

March 2010

South African Go Association

President's report for the year 2009/2010:

The 2009/2010 period was a relatively uneventful period compared with some recent years. Some recent reports have had to report some distressing news or various crises, however, this last year, thanks in part to the proactive work of the council, there were no significant surprises or problems.

At the beginning of the period we bid farewell to Andries Kruger, who was replaced by Lloyd Rubidge. Ben Gale took over as membership secretary; otherwise all portfolios remained the same.

One of the major initiatives undertaken by the council in the previous year was the effort to get Africa a representative of their own at the bi-annual international Oza tournament. Although a proposal was sent to all the relevant IGF members, enthusiasm for the proposal was limited. In particular, Australia declined to sign the proposal. However, Toyota had in the meantime decided to terminate their sponsorship of the Oza, so for the foreseeable future, there is no tournament. As a result of the lukewarm response, and the current status of the tournament, it was decided to abandon this initiative.

Another initiative was to try and find a way to commemorate the loss of Julius Paulu in 2008. After some debate, and follow up, it was decided to rename the existing African Players floating trophy to the Julius Paulu African Players trophy.

One issue that the council was obliged to consider was the topic of anti-doping regulations. The IGF have adopted relatively rigorous anti-doping regulations, and as an IGF member, we were required to conform to the legislation should we wish to keep sending candidates to international tournaments. In practice, this will have little impact on our members, at present anyway, but this space will need monitoring in case future changes require more significant compliance implications for our potential representatives.

It was with disappointment that it was confirmed that from 2010 onwards the World Amateur Go championship (WAGC) would no longer have sponsored flights. A number of initiatives to obtain sponsorship were attempted, but they proved unsuccessful. We were thus disappointed that our chosen representative, Welile Gogotshe, was unable to attend. In his place, Lloyd Rubidge will be attending, and we wish him well.

We were pleased to note the efforts by Soweto club members, with support from council members such as Ben Gale and Andre Connell, to revive the fortunes of that club. We hope they can achieve significant membership growth.

With regards to tournament news, there was some good news despite the disappointment about the WAGC. We were contacted by the International Pair Go Association about sending a team to the special

commemorative pair go tournament being held in China. This is to celebrate 20 years of international pair go tournaments. It is a fully sponsored tournament, with prize money for all entrants. We were not given much notice, but swift work from Steve and Andrew ensured that contenders were identified and a qualification tournament was held by the deadline. In the end, the team of Victor Chow and Carle Joubert were selected and we wish them well.

In 2009, Andrew Davies represented South Africa at the 30<sup>th</sup> WAGC held in Japan. Andrew came 43<sup>rd</sup> out of 66 entrants, with three wins out of eight.

Victor Chow represented South Africa at the 4<sup>th</sup> Korean Prime Ministers Cup (KPMC) held in Korea. Victor obtained a very impressive 9<sup>th</sup> place, out of 68 entrants.

The 2009 South African closed had a record number of Cape Town contenders this year (four out of the eight), and it was decided to hold it in Cape Town. It was won by Victor Chow. The 2010 South African open was also held, and won by Andre Connell.

The rest of the annual go calendar is also still going strong, including the quarterly Internet events, and the regional club tournaments.

I'd like to thank the people who served with me on the 2009/2010 SAGA Council: Ben Gale, Lloyd Rubidge, Andre Connell, Steve Kroon and Andrew Davies. Ben, Andre and I will be ending our terms at the next AGM. I'd like to say thank you for the privilege of serving on the council, and the support I received from the council which made my job both straightforward and a pleasure.

Chris Welsh

SAGA president 2009/2010