Myosu

GLOBAL BADUK MAGAZINE

2nd Issue | October 2017



"I find Myosu in my dreams"

The Chinese A League

International Go Festival

Interview - The Go Academy

European & US Go Congresses

Letter from the editor-in-chief



Dear Baduk fans all over the world,

First of all we would like to thank all readers who send us so many positive messages, and asked about how to purchase a copy. These responses encouraged us a lot to work harder and to publish an even better second issue of Myosu – Global Baduk Magazine.

In this issue, we'd like to present you Baduk news from Asia, Europe and US, interviews with the 2017 European champion and with the founder of "The Go Academy". There are three commented games: one by Go Seigen, one by DeepZenGo, and another one by two promising young players. Articles on Baduk research and culture cover other aspects of the game.

Within the last four months of hard work, we tried to create the best magazine for Baduk fans. Starting with this issue, we are also looking for ways to finance the making of Myosu. We are going to offer electronic and printed versions for sale, as well as additional services, such as game commentaries. We hope to attract a growing audience, and be attractive for Baduk businesses to place their advertisement in our magazine in the future.

We strive to satisfy our readers' interest and cover various global Baduk issues as well as articles that help you to improve your playing strength. In that sense, we appreciate any kind of feedback, such as what content you liked best, and in what way we can enhance our magazine. Please feel free to send us any questions related to the contents or to Baduk in general.

We wish you a splendid time studying Baduk and exploring Baduk culture with our magazine and are looking forward to your feedback,

Editor-in-chief

Le Kieu Khanh Linh

October 2017

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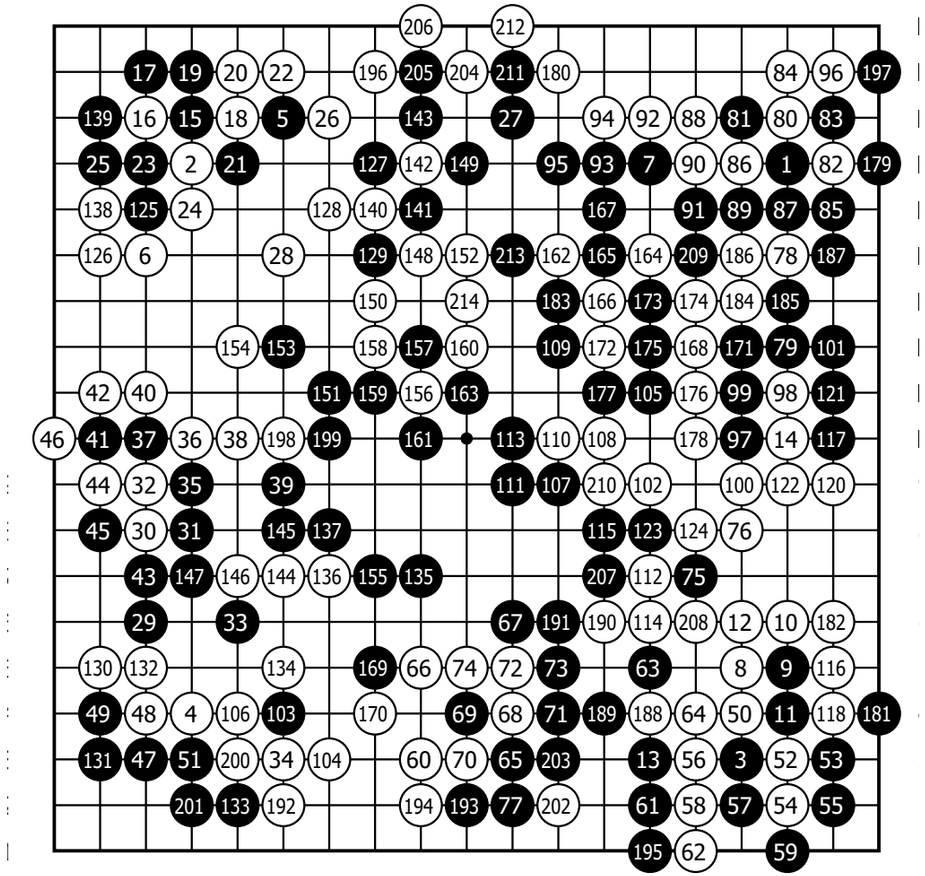
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Lee Younggu and Kim Miri (white) won the 7th SG Cup Pair Baduk Tournament by defeating Choi Cheolhan and Oh Jeonga (black) after 214 moves (kifu below) in the final, which was held on July 27 in the Baduk TV studios.



119 = 52

Lee Yeonggu

Kim Miri

PAIR WINS 7th SG CUP

Starting from the round of 32, the Lee Younggu-Kim Miri pair defeated Choi Wongyong-Ko Miso, Cho Hanseung-Kim lim, Park Hamin-Kwon Gayang and Kang Dongyun-Kim Eunseon pairs to get the final ticket.

This was Lee Yeonggu's first time to win the SG Cup, while Kim Miri had won once before; the first edition in 2011. At that time her partner was Hang Sunghun. After the final, Kim stated that she was happy to win the SG Cup for the second time and thanked Lee for setting their pace well.

On the other hand, Lee commented that although he is not well skilled at pair Baduk, they won the tournament thanks to Kim's good lead. The winners and runner-ups got prize money of 30 million Korean Won (~27.000$) and 10 million Korean Won (~9.000$), respectively.

In this tournament Fischer timing was used for the first time in professional Baduk tournament history. Main thinking time was 10 minutes, with 30 seconds added to a pair's clock after their move. Fischer timing has before been widely used in chess tournaments.

Hüsrev Aksüt

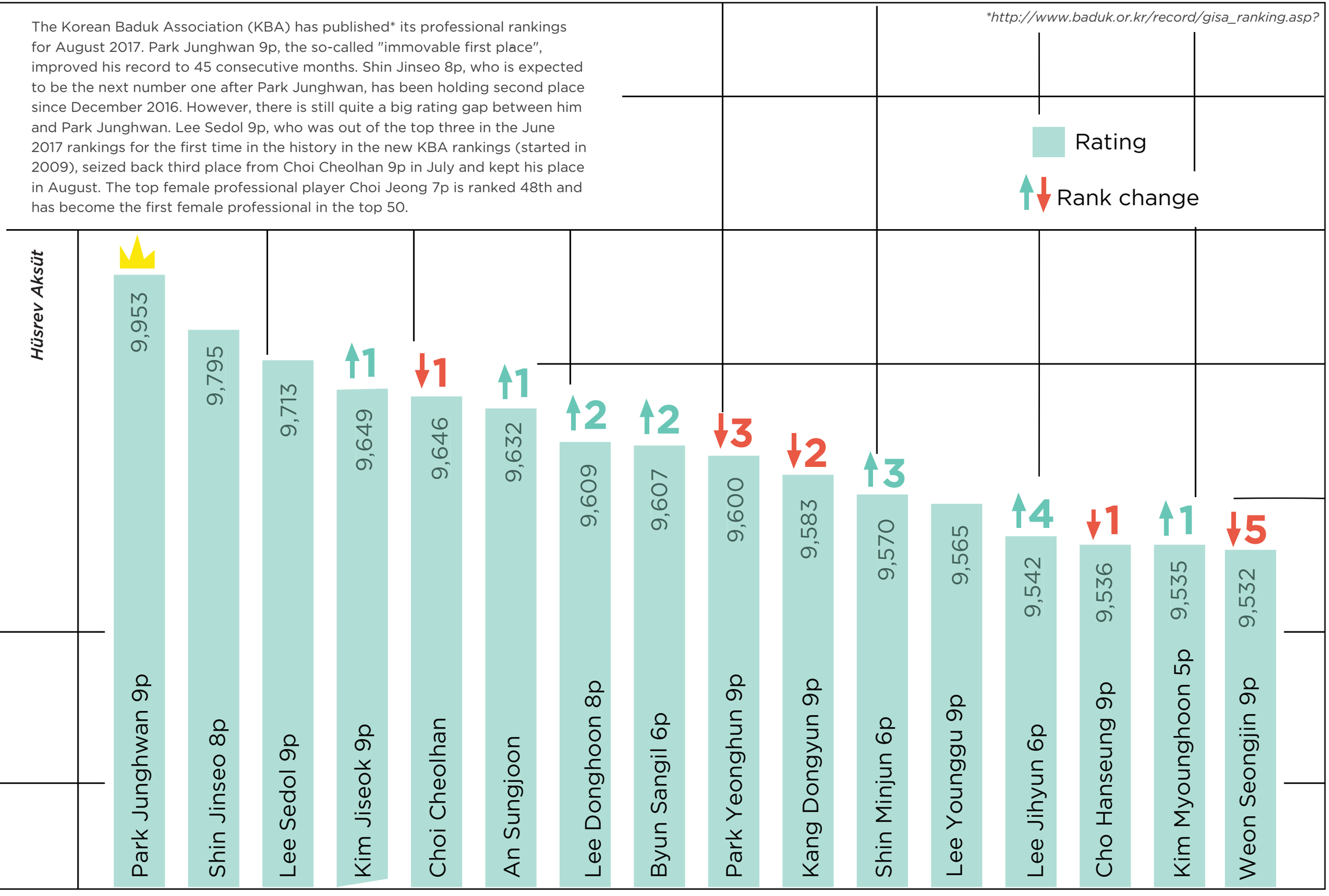
7th SG Cup Pair Baduk Tournament Final

Date: 27.07.2017
Black: Choi Cheolhan-Oh Jeonga
White: Lee Younggu-Kim Miri
Result: White + Resign

Korean Baduk Ranking

The Korean Baduk Association (KBA) has published* its professional rankings for August 2017. Park Junghwan 9p, the so-called "immovable first place", improved his record to 45 consecutive months. Shin Jinseo 8p, who is expected to be the next number one after Park Junghwan, has been holding second place since December 2016. However, there is still quite a big rating gap between him and Park Junghwan. Lee Sedol 9p, who was out of the top three in the June 2017 rankings for the first time in the history in the new KBA rankings (started in 2009), seized back third place from Choi Cheolhan 9p in July and kept his place in August. The top female professional player Choi Jeong 7p is ranked 48th and has become the first female professional in the top 50.

*http://www.baduk.or.kr/record/gisa_ranking.asp?



2017 KB KOREAN BADUK LEAGUE

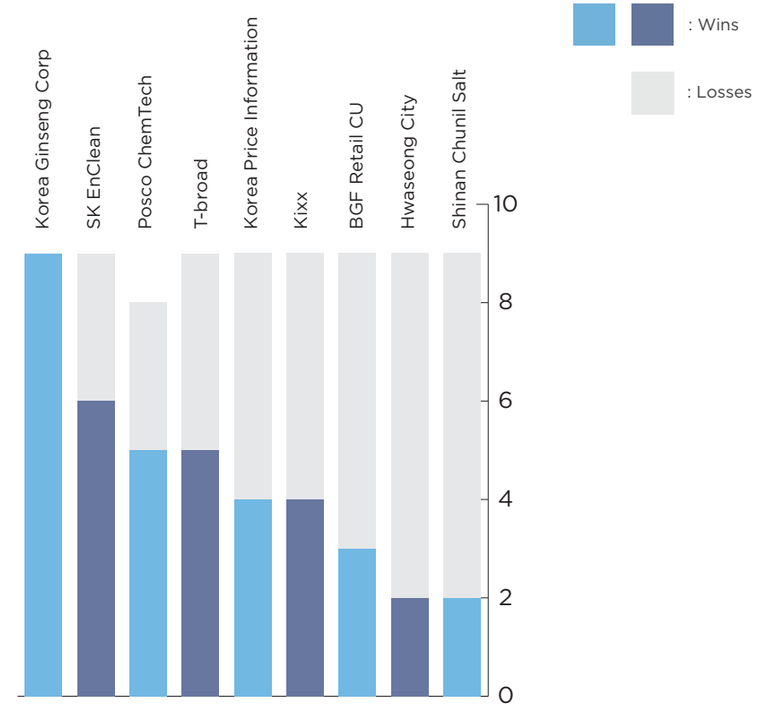
-Hüsrev Aksüt-

The 2017 KB Korean Baduk League started with 9 teams on May 18th. According to the league rules, teams can preserve their players up to three consecutive years maximum. Therefore, last three years' winner team T-broad had to change all their five players at the 2017 KB Korean Baduk League Drafts which was held on April 12th. Hwaseong City picked up Korean number one Park Junghwan 9p who had been playing for T-broad for the last three years. Lee Sedol 9p moved back to his hometown team Shinan Chunil Salt where he had previously played for a period of six years. While seven teams changed all their five players, Posco ChemTech chose to save their first three boards from last year; Choi Cheolhan 9p, Na Hyeon 8p and Byun Sangil 6p. Korea Ginseng Corp was the only team to keep all their five players: Shin Jinseo 8p, Lee Changho 9p, Kim Myeonghun 5p, Han Seungju 4p and Park Jinsol 8p.

