



THE WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION

## **WBF Executive Council MEETING Lille, August 2012**

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dear Jimmy, dear José, dear Friends

Before going more deeply into our matters, I would like to remember with you Ding Guangen, President of the WBF Congress, who passed away few days ago. Mr. Ding was a great personality who honored his Country and the entire bridge movement. His passing away will leave a great void in the bridge family, but also, I am convinced, a great memory.

First of all let me congratulate Georgia Heth for her re-election and congratulate and welcome Bruce Blakely, the newly elected member of Zone 2 to the WBF Executive Council..

I have also to inform you that our colleague and friend, Jens Auken, a member of the Executive Council since 1994, resigned his position as member for health reasons which don't permit him to continue. On behalf of the WBF, the entire bridge movement, and personally, I would like to express to Jens our gratitude for the excellent service rendered with dedication and skill in every field he has been involved in all these years. But I want to underline, in particular, the activity undertaken by Jens in the anti-doping matter and the remarkable success he achieved in the relations with WADA, which granted the WBF a very favourable policy in this very delicate matter. I would like to extend to Jens all our best wishes to get over his illness.

At the same time I want to officially thank Jonathan Steinberg, who ended his term and left the board, for the contribution he offered to the WBF with enthusiasm, dedication and friendship

The EBL has elected David Harris as a member of the WBF Executive Council, to replace Jens. To David, who is already an authoritative member of several WBF Committees, our congratulations and welcome.

Coming now to our work, I am pleased to report to you about the activities undertaken since our last meeting in Veldhoven.

On 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> November I was in Lausanne to attend the IFs SportAccord Forum and the Meeting of the International Sports Federations organised by the City of Lausanne and the Canton de Vaud. I took the occasion to meet Carol and to talk about the office organisation and the 2012 program.

On 17<sup>th</sup> November I was in London for the Exhibition of the Mind Sports at the London Eye. I met José and the Presidents of the Mind Sports Federations. It was a

very nice event, very well organised by Don Morris and Mind Sports Partners Company which spread far and wide on the media.

From 20<sup>th</sup> November to 1<sup>st</sup> December I was in Seattle on the occasion of the Fall ACBL Nationals. I met the President Craig Robinson, the elected President Sharon Anderson and the new ACBL CEO Robert Hartman. I attended the Ceremony in honour of Jay Baum and awarded him the WBF Plaque. I had several very constructive meetings with Al Levy, George Retek, Joan Gerard, Georgia Heth, Ernesto D'Orsi and Jeff Polisner speaking about various matters.

From 8<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> December, in Beijing, I attended the 1<sup>st</sup> SportAccord World Mind Games together with Marc De Pauw. Patrick Choy joined us for a few days. It was a marvellous event, very well organised by SportAccord, with such an unbelievable deployment of technological instruments which enabled a tremendous success in broadcasting both through the TV and internet. The image of bridge and mind sports has been delivered everywhere in the world with a wealth of detail. The event received the enthusiastic consensus from all the participants who enjoyed their play and their stay, underlining, in addition to the technical value, the great social and cultural impact of such a demonstration.

During my stay in Beijing, I took one day to go to Tai Cang, with Lilian Sun and Maurizio Di Sacco, to visit the venue of the 2012 Youth Championship and to meet the local organisers to examine and discuss the details of the event.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> January, I was in Lucca to visit the town and the venue because of the candidature received for the 2014 World Bridge Series.

From 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> January in the President's Office in Milan, the Technological Committee Meeting, chaired by Al Levy, was held. Al will report later in depth about the meeting and the activity done by the Committee, but I want to underline that I was impressed by the work done and I want to thank Al and his colleagues of the Committee.

On 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> January in Destelbergen, I met Marc De Pauw and Dirk De Clercq for a check the accounts in preparation of the balance-sheet.

On 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of January, together with Maurizio Di Sacco, I was in Cardiff, invited by José Damiani, to visit the venue and the hotels for the World Mind Games, incorporated in the World Mind Sports Games. Concerning the WMSG you know that they have been moved to Lille, France and we will discuss this item later when we examine the specific point in Agenda.

