



## **Organisers' Handbook**

The British Go Association

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Overview

This document is intended to be the standard source of information on organising Go playing, teaching and publicity. It is aimed mainly at the current state of Go in the British Isles, but is intended to be much more widely applicable.

The various chapters contain gleanings from many years' experience of Go organisation, but everyone has his own favourite ways of doing things, and anyone who feels that his preferred methods or ideas are missing, or are not covered adequately, should write to the BGA with suggestions, so that future editions can include the benefit of his experience as well.

Throughout, for brevity and convenience, a player is referred to as "he", since the majority of players at present are male, despite the growing number of female players.

Material contained herein may be copied as long as it is done to further the interests of Go playing and is credited to the BGA.

### Acknowledgements

This edition was compiled by Edwin Brady, and updates the previous edition, prepared by Tony Atkins. Thanks are due to Tony Atkins, Ian Davis, Geoff Kaniuk, Jenny Radcliffe, Paul Smith and Nick Wedd for their contributions and suggestions, and the many contributions (both direct and indirect!) from the gotalk mailing list. It was typeset using the  $\LaTeX$  document preparation system.

### 1.2 The British Go Association

The British Go Association (affiliated to the European Go Federation and to the International Go Federation) is a voluntary organisation with elected officials which exists to promote the game of Go within the British Isles. The BGA has existed for 50 years, and is actively involved in the organisation and co-ordination of tournaments. The BGA

plays an active part in the European Go Federation (EGF), taking its turn to be the host to the annual European Go Congress.

Membership is open to all Go players on payment of a small annual subscription. Among the BGA's activities are the following:

### **Publications**

- The British Go Journal is distributed free to members and includes instructional articles as well as news items.
- The BGA newsletter is distributed to members every two months, and includes recent news and details of forthcoming events.
- The BGA website<sup>1</sup> includes pages of news<sup>2</sup> covering UK and European tournaments and events.

### **Services**

- The BGA provides books, sets, and other supplies, at special members' prices by post. There is a price list online<sup>3</sup>.
- A number of public-domain Go-related utilities, including Go-playing programs, are also made available on CD ROM, as a service to members.
- The Association provides a game analysis service, help with putting on tournaments, and other services to members and clubs.
- Diplomas are awarded to all those who reach dan strength, according to the grading system maintained by the European Go Federation.
- The BGA offers free web space (up to 50kB) to BGA affiliated Go clubs.

### **Tournaments**

- Around 25 Go tournaments are held regularly in Britain each year. The BGA helps with the organisation of these, and lends Go sets and clocks for them.
- The annual British Go Congress is held around Easter time, and the British Championship somewhat later in the year. Other tournaments are not run by the Association, but are assisted, and coordinated and advertised by it.

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.britgo.org/>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.britgo.org/news/>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.britgo.org/bgabooks/bgaprices.html>

## **Representation**

- Each year a sponsor generously provides air tickets to allow British Go players to compete in the World Amateur Go Championship as representatives of Britain. There is also representation in European tournaments.

**Part I**  
**Running a Club**

## Chapter 2

# Starting A Club

If there is no Go club near you, you can always start one. The hardest thing at first is to find other players; the BGA Membership Secretary can help by providing a list of nearby BGA members. There may also be go players nearby who are not BGA members, who will of course be more difficult to find. Several people, particularly those with no nearby club, play Go on the Internet. Possible ways to find these players include posting an announcement to the gotalk mailing list or the `rec.games.go` newsgroup (see Appendix B for contact details). Also, the Kiseido Go Server<sup>1</sup> has a British Room, where you may find local players.

### 2.1 Setting Up

Once you have a nucleus of players (and this can be as little as two) you can start to arrange regular meetings. These can be weekly, which is probably best, or less frequently such as fortnightly or monthly. An initial venue can be a member's front room; once established there, you can contemplate expansion. Many go clubs have originated in this manner.

Of the other possibilities for a venue, the most common is one associated with a member's occupation. This includes a university (if he is a student or a lecturer), firm, or social club attached to a firm. The great advantages are that these are generally cheap — financial assistance may even be available — and usually fairly salubrious. Publicity aimed at fellow employees is often successful, but it may be more difficult to attract non employees. Rules for social clubs are often quite strict, but only so as to cater for licensing laws, and a method to include non employees is usually not difficult to find. You should discuss the situation with officials of the social club.

Other possible venues are church halls, coffee bars, pubs, etc. They all have their pros and cons, and local intelligence will often generate some ideas. If you do not know where to start looking, find out where

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<sup>1</sup><http://kgs.kiseido.com/>

the local chess players meet. The public library should be able to provide that information.

### **BGA Affiliation**

To affiliate your club to the BGA, you must nominate a club secretary. The secretary must be a member of the BGA, and be prepared to have contact details published by the BGA. Club secretaries should encourage members to join the BGA and can collect their fees and contact details to pass on to the BGA membership secretary.

When you have a regular meeting time and location and a nominated club secretary, you should inform the BGA webmaster, who will add the details to the website and arrange for information to be included in the newsletter and journal.

One of the major problems when a club is started is that of equipment. The BGA can help affiliated clubs here by loaning sets for a short period while the club gets going; contact the Equipment Coordinator to arrange this. Collection and return will be your responsibility; you can often do this at tournaments. Ultimately, of course, the club should be self-supporting.

### **Joint Meetings**

If there are several clubs in the same region, it is a good idea to arrange occasional joint meetings with those clubs, perhaps also with a social event. For example, a group of clubs in the North East hold occasional joint meetings at weekends, with a barbecue in the evening. The main advantage of such meetings, particularly for small or new clubs, is to give players an opportunity to play different opponents from usual.

## **2.2 Club Management**

There are several ways in which a club can support itself; a small club can make do with the use of members' equipment, although you should make sure there are 9x9 boards to teach beginners; these can be obtained for less than £5 from the BGA Shop<sup>2</sup>. A club based at a university may be able to get grants from their Student Union to buy books and equipment. The most common way, however, is to charge a small fee. Many clubs have two types of fee: an annual fee and a board fee for each evening. It is recommended that the board fees should do more than cover the cost of the room (if any); the surplus can be used to purchase equipment or books for a club library. Typical fees might be £10 per annum and £1 per evening, with appropriate reductions for those in full-time education etc. The details will, however, depend on local circumstances and many clubs operate free. Many established clubs are funded by the profits of running a tournament.

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<sup>2</sup><http://www.britgo.org/bgabooks/bgaprises.html>

Usually there is one person, the prime mover, who starts the club going, but he should not see it as a one man show. He should delegate jobs wherever possible, as this will help to ensure the continuity of the club if he should leave the district. Typical jobs are Secretary, Treasurer and Equipment Officer/Librarian. None of these duties is particularly onerous, but people tend to be shy of volunteering, yet will do the job enthusiastically if asked. The appointment of a publicity officer could be worthwhile, especially if there is someone with a flair for it.

Some Go clubs are officially set up with a bank account and a constitution. Others have neither. If you want to have a bank account, and one is recommended if you charge a membership fee or intend to run tournaments, you will probably need to have a constitution. This does not need to be particularly elaborate; the only important thing is to clarify the means by which the members can check that their money is being looked after properly. A model constitution sufficient for most purposes is given in figure 2.1.

### **Constitution of the . . . Go Club**

1. The . . . Go Club is a non profit-making organisation devoted to the playing of, and promotion of interest in the game of go.
2. The officers of the club shall be Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.
3. There shall be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) to which the Secretary shall invite all members at least two weeks in advance.
4. The business of the AGM shall include the election of officers and the presentation by the Treasurer of the previous year's accounts.

Figure 2.1: Model Constitution

It is, of course, possible to be far more precise about these matters and also to define details of the many other aspects of club management, but in practice such items tend to be forgotten or ignored or, worse, they absorb time and effort which would be better spent playing Go.

## **Chapter 3**

# **Publicity For Clubs**

Publicity is very important for Go clubs, since a large proportion of the population have not even heard of the game. Some of these people would become keen Go players once they knew what the game was about.

### **3.1 Publicity for New Go Clubs**

A good time for concentrated publicity is when a club is about to start meeting in a reasonably sized venue, possibly as an expansion from a small group meeting in a member's house. After finding a suitable venue (see section 2.1), it is necessary to fix upon a day for the first meeting; this should allow sufficient time for advance preparation (say 4-6 weeks).

There are various ways of publicising the opening of a Go club. Posters, which can be obtained free from the BGA Secretary, should be displayed at work or school. Even better is to place notices at the local university or technical college, since students often take to Go quickly and spread the game amongst themselves. Advertisements should be placed in the personal columns of local newspapers (especially student newspapers) and in newsagents' windows. Notices should be placed in local libraries, and also in members' windows. Contact the BGA Membership Secretary to establish whether there are any unattached members already in your area who can be approached to join. Finally, a good way to spread Go is to talk about the game - many people who would ignore other publicity try out the game because a friend of a friend plays Go.

### **3.2 Regular Publicity**

A major publicity effort is essential to get a new club started. However, it is also very important to maintain a smaller amount of continuous publicity, since a club needs a steady flow of new members in order to keep going. Furthermore, if there have been no recent recruits to the

club, a beginner who does turn up is often put off by the high standard. Most clubs will not be able to spend any money on regular publicity, but there is still a lot that can be done.

The first thing is to maintain some of the initial publicity by keeping up posters and notices for as long as possible. Your local public library will normally be willing to display a small card giving details of your go club, which should include where and when it meets, a website address, who to contact for information (with email address and telephone number) and a few words about the game itself. Go should also be covered in any lists of local societies; these are often organised by libraries, newspapers and information services.

It is also worth putting a card in any local board games shop; some shops have a board of contact cards for various game-related groups and these often attract new visitors to your club.

Although a local newspaper will not want to publish regular articles about the game itself, it may be interested in results of club matches and of local players in tournaments, particularly if they win prizes. Another way to generate publicity is to organise a tournament (see Chapter 7 for details).

### **3.3 Club Web Site**

Many people find out about go, and their local clubs, through the internet. It is therefore essential for a club to have an up to date website, listing meeting times and places, with directions — it is easy to link to a map using Google maps<sup>1</sup>, streetmap<sup>2</sup> or multimap<sup>3</sup> — and contact details. The site should also state that the club is open to and welcomes visitors. The BGA website maintains a list of clubs<sup>4</sup> and provides a small amount of free web space (up to 50kB) to BGA affiliated Go clubs. If you want your club to have its own page, but have nowhere to host it, just send the webmaster an email containing the text (in html if you can manage it) and any graphics.

