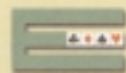




46th European Bridge
Teams Championships

Salsomaggiore Terme - Italy
15th - 29th June 2002



Daily Bulletin

Editor: Mark Horton - Co-editors: Alberto Benetti, Philippe Brunel,
Jos Jacobs, Jan van Cleeff - Italian Pages: Gianluca Frola - Layout Editor:
Stelios Haidzidakis - Photographer: Ron Tacchi - Printing: Roberto Luchin
Deliveries: Gabriele Grogardi, Alessandro Grogardi

PDF version, courtesy of EBL

Special Edition

Sunday, 23 June 2002

Night of the Stars

The 70th Anniversary Celebrations of the European Bridge League took place last night at Teatro Nuovo. While all the participants were taking their places music by Glenn Miller put everyone 'In the Mood'. **Anna Maria Torlontano** and **Panos Gerontopoulos** orchestrated the ceremony which featured informative and inspirational speeches from '**Jimmy**' **Ortiz Patiño** President Emeritus of the World Bridge Federation & Honorary Member of the European Bridge League, **José Damiani**, President of the World Bridge Federation & President Emeritus of the European Bridge League, **Bill Pencharz**, Honorary President of the European Bridge League & **Gianarrigo Rona**, President of the European Bridge League.

Then came the presentation of the awards, firstly to the Presidents of the Countries who have won a European Championship and then to those players who were able to be present in Salsomaggiore. First came a tribute to the supreme Giorgio Belladonna and Rixi Markus. Then with a brilliant Olympic touch our heroes ascended the stage to the music of Vangelis from



Chariots of Fire. There was tremendous applause for all these great Champions, none more so than for the three women who were winners in the 1950's, Suzanne Baldon, Andrée Bourchtoff and Vibeke Petersen.

Last to be called forward was the charismatic **Sabine Auken**, who gave a brilliant response on behalf of the players.

Then, to the sound of the March of the Toreadors from Carmen, came the entrance of the EBL Flag followed by the playing of the EBL anthem.

Afterwards everyone went to the party at the Grand Hotel Milano.



'Jimmy' Ortiz Patiño was the first to deliver his speech. He had been travelling for more than 18 hours and had expected to be speaking today rather than last night. He recalled many of the significant moments in the history of the EBL, particularly the creation of the World Bridge Federation and the introduction of the now indispensable Daily Bulletin by the great Herman Filarski. Jimmy still has a copy of the first set of bulletins ever produced and told how in his book on golf he claimed that they were the first to appear in respect of any such sporting contest, a claim that has never been challenged.





José Damiani
President Emeritus EBL
President of the WBF

I would like first to thank all of those who contributed so much to the part of the history of the EBL that I was associated with (since 1978), following in the footsteps of our predecessors to whom I would like say how much they showed me the way, especially of course my great friend, Jimmy Ortiz Patiño, and with a special thought for André Lemaître. Also, for the fruitful cooperation over the years with Nils Jensen, from whom I took the helm.

It is now undoubtedly with some pride that I will report on the History of the EBL from 1987 to 1995, during my two terms as President.

Of course, we were younger then and, together with André Boekhorst (who was a great figure in the EBL and who sadly passed away too soon when he was supposed to be my successor), Anna-Maria Torlontano, Panos Gerontopoulos and others, we believed in the promotion of our game, including the development of our relationship with the International Olympic Committee and the consideration of Bridge as a sport.

We organized two promotion weeks, one in 1989 and the other in 1993, which were very successful. In addition, I traveled extensively in Europe to bring in new countries, succeeding first in convincing the former USSR to authorize bridge and then, of course, we acquired all the new republics that recovered their independence.

I also believe that my Guide to Development helped at least

some countries, while at the same time the teaching methods improved and the Directors Courses produced a high quality of staff on our continent.

Indeed, thanks to an excellent co-operation with my colleagues on the Executive Board and also with the National Federations, the EBL not only grew in stature - from 26 to 42 countries - but the number of registered bridge players also increased by more than 100.000 to reach close to 380.000, representing more than 55% of the world.

