



THE GAME OF GO

Contents:

Gameboard

Black Pawns - 182 nos.

White Pawns - 182 nos.

Black	White
(69) G 4	
	(70) H 5
(71) G 10	(72) A 4
(73) A 5	(74) D 7
(75) C 7	(76) E 7
(77) B 6	

Saving H 4 and J 4 A threat which must be answered. White cannot Play G 10 because of the threats to his own pawns. (If White G 10, Black J 6 (atari) white K 6 (takes one pawn). Black H 5, and White must lose his 10 pawns as he cannot connect at J6 without losing his Entire formation by a Black Play at G 6') Forced as explained in the note to the previous move.

This move is necessary to Protect against an attack starting with White A 6, Black B 6 White B 8, etc.

All the territory has now been surrounded and there are no neutral points to be filled in. The game is now finished (See Fig 8.)

The next step is to remove the dead pawns at H10 and B2. Black has surrounded $11+3+2=16$ points and has lost 2 prisoners. His score is therefore 14 points. White has surrounded $6+4=10$ points and has lost one prisoner, making his score 9 points. *Black has therefore won by 5 points.*

Black	White	
(27) E 5		Attempting to connect his threatened pawns to a stronger formation.
	(28) D 5	
(29) D 6	(30) F 5	
(31) F 3	(32) E 2	Forced.
(33) E 4	(34) E 6	Atari. Threatens to take E 4 and E 5.
(35) F 4	(36) G 5	
(37) D 3	(38) C 3	
(39) C 4	(40) D 2	(Takes one pawn D 3.)
(41) C 5	(42) D 3	(as (37)
(43) B 2	(44) B 3	
(45) F 1	(46) E 1	
(47) G 1	(48) C 1	Forming two eyes, and thus making his group safe.
(49) B 4	(50) A 3	
(51) J 2		Trying to make two eyes.
	(52) H 3	
(53) H 2		Atari.
	(54) K 3	A mistake which costs him the game (The correct sequence was White K 2, Black K3 (takes 2 pawns). White J 3 (takes 1 pawn) and Black cannot form two eyes).
(55) K 2	(56) K 5	Forced.
(57) J 1		Making two eyes and saving his large group.
	(58) D 10	Threatening to invade.
(59) C 10	(60) E 10	
(61) C 9		Black must reply here or lose his pawn and many points in the corner.
	(62) K 7	
(63) J 9		Making sure that he can form two eyes in the corner
	(64) H 10	Attempts to "blind" Black's formation.
(65) J 10	(66) K 8	
(67) K 9	(68) F 10	

THE GAME OF GO

History:

The game of Go is probably the oldest board game in existence. According to legend it originated in China more than 4,000 years ago, probably under the name of 'yi' and later changed to 'We-chi' ("the -surrounding game").

About A.D. 700 the game was brought into Japan where its popularity steadily grew, until today it is considered the national game of the country. There are believed to be between eight and ten million Japanese 'GO' players.

In the Orient 'GO' is ranked higher than Chess. There are many hundreds of books on the game and some of these are now published in English for the benefit of western players. Of the nine monthly 'GO' magazines published in Japan, two have a circulation of over 35,000. The magazine "Go Review" is published in English by the Japanese GO Association for American and European Players.

Every Japanese newspaper has 'GO' section and several daily papers sponsor tournaments for both amateurs and it's professionals.

In Japan 'GO' players are graded according to their playing strength on a system similar to that used for Judo. There are *Kyu* or junior grades, through which a player may progress until he reaches 1st Kyu. The Dan or Master grades begin with 1st Dan, the highest being 9th Dan. Handicaps are used between players of differing strength.

GO is relatively new to the Western world but there are already some thousands of players in America and in Europe. About 100 players attend the annual British Go congress, and a similar number attend the annual European Go Congress.

