

A Go Transformation in the U.S.

The Enigma

Go is the most subtle, elegant, and abstract game ever invented. It has been played continuously for 4000 years. Popular in Asia and played by millions, it is but a speck on the cultural landscape of the U.S. Why?

Is Go ripe for an American metamorphosis? And if so, how can we kick it into gear? Can we develop more heroes and more publicity for Go?

Go Heroes

Our first playing hero was Jim Kerwin, the first American to achieve professional status (Japan). Next came Michael Redmond, who reached 9 P in 2000 (Japan). Then came Janice Kim, 3 P (Korea). Now we are working to start a Pro system in the US, to generate our next generation of heroes.

What Next?

The AGA National Fund-raising Committee is wrestling with this problem. While our mandate is to raise funds, our underlying goal is transforming the place of Go in the American cultural landscape. You should be able to walk down the street, ask a stranger if they have heard about the game of Go, and get this response: "Sure. It's that great Asian strategy game." Then we'd know we have arrived.

We need to construct the same societal commitment to the development of our youth as other countries. In China, the government identifies prodigies at an early age and fully supports them as they study Wei Qi. In Korea, both the government and the private sector support training for young players and backing for Baduk tournaments and other events. In Japan the private sector is primarily responsible for supporting the professional IGo system. In all these countries, media of all types – TV, Newspapers, the internet, Anime, fine arts – support and promulgate Go.

Where will the backbone of a vibrant and newly energized US Go community come from? In America it must come from parents, private foundations, private corporations, and private individuals. And, we must have a strong presence in the traditional and new medias.

Current National Fund-raising Committee strategic initiatives.

a. Raise money: We are focused on sponsorship for the U.S. Go Congress, major tournaments, new events, publicity, and infrastructure.

You can help! We have targeted hi tech companies; companies with business interests in Asia; and Asian businesses in America for sponsorship commitments. Do you, a friend or a family member work in such a company? Contact us! We would like to approach them with a sponsorship proposal. (Click [here](#) to see our promotional materials in PDF format.)

b. Raise the public profile of Go.

Five of the 25 richest people in America are Go players: Bill Gates, Microsoft. Larry Ellison, Oracle. 1 Sergey Brin and Larry Page, Google. Paul Allen, Microsoft, Portland Trailblazers. What if they agreed to do promotional videos for us on the subject, 'I love Go because...' ? These men and their companies are our highest priority. Do you know any of them, or, work in one of their companies? Contact us!

We are looking for contacts within the media that can help us air Hikaru No Go, place articles on local and national events, and encourage children to play. Can you help? Contact us!

Whether Go remains in America's cultural background or makes a quantum leap forward depends on our vision and the actions our Go community takes.

Help us make the leap, now...

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