



Australian Go Association

President

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AGA Secretary's Report 2015

By David Mitchell

Before I go into detail on this year's activities I would like to extend thanks on behalf of all Australian Go players to both the Korean Amateur Baduk Association (KABA) and Raphael Shin for their continued friendship and support. KABA have paid for two top professionals to attend this event (The AGA National Championship); they did a similar thing for the first Australian Go Congress and the Korean Ambassador's Cup. This friendship and support helps our members learn and improve – a priceless gift. Raphael Shin and his Hoju Dong-a Newspaper have sponsored this tournament to ensure the financial pressure on the organizers is kept to a minimum. Both KABA and Raphael have made significant monetary contributions and I am sure all AGA members and Go players around Australia are impressed and grateful for their support.

2015 has been a busy year for the AGA committee, there have been 4 committee meetings and various projects undertaken (detailed below). While a lot has been done, a lot more needs to be done and the committee is in desperate need of people to take on some of the workload, either as part of the committee or on an ad-hoc basis. Despite the dearth of resources a lot has been achieved. In chronological order the main events were:

The first AGA Go Congress was held in January and organized by Sang-Dae Hahn. There was significant sponsorship money and other resources from the Hoju Dong-a Newspaper & Raphael Shin. The tournament attracted just under 50 players predominantly from overseas. Raphael & Sang-Dae Hahn are organizing another Congress for January 2016 in Sydney. This event is a great platform for Go in Australia and again Raphael Shin and his newspaper are putting in a lot of money and effort to make the event a success.

The first committee meeting of the year was in February. In order to bring people together AGA Committee meetings have been held using a (free) teleconference facility. This helps stimulate debate, reduce misunderstandings and get projects underway a lot faster. It has proven very successful during the year and is likely to continue to be used into the future.

The key outcome of the February meeting was to prioritize projects (suggested by AGA committee members) and select one for completion during the year. The list was as follows:

- I) To edit and publish a year book of AGA Go activities and events - the aim is to have this happen every year.
- II) To provide a platform for AGA clubs to engage with 'sister city' clubs around the world. (Platform means contacting the national organizations and matching overseas clubs with interested AGA clubs)



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- III) To encourage and publicize Go tour groups. (The suggestion is that more players would join such groups if they knew opportunities existed, this will help make such ventures more successful and encourage the adventurous Go players).
- IV) To provide supporting material and marketing methods for clubs to publicise their tournaments/events in local and regional news outlets - a sort of potted marketing strategy that can be built upon by the clubs.
- V) To collect news clippings and other information from around the world that can be used by clubs to spread Go in the community and in schools. Also, to suggest different strategies for getting Go into schools and collecting feedback from initiatives.
- VI) To encourage inter-club competitions - either face to face or over the Internet.
- VII) To give opportunities and encourage younger players.
- VIII) To formulate a ratings process, issue AGA certificates and publish a list of players along with player details (including a photo) as the EGF do.
- IX) Online tournaments. Having at least one first-class Australian tournament reachable to players outside the capital cities would be good.
- X) Establish an Australian Pairs Go competition with the winning pair to represent Australia in any international Pair Go events.

After due consideration the committee decided that an online tournament (recognized by the AGA for representative points) was top of the list; Horatio Davis volunteered to organize the event. The first Online Go Tournament was held in September and was a great success with thanks to Horatio (for organizing and managing the event) and An Younggil (for his role as referee that involved solving some interesting disputes). The AGA extends its sincere thanks to both.

In March, I (David Mitchell) established contact with Kirrawee High School and presented a 2 hour lesson and activities to 50 year 9 students. I also contacted the British Go Association and obtained permission to use their youth teaching materials. The Committee appointed me chair of the Youth sub-committee and I presented the Youth strategy document at the next committee meeting. The Youth sub-committee have extended supported fledgling clubs in Canberra (organized by Des Blackwell) and in Hurstville, Sydney (organized by William Qian). Billy Sun (in Melbourne) has been running a successful group for some time so our materials etc. are of little use, but we are ready if needed. The current target in Sydney is to 'get into' Sydney Grammar School and from there use the leverage to spread Go into other prestigious schools. In addition, we continue to target Sydney High Schools through their language or cultural subjects.

In April, Yoko Usami was appointed chair of the AGA Pairs Go sub-committee. During the year Yoko established the rules for Australian Pair Go including the organization of a Pairs Go event at this tournament. Yoko is the liaison officer between the AGA and all overseas pair-Go organizations and represents the AGA on all pair Go matters.

The second committee meeting was held in May. The issue of AGA rankings first arose at this meeting and has been the subject of much debate since. An Younggil was appointed Chair of the rating committee assisted by me (David Mitchell) and Neville Smythe. Various proposals have been



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discussed but the debate continues. Once there is consensus on the committee, a proposal will be presented to the full membership at an AGM. In the meantime, the Agatha/Agador system continues to be used along with current practices such as allowing tournament directors to adjust rankings where they deem it appropriate.

With the increased workload it became clear that more people were needed to undertake roles. One of the key areas that needs addressing is publicity and social media – I was charged with the task of finding a volunteer. I have failed – does anybody want to take on the role?

No new projects were undertaken at the August and November meetings – the focus in both was the delivery of as many projects as possible.

David Mitchell,
Secretary,
AGA