1	1	1	6/7
Noel Mitchell	0	0	█	1	1	0	1	1	4/7
Eoghan Barry	0	0	0	█	0	0	1(d)	1	2/7
Claas Roever	0	0	0	1	█	0	1	1	3/7
Colin MacSweeney	0	0	1	1	1	█	1(d)	1	5/7
John Gibson	0	0	0	0(d)	0	0(d)	█	0	0/7
Rory Wales	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	█	1/7

Kings Baduk Centre, Budapest

Kim Sung-Rae 8p, Lee Young-Sin 8p and Go Ju-Yeon 8p established a Korean-style Go school in Budapest, Hungary with the aim of popularizing and promoting Go throughout Europe. The price of studying at the centre is quite reasonable at 250e p/m with accommodation included. Please see website for contact information:

<http://www.badukcenter.com>

When I first arrived at the centre I was greeted by all the resident pros and students staying there which made me feel instantly at home. Soon after I was shown to my apartment which was modest, but comfy. It came equipped with all an aspiring Go player could need!

My Day started at 10 am every morning with a speed test. This comprised of life and death problems, tesuji, endgame questions etc... You are only given 20-30 minutes to answer up to 75 problems. This is a form of test which Kim Sung-Rae 8p has come up with to help with speedy reading and instant recognition of shapes which should die. After the exam has been corrected Kim gave lectures on new openings, recent pro games and reviewed league games which were played during the week. This lasted till 12pm each morning. Next came lunch until half one. There are many places to eat around the centre from bakeries, delicatessen, and all your fast food needs.

After lunch we played league games with the other students and the many walk in Hungarians who visited most days. The weekly league was 1000ft to enter (4 euro) and the pot was payed out to first and second place. This made the league much more competitive and entertaining. Proper handicaps were placed on all games so it was fair to all who entered. This time is also used to play the professionals (usually 1-2 games with review per day). Playing with professionals is a truly great feeling. The weight of each stone is indescribable, for a Go player it has to be the ultimate high. I even managed to win 2 games with 4 stones and 15 reverse komi, which was the highlight of my stay.

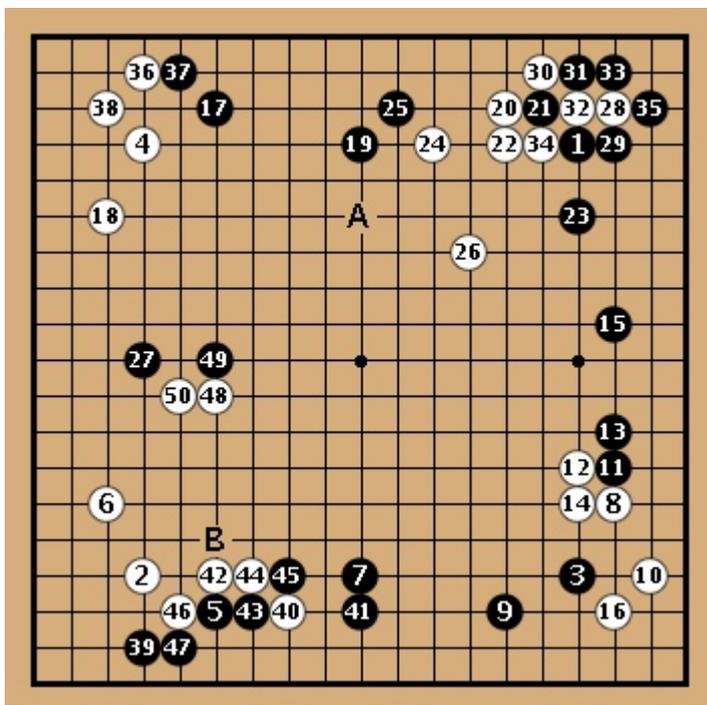
During the weekends we usually went to the pub for a few beers and practiced drunken style go. One weekend we went on a trip up the mountains and rented out a cabin and played team games with a fun twist! The losers were given a pint of the most unholy drinks you could imagine (southern comfort, jagermeister, vodka, palinka and many others). Then by campfire we sang songs and had a marvellous feast.

My stay at the Korean Baduk Centre was a true delight and left me with many great memories (and some nights I can't remember). After returning home I feel like I understand Go much better and have improved a great deal. I would recommend going there and I certainly will return myself.