These years saw the creation of some new events, as I believed they would fill a gap in the market and, indeed, they were very successful thanks to the players themselves, but also thanks to the sponsors. With very strong support from Philip Morris, we were able to organize the open pairs on a very large scale, ending up with a perfect format that shows great champions winning this title. We then added the Mixed European Championships that had been missing and which really attracted tremendous participation throughout Europe.

On Anna-Maria's initiative, we then launched the Ladies Pairs in the first days of the European Teams Championships - the 'Bibi and Nils Jensen Cup' - and later on the Jamboree in Budapest. Although by now we had the events for the masses, we thought that something still needed to be done to emphasize the image of our champions.

The result was the Generali Masters, with a first edition being held in Paris in 1992, where the standing ovation given to Giorgio Belladonna remains one of my best memories.

I also remember a very nice story involving Giorgio. We were playing a tournament in Sorrento, I don't dare to tell you when, but quite a long time ago. And looking at the frequencies, someone asked him why he was the only one who did not bid the slam while the Q J fourth in Trumps were missing. The guy said, in Italian, "You must have very good eyes" and Giorgio replied right away "Not at all, but I have big ears".

I congratulated him, also in Italian, for his 'honest' response and that was our first -but not the last- conversation; of course you all know that later on I took extra care in the organization of events in order to avoid the possibility of any further such communications, which is the organizers' responsibility, not that of the players. For that I would like to thank the staff, lead by Ton Kooijman, Claude Dadoun, Max Bavin, Antonio Riccardi and others who were of great assistance for me and the League.

We also took care of the seniors by organizing their own championship.

Last, but not least, thanks to Panos and the Youth Committee, we finally added a championship for scholars (less than 20 years) of which I am happy to be the patron.

These two main sponsors, Philip Morris and Generali, were present each year in our European events, enabling us to organize prestigious events which brought some very important television and press coverage, together with the use of modern technology. We covered a little of the continent from East to West with the Juniors - Plovdiv, Neumünster, Fiesch, Palaiseau, Arhus and Arnhem - and from North to South with the main events - Brighton, Turku, Bordeaux, Salsomaggiore, Killarney, Paris, Oostende, Menton, Bielefeld, Barcelona, Rome and, finally, Vilamoura (with José Oliveira now the EBL 2nd Vice-president whom I am very grateful for his co-operation) - where I believe I left the League in good shape. Apparently, that was also the feeling of the players as they - and perhaps you

- were kind enough to offer me the most unique, not to say the only, reward I received from their tremendous response to my farewell.

You, the European champions, deserve our gratitude too for having won a great many world championships during these years.

The gold medals were:

Olympiads:	1988	Women	Denmark
Rosenblum Cup	1990		Germany
Bermuda Bowl	1991		Iceland
Olympiads	1992	Women	Austria
Olympiads	1992	Men	France
Bermuda Bowl	1993		The Netherlands
World Open Pairs	1994		Poland
World Women Pairs	1994		The Netherlands
Venice Cup	1995		Germany

And many silver and bronze medals were also brought to the League.

During this same period, first with Karl Rohan and later on with Jens Auken, we also gave our attention to the systems policy, which really showed the way to the rest of the world.

I was helped on an administrative point of view by my personal assistant, Christine Francin, and we managed together with Karl Rohan who was our fantastic treasurer during that time, to bring the EBL fortune up to 1 m Swiss Francs. You may not realize just how lucky we were to have Karl (and his wife Elisabeth), since when he

first stood for election he was defeated by one vote, someone having voted for another candidate by mistake and then congratulated Karl on his success! He knew Karl by sight but he confused the name and then said "Bravo" Mr "x".

Yes, sometimes even bridge players or administrators confuse the Ace of Spades and the 2 of Clubs.

The EBL statutes were revised with a major change: a scale of voting according to the size of the National Federations which is fairer, considering the contribution made by the largest NBOs to the EBL.

May I say that those were really happy years that I remember with great pleasure.