### **3.4 Open Evenings and Freshers' Fairs**

It is easier to keep beginners keen on go if they have other beginners of the same standard to play against. Partly for this reason, and partly to make teaching easier, it is a good idea to try to recruit a large number of beginners at the same time, and the best way to do this is to run widely publicised open evenings every year or so.

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<sup>1</sup><http://maps.google.com>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.streetmap.co.uk/>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.multimap.com/>

<sup>4</sup><http://www.britgo.org/clublist/clubsmatp.html>

### **3.4.1 Timing and Publicity**

In university clubs such events should obviously be run at the beginning of the academic year, in other clubs the best time is less easy to determine, but the Autumn is usually best. Even if you are not a university club, it is worth targetting local universities at the beginning of the academic year. Contact the students union at the beginning of the summer to get details of when they hold their Freshers' Fair. There will usually be a small charge for this, but it can be worth it in terms of the numbers of people who then come to the open evening.

The vital thing about an open evening is that it should be widely advertised. Local libraries and the local press are a good start, but deliberate raids on the chess and bridge clubs in the area have the great advantage of concentrating on people known to have a propensity for playing games in clubs. There may also be groups in your area which meet to play other games such as Dungeons and Dragons or Othello which can be raided in the same manner. Games shops are a good source of information on the whereabouts of such groups.

### **3.4.2 Running the Open Evening**

When it comes to actually running the open evening the important thing is to spend as little time as is absolutely necessary teaching the rules, and to get people to play as many games as possible reasonably quickly — chess players in particular have a tendency to spend far too long thinking in their first few games — and only using 9x9 boards. Photocopied small boards will usually suffice but look a bit tacky.

How you run the open evening depends on the sort of people who turn up. In particular, teaching adults requires a different approach from teaching children. One way of running an open evening goes as follows:

1. One of the club's stronger players gives a short talk introducing the basic rules and some background to the game. If you have access to a demonstration board, or even a computer and projector, with which to demonstrate the rules, so much the better. However, it is important to keep this short, perhaps no more than 10 minutes. Remember that people have come to play! It is better to leave out such details as ko and life and death, as people will have difficulty taking everything in.
2. If there are enough experienced players present, get each one to play a beginner. During the first games, you can explain any gaps left by the introductory talk, such as ko.
3. Get the beginners playing each other. Your goal at this stage is to make people come back to the club, and if they know there are others of about the same strength, this is more likely to happen. Be prepared to answer questions; people will ask in particular about the life and death status of groups, and whether the game is over.

4. Above all, be friendly and welcoming! Particularly if you have a group of adults, it is good to finish with some kind of social event, even if this is just going to the pub, to get to know the newcomers. It is not unusual to find that they want to continue playing Go over a pint!

There are other approaches you can take. Some people have success teaching large groups (particularly groups of children) by beginning with First Capture Go, then moving on when dead stones stop being overlooked. Many bright children discover ko and even life and death for themselves this way.

## Chapter 4

# Teaching Beginners

A beginner is the most important person in the club. He is the new blood that will keep the community developing, and if there are no beginners then the community stagnates and the interest dies. When this happens, the club may be very close to folding up. Members of the club should be aware of this danger, so that in addition to teaching any potential new players, they show the correct attitude to them. The beginner must not feel that he is outside the existing group of players and has to fight for acceptance; he must be welcomed with open arms and encouraged as much as possible. Above all talk to him, about his life outside go, possibly over a pint, to get to know him personally.

### 4.1 Teaching the rules

Some go clubs, particularly at universities, have certain meetings where more than one beginner turns up. Others rarely see more than one new player at a time. In either case, the rules of go need to be explained. Since it is important for this to be done clearly, players at the club who expect to teach beginners should think beforehand about what approach they intend to adopt. The various leaflets<sup>1</sup> available may be useful for this purpose (e.g. the BGA Introductory leaflet, and Andreas Fecke's cartoon introduction).

Teaching with a board, and with the subject able to ask questions is, however, a rather different task from teaching simply through a written text. You will, with some experience, come up with your own methods of teaching beginners; however the following scheme is one starting point. Remember that the important thing is to have some sort of plan before you start — you should nevertheless be flexible, as some people take to the game more quickly than others.

**Teach by playing games, not by demonstration** The point of the first few games is to make the beginner comfortable with the rules and to give them a feel for the game. Remember that it is not essential to explain all of the rules straight away; in particular, details

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.britgo.org/covers/covers.html>

like ko and seki are likely to be confusing. Keep in mind at all times that it is hard to take in large amounts of information in one go. Because of this, you are likely to have more success if you describe just enough rules to get playing, then introduce further rules (e.g. ko) as necessary.

**Basic Rules** Begin by explaining the basic rules:

- Say that the game is played between two players, black and white.
- Explain that the stones are placed on the intersections and that black plays first.
- Explain that the purpose of the game is to surround territory.
- Describe capture of one stone, then groups of stones, and explain that suicide is not allowed.
- Explain how the game ends and how to score (you will almost certainly need to explain this again).

Try to be consistent with your terminology (e.g. always use the words “stone” and “turn” rather than “piece” or “move”) and avoid the use of jargon (you may find it useful to explain “liberty” and “atari”, but that should be all).

The beginner now knows enough to start playing. You should explain the handicap system and give the beginner an appropriate number of handicap stones (as a rough guide, the beginner is about 30kyu and you should give 1 handicap stone for 5 grades difference on a 9x9 board). If you intend to let several beginners play amongst themselves, you can skip this detail at first.

**First Games** The first games should be played on a 9x9 board as this allows the beginner to get a quick introduction to all aspects of the rules — a larger board appears daunting at first.

It is good to encourage the beginner to play their first games quickly; many people in their first games think very carefully before making the wrong move! Some beginners can freeze completely, and need encouraging to make a move. You should aim to win by a small margin; although it may be tempting to capture all of black’s stones given an opportunity, this will discourage many. It is important to remember throughout the games that the point is to make it comprehensible, not to win or lose, and the teacher needs to play accordingly. Use phrases like “close game” if the margin is anything less than around ten points, and after each game, try to give a summary of what happened.

At some stage, a ko will arise naturally, at which point you should explain the ko rule — try to resist explaining its implications however! It is also likely that a snapback will arise; this often confuses beginners who often think it is disallowed because it is a ko or suicide, so you should take care to explain why it is legal. Try to avoid ko or snapback in the first game, however!

**End Of The Game** Most people have difficulty knowing when to pass in their first few games, and end up examining the board for several minutes not knowing what to do. You should be prepared to comment at this stage, either by asking what they are thinking, or remarking that you think the game is over. Occasionally, new players pass when there are still points left, in which case you may want to comment that the game isn't quite over yet. Whatever happens, don't let the endgame drag on too long, as there are far more interesting and important things to learn.

Many beginners have difficulty understanding which groups are alive or dead at the end of the game. Often, they will try impossible invasions into your territory. Be patient with this; they will learn more by playing out these situations than if you try to explain.

**Eyes** After one or two games, when you have captured several large groups, the beginner will probably be very keen to know how to avoid this! The easiest way to demonstrate eyes is to make a group with a three space big eye in the corner, and show what happens when either player plays on the vital point. You may choose to set up some simple life and death problems for the beginner to try to solve.

## **4.2 Starting To Play**

If you have more than one beginner in the club, it is good for them to play amongst themselves. While the handicap system allows players of greatly differing strength to play, many people do prefer the chance to play against people of roughly equal strength. All club members should still, of course, be prepared to play teaching games against the new players, remembering that the more they do this, the sooner they will have more even game opponents!

### **4.2.1 Board Size**

It is a matter of some debate as to whether beginners should play on a small 9x9 board, or play on a full size board as soon as possible. While the first games should certainly be on a small board, to some extent, it should be up to beginners to decide which is most enjoyable for them — after all, the more they enjoy it, the more likely they are to continue playing. However, you should not expect the stronger players to have to give more than 9 stones handicap on any size of board. The beginner is likely to get more benefit from playing a 10 kyu on a 13x13 board with a 6 stone handicap (or even a 9x9 board with a 4 stone handicap) than on a 19x19 board with a 20 stone handicap. This is also likely to be more beneficial for the 10 kyu.

### 4.2.2 Teaching Games

Teaching games should be a constant feature of all go clubs; every member should be encouraged to give weaker players teaching games. This is beneficial for everyone; most people find that explaining a concept to someone improves their own understanding of that concept. Some points to bear in mind are:

- You should play to win, but at the same time remember that the goal is to teach. To this end, you may find it useful to make comments during the game (but be careful to comment on good moves as well as bad).
- Review the game afterwards. If you can remember the game, so much the better — it is also good to encourage black to try to remember his moves. Many people are surprised and encouraged by how well they can do this.
- As when teaching the rules, try not to explain too many concepts at once. In your review, it is better to focus on one single thing the student can improve, rather than try to correct everything.

### 4.2.3 Computer Programs

Although Go programs do not yet challenge players above around 5 kyu, they are very useful for beginners. It is said that beginners should lose their first 50 games as quickly as possible, and many people prefer to do this against a computer rather than against a human opponent! Playing a few games against a computer is a good way for a beginner to learn common shapes and simple tactics. Computer programs also do not get upset if you keep taking moves back. Some possible programs are:

- Igowin<sup>2</sup>
- Gnu Go<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup><http://www.smart-games.com/igowin.html>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.gnu.org/software/gnugo/gnugo.html>

## Chapter 5

# Competitions for Clubs

### 5.1 Club Ladder

A club ladder provides a format for playing relatively serious handicap games with automatically adjusting grades. It also enables a go club to establish the relative grades of its members and to monitor their progress.

The rungs of the ladder form a vertical scale which represents the grading system. Every member of the group has a marker on one of these rungs. Each grade is divided into several subdivisions, each of which is represented by one rung. Every time a player wins a game he goes up one rung and every time he loses a game he goes down one. The handicap for a game is simply the difference between the current grades of the players, giving, say, 5 points komi for each grade over.