The following game is taken from the BGA's team league. Once again Belfast are in the second division, where are foes this year are Glasgow, Central London B, Cornwall, Oxford and St Albans. The game below, from Board 1 against Glasgow, was our first in the season. To follow the league you can visit <http://league.britgo.org>

Moves 1 to 50

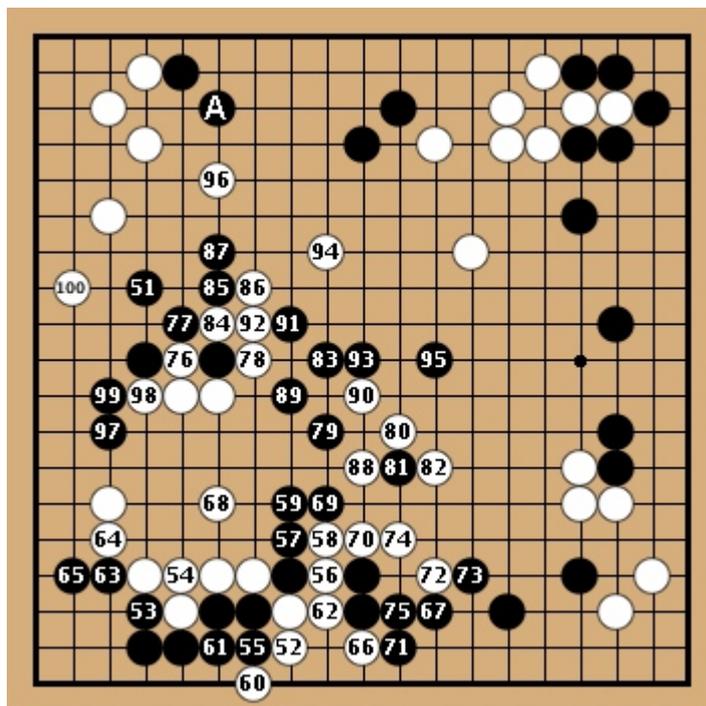


White: Ian Davis (1d) Black Glenn Forsyth (1k)

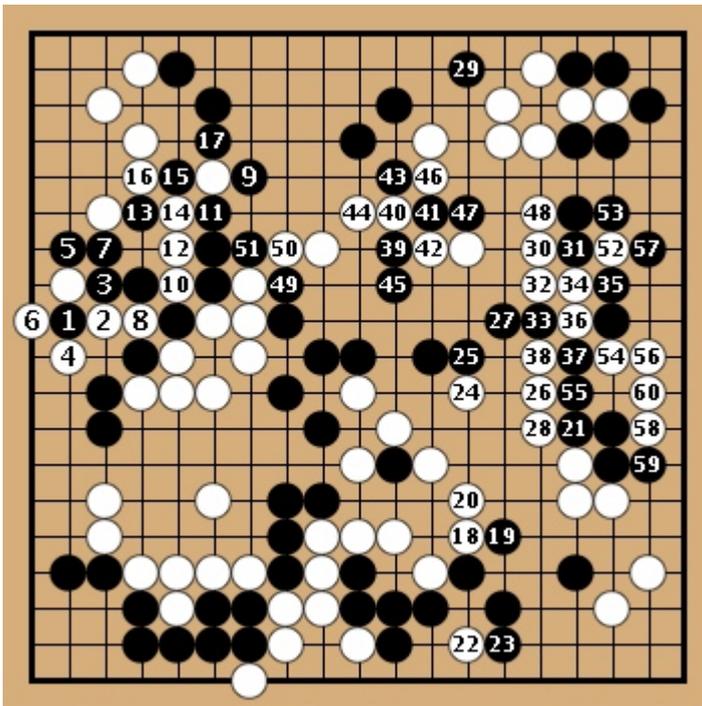
- Move 14: In fashion at the moment.
- Move 19: White feels much slower on the whole board.
- Move 27: I expected Black to continue an attack on this group at A, the high splitting move feels somewhat improper.
- Move 36: White is just taking territory locally instead of playing globally.
- Move 40: Since the shape has a gap I invade, as we see in the game, this is not so strong an idea with Black 27.
- Move 48: Tip - when you play a ladder breaker, make sure it breaks the ladder.
- Move 50: It's pretty embarrassing to have to play here.

Moves 51 to 100

- Move 51: Black fails to notice the plan.
- Move 66: The key point to weaken the Black group on the right.
- Move 74: Threatening snapback.
- Move 76: A terrible move. The 3 Black stones are really light, to try to kill them would be like eating for a day in McDonalds.
- Move 79: Black wakes up.
- Move 82: White must be careful of the weakness in the two space jump shape.
- Move 90: Taking the eyeshape.
- Move 94: Aiming at a splitting attack.
- Move 96: Continuing to split and preparing to invade and kill A.



Moves 101 onwards



Move 101: The correct shape is kosumi (at 102) if I remember rightly.

Move 111: It seems possible to block at A - see Variation 1.

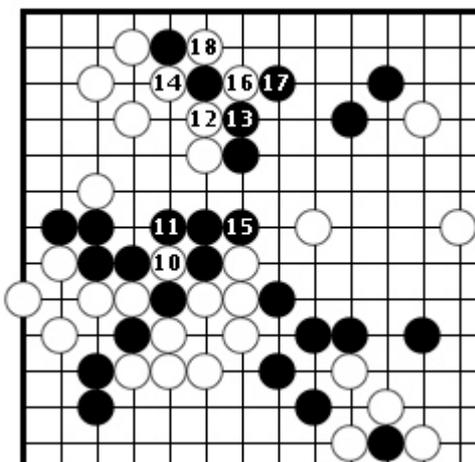
Move 129: White doesn't have two eyes here, so this is the only real chance to catch up though a kill.

