



“Bridge for Peace”

BRIDGE: HOBBY, SPORT, CULTURE

By Gianarrigo Rona

Playing Bridge, at least in its primordial version, dates back to the dawn of time and there are traces of it since antiquity. Bridge is the most widespread card game in the world and counts a number of players larger than that of any other game.



“Bridge for Peace”

Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

The reason for the success of bridge is linked to the fact that Bridge is a universal game that can be played by anyone, anywhere, in the same language and the same technique, without particular tools, since all you need are four people and a deck of cards.



“Bridge for Peace”

Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

Bridge together only with music,
represents a truly universal language, one
that enables people speaking the most
disparate languages to communicate with
each other without difficulty or problem.



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Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

The cards represent, unique case in the field of games, only the instrument needed to carry out tactics and do not constitute a fundamental element of the game.

Today, with modern technology, the game can be played also without cards, at a distance, with a simple computer and four players in different places.



"Bridge for Peace"

Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

Bridge is Hobby

obviously, because it represents a recreational pastime, a game in the most complete sense of the word.



Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

“Bridge for Peace”

Bridge is Sport

because, regardless of the official recognition obtained by the IOC and beyond its recreational etymology, if we forget for a moment the concept of sport as an exclusively physical activity, one of action and movement, we can find, and we do find, all the components of a sport in Bridge: discipline, rigour, ethics, performance, competitiveness, application, study, practice, effort, sacrifice, stress



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Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

Bridge is Sport

It should be highlighted, also, that in the important competitions, that require practicing ten, twelve hours a day for ten to fifteen consecutive days, the stress is not just psychological and that aptitude to effort and resilience must be reviewed under a purely physical perspective.



Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

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All components of the game, both theoretic and practical, have an absolute logical, mathematical and statistical matrix and this drives the players to continuous reasoning, improving concentration, synthesis and analysis, putting them in front of continuous strategic problems, increasing mnemonic potential



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***Bridge has been defined
“the sport of the mind”,
but is not only a sport for the brain:
it requires particular concentration,
fighting spirit, quick reflexes
and stamina: qualities only achieved through
physical fitness***

***Mario Pescante
former IOC Vice-President Vicarious***



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Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

Bridge is Culture

because Bridge is substantially about socialization and aggregation, since its fundamental nucleus is composed firstly by the couple and then by the four players.



Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

“Bridge for Peace” **Bridge is Culture**

Bridge is different to other mind sports like chess, in which the ultimate objective is to defeat the adversary, to beat the other, a war game, in other words. With bridge instead, the most important element is the mutual understanding existing with the partner and therefore it's about communication, harmony, solidarity above all.



Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

“Bridge for Peace”

Bridge is Culture

It therefore becomes necessary to know your partner well, to form a good team, to sacrifice a part of one’s personality for the benefit of the partner, to have relationships with others, assimilate habits, attitudes, behaviours, customs, mentalities that are different from one’s own, sometimes even of other countries, traditions, cultures.



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Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

Bridge is Culture

The basic nucleus of the game is therefore the couple and this inescapably forms an aggregating element. It is a veritable marriage where each of the two components must learn to know, understand and appreciate the other, to be in tune with one another, sacrificing elements of their own personality, softening character traits, accepting the decisions and initiatives of others, establishing, in other words, a proper relationship in good or in bad.



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Bridge is Culture

It is about continuously measuring oneself in grappling with a game which is endless, not perfect, susceptible to constant improvements, through progressive discoveries. And again, the knowledge that nothing is absolute, but that all is relative and the one who makes the least mistakes prevails, thus rewarding safety, regularity, perseverance, without frustration but, on the contrary, with talent and intuition.



Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

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Bridge is Culture

Bridge promotes the most unimaginable socializations between people of different age, sex, class, education, culture and characteristics. Bridge is regulated by ethical and practical rules, the respect of which represents the main aim of the game, and this aspect, especially for the younger players, is of considerable educational value.



Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

“Bridge for Peace”

Bridge is Culture

Bridge mirrors aspects of life in serenely and rigorously accepting negative events (bridge is in fact a game in which one often goes down).



Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

“Bridge for Peace” **Bridge is Culture**

It's about knowing how to choose the best strategy in order to limit the damages as well as the adversary's advantages, through rational choices (the defence

declaration, playing safe); about being able to sacrifice one's position in favour of the partner through tactical choices (sacrifice of an honour to favour that of the partner); about finding winning solutions through prompt technical choices (time factor, anticipating a suit).



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Bridge is Culture

Regarding young players,

Bridge is able to offer a consistent help in refining their analytical skills, in a moment of fundamental importance in their formation, and to perfect, through constant verification, their ability to synthesize.



Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

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Bridge is Culture

Once they gain sufficient confidence to interpret and evaluate data, to formulate and assume decisions, players immediately find winning strategies in the planning and implementing phase, adopting a mentality which systematically tends to avoid pointless risks and opt, every time it is necessary, for the choice that offers the greater chances of success.



Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

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Bridge is Culture

One finds oneself in the best conditions for feeling strong, determined and ready to face life and its many and varied challenges. Bridge is intrinsically effective in bringing out the best qualities in young players, it will help them to patiently accept the negative events and correct or eliminate all that can hinder, or even just slow down, their success



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Bridge is Culture

In a society that hosts and fuels strongly degenerative attitudes, bridge represents a very strong element of prevention and recovery from deviant behaviours. Proven experiences tell us that bridge is an effective deterrent for degenerative behaviour and is a most effective instrument for recovery and social reintegration.



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The experience of teaching bridge in schools has given extraordinary results, enabling the social reintegration of kids who were particularly introvert, unresponsive to any commitment, unyielding to any socialising initiative.

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Bridge is undoubtedly a discipline that can be indulged in by people with disabilities on a par with anyone else, without problems of any nature, without the need of particular alchemies, without the limitations of architectural barriers, that have aroused so much discussion.



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Bridge is Culture

People with disabilities measure themselves on a par with the fully able and do not feel disheartened by their condition and, above all, they can practice a discipline, also at competitive level without being isolated and marginalized together with their unfortunate peers.



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For the elderly bridge represents an opportunity to exercise their mental skills, often destined to diminish with retirement and the progressive lack of direct interests, but above all it offers the opportunity to be in contact with younger people, to talk to them, to be involved in their problems, to speak their language, to somehow feel similar to them, to overcome the terrible feeling of oppression which is the direct consequence of feeling “out of the game”.



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Specific studies have highlighted how elderly people who play bridge have greater mnemonic and intellectual skills than those who don't play.

Moreover, a research carried out by the University of Berkeley revealed extraordinary results: playing bridge helps to produce more T type lymphoid cells and, therefore, strengthens the immune system, which is what protects the body from harmful microorganisms.



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Since June 2001 the Secretary General of the United Nations Mr. Kofi Annan contacted the WBF President José Damiani to explore ways in which the United Nations and the world of sport can work more closely together for the benefit of people everywhere and particularly for the world's youth, in order to identify tasks, programmes and new initiatives that might benefit from collaboration between the United Nations and World Bridge Federation.





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UNESCO recognised that Bridge can develop, as a sport of awakening and a factor of conviviality, not only the intellectual faculties but also a better knowledge of the other.





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Bridge is Culture

Because it rejects any form of discrimination

“The best thing about this is that we had a black, a Jew, an Indian and a Pakistani playing together.

It’s good to show how bridge can bring together people from such different backgrounds, it shows a special magic about the game of bridge”

Zia Mahmood

*after winning a NABC in 1987 with Larry Cohen,
Ron Smith and Jaggy Shivdasani.*

Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture



Bridge for Peace
is the motto of all the bridge
players everywhere
in the world, who
in order to defeat hatred
play the Card of Peace

Bridge: Hobby, Sport, Culture

This leads us to firmly believe in the effective and beneficial impact of our initiatives. And this is the extraordinary sense of what we are doing and what we intend to continue to do.

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In order to defeat hatred,
we play the Card of Peace