Let's see what's been going on this season so far. After 10 rounds, apparently, Korea Ginseng Corp's strategy to keep all their players from last season was correct. They have been dominating the league with a perfect score of nine wins in nine matches. Park Junghwan's Hwaseong City and Lee Sedol's Shinan Chunil Salt are at the bottom of the table with only two wins each.

Shin Jinseo has been leading the individual standings with nine wins in nine games so far. He was also at the top of the list last year at the end of regular season with 13 wins and 1 loss. Park Jeonghwan also has been winning every single game this season so far, although his team is not doing well.

MVP prize for the 2017 KB Korean League is 10 million Korean Won (~9.000$). Park Junghwan had won the MVP prize for the last three seasons (2014, 2015 and 2016). Kim Jeonghyeon 6p was the last player getting the MVP prize other than Park Junghwan (2013). Let's see if Shin Jinseo can get the MVP title this season.



2017 KB Korean Baduk League Regular Season Standings After Round 10

1 **Shin Jinseo**
9 game (9 wins, 0 losses)
Win ratio: 100%
Korea Ginseng Corp Team

2 **Park Junghwan**
7 game (7 wins, 0 losses)
Win ratio: 100%
Hwaseong City Team

3 **Kim Jiseok**
9 game (7 wins, 2 losses)
Win ratio: 77.7%
Kixx Team

3 **Park Minkyu**
9 game (7 wins, 2 losses)
Win ratio: 77.7%
SK EnClean

4 **Byun Sangil**
7 game (6 wins, 1 loss)
Win ratio: 85.7%
Posco ChemTech

5 **Lee Sedol**
8 game (6 wins, 2 losses)
Win ratio: 75%
Shinan Chunil Salt

2017 KB Korean Baduk League Individual Standings After Round 10



GETTING TO KNOW **THE BIGGEST BADUK LEAGUE** IN THE WORLD

An Introduction to the Chinese A League

The Chinese A league, also known as "Wei Jia" is the top Chinese league for professional Baduk players, and is considered one of the most important championships in China. With 14 teams each representing their cities and sponsors, the league works fairly similar to some other professional sports leagues. Each team plays 26 rounds in a season; playing each other team in the league both home and away. The seasons usually start in April and December.

The Chinese A league represents the highest level of Baduk in the world. Because of the tough competition and high prize money, the league is very attractive to players outside of China as well. Especially Korean top players are well represented in the league, take for example Korean no. 1 Park Jung-hwan (Hangzhou Supor), Lee Sedol (Henan) or Choi Cheol-han (Chengdu Koden). However, every team, comprising of five or six players, can only include one foreign player. Out of those five or six players, a team sends four to each round.

Each round, consists of two regular games, a captain's game and a fast game. The team winning three or more games thus wins that round and gains three points, while the losing team gains nothing. In the case of a draw, each team gains one point. However, the winner of the captain's game earns one extra point for their team. Naturally, the team with the highest score at the end of the season wins the championship. Meanwhile, the two lowest placed teams drop down to the B league.

The 2017 Chinese A league saw some major changes. Not only was the league expanded from 12 to 14 teams, but a new draft system was also introduced to reduce the strength gap between teams and increase "player flow" in the league. This so called "reversed draft" allows teams, starting from the lowest seeded team, to pick up at least one player from the pick up list.

The current league sees Beijing China Minsheng Bank leading after 16 rounds with 39 points. The current world no. 1 Ke Jie and his team are currently placed (only) fifth. However, Ke Jie has shown a champion performance up until now, winning 11 out of his 16 games as team captain.

The Chinese Baduk league is still young, but developing into a very mature, attractive league. However, it takes a lot of effort from different parties to achieve the high standard. We hope the Chinese league can keep growing and gather more attention from all over the world.

Koh Song Sang

Western Baduk News

by Michiel Tel

As happens every year during the school summer vacation, the biggest Baduk tournaments in the US and Europe took place: the US Go Congress and the European Go Congress. Both events, lasting respectively one and two weeks, besides providing their attendees with all the fun Baduk has to offer, also included their respective annual open championships.



The US Go Congress

The US Go Congress saw 478 registrants, of whom 25 were professional players. Some of these professionals were playing in the tournament, while others attended to give lectures and reviews.

The main tournament was divided into the US Open and the US Open Masters Division, of which the latter boasted the strongest 30 players at the tournament. The masters played three evening rounds on top of the six rounds played by all US Open players, for a total of nine games in regular competition style. Wu Hao, Chinese 2p, came out on top with a perfect score of nine wins. Second and third place went to US 1 dan professionals Andy Liu and Ryan Li, who scored 7-2 and 8-1.

Also at the US Go Congress: the finals of the Pandanet City League. The top two teams of the online league came together at the congress to decide who deserves the title of City League champion 2017. Defending champion Canwa Vancouver's Matthew Hu 1p lost the first board game to Greater Washington's Tim Song 1p. But this loss was offset by second and third board Ryan Li 1p and Bill Lin 7d's wins against Eric Lui 1p and Yuan Zhou 7d. This championship is Canwa Vancouvers third, after wins in 2014 and 2016.

The European Go Congress

This year's EGC, in Oberhof/Germany, was the biggest in its history, with over 1000 people joining, of which more than 800 played one or more rounds in the tournament – the European Open Championship. While the European Open was a 10 round McMahon tournament, the top 24 European players competed in a double knock-out tournament to determine the European champion. All EGF professionals participated, of which two played the final: Ilya Shikshin 1p and Matheusz Surma 1p. Matheusz managed to reach the final undefeated, while Ilya had to fight through the loser's section and win his rematch against Artem Kachanovskyi 1p, to whom he had lost in the quarter finals. In the final, Ilya pulled through to become European Champion for the fifth time in his Baduk career.

The Pandanet European Team Championship finals were played at the EGC as well, with the top 4 teams of the online league playing a full round-robin to determine the winner. The Russian team, consisting of European champion Ilya Shikshin 1p, Alexander Dinerchtein 3p, Gregory Fionin 6d, Timur Sankin 6d and Dmitrij Surin 6d, showed its prowess by only conceding one loss – to new European professional Andrij Kravec 1p from Ukraine – becoming the undisputed European team champion. Second to fourth, in order, were Romania, Hungary, and Ukraine.

The Vietnam National Baduk Tournament



The Vietnam National Tournament is the most important Baduk tournament in the South East Asian country. This annual tournament is sponsored by LS Corporation, a big Korean chaebol, for the last few years.

This year's tournament was held in Ho Chi Minh City from the 15th to 18th August. It attracted more than 80 players from different regions of the country, competing in 6 different categories: Men's Open, Women's Open, U16 Men, U16 Women, U11 Boys, and U11 Girls.

The main competition, men's and women's tournaments are 6 rounds Swiss-system tournaments, with SOS used as the tie-breaker.

(Photo by Vietnam Chess Fedaration)

The men's competition had more than 30 contenders, so the "final" is decided in round 5 between two players with 4 wins. This year, it was the rematch of last year's deciding game between Do Khanh Binh and Nguyen Manh Linh. Binh was one of the representatives of Vietnam in the European Go Congress this year, where he made it to board 1 of the Open Championship in round 10 to play the eventual champion Zhang Tao 5p. Linh is the reigning champion, and also the representative of Vietnam in the Samsung Cup Qualification World Group this year. Both are known for their territorial style, and they indeed played a long game, which Linh won by 1.5. Linh continued his momentum to win his last game to become the first player who won the men's tournament two times in a row! A great achievement, especially because he was undefeated both times! Losing thus failing to achieve revenge, surely affected Binh's spirit. He went on to lose his last game against the 15 year old Vo Nhat Minh, handing the top3 position to the latter. Also a first for the young talent!



Cao Ngoc Anh (left) and Ngo Anh Tam

In the women's competition, reigning champion Pham Thi Kim Long succeeded in defending her title. She, however, was beaten by Tam Anh – another Vietnamese representative in EGC this year – in round 5; thus needed a little help from her teammate Yen Nhi (in Ben Tre team), who overcome Tam Anh in the last round, to secure first place.

Baduk has only started to gain popularity in Vietnam in the last 10 years, and most of the strong players of the current generation started playing Baduk quite late (in high-school or later). However, the fact that the National Tournament and other regional tournaments have categories for young players is a good sign. Some players who played in the youth category a few years ago now start to claim top spots in the main category.

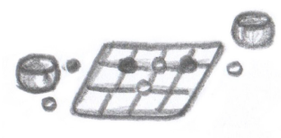
Pham Viet Khoi

Getting the Last Play

Game for a Pair of Gold-Petaled Bowls

- Bill Spight -

In its premier issue Myosu published an article about the Baduk classic, Collection of the Carefree and Innocent Pastime. The book contains one of the oldest surviving complete game records, of a game played during the Tang dynasty for a pair of gold-petaled bowls, between Gu Shiyan, Black, and Yan Jingshi, White. White played first. The game was scored by territory plus captured stones, but with a so-called group tax, i.e., the two points of territory necessary for the two eyes of each group were not scored. Black won by one point, but White could have evened the score by getting the last play. Both players made mistakes. The fight which White might have waged for the last play was unusual. For now, let's look at White's last mistake, which lost the game.



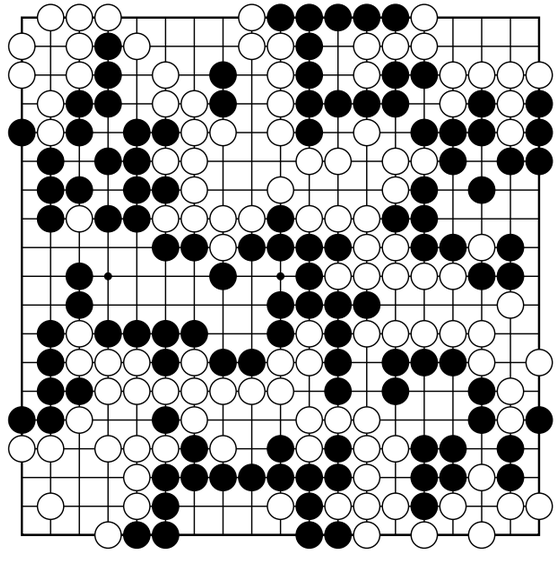


Figure 1

Fig. 1: In this position White could have evened the score by getting the last play.

How would you get the last play? More than one line of play will work.

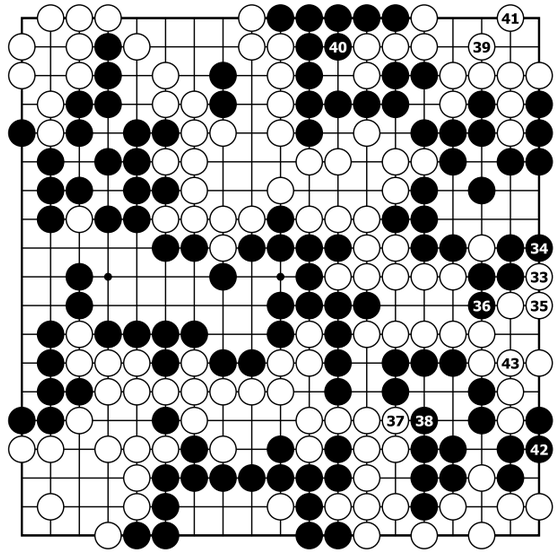


Figure 2 (Moves 233 - 243)

Figure 2 shows the play in the actual game. White took local sente in two places. Black 238 is the last effective play. The remaining plays are neutral points and protective plays. Black won by one point.

First, let us consider the exchange, White 237 - Black 238. White 237 is a one point sente, which means that a black reverse sente in the local position would gain one point. The local sente sequence gained no points, in accordance with the saying, sente gains nothing.

