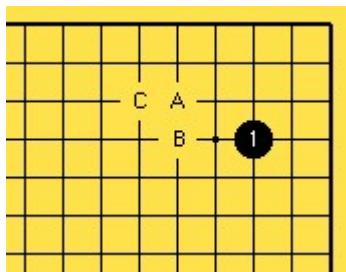


Gentle Joseki, part I by Pieter Mioch

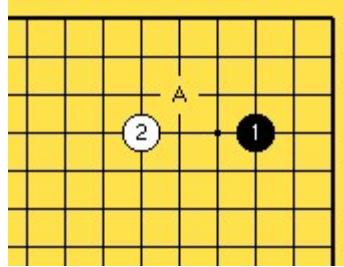
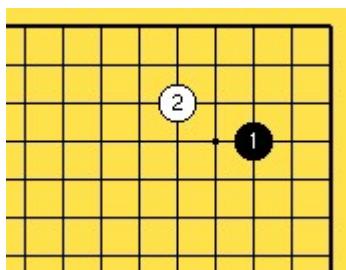
The patterns



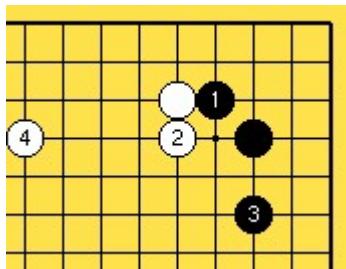
Dia 1 An opening move at the 4-3 point (komoku) is basically a typical way of not regarding the center important as yet. Komoku had for centuries been the focus of almost every game in Japan and profound research dealing with the 4-3 point was constantly going on. (this explains why even today there are more komoku joseki's than all the other opening moves put together) In dia 1 black's aim is to make a corner enclosure (shimari) with A, B, or C. Black thus spending two moves in the corner gets cash profit but in doing so

it'll take longer before he can start to emphasize the center. This is because the orthodox and still popular way of developing in the opening is to first claim the corners, then the sides, and last, as an afterthought the center.

It should be kept in mind that either making a shimari yourself or preventing your opponent from making a shimari is regarded of equal value (miae). It is in most cases, if not all very hard to say that making a shimari is clearly better than preventing your opponent from making one. A good idea for any player, be it dan or kyu, is to experiment freely with both styles of playing. Games will most likely develop completely different, providing an opportunity to be amazed and learn, which is all it takes to improve rapidly.

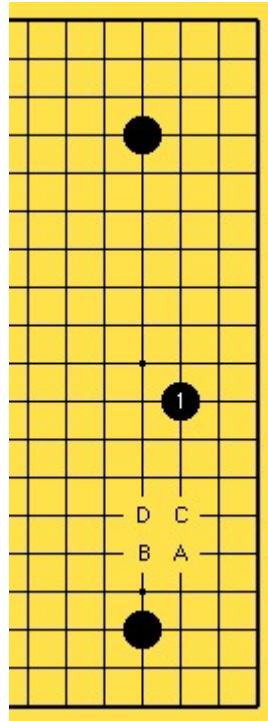
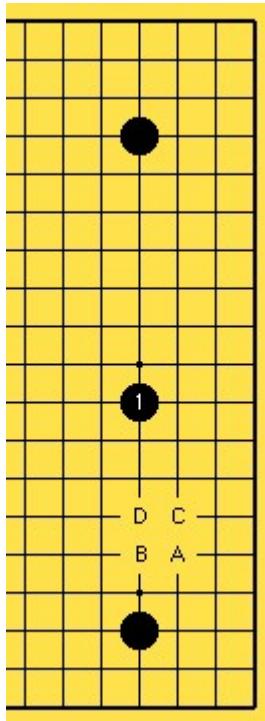


Dia 2 and **dia 3** show moves which prevent black from making a shimari. White's move 2 in dia 2 is much more common than 2 in dia 3 since dia 3 actually leaves a big piece of the corner to enclose, for example black can play at A and secure at least 12 points.

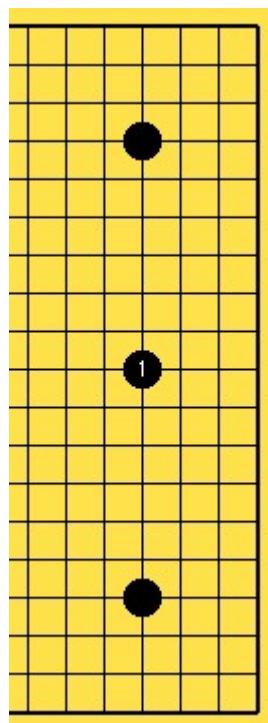
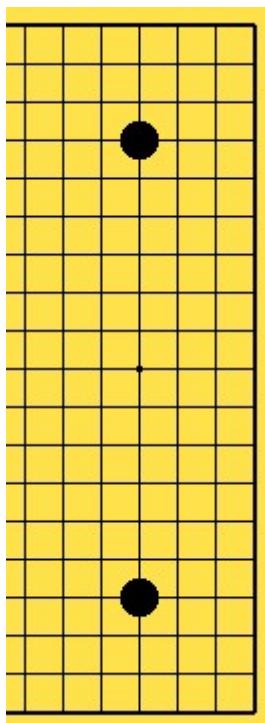


It is true that even in dia 2 black can secure about 12 points with the sequence shown in **dia 2A**.

This way of playing however, is regarded as giving too much away for too little, it is rarely seen in professional games. White's shape on the left side is nice and he has no complaints.



In **dia 4** and **dia 5** you can see the so called high and low Chinese Fuseki patterns, this is an intriguing way of playing since black's strategy by purposefully not making a shimari is to invite white to play an approach move to the corner (kakari) at A-D. If white plays here black hopes to put his stone at the side, 1 to good use and make it hard for white to settle himself. White most of the time declines the invitation and plays somewhere on the left side instead.



(Ikezaki) "Go Seigen for his part was more concerned with speed than anything else. He felt that taking time to solidify the corner with 2 moves was much too laid back an approach to the game, especially when playing white" (games in Japan during the first half of this century were largely played without komi and black had the advantage of playing the first move).

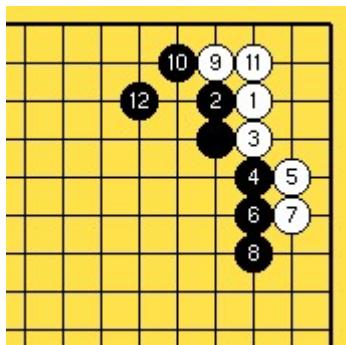
Kitani and Go might have had different goals in mind but they both came around

to the same conclusion, komoku (4-3) or other asymmetrical opening moves (5-3, 5-4) need a follow up move (again in the corner) and do not develop towards the center and also do not develop one's stones very fast.

This was why they made the hoshi (4-4) play a standard opening move, and, a little after that the ni-ren-sei (**dia 6**) and san-ren-sei (**dia 7**).

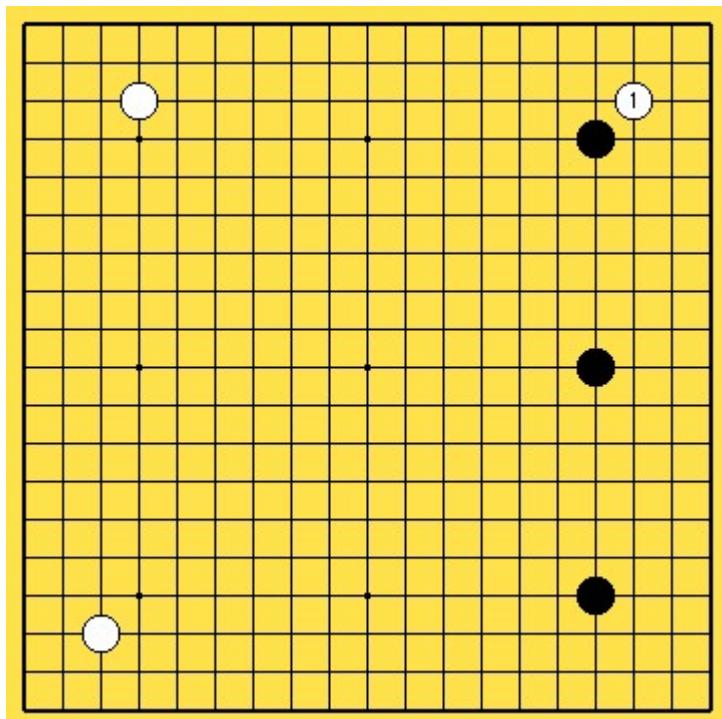
(Ikezaki) "That Kitani and Go's views differ is best explained by the san-san (3-3) move Go came up with. Anybody can see that such a low move does not do much towards the center. Go, however, was perfectly content with it because, similar to the hoshi play the san-san move does not require a follow up move, enabling black to develop rapidly."

Nowadays the 4-4 move is extremely popular because of its relative simplicity and speedy development. Of course however, there is one major drawback to the hoshi play: on its own it barely makes any territory at all!

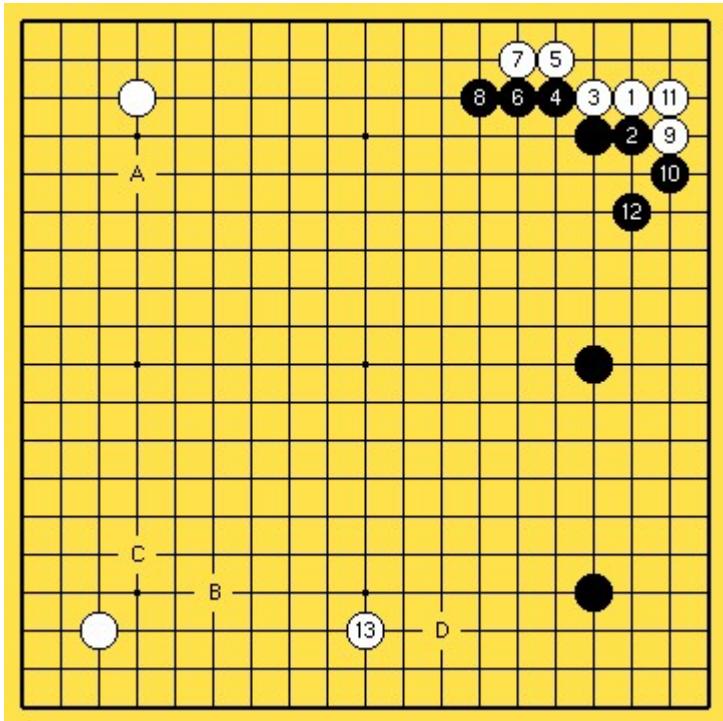


Dia 8 As long as black has not any stones in the vicinity white can enter the corner at 3-3 and for example, initiate the joseki up to black 12. Black plays the last move here (he ends in 'gote') and white can play elsewhere first (he has 'sente'). For black the idea of omitting 12 and play elsewhere is not an option, since white will cut immediately left of 2, ruining black's position. So, although black played in the corner first his opponent can invade at the 3-3 point, make 10 points of territory and play elsewhere (tenuki) first! Put it like this and you might have a hard time believing that this result actually favors black, big time. In spite of all the

aforementioned, black's thickness is usually worth much more than the 10 points white took in the corner. For one thing, after white invaded black can chose where he wants to block off white. If at 2 in the diagram his thickness will come to face to the left. If 2 at 3 black's wall will come to face the lower half of the right side.



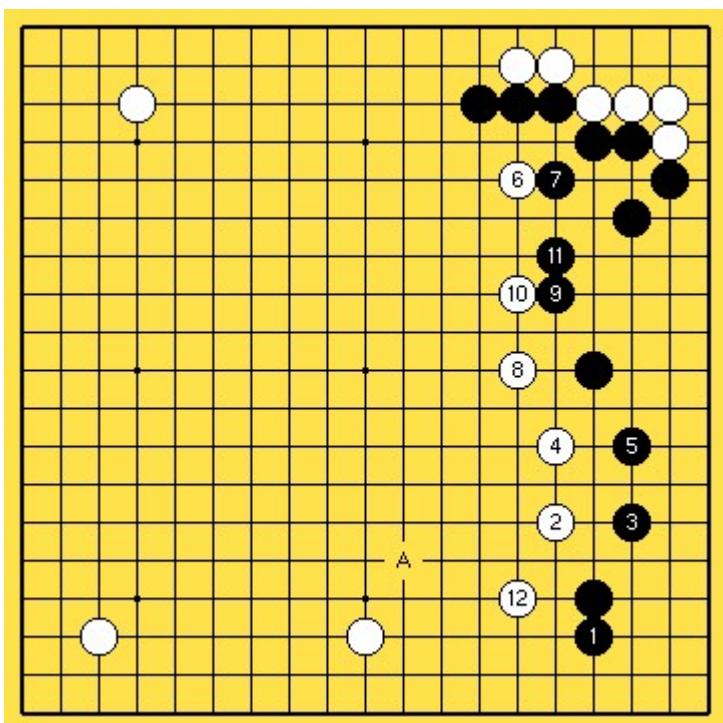
Realizing this white should think twice before deciding to jump into the corner in **dia 9**. Playing at 1 here is bad timing: black has no problem giving up the corner in order to create formidable thickness, which might well turn out to be worth over 40 points!



This is shown in **dia 10** where you can see that black gets a promising game right from the start. After white 13 black does not need to do anything special, a play at A is good enough. If black really wants to he can see what happens if he plays at B, white C and black D. Black can permit himself to create a potentially weak group (stone B) in white's sphere of influence since his overall board position is rock-solid. By the way, black cannot play around 13 first and forget about playing at 12.

Whatever happens one thing to keep in mind when looking at dia 10 is that black should not look at his position on the right as being secure territory yet. Using the right side to set up a moyo (oversized territory) of roughly

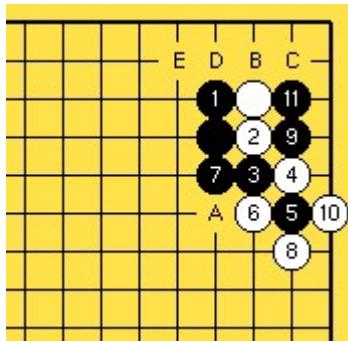
the size of for example 80+ points is a good idea. For example a play at A (instead of black 1) in dia 11 shows the right spirit. To think however, that black now quickly must at least secure 40 points of territory as compensation for losing the corner is a mistake. Such a rigid state of mind is easily exploited by white who can play a number of forcing moves on the borderline of black's territory. If black docile were to answer all white forcing moves (kikashi) protecting his territory it'll be inevitable that black turns out to be using too many stones to secure a small part of the board (kori-gatachi).



Black 1 in **dia 11** is on its own maybe not such a bad move. However, if black 1 is played with the idea of securing black's territory as fast as possible then it is no good. The sequence up to 12 shows a worst case scenario. White doesn't even need to bother with an invasion on the right side (although this is of course possible) in order to get a promising game. If black is set on making the right side into solid territory he'll defend at 3-11. These moves disregard the proper usage of thickness and lack in fighting spirit. Black, to be sure, does get solid territory, about 40 points but he normally should not be able to win this game, his stones are all concentrated on the right side and much too singular in their purpose

(they do not attack or threaten to do anything)

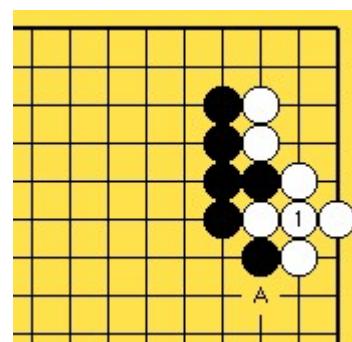
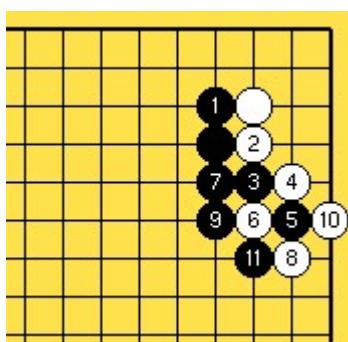
In other words, it is often not advisable to try to use a hoshi stone in a territory-oriented manner right from the start. Therefore, if at an early stage of the game your opponent chooses to enter at the 3-3 point this should often be welcomed!



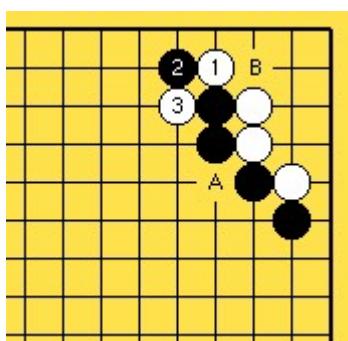
Dia 12 Let's take a closer look at what to do after white's 3-3 invasion. It is worthwhile to memorize at least three variations by heart. The sequence shown in dia 8 is number one and the most peaceful.

The ni-dan-bane combination with black 3 and 5 (double diagonal move) is very popular since this usually lets black get the corner back. Although white might sometimes want to play elsewhere (tenuki) after black 11 a play at A is extremely big. Not only does white make his position virtually invulnerable, he also can aim at exploiting the lack of liberties of black's 1-3-7 stones. After white

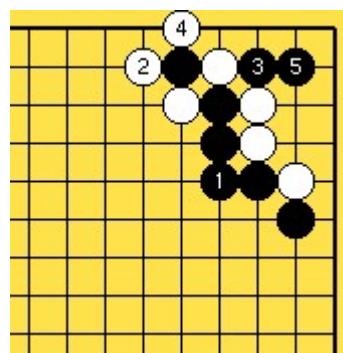
A, black elsewhere, white B, black C, white D and black E, black can only just capture the white stones because he has one liberty more. He should, however, be very careful what happens to his own outside liberties during the game.



Note that the cut at 9 is just one possible continuation, sometimes high ranked players prefer to let white have the corner and instead of black 9 play **dia 13**. By playing on the outside with 9 black clearly goes for thickness towards the left and center instead of taking profit in the corner. Another aim however, could very well be to obtain sente by playing elsewhere in case white connects the ko with 1 as in **dia 14**. But, black must be prepared for a tricky ko fight if white does not connect at 1 but instead counters his atari with A. Finally the last variation, and a tricky one at that.

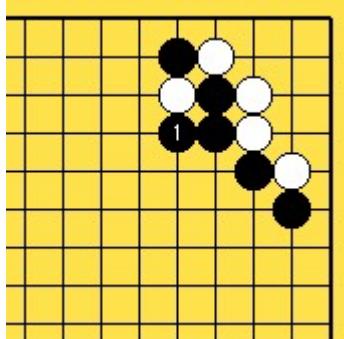


Dia 15 White 1 and 3 are testing black's intentions and perhaps also his knowledge of joseki. White 3 shows excellent fighting spirit, aiming at the double atari at A in spite of the obvious weakness of white's own stones. If black were to play at B next white would without hesitation play A, and whatever the continuation get a good result.

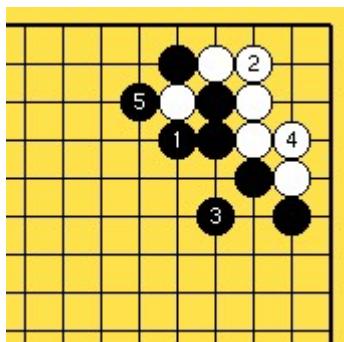


Dia 16 shows how to keep things

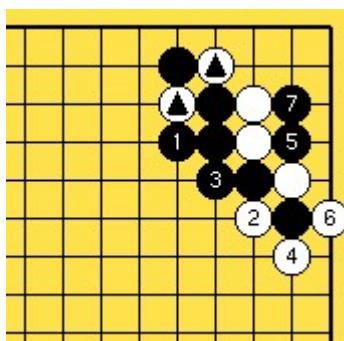
simple and get a good result for black. Although the sequence starting with black 1 is a basic joseki I think that black has a nice corner with no hidden nastiness (warui aji) waiting around to haunt him. White'd better be sure his shape at the left (ponnuki) is serving some kind of purpose there taking the whole board situation in account, otherwise he should stick to the sequence shown in dia 12.



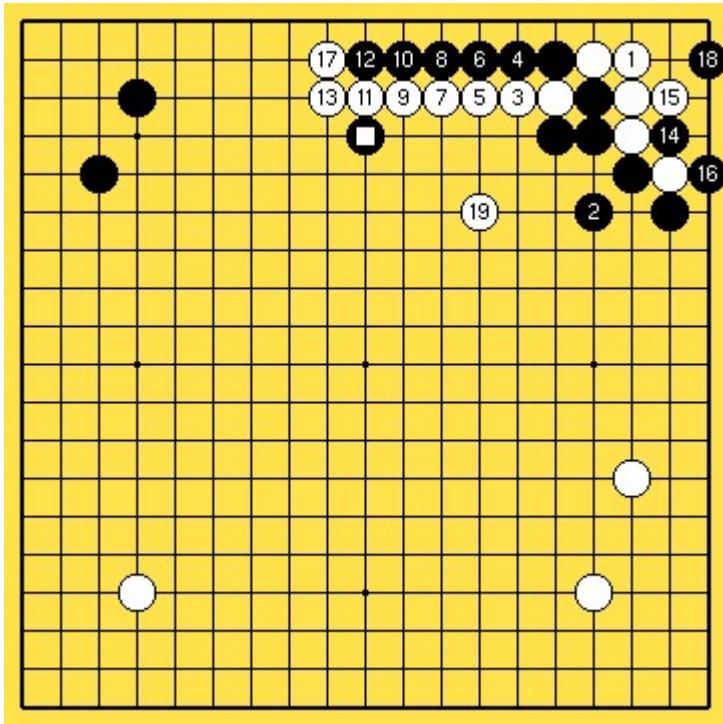
The reason why I called this variation tricky is this forceful move black 1 in **dia 17**, which black sometimes can play if he is careful.



Dia 18 If white has to defend with 2 and 4 then black can get a solid, thick position. This result favors black.



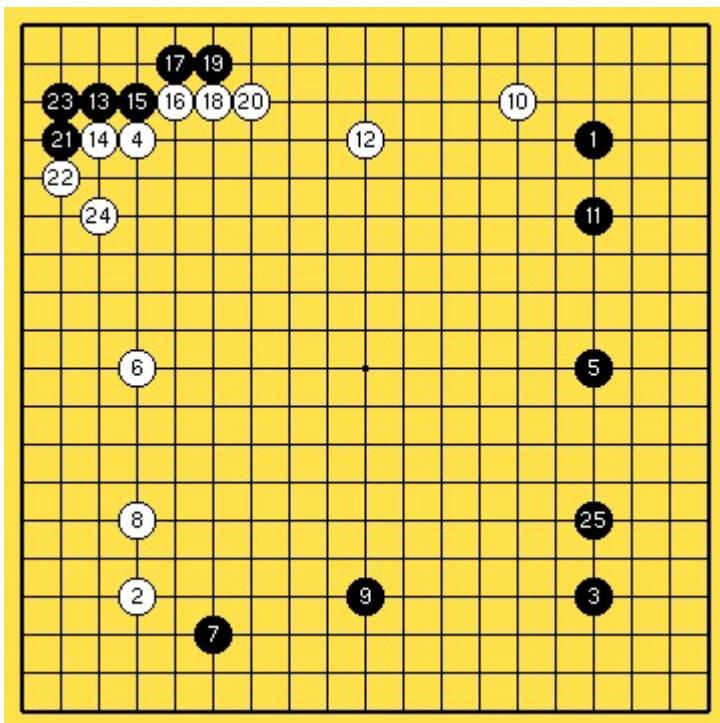
Dia 19 When white tries to fall back on the original joseki (dia 12) and captures a black stone with 2-4-6 the result is a disaster: the triangle marked stones have now become wasted moves.



Dia 20 This diagram shows how frightening joseki can be. Moving out with 3 white sets his stone in motion instead of making eyes in the corner at 14 (=4 in dia 18), and in doing so is sacrificing the corner but?

Although no black stones die he is losing the game already once the sequence up to white 19 is set in motion. Crawling on the second line is not to black's liking but you can say that he captures the corner as compensation for that. The position of the square marked black stone however, is pitiful having all but died being plastered against the white stones as it is. Furthermore, attacking the white stones has become pretty difficult and black's shimari is not doing much, black is bound to lose this game because of a lack of territory.

Black 1 in dia 17 is sometimes possible but shouldn't be played lightly.

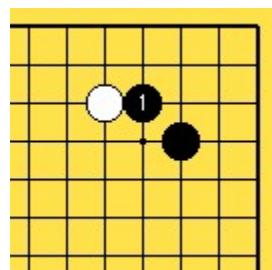
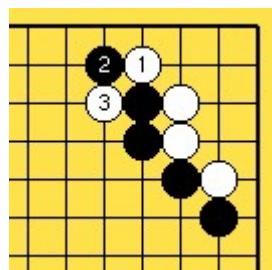
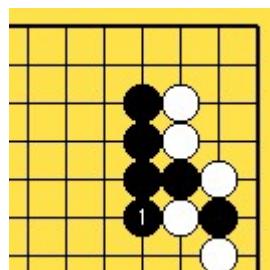
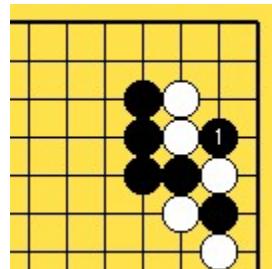
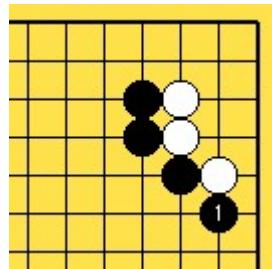
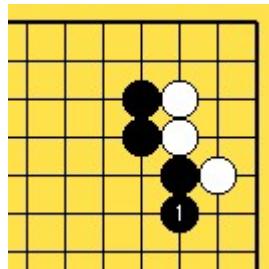


Dia 21 To give you an idea of when a pro plays under the 4-4 point of his opponent let's take a look at dia 21. This is a game between Japanese top pro's. In case of white's 4-6-12 formation is entering at the 3-3 point, like in the game, often something to consider. Once black invades it is difficult for white to put both 6 and 12 to optimal use. In this game white's exchange of the moves 10-11 as well was the position of 12 is not entirely to his liking. Black 25 is a moyo making move still leaving white some room to enter. It is, however, not so easy to tell when and where white should play.

([Shimamura Toshihiro versus Fujisawa Hosai](#), 1961, black wins by resignation in 171 moves).

Appendix 01

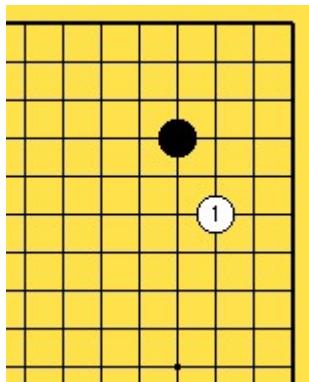
Index of joseki's mentioned in this episode:



Gentle Joseki, part II by Pieter Mioch

The patterns

It is safe to say that the most common and popular approach move (kakari) to the 4-4 corner stone is the knight's move (keima) at 1 in dia 1.



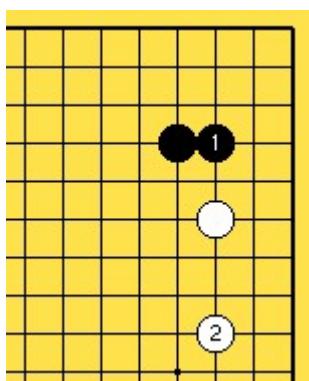
For black there are legion ways of answering white 1, as a matter of fact there are so many possible moves that I cannot hope to even cover half of them in one episode. There are, however, only two basic lines of thought necessary, whether -

- A: to answer with an extension, or
- B: to answer with a pincer.

Yes, yes, I know, there are plenty moves which do not seem to fit either description but please bear with me, I'll get there in time, I hope. (next edition, red.)

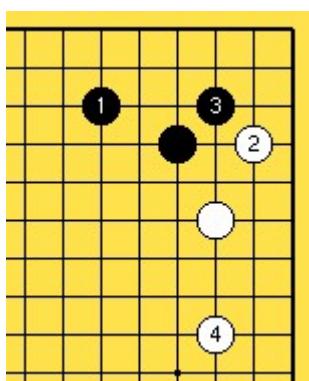
Diagram 1

Reasons why white's approach the keima-kakari is so popular.



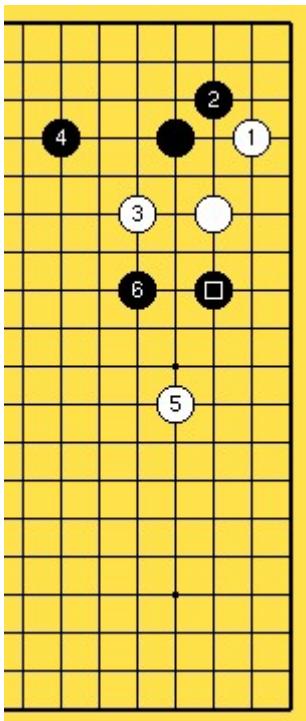
In dia 2 black played the tightest move possible, the sagari (extension towards the side) at 1. This black shape is called "Iron Pillar". Next time you want to impress your friends you can say something like: "My Iron Pillar felt a little heavy, a keima extension perhaps, might have been better". Anyway, the point of dia 2 is that even if black plays the tight move at 1 white only needs to extend to 2 in order to settle himself.

Diagram 2



If black answers at 1 (keima extension) white often slides at 2 first, enlarging his eye space, before jumping to 4. The point of dia 3 is that white, again, has no difficulty in settling his stones. Although white 2 is a basic joseki move it is very hard to say when this move is appropriate to play. Although white gets a little extra profit when sliding at 2, once he makes the exchange 2-3 he lets go the option of invading at the 3-3 point. But then again, who can tell if white by omitting this exchange actually will have the opportunity of invading at 3-3 in the future at all! This is one of the decisions you'll be forced to make in your own games, good luck!

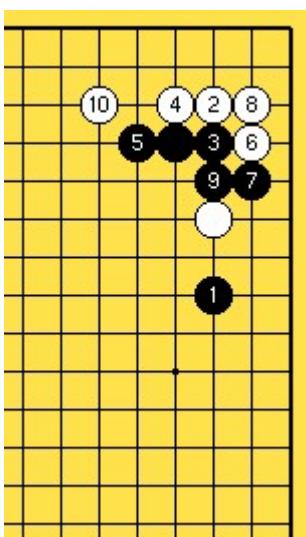
Diagram 3



In dia 3.1, a situation is given where it is not interesting for white to slide into the corner first. Because of the position of black "[]" white cannot make the follow up extension necessary to fix up his (eye) shape. In general it is not good to slide when you cannot extend (= settling your stones). White tries to launch some kind of attack with 5. Black, however, got the chance of making delicious territory at the upper side already and now is not at all being worried about being under attack. As a matter of fact, the white stones 1-3 might end up making small life in defense first. Here, omitting white 1 and directly playing the one space jump (ikken-tobi) at 3 is much better.

To make a simple situation (dia 3) even more complex, these days black never seems to answer white 2 at 3 right away anymore. Professionals feel that playing the exchange black 3-white 4 sometimes may favor white. Instead of black 3 later on in the game black might want to play a pincer somewhere around white 4 judging from the whole board position. (next edition, red.)

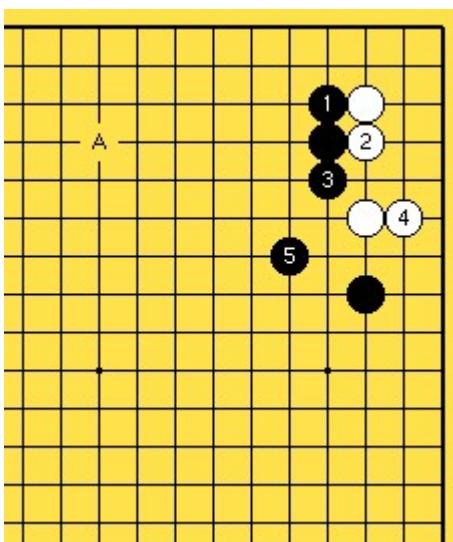
Diagram 3.1



In dia 4 white gets a nice result. He takes at least 10 points worth of territory and even manages to poke his head out at 10. Although this is a basic joseki I think that the old Japanese master Honinbo Shusaku (1829-62) and the like would have thought twice before giving away the corner in this fashion. The joseki in dia 4 is typical for go of the 1990's and not seen much earlier.

It came as a bit of a surprise to me that when I spoke with Nakane and the other pros present at the ki-in about how Honinbo Shusaku would evaluate dia 4 most of them were reluctant to give a straight answer. As Nakane put it: "Well, Shusaku likely never saw dia 4 in his whole life. Old game records tell us that instead of building influence the focus seemed to be more on making territory. Shusaku might very well recognize the pattern in dia 4, when laying eyes on it, as equal, as is the opinion of most modern professionals."

Diagram 4

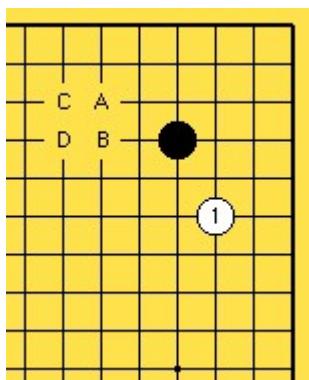


The block at 3 in dia 4 is correct, but, if black has a stone in the neighborhood of A than it can be attractive to play as in dia 4.1 and making the upper part of the board into a black moyo (large framework, not yet sure territory) Without any black stone at the left side, however, this way of playing is not feasible for black. If white would play somewhere around A next instead of having created thickness black might find himself hurrying to make eyes with potentially weak stones.

Diagram 4.1

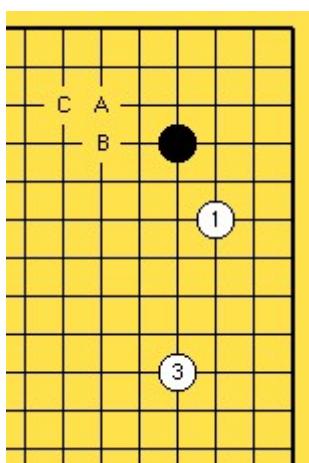
To summarize the dias 2-4, after white plays a keima kakari (knight approach move) whatever black does, white can handle it. White's kakari is the perfect balanced approach move, flexible and easy to use regardless of what black may come up with.

Answering a keima kakari; the extensions



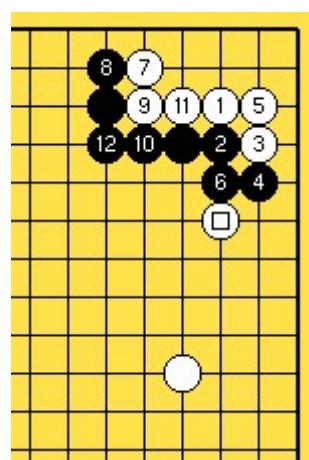
Now, to get back to how to answer this knight approach move, when black answers white 1 with an extension to the left the most commonly used moves are A-C in dia 5. The move at D is also possible but often regarded as being a little thin. The main difference between A, B and C is that in case of a black response at A or B for white entering at the 3-3 point is, although still possible, not as attractive as compared to when black plays at C.

Diagram 5



Suppose that black answers white 1 with 2 at any of the moves A-C in dia 6. White makes an extension along the right side (3) and black plays elsewhere. The next variations (dia 6~6.8) show what happens as white chooses to enter at the 3-3 point for each of the black extensions.

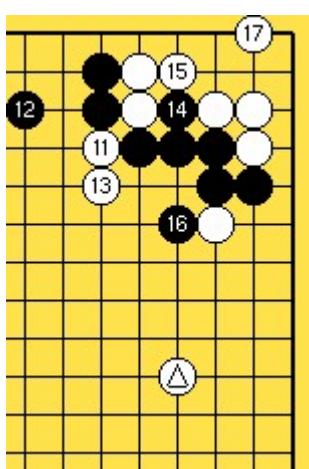
Diagram 6



Here black has played the knight extension at A. The result obviously favors black, he has no defects in his shape and, besides a few points in the corner, white did not gain anything. The "[] marked stone plastered against a solid black position has weakened a lot and is not in an interesting place for white.

Looking at dia 6.1 it seems as if invading the corner when black has played the keima extension is out of the question? Not so, invading is still an option and, under given circumstances, called for. White, however, should not immediately secure life with 11 in dia 6.1.

