The ICGA on the Web

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THE ICGA ON THE WEB

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The ICGA and its members can now communicate with each other and a wider public, as never before. The ICGA website *ICGA_W*, www.icga.org, will complement the *ICGA Journal*, providing more space and access to an evolving and wider range of items including both topical news and definitive reference material.

The purpose of ICGA_W is to represent and expedite the ICGA's aims, objectives and activities. The aims are:

- to promote the demonstration of Artificial Intelligence via the domain of computer games
- to foster the community of those interested in the theory and practice of computer gaming
- to promote competition in games that include computer involvement
- to add value, by education and entertainment, to the human experience of game-playing.

To that end, ICGA_W is managed by an impressive team of topic-specialist editors backed by an excellent webmaster, Paul van der Krogt. The ICGA depends essentially on the enthusiasm, experience, skill and energy of its volunteers, and first recognises and thanks all those who have agreed to join the team to date:

> Vadim Anshelevich (Hex), Darse Billings (Poker, RoShamBo), Michael Buro (Othello), Jaap Bus (International Draughts), Jr-Chang Chen (Chinese Chess), Jeroen Donkers (Mancala), Guy Haworth, Johanna Hellemons (ICGA Operations), Kentara Kayama (Shogi), Hans Kuijf (Bridge), David Levy (ICGA External Relations), Richard Lorentz (Amazons), Martin Müller (Go), Alexander Nosovsky (Go-Moku/Renju), Jonathan Schaeffer (Checkers), Brian Sheppard (Scrabble), Martine Tiessen (ICGA Journal), Jos Uiterwijk (Western Chess), Tsuyoshi Yamada (Tsume-Shogi) and Mark Winands (LoA, TwixT).

We would very much welcome further editors for cross-game and game-specific topics such as Backgammon, Crossword Solving, Culture, Domineering and History. No doubt, readers would like to suggest further topics. There is a news column but no bulletin board.

The site gives members a significant, new opportunity to represent, contribute to and build the ICGA by reaching out to a wider public and also potential sponsors. Games have historically been a major part of the world's cultures, perhaps initially as a way of modelling some aspect of our society in a simple and safe way. Today, computer technology is a key force for change: computer game-playing combines these two elements of our world. Computer involvement in game- and model-domains will continue to add value to the human enjoyment of them, as well as creating knowledge and AI techniques which can be used more widely in important areas where complex optimisation is involved. The ICGA contributes by promoting this activity.

As can be seen from the style of the games-specific sections, ICGA_W aims to acknowledge the key people, programs and achievements in each field. Further, we challenge future workers to achieve new goals, just as David Levy did for Chess in the '70s and '80s. ICGA_W will also acknowledge its contributors and we hope all members will promulgate, input to and link to our site using the ICGA logo badge, c.f. *ICGA_W, Contact*.

ICGA_W is looking for transaction software to enable the ICGA to trade online with members and the public. Easier ways to pay subscriptions and order ICGA material are always welcome. ICGA_W also aims to relay the ICGA's tournaments live as they happen. To that end, we will publish interfaces as available between competing engines and *Tournament Servers* which will, for their part, relay the games to the world.

To contribute, please email info@icga.org, specific editors, or webmaster@icga.org on technical site issues. The most convenient subject header is *ICGA_W: <domain> - <keywords>*, e.g. "ICGA_W: Poker - useful links". The Editors and I look forward to your contributions and reaction to the site. Enjoy!

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