We call the local position a white sente as well as the play. A white sente position is one kind of local position that White does not want to leave

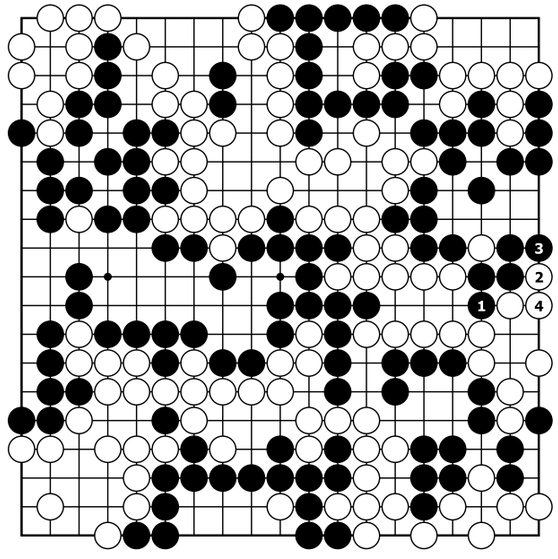


Diagram 2 - 1

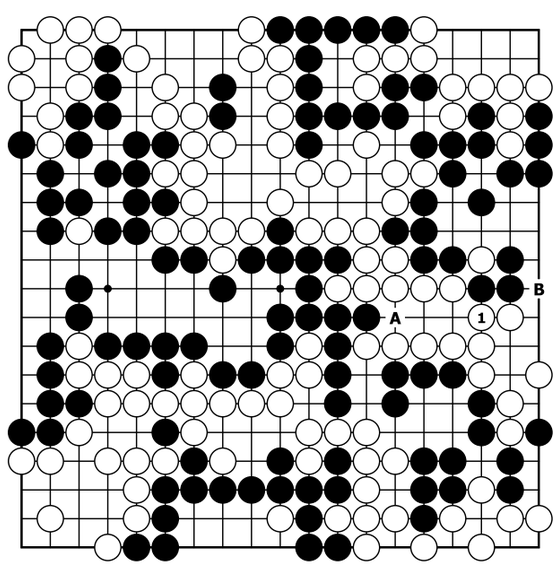


Diagram 2 - 2

as the last one on the board in the fight for the last play. The reason is that Black gets the last local play, either as a reply to White's sente or as a reverse sente play. When the last local position on the board is a white sente, Black gets the last play.
Now let us consider the position on the right side. White took local sente there, and also gained nothing.

Dia. 2-1: The position on the right side is a one point black sente. Black 1 threatens the atari at 4, a 2 point sente. White replies with White 2 – 4. This sente exchange gains nothing. Note that the local result is the same as in the game. That sente exchange gained nothing, as well. To gain one point White must play the reverse sente at 1.

Dia. 2-2: White 1 produces two new local positions, A and B. Position A is not a black sente, but it is the same kind of position, because White can get the last local play, regardless of who plays first. Black does not want to leave that as the last local position on the board. Position B is a hane-and-connect, a different kind of position where whoever plays first can also get the last local play. Neither player would like for it to be the last local position on the board if the opponent gets to play in it first.

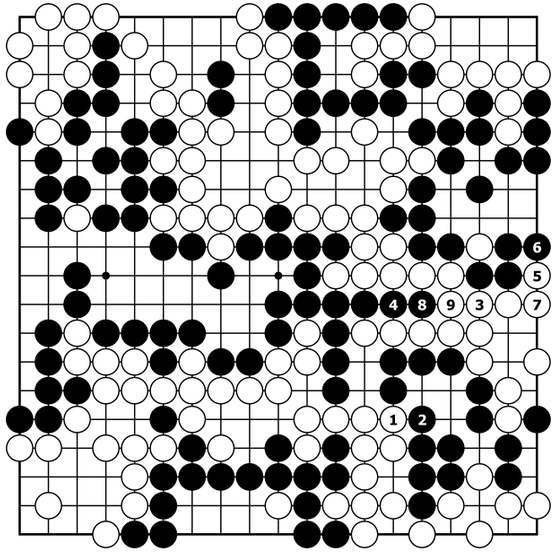
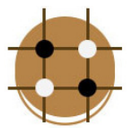


Diagram 2 - 3

Dia. 2-3 shows how White could gain one point and even the score. In the fight for the last play it is usual to play sente first. After Black 2 the local position where Black gets the last play is eliminated. If Black plays Black 2 at 3, to try to take sente, White plays a larger, three point sente at 2 that Black must answer. Black 4 gains one point and tries to eliminate A from the board to keep White from getting the last play. White now has a chance to make a mistake. If White replies at 8 Black can play the hane-and-connect at 7 and get the last play. But White plays the hane-and-connect to gain one point and gets the last play with White 9 to even the score.



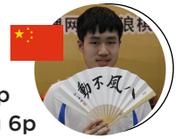
What do we learn from this fight for the last play?

First, we learn that there are local positions where only one player can get the last play, no matter who plays first. As a general rule of thumb, we try to eliminate positions where only our opponent can get the last play. We alse generally avoid playing in those positions where only we can get the last local play, to keep them on the board so that we can get the last play of the game.
Second, we learn that we should usually play our own sente early in the fight, to eliminate local positions where only our opponent can get the last play.
Third, we learn that we should beware of taking sente in a local position where we also have the option to get the last play. Sometimes that is the right thing to do, but in this case White took sente on the right side and left a position where Black got the last play. White should have taken his sente in the bottom right and then taken reverse sente on the right side.
Perhaps White was lured by the prospect of sente on the right side into making a mistake. But both players made mistakes earlier in the fight for the last play. There are more lessons to learn, and earlier in the game the fight for the last play might have been a remarkable cliff-hanger where White just barely manages to get the last play and even the score. The second, and final, article about this fight will cover all of that.

Big Match Between Promising Young Players

- Decisive Jachung *





Black: Shin Min-jun 6p
White: Huang Yun Song 6p
Tournament: 2017 Chinese A League, Round 13
Date: 2017. 8. 11.
Commented by On So-jin 7p

Shin Min-jun is a promising Korean young Baduk player, his rank is 11th in the August Korean rating list. Huang Yun Song is also a famous young Chinese player. Their teams play in the Chinese A League. Shin and Huang had played two games against each other before this encounter. The first game was in the 2015 Samsung Cup, which Shin won. Huang won their second game in 2015 Limin Cup World Top Star. This is their third game.

* *This is a Korean term that refers to a move that takes its own liberty, or a situation in which a certain move is not useful because it would take its own liberty.*

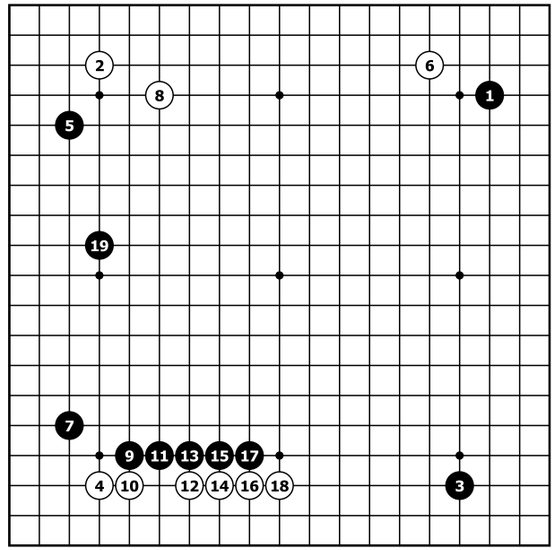
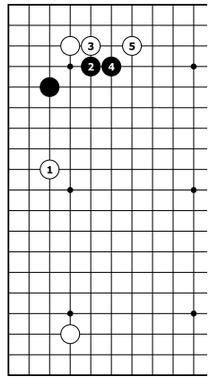
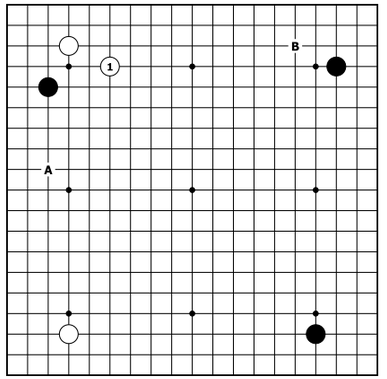


Figure 1 (1 to 19)

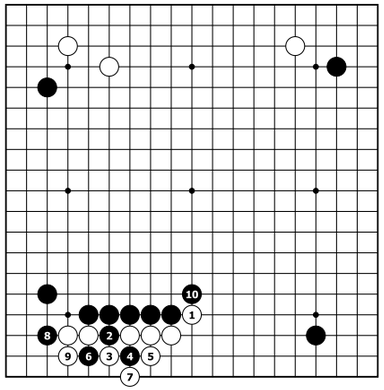
Fig. 1: White approached at 6 in the upper right corner. Why didn't White answer in the upper left corner, such as White 1 in Dia. 1-1 and Dia. 1-2? Black took influence with the joseki at 9 in the corner and kept pushing from 13 to 17. Couldn't White play hane at the star point (White 1 in Dia. 1-3) instead of White 18?



Dia. 1-1



Dia. 1-2



Dia. 1-3

Dia. 1-1: If White pincers at 1, instead of White 6, Black will play at 2. It is a common joseki until 5. Black gets sente and approaches the lower left corner. The result is even.

Dia. 1-2: White can also respond to Black 5 in Fig. 1 at 1. If Black takes A, then White will approach at B. It is a common variation.

Dia. 1-3: The hane at 1 is overplay. Black 2 and 4 are good moves because Black can occupy the 3-3 point in sente. Up to Black 10, White gets about ten points but Black's influence is worth more than that territory.

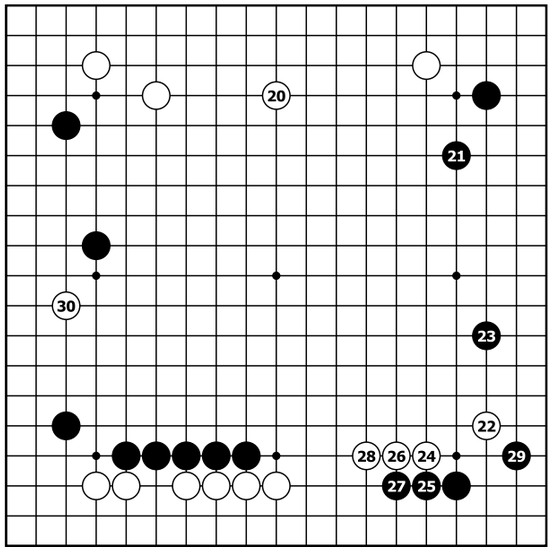
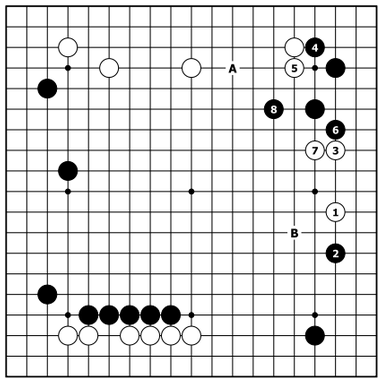


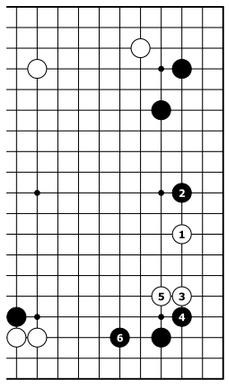
Figure 1 (20 to 30)

Fig. 2: Huang tried to make a moyo on the top with White 20. Shin answered at Black 21 to defend the corner and make territory.

Huang approached at 22, and Shin pincered at 23. Up to 29, White made some influence but it had low potential because Black 23 limits White's influence. Black got about 10 points in the corner and is satisfied with the result. Why didn't White split the right side instead of approaching with 22?



Dia. 2-1



Dia. 2-2

Dia. 2-1: If White splits the side with White 1 Black will pincer at 2. The result after Black 8 is good for Black. Invading at A and attacking at B are miai for Black.

Dia. 2-2: White might even consider splitting at 1. However, the result is unsatisfactory for White up to Black 6 because Black gets territory in the corner and on the side, while White's group is still fragile.

