

AGA Board Meeting Sunday, October 15—7:00 PM EDT

Meeting called to order by: Roy Laird
Type of meeting: Regular monthly conference call
Secretary: Pauline Pohl

Attendees:

Roy Laird (At Large) Chairman
Paul Celmer (Eastern Region)
Chuck Robbins (Eastern Region)
Robert Barber (Central Region)
Roy Schmidt (Central Region)
Willard Haynes (Western Region)
Gordon Castanza (Western Region)
Mike Lash (President)
Pauline Pohl (Secretary)

Agenda Topics:

Call to Order/Establish a Quorum

Roy Laird called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM EDT. A quorum was established.

1. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

Action items: Motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting
Motion-Gordon Castanza
Second-Chuck Robbins
Approved unanimously

2. President's Report : Mike Lash

a) Ing Funds

The AGA received \$46,000 from the Ing Foundation. This paid for the expenses so far in 2006:

| | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Youth scholarship support | \$17,000 |
| Redmond Cup | 5,000 |
| Ing Redmond Cup | 12,000 |
| North American Masters Tourn | 12,000 |
| Total | \$46,000 |

b) National Youth Tournament

Mike Lash proposed committing up to \$12,000 of AGA reserves for a Youth Go Championship, to be repaid by future Ing Foundation funds if possible. Chuck Robbins asked what happened to the rest of the \$51,000 he thought was coming. Mike Lash said that number was rumored and not a firm promise.

Roy Laird said this money pays for the 2006 US Go Congress events, but what about 2007 Congress? Mike Lash said that is a good question that will be discussed later, but today the question is whether to fund the Youth Tournament.

Chuck Robbins asked if we go into the reserves and the Ing Foundation doesn't end up funding the tournament, is this how we want to spend the AGA's reserve? Mike Lash replied that he's not generally in favor of funding tournaments from reserves, but the children's tournament is a top priority with both the AGA and the Ing Foundation. If the Ing Foundation doesn't come through, we will look for another sponsor of the Youth Tournament.

Gordon Castanza made a motion to allocate \$12,000 in AGA reserves to fund a Youth Go Tournament.

Bob Barber seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously to fund the Youth Go Tournament.

c) Guo Juan Video Proposal

Mike Lash said he is working out details of a plan to have the AGA offer a DVD of Guo Juan's lectures from the 2004 Go Congress in Rochester. He is currently working out how to compensate the Empty Sky Go Club for their work in filming the lectures. So far, Mike Lash has had preliminary talks with Guo Juan, suggesting an arrangement of:

Sale Price \$15 per DVD

DVD series: Progression called "Guo Juan's Congress Lecture Series, Volumes I, II, etc.

Production and distribution by the AGA

Profit sharing: Split net profit 60% to AGA, 40% to Guo Juan after production and distribution costs are deducted.

Willard Haynes said he thinks it's bad to split profits. He cited examples of blockbuster Hollywood movies that after accounting shenanigans have no profit whatsoever. It's more straight forward and easy to calculate a percentage of the gross revenues.

Roy Laird said he spoke to a literary agent who told him that 40% of net is a good deal. If we switch the calculation to a percentage of net profits, we could offer 33%, so she would get \$5 of every \$15 DVD. Mike Lash said he would discuss this proposal with Guo Juan.

Paul Celmer suggested that before proceeding further with this plan, someone should contact the other professionals and tell them we are doing this and promising to do a similar project with them if they would like to try something similar.

Chuck Robbins said Mike Lash should personally talk to all of the US pros to see if they want to do a similar project with the AGA.

Roy Laird commented that statistics from the AGA web site show that 114 people have downloaded the go e-basics video so far this month (a two week period), so it looks like people are looking for video content.

