

Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2008 of the European Go Federation

1st August 2008 at Leksand EGC, Sweden

0) Present

Executive: President: Tony Atkins,
Vice-Presidents: Martin Stiassny & Oleg Gavrilov,
Treasurer: Hans Kostka,
Secretary: John Gibson,
Officer Tournaments: Matti Siivola,
Officer Ratings: Ales Cieply
Auditors: Peter Zandveld, Arnaud Knippel

Official representatives:

Austria: Juergen Suntinger
Bulgaria: Stanislav Traykov
Czechia: Martin Kovarik
Denmark: Magnus-Emil Jensen
Finland: Suvi Leppanen
France: Antoine Fenech
Germany: Michael Marz
Ireland: Ian Davis
Italy: Francesco Marigo and Mirco Fanti
Luxemburg: Cuong Nguyen
Netherlands: Martin Finke
Norway: Terje Christoffersen
Poland: Leszek Soldan
Romania: Iulian Toma
Russia: Victor Bogdanov
Serbia: Ivan Dubakavic
Slovakia: Radka Haneckova
Slovenia: Gregor Butala
Spain: Pablo Alvarez
Sweden: Tomas Boman
Switzerland: Lorenz Trippel
Ukraine: Yurii Pliushch
United Kingdom: Geoff Kaniuk

Belgium (Robby Goetschalckx) was present but had not paid their subscription.

Also present was Robert Jasiak of the EGF Rules Commission,
Catalin Taranu and Alexandr Dinerchtein, and about 14 other observers.

Special Guests: Mrs Taki and Mr Noguchi (Pair Go/Pandanet), Seong-June Kim (KABA), Ms Yuki Shigeo (IGF), Mr Zhang Wendong (CWA/WMSG)

1) Opening

Tony Atkins opened the meeting at 7:30 pm

2) Representation

23 Countries were represented and eligible to vote.

3) Agenda

The agenda was accepted.

4) International Matters

a. IGF Directors

Martin Stiassny presented his report. The other European Director, Erik Puyt, had submitted a written report about IMSA and how the World Mind Sports Games (WMSG) got started. Martin said that the directors had had a raised workload that year, planning for the first WMSG. There had been a change to the IGF constitution that allows association membership to include bodies such as the EGF, Pair Go and Ing Foundation. Membership was now 71 with that addition of Macau. The World Amateur Go Championship has traditionally been in Japan because of the sponsors and the 30th in 2009 would be in Japan. However China will probably host it, for only the second time, in 2010 and after that it would be available for other countries to host. The IGF is also involved in the Korea Prime Minister Cup (KPMC) and had sponsored Saijo to attend the European Go Congress (EGC). He stressed that cooperation between all international Go bodies was important.

b. World Pair Go Association

Mrs Taki from the World Pair Go Association (WPGA) talked to the meeting about the new WPGA launched on 29th May and membership of it. She hoped Pair Go would be enjoyed by more and more countries and it was apt that the WPGA had started in 2008 because it had been accepted as an event in the first WMSG which would include professional players. The 20th International Amateur Pair Go Championships would be in 2009 (counting the 19th as the event at the WMSG) and she requested ideas that could make it special.

c. KABA

Seong-June Kim reported that the KPMC was happening again (7-12 November) in Goyang (near Seoul) and flights would be paid for the players. In addition all players would be welcome at a new Korean Businessman's event 22-27 September. Not just businessmen, but any professional can attend; players have to fund the trip themselves.

d. WMSG

Martin Stiassny briefed the meeting on the arrangements for the forthcoming first WMSG. He spoke about the large amounts of work being done by the IGF to arrange for the 700 expected Go players, coaches and captains from 64 countries. Most of the work was being done by Yuki Shigeno. He had met her in Beijing to look at the facilities. He reported that Air China was providing one ticket per country. The venue was a secure conference centre with id cards being issued to teams, which means no spectators. He was confident the Go events would work well and the Chinese had started a web site for the event. Yuki Shigeno was still waiting for team info from some countries, however.

5) Minutes

The minutes of 2007 were accepted (18/0/5).

6) New Members

No new members proposed this year.

7) Reports

a. President's Report

Tony Atkins mentioned it had been a year of stability and thanks go to the executive for their work, which is largely unseen. However there had been communication problems and if an email is not replied to within seven days, it should be sent again to the full executive. He also stressed cooperation is needed from organisers of Pandanet Go European Cup (PGEC) and other Go events, in order to acknowledge the support of all the event sponsors. Whilst sitting in the local Japanese garden, he had reflected on how Go brought international harmony and unity, and that we were lucky in being able to travel and take part in events such as the first WMSG and other continuing events in Korea and Japan; in the future there may have to be online events (for example the European Masters in 2009).

Mr Zhang Wendong of the WMSG addressed the meeting saying he was pleased to meet with everyone and that they will be made very welcome in Beijing.

b. Secretary's Report

John Gibson had just a few things to report. Peter Zandveld and Martin Finke both requested something be done about the email system and the ant-spam password and messages not getting through. It was agreed to change the system.

c. Treasurer's Report

Hans Kostka reported that in 2009 it would be possible for members to pay IGF fees via EGF to save bank costs and requested the money by 31st January. He commented sponsor income from Ing Foundation was lower in real terms as payment is in dollars. This means some Ing Fund activities are being paid for from reserves.

