



U.S. YOUTH GO CHAMPIONSHIP (USYGC)

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The AGA is pleased to announce the opening of the 2008 USYGC national competition season. Our goal for this year is to improve the event and attract more players from among American youth to compete, renew friendships, and identify the United States representatives in the season of the World Youth GO Championships (WYGC).

The USYGC is an ING Foundation and AGA-sponsored national competition exclusively for our youth players. It is organized into eight qualifier events across the country (including internet rounds if necessary) leading to a national championship final event. The final winners in each age division will represent the AGA in the next WYGC.

Participation Guidelines

WYGC Age Requirements

Players must meet the age criteria by the calendar set by the WYGC organizers. There are two age groups: under 12 (junior) and 12 through 17 inclusive (senior). The cutoff date for each age is the day that the World Youth Go Championship is held. Therefore, if you will become 18 before the start of the WYGC in 2008, you will not be eligible to play in the WYGC and cannot compete in the USYGC. If you will become older than 11 years old on the day the WYGC begins, you may only play in the senior division of the USYGC.

AGA Eligibility Requirements

These are the AGA's criteria for players of the USYGC –

- a. US citizens by January 1, 2008,
- b. AGA membership for at least the full year immediately prior to January 1, 2008 and maintain membership at all times to avoid disqualification,
- c. physical residence in the United States, its territories, possessions, or Washington, DC., for at least six of the twelve calendar months prior to January 1, 2008. For AGA members with families assigned to U.S. military duty overseas, time overseas will be counted as residence in the United States. In cases of doubt about the residency period, tournament directors may require proof.

Youth who win (1st place) qualifier events for four consecutive years, including cross over years from junior to senior divisions, must skip one year before resuming competition.

Event Guidelines

Qualifier Events

1. All qualifier events must be scheduled between January 15 and April 30. Actual dates are at the discretion of the hosting chapters but need to be coordinated with the USYGC Coordinator.
2. There will be eight (8) qualifier events with rounds for each age division. There is no limit to the number of participants in each qualifier event or division.
3. The location of qualifier events may change from year to year.
4. The qualifier event involves play over two consecutive days and may be stand-alone or an additional AGA event being held by the Chapter.
5. All qualifier events will use ING rules.
6. All games are even (no handicaps) and AGA-rated. Komi is 7.5.
7. The tournament format may vary between qualifiers depending on the number of players and their ratings in each age division. Formats may include round robin, Swiss McMahon, elimination rounds and a final round, or any other established and accepted format over both days. To the fullest extent possible, tournament formats should allow players to play as many different players as possible within their age groups.
8. Play Rules:
 - a. Time – 60 minutes main time per player; overtime 5 periods of 30 seconds.
 - b. Clocks – required; clock type at the discretion of event organizer.
 - c. Tournament results must produce clear 1st and 2nd place winners.
 - d. In the event of a tie, AGA tie-breaking rules will be used.
 - e. In the event of disputes, the decision of Tournament Director at the event is final.
9. For no shows by the time the first round begins, the Tournament Director will adjust the pairings as appropriate.
10. Players pay their travel and accommodation to the qualifier events.
11. Players may participate in up to two different qualifiers per year, but only if they do not win the first qualifier in which they play.

Final Event

1. The U.S. Youth Go Championship is schedule to be held each year by June 1 and will be hosted by an AGA chapter.
2. It may be held as a stand-alone event or held in conjunction with an additional AGA event being held by the Chapter.
3. The final event is defined as follows:
 - a. Format – 6 round Swiss over two days.
 - b. Time – 60 minutes main time per player; overtime 5 periods of 30 seconds.
 - c. There is a maximum of 8 players in each age division.
 - d. For no shows by the time the first round begins, the Tournament Director will adjust the pairings as appropriate.
 - e. Clocks – required; clock type at the discretion of event organizer.

4. In the event less than 16 finalists confirm their attend at the finals, the following rules are to be used to fill any vacancies:
 - a. In the event that the 1st place winner in a Qualifier is unable to attend the Finals, the 2nd place runner-up will be invited to attend.
 - b. If both 1st and 2nd place finishers from a qualifier are unable to attend, then the USYGC Coordinator is authorized to make a discretionary selection from among all other participants in the national collection of Qualifiers using AGA ratings and over all playing record in the qualifiers. The USYGC Coordinator will consult with the hosting chapters in making such a selection.
 - c. If fewer than eight Qualifiers take place, the finalists needed to fill any vacancies will be selected from the 2nd place runners-up in the Qualifiers. The youth chosen will be based on the following (in this order): a) Qualifier record: b) If method a) produces ties, then the first tie break will be AGA ratings at the start of the event.