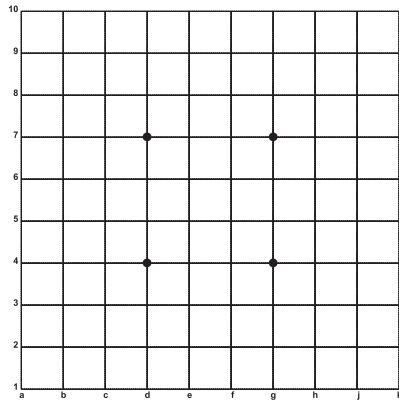
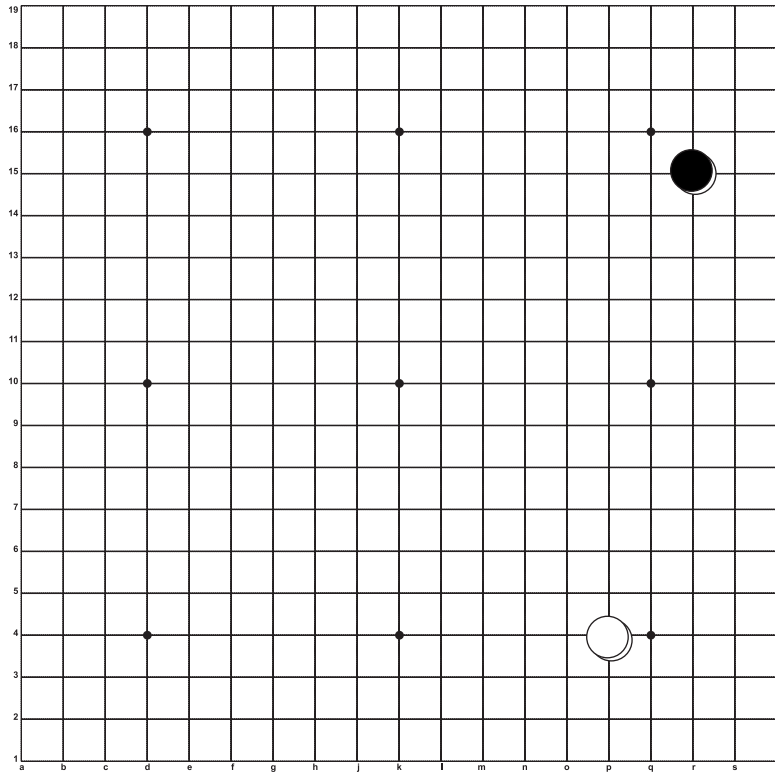


Fig. 1

There is a quarter board (10x10 lines) marked out on the reverse side of the board supplied

SAMPLE GAME

You will find it interesting and instructive to play through the following quarter-board-game on the lower left. quadrant of your board. (The conclusion of this game is shown in Fig. B).

Black		White
(1)	H 7	(2) D 4
(3)	G 3	(4) E 3
(5)	D 8	
		(6) F 8
(7)	G 8	
		(8) F 7
(9)	C 6	
		(10) H 6
(11)	H 4	(12) J 7
(13)	J 8	(14) G 7
		(15) H 8
		(16) J 5
(17)	F 9	
		(18) E 9
(19)	G 9	
		(20) E 8
(21)	D 9	
		(22) F 2
(23)	G 2	(24) J 3
(25)	J 4	(26) K 4

Black occupies the fourth corner instead of replying to White's threat to his G 3. White separates the Black pawns. Black defends his corner and attacks the White pawn. Leading his threatened pawn towards his corner formation and preparing an attack against D8. Making sure of points in the corner and preparing an attack against E3 and D4.

Atari. Threatens to capture H 7 by a play at H 8. Protecting J 7 and threatening G3 and H4. With two corners threatened Black tries to make sure of one of them. Separating the Black groups. To save F 9. Forced. Gaining points in this corner and threatening to join his groups with a play at E 10. Commencing a violent attack on G3 and H4.

pronounced (“sen-tay”) and thus force your opponent on to the defensive. To retain sente you may find it worthwhile to abandon some of your pawns.

Pawns in serious danger should be given up early.

If you stick to some helpless tones and struggle to escape from your captor, the number of pawns increases and a huge group will be doomed, having a decisive effect on the result of the game.

Endeavour to keep your own pawns connected into groups and at every opportunity separate your opponent pawns.

Do not be an avaricious winner. The winner by one point is no less the winner than who wins by a hundred.