Move 130: Never answer softly.

Move 138: Now (locally) Black looks to be dead in the centre.

Move 152: The obvious tactic to force a second eye.

Move 160: Black has no choice but to resign at this point. Black answered White too often in this game.



Variation 1

This seems much better to me than dying, Black doesn't make many points, but he doesn't lose all.



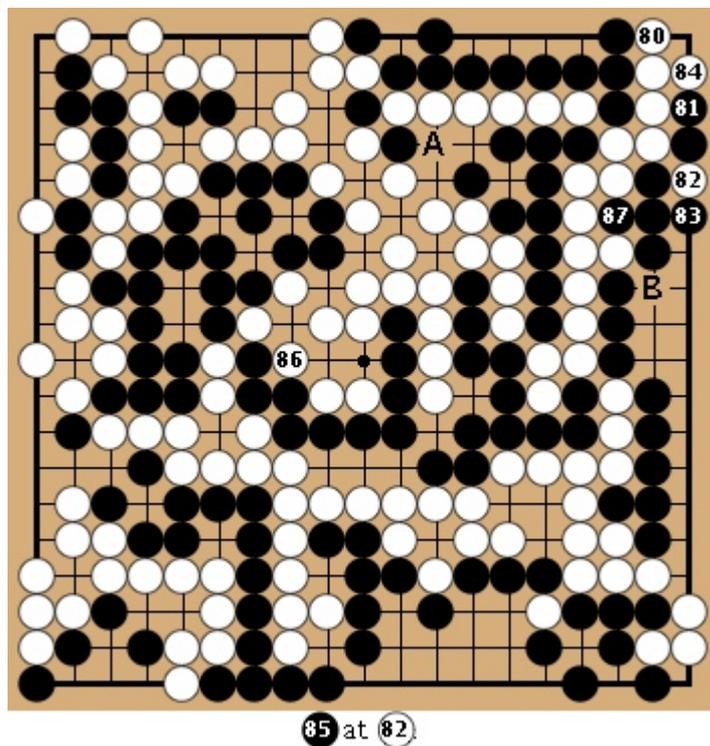
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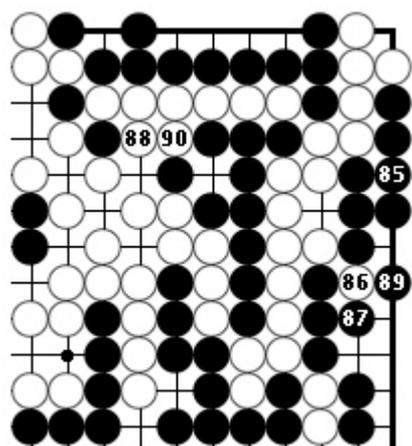
Gibson Corner



Some players are gifted with artistry and shape, others with attacking prowess. Some men seem like calculating machines, others are famous for their dirty endgame rip-offs. Of course John Gibson is famous for the latter, and here, we begin a short series on the essence of what we call in Ireland, 'the Gibson'.

First we must look at the whole board. On territory it is clear that White is over 30 points ahead, there is no obvious way for him to lose what looks to have been a very lively game. Look again however, White has just removed 1 liberty from his eyeless group - the very same group that is killing P15. Could something happen here?

How many liberties does White have left at this point? 4. How many moves to kill Black? 3. In later issues we will explain why this is the correct number of liberties to leave in a semeai you have no hope of winning.



Variation 1

Throw in once to prevent an approach move

Move 282: The throw in is a good move, because it means that in the resulting shape Black must later come back to defend at B. As it is an atari on 2 stones, it doesn't lose liberties.

Move 284: This move looks suspicious - White gains no extra liberties here, he takes one liberty away from himself, even if he does make an eye

Move 285: Now White must play B to prevent Black from approaching at 87, it will take two intermediate moves to kill B.

Move 286: I presume that this move was a mixture of panic and disgust, Black can now play atari and the group is saved. See Variation for the correct line to kill.