Bob Barber asked if anyone has seen the finished product. Mike Lash said only the people from the Empty Sky Go Club have seen it so far. Roy Laird said that somebody will have to check the quality of the DVDs before committing to producing a large number of them. Mike Lash said he will try to get copies to Board members for their opinions. Mike Lash said he also still needs to come to an agreement of how to compensate the Empty Sky Go Club for filming the lectures.

d) Congress Surplus Policy

Bob Barber said he had looked into the Congress profits on reserve at this time, and there is no evidence that there is a problem of large sums of money sitting around for too long. He suggested that we drop the proposal to enforce a schedule of forcing the clubs to spend the money or lose it.

Roy Schmidt said he worries that if the AGA took the profits back from the local organizers, they would be spent on operational expenses and not used as intended to promote and support go educational projects. Roy said he is against the proposal and would not vote for it.

Chuck Robbins said he is totally against the proposal.

Mike Lash withdrew the proposed policy until further notice.

3. Certification of Amateur Players

Roy Laird reported on progress made regarding a proposal for creating an AGA rank certification program. The Rank Certification Committee met by telephone conference on October 12. They are working on a fee schedule and details of the certification program. No action by the Board is required at this time. On a related issue, Roy Laird announced that Paul Matthews is working on adding historical game results to the web site, so members can review their own results as well as how their opponents have done.

4. AGF Analysis of AGA-AGF Equipment Expenses

Terry Benson, of the American Go Foundation has the records, and hasn't delivered them yet, so this item was tabled until next meeting.

5. New Business

a) Complimentary Membership for Professional Players

Roy Schmidt said it's a way to show respect for the professionals, there's a lot of support for this idea, and it doesn't cost the AGA a lot of money, so why is there so much discussion about it? Why don't we just do it?

Roy Laird said the question is who qualifies? Any US citizen who wants to join or do they need to be a US citizen living here or could it be any professional player who lives here?

Bob Barber said the cost is minimal—just the cost of the Yearbook, and we want the pros to have that.

Roy Laird said we could make the offer to American citizen with pro credentials regardless of where they live.

Chuck Robbins suggested working out the details off line and vote during the next meeting. Roy Schmidt will head up the discussion and make a report next month.

b) New Treasurer

Mike Lash reported that he placed an advertisement in the E-Journal, but didn't get any responses. Mike Lash contacted Adam Bridges, who was Treasurer of the Asheville Go Congress this year. Adam may be interested. He is a PhD in Chemistry and has done accounting for other non-profit organizations. Paul Celmer said he has known Adam for years and he would make an excellent Treasurer for the AGA. Bob Barber and Chuck Robbins both echoed that they have dealt with Adam and hold him in high regard. Mike Lash will pursue Adam as the next AGA Treasurer to replace Ulo Tamm.

c) Selection Procedure for International Representatives

Roy Laird said he has been working with Allan Abramson and others to formalize the procedures to select Americans to go to international tournaments. The most recent version (4) has been distributed. Should we move to accept the proposal or discuss it?

Willard Haynes said a formal procedure is necessary.

Mike Lash said he is satisfied with the current method that is less formal, but is flexible. So far representatives have been chosen using rankings, a playoff, or tournament results.

Willard Haynes said that he thinks a formal, public procedure is better, because candidates who wish to represent the U.S. can know what they have to do to be selected.

Roy Laird said we all agree that the selection process should be fair. There's a value to a default option, but we need to be able to use more than one method to select a

representative, such as a circuit of existing tournaments, or cumulative points such as the way we now select the World Amateur Go Championship representative from the US Open. Using a variety of procedures adds excitement to the tournament scene and encourages players to be involved in various ways by giving them several selection methods to try for. The current proposal says that professionals are automatically qualified, but amateurs must have 12 even games against a 7.0+ rated player to qualify at the top level.

Chuck Robbins said that high number requires a strong player to go to the U.S. Go Congress plus another tournament during the year. That would be a plus to local tournaments, which benefit from attendance by strong players, but may be a hardship to players who don't live near large metropolitan areas where they are likely to play against another strong player at a local tournament. He proposed 10 games rather than 12. He also suggested permitting even game results by 7.0+ players against 6.0+ players, because 7.0+ vs. 7.0+ matchups rarely occur outside the US Go Congress.

