

The New NGA Format

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Introduction

The old system for NGA could be described in go terms as being a heavy shape. Some of the biggest problems were

- complicated format with a tedious-to-read description,
- scheduling problems of the pre-arranged games ever since NGA launched,
- a lot of work done for reviews that only benefited 2 students,
- bad program + public website integration,
- clumsy communication between the participants, primarily happening by email; no good ways to discuss lecture & review content.

During November 2014 we asked for suggestions from our students for the new NGA system, and we were able to receive great feedback, with everyone contributing something to the new system. I will take this opportunity to thank everyone who wrote us their suggestions!

The new system

The new system follows a multi-league format with monthly promotions and demotions. We introduce 2-month *NGA seasons*, although at the moment a season-wide participation only allows a participation in the tsumego competition and a cheaper subscription fee.

Seasons (2015)
Jan–Feb
Mar–Apr
May–Jun
Aug–Sep
Oct–Nov

Participants with the *membership option* play games against other league members with free pairing, up to 2 matches per other participant. We try to assign a specific teacher per league (this works well with a 3-league system). Tentatively Antti takes care of the A league, Jeff B and Juri C. The lecture format is changed so that the teachers actively check the league games and then prepare

themed lectures based on problematic aspects found in the games. This way, the lectures will be better-formatted and more-to-point, and it allows multiple games to be discussed during the lecture for more examples of the same concept.

There is also a cheaper spectator option for those who just want to follow the lectures and check the reviews. Participants with the spectator option can't participate in a league or the season-wide tsumego competition.

The old review system stays, but is modified. We introduce a *token system*, where you may add up to 3 tokens to your participation. You may use a review token to get a game with your comments and questions reviewed more personally by a teacher, and this review will also be public to all the participants. The game can be a league game or a real-life game such as your tournament game. We are also reducing clutter in the reviews and will in the future concentrate on giving more focused advice on the crucial problems, with something around 5 to 10 on-point comments about the game.

The coaching system is changed to cover an entire season, and may be added to your membership participation.

An example

Here's an example how the leagues could be distributed based on NGA 2014 November's 23 participants:

League A (Antti's)		League B (Jeff's)		League C (Juri's)	
Lauri	4d	Gardan	1d	RBerenguel	4k
Darchik	3d	kyy	1d	sanniti	4k
Pyoveli	2d	Sennahoj	1k	Calwen72	4k
Juippi	2d	fujisai	2k	tygempanda	4k
lucibel	2d	Smar	3k	Kurbads	5k
Asum	2d	Kery	3k	Foulons	7k
		Eilinen	3k	Ddoox	7k
		Xirxaven	4k	six4	7k
				brittany	8k

The amount of lectures will be scaled so that at least 1 game by every participant gets discussed during a lecture. The real number will be closer to 2 games or more. With 2–4 games analyzed per lecture, this translates to...

min. lectures/month	League A	League B	League C
# games discussed	6 participants	8 participants	9 participants
1 per participant	1.5–3	2–4	2.3–4.5
2 per participant	3–6	4–8	4.5–9

In the new system, we could do 4 lectures for A and 6 for B and C, for a total of 16 lectures.

So the new system’s membership option entails participation in a league where you are free to play as many games as you want, with a guarantee to have at least 1–2 of your games discussed in a lecture. For premium services, participants may add 1–3 tokens or the coaching option.

Promotion/demotion system

The promotion/demotion system hasn’t been figured out yet. If you have a suggestion, please email NordicGoAcademy@gmail.com!

Prices for 2015

Option	1 month	season
Spectator	25 €	40 €
Membership	35 €	60 €
Regular	30 €	55 €
Premium services		
Coaching	15 €	

(Regular is simply membership with a 5 € discount.)

In addition, participants may add up to 3 tokens per month with the following rate: 1/2/3 tokens for 10 €/15 €/20 €. Season-wide participants may add further tokens at 6.50 € per token, up to 3 more.

The review services have been unpopular, but we will keep them as they are helpful to those who cannot participate in our league.

The feedback

Some of the feedback that influenced the new system is listed here.

- **more personalization:** teachers in charge of leagues
- **require comments & questions in reviews:** students should include comments and questions in their games before sending them for reviewing
- **publicize reviews for all participants**
- **prepare specific topics for review lectures / themed lectures:** implemented in the new lecture system
- **free pairing**
- **more-to-point reviews**
- **league system**

This list cannot include all the great suggestions we received, some of which went to great extents describing the new system and providing feedback about the way we work.

Afterwords

For now we will still run the program on the /academy/. Another good suggestion was a participants-only Google Calendar, where adding their scheduled matches is possible so other participants can come online to follow interesting matches. We will look into setting this up!

The “Proposals for the New NGA” followed a competition format, and we will contact the winners personally.