

Taken from Sekiguchi Harutoshi's book

“囲碁ルールの研究—理論と歴史”

“Igo rūru no kenkyū — riron to rekishi” / “Study of Go rules – Theory and History”
ISBN 978-4-286-03142-2
Japan, 2007

In this book, I found an interesting concept for “Japanese Rules” of the game of Go, which might not be known in the Western World so far.

Herein, I will concentrate on “status confirmation”, because this phase involves the main difference to the “Nihon Kiin Rules” from 1989.

Thomas Redecker

Disclaimer:

*I do not have extensive knowledge of the Japanese language.
Consequently, it is not unlikely at all that I have not properly understood the text as well as overlooked some of the author's intentions, or even misinterpreted these.*

To avoid any mismatch with probably established terms within Western rules' theory, I did not use the author's original terminology, but created new names on my own.

I also do not give a strict formal translation of the original text.

In the book, not every Nihon Kiin Rules' example is displayed with regard to “status confirmation”. Therefore, I cannot guarantee to have met the author's intention in every case.

All mistakes in this paper are mine.

Status Confirmation

In my understanding, the following procedure is applied for “status confirmation”:

- F A bunch of Black stones owns the property “**first-class life**”, if one of the following cases applies.
 - F1 The bunch of Black stones surrounds at least two points that White is forbidden to occupy.
 - F2 Even after White moved first, the bunch of Black stones can get into case F1.
 - F3 Even after White captured Black stones **all** of these captured stones can be replaced permanently.

- S A bunch of Black stones that can neither reach case F1, nor F2, owns the property “**second-class life**”, if one of the following cases applies.
 - S1 Even after White moved first, Black can avoid his bunch of stones become captured.
 - S2 Even after White captured Black stones at least one of these captured stones can be replaced permanently.

- N A bunch of Black stones that can neither reach case F, nor S, owns the property “**none**”.

Final status allocation will be as follows.

A bunch of Black stones of property “**first-class life**” will be called “**alive**”. (*((This may also be applied immediately above.))*)

A bunch of Black stones of property “**second-class life**” will be called “**Seki stones**”. (*((This may also be applied immediately above.))*)

A bunch of Black stones of property “**none**” will be treated as follows.

Black stones that are completely surrounded by White stones of property “first-class life” only are called “**dead**”.

All other Black stones are called “**Seki stones**”.

Some annotations, based on my point of view

Enabling the re-capturing of a Ko

You will have noticed that there is no special Ko-rule mentioned for “status confirmation”. This means that the “usual” Ko-rule applies in this phase, too.

As a matter of course, this will result in several differences, regarding the intended results of the Nihon Kiin Rules’ “Examples of Confirmation of Life & Death”.

This is true especially for these examples that contain a Triple-Ko (i.e. in most cases a Double-Ko & a Single Ko). Without a special Ko-ban, it is not possible to approach the Double-Ko element of these examples. So, the main part of the Double-Ko will get the status “Seki stones”.

In order to acquire the Nihon Kiin Rules’ intended results below, I additionally used the type of Ko-ban that has been developed by Robert Jasiek for application within Japanese-style rules.

This means that – during “status confirmation” – recapturing in a Ko is forbidden, in principle.

A player must use a special kind of Pass, to lift this Ko-ban for all Ko that have been captured between this special Pass and either the starting position of the example, or the previous special Pass for enabling Ko-recapture.

Precondition for doing so is that at least one of the player’s stones has become captured in a Ko in the corresponding period.

“Philosophy” of who has the initiative

You will also have noticed the occurrence of “Even after White moved first”.

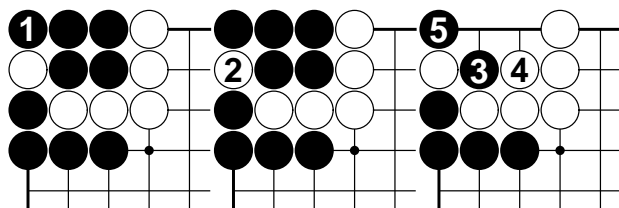
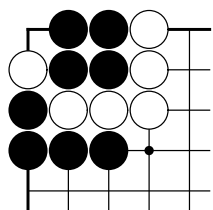
This means that the procedure above is based on an attitude that Black must be able to reach a specific aim, even if moving second.

In contrary, the Nihon Kiin Rules assume in general that it is Black, who will move first.

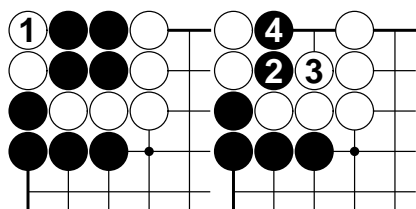
This will result in different status in examples, which contain positions that are not wholly played out.

Application on the Nihon Kiin Rules' Examples

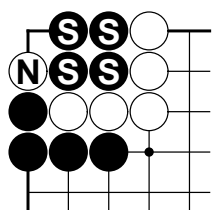
Example 1



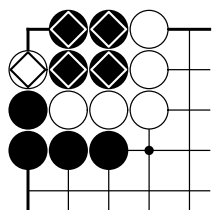
After capture, White's stone cannot be replaced permanently.



After capture, Black's bunch of stones cannot be wholly replaced (./ White 3), but partially only.



Stones with property "second-class life" are marked with "S".
Stones with property "none" are marked with "N".

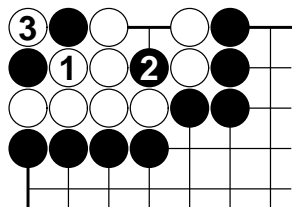
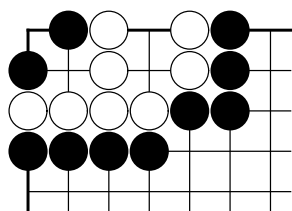


Stones with status "Seki stones" are marked with diamonds.

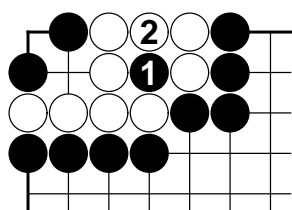
This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

((However, there seems to be no need to provide Black with 3 points.))

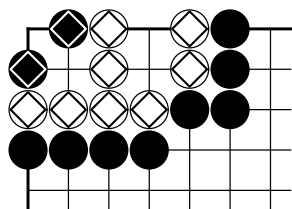
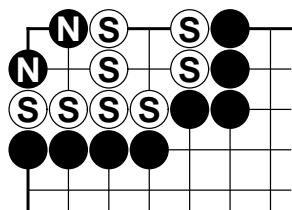
Example 2



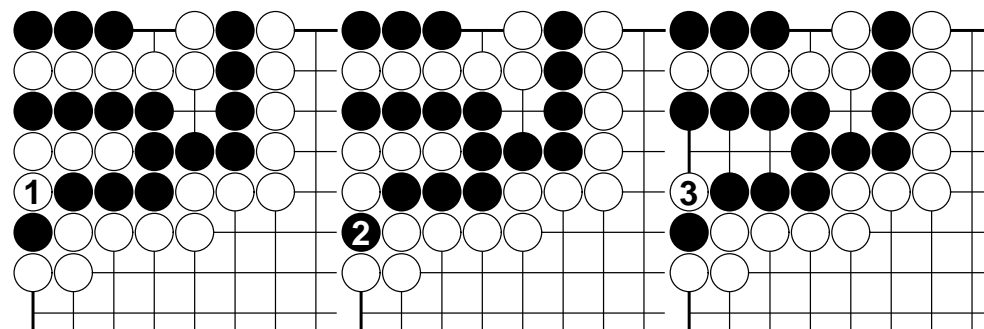
After capture, Black's stones cannot be replaced permanently.



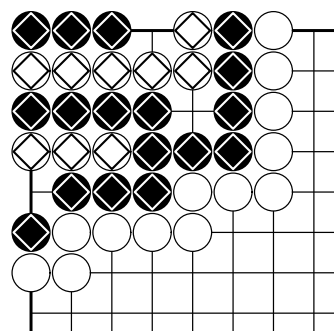
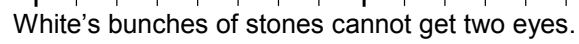
After Black moved first, White is unable to get two eyes.



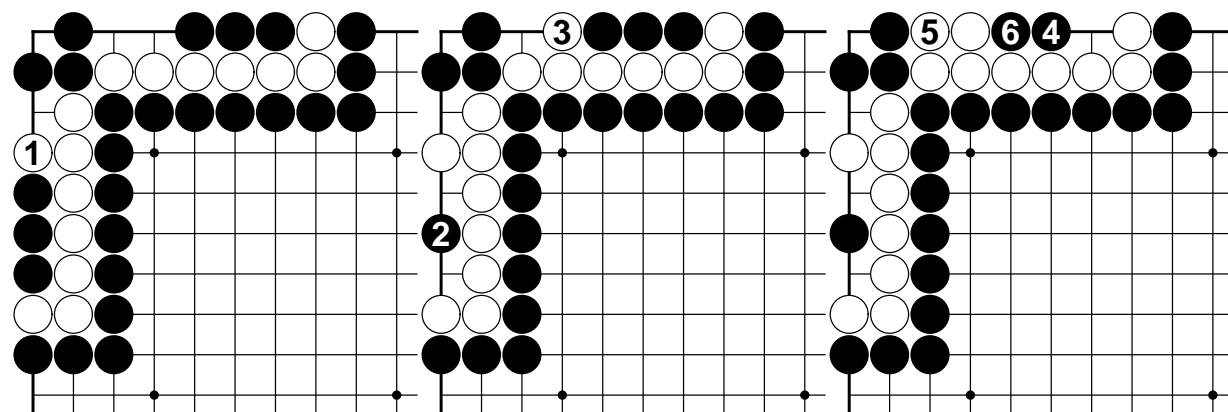
This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.



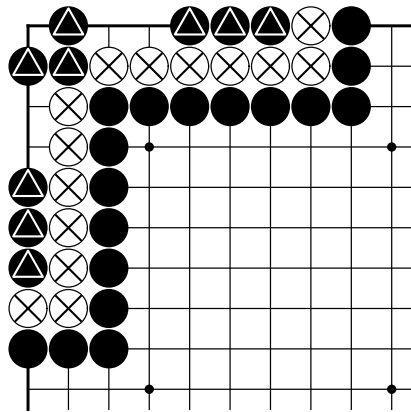
Black's bunches of stones cannot get two eyes.



