



MINUTES OF THE
EBL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Held at 10.00 a.m. on Sunday 17th June 2012
at Citywest Hotel, Dublin - Ireland

Present:	Yves Aubry	President
	Marc de Pauw	1 st Vice President
	Radek Kielbasinski	2 nd Vice President
	Jan Kamras	Honorary Secretary
	David Harris	Treasurer
	Sevinç Atay	Executive Committee Member
	P. Gerontopoulos	Executive Committee Member
	Josef Harsanyi	Executive Committee Member
	F. Palma	Executive Committee Member
	Pim Vaders	Executive Committee Member
	José Damiani	President Emeritus
	Gianarrigo Rona	President Emeritus
	Bill Pencharz	Hon. President
	JC. Beineix	Hon. Vice-President
	Anna Maria Torlontano	Hon. Vice-President
	Catherine Vitry	Secretary to the President
Excused	Jens Auken	Executive Committee Member
	Jose Oliveira	Hon. Vice-President
	Jaime Ortiz-Patiño	Honour Member

And the Delegates from the following 37 (thirty-seven) National Bridge Organisations, having the indicated number of votes in accordance with art. 25 of the Statutes:

Albania	1	E. Vainikonis - proxy	Lithuania	1	E. Vainikonis
Belgium	4	E. Debus	Luxembourg	1	P. Banchereau
Bulgaria	3	V. Isporski	Malta	1	M. Dix - proxy
Cyprus	1	P. Wayers - proxy	Monaco	1	JD Chalet - proxy
Czech Rep.	1	J. Masek - proxy	Netherlands	7	E. Laurant - proxy
Denmark	5	H. Friis	Norway	4	A. Livgaard - proxy
England	6	J. Dhondy – proxy	Poland	4	P. Walczak
Estonia	1	P. Lond	Portugal	2	M. Capucho - proxy
Faroe Islands	1	F. Bøgh-Sørensen-proxy	Romania	1	M. Georgescu
Finland	3	K. G. Backas - proxy	Scotland	4	D. Liggat
France	7	JD Chalet	Serbia	1	V. Isporski - proxy
Germany	6	U. Wenning	Slovakia	1	B. Szegedi - proxy
Greece	4	S. Bopolakis -proxy	Spain	3	E. Correa-Nicolas
Hungary	2	A. Booc	Sweden	5	M. Melander
Iceland	2	B. Eystein	Switzerland	3	F. Piedra
Ireland	3	T. Roche	Turkey	4	L. Ozgul
Israel	4	E. Levy	Ukraine	1	O. Rovyshyn - proxy
Italy	5	G. Bernasconi	Wales	2	A. Thomas
Latvia	1	U. Bethers - proxy			



EUROPEAN BRIDGE LEAGUE

The President welcomed the Delegates to EBL General Assembly to discuss the following Agenda :

1. Confirmation of Roll Call
2. Appointment of the Assembly Committee
3. Approval of the Minutes of the General Assembly, Ostend 2010
4. President's Report
5. Approval of the President's Report
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Approval of the Balance Sheet and Accounts 2010/2011 and Auditors' Report.
8. Examination of the budget 2012/2013
9. Membership dues and other fees
10. Election of one Member of the EBL Executive Committee for the legislature 2012/2014
11. EBL Committees
12. Questions and proposed resolutions sent by the NBO's
13. Various

1. Confirmation of Roll Call

The Honorary Secretary, Mr. Jan Kamras, took the Roll Call of Delegates which showed the presence of the above mentioned NBOs. The Hon. Secretary certified the presence of 37 NBOs out of a total of 48 having right to vote and of 106 votes out of a total of 124.

The President, in accordance with the art. 21 of the Statutes, declared the Assembly valid and opened the proceedings.

2