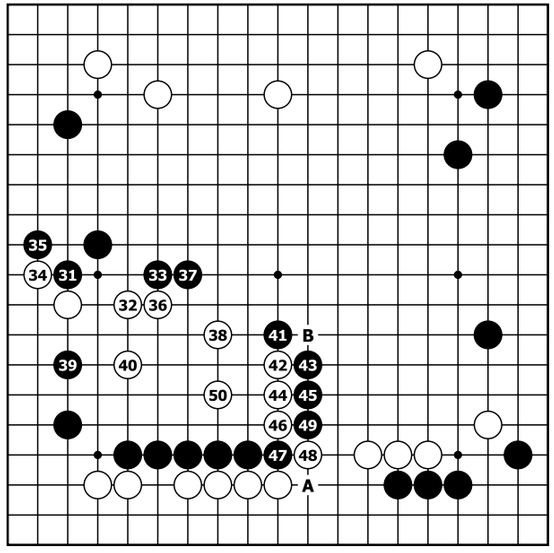
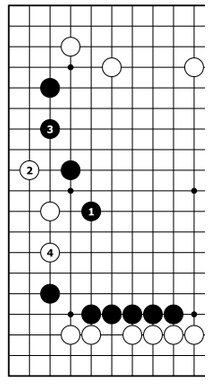
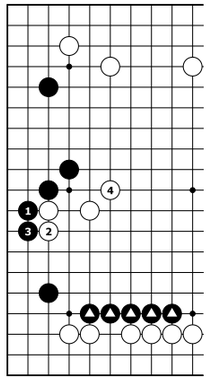


Figure 3 (31 to 50)

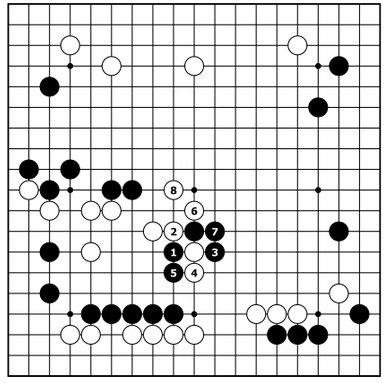
Fig. 3: Huang attached at 31, which is a common way of attacking. Black kept attacking with 33, then White went out to the center with move 32. Black 39 is the vital point to attack, taking White's eye space. When Black strongly attacked the white group with move 41, White tried to split Black while moving out. It is a very complicated situation up to move 50. Black has a weakness at B wheras White has one at A, furthermore the white group in the center and Black's marked stones are not settled yet. Were there any other attacking moves? What would they play next?



Dia. 3-1



Dia. 3-2



Dia. 3-3

Dia. 3-1: If Black caps with Black 1 instead of Black 31 in Figure 3, White will slide at 2 and then play 4. White can easily settle down on the side.

Dia. 3-2: Playing the hane at Black 1 instead of Black 33 is not a good idea. White can easily run away. Black's marked stones have lost their potential.

Dia. 3-3: If Black plays the hane at 1 instead of Black 43 in the actual game, White cuts at 2. White can successfully escape up to 8.

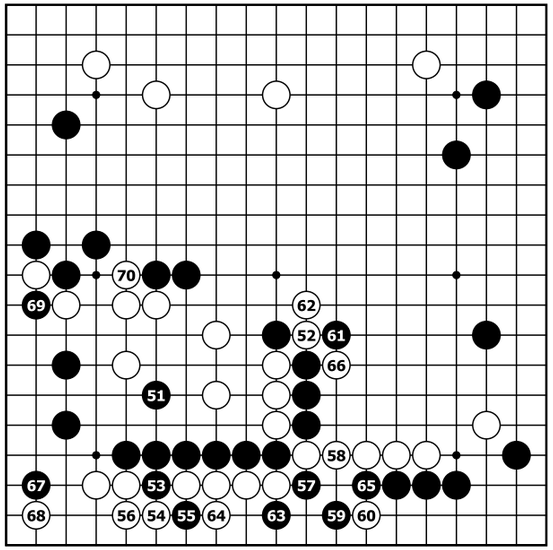
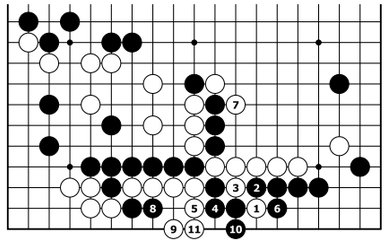


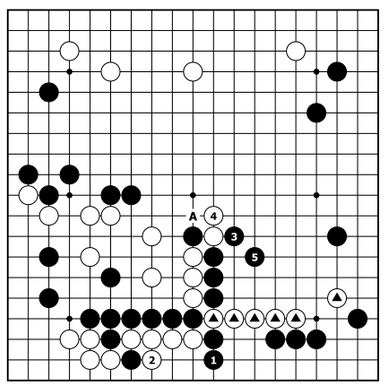
Figure 4 (51 to 70)

Fig. 4: Black defended his group on the left side with 51. White cut Black's weak point in the center at 52, starting a full-scale fight. Black 55 was a good probing move. If White plays at 64 instead of 56, Black can attach at the 3-3 point and get territory. Black 59 was a big mistake that results in White capturing Black's three stones in the center with 66.



Dia. 4-1

Dia. 4-1: If Black cuts at 2 when White plays at 1 (60 in Fig. 3) White will play atari at 3 and then block at 5. Black has to answer at 6, and White can capture Black's three stones in the center with 7. This result is worse for Black than the actual game.



Dia. 4-2

Dia. 4-2: Instead of Black 59 in the game, descending with Black 1 is the correct move. White's marked group is in trouble up to Black 5. There is also bad aji for White at A.

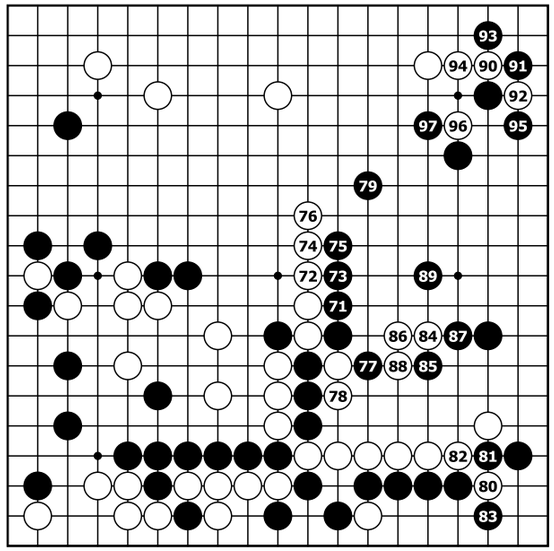
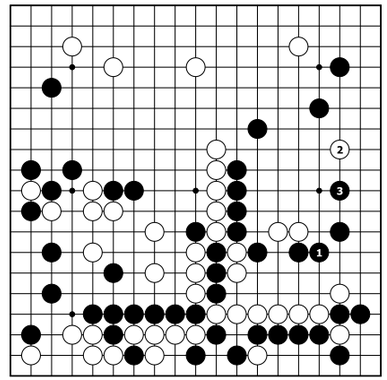


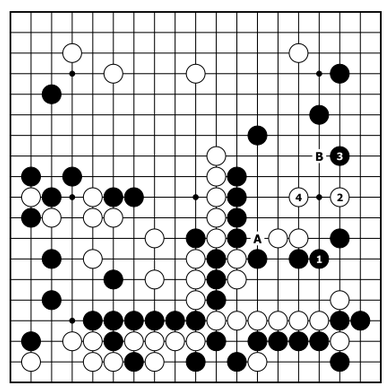
Figure 5 (71 to 97)

Fig. 5: Black just played at 71 to make a moyo on the right side but it was too late, Black already had a big loss. Up to 79, Black tried to catch up. White made some exchanges from 80 to 82 before invading Black's territory at 84. This was a good move to take advantage of Black's thinness. Black took a step back at 87 and 89. Why didn't Black attack to kill the white stones instead of 87 and 89? (Check Dia. 5-1 for the answer).



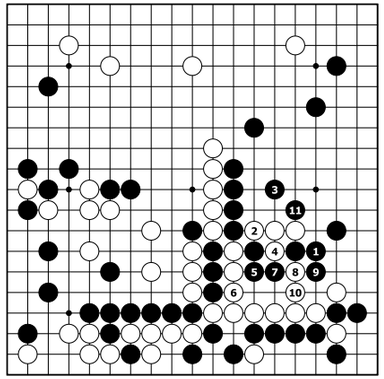
Dia. 5-1

Dia. 5-1: Instead of Black 87 in the actual game. Black could play at 1 and try to kill the two white stones. Defending with White 2 is overplay because Black will attack severely at 3. White is in trouble.

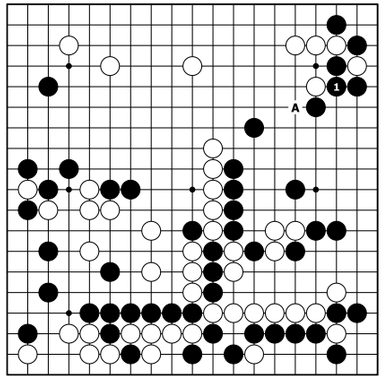


Dia. 5-2

Dia. 5-2: Instead of White 2 in the previous diagram, White should try to live at 2. Black will pincer at 3 and White will jump at 4. This leads to a very complicated fight. White can aim at Black's weak point at A and the attachment at B to make eye shape. It is not easy to capture the white group. However, since Black is behind, Black should give it a try.



Dia. 5-3



Dia. 5-4

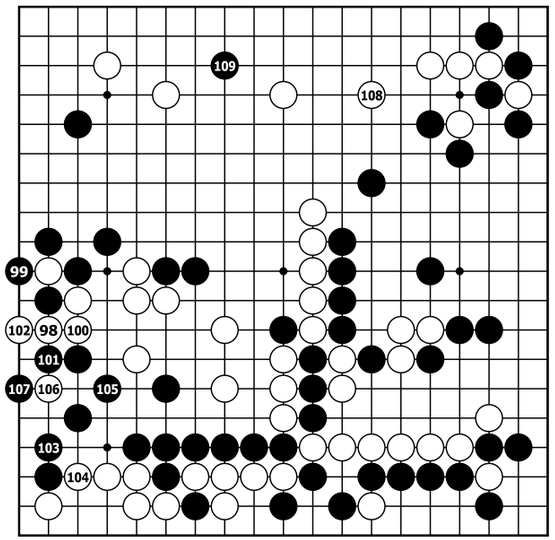


Figure 6 (98 to 109)

Dia. 5-3: If White cuts at 2, White can't get enough benefit up to 11.

Dia. 5-4: Instead of Black 97, Black could connect at 1 but there is the aji of White playing a hane at A later. In other words, the result is advantageous for White.

Fig. 6: White cut off Black's group at 98 and 100 in order to force Black to live. White defended his territory at 108, after which Black immediately invaded the upper side.

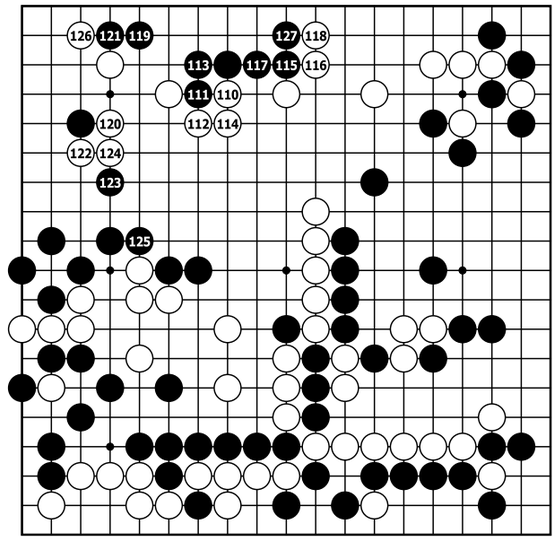
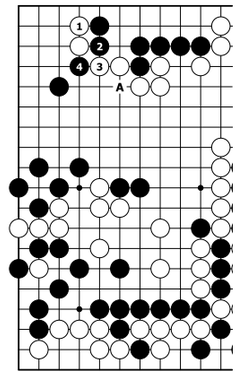
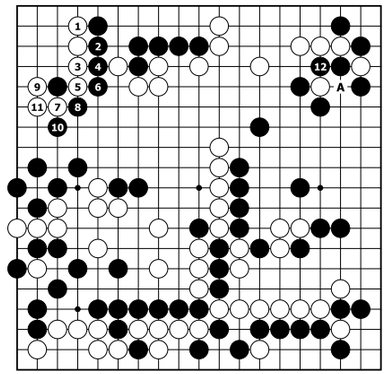


Figure 7 (110 to 127)

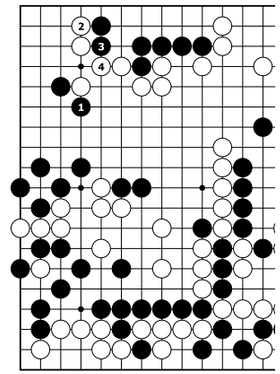
Fig. 7: White attached at 110 to prevent Black from escaping to the center. Black tried to live on the side from 111 to 119. White attached at 120, and Black pushed at 121. Up to 127, Black lived on the side and White made territory in the corner. Couldn't White capture Black's group?