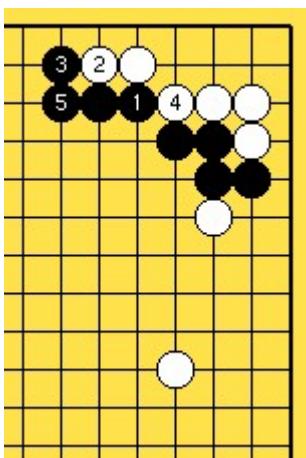
Diagram 6.1



Especially because of the presence of the triangle marked white stone

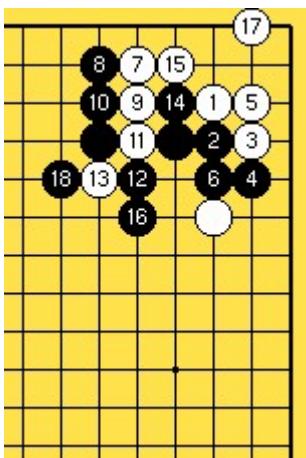
white should cut first and then make eyes. This result is playable for white. If white has a stone at the right like the triangle-marked stone black's move 8 in dia 6.1 maybe was too thin. So, instead of 8 black can play at 1 in dia 6.3 and keep things simple.

Diagram 6.2



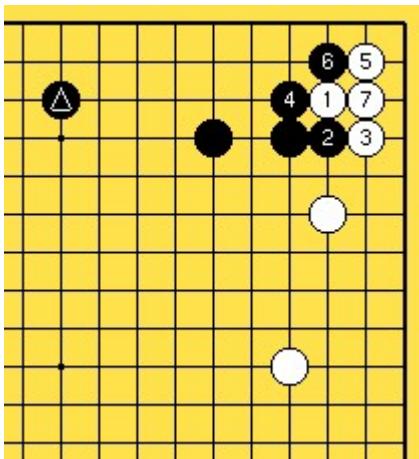
In dia 6.3 there is nothing white can do to create some thinness in black's shape. White lives in the corner but under normal circumstances this results is not bad for black.

Diagram 6.3



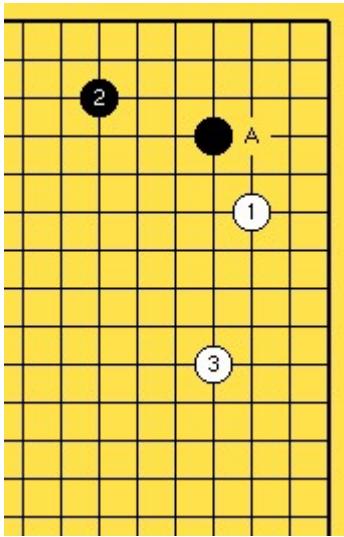
In dia 6.4 black has played the ikken-tobi at B. It is much like dia 6.2 with the difference that black can capture white 13 in a ladder. If the ladder favors him this sequence might again be worth thinking about for white. Provided he has some stones to back him up in the vicinity when he sets his stone 13 in motion. Of course, however, if the ladder with 18 does not work for black he'll probably omit the atari and instead play a short extension to the left side.

Diagram 6.4



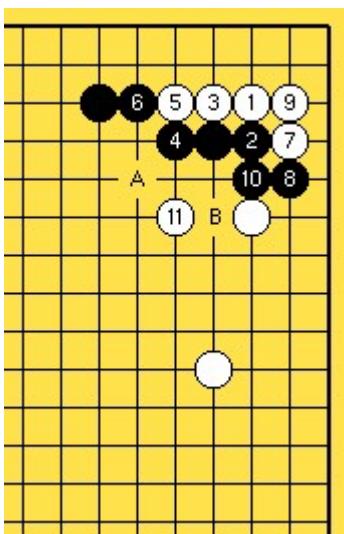
When black has a stone at the left side like the triangle marked stone he might very well play at 4 instead of preventing white to cross underneath as in the previous dia. This is a very nice result for black and he has sente, too. The move at 4 should not be played if the left side is not interesting for black. This is also applicable in case of the black keima extension (A) in dia 6. Further, playing immediately at 4 with black 2 is not an option; this gives white too big a part of the corner.

Diagram 6.5



The last of the extensions possible for black in answer to the white approach move is also the most popular. The oogeima (large knight jump) of black 1 has been around for quite some time. It was the most common answer to a white approach move for centuries in handicap games played before the 20th century. The oogeima is also the most greedy move since its aim is to play sagari at A at the earliest opportunity and make the whole corner, about 18 points, into black territory. To make close to 20 points of solid territory using 3 moves is a good deal for black. It is for this reason that white is most likely to invade the corner; again playing at the 3-3 point, before black gets the chance to play here. It is also very possible for white to, instead of the extension at 3, jump immediately in the corner. The size of the potential black territory in the corner, however, is not the only criteria why white feels like playing at 3-3 soon.

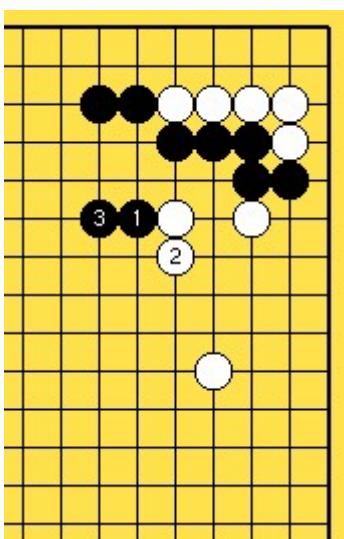
Diagram 6.6



Contrary to the situation when black has played the ikken-tobi extension or the (small) keima extension it is white who can play at the outside first (white 11) after having invaded at the 3-3 point. This is of course an enormous difference and explains that when playing the oogeima extension with black it is actually less likely that the corner will turn out to be his territory. Before jumping to 11 white is tempted to peep at A. If he plays at A, however, black won't answer there but instead play the thick hane at B. This black hane is, by the way, a kind of a key point in all the diagrams from 6~6.8.

Although this result seems to favor white it must be kept in mind that black got a move elsewhere. Besides, black can fix up his shape like in dia 6.8

Diagram 6.7



Although black has nothing to brag about he is not complaining either, the shape with black 3 is unexpectedly resourceful and his stones are by no means weak.

Diagram 6.8

Game example 1: Takemiya Masaki

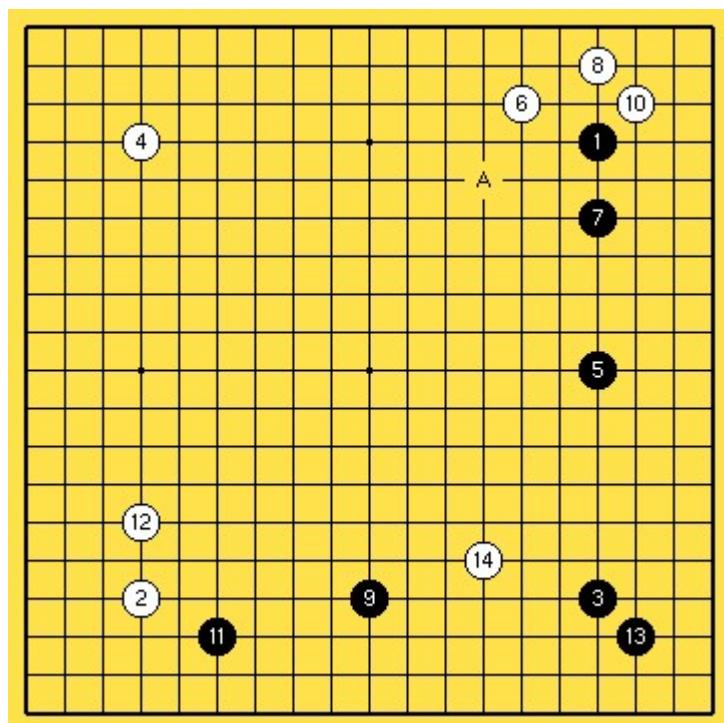
I don't think it actually was Takemiya "Cosmic Style" Masaki, 9 dan who started playing the ikken-tobi but he certainly seems to be fond of it.

42nd Honinbo title match, game 1

White: Yamashiro Hiroshi, 9 dan

Black: Takemiya Masaki, 9 dan

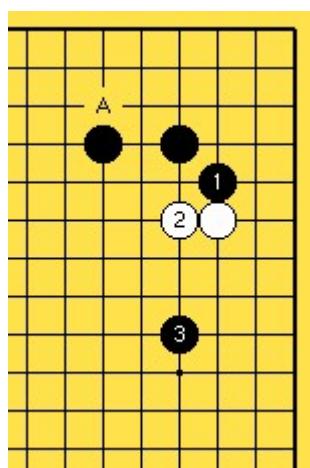
Moves: 1-14 (Black wins by 5.5 point).



Here black 7 is played in, what I think, a very positive way of using hoshi stones, in this case the san-ren-sei formation of black 1-5-3. As I discussed in the first edition of Gentle Joseki, a stone on the 4-4 point is not ideal if you are thinking about securing territory fast, white can play at the 3-3 point and there is not much black can do about it. Therefor, to give up on the idea of making territory in the corner for the time being only seems to be natural. Former Honinbo Takemiya was a master at this. He knew precisely when to let go of the corner and when it was important to solidify. In his top days his skill at using stones at 4-4 to create large frame works is perhaps unequaled. The play at 7 is undoubtedly proper if you are

thinking about making a moyo. If black 7 were at the third line (keima) than it already feels if the moyo is falling short. To repeat the key point here: the black ikken-tobi response is ideal for moyo making and fighting, exactly what the hoshi move stands for in the first place! Playing at 13 black is saying "well, the moyo is going as far as it goes, now I want to see what white is going to do about it". The answer is the cautious reducing move at 14.

In the post game analyses of this game both players agreed that before playing at 9 black actually first should have played at A or at 10, in both cases white will probably answer and black will still be first to play at the bottom.



The second reason I mentioned (attacking) for playing the ikken-tobi response is shown in dia 9. When white feels like playing elsewhere after black's response black will attack at the earliest convenient time with the kosumi-tsuke (diagonal clamp) at 1. Usually white will stretch at 2 after which black plays the severe looking pincer at 3. If the game were to continue like this the black ikken-tobi response is in a much better position to put pressure on white compared to the keima

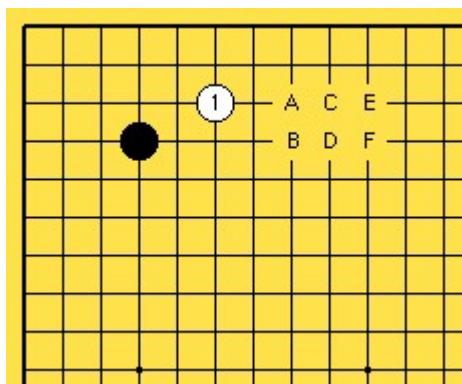
response at A.

Diagram 9

Often when Nakane and I come to talk about go, while shooting some pool, the conversation leads to the correct usage of a stone at hoshi. My point is that the keima response is not really in the spirit of the hoshi stone being a territory-oriented move. I prefer the oogeima or ikken-tobi response since these moves seem to ignore making territory for the time being. Nakane refuses to agree with me and shaking his head he says something like: "if the game of go were as straight forward as you would like to believe we'd all be 9 dan in no-time! We are not dealing with mathematical problems here, this is go, there are just too many ways of how you can put stones to use. It often limits a persons growth when he or she starts thinking along straight lines like "if A than B and never C". Instead of rationalizing or simplifying things in such a fashion it is advisable to try to keep your mind flexible". Although thankful for this kind of honest advice I find it sometimes difficult to sell to people. Let's put it like this; I guess that it is no good to have a chess like attitude towards go.

Answering a keima kakari; the pincers

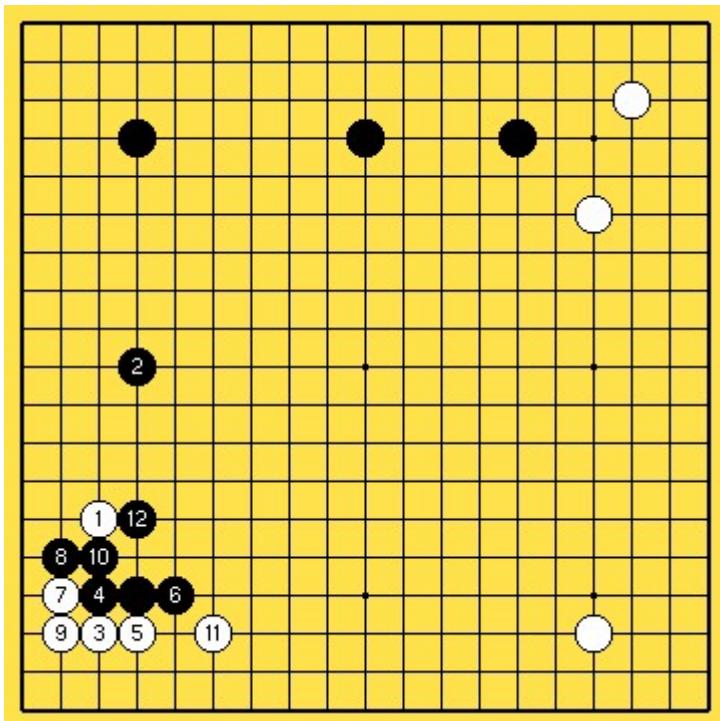
I hope that with the above you might find it easier to make up your mind what extension you want to play in your next game in answer to a white approach move. Although there is of course much more to tell about extensions I will leave that for another future episode of Gentle Joseki. From here I'll discuss the idea behind making a pincer play instead of an extension. In dia 10 the black moves from A to F are regarded as pincers. Or, in other words, these are the points you play to prevent your opponent from making a two-space extension along the side and settling himself.



The pincer at C is not seen often but that does not mean it is a bad move, in recent years the pincer at A and D have become extremely popular. The idea behind all the pincers is basically the same; to invite the opponent to enter the corner at the 3-3 point after which black blocks white at the side were he has played the pincer. You already could see an example of a (now) common pincer joseki in dia 4. It is seldom bad for white to accept the invitation although at times it can be too straightforward.

Diagram 10

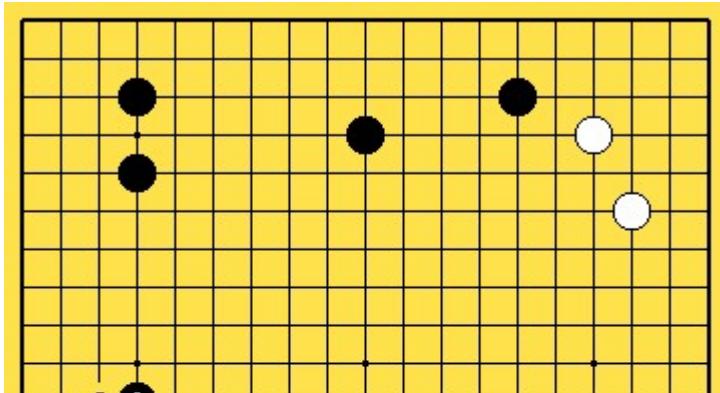
Instead of showing you tens of variation of pincer joseki and double kakari joseki I'd like to think about when and when not to play a pincer.



First rule: play a pincer which is an extension at the same time

Black 2 in dia 11 is a nice example of an extension and a pincer at the same time, although the joseki which follows is a kind of out of fashion now there is nothing wrong with playing like this. White might try to confuse the situation by playing a double approach move at 11 instead of 3 but if black will keep his issues straight and his head cool he should be able to build thickness facing black 2.

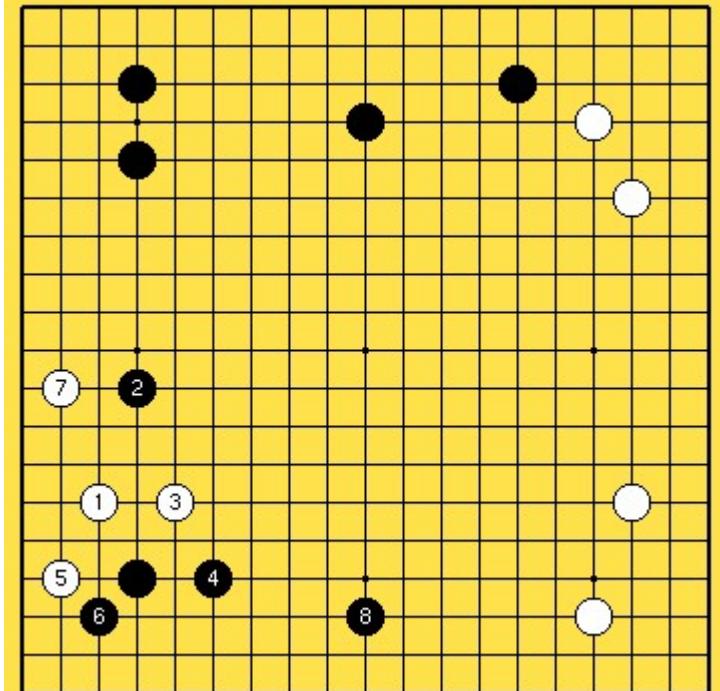
Diagram 11



Second rule: play a pincer which is an extension at the same time

Dia 12 shows a pretty high-tech joseki, if you know it and you're not at least 3 dan you are reading too much. It is not necessary to memorize this joseki, but try to see that no matter what white tries he won't succeed in making black 2 a wasted move. If after 16 black gets the chance of playing at B his shimari-moyo looks excellent so the joseki like move for white around A seems out of the question. To play around B with white, however, is not to his liking either, black's shimari still looks good but the white stones 3-11-13 aren't too happy.

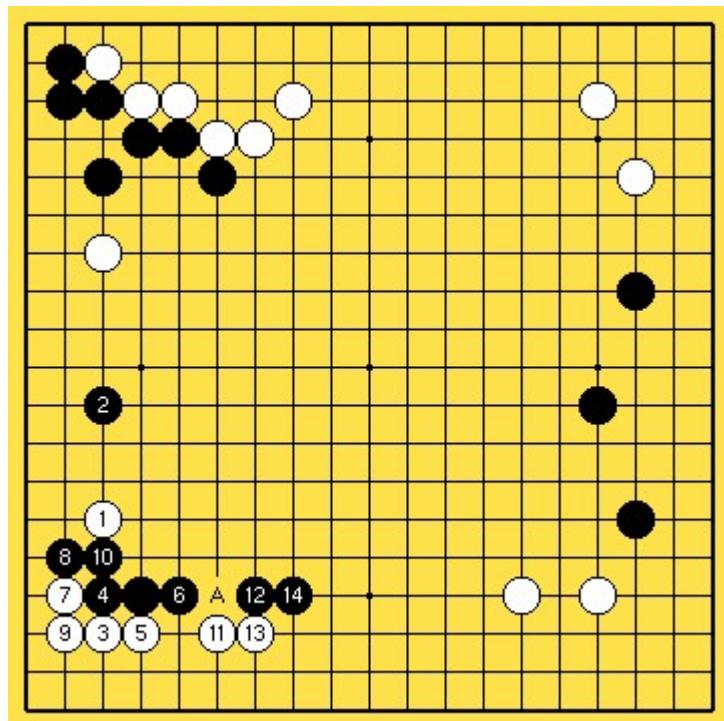
Diagram 12



In dia 13 white has tried a simple joseki, also refusing to enter the corner because he is worried that in that case black's upper side will combine perfectly (and he's right of

course). So, sliding at 5 and 7 looks like the way to avoid complications and since it is a joseki white might be thinking he's doing well here. It is true that black 2 has lost a big part of its original extension-pincer meaning, but still this game is good for black, to get the chance of playing at 8 is wonderful, black is doing good.

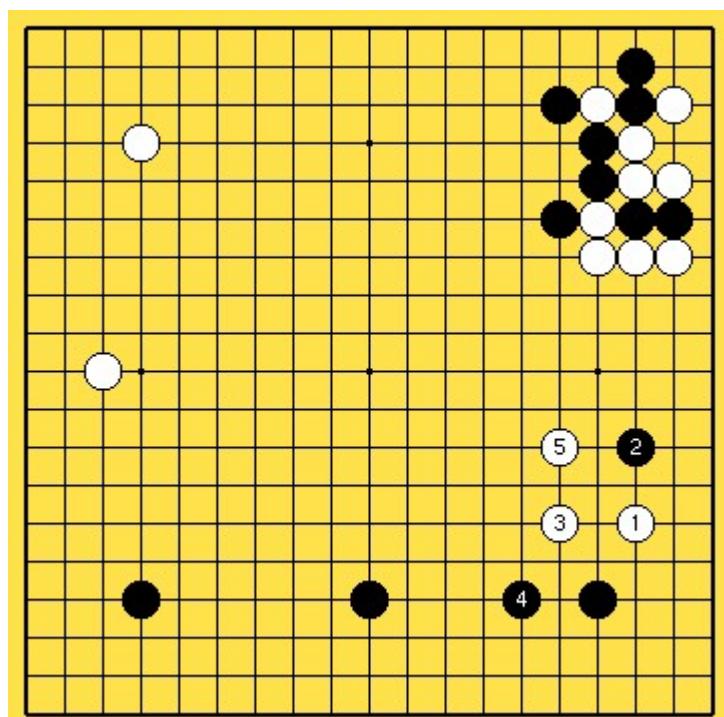
Diagram 13



The third rule: when you can launch a double attack, play a pincer

Although sometimes, as a pincer, black 2 has its shortcomings it is right on the spot in dia 14 (if one to the right white might settle himself sliding underneath). Black 12 and 14 are all-out moves which are just a little thin because of the defect at A. White, however, will have a hard time if he starts a fight at the left side because of his own weak stones. The game looks very promising for black.

Diagram 14

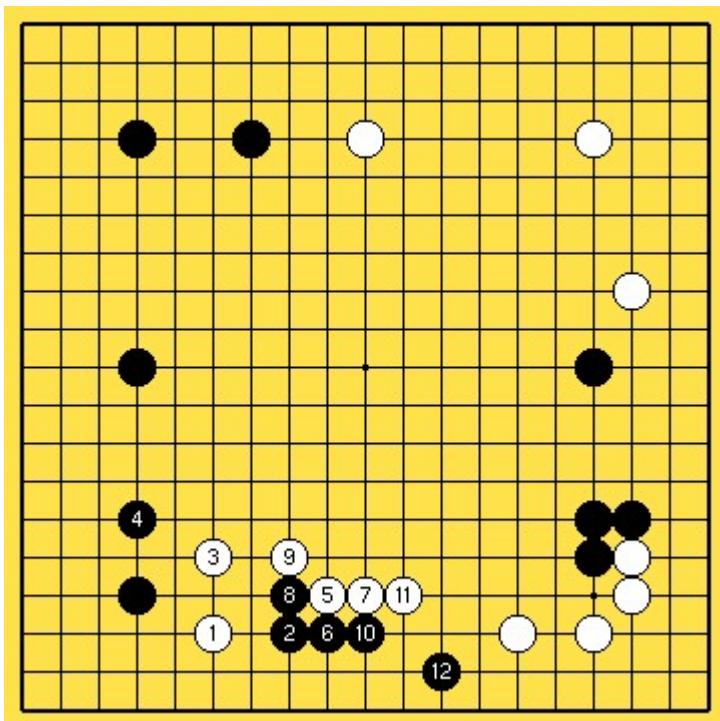


Fourth and last rule: do not play a pincer where your opponent is strong

Black had hoped white would enter at the 3-3 point as shown in dia 4.1. Although this actually might be not so bad I will use this game example

to show that you cannot expect your opponent to follow your script and sit by. Of course white wants to move out and eat the black stone whole with 3 and 5.

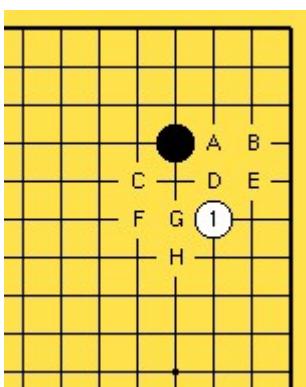
Diagram 15



In dia 16 the black pincer is maybe not as obviously wrong compared to the pincer in dia 15. Here white's position in the lower right corner, however, is strong, too. Black should stay away from the lower part of the board. Instead of the pincer the extension at 4 looks much better. If black does want to try something different he can play 2 at white 3. This cap play (boshi) is a typical center oriented moyo making move, it looks good together with the black hoshi stones at the left side. The result up to black 12 is, by the way, not to black's liking, to have to make eyes so early in the game in a cramped position is in general bad.

Diagram 16

Well, that's almost it for this time. I sincerely hope you are not too confused by all this. Next episode (Gentle Joseki III) I will get back on dia 3 briefly to handle exactly why black often plays elsewhere after white slides into the corner. Further more I'll continue about how to answer a keima-kakari. There are still very interesting moves left which seem to be neither, an extension or a pincer.



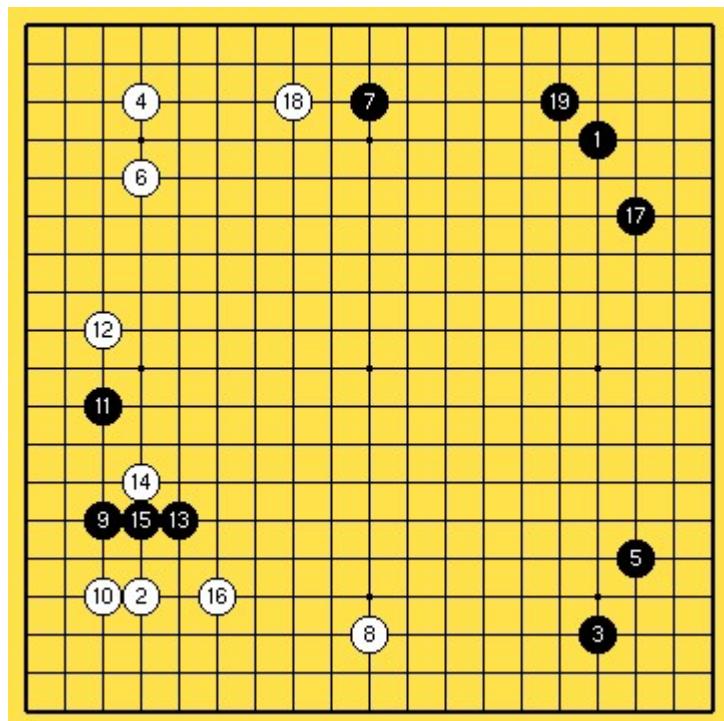
The possible black answers (A-H) in dia 17 are what you can look forward to. All the moves, from A to H are possible although D and H are rare but at times interesting.

Diagram 17

Game example 2: Kobayashi Izumi

To finish this episode of Gentle Joseki here is a little extra, part of the game Izumi played the 18th October 2000 at the Ki-In of Nagoya.

Oteai grading tournament,
Black: Kobayashi Izumi, 4 dan
White: Miyagawa Fumihiko, 6 dan
Moves: 1-19 (Black wins by 15 points).

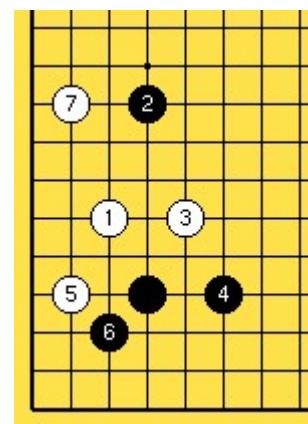
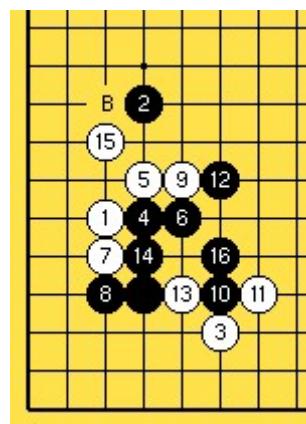
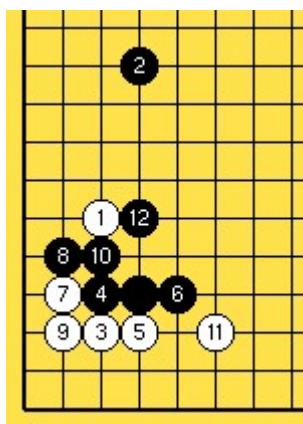
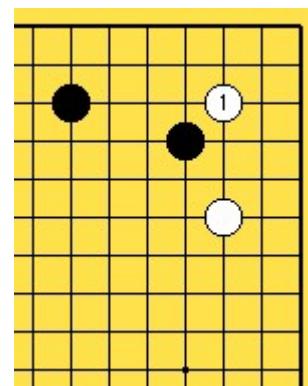
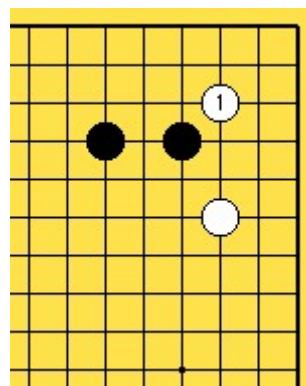
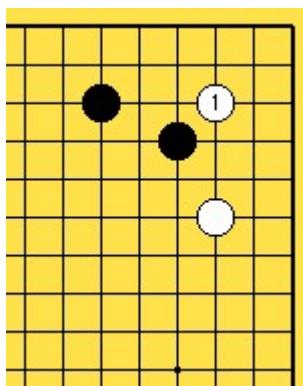
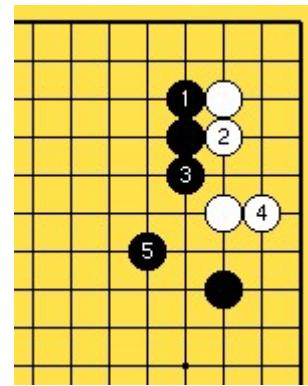
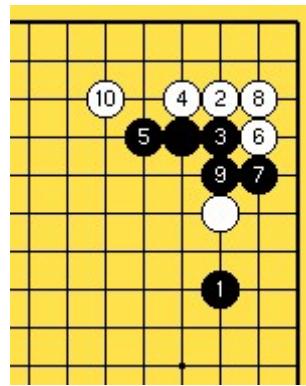
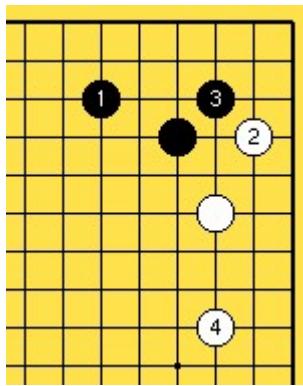


There is nothing terribly wrong with the fuseki, in the middle game white made a bad mistake and on top of that there is no komi in games played for the Oteai. This explains the unusual big difference for professionals of 15 points. Look at how white played the tightest moves possible when playing at 10. Because of the presence of white 8 white judged that it would be too sweet to let black get a part of the corner. It shows how difficult it is to make solid territory with a hoshi stone when you look at the upper right corner. White refuses to play an approach move there so black has no choice then to make territory but this takes 2 extra moves. The white shimari 4-6 as well as the black shimari 3-5 show that 2 moves is

enough to ensure the corner territory.

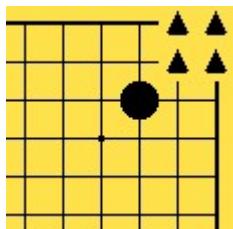
Appendix 01

Index of joseki's mentioned in this episode:



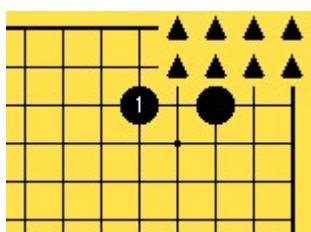
Gentle Joseki, part III by Pieter Mioch

The patterns



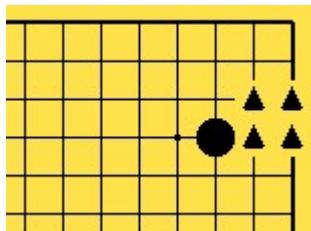
I can't help myself but I just have to show you some diagrams. The deal with a play on the 3-3 point is very simple. You can expect about as much territory as there are triangles, about 4 points (dia 1)

Diagram 1



In dia 2 you can see that by adding another move black gets about 8 points worth of territory. It is not so much but it is pretty solid.

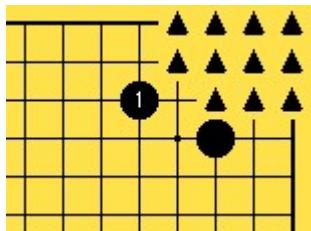
Diagram 2



Dia 3, here black has played on the 4-3 point (komoku). Although his territory looks bigger as compared to dia 1 I think that in terms of solid territory there is not such a big difference, a play at komoku is worth about 4 points, maybe 5.

Diagram 3

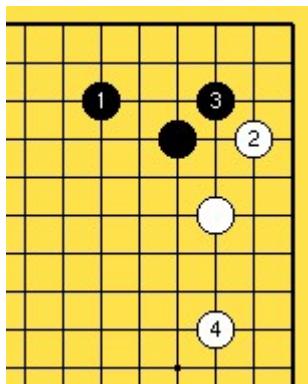
So, are komoku and san-san (3-3) almost equal in value and efficiency? Certainly not, there is a very good reason why komoku was for ages thought of as the best opening move.



If black finds time to spend another move in the corner he'll be able to make as much as 11 points worth of solid territory with the shimari (enclosure) formation in dia 4. This may not sound as such a big deal but 11 points for two moves comes to over 5 points a move, this is as much as you can expect.

Diagram 4

Tenuki or not Tenuki, loose end No. 1

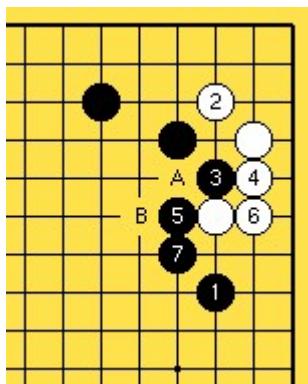


In the previous episode of Gentle Joseki there was, among other things, the following comment by dia 5: "To make a simple situation even more complex, these days black never seems to answer white 2 at 3 right away anymore. Professionals feel that playing the exchange black 3-white 4 sometimes may favor white. Instead of black 3, later on in the game black might want to play a pincer somewhere around white 4 judging from the whole board position."

Diagram 5

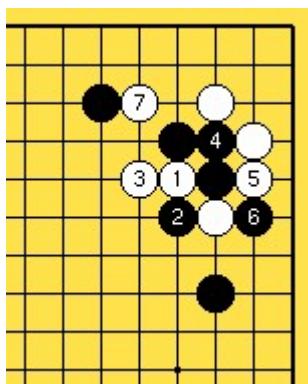
In order to avoid confusion let's first say that the white slide at 2 most of the time is not a bad move, for more about to white 2 click back to Gentle Joseki II. Which raises the next, excellent, points. Why on

earth would black be reluctant to play at 3? Or, what alternatives does black have? Well, there are some moves black might want to consider, but, once again, let's first say that black 3 in the dia is rarely a bad move. It might be a slack play at times to answer white 2 and not take the opportunity to do something somewhere else, but that still does not make it into no-good move on its own.



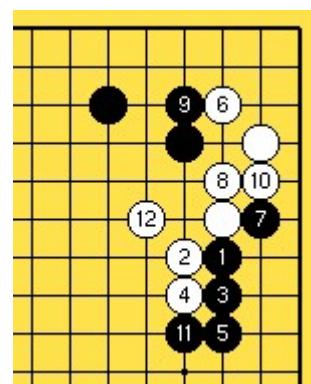
Instead of defending the corner black can think of creating thickness and letting go of the corner territory as in dia 6. The sequence shown here is a peaceful one, however, and black should be prepared to fight back when white plays 4 at A after which all kind of hairy sequences could follow. It should be noted that instead of taking control of the corner with white 2 jumping to B is not good. Black will immediately block off the corner by playing at 2 himself after which it becomes clear that the white stones can not easily make eyes anywhere and they'll have to continue jumping towards the center in order to prevent black from attacking.

Diagram 6



White 1 in dia 6a can lead to very difficult situations. Whatever black does he should not play at 6, after this move he'll find himself tricked by the delicious squeeze play of white 7. Black 2, by the way, can also be played at 4 right away.

Diagram 6a



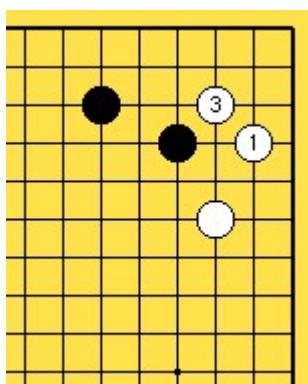
The fashionable clamp at 1 is another alternative for black. This move smacks of a trick play but it is actually a skillful probing move. The sequence shown in dia 7 is uncomplicated and gives an equal result. This joseki is a kind of new and it is not yet clear if white 2 is the best response

Diagram 7

The dias 6 and 7 showed 2 alternative ways of playing instead of guarding the corner as in dia 5. This brings me back to the comment of last time: (dia 5)

"Instead of black 3, later on in the game black might want to play a pincer somewhere around white 4 judging from the whole board position."