We worked in excellent cooperation with the all councilors, some of whom have sadly since passed away. I would like to remember them all, past and present, and to thank them: J. Auken, Guido Barbone, D. Bardach, J.C. Beineix, A. Boekhorst, G. Endicott, M. Frenkiel, P. Gerontopoulos, H. Van der Helm, N. Jensen (President Emeritus), H. Johannson, B. Pencharz, K. Rohan, D. Schroeder, A.M. Torlantano, G. Szappanos.

Life continued with my successors, Bill Pencharz, and my adopted "son", Gianarrigo Rona, at the helm of the EBL, of which I am very honoured to have been nominated President Emeritus. Thanks to our mutual understanding, the EBL remains the task force behind the WBF.

In 1987, I started my presidency by saying: "Let's all try together" - and, indeed, we succeeded in the best spirit. When I left in 1995, it was with the feeling that we really had built a 'Bridge for Peace'.

So, happy birthday EBL, all the best for the next seventy years.





Bill Pencharz
Honorary President of the EBL

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Whilst celebrating 70 years of European Championships we need to remember that back in 1932 Contract Bridge was already a popular game.

More than anyone else we owe the popularity of bridge to one man. A Russian-American, born in Romania from a Russian mother and an American father, who spoke nine European languages and completed his education at the Sorbonne immediately before the First World War. I am talking, of course, about none other than Ely Culbertson.

Culbertson was a flamboyant, larger than life character, who had the good judgement to marry Josephine, 'Jo' to her friends. Josephine was a great player in her own right, and was as glamorous as a movie star.

As a publicist of Contract Bridge Culbertson used his own flamboyant personality. He used Josephine's appeal, and he used sex, yes sex.

When naming the system he invented - which is basically the system we use to this day - he deliberately called it 'Approach Forcing' because of the sexual innuendo.

Culbertson was quite open about using sex in publicising the

game. He was once asked if all bidding terms had sexual connotations.

What about 'pre-empt', for example he was asked.

"I will tell you a story", he replied. "Last Saturday night I returned home from a long session of Contract Bridge at two o'clock in the morning. Jo was fast asleep, so I got two aspirins and a glass of water from the bathroom, took them to the bedside, woke Jo up and said 'These are for you', 'But I don't have a headache' said Jo, 'Oh good', I replied, 'then let's make love!' That's a pre-empt!"



So much for the past. When I look at the present what I see for the EBL is good. The entries here at Salso in the Open Teams are a record, as are the entries for the Youth Team Championships to be held next month in Torquay. The Senior Teams has established itself as a true championship.

The league's finances are sound and after a painful transition we have learned to live without the luxury of a major sponsor.

The new championship which starts in Menton next June is sure to be a huge success.

And in Gianarrigo Rona the EBL is in the happy position of having a President with the vision to see what needs to be done and the dynamism to make it happen.

But - yes there is a but - there is a cloud in the horizon. Not yet a big one, but one that requires our attention.

Perhaps I can put it this way. When I became President of the European Bridge League seven years ago the number of registered bridge players was just under four hundred thousand. And my war cry was "Half a Million by the Millennium". It was a target we never got close to achieving. The membership never exceeded four hundred thousand and, indeed, is now a little less than it was seven years ago.

I cannot go back to 1932, but fifty years ago, when I was seven years old, cards were the only diversion available to a child on a wet weekend. And as cards were part of our life, learning bridge came naturally. There was no competition. Today bridge has to compete with the television, computers and the Internet. The competition is fierce, and bridge does not always win.

Which is why I started this speech by talking about Ely Culbertson. The greatest publicist bridge has ever known. We need to remember that the game always needs new blood and that we must use as much energy and imagination as Culbertson ever did in promoting the game. Whether it's teaching in schools, better management of the media, use of the Internet or, even sex.

Provided we don't forget the lesson of Ely Culbertson taught us, the future is bright, 'the future is bridge'!

Thank you very much.





Gianarrigo Rona
President of the EBL

Dear friends,

Having to speak after the "greats" is certainly not easy. Their testimony is our history since they are the ones who have made our history. I have had the honour and privilege to receive the baton from them and I hope to carry it on with the same dignity, and even if I do so without the same skill, I hope not to cause them too many regrets. I hope to have learned from them and to be able to leave behind something positive when I in turn pass on the baton to my successor.