SAMPLE GAME

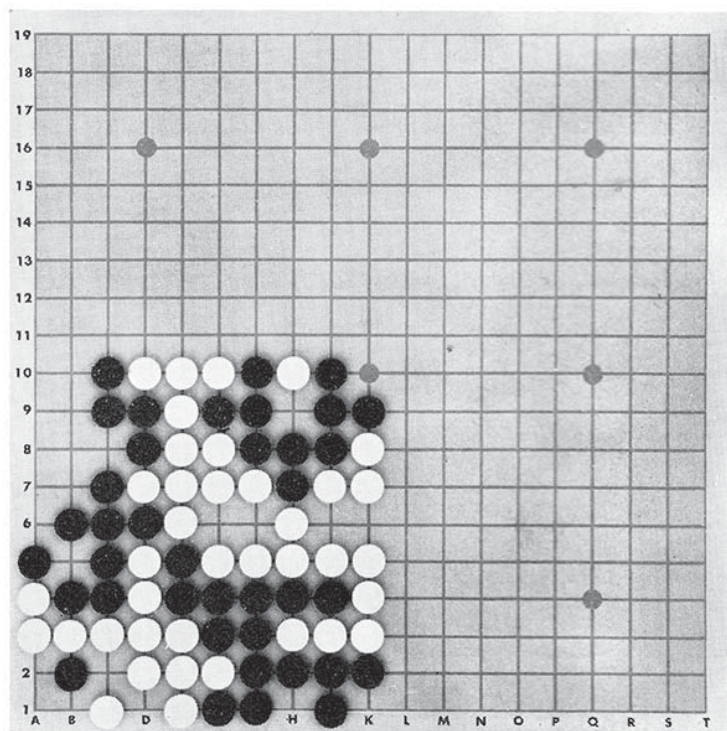


Fig. 8
Conclusion of quarter board game.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE GAME

1. THE BOARD AND THE Pawns

GO is a fighting game. The board represents the uninhabited world bounded on all sides by the seashore. There are 19 vertical and 19 horizontal lines on the board, forming 361 intersections or “points” as they are usually called. Beginners usually start to play on a quarter-board (10 x 10 lines), as this makes the game simpler and quicker. Once the basic tactics are understood, one should then progress to a full board.

These intersections or points may be identified by the letters and numbers marked along the sides of the board. Thus, the Black pawn shown at top right in Fig. 1 is at R 15; the White pawn at bottom right is at P 4, and so on.

The set of pawns consists of 181 black and 180 white, but seldom are all of these needed to complete a game. There are 182 black pawns & 182 white pawns provided in a runner frame, (however for this game you will need only 181 black & 180 white pawns) carefully twist of the pawns to remove them from the runner frame (keep a side the extra pawns).

Commencing with the empty board, the two opposing players alternately place a pawn on one of the intersections, **Black having the first move**. The primary object is to enclose as much territory (i.e. as many vacant points) as possible by placing the pawns in strategic positions on the board. **pawns once placed remain stationary unless subsequently surrounded and captured.** (See par. 3.)

2. THE WINNER

The game is concluded when the players agree that neither can increase his territory or the number of his “prisoners”. After all the captured pawns have been removed from the board each player counts the number of points he has enclosed and deducts from this figure the number of pawns lost as prisoners. Thus if White has 40 enclosed points of territory and has lost 10 pawns he has 30 points. If Black’s score is 25 points, White has won by 5 points. (The conclusion of a quarter-board game is shown in Fig. 8, page 14.)

3. CAPTURE OF Pawns

A single pawn can be captured and removed from the board when all of the adjacent horizontal and vertical points have been occupied by enemy pawns, as shown in Fig. 2 **a,b** and **c**.

Two or more pawns of the same colour can be connected into a single unit by placing them on adjoining intersections. The group of pawns shown at **d** in Fig 2 is connected, as is that at (e). Note that connection is along the horizontal and vertical lines.

