

World Mind Sports Games (WMSG)

Participation

Information

As of March 29, 2008

Note: This revision updates with respect to significant changes in conditions mandated by the International bodies organizing WMSG. These are more completely explained in a separate document ([click here](#)) Please consult it as well for details on current requirements.

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FAQ

FAQ Questions

How do I qualify?

Beginning in January, 2008 tournaments will be designated as WMSG qualifiers provided they meet established standards for high quality play. Those standards are published at ([click here](#)). Tournaments expected to meet that standard will be advertised as such and scheduled beginning in January, 2008 and continuing through June 1, 2008. Tournament reports must be received before midnight June 1. Each qualifying tournament provides qualification points to those placing high. (More points for stronger tournaments) You may acquire qualification points from up to two qualification tournaments. The top point winners will qualify for the team and be expected to compete at the US Go Congress in August to determine their placement on the team that will represent the US in Beijing in October, 2008.

When you play in a qualifier tournament you **must notify the tournament director before the start of round 1** that you wish to compete for WMSG at the tournament.

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How many people will make the team?

Up to 22 competitors will qualify to compete in various events. Women's team and individuals, men's team and individuals, amateur only individuals, and pair go are all separate events. **Players will be scheduled to compete in only one event.**

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How do I find qualification tournaments?

Tournaments are announced as qualifiers on the AGA website on the “coming events” page. They must be announced a minimum of 3 weeks before they occur. Regardless of the announcement, the tournament must meet the strength and structure requirements in order to be counted.

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How does the point system work?

Bigger tournaments with stronger players give more points. You may play in as many as you wish, but only accumulate points from 2. A complete description of the point system is available at [Category System for Rating Tournaments](#) .

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What is WMSG?

World Mind Sports Games. They will be played October 3 – 18, in Beijing, China, in the same facilities used for the summer Olympics in August and the Paralympics in September.

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Why do we have separate qualification for men and women?

The International Mind Sports Association (IMSA) and the International Go Federation (IGF) have determined that there will be separate competitions for men and women, and defined how many of each may participate on a team. Since the teams are gender specific, we have no choice in the qualifiers.

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Who is eligible?

You are eligible if:

You are a US Citizen as of June 1, 2008. And you are a full and continuous member of the AGA beginning not later than August, 2, 2007.

And you have been resident in the US for at least 6 months (183 days) since August 2, 2007.

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Who will pay for accommodations in Beijing?

The Chinese government will provide accommodations during the competition. You will be responsible for extended stay either before or after the games, and will be required to find other accommodations to do so.

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Who will pay for transportation?

The AGA and AGF are actively seeking donations to cover the cost of transportation only. (Please donate if you can.!) Each competitor will receive funds (amount based on donations.) to help defray the cost of travel. You will be responsible for booking your flight.

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Is WMSG a part of the Olympics?

No, although it would be fair to say it is a part of the Olympic movement. The International Olympic Committee is not yet ready to treat mental sports as Olympic events or to lend their name to it directly. However, they know what we are doing and approve it as a separate event, just as they do with a large number of other physical sports. The style and structure of the competition is very much like the Olympics. The awards for winning will be gold, silver and bronze medals as in the Olympics. The IOC has been involved with the planning of WMSG in the sense that it approved the name, and the use of the Olympic venues, and supports the formation of the International Mind Sports Association, which is the world organizing group for the games.

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What is GAISF?

The General Association of International Sports federations (GAISF) was formed in 1939, when it became apparent that there were many sports not included in the Olympic sports competitions which nevertheless deserved the international recognition that accompanies such association. It was formed with the intention of being an international organizing resource for sports recognized by the IOC but not included in the games themselves. As such GAISF works in close cooperation with the IOC. New sports applying for IOC recognition are routinely referred to GAISF.

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What is IMSA?

The International Mind Sports Association is a consortium of members of GAISF (see below). It was formed in recognition that the mind sports (Currently Bridge, Checkers, Chess and Go are the members) are significantly different from the other sports where competition is more identified with physical than mental activity.

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What prizes will be given at WMSG?

As with the Olympics, there will be no monetary prizes. Medals (Gold, Silver, and Bronze) will be awarded for the first three places in each of the 6 events.

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Will Professional players be permitted?

Professional players will be able to participate in most but not all competitions. There will be two types of individual competition, one may include pros, the other will be restricted to amateurs only .

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What are the WMSG events?

Women's individual (3 players)

Men's individual (5 players)

Women's team (3 players, and 1 alternate)

Men's team (5 players and one alternate)

Individual (2 players Pros not permitted)

Pair go (1 pairs)

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Will drug testing be required?

Drug testing is not planned at this time. IMSA will work together with the individual International federations (Go, Chess, Bridge and Draughts) and will announce standards. The AGA will not develop a national standard until we are notified of the IMSA/IGF standard. We do not expect this to be a major problem, however, people taking some fairly common drugs for medical conditions may need to provide documentation of the conditions requiring them. (Beta blockers for example.)