My efforts and those of the Executive Committee are oriented in three directions: firstly trying to give solidity to our League and giving it the mentality, laws and instruments appropriate to today's social and sporting reality, all of which requires increasing professionalism, adaptability, organisation, communication, awareness of problems; in a few words, high-level managerial ability.

We are also concentrating our efforts towards the Olympic goal, supporting the great work done, and being done, by the WBF and in particular by its President José Damiani. For our part we are trying to intervene directly with the authorities of the EOC, the European Olympic Committees, by which we have already been recognised. Our work with the EOC is especially, and perhaps most importantly, that of facilitating the recognition of our NBOs by their respective National Olympic Committees. This is not only an objective of great prestige but also more basically of great benefit to the NBOs and their members and in the interests of the bridge

movement.

Finally, our efforts are aimed at developing and reinforcing with our affiliates and their members the sense of belonging to the League and to their own Federations, which for me is the true qualifying point of our programme.

This sense of belonging can only be gained by knowing our history and roots. It is not enough, dear friends, to simply know how to finesse and the art of the squeeze. To be a real part of our wonderful discipline one must feel intimately and proudly an integral part of one's club, Federation and supranational League. And it is only our history, only the milestones and the successes achieved, which can stimulate in us this pride and provoke in us the awareness, gratifying us intimately, revealing to us the true values of bridge, which are sportsmanship, fair-play, ethics, the acceptance and observance of the rules, friendship and solidarity.

We are here today to celebrate this great event commemorating almost three quarters of a century of bridge life. We are here to give an example to the young, the newcomers and those showing interest in our bridge world, to transmit our message to them and give them the reasons why they in turn should perpetuate it. This is the message which so many great champions and officers have brought us by their presence here with us this evening. It is a message of continuity, expressed in peace, serenity and fraternity, by their presence of which I personally, our friends of the Executive Committee, and I am sure all of you, feel proud and moved. I am proud and moved to see so many generations merging and joining together; champions from 1953 and from 2001. I am also proud and moved that those who are not able to be with us this evening have conveyed to me that they are with us tonight in spirit. All of the following have asked me to embrace you warmly on their behalf: Leon Tintner, Pietro Forquet, Benito Garozzo, Claude Rodrigue, Lizzie Schaltz, Boris Shapiro, Odile Valensi, Sandra Landy, Antonia Robaudo, Beppe Messina, Phyllis Williams, Philippe Soulet, Claude Brochot, Marianne Serf, Roman Smolski, Alan Truscott, Kurt Feichtinger, Anne-Marie Kitabgi, Guglielmo Siniscalco, Tony Forrester, Andrew Robson. All of them remember fondly the extraordinary times spent with many of you in and out of competitions.

The presence here this evening of such a number of personalities in itself underlines the importance of this event. I wish to thank them, the most impressive names of the WBF and the EBL, the representatives of the Olympic Family, the Authorities from both the Netherlands and Italy, and I am very grateful to them for giving us the opportunity to enjoy ourselves here together.

Let me now express our thanks to our great champions and officers who have passed away; they are our glory. They have left us a great inheritance. Today for sure they are all with us in spirit and I am certain that they are just as proud of you as you and we all are proud of them.

Thank you dear friends for being here this evening. The homage which the League wishes to make to you is certainly modest compared with what you have done for bridge, your country and our League, but believe me, its significance is immense and is indicative of our gratitude.

For me it is a privilege, perhaps undeserved, to be here tonight in this position and I assure you that thanks to you I will carry with me an indelible memory of this for all my days.

Hurrah for all of you, hurrah for the EBL, hurrah for bridge.

Thank you very much.



Sabine Auken replied on behalf of the players. She made the telling point that it is not necessary to be a great Champion in order to experience the joys of Bridge. It can provide you with so many wonderful life enhancing experiences, the making of friendships, the discovery of husbands even!

Sabine alluded to her debut with Daniela von Arnim and their upset victory in the European Championships in Turku in 1989. As a result they had travelled the world, visiting many places they would otherwise never have seen. Club and rubber bridge players alike can share in these great experiences.

Sabine encouraged everyone to go and spread the message about the really most beautiful game. And may the best woman win!

