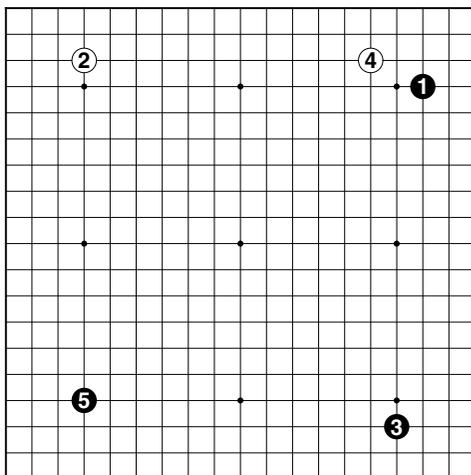
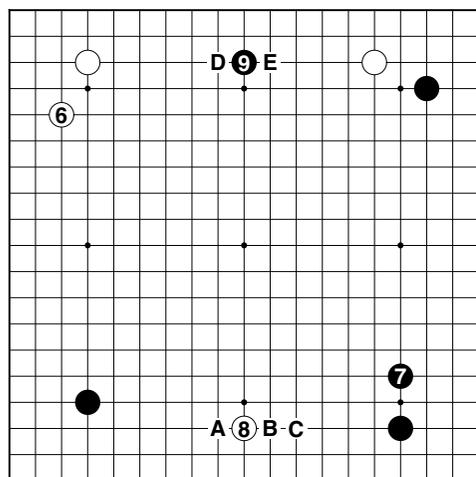


In this diagram, ①, ②, and ③ follow the guidelines, taking the empty corners. However, it is possible to play a slightly slower move at this stage. Maybe White plays ④, which is a Second Class move on the list of guidelines. ⑤ takes the empty corner. What is the biggest move now?

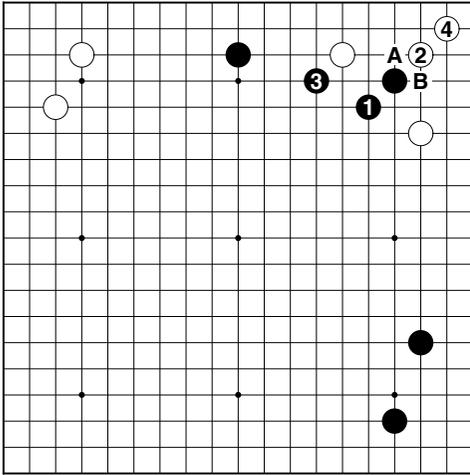


There are two choices for White: approach ③ or enclose the corner containing ②. Pressing down against ① is not the biggest area to develop; this would be appropriate only if White had a huge potential at the top or he could make Black over-concentrated. Neither is the case here.



The left side is slightly bigger so ⑥ is bigger than approaching at ⑦. Now the right side is bigger. ⑦ is better on the fourth line because the bottom is very developable for Black and on the right side Black already has a stone on the third line so he does not want to end up with a flat position. Now the bottom is the largest area, eleven lines between the fourth line and the third line. White plays ⑧ on the third line to make a base in this area. ⑧ could be at B since Black has more potential in this direction, but it would be a mistake to play ⑧ at A. Black would

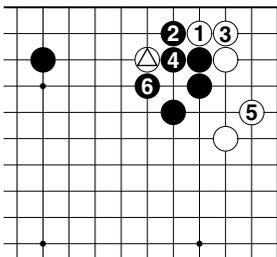
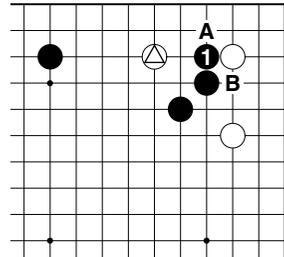
extend to C without thinking. After ⑧, the top is the biggest side. Black's major purpose in playing there is to destroy White's potential; Black lacks the resources to attack White here. See the first diagram on the next page. Black would also like to put some pressure on White's single stone. So Black plays at ⑨. If this move is at D to emphasize reduction, White will be very happy to extend to E to get a wider area and strengthen his weak stone. The position of ⑨ makes it hard for White to decide which way to go.



