



WBF Management Committee Meeting

25th May 2020

Statement

Unfortunately, everywhere in the world, people are still coping with the COVID-19 that is continuously developing its deleterious effects affecting every activity by imposing restrictions, deprivations, sacrifices and suffering with its massive impact on our everyday life and habits.

Bridge activity, as all bridge players and bridge lovers are sadly aware and experiencing, is not immune to such effects and the WBF is constantly monitoring and trying to take decisions that can have the best handle on the situation and can offer help and support to our stakeholders.

The Management Committee in its meeting of Monday 25th May, in light of the above, fully aware of the great difficulties encountered by the NBOs and their members and athletes, has unanimously made some important decisions; in particular:

1. Membership Dues 2020

Being fully aware of the difficult situation that many NBOs are facing at the moment, the MC started to examine and discuss possible facilities for the NBOs, in terms of a one-time reduction of the annual dues; in the meeting of April 14th it postponed any decision to the next meeting after the Treasurer's Report, mandating to him to study an appropriate proposal. Following the Treasurer's Report the matter was examined and discussed in depth and it was recognised that all NBOs are in trouble and have great difficulties due to restrictions of activity in their countries and the consequent reduction of resources. At the end of the discussion it was unanimously approved that the 2020 membership dues for the small NBOs (under 300 regular members) have been waived, while for all the other NBO have been reduced by 30% (with a minimum of 300\$). The NBOs, who have already paid the 2020 membership dues, may decide to request the reimbursement of the amount overpaid or to maintain a credit to be calculated on the 2021 payments. The deadline for the payment of the dues 2020 has been extended till the end of 2020. The total amount of the reduction exceeds 173K€ (33% of the normal dues).

2. WBF Championships, postponement of the 2020 events, definition of the 2021 and 2022 calendar, quadrennial cycle of the WBF events.

Following the decision made in the meeting of April 14th to postpone the 2020 Championships, the MC examined and discussed in depth the entire matter of the Championships, including the WBF quadrennial cycle. The first consideration shared by all the members, according to the various concerns coming from several NBOs, was that the implausibility to organise, in the coming year, more than one main event in addition to the Youth event. The MC unanimously decided that only one Youth Championship and one Main Championship will be organised every year. As a consequence, one main event during the current quadrennial legislature will need to be sacrificed.

At this point the various possible scenarios were examined, together with all the possible connections and implications with the whole sphere of activity of the WBF and its stakeholders; at the end of the discussion the unanimous decision was to consider the 2020 as not existing, maintaining in 2021 the World Team Championships and postponing to 2022 the World Bridge Games, so maintaining unaltered the WBF quadrennial Cycle only switching in the even-numbered years the World Bridge Games and the World Bridge Series.

This solution assures the maintenance of our traditional cycle and, apart from the switching of the events in the even-numbered years, avoids involving radical changes in the whole sphere of both our and the NBOs activity. From 2023 the cycle will continue unaltered, without further upheaval.

In consequence of the above, the calendar will be:

- 2021 – World Youth Bridge Team Championships and World Bridge Team Championships & Transnational Open Teams Championship
- 2022 – World Youth Transnational Bridge Championships and World Bridge Games
- 2023 – World Youth Bridge Team Championships and World Bridge Teams Championship & Transnational Open Teams Championship
- 2024 – World Youth Transnational Bridge Championships and World Bridge Series

The MC considered in its competence the decision concerning the 2021 and 2022 events, to be ratified by the EC, according to the Statutes, not being in session the EC and being an urgent matter, but considered that the switching of the events in the even-numbered years has to be approved by the Executive Council and unanimously strongly recommend to the EC the approval of the same.

3. Eligibility to participate in Bermuda Bowl and Venice Cup

The MC unanimously decided to abolish, until the end of the legislature, the eligibility requirement that subordinates the right to participate in the Bermuda Bowl and Venice Cup to the participation in the previous World Bridge Games.

4. Congress and Electoral Procedure

Starting from 2020 the Congress is of even more special importance because, according to the Statutes, together with all the other functions, the Congress is required to elect three members of the Executive Council. This represents a crucial innovation in the history of the WBF, not only in respect of a democratic operation, but to bring from the base to its apex, additional strengths and support coming from the territorial activities. To this end it is very important that the NBOs prepare themselves in readiness for this task when the Congress will be convoked and the Candidatures need to be submitted.

The MC decided to try to hold the Congress in 2020 before the end of the year studying also the possibility to hold it electronically, if allowed by the law according to our Statutes. The item will be discussed in the next meeting, before the end of June.

To clarify some doubts that have arisen with regard to the electoral procedure and to avoid any possible misunderstanding or mistake, the MC decided to provide to update and amend the related articles of the By-Laws, to be approved by the Executive Council and then submitted to the NBOs.

5. Risk Assessment in Bridge Activities

Concerning the Coronavirus disease we received guidelines provided by the World Health Organisation and to follow the Circular Letter from the IOC requesting to show our actions in that regard. The WBF Medical Commission provided to draft the document concerning "The Risk Assessment in WBF activity" (attached), submitting it to the Management Committee for its approval and recommending also to deliver it to the Zonal Conferences and to the NBOs. The Management Committee unanimously approved, and this is the first answer to the IOC request, to show that we totally shared their concern (that is our main concern) and took care of their recommendations, indicating that accordingly we are working to provide a protocol with the guidelines for organising and conducting our events in situation of emergency like those we are currently living in. The MC demanded to the Championship Committee, with the addition of one representative of the Medical Commission, taking care of "The Risk Assessment", to draft the text submitting it to the Executive Council (or if not in session) to the Management Committee for final approval. The MC agreed that today this is the most important task that we have to take on and that it cannot be postponed. We need to have clear, precise and strict guidelines that allow us to organise our events and to ensure their survival, without changing the peculiar features consisting of friendship, aggregation, socialization, staying and enjoying all together. The guidelines will also need to be applied in Zonal Championships and will be a useful tool to assist the NBOs in introducing their own arrangements, subject of course to appropriate adjustments linked to their respective activities.

The MC made the above decisions, in this situation of emergency, in the interest of the WBF affiliated NBOs and their athletes, to give them support, trying not to foul up our activity and to minimize the inconvenience of things. The MC hopes and is confident that all the WBF stakeholders will share its decision, remaining in any case at their complete disposal.

Both the Management Committee and the President personally want to share a fond thought to the people and families, everywhere in the world, affected by the outbreak and to wish the bridge friends and families all the best, hoping to get out through the tunnel and rediscover the serenity of the life soon.

28th May 2020

Anna Gudge
WBF Communication Manager

To read the “*Risk Assessment in Bridge Activity*” [click here](#)