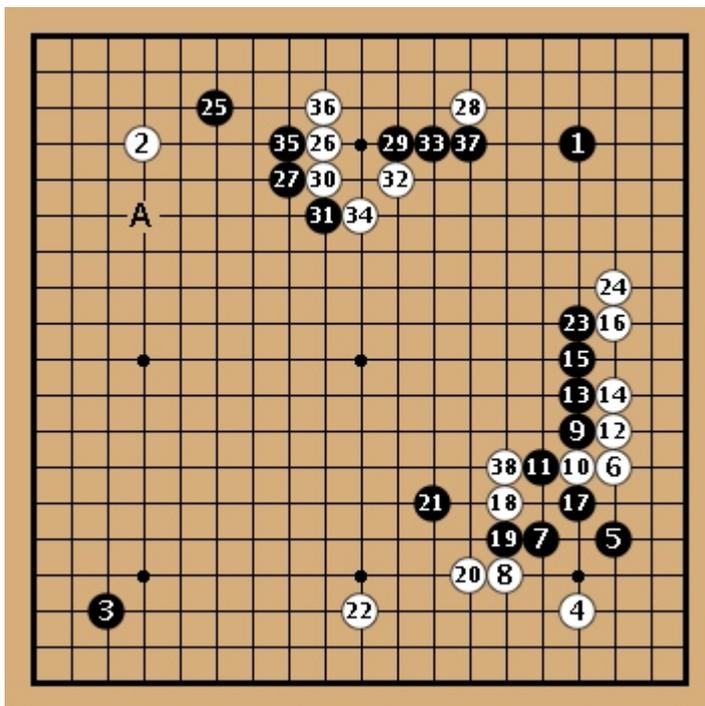
Move 287: The moral of this story is clear. When the game is over, make sure your opponent notices. White capture at A is the only move to consider.

Irish Go Congress Report

The Irish Go Congress was a great success this year. We had a total of 62 players coming together to play at the traditional venue of the Teachers' Club in Parnell Square. It was the penultimate event in the Pandanet European Go Cup, and event that will disappear next year. Competition was tough, particularly at the top, where we saw joint winners for the first time. Antti Tormanen from Finland and Wei Wang, currently in exile from Cork. We will show some games they played here. Best Irish performance was from Gavin Rooney, who showed that the Hungarian Baduk School must have some merits as he finished in 8th place. Your President, Ian Davis, meanwhile, showed that KGS blitz is important, taking his second Irish Rapid title with 5 wins out of 5.

The first game we are going to present is between the joint winners. If you want a full commentary, please consider visiting Antti's blog at <http://gooften.net>. The material shown below is a short excerpt from this blog.

Moves 1 to 38



Round 3: Irish Open

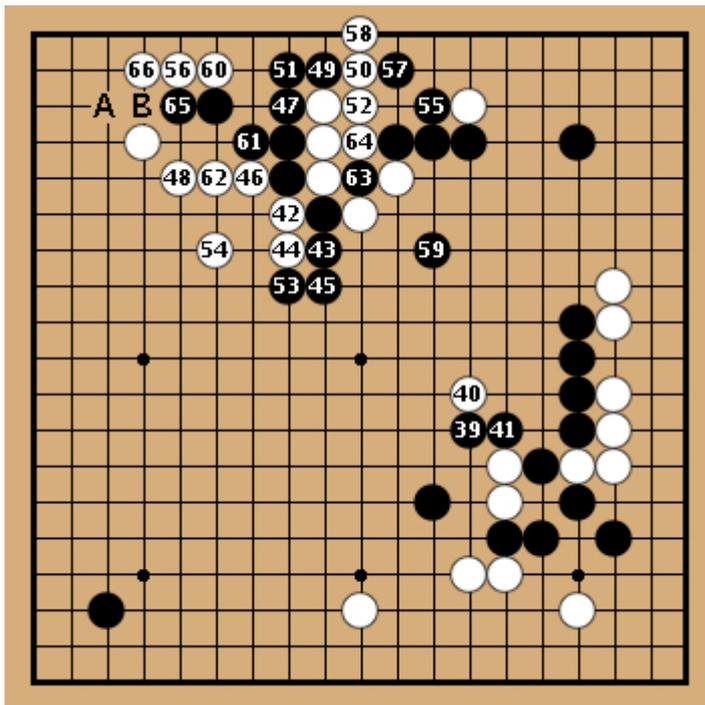
White: Wei Wang Black: Antti Tormanen
(Commentary from A.Tormanen)

I played the same opening stones as in our previous game, however the game quickly got different. We kicked the game off with a really classic joseki sequence, as seen here.

Wei then played the out-of-ordinary peep of white 18, which I chose to cut off. After white 22, it seems both players have solidified their groups, however I would have felt uneasy if white later had the chance to push up at 23, reducing the three black stones' liberties. Thus, I pushed at 23 myself, before moving elsewhere. After white 26, black had plenty of options for a follow-up.

The interesting shoulder hit of 27 struck my eye in this game: black could either push at 30 next, building a centre framework, or if white prevents that by pushing at 30 himself, black will likely get the chance to make a double approach to the corner with A. White replied with 28, to which I played 29, pushing white to decide what to do. The sequence here can be relatively difficult to understand: the key part is the interaction of black 29 and 31, removing a white eye, and allowing black to play 35 as a forcing move (threatening to connect if black can play at 36).