This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.



Stones with property “first-class life” are marked with “F”.

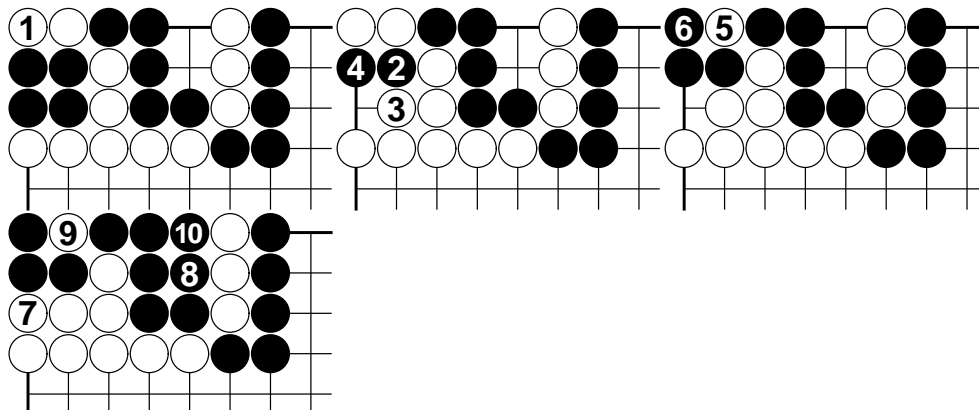
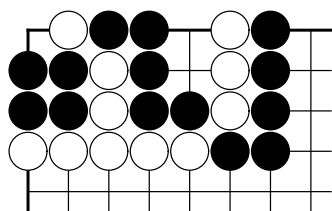


Stones with status “alive” are marked with triangles.
Stones with status “dead” are marked with crosses.

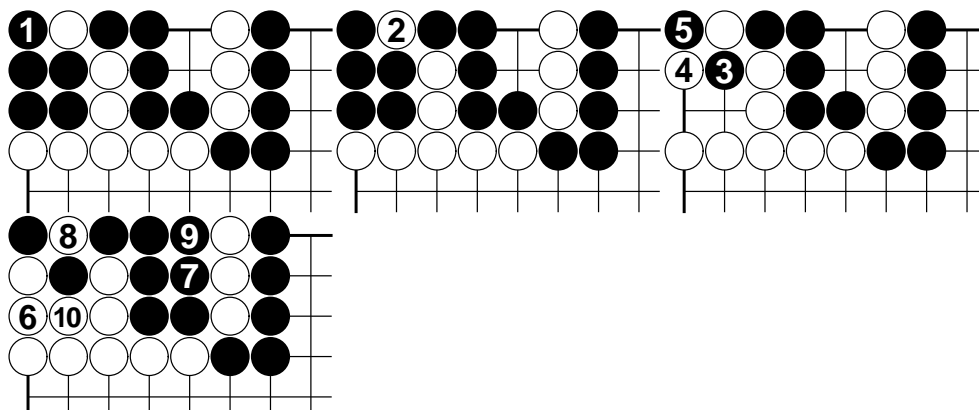
This result does NOT correspond to the Nihon Kiin Rules (which have “Seki” for the entire position).

((In my opinion, this result here is OK ! The Nihon Kiin Rules are simply overstretching the aspect of where to place a permanent stone after capture, here beyond the independently alive Black group in the corner.))

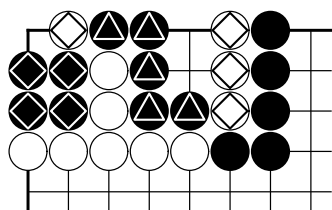
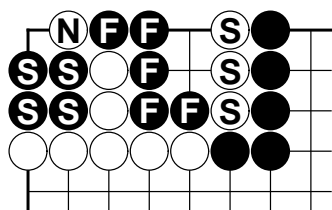
Example 5



White's bunch of stones on the right cannot get two eyes.
Black's bunch of stones on the upper edge has got two eyes.

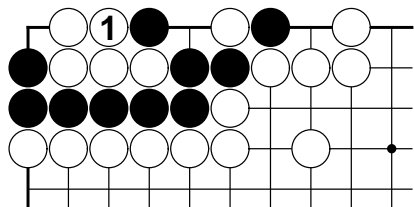
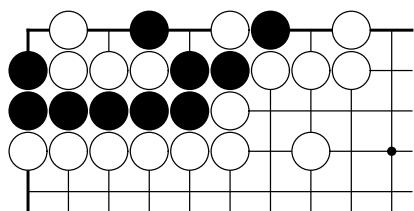


White's captured stone at 8 is replaced permanently.

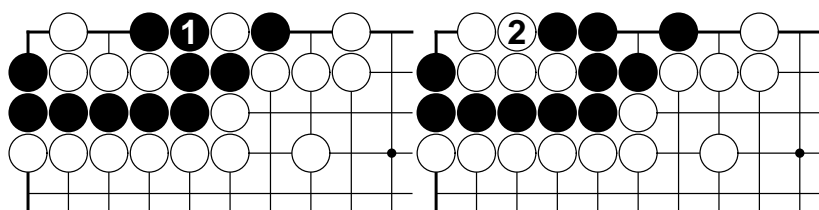


This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

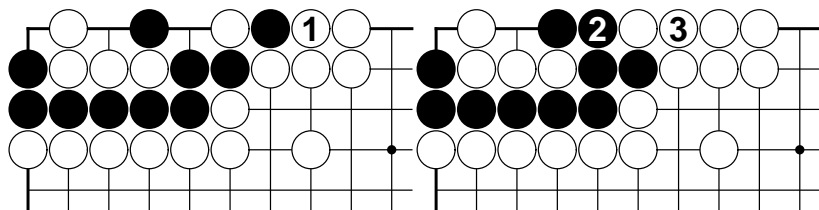
Example 6



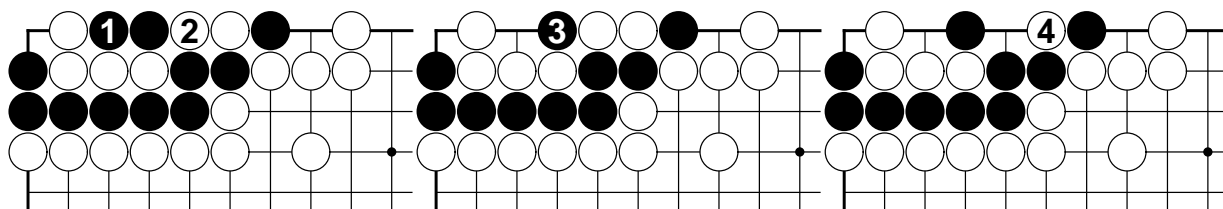
Black's bunches of stones are all captured.



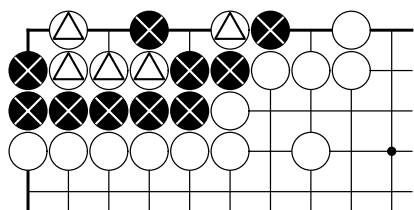
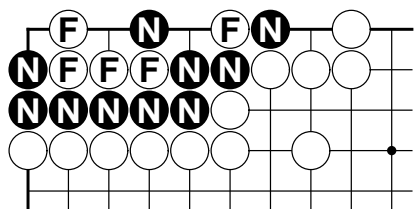
After capture, White's single stone will become replaced permanently.



After capture, Black's single stone cannot be replaced permanently.

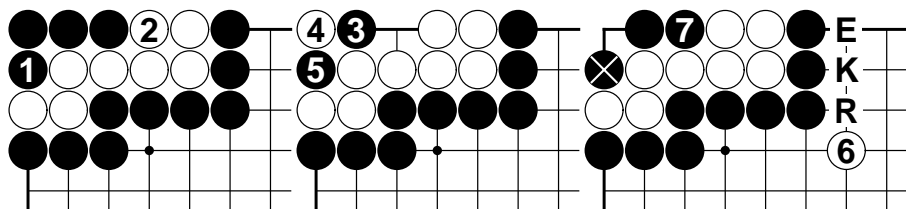
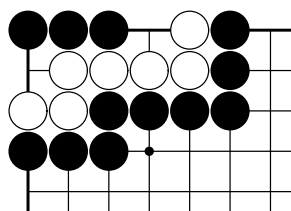


Black's group cannot get two eyes.



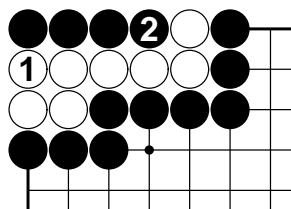
This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

Example 7

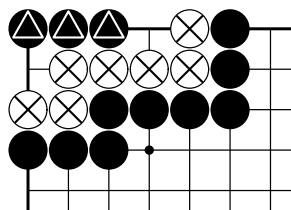
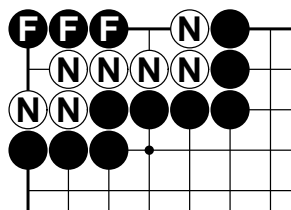


Black's bunch of stones can get two eyes.

"EKR" symbolises the Pass, needed for lifting the Ko-ban within "status-confirmation", and enabling Ko-recapture. The Ko affected by this Pass are marked with crosses.

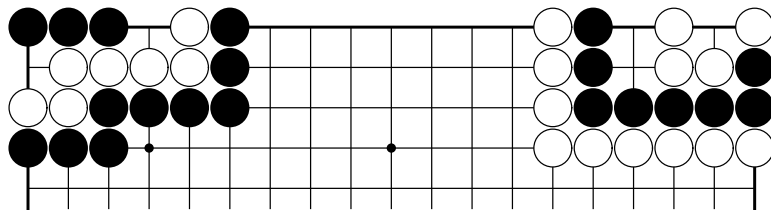


White's bunch of stones cannot get two eyes.