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Eligibility to Compete in WMSG Qualifiers

In conformance with general AGA standards for representing the US in International play, we require a full and continuous year of full individual AGA membership and residence in the US for a minimum of 183 days (six months) of the prior year. The organizing body requires citizenship in the country for which you play. For the purposes of this event we specify the times as follows:

You must have been a continuous member of the AGA beginning not later than August 2, 2007.

You must have resided in the US a minimum of 183 days in the period beginning August 2, 2007.

You must be a US citizen on or before June 1, 2008.

Qualification procedures

There will be separate qualification procedures for men and women. This policy follows the structure of the games established by IMSA. While we recognize that some may see this as inappropriate, in practice we see no practical alternative.

Women

Women will be invited to apply prior to June 1, 2008 to join the team. Top rated players as of May 1, 2008 will be chosen. They are expected to compete at the Go Congress to determine their placement on the team.

Men

Men will participate in any of a series of qualification tournaments for which they will receive qualification points based on the strength of the tournament and their finishing position. Qualification tournaments must be reported by midnight June 1, 2008. Those with sufficient points will be named to the team and will be expected to compete for positions at the US Go Congress in August, 2008 in Portland Oregon. See WMSG update for further details.

Pair go

A pair go team will be chosen separately, by an Internet tournament which will include Canadian players as the pair will represent North America, not just the US. In order to facilitate organization, registration is required before June 1, 2008.

Finals Selection Process

The finals selection process, which will establish positions for the team event and the amateur individuals, will occur at the Congress.. The tqualifiers will select a minimum of 21 players. The President will retain an opportunity to choose one player whom he deems otherwise suitable, but who may be otherwise not eligible.

Women's WMSG Qualification

The World Mind Sports Games (WMSG) will have 6 events, 4 of which are gender specific: men's and women's teams and individuals. One event is open with respect to gender, but is limited to amateur players only. The final event is pair go.

Note: Professional players are permitted to compete in all events except the “open” amateur. Thus women professionals are not eligible to earn points in the qualifiers that will run from January through June because there is no event in which they could play except the women's events, for which we have a different selection process. Amateur women, however, **are** permitted to earn points as they are eligible to play in the open amateur individual competition.

Regardless of the ability to earn points, there is no restriction on anyone playing in a qualification tournament, as they are open tournaments. The restrictions stated here and elsewhere in this document apply only to a person's ability to earn qualification points. The general principle is that a person may receive points only if that person is eligible to make use of them.

Because of the significant difference in both number of players and top level strength, the AGA is organizing the qualification process differently for men and women. However, the eligibility requirements are the same for both: US citizenship, full membership in the AGA beginning not later than August 2, 2007, and residence in the US for at least 6 months (183 days) of the year beginning August 2, 2007.

The AGA will select the team based on ratings as of May 1, 2008. We will select 7 players (3 for the individual competition and 4 for the team, of which 1 is a designated alternate on the team).

The AGA has traditionally not treated the genders separately, and has in fact not collected that bit of information from its members. We thus have little idea of how many women are eligible and even less of an idea of who would be able to take the time to go. We are therefore inviting all interested women to apply in advance. Because we must plan and schedule the event ahead of time, and inform the players, the registration deadline is June 1, 2008.

Please register by emailing WMSG@usgo.org

Please include your name, membership number, date your membership expires, and citizenship status.

Point Allocation Rules

For

WMSG Finals Qualification Tournaments

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Principles:

Category assignment

All qualification tournaments are rated on the basis of the average (mean) strength of the open section player, and the number of players in that section. The calculation establishes a “category” rating for the tournament. In general, both higher average rating and increased number of players in the field yields a higher category. It is possible for a lower average rating with a larger number of players to have a higher category rating. See for a detailed description of the calculation.

Average rating is the average rating of players in the top section only, and is calculated on the basis of their rating prior to the tournament. Self promotion is not permitted. New players must win at least one game within the top band to be counted. A new player is entered at the mid point of the stated rank. (That is, 6.5 if the person enters as a 6 dan.)

Counting players

All players in the top section are counted for purposes of calculating the tournament category. Players who take two or more byes during the tournament will not be counted for purposes of calculating the tournament category.

Note: it is therefore theoretically possible that what started as a category N tournament at round one gets demoted because some players quit. No help for that. We can't have people signing up to boost the category, and then leaving because they don't really want to play.

Allocation of points to winners

Points are allocated only to winners who are eligible, and have declared their intention to compete in WMSG if selected. (Citizenship, full AGA member for a year, resident in US for 6 months of prior year. See [Eligibility to Compete in WMSG Qualifiers](#) for details.)

Application of point system to WMSG team selection

Tournament qualification

Tournament must be announced in E-Journal a minimum of 3 weeks before the event. Tournament must qualify as a category 8 tournament or better. See WMSG Qualifier Standards for complete details.

Players points

Players may compete in as many qualification tournaments as they wish.

Players may accumulate points for only 2 tournaments. (Presumably their best 2)

Players reaching a total of 15 points or more will be invited to join the team. ; and will not receive additional points in other qualifiers in which they may play.

