- - · ON THE ROAD · - -

Yu teaches the ancient game of Go

By Murray Green

Sarah Yu wants local people to learn the ancient game of Go. It is a traditional Chinese, Korean and Japanese mind game played on a board with stones.

"I think this game is wonderful. When I was a little girl, I discovered this game at my grandparents house. I asked to learn to play until I was six and a half, finally they got me a teacher. Since then I progressed a lot," said Sarah.

Like chess, mastering Go requires both planning and the ability to read your opponent.

"You want to get an understanding of the game in order to win. You must enjoy winning. My dream is to become the first (top) player of the world. I placed second at a national tournament in China in the little girl's group. I was 10 and half and it was 11 and under age. The next year I entered tournaments and was in the top 60s in the under 20 age group. My family moved to Canada so I stopped playing the game and I began to learn English," she shared.

Sarah had six years of professional training in China and has represented Canada in top tournaments, winning a bronze medal in the 2012 World Mind Sports Games in France.

"I reached number five in the championships, but lost only two games," Sarah said.

After having a baby, she now wants to focus her attention to teaching others. To progress in the game, she offers lessons and game

Murray Green, Camrose Booster
Sarah Yu demonstrates some key moves in the ancient game of Go that she wants to teach.

reviews for players of all ages and skill levels. "It is time to teach others and maybe form a club here in Camrose."

The object of the game is to take turns placing stones on the board on open intersections of the board grid. When you surround your opponent's stones they are considered captured and removed from the board (similar to checkers and chess). At the end of the game, whoever controls the majority of the territory wins.

"We moved to Camrose (from Ontario) when my husband was offered a job at Augustana two years ago. He is a computer science professor," Sarah added.

"I want to introduce this game and help people improve. A game can take from 30 minutes to three hours on average, depending on how good the players are. You can use a time clock, like chess, to make the game faster. Some Augustana students might be interested in playing, but also some retired people that want to exercise their mind and keep it sharp," Sarah suggested. "Memorization is key, so it might be harder for retired people, but they will grasp the concept quickly which is amazing."

The ancient game of Go started in China about 2,500 years ago. By 600 to 900 AD, it had spread to Japan and Korea. Four arts are required in China to be considered a cultured gentleman. They are playing Go, painting, calligraphy and music.

The Canadian Go Association is the governing body in Canada for the game of Go. It is affiliated with the International Go Federation in Tokyo.

There are clubs in many Canadian cities, large and small. Newcomers and beginners are always welcome.

The game of Go came to Canada over 100 years ago from a number of different sources. First, Japanese immigrants from Japan and California brought the game along the West Coast.

Second, a European engineer named Edward Laker, who studied at a German University learned to play Go from Japanese students who also studied in Germany. Edward later came to North America where he spread the game in both Canada and US.

Third, in 1929 a small group of Chinese Go players gathered at YMCA in Montreal. Between 1935 and 1938, Go was introduced at McGill University by Harry Schwartz, who, in 1948, founded the Montreal Go Club.

The World Youth Championship, in particular, prompted the teaching of Go, started with Ottawa Chinese Go Club and later many other clubs, to youngsters. The age range of the Go players dropped down to eight to 10 years old, and in many of the local tournaments the trophy winners are in the 12 to 18 age group. With this teaching initiative, they envision a bright future for Go in Canada.

You can learn the game of Go by stopping in at the Go & Tea between noon and 5 p.m. on the second floor (above From Kicks to Kids), 4929-50 Street.

Kodiaks edge Olds Grizzlys, wait for league decisions

By Murray Green

Camrose Kodiaks won a close 3-2 contest against the Olds Grizzlys in Alberta Junior Hockey League (AJHL), January 17.

After a scoreless opening period, Camrose garnered the only tally in the middle frame when Levi Carter earned his 10th of the season.

After an Olds goal, Owen Lansing counted his sixth of the season on a power play. Olds tied the game once more, but the Kodiaks responded with a marker from Cole Barrett, his ninth of the year.

Kodiaks goalie Carson Ironside stopped 16 of 18 shots directed his way. Camrose recorded

35 shots on goal.

Sherwood Park beat Camrose 9-2 on January 19 with Brenden Bedorf (2) and Carter (11) scoring for the Kodiaks.

Goalie Elliott Pratt turned away 21 of 27 shots before giving way to Ironside, who stopped 13 of 16 shots. Camrose fired 27 shots at the Sherwood Park cage.

The Bonnyville Pontiacs beat Camrose 7-2 on January 20. Garrett Thom collected his ninth of the season and Odin George scored his third in the middle frame.

Goalie Ironside turned away 10 of 13 shots before giving way to Pratt who stopped 18 of 22 shots. Camrose counted 23 shots on goal.

The Kodiaks are at home against Lloydminster on January 31 at 7 p.m.

In February, the Kodiaks are home against Canmore (2 p.m.) on February 4; Lloydminster (2 p.m.) on February 11; Fort McMurray (2 p.m.) on February 19.

Bear facts

AJHL has cancelled games between the Camrose Kodiaks and the following five opponents: Brooks Bandits, Sherwood Park Crusaders, Okotoks Oilers, Blackfalds Bulldogs and Spruce Grove Saints.

The AJHL is continuing to play games between the remaining 11 teams as originally scheduled.