

CHAPTER 1

Shodan. I guess all kyu players look forward to when they reach this level. Many people ask professionals how to make shodan. It seems to me that there are two areas that require improvement in order for kyu players to become shodan. One is technique, and by this I mean reading ability, joseki, tesuji, etc. Technique can be improved by studying problems and games and/or by playing a lot of games with players a little stronger than yourself.

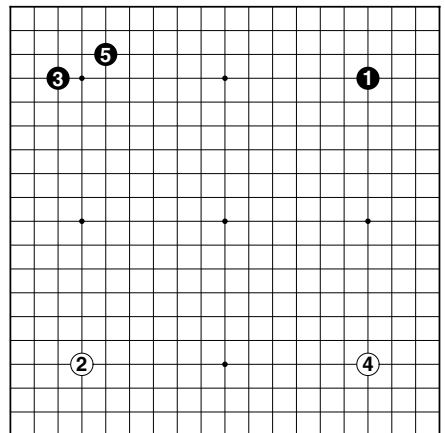
The fundamental difference between a kyu player and a dan player, however, is to be found in the second area which is their way of thinking about the game. Mistakes in the way of thinking are likely to be repeated throughout one's go career until someone teaches you the correct approach, and this makes it particularly urgent for you to identify wrong thinking patterns and strengthen correct ones. Throughout the games that follow various "points" and "mistakes" will be pointed out. By mistakes, I mean incorrect ways of thinking about go, and it is to these that kyu players should pay the most attention.

The first game we'll consider is an important promotion tournament game between a 3 kyu and a 4 Kyu. It may be helpful for you to record one of your own games and later on analyze it from the standpoint of the various points and mistakes made in this game.

Moves 1-5: PERFECT

Up to ⑤ this game is a perfect example of good go.

POINT 1: *The principle of good opening development is to play first in the empty corners, then make a corner enclosure or an approach move, and finally to play on the sides.*



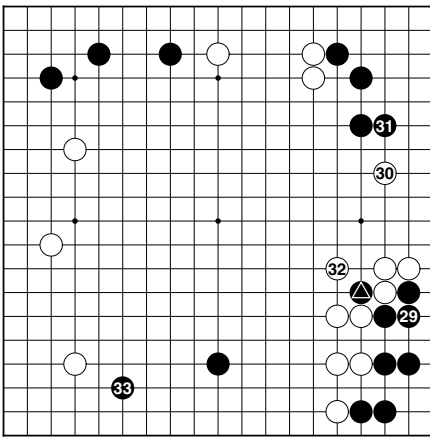
1 - 5

Black made a corner enclosure with ⑤. Where would you play now as White?

Moves 29–33: TOO PASSIVE

POINT 5: *A spirit of resistance is essential.*

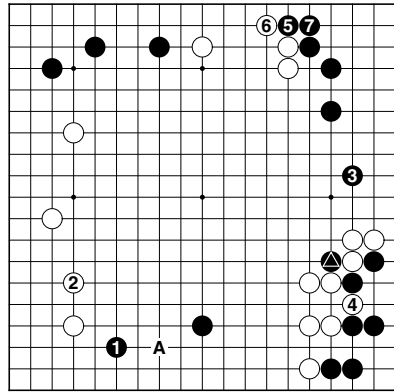
White is already in a better position now because Black has failed to punish White's overplays. Instead of 29, Black should seize this opportunity to play elsewhere and follow Diagram 17.



29 – 33

5 and 7 combine to solidify a large area and weaken White's upper right group. Although A is a weak point on the bottom, Black will certainly be able to ride out any attack in that area.

Diagram 17



MISTAKE 4: *Think in terms of purposeful sequences.*

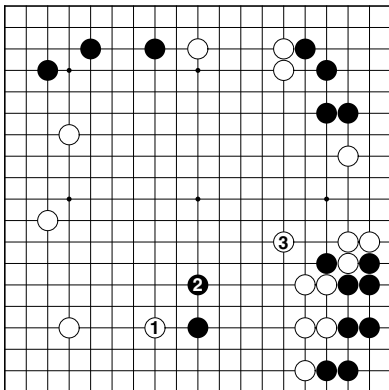


Diagram 18

32 is too tight a play; it overprotects and lets Black get in 33 first. In Diagram 18 we see how White should press first and, as Black becomes stronger, then go back and make a natural defensive as well as an aggressive move at 3. This way of thinking is very important. Notice that since White has already extended up the right side with 30 it is not so urgent to capture \triangle until Black's strength near the potentially cut off lower group becomes stronger. *Dan players often find forcing sequences like this that flow into the protective move they wanted to make anyway.*

UNDERSTANDING THE CHINESE OPENING

Let's go beyond the carefree attitude of "Well, everybody else is playing the Chinese opening, so I'll give it a try too." The Chinese opening is most commonly played by Black, but this is just a matter of style.