Levels should be closer together at the top of the ladder than at the bottom; this automatically allows weaker players to change grade faster than stronger ones. There are various ways of dividing up the grades. One suggestion is as follows:

**1 dan+** 0.1 grade per rung

**1-6 kyu** 0.2 grade per rung

**7-16 kyu** 0.5 grade per rung

**17-24 kyu** 1.0 grade per rung

#### 5.1.1 Prizes

The element of competition may be enhanced by giving various prizes for results over some set period (for example, in a university club, the obvious thing to do is to award termly prizes. Otherwise, a good period is around three months). Some examples of prizes you could award are:

**Improvement** The player who has climbed the most rungs over the period wins the “Most Improved Player” prize. This type of prize

also has the advantage that it is easier for weaker players to win than for stronger ones.

**Persistence** The player who has played the most games over the period wins the “Most Persistent Player” prize; the idea of this is to encourage players to try harder to improve. The disadvantage is that the same players tend to win every time.

### 5.1.2 Limitations

The main problem with any sort of ladder is that, while it is very good at describing the relative strengths of the players involved, there is a tendency for the whole club to get stronger simultaneously and the ladder cannot reflect this. Some ways of introducing inflation automatically are:

- Fix the bottom of the ladder, so that no player goes below (say) 25 kyu.
- Fix other positions in the ladder. If a player is a regular tournament goer, he will have an established EGF rating<sup>1</sup> controlled by the European Go Federation and his ladder position can be anchored accordingly.
- A player winning his third successive game can go up two rungs, instead of the usual one.
- Promotion after winning several games in a tournament.
- If the grade difference between two players is large and the weaker player wins, he can go up two rungs.

However the only reliable way to incorporate inflation into a ladder is to play games against members of other clubs and to keep a check on the result, shifting the whole club up a few notches if the members seem to be doing too well outside.

### 5.1.3 Representing the Ladder

Probably the easiest way to represent the ladder is on a club website. This has the advantage that people can monitor their progress and that of other members outside meetings. You should consider, however, that some people may not want to have their names on the web, so it is a good idea to check first. One such example is the Durham Go Club Ladder<sup>2</sup>.

A physical ladder can also be constructed — for example, some sort of wall chart may be used. The players’ names are put on small markers which can be moved up and down the ladder. The rungs should be made wide enough to take several players’ names at once.

<sup>1</sup><http://www.eurogofed.org/rating/>

<sup>2</sup><http://compsoc.dur.ac.uk/%7Eecb/goladder/>

A different way of representing the ladder is to use a sheet of paper divided into columns. The left hand column contains the names of the players and the second column gives their nominal grades. The remaining columns contain new ladder grades updated after each game. This sort of ladder has the advantage of portability, although it will need replacing at regular intervals.

## 5.2 Club Championship

The great advantage of running tournaments in clubs is that they don't have to finish in one day. A simple idea is to have an all-play-all tournament spread over two months or more. You may choose to play with or without handicaps (or even with reduced handicaps), and all games should be played with clocks and have time limits of at least an hour per player.

If the club is a large one, such a tournament will last too long, and it may be better to divide the players into several divisions.

A club championship can be split into several stages. One format is for all but the strongest players in the club to participate in a short knockout tournament, the winners of which qualify for places in a league where they are joined by the strongest players. This idea can be stretched further by having a 3 or 5 game playoff between the top two finishers in the league, and by allowing players who do well in one year to start in a privileged position in the next tournament, but it should be remembered that a protracted tournament will make it difficult for beginners to be catered for adequately.

## 5.3 Club Tournaments

If the players at the club are keen on quick games with clocks, it is relatively simple to organise a "lightning ladder". It is recommended that all rungs be 0.5 stone apart, but beware: normal handicaps do not necessarily apply for quick games, and players can easily end up more than 9 stones from their starting grades.

In order to finish a tournament in one night, it is necessary to use small boards, or quick games, or both. 10 minutes of clock time for a double elimination knockout tournament (see section 11.2) on 13x13 boards is about right. Exact details will depend on the number of players and the range of strengths. Small boards allow a much wider range of handicaps; 9 stones on a 13x13 board is about right for 25 grades difference. Some of the other systems discussed in section 11 may be found to be useful.

There are several other possibilities:

**An informal weekend tournament** Some clubs have run McMahon style tournaments, more or less along the lines of a typical BGA tournament as described in Part II. This can be fairly informal (e.g., in a pub or coffee shop, or even someone's front room), with

the club and players supplying equipment. The entry fee could be a donation to a local charity, or donation of a prize. This is a particularly good idea if you are planning to hold a BGA Tournament at some stage, but have no experience, and is a good way to introduce beginners to the fun of tournament Go in a friendly environment.

**Matches against other local clubs** If you have another club nearby, it would be possible to arrange matches against them (e.g. Oxford and Cambridge hold an annual Varsity Match). The usual format is for players from each club to play approximately evenly matched players from the other club, and the winner to be the club with the most games won. This is a good opportunity to play against new opponents without having to travel too far.

**Internet matches against other clubs** Many Go players now play regularly over the internet, for example on KGS<sup>3</sup> or IGS<sup>4</sup> and so if you don't have any local clubs you could consider arranging a match against another club (even a club in another country) on a Go server.

You should, however, not be limited by any of these suggestions. If you have any further ideas or hold any other kind of competition, please let us know so that it can be included in this document.

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<sup>3</sup><http://kgs.kiseido.com/>

<sup>4</sup><http://www.pandanet.co.jp/English/>

## Chapter 6

# Teaching Events

Most established clubs will hold weekly (or fortnightly) meetings, with the main purpose of playing games. A regular feature should of course be the playing of teaching games against weaker players. Apart from this, several kinds of events designed for teaching have been tried. The following sections describe several ideas (by no means exhaustive).

### 6.1 Demonstration games

Two of the strongest players in the club play a game, while a third gives a running commentary to explain what is going on. It is important that the players are not allowed to speak [it is likely that they will anyway], since the commentary then degenerates into a high-level argument which nobody else can follow. These events have the advantage of being very easy to organise, and they can be extremely enjoyable if the commentator is skilful enough.

### 6.2 Game analyses

A game is selected, e.g. one played at the club the previous week, and (preferably) two of the strongest players take it home and think about it. One of them gives a 30-minute lecture on the game. In planning such a lecture the following points should be borne in mind:

- Don't talk for more than about 30 minutes since people will start to lose interest
- Concentrate on just one aspect of the game; there won't be time to about everything.
- Stop every now and again for a quiz session; make some little cardboard circles with a, b etc. on them, and put them on the board at likely looking points at key stages of the game which are to be discussed. Collect votes as to which to play, or get onlookers to choose their move using tiddlywinks or pennies.

These events can be highly enjoyable and informative, but they require a considerable amount of preparation by the person who is to give the talk.

### **6.3 Visits by stronger players**

The BGA has a scheme for organising visits by the country's dan-grade players to clubs. These can be used as foci for press coverage, and may take many forms; perhaps the simplest is for the whole club to play the visitor simultaneously. All clubs are encouraged to avail themselves of this facility.

### **6.4 Study sessions**

These are really a matter for small groups of players to organise outside normal club meetings. The recommended approach is to have one member who has studied the matter to be discussed in advance. This can be a game he has played, a professional game he has studied, or a joseki that he has read about in text books. This person then presents the subject and the others join in the discussion as seems appropriate.

The success, or otherwise, of such events depends almost entirely on the personalities involved; some study groups generate highly successful social evenings which also contribute greatly to the playing strength of those involved, while others degenerate consistently into acrimonious debate. In any event, it is important not to allow such groups, whether meeting as part of a club night or not, to form a clique from which beginners will feel excluded.

### **6.5 Teaching Exercises**

Teaching events which involve active participation are often more beneficial. This section describes some games which are designed to improve some aspect of the players' Go. Other suggestions would, of course, be welcome, however experimental or unusual they may seem.

#### **6.5.1 Killing Game**

Set up a board with several black stones, such as the position in figure 6.1. White moves first; the objective for white is to make a living group, and the objective for black is to kill all of white's stones. This game is particularly beneficial for players below around 15 kyu, and is intended to give more confidence in making invasions, and practice at techniques for killing unreasonable invasions.

Other starting positions are of course possible, for example a line of black stones around the edge of the board, or with different enclosures in each corner. The difficulty can be varied by adding or removing black

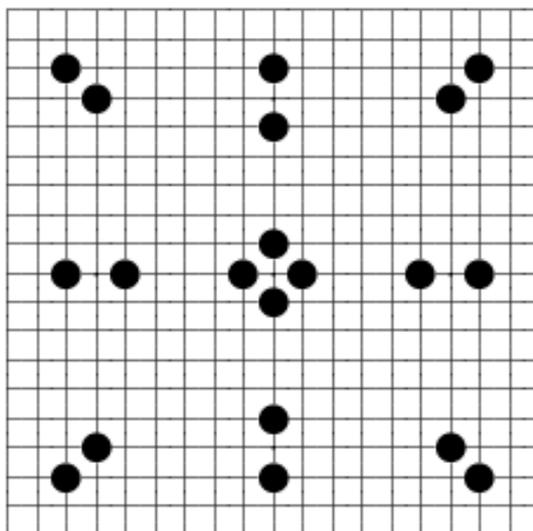


Figure 6.1: The Killing Game, possible starting position

stones. The game may also be played on a smaller board, with fewer black stones.

### 6.5.2 Strategic Thinking

Starting with an empty board, each player takes twenty stones. Black plays the first move in his upper right quarter of the board, and white follows in the diagonally opposite quarter. Each player's subsequent moves must be in the next (clockwise) quarter from their own preceding move. After twenty moves each have been played, both players examine the position to decide which has the better position, and which direction the game might proceed in. It is naturally beneficial for a stronger player to be observing.

The idea behind this game (devised by Matthew Holton) is to force both players to think about how their stones are working together, and to improve their approach to the opening. By forcing moves to be in a different quarter each time, the players usually avoid complex fighting and are forced to think strategically.

## 6.6 Other possibilities

Experiments in teaching Go are often more interesting for the participants than any sort of event following a tried and tested formula, and Go clubs are encouraged to try out anything which seems like a good idea at the time. If the ideas work particularly well, details should be sent to the BGA Secretary for inclusion in later editions of this booklet.

One important objective in teaching is to help people to look at familiar situations from a new angle. In this respect, for example, an exercise held at Reading some years ago in which the whole club spent an evening playing out the last 50 moves of a game (with different opponents, but always starting from the same position) was extremely interesting.