AGA Support

USYGC Coordinator – Nicole Casanta will manage the program and is the AGA's first point of contact for anyone with questions or interest on the program.
nicole@seraphine.us.

Qualifier Tournament Directors – These volunteers will be approved by the AGA and announced with the hosting chapters to run the qualifier events. Each year interested person must register their interest in hosting a qualifier or the final event. The AGA will make the final decision on the venues based on a variety of factors including but not limited to the alternatives available, proximity to already approved qualifier venues, prior experience in hosting major tournaments, resources available locally to manage the tournament, etc.

The AGA will provide certificates for all players who compete in the qualifiers.

Players cover their own costs to the qualifier events. The AGA covers travel and accommodation costs for the final event. Meals are not included at any event unless the host chapters provide them. Parents and chaperones pay their way to all events.

ING Foundation Support

The USYGC is generously funded by the ING Chang-ki Wei-Chi Education Foundation. through an annual grant program. These funds support all the qualifiers and the finals event that generates the AGA's youth representatives to play in the prestigious World Youth Go Championship. The international venue of that event changes each year and more information on that will be announced when available.

Prizes

Qualifiers

1. The winners of each qualifier event receive economy airfare to the city of the USYGC Finals and hotel accommodation for two nights. Additional prizes for the Qualifiers are at the discretion of the hosting chapters.
2. In addition to the right to compete for the right to play in the World Youth Go Championship, all first place winners at each qualifier event are entitled to receive a partial scholarship for one of the AGA's summer US Go Camps. The scholarship is in the amount of \$400 and is provided by the American Go Foundation (AGF). The scholarship can be applied to any AGA-supported Go Camp in the calendar year it is won. The scholarship funds will be provided directly to the Camp Directors to defray the costs of the youth attending. If the winners are unable for any reason at all to use the scholarship, the scholarship may be awarded to any other youth who completed a qualifier event, at the discretion of the AGF Youth Coordinator and in conjunction with the tournament directors. Scholarship funds are not transferable to another year or another player by any winners.

Finals

1. All players in the USYGC Finals receive certificates for participating.
2. The winner of the USYGC Final in each age division will receive a trophy and a trip to the World Youth Go Championship later that year with travel expenses paid by the sponsor. The AGA will assist in coordinating logistics with the sponsor after the final event.

Additional Information for Tournament Directors

1. Each Qualifier Tournament Director (TD) is to submit a tournament plan to the USYGC Coordinator prior to the start of their Qualifier. The plan needs to include venue and format information such as the schedule of the games, # of participants anticipated for formatting purposes and the anticipated tournament format. Prizes and refreshments information is optional but recommended.
2. Pre-registration for qualifier events is very strongly recommended as a prerequisite to participate. This allows Qualifier TDs to make formatting choices earlier and confirm pairings in advance. Late entries and last minute arrivals may be excluded from the event or deferred to the second round at the discretion of the Tournament Directors if including such players delays the start of the event or requires a material change in the tournament format. The Qualifier TD's decisions are final.
3. Qualifier event fees are at the discretion of the hosting AGA chapter. There are no fees for playing in the finals. Any fees collected should be used to cover venue and equipment expenses, refreshments, local prizes, transportation, etc.

4. Individual qualifier TDs decide the event format. Tournaments must have at least 5 rounds and must produce a clear 1st place winner and 2nd place runner-up. This means that if the format cannot produce clear 1st and 2nd finishers in 5 rounds, the TD must be prepared to play a 6th round or use clear tie-breaking rules. (Tie-break rules are those used in AGA tournaments and must be fair, transparent and objective).
5. Tournament results are to be submitted to the USYGC Coordinator no later than 48 hours after the Qualifier. These will be published in the E-Journal and on the AGA's website for the public to watch the progress of the players.
6. Ratings reporting: Qualifier results should be submitted to the AGA Ratings Coordinator [ratings@usgo.org] no later than 48 hours after the Qualifier. Required data includes players' names, AGA ID numbers, pairings, results, b/w designations and any information on tie-breakers. For questions on reporting for ratings purposes, contact the AGA Ratings Coordinator.

This document contains the full description of the program and guidelines. For any details not covered, please contact the USYGC Coordinator, Nicole Casanta at nicole@seraphine.us.