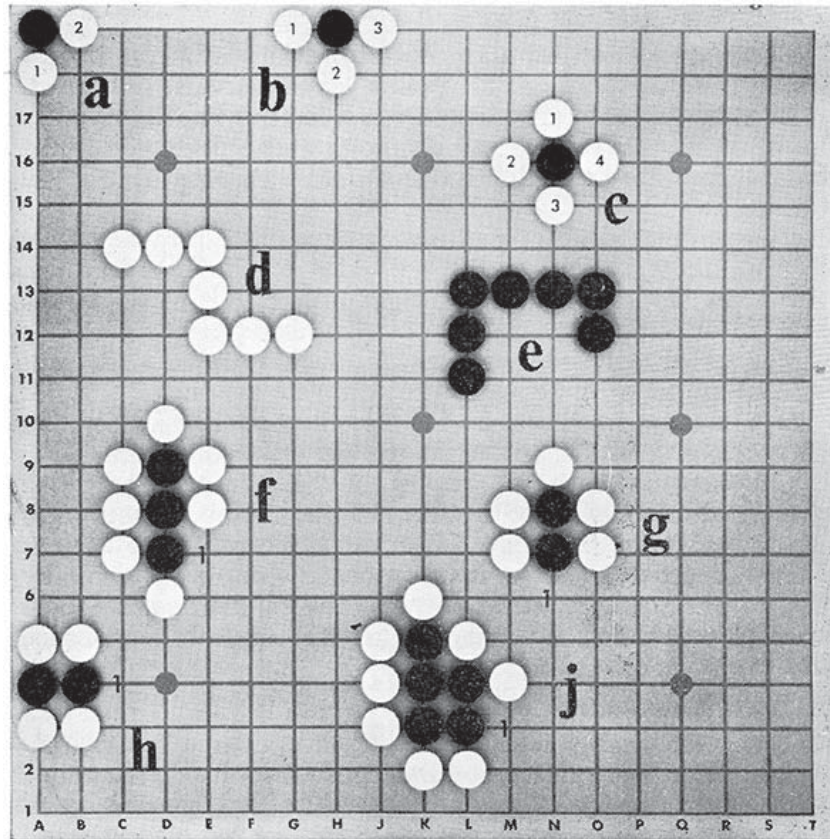


Fig. 2

4. LIBERTIES

The vacant points immediately adjacent to a pawn or group of connected pawns are called “breathing spaces” or *liberties*. When there remains only one *liberty* the pawn

SIDES AND CENTRE

After the corners the next most valuable parts of the board in which to sketch out your intended territory are the sides, by placing pawns on either the third or fourth line.

When the claims to the sides have been made, the next stage is an advance to occupy the centre. Of course, before this can happen the opposing forces may have already clashed and life-and-death struggles may be in progress.

An example of an- opening by experienced players is shown in Fig 7. Play this through on the board yourself. The White play (24) is an invasion of Black’s corner. This will precipitate a fierce tactical battle and now the game will enter the middle stage.

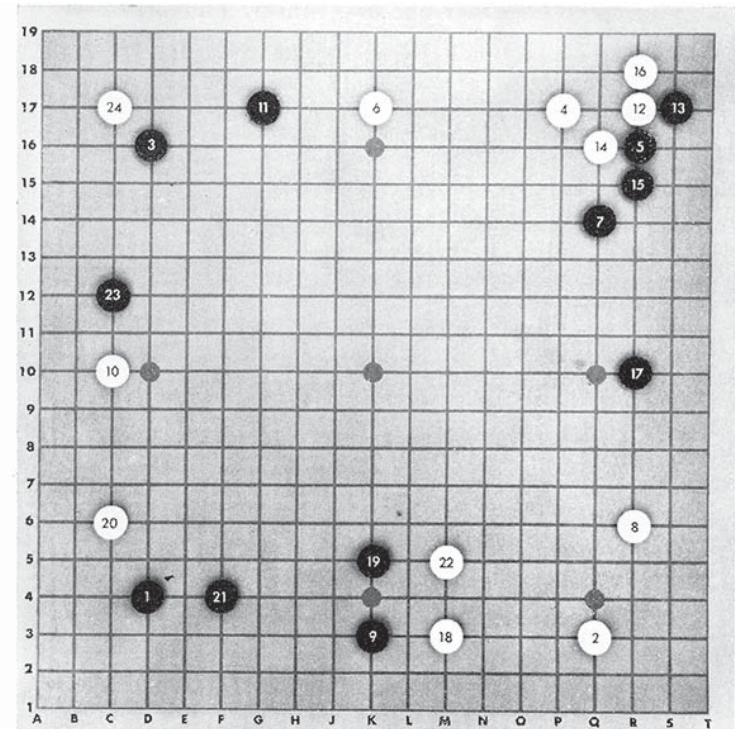


Fig 7

INITIATIVE (SENTE)

It is most important in all tactical battles to seize and retain the initiative (*sente*,

The handicap positions are as follows:

2 pawns-at Q 16 and D 4

3 pawns-at Q 16, D 4 and, Q 4

4 pawns-at Q 16, D 4, Q 4 and D 16

5 pawns-as 4 pawns with one also at K 10

6 pawns-as 4 pawns with one also at Q 10 and one at D 10

7 pawns-as 6 pawns with one pawn also at K 10

8 pawns-as 6 pawns, with one also at K 16 one at K 4

9 pawns-as 8 pawns, with one pawn added at K 10

These nine “Star” or handicap points are marked on the board itself.