## **Part II**

# **Running a Tournament**

## Chapter 7

# Planning a Tournament

This chapter contains information and advice for those considering organising their own go tournament. Most of the information is directed towards one-day tournaments, although section 7.8 deals with the extra considerations required for longer events.

### 7.1 Date and Venue

You should start planning a date and venue at least four months in advance. Naturally, choice of date will have an impact on the availability of venues, so it is good to be as flexible as possible for both. The BGA Tournament Coordinator can help you find a suitable date, although the tournament calendar<sup>1</sup>, available on the BGA web site<sup>2</sup>, can also help. It is obviously preferable that your tournament does not clash with another event; however, this does not matter so much if the two events are taking place several hundred miles apart, as there are not likely to be many people hoping to go to both! Also try not to choose a date too close to other nearby tournaments. Please contact the Tournament Coordinator for advice about your selected date.

When deciding on a venue, there are several factors you should take into account.

**Hire cost** This is perhaps the most important, as it will typically be the largest cost of your event and will therefore have the greatest impact on your entry fee. Consider, given the hire cost, how many entries you will need to break even.

**Size** How many entries are you expecting? Although it is not easy to know the answer to this, particularly for a new tournament, it is still good to have a target in mind in order to set a budget, and to ensure that you have an appropriately sized venue.

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.britgo.org/tournaments>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.britgo.org/>

**Tables** Will there be enough tables available at the venue, or will you need to hire extra? Will they be the right size for a go board, stones and a clock? Try to give people as much elbow room as possible.

**Tea and Coffee** Will you be able to provide tea and coffee and other refreshments? Some venues have a kitchen area available; if not, you will need to make alternative arrangements (perhaps there is a nearby coffee shop). Also note that go players eat more biscuits than you can possibly imagine, so providing some along with tea and coffee is a good idea.

**Food** Will you provide lunch? Some tournaments provide a buffet (although most do not). You should also consider how near the venue is to a restaurant, pub, or sandwich shop, and display a map at the tournament.

**Accessibility** How easy is it to get to the venue by public transport? Is there car parking available? In particular, you should be sure that the cars carrying books and equipment can park nearby!

You should also check that the lighting and heating are adequate. Many lecture rooms and suchlike venues are only adequately lit at one end, and although it is not very difficult to obtain extra lights by asking for them in advance, it can be almost impossible to do so at 5 p.m. on a Sunday when the problem becomes apparent.

Once you have decided on a date and venue you should send the details to the BGA Tournament Coordinator, who will add your tournament to the calendar.

## 7.2 Format

Most tournaments in the UK are run on the McMahon system, with three rounds (see Chapter 9 for details). However, this does not mean you should have to follow this format — in fact, it suggests that you should try something different, as many people would prefer a variety of formats. Some other formats which have been tried include:

- Four or five round McMahon, with faster time limits (e.g. Wanstead, Wessex, Fife)
- Bar-Low tournaments (with a maximum entry grade, e.g. Scottish Bar-Low, Cambridge Bar-Low).
- Handicap tournaments (e.g. West Surrey)
- Handicap tournament with a top group (e.g. Cheshire, Liverpool)

You should decide the format well in advance, and inform the BGA Tournament Coordinator so that he can include it with the tournament details. See Chapter 11 for a discussion of the various tournament formats you might consider other than McMahon.

## Tournament Class

The results of BGA tournaments will in most circumstances count towards EGF ratings<sup>3</sup>. Ratings are weighted according to the tournament class, and the format you choose for your tournament will determine its class. Tournament classes recognised by the EGF are determined as follows:

- **Class A**, minimum 60 minutes main time, minimum 75 minutes adjusted time.
- **Class B**, minimum 40 minutes main time, minimum 50 minutes adjusted time.
- **Class C**, minimum 25 minutes main time, minimum 30 minutes adjusted time.

*Adjusted time* is the main time plus the time to make 60 moves in overtime. Other tournaments (such as lightning or small board tournaments) are unclassified and do not count towards ratings.

The tournament coordinator will add this information to the calendar, although it may be changed at the discretion of the EGF ratings committee. You may also demote the class if the lower class better suits your intentions (e.g. if you are trying a new tournament system). In this case, you should let the tournament coordinator know, and include the information in your publicity.

## 7.3 Publicity

The two principal methods of publicising a tournament are through the BGA web site, and the newsletter. When you have sent the details to the Tournament Coordinator, the information will be posted on the web site and added to the newsletter for you. However, there are some extra things you can do which make this more effective:

### 7.3.1 Tournament Website

It is useful to create a tournament website with further information about your event; the tournament coordinator will place a link to this on the calendar. The BGA can host a small website for you. This website can include the following information:

- Location of tournament, including a map and details of access by public transport and by car.
- Date, and closing date for entries (and late entry fee, if any)
- Times for registration and for start and end of play (usually about 10.00 to 18.00, but check arrival times of suitable trains)

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<sup>3</sup><http://www.european-go.org/rating/gor.html>

- Details of meal arrangements / accommodation.
- Details of prizes.
- Time limits, number of games, rules.
- Entry fees and who to pay cheques to.
- Name, email address and phone number for enquiries.

In addition, it is good to have an online entry form, to make it as easy as possible to enter — the Tournament Coordinator can help with this. You should request at least: name, playing strength, club, whether they are a concession (e.g. student or unemployed) and whether they are a member of the BGA (see section 7.6.1 for details of the BGA levy).

Nowadays, most people will enter your tournament online, whether by email or through an online entry form. It is good practice to acknowledge receipt of entries.

You will probably find, no matter how far in advance you announce your tournament, that most of the entries are received in the fortnight before the event. This is, of course, partly because there are other tournaments going on in the mean time. Therefore, you should not be too worried if entries appear to be coming in slowly!

### **7.3.2 Flyers/Entry Forms**

It is also possible to include an entry form or tournament flyer with the BGA newsletter. This should include the same information as on your website. Typically, it is sufficient to send an email to the editor with the entry form in `.doc` format. Note that many members get their newsletter by email — these will get most of the information about your tournament from the event's web page.

Copy dates for the newsletter are normally near the start of even numbered-months (February, April, June, August, October, December). The general recommendation is that tournament entry forms should be sent out with the newsletter printed one to three months before the date of the tournament, however longer, residential tournaments may wish to give more notice. The cost of circulating your entry form is one of the services covered by the levy. The newsletter editor will usually contact you two or three months in advance of your tournament with details of how to get your entry form sent out.

It may also be worth taking some of your entry forms to other tournaments which take place shortly before your event, although you will have to print these yourself.

### **7.3.3 Email Announcements**

You may also announce your tournament on the gotalk email list. The number of emails you send to the list should be kept within reasonable limits — one announcement, about two or three weeks in advance of the tournament, should probably be sufficient.

You can also contact secretaries of other local clubs to announce the tournament on their club email lists, since not all of their members will necessarily be BGA members, or subscribed to the gotalk email list. Again, one announcement should be sufficient.

### **7.3.4 Other Forms Of Publicity**

Word of mouth is always an effective form of publicity, particularly for new tournaments. It is worth visiting local clubs (if you have any) and encouraging people to enter. In particular, you are likely to find several double figure kyus who would like to enter but who think they are “not strong enough for a tournament”. This is of course incorrect — it is helpful to explain that there are likely to be other double figure kyus entering, and that most tournament systems allow for games between players of greatly differing strength. You can also consider a novices’ tournament (see section 8.5.1).

You can try to promote Go, and your local club, by getting a story about your tournament into the local media. If you live near a university, it is particularly worth contacting the editors of any student newspapers as universities are a fruitful source of new players, and many students do read these newspapers. Pictures taken with a digital camera can be e-mailed to local newspapers together with a press release. This saves them doing any work and can result in good coverage in the local papers. A sample press release is given in Appendix C.

An important follow-up to such publicity is for the organiser or his assistants to be prepared to teach beginners who come along just to see what the game is about.

## **7.4 Timetable**

You should work out an approximate timetable for the rounds in advance. Make sure there is enough time between rounds — allow at least 20 minutes for any unexpectedly slow games or any difficulties with the draw. Remember to take overtime periods into account; it is quite possible to play through several overtime periods of 30 stones in 5 minutes, but very difficult to get through 50 stones in 5 minutes.

Remember to allow enough time for a lunch break (around an hour). If you are playing more than four rounds in a day, you might also consider a short break (say 30 minutes) during the afternoon to give people a chance to recover before the final rounds.

Some people will have trains or buses to catch, therefore you should publish an expected latest time for the prizegiving so that they can make plans. Make sure that you include enough slack in your timetable so that it is almost impossible to exceed this time! It is usually difficult even to start the first round on time, due to late arrivals.

## 7.5 Prizes

The usual way of allocating prizes is to give the biggest prize for the best score above the bar, and further prizes for all those with some number of wins. However, one does not know in advance how many winners there will be. Special prizes can also be awarded to people who have done well without winning any of the other prizes, or to juniors. Some tournaments also have a team competition, and award prizes to the team with the best combined results in the main tournament.

If you intend to award a prize for all results equal to or better than some number of wins, you should decide whether to allow jigos (by having integer komi) and if so, whether the qualifying number should be an integer. You may prefer to wait and see how things turn out before you decide what result is good enough for a prize. If you allow jigos you will have more flexibility in this.

Commonly awarded prizes are wine, chocolate or books (but do be careful not to award alcoholic prizes to children!). You may also want to buy a trophy (although many tournaments do not; it is difficult to get a Go themed trophy!) or award a cash prize, if your budget allows it.

## 7.6 Entry Fee

When deciding upon an entry fee, remember that the following expenses will have to be covered:

- Administrative expenses: printing entry forms, postage, telephone, miscellaneous stationery
- Hire of rooms
- Prizes
- Cost of meals (if relevant), tea and coffee
- Publicity
- BGA levy (see section 7.6.1).

You should aim to make a small surplus on the tournament, which can go towards purchasing new books or equipment for your club. Note that there are usually several people who enter in the day or two before the tournament, or even who just turn up on the day. If you need to know numbers in advance (e.g. to make catering arrangements), it is therefore wise to set a closing date for entries and include a late entry fee, payable by those entering after the closing date.

Look at other events to get an idea of the going rates. Obviously, it is reasonable to charge more for a two day event (to cover room hire and the BGA levy) or if you are providing food.

