

EUROPEAN BRIDGE LEAGUE

Jan Kamras
EBL President

To the attention of
The Presidents of the European NBOs

Thursday 16th August 2018

Dear Friends,

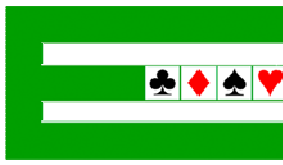
While waiting for my "blog" to be set up on the EBL website, I would like to give you some interim information about what has been happening in the EBL Executive since I took office in Ostend in June.

Immediately after the election, as required by §8.1(c) of our Statutes, we held a first meeting where the officers (Treasurer, Honorary Secretary, 1st and 2nd Vice President) as well as the five WBF representatives were elected.

Historically no further formal meeting was to be held until in November, but I did not want to waste almost half a year, particularly with five newcomers on the Executive Committee (EC), so we decided to schedule a meeting in July. I had made certain promises to you before the elections and wanted to get going with the agenda. I am very grateful to my colleagues on the EC for fully supporting the reform agenda and for agreeing to a two-day meeting in Opatija in July during the Youth Pairs Championships where some of us anyway needed to be present.

During these meetings we achieved the following, specifically related to my campaign agenda:

- Officers' indemnities were reduced by a total of €15,000 per annum, effective from July 1, 2018.
- Employee contracts were restructured, saving another €15,000+ per annum, also effective July 1, 2018.
- The number of committees was reduced from more than 30 to 18.
- We made a professional online survey, eliciting 124 responses, of the participants in Ostend to hear opinions on all aspects of the Championship.
- A new accounting plan and software that will increase transparency, facilitate historical and budget comparisons and improve control was introduced by the Treasurer.
- We created a "Players' Advisory Committee" to involve the players themselves more actively in decisions concerning our championships.



- I held very fruitful discussions with WBF President Gianarrigo Rona resulting in, amongst other things:
 - agreement to jointly rewrite both Disciplinary Codes and the Laws of Duplicate Bridge to facilitate the prosecution of alleged cheats also on statistical evidence;
 - agreement to form a group to handle our common assets in a more efficient way;
 - agreement to pursue the inclusion of bridge in the European Olympic Games 2022, as it is to be included in the 2018 Asian Games.

Other important matters discussed, or decided upon, were:

- Various aspects of anti-cheating measures, structure of the Investigation Committee, recording of suspicious behaviour, joint action with the WBF etc.
- The venue for the Open Championships 2019. We visited Turkey as a back-up option in case the space in the venues in Opatija would prove insufficient.
- The venue for the Mixed Teams Championships 2019. After several site inspections we found Lisbon the best choice and decided accordingly.
- Sponsoring, including relationship with playing teams' sponsors.
- As we are incorporated in Switzerland we will seek a Swiss auditor.
- Efforts to find a host NBO for the Youth Teams Championships 2019 must be intensified.
- The structure of entry fees for our National Teams championships.
- Supporting a scientific research project led by Samantha Punch to the tune of €6,000 from our Solidarity Fund. The WBF is also a partner (contributing a higher amount). This project is expected to provide very useful results for the NBOs and the bridge community at large.

I wish you all a continued pleasant summer.

Best regards

Jan Kamras
EBL President