Moves 39 to 66

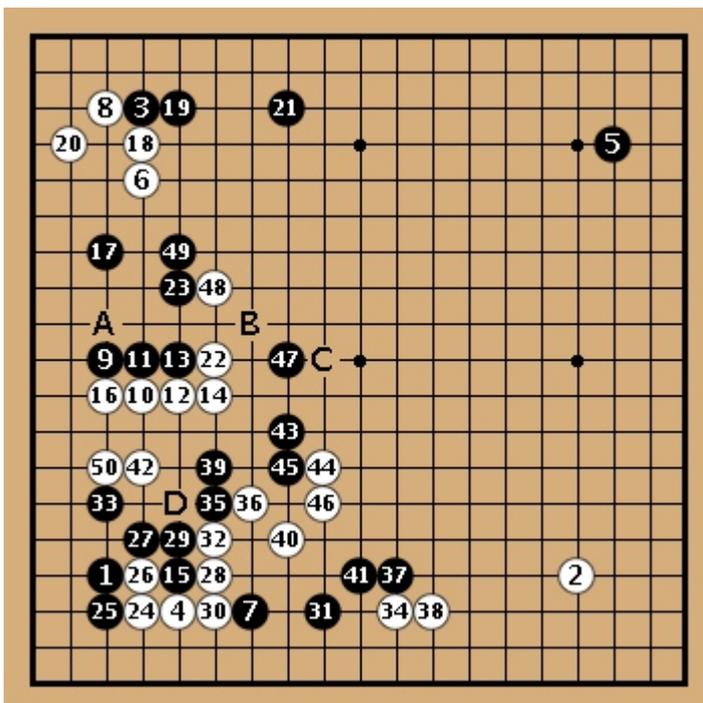


White, then, played 38 and 40 to create a ladder-breaker, and then set up the ladder here, up to 44. Black had no choice but to extend with 45, leaving the upper-left group a little cramped. It was here that a complicated fight erupted between the black and white groups on the upper side.

For me, continuing like up to 55, here, was the only course of action. Black could also have lived in the upper left corner by playing at 66, but then the white group would live as well. I reasoned that even if the black group died, I would get a reasonable amount of territory in the upper right corner as well as in the centre. The forcing move at A, requiring a white answer at B, is also left to use. Now in hindsight, I may have missed a black move at 60, which I should have played right after white 58 - it seems likely that the black group would get a liberty more for the capturing race. As shown in the figure, here, black loses the capturing race by one liberty.

For the full commentary see <http://gooften.net>

Moves 1 to 50



Board 2: Irish Open

White: Ondrej Silt Black: Wei Wang

Commentary by Wei Wang

Move 8: Not bad, but normally we play at A.

Move 9: See Variation 1.

Move 15: Wrong. Black gains nothing by covering, White can still steal the corner later on at 24. Can play as in Variation 1.

Move 21: Probably B is better here, the follow-up is at C to pressurise White.

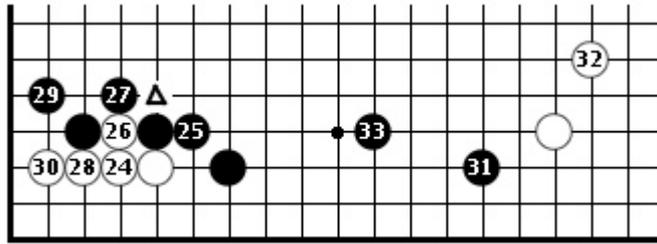
Move 23: So painful, but have to protect here.

Move 25: Black is over aggressive, but in my opinion, I have to take corner here to start a fight because sacrificing the corner is too much. See Variation 2.

Move 32: White misses a chance to punish Black, see Variation 3.

Move 33: Good shape now.

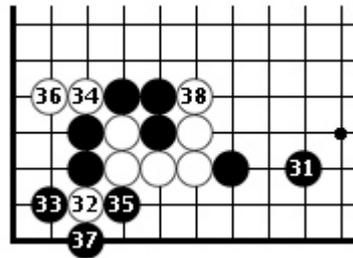
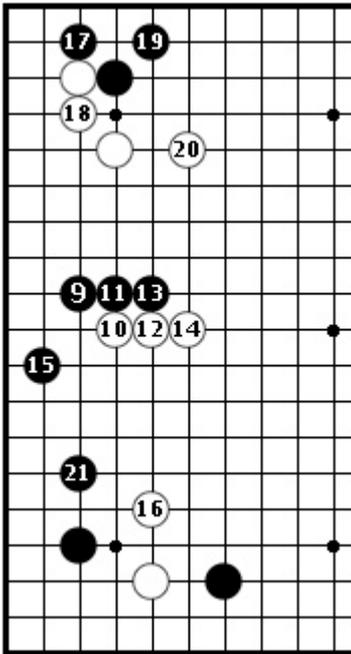
Move 42: Overplay by White. Black won't connect at D, but rather counterattack by separating.