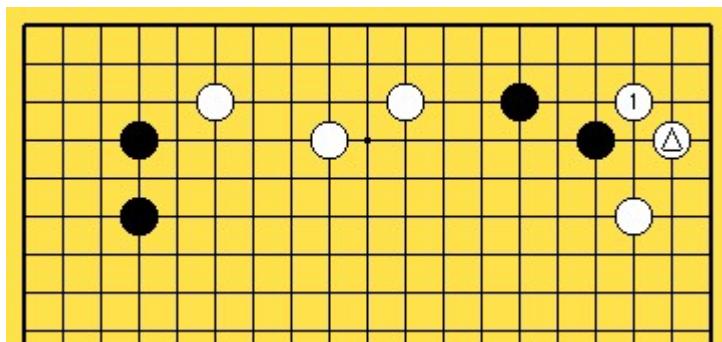
This is all very nice but what prevents the white player from thwarting black's intention of waiting to see what the best play will be and occupying the 3-3 point with his next move himself? Well nothing, actually.



In dia 8 black did not answer white 1 but played elsewhere instead. White plays 3 and effectively takes over the corner territory. When seeing this result for the first time one is tempted to think that this is a clear disaster for black and that nothing can justify taking such a loss in the corner.

A lot, of course, depends on precisely how big a move played when ignoring white 1. To judge dia 8 correctly it is further necessary to know what is at the left side of the board.

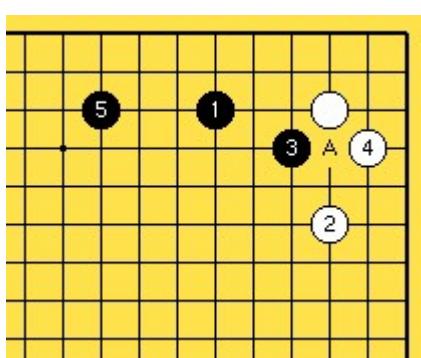
Diagram 8



In dia 9 a situation is shown where it was almost certainly not a good idea to ignore white's marked move. After white takes the key-point in the corner with 1 the black stones have no room to make a two-space extension towards the left and black cannot expect to make two eyes locally. Black's stone are afloat and his stones will most likely keep bothering him until the finally can get two eyes somewhere.

Diagram 9

Looking at dia 8 and 9 you easily can get the feeling that black never should ignore white's slide! (conveniently forgetting about the value of black's tenuki). For professionals there is, however, still another reason why dia 8 is not such a terrible result for black.



Suppose white has played first in the corner at the 3-3 point. Next black has played an approach move at 1 after which white extends to 2. Well, so far so good, but...

Diagram 10

Next the questionable exchange of black 3 for white 4 gets played which gives us the same position as in dia 8. Professionals and amateurs alike will, of course, never answer black 3 at 4. White 4 should be at A. All the same, there doesn't seem to be such a big difference between the white play at 4 or A. When comparing these moves the average amateur most probably'll shrug and think "So what, maybe you lost 1 point, no big deal, what's so bad about it for white?"

For pros, however, this is quite different. To be able to make your opponent answer in a submissive way, a way, which does not make efficient use of, previously played stones without compensation, is a very big deal, it's a disaster.

Recently I don't go to observe the professionals play anymore but a couple of years ago when watching the professionals play it often would happen that suddenly in the middle of a game a pro starts beating himself over the head with his fan while screaming out in agony. When you see this happen for the first time you naturally assume that that person must have put his own stones in atari or made a likewise terrible blunder. After the game, however, when following the analyses it is nine times out of ten that the reason for the self-punishment was precisely what I was talking about now, answering submissively and not putting your own stones to optimal use. When a pro realizes that he has played such a move unnecessarily, no matter where or what time of day it is he will feel like walking to a nearby wall and start banging his head against it.

For the white player the 3-4 exchange is terrible. For black it helps justifying letting go of the corner. And, black played on the 4-4 point (hoshi) in the first place, not directly thinking about making territory there, remember? After reading this you now might feel like never taking the corner when playing white as in dia 8. Well, sometimes it might be too early but taking the 3-3 point is a very big move. Also, even though black played on hoshi, black played in the corner first, meaning that IF he lets go of it he should get sufficient compensation. So, if you feel that black's move elsewhere is way too small or doesn't require a direct answer then there's nothing against taking over the corner and being happy.

Game example

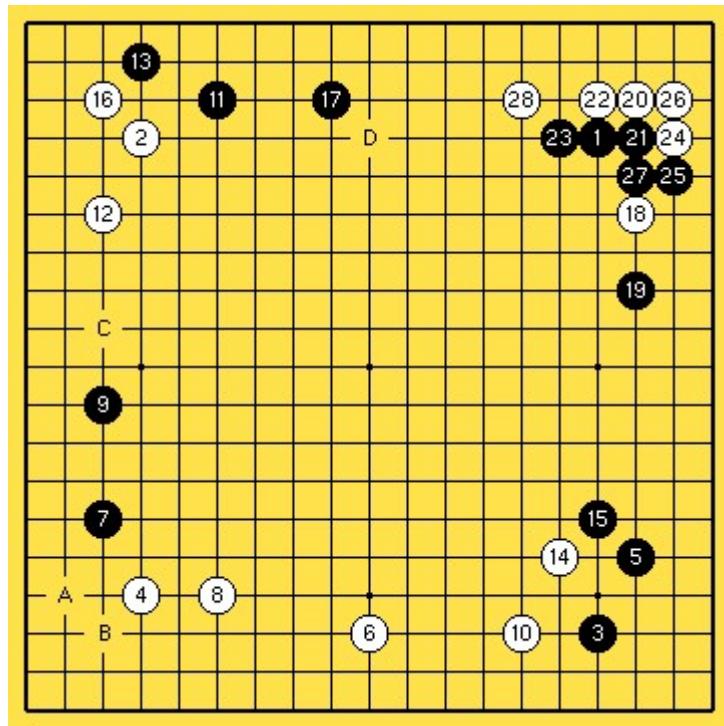
Now what I'd like you to do is to find somebody who's about your own level and show him the opening of this game. Next you ask what your friend thinks about it and you write down the comments and questions he or she might have. Then you ask your friend to read through Gentle Joseki I-III and repeat the same procedure, I promise you to eat my shorts if your friend comes up with exactly the same comments and questions as when going over the game the first time.

19th Female Honinbo title match, game 5, Date: November 22 2000

White: Chinen Kaori, 3 dan

Black: Inori Yoko, 5 dan

By forcing her opponent to resign after move 179 Yoko managed to take the Honinbo title at her first ever title challenge.



There is enough to tell about this particular fuseki but I think that the left side especially deserves your attention. It is very interesting to notice that black is reluctant to play at A. The reason for this is that black in a way helps to solidify white's 4-6-8 formation if she'll make the black A, white B exchange. Black is keen on keeping the option of invading at B alive as a means of reducing the white territory.

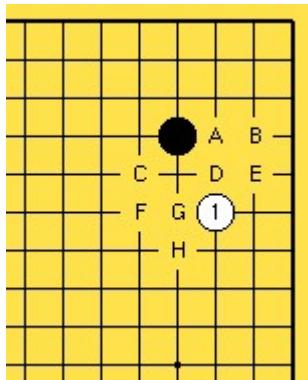
Diagram 11

After black 13 in the upper left corner white choose to play tenuki once. White 14 is an excellent move but does not really force black to answer immediately. Black, however, let go of the chance of playing a second move in the corner at 16. I

think taking the 3-3 point with black was a possible move too but after black 15 at 16 white will extend to C which almost certainly requires black to slide in the corner at A. If the game were to be played like that it is suddenly white who is determining the pace in spite of the disadvantage of not having the first move. This is not to black's liking.

The last thing worth noticing is that black choose to block white 20 at 21, and not at 22. The game move at 21 is the correct direction, black emphasizes the whole right side of the board while maintaining "sente" (the initiative). White will have a tough time keeping black's right side under control, invading here is not what white is looking forward to but if she doesn't do something black's right side is sure to become too much solid territory. If black were to play at 22 instead of 21 then the black moyo would never be as impressive. White has a nice moyo-flattening-move at D. White will not have a hard time keeping black's territory from mushrooming. If black would've had a stone at D to start with, however, she might very well have chosen to play 21 at 22.

Answering a white approach move with a move which is neither an extension nor a pincer, loose end No. 2



I do not think I have enough energy left to cover all these possible responses (my family and I'll be homeless if we don't find a place to live by December 10) so let me start with the rarest and most intriguing answer, black H.

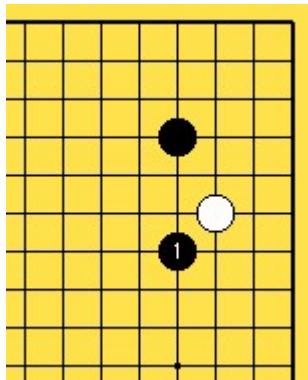
Reference diagram

You will never find a beginners book of go telling you about black H, nor will you be able to find a decent go teacher showing you this move and encouraging to try it. It's a kind of a rogue move which, of course makes it all the more attractive. Don't tell anybody you got it from me. (and don't blame me if you played it and it didn't work out at all)

Black 1 seems to be telling white that he is sealed off and that white better hurry to make two eyes at the right side. However, any go player worth his salt has only one thing in mind playing white:

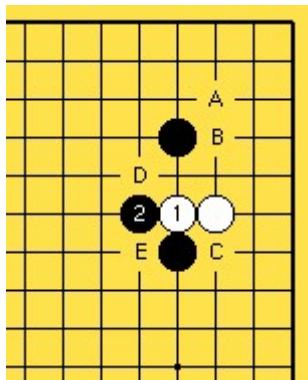
"how am I going to keep these thin black stones separated".

Diagram 12



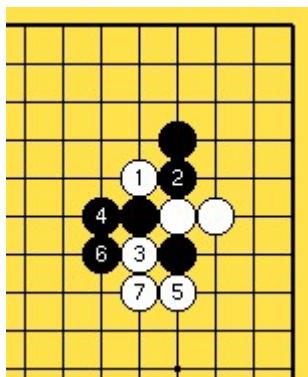
White 1 is a natural move, preventing the black stones to link up and become a thick position. Instead of white 1 there are other moves possible, at times. But if white plays any move from A to C black is not exactly worried. Even if black plays conservatively he'll at least be able to make a thick wall facing the left side and can be satisfied. Next white must choose if he wants to play hane at D or cut directly at E.

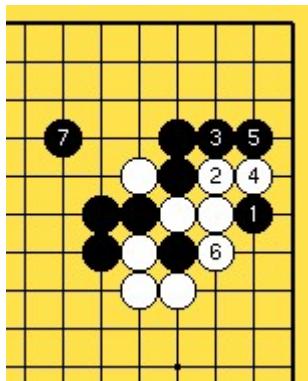
Diagram 13



Generally speaking you don't want to cut with the moves 1 and 3. If a sequence will not work any other way it is sometimes inevitable but instead of white 1 here, playing directly at 3 is better style, i.e., to cut at the side you capture. (if white 1 is captured or sacrificed later on the exchange white black 2 is a huge loss for white) The result in dia 14, however, is also something of a joseki, both players get to eat an opponent's stone. There is still a very interesting move left for black, a move that I'm sure you want to memorize.

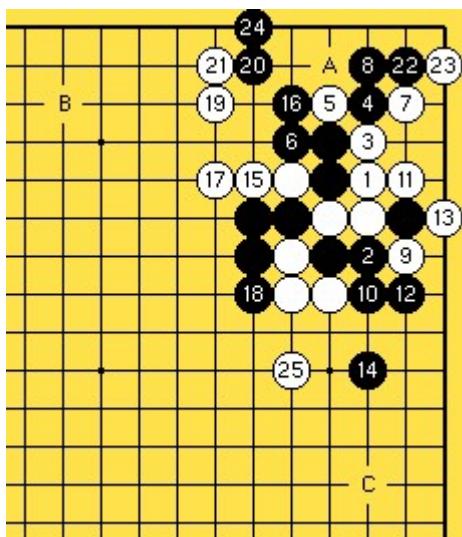
Diagram 14





Black 1 is one of those moves, which make you forget your worries and make life worthwhile. Dia 15 shows the most peaceful continuation, black seals off the corner and white gets a rock-solid group. White 2 is a move dictated by fighting spirit. Capturing immediately at 6 is much too sweet and black won't hesitate playing at 4 making the corner into solid black property. White 2 in the dia, however, is not without risk as you can see in dia 16.

Diagram 15



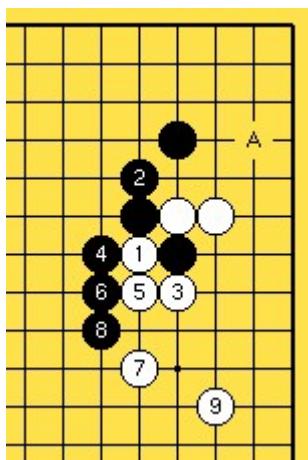
Dia 16. "Do I have to study such a long joseki?" "Is it really necessary to memorize such a long sequence?" "Will I get any stronger by trying to learn from this?"

Good questions, to be sure. The answer is respectively no, no and maybe.

Diagram 16

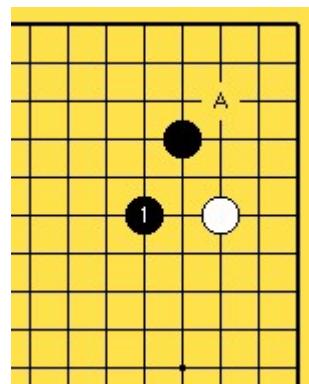
If you like going over long josekies then please do so but otherwise don't worry too much. One point of interest, however, is to realize that white can capture two more black stones if he plays 15 at A. After A black will build thickness, superior in value compared to white's territory. This joseki is a mess, it's real fist fighting and the outcome is not predictable. When white plays 2 in dia 15 he should be prepared for this. The result on its own is difficult to

judge since everything depends on how strong all the floating groups are in the context of the whole board. If, for example, there would be black stones at B or C (or both) white will probably having a very hard time getting a good result.



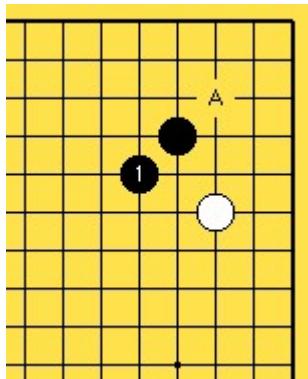
The cut at 1 in dia 17 is a stylish move, refusing to make black unnecessarily stronger (compare 1 in dia 14). Black builds nice thickness up to 8 and white gets 16 points of territory. Whether this is a good result solely depends on the situation on the upper left side. Next black A is extremely big.

Diagram 17



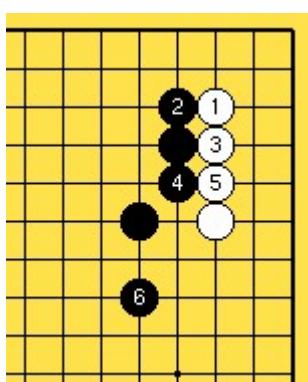
Dias 18 and 19 show moves, which are in a way similar to 1 in dia 12.

Diagram 18



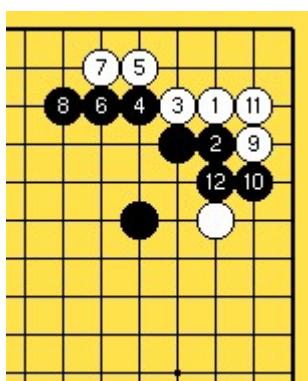
They normally do not involve any fierce fighting but black 1 in dia 12, 18 and 19 all are clearly moves which try to emphasize the left part of the board and do not worry about the obvious defect at A. All these moves, however, are not very convenient in terms of securing territory.

Diagram 19



If white enters at the 3-3 point black can keep things very simple by blocking at 2 and creating a nice wall of steel.

Diagram 20



Being flexible is very very important, black 2 in the previous dia can also be played at 2 in dia 20. The key to real strength is to never automatically choose either but always take a minute to consider both.

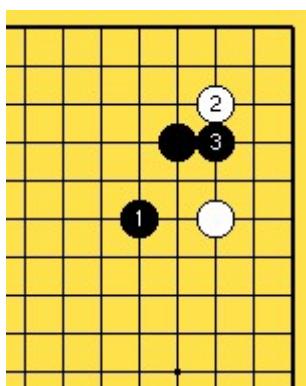
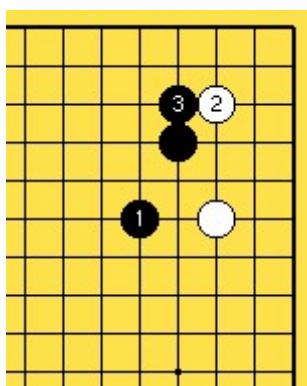
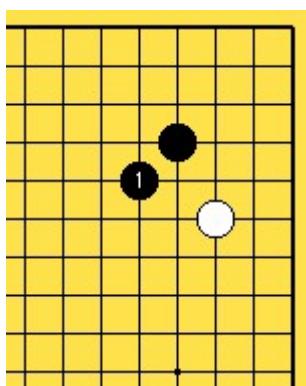
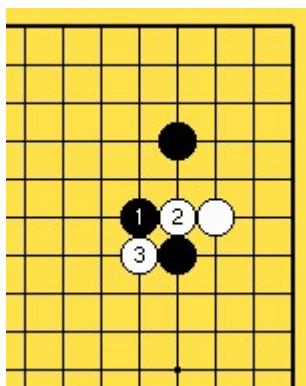
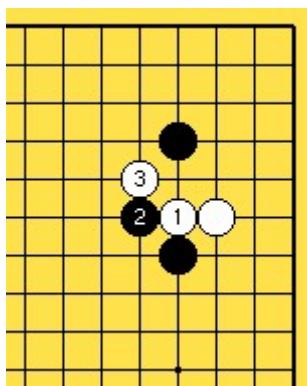
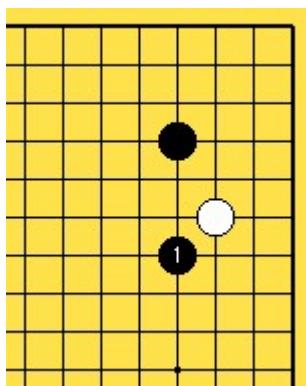
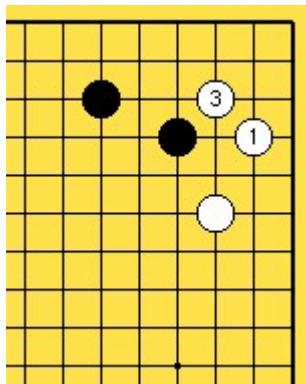
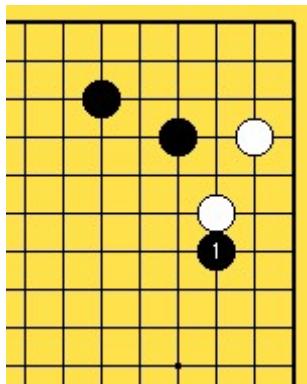
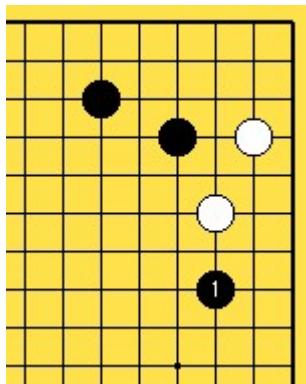
Diagram 21

Variations for black 1 in dia 19 are much the same as dia 20 and 21. I will deal with the remaining moves A-G (reference diagram) next time. I hope you'll forgive me going house-hunting.

I do look forward to any feedback you care to mail me, or, you can just wait and keep coming back to Gentle Joseki and I'm sure I'll provide all the answers to your every question someday.

Appendix 01

Index of joseki's mentioned in this episode:



Gentle Joseki, part IV by Pieter Mioch

The Patterns

Some of the aspects of the remaining moves in answer to the white approach knight's move, the keima kakari. The moves I haven't told you anything about yet are given in dia 1, A-E.

Various other ways to answer the keima kakari

I'm not a programmer myself but since I started trying to tell you something on an elementary level about joseki I can imagine what an extremely difficult task computer people undoubtedly are having figuring out a way to make up code covering all the necessary points, which seem to be virtually limitless. Every single edition of Gentle Joseki I desperately make a choice among the zillions of things, which are worthwhile telling you. When I finally put up the handful of diagrams here I feel often frustrated that I, again, wasn't able to show you more, my sincere apologizes for this. Looking through previous episodes of Gentle Joseki I realize that I did not spend nearly enough time, text and diagrams dealing with the already explained other possible black moves. I hope to get back to them in the future, someday. (Please don't go holding your breath.)

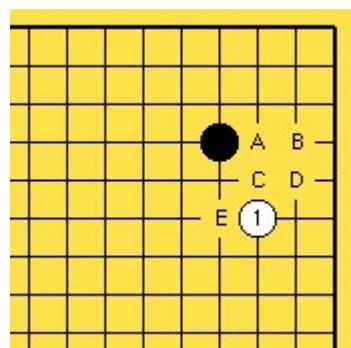
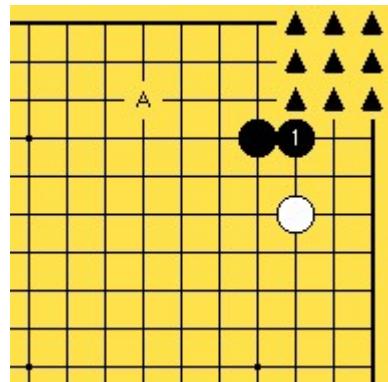


Diagram 1

Black plays sagari



The move, which will not require too much explaining, is perhaps 1 in dia 2. On its own it's maybe not a perfect move but you make about 9 points with two moves as shown by the triangles in the dia. If black has the time to add a move around A he will almost double that amount, this would be making optimal use of his stones, in other words, an ideal way of playing.

Now white can continue choosing among A-D in dia 2a. If white plays A or B and starts something at the right side black will, of course, solidify the upper side with a move around C. Neither the white move A nor B, however, is out trying to make the black sagari look like a bad move. I white insists on showing black that maybe his choice of moves (= sagari "0") was not correct he'll play at C or D after which there are, again, tens, hundreds of variations unfortunately not given this time, sigh.

Please do not forget that the black sagari (descending move) 1 in dia 2 is not so popular when there is no black stone already somewhere at the upper side.

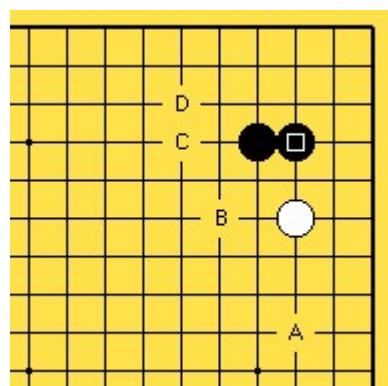
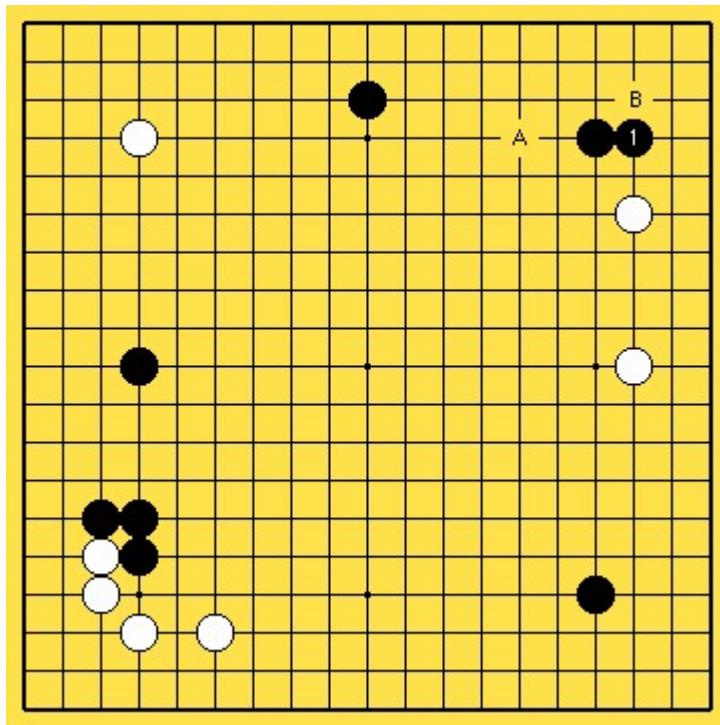


Diagram 2 & 2a

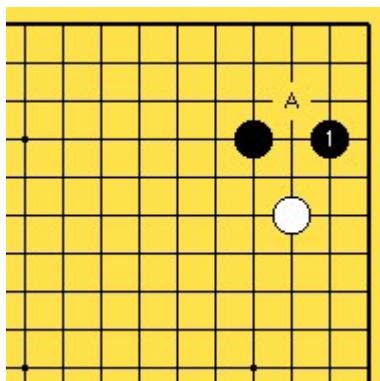
A splendid move



Look closely at dia 3, here you can see a position where black 1 makes a splendid move. Of course instead of 1 a move at A instead is very possible, too. However, A has the drawback of leaving white the chance of invading at B. Black 1 is the tightest move possible and clearly goes for territory.

Diagram 3

Various other ways to answer the keima kakari

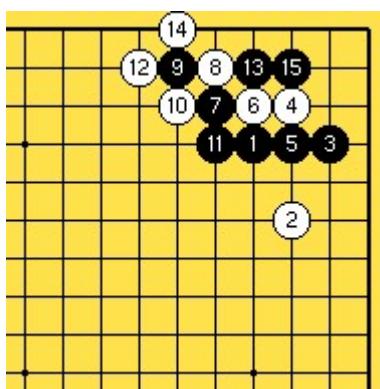


The move 1 in dia 4 seems much in the same spirit as the black sagari we just had a look at.

Black 1 in dia 4, however, is hardly a move worth recommending when played with no friendly stones in the direct vicinity, preferably a stone at the left at a keima's distance. There is a painfully obvious peep at A which white in the future can use as a first move in a sequence going for the corner. There's nothing much black can do about keeping white out the corner.

Diagram 4

White invades



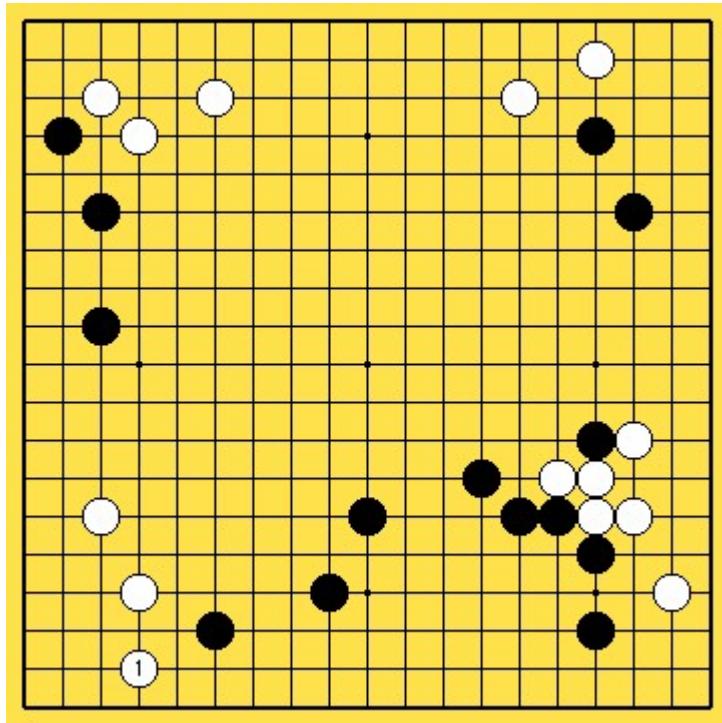
In dia 4a you can see what most likely will happen if white directly enters the corner after black 3. Black, to be sure, can save face with the skillful tesuji of black 9 but one cannot help feeling that black is taken in a little. Proof of this is the exchange white 2-black 3. Imagine the situation without this exchange and you have a basic joseki. So after the basic joseki you can say that white played at 2 and that black, instead of fiercely pincering, the move dictate by fighting spirit, docilely answered at 3. Although black 3 is of course not completely wasted it is a bit of slack move.

Diagram 4a

As often, however, in the case you feel your opponent has played a lesser move, it is advisable to not immediately try to show or prove your opponents move was a bad one. In the situation of dia 4a, for example, it might very well be a good idea for white to stay out of the corner for a while and let black worry about coming back there and play a defensive move.

The sagari, black 1, of dias 2 and 3 is on its own maybe not the best move possible but in many situations I don't think it will come out bad. Black 1 in dia 4 is just the other way around, unfortunately, on its own it's hard to make it in a good move. Black 1 is a typical "finishing touch" move. only played with plenty of back up around.

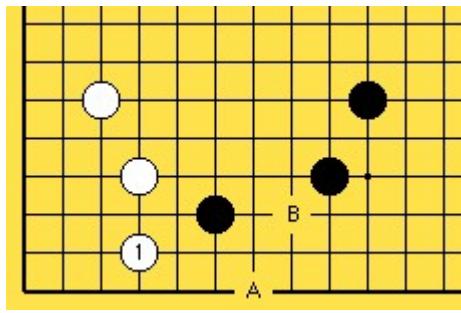
Ma Xiaochun versus Liu Xiaoguang, 11th Mingren title match, 1998



This is a fragment from a game between two top pros from China. Ma is White and Liu plays the black stones. In dia 5 white 1 is a nice tight move securing the corner territory while at the same time preparing huge endgame moves in regard to black's territory at the bottom

Diagram 5

Aiming an invasion



As you can see in dia 6 because of the position of white 1 he can next easily aim to invade at B, black cannot expect to capture or seriously attack this invasion. If white doesn't feel like invading (he could for example be afraid to lose the initiative (sente)) he might play the super slide of A, as you probably know called the "Large Monkey Jump", an excellent endgame move.

Diagram 6

Greedy?

As with the black sagari (1 in dia 2) and the ikken-tobi one-space-jump (1 in dia 4) black 1 in dia 7 tries to secure the corner, too. This was for a long time one of my favorite moves when I was still playing tournaments in Holland, ages and ages ago. Many of my opponents not really had any clue about how to deal with this move and not a small number of them tried the most crazy things to prove that black 1 is just too greedy to be a correct move. Well, it certainly does look greedy, I guess, but is a perfectly common move and it does secure a large chunk of the corner

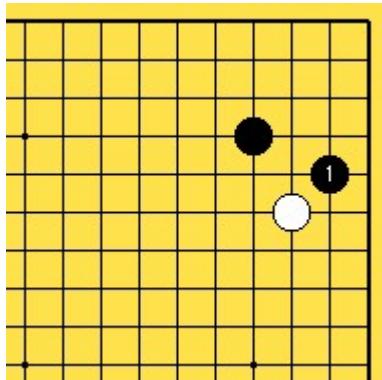
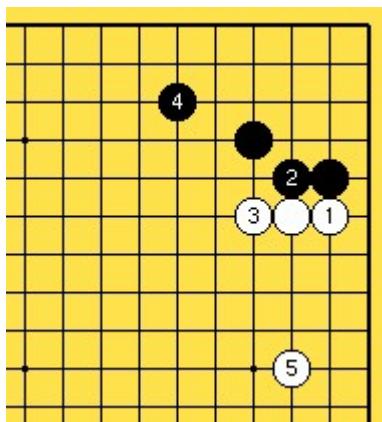


Diagram 7

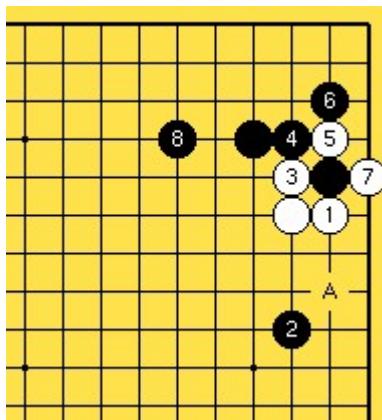
Joseki



Dia 8. This is a joseki, or, a sequence of moves, which gives both players a results they can live with. Black 1 in dia 7, however, has some unexpected features:

Diagram 8

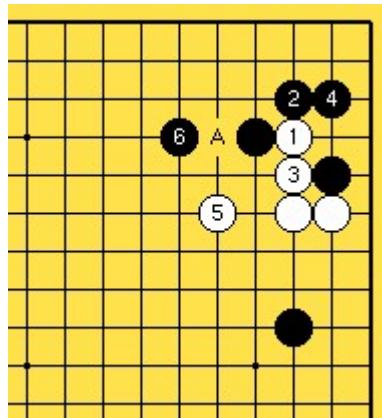
Move of a madman?



Black 2 might look like the move of a madman but it's really quite fancy. White 3 is about the worst thing he can do. Without second thoughts black'll let go of one stone in order to create an impressive formation up to 8. White has not gotten much in return and if white isn't careful black will next play at A and white even won't even be able to make two eyes locally. This is a result very much to black's liking.

Diagram 9

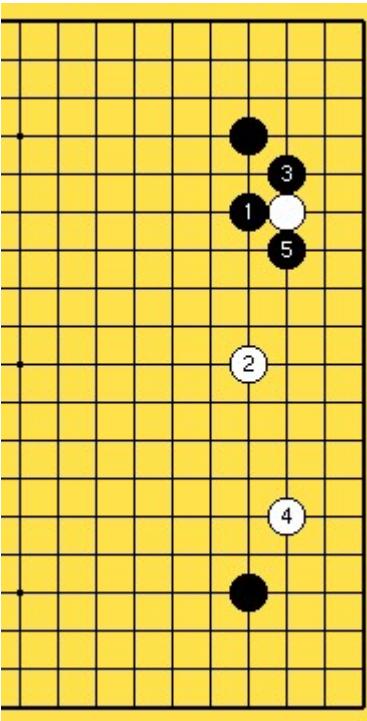
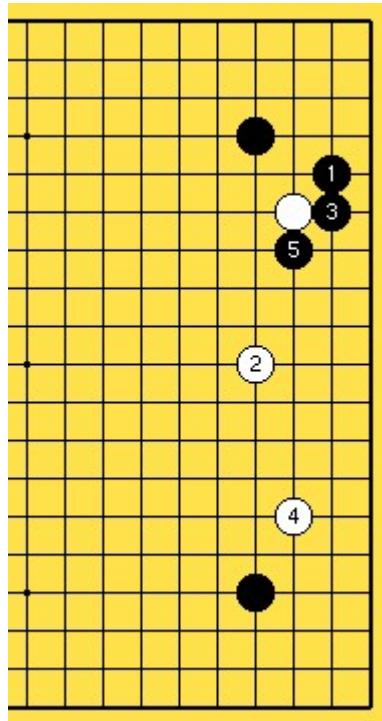
White's tesuji's



White's best move is at 1 in dia 10. This is a sharp tesuji, however, if white were to continue with 5 the result is again very nice for black. White should play a second tesuji, at A, instead of 5.

Diagram 10

Black is low

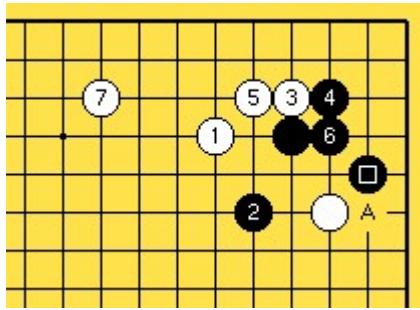


When playing white I don't like the blocking move (= 1 in dia 8) very much. Black 1 is in a rather low position, the best move black often has to continue is at 3, another low move. So nothing to be worried about. In general it is a good attitude and often a necessary way of playing to just ignore your opponent's move. This is especially easy if your opponent's move was in a rather low position. In dia 11 black 1 and 3 are not in an optimal position, compare dia 11a.

In dia 11a black's 1 and 3 are used in a more efficient way, creating a thick position, this result is superior to black's result in dia 11. Thinking about the difference between the dia's 11 and 11a you might want to try a playing elsewhere with white yourself.