### **7.6.1 BGA Levy**

The BGA levy is a fee charged by the BGA to cover services provided by the BGA to your tournament. This includes advertising (e.g. sending out flyers with the newsletter), and equipment hire. From 2006, the levy is:

**Full (non BGA)** £3.00 per day

**Members** £1.50 per day

**Concessions** £1.00 per day

Note that we assume visiting foreigners are members of their own national Go associations and hence should be treated as members when calculating the levy. Tournaments usually charge a surplus to non BGA members in the entry fee; effectively, this gives BGA membership for the duration of your tournament. Any concessions are at your discretion.

For new events with uncertainty over the number of entrants, the BGA Treasurer may on request reduce or waive the levy in case of loss. Also if your event is longer than two days or experimental in some way, please contact the treasurer to request a discount.

## **7.7 Miscellaneous Points**

### **7.7.1 Getting Equipment**

The BGA can provide up to 100 go sets, boards and mechanical clocks for your event to use. Some of these are superior sets which are normally only used for special events. The normal tournament sets come in multiples of 12 (some loads have 15 clocks to cover for break downs).

Usually volunteers carry sets from one event to the next. This is arranged through the Tournament Coordinator. Clearly it may be more reliable and helpful if you collect some sets from the previous event, although this is not a requirement. The Tournament Coordinator will contact you some time before your tournament to arrange equipment. You will need to estimate how many sets you will require (obviously this will be half as many as there are players). This is not always an easy thing to do for a new tournament, but the Tournament Coordinator will be able to help based on the number of entries you have had so far.

### **7.7.2 Laptop and Mobile Phone**

There is a laptop with a printer and a mobile phone available for the use of tournament organisers. The mobile phone can be used on the day for notification of late or cancelled entries. To arrange use of the laptop, contact Geoff Kaniuk (draw-program at britgo dot org).

### **7.7.3 BGA shop**

The BGA Book Seller may attend an event at his own discretion, depending on location, likely sales, local availability of books and so on. He will contact you well in advance if he intends to come, in order that you can make arrangements. A long table at one end of the playing room will usually suffice to accommodate the shop.

### **7.7.4 Public Liability Insurance**

The BGA has public liability insurance that covers all BGA affiliated events. For more details of exactly what is covered, please contact the BGA Treasurer.

### **7.7.5 Social Event**

Many people travel to tournaments not just for the Go, but in order to meet and talk to other Go players. Also remember that some people may have travelled a long way to come to your event. A social event, for example going for a meal after the tournament, is one way to make your tournament more enjoyable and memorable for these people, and may help attract them back in future years.

### **7.7.6 Accommodation**

Even for a one day event, there may be people who would like to travel and will require accommodation, particularly those in remote parts of the country which do not hold many local tournaments. Sometimes, local people are willing to offer accommodation (e.g. a spare room or a sofa) to those who would not otherwise be able to afford to attend (particularly students). However, people do not like to ask, so you should make it known (for example on the gotalk mailing list) if such accommodation is available. Note that it is better to give priority to students and unemployed.

## **7.8 Longer Events**

If you are organising a two day event (such as the Scottish Open or Welsh Open) there are some extra things you can do both to encourage people to come to the tournament, and to make the tournament more enjoyable. There are also some further organisational things you need to consider.

- It will be more difficult to find a suitable venue for a two day event at a weekend. In particular, you are unlikely to get a Church Hall on a Sunday, and many other venues are closed on Sundays. Some places to try are hotels or pubs with function rooms (although you may have to pay a little more for these), local schools (they may not necessarily advertise that they have rooms for hire,

but it is worth asking) or universities (if you have a contact at a local university, you may find that they can hire a room for free or very cheaply).

- You may attract people from further afield for a two day event, and they will require overnight accommodation. You should at least do some research into local accommodation, and give information on your website. You should also be prepared to answer any queries from potential attendees about accommodation.
- Consider when people might be travelling; if you start later on Saturday (e.g. around lunch time) this allows people time to travel on Saturday and save the cost of one night's accommodation.
- Organising some kind of social event is particularly important for longer events. Advertising a place to meet on Friday evening and booking a restaurant on Saturday evening is a good and simple way to do this. When booking a restaurant, it is difficult to have any idea of numbers, so asking people to sign up by, say, mid-afternoon if they want to come is a good idea.

## **7.9 British Go Congress**

Apart from the three-stage British Championship, which is run by the BGA, tournaments are run by clubs. The exception is the British Go Congress which is run by a club on behalf of the BGA. The organiser is usually agreed a year in advance and offers from clubs are always welcome.

The British Go Congress is a weekend event, including the British Lightning championship on Friday evening, and the British Open. The weekend also features the BGA AGM. The British Open is a six round McMahon tournament, with one hour each on the clock. It is residential, with accommodation usually in halls of residence or a hotel. You may also let people find their own accommodation. Full board should normally be offered. As a rough guide, the 2004 British Congress in Milton Keynes attracted 67 entries, and the 2005 Congress in Leicester attracted 61.

A congress bank account should be opened, with two signatures required for withdrawals, as the amount of money handled can exceed £5000. The work can conveniently be split between one person responsible for accommodation and money, and one responsible for the tournament itself.

Since this is a large event, there is an associated financial risk. The club organising a Congress has two options: they can either take all the risk, and do whatever they wish with any profit; or have the BGA underwrite the risk (against a documented budget approved by Council) in which case any profit is shared 50-50 between the BGA and the organising club.

## Chapter 8

# Running a Tournament

This chapter covers the running of a tournament on the day itself. Much of the work happens on the day, and it is therefore useful to find some local players who are willing to help with various tasks such as putting up signs directing people to the playing room, registration, laying out tables and carrying boards into the playing room.

### 8.1 Before the Tournament

On the morning of the tournament, you should make sure that visitors can find the venue easily, perhaps by placing signs directing them to the venue. It is also helpful if you can find volunteers to arrive early to lay out tables and boards (and, if applicable, the BGA Bookshop). Each board should be labelled with a number. If there is more than one playing room, label the doors clearly with the numbers to be found in that room. There are various other useful bits of preparation you can do:

- When people have entered in advance, enter their names into the draw computer before opening registration. This can take a surprisingly long time when you are in a hurry!
- If you are doing a draw by hand, prepare the cards in advance, as described in section 8.3.2.
- Set aside an area for a noticeboard, where you can place the draw, results sheets, a summary of the rules (i.e. time limits, komi, etc).
- Bring a cash float; you will need to have a some change, as people will pay with £20 notes.
- Bring a good supply of scrap paper, blu-tak, marker pens and other stationery equipment.
- Put the kettle on and open the biscuits!

Set up a table for registration. You should have a list of the people you are expecting to register, including details such as name, grade, club and whether they have paid in advance (or how much their entry fee will be). You should confirm these details when they register, particularly their grade, as this could easily have changed between their entry and the tournament.

## 8.2 General Points

It is important to find a non-playing organiser for your go tournament, since the work involved in running a tournament is not confined to the time between rounds. A non-playing organiser is better able to deal with problems which might occur during games, such as broken clocks or running out of coffee or biscuits.

You may find that you have an odd number of entries. It is *strongly* recommended not to give any player a bye, and so you should have one player willing to act as a *ghost*, who will only play if required to make an even number. Note that for various reasons, some players may not wish to play in all rounds.

If a player is late for a round, you should instruct their opponents to start the clock. You may find that some people are reluctant to do this out of politeness, but if they do not, you risk running late! (If it is white who has not turned up, black should start the clock, make his move, then start white's clock).

## 8.3 Organising The Draw

If the organiser has not run a tournament before, he should receive assistance when he makes the draw. This can be given by one of the participants in the tournament; several BGA officers are willing to help if asked. Chapter 9 gives a more detailed overview of the McMahon system used by many British tournaments.

### 8.3.1 Using a Computer

Most tournaments nowadays use a computer to produce the draw. Most tournaments in Britain use Geoff Kaniuk's GoDraw program. Using this is recommended by the BGA in particular because there will almost certainly be people at the tournament who can help with its operation, and also because it is used to process tournament results. If you do choose to use GoDraw, a donation to the Castledine-Barnes trust<sup>1</sup>, a charitable trust providing financial support to young Go players in Britain, is requested.

Other programs are available, including Gotha<sup>2</sup>, written by Luc Van-  
nier, and MacMahon<sup>3</sup> [sic], written by Christophe Gerlach, both of

<sup>1</sup><http://www.castledinebarnestrust.org.uk/>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.ap76.com/LV/gotournaments/Gotha.htm>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.cgerlach.de/macmahon.html>

which are popular in Europe. These programs all handle McMahon, Swiss and Round-robin style tournaments.

Chapter 10 provides further details of good practice for using a computer to do the draw.

### 8.3.2 Producing a Draw by Hand

Although most tournaments use a computer, smaller events, or events with unusual pairing systems, may still prefer to do the draw by hand.

Each player is given an identifying number and has a card (e.g. a postcard) made out as depicted in figure 8.1. The card is used to keep track of the player's current McMahon score, and other relevant details such as who they have played, which colour they took, and whether they were drawn up or down. The draw is performed by shuffling these cards around a suitable table top. It will be found useful to have a large table out of range of the "helpful" comments of the players for this purpose. Do not use paper as it blows away; small pieces, however, can be used stuck to a glass sheet with Blutak.

The card illustrated in figure 8.1 is appropriate for a six round tournament. Each box gives details of one round of the tournament. This player has played four rounds, losing in rounds one and three, and winning in rounds two and four, with a current MMS of -2. It is important for purposes of presentation of results that the players' identifying numbers should be in order of entry strength. This means that the numbers should not be allocated until the last possible moment (it can even be done as late as during the first round).

Identifying Number	24	Name		C. Littlebottom	Club		Uberwald	4 kyu	Entry Grade
Opponent Number	26	0	28	1	23	0			
Result		-4	-3		-3				
McMahon Score		W	B		B		+		"drawn up"
Colour Used	25	1							
		-2							
		W							

Figure 8.1: Draw Card

No two players should meet more than once, and, if possible, players from the same club should not meet (except where either could win the

tournament). It is also a good idea to ensure that players from the same family do not meet (even if they play in different clubs).

## 8.4 Presenting The Results

Results should be recorded on a wall chart as the tournament progresses, and a final set of results in similar format should be compiled for circulation afterwards. An example of the recommended format is shown in figure 8.2, but in any case it should be easy to see at a glance how many games each player has won, and who his opponents have been. Here, player number 42 lost in round 1, won in rounds 2,3 and 4, and scored a jigo in round 5.

