



## EUROPEAN BRIDGE LEAGUE

### **Resumé of the Presentation made by Anna Maria Torlontano, Chairman of the EBL and WBF Women's Committees, to the EBL NBO Seminar in Rome, January 2009**

First of all I would like to give you my personal wishes for a healthy and successful 2009, also on behalf of Sevinç, and Silvia, present here and all the members of my Committee. I am very happy to have the opportunity to talk to you today. I am sure that our exchange of opinions will be very useful and productive.

I realize, during all these years of my activity that letters, messages and requests of information, very often remain "dead letters". I strongly believe in a direct, personal and warm contact!!

Then, here we are.

I would like to touch in this meeting on three main points, to keep you aware of what we are doing for the Women. and also to leave some time and space for a discussion so that we can hear your opinions, suggestions and comments.

1). In the first one, very short, I would like to express my gratitude for having read and filled the form that you received at the registration desk about the "Women's Bridge". Sevinç will be so kind to come to you to collect all your replies. We choose this way because, if you well remember, two years ago, in order to have from you some information, we asked to each of you, one by one, during the meeting your immediate reply. Well, it was too long and also quite boring. So, even if it could be interesting for all of us to know what is happening in the various Countries, about the Women's Bridge, still I think that this way adopted now is the quicker and the best. We need information from you, very important for being aware and for evaluating the situation of the "Women Bridge" in general, in Europe,, and specifically in your Country. It will not be a loss of time or useless. We will read them very attentively so that we could eventually model or take up our activity, according to the different situations and needs of the majority.. and eventually assist you to develop and promote Women's Bridge in your Country (without a financial contribution unfortunately)

2) About our activity, we had a very interesting and productive year: Our new website at [www.wbfwomensbridgeclub.org](http://www.wbfwomensbridgeclub.org) was launched and of course there are some pages on the EBL Website, under Categories/Women about Women's Bridge that you may find useful.

But ... back to our Women's Club - as you know, the Women's Committee has created for "women players", wherever they are, a very exciting event, one that they can play in their own homes, at very little cost!

**An online week of Bridge, just for Women Players organized with Bridge Base Online was held from 7th to 13th April, with the full support of José Damiani and Gianarrigo Rona. Of course it was open to women players from all over the world.**

**The three important objectives are:**

- 1) To help the Women Players who wish to compete in a National and International Championships, giving them the opportunity to train, playing with their partners against players from all over the World.
- 2) To provide a social event in an excellent atmosphere, making many new friends
- 3) To promote in general the "Women Bridge "in the World.

Well, this Festival, as first experiment, was a very successful event! We had **664** inscriptions valid. (many more at Festival started and many annulled ) and **67** Countries participating.. And more we have now a very rich Women players database, more that 1500 email addresses !

The overall winner of the Individual was Mrs M.Dabroska from Poland. Mrs F. Stoppini and Mrs M. Stoppini from Italy won the Pairs and the combined overall winner was Mrs. J. Tahya from Indonesia... Certificates were given as prizes to the Winners.

We were all delighted with the number of emails we had both during and after the event, telling us how much the competitors enjoyed it.

The collaboration with **BBO** (<http://www.bridgebase.com>) was excellent. **Vincenzo Delle Cave**, responsible of BBO Italia, was a perfect organizer, very enthusiastic and always ready to accept and share the requests of my very exigent Committee. **Fred Gitelman** the Boss of BBO also trusted me and sent me very kind words of sincere appreciation.

Some special words to the people, marvellous friends with whom I worked very tightly...more that once every day.. Please let me at least name them: from Turkey **Sevinç Atay**, from USA **Joan Gerard** my vice Chairman in the WBF Women Committee and **Barbara Nudelman-** from Great Britain, **Anna Gudge** our invaluable secretary and one of the most efficient member of the Committee...she works with me since 25 years! - from Italy **Silvia Valentini**, my assistant in the EBL Women's Committee - and..I left her as last, because she needs some very special words of appreciation: from Netherlands, **Marijke Blanken**, one of the most important part in the organization. The work for the Festival started as a small thing: one webpage, some banners, graphic, designs and pdf-files. Then, the one webpage turned into 9 pages, and these into 14 pages and extra banners too. She took care also of the design of the "certificates" that were given as prizes, in total 51 - and a small word to **Anna Maria** who coordinated with Vincenzo all the work and took care of the translations of all the webpages into 5 languages.