Players of unequal strength should always play with handicaps and these can be adjusted in in succeeding games according to results.

For example, if the weaker player wins three consecutive games with (say) a 3 pawn handicap, he should have his handicap reduced to two pawns. If he again wins three consecutive games he should have his handicap reduced to playing first. If he *loses* three consecutive games, however, , he returns to the next higher handicap.

GENERAL HINTS ON PLAY

Many hundreds of HO text books have been written, teaching opening strategy, corner tactics, middle-game tactics and strategy, end-game play and so on. Naturally it is not possible in this first introduction to give anything more than general principles.

CORNERS

Because territory is easiest to acquire in the corners of the board it is best, if possible, first to place two pawns in the corner area on the third and / or fourth lines (eg. At R 16 and P 17, or at D 3 and C 6).It is-also worthwhile to prevent your opponent from, completing these corner fortifications, and this can often be done by playing on the point which he would like to occupy himself (eg: if he plays at R 16 you oppose him at P 17).

or group of pawns in jeopardy is said to be in *atari* (similar to *check* in Chess).

All of the Black pawns at **f, g, h and j** in Fig. 2 are in *Atari* and can be captured when the last remaining *liberty* is occupied by the surrounding pawns-as shown by a White play at (l) in each case. The captured pawns are at once removed from the board.

A player may not place a pawn on any point which is completely surrounded-by his opponent’s pawns *unless* in so doing he captures all or part of the surrounding enemy pawns. **This is because it is not permitted for any pawn to remain on the board when it is completely surrounded by pawns of the opposite colour.**

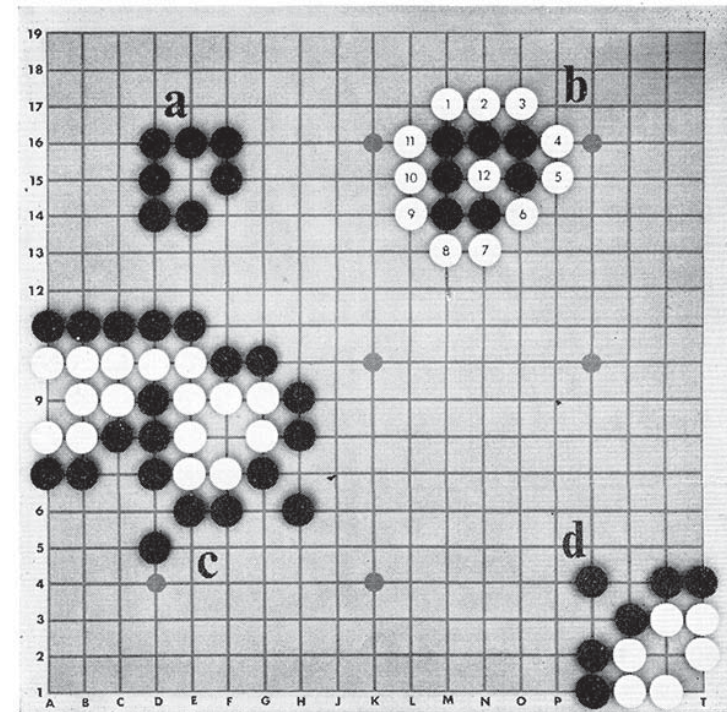


Fig. 3

5. AN EYE

An unoccupied point which is completely surrounded by pawns of the same colour is called an “eye”. The group of pawns at **a**, Fig. 3, contains one *eye* (at E 15), and the opponent may not place a pawn on this eye until he has occupied all the outside

liberties of the group, as shown at **b**, Fig. 3, where move (12) at N 15 completes the capture of the seven black pawns, which are then removed from the board.

Since an *eye* may be occupied by the opponent only when that eye is the last remaining *liberty* of the group, it follows that if a connected group of pawns contains **two separate eyes** it cannot be captured by the opponent. He cannot play on either *eye*, because the pawn so placed would be “committing suicide”, which is not allowed. To kill the group it would be necessary to fill both *eyes*, and as they cannot be filled simultaneously (i.e. with one play) the group is impregnable. The white groups at **c** and **d** in Fig. 3 have two eyes and therefore cannot be killed.

Except for a few rules concerning special situations (which will now be explained) an understanding of the foregoing instructions is all that is required to play GO.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

At this stage it should be noted that although the principles of GO are very simple, the game can become extremely complicated. For that reason it will be best if your first few-games are played on a quarter of the board (10 x 10 lines) (See Fig. 1.)