Dia. 7-1



Dia. 7-2



Dia. 7-3

Dia. 7-1: If White blocks at 1 instead of White 120, then Black pushes and cuts. White is going to be in danger. Also White has a weak point at A.

Dia. 7-2: Instead of the hane at 3 in the previous diagram, if White extends at 3, Black can live and defend the weak point at A in Dia. 7-2 with 12.

Dia. 7-3: Instead of 121, if Black plays at 1 then White blocks at 2. Black doesn't have enough eye space to live.

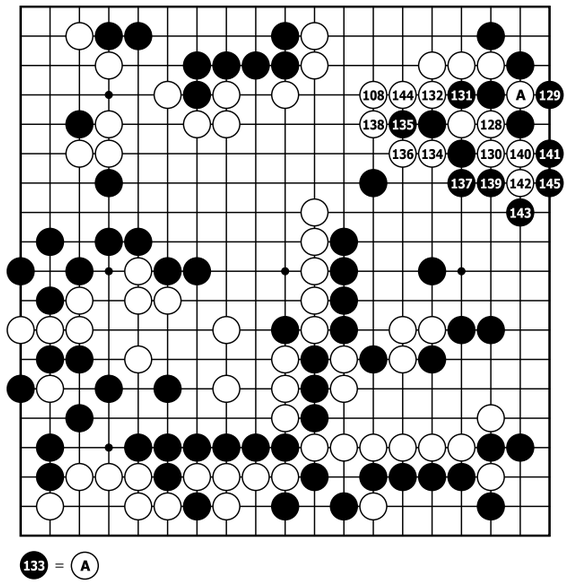


Figure 8 (128 to 145)

Fig. 8: White 128 is the move which White wanted to play. Up to 145, it is a one-way sequence.

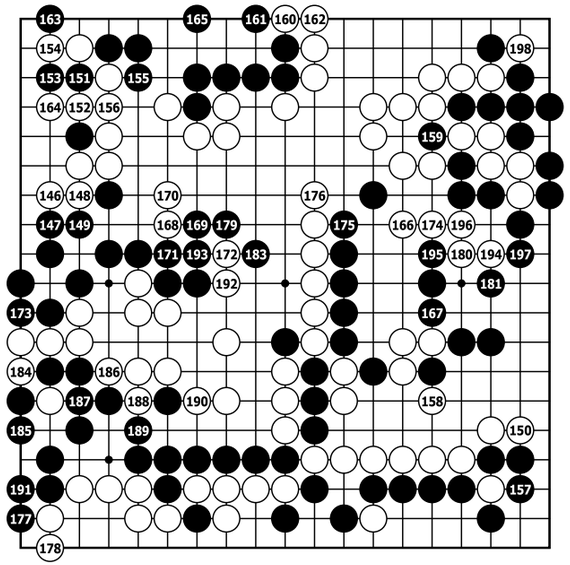


Figure 9 (146 to 198)

Fig. 9: In the endgame, there was no chance for Black to win as White solidly secured his lead. White was leading by komi and after White 198 Shin resigned.



ALPHAGO LIKES TO IMPROVE

LARGE-SCALE JOSEKI

Recently some Chinese netizens asked: "Which joseki have been repudiated by AlphaGo?" and Chinese legend Nie Weiping 9p has given his answer. Below is the translation of an original article on the Chinese website Sina Sports.

From the matches played by AlphaGo, it seems it changed almost all of the large-scale joseki (LSJ). The most typical lsj are the large avalanche joseki, the magic sword and the taisha. I will briefly introduce the large avalanche and the magic sword joseki played by the Master version of AlphaGo.

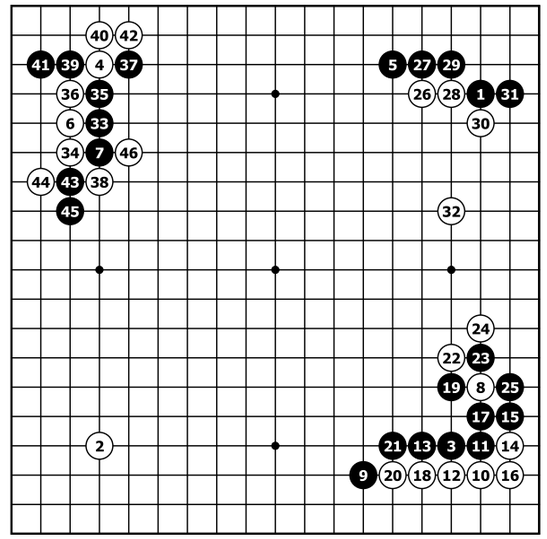


Fig. 1: On the top left there is the new variation of the large avalanche joseki played by AlphaGo (White) against Mi Yuting 9p. White 46 had never been seen before and was first played by AlphaGo.

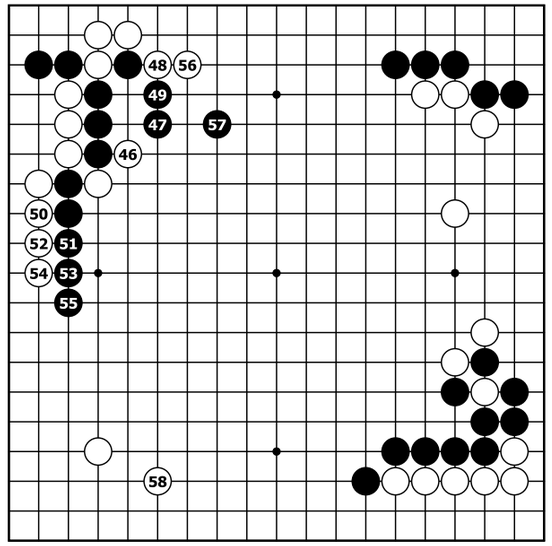
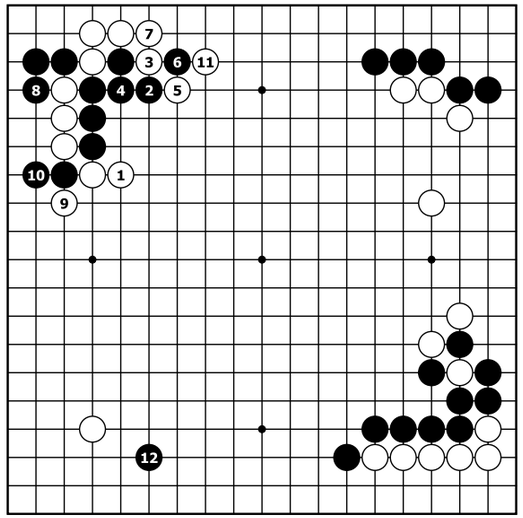


Fig. 2: Based on the result, AlphaGo's novel move (White 46) was a success; not only capturing the corner in sente, but it was also able to play on both the top and the bottom and even enclose the bottom-left corner. Up to White 58, Black hasn't gained much.



Dia. 2-1: The normal sequence for the large avalanche is as above. Instead of AlphaGo's hane 46, White extends at 1. Black will get sente to approach the lower left corner, while White will be able to capture Black 6 on the top side. Since Black is solid on the right side, White's development is being constrained from that direction.

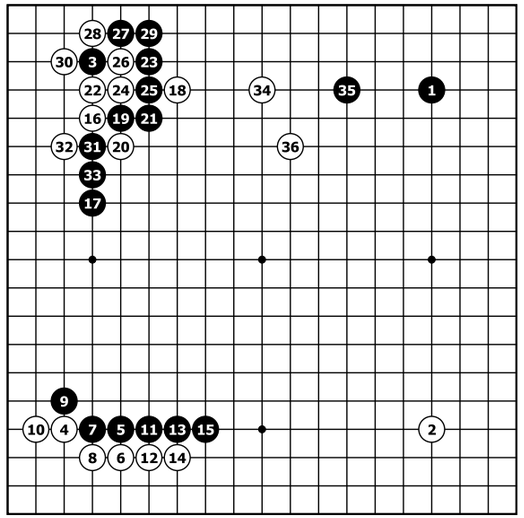
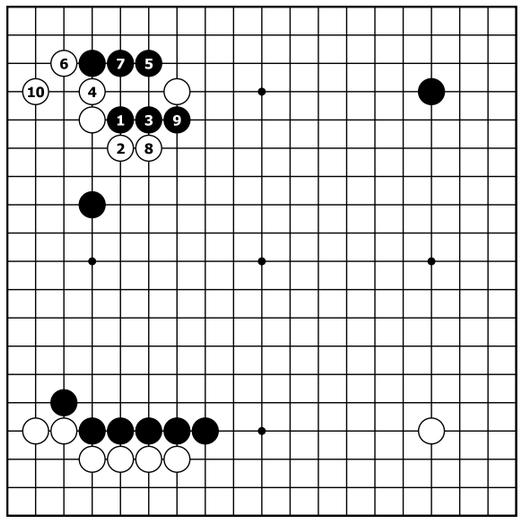
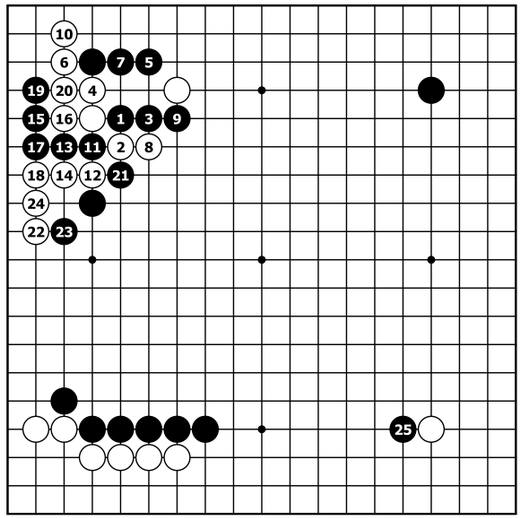


Fig. 3: This is another match from AlphaGo (White) playing against Jiang Weijie 9p. AlphaGo improved the magic sword joseki by playing 24, White still got sente after the new sequence. After White 34 and 36, Black's influence has been reduced.



Dia 3-1: This is one of the original sequences for the magic sword joseki. White is facing Black's thickness, which is not a good choice for White.



Dia 3-2: Here is another variation of the joseki shown, Black 25 prepares for the ladder. White has too much aji and it is not easy for him to control the game.

AlphaGo

Both the large avalanche and the magic sword joseki will take up nearly a quarter of the board. This means that those joseki will demolish all the possibilities of a fourth of the board. As a master of controlling the game by making precise judgment, that's not the result AlphaGo would like to see. According to the theory, every single move should only be played after analysing the overall situation of the board. The large-scale joseki need too many moves to be complete and the shapes often become over-concentrated. Those joseki definitely need to be improved and AlphaGo has just taught humans how to do it.

Writer: Nei Weiping
Translator: Kew Chien Chong

Nie Weiping



Chinese professional player; born 17 August 1952.

Before becoming a professional, Nie won the 1st World Amateur Go Championship in 1979.

Nie is well-known for his outstanding performance in the first four China-Japan Super Go Series (1984-1988). People believed at that time that Japan had the strongest Go players in the world, but Nie defeated them consecutively in that tournament. After the 11 successive wins against all the top Japanese players, Nie earned the nickname "The Iron Goalkeeper" as he was the last Chinese player left and lead China to victory. He became a national hero after those remarkable results.

He is also the teacher of well-known world champions, Gu Li 9p and Chang Hao 9p. Nie created one of the most prestigious Weiqi schools in China (Nie Weiping Dojang) which was the school to many more world champions, such as Ke Jie 9p.

DeepZenGo
Valor & Humiliation

Bae Incheol
Ph.D./ Research Director
Korea Expressway Corporation Research Institute

AlphaGo heralded a new era for Baduk; one where AIs can compete with and even beat professionals. Since then, other bots have been developed and you might have heard of DeepZenGo.