Diagram 11 & 11a

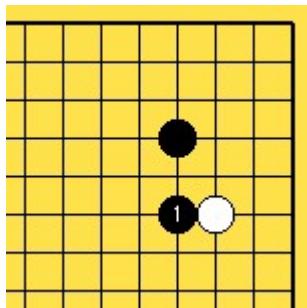
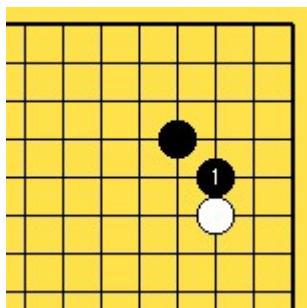
Ignoring black



So, just because black [] is a low position trying something else than just blocking at A is sometimes called for. In dia 12 white 1 is another move possible and 'kind of ignoring black []'. White gets a nice shape at the upper side and black has some profit and thickness towards the lower right.

Diagram 12

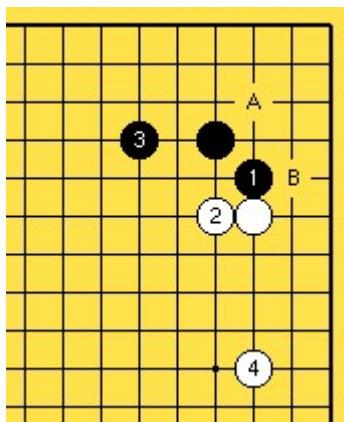
Whaaaat?!



The kosumi-tsuke (diagonal clamp) is the last move I'm going to tell about this time. "Whaaaat?!" I hear you say, "But you promised to go over *all* the remaining possible moves!" I hear you say again. Yes, yes, you're quite right, I can do nothing but admit it and make a new promise: in Gentle Joseki 5 I promise to *only* talk about the remaining move, the clamp of dia 14 this move is certainly worth a lot of attention.

Diagram 13 & 14

Unorthodox



Well, for now, back to dia 13. This move on its own is a rather unorthodox play for a good reason: it solidifies the white stone and does not protect the corner properly.

Dia 15 shows a sequence which is most definitely not a joseki, the result favors white. The only reason I can think of for black to play this way is that after white 4 black intends to immediately play at B. A black play at B guards against the white invasion at A and is a very, very, very big move. It is also, however, a bit slow. Usually black'll be too busy in the opening stage of the game elsewhere to be able to permit himself such a, mostly defensive, move.

Diagram 15

Superb move

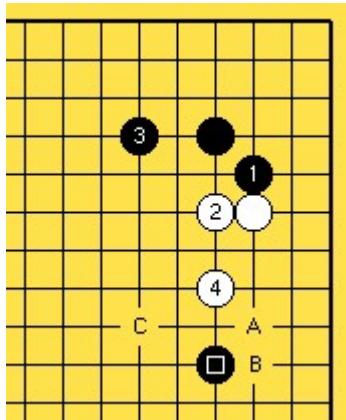
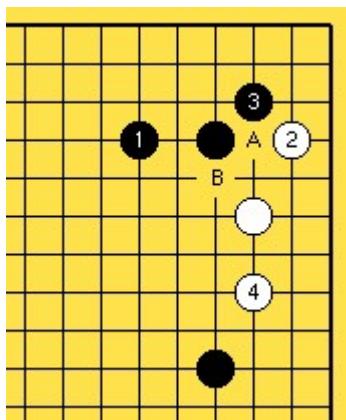


Diagram 16

Preventing that white settles



Dia 16 shows a typical situation where black 1 is a superb move. Because of the presence of black [] white has only little room to make something resembling a group with eyes. To put it more bluntly: if white would play as in dia 16 next a black move at A, B or C is severe and white'll have to struggle for his life. This is, by the way, a joseki which you can try to initiate in a handicap game where black often has a stone at [] already. Do not expect, however, that white'll tamely play at 4 in a feebly attempt to create eyes. Any white player with a little talent will play elsewhere or pincer two spaces below [] instead of 4, in a handicap game, that is.

Diagram 17

Sonoda 8p (black) versus Shimamura 9p, 1977, black wins by 3.5

The reason is the obscure joseki shown in dia 18. Do not try to imitate this style of playing blindly, black's usually has a hard time of making his stones come out nicely once he plays at 1. In the dia, however, I think that the result shows that black 1 in combination with 3 is very playable. Note the cool reinforcing move of black 9, after this move white has no choice but to defend against the threat of black pushing through and cutting. White 10 is a stylish way of keeping his stones connected but all the same, it feels black nicely forced white into a joseki which white never thought even existed. There is also plenty of chance white will fumble somewhere along the line, but of course, we are not counting on that, aye?

To finish the joseki, by the way, black usually jumps out at A next. You might want to play like dia 18 if you feel that you ought to play a pincer instead of black 1 but are worried about the possible difficult variations which might follow. There is not much room for variation with the joseki in dia 18 and black gets to play a pincer and is happy.

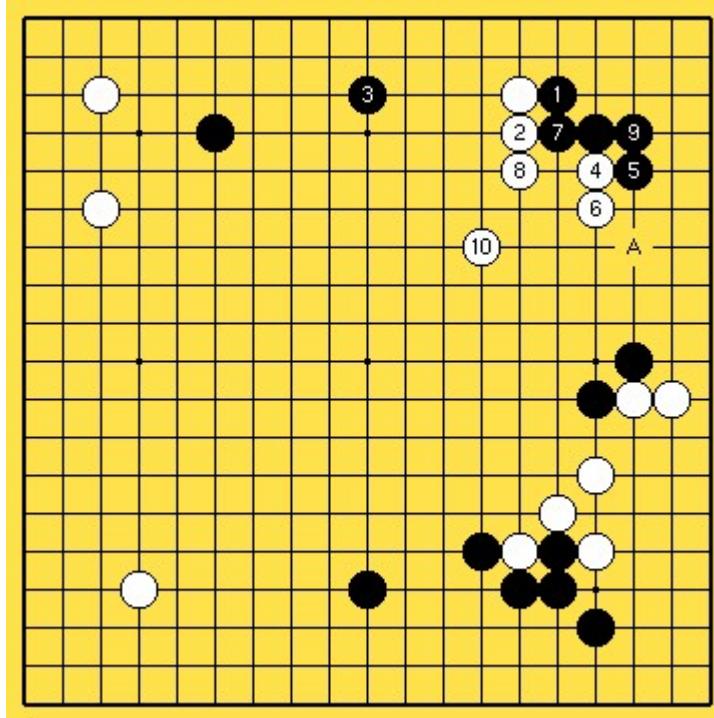
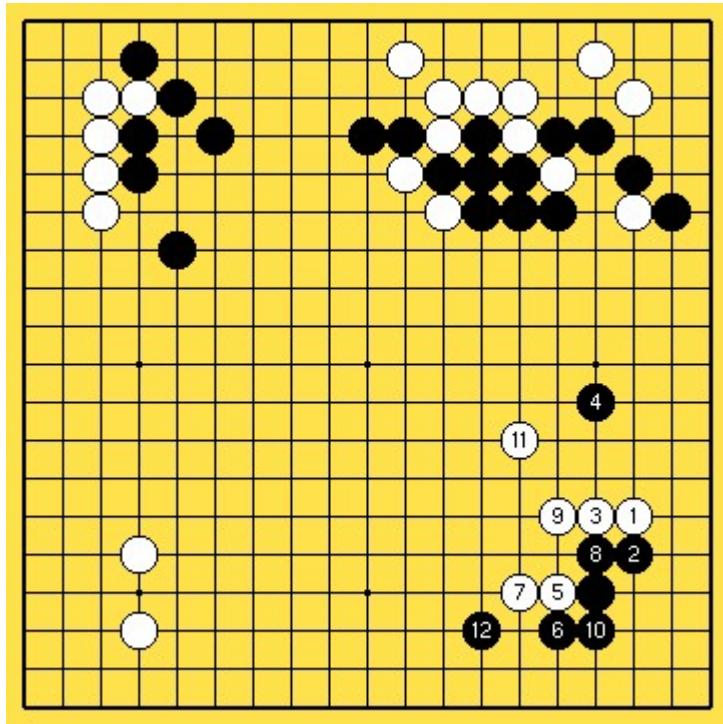


Diagram 18

Okubo Yukio 6p (black) versus Go Seigen 9p, 1956, white wins by 2

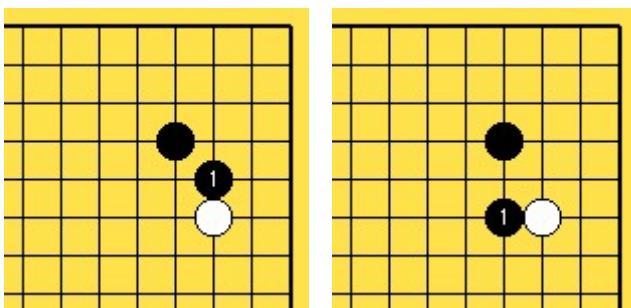
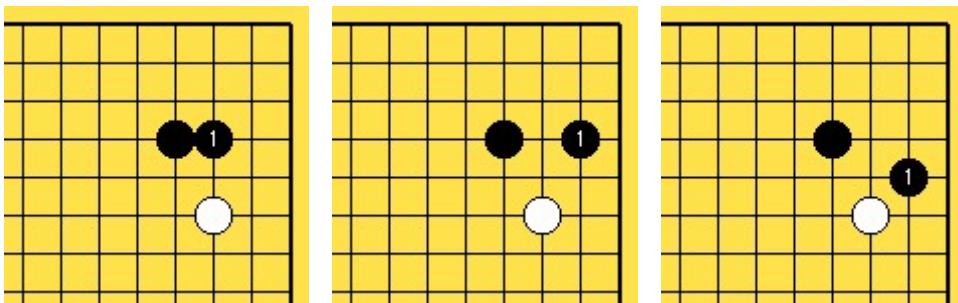


Go Seigen is white against promising young player Okubo in 1956. In spite of a 2 point reverse komi, black was not able to win against the most talked about player of the 20th century. Perhaps black 2 does not work well against he who virtually made up one new joseki per game during the first half of his career.

Diagram 19

Appendix 01

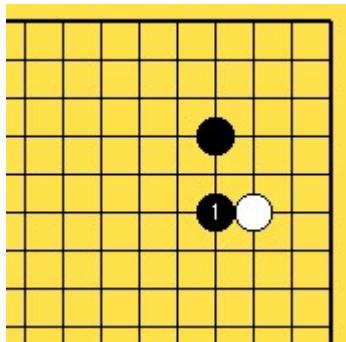
Index of joseki's mentioned in this episode:



Gentle Joseki, part V by Pieter Mioch

The Patterns

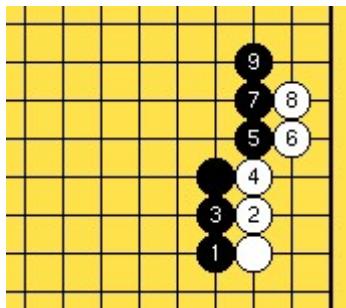
Black attaches



This time I will try to tell you everything (well, a lot anyway) about what happens after the attachment play of black 1 in dia 1.

Diagram 1

A different story



In dia 2 you can see black 1, the same move as in dia 1, played in a different situation. Now it's not played in the corner but on the side of the board. I think that the continuation given here is the most straightforward and simple possible. I don't know about you but ever since I learned this game I have felt like answering black's attachment (tsuke) 1 at white 2.

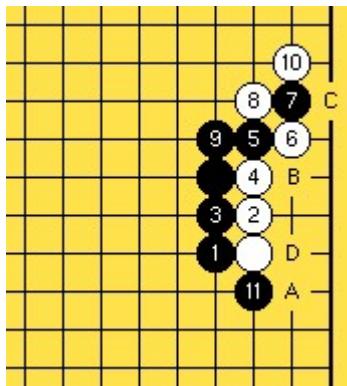
Diagram 2

Regardless whether the situation is in the corner, the side or in the middle. When playing white 2 it seemed to me that black was making no territory at all and that the result was clearly good for white?

Well, it is not. Most of the time during the opening stage of the game black will welcome it if white were to start crawling under the black stones as if there were no tomorrow.

The result in dia 2 is not such a terrible disaster for white, but black has a very nice and thick position. Also, the white stones are more or less played out already and will not help white much in the future. With the black stones it's just the other way around, although black, to be sure, did not make any territory yet his stones will continue influencing the game, possibly right up to the end. The 8 points of territory white made are more often than not a bad trade-off compared to black's thickness.

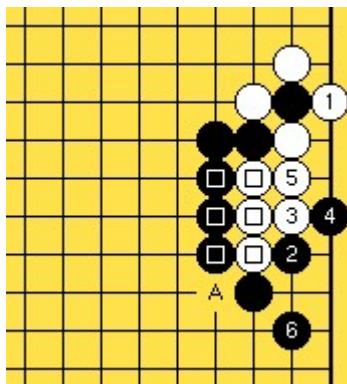
Taking the head of three stones



In the dia 3 black plays the fierce combination of 5-7, the nidan-bane (double diagonal move, blocking your opponent's stones). It may look as if black is helping white by letting 7 get captured. In many cases, however, this line of playing will give black an even better result than dia 2. After black plays the super vital point of 11 white scoop of action is severely limited due to lack of liberties. White A leads to a disaster when black answers at B, white C and black can capture 3 stones with D.

Diagram 3

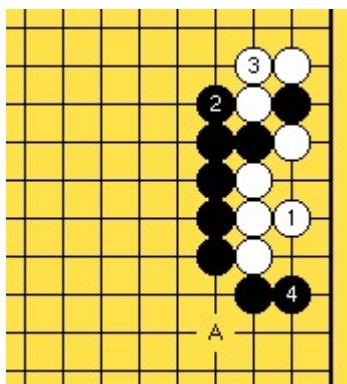
Kikashi before defending



Dia 4 shows a likely answer of white, eliminating all the bad "aji" (potential) and capturing at 1. Before thinking about defending his own weak points black has the nice kikashi's at 2 and 4, next it would be perfect if black could afford to defend at 6. In your own game, however, you might want to spend some time reading out what happens if white cuts at A next. If the fighting after white's cut seems too much for black it is probably a good idea to defend around A instead of 6. Wherever black chooses to defend it is important to realize that from white's point of view the exchange of the marked stones is terrible. The 3 white stones are not doing anything whatsoever but black's 3 stones are influencing the whole board.

Diagram 4

Atari before defending

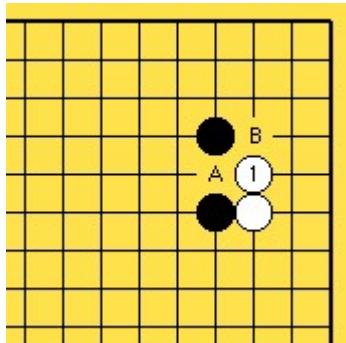


In dia 5 white does not capture immediately since he doesn't like to be kikashi-ed as in the previous dia. Black now first plays an atari before descending with 4. Again, if the cut left after black 4 seems to be too bothersome, defending at A is good enough.

Diagram 5

"That is all very, very nice, and may even be true, but what on earth has it to do with corner joseki's?" I hear you think. Well everything actually, shapes tend to develop in a similar fashion with this amazing game, even if the location is completely different. Both players, naturally, try hard to put all their stones to optimum use, this explains the phenomenon. Just that a given sequence has a nice natural flow, however, does not mean that it's the only sequence possible.

Not very promising



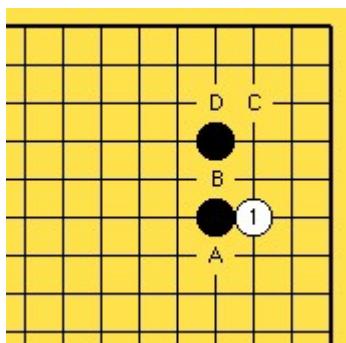
To get back to the original joseki in dia 6, it is safe to say that crawling on the third line with 1 is not a very promising move for white, it is sometimes seen in professional games, not in the opening, however, but much later on in the game. You can of course try it in handicap games to confuse the situation but if black keeps his head cool and his stones together (and every now and then remembers the double hane) he will not get a bad result.

Diagram 6

Now when playing the black stones don't start being foolhardy and blindly play at A, whatever the situation. If, for example, the black stones are completely surrounded by a solid white positions and black is badly in need of some eyes do not hesitate to forget all about thickness and whatsoever. Just block at B, directly guarding the corner is the fastest way of making sure eyes, after all.

So, what exactly *are* white's option once black has attached?

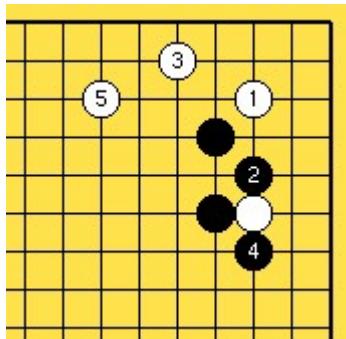
The possible continuations



Usually the only moves worth considering are A, B, C. and D. Please trust me, however, as I tell you that white C and D are mainly played with the idea in mind to frustrate the black player who very likely has studied all the available joseki books but has never heard of white playing at C or D. Both moves, however, occasionally do appear in pro games. I'll show you 2 variations for each, C and D.

Diagram 7

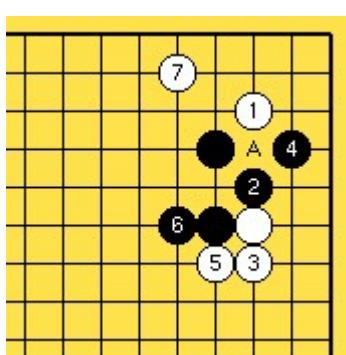
Black is thick



Black's thick, no reason to complain.

Diagram 8

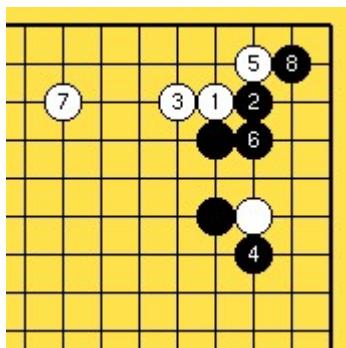
Black will fight



Black will fight. White can try to prevent black from getting a rock-solid shape and connect at 3. Black 4 is a must; black prepares himself for battle. After white 7 it might look as if white has successfully played on both sides and got away with it. Not true. The 1-7 corner has no eyes as yet and white 3-5 will have to run for life when black chooses to play a pincer at the lower right side. (I know, I know, in high handicap games the black stones have a tendency to suddenly and spontaneously die, but they shouldn't) By the way, instead of black 2 in dia 9 is black A also a fine move, going for thickness, and thickness we love, remember?

Diagram 9

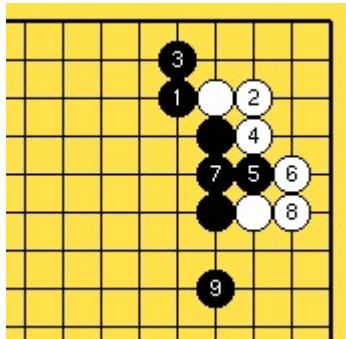
Take the 3,3 point



Blocking at the 3-3 point with 2 is seldom bad, there's some room for variation on both sides but this is very much the general idea, black keeps the corner, scores some points while white makes himself comfortable at the upper side.

Diagram 10

Take the outside

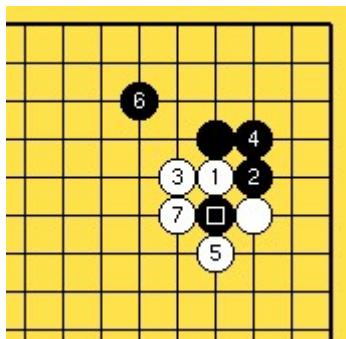


If black doesn't feel like making territory he can block on the outside and letting the corner to white. Black's strategy can be extremely efficient and powerful if he has stones on the left making his wall in to a large framework (moyo).

Diagram 11

Okay, so much for the gentle part of this episode of Gentle Joseki, now it is time to tackle the more serious moves, the ones that make you feel like you just rode your camel four 3 days through the desert when you think about them too much. (moves, not camels, that is)

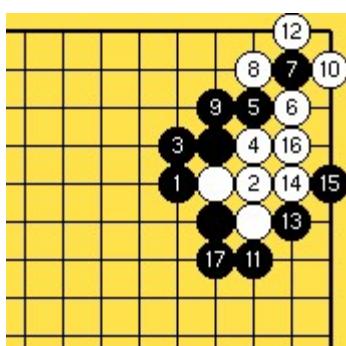
Is the ladder ok?



The white wedging move in dia 12 has the same taste as when white plays 1 at 2 and start digging himself in. It shows, however, a lot more fighting spirit and is quite playable. If white can capture black "[]" in a ladder black should try something different and not play 2-6. This result is good for white. It goes without saying that when the ladder is unfavorable white's original move 1 is very possible not ideal.

Diagram 12

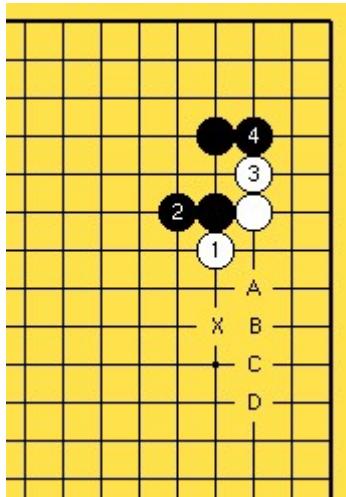
Looks familiar?



So, black will in most cases block at 1 in dia 13 after which there are, once more, plenty of variations (and there was much rejoicing). I'll give you one, which kind of looks familiar, doesn't it? Black gives up the corner when he plays the double hane at 7. Next when black takes the vital point of 11 it becomes clear that white's making some territory while keeping the initiative and black makes a wall. White might somewhere along the line try to play atari at 17. He must be careful, however, with his timing when to play here. If white plays atari after black has played at 11 black will sacrifice one stone and play at 16, white 12, black 13, white captures, black 14 and white has to fill in, white being squeezed and all will be in for difficult fighting.

Diagram 13

How to extend?

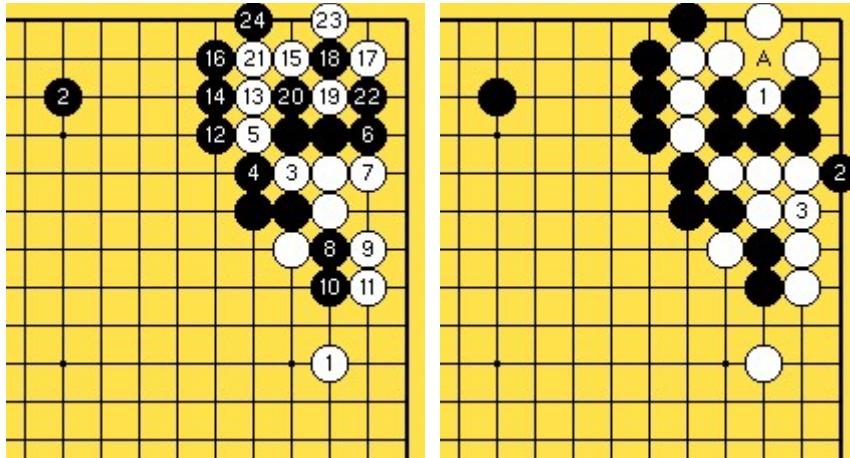


I guess most of you have seen this appearing in a game or two already, it is the most common way of handling the black attachment. Next white can choose between A, B or C. To extend all the way to D is overdoing things. After white played D he'll have a hard time dealing with a black play at X or B.

Extending to A or B makes it possible for white to move between the black stones and try to start a fight. When white has played the C extension he should not try to cut, see dia 15 and 15a.

Diagram 14

Oops, it's a ko!



Because white 1 is a little far white has to play at 7 in order to guard against the cut at 8 and, at the same time, keep the struggle for liberties (semeai) alive in the corner by filling one of black's liberties in. Black, who wasn't born yesterday and read the whole sequence out right from the start, cuts with perfect timing at 8. This creates an ideal ko-threat black is going to need in the future. After black 24 it is white's turn to take the ko first. As you can see in dia 15a, however, black was waiting for this and finally plays the atari of 26. With 28 black takes back the ko and white cannot find a threat black'll answer usually.

Diagram 15 & 15a

I told you a minute ago I could hear you thinking, well, I'm doing it again:

"So I replayed and studied these 2 diagrams, now what? If I'm lucky I might get a chance to use this knowledge, someday, in the next century..."

Actually, there are tons of variations during every game, which bare close resemblance to many corner joseki's. Please have a good look at dia 16.

The same sequence

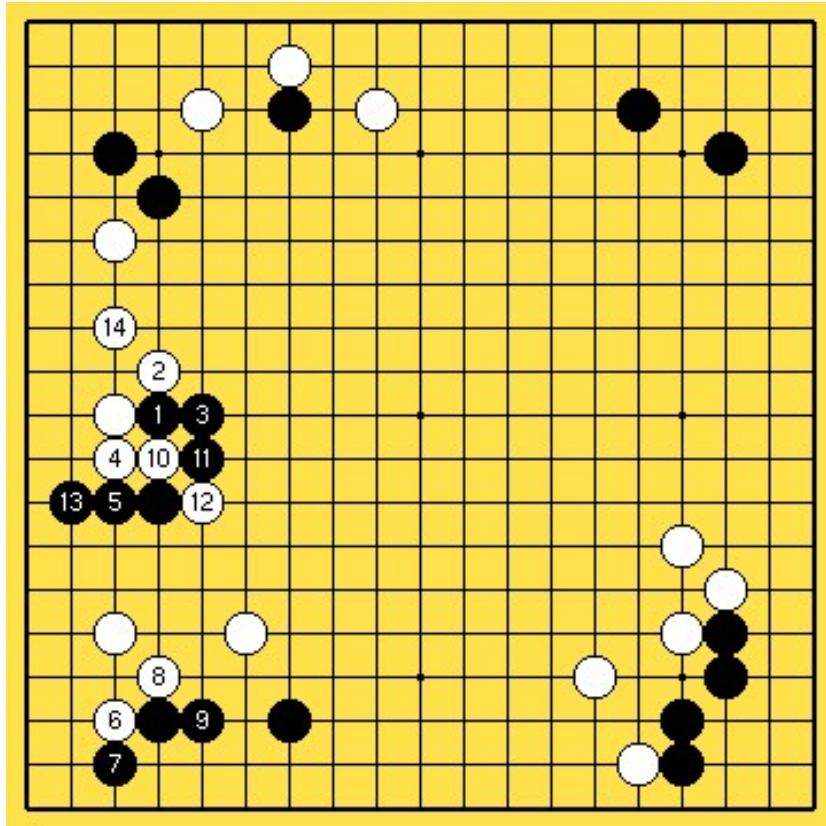
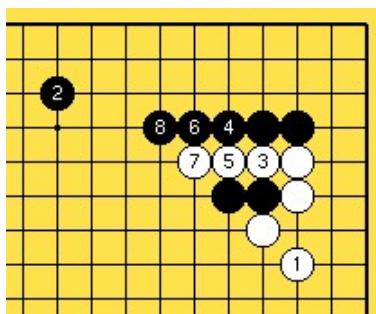


Diagram 16

A game way back from 1927 between Kitani (black) and Hashimoto Utaro who forced Kitani to resign this game in 216 moves.

This is nowhere near to the corner, all the same, there it is, exactly the same sequence you just, grudgingly, made your way through. Here white is not trying to capture black 5-13 so he doesn't need to stretch himself and block above 13. White solidly defends against the cut set up by excellent move black 13 and bide his time.

White plays tightly

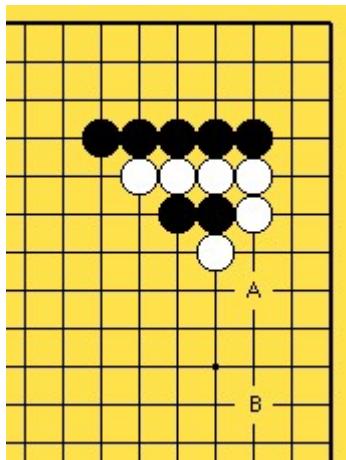


White has played the tightest possible move at black is now tempted to play at 2, although he very well knows that the basic joseki would be to play at 6 instead.

Diagram 17

The reason why black does not defend against white's threat of pushing through is shown here in dia 17. Black doesn't even bother to put up a fight! He lets his two stones go and black is perfectly happy with the 25 some points he made. If you read through the previous editions of Gentle Joseki carefully then you know that the points black made are not the only reason for letting white get his way. The second reason why black likes this results is the *shape* of white's stones.

All about efficiency



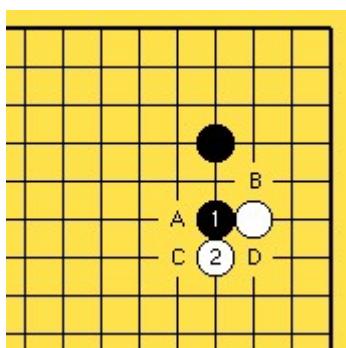
Although black's stones are all doing their job, they all work nicely together to make a solid piece of territory, white stone A is not doing too much, it is overconcentrated, too solid. If white had the choice of placing A somewhere else he would at least want to extend as far as B. In other words, if there would be a stone at B to start with and not at A black might not be so willing to let white barge through with 3-7 in the previous dia.

Diagram 18

By the way, exactly why should black attach at 1? That is a tough question to answer. One answer could be like this. Black plays the attachment because he wants to play out the situation as much as possible so he doesn't need to worry about it in the future too much.

The above is as accurate as any answer, which means that whatever reason you can come up with in any kind of situation is true as long as you have enough breath left to explain it.

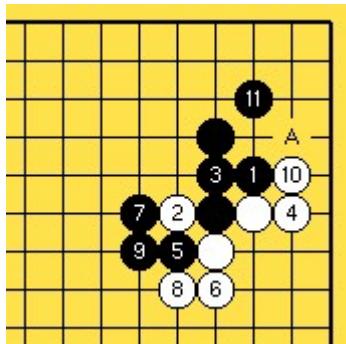
Try to experiment



To give you something you can work with, however, you need to take a look at dia 19. Black 1 often is played because black has * a plan *. Right from the moment you learn to play go you can try to experiment with A, this is a steady approach and although it can get very messy too it often doesn't and keeps things fairly simple. The moment, however, a player finds himself teaching the rules of go to somebody else and is no longer an absolute novice himself, he will start wondering if other moves are possible. Many players who are working their way through the 5-6 kyu barrier discover black B like this.

Diagram 19

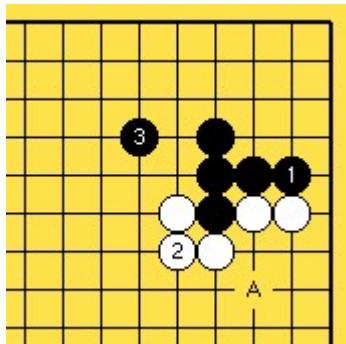
A revelation?



Black 1 in dia 20 many times comes as a revelation. All the same, it's a perfectly normal move with its due of pros and cons. Notice the quiet move of black 11, this is the best move here. Blocking white 10 immediately at A does not defend the corner properly, white very well might invade later on and make life. Instead of white 10 he sometimes might want to try to play at 11 after which black usually blocks at 10.

Diagram 20

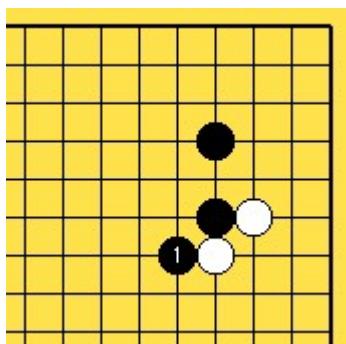
Black too eager for points?



I don't like black's way of playing in dia 21 very much, it seems black is too eager to secure points and does not care how the rest of the board looks like. Nevertheless, sigh, it is a possibility, white 2 at A is also a good move, the result is equal.

Diagram 21

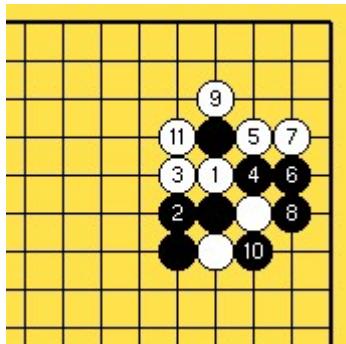
Move of a Madman



If you read Gentle Joseki 4 you'll remember that is said "The Move of a Madman?" somewhere near to the end. Here's this episode's move, which indeed looks as if black is not taking white seriously. To draw this conclusion right away, however, is a mistake. (it goes without saying I think black 1 in dia 22 shows an excellent attitude)

Diagram 22

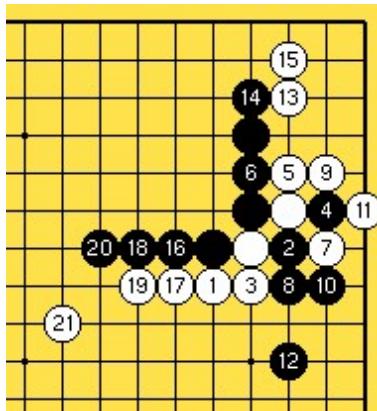
Normally better for black



White 1 is a frowned upon move. As you can see in dia 23 white managed to take the corner but black has made a very thick position in sente (while holding the initiative). The result is normally judged to be better for black. Playing black 10 at 11 leads to uncharted waters, the result is not predictable. If you are an extremely skillful fighter you can see what happens, otherwise you better forget about it and you won't miss it.

Diagram 23

A cool tesuji



White 1 is much in the same spirit as black's original move in dia 22. The main reason why I show you this dia 24 is not the white move, however, but the outstanding move black 4. Black seems on a self-destructive course once he plays 4 but this is actually a very cool tesuji. The follow-up move of 6 is all-important. Do *not* forget it. The result is perhaps doable for white but when playing an approach move to the black 4-4 stone he certainly didn't count on this. The fighting in dia 24 is good, black is happy.

Diagram 24

Taken by surprise?

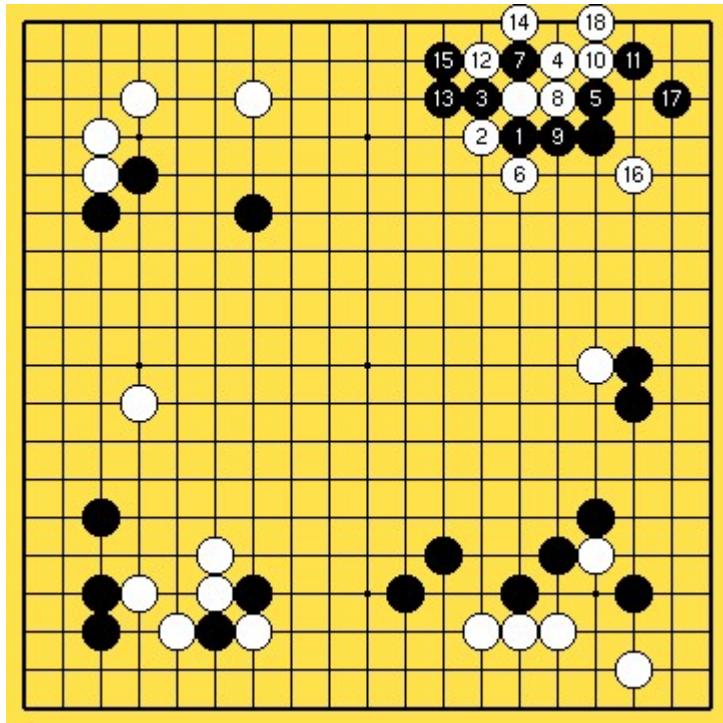


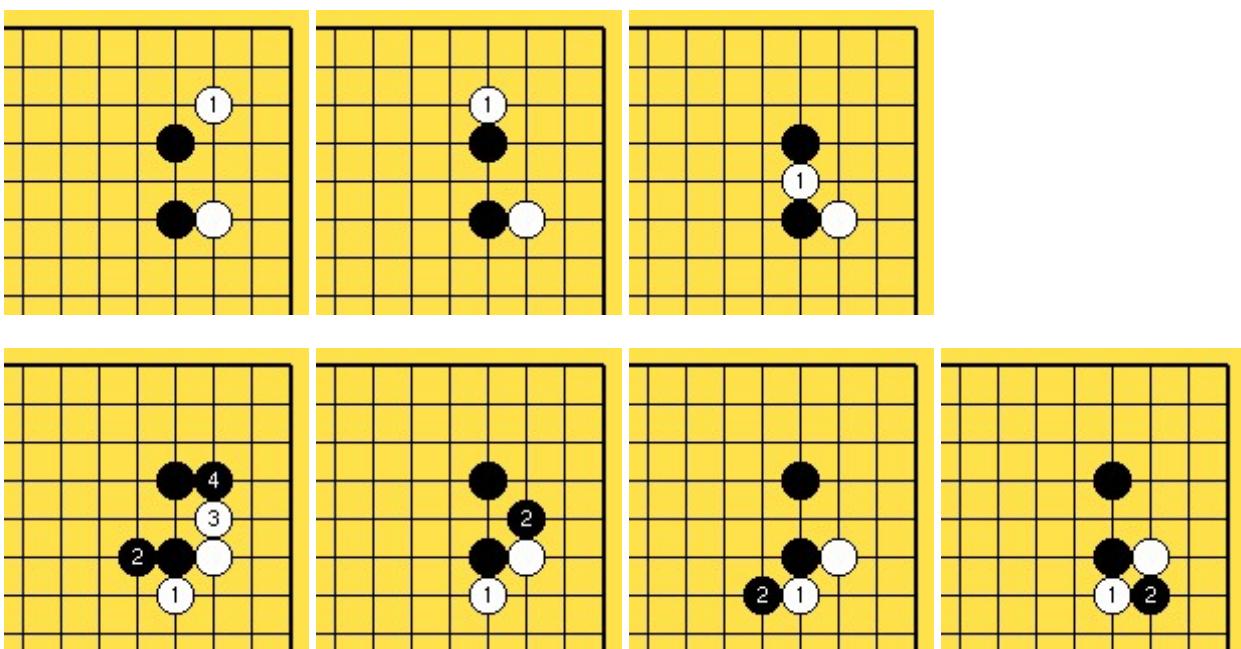
Diagram 25

I am unfortunately not strong enough to tell you how you should judge this result. I wanted to show you that top pros do play the moves I am talking about and I'm not making it up on the spot.