8) Auditors' Report

Peter Zandveld explained that the Auditors were not members of executive but were required to check the accounts and give advice on the functioning of the EGF. Arnaud Knippel reported that all payments in the accounts had been checked during the Congress, but they had not received accounts early enough to study them thoroughly. Peter said he would be stepping down as he is joining the board of the European Go and Cultural Centre (EGCC) and Arnaud would also be stepping down in two years. New auditors would be sought out and could help with future audits prior to their appointment. Peter stressed the importance of looking after the EGF's sponsors, such as Ing, Pair Go and Pandanet (IGS). An instance of lack of care was an event recently that gave prominence to a flag from Japan whilst the event was sponsored by Ing.

The accounts and auditors' report was accepted (18/0/3).

It was stressed in future that unaudited reports must be sent to members in advance of the meeting.

9) Commission Reports

a. Rules Commission

The Rules Commission is continuing and will complete their report next year.

b. Youth Commission:

Oleg reported on the chance to send children to Kings Baduk in Korea. Up to ten can be sent free and others at a reduced cost, to study at this school. The secretary would circulate the contact details for Kim Sung-Rae to all members.

c. Strong Players Commission

Catalin Taranu was concerned this commission did not represent the top players and players over 2550 rating should be involved. Peter Zandveld stressed other interests should not be ignored, for instance sponsors, organisers and Asian players. Catalin was asked what this was to achieve and he replied to protect the interests of the top players in Europe. Ales Cieply proposed the commission be reformed with Catalin heading it and they could put proposals to the next AGM. For instance the European Championship system was very important to them and Catalin was asked to comment on the proposals being brought to the meeting. He wanted the championship to be Europeans only, but to not lose contact with the strong Asian players attending, possibly through good will matches.

Break was taken 9:15 to 9:45

d. Ratings Commission

Some programming was to take place but Ales Cieply would step down after one more year. A reliable replacement must be sought. Leszek Soldan expressed some concerns about internal events not being rated and also about non-members getting ratings. In Denmark, as well as France you have to be a member for internal events too.

10) Elections

All the existing executive and Auditors were re-elected. Potential Auditors and Ratings Officers should be sought

11) Budget

The budgets were presented for 2008/9 and 2009/10. Due to cuts in Ing income some changes to the Ing Fund budget items were proposed. There were concerns that there was no feed back after money was paid that it was being spent correctly. The last fifth of grants is not paid until accounts and reports are received. Henric Bergsaker did not see a reason to keep so much capital in reserve. Martin Kovarik suggested auditors should make rules on how to use the money. It was agreed that Ing Grants item be cancelled and others items would be trimmed if possible.

The amended budgets were agreed (17/0/5).

12) Commissions

Catalin Taranu was appointed to lead Strong Players' Commission to investigate the European championship system.

13) European Go Congresses

a. 2008 Sweden: no complaints. It was noted the marathon events were slow to start.

b. 2009 Netherlands: Details of the hotel and venue of Groningen were given. They were still trying to sort out sleeping bag places and were not sure about cash prizes yet.

The proposal, held over from 2007, to hold the championship as a knockout was discussed. A wild card place was proposed but thought to random by the Rules Commission, who were proposed to decide final details of the rules. Magnus-Emil Jensen pointed out it was hard for media to understand the European Champion may place twelfth. Ales Cieply thought it was not perfect but that it might work. There were suggestions for and against letting the Strong Players Commission consider the matter, and Catalin was concerned each year may run with different systems. The affect on Asian visitors was a worry to some and Michael Marz wondered what Pros would think. Catalin remembered thinking he had a chance of winning when only a 4 dan, and a new system would prevent that. Getting a final ordering would not be very clear. Prize money can be awarded at the discretion of the organisers.

The proposal was rejected (8/9/6).

c. 2010 Finland: This Will be in Tampere, 120 km from Helsinki, at the Tampere Hall which was being provided by the city. A main committee of six was organising. There would be several cheap options for accommodation.

d. 2011 France: Still trying to find exact venue in Cote d'Azur.

e. 2012 Germany: It was agreed (21/0/2) that it would be in Cologne (Koeln), a university city with lots of accommodation options. Large numbers were expected and the main organiser is Horst Timm who has lots of tournament organising experience.

f. 2013: Romania, Czechia and Poland are still interested (Luxembourg no longer interested)
2014: Russia is still investigating if the Sochi Winter Olympics venue would be available.

14) European Tournament Calendar

The following were approved:

- a. Youth 2010: Romania, if possible, else Czechia
- b. Student 2010: Germany, Darmstadt in September (Netherlands possible 2011)
- c. Pairs 2010: Cyprus or Portugal might be interested
- d. Ing 2010: France (Cannes or Strasbourg possible)
- e. Women 2010: France Aix-les-Bans November
- f. Teams 2010: Sweden, Leksand possible, else Poland

15) Rules Changes

- a. Definition of European player: to be formalised next year (but the 5 year rule will be used in the interim).
- b. Formalise and record the rules of the championships: this should be done.
- c. New EGC Rules (Finland): This further proposal for changing the Championship was rejected (1/17/4) for consideration by the Strong Players Commission.

16) AOB

- a. WMSG rules are acceptable for EGF events, it was pointed out.
- b. Rules Commission will consider changing the super group and bar rules.
- c. Czechia proposed that documentation be circulated earlier, at least a month before.
- d. Czechia also wanted more advance information about and a greater focus on the Students'.
- e. France asked about the children's tour to Japan: UK, NL and CZ went in 2007.

The meeting closed at 12:04 am

John Gibson Honorary Secretary