DeepZenGo is a Japanese AI that won the 1st World AI Baduk Open held a month ago. In this Olympiad, DeepZenGo beat FineArt (China), the expected champion, in the semi-final, and CGI (Taiwan), an overnight sensation in the final. Before the event DeepZenGo had an 86% win rate against the Japanese National Team while playing practice matches, which is an astounding feat in itself. But DeepZenGo has two faces like the ancient Roman god Janus; one of valor and the other humiliation. Let's look into its ambivalent nature.

Figure 1 shows a match against the young Japanese player Mutsuura Yuta 3p on July 27th 2017. In this game DeepZenGo showed us a sequence of highly inventive moves which seem hard to counter for professional players. This certainly does make DeepZenGo's playing style attractive to look at. DeepZenGo plays with a very constant rhythm. There's no sign of doubt or confusion, as if every move were inevitable. Figure 2 is a typical example. After the curtain rose on the first major battle, DeepZenGo's line is straightforward. It played following the conventional proverb 'slow and steady wins the race'. Although it may seem easy, DeepZenGo's way of playing is extremely hard for a human player to conceive.

But Homer sometimes nods. In the second match against Mukai Chiaki 5p on July 26th 2017, DeepZenGo makes a terrible blunder. The mistakes in Fig. 4 and Fig. 5 are ones no experienced human player would make. It is not until the late endgame that we figure out why DeepZenGo did not resign. It misjudged the life and death position of his group! In a philosophical sense, it is not the least bit significant. After all, error is an essential and fascinating part of Baduk. We are puzzled because we take for granted that AI is nearly perfect in solving clear-cut positions like life and death. In any event, AI has introduced a novel era in the advancement of the game of Baduk. To paraphrase Aldous Huxley's renowned work, we have entered into 'A Brave New World of Baduk'.

> "DeepZenGo has two faces like the ancient Roman god Janus; one of valor and the other humiliation"

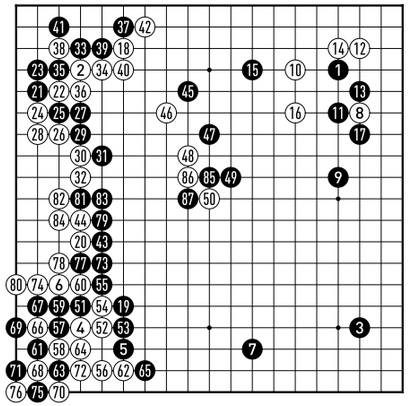


Figure 1 (1 to 72)

Fig. 1: After the top left corner is settled, DeepZenGo follows up with the bold attachment at 43. The combat triggered by 51 escalates into a gruesome tug-of-war. The game has entered a stage of extreme suspense at 72. The following move will decide the game.

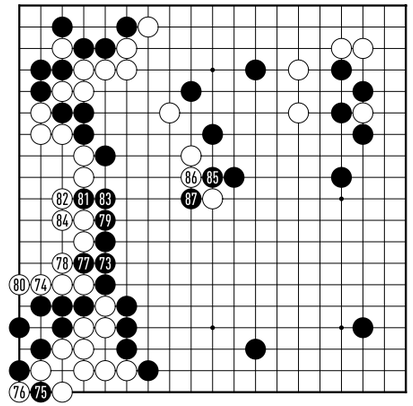


Figure 2 (73 to 87)

Fig. 2: DeepZenGo chose 73, forcing White to capture the stones in the corner. Up to 84, the moves are a one-way street and White wins a small victory. But it's a Pyrrhic victory; the game rapidly begins to favor Black. DeepZenGo's merciless blow at 87 lays bare the harsh reality! White is doomed.

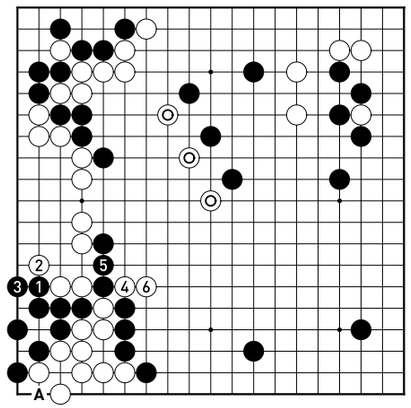


Diagram 1

Dia. 1: Securing another eye with 1 and 3 would be the normal moves, but then White will cut Black's lifeline with 4 and extend at 6, having cast the 'Iron Ring'(the three circled stones) in advance. White can bear the burden of the potential ko at A. Conclusion: this variation will lead to a complicated fight, failing for Black.

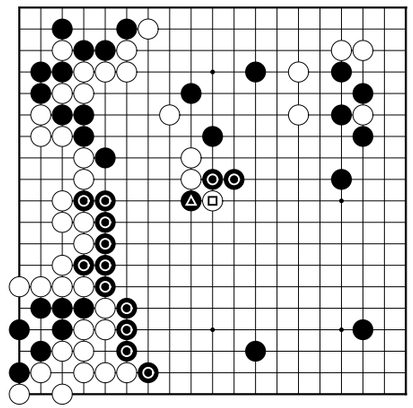


Diagram 2

Dia. 2: Look at the black wall stretching dauntingly across the board. This blocking formation is so thick but the cut proves fatal for White, and the cut proves fatal for White. DeepZenGo eventually won by resignation.

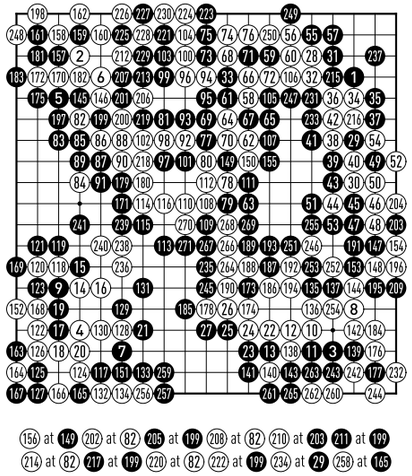


Figure 3 (1 to 271)

Fig. 3: White does a great job, making a fortune by capturing black's group on the top. Unwilling to admit defeat, DeepZenGo draws a sword at the feeble quintet on the bottom left with 117. The result of the war all depends on this final chapter. From 170 to 271 both players have opposite views on the bottom left. Is White's group dead or alive? Who is right, AI or human?

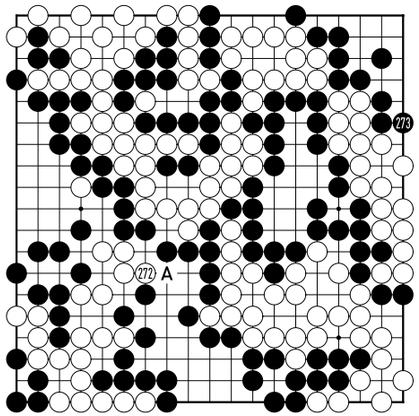


Figure 4 (272 to 273)

Fig. 4: Seeing Black's turn at 273, the human's shock is palpable. Black should have blocked at A instead because it is far bigger than 273. This is evidence of DeepZenGo's misjudging the life and death situation.

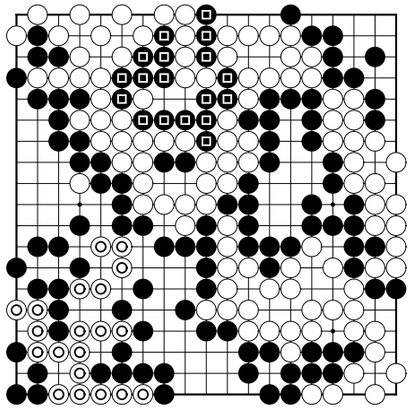


Diagram 3

Dia. 3: Dividing the board into two groups makes matters more clear. The 'Black Panther' on the top is dead, whereas the 'White Whale' at the bottom corner is not! Is something wrong with DeepZenGo?

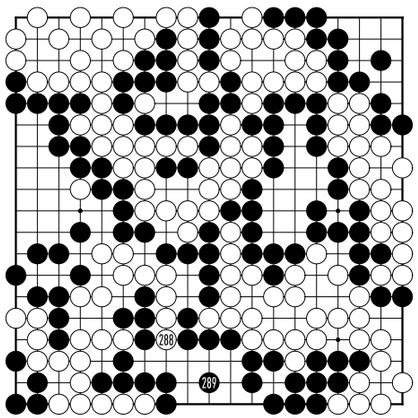


Figure 5 (288 to 289)

Fig. 5: Another explicit piece of evidence comes up. Facing the push at 288, DeepZenGo surprises us by retreating at 289. It is quite a shocker that it doesn't understand the seki situation in the bottom left. The game ended with White's tremendous victory by 51.5 points.

Dying for a Squeeze

(Na Hyeonseok, edited by Philippe Fanaro)
White: Go Seigen 5p
Black: Kojima Haruichi 4p
Date: 1933, October 17-18 (2 days)
No Komi

This game was played in the Oteai Tournament, a rank promotion system created by the Nihon Kiin in the early 1900s. This is one of the greatest examples of the Shin Fuseki era, a rupture with the traditional territorial and corner-focused fuseki emphasized in the previous century. I've found this game in old records, apparently a hidden gem. It is with great excitement that I show you this game, and a new paradigm of those days: break all the stereotypes!

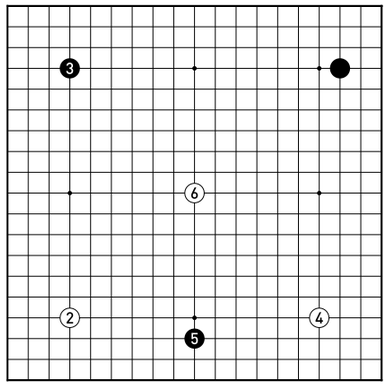


Figure 1 (1-6)

Fig. 1: Look at Go Seigen's White 6! He plays on the zenith as White during the opening!

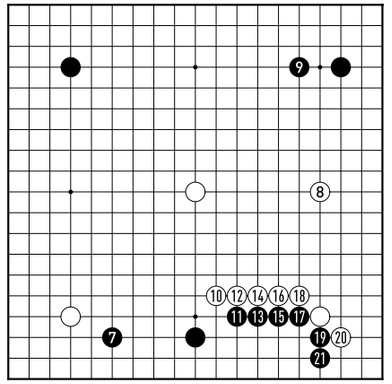


Figure 2 (7-21)

Fig. 2: Next, he occupies the right side with 8, ignoring Black's approach to his corner, a very unusual tenuki. But he has his eyes on the prize: he continues to develop the center moyo with 10. Black persists in stealing the lower side territory and leaves White with a defect in the corner.

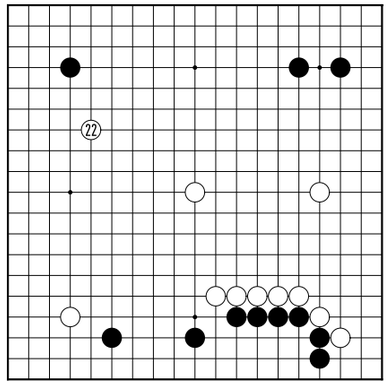
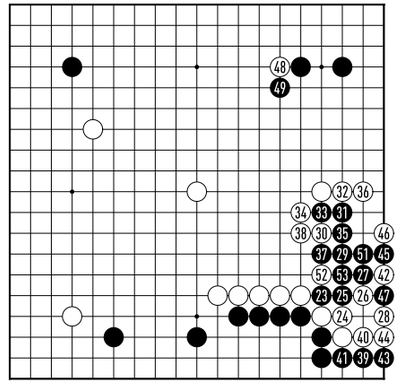


Figure 3 (22)

Fig. 3: And now White 22! I was amazed by this "approach". A glimpse from the future, AlphaGo in disguise 84 years ago!



50 at 42

Figure 4 (23-53)

Fig. 4: Black follows up by capturing the White group in the lower right corner, but White successfully squeezes him. And further benefits from the ko will most likely follow.