Black is Korea's finest veteran Cho Hunhyun who manages to clobber Lee Sungjae in this game. Maybe it's because of black 3, which took white by surprise, maybe not, food for thought, though.

Appendix 01

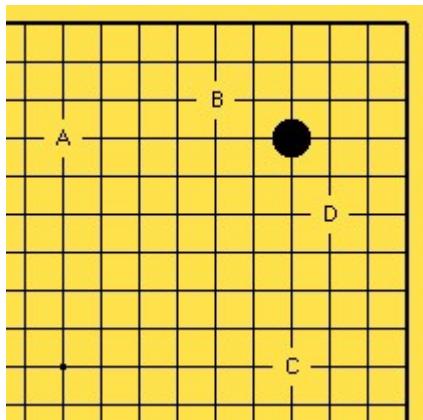
Index of joseki's mentioned in this episode:



Gentle Joseki, part VI by Pieter Mioch

The Patterns

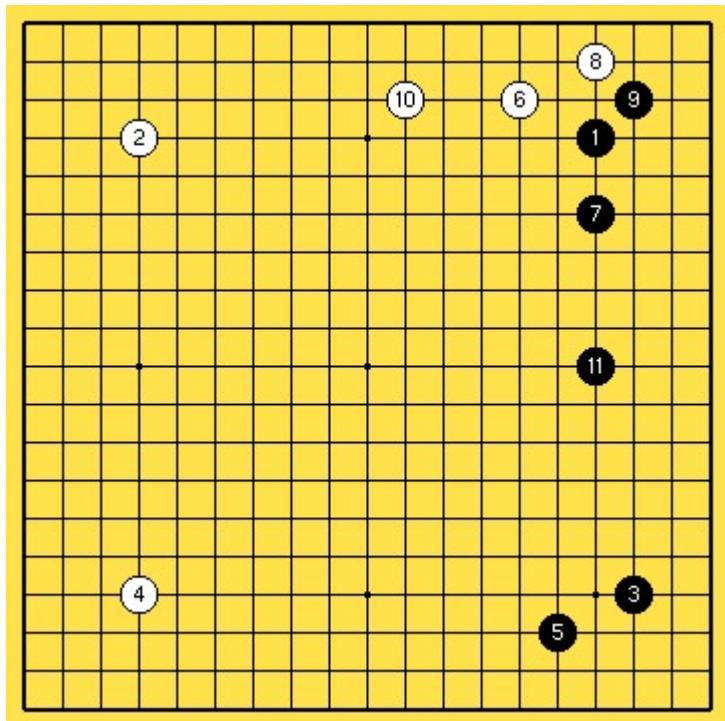
Hoshi (4-4 point)



The stone at Hoshi is not directly concerned with territory, building frameworks is what Hoshi is supposed to be all about. For example an additional play at either A or C will not increase the actual amount of points made by one iota. The amount of *potential* points, however is easily doubled as is the fighting strength potential (were white to play between the black stones). Developing towards A or C comes as a first priority, if you don't feel like making a framework the way of developing the Hoshi stone would be to play at B or D. If you feel you are in the position of freely playing any of the moves A-D it is often a good idea to go for the move which has the most/ nicest follow-up moves.

Diagram 1

A Nice Flow

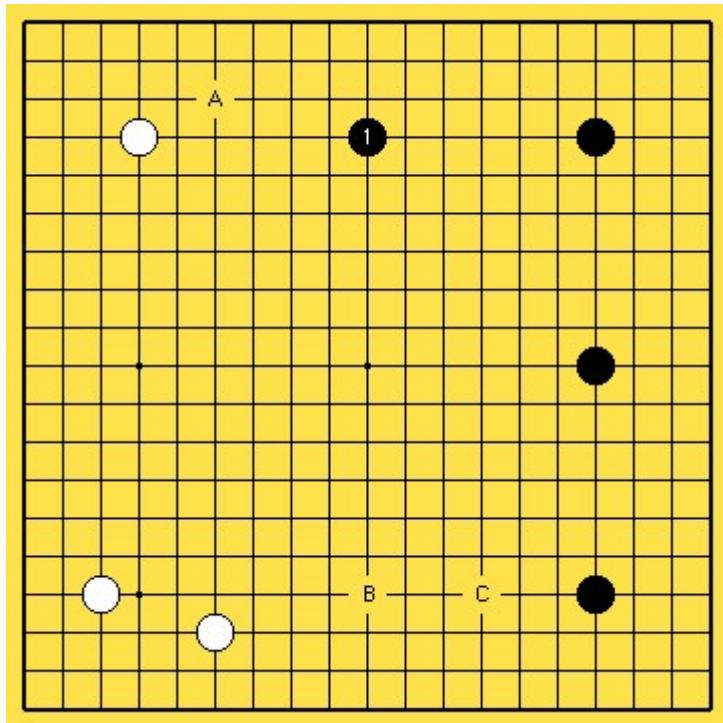


After white 6 not a few players playing black might torture themselves while figuring out which of the tens of josekies mastered they should apply here. Well, I'm over simplifying things on purpose now but to put it bluntly: It doesn't matter what joseki you pick, as long as it does do "something" for the right side black will not do bad. Black 11 might be a little "of joseki" (books give this move one space to the right). But it is undoubtedly an excellent point. It sets up a huge potential territory and is a very nice extension with regard to the bottom right corner as well.

Diagram 2

In the above game example black is Yamashiro "Golden Child" Hiroshi who beat Qian Yuping from China for the 3rd China-Japan match, 1987.

Framework-Style

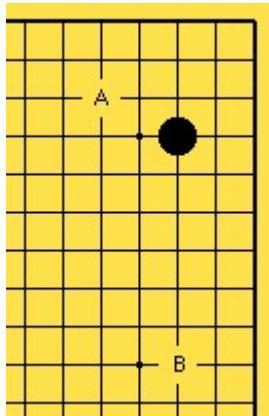


In dia 3 there might be alternative moves possible instead of black 1. If this were my own game, however, I wouldn't bother checking those and would play at 1 in no time. Next black has the nice aim of a move at A. Instead of black 1 I think that playing at the bottom is not so interesting. White's shimari in the bottom left corner should be regarded as a strong position (shimaries are those things you do not play in the direct vicinity of soon because of low-gain probability). And a black play at B has not much territory making or fighting to look forward to. If black has the chance of playing at the bottom in the future (for example after black 1, white A) I would extend no farther than C.

Diagram 3

For more detailed explanation of Hoshi openings and joseki please (re) read Gentle Joseki I-V.

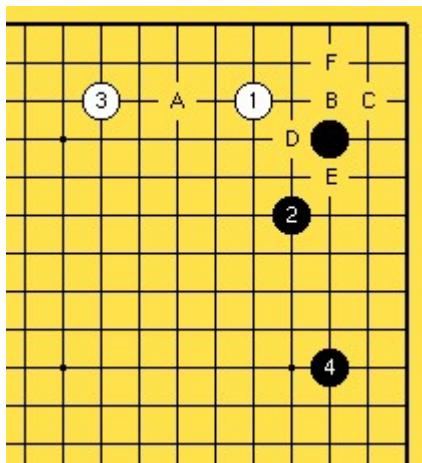
Ko-Moku (4-3 point)



The primary direction of development of a ko-moku stone is towards the left, for example A. It is intriguing that in both situations, either black plays himself at A first or his opponent plays an approach move at A, this focus shifts. The secondary direction of development is towards point B.

Diagram 4

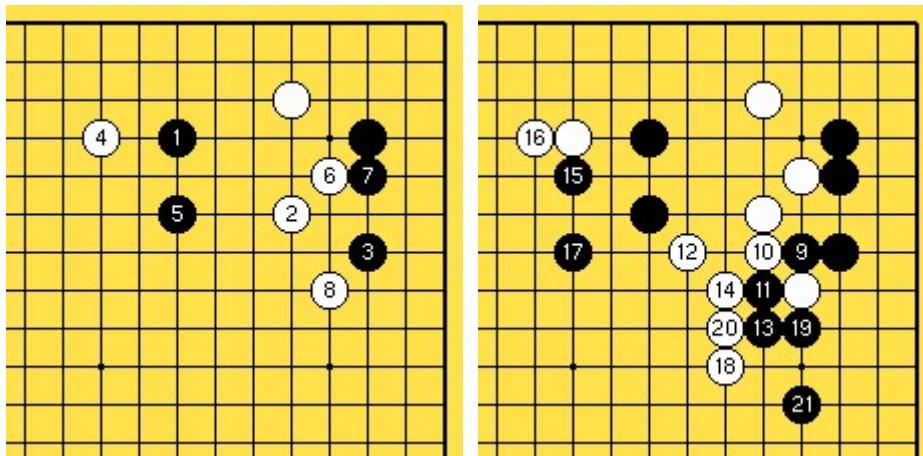
Peaceful possibility



In dia 5 a very peaceful possibility is shown. Both players are a kind of minding their own busyness and are as yet not thinking about bashing each other's heads in. Black comes to play at 4 in a very natural-flow kind of way. White played 3 which is just a little thin. Black can aim at playing at A but white has a handy self-settling maneuver if he plays at B (black C, white D, black E, and white F) after which white has become strong enough to deal with the black invasion, he hopes...

Diagram 5

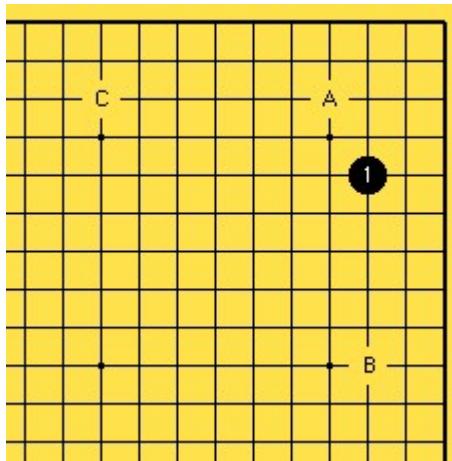
A Little More Complicated



For those among you who have a taste for longer and more complicated josekies here are dias 6 and 6a. There is no telling what will happen after the black pincer 1, there are literally zillions of ways to get off the main track and the end result does almost entirely depend on how good you can handle yourself when in battle and has not much to do with joseki (book) knowledge. One last word about dia 6a, black 9 is not the only possible move but it often shows a positive attitude to push through and cut in a case like this when your opponent tries to push you along the 3rd line.

Diagram 6 & 6a

Moku-hazushi (5-3 point)

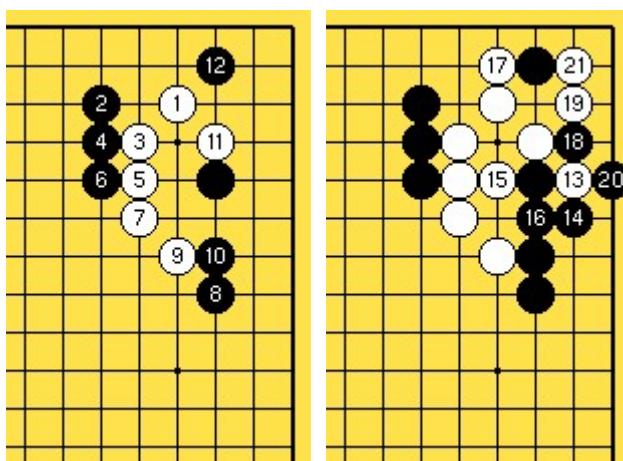


Moku hazushi is an old move with a modern touch; like the Hoshi play on its own it does not make territory. An additional play at A, the primary line of developing makes a nice shimari, the ideal shape to make solid points. Black's opponent, however, usually will hurry to keep black from playing at A in an extremely affective manner, white will play at A himself. Once white has entered the corner the focus again shifts to point B, the second line of developing. If white does not prevent black from making a shimari and black gets the chance of playing at A himself the focus shifts to developing towards the left side, for example point C.

Diagram 7

By the way, please keep in mind that when I'm talking about primary, secondary etcetera lines of development I do not mean to tell you that these lines of playing are a must or that you're doing something wrong when your stones end up facing the opposite side.. I'm only showing you what is considered a natural way of playing. This is often at the same time a rather peace full way of playing, too. Once a fighting variation of a joseki is initiated, however, you can conveniently forget about those "lines of development" (you are not developing anything, you're supposedly much to busy getting your opponent of your back).

Black's One-Space Pincer



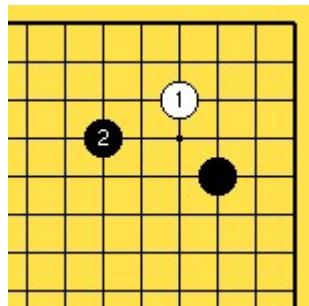
This is a not so peaceful joseki, but it's not all out rough-and-tumble either. After white entered the corner at 1 the easiest thing to do for black would be the extend to the lower right, using a 3 or four point jump. This approach can be extremely feasible when there's a black formation in the lower right corner already.

In dia 8, however, black chose to pincer at 2, not such an easy move. White has a couple of ways of moving out, the diagonal move (kosumi) is probably the simplest. Black 12 is the vital point and an interesting move. Black does not need to sacrifice his stone 12 if he doesn't want to.

Instead of 14 he can play at 17. After this exchange, however white is not complaining and eats a black stone by playing at 16. Black 12 is usually played with the idea of inducing white to strengthen black's stones and to make sure white is the one who has to play the last move in the corner, enabling black to play elsewhere first.

Diagram 8 & 8a

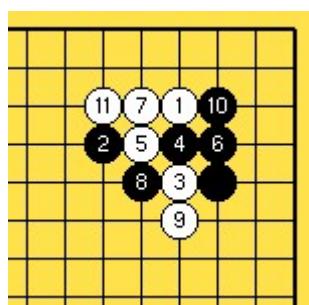
Are You Under 18?



The main feature of the moku-hazushi move is black 2. This innocent looking move in dia 9 can initiate the terrifying Taisha joseki (if you're under 18 please hit the back button of your browser, now)

Diagram 9

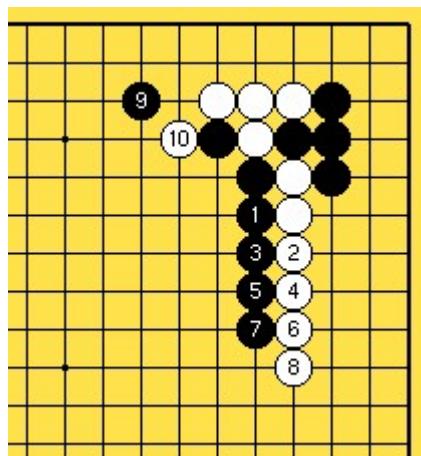
Basic Taisha



The reason why most people stay away of the Taisha joseki is because it's really long and difficult and there are plenty of trick moves involved. The sequence up to 11 in dia 10 is the basic Taisha pattern. Already both players have had to skip a bunch of sidetrack variations to get here. Those, however, are regarded as the easier variations, the real hard part comes after white 11 where black can choose amongst at least 5 possible moves. At the Leiden Go-club these were known as the "Tombstone" variations, probably because one of the players is supposed to meet his maker.

Diagram 10

Extreme Taisha

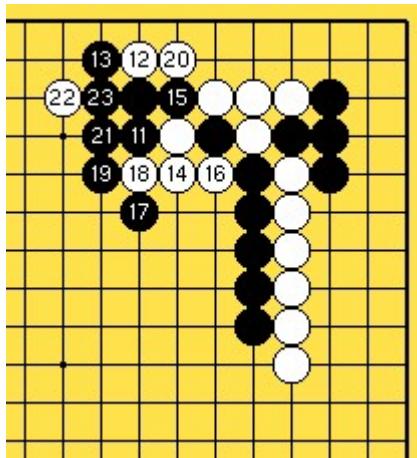


In other words, the reason why some people have a liking for the Taisha joseki is because they have studied and memorized one or two particular tricky variations, which they are eager to use as a means to flabbergast their opponent.

Diagram 11 (1-10)

The variation shown in dia 11 was popular among a couple of us when I was still playing tournaments. After black 9 white has to be very careful.

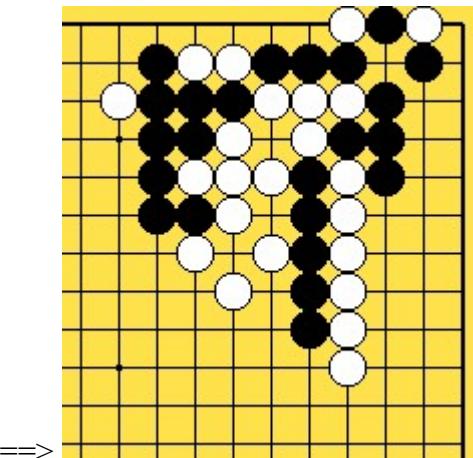
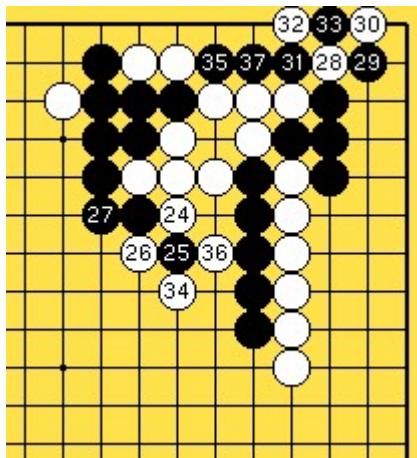
Continuation



The funny thing with people who study joseki for the sole purpose of trying to trick the opponent in order to get an easy / early lead is that they are quite often not very knowledgeable. And (I'm talking about myself of 15 years back now) it is not at all rare that the trickster gets tangled in his own devious web of "Hamete" (trick moves). White 12 is excellent timing, in order to hold white inside black can only play at 13.

Diagram 11a (11-23)

Foiling The Trick Taisha, End

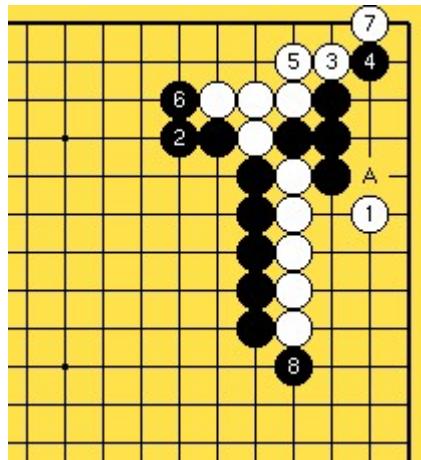


(final position)

After black 35 white plays the very calm move at 36. This is the key to getting a good result. In variation 11-11b white gets a better result, neatly avoiding all of black's nasty traps. By the way, the ko which white can set up in the corner (28-30 in dia 11b) can often be used as a way to save himself in the more difficult patterns.

Diagram 11b (24-37)

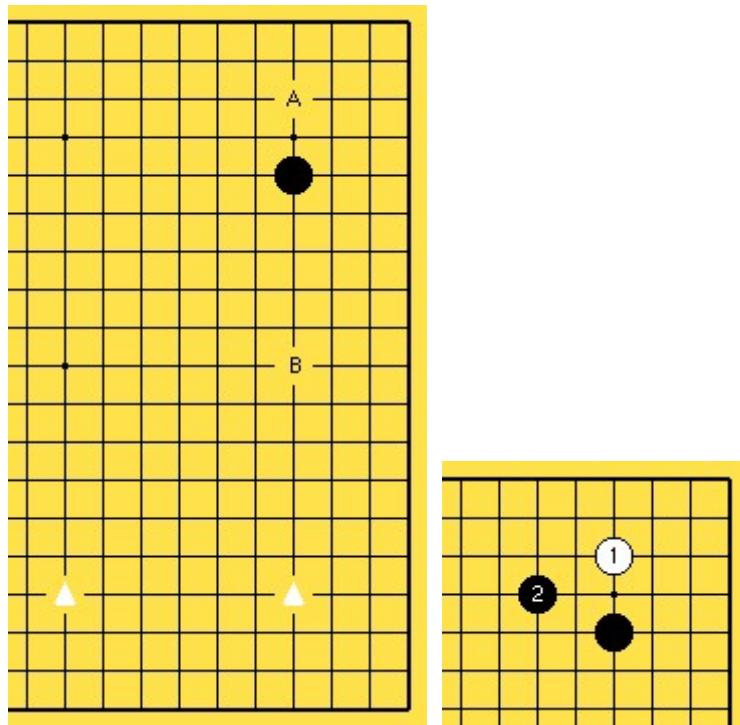
Not A Good Forcing Move



When people showed me this Joseki for the first time I was told that White 1 in dia 11x was a skillful move. As it turns out, however, white 1 is questionable. White's intention is to make black answer submissively at A before playing at the place of black 8. Black, however, does not answer the white forcing move but instead lets go of the complete corner! This result is regarded as better for black.

Diagram 11x

Taka-Moku (the 5-4 point)



Taka-moku, similar to the 5-3 point, has a modern feeling. It does not make any points on its own, and especially since the nineties it is often used in a moyo-making, fighting kind of game. The next move, if black's going to play one, is of course at A.

Diagram 12 & 12a

Nowadays, however, often people do purposefully not play at A, even if they have the time for it. The idea is, especially when black has stones in the neighborhood of the triangle marked spots, to go for influence with black 2 in dia 12a. Playing like this obviously shifts the focus to point B, big time.

Earning Respect

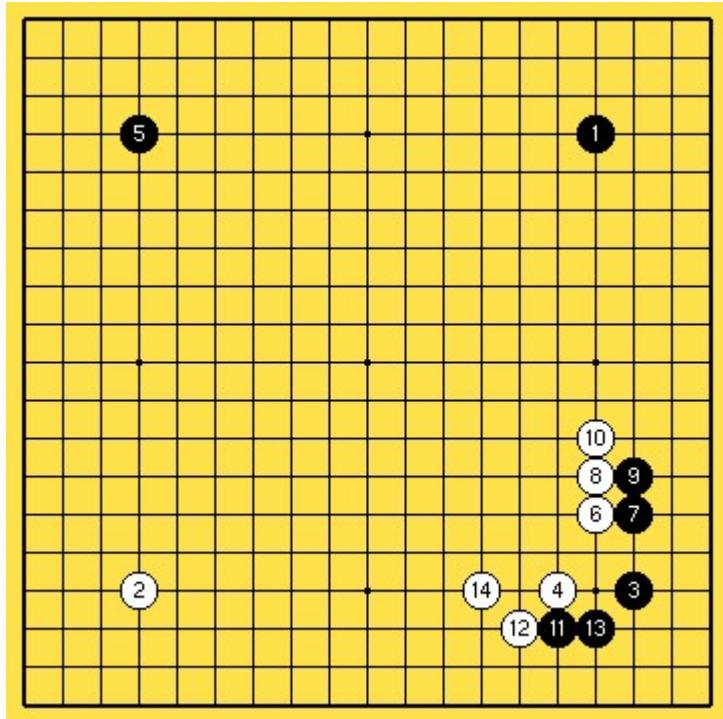


Diagram 13

White 6 is a very nice move and one of the main attractions of the 5-4 point. White wins this game eventually by half a point. I think that white's way of playing only recently has become popular. Playing like this white must have steady confidence in his / her abilities in order to neglect making territory in spite of the disadvantage of not having the first move. You can not help but feel respect for white, playing like this, and winning.

Not Such A Modern Move After All

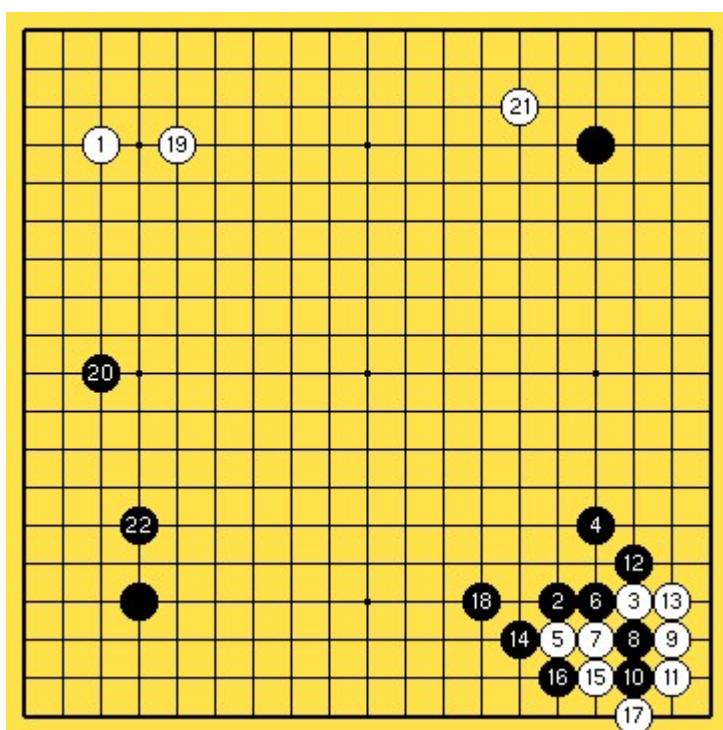
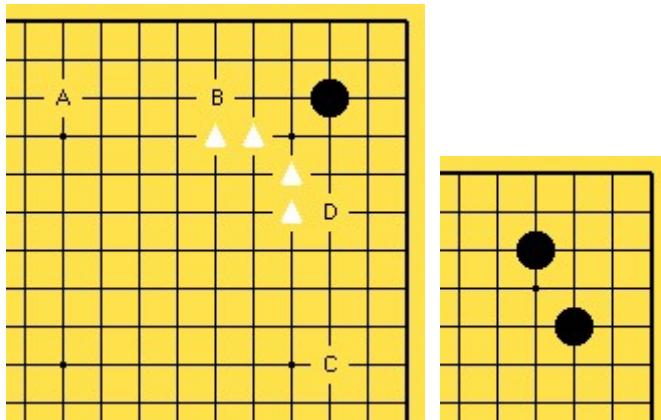


Diagram 14

I only show you this game to prove that you cannot trust me as far as you can throw me. Although this game was played in 1881, even before anybody had heard of "Shinfuseki" (= new, center oriented opening) black 4 was played as a standard move already. It was a 2 stone handicap game so that does explain it in a way. Black 4 was not so popular but all the same, just because black 4 wasn't played so much a long time ago does not mean that it's a typical "new" or modern move. In this case it only means that for centuries black 4 was thought of as a splendid move, backed up by (some) Hoshi stones. Of course, the only problem, except for handicap games, nobody played on Hoshi very much.

Hayashi, who plays the black stones uses his Hoshi stones in the powerful framework strategy. He forces his opponent Nakagawa to resign this game in 155 moves. Note that black's lower left corner still is more or less open, in spite of two additional moves 20 and 22.

San San (the 3-3 point)

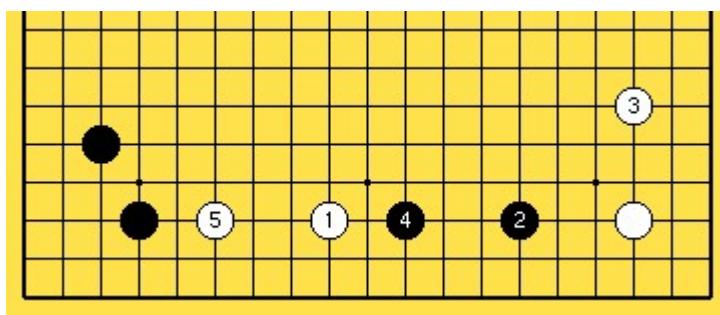


Well, there is not much of direction to the 3-3 point. What I mean is that as with a stone on Hoshi it is self-sufficient, you do not need to hurry and play an extra move. (In contrast, all the asymmetrical moves 3-4; 3-5; and 4-5 are best completed with a second, shimari-making move).

If you want to develop the 3-3 point most often the wide extensions of A and C are the proper way of playing. Although the 3-3 move does not require an immediate follow-up move you might sometimes feel like playing at B or D (my personal favorites) or any of the square marked spots. One reason, however, you might feel reluctant to spend a second move in the corner (making a 3-3 shimari) is because the most effective, the best shimari is the 4-3 shimari in dia 15a.

Diagram 15 & 15a

Not So Much Choice



This excerpt of a pro game (Ma Xiaochun, 9p vs Guo Juan, 5p) shows a typical way of developing a 3-3 stone. It is not so much that you decide which way to go to yourself. No, it is many times your opponent who decides for you which side you have to go to. In dia 16 when only thinking about the size of territory made, black is doing better because of his superior shimari at the left.

Diagram 16

This does, however, not mean that he has any kind of advantage he can exploit to win the game. White's territory at the right might very well turn out to be worth more than black's left. From here on much will depend on exactly how strong the formations white 1-5 and black 2-4 turn out to be in respect to each other. The weaker your nearby enemy stones are, the more territory you can look forward to.

That's it for this time. I hope you managed to make your way through all the above this time, too. People have told me before "You certainly seem to be writing for a wide audience, Pieter". Meaning that Gentle Joseki is sometimes targeting 20 kyu people and sometimes (like this episodes Taisha stuff) dan-ranking players. I, however, sincerely believe that *anyone* can pick-up something worthwhile here, as long as you're clear about the rules.

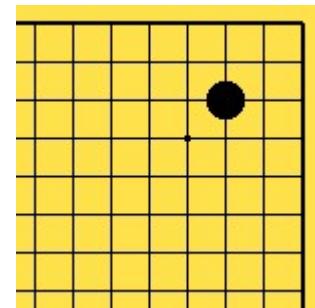
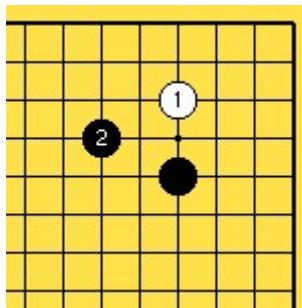
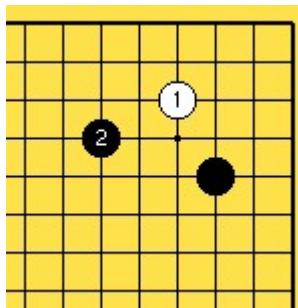
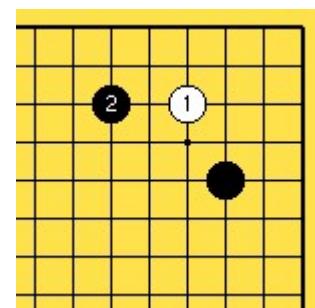
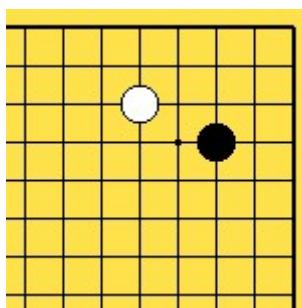
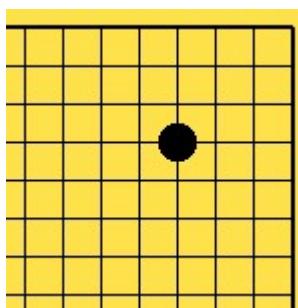
One other thing, since Jan Steen has redesigned my automatic mail-click-link at the bottom of this page the amount of reactions I got has drastically decreased. Please do write if you feel like it, it is a great help, believe it or not. (Sorry to the 50+ people who were on my Gentle Joseki mailing list, I forgot to save my address book when re-installing my system, oops...)

The number of people visiting Gentle Joseki has been quite stable since episode II at over 600 per new episode. Well over 1500 if you take the total of all the episodes over a 1-month period, thank you people! (now where is that filthy rich sponsor again?)

Be sure to come back for more next month. In Gentle Joseki 7 I finally will start about my hobbyhorse, the opening move at the 5-5 point. On IGS I've tried this move with both black and white in over 30 games, each game playing two 5-5 points and I surprised myself by holding onto my 3d* grade. Well, that's to show that you can play any move in the opening, as long as you've convinced yourself that it's playable, you'll get away with it for sure.

Appendix 01

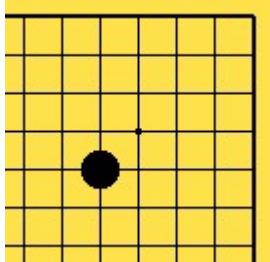
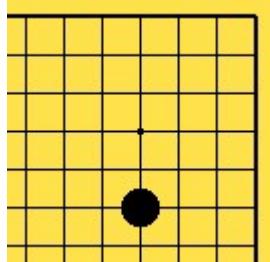
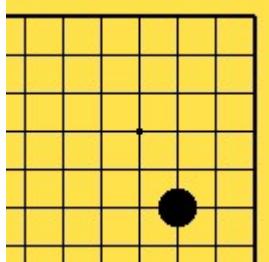
Index of joseki's mentioned in this episode:



Gentle Joseki, part VII by Pieter Mioch

The Patterns

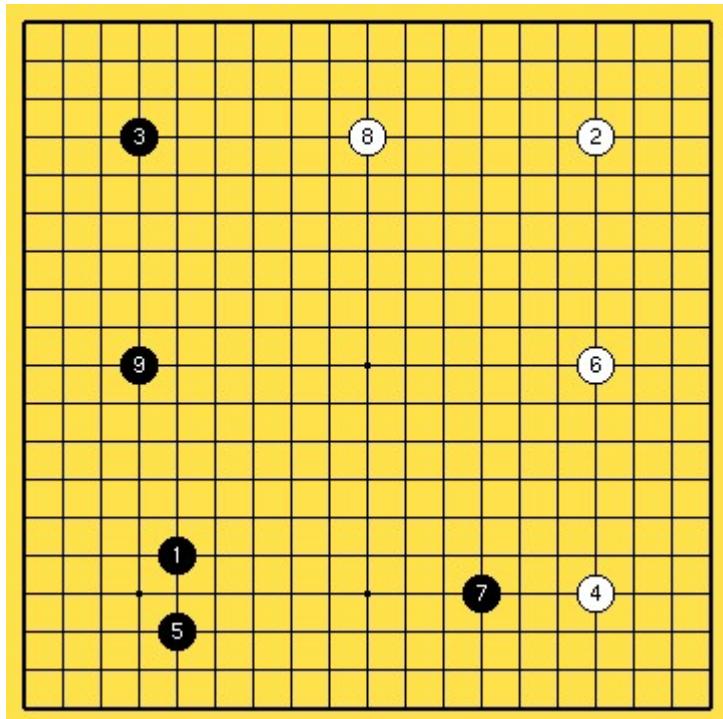
Non- Standard Moves



The corner plays in dia 1, 2 and 3 have at least two things in common. One you guessed already I presume; they are not standard opening moves. The second similarity may come as a bit of a surprise though: these moves are all recognized as playable and sometimes appear in pro games. Like a first move on tengen (10-10 point) the plays at the 6-3 point, the 6-4 point and the 5-5 point, however, are difficult to understand. I for one have not really a clue what they're all about. This does not, however, stop me from freely using them in my games. They are, unfortunately, quite hard to put to good use. In the future I might come back at the moves in dia 1 and 2. In this episode of Gentle Joseki I would like to focus on the move in dia 3, the 5-5 point.