	Name	Grade	Club	1	2	3	4	5	Total
41	F. Baggins	4 kyu	The Shire	1 <sub>42</sub>	2 <sub>39</sub>	3 <sub>38</sub>	3 <sub>40</sub>	3 <sub>44</sub>	3
42	F. Prefect	4 kyu	Betelgeuse	0 <sub>41</sub>	1 <sub>44</sub>	2 <sub>43</sub>	3 <sub>39</sub>	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ <sub>37</sub>	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
43	...								

Figure 8.2: Results Chart

Players should be ordered according to their starting grades, and numbers should correspond with those on the cards used in making the draw.

In addition to this display (and even more important than it) a list of players' opponents and table numbers for each round should be displayed, indicating clearly which player takes Black. This list can conveniently be used for the players to record their results on (by underlining or circling the winner's name). For larger tournaments, or for those who prefer a more streamlined system, a separate result slip can be provided for each game for each round, to be filled in and returned by the winner. If these slips are put on the boards at the start of the round, the scrummage caused by large numbers of players trying to read the draw can be reduced, although this process could slow down the draw considerably unless a computer print-out is used.

If you are using a computer program to do the draw, it is very likely that the program can produce all of the necessary displays, including the score table and the draw, automatically.

## 8.5 Side Events

### 8.5.1 Novices Tournament

Some events run a tournament for novices alongside the main event. This is particularly worth considering if there are a lot of local players (especially from local schools) who are new to the game and would otherwise be reluctant to enter a tournament. There does not have to be a large turnout for this to be worthwhile; even as few as four makes it viable.

It is advisable to call it a “novices” tournament rather than a “beginners” tournament, as this makes it easier to get people who have been playing for a while to take part. In particular, juniors who have been playing for a few years and are in the 20-30 kyu range seem unhappy at the idea of being called a beginner (“novices” seems to be tolerated better).

### **Tournament Format**

It is good to be flexible about the format until you see who turns up. The general form is to hold a teaching session in the morning, covering the rules and some basic tactics such as capturing races and life and death, followed by a tournament in the afternoon.

For the tournament itself, things like board size, clocks etc. will depend on the players. In general most people at these grades do not need clocks. People who have hardly played before might find 13x13 to be quite big whereas someone near 20 kyu is likely to much prefer 13x13 to 9x9. Past events, e.g. the Novices Tournament at the 2005 Cambridge Trigantius, have had a wide range of players — the strongest had been playing online a bit and were probably slightly stronger than 20 kyu, the weakest weren’t very sure of the basic rules. The games were a mixture of 9x9 and 13x13. There are usually some handicap games and it is good to try to arrange things so that nobody loses all their games if possible.

### **Advertising**

The best form of advertising for such an event is word of mouth — if people (especially at the local club) can encourage novice players that they know to come along it makes a big difference, especially as these players are often nervous about taking part. Any groups of juniors who are not too far away are also worth targetting. The sooner the event can be confirmed the better (and also it helps to have an explicit box on the entry form to say whether people want to enter the main or novices’ event).

## **8.5.2 Self Pairing Tournaments**

It is common to hold self pairing tournaments as side events. The idea is that players who finish their main tournament games early can play further games between rounds. These side events are usually played on smaller boards, or on a full size board with fast time limits. Usually there is a restriction that a player can play each opponent at most twice. The simplest method of choosing the winner is by number of wins, although other more complex formulae are possible.

All you need to do to hold such an event is make a wall chart, where participating players enter their names and fill in a running total of points (and opponent number) for each game they play, as illustrated in Figure 8.3.

1	Gandalf	1 <sub>3</sub>	2 <sub>2</sub>	2 <sub>3</sub>	...
2	A. Dumbledore	0 <sub>1</sub>	1 <sub>3</sub>		
3	A. Dent	0 <sub>2</sub>	0 <sub>1</sub>	1 <sub>1</sub>	
...					

Figure 8.3: Chart for Self Pairing Tournament

## 8.6 After the Tournament

You should send the results to the BGA Tournament Results coordinator (email `results` at `britgo dot org`) as soon as possible after the tournament. His preferred format is the output file from GoDraw but if you have done the draw by hand, a copy of the draw sheets with results will suffice. Even if you have done the draw by hand, it is possible to use GoDraw to recreate the tournament and send in the file.

You should also send a short report to the Tournament Coordinator (email `tourn-coord` at `britgo dot org`) for the BGA news web page, listing prize winners and any other notable features.

The BGA Levy should be sent to the Treasurer using the form provided. Arrangements should be made for the BGA sets to reach the next tournament. Letters of thanks should be sent to any sponsors, including the owners of premises used.

The results of your tournament may also have an effect on other BGA events, as follows:

**Candidates' Tournament Qualification** Your tournament may be eligible for qualifying places for the Candidates' Tournament, which is the first stage of the British Championship. The BGA web site includes the current championship rules<sup>4</sup>, including all of the qualification criteria.

**Stacey Grand Prix** Each game won above the McMahon bar in a BGA recognised tournament counts one point towards the Grand Prix. The winner becomes the holder of Terry Stacey Memorial Trophy for a year, so it is important that the McMahon bar is set sensibly.

**Youth Grand Prix** Players who are under-18 earn points by attending BGA tournaments and winning at them. Forty percent of the points for an event are for just turning up, the rest are for winning games. The British Youth Go Championships counts double. Players of 1 kyu and 23 kyu are just as likely to win the trophies for first, second and third. Other prizes are often awarded too. Currently the year is the calendar year and the prizes are presented at the British Youth Go Championships.

<sup>4</sup><http://www.britgo.org/bchamp/chrules.html>

## Chapter 9

# The McMahon System

### 9.1 Overview

Most British Go tournaments use the McMahon system. The McMahon system is designed to ensure that games in a tournament are most likely to be even. Each player in the tournament starts off with a McMahon score (or MMS) that is equivalent to his or her grade. For example, a 4-kyu player would start at -4, and a 1-dan player would start at 0. However, players above a certain grade near the top of the tournament are demoted to this grade, in order to produce a pool of players with the highest McMahon score represented. This grade is known as the McMahon bar (see section 9.2). Each win for a player increases his or her MMS by one.

**(Note:** An alternative method, commonly used in Europe, sets the score of all players at 20 kyu or below to zero. Like the UK scale, each grade step corresponds to an increment of 1 McMahon point, so shodan has the value 20. A disadvantage of this scale, however, is that it is likely to make players below 20 kyu feel that they are not yet strong enough to enter a tournament.)

When pairing players against each other, the draw program (or human organiser) attempts to pair players with the same MMS against each other. This has the effect that, if a player enters at the wrong grade, their MMS will gradually come closer to that of players of their own strength. For example, if someone declares too high a grade, they are less likely to win, and so their MMS will stay the same while other players' scores rise — until finally the player meets those of roughly the same strength.

### 9.2 The Bar

Because a player's starting score is determined by their grade, a player who was 7 dan would have a massive advantage and the best chance to win the tournament, as such a player would start at a very good MMS. To counteract this, and to give as many people as possible an equal chance of winning the tournament, players at or above a certain rank

all begin at the same MMS. This rank is called the bar. For example, if the bar is set at 3 dan (which is an MMS of 2) then no player can start at an MMS of more than 2, no matter what their grade. This gives a pool of players starting with the highest McMahon score. The optimum size for this pool depends on the number of rounds to be played. Rough guidelines are as follows:

**3 rounds** 4-8 players

**4 rounds** 5-10 players

**5 rounds** 6-12 players

**6 rounds** 7-15 players

**7 rounds** 8-18 players

**8 rounds** 9-22 players

**9 rounds** 10-26 players

**10 rounds** 11-30 players

The constraints on which these figures are based are

- There must be a unique winner. This sets an upper limit for short tournaments.
- If there are too few on the bar, these receive an unfair (and unnecessary) disadvantage.
- If there are too many on the bar, the tournament will end without all of the top players having played each other.
- Higher graded players should not run out of even game opponents.

If you are using Geoff Kaniuk's GoDraw to create the draw, it will set an appropriate bar automatically.

In effect the top players play a knock-out to determine the winner, so there should not be more than 8 players above the bar for a 3 round or 16 players for a 4 round tournament.

**(Note:** In some larger European tournaments, there is a *supergroup*, which is one point above the McMahon bar. This is used where there would otherwise be too many players above the McMahon bar.)

## 9.3 Handicaps

Although the McMahon system decreases the chances of uneven games, they still occur, especially where there is a large range of entry grades. The handicap in the McMahon system is normally one less than the current difference in the players' McMahon scores, with a handicap of 1 meaning a no-komi game. If there is no handicap, colours are selected (more or less) at random. Therefore, a player may end up taking White even against someone on a McMahon score one better than

them. It is normal to try to organise the draw so that, as far as possible, players play an equal number of games as each colour.

If either player declared a grade at or above the bar, then the game is even.

**(Note:** It is not a requirement that the handicap be one less than the McMahon difference; it is normal in Europe to use difference-2, and some tournaments use the difference directly.)

## 9.4 Sleeping Players

A player who misses a round (with the tournament director's consent) sleeps for that round. For the purpose of producing the pairing, a sleeping player is deemed to have achieved an average score for each round missed. In order to prevent biasing the draw by matching players who sleep, an extra McMahon point is awarded after every two rounds missed instead of a half point for every round missed. This score increase does not, however, count as a win.

In more important tournaments, players in the top McMahon group (or Supergroup if there is one) are not allowed to sleep for any round. Sleeping players who would be in the top group are removed by reducing their initial McMahon score by one or possibly two points. This prevents the lower group players from interfering with top group players in later rounds.

## 9.5 Forfeits

If a player wins by default (usually because their opponent fails to show up), their MMS is increased by one. This counts as a win for the purposes of the tournament, but not for the purposes of the EGF rating system. It is not counted as a missed round for either player. **(Note:** In practice, this depends on how you choose to record the result; for simplicity, a win by default may well be entered as a normal win, in which case none of this applies.)

## 9.6 Overall winner

At the end of the tournament, the winner is the player with the best McMahon score.

There may be a tie for first place, and it is very likely that there will be ties for other positions. The tie breaker used varies from tournament to tournament; commonly used tie breaks include:

**SOS** (Sum of Opponents Scores) SOS is the sum over all rounds of the final McMahon scores of the player's opponents. For each round that the player sleeps add the player's own initial McMahon score.