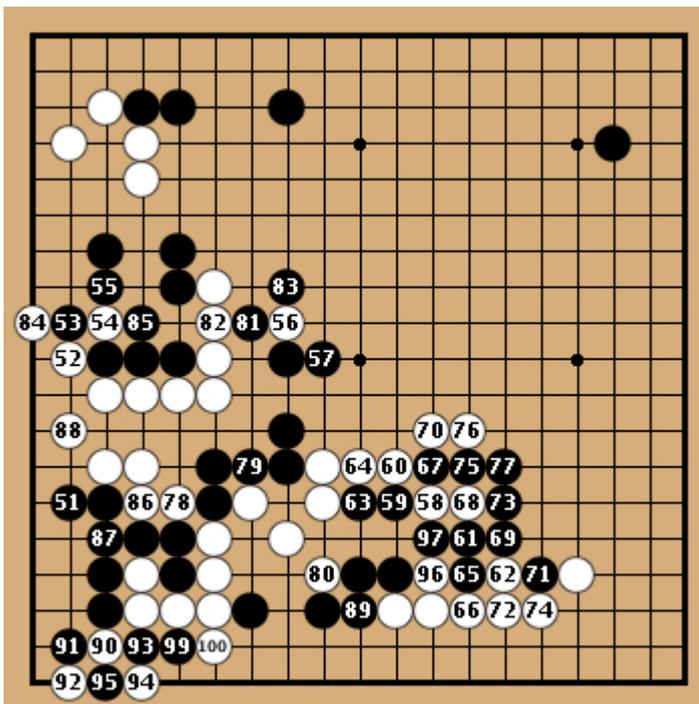
Variation 1 (left) One line further to reduce White's space is better. Now White has to run out with Move 20.

Variation 2 (above) This is the normal way to play. The marked cut is left behind. Later White can play a move in the upper right corner to make the ladder work; this is very annoying for Black.

Variation 3 (below) This is White's chance to punish the terrible Black shape, in this instance we can see that Black cannot block. It should be game over!

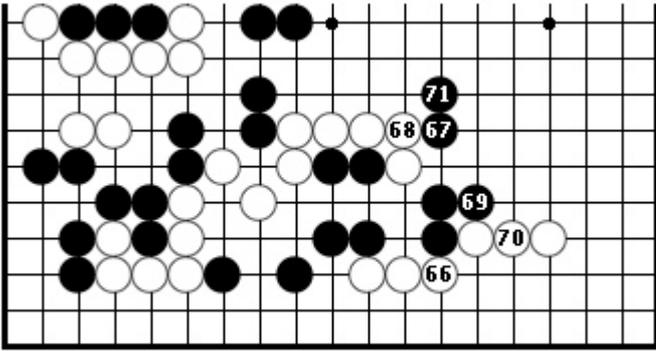


Moves 51 to 100



98 at 90

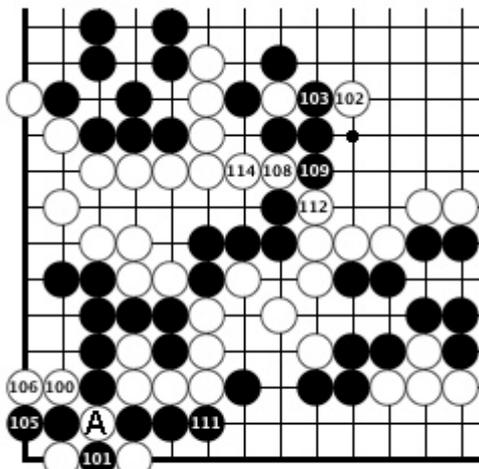
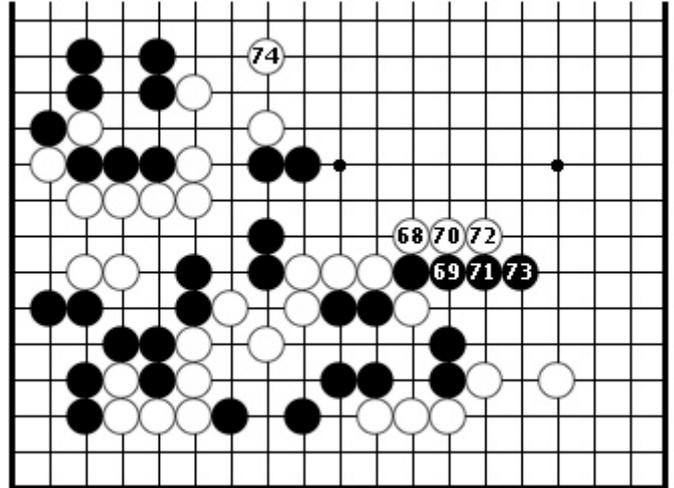
Move 57: White is playing just to grab the chance to attack Black's lower group (at 89).
 Move 67: The cut is common sense, but see Variation 4 for a better alternative.
 Move 68: A mistake, see Variation 5.
 Move 73: To make the cut at 74 possible.
 Move 77: Black is alive, so strong right now.
 Move 92: A strong move! The double hane lets White start a ko for life there.
 Move 100: See Variations 6 and 7.