Diagram 1, 2 & 3

67 Years Ago



Black: Onoda Chiyotaro 5d
White: Kitani Minoru 5d
January, 1934, black wins by resign.

Recently the young (22) Japanese talent **Yamashita Keigo**, 7 dan, has gained popularity because of his unorthodox opening moves. He did this in such a splendid way that he conquered Kobayashi Koichi in 2000 for the Gosei title and won the best of five, three games to two. It is not true, however that young Yamashita is making these things up all by himself. Dia 4 shows that the 5-5 point was already played, in a serious fashion, well over 60 years ago. By the look of this game it might well have been played yesterday.

Diagram 4

Let's first answer the question, which surely must be on your mind: "Why on earth would anybody feel like playing the 5-5 move"? My joseki dictionary, the "Joseki Daijiten" I occasionally glance in has an excellent, if not completely satisfactory, answer. *"Playing a move at the 5-5 point has the advantage of having a big psychological effect on your opponent"*

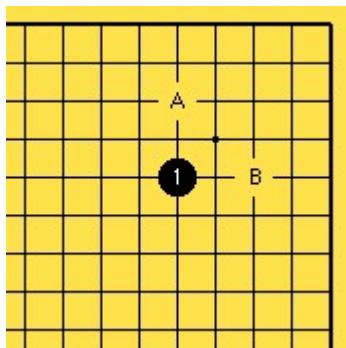
If this were the whole story then everybody and his brother would be playing at the 5-5 point but, as of today, that is certainly not the case. Usually when doing Gentle Joseki I avoid opening my joseki dictionary and instead try to explain things in my own words. As an exception I'll give you the rest of the text, it seems to be only fair to let you share in the Daijiten's infinite wisdom... *"It is however, undeniably the 5-5 play does not help much in terms of territory. It is a move which naturally goes for influence..."*

...Well, since there does not seem to be any logical reason for choosing to play at 5-5 let's switch to a different strategy in our crusade for wisdom, knowledge and blood.

A very good reason for **not** playing at the 5-5 point is because of the lack of proper follow-up moves. As a matter of fact, this is one of the major drawbacks of all the symmetrical opening moves, the 3-3 point, the 4-4 point as well as the 5-5 point, not to mention tengen... Symmetrical corner moves do not make it easy to decide where to play a second move if the chance arises.

(The most effective way of guarding the corner and getting profit is the ordinary "shimari", the shape you get with a move at the 4-3 point and the 5-3 point. I've been over this a couple of times before and will skip a detailed explanation. If you're interested please go through earlier episodes of Gentle Joseki.)

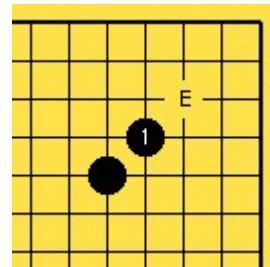
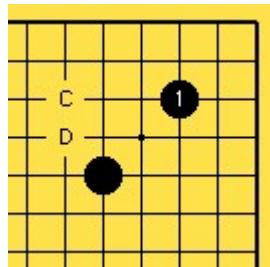
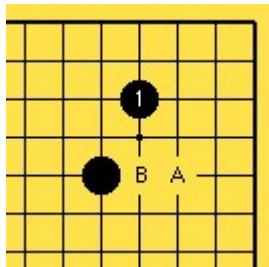
The 5-5 Formation



The best thing black can do seems to be to reinforce the corner with a move at A or B as shown in dia 5. Even with this additional move, however, it is still in the dark exactly how many points black can expect in the corner. To put it in a different way, playing 2 moves black still didn't make one point of territory!

Diagram 5

Not Very Sensible



As is shown in dia 6, 7 and 8 black's other follow-up moves do not make a whole lot of sense. Black can try going for territory with 1 in dia 6. In that case, however, black would very much like the 5-5 stone to be at either A or B. Black 1 in dia 7 is also an unnatural move, now the 5-5 stone would be more useful at C or D. Black 1 in dia 8 is really funny looking, it would be something if it would be a good formation. Actually, I am not sure how to rate this shape, it might be worth trying. What I do know, however, is that there is a terrible defect at E, when white plays here black's corner is gone for sure.

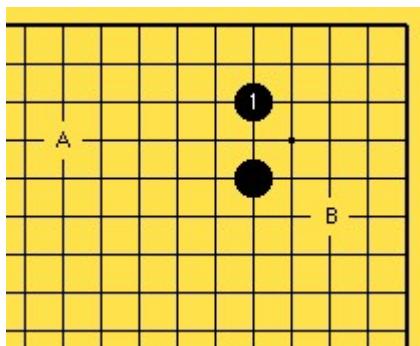
Diagram 6, 7 & 8

By the way, just because in dias 6-8 black one results in giving black a less optimal shape does not mean that you will never see these kind of formations appear in your own game or pro games. If, for example, in dia 8 white would have a stone at the 6-3 point the position reverts to a perfectly normal joseki.

It is wishful thinking, however, to expect white to be as nice as to approach the black formation in a way which makes black's stones come out excellent. Playing white you might feel the urge to restore the situation to a more common one. A pattern you have seen before and know. This is not what the game is about, however, and if your opponent played a strange move it's up to him to make it work, **there is no reason for helping him along**.

(white 12 in dia 10 is an excellent move with this in mind, white does not make it any easier for black by keeping distance and playing solid)

Common Follow-Up



Which brings me back to black 1 in dia 9. This follow-up move is most often seen in pro games and is a standard continuation. Which is to say that black is persistent in his far-out strategy, playing close to the corner but not claiming it as yet. Next black can try to put his formation to good use in moyo making (or fighting) in the direction of A. Or black can aim at playing B, making a thin 20 points of territory. ("thin" meaning that depending on white stones in the neighborhood black will be hard put to keep his corner territory unharmed)

Diagram 9

No Territory

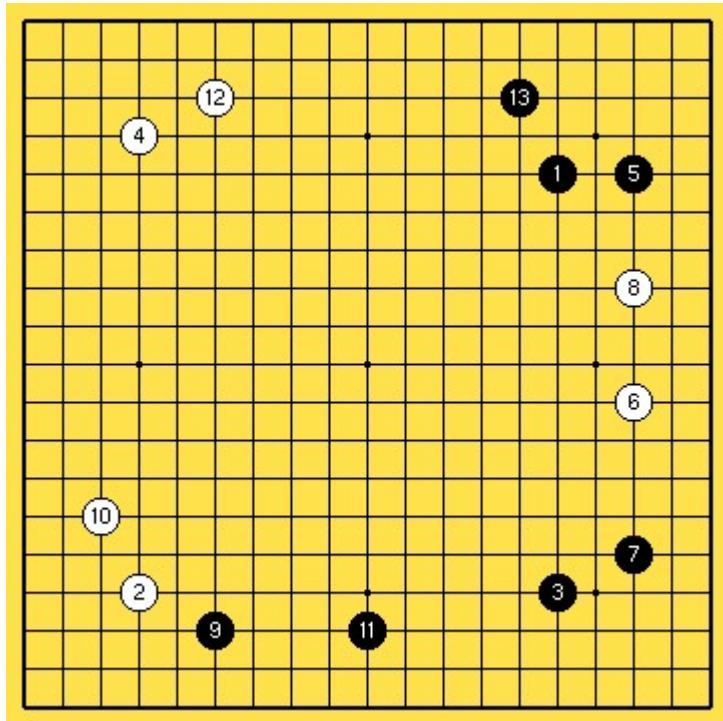


Diagram 10

White Can Invade at Will

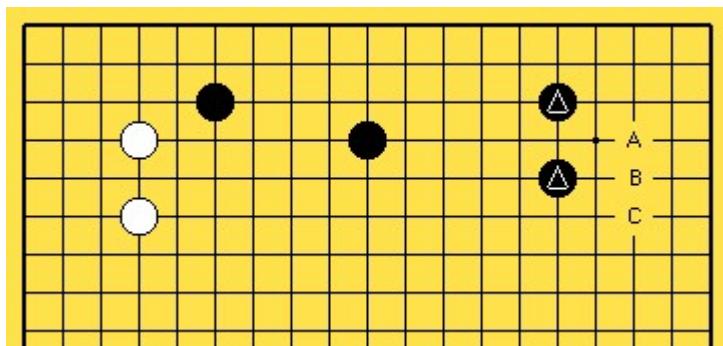


Diagram 11

Now we have a bunch of plausible sounding reasons why you should never play at 5-5. And, perhaps, the best thing to do is to stop reading right here get on with your life, forgetting about the existence of this weird move completely and be happy.

Thank you for staying with me, coming this far shows courage. By still being here however, you admit that you're interested in the 5-5 move. So, I think it is time for you to try the 5-5 move in your own games a couple of times to see how you like it. Play it a couple of times in one or two corners and than go over the rest of Gentle Joseki 7. You will appreciate the rest even more after having faced similar situations in your own games.

Let's have a look at another aspect of the 5-5 move. **What happens if white does not keep his distance and chooses to play an approach move?**

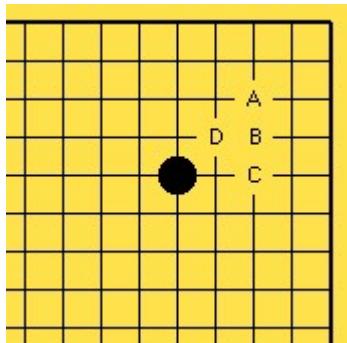
Black: Kato Atsushi 6d
White: Yoda Norimoto 9d
White wins by resign, October 1996.

In this game black choose to ensure the corner playing 13. A little later, however, white successfully invaded at the 3-3 point and black's territory vanished. This would have been all right if black had some weak white stones as a target to attack and possibly capture. Unfortunately this was not the case, thus failing to put his stones to good use black had to resign. Formation like 3-7 and 1-5-13 are possible but not at all easy to handle skillfully.

To be perfectly honest, I do not feel comfortable with the triangle marked formation in dia 11. To play two moves in the corner and still be completely open and not able to stop white from invading at A, B or C is not to my liking. If, for example, black made a framework as in dia 11 I feel this must compensate for the open-skirted corner. As it is, however, black cannot count on more than 12-20 points, not counting the corner.

How to Enter

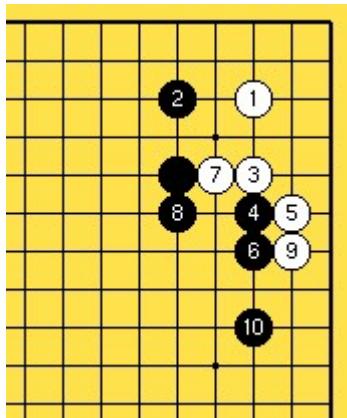
How to Enter the Corner



Trust me on this, only few players can resist the temptation and usually within a couple of moves your opponent will play at A, B, C or D. For all of you who were expecting fabulous hamete (trick) moves or aggressive counter measures for black when white enters the corner I have to disappoint you. There are no tricks worth mentioning involved with the 5-5 corner. The only "trickery" thing about it is that white most of the time does think that the strange looking 5-5 move cannot possibly be any good no way, no how. In this he is wrong, this misperception can be exploited.

Diagram 12

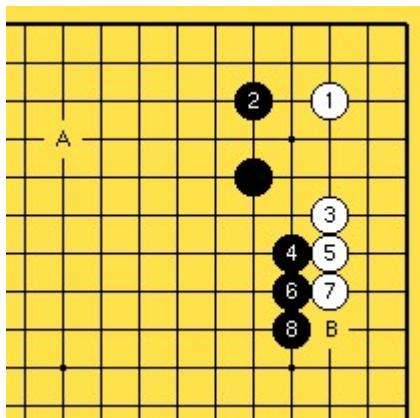
Entering at the 3-3 Point



When white enters at the 3-3 point in dia 13 black does not need to do anything special. By playing steady moves black seals white in most effectively and the result is not to white's liking. Although playable under certain circumstances white should not volunteer to be locked up like this.

Diagram 13

Variation



In dia 14 white jumped two spaces, disliking the idea of being locked up. Black, again, plays very calmly and pushes white along the third line. The result is nice for black and either extending towards A or blocking at B next is extremely big.

Diagram 14

Conclusion, white should not hurry entering at the 3-3 point.

Entering at the 4-3 Point

Entering at the 4-3 point is often a better move compared to entering at 3-3. The territory white can make is a little bigger and while white is solid the black stones feel a little thin. After black 4 white often slides at A. This, however, is not necessary as black cannot expect to kill the white stones if white were to omit playing at A. The result after white A is unclear. Black has more or less sealed his opponent but his stones are by no means thick. Very much depends on the black player's ability to create an impressive moyo (oversized territory) or his fighting skills. It is, however, a very, very thin line between black stones (2-4) which are skillfully keeping a weak white group from linking up with the corner stones or the same black stones which get gobbled-up after being sandwiched between two white positions.

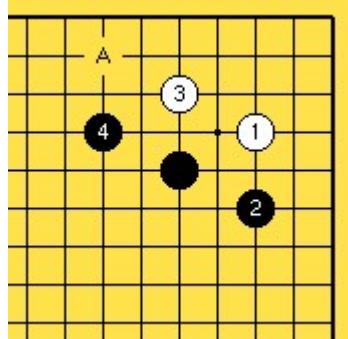
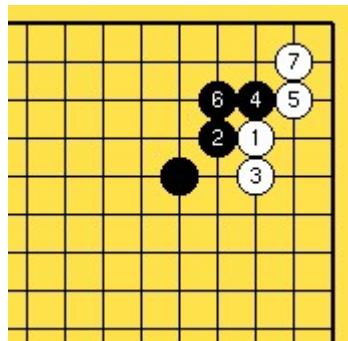


Diagram 15

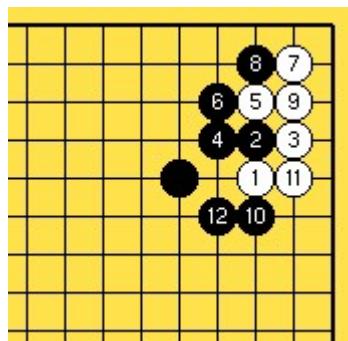
Joseki Like But...



The result in dia 16 is not good for black. By trying to play what feels like a "normal" joseki line black ignores the purpose of the 5-5 point. Black always should first be concerned with getting stones at the outside, preferably locking white up in the corner. After white 7 black has gained neither territory nor influence.

Diagram 16

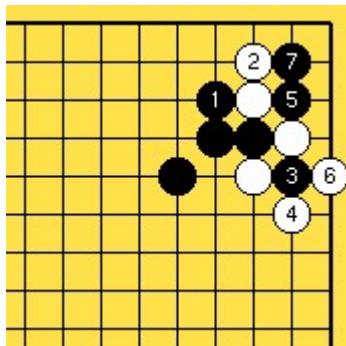
Entering at the 5-3 Point



From my own experience I can tell you that white 1 is by far the most popular way of entering the corner, at igs 3d* level that is. The contact play of black 2 is a resourceful reply to white 1. A natural way of playing out the situation is shown in dia 17. On an empty board this result favors black and this sequence is consequently not a joseki. Black 6, by the way, is perfectly timed. Although white would like to extend to 8 this is not an option.

Diagram 17

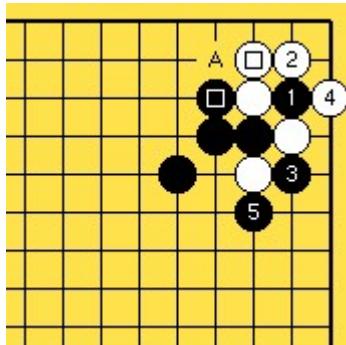
Do Not Stretch



After black 1 white 2 is a bad move. If, for example, black cuts at 3 white will get an inferior position. Also note that the exchange white 2-black 7 is terrible for white.

Diagram 17a

All About Shape



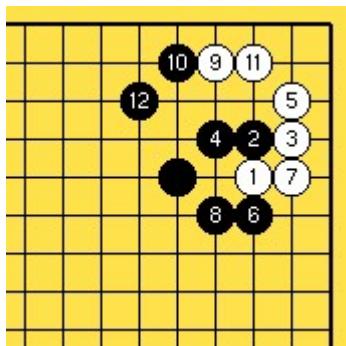
Black can also cut at 1 and get a good result, although I prefer to play as in dia 17a. The result in dia 17b can also be judged by looking if in the final position any strange exchanges have been made. What I mean is: suppose black "[]" and white "[]" were the last moves played here. Now why in the name of all Go-Saints would white answer black "[]" with any other move than the play (hane) at A?

Diagram 17b

This kind of thinking may seem trivial and not to the point. If you think so then I only can beg you to take the following advice to heart since this is exactly what all that "Good Shape" - "Bad Shape" talk is all about.

Judging a sequence by looking for and determining if any questionable exchanges are made is **the most powerful tool** you have to judge a result correctly. And the beautiful thing is, you do not need to be a high-leveled dan player in order to apply it to your own games! When thinking like this, however, do not forget that two strange exchanges, one played by you and one played by your opponent, cancel each other out. It is also true that given enough compensation for having played a bad-shape move can justify it. On the other hand, it is next to impossible to obtain a good result by having played 2-3 questionable exchanges more than your opponent.

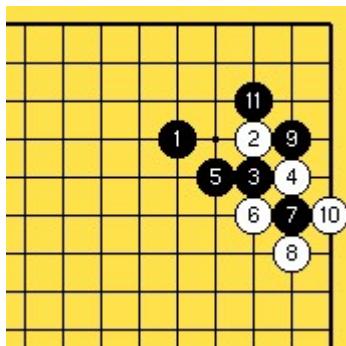
Another Variation



Dia 18 shows a variation for white. After white 5 black still attaches at 6, white 7 follows and black pulls back at 8. Black 10 is a very sharp move but the best white can do is reinforcing at 11. To make most of black's shape 12 is an exquisite play. The result again favors black, but remember, the board is *never* empty.

Diagram 18

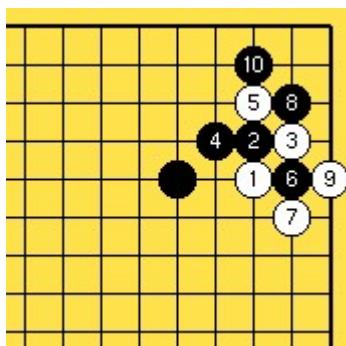
A 5-4 Joseki



I should have called dia 19 reference diagram 1 because it is not about the 5-5 move, or is it? The shape after 1-6 is similar as with the 5-5 variation shown in dia 17. Dia 19 shows a common 5-4 joseki, if white with 8 captures black 9 black captures white 6 in a ladder.

Diagram 19

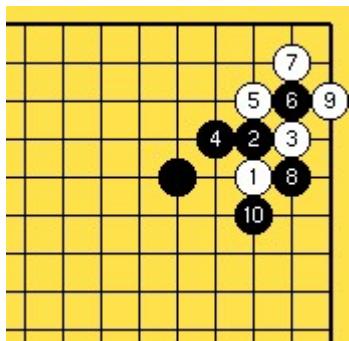
Not So Good for Black



To apply the joseki shown in dia 19 to the 5-5 move, however, is not correct. The sequence shown in dia 20 is not a joseki; the result is judged inferior for black.

Diagram 20

Not So Good Either

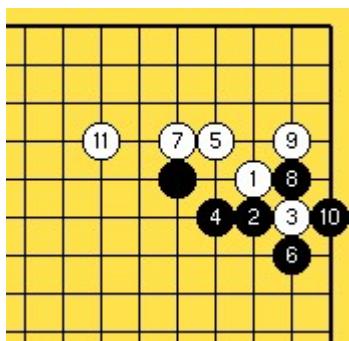


Even if black 6 is played at the inside white immediately goes after the cutting stone and captures it with 9. Again this result is not satisfactory for black.

Diagram 21

Note, however, that if the game is well underway and the opening stage is more or less finished then black might be glad with the results in dia 20, 21. Especially dia 20 seems to be not too bad at all.

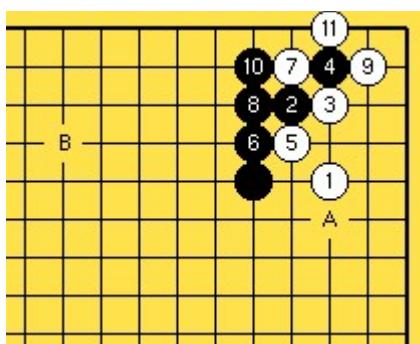
Attaching at the Outside



To attach at the outside right away does not give black a convincing result either. In dia 22 you can see that white makes a lot of profit and that black's outside position does not make up for the points lost in the corner. If black plays 6 at 7 white extends at 6 and gets a good result too.

Diagram 22

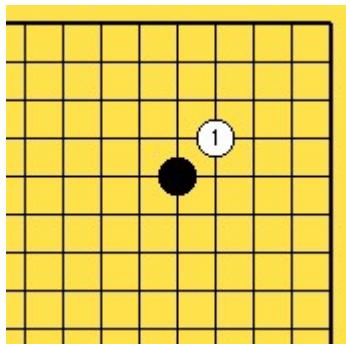
A 4-3 Joseki



It is possible to revert this situation to a ko-moku (4-3 point) joseki when switching the order of black 2 and the move at the 5-5 point. After white 11 black can choose to play A or B. The result as shown in dia 23 is good enough for black and he is not complaining.

Diagram 23

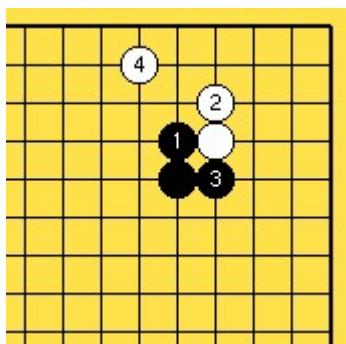
Entering at 4-4



The remaining possible move for white to enter the corner under the 5-5 point is the play at hoshi (4-4 point) as shown in dia 24

Diagram 24

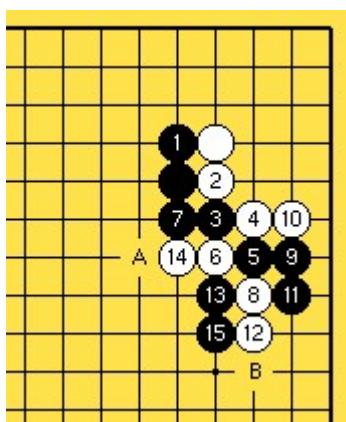
Influence Again



For black it is very important to judge the surrounding situation correctly before deciding how to use his 5-5 stone. In dia 25 a straightforward variation is shown. The result may look good for white (it certainly is not bad for white) but is playable for black, too. He has sente and black can continue with its influence oriented playing style somewhere else.

Diagram 25

White Travels a Dark Path

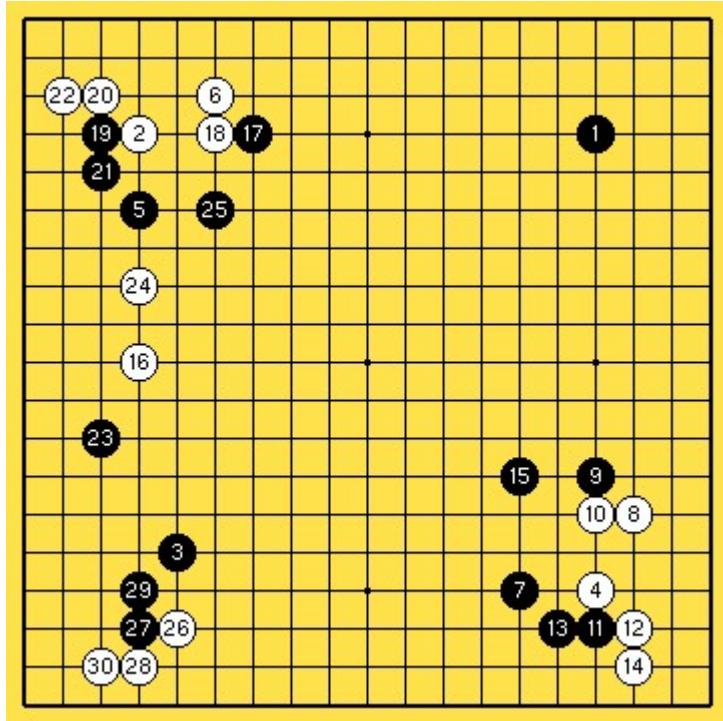


White might try the unhealthy looking moves of 4 and 6. If the ladder is good for black he can play like dia 26. After black 15 black can capture two white stones at either A or B. If the ladder is not favorable for black there are other ways of getting a satisfactory result. That is again, unfortunately, a bunch of diagrams not given this time.

Diagram 26

And for the main feature (ahum, ahum) of Gentle Joseki 7 the opening of a game I played at igs. Both players are level 34*.

Who Let the Dogs Out?



Black: me
White: m***y

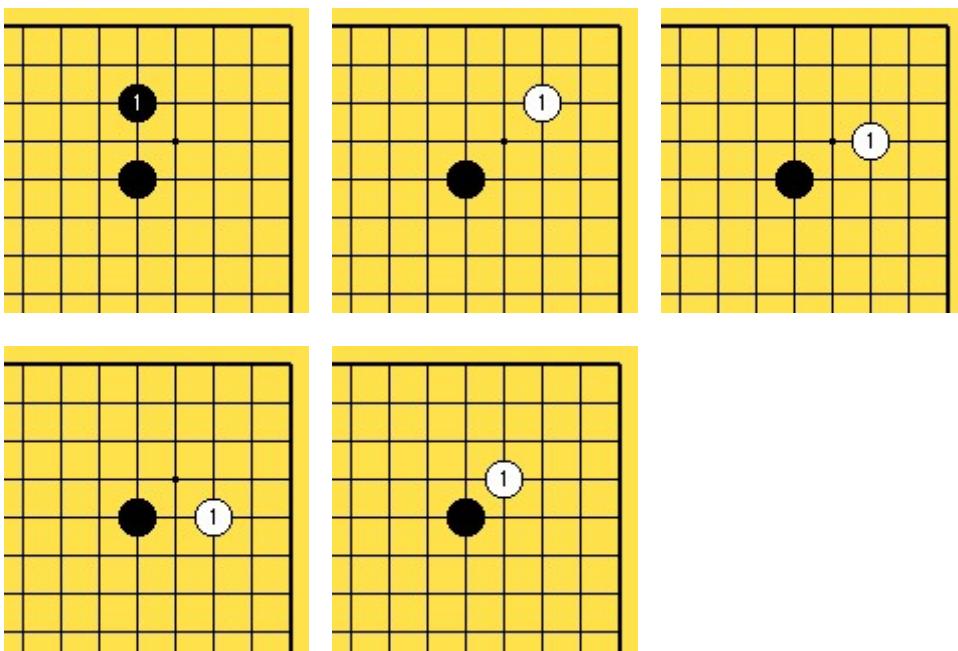
I do not pretend that you'll learn from going through this game. To be honest, you might very well play two stones weaker because of it. I usually combine high approach moves like black 5 and 7 with a 5-5 opening. The shoulder hits at 9 and 17 are also played with the idea of making "something" (anything) towards the center. When black, till white's surprise, did not go under in a fierce fight white asked for adjournment and the game was suspended at move 136 with mutual consent. Black 15 is not a very good move, I'm afraid, it is very thin. You, of course, now know what black's next move should be, don't you?

Diagram 27

P.S. Not all Yamashita's games include plays at the 5-5 point but some of them do and if you'd like to go through his games download them through [Yamashita Keigo's biography page](#).

Appendix 01

Index of joseki's mentioned in this episode:

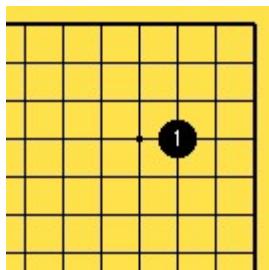


Gentle Joseki, part VIII by Pieter Mioch

Things you don't want to do

The 4-3, or "ko-moku" play is the most complicated opening move known today. There are uncountable variations and to master them all would take the average person a lifetime or three. Because of this versatility the 4-3 move is certainly worthwhile to have a closer look at how to put it to good use. As I often do in Gentle Joseki I'd like to approach discussing ko-moku from the opposite direction. Since it is not humanly possible to memorize all the patterns I'll keep it simple and concentrate at ways of playing which are regarded as being bad according to modern go theory. So, memorizing these "anti-joseki" patterns will help to stay away from bad moves and automatically make you play the correct patterns, piece of cake.

cute move



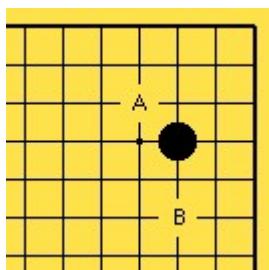
Here it is, the 4-3 move, isn't it cute? I very much doubt it is the best opening move possible but I doubt it even more if anybody will come up with evidence to the contrary in the next century. Although not as popular as it once was, the ko-moku play is an excellent move. It is a little low but all the same it's way more positive compared to the 3-3 play.

Diagram 1

Not to discourage you but I seldom play ko-moku in my own games. It's not that I don't like it or that there are any hidden defects or stuff like that but when playing ko-moku I always feel I have to play a real "serious" game and think very hard. It goes without saying that this is not my strong suit, I prefer lightning games big time and the last serious games I played were in the Insei league some 300 years ago. (still dream about these games occasionally, they would take the whole day and seldom finish inside 6 hours)

Well, to make good on my promise of telling you what you shouldn't do please have a look at dia 2. Follow up moves like the diagonal (kosumi) move and the one-space jump (ikken-tobi) are often worth considering in case of having played at 4-4 (hoshi) but not with the ko-moku opening.

Never mind anybody's advice

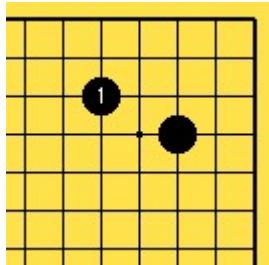


You won't hear me say, though, that you -never- should play at either A or B as a follow up move to the 4-3 play. It is safe to say, however, that A and B are regarded as bad moves. "How bad?" you ask? Humpf, as all good questions, that is not easy to answer. If the best move would be worth ten points than I guess that A and B are roughly the same value of between 8-9 points. In other words, as a novice to this game I don't think that there is anything wrong with freely playing them in your own games, never mind what anybody is telling you about books this and books that.

Diagram 1

So, what -are- the ten pointers? Which moves are given as the best continuation after having played at the 4-3 point?

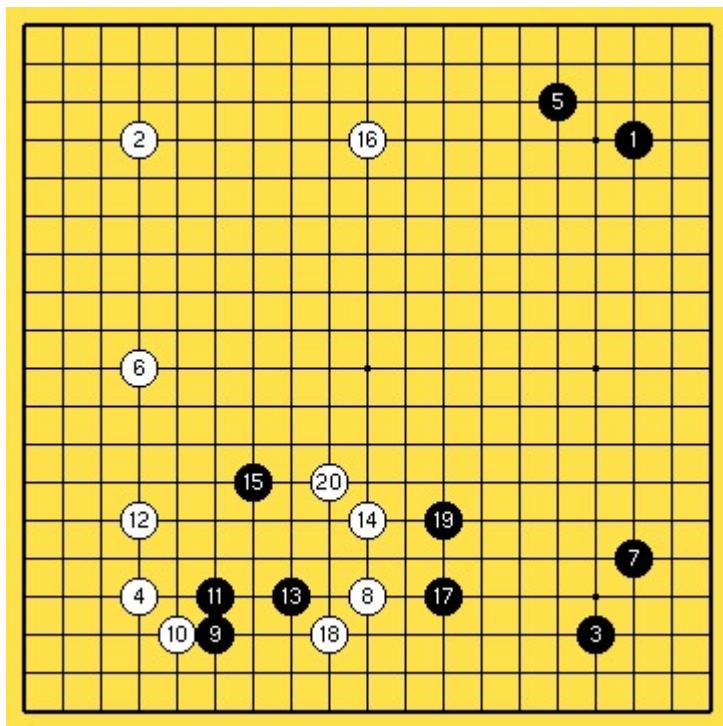
Once Again, a Shimari



There is no move which can hold a candle to black one in dia 3. Likewise, there is no formation as omnipotent as this small-knight's enclosure (shimari). If in an even game black can make two shimaries with his first four moves he can never have a bad game.

Diagram 3

Unbeatable?



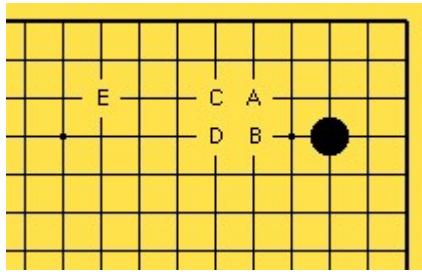
15th Meijin league, January 1991
black: Cho Chikun
white: Rin Kaiho (+resign)

Now I thought that what I just said about black never having a bad game when making two shimaries was rather an understatement. I just finished searching for a good game example where black gets an easy win because of his shimaries. Till my surprise, however, *all* the five games I managed to find were won by white! It seems the vitality of the center oriented way of playing helps to reinforce one's confidence or something, that is to say, I have no clue as to why white wins all the games, probably coincidence.

Diagram 3a

Like I said before, however, the ko-moku opening is a kind of "serious" instead of the ol' rough'n tumble style street fighting it shows an attitude which some regard as more mature but others just think is boring (who said that?). When playing with a shimari it shows that you prefer to build solid, strong positions from where you will develop steadily while making territory. Opposite to this way of playing would be moyo making and preferring making influence instead of points. Both ways of placing your stones on the board are, of course, perfectly common. Even if you feel that one of them doesn't suit your temperament or character I still think it would be a very good idea to try both, playing solid and making territory versus playing light and building moyos.

Orthodox moves

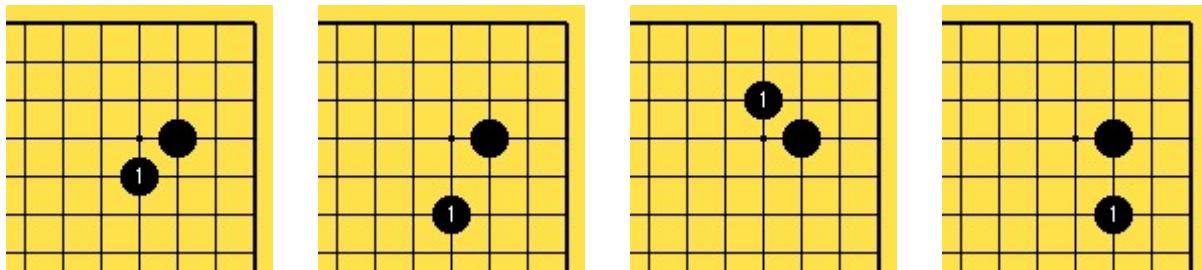


In dia 4 A-E show the moves which are regarded as orthodox, i.e. these are the plays black should be playing according to the book. The moves C, D and especially E are not very tight, however, and do not help black ensuring territory yet. Properly speaking, move E is not a follow up but a whole-board kind of play, not necessarily regarding the corner as being important.

Diagram 4

Let me repeat what I told you earlier about moves you shouldn't play. In dias 5-5c you can see moves which are regarded as being bad. None of those, however, will cost you the game. This even goes for pro's although it will be next to impossible to find a game record of a pro actually using one of these moves in the opening. To be sure, they are slack and have other shortcomings but I wouldn't worry about it too much if I were you. Try them, memorize them and when you feel you got an idea why they're not too sharp keep them for special occasions (explaining the game to your mother in law or something like that).

Non- Standard Moves

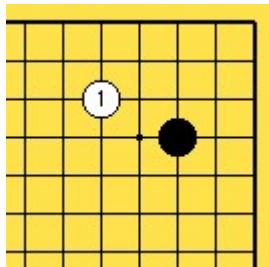


I like the moves in dia 5-5c, though, just copying pro moves is good too, of course, but I honestly think that the road to fast improvement is playing lesser moves and come to understand why they're not so hot. You can be sure, however, that after the game, no matter what the result might be your opponent will keep telling you these moves cannot be good and you shouldn't be playing them and tons more of talk you sometimes have to put up with after the game which does not contribute to the game very much, although it can be great fun at times.

Diagram 5, 5a, 5b & 5c

Up to here I briefly described what to do with your ko-moku stone if you have the chance of playing a second move. It is, however, likely that you often do not have the chance of doing so and your opponent will play an approach move first.