Remember that the object of the game is to acquire territory by surrounding vacant areas of the board with your pawns.

If you can do this more economically than your opponent can, that is, if you secure more territory with your plays than he does with his, you will win the game.

A casual game usually takes about one hour to play. Serious match games may take several times longer, as in Chess.

6. LIVE GROUPS AND DEAD GROUPS

As already explained, a group of pawns which has two or more *eyes* is permanently safe from capture. The black group at **a**, Fig.4, is dead because it has only one eye (at E 16). When White plays on this *eye* he will be **filling the last liberty** of the group and can remove all these black pawns from the board

The black group **b**, however, contains two separate *eyes* (P 15 and T 16) and so

It is Black's turn. He plays at (3) R 18, taking the White pawn (4) at R 17 and threatening to take off the White group by a play (5) at S 19. By the *ko* rule White is not allowed to retake at (4) R 17 immediately. He must therefore make a play in another part of the board so threatening that Black cannot afford to ignore it.

Assuming that Black replies to this threat elsewhere, White may now play at (4) R 17, threatening to follow with (6) at T 16, taking the two Black pawns.

Now it is Black who may not retake immediately (*ko* rule), so he must find a compelling threat elsewhere. This alternate playing in the *ko* followed by a threat elsewhere will continue until one or other of the players decides that it is more profitable to win the *ko* by ignoring the side threat. If White is able to play at (6) T 16, or Black at (5) S 19, the *ko* fight is finished one way or the other.

In practice the outcome of a *ko* fight frequently determines the outcome of the entire game.

10. LOCAL STALEMATE POSITIONS (SEKI)

Occasionally a local struggle can develop into an impasse. An example of this is shown at **f** in Fig. 4. Neither player is able to place a pawn on the point D 1, for if White does so, Black plays on point F1, capturing the six White pawns. On the other hand, if Black plays on point D 1, White will play on point A 1, killing the five Black pawns. This situation is therefore left as it is (a local stalemate) and is known as a *seki* (pronounced “say-kee”).

HANDICAPS

The handicap system has contributed greatly to the popularity of GO because, with the correct handicap allowance, a fairly weak player can compete with a stronger opponent, and both can enjoy an exciting and interesting game. If no handicap is given, the weaker player takes Black and plays first. Experts consider that this gives him the advantage equivalent to 4 or 5 points. If this handicap is not enough he may place 2 or more (up to 9) black pawns at certain prescribed points, according to the disparity between the two opponents. This placing of handicap pawns is regarded as Black's first move.

This rule not only prevents drawn games but also adds to the excitement of the game, because often a *ko* is important (e.g. it may be the connecting point between an eyeless group and a live one) and the players will continually search over the board for *ko threats* (plays which they think their opponent will be forced to answer), so that they may play once more in the *ko* (and so that the opponent cannot play in the *ko* twice running and fill it).

