

# **MINUTES OF THE AGA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**8-9-2002**

Present:

Roy Laird, AGA president  
None Redmond, education coordinator  
Terry Benson, AGF president  
Chris Kirschner, congress liasion  
Ann Arbor Go Club, Susan Weir  
Arthur Lewis Go Club, Todd Heidenreich  
Austin Go Club, Jeff Shaevell  
Baltimore Go Club, Keith Arnold  
Bayou Go Club, David Dinhofer  
Charlotte Go Club, Tim Myers  
Cleveland Go Club, Duane Burns, Harold Lloyd  
Davis/Sacramento Go Club, Willard Haynes  
Denver Go Club, DeeDee Eckles  
Evanston Go Club, David Whiteside  
Go for Yu Club, Larry Gross  
Greater Washington Go Club, Haskell Small  
Hillandale Go club, John Goon  
Houston Go Club, Mike Peng  
Lancaster Go Club, Sam Zimmerman  
Mass. Go Assn, Roland Crowl  
Mile High Go Association, Eric Wainwright  
New Mexico Go Assn, Willard Draisin  
New York Wei Chi Society, Chendao Lin  
NOVA Go Club, Chris Garlock, Craig Hutchinson  
Palo Alto Go Club, San Fransisco Go Club, Mike Bull  
Portland Go Club, Glenn Peters  
Princeton Go Club, Rick Mott  
Richmond Go Club, Bill Cobb  
Seattle Go Center, John Hogan, Jon Boley  
Twin Cities Go Club, Loretta Curran  
U of Wisconsin GoClub, Dave Weimer  
Wings across Calm Water Go Club, Terri Schurter and John Stephenson  
Jie Li  
Liangzhou Yu  
Ted Ning  
Martin Bradshaw  
I-Han Lui  
Xuefen Lin

CALL TO ORDER 7:04 PM, Roy Laird

Welcome to officers, chapter reps, new board members.

Introduction of the new AGA board:

At large: David Weimer, board chair, (2 year term)

Eastern: Chendao Lin (2 year term), John Stephenson (1 year term)  
Central: David Dinhofer (2 year term), Harold Lloyd (1 year term)  
Western; Jon Boley (2 year term), Bob O'Malley (1 year term)

The election committee: Sam Zimmerman, Paul Anderson, Chris Kirschner, and Susan Weir were thanked for their work.

The board has met a few times at Congress, have confirmed Roy Laird's choice of new treasurer, Ben Bernstein. Ulo will begin transitioning the job to Ben over the next few months. For the next few months, we will still send receipts to Ulo, until a formal announcement is made that the job has been officially transferred. Many thanks to Ulo for his years of past service.

Also, many thanks to the outgoing officers: Roy Laird, Chendao Lin, Mike Peng, and Larry Gross for all their service to the AGA.

Last year's minutes are approved. Roll call was taken.

#### Current officer reports

For officer's reports, attendees were directed to the reports in the annual report. Chris Kirschner, our Congress liaison officer, will be working with Mike Peng to organize next year's Congress in Houston.

#### Journal report

Journal report from Chris Garlock: We have 4000 EJournal subscribers. We are slowly moving some of these to becoming AGA members, because of the annotated games in the Ejournal.

Of the 1500 AGA members, 1300 also subscribe to the EJournal. The Journal staff met at this Congress for the first time. Daily EJournal reports have been going out during Congress itself. We will be using an email service to automate the process of adding new subscribers.

About 15-20% of Journal subscribers live outside the US, many are Thai players.

#### 2003 Congress proposal

Next Year's Congress director, Mike Peng, made a presentation about next year's Houston site. Highlights include:

- near gulf coast and Louisiana
- served by 2 airports
- All areas are air conditioned, including dorm rooms
- drinking will be OK in dorm rooms and hotel rooms (a Hilton hotel is on-site)
- Houston is very cosmopolitan
- all areas are wheelchair accessible.
- many different cultural and cuisinary venues
- near the space center

Congress 2004 is unsettled. Congress 2005 is proposed to be in Seattle.

## Ranking Committee Report: Chris Kirschner.

A lengthy discussion here. The committee was looking at how rank should be used in tournament entry. How do we determine rank- extended play at a particular level? Do we keep ranks and ratings separate? Current rank is used as a 'rating' to enter a tournament.

There was much discussion of implementing a new system of certifying ranks. The AGA would be issuing rank certificates to members. There is no agreement for a fee structure in this process. One view is to charge large enough fees that the certification could be a new revenue flow source for the AGA. Another idea is to figure out what our actual costs are to issue certificates and just charge enough to cover our costs. A straw poll was taken, with 17 votes for larger fees, and 10 votes for cost covering fees. The idea was also suggested of using a two-, or multi-tiered system, where people could pay less for a paper certificate, and pay more for a more elaborate plaque.

- what are our goals, how does this serve our larger goals... are we looking for income, or what is our other goal by having these?

- even Nihon Kiin has had problems with people disagreeing over whether large fees should be charged.

- certification could work strengthening our relationship with our pro players... if rank certificates are confirmed by a US professional. Thus we can help the pros to build their status and careers.

- Chris k - has talked to pros- a great lack of interest, unless some money changes hands.