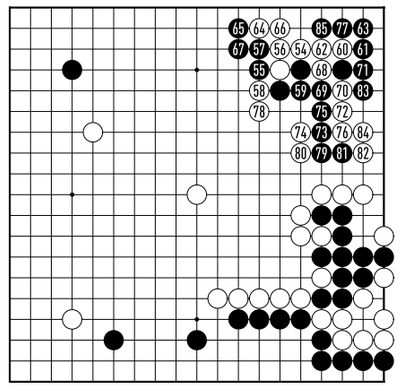


Figure 5 (54-85)

Fig. 5: Black has captured another white group in the upper right corner: how can Black lose? Black's got at least 60 points, maybe more, and White has no big territory. However –

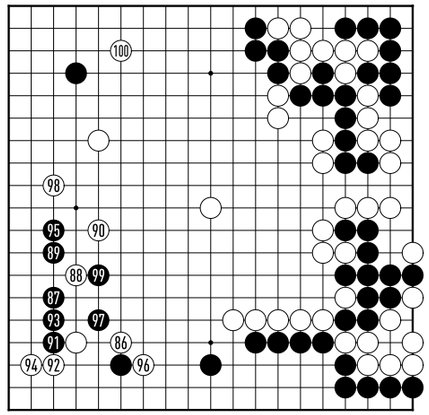


Figure 6 (86-100)

Fig. 6: White attaches at 86, extending his center moyo. As a counter, Black disrupts the influence with 87, but White manages to profit in the corner with 96 and get the important forcing moves of 90 and 98.

Then, suddenly... White 100! A black stone is about to get squeezed yet again: Black has apparently lost grip of the game.

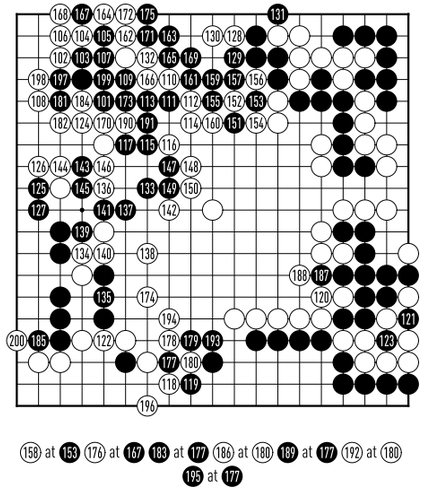


Figure 7 (101-200)

Fig. 7: Black plays the diagonal move 101 in an effort to break White's shape and influence, but White shows remarkable flexibility by switching into territory while at the same time continuing to squeeze Black's awkward shape. In the end, Black fixes his shape with the very solid 109, and White gets the paramount sente to extend his moyo and reduce Black's top potential. Black has no choice but to reduce White's center territory, letting White profit along the way. White finally benefits from the ko in the lower right corner with 122, and the game is now quite clearly favoring him.

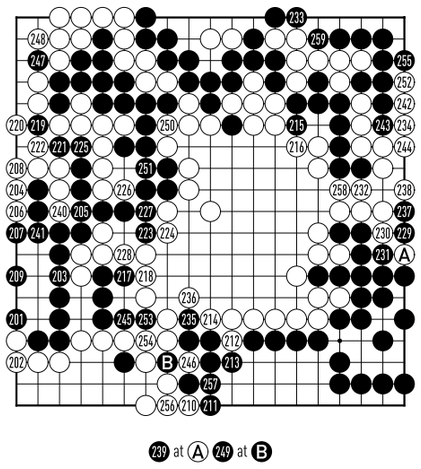


Figure 8 (201-259)

Fig. 8: White finishes the game with simple endgame, and wins by 5 points - an astounding feat for a game with no komi and such an unconventional opening.

In his masterful way, Go Seigen had broadened the horizons of possible plays in the first half of the 20th century, and I hope today he has once again shown us that we can play more freely and creatively than our preconceptions would like us to believe.



Go Seigen in Japan, 1957

“I find Myosu in my dreams”

Interviewer: *Ha Ji-su (The Chosun Ilbo)*
Translator: *Hüsrev Aksüt*

Every year, 17 people are given a professional title by the Korean Baduk Association. Among these pros, four of them are female. Kim Kyeong-eun (14) became a pro this year on August 11 breaking the youngest female pro record in Korea.

“I wanted to become a pro in secondary school. I am happy to have accomplished my goal as planned. However, I’ve just turned the corner, I don’t think this is the end. If you consider my Baduk career a marathon, I’ve only ran 10 out of 42.195 kilometres. Hereafter I should run faster.” said Kim in her interview for Chosun Ilbo on August 23.



According to Kim, ‘restless practice’ was the key to becoming the youngest female pro ever. She studied Baduk for more than 10 hours every day which helped her maintain her sense of moves. She said by spending over ten hours in the Baduk dojang (school) every day, she started to feel as if this was her home.

Kim stated that she paid attention to her mental and physical strength as well. She exercised daily and watched what she ate. She stopped eating ramyeon (Korean noodles), bread and pizza after she became a yunguseng(insei).

When she was six years old Kim started to play Baduk. ***“At first it started as a hobby, but after winning against stronger opponents, I began to enjoy it more and more”*** said Kim, and added: ***“Since there are no fixed patterns in Baduk, you have lots of possible places to make your move which is very attractive to me.”***

Kim became a yunguseng at the age of 12. While she was a yunguseng, even on weekends she had to play Baduk for six hours per day with other yunguseng.

“Yunguseng play the moves they studied with their masters in their own dojang when they face a yunguseng from a different dojang. It is a good moment to try a new move and learn from it. When you play with a stronger opponent, depending on the situation, you may encounter various myosu (an excellent move that is difficult to see) as well.”

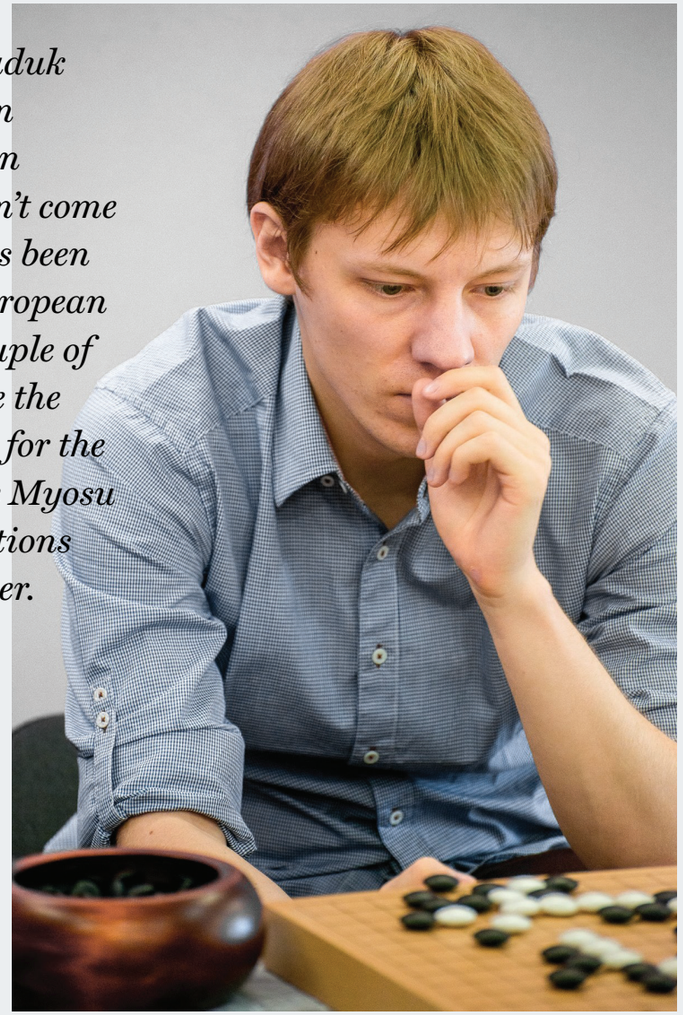
One day, she unexpectedly got an idea. ***“Since you play Baduk all day, from time to time you play Baduk in your dreams. I found a new move in my dream while I was sleeping on the subway. Before forgetting it, I went directly to the dojang and played it out on the board to remember it well.”***

At the end of the interview, Kim expressed her aspiration: ***“I want to be the first female Korean player who wins an open international Baduk tournament.”***

Yunguseng: A student studying to become a professional player

INTERVIEW
with the
EUROPEAN CHAMPION

To most European Baduk players, Ilya Shikshin winning the European Championships doesn't come as a surprise. Ilya has been very dominant in European Baduk for the last couple of years and has become the European Champion for the fifth time. About time Myosu asked him some questions about his Baduk career.



First of all, congratulations on winning the European Championship! Could you give a quick self introduction for the readers that do not know you yet?

Thank you for the congratulations. I'm Ilya Shikshin, 27 years old, from Russia. I started to play Baduk when I was 5 years old and became EGF professional in 2015. Also, I'm the winner of multiple European and Russian championships.

This is the fifth time you won the European Championship. How do you feel about winning yet again? Does this feel like a milestone in your Baduk career?

Of course I'm very happy to win the European championship again. But honestly, I am aiming for new achievements – not only in Europe.

Were you the favourite to win this title? Who do you think your main rivals are? What was your toughest game on your way to the championship?

I won the European Championship last year, so I'd say my chances were quite good. My main rivals are the other European professionals. Especially Mateusz Surma 1p from Poland; he has shown good results this year. I met him in the final of the championships; my game with him was quite tough.

The AlphaGo games are being studied a lot lately. Did you review these games as preparation for the tournament? What else did you do to prepare?

I followed and reviewed the games AlphaGo played with Lee Sedol and Ke Jie live on Youtube. I also watched some of the games AlphaGo played against top professionals on the internet as "Master". However, I think AlphaGo's games against itself are too complicated to understand. Usually, I watch top professional's games and play games myself to prepare for tournaments.

Since the first time you became European champion in 2007, did you become a lot stronger? What about the competition?

Yes, I do think I became a lot stronger, perhaps 1 or 1,5 stones. The level of the competition also grew considerably. In 2007, I had only one main rival – Alexandr Dinerstein. This year there were 7 European professionals competing at the EGC, including myself.

Do you think the European professional system helped you and others achieve a higher level of play?

Creating the European professional system was a great step in the development of Baduk in Europe. It motivates strong players to study Baduk more seriously. Nowadays, there are many good tournaments for professionals in Europe, and we often get invited to Asian events.

Lately, you were part of a team of European professionals playing in a team league in China. Could you tell us a little about that experience? Did you feel like the European professionals were competitive?

It was the first time a European team took part in the Chinese League. Our results were not too good; our team had 3 draws and 4 losses in 7 rounds. We won a total of 7 out of 28 games. Next time, I think we can achieve better results.

Are you going to play in any international professional events in the near future? What other events will you play at?

I am going to take part in the 2nd IMSA Elite Mind Games in China in December, which I qualified for through the European Championship. Other events I will be at include the Silk Road tournament in China in October and the Sankei cup in Japan, which will be held in November.

Finally, we'd like to ask about your Baduk family. If I'm correct, your father taught both you and your sister, Svetlana Shikshina 3p, and in the end you both became professional players.
Could you tell us about how your father inspired you both to become two of the strongest Baduk players in Europe?

I would say my father is a professional at teaching Baduk. Many of his students have shown good results at both Russian and European Championships.
As for his method, I think he has a good understanding of the basic principles of Baduk and is able to relay them to his pupils very well. With these principles, it was not very difficult for me to reach dan level and increase my Baduk strength even further.
I would also like to thank Mr. Chun Pong-jo 9p, who helped Svetlana and myself study Baduk in Korea and reach the high level which we both play at.

Thank you for the interview. Myosu wishes you good luck in your future Baduk endeavours!

Michiel Tel



Photos: Kirill Akinfeev



INTERVIEW
with



DANIEL CHAN HAN SIONG

from The Go Academy (TGA)

THE GO ACADEMY

Daniel Chan

Director of TGA

Singaporean, born in 1987

Bachelor of Baduk Studies from Myongji University

Korean 4 Dan certificate holder.

Can you tell me about yourself a bit?

I was in a comic shop one day and somehow the cover of Hikaru No Go caught my attention and I started reading it. I was so fascinated by it. I began searching online about the rules and that's how I learnt about Go. I started getting more involved with the Go association in Singapore and I represented my school and Singapore in overseas competitions. After my two years of army national service, I went to Myongji University and majored in Baduk Studies.

When did you decide to open TGA and what was your main motivation?

Before graduating from Myongji, I was faced with two options. Either stay in Korea to continue my Masters in Baduk Studies or go back to Singapore to promote Go. I decided to go back to Singapore because I thought I was too old to continue studying and I wanted to popularize the game. After graduating, I went to work in the Go association of Singapore as the executive manager for one and a half years and realized that there were many restrictions and constraints to promote the game efficiently under the association. I believe that more could be done to promote the game so I left the association and together with some friends and my Go teacher, we started TGA in November 2014. We were very fortunate because we managed to invite the minister of education to be our guest of honor for our academy grand opening.

Who were in your target group as potential students? Could you tell me about the current development of TGA?

