



## 2020 AGM: President's Report

### *Coronavirus*

*This Report covers the calendar year 2019, but it would be wrong not to mention the current Coronavirus outbreak and its effect on the Association. As I write this Report in March 2020 the country is in effective lockdown due to the Coronavirus. As a result all face to face Go events have been cancelled for the foreseeable future, but we hope to resume normal service as soon as possible.*

### **Tournaments**

Since the last British Congress we held 30 Open Tournaments spread over 43 days, with an average of 35 players per event – an increase of 6% over the previous year.

### **Youth and Sponsorship**

We received a third (and final) tranche of £5,000 sponsorship from DeepMind to support Youth Go. We used some of this to support a third residential 2-day course at Caythorpe, near Grantham, attended by 26 of our young members, with Go teaching in the mornings, outdoor activities in the afternoons and social game playing in the evenings. A fourth event is planned to take place this summer.

Also receiving support was the British Youth Go Championships, held at Brownsover Hall in Rugby, in November 2019, with an entry of 55. We congratulate Jayden Ng for winning the Youth Championship.

In previous years we have supported youngsters going to the European Youth Go Championships. This year they were held in Moscow and there was no desire from players to visit Russia; accordingly we did not provide any support and as a consequence some of the sponsorship money has been carried over to 2020. For the future we have been promised support from the T Mark Hall Foundation.

We took part in the European Youth Team Championship, held over the Internet. We selected a squad of 12 players, 5 of whom played in each match (even games). In picking the team for each match, our team manager aimed to provide generally close games while giving each squad member a chance to play; winning was considered a secondary objective. Nonetheless we came 7<sup>th</sup> (out of 12) in both the 2018/19 and 2019/20 seasons.. I thank Alison Bexfield for acting as Team Manager.

A team of 4 (with 2 accompanying adults) was invited to visit Xian in China in the summer for an inter-school tournament. The team was heavily outclassed, and treated it as a learning experience. We thank the Chinese for their generous sponsorship of this event, and to Martin and Helen Harvey for acting as Team Leaders.

## **London Go Centre**

The London Go Centre continues to operate. It ran 7 (and hosted 2) tournaments during the year, including the London Open Go Congress. It has upgraded the internet connection to enable games to be streamed.

It hosted a professional visit from China, (Liu Yajie), and started a monthly lecture series, which unfortunately was almost immediately suspended due to illness.

I thank Gerry Gavigan and his team for making this possible, and to the T Mark Hall Foundation for financial support.

## **Team Competitions**

We took part in the Pandanet Go European Team Championship, played over the Internet, where we were 7<sup>th</sup> out of 10 in League B for the 2018/19 season. For the 2019/20 season we are again mid-table. My thanks to Sandy Taylor for acting as team Captain.

## **British Championship**

Andrew Kay defeated Andrew Simons 2-1 in the Title Match. All three games were broadcast on KGS. We are planning a simplification for future years, amalgamating the Candidates Tournament and the Challenger's League.

## **International Representation**

Andrew Kay represented the UK at both the World Amateur Go Championship, where he came 27<sup>th</sup> out of 59, and at the Korean Prime Minister's Cup, coming 9<sup>th</sup> out of 62, the best results ever for a UK player at this Tournament.

## **Teaching**

We held half-day teaching events at the British Congress, Penzance, and Nottingham. We welcomed professionals Catalin Taranu (Romania) back to the London Open, and Antii Tormannen (Finland) to "Not the London Open", supported by the Nihon Kiin.

The London Go Centre has put up 38 videos (lectures and games) on its U-Tube channel, [www.youtube.com/c/LondonGoCentre](http://www.youtube.com/c/LondonGoCentre), which has 647 subscribers. It also ran a training day for kyu players,

## **Web-Site**

We regret that there has been almost no progress on upgrading our web-site to Drupal 8. We will be adopting a new approach to this upgrade in 2020 in an attempt to move the project on.

## **Constitution**

Council has reviewed our governance arrangements (currently encapsulated in our Constitution). It has concluded that we should convert from the existing unincorporated association to a Company Limited by Guarantee. The Articles of Association of the new Company should largely mirror the existing provisions of the constitution with two significant differences. Firstly, we would propose to introduce proxy voting; Council believes that this would be a worthwhile change in any case, and is proposing it as a constitutional amendment

at this AGM. Secondly, Council believes that it should have the authority to discipline members (including, *in extremis*, expulsion) although it would expect to use these provisions very rarely, if at all. The exact powers and safeguards proposed are still under discussion and we do not have any concrete proposal to put forward at the moment.

There is, nevertheless, a motion at this AGM to ask members to approve in principle the change to a Company Limited by Guarantee, and to agree in principle that Council should have disciplinary powers.


### **World Wei Chi Leaders' Conference**

I was invited to this event, held in Rizhao, China, by the Chinese Weiqi Association (CWA). About 60 countries were represented.

The keynote speech was given by Lin Jiancho, the new President of the CWA, who explained that there has been a significant change in the organisation of Weiqi in China; the CWA has been centralised and has been given more power. It included a potted history of Weiqi in China, but failed to recognise the significant contributions made by other countries (notably Japan), nor the IGF.

The Conference itself consisted of each delegate making a short 3-5 minute speech about Go in their country. There were no questions and no time for discussion. As all the speeches had been previously circulated (and are available in the written proceedings) this was not particularly useful.

I thank the Chinese Wei-Qi Association for providing flights and accommodation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Toby Manning', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Toby Manning  
BGA President  
1 April 2020.