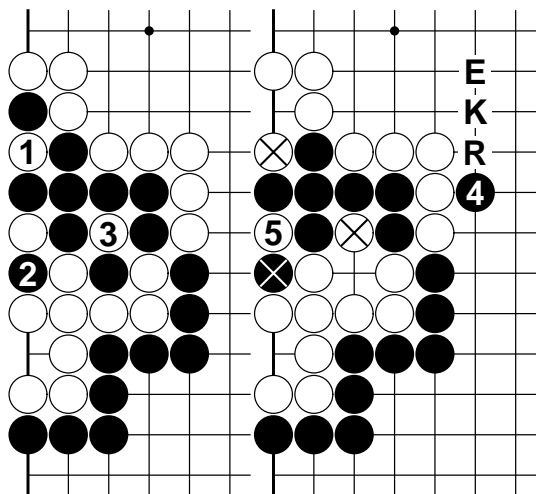
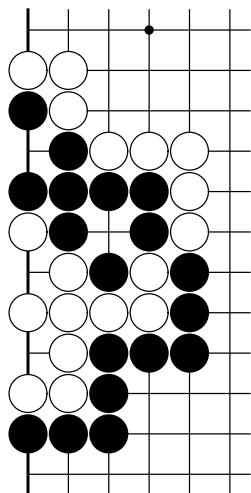
This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

Example 7-2

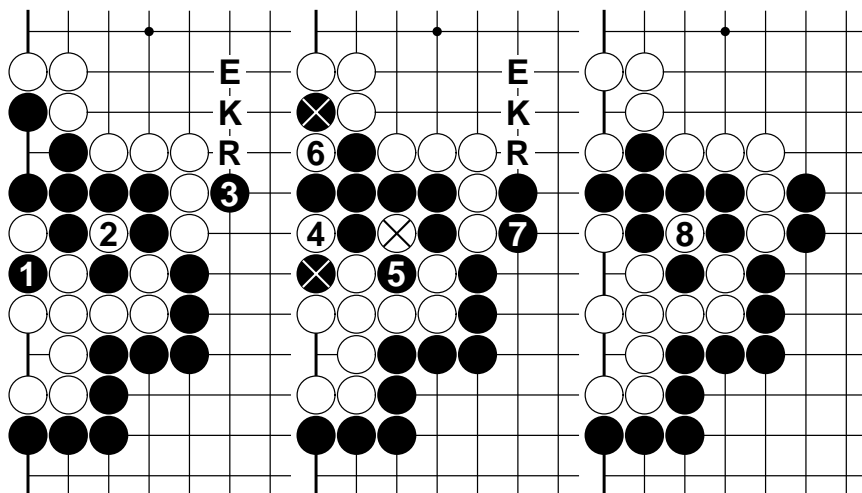


((same as example 7))

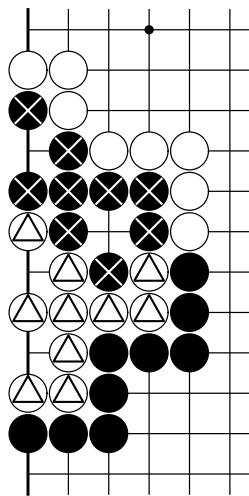
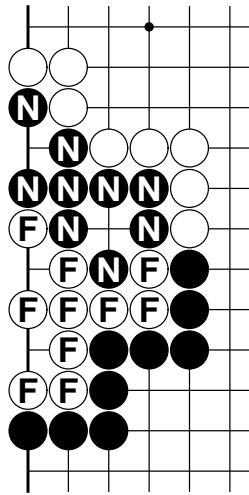
Example 8



White's bunches of stones can get two eyes.

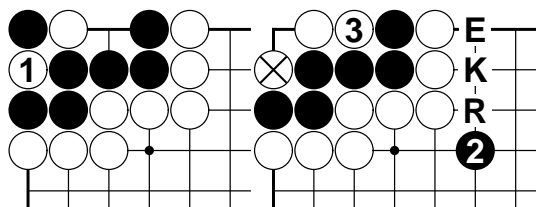
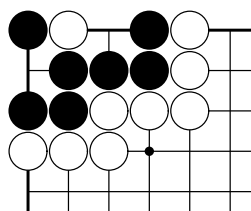


Black's bunches of stones are unable to survive.

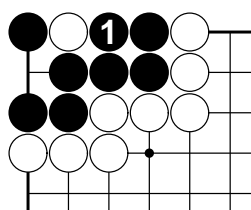


This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

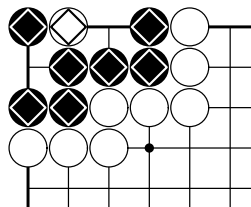
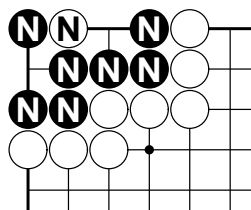
Example 9



Black's bunches of stones cannot survive.

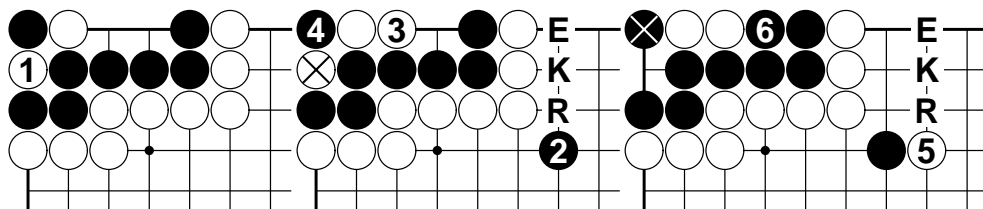
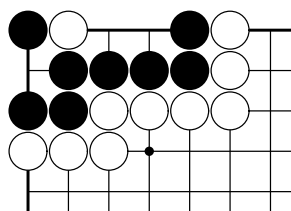


After capture, White's single stone cannot be replaced permanently.

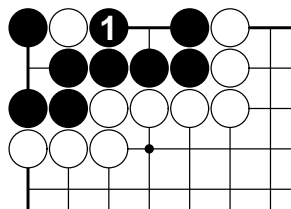


This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

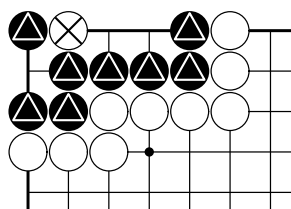
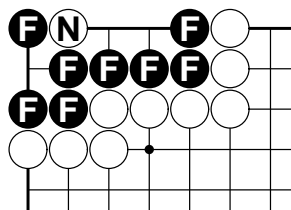
Example 10



After capture, Black's single stone will be replaced permanently.
After White moving first, Black's bunch of stones can get two eyes.

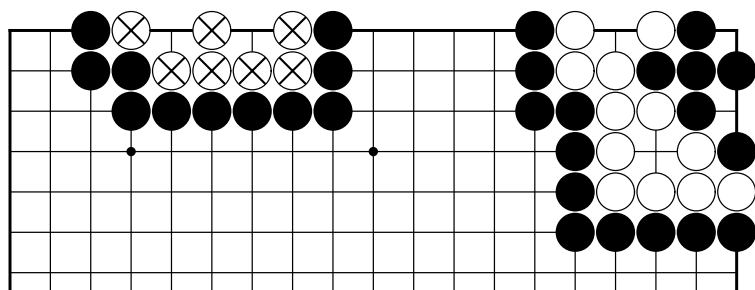
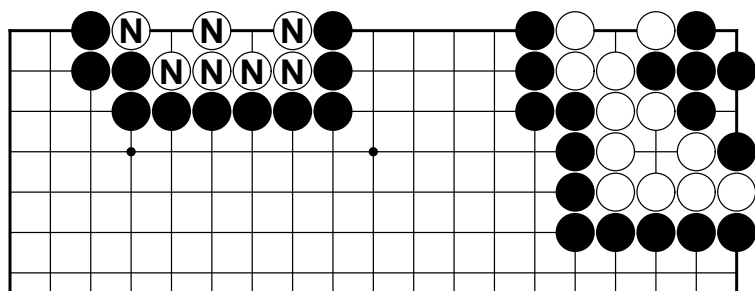
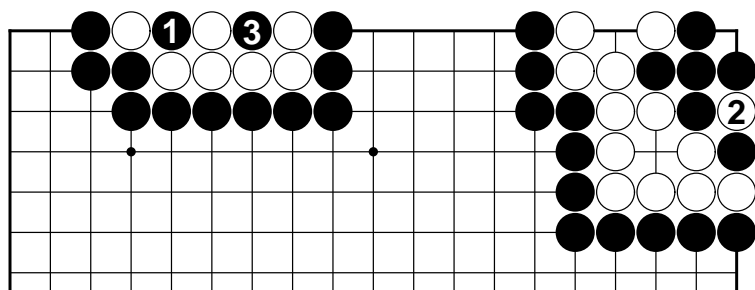
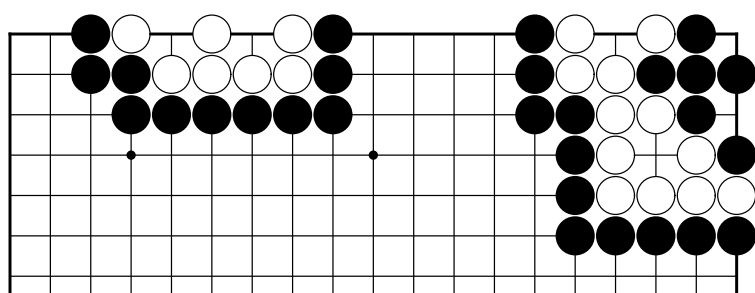


After capture, White's single stone cannot be replaced permanently.



