

Secretary's report – AGA AGM 2012.

2012 was a remarkable year for Go in Australia. Prior to the commencement of the national championships the AGAs fully paid membership amounted to over a hundred players. This is a gratifyingly large number and a fitting tribute to the efforts of all those who have promoted the game throughout the country. I would like to take a moment to pay particular attention to some of the more outstanding individual contributions from the past year.

David Ormerod deserves the gratitude of the Association. We have benefited enormously from the web-based membership system that he helped introduce in his time as treasurer. Further, his website Go Game Guru has raised the profile of Australian Go internationally and has facilitated closer links with professional associations in Asia.

He has been greatly assisted in his endeavours by YoungKil An whose game analyses and interviews form a powerful focus for study and discussion on the site. YoungKil's continuing generosity with his time and effort have most recently demonstrated by the workshop he hosted over the past few days. He has been of tremendous benefit both to the standard of go played in Australia and the game's continuing growth in popularity. We are fortunate to have such a wonderful ambassador for the game in our association.

2012 saw the second World Mind Sports Games held in Lille France. Australia were represented by Xu Wei, Chang Sun, David Bofinger, and Billy Sun who performed very creditably in exceptionally challenging circumstances. This was a week-long event that participants entered at their own expense, the AGA is proud to recognise the outstanding generosity of all of these players in representing us on the world stage. Particular thanks goes to Billy Sun for his efforts in organising a team to participate and supplying team shirts. This is the latest of Billy's many contributions to the association, we are deeply indebted to him for his unflagging energy and support.

This year the world championships were held in Guangzhou, China from the 13th to the 16th of May. The Australian representative was David Bofinger who again acquitted himself well in the face of a difficult draw.

The AGA continues to enjoy the benefit of Neville Smythe's participation on the IGF directorate, he is a long-serving and well-respected figure whose prestige reflects very well on the association as a whole.

It is also appropriate here to acknowledge the commitment of our treasurer, Horatio Davis, and the tournament coordinator Dean Thomas for their outstanding efforts and the rest of the committee members.

All of these individual contributions have helped promote the association and the game we enjoy and on behalf of the association I would like to extend the AGA's immense gratitude to all of those mentioned above, and to those whose contributions may have been less spectacular but no less real. Thank you everyone, it is through these efforts that the association is steadily improving its profile and position.

As encouraging as progress has been over recent years there are still many challenges and opportunities yet to be met. Efforts to establish a go congress have been initiated. Though there are immense logistical hurdles to be overcome such an event may eventually become feasible, albeit on a much more modest scale than the European and American versions. David Ormerod has developed some exciting new opportunities for closer association between the AGA and Go Game Guru. There has been some discussion of establishing a Mind Sports analog of the Commonwealth Games which is of particular significance since the 2018 edition would be hosted in Australia. Finally, the Canberra Go Club will be hosting a new tournament to coincide with the Doeberl Cup in Easter of 2013. This will present an opportunity for us to work more closely with the chess community and establish a strong tournament at a point in the calendar that is normally very quiet.

Going forward we must be mindful of our responsibilities to promote and support the game of go within Australia, each of the individuals I have mentioned deserves recognition not only for their efforts, but also the generosity of spirit with which those efforts are undertaken. As an association

attempting to further develop and flourish we would do well to foster an environment of enthusiastic cooperation. With the examples that have already been set I am more optimistic for the association's future prospects than I ever have been.

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At the 2011 AGM I was asked to contact the NSW Education Department about recognition of go in line with that accorded to chess. The NSW Dept. of Education does not offer scholastic recognition of chess as a field of study, nor does it offer any formal recognition of achievements in tournaments. However, individual universities may recognise such achievements when awarding scholarships.

To achieve equal status for Go would therefore require us to petition universities that do this and suggest to them that they should recognise go as they do chess. They would then be free to accept the suggestion or not as they prefer. They are after all the university's scholarships they can do what they like.

A more practical approach would be that if a particular member is applying for a scholarship at a given institution that recognises chess, the Association should make representations to the university that the applicants achievements in go tournaments are worthy of recognition.