This is the most commonly used tie break in the UK.

**CUSS** (Cumulative Sum of Scores) CUSS is the sum over all rounds of the player's individual McMahon score at the end of each round. This rewards the player for winning early in the tournament.

**CUSP** (Cumulative Sum of Points) CUSP is the sum over all rounds of the player's total winning points at the end of each round. Note that winning points at any round is the total sum of wins and jigos and does not include free wins or points gained by sleepers.

If two players start off on the same McMahon score, and end up with the same CUSS (having played all games) then their CUSP will also be the same. This follows since at any round McMahon score is equal to initial McMahon score plus winning points up to that round. So one cannot use CUSS and CUSP as first and second level tie-breakers. CUSP is easy to calculate by hand and is therefore recommended for use as the tie-breaker in small tournaments.

**SOSOS** (Sum of Sum of Opponents Scores) SOSOS is the sum over all rounds of the SOS scores of the player's opponents. For each round that the player sleeps add the players own SOS.

**SODOS** (Sum of Defeated Opponents' Scores; strongly deprecated) SODOS is the sum of the final McMahon scores of the player's opponents in those rounds that the player won. For each free win add the player's own initial McMahon score. For each jigo add one half the McMahon score of the opponent.

There is, however, a serious flaw associated with the concept of SODOS. This tie break depends on the scale chosen, and it is possible that the final ordering can change depending on the origin of the McMahon scale (i.e., whether is is 0 for shodan, as in the UK, or 0 for 20 kyu, as commonly the case in Europe). This tie break is therefore strongly not recommended.

It is a good idea to decide in advance what to do in the event of a tie, as even these tie breakers are not necessarily enough to separate players. For most tournaments, it is reasonable for first place to be shared. For more important tournaments, such as the Challenger's League, a play-off game is used.

# Chapter 10

## Producing the Draw

This chapter provides guidelines for people who have undertaken the responsibility of producing the pairing for a tournament. Although a draw can be produced manually, it is now common practice to use a computer to carry out this function.

This is for a good reason. Although the McMahon rules are apparently easy to state as described in Chapter 9, the more formal details get far more complex. So much so, that it is virtually impossible for a human to produce a pairing which satisfies all the rules in a reasonable time.

Accordingly, these guidelines cover the use of computers in producing the draw. There is no discussion of any particular program, instead we seek to uncover principles of good practice, be it for a manual or computer draw.

The information in this chapter is primarily aimed at larger tournaments such as the London Open, or the British Go Congress, but the principles of good practice apply to all tournaments. In smaller tournaments, it may be the case that one person plays the rôles of Tournament director, Drawmaster, referee *and* assistant!

### 10.1 Schedule

Since it is the Drawmaster's responsibility to produce the pairing for each round on time, he or she should be closely involved in setting the playing times for the tournament. There are three good reasons why it is important to produce the pairing on time:

1. It is common for tournaments to be run in a hall which is booked and paid for. This often means it is booked for a fixed time and overruns are not allowed.
2. Tournaments may offer side events slotted into spare time. If the main tournament time slips, this can interfere with the smooth running of side events.

3. Players participating in a tournament may wish to take the opportunity to explore your local surroundings. Poor control of start of round interferes with player's other interests, and they rightly get annoyed if the round starts late.

Two of the most common reasons why schedules slip, are inadequate planning for registration on the day and very slow play by some top players using excessive byoyomi/overtime periods. Therefore the schedule needs to be designed to take into account the vagaries in these areas. Registration is discussed in more detail below, but for now it should be emphasised that once one has decided on a schedule, then every possible effort should be made to stick to it. In particular this means having a clear policy on how to handle late arrivals, and publishing that policy in your tournament literature. You will also need to have formulated a policy on how to deal with slow play holding up the draw for the next round. Players do get disgruntled if they appear to be hanging about for no obvious reason.

The schedule specifies starting times in detail for each of the tournament phases, and the Drawmaster needs to be sure that all the times announced are realistic. This needs to be done before the tournament publicity is produced.

## **10.2 Pre-registration**

It is the Drawmaster's responsibility to ensure that the correct details for a player are used in constructing the draw. Registration systems vary from the simplest "give me a call" to highly sophisticated on-line database systems which can produce a registration file for you to import. Whatever the system, the Drawmaster has to ensure that the correct data is used in the draw system and that no player is entered twice.

In theory the source of all data for the system is the entry form, so the Drawmaster must approve this form at the time that the tournament publicity becomes visible to players.

## **10.3 Workplace**

The Drawmaster works under pressure in order to produce the draw on time. If you are lucky enough to have your own physical room, then well and good. If not then you must make arrangements to clearly identify 'your' workspace in a shared environment. This can be done by suitably arranging furniture, or judiciously employing a ball of red string to mark your territory.

Apart from space for your equipment and a chair, you should arrange the space for a chair to accommodate an assistant to help with result entry.

## 10.4 Registration On The Day

Without doubt one of the most complex aspects of running a tournament is managing registration on the day the tournament starts. It is at registration that player's details finally get verified, and so the Drawmaster is exceedingly interested in this process. In large tournaments, registration may also involve booking players into accommodation. Consequently the requirements of the draw need to be integrated with any other such matters in your registration system.

Whether you are processing incoming players by pencil and paper or using a network of terminals there are two questions that need to be answered when setting up your registration scheme.

**Q1. How much time does it take to process a player?** The answer to this will need to take account of the unexpected. For example, needing to explain further details or correct pre-registration data.

**Q2. How many players are you expecting?** This of course should be known from your pre-registration data. Go players however are notorious for entering tournaments late. Yet the answer to this is crucial for a whole host of reasons relating to the draw schedule and the tournament director's nightmare: "Will I have enough sets?"

Given the answers to these, you can then allocate sufficient resources to register players in the time quoted in your tournament publicity. Players do get rightly annoyed if they arrive in good time for registration only to find that the start of Round 1 is hours late because queues have built up at the inadequately manned registration desk.

There will always be some players who arrive on the day out of a clear blue sky. Such players should be diverted to a "late desk" and be required to fill in a registration form before returning to the main registration queue.

If at registration a player changes some detail vital to the draw, then it is essential that such changes be written down and communicated to the Drawmaster. Registration details may also change later during the tournament as players realise their names or clubs are wrongly spelled for example. It seems simplest if all the changes that players need to make are written on exactly the same form so that players get to know the one and only way of communicating changes to the Drawmaster. It is even better if the form is a slip of paper in some alarming pink colour so that it won't be missed.

At the start of the registration session, the Drawmaster publishes the register so that players can check their details and see what their friends are doing. The Drawmaster is now kept busy updating the draw system with player's changes communicated via the pink slips. These slips are described in greater detail in section 10.6.

Players are marked in the system as "registered" as soon as the information reaches the Drawmaster that they have actually arrived. You cannot rely on hearsay reports that someone is on the way; you

can only register someone if you have actually seen the colour of their eyes!

Once all players are registered, you are ready to close the register at the appointed time

## 10.5 Closing The Register

The formal close of registration is a terribly important moment in the life of any tournament. At this point the full set of players joining Round 1 is known, and this triggers the following actions from you:

- Confirm that you have an even number of players. If not, then invoke your ghost player to make up the numbers, and make sure that your ghost is entered in the draw. Don't even dream of awarding a bye!
- Determine the size of the top McMahon group to set the bar. See section 9.2 for details of how to set the bar appropriately.

Once these matters have been completed to satisfaction, it is a good idea to publish the latest version of the register so that players can check their details. You are now ready to produce the pairing for the first round.

## 10.6 Changes to the Register

The register should be published in the *Information Centre*, which is space set aside for displaying all the important documents such as the rank list, tournament rules, latest schedule, prize money, and the register. You should keep this area clear of player messages and other tournament information - it is meant for the main tournament!

If a player wants to change some details then writing changes on the register is not going to get noticed. The only safe way is to instigate a clear formal system which is really easy to operate perhaps along the following lines:

Place a register change box below the published register. Next to this place a pile of printed pink slips with the following information to be filled in by the player:

- Player Number
- FAMILY Name
- GIVEN Name
- Grade
- Club
- Country

- Rounds

Next to the register, publish instructions to players to mark their changes on the slips, and then place the slips in the box. As Drawmaster your only task now is to make sure you process the slips shortly before you do the draw for the next round.

## 10.7 Pairing For Round 1

Once the draw for round 1 is produced, you will need to double check the following:

- Some players may have told you they are not playing in round 1 or are arriving later in the tournament. You will need to ensure that such players are not included in the draw.
- Players from the same club below the bar may have been paired. You will need to ensure that such pairings are acceptable. If players have travelled hundreds of miles to your tournament, they really want to play new people and get upset if they play someone whom they play every week. If necessary consult the players and explain that there is a really huge club so players will have to meet, but you are trying to minimise these same club pairings.
- Two players from the same family should not be paired without the player's consent. Remember they may even play for different clubs. If it does happen, be prepared to change the draw.

Once these issues are settled, you should now publish the draw, but do not let players start their games yet. Nearly all the problems with the draw will be discovered in the first 5 minutes.

The draw should be published in well separated sections to avoid overcrowding. If your tournament takes place in several rooms then place a selected copy of the draw inside the room. In later rounds players will get to know which room they are in, and avoid the *melée* around the main publication of the draw.

You can fix the hopefully few problems with the draw manually, by making notes on the published pairing. Try very hard not to redo the draw. When you are satisfied with its accuracy, instruct the referee to start the clocks! If you have published several copies of the draw, remove any redundant ones and leave only a master for recording the results. Now you can go for a well deserved cup of coffee!

## 10.8 Results

When all games are completed collect the draw sheets, now containing the results filled in by the players. It is the referee's responsibility to ensure that players record their results before wandering off to the pub or whatever, so by the time you get the sheets there should be no

missing results. It is likely that you will have to chase players who finish their games and record no result — you will often find them analysing the game unaware that they were the last game to finish and you are waiting to do the draw for the next round!

In large tournaments, players may be required to complete and sign a form with the result, and in this case again you should receive the forms all duly signed. You will then need to order the forms in the correct board order as published in the draw.

Whichever method is used, you should confirm the result by physically writing a 1 next to the winner and a 0 next to the loser. Players can be very sloppy when marking results by ringing or underlining the winner so it is necessary to make this information precise.