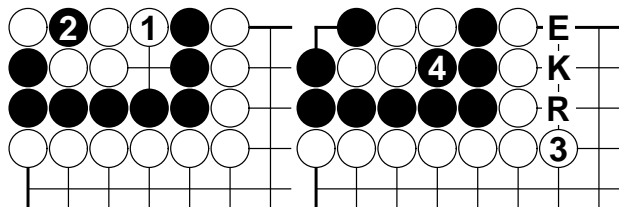
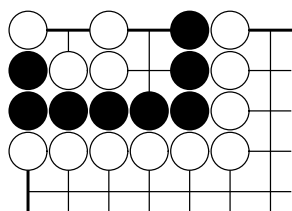
This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

Example 11

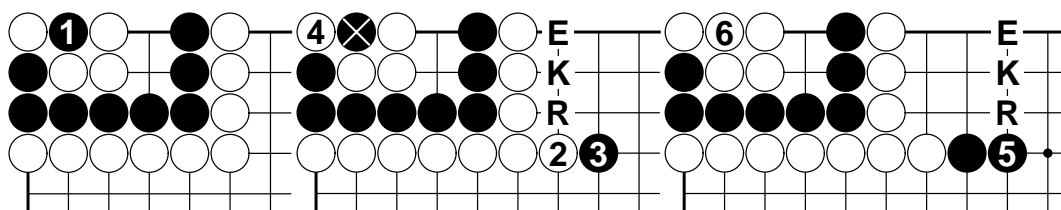


This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

Example 12



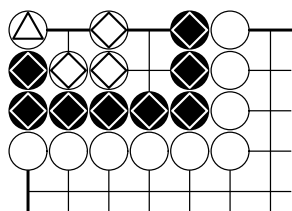
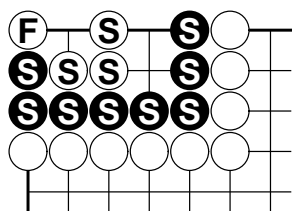
White's bunch of stones cannot get two eyes.



Black's bunch of stones cannot get two eyes.

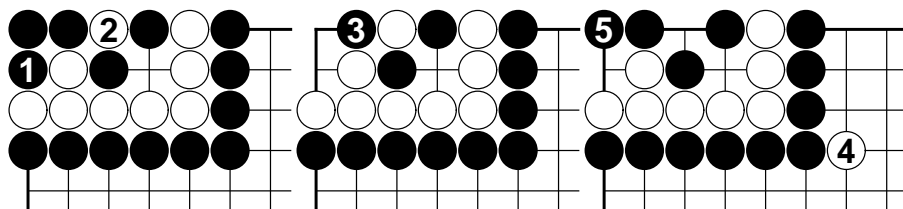
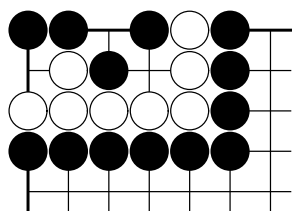
After capture, White's single stone can be replaced permanently.

Black 3 is an "ordinary" Pass.

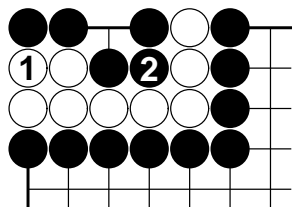


This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

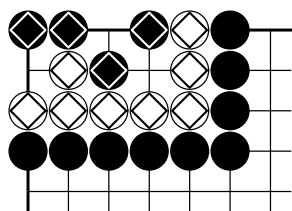
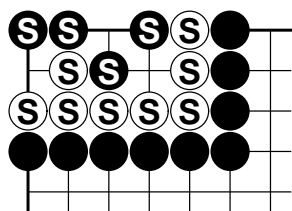
Example 13



Black's bunches of stones cannot get two eyes.
White's bunch of stones cannot be captured.

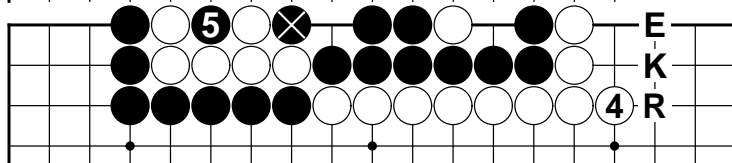
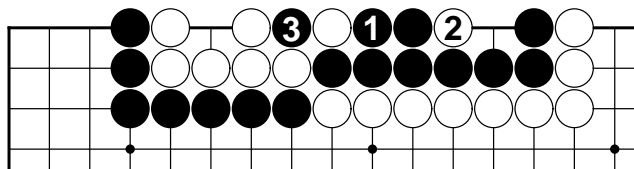
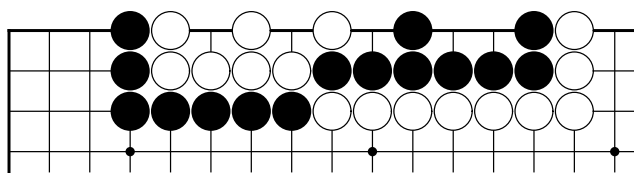


White's bunches of stones cannot get two eyes.
Black's bunches of stones cannot be captured.

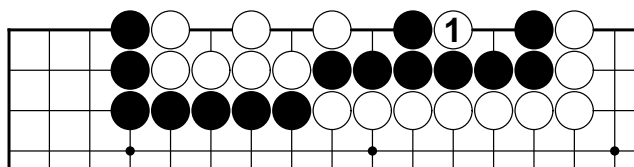


This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

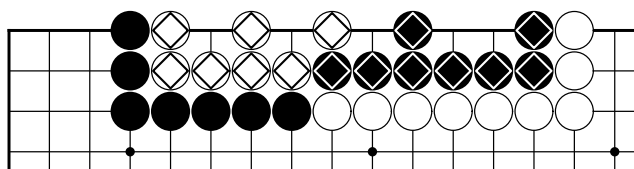
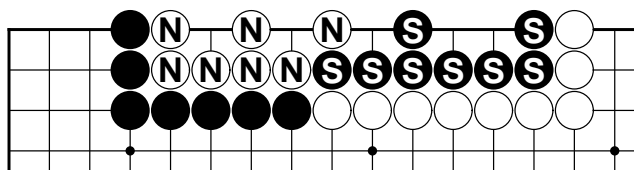
Example 14



After capture, no stone of White's bunch will become replaced permanently.



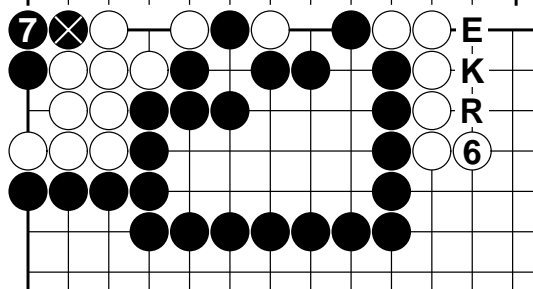
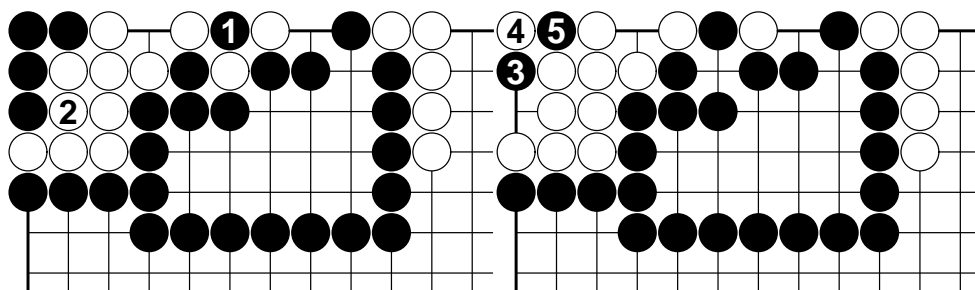
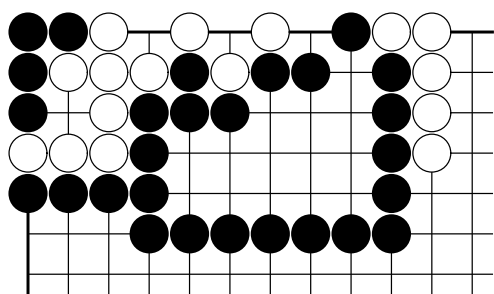
After White moving first, Black's bunch of stones cannot get two eyes.



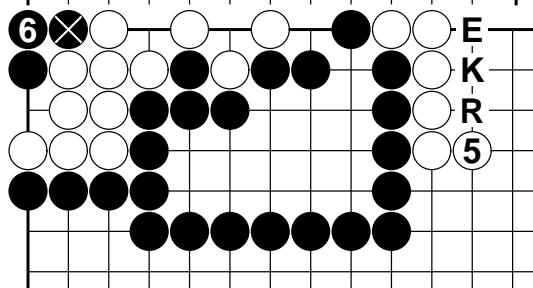
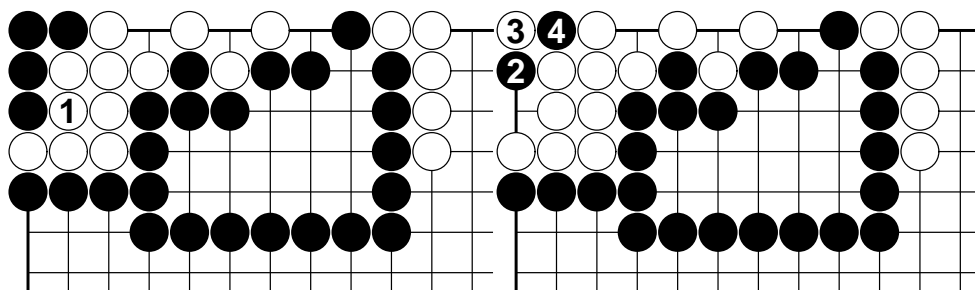
This result does NOT correspond to the Nihon Kiin Rules (which have White's bunch of stones as "dead", and Black's as "alive".).

((As mentioned in the introduction, this is one of the "not yet played out" positions. The status depends on who is given the initiative!))

Example 15

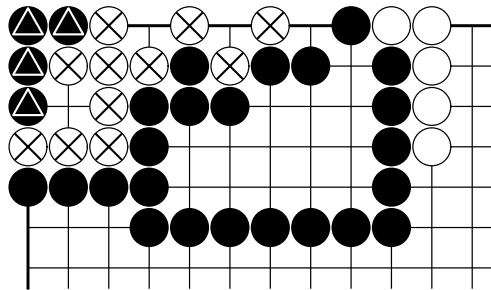
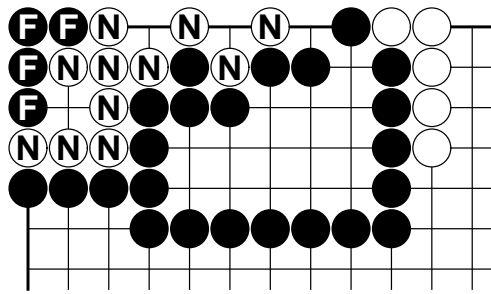


White's bunches of stones will become eliminated.



