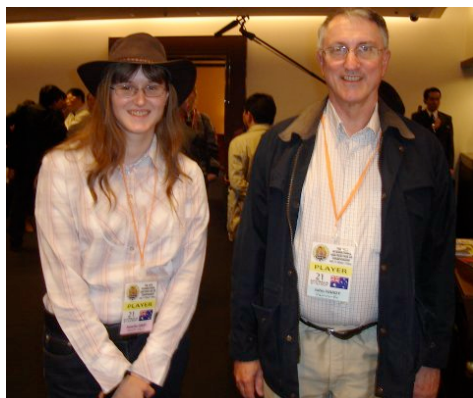


Report on the 18th International Pair Go Championship



This was the third occasion on which Australia was invited to participate in the International Amateur Pair Go Championship (IAPG). The invitation was received with just one week's notice before the entry deadline. John Hardy and Amelia Gray from Brisbane were nominated with no other pairs having expressed interest before the deadline. The Japan Pair Go Association pays the tab for the air fares plus accommodation and meals for the duration of the event.

With lucky connections we managed to arrive at 7.30pm on Friday 9th November at the Hotel Metropolitan Edmont in Idabashi, a suburb of Tokyo. On registration we received the souvenir booklet, rules booklet and schedule of events. Participants are expected to participate in all events on the schedule.

John and Amelia are shown above in national costume which is required to be worn for the friendship match, where the participants are randomly paired with professional players and local citizens. Amelia's partner was Hane Naoki 9 dan, a top tournament winner – how exciting is that! John was paired with Kuwabara Yoko 5 dan professional, playing opposite Araceli Checa of Spain, and Michael Redmond 9 dan professional. It was great fun and a memorable experience.

The 1.30pm start on Saturday 10th November allowed recovery from jetlag. Round 1 was completed, followed by the friendship match and opening reception, where an array of delicious Japanese food was served.

Round	1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round	5th Round	Final
Round 1	9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16	17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24	25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32	33, 34, 35, 36	37, 38, 39, 40	41, 42

On Sunday 11th November there was a busy schedule of four rounds of play, followed by Michael Redmond's professional analysis of the final match between Korea and Japan. Korea won the event with a clean 5-0 record. The prize giving ceremony followed with prizes for the IAPGC, JAPGC, Best Dressed Players and Lucky Draw tickets. Finally it was all over, with a slight feeling of sadness that there was no more go to be played, and yet joy at having made many new friends from many

countries. We scored one win and were 27th out of 32 teams – in line with expectation given our playing strength and lack of pair go experience.

On Monday 12th November the final luncheon meeting was held. All participants were given the opportunity to speak about pair go in their respective countries, and about their impressions of the tournament. Pair go does require a measure of patience, as each player is reliant on his partner. Patience is not my strong suit, and I waited with trepidation for Amelia to play. It was a great joy to me when my partner

frequently found excellent moves. I can say that my level of patience has advanced one step – maybe pair go is for me after all.

The Sunday also saw the Japan Amateur Pair Go Championship being played, adding a large number of participants and creating an exciting atmosphere. Overall the organisers coped with the challenges and myriad details very well and smooth sailing was the norm.

It seems to me that pair go has potential in Australia even though currently we have few female players. I believe it is an opportunity to promote the game as a more friendly and less intimidating activity. To increase the possibilities I believe we could profitably expand the pair concept to include parent and child as well as male and female. I intend to organise a pair go event along those lines as soon as possible in Brisbane. I will be contacting the Pair Go Partnership Programme (we were invited to join at the closing meeting) to find out what assistance and advice they can offer.

I believe the AGA should establish a register of players interested in pair go, particularly noting those who are willing and able to represent Australia at international events. I have already commenced moves to include a separate page for pair go on the AGA website. For those wanting more information about pair go, see

www.pairgo.or.jp

In closing, on behalf of the AGA and Amelia I thank the sponsors for making this event possible and for inviting us to participate. I thank the many hard – working and efficient people on the organising team for a smooth and pleasant experience that we will remember for years to come.

John Hardy
President
Australian Go Association