

Answers

From: Sylle Arvidieu

1. What is your take on there being several memory associations presenting themselves as being global? Where does the IAM fit in?

My view is that it is in the benefit of the IAM to reach out to certain (not all, on a case by case basis) such independent associations that have a decent base of competitors and discuss with them the idea of carrying out their activities with the IAM affiliation. It is important to have one body to be officially associated with the sport and that position is where the IAM fits ideally. The reason why I believe this position is right for the IAM is because the IAM has been the one making efforts to connect the memory world in a democratic fashion by involving competitors and interested individuals alike and that too in a transparent manner. The IAM's contribution to the sport stands out from the rest quite clearly, given its attempts to digitize, improving disciplines (case in point: abstract images replaced by the new Images) and being one of few organizations to have its own WMC.

2. What would be your top two ideas to help broaden the memory competitor base?

As I have stated in my motivation letter, making the sport viewer friendly is a must to attract people. Thus, I suggest focus be increasingly given on the faster formats which are a delight to spectate. I myself got interested in the sport on watching the Memory League Championship (formerly XMT) videos. Secondly, tapping certain brands and companies to associate with the sport is something that can lead to greater awareness among the masses as it would provide the organization a better platform to advertise. In the meanwhile, we could make use of some form of advertising at least, which can be decided accordingly based on the funds intended to be used.

From: Lynne Kelly

3. Some motivation letters referred to the value of memory sports for education and implied a role for IAM extending beyond sports to promoting the broad benefits of memory training. Do you see this as a role for IAM? If so, to what extent?

I certainly see this as one of the roles of the IAM. Since most people in the world do not have knowledge of the sport, it certainly is an organic way of increasing the competitor base by informing them about the very existence of memory sports. I think we can start from the ground level by approaching schools (members can start with their very own) and merely having short sessions informing young children about how they can use the techniques to their own benefit. Assuming the sport takes off in the future, it is natural that the organization that makes efforts in promoting it will become the one known to most.

4. Some motivation letters talked about the high entry level into the sport. Can you point to some successful efforts in that field and / or ideas you have for making it more accessible?

Memory League is something that makes the sport increasingly accessible to people having no knowledge of memory sports. With forums like Art of Memory wherein

beginners can get a plethora of information, and then competing in real time with several people (including the present top athletes of the world), I believe it is a brilliant initiative and is something that the IAM can make good use of. In fact, it is one of the USPs that sets the IAM apart from several other memory associations in existence which focus only on the traditional formats.

From: Kelly Knight

5. What is your approach to bringing new members, especially young ones, into the sport?

My approach to this is the same as the one on spreading awareness. Starting by reaching out to our very own schools seems to be the most convenient way. By means of knowledge sessions, we can generate interest and the idea can be further developed by conducting small-scale events eventually. Schools tapped will then be affiliated with the IAM and this can also lead to more local competitions being held on a small scale, leading to further awareness.

From: Florian Minges

6. What is your opinion on the ongoing digitalisation of memory sports? Yay or Nay? Why?

Yay! This is something I am strongly in favour of. Digitalization of memory sports is a must. It can make everything related to competition much more convenient, save a lot of time and competitors will be able to practise at home in a better way. Not to forget the paper we'd all be saving! In fact, I remember approaching an IAM member to talk about the digitization of the sport almost a year ago. I'm really glad to see the IAM working on it and trying it in the upcoming WMC.

7. The IAM is currently looking for a host for the IAM World Memory Championship 2019. The DL for applications is the 7th of December (so before your answers to these questions will be published). What do you think about the feasibility of organising an IAM World Memory Championship in your country, either next year or sometime in the future? What are the the biggest obstacles? Is there anything that could be done or changed to make it easier / more convenient in order for someone to host it in your country?

Since I have not yet taken part in an Indian Championship, I am not in touch with other Indian competitors and the ones who organize it. Should I be elected, a natural step would be to communicate with them and discuss the possibility of the same. The Indian Championship has been conducted annually since the past 9 years (including 2 open championships), so it is clear the people organizing are quite experienced in this regard. I would not be able to comment on the obstacles or convenience of hosting without talking to the organizers who've been doing so in the last decade.

8. The memory sports community has many dedicated volunteers who are contributing to it in many different ways, both internationally and nationally. If you could highlight one such person today (who is not also running for the IAM International Board right now), who would it be, and why?

I would like to highlight 2 people who have contributed a lot to the sport and aren't running for the board.

First, I would highlight the contributions of the American athlete Lance Tschirhart which

have undoubtedly changed the sport for good. He created the 2 Card Shadow system a few years back, the foundation of which is used by several top athletes (with some modifications). Given that adopting any 2 Card System is such a big task, I can only imagine the effort and skill required to accurately design one, giving due regard to pairing letter nuances and how it would aid speed as well as learning. From personal experience, I have known him to be of immense help whenever asked for, be it budding athletes (like yours truly) or even the IAM, as I'm told he has been working towards building the cards memorization software for the upcoming WMC. Not to mention the competition experience he has already (with a WR in spoken numbers that still stands). I believe the memory community is fortunate to have people like Lance and several other self-effacing personalities, who have improved the sport in more ways than we can imagine. With adequate competition experience, creativity in developing memory systems which have helped many athletes, and computer science skills to aid the ongoing digitalization of memory sports, I find him to be an instrumental part of the community.

The other is another American athlete, Nelson Dellis. I have been following Nelson's work since quite some time and I believe his efforts in generating awareness for the sport have been phenomenal. By means of his Youtube channel, television appearances, documentary on memory games, initiatives like Climb For Memory, setting up the XMT (Memory League), organizing its championship, and also a book that he released very recently, it is clear how devoted Nelson is to the sport

From: Anonymous

9. How do you consider your own potential contribution to the board to be unique, compared to the other candidates?

I believe I will be able to contribute in terms of ideation, trying to associate with companies for increasing the reach of the sport, and from the views that I have read in the other motivation letters, I seem to be one of the few with an expressed focus on faster formats as the key to popularizing the sport. Since most applicants are people with real competition experience, perhaps being from the 'outside', I could provide novel views with regards to activities related to competing. For instance, when I read about events like 10 Minute Cards and Hour Cards, I proposed the idea of having a spare deck during recall to assist the competitor. Several months later, I saw the same idea being put forth by a few other athletes as well; which is just an example to show that people who haven't yet taken part can also aid in improving the sport for good.

I hope I have answered your questions well. Do not hesitate in reaching out to me in case of any other questions/clarifications.

Warm Regards,

Sanchit