



Hikaru no Go, Vol. 11: Fierce Battle

Yumi Hotta , Beth Kawasaki , Takeshi Obata (Illustrations)

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Hikaru's classmate Ochi has won enough games to guarantee his place among the top three players who will pass the pro test. Hikaru, on the other hand, still needs to win more games, and he'll soon face his friend Waya and Ochi himself, who has been preparing for their match with Akira's help! When the dust clears, who will be left standing?

Hikaru no Go, Vol. 11: Fierce Battle Details

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Author : Yumi Hotta , Beth Kawasaki , Takeshi Obata (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review Hikaru no Go, Vol. 11: Fierce Battle for online ebook

David says

Once again, the beauty of this series is its ability to maintain a sense of tension and drama over what is basically just an unending series of go games. In volume 11, the author *finally* wraps up Hikaru's pro test that has been going on for the last four volumes. (Spoiler: he passes.)

The most dramatic game by far is between Hikaru and Ochi, the young Insei who has already guaranteed his place in the pros, but who has been receiving private tutoring from Akira Toya. The game between Ochi and Hikaru is bristling with hidden significance, as represented by the ghostly Sai sitting behind Hikaru, and Akira's presence behind Ochi. Akira is obsessed with Hikaru, Hikaru wants to become a match for Akira, Ochi is aware that Akira is more interested in Hikaru than him and wants to earn the young pro's respect, and Sai is showing hints of developing a subplot of his own, as he begins to speculate on whether he really will accompany Hikaru throughout his life.

Given that in the author's notes, Hotta admits she doesn't always know where she's going with the story, I wonder how things will develop now that Hikaru is entering pro ranks.

Oh, look, the author remembered that Hikaru a 13-year-old, still has parents. Once every few volumes his mother shows up to titter nervously about how she just doesn't understand this go game her son is so obsessed with. Talk about disappearing parents in children's fiction. I don't think we've seen Hikaru's dad since volume one.

Anyway, this volume was also notable in that it's starting to refer to actual go terms and tactics in *slightly* more detail, and I was actually looking at the game between Ochi and Hikaru trying to figure out how Hikaru was going to make life for his black stones. You still don't really need to know how to play go to enjoy this series, but this was the first volume where I think you might miss a bit of nuance if you're not familiar with some basic principles. (And believe me, basic principles is all I know.) I know they have go experts double-check all the go drawings, but not being an expert myself, I wonder how tricky and sophisticated these games really are, or do they just pick some old classic Honin'bo tournament to illustrate?

Anyway, once again one of the better volumes in the series.

Indah Threez Lestari says

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Krista says

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Dan Warren says

This series is getting better as it progresses - I start to get more and more invested in the characters. And, interestingly, I've learned a lot about the psychology of competition - lessons that I can apply to my tournament chess play. Hikaru and Sai are good teachers for people competing in any type of game/sport, not just go!

David says

I can still hardly believe that there's a 23-volume manga series about the game Go, and that it's hard to put down. Drama, cliffhangers... I actually care about what happens to a few of these characters, which doesn't happen to me very often.

And Fujiwara-no-Sai is male?!? That's what the interwebs say. I much prefer Hikaru being possessed by an ancient *female* Go master, and will have no problem continuing to read it that way.

Ben Truong says

It all comes down to one game – it always comes down to one game. By the twenty-fifth game of the Pro Exam, Kosuke Ochi has already secured one of three spots for becoming a Go Professional. However, he isn't resting on his laurels – he intends in beating Hikaru Shindo. If he does, Akira Toya would recognize him as his rival publicly and he would be able to join his father's study group.

Entering the final game, Ochi has a record of 25-1 with Yoshitaka Waya and Shindo tied with a record of 23-3 each and Shinichiro Isumi has a record of 22-4. If Isumi wins and either Waya, Shindo or both lose there will be a play for the remaining Professional spots. Isumi easily wins, and as does Waya, who beat fellow insei, Yuta Fukui, who he is notoriously difficult in beating, which comes down to one game. If Shindo wins, he takes the last spot for being a pro, but if he loses, he has to play a rematch with Isumi, which he could lose. Reiterating the fact, it always comes down to one game.

Prior to the last match, Ochi purposely let slip that Toya was tutoring him to beat Shindo, hoping to unhinge him, which he was successful. However, he bragged too much, which gave Shindo the chance to deflect that attack back towards him. The answer is clear – the victor of this match would be Toya's true rival.

The game was tough, Toya's guidance helped Ochi to out-read some of Shino's plans. However, Shindo found a weak spot against Ochi that he failed to see, making the game in flux and the certainty of a victor became unknown. They would have to duke it out to the very end and in the end there was one winner – Shindo. So, there wasn't going to be a playoff and Ochi lost the recognition of being Toya's rival and his seat at the Meijin's Go Study Group and Shindo would be joining the Pros.

Reading this tankobon was filled with tension and drama. While the match between Ochi and Shindo took center stage, there was another match that was quite dramatic also, the match between Waya and Shindo in

which Shindo also won, which makes Shindo one of Waya's three losses.

All in all, I'm really excited, the moment has finally come and Shindo is now a Professional Go Player on par with Toya Akira and I can't wait to see what happens next.

Ben Nash says

This story is comfort food for me. I can't quite put my finger on what keeps me rereading/rewatching this and the anime, but my interest in Go certainly helps. I also like that it's a generally positive story about getting good at something

Peter says

One of the best so far. Great tension with the results of the Pro Test hanging in the balance.

Robert Beveridge says

Yumi Hotta, **Hikaru no Go vol. 11: A Fierce Battle** (ViZ, 1998)

I hate to say it, but as both series go on, Hikaru no Go is starting to supplant Bleach as my favorite manga series. With most fighting manga, the whole “fight – get stronger – fight – get stronger” cycle is overstated and obviously artificial, but with Hikaru no Go, it's much slower-moving, there are plausible explanations for various events in the get stronger part of the cycle (plateauing, making dumb lucky moves, etc.), and Hotta, over the course of the pro test story arc, has built a credible, realistic stable of strong personalities. Hotta completes that arc in *A Fierce Battle*, the eleventh volume in the series, and the long-awaited match, with Toya-trained Ochi facing Sai-trained Shindo, is a barnburner. That you know how it's going to come out despite Hotta cliffhanger makes it not one whit less exciting, and that's part of the fun here. A banner volume in a fantastic series that's well worth your time, even if you're not a manga fan (yet). **** ½

Sophie says

In this volume, it's finally decided who's going to pass the pro exam. Once again I was struck by how attached I have gotten to these characters, and how on edge I was, feverishly reading on and on and on. I was sad that Isumi didn't pass, but to be honest, I was pretty sure he'd be the one who wouldn't.

Anyway, this is really great stuff and a lot of fun.

Scott Lee says

Hotta and Obata continue to do a wonderful job with this book. Obata's art is always precise and detailed but