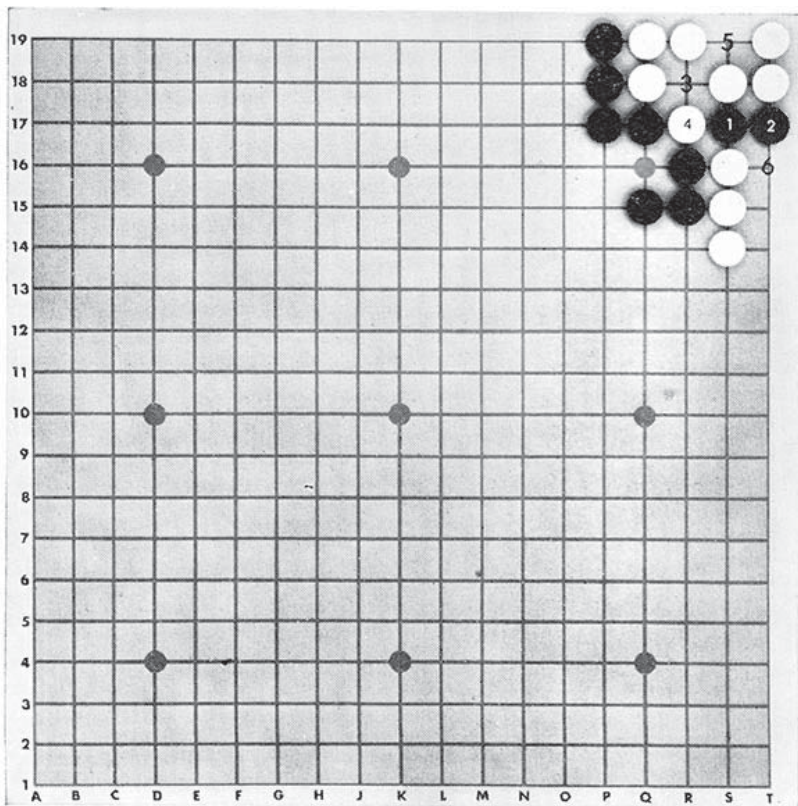


Fig.6

Example of an important *KO*

The outcome of the *ko*, in Fig.6 . 0 will determine whether the White pawns will live or die. To make two *eyes* and live White must capture the two Black pawns (1) and (2) at S17 and T17.

can never be captured. For White to play on either *eye* would be illegal, because his play would not capture any of the pawns in the group.

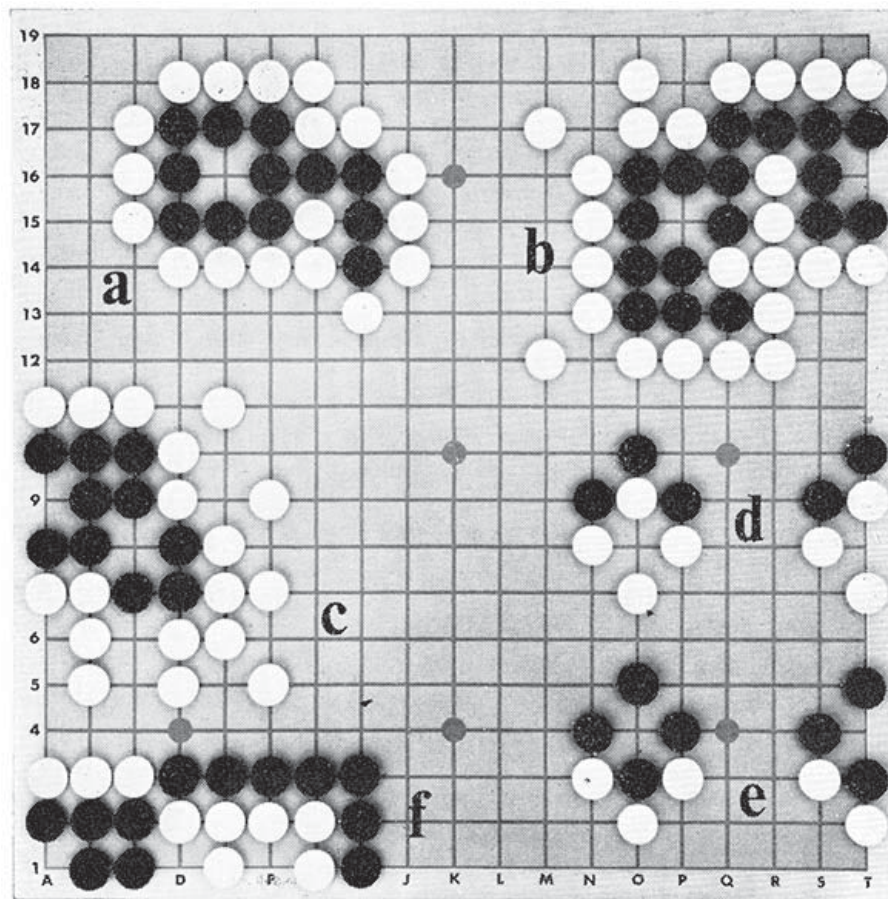


Fig. 4

7. FALSE EYES

When all of the pawns which form an eye are not connected to each other that *eye* is temporary or **false**. The group at **c** in Fig 4 has one real eye (A9) and one false *eye* (C8) and is therefore doomed. (After a white play at C6 the three Black pawns at C7, D7 and D8 can be captured by a White play at C8.)

You will by now understand that when a group of pawns is surrounded by pawns of the opposite colour in such a manner that neither escape nor the formation of two *eyes* is possible, that group is dead, and unless some of the surrounding pawns can be captured it will remain dead, and be removed from the board **at the end of the game.**

Note that a dead group cannot be removed from the board by the opponent **before** the end of the game **unless** and **until** he has played on all the liberties of the group. Of course, once you have sealed the fate of a group of pawns it is more profitable to wait till the end of the game to remove them, rather than to reduce your own territory by playing in it just to complete the immediate capture. Usually dead pawns are captured during the game only if the surrounding (capturing) pawns are in danger and are thus forced to remove the dead pawns in self-defence.