So probably the best move for White is to take the 3-3 point himself with ②. This threatens to link up in both directions and Black must play at A or B to prevent this. If, for example, Black tries to seal White in with ③, ④ links up both ways.

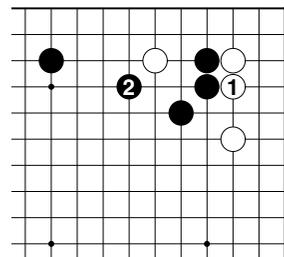
Should Black play ③ at A or B? On which side is Black more likely to be able to get a position? The top seems more likely since the right side is so open.

Black should block at ①. Now White has a choice: use the forcing move at A or connect directly at B? In this sort of situation I have already said that White should not hane at A if it is possible not to do so, because the hane will damage \triangle , which otherwise could still escape and separate Black.



If White forces with ① this way, he can make a little better position with ⑤, but Black will damage \triangle with ⑥ and get a very solid position. So White should not play this way.

So White should play this way with ①. Now this is a difficult situation for Black. White's three stones on the right seem solid—connected with plenty of eye space, while Black is in danger of being split. It seems that ② is necessary.



Punishing Weak Groups Directly

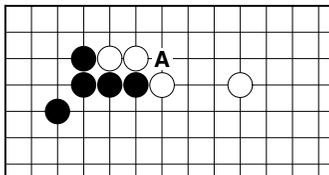
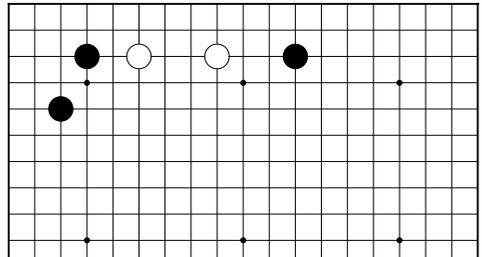
In this lecture I will discuss how to punish weak groups, but first we must determine what sorts of groups can be called “weak”.

There are three questions to ask to determine if a group is weak:

1. Does the group have a liberty problem?
2. Does the group have a connection or cutting point problem?
3. Does the group have a base problem?

If you get three “yes” answers, the group is very weak. If one “yes” answer, it is a little weak; if three “no” answers, it is not weak at all.

Consider this example. The white group has no liberty problems; both stones have 100% of their liberties. There is no connection problem, and at most there might be a base problem. So this group is not really weak.



How about this white group? Let’s consider the three questions. What about liberties? This is usually the most important question. A cutting point or connection problem may lead to your being separated into two or even three pieces, which is difficult to handle. If you don’t have a

base, you may be able to escape. So how do you assess this white group?

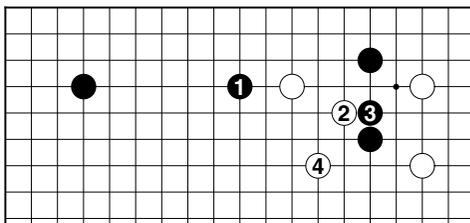
First, I need to clarify what counts as a liberty problem. If a single stone has lost one liberty, it has a liberty problem. If two, three, or four connected stones have lost 50% of their liberties, they have a problem. (Five or more connected stones normally do not have to worry about liberties.) In this case, White obviously has liberty problems. The two connected stones have lost half of their possible liberties and the single stone has lost one.

We can also see that the white group has a connection problem because of the cutting point at A, and it may even have a base problem since it does not yet have a definite base. So, in this case we get two “yes” answers and a “maybe”. This group is very weak. White needs to defend immediately, lest Black punish this group.

