

The 26th JAL Cup World Amateur Go Championship

Date: Tuesday, 24~27 May 2005

Venue: Aichi Prefectural Gymnasium, Nagoya City, Aichi Prefecture

The 26th JAL Cup World Amateur Go Championship will be staged with representatives of 65 countries and territories from around the world competing. This number sets a new record for the JAL Cup WAGC, which aims at promoting international understanding and cultural exchange through the medium of go. It shows that the game is growing steadily in popularity and that it is continuing to win many new fans in new countries. The 65 representatives have all won their way through intensely competitive qualifying tournaments in their own countries and in Nagoya they will compete for the honour of becoming the world's number one amateur player.

Just 15 countries participated in the inaugural tournament in 1979, so that number has grown more than fourfold in the intervening two and a half decades.

The tournament is sponsored by Japan Airlines and the Nihon Ki-in. Japan Airlines, which has supported the tournament throughout its history, sees the tournament as playing an important role in its sponsorship of cultural activities.

The tournament is organized by the International Go Federation and is the main event on the international amateur go calendar. In this respect, it can be considered the Olympics of amateur go. It already has a long tradition, and participation in it is the ultimate goal of all amateur players. The virtue of go is that age is not a factor. In last year's tournament, the youngest player was nine-year-old Shiba Shaw of India and the oldest was 79-year-old August Unten of Peru.

The Aichi tournament will be the first held in the Tokai (central Honshu) region since the Nagoya tournament in 1989. It commemorates both the inauguration of JAL flights to the Central Japan International Airport that opened on 17 February this year and the Aichi Expo that opened on 25 March.

The tournament venue, the Aichi Prefectural Gymnasium, is located inside the grounds of Nagoya Castle, which is associated with the founder of the Tokugawa government, Tokugawa Ieyasu, one of the first four figures to be admitted to the Go Hall of Fame founded last year by the Nihon Ki-in. Ieyasu played a very important role in promoting the great development of the game that took place during the Edo period in Japan. The historical associations of the venue should add to the interest of participating in the tournament.

The tournament itself will be preceded by a goodwill match held at the Rotary Hall on the Expo site on Sunday, 22 May, between the competitors and a team of players from all over Japan.

Outline of the 26th JAL Cup World Amateur Go Championship in Aichi

Date/venue: Opening Ceremony: 18:30, Monday, 23 May 2005.
Meitetsu New Grand Hotel (Tsubaki-cho, Nakamura-ku, Nagoya City, Aichi Prefecture)
Tournament: Tuesday, 24 May to Friday, 27 May 2005
Aichi Prefectural Gymnasium (Ni-no-maru, Naka-ku, Nagoya-shi, Aichi Prefecture)
Closing Ceremony: 18:30, Friday, 27 May 2005, Aichi Prefectural Gymnasium.

Sponsors: The Nihon Ki-in, Japan Airlines
Organizer: The International Go Federation (IGF)
Co-sponsor: Japan Association for the 2005 World Exposition
WAGC Aichi Promotion Council

Support: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan Foundation (scheduled)
Cooperation: The Kansai Ki-in
Support: Toyota Motor Corporation, Denso Corporation, JAL Card

Competitors: 65 players from 65 countries and territories (a new record)

Asia: 14 countries and territories

China, Chinese Taipei, DPR Korea, Hong Kong China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam

Near and Middle East: 2 countries

Israel, Turkey

Europe: 30 countries

Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia-Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom

Africa: 3 countries

Madagascar, Morocco, South Africa

North & Central America: 6 countries

Canada, Cuba, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, U.S.A.

South America: 8 countries

Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela

Oceania: 2 countries
Australia, New Zealand

Tournament conditions

1. 8-round Swiss system.
2. All games to be played on even, with Black giving a 6½-point komi.
3. Time allowance of 90 minutes per player, followed by Canadian Overtime.
Tournament clocks will be used for all games.
4. Tournament rules are *The World Amateur Go Championship Rules*. Any problems that arise will be settled by the referees.
5. The referees are professional go players from the Nihon Ki-in and the Kansai Ki-in.

Awards

1. The winner will be given the title of '26th World Amateur Go Champion' and the winner's cup and will receive an amateur 8-dan diploma from the Nihon Ki-in.
2. Winners of 2nd to 10th places will receive cups.
3. A player not placed in the top ten who has demonstrated fair play and fighting spirit will be awarded the Shizuo Asada Fighting Spirit Prize.