Now get an assistant to read to you the results for Black in board order in groups of 5. You can then enter these into the computer with a low error rate. When all the results have been entered, return to the beginning. Now you read out the results for White again in groups of 5 and your assistant confirms that the correct result has been entered. This double check is vital as you are not easily forgiven for recording a wrong result.

Once the results are confirmed as correct, print out the rank list and display it in your information centre. You are then almost ready to do the draw for the next round.

Before you do the draw, you must check your box of pink slips. Update your register, mark the pink slips as done, and put them in a 'done' box for reference. Now do the draw!

## **10.9 Finale**

Once the final round is completed, with all results entered and cross checked, publish a prize list for the tournament director. Publish a final ranklist for the players to look at. You will also need to produce files for the ratings system and your webmaster. Make sure you have a copy of the tournament file on floppy, then pack up.

# Chapter 11

## Other Tournament Systems

### 11.1 Simple knockout

This is one of the easiest types of tournament to organise. The advantages are that it produces a unique winner in the smallest possible number of games, and that games in each round can be started as soon as the players have finished their previous game. There are various disadvantages:

- Half of the players only get one game.
- The probability that the best player wins is surprisingly small.
- There is no satisfactory way to produce an ordering for players other than the overall winner.

### 11.2 Double elimination knockout (Judan system)

The principle here is that a simple knockout tournament is accompanied by a losers' tournament, in which all players who have lost exactly one game participate. The winners of the two tournaments then play off to determine the overall winner.

This system only works perfectly for numbers of players of the form  $2^n$  to the power of 2 to the n, (e.g. 16), otherwise there will be an odd number of players in the losers' section for at least one round, and byes will be necessary.

It shares the advantage of the simple knockout that the draw for each round is automatically complete when the previous round's results are known. Furthermore it guarantees that all players will get at least two games, and that three quarters of them will get at least three.

For 16 players, it takes two extra rounds to produce a result, but if there is time, the final game between the winners of the two sections

can be replaced by a best-of-three match, so that everyone has to lose twice to be eliminated.

This system is recommended for use in one-night lightning tournaments, either as club events or as incidental entertainment during congresses lasting more than one day.

### **11.3 Generalised knockout**

The idea here is that nobody is eliminated; after each round players with exactly the same sequence of results are matched together.

This system ensures that everybody gets plenty of games against roughly equal opposition, and can be used to arrange all the players in order, though ordering is pretty arbitrary, especially around the middle of the list.

The usual ordering system is to give the losing finalist 2nd place, the losing semi-finalists 3rd and 4th, the losing quarter-finalists 5th to 8th etc., but this method puts a high premium on winning early - in a 32 player tournament the player placed 8th has won 2 out of 5 games, while those placed 9th and 17th have 4 out of 5.

### **11.4 Zone systems**

Players are divided arbitrarily into zones, within each of which all play all, and then the zone winners play off to produce a final winner.

This type of system is easy to organise, and players will know in advance who their opponents will be. This may be considered important for the World Football cup, but seems pretty irrelevant in go.

Mathematically, this is an incredibly inefficient way of finding the best player. The larger the zones are, the more inefficient it becomes. The problem is that after two or three games, players with widely differing results are being matched against each other, and such games are unlikely to provide any new information.

This system is only recommended for lightning tournaments with more than 16 players - it is only in lightning tournaments that the small saving in time gained by knowing who your next opponent will be is worthwhile.

### **11.5 Swiss system**

All players start equal, and in each round players with the same number of wins play each other.

This is the ideal system for an even game tournament in which there are too many players for an all-play-all. Details of organisation are exactly as for the McMahon system described in sections 8 and 10. (The McMahon system can be thought of as a generalised Swiss system.)

Ties at the end of the tournament can be resolved either by Sum of Opponents' Scores (SOS) or by cumulative sum of wins. Neither of

these methods is completely satisfactory, and playoff games should be used for important places if time permits.

### **11.6 Zoned Swiss system**

In this system, the tournament is divided into a set of completely separate Swiss type tournaments, one for each range of strengths. Since most players prefer to have a chance to play against stronger opposition if they do well, this to be a poor alternative to the McMahon system, and since it offers no compensating advantages it is not recommended.

### **11.7 Round Robin**

All players play all other players (for 6 or 8 players). One player stays still and all others revolve around him, to play the games in the minimum number of rounds.

### **11.8 Swiss knockout**

All players play Swiss except the top 8 or 16 who play a knockout to determine the winner; the losers return to the Swiss section. This is best suited for a handicap event.

### **11.9 Mixed Systems**

There are many of these. They usually start as a Swiss or McMahon, and end up with a top group splitting off into a knockout. There are also schemes that mix three systems such as Swiss, followed by groups and a knockout. Generally these are only appropriate to longer events.

## **Appendix A**

# **Default Rules for BGA Tournaments**

If the organisers of a Go tournament in Britain, recognised by the BGA, do not specify otherwise then the Japanese rules are understood to apply except that triple kos are treated as draws, and komi is 6 points.

If the organisers of a Go tournament in Britain, recognised by the BGA, specify that overtime is to be used but omit to say how it is to be implemented, then Canadian (clock-resetting) overtime should be assumed to apply.

### **A.1 Komi**

Black gives White 6 points komi.

### **A.2 Triple Ko**

Triple kos and other such repeated positions count as jigo (a draw).

### **A.3 Overtime**

Japanese professional games traditionally use the byoyomi system. When a player has only a few minutes left the seconds are counted down, and any move made in less than a minute does not use up any of that player's time.

In Britain we use the overtime system instead. When a player has used all of their main time allocation, they go into overtime. Overtime is made up of an unlimited number of overtime periods. When a player has used the main allocation, the first overtime period begins.

In each overtime period the player must play a specified number of moves within a specified time period. Typically, the main allocation might be one hour each, and the overtime periods for each might be five minutes in which to play thirty stones.

A play (or move) consists in placing a stone on an intersection (or passing) and then pressing the clock. If a player fails to make the specified number of moves within the specified interval, they lose immediately.

If a player plays the specified number of stones within the specified interval, what happens next? There are various systems.

**1. Canadian overtime**

The next overtime period begins immediately. The clock is set to the time specified for the next overtime period, and the specified number of stones are counted out. The next overtime period begins when the opponent next presses the clock.

**2. Milton Keynes overtime**

The player plays on freely until the current allocation of time is consumed, for example until the flag on their clock falls. Then the clock is set to the time specified for the next overtime period, and the specified number of stones are counted out.

**3. (deprecated)**

The player counts out the number of stones specified for the next overtime period, and starts to play these next turn, while still using the time remaining in the current overtime period. When that allocation of time is consumed (that is, the flag falls) the clock is set to the next allocation of time, which begins immediately.

**4. (strongly deprecated)**

The player counts out the number of stones specified for the next overtime period, and adds to the clock the next allocation of time.

The method preferred by the BGA is method 1, Canadian overtime.

Method 3, and particularly method 4, are deprecated by the BGA because of the difficulty of ensuring that they are applied correctly and accurately while at least one of the players is short of time.

With Milton Keynes overtime, the player whose clock must be reset is the player whose move it is. With Canadian overtime, the player whose clock must be reset is the other player. Thus with Canadian overtime, but not with Milton Keynes overtime, the player who is thinking about her move can continue to do so, while the other player resets the clock. This is a reason why Canadian overtime is preferred.

Tournament organisers are free to specify any method of timekeeping that they choose, including methods 3 and 4 above, and methods other than overtime. However if a sufficiently eccentric method is used then the tournament may not be eligible for inclusion in the European ratings system. (Summary of the conditions for a tournament to be included.)

Often, each overtime period will be identical, with the same number of stones to be played in the same interval. For example twenty stones in five minutes (commonly abbreviated 20/5) or thirty stones in five minutes (30/5).

Some tournament organisers choose to specify a sequence of differing periods (the same sequence for both players). For example 20/10, then 20/5, then 40/5, then 40/5.

# Appendix B

## Useful Contacts

### B.1 Email addresses

**President** president at britgo dot org

**Secretary** secretary at britgo dot org

**Treasurer** treasurer at britgo dot org

**Webmaster** webmaster at britgo dot org

**Membership Secretary** membership at britgo dot org

**Tournament Coordinator** tourn-coord at britgo dot org

**Tournament Results** results at britgo dot org

**Draw Program** draw-program at britgo dot org

### B.2 Links

- BGA Website<sup>1</sup>
- gotalk mailing list<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.britgo.org/>

<sup>2</sup><http://three.pairlist.net/mailman/listinfo/gotalk>

## **Appendix C**

### **Sample Press Release**

The following is a real press release written by Toby Manning. Obviously it needs to be adapted if it is to be used in your area, but it is worth while trying this. In 2000, a press release similar to this got the tournament into 3 local papers.

Note that this release was sent out after the event. Obviously, if you wish the papers to take photos, etc, you need to send a release beforehand, inviting photographers at such and such a time.

#### **The 2001 Three Peaks Go Tournament**

Fifty-eight enthusiasts descended on Ingleton last weekend to play Go, Japan's national board game. The event was the Ninth Three Peaks Tournament, held in memory of Tim Hazelden, who had been a keen player until his untimely death in a road accident in 1995. Tim had been a joint landlord of the Marton Arms, where the Tournament was held.

Winner of the Tournament was Tim Hunt, 28, who designs Software for the Open University. The runner up was Alastair Wall, from London. Also with 4 wins were Mike Cumpstey and Martin Harvey from Manchester Go Club, Mark Collinson from Hull, Ron Bell from Reading, Michael Pickles from York and Stephen Streater from Epsom.

The event raised £100 for the Tim Hazelden Fund to support the fabric of St Oswald's church in Thornton in Lonsdale.

#### **Note to Editors**

Go is a board game of pure skill played between 2 people. Its largest following is in the Orient (Japan, Korea and China) although there are keen groups of players in most countries in the world. In Britain the British Go Association runs around 20 tournaments each year around the country, of which the Three Peaks Tournament is one.

The entry of 58 is a record for the Three Peaks Tournament, surpassing the 52 in 1999 and 2000. As well as local players from Preston, Lancaster, Leeds, York and Bradford, people came from all round the

country including London, Cambridge, Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh and the Isle of Man.

Further information is available at the British Go Association Web Site, <http://www.britgo.org/>, and details of the tournament at <http://www.ptmfa.freemove.co.uk/3peaks>.