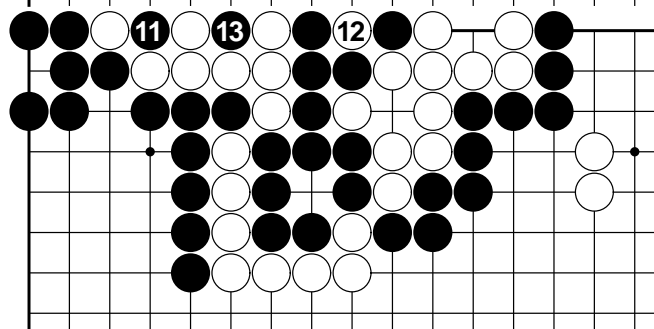
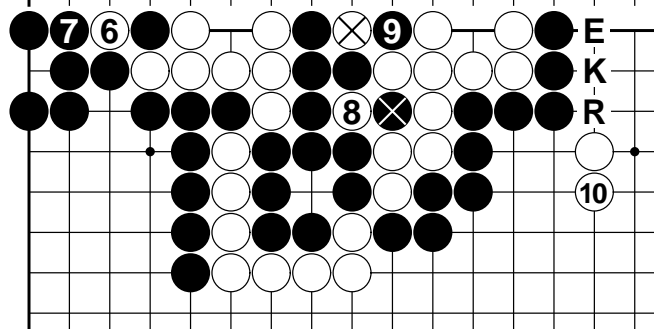
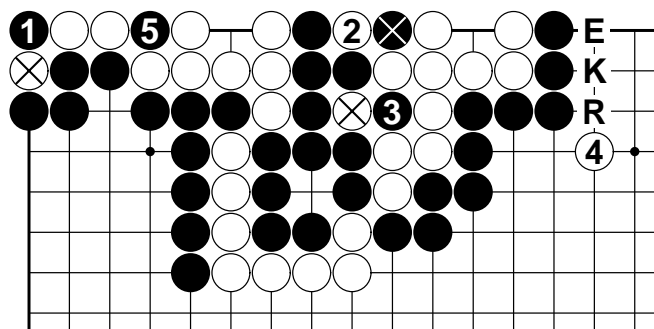
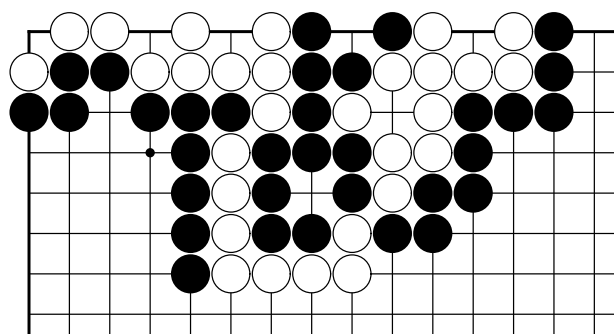
White's bunch of stones is unable to get two eyes.

After capture, Black's bunch in the corner will become wholly replaced permanently.

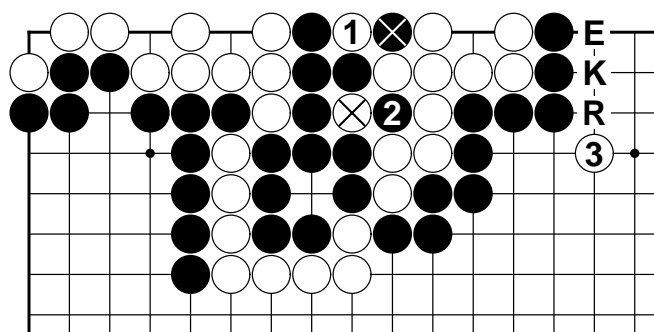


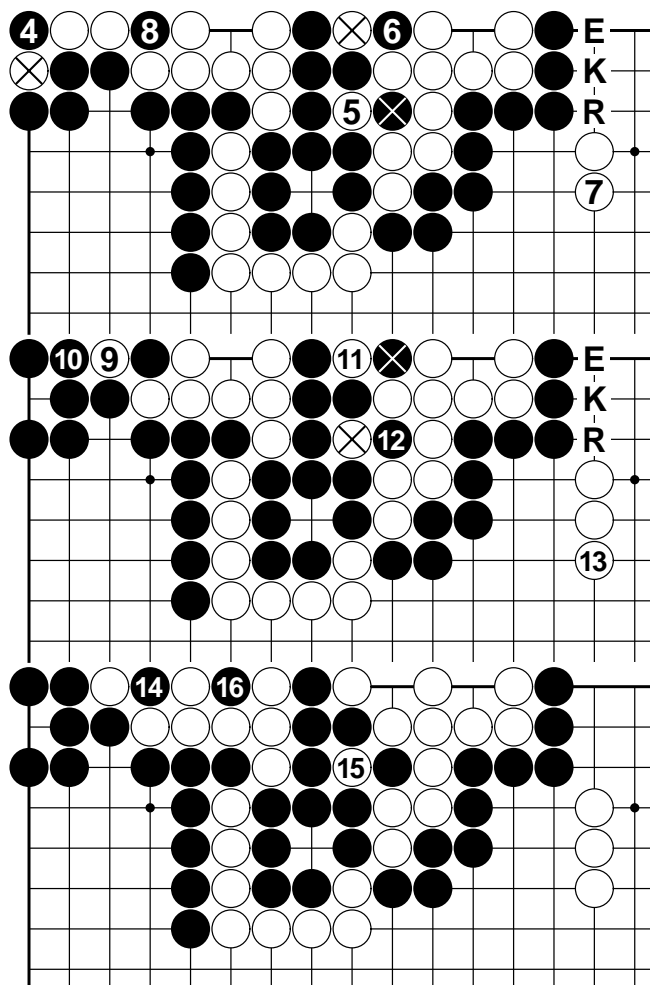
This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

Example 16

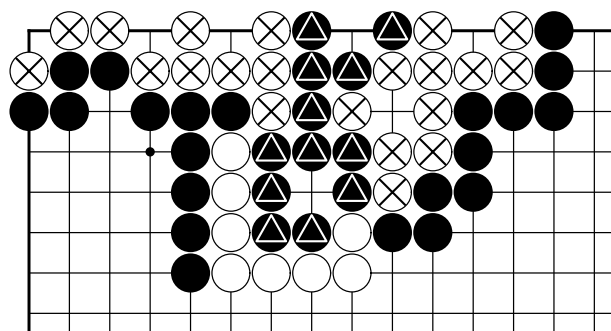
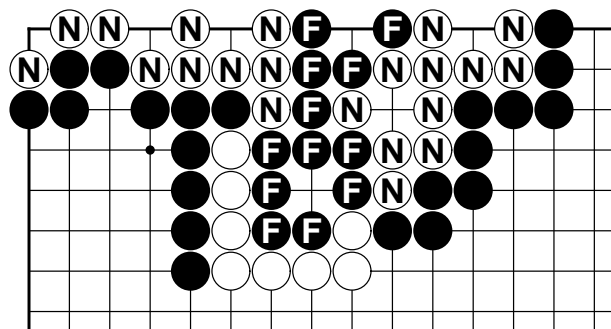


White's bunches of stones will become eliminated.



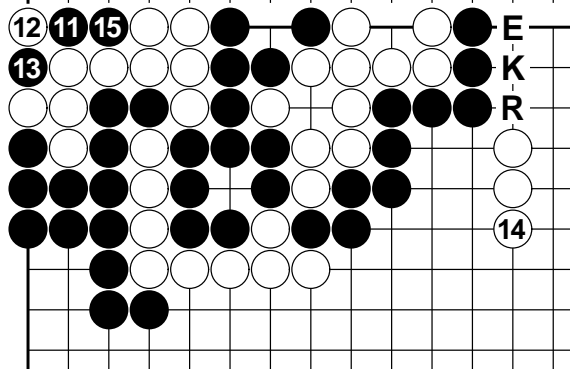
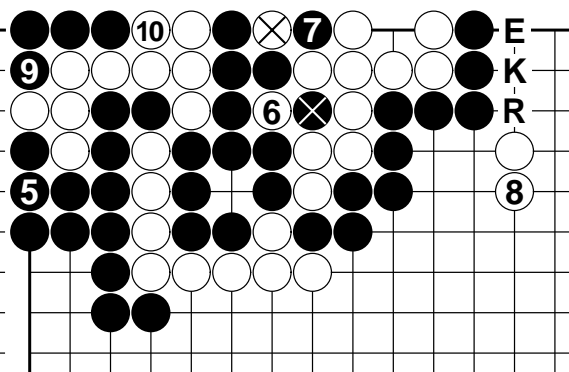
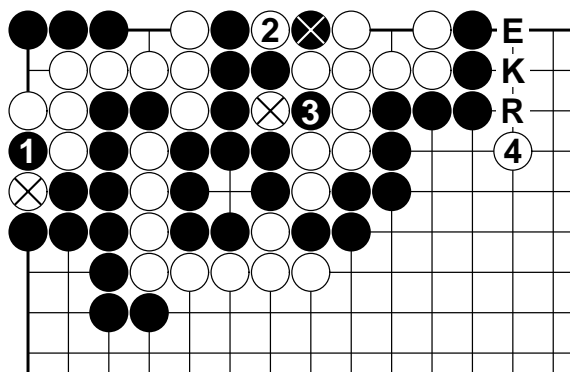
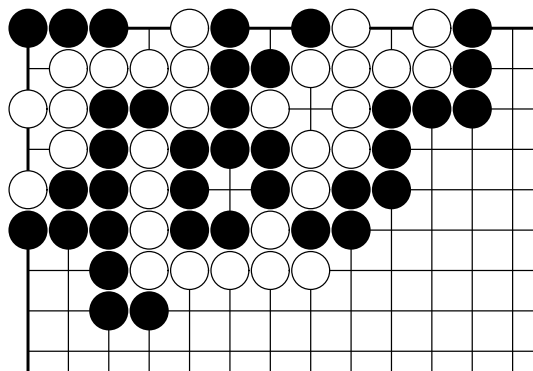


White's bunch of stones on the right is unable to get two eyes.