Roy Laird added that these new procedures would not affect tournaments with established procedures but would apply when there is no procedure in place.

Mike Lash said he thinks we are doing fine without a formal policy.

Willard Haynes said Allen's point is that procedures by which we select players should be a public document so that candidates know what is going on.

Mike Lash said the issue is whether there's advance notice. If there is, we can put together a tournament.

Gordon Castanza added his perspective as one who represented the US in an international tournament as an amateur 18kyu:

"Regarding the issue of the designation of "strong players." I was selected as an 18kyu to attend the Hangzhou (China) City Invitational Tournament in November 2005. If the proposed procedures were adopted, then no player less than 6-Dan could ever hope to play in an invitational tournament in which the tournament organizers did not specify that only 6-Dans and above would be permitted to play. As a matter of fact, there was no upper limit on the participants either. There were several participants from other countries who were at least "semi-pro," if not actually a pro at one time, but then went "amateur" again. The Hangzhou tournament organizers did not pay for our transportation to Hangzhou. That was all on our nickel (actually, in my case, about \$2,500.00 for air fare alone. Then I had to pay for two nights at the Pudong Hilton Hotel, and the transportation from Pudong (Shanghai) to the Hangzhou Sports Stadium, and then taxi fare to the hotel.) While in country, the Hangzhou organizers paid up to \$50.00 per day for our hotel and meals. Anything above that was again on our own nickel. The Hangzhou organizers were extremely gracious to our "team" (only one of whom was $\geq 6d$). Many of us, including me, were interviewed by a local TV station. The interviews were broadcast nation-wide on the Chinese Go channel. We were taken

on a tour of a major tourist attraction (where we were treated to a display of how a multitude of workers can move a heavy temple cauldron through a narrow gate and down a flight of stairs) that miraculously survived the scourges of the Cultural Revolution (ca. 1966 to 1976) and the raids of the Red Guards, and a boat tour of the famous man-made Western Lake. The tournament organizers also drove us back to Shanghai where we had a brief tour of the Nanking Road Shopping District (which was subjected to some of the fiercest fighting for the city during both the Japanese invasion, and the Chinese Civil War, and even as late 1948 was littered with bodies), and "the Bundt" along the Huangpo River waterfront, across from which has risen out of river flood-plain farm land a futuristic city that is an indicator of the progress China has made since 1976 when Deng Xiao Ping was leader of China. President Mike Lash (6k) also had the opportunity to meet with the President of the Chinese Wei Qi Association, play a couple of games, and discuss some details about the current and future relationship between the Chinese Wei Qi Association and the AGA. At the very least, our "team" served as excellent ambassadors both for the USA and for Go in the US. I can understand the intent of the proposal to formalize the selection process so that it is objective (i.e. it is out in the open and everyone knows what the selection criteria are). However, as the proposed selection process is written, I find it too elitist and exclusionary. As it stands, I would have to submit a "Nay" vote. May I suggest including some wording that if the tournament organizers do not specify the criteria for participants, then a selection process would be open for other level players as well. This broadened selection process could consist of some qualification play (say 10 AGA rated games) for potential participants at other levels of play, perhaps even within a band."

Roy Laird said he will modify Version 4 to change the game requirement to 10 even games with players 6-Dan and above per year. He will circulate the revised proposal for more input from the Board.

d) Future Congress Site Selection

Bob Barber reported that three possible sites are being considered for the 2008 U.S. Go Congress: Connecticut, Oregon, and Minnesota. Minnesota recently withdrew from the competition, and Connecticut and Oregon will submit proposals for a decision by this Thanksgiving.

Schedule next monthly Meeting and Adjournment

The next regular monthly conference call will be November 19, 2006 at 8:00 PM Eastern time, one hour later than normal to accommodate Chuck Robbins' schedule.

Bob Barber moved that the meeting be adjourned. Willard Haynes seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM Eastern Daylight time.

Minutes prepared by Pauline Pohl, AGA Secretary