The top point accumulating players will be invited to join the team and are expected to attend the congress to compete for positions on the team. Runners up will be identified as alternates. Note: WMSG is organized with separate tournaments for men and women, therefore requiring separate approaches to the qualification for each. The system described above applies to the male competitors.

Pair go competition will be by pairs, with the qualification occurring in a special Internet Pair go tournament. The pair will represent North America, not just the US, so Canadian pairs will also compete.

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WMSG Qualification Tournaments Standards

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Beginning in January, 2008, the AGA is instituting a tournament grading system which will assign a **category** designation to all tournaments in which at least one section plays without handicap. See details at [Category System for Rating Tournaments](#).

Assignment of the category is a mathematical process based on the average rating of the players and the number of players in the unhandicapped section. The category increases as the number of players and average rating increases.

Any tournament can receive a category rating. However, for a tournament to be designated a WMSG Qualifier, it must meet all of the following conditions.

1. It must be announced in the AGA E-Journal a minimum of 21 days prior to the tournament.
2. It must be completed and reported before June 1, 2008.
3. The unhandicapped section must have a minimum of 5 players total and 4 players who are eligible to compete in WMSG. (US Citizens, Full AGA membership for a year, and at least 6 months residence in US in last year.)
4. The tournament must calculate as category 6 or higher.
5. The tournament must be a minimum of 4 rounds.
6. Time limits may not be less than 45 minutes each.
7. There must be a recognized system for overtime play. (Seconds reading, Canadian, Fischer time, etc.) Sudden death is not permissible.

Tournament Directors' Instructions

for

2008 World Mind Sports Games Qualification Tournaments

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Reporting Qualifier Candidates

Because of the special requirements for participation in the WMSG, and the qualification system the AGA has instituted, we need some additional information about the players competing in the top non-handicapped section of your tournament.

This information is needed from **All** players in the top section.

For your convenience, we provide a sign up sheet for the players below. You may either send us the sheet by mail, FAX, or as a spreadsheet if you prefer.

Mail to Chris Kirschner
22216 - 5th Drive SE
Bothell, WA 98021

FAX to 425-806-0250

Email to tournaments@usgo.org

1. Citizenship status. Citizenship is required to play in Beijing, so only citizens may accumulate qualification points.

If the person is not a citizen, the other questions are not needed.

2. Does the player wish to be considered for participation in the Qualification Finals, which will be played at the US Go Congress in Portland August 2 – 10, 2008.

3. The player is male or female. (The WMSG will have separate Men's and Women's teams, so the qualification process must make the distinction too.)

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Category System for Rating Tournaments

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The AGA has instituted a method for calculating the strength of any tournament taking into account both the number and average rating of players in the top section. If you have a spreadsheet that reads the Excel format you can use the calculator below to find out the category rating of your tournament, and the qualification points it will provide to the players in the top section.

The players competing to play in the trials at the Congress will undoubtedly be interested in these figures.

Note that the points are provided only to eligible players who have indicated that they do wish to compete to represent the US in the World Mind Sports Games in Beijing.

Thus, a player can win top qualification points without winning the tournament if the winner is not eligible to compete in Beijing.

Also, tied players split the points for the places for which they are tied. Thus, if first gets 8 points, second 6 and third 4.5, a three way tie would give each $18.5/3$ or 6.13 points. If second and third are tied, first would get 8, and the other two would get 5.25 each. The players will of course be very interested in these figures too.

You do not have to calculate the points, but we do need the report information on who is competing and who is not, so we can report the results and keep track of progress.

Note that there is a cap on how many points a player may accumulate (15), and after they reach that point, they will have qualified for the finals. They may continue to play in qualifying tournaments, but will no longer receive points. The points they would have received will be distributed among the other competing contenders.

Category Calculator

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The calculator assesses the strength of a single section of a tournament, usually the top section. In a McMahon tournament, it is the top band.

Because this series of qualifying tournaments provides points to qualify players for the World Mind Sports Games (WMSG) trials in August, 2008 at the US Go Congress, the points assigned to places will be used to determine who qualifies for an invitation to compete in that event. For other tournaments, the calculator provides a reliable assessment of the strength of the tournament.

The points calculation uses the category, rating and number of players to calculate the qualification points.

How to use category calculator

Note: your computer must have the ability to read an Excel spreadsheet embedded within this document.

Calculate the average rating of the players by adding the ratings and dividing by the number of players.

Double click on the spreadsheet to open it.

Enter average rating and number of players in the appropriate cells of the spreadsheet.

Tournament Category Calculation

Avg. Rating	7																			
# of Players	5																			
	Exact Category										Rounded Category									
	12.6										13									
Places	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Points	8.7	6.5	4.9	3.7	2.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Pairing procedures

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Please pay some attention to who gets paired with whom in the final round or two, and try to pair qualifying players with equal scores against each other when that does not disrupt other pairings too much.

Help

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If you have questions or run into problems, you can get as much help as we can give from the following:

Chris Kirschner

Operations@usgo.org

206-579-8071

Roy Laird

Webmaster@usgo.org