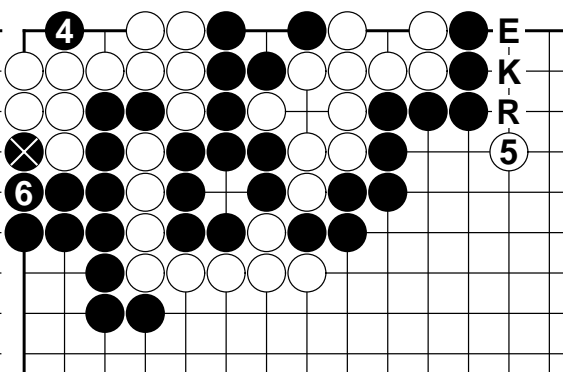
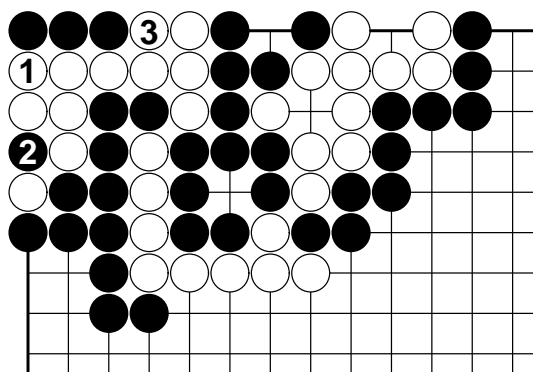


This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

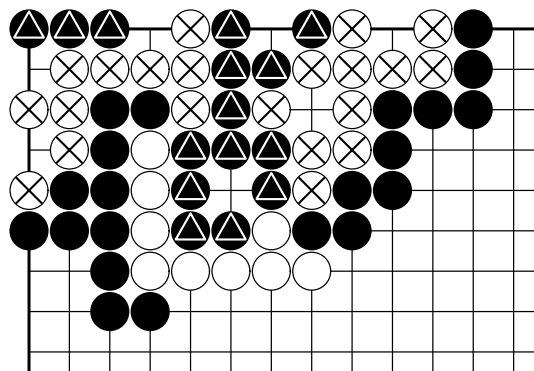
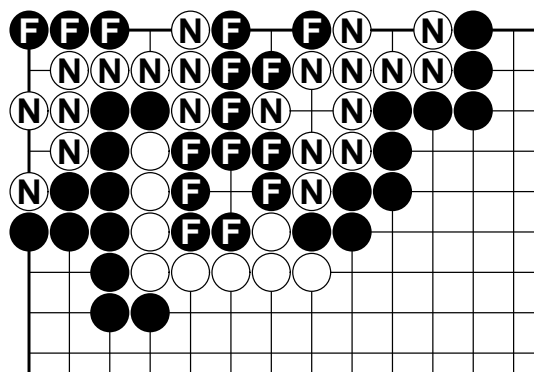
Example 17



Similar to earlier examples.

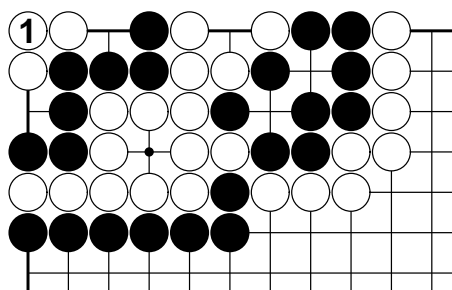
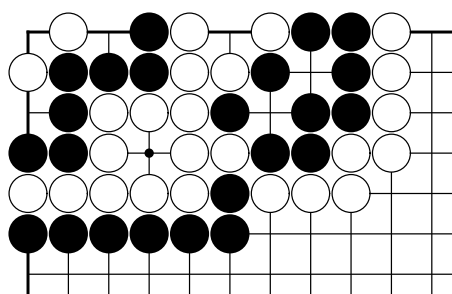


Similar to earlier examples.

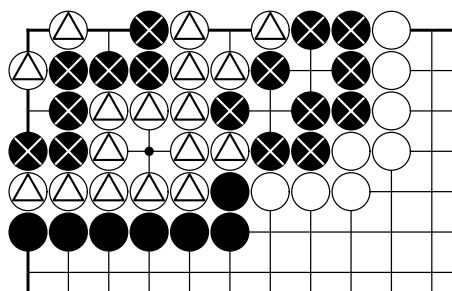
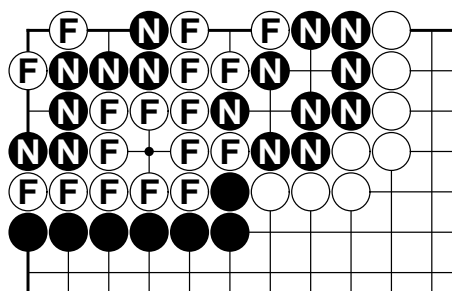


This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

Example 18

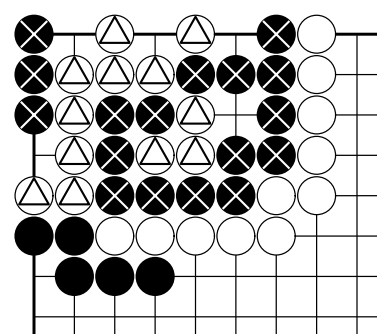
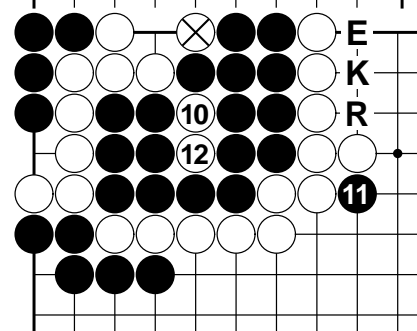
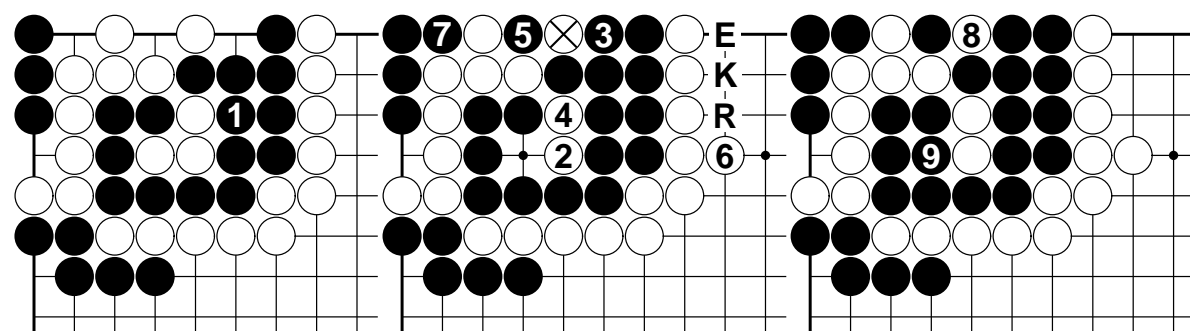
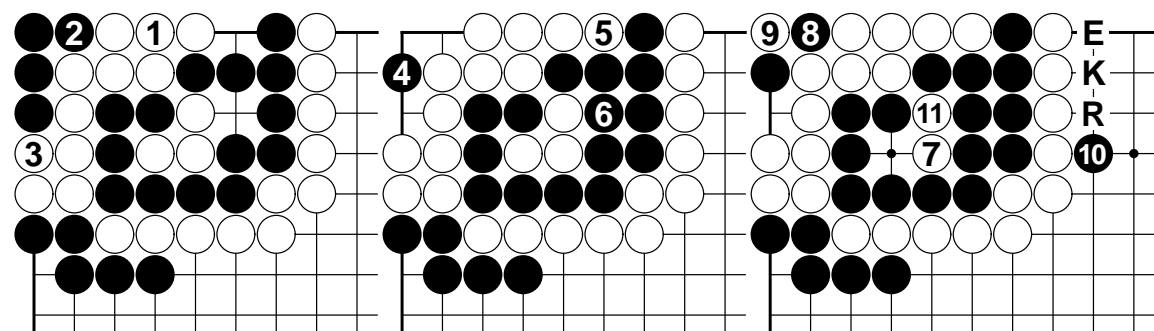


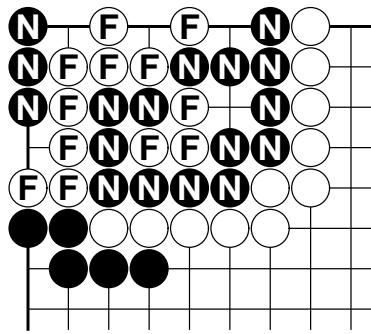
Similar to earlier examples.