On 1<sup>st</sup> February, in Rome, I had a meeting to discuss the project concerning the health of the players, as requested by the IOC Questionnaire.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> February, I was in Budapest, at the invitation of Yves Aubry, to attend the EBL NBOs Officers' Seminar and to report about WBF matters. I thank Yves for the invitation and, once again, I want to state how important such an initiative (consisting in practice in a work-shop where all the attending persons are participants and not simply listeners) is for the organisation and development of our discipline.

On 17<sup>th</sup> February, in Lausanne with Marc de Pauw, I had a meeting with Maître Nicolas Gillard, our Swiss lawyer, to discuss the matters concerning the judicial position of the WBF, and with Ms. Sabrina Tramparulo, representative of the City of Lausanne, and Carol to discuss the organisation of the office in the Maison du Sport International (MSI). The meeting was also attended by Yves Aubry and David Harris, in their positions as EBL president and treasurer. Maître Gillard is a partner of Carrard & Associés, the lawyers of the IOC, and his cooperation is very important to us to focus on the consistency of our laws, rules and policies with the IOC principles.

On 18<sup>th</sup> February I welcomed Dirk De Clercq, Assistant Treasurer, who came to Milan to provide the inventory of the equipment stored in the warehouse.

The 14<sup>th</sup> of March I flew to Orlando, where together with Joan, Ernesto and Marc we visited the Marriot and the Peabody, meeting the Managers and discussing about the organisation of the 2018 World Bridge Series. Later we will report about the final decision.

From Orlando we flew to Memphis, where from 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> we had the meetings of the Management Committee, kindly hosted by the ACBL, to whom goes our thanks. In this occasion I have the opportunity to meet the ACBL President Sharon Anderson and the new CEO Robert Hartman and also to visit the ACBL Headquarters.

The 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of March I went to Lille with Maurizio Di Sacco, to attend the technical meeting of the Mind Sport Federation, chaired by José Damiani, in preparation of the Lille World Mind Games.

The 11<sup>th</sup> April with Maurizio Di Sacco I went to Utrecht to meet the people of Card Reader System to check the status of the development of the system and to discuss the use of it at the World Championships. I have to say that, as you can directly control here in Lille, the system had a tremendous improvement and is now really affordable.

The 16<sup>th</sup> of April in Roma at the headquarters of the Olympic Committee I planned the realisation of the questionnaire concerning the health of the athletes, which will be texted here in Lille.

The 18<sup>th</sup> of April I flew to Shanghai and Taicang with Ata Aydin where the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> we met the organisers of the Youth Teams Championship and the representatives of the CCBA, we visited the venue and the hotels and discussed and defined all the organisational details.

The 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of April with Ernesto and Marc we were in Bali for a second visit to the venue and above all the hotels to discuss and define the condition of stay and to discuss and define all the details concerning the organisation of the event. Later we will report in depth about this item.

The 12<sup>th</sup> of May, by invitation from Yves Aubry I attended in Lucignano, Tuscany, the Presidential Council of the EBL and I reported about the WBF matters.

The 16<sup>th</sup> of May in Paris at the French Federation headquarters I had a meeting with José, the French President Patrick Grenthe and Jean-Claude Beinex concerning the Lille organisation.

From 20<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> April in Quebec City I attended the SportAccord Convention and General Assembly, the ARISF General Assembly and some meetings of the IMSA. I met also George Retek who visited the venue and together attended the lunch offered by the Mayor of the City.

The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of June Anna came to the Milano Office where we worked to the final draft of the General and Supplemental Conditions of Contest and the text of all the other Rules to Publish in the Booklet.

From 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> June I have been invited by Yves to attend in Dublin, together with José, in our position of Presidents Emeritus, the meeting of the Executive Committee and the General Assembly of the European Bridge League.

The 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of July with Marc I went to Izmir, Turkey, to visit the venue and the hotels following the presentation of the candidature to host the 2014 World Series.

Tyhe 22<sup>nd</sup> of July I flow to Taicang for the World Youth Championship, coming back home the 5<sup>th</sup> of August, just in time to change the luggage and reach Lille. We will report later about Taicang, but I am pleased to anticipate that it was a great event, perfectly orgtanised and hosted by the Taicang LOC and the CCBA.

As usual we will come back in detail to several of the above mentioned issues, specifically indicated in Agenda, together with all the topic points concerning our activity.

Thank you for your attention

Gianarrigo Rona