



**CANADIAN GO ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DE GO**

**Proposal for Rules Governing the
Canadian Open**

Preamble

The Canadian Open is the national go championship of Canada. It is used both to determine Canadian representatives to various international go tournaments, and to enhance the level of Canadian go in general.

1. Organization

The organization of the Canadian Open is left to the host club/city. Beyond the rules set out in this document and the general principles of fair play, the CGA is not involved in the operation of the tournament. In particular, the CGA takes no financial interest in the event; it neither makes a claim to any profits generated, nor does it guarantee backing of financial losses.

2. Main Tournament

The Canadian Open is a tournament open to all members of the Canadian Go Association, regardless of playing strength, nationality, age or gender. Certain prizes and titles may have citizenship, strength, age or gender criteria (e.g. international competitions). Players must be members of the CGA in order to compete in the Canadian Open. CGA membership is waived for foreign players who are members of their national go association.

2b. Eligibility—Top division

The top band is open to all players 5 dan and stronger who wish to contest the national championship. Other players may enter the top band at the tournament director's discretion. All players in the top band will be assigned a rank of 6 dan, regardless of actual playing strength. All players in the top band are initially considered to be of equal playing strength and shall be seeded randomly (if seeding is used).

Note: It is important to consider all players of equal strength to avoid preferential pairings in the first two rounds. The practice of pairing past national champions against each other at the beginning of the tournament creates problems in later rounds. Weak players at the bottom of the division (who were paired against similar strength players) can be in contention for the championship because they were not paired against strong players early on. At the same time, a low tiebreak score will unfairly handicap those strong players who lost in the early rounds.

3. Tournament Format

The Canadian Open will be run using the Swiss MacMahon system. It is preferred that the pairings be done using a computer program, but pairings may be done manually as well. If manual pairings are used, they must be checked for accuracy by a second person assisting the tournament director.

3a. Separation of MacMahon bands.

The separation between the top two bands will be set at 2 MacMahon points for a six round tournament. The separation of other bands is set at the tournament director's discretion.

Note: In previous years, it was made clear that the top players in the second division are at least as strong, and in some cases stronger, than the players at the bottom of the top division. The practice of keeping the top band separate from the rest of the tournament does not necessarily lead to the strongest possible competition.

3b. Pairing Odd Players

The Swiss MacMahon pairing system requires that, wherever possible, players with equal MacMahon scores be paired together. If a band has an odd number of players, the person to play outside the band should be determined by random draw. A player in the top division who is paired down is not penalized with regards to trip prizes.

Note: This is very important in the first two rounds if the top division has an odd number of players. The person playing down is automatically given an easier game, but penalized two points on his/her tiebreak score. In later rounds, this person is selected from the bottom of the top division, but at the beginning of the tournament, no distinction is made between players. All players in the top division must have an equal chance of getting the lower pairing.

3c. Handicaps

All games between players in the top division will be even, with full komi. At his/her option, the tournament director may assign handicaps for games in lower divisions, or for games in which a player in the top band is paired down.

Note: As of the 2003 World Amateur Go Championship, komi is 6½ points.

3d. Assignment of Colours

Players will draw for colour (*nigiri*) in the top division. At his/her option, the tournament director may assign colours for games in lower divisions.

3e. Game Rules

Games in the Canadian Open will be played under the rules in effect at the World Amateur Go Championship. Players with games ending in a “no result” will each be awarded $\frac{1}{2}$ a MacMahon point.

Note: The rules from the World Amateur Go Championship are derived from the traditional Japanese rules. In particular, the “bent four in the corner” position is declared dead without regard to the outside board position and games with triple ko or “chosei” positions are declared to have “no result”. There is no “super ko” rule under the World Amateur rules.

3f. Clock Stoppages

Game clocks may only be stopped at the end of the game, in the event of a dispute between the players or in case of emergencies (medical, fire, etc.). Clocks may not be stopped for other reasons without the permission of the tournament director. In particular, clocks must remain running during all washroom/smoking/coffee breaks. Clocks also remain running while prisoners are being removed from the board.

