

Report of the President of the Australian Go Association

AGM 2nd October 2009

Another year has passed and much has happened.

Highlights:

1. The change to individual membership has been carried through successfully, with excellent numbers producing an adequate income to keep the AGA running, and with some left over. There was a pleasing response from various members who paid an additional contribution to become Sustaining Members.
2. A Go Problem Competition has been commenced, in an endeavour to generate value for AGA members. The response was poor, but the idea had merit, and may prove itself in the coming nine months.
3. State championships continued to be held in Queensland, NSW and the ACT. No sign yet of a reawakening in Victoria, though.
4. Major events were the 13th NEC Cup in Melbourne and the KAC in Sydney. Sadly we were informed that, after all, 13 was unlucky, and that the NEC will no longer be held as the sponsor is withdrawing from Australia. On the international scene, David He represented Australia at the WAGC and performed creditably.
5. Brisbane Go Club organised a Go Camp at Ballina, with Younggil An 6P as teacher. Entrants came from as far away as Adelaide, and everyone had a wonderful time.
6. Although not strictly an AGA activity, the Australian Go Journal came into being as a web issue, or blog, and also less regular print issues. I commend the editors for a great job, and look to the AGA members to support this initiative by providing news of Australian go happenings.
7. BGC continued its successful relationship with the Keio Old Boys group, and their 6th annual visit was held in April.
8. I made a successful international visit to Xi an, China in July 2009, accompanied by Larry Wen, AGA Treasurer. We had fruitful meetings with the Xi an Weichi Association, and were treated in a very friendly and welcoming manner. As a result we plan to invite Mr. Wang Runan , President of the Chinese Weichi Association, to visit Australia in 2010, with hopes to create good relations in the future. A visit to Japan in November 2008 produced little to benefit Australian go, although I did meet with a representative of the Nihon Kiin's International Department.

Lowlights:

1. At about the same time as we were informed of the loss of the NEC sponsorship, we received another body blow with the withdrawal of the Toyota Denso sponsorship, so no more Toyota Cup either.
2. Australia's status in world pair go was reduced further, as it seems we now are part of an Oceania pool with an unspecified number of countries. We may therefore receive fewer invitations than before, when it was once every two years.
3. In other relations with Japan, a request to send a professional player to the Nationals was rejected. A mooted visit by a Cultural Exchange group did not go ahead.

The Year 2010

I am feeling rather upbeat about the near future of the AGA. There are quite a few good things happening and the new membership model is advantageous financially. The loss of two sponsored tournaments is sad, but we can still run our own tournaments and enjoy go playing for its own sake. Travel costs certainly place a limitation on interstate meetings, so maybe there is scope for some additional internet activity. A series of state teams matches on KGS commenced in early 2009, but currently seems dead in the water. Maybe it can be revived to add some extra excitement to the go calendar. There's an obvious gap in the calendar, namely the Victorian Championship, and with the heady experience of a Nationals under their belt, the folks at SPGo might find that a bit of a cakewalk. Another go camp seems called for depending on the availability of teacher Younggil.

For my part I am considering another foray to China in 2010 in the hopes of creating more good relationships that may lead to future benefits for Australian go.

The Long Term

With fewer than two hundred members, the AGA barely rates on the world scale. That is a shame, because our strongest players are good enough to be noticed on the world stage. At age thirty, the AGA is also rather a youngster, barely out of nappies, so to speak. It seems we need to learn quickly and grow quickly if we are to be taken more seriously by others. We face a difficult task, but we must meet it head – on with new ideas and methods, and of course new people. The management committee is seeking individuals with passion and enthusiasm to assist in the growth process. If you are one of those, make yourself known to your local committee member, or to me. The AGA needs you.

John Hardy

President