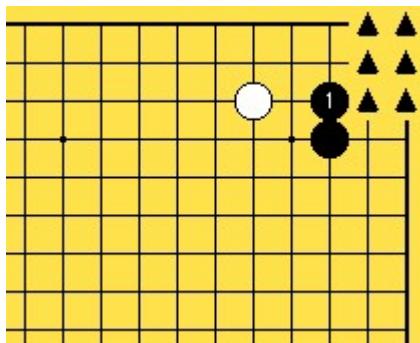
Dealing With An Approach Move



This is the typical way of thwarting black's shimari plans, the white "keima-kakari" or small knight approach move. Let's have a look at what you shouldn't be doing after this when playing black.

Diagram 6

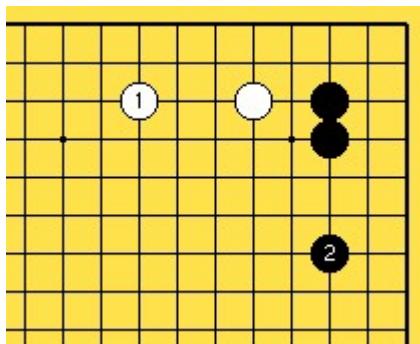
Not Good Enough



Black one in dia 7 is too small. The corner territory is only worth about six points, this does not justify the two black moves here. As I often said in previous episodes, one (opening) move should be worth about 5 points.

Diagram 7

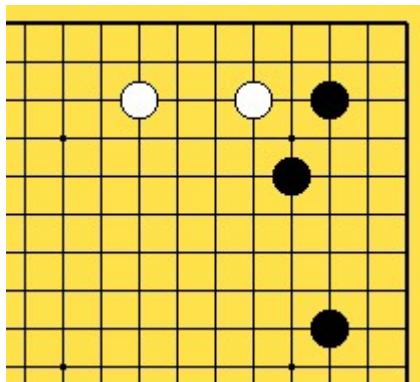
Too Tight



Dia 7a shows a likely continuation. The moves look normal but the result is so so, not really bad for black but a little slack. Not game-losing but a bit too tight, have a look at a better shape for black in dia 7b.

Diagram 7a

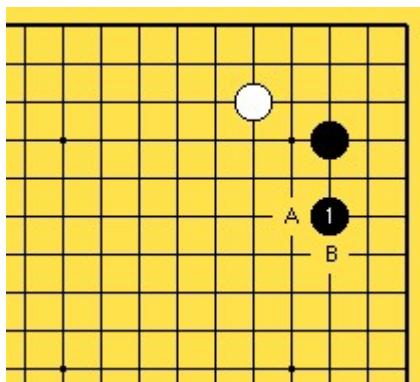
Superior Shape



Undoubtedly the result in dia 7a is more solid for black compared to this diagram, dia 7b. All the same, the result in dia 7b is a joseki while dia 7a is not because black is over concentrated, spending too many moves in a cramped place, 'kind of how you feel after a huge dinner and the cake and coffee arrives just a little too early.'

Diagram 7b

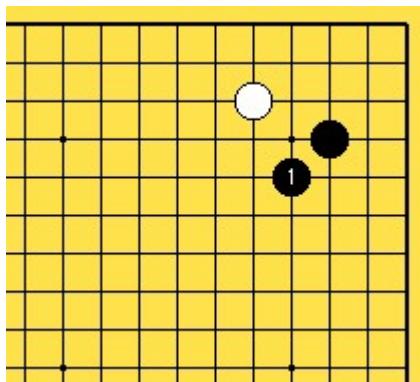
Too Solid



In dia 8 you can see yet another move, black one, which is not standard and thought of as too solid, over protective if you want. Instead of black one a move at either A or B would be better.

Diagram 8

Shusaku's Kosumi



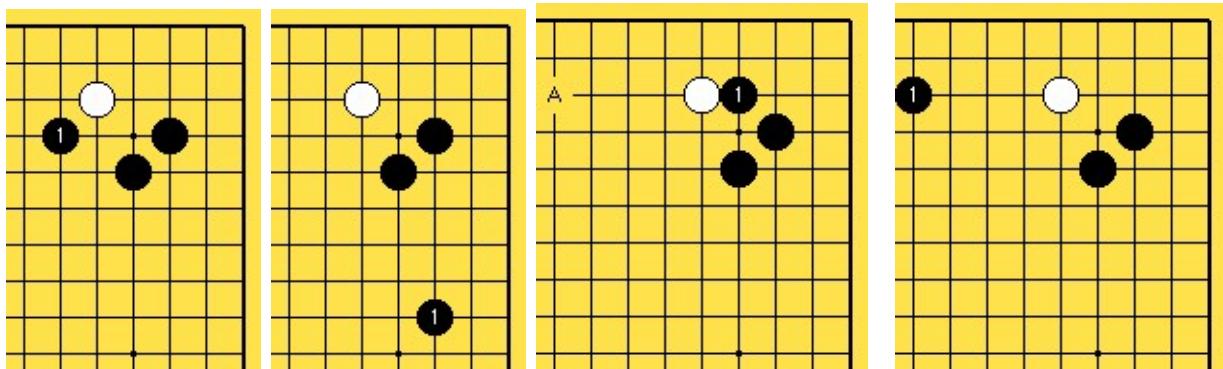
This diagonal move is a border case. It is the famous "Shusaku kosumi" named after the 19th century Go-Master who virtually won all his games on black by playing it. Strange when you think about it, you can invent and play an excellent new move but as long as you're not going to win any games with it people will think it's worthless.

Diagram 9

According to modern go theory this move is not good enough if black has to give komi to white to make up for the advantage of having the first move. It's a very solid move, however, and I'm fond of it and often use it, when I play ko-moku, almost never, that is. It's also still being used in pro games which might help you a bit more to convince you it's playable.

One more word about the Shusaku kosumi, it is especially nice and easy to use when realizing that you have four next possible moves (compare this to the usual amount, which is about two or three).

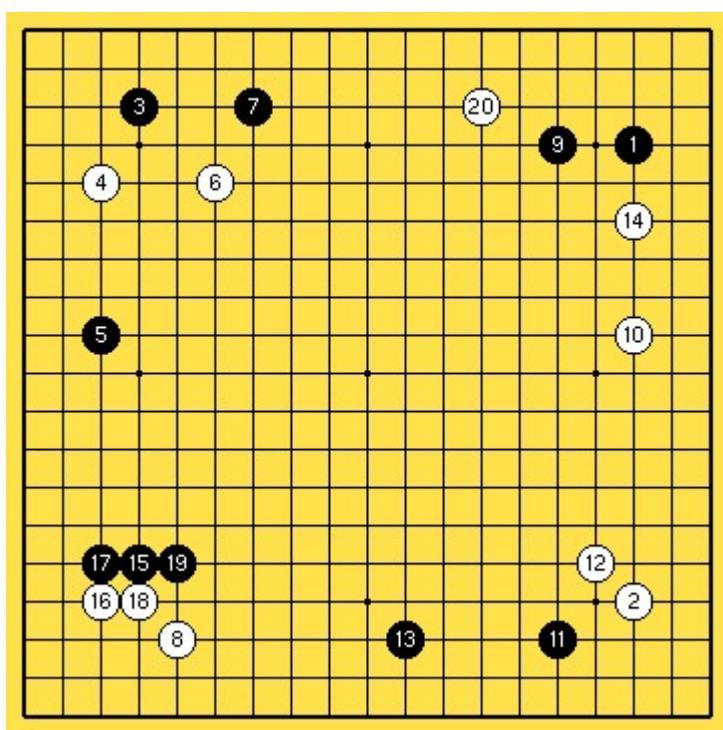
Four Good Moves



Black 1 in dia 9b is often played one or two spaces down, for example, when playing it after first having played one in dia 9a. Note that black 1 in dia 9c works best when there already is a black stone somewhere around A. The pincer in dia 9d gives a situation which was often seen in go of the 18th and 19th century but it still is played today.

Diagram 9a, 9b, 9c & 9d

A Shuei Game



1875-08-22
black: Shuei
white: Nakagawa (+2pt)

The reason I selected the game of the 19th century shown in dia 10 is because when looking at it even a person who never played a game in his life can get an idea of what you can use a stone at the 4-3 point for. We have a shimari (upper right white formation) a hasami (pincer) at the left, the famous Shusaku kosumi in the lower right and an alternative way of approaching the opponent's 5-3 stone (lower left) with another move than at 4-3.

Diagram 10

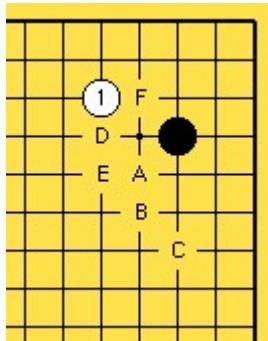
I love the old master's games and I know that if you can bring yourself to replay say 3 of such games twice per day and manage to keep it up for a month your go skill will dramatically improve. Not that there's anything wrong with modern games but the fighting of today is of such ferocity and is so complicated that it is very hard for players other than top amateurs level players or up to learn something from them without any explanation. Older masters can play fierce too, of course, but old games were played with virtually no time limit so that top pros of these days had a very different mentality than their modern counter parts. They took their time and thought twice before embarking on a rash sequence of moves, the outcome of which is often far from clear.

In the last centuries time allowances have become shorter and shorter. In Korea 3 hours per person is common and it can be expected that the 5-hour allowance used in Japan will get shortened too. (this is already happening, not in all games, though) This is a very good tendency for amateurs who love to see pro games getting bloodier and bloodier, the less time pros have the higher the possibility is that the go board will turn in a raging full-scale battlefield right from move one.

Well, back to business, the ko-moku move. The most common approach move is the knight's move or keima kakari. Now black has three choices:

1. solidify the 4-3 point by playing an extension
2. playing a pincer and see what white wants
3. ignore white altogether and play somewhere else

About Six Possibilities

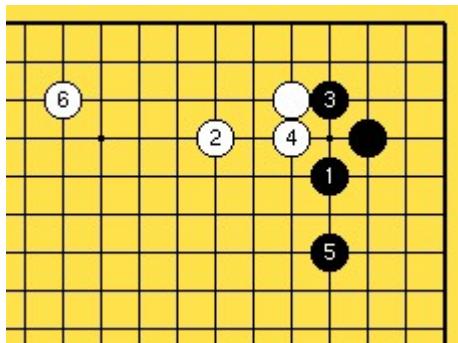


In dia 11 you can see the defensive oriented moves which black can play if he doesn't want to play a pincer. Move F is special and usually not played but certainly not unplayable. If black would answer at E the situation reverts to a 5-5 joseki (dia 23 in GJ-VII) were black's first move in the corner was at E, white plays 1 and black answers at ko-moku.

Diagram 11

You guessed already that my recommendation here is the play at A, it is solid and easy to understand, there is not much mischief your opponent can try to cook up. I'll show you an "and everybody lived happily ever after" joseki to give you an idea you can work with.

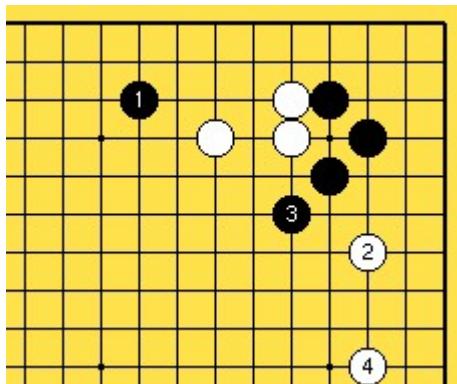
All Peace and Quiet?



Dia 12 shows a sequence of both players can be happy with, however..

Diagram 12

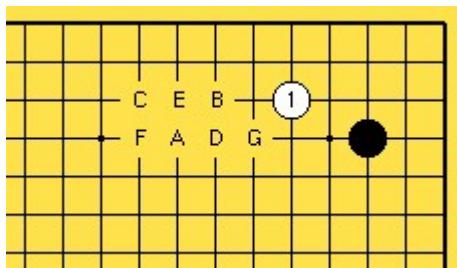
Beyond Joseki



Things can get hairy easily as you can see in dia 12a. Once black starts throwing his weight around and plays aggressively at 1 white will immediately make clear he is not in the least impressed and start a counter offensive at 2. After white 4 you are in no-man's-land and you'll have to figure out what to do next by looking at the whole board and not overestimating your own fighting skill.

Diagram 12a

Pincers

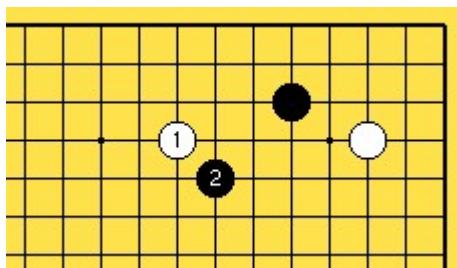


In dia 13 I've tried to rank the possible pincers A-G in order of commonness. The play at G is not often seen (but possible) and A is gold record all-time favorite. Its main feature is that the situation does not settle easy and that there are numerous variations the results of which are not at all similar.

Diagram 13

When starting on Gentle Joseki 8, a month ago, I started to use the 4-3 move in my own games and it seemed to work contagious because many of my opponents started playing at 4-3 too. About 90% of my opponents played the A pincer in no time and I decided to play black 2 in dia 14 a couple of times.

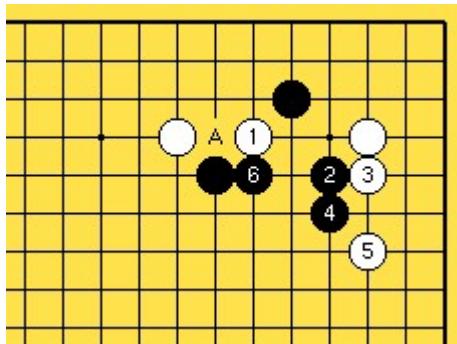
In Love, Again



I've been in love with this move ever since I saw it for the first time, some 14 years ago. It's perfect to catch your opponent off-guard with and it works very well with a black stone in the upper left corner to back it up.

Diagram 14

Looks Vital, But ...

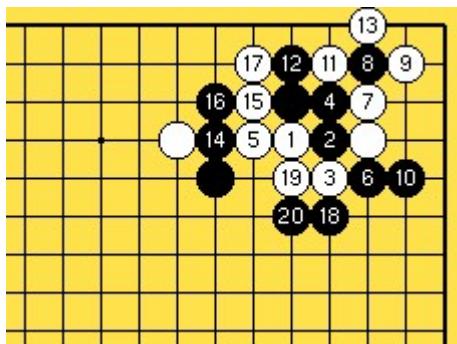


White 1 in dia 15 may seem as a logical move (ergo, it is logical, moving between two enemy stones in a way they cannot expect to link up, ever) but it is a miss fire. Black quietly plays the forcing moves of 2 and 4 and next comes back at 6 or A. White has no continuation which will make white 1 coming out good. White one only helped black strengthen himself and white only got a few points in the right corner back as compensation. The corner, by the way, which was his to start with.

Diagram 15

There are plenty of nice cozy joseki I could show you but since we're at the end of this episode I'll show you a long and difficult one.

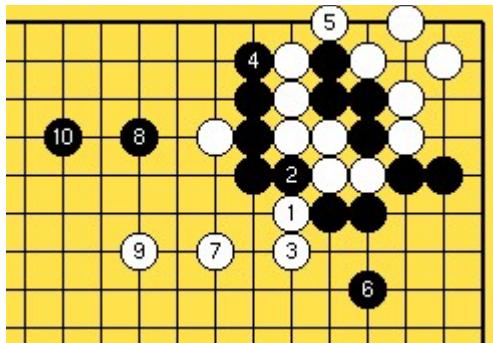
Sacrifice



Black 2 is natural, white 5 is trying to link his own stones together while at the same time keeping black separated. Black 10 is an unexpected move but once you get to think about it the only way of saving the situation is by making a sacrifice. Up to 20 black more or less has sealed white off, the result is about equal.

Diagram 16

Some defects Left But Equal Result



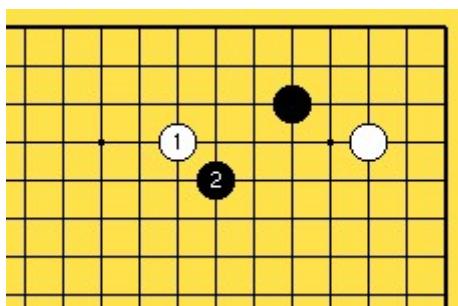
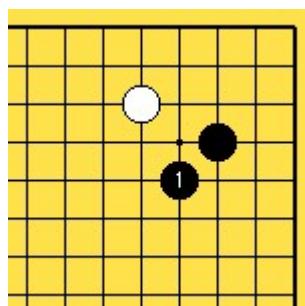
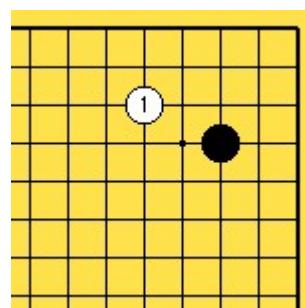
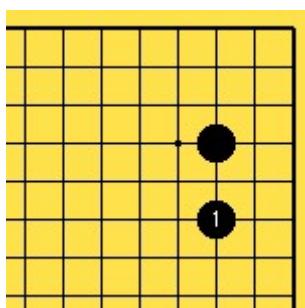
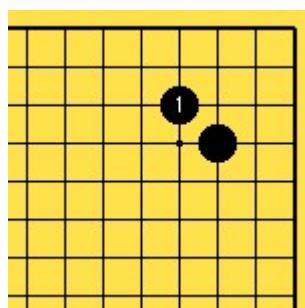
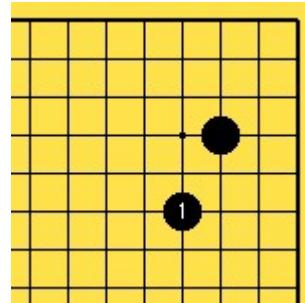
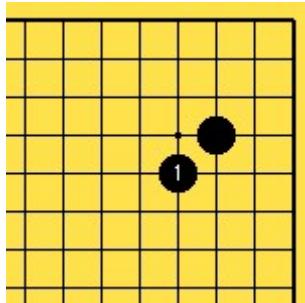
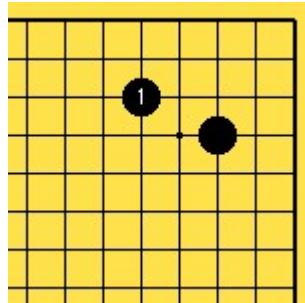
Black's formation, however, is by no means without its defects. White may very well continue with a play at one and starting a large-scale fight. Black's groups are not weak, however, and he should be able to handle the situation.

Diagram 16a

This is all for this time, I will continue with the 4-3 point and its variations in the next episode of Gentle Joseki, that will be episode 9. I still have to think up something "tying everything together and make it look good conclusion" for episode 10.

Appendix 01

Index of joseki's mentioned in this episode:



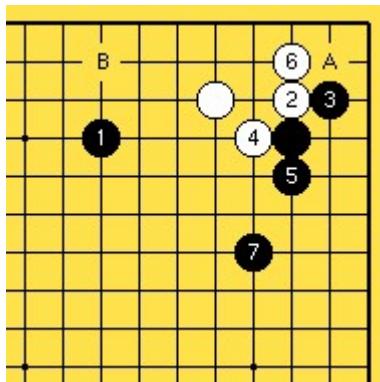
Gentle Joseki, part IX by Pieter Mioch

The Patterns

As usual I've underestimated the amount of even the most basic diagrams concerning the 4-3 point. There is no way on earth I can tell all the things you should know in order to be able to start feeling confident in your own games when playing 4-3. The ko-moku move is low, as I said before and if there's one thing you should try to pick-up from Gentle Joseki 8 and 9 it is that the 4-3 move lacks in attacking strength because of it.

Well, that was one something which deserves a single episode by itself but, alas, not this time. I'll continue with where I let off in Gentle Joseki XIII and when I have some 20 diagrams I'll call it a day.

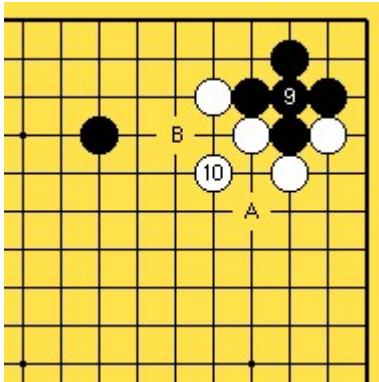
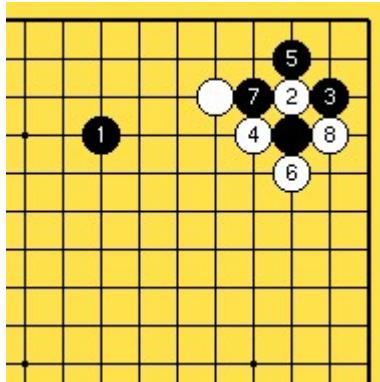
White Attacks



After a white approach move to the ko-moku stone playing a pincer is the most likely way to lead to unpredictable and difficult situations. In dia 1 blacked played the two space high pincer. White has plenty of choice in how to answer this pincer. The white answer I'd like you to memorize by heart though is the attachment (tsuke) of white 2. This is *the* move white has to keep things simple and settle himself without messing up too much. After black 7 white can play at either A or B to settle his stones. Because of having two options white can play elsewhere without having to worry.

Diagram 1

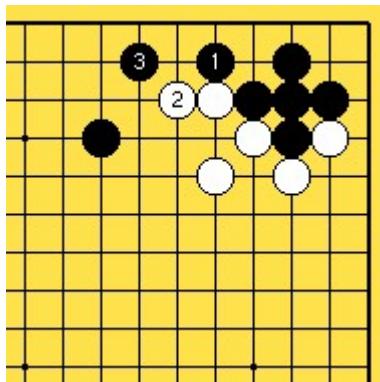
Playable But Not So Many Eyes



The dias 2 and 2a show that black can counter at 5 instead of letting white get easy eye shape. After white 8 it is 98% out of the question to even consider fighting this ko when playing black. Black 9 in dia 2a is natural and white 10 might look cool, but?..White should not be too happy with his shape. As black's corner is alive black could very well choose to peep at A and B and continue attacking the white stones. White should be able to handle himself, of course, but for the time being his stones have no eyes and feel a kind of heavy.

Diagram 2 & 2a

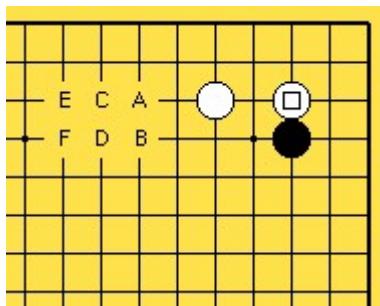
a Genuine Joseki



This is, as an exception to the normal Gentle Joseki approach, a genuine joseki. Black 1 in dia 3 shows the "go steady" attitude. After white 2 black can hook up his stones with 3. Black is satisfied (even though he's a bit low)

Diagram 3

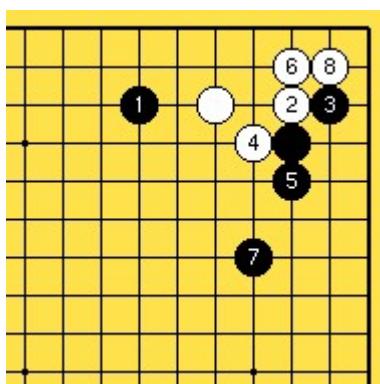
Always Works



Dia 4, in short with *all* the pincers A-F the attachment play of white 1 is possible. It most of the time works similar to the dias I just showed you about the two space high pincer. If black pincers at A white 1 might not be the best move, but it's still playable.

Diagram 4

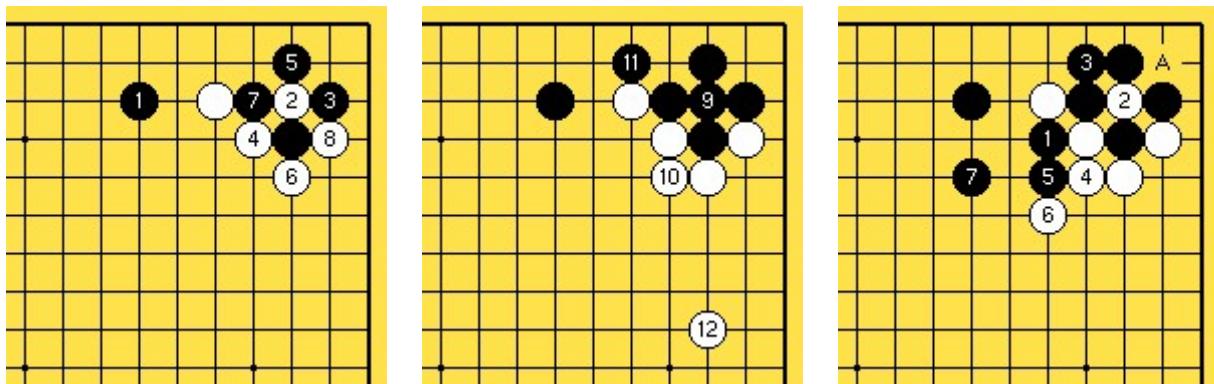
White Settles His Stones



And I do it again! It is a real joseki! Be that as it may, however, I think that this result is more than white can hope for. White settled his stones most effectively in spite of the fact that black played the sever pincer of black 1. White 8, by the way, is extremely big because white cannot extend towards the left and instead of 8 playing elsewhere (tenuki) is often a bad idea as black can take 8 and set the white stones a floating.

Diagram 5

The Attachment Works

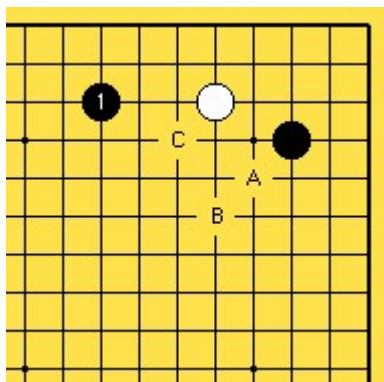


Black would like to do something, anything. The atari at 5 is a good start, now there are a number of possibilities. Filling in with black 9 is good enough, white's shape may look okay but it's a little thin and not very impressive. White 10 is correct, if one to the left the remaining peep option can help black to set up an attack.

The cut at black 1 in dia 6b is possible too. As black cannot expect to win the ko, however, filling in at 3 is the only move. Next white 4 is a nice move, this solid move enables white to later on play at A and fight ko. Without white 4 his position would most likely not survive in a ko fight. The result is more or less equal.

Diagram 6, 6a & 6b

Not So Popular



There seems to be an unwritten law or at least a silent agreement to not play the two-space low pincer of black 1 in dia 7 these days anymore. In my insei days my "sensei" (teacher) was very fond of this pincer because most of his students did not study it as thoroughly as the other, more popular pincers. I think it is an excellent play and whatever the current fashion may be by all means add this move to your standard-answers repertoire. Playing white the opposite idea to the attachment we just went over would be moving out and jumping towards the center. A, B and C are just a few possibilities which are playable with all the pincers although they're maybe not always advisable if black played any one-space pincer.

Diagram 7

I don't know about the correct line of playing too much but judging from my own games jumping out leads to "unsettling" at least a quarter of the board. I mean that often both players end up with a number of stone-strings of unclear status and feel they're in a guerilla war.

Our Ships Are Sailing the Same Direction

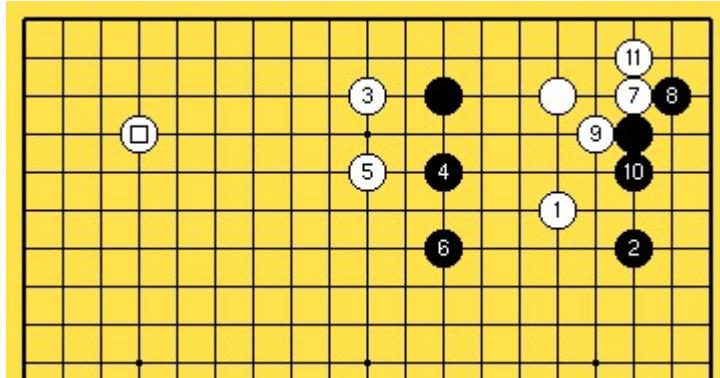


Diagram 8

One of the major options white often has when jumping out as in dia 8 is to counter-pincer. This especially is a very healthy attitude if white has the left corner. If the triangle marked stone would be black's, however, the counter-pincer could be too much for white to handle. This is, again, a joseki. All the same you cannot expect your opponent to follow suit. There are plenty of ways to make a left turn somewhere and, as a matter of fact, this is often called for.

**Be never satisfied just because you memorized a joseki and got it on the board correctly.
Being suspicious of the outcome is the more recommendable attitude, me thinks.**

A Question

Black: Cheng Zengyu
White: Wang Yuan (+resign)
Played April 1986

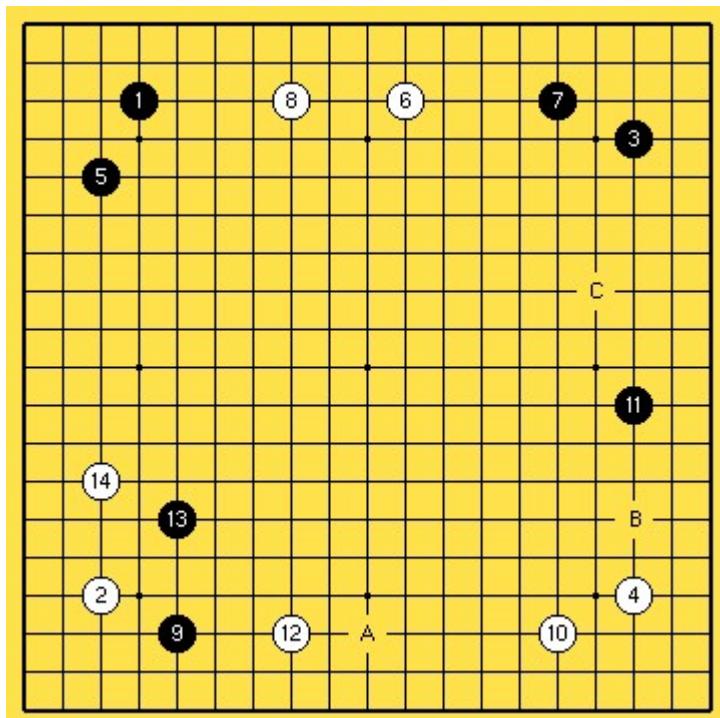


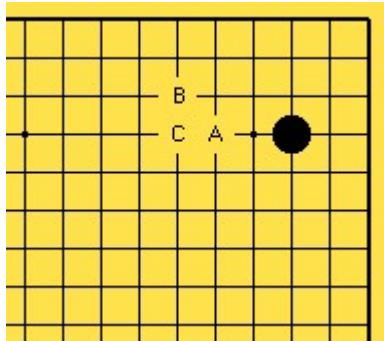
Diagram 9

Dia 9. I'm glad I could find some game from after WW2 were the two-space low pincer is played. From my search results I can say without a doubt that this move is nowhere as popular today as it was 60 years ago.

Next black to play, where would you play in your own game A, B or C? Part of the continuation of the game is given right at the end.

By the way, this is again a game where black had to resign after having played an opening making two corner enclosures (shimari). This makes six games in a row including the games I checked out for Gentle Joseki 8. I think it is time for me to start writing a thesis, proving that black cannot win a game of go when having two shimari. I still have no clue, however, why on earth two shimari would be bad but it's intriguing to find that black often loses. Still, it could very well be coincidence, of course. I'll get back to you when I checked on say 2000 games.

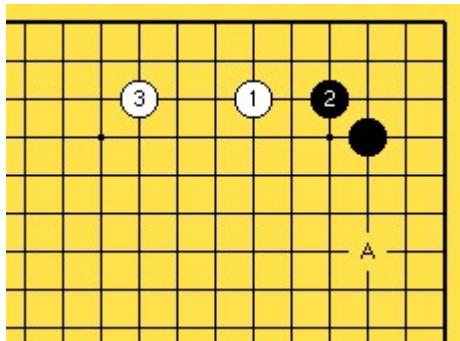
No Big Deal



In dia 10 the remaining moves I have to go over are given. You can make a big deal of the white approach moves at B and C but I think they're not.

Diagram 10

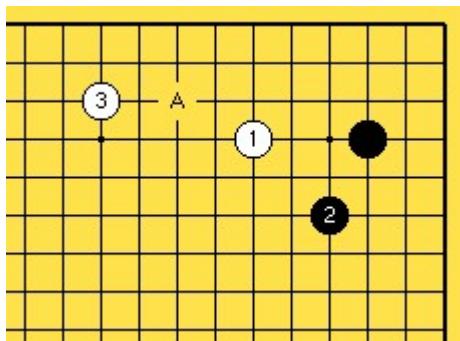
Good For Black



If white wants something on the left side he often chooses to play a little far from the corner, trying to avoid being pincered. Well, let white do his worst and give him a second move at the left side, I say. Black 2 makes excellent shape and after white 3 black can play tenuki or make an extension in the neighborhood of A. Black gets the better part out of this exchange.

Diagram 11

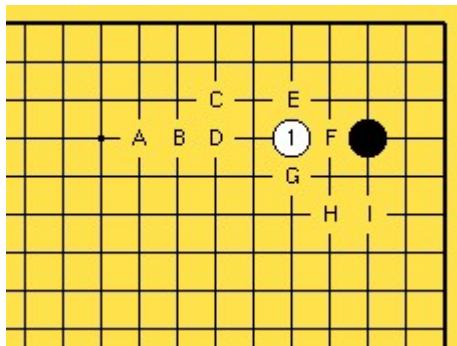
Good For Black Too



The same goes for dia 12. Just stay cool and play solid moves and white only can make a thin extension towards the left, no sweat. At a fairly early stage of the game black might very well want to invade at A after which white cannot hope to capture the invasion.

Diagram 12

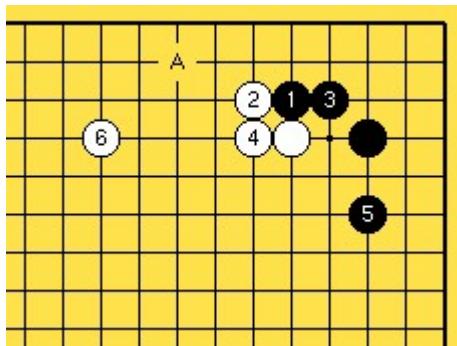
'Lot of Moves



Dia 13 shows that there are certainly enough moves to choose from if white played the one-space high approach move. I have no personal favorite move but black E gives black a lot of points while black still is the one who can play elsewhere (tenuki) first.

Diagram 13

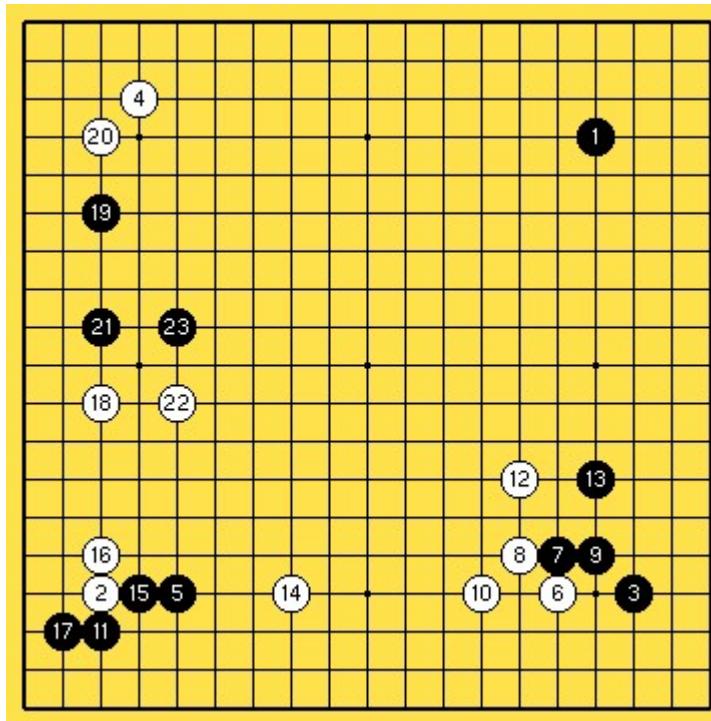
Good Enough for Black



Black is solid and got points in dia 14, he has no reason to be dissatisfied. Black also can aim at the troublesome move at A later on in the game. He should not play here too fast but only just about when white is starting to think that the upper left is his territory.