Variation 4

This (67) is a good move. Black becomes safe, which means White is in danger. If you are stronger, then your opponent is weaker, and vice versa.

Variation 5
White is okay if he plays like this.

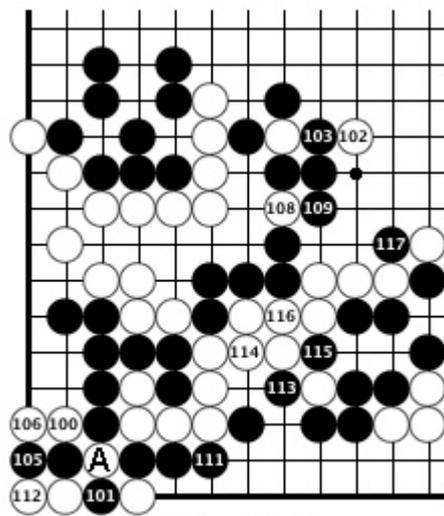


Variation 6

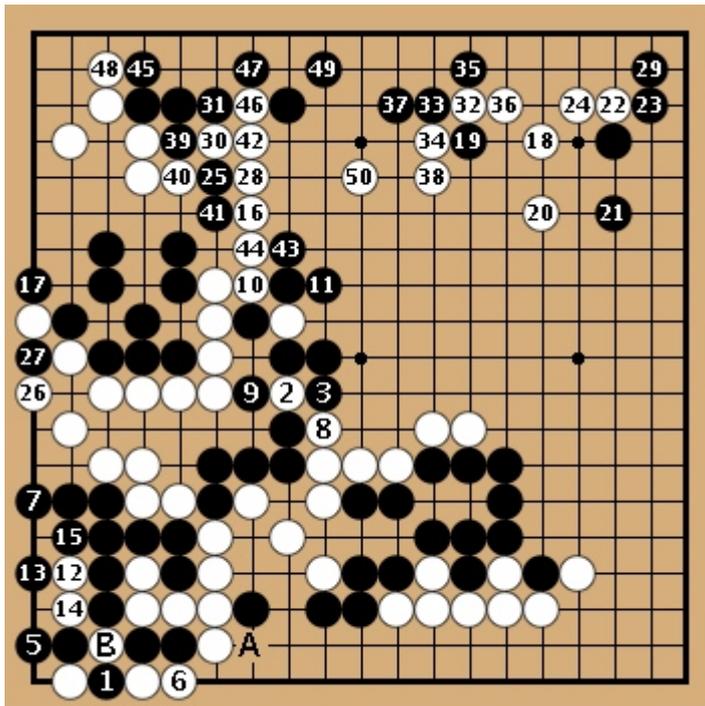
Move 112 is necessary for White. The final position is acceptable for Black, despite the loss of the middle group.

104 at A, 107 at 101, 110 at A, 113 at 101, 115 at A.

Variation 7
White could not allow 14 stones (at 116) to die.



104 at A, 107 at 101, 110 at A.



④ at B.

Moves 101 to 150

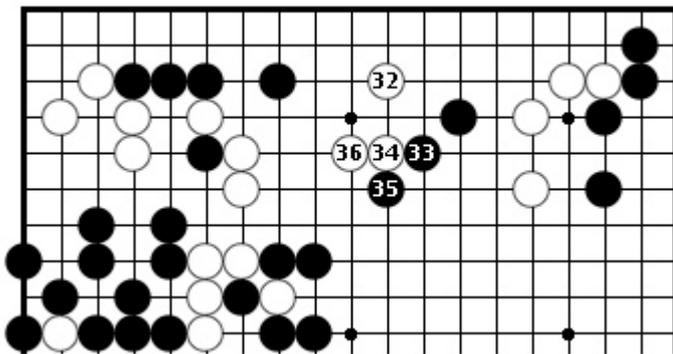
Move 107: Although White managed to win the ko, his group still isn't completely alive. Only 1 eye is solid, the second can be taken through a move at A later on.

Move 110: White played a strange move here, it isn't necessary.

Move 132: A passive move for White, he should think about a more positive move - see Variation 8

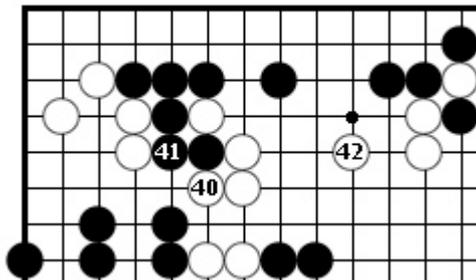
Move 140: Unnecessary move again for White, consider Variation 9.

Move 143: Good move order here for Black.



