

AGENDA
AGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Sunday, November 2, 2008 – 8:00 PM EST

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 by Roy Schmidt.

Type of meeting: Regular monthly conference call

Attendees:

Jie Li (At Large)

Paul Celmer (Eastern Region)

Laura Kolb (Central Region)

Roy Schmidt (Central Region) Chairman

Willard Haynes (Western Region)

Andrew Okun (Western Region)

Allan Abramson (President)

Pauline Pohl (Secretary)

Late: Chuck Robbins (Eastern Region) --Called in at 9:20 PM after President's report

Guests for the first portion of the call:

Paul Barchilon (AGA Youth Coordinator)

Terry Benson (AGF President)

1. Approval of minutes for September 7, 2008 meeting

Andrew Okun made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 7, 2008 Board conference call. Paul Celmer seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

2. Call for additional agenda items

No items were added to the agenda.

3. President's report

a) Policy Decision Request- Top Rank for Amateurs

Abramson reported that after polling strong players, he has had no objections to limiting the highest AGA rank to 7 Dan. Regardless of the rating, he recommends that:

“The AGA limits strong amateur players to a top rank of 7 Dan, with exception for rare honors for a small number of players with outstanding achievement, such as winning the U.S. Open twice. Exceptions will be granted by the AGA President, under criteria developed through a public process, and approved by the

President. AGA publications will conform to this policy, with editorial discretion to add the AGA rating in parentheses, such as ‘7D (AGA 8.52)’.”

Andrew Okun made a motion to accept the policy. Willard Haynes seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of five in favor with one abstention. (Jie Li)

b) Policy Decision Request- U.S. representative to the World Youth Go Championship Eligibility

Abramson proposed a change in the eligibility requirements for the U.S. representative to the World Youth Go Championship

Current policy is:

- a. AGA Membership for a full year
- b. Residence in the U.S. for at least six months
- c. Minimum of 10 games against 6 Dan or higher

Proposed policy is:

1. Waive the one year AGA membership requirement for qualifiers but require it for finalists.
2. Retain the six month U.S. residency requirement for both the qualifiers and the finalists. (However Abramson would not object to waiving this one for the qualifiers to increase participation)
3. Waive the minimum number of games against strong players requirement completely this year, and study what would be appropriate for youth players over the next year in time for the next USYGC event.
4. Retain the U.S. citizenship requirement. Waive this for the qualifiers, but require it for the finalists.

Paul Barchilon (Youth Go Coordinator) and Terry Benson (AGF) joined the conference call at this point to tell the Board how they want the policy to be altered. Barchilon said that all of the strong youth players tend to be either close to Feng Yun’s go school in New Jersey or in Los Angeles or San Francisco. He wants to increase participation at the eight regional qualifier tournaments and “provide the dream” of going to the national finals to compete for the opportunity to represent the U.S. and the World Youth Go Championship. Barchilon wants to limit the requirements to only AGA membership at the beginning of the tournament and keep the residency and citizenship requirements for just the finals. There was extensive discussion. Barchilon and Benson left the conference call.

The discussion continued, and Okun made a motion to revise item number 1 above to require AGA membership at the beginning of the qualifying tournament. He proposed keeping items 2, 3, and 4 as written above. Kolb seconded the motion.

The vote was unanimous (6 votes) in favor of the motion. (Robbins was absent)

c) FYI-Internet Friendship matches with Europe

Abramson reported that he met with representatives of the European Go Federation when he was at the Mind Games in Beijing. They agreed in principle to proceed with three types of internet matches.

1. "Supergo"-type matches: These would occur once or twice a month with 10 member teams playing until one member is left undefeated. The first of these will occur at either the European Go Congress or at the U.S. Go Congress.
2. Friendly matches: These are games between players of similar ranks. The plan is to start these matches soon.
3. Special challenge matches for strong players, say best of seven: The plan is to get a sponsor to promote these matches and provide participation incentives.

d) FYI- Potential Chinese support for the development of youth

1. Pro support for talented youth

The Chinese Wei'Qi Association has offered to send go teachers to the U.S. for 90 days to teach a talented child. They would require room and board and in exchange the teacher will work for up to 20 hours/week. Travel would be an AGA/family cost. The family would speak English to help the professional improve their English skills.

2. Strong amateur support for school programs

The Chinese Wei'Qi Association will also agree to send a strong amateur to support school go programs with a local family providing room and board and the AGA setting up the school contacts.

This idea is in the planning stage. Abramson recommends that we take China up on their offer and start small and grow the program if it goes well.

End of President's Report. (9:23 PM)

4. Old Business:

a. Revision of WAGC procedures

Phil Waldron (AGA Tournament Coordinator) visited the meeting to discuss changes to the policy on WAGC point accumulation. He asked the Board to agree with the procedures in principle but to not make it a formal policy that requires Board action to change. He also doesn't want this document to conflict with existing policies.

Waldron wants to clarify the acceptable lapse in AGA membership to prevent losing accrued World Amateur Points as well as being allowed to earn points. He recommends a three-month maximum lapse in membership. Waldron said he will post these clarifications on the AGA website. The Board agreed with Waldron's plan and there were no objections.

b. Clarification of International tournament eligibility and selection criteria

Waldron discussed the major points of clarification and change for the policies documenting eligibility to represent the AGA in international competition. He also presented his plan for selecting representatives to play in international tournaments. The policies distinguish between representing the U.S. and representing North America. Waldron's proposals are consistent with the AGA's policy of making participation in the tournaments fair, inclusive, and transparent. The proposed changes give him more flexibility to fill out the field of competitors in qualification rounds for tournaments such as the student Oza by lowering the minimum rating if there aren't enough qualified competitors at the highest level. The Board decided to postpone voting on the proposed procedures until next month's meeting. The Board agreed to provide any comments to the president within one week. After this, he would circulate the documents to the professionals and strong players for comment.

c. Status of Rank Certification Initiative

Abramson reported that he plans to automate the procedure for notifying members when they are eligible for a rank certificate. If members want to order a fancy certificate they will be able to do so on the AGA online store.

d. Website/Online store

Abramson reported that the Internet 4 Associations website isn't working out as we had hoped. The AGA will terminate the contract at the end of its term and will go back on Chuck Robbins' servers. The online store can be activated within a few weeks if we require members to mail in checks or credit card information. Okun said he thinks if members have to do that they will be disappointed, and when people are disappointed with an online experience they tend to not return. The Board agreed that we may want to wait until we can get the credit card verification online before opening the store. The World Mind Sports products can be sold through advertisements in the e-journal until the store opens. The decision on when to open the online store was postponed until the December Board meeting.

5. New Business

a. Membership card upgrade

Because it was so late, this discussion was postponed until next month.

6. Establish Date and Time for Next Board Meeting

The next Board meeting will be Sunday, December 14 at 8:00 PM EST.

7. Adjourn

Okun made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Haynes seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to adjourn at 10:10 EST.

Submitted by Pauline Pohl, AGA Secretary