Note: In the past, tournaments have unnecessarily delayed by players stopping the clocks for extended breaks. This is unfair to the tournament director and other players in the tournament, especially in cases where the tournament venue must be vacated by a certain hour.

4. Titles and Prizes

The tournament organizer may award such prizes as are deemed appropriate to the contestants in all divisions. It has been common in the past to award prizes to the top three players in each division, but this must be adjusted based on tournament attendance and finances.

In the case of players being tied for prizes, a tiebreak algorithm will be applied. If the tournament director has not previously announced such an algorithm, the following method shall be used:

- i. Sum of Opponents’ Scores (SOS): The sum of the MacMahon scores of each player’s opponents.
- ii. Sum of Defeated Opponents’ Scores (SDOS): The sum of the MacMahon scores of each player’s defeated opponents
- iii. The result of the tournament game(s) between the tied players (if any).

If the tie cannot be resolved after step (iii), the players shall remain tied. Cash prizes shall be split evenly and material prizes (e.g. trophies, books etc.) will be awarded based on a coin flip.

4a. Title—National Champion

The player in the top division with the largest MacMahon score at the end of the tournament shall be awarded the title of “National Champion”. This is an unrestricted title, with no requirements on citizenship, age or gender.

4b. Title—National Youth Champion

The top-placing player under the age of 18 shall be given the title “National Youth Champion”. There is no restriction on citizenship or gender.

This title is not the same as the World Amateur Youth Representative.

4c. Title—National Women’s Champion

The female player with top placing in the main tournament shall be given the title “National Women’s Champion”. There is no restriction on citizenship or age.

This title is not the same as the representative(s) to any international women’s events.

5. Selection of International Representatives (“Trip Prizes”)

The CGA is historically invited to send representatives several international tournaments. Selection of most of these representatives is done each year at the Canadian Open.

5a. Eligibility—Representatives to World Amateur Go Championship and Incheon Cup

The Canadian Go Association is invited to send one representative each year to the World Amateur Go Championship. At the time of writing, the tournament sponsors bear the complete cost of transportation, food and accommodations for the selected players.

To be eligible to represent Canada at the WAGC or the Incheon Cup, a go player must

- i) be a citizen of Canada
- ii) be a member in good standing of the Canadian Go Association
- iii) not have represented Canada in the WAGC or Incheon Cup more than once in the past four years (i.e. a player may represent Canada no more than twice every five years)

The WAGC and Incheon Cup are usually held each year in early June.

At the time of writing, the Incheon Cup has only been scheduled for one year. It is expected that the event will also be held in future years. The Incheon Cup is named for the city, which is hosting the first event. The name of the event could change

from year to year, but the Korean sponsored amateur championship will herein be referred to as the Incheon Cup.

5b. Eligibility—North American Fujitsu Cup Representatives

The Canadian Go Association is invited to send two representatives each year to the North American Fujitsu Cup Championship (“the Fujitsu Cup”) tournament. At the time of writing, the tournament sponsors bear the complete cost of transportation, food and accommodations for the selected players.

To be eligible to represent Canada at the Fujitsu Cup, a go player must

- i) be a citizen of Canada
- ii) be a member in good standing of the Canadian Go Association

The Fujitsu Cup is traditionally held sometime between early November and late January of each year.

5c. Eligibility—World Youth Goe Championship Representative

The Canadian Go Association is invited to send one representative each to the World Amateur Youth Goe Championship. At the time of writing, the tournament sponsors bear the complete cost of transportation, food and accommodations for the selected player

To be eligible to represent Canada, a go player must

- i) be a citizen of Canada as of the beginning of the Canadian Open
- ii) be a member in good standing of the Canadian Go Association
- iii) be 18 years of age or less as of the xxx of xxx (date) following the Canadian Open
- iv) not have represented Canadian in the WYGC more than once in the past four years (i.e. a player may represent Canada no more than twice every five years)
- v) be at least shodan (1 dan) strength

The first time Canada was invited to send a representative to the World Amateur Youth Championship, the CGA sent an extremely weak player. The representative's results were such that the CGA was not invited back for several years. Criteria (v) was created in order to ensure that the CGA would send a sufficiently strong player that this would not be repeated.