There was also discussion about what constitutes a ranking in general. Some points:

- rankings at kyu levels need not be that conservative, since they are moving up more rapidly

- ratings, not ranks, are usually used as tournament entry level.

- some talk about recent rating deflation. There is no true way to peg the rating system to any absolute standard.

- both the ranking committee and the assembly are widely uncertain exactly what to do here.

- many children are chronically under-rated, and this hurts the ratings of other players. In the case of rapidly improving children, we should take the best estimate of the child's teacher as to accurate rank. There is also provision in the rating entry system to make a person's rating as 'uncertain'. This way, their ranking will change more rapidly than their opponent's.

- our present system disallows any manual adjustment to ranking.

- the rating needs to be internally consistent

- certificates- dan ranks should be conservative, making sure the player has actually reached their level.

- can we create an ongoing discussion, perhaps through email? Chris Kirschner will do this; contact him by email, using his aga email address, or use the "congress liaison" button at web site.

Chris Kirschner's closing statement- about 2/3 of the committee prefers to stick with straight rating determinants, no cushion factors. Leadership needs to pay attention to

this issue, perhaps it should be a focus of the new board.

Report from finance committee

Larry Gross:

A committee appointed last year to look over AGA finances in general. (Chuck Robbins, John Stephenson, Ulo Tamm, and others)

-AGJ: 100% of our dues are basically paying for the Journal, up from 80% in past years. We need to reexamine the AGJ. We are losing money on foreign members because of the cost of postage. Basically, we're not losing, not making money on the journal.

New Business

Rick Mott: about a year ago, a discussion of overtime methods was begun. There's a chess clock with go features that might be an improvement on our current system.

Please join me in an email list if you'd like to join the discourse:

[rickmott@alumni.princeton.edu](mailto:rickmott@alumni.princeton.edu).

Terry Benson: AGF report. The AGF spent much more than it took in in donations. Clearly the AGF needs to increase donations. Before, excess congress funds went to the AGF, now they're going to the AGA. How can we use the AGF and the tax benefits to bring more money into go? Developing chapters, infrastructure, more with children are all areas of AGF support. How can we encourage people to bring more money into our programs, tournaments, etc.

Discussion of the AGF issues was as follows: It would be nice to have a written document to describe what the AGF does, maybe a brochure, better Web site pages would be a plus. Is there a way we can donate on our renewal forms to the AGF? Can you provide us with an annual report of the AGF budget? Also, it is not clear what the distinction between what the AGF does and what the AGA does. A fund raising letter would be valuable. Not only for money, but for general recognition of the value of the AGF.

John Stephenson: the AGF is non-profit, AGA not-for-profit. The AGA has clearer accountability. The AGF has a self perpetuating board of directors, accountability is not on paper. I'm not comfortable with this. Now the AGA can do much of what we originally founded the AGF to do, we need to review this relationship between the two organizations.

Terry - because the AGA is membership based, it is fundamentally not a charity like the AGF. A self perpetuating board is rather common to charitable organizations, the AGF is accountable to donors and the IRS. We can certainly be more transparent, but we are accountable.

Other topics

About Jim Kerwin and the new projector- opinions about how wonderful to use the projector; truly great, a good investment. Recognition to Bill Cobb as making this happen.

Vendors at congress - perhaps we could do more publicity locally about all the variety of

go products we have available at congress to bring in more business for them.

Go equipment in game stores. Any effort being made to get more decent sets into regular game stores?

Thanks to Charles French, who did a lot of work for the AGA's tax problems, and has had a stroke recently. We wish Charles well.

Roy Laird, in closing, stated that this is his fifth time leading this meeting, and has appreciated the opportunity to serve the AGA. the board is looking for a new president, Please let the Board know if you are interested.

Several stronger players stated that they don't know the amount of the US Open prize in advance. Every year it is different. Last year they waited 3-4 months to receive the money from the Ing cup. Can we standardize this, before the Congress so everyone knows?

Questions also arose regarding selection of players for the World Amateur Go Championship and other invitational tournaments. Roy noted that criteria for many invitational tournaments are available on the AGA website or through the tournament coordinator. We'll try to address these issues to make the process clearer to everyone.

Chendao: The pros had a meeting this past week, and recommended use of the NAMT as a means of selection for international tournaments. NAMT has two slots for amateurs, the winner of the Ing cup, and the winner of the Open. Amateurs have been invited for the past two years. Some tournaments, such as the Fujitsu and the Oza have its own election process. Others suggest that the AGA select a player, or invite a specific player themselves to represent the US. Some pros are concerned that the selection process for other international tournaments has seemed arbitrary at times. To improve the objectivity and transparency of the selection process, the AGA should develop more explicit criteria for these events, as part of our efforts to build a stronger relationship with the American professional community and the hosts of international tournaments.

The pros also recommended that the Challenger Round be switched from a round robin format to a knockout format, so that foreign-based American pros, who have heavy tournament schedules already, would be able to participate.

Chen-dao expressed the view that we're not getting enough 6 dans to come to out congresses. Not enough information is going out to strong players about the opportunities the AGA presents. We want to take advantage of strong player interests and get more of them involved.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Weir, recording secretary