BRIDGE

a True Sport for All

By Gianarrigo Rona & Simon Fellus
“Bridge for Peace”

is the motto of bridge players all over the world!
“Bridge is, with music, the only universal language”

Li Lanqing, past Vice-Premier of the People’s Republic of China
Bridge has been played since the 1850s and competitive Bridge since 1925.

The World Bridge Federation - W.B.F. - was founded in August 1958 in Oslo by the representatives of the American Contract Bridge League, the European Bridge League and the Australian Bridge Council, organizations themselves founded in the 1930s.
Thanks to the efforts of Alejandro Castro, President of the Argentina Bridge Federation, in Buenos Aires in 1948 the first international bridge competition in South America was organized with the participation of Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay. The “Confederación Sudamericana de Bridge” was founded in 1955 by the representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. Today the CSB counts 10 full affiliated National Bridge Organisations: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.
CSB National Bridge Organisations

ARGENTINA  BOLIVIA  BRAZIL  CHILE  COLOMBIA

ECUADOR  PARAGUAY  PERU  URUGUAY  VENEZUELA
Bridge is a true sport

Bridge, “bridges ages” and is a sport for a lifetime!
**Bridge** is a true sport

- Physical activity is a fundamental necessity for a human being
- Mental activity is an indispensable complement
- **Bridge** is an excellent gymnastic of the mind for men and women of all ages, all races and all religions
- It is a sport for 60 million players in the world
- **Bridge** is played in 130 countries on all 5 continents
Bridge is a true sport

- Bridge contributes to education
- Bridge contributes to health
- Bridge is a social as well as a competitive game
- Bridge has no barriers
- Bridge is a sport, a hobby and a culture
**Bridge is a true sport**

- *Bridge* comprises all the elements that characterise a sport: fair-play, discipline, rules, ethics, application, training, competition, performance

- *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
Bridge is a true sport

- **Bridge** means complete acceptance of the rules and, above all, strict respect of ethics
- A first international code of laws was introduced in 1871
Bridge is a true sport

- The WBF received recognition as International Sport Federation (I.F.), pursuant to rule 29 of the Charter, from the IOC during the 109th Session in Seoul, March 1999

- In October 1999 in Monte Carlo the WBF was accepted as a member of GAISF (General Association of International Sports Federations)
declared IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch on September 7th 1998 at the opening of the 1st I.O.C. Grand Prix for Bridge at the Olympic Museum, realising that he was watching a true competition

“Bridge is a sport and, as such, your place is here like other sports”
On the occasion of the Sport Accord Congress, held in Berlin, Germany on April 19th 2005, The World Bridge Federation (WBF), The International Chess Federation (FIDE), The World Federation of the Draught Games (FMJD) and The International GO Federation (IGF) met together under the aegis of the General Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF), and decided to constitute the **International Mind Sports Association (IMSA)**.
A game becomes a sport when it meets three essential criteria:

• A code of **rules**
• The prevailing of **skill** over luck
• A **competitive spirit**, i.e. the players aim to win

**Bridge is a true sport**

There is always a moment in history when a **game** becomes a **sport**.
Among the numerous sports, which one is closer to the main characteristics of the human race, compared to the characteristics of the rest of the animal kingdom?
In a sport based on **power** a man will lose for sure if compared to a gorilla or an elephant.
In a sport based on speed a man will yield to a horse or a cheetah.
In a sport based on \textit{agility} a man would be defeated by a monkey.
In a sport based on grace a man will be humiliated by a bird or a fish.
Yet there is a sphere where a man fears no comparison, and that is the one concerning intelligence.

In an intelligence challenge a man knows he can excel over any other living species in the world.
Therefore, a sport mainly based on intelligence, enhancing the peculiar gift of humanity, is a sport more "human" than the others.
Bridge is a true sport

- Unesco and numerous Ministries of Education recognized the education value of Bridge
- Mini Bridge teaches very young people to memorize, concentrate and reason
- Bridge reflects real life situations. Negative events must be accepted with serenity and discipline

Lorraine & Alicia, National Mini Bridge Champions The Netherlands
Bridge is a true sport

• *Bridge* is also a terrific sport for students
• FISU organizes World Bridge University Championships
• EUSA organizes European Bridge University Championships
Bridge is a true sport

Bridge and health

• Playing Bridge ensures a longer life of conviviality
• Playing Bridge is an excellent protection against illnesses such as Alzheimer and Parkinson
• The pictures show Anna (90) and Jean (81). She plays almost every day in her retirement home. He is still a fanatic club player
Bridge is a true sport

Bridge and health

- Peter Severens living in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, was severely injured in a car accident in May 1989 and lost half his memory. In 1991 he took Bridge lessons.
- By playing Bridge he completely regained his memory in a year and a half.
- The pictures show Peter in an article of “Bridge Beter” Magazine and his car, which was at total loss.
Bridge is a true sport
Bridge is social and competitive

- **Bridge** teaches spirit, dialogue, communication, aggregation, friendship and solidarity
- **Bridge** is played on the internet from New York to Beijing with partner or opponents in Rome or London
- **Bridge** can be played as a competitive game as well as a for recreation
Bridge is a true sport
Bridge is social and competitive

Young and old match well in Bridge!
Bridge is a true sport
Participation without barriers

• No barriers in Bridge

• People with physical disabilities including the blind can compete together with other competitors

• No differences and equal amount of chances
Bridge is a true sport

Bridge and technology

At Bridge events the latest video and computer technology permits spectators to follow the play in the Bridge Rama auditorium or theatre.
Bridge is a true sport

Bridge and communication

• All large events are now transmitted via Internet.

• And there are approximately 700 Bridge journalists in the International Bridge Press Association who write nearly 3000 bridge columns

3086 bridge players at Ajax Football Stadium
Conclusion

- **Bridge** can be played at any level, any age, any time anywhere
- **Bridge** there are neither barriers nor discrimination.
- **Bridge** is not only a fair game, but also an ethical one.
- **Bridge** is not only a way of thinking but also a way of being
- **Bridge** is a hobby, a sport and a culture
- **Bridge** is a sport more “human” than the others
- **Bridge for Peace** is the motto of bridge players all over the world
- **Bridge** “bridges ages” and is a sport for a lifetime!