This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

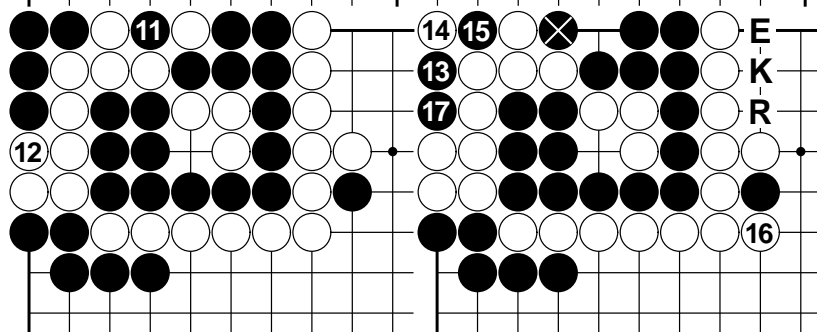
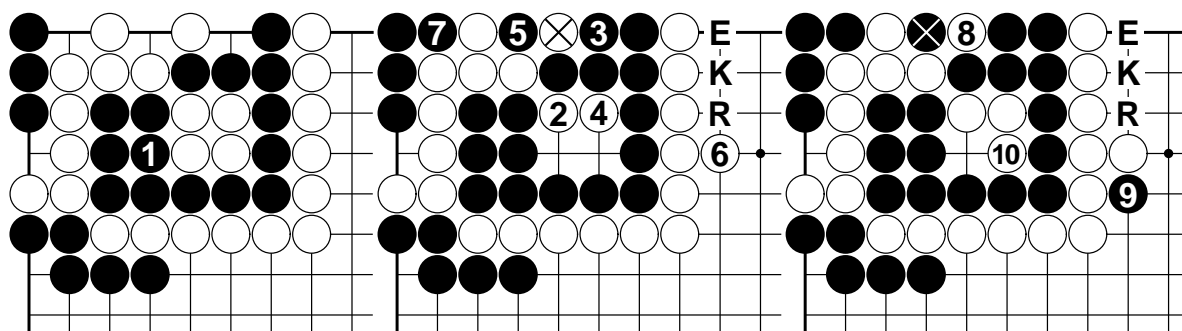
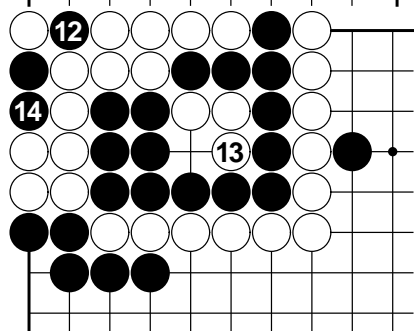
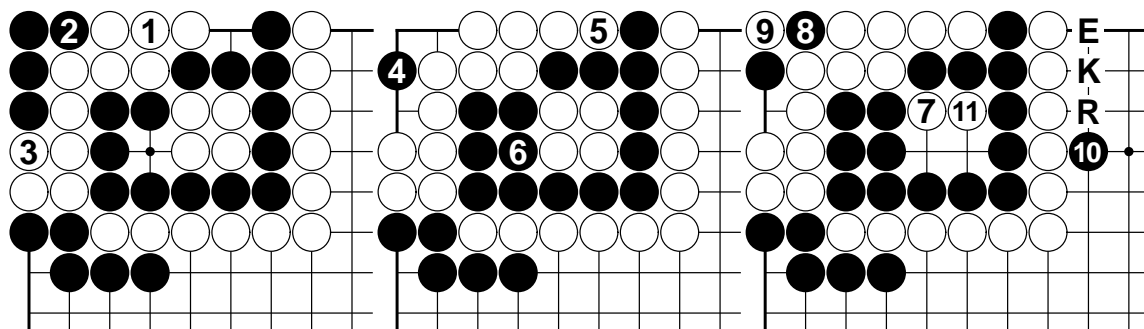
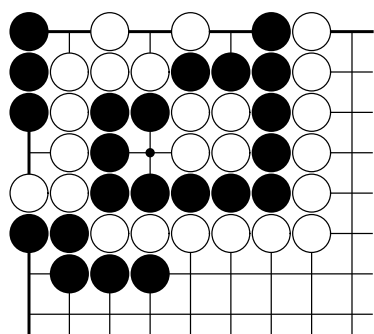
A 10x10 grid with black and white circles placed on some cells, representing a binary matrix. The circles are arranged in a pattern that is symmetric about the main diagonal.

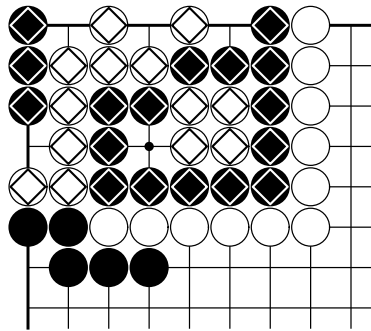
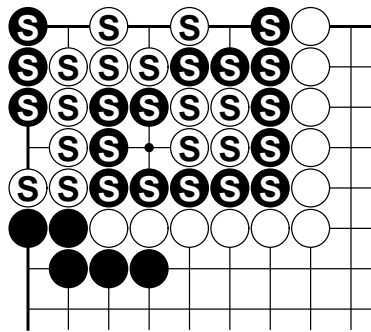




This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

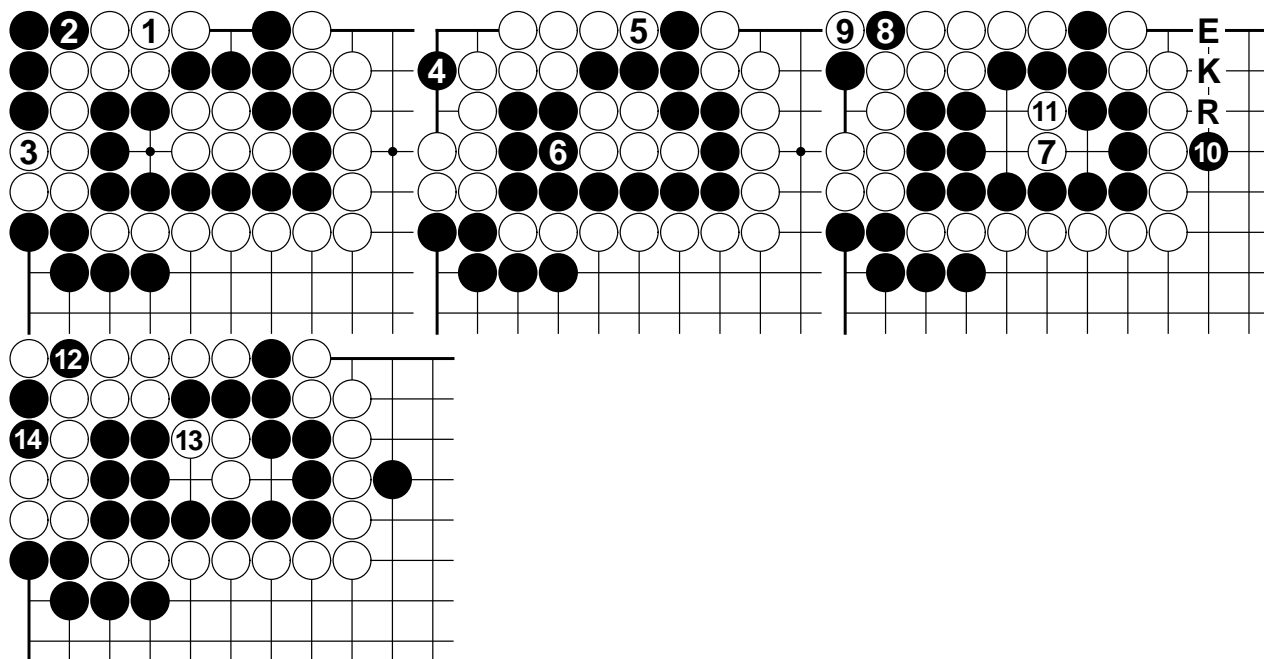
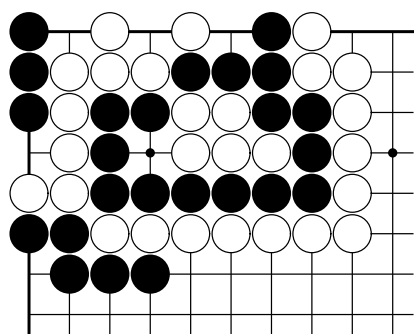
Example 20