8. ATTACKING ENEMY pawns

The seven black pawns at **a**, Fig. 5, are dead, because they are surrounded and cannot make two eyes. Their liberties can all be occupied by white as shown at **b**. (After move (4) all these black pawns are immediately removed from the board.) If the surrounding White pawns are never in danger during the game, however, White need not play the sequence shown. **At the end of the game** Black will acknowledge these Black pawns to be irrevocably dead, and White will remove them. Look at the formation at **c** in Fig. 5. If it is Black's turn to play, his pawns are alive, because he will place a pawn on the point 5 and the group will have two *eyes*. But if it is White's turn, *he* will play on the point 5 and thus kill the black group which will now be unable to form two *eyes*.

The White pawns at **d** are alive, because if Black plays on the point 6 White will play on the point 7; if Black plays on the point 7 White will play on the point 6. White's reply in each case forms two *eyes*.

Even when a group contains six points it may be vulnerable. The Black pawns at **e** in Fig. 5 are not all connected and can be killed. White first plays on the point 8, forcing Black to save his two men with a play at 9. White continues at 10, forcing Black to respond at 11. When White plays at 12 the Black pawns are all in *atari*. So Black plays in the remaining point and takes off the three White pawns. The

position is now as shown at **f**. White again plays on the point 10 and Black now has no space in which to form two *eyes* (Play. this out on the board and you will find it easy to understand')

9. REPETITIVE SITUATIONS

The position shown at **d**, Fig 4, is called a *ko*. A White pawn is surrounded on three sides and is in *atari*. Black can capture this single pawn and the resulting position will be as at **e**.

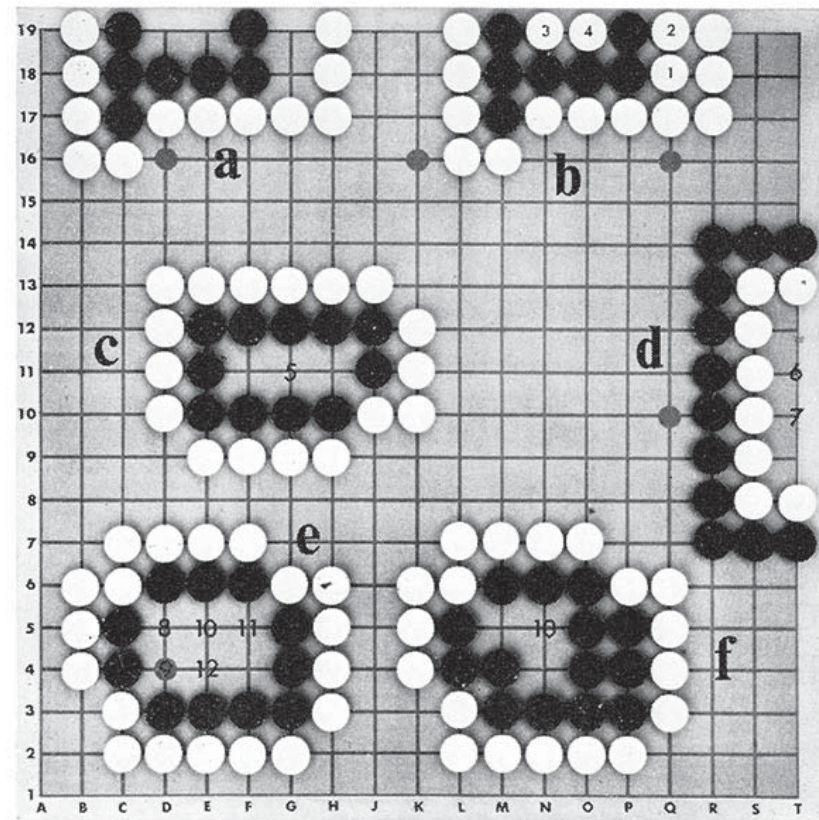


Fig. 5

If White now recaptures this Black pawn, the position is the same as at **d** again. This could go on forever, but a draw does not occur, because of the following rule:- **In a ko situation, after one player has captured a single hostile pawn his opponent is not permitted recapture until he has made at least one play else where on the board.**