Rules of Go (Weiqi)
For World Mind Sports Games 2008

Section 1 Equipment

1. The board

The board is a grid intersected with 19 evenly-spaced parallel vertical lines and 19 evenly-spaced parallel horizontal lines. Each intersection is called a "point" and there are 361 points on the board. Nine points on the board are dotted and called "star points".   See Figure 1.
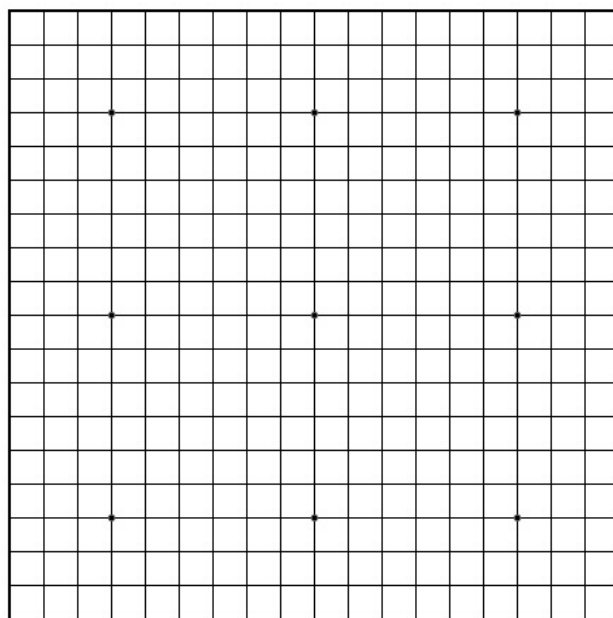

Figure 1

2. The stones

Lens-shaped black and white stones are used, with a size slightly smaller than an element of the grid. The numbers of stones should be adequate to last until the end of the game.   In official competitions, the numbers shall be set at 180 for each color.

Section 2 The Play

1. There are two players: one takes the black stones and the other, the white stones. They are respectively called Black player and White player.

2. The board is initially empty.

3. Black makes the first play by placing a stone on an unoccupied point on the board, then White, and so on in alternation.

4. After a stone is placed on a point, it shall not be moved to any other point.

5. Playing alternately is the right of both players, but either player may give up the right to make a play and this is known as a pass.

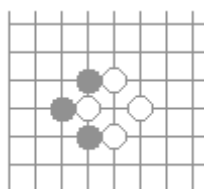## Section 3 Liberties and Dead Stones

1. The unoccupied points that are immediately adjacent to a stone along horizontal or vertical lines are called the liberties of that stone.

2. A group of same-color stones that are connected along the lines form a single unit, and the unoccupied points adjacent to the group are liberties of that single unit.

3. A stone or a group of stones left with no liberties are dead stones and must be removed from the board.

4. After a player places a stone and leaves stones or groups of stones of both sides with no liberties, the stones of this player remain on the board and the stones of the opponent are removed.

5. Forbidden points: A forbidden point is an unoccupied point on the board which, if played, would leave that stone and its connecting unit of stones without liberties, while failing to remove any of the opponent's stones. A player cannot play on a forbidden point.

Section 4 Prohibiting the Reappearance of the Same Board Position

It is illegal to play in such a way as to recreate a board position that previously existed on the board.

The most common example is a *ko* (*jie* in Chinese).

As seen in Figure 2, after a player makes a capture, his opponent may not make a capture immediately, as this would repeat the board position before the first player's capture. Instead, the opponent must make a play

elsewhere on the board. When both players, after playing away, make repeated captures in such a formation, this process

Figure 2   is known as a ko fight. The play away from the ko itself is known as a ko threat.

Cyclic Ko

A cyclic ko happens when three or more ko's appear simultaneously or when other repetitive situations involving multiple stones, such as "eternal life", occur. The principle for handling them is always the same: before placing a stone that would cause a repetition of the board position, the player must play away from the repetitive cycle.

Section 5 Ending the Game

Two consecutive passes signal that both players believe that there are no more points to contest for in the game. The game of placing the stones in alternation comes to an end and the competition is over. Then:

1. The two players remove dead stones by mutual agreement. The game ends when all the dead stones have been agreeably removed.

2. In case of disputes on the life and death of any of the stones or the rights to the vacant points, either player may propose to resume the play and continue in the original order, until there are two consecutive passes again and the game comes to its end. In this case, all stones remaining on the board are alive.

3. Play may only be resumed to confirm the life or death of stones and the rights to the vacant points enclosed by the living stones. If one or both players find other contestable points on the board after two passes, those points shall be left as they stand and are evenly divided between the two players.

Section 6 Determining the Winner

The goal of a Go game is to occupy the majority of the 361 points on the board. At the end of the game, all the points occupied by the stones of a player together with all the vacant points surrounded by these stones constitute that player's points. The unoccupied points between black stones and white stones

are divided evenly between the two players. The difference between the two players' points, corrected for compensations, determines the winning margin. There are two types of compensations. The first type depends on who passes first in the game.   If White passes first, Black's score is reduced by 1. If Black passes first, no such compensation is given.

The second type of compensation aims to balance the advantage enjoyed by the player who makes the first play. To ensure a fair game, the Black player is asked to deduct an amount from his total points, traditionally known as the *komi* (*tie-xian* in Chinese). The amount of komi in this tournament is set to be 6.5 points.

Either player may resign during the game, in which case the game ends immediately.

Section 7 Counting the Score

There are three methods for counting: **counting the stones and the surrounded points; counting the surrounded points after filling in the captured stones; and counting by filling in all the stones.** Although methods differ, the result will be the same, and all the methods may be offered as choices. The third method, counting by filling in all the stones, is used for this competition. See **Appendix** 1.

At the end of the game, both players will fill their empty points with their stones before the scores are counted using the procedure in Appendix 1. This method requires that both sides start with 180 stones each, which should be ascertained before the game.