Our main target group is from 5 to 10 years old and they make up of 90% of our total students. We also offer adult class and professional teaching games taught by our head coach Mr. Kang Zhan Bin 6p. Currently we have around 250 students in both of our



TGA students from 5~7 years old.



Students with their Kyu certification.

centres in Singapore. Besides the classes in our academy, we also teach Go in primary and secondary schools as a co-curricular activity.

We know that you had been inviting famous professional players from China every year. Do you want to tell us more about it?

We understand that professional Go players are an important source of motivation for all Go players so by inviting them to our event, we hope that our students can be inspired to improve and reach new heights. In November 2014, we organized the 1st National Primary School Go Championship and the Tri Nation Junior Go Challenge and we invited Hua Yigang 8p, Vice President of the China Weiqi Association and Mok Jin-seok 9p from the Korean Baduk Association as the guests of honor. In 2015, we invited Wang Runan 8p, President of the China Weiqi Association, Kim Seung-jun 9p and Diana Koszegi 1p from the Korean Baduk Association who also have their own Baduk school, BIBA as the guests of honor. In 2016, we invited Cho Hye-yeon 9p from the Korean Baduk Association and in 2017 Chang Hao 9p was our guest of honor at The 2nd GO Academy Cup.

What are the advantages and disadvantages when you run a Go academy in Singapore?

Go is still a relatively new game to many despite having more than 30 years of history in Singapore. Most Singaporeans think that Go is the same game as Reversi/Othello or Gomoku (Five-in-a-Row) because they all use black and white pieces. Parents who do not know about the game do not see the value in learning Go, they normally prefer other enrichment such as learning piano, ballet etc. Fortunately in Singapore there are many new immigrants from China and they know the

value and importance of learning Go so they would send their children to our academy to learn from a young age.

How can students learn Go in TGA?

In TGA, we have books for every level starting from elementary level 1 and 2, intermediate level 1 and 2 and advanced level 1 and 2. Students will listen to a lecture for half an hour and will spend the remaining time playing against each other to gain points to be promoted to the next kyu level. Coaches will analysis pro games and students' game in the Kyu Certification Class, Dan Certification Class and Dan Upgrading Class. They will also be given life and death homework every week.

Can you tell about your daily schedule at TGA?

During weekdays my lessons run from 5pm to 9pm and weekend from 9am to 6pm. Sometimes I will have to reach the school earlier to do administrative work such as the accounts, marketing, arranging timeslots for new classes and so on. Fortunately, every Monday is my rest day.

Which study methods do you find most effective in order to improve one's go level?

Playing more games, memorizing pro games, doing life and death and getting your own games reviewed are the four main methods to improve your Go level. Even though these methods are important, I personally think that enthusiasm towards the game is most important. Do you feel excited when you think of Go? Is Go one of the first things in your mind when you wake up? If that is the case, you will be able to improve faster than anyone else (together with the above mentioned methods).

What is your plan and desire to develop TGA in the future?

My ultimate goal is to let all Singaporeans know about the game and the importance of learning Go, and of course the difference between Go and Reversi! I always joked that in the future, if I were to throw a stone randomly, it will definitely hit a Go player. This year we started The GO Academy in Vietnam and we are glad that we are able to promote this game to more people around the world.

Please use one word to describe TGA.

Education.

If you have any interesting story about your students or TGA, please share it with us.

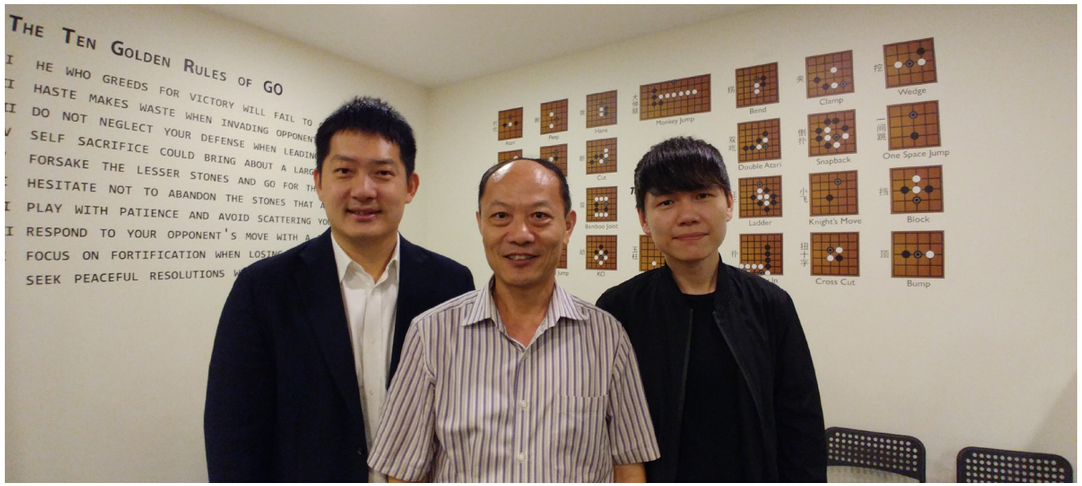
When we first started TGA, we did an infographic poster on Go to educate people on this game and we were surprised that it was shared more than 160 times on Facebook. Other associations and clubs have also approached us to buy the copyright of the poster so that they can translate it to a different language. However we have to edit the poster after the AlphaGo match as one of the portion was written as "Till today no computer program can win professional Go players unlike Deep Blue in International Chess."

Thank you again for taking some time off from your busy schedule for this interview.

Kew Chien Chong



THE GO ACADEMY



The famous world champion Chang Hao 9p, the head coach of TGA Kang Zhan Bin 6p, and the director of TGA Daniel Chan.



Dan certification tournament in TGA.



(Source: https://gomagadan.ru/events/)

International Go Festival 2017

Magadan GO fest

23–30/5 2017
ФЕСТИВАЛЬ

From May 23rd until May 30th 2017, I participated in the “International Go Festival” in Magadan, Far East, Russia - a military exclusion zone in Soviet times, located on the Sea of Okhotsk. During this festival, several side tournaments (Pair Go etc.) and two officially rated tournaments took place: the “Eurasia Cup among Women” (ECW) from May 24th-26th and the “President’s Cup” (PC) on May 27th/28th. 37 players participated in the ECW, 43 in the PC. With Zheng Guoping (5d, 4th in PC) from China, Manja Marz (3d, 2nd in ECW/8th in PC) from Germany, Shi Ou (2d, 11th in PC) from China, Milena Bocle (1d, 6th in ECW/12th in PC) from France, and me (23rd in PC), only 5 foreigners joined.

Ever since I started reading the classics of Rus-sian literature in my early 20s (I'm 36 by now), I was attracted to Russian culture. So a couple of years ago, I came across a documentary on the "Road of Bones" - a road through the Russian Far East which connects Magadan with Yakutsk - and it became a dream of mine to visit this region. I did some reading, my imagination flourished, and I finally told my companion Petru Oancea (3d, a veteran Go player) from Romania about it. Some months later - completely unexpected - he sent me a message, asking if I was interested in participating in a Go tournament in Magadan. As time and financial means are usually too scarce for leisure traveling, I embraced the opportunity to combine my wish to visit Magadan and the chance to gain first tournament experience (I am still quite a rookie in the game). I had all the preparations done quickly and went on to the trip just a few days later. Coming in from Khabarovsk, my expectations were sky-high - and I was not disappointed: the Russian Far East welcomed me as if I was part of the family.

As this tournament was my very first (I am a mere 10k), I didn't have any prior experience regarding this kind of event on whose basis I could have drawn comparisons, but I will certainly try to participate again in the future: not only is Magadan an incredibly beautiful location, but also were the participation, accommodation, four delicious meals per day, two excursions, and a big closing party completely free. During this stay, Russia was showing itself from its most attractive side: next to a perfectly organized schedule by the friendliest organization team imaginable and exciting excursions; also the weather seemed to do everything to make us fall in love with this place. I've rarely felt such warm hospitality before and I can only recommend this event to the international Go community.

Philipp Neubert





The first three places in the ECW were taken by
1. Natalia Kovaleva, 5d, from Chelyabinsk
2. Manja Marz, 3d, from Germany
3. Elvina Kalsberg, 3d, from Saint Petersburg

The first three places in the PC were taken by
1. Vjacheslav Kajmin, 5d, from Zhukovsky
2. Alexej Lazarev, 5d, from Petrozavodsk
3. Anton Zatonskikh, 5d, from Khabarovsk

MAGADAN:GO:FEST

European Go Congress

BACK TO THE ROOTS

Daniela Trinks



Chess world champion Emanuel Lasker (left) playing against Felix Dueball. His son Fritz Dueball (standing) became the winner of the first three EGCs 1957-1959. Photo: Günter Ciessow.

This year, the 61st edition of the European Go Congress (EGC) was held with a new record number in participants. Far from being a mere Go competition, this multi-purpose event has been growing slowly in size, and is actually older than its edition number suggests. This article travels back in time to the origin of the EGC.

Early traces of European Go history date back to the 17th century when European scientists, travelers, missionaries and merchants encountered Go and mentioned it in books and scientific journals: Matteo Ricci & Nicolas Trigault in a book about Chinese games (1615); Gustavus Selenus (the pen name of Duke Augustus of Brunswick-Lüneburg) in "Chess or the King's Game" (1616); Thomas Hyde in "De ludis orientalibus libri II" (1694); the polymath and philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz in "Berlin Collection for Promoting Sciences" (1710). Unfortunately, these early texts didn't properly describe how to play the game. It was only in 1880, when the chemist and engineer Oskar Korschelt published an introductory series of articles in the German scientific journal "Natural history and ethnography of East-Asia", that Europeans began to play Go.



The father of the EGC, Bruno Rüger (6th from the left, upper row), at the Go Congress 1954 in St. Urban at Lake Ossiach/Austria. Photo: Günter Ciessow.

Bruno Rüger (1886-1972), a school teacher, was one of the key persons in early European Go development and history: He devoted plenty of his leisure time to promote the game by teaching and publishing many writings on it, including in the German Go journal Deutsche Go Zeitung (DGoZ) from 1920 to 1944 which enjoyed up to 150 subscribers at that period. Furthermore, he was known for his great efforts in gathering Go players.

In 1926, Rüger returned from his holidays and found a postcard from another Go player who had spent his holidays at the same time and place as Rüger. He judged it a pity they hadn't known about their holiday plans in advance, especially since it was a rainy holiday week and they had missed the opportunity to play their beloved game of Go. Due to this incident, he proposed they had a joint summer holiday of Go players in 1927 in the small town of Ilmenau in the Thuringian Forest, a popular holiday region. The forest would be, in Rüger's opinion, a great complementary environment for the game, *'Go could be played on rainy days or after walking',* he added. He not only suggested the time and place but also spread the word in DGoZ: *"Where should, will and must every reader of our journal spend his summer holidays in 1927?"* describing how wonderful a gathering of Go friends would be. In the end, six players from Germany and Austria followed his enthusiastic call, among them three of the strongest German Go players back then: Felix Dueball, Bruno Rüger and world chess champion Emanuel Lasker. Despite the small size, this event was even documented by the local newspaper, and Rüger concluded five decades later *"1927 was the year of birth of the Go congresses!".*

What had started with few Go-loving players and their families coming together had grown by 1931 to “new heights”, as Rüger described it in his typical mischievous writing style: “Such numbers have never been achieved before! You won’t believe it: 12 gentlemen, six ladies, one child and two dogs! Not to mention plenty of flies and wasps which were interested in the games of Go.”

By 1957, the participants had not only doubled in size but also included players from other countries. In fact, the 25 players from five countries who attended the congress inspired the organizers to name it the “1st European Go Congress.” Since then, the annual EGC has grown to an imposing size of several hundred players, and has become the most prestigious and popular Go event in Europe. Coincidentally, the 61st European Go Congress this year had returned to its roots in the Thuringian Forest: it was held in Oberhof, an idyllic village in the Forest. The congress saw a record number of participants of more than 1,000 people from 35 countries. Just as Rüger had noted ninety years ago, it rained a lot during the congress; but that did not stop the players from enjoying the game – or shall I put it this way: there wasn’t any better excuse than to play Go all day long!



The Thuringian Forest, a paradise for hiking and cycling, was chosen as the location for the very first Go summer holiday in 1927 as well as the 61st EGC 2017. Photo: Misha Krylov.











Some impressions from EGC 2017. Photos: Misha Krylov.

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