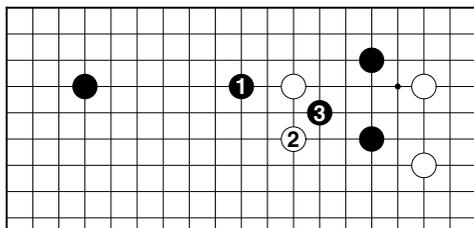
USING FORCING MOVES

I've noticed in the workshop games that a lot of players like to use forcing moves. However, their forcing moves are often either not useful or not well timed. So I would like to discuss how to use forcing moves.

In this rather common situation, Black squeezes White's single stone with ①, so White needs to help it somehow. ② is forcing and is somewhat useful for running out faster with ④, but we cannot say it is very useful. Besides, it eliminates the possibility of other forcing moves in the area that may be more useful later.



If a forcing move is extremely useful or if the forcing possibility is about to disappear, you can play such a move immediately. Generally, however, we should hold off when there are several possible forcing moves until developments make clear which one will be the most useful. Let's consider the situation before ② in the previous diagram. Obviously, White has many possible forcing moves, threatening the connection between Black's two stones from either side or attaching to one of the stones.



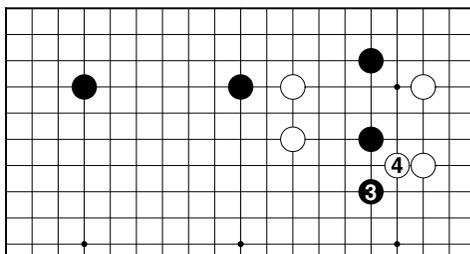
So White should simply jump out this way with ②. What do you think of Black's now forcing with ③?

③ is not very helpful; Black's group is still weak. Also it eliminates the possibility of Black's peeping from

the other side and other possibilities that may turn out to be more useful. Moreover, if Black plays elsewhere, White is not going to protect this point now, so this forcing possibility won't go away. The best way for Black to help his group is to just move out.

After Black gets out with a jump to ③ here, White may consider using the forcing move at ④. Is this good?

No, ④ here is not very useful. White needs to get out to avoid being sealed in and this doesn't help much.

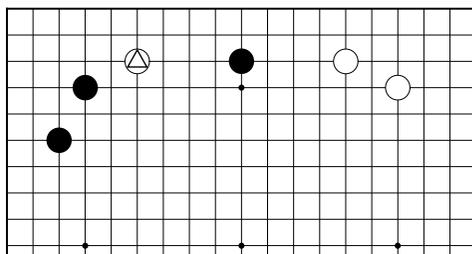


HANDLING WEAK STONES

In this lecture I would like to discuss a defensive problem: how to handle weak stones. Basically there are three choices: to live, to sacrifice, or to escape. Usually living is best, but sometimes the value of living may be too small, and it may be better to escape. Sacrificing means using the weak stone to get a benefit elsewhere. Sometimes escaping will enable you to put pressure on your opponent's weak stones or to reduce his moyo. However, most of the time, living is best.

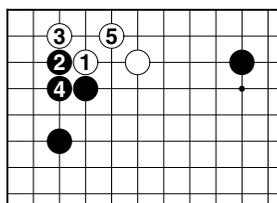
First, you must determine if the weak stone is important or valuable. The usual basis for a stone's being important is that it is a cutting stone or it separates your opponent's weak groups. A stone is valuable when it is in an open area where a lot of points are available. If the stone is important, then you would usually not want to sacrifice it, which means you would have to choose between living and escaping. If the stone is not important, you may also consider sacrificing it, even if it is valuable.

In this case,  is obviously a weak stone. How should White handle it? Which of the three choices is proper: live, escape, or sacrifice?



First, we must ask: is this stone important or valuable?

 certainly is valuable. It is in a large open area where a lot of points are at stake.  is also important, since it may enable White to separate off Black's single stone to the right. White should consider making a live group. How should he proceed?



Contacting a strong stone with  is an easy way to live. Normally, Black would connect with , and  makes a solid, live group.

Black could also force this way with . After , one option is for Black to connect at . White plays  because the original stone is important. Then Black must extend with  lest White capture  and live. White is fine after  and has even more eyespace.