We opened a new World to the Players using Internet and since these **Women's Events Online** have been so enthusiastically accepted from all the players in the World,, our Women's Committee decided with BBO, before the 2nd Women's Festival Online which will be held in April 2009, to organize **a series of Women's tournaments online**. These tournaments started on November the 5<sup>th</sup> 2008 and run each and every Wednesday, on BBO. There are two pairs events and two individual events, extended to the women players from all over the world and covering a wide range of time zones. There is a final overall classification every month. The first ten are awarded with BBO dollars, offered by the **World Bridge Federation**, which can be spent only for other BBO tournaments.

The winner in the month of November is KIKO (nick name) from Egypt. She will get 24 BBO\$ and in addition, as first prize, she will play a tournament online with the World Champion Fulvio Fantoni.

The winner of the overall classification in December will play a tournament online with the World Champion Sabine Auken and in January the partner of the winner will be the World Champion Mildred Breed from Texas.  
How can I thank Fulvio, Sabine and Mildred for their kindness and availability for having so enthusiastically accepted to play!!!

For any information and details about these tournaments, (classification, names of the players, prizes etc..etc.), please visit our site:  
<http://www.wbfwomensbridgeclub.org>

In addition we are working with BBO to create a "**Women's Online Bridge Club**", where we hope to be able to keep players informed about events organized for women players, where players can "meet" to exchange ideas, discuss hands and maybe-we hope- follow some lessons from a Champion. This is still in the planning stage and we are working on it.

**Then the dates of the next event, the 2nd Online Women's Bridge Festival organized with Bridge Base Online are from 13<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> April 2009**

During the Festival the tournaments which are played every Wednesday will be suspended, to start again in the month of May.

**Of course your collaboration is extremely important and really indispensable. Without your support, we cannot achieve our FESTIVAL for sure, and the event cannot be a success.!!**

**What does the EBL and our Women's Committee ask of you?**

**First** to put a banner and a link on your website! We have banners available in - English- French- German- Italian- Spanish which you can download ) from <http://www.wbfwomensbridgeclub.org> (the link is on the home page of the website)

The link on the banner must go <http://www.wbfwomensbridgeclub.org>

**Next** to publicise the event (and the weekly tournaments) in your National Magazines and at your women's tournaments so that your players are aware of them

**And also** ... to tell all your women players about our site and the Festival ! Tell your bridge playing women friends and family

**And finally my third point ... the Transnational European Women's Jamboree (well, it is really world wide as we extend it to players from all over the world)**. As you know we organize this event for the Women Bridge Players who would normally be unable to participate in the International Championships.

We try to stimulate interest in this event by working to produce a very enjoyable holiday atmosphere while at the same time running a very serious Bridge.. Our aim is to try and increase interest and make a big promotion for Women's Bridge.

The fantastic news is that this year we are so lucky to organize this event here **in ROME**. from the...6. to the..11..October 2009.

**Nothing could be more attractive and interesting!**

The Jamboree will last 5 days. As far as the Bridge is concerned, we plan to have one long session of individual tournament and three sessions of pairs tournament.

(duplicated hands). Of course there will be prizes (not money prizes) that will be presented on the Saturday night during the Victory Banquet.

Every night, after dinner, we will organize with one of the most well known and serious Bridge organizer Enrico Basta, social tournaments.

As far as the tourism and social side is concerned, we will organize one full day excursion of a guided tour within Rome with lunch included. We will also be organising a visit to The cathedral of St Peter where we are hoping we may have the marvellous opportunity to participate in "Apal Audience" given by His Holiness the Pope – we will know in June if this will be possible as it depends on whether the Pope is in Rome at that time.

We will stay in the Hotel Sheraton, (EUR) 5 stars. We will have our meals in a typical restaurant and our playing area will be a very well known Bridge Club.

A package will be offered including everything, ( including drinks) The players will be received at the Airport and at the rail way station.

As soon as the programme of this exciting event will be finalized, we will be sending you as usual, a brochure, containing in detail all information.

Of course **We will ask you, as always, for your co-operation and help, with advertising this Jamboree to your Women Players, in the same way as you do for the Festival online.. The websites of your Federation are the best way to do it.** But let us go step by step!!

You should advertise this Jamboree as soon as the Festival online will be achieved!!

I do hope you appreciate what we are doing for the Women Players and how much and how hard we work to plan and achieve these events!!  
That's all!