Diagram 14

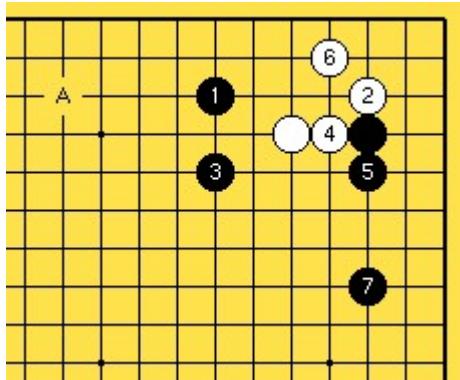
Three Ko-Moku Joseki



Dia 15. I don't have much room left that's why I decided to show you this game between Otake "the master of good style" Hideo and Kato "the Killer" Masao and show you various aspects of the 4-3 move all in one diagram. Try, among other things, to pick up something from the lower left corner. Playing tenuki (or a pincer) *after* your opponent has attached at the 3-3 point is quite a common strategy. Now tell me, did you ever try that in one of your own games? White 18, by the way, is over extended. Black could play between white 16-18 and probably eat the 2-16 stones. White, however, does not care so much about that since he regards the 2-16 as light.

Diagram 15 B: Kato Masao W: Otake Hideo (+resign) July 1978, 2nd round Gosei title

Alternative Joseki

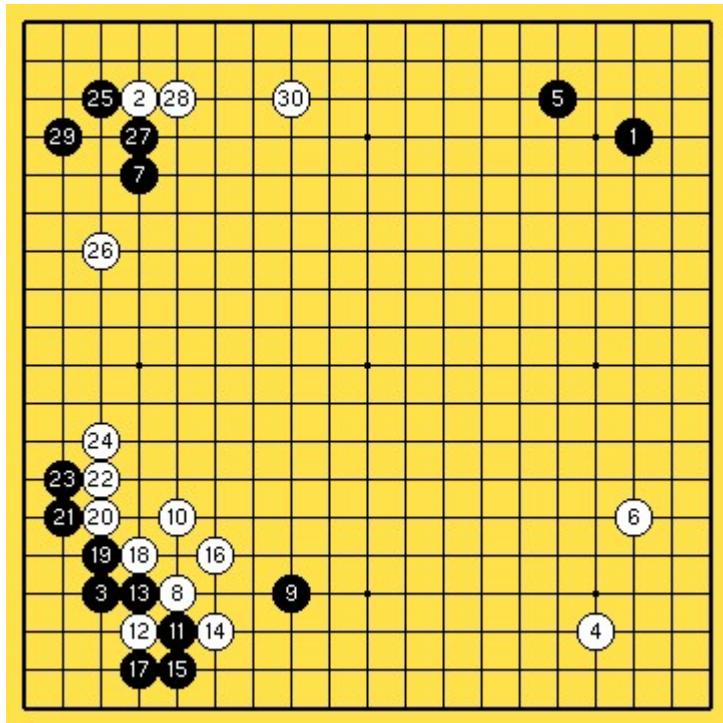


Dia 16 shows an alternative joseki, that is to say that this might be playable but by no means common. Instead of black 7 playing at A could very well be an excellent choice.

Diagram 16

I just found another game to throw at you which I think is worthwhile. It is between a local hero, Hikosaka Naoto playing white and O Rissei who is currently one of the strongest players in Japan, if not in the world.

There Ain't No Such Animal



Later on in this game a big fight developed and black managed with a truly exquisite move to barely ensure life and thus killing the white stones which had only one of those things, eyes. White resigned after move 145.

The joseki in the upper left corner is not all that special but the sequence of moves in the lower left is one I never saw before (and never hope to see again). White clearly made a judgment call here and decided to give black a lot of points in exchange for some stones towards the center. It seems that black is doing fine here, I wouldn't complain if this were my game.

Diagram 17

Surprise Your Club

To give you an edge at your local go club it is a good idea to have a closer look at dia 18. As anybody can tell you, normally black is supposed to play at 4 instead of black 3. The blunt move of 3, however, is possible too and an unexpectedly large number of players seem to never have heard of it. The result in the dia looks natural and very joseki like but it does favor black and white should not be satisfied with it. Black 13 neatly captures two white stones and he's happy. White should not play as docile as in the dia but should play 10 at A instead. After this all hell breaks loose as black has the fierce diagonal move (hane) at B. If black does not feel up to the difficult fighting which follows he also can stretch at C, now the result is unclear but something tells me it cannot be bad for white.

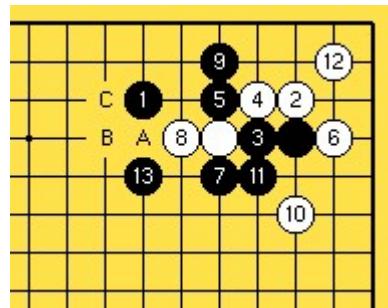
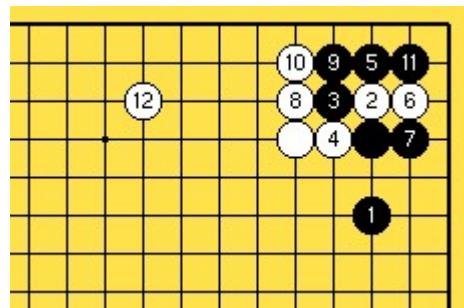


Diagram 18

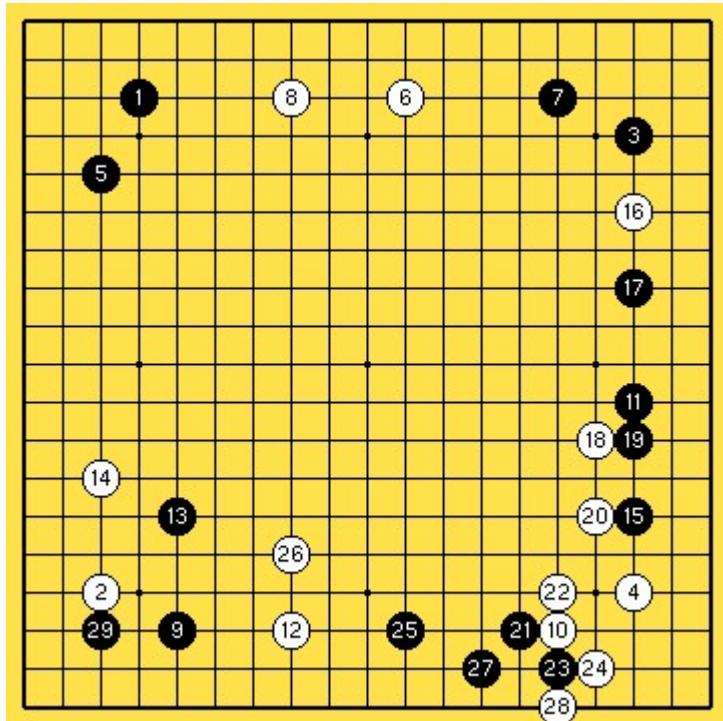
Surprise Your Club II



Dia 19. I remember as if it were yesterday that this joseki was the latest hit at the go club I was playing when I was about 6 kyu. We all thought that white was taken in big time and that black had played a cool trick joseki. Well, actually the result in dia 19 is about even and there nothing "hamete" (tricky move) about it. So, don't be surprised when your opponent does not answer as you had anticipated but instead plays hane at 3 and easily captures two stones of yours.

Diagram 19

Answer To Dia 9



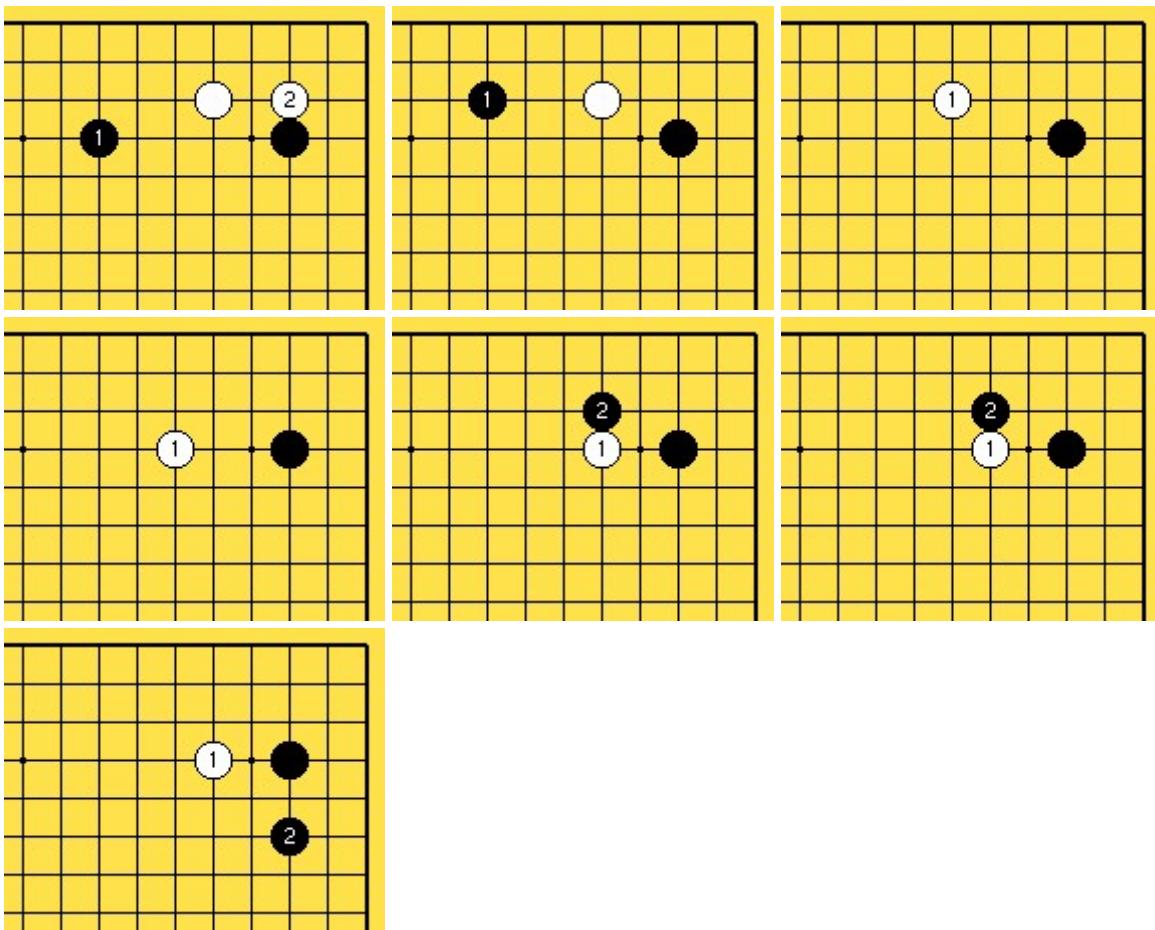
Black: Cheng Zengyu
White: Wang Yuan (+resign)
Played April 1986
(continuation)

Black 15 was the biggest point at the board and also helps to set up the counter pincer at 25. Notice that before starting the heavy fighting black plays 29 in order to make one and a half eye, this is always a good idea, of course.

Diagram 20

Appendix 01

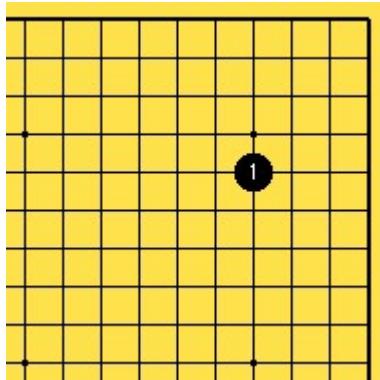
Index of joseki's mentioned in this episode:



Gentle Joseki, part X by Pieter Mioch

The Patterns

The 5-4 Move



As with the opening moves on hoshi (4-4) and the far-out move at the 5-5 point an opening move at the 5-4 point (taka-moku) does not make any territory on its own, it does not protect the corner at all. I like 5-4 because it seems to be bragging about its obvious disregard of points. "Yeah, look at me, no points and I don't give a shee-it, whacha gonna do about it?" (pardon the moves' French) The 5-4 move has a psychological effect on your opponent for sure, exactly what kind of effect and how you can use it is beyond me, contact me if you find out.

Diagram 1

Three Moves to Think about

Here you can see the moves black can choose from if he has the time to add another move in the corner.

What did you say, you don't want to play another move in the corner?? Well, fair enough I guess but have a look anyway because an extra move can be the best play on the whole board possible in not a few situations.

The most common follow-up would be to play at B and make a shimari (a formation of two moves which effectively seal off the corner).

To play at the 3-3 point with A is a good move too, it's a little tighter compared to a move at B and it loses some 2-3 points when talking about the size of territory made. All the same, A is a very feasible move when your opponent is strong in the direct vicinity. Making a shimari with a play at B leaves more room for your opponent to try "something" (invasion) under your stones

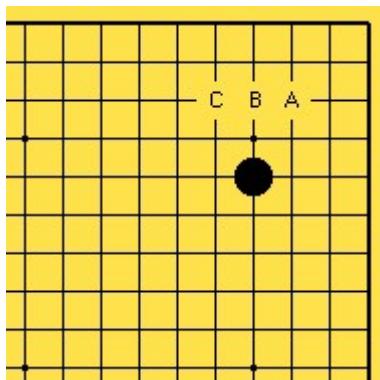


Diagram 2

Move C in the above diagram deserves a little extra attention, it's a non-standard corner enclosure but not unheard of in pro games. Let's have a closer look at it in dia 3.

Strange Shimari

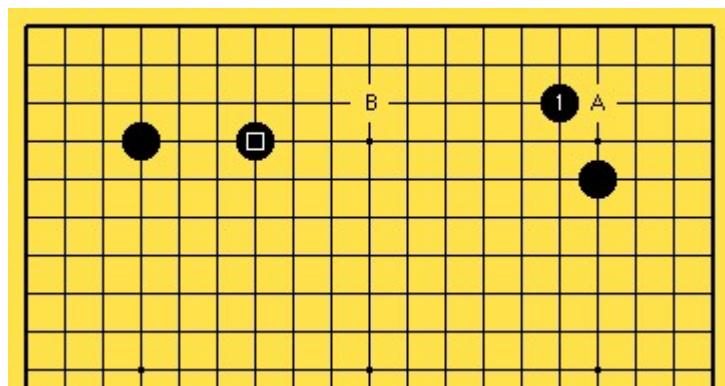


Diagram 3

Black 1 is a mysterious move, it's not clear exactly how many points black made in the corner in spite of the two moves he played there. In the dia, however, an example is shown when you might consider playing the unorthodox move.

Instead of black 1 the usual move would be at A. After black's play at A the natural approach would be to play an extension towards B. If black is already strong in the upper right corner, however, one cannot help but feel that black is overdoing things playing like this. Black seems to be spending too many moves at one side of the board. Which brings me to black 1. It most probably will be the last move black is going to spend at the upper part of the board. Black's strategy is to wait until white plays between the strong black positions.

China-Japan super match 1986-05-10

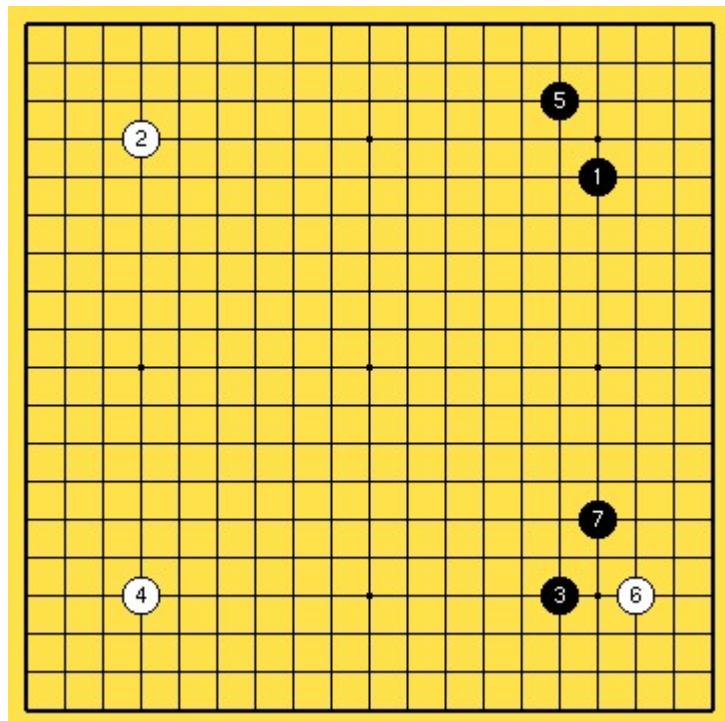


Diagram 4

Black: [Kubo Katsuaki](#), 8p
White: [Rui Naiwei](#), 7p (+resign)

Kubo is clearly going for the psychological effect here. All his moves from 1 to 7 are just screaming: "I am not in the least impressed by a female 7 dan professional from China, I can play any which way I want and *you* are gonna *lose* ". Or something like that, well tough words but things turned out differently from what Kubo had expected. His attitude was skillfully used against him and Rui quite convincingly killed 18 black stones at move 152 after which black resigned.

An Alternative Approach

White 1 is definitely not a normal move and although there are undoubtedly situations in which it would make an excellent play I'm not going to think one out.

White often is a little reluctant to enter the corner, usually at C, because he fears black has some nasty tricks up his sleeve and will let loose a terrifying joseki. Some people therefor choose to play at 1 after black can play any of the A-D moves and get a good result.

White refusing entering the corner will lose points. Note, by the way, that if there were a black stone at E already black might want to choose between C and D. These moves pay more importance to the side and less to the corner.

Move A and especially B are very tight and make sure black has room for eyes and possible some points in the future.

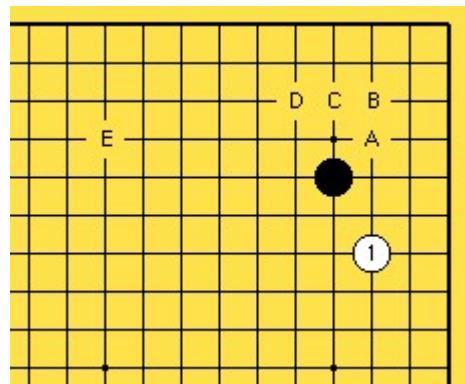
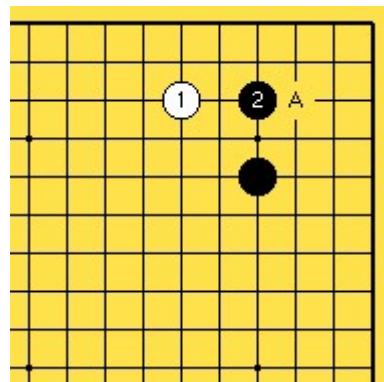


Diagram 5

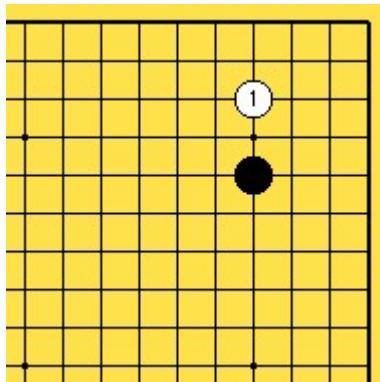
Not Good



If white 1 in dia 5 was a questionable approach move than white 1 in dia 6 is at least twice as questionable. Black answers at either 2 or A and gets a splendid result. Whatever reason you think you have found for playing white 1, think it over another 2-3 times before actually playing it.

Diagram 6

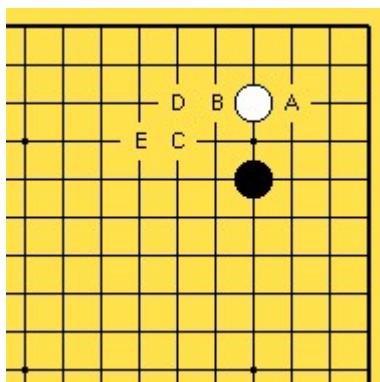
Finally, the Normal Approach



White 1 here is by far the most common way to enter the corner, unless you have a really excellent reason for playing another move to enter the corner just play 1 and don't worry too much.

Diagram 7

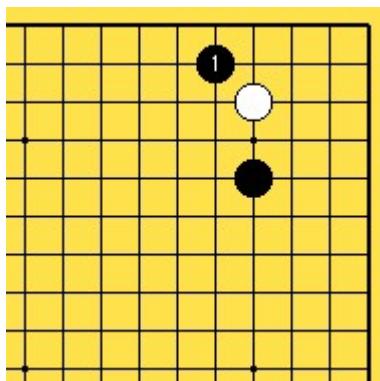
Ishida



When leafing through Mr. Ishida's Joseki dictionary I see he gives five possible moves to play with black now, A-E as shown in the dia.

Diagram 8

Rebel without a cause

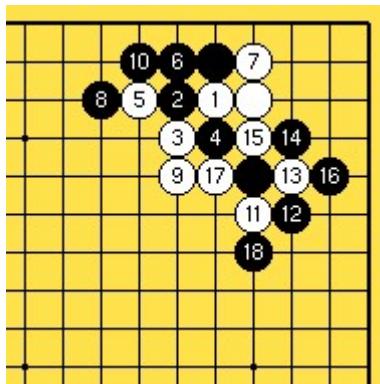


Being a rebel (I sometimes park my car at the wrong side of the street) I would like to start off with black 1. It's not much of a move but from one thing you can be assured, your opponent will be surprised and suspect that you are either

1. Totally insane and do not know anything about go
2. A very crafty fellow with a profound knowledge of "hamete"

Diagram 9

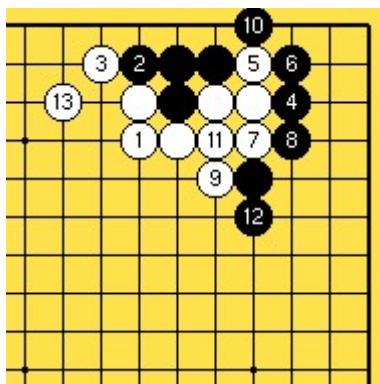
Good for Black



This is one of the few variations which is nice for black, unfortunately there are lots of sequences excellent for white. In this case white 7 is not the proper move.

Diagram 9a

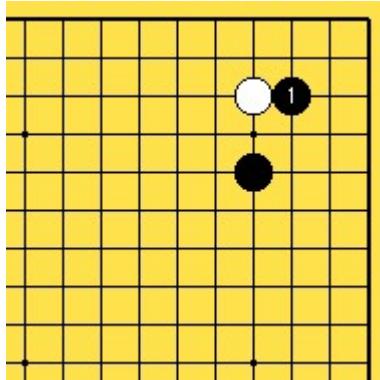
Better for White



White should play white 7 at 1 in this diagram. This may look as a nice result for black but pros think white is thick and doing better here.

Diagram 9b

The Normal Stuff



Black one is as common a move as they come. I think it is not really in the spirit of the 5-4 move but it is an excellent point all the same.

Diagram 10

As good as Joseki

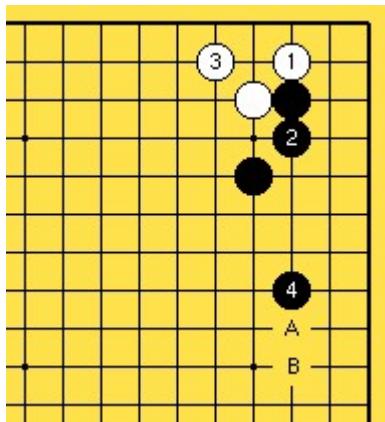


Diagram 11

White 1 and 3 are the fastest way of ensuring space for future eyes. Black 4 is strictly speaking too tight, the real joseki would be to play at A and sometimes as far as B. Black 4, however, is a very solid move which enables black to forget about his stones here and regard them as settled. Although it is not the best move it tends to make things easier.

The Correct Extension

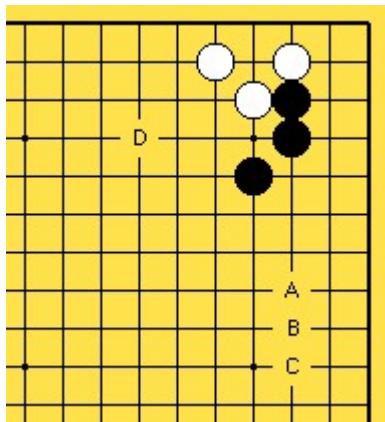


Diagram 12

By the way, no matter which extension black may choose, A, B or C the correct extension (if not the only one possible) for white to play is at D. It is, however, not strictly necessary to play here, often white will play elsewhere (tenuki), counting on his solid shape to be able to make life in the future and/but nothing more.

A Very Cool Move

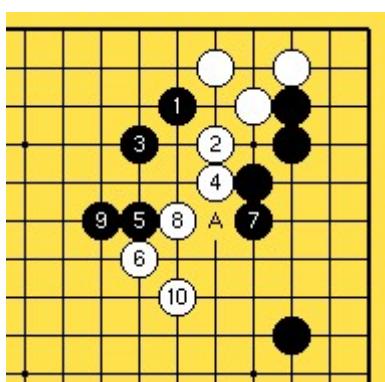


Diagram 13

One way to go about punishing white for having played tenuki would be the shoulder hit of black 1. The sequence, which follows, is up to black 5 quite natural and easy to remember. The flaming tesuji (local kick-ass move) of white 2 is not so easy to get. Many player's first instinct would be to barge through and play black 7 at the place of white 8. Next, however, white plays A and any further black attempt to prevent white from hooking up his stones might well end in losing the side. Sometimes white 6 in the dia is too dangerous but on an empty board it is excellent, a super-shape move. Black will normally patiently defend at 7 and white works his way out to the center.

1983-01-13 Preliminary round 1st Judan title

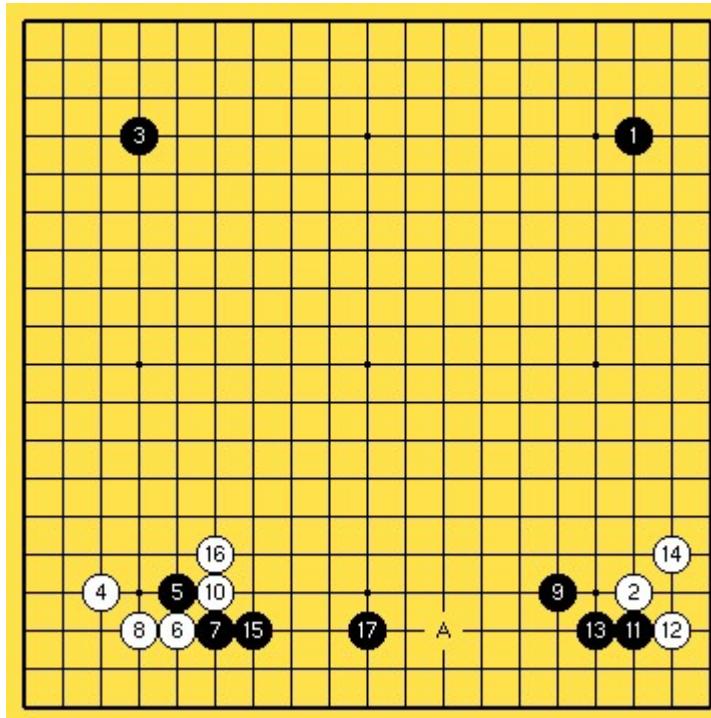


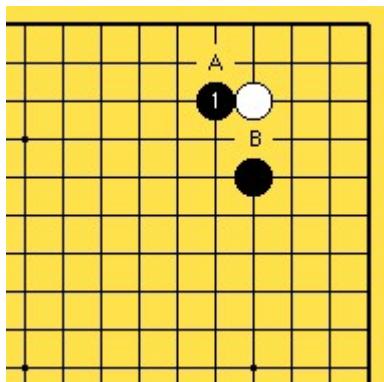
Diagram 14

Black: [Iwata Tatsuaki](#), 9p

Iwata Sensei is the oldest and most respected active pro in Nagoya. Unfortunately he is getting on in age (well, nothing unfortunate about that) and in recent years he has trouble going all the way. He cannot give everything for ten hours straight anymore, and this, to be sure, is unfortunate. The above game, however, is brilliant and I like to think of the result as just a minor detail. The reason why I show this diagram is of course black 17 which is a little thin but nicely looks after all black's stones at the lower side. White, however, patiently waited until he got his hands free and invaded at A with move 76. White 18, by the way, was a one-space approach move in the upper right corner.

White: [Kobayashi Koichi](#), 9p (+0.5)

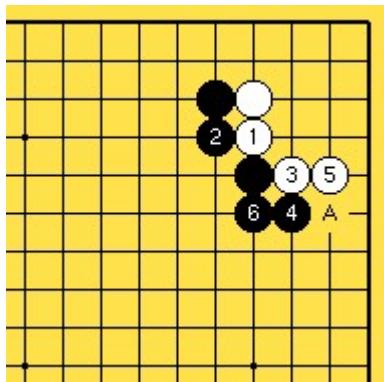
Your Move, A or B?



Time to move on to the next move, the outside attachment. If you never saw this before but you somehow feel that a play at A next is okay for white you definitely have talent. The play at B might look natural but actually is a pretty bad move.

Diagram 15

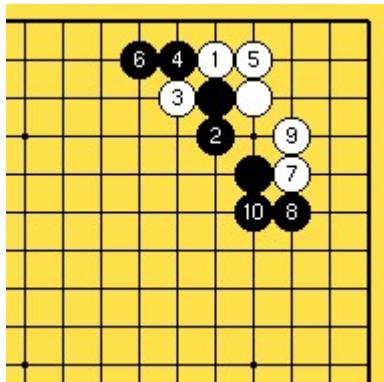
Black's Doing Fine



After black 4 there seem to be plenty moves possible but descending with 5 is about the best white can do. Black gets a good result by simply connecting at 6 but if he feels like it he might want to play the severe block at A.

Diagram 16

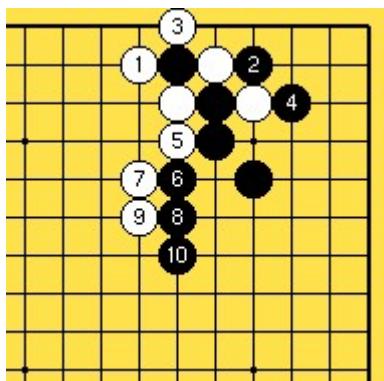
The Cut



The cut at 4 is tesuji, white should accept this gift graciously because if he connects at 5 as shown in the dia he still has to make eyes in the corner. By the way, if the ladder works if black instead of 6 plays atari to the left of white 3 he should play it. If the ladder is good for white and black cannot immediately capture white 3 the stretch of 6 is good enough. After black 10 white can set his stone 3 in motion but provided he has not got several strong groups in the vicinity black will get the chance to develop his stones on both sides while white is running for eyes.

Diagram 17

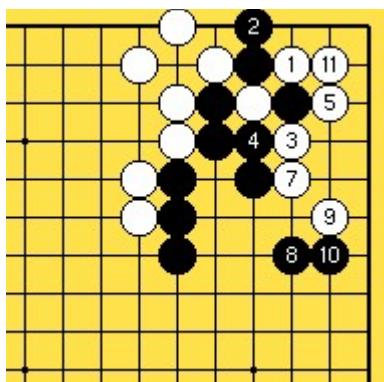
Joseki



This is what white should go for, it may look very good for black but his territory is not secure yet. (white 5 is not absolutely necessary but it is a very nice point)

Diagram 18

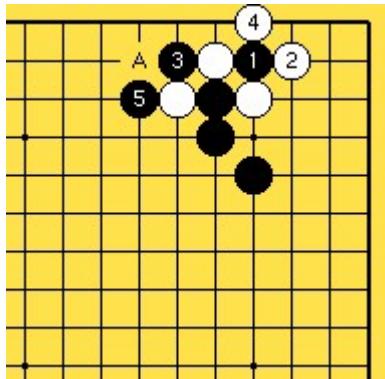
The Corner is Hollow



Black can save half of the corner but once he plays at 2 it's a one way street. Black 6 connects (above 4) and white can nicely get a small life. It is a hard question what exactly (and when) black has to solidify his territory without playing too slow.

Diagram 18a

A Joseki

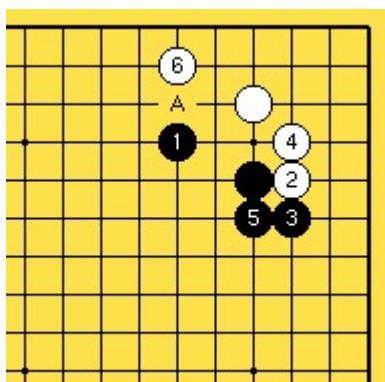


This is a joseki, provided that the ladder after black 5 really captures the white stone. If the ladder doesn't work for black he can try to get an equal result by playing black 5 at A. In contrast to dia 17, however, the white corner is alive and does not need any reinforcement. Making life in the corner as in dia 17 is painful for white since it automatically makes the black stones stronger. Here, in dia 19, this is not the case and although black 5 at A might at times be possible it is most often not a good idea. It is very important, by the way, to resolve the ladder, i.e. capture the single white stone, at the earliest opportunity because if white can in the future run away with this stone black is really in a tight spot.

Diagram 19

The rule with the outside attachment is that you cut at the side you don't want. Giving one stone to your opponent enables you to get a big return.

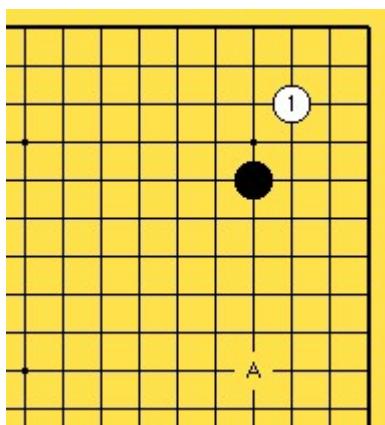
A revelation?



Black 1 is in my opinion the only follow up for black after white entered the corner, which is 100% the same idea as the original play at the 5-4 point. Instead of white 6 playing at A is a possibility too. Playing elsewhere is also common. Black 1 has many simple and straightforward variations (and even more not at all straightforward ones) but this is the only one I'm going to show you, sorry. If you are really eager to find out more about this black 1 move here you will have to very carefully study what happens if black plays 3 at 4.

Diagram 20

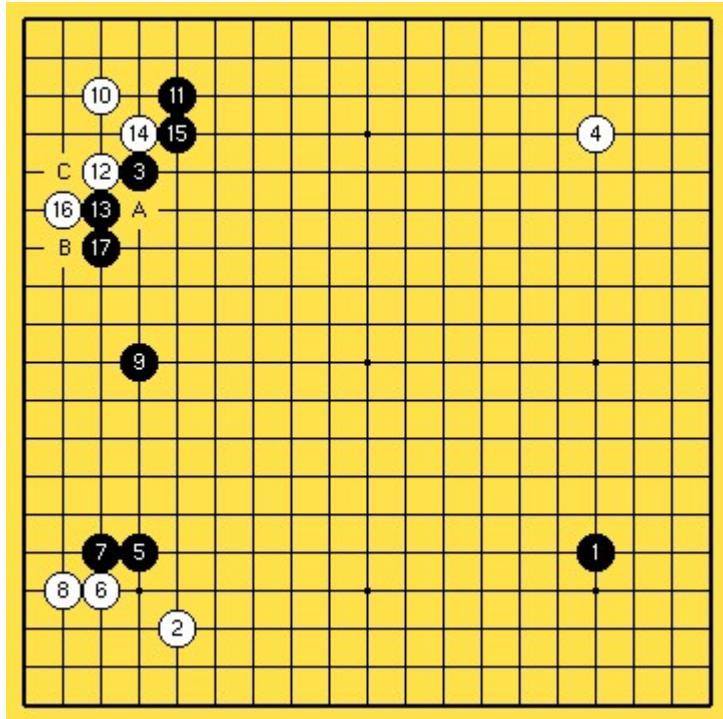
Entering at 3-3



When black has a stone at A from the start or when developing towards the direction of A is very attractive for black, entering at the 3-3 point with white 1 is a splendid idea.

Diagram 21

A Go Seigen Game Example



Date: 1934-11-14,15

Black: [Go Seigen](#)

White: [Iwamoto Kaoru](#) (+2)

Black 11 is normal; white 12 can also be played at C, which is a little low, but simple. After white 16 black usually connects at A and white stretches at B. Black 17 is interesting, white played at B next and black cut at C. A trade followed, black captured two white stones (16 and B) and white captured black stone 3.

Diagram 22

Appendix 01

Index of joseki's mentioned in this episode:

