

MINUTES OF THE AGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sunday, 13 Nov 2005, 7 PM, EDT

Attending: Roy Laird, Bob Barber, Mike Bull, Yuan Thou, Michael Lash

Absent: Allan Abramson; Jeff Shaevel; Willard Haynes

Roy announced that Allan would not be able to attend and had asked him to lead the meeting. He called the meeting to order and announced that Willard was also unable to attend because of a work conflict. He announced that Allan had given Jeff his proxy, but Jeff was not present.

(The minutes of the October meeting had been approved by e-mail and posted on the web.)

Roy announced that Terry Benson had contacted Mike L as President and Allan as Chair and requested the opportunity to present a verbal report to this meeting, on the subject of financial sponsorship from the Ing Foundation. He had recently attended a meeting of the International Rules Committee in Beijing, sponsored by the Ing Foundation, and had had the opportunity to discuss the subject at length with Yang Yu-chia, the Foundation's General Secretary, and Ying Ming-hao, the Chairman of the Foundation and son of the founder, Ing Chang-ki. With no dissent, he invited Terry to make his presentation.

Terry began by noting that both Mr Yang and Mr Ying had separately asked him, what's been happening with Ing Cup? It turns out that no one was providing them with any information about the results of the tournament. Terry had contacted the most recent TD, Chuck Robbins, who said he had never received any instructions to do this. Mr. Ying had expressed appreciation that None Redmond always provides stories and pictures so they can see what's she doing, but they never get anything else.

Mike B interjected that he was surprised to hear this. When he served as Tournament Coordinator(1996-2003), proving the Ing Foundation with immediate results of the Ing Cup and the Masters, including game records, was a top priority. He strongly agreed that this practice should be resumed.

At the Rules Conference, Terry also had the opportunity to speak at length with Oleg Gavrillov, the Vice President of the European Go Federation. In fact they stayed on after the meeting, sharing a room and exploring Beijing together for three days. They discussed European Ing finances at length. Gavrillov told Terry that the European Go Federation (EGF) continues to receive regular funding for its projects, which include:

- A larger equipment grant (\$35,000); we have been receiving 200 sets and 200 clocks per year (\$20,000); they receive 300 sets and 150 clocks
- The Europeans hold an annual children's tournament, funded with \$15,000 - \$20,000. Players above 1D are fully subsidized; 1-10K players receive partial subsidies. "Double-digit" kyu players can participate at their own expense. They

keep costs down by holding the event at an institutional site and using a cafeteria service for food.

- \$25,000 is budgeted for the European Ing Cup, an invitational tournament of 24 players. Travel, room and board are fully subsidized for the 24 players.
- \$10,000 supports the running of the main tournament at the European Go Congress, except for the top 16 boards, under Ing rules.
- \$10,000 per year is given as three grants for local children's programs.

Terry also learned that the EGF has personally invited Mr. Yang to Europe next year for an event.

Both Mr Ying and Mr Yang responded positively to Terry's queries about the status of the North American Ing grant, while also noting that funding the grant every year is a struggle. They also said they had the impression that AGA has some Ing funds in reserve. Terry thought they seemed to be suggesting that if new grant monies were slow in coming, the AGA should be able to continue funding events out of past donations, although they did not explicitly make any such suggestion.

Dissatisfaction was expressed to Terry regarding our youth program. It was noted that in contrast, the Europeans have events with hundreds of children. They were pleased to learn that more than eighty participants in the last Congress were under eighteen, but they remain more impressed with Europe's success. He later learned from Gavrilov that the EGF also receives government grants based cultural activities or sports or political connections, as well as corporate support. Ing Foundation grants make up only about one-third of the funds available for these projects in Europe.

Terry reported that a desire was also expressed to see "American" players at the World Youth Championship, by which Mr. Ying means, non-Asian players. The fact is that nearly all American players in the WYGC have been Asian, while European players in the WYGC are nearly all non-Asian. As an avid youth intramural soccer referee and organizer, Terry answered that many American soccer players have Italian, Greek or Spanish surnames because these are the communities that encourage the game. The same is true of Go. American has a much larger Asian community, so it stands to reason that those communities would produce many of our top players. He noted that some Asian-American competitors come from families that have been in America longer than his own family. Just as soccer is now beginning to attract children from other ethnic communities, Go is doing the same on a smaller scale.

Terry took the opportunity to mention a pet project of his to Mr. Ying – the inclusion of computer Go in the selection of games available on individual screens to more and more airline passengers. Mr. Ying responded favorably to this idea.

Terry concluded his report with a series of recommendations:

- Immediately resume the practice of providing the Foundation with timely information about all Ing funded events, and increase communication in others ways that funding recipients generally interact with sponsors.
- Bring the Foundation up to date with an extensive report on our activities of the past few years, especially regarding children.

- Send the Ing Foundation a proposed budget for next year, not conditional on receiving funds. Be prepared to fund this budget from reserves for one year if necessary.
- Discuss additional projects with the Foundation that could be undertaken with sufficient funding.
- Invite someone from the Ing Foundation to next year's Congress
- Organize a national youth tournament. Mike B interjected that we have a national youth tournament, the Redmond Cup. Yuan asked how many participants the Ing Cup has – Mike B answered that about twenty players participate in the preliminary. Terry agreed that the Redmond Cup is national in that any young person in the US can play; however, he had something larger and more organized in mind: perhaps several regional events – hopefully involving as many kids as in Europe -- would pick contenders who would be funded to play in an in-person final event, selecting contenders for the World Youth Wei-ch'i Championship,
- Terry received a specific suggestion from the Foundation to help Feng Yun. He suggested that this might mean developing a program to help all pros teach kids – not adults – using her as a model.
- Continue Ing funding of the Redmond Cup, and keep the finals at the Congress.
- Find a way to address the perception that we aren't doing enough for kids compared to Europe when we have 1/3 the money.
- Work with all those in contact with Ing and the Asian associations to enlist them in helping our relationship.
- Make sure that, while we don't discriminate, that we are working to develop players outside the traditional go communities and not just finding players where it is easiest.
- Stay involved in the rules conference. The next meeting is February 14-17 in Seoul.
- Follow up on the airline game idea.

Terry offered to answer by e-mail any questions the Board had about rules issues.

Terry thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak, and left the call at this point.

Roy stated that the floor was open and invited each participant to express his reaction.

Bob said that assuming the accuracy of Terry's information, he agreed that we should continue supporting Ing events.

Mike B said that although the news is not good, the situation seems fixable. He suggested that if funds are limited, we concentrate on high profile events.

Yuan also expressed support for the Ing programs.

Roy said that as a preliminary analysis, he had looked at annual reports since 1999 – it appeared that we had spent approximately \$365,000 on Ing projects during that period. In the same period we had received approximately \$480,000 in cash from the Ing

Foundation. This would suggest the presence of considerable cash reserves that have accrued from the Ing funds over the year. His analysis did not include expenditures during the early part of the grant, from 1994 to 1999, when the AGA received approximately \$350,000 in contributions.

Mike L requested direction from the Board on how to proceed.

The Board agreed without dissent that the recently adopted policy of suspending funding for Ing events should be reversed in principle. However, they did not reach specific agreement on any particular project. Mike L was instructed to contact George Zhou, the current Ing Foundation liaison, and discuss with him the need to develop more effective communication with the Foundation. It was also agreed that Mike L would request from the Redmond Cup team a detailed budget for this year, not to exceed budgets in prior years.

Board members present noted that it will be very important to reach a specific decision on funding Ing events for next year at the next Board meeting.

In the absence of objection, Roy invited Mike to proceed with his report. He discussed his experience meeting with Chen Zude and other Chinese Go officials at the recent world tournament in Guangzhou. He was very impressed with how seriously he was taken, and "treated like a king." The China Weiqi Association seems extremely interested in finding ways to help spread Go in America.

Mike L concluded his report with an update on the AGA financial situation. He noted that administrative expenses are over budget, especially database expenses. Roy mentioned that the 2004 budget had included a line item, and preceding budgets, had included a line item for database maintenance that had disappeared from the 2005 budget. Roy recalled that the cost in 2004 was over \$8000. Mike L stated that aside from this anomaly, we are spending slightly less and receiving slightly more in membership income than anticipated. None of the funds for marketing/promotion have been allocated as yet.

Roy stated that several items remained on the agenda that Allan had distributed for this meeting, and the meeting had been session for just over an hour. He asked the sense of the group on how to proceed. Yuan stated that he would have to leave shortly. Roy noted that since only four members are present, that would mean the loss of a quorum. Mike B moved to adjourn, Yuan seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

-- submitted by Roy Laird