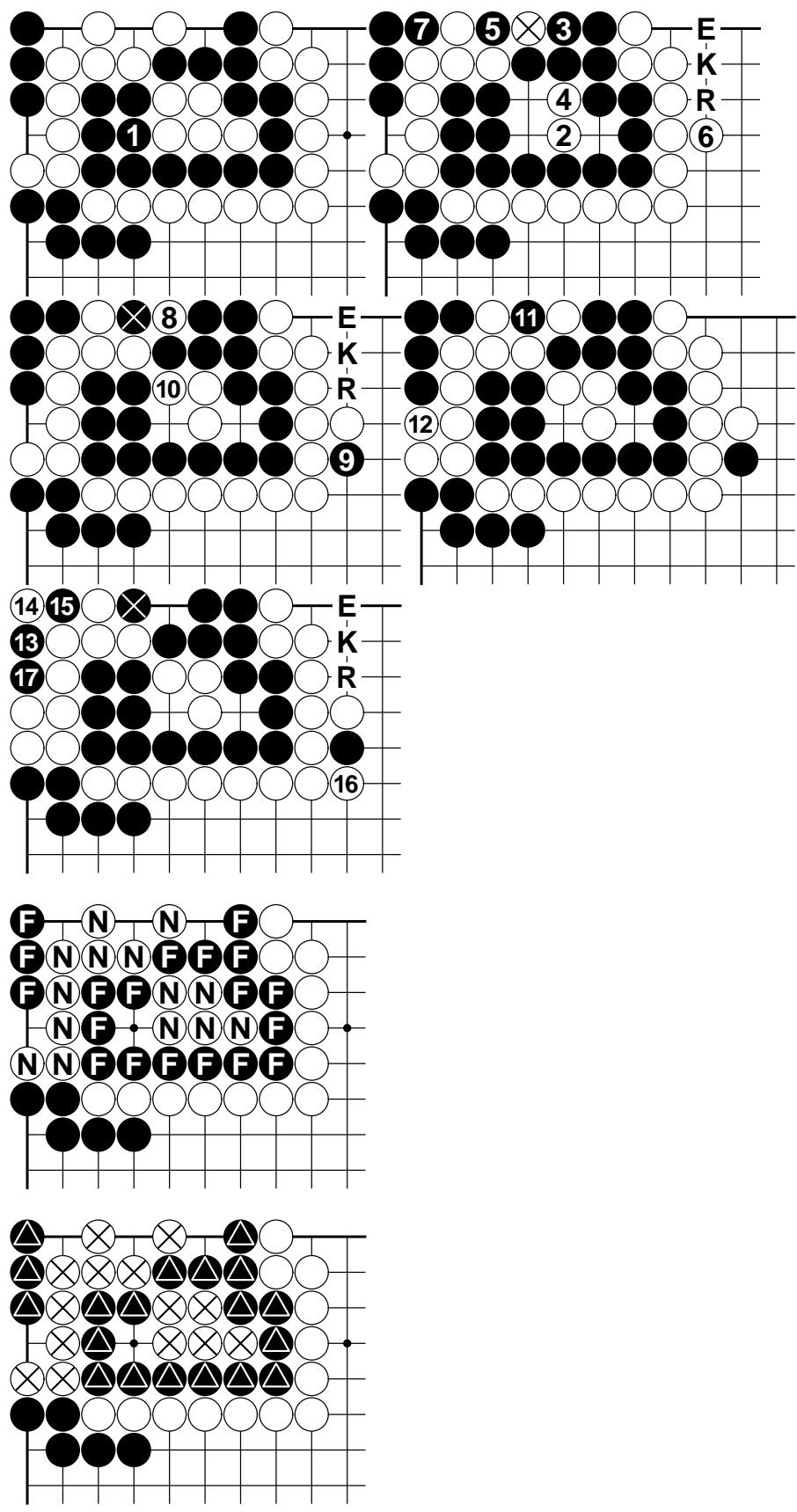




This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

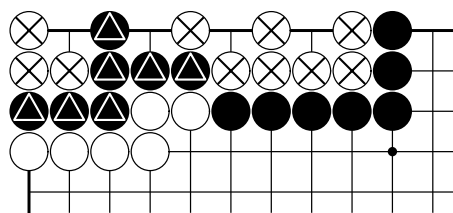
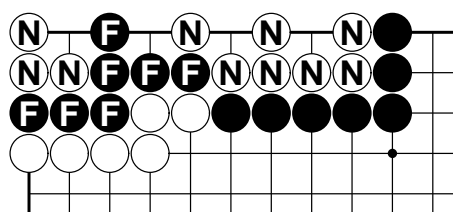
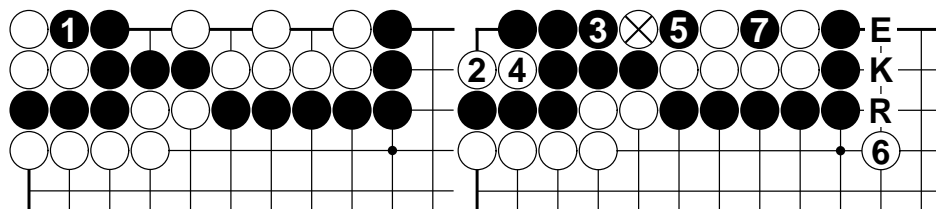
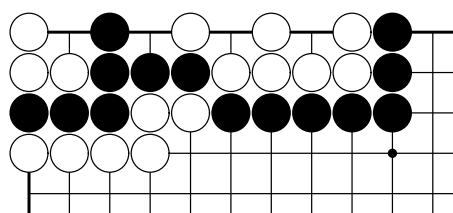
Example 21





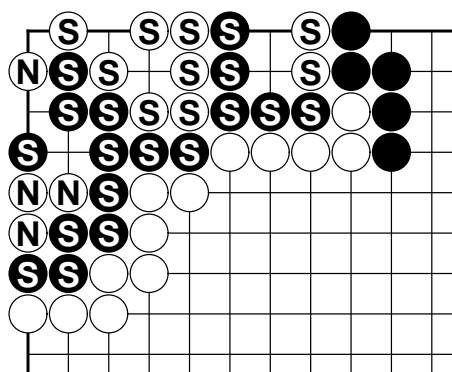
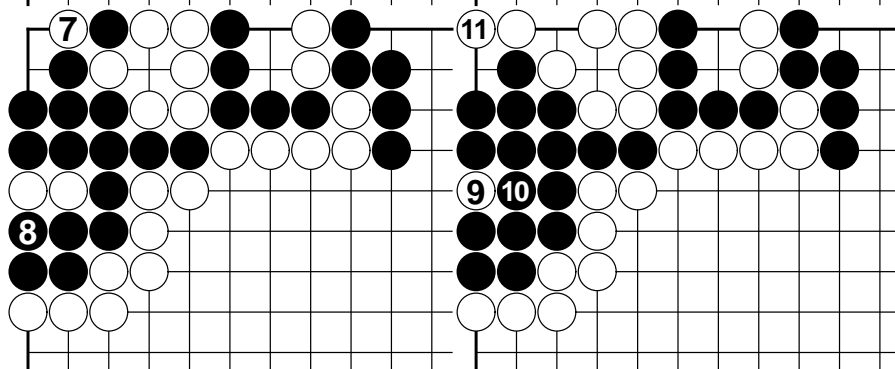
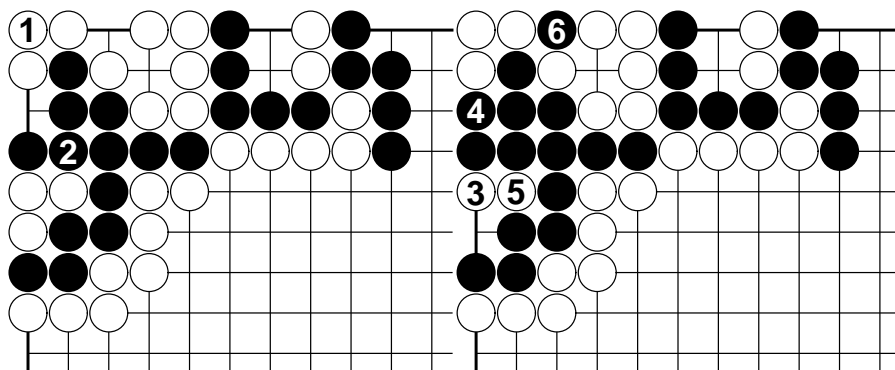
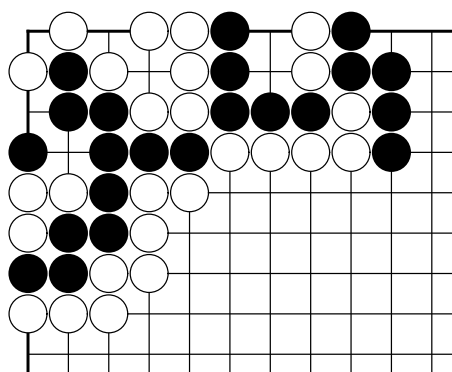
This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

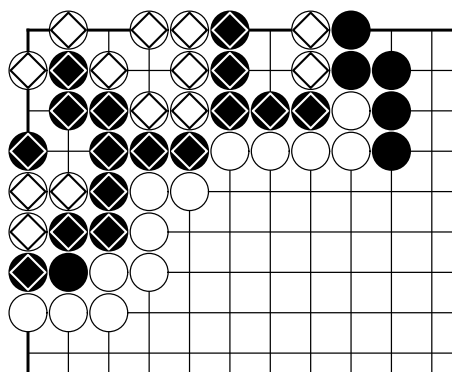
Example 22



This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.

Example 23

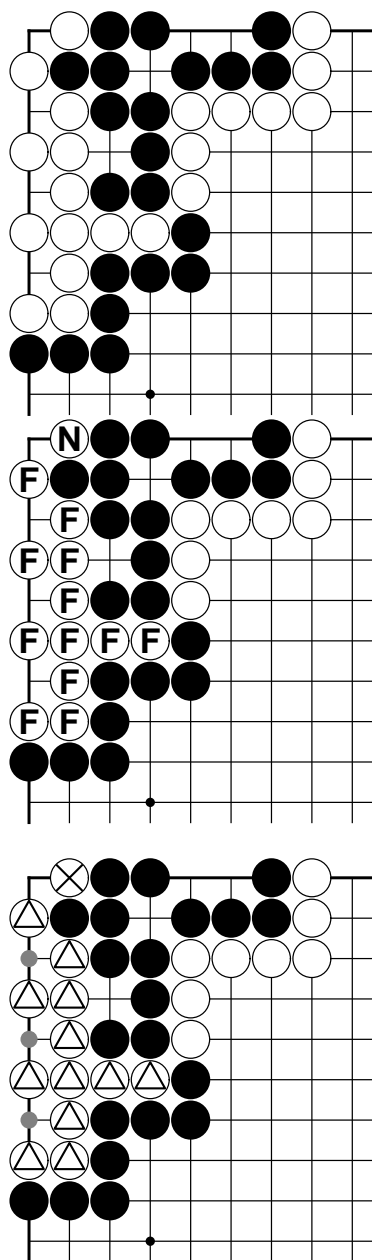




This result does NOT correspond to the Nihon Kiin Rules (which have White's bunches of stones as "dead", and Black's as "alive".).

((As mentioned in the introduction, this is one of the "not yet played out" positions. The status depends on who is given the initiative!))

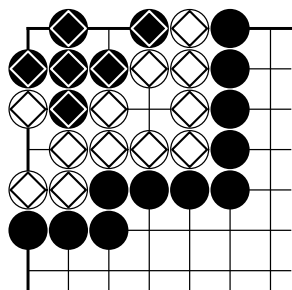
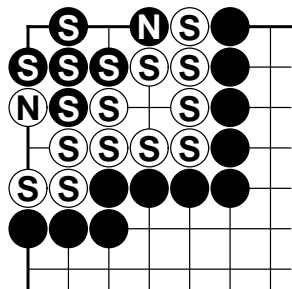
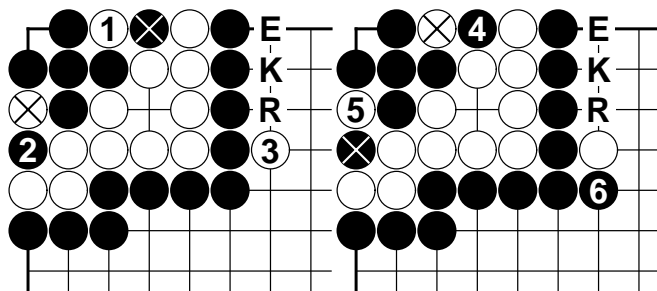
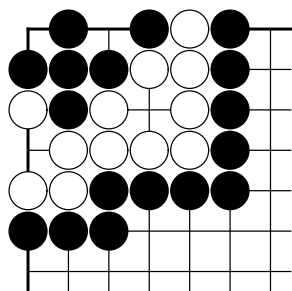
Example 24



This result does NOT correspond to the Nihon Kiin Rules (which have White's bunches of stones as "Seki stones", unless White connected both of her stones in the corner.).

Please also note that White has THREE points of territory here, marked with dots.

Example 25



This result corresponds to the Nihon Kiin Rules.