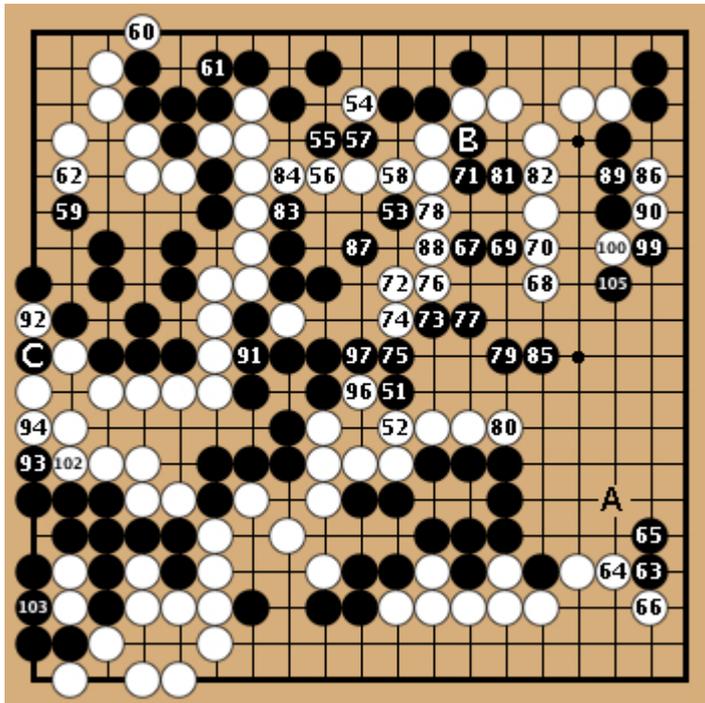
Variation 8

This is just one possible alternative.



Variation 9

This is good enough to make sure of White's connection. Also, the middle group of Black is not alive, so Black has to exercise some caution.



95 at C, 98 at 92, 101 at C, 104 at 92

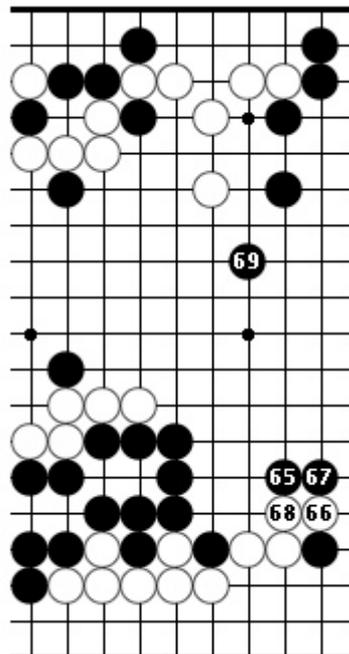
Moves 151 to 205

Move 154: A mistake.
 Move 155: Good counterattack!
 Move 165: Better at A, see Variation 10.
 Move 167: Black peeps here, looking forward to rescuing the dead stone at B
 Move 173: The winning move!
 Move 177: White can't cut Black, so the game is actually over already.
 Move 205: White dies everywhere.
 Game over.

Thank you for watching.
 Best Regards,
 Wei

Variation 10

This is probably a better move.
 Black can save one move,
 affording tenuki at 169



Pandanet European Team Championships

Country	r	M	w/d/l	p	score	1234
Switzerland	5	⑩	5-0-0	0	19-1	5554
Luxembourg	5	⑧	4-0-1	0	15-5	4344
Turkey	5	⑧	4-0-1	0	15-5	4335
Slovakia	5	⑧	4-0-1	0	15-5	3543
Italy	5	⑧	4-0-1	0	13-7	3424
Ireland	5	②	0-2-3	0	5-15	1121
Bulgaria	5	②*	1-1-2	5	0-15	0212
Bosnia	5	①	0-1-4	1	4-15	4010
Portugal	5	①*	1-0-4	6	0-14	0222
Cyprus	5	0	0-0-5	0	2-18	1010

Scoretable before we lost to Cyprus

As barely anyone ever watched tournament broadcasts on IGS, Pandanet cancelled their sponsorship of the event. So the EGF negotiated a new team championship to be played on the IGS server. Ireland are in Division C of this brand new competition. Our record so far has been less than impressive, but we are, nevertheless, on track to top our seeded 9th place. The secret to our success is not having board points deducted for rules infractions! So far both Bulgaria and Portugal, who are close rivals for us, have had match points deducted for sins such as 'forgetting to turn up to the match'.

Results

- R1 Ireland 0-4 Switzerland
- R2 Ireland 2-2 Bulgaria
- R3 Ireland 2-2 Bosnia
- R4 Ireland 0-4 Luxembourg
- R5 Ireland 1-3 Turkey
- R6 Ireland 1-3 Cyprus

Call for Treasurer

Arthur Cater has decided to step down from his role as IGA Treasurer after many years of valued service. Therefore, come September, we will be needing a replacement to take over from him in this important position. If anyone is interested in the role, please contact us. I understand that it would be helpful if you have an existing Bank of Ireland account, but that this is not essential.

Tournament Diary - Galway

The 2011 Galway Go Tournament will take place on 28-29 May, 2011 in the Galway Bridge Centre, St Mary's Road, Galway
Check the IGA website for the latest details