5c. Selection—WAGC, Incheon Cup and Fujitsu Cup Representatives

Subject to playoff constraints (see section 4f), the Canadian representative to the WAGC will be the top placing eligible player in the main tournament of the Canadian Open who is willing and able to play in the WAGC.

Subject to playoff constraints (see section 4f), the Canadian representative to the Incheon Cup will be the top placing eligible player (excluding the WAGC representative) in the main tournament of the Canadian Open who is willing and able to play in the Incheon Cup.

The Canadian representatives to the Fujitsu Cup will be the top two eligible players in the main tournament (excluding the WAGC and Incheon Cup representatives) who are willing and able to play in the Fujitsu Cup.

5d. Selection—World Amateur Youth Go Championship

Subject to playoff constraints (see section 4f), the representative to this event will be the eligible player who places highest in the main tournament and who is willing and able to play in the World Amateur Youth Go Championship.

If no eligible player participates in the Canadian Open, the CGA Executive shall decide on an appropriate selection method. In particular, at its discretion, the CGA Executive may vote to suspend eligibility rule (iv) (section 5c) for the year and allow a representative to play in the WYGC more than twice in a five consecutive years. Such an action applies to **all** players; it is not permissible to suspend rule (iv) (section 5c) for one player but not others.

5e. Selection—World University Championship Playoff

North America is invited to send one continental representative to the World University Championships. To determine this player, a playoff is held between the representatives of the various North American national go associations.

To be eligible for this playoff tournament, a go player must

- i) be a member in good standing of the Canadian Go Association
- ii) be under 30 years of age
- iii) be registered full-time in a post-secondary institution

At the time of writing, this tournament has only been held once. As such, eligibility requirements may evolve to reflect future practices of the tournament sponsors.

5f. Prize—World Women's Representative

To be eligible for this title, a go player must

- i) be female
- ii) be a member in good standing of the Canadian Go Association

- iii) satisfy other entrance requirements as set by the sponsors of international tournaments.

At the time of writing, there are no international women's events to which the CGA is invited send a representative. Should the CGA receive an invitation to such a tournament in the future, the representative shall be selected from the strongest eligible woman player from the Canadian Open

5g. Playoffs

It is the policy of the Canadian Go Association not to award trip prizes on the basis of tiebreaks in the main tournament. If the main tournament results in a tie for a trip prize between multiple players, the prize will be awarded to the winner of a playoff tournament to be held between the various eligible players.

The format of the playoff tournament will depend on the number of players is left to the discretion of the tournament director.

5h. Multiple trip prizes

A player may not be selected as a representative to more than one of the WAGC, the Incheon Cup and the North American Fujitsu Cup in the same year. A player may, however, be selected as one of the WAGC and Fujitsu Cup representatives and in addition be selected as a representatives to any number of the Youth, University or Women's (if applicable) events.

The selection process described herein has no bearing on the selection methods for representatives to other tournaments (e.g. the North American Ing Cup).

6. Pair Go Tournament

A pair go tournament shall be held in conjunction with the Canadian national tournament. This tournament shall be the primary selection for Canadian representatives to the World Amateur Pair Go Championship (WAPGC). The purposes of the pair tournament include

- to maintain Canada's participation in international go,
- to encourage individuals to compete in pair go,
- to encourage women to play go and to be members of the CGA, and
- to recognize pair go as both a game of skill and as a social event.

6a. Eligibility—World Amateur Pair Go representatives

A pair eligible to represent Canada at the WAPGC must consist of one female and one male player each of whom

- i) is a Canadian citizen and a member of good standing of the CGA during the entire period from the selection tournament through the WAPGC,

- ii) has not represented Canada at the WAPGC in any of the past three years,
- iii) agrees to meet all conditions (including attire and demeanour) set by the sponsoring body of the WAPGC if sent as representative, and
- iv) is willing and able to represent Canada at the WAPGC.

6b. Game Rules—Pair Go

Games will be played under the rules specified by the Japan Pair Go Association and used in the International Amateur Pair Go Championship. See the appendix for rules.

6c. Tournament Format—Pair Go

The tournament director shall decide the format of the tournament based on entries. The director may require registration by a time not before 24 hours prior to the scheduled start of the event. All pairs who register by the announced deadline (whether eligible or ineligible) shall be accepted; acceptance or denial of late registrants is at the director's sole discretion.

The director shall choose a format according to the following criteria, and shall announce the format to all players prior to the commencement of play.

- i) The format shall ensure a fair determination of a single pair as representative to the WAPGC. This determination must not depend on any criterion other than the results of games played between eligible pairs. Games in which one or both pairs are ineligible must have no effect on the determination.

Ideally, the format should also determine a winning pair among all entered pairs. This determination may involve any relevant factors from all played games.

- ii) The format shall encourage enjoyment on the part of all players, including those in ineligible pairs.

- iii) The director is authorized make decisions regarding acceptance or denial of late registrants in order to improve the selectivity or enjoyability of the format. If the late registrants do not suffice for such a decision, the director may solicit additional registrants. (The director may allow registration by a pair consisting of two male or two female players, but only with the consent of all other players. In this event, one member of the pair shall be designated as the "female" for the purpose of the pair go rules.)

6d. Appeal of format.

Registered players may enter an appeal to the director's choice of format prior to the commencement of play. They may request a delay of the commencement of play of not more than fifteen minutes while they prepare such an appeal; the director shall grant a proper request for such a delay.

An appeal must give reasons why the director's choice of format does not meet the specified criteria and must propose an alternative format that does meet the specified criteria. The director shall decide between the originally proposed format and any proposed by appellants; the director is encouraged to consult with available members of the CGA Executive Committee, or other persons at the director's discretion. The director's decision following appeals shall be final and not subject to further appeal.

Appeals concerning matters other than the selection of tournament format shall be handled as in other tournaments (see Section 7).

6e. Selection—World Amateur Pair Go Representatives

The highest placing eligible team in the pair go tournament shall be selected to represent Canada at the World Amateur Pair Go Championship.

If no eligible pairs enter the pair go tournament or the selected representative pair proves unable to attend the WAPGC, the CGA President may select an alternate pair.

Preference shall be given to pairs who competed as an eligible pair in a Canadian pair go championship within the past five years, but have not represented Canada at the WAPGC in the interim. The President is encouraged to choose a pair with a strong record of attendance and performance at pair go tournaments. The actual choice shall be at the President's sole discretion.

If no such pair declares itself able and willing to be the representative, the CGA President may nominate any eligible female, who may then nominate any eligible male. These two nominees shall be the representative pair.

7. Conflict Resolution

Disputes regarding the operation of the tournament or the conduct of players should first be brought to the attention of the tournament director. If a satisfactory decision cannot be reached, a formal appeal may be made.

The Appeals Committee should be composed at least three persons not directly involved with the dispute. If possible, the Committee should include a representative from the CGA Executive. In general, the tournament director should

be part of the Committee, unless the appeal alleges a failure of the tournament director in some way.

It is the task of the Appeals Committee to hear from the relevant parties of the dispute and render a verdict. The Committee may issue such directions as required to ensure the smooth and fair operation of the tournament (including the expulsion of a player from the tournament in extreme cases). The decision of the Appeals Committee may by itself not be the subject of future appeals.

Appendix: The Pair Go Competition

Rules of Pair Go

1. (Concerning Pair Go games) In principle, games are played between pairs consisting of a male and a female. The members of a pair are called partners.
2. (Concerning seating) The pairs face each other across the Go board, with the partners sitting side by side.
3. (Concerning the order of play) Black female, White female, Black male, White male: This is the normal rotation, which is repeated until the game is completed. The players must always follow the normal rotation in playing their moves. In even games or games in which one side takes Black giving no komi, the female player on the Black team plays the first move. In handicap game (two stones or more), the female player on the White team makes the first move.
4. (Prohibition on the exchange of information) During a game, the partners in a pair must not convey information to each other by any means apart from the actual playing of moves. Verbal consultation, gestures, signs and so on is prohibited. The only exceptions are consulting about whether to resign and enquiring if it is one's turn to move. When conferring about resigning, the player whose turn it is may consult his or her partner but only ask if he or she agrees to resign.

Note: In Canada (and the United States), it is also permissible to remind one's partner to hit the clock. This may not be the case in other countries and tournaments.

5. (Concerning resigning) Resignation is announced by the player whose turn it is to move. The partner cannot retract the resignation.
6. (Concerning violations) When the players in a pair play in the wrong order and diverge from the normal rotation order, this is called a rotation error. A rotation error can only be claimed when the move just played was out of rotation. Let's assume that the *A* (female player) and *a* (male player) team are playing the *B* (female player) and *b* (male player) team. The order of play is:

$A \rightarrow B \rightarrow a \rightarrow b \rightarrow A \rightarrow B \rightarrow a \rightarrow b \rightarrow A \dots$

The correct cycle must be repeated until the game of the game. After *b* players, *A* should player, but let's assume that by mistake *a* plays. This is a rotation error. $A \rightarrow b \rightarrow a$ (!): the male player on the *Aa* team has played two moves in a row. Only immediately after *a* has played his second move in a row can the *Bb* team claim a rotation error.

- i) A rotation error can be claimed only when the move just played was out of order.
- ii) If a rotation error was intentional, the team making it loses the game by forfeit.
- iii) When the claimed rotation error was not intentional, the next step is to verify which partner played the preceding move.
- iv) If the preceding move was played in the correct rotation, a penalty of three points is imposed on the side making the claimed rotation error and the game is resumed.
- v) When the preceding move was not played in correct rotation, no penalty is levied and the game is resumed.

Comment: As written, articles (iv) and (v) are a little confusing. To summarize, if it is determined that a rotation error has been made and the error is caught immediately, the team making the mistake is penalized three points and the game is resumed. If there is no rotation error or if the rotation is not challenged before another move is made, play continues without penalty.

- vi) In either case, no moves are taken back and replayed. The last move is regarded as correct, and the player who played it becomes the starting point for resuming normal rotation.
- vii) When a rotation error has been detected, the game must return to the normal rotation for the next move. Failure to do so constitutes a new rotation error.

If there has been a rotation error, the 3 point penalty is assessed. The last play is treated as correct and a new rotation is established from there.

- viii) Illegal exchange of information—If an illegal exchange of information is observed to take place, the offending pair forfeits the game.

Rules for the International Amateur Pair Go Championship

1. Pairs consist of a male player and a female player.
2. Competition is carried out by the tournament system.

In Japan, this used to mean an elimination tournament. In Canada, the tournament format is decided by the tournament director in consultation with the players.

3. Games are played on even, with Black giving a komi of 5½ points.
4. Tournament clocks are used for all games.

5. Time allowance:
 - 1st to 3rd rounds and playoffs for places: 45 minutes each, no byo-yomi. If players run out of time, they lose
 - Semifinals and playoff for 3rd place: 40 minutes each, followed by 30 seconds (Japanese) byo-yomi
 - Final: 50 minutes each, followed by 30 seconds byo-yomi.

Official tournament games in Canada are always played with 45 minutes per side and no overtime.

6. If a pair is up to 20 minutes late, then the time is deducted from their time allowance. If the pair is more than 20 minutes late, they lose on time.
7. One Go board is used. The female players face each other and the male players face each other.
8. The female players conduct the *nigiri* to decide who takes Black.
9. The team playing White has the right to decide where to place the clock.
10. The referee will adjudicate in all disputes arising during the game, and the players cannot object to the referee's decisions.
11. If the organizers judge that the behavior of a player or a spectator is very injurious to the spirit of the tournament, the player in question may be disqualified and the player or spectator in question may have his or her permission to participate cancelled.

Pair Go manners

- Male players are requested to wear coats and ties while attending tournaments.

This is waived in Canadian tournaments, but is important to remember for the team playing in Japan.

- Smoking during play is forbidden.
- The members of a pair should not leave their seats at the same time during a game.
- Please refrain from trying to win on time when you have a lost game.

In extreme and malicious cases, the referee may disqualify such participants.

- Please apply to the referee to resolve any problems arising during the game.
- Please abide by the referee's decisions.