Schedule of the 26th JAL Cup World Amateur Go Championship in Aichi

| Date | Time | Event | Venue |
|----------------|---|---|--|
| Sun., 22 May | 16:00~19:00 | Go exchange | Aichi Expo Rotary Hall |
| Mon., 23 May | 12:15~15:15 17:30~18:00 18:30~20:30 | International Goodwill Match Press Conference Opening Ceremony/Reception | Aichi Prefectural Gymnasium Meitetsu New Grand Hotel “ “ “ “ |
| Tues., 24 May | 9:00~12:30 14:00~17:30 | Round 1 Round 2 | Aichi Prefectural Gymnasium |
| Wed., 25 May | 9:00~12:30 14:00~17:30 | Round 3 Round 4 | Aichi Prefectural Gymnasium |
| Thurs., 26 May | 9:00~12:30 14:00~17:30 | Round 5 Round 6 | Aichi Prefectural Gymnasium |
| Fri., 27 May | 9:00~12:30 14:00~17:30 17:00~18:00 18:30~19:30 | Round 7 Round 8 Public game commentary Awards Ceremony, Closing Ceremony | Aichi Prefectural Gymnasium |

All the events from Monday to Friday are open to the general public.

Go exchange: Goodwill games with WAGC participants. Participants have been chosen from all around Japan.

History of the JAL Cup World Amateur Go Championship

This tournament was founded in 1979 in order to promote mutual understanding and cultural exchange through the medium of go and to raise the level of amateur go throughout the world. The inaugural tournament was held in Tokyo. At the time, go had not yet achieved the level of worldwide support that it enjoys today, and the number of participating countries was a mere 15. Thirteen of the 30 places were allotted to Japan, China and Korea; just six European countries participated; and six of the players from the remaining countries were of Asian birth or descent.

The tournament proved a great stimulus to the spread of go in all parts of the world and also greatly promoted the systematic growth of go organizations. The ensuing decades have witnessed a steady increase in the number of countries participating in the tournament.

A look at the results of the first 25 tournaments shows that China has the lead, with 14 wins, followed by Japan with seven, and Korea with three. The other win went to Hong Kong China. However, the level of Western players has been rising steadily and we could easily see the first Western champion this year or in the near future. Also, more and more young players have been appearing in the tournament in recent years, so a teenaged champion is also a real possibility. The second-place winner last year was only 14.

The growth of the WAGC

1 (1979) Tokyo: 15 countries

Japan, China, Korea, Austria, France, F.R. Germany, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Yugoslavia, Canada, U.S.A., Argentina, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand

2 (1980) Tokyo: 20 countries

Hong Kong, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Poland, Switzerland

3 (1981) Tokyo: 24 countries

Philippines, Hungary, Spain, Sweden

4 (1982) Tokyo: 29 countries

Singapore, Italy, Romania, Finland, Norway

5 (1983) Tokyo: 30 countries

Mexico

6 (1984) Tokyo: 30 countries

Thailand (Romania did not take part.)

7 (1985) Tokyo: 31 countries

Romania rejoined.

8 (1986) Tokyo: 35 countries

Belgium, Luxembourg, U.S.S.R., Chinese Taipei

9 (1987) Beijing: 34 countries

Malaysia (Romania and Chinese Taipei did not take part.)

10 (1988) Tokyo: 36 countries
Romania and Chinese Taipei rejoined.

11 (1989) Nagoya: 38 countries
Chile, German Democratic Republic

12 (1990) Hiroshima: 39 countries
Ireland

13 (1991) Kanazawa: 39 countries
DPR Korea (The unification of East and West Germany meant that Germany became one country.)

14 (1992) Chiba: 40 countries
Venezuela

15 (1993) Fukuoka: 40 countries

16 (1994) Kyoto: 42 countries
Turkey, South Africa, Ukraine (DPR Korea did not take part.)

17 (1995) Tokyo: 44 countries
Indonesia, Slovakia (DPR Korea did not take part.)

18 (1996) Omachi City, Nagano Prefecture: 45 countries
Cuba (The Philippines dropped out.)

19 (1997) Sapporo: 46 countries
DPR Korea rejoined.

20 (1998) Tokyo: 50 countries
India, Israel, Croatia, Yugoslavia

21 (1999) Oita: 55 countries
Madagascar, Vietnam, Guatemala, Colombia, Peru

22 (2000) Sendai: 56 countries
Morocco

23 (2001) Miyazaki: 56 countries
Armenia, Lithuania
Not taking part: DPR Korea, Cuba

24 (2002) Hida Takayama: 61 countries
Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ecuador, Uruguay
Rejoining: DPR Korea, Cuba
Not taking part: Morocco

2003: Tournament not held because of the SARS epidemic.

25 (2004) Kurashiki: 64 countries

Mongolia, Nepal, Panama

Rejoining: Morocco

(Yugoslavia changed its name to Serbia and Montenegro.)

Not taking part: DPR Korea

26 (2005) Nagoya: 65 countries

Rejoining: DPR Korea