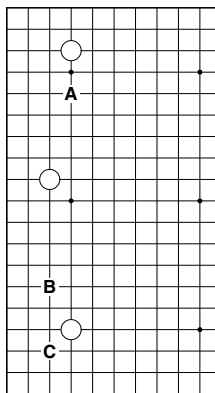


Diagram 3

In Diagram 3 we have a standard Chinese opening pattern. The intent of this opening is to build up the lower left side territory by making a strong attack on Black's approach stone at A. On the lower side, Black might try an approach at B or an invasion at C to disrupt that area.

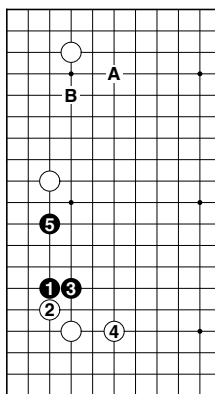


Diagram 5

Looking first at the 3-3 invasion, the standard joseki up to ⑫ in Diagram 4 is simply too good for White.

Since Diagram 4 is too good for White, Black could try the moves in Diagram 5, where White is looking for a chance to play A, not B.

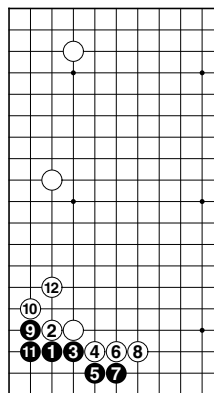


Diagram 4

By the way, the ease with which Black can settle into the lower side in the Chinese opening (as in Diagram 5) is one of the major differences between it and the sanrensei in Diagram 6, where White can mount a more severe attack.

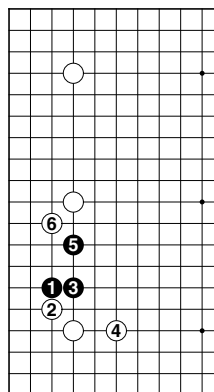


Diagram 6

In the case of the sanrensei, Black prefers to attack from the outside, as in Diagram 7.

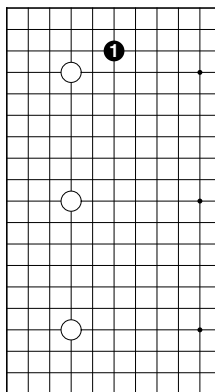
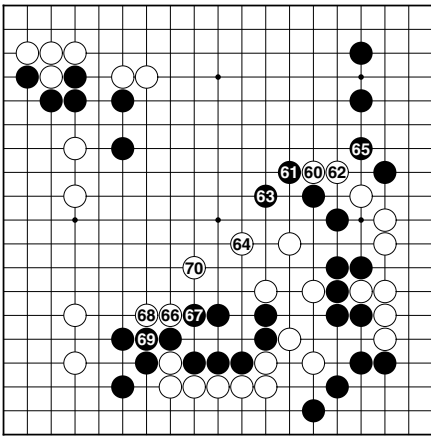


Diagram 7

Moves 60–70: *SHINOGI*

Following 65, White's group on the right is not safe. For example, after Diagram 25, White would be forced to jump out to A in a run for his life. However, with 66 at ① in Diagram 26, White would end up aiming at the push and cut beginning with A. 66, 68, and 70 show *the Achilles' heel of the person who over-attacks: he doesn't protect his own weak points and thin spots.*



60 – 70

UNDERSTANDING *SHINOGI*

Shinogi refers to the art of making eye shape. It requires a view of the whole board. That is, if you make one group live at the cost of losing another group, you really haven't accomplished anything. Also, as in this game, if your struggle for life leaves other areas in a bad situation, you may have failed to make the best possible *shinogi*.

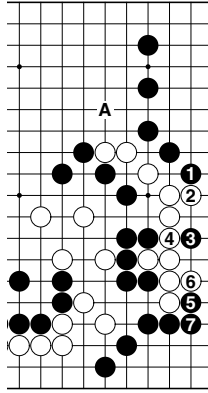


Diagram 25

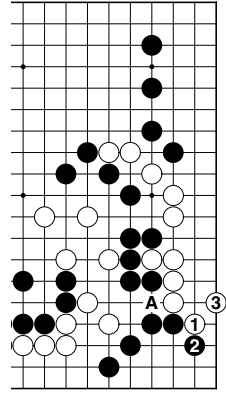


Diagram 26

MISTAKE 5: *When you make shinogi, look at the whole board.*

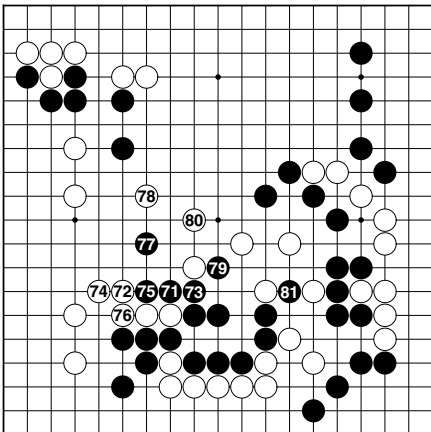


Figure 7: *SHINOGI* CONTINUED

All of Black's wild thrashing about after 71 serves merely to strengthen a relatively strong group at the expense of his group in the upper left. Diagram 27 on the next page is an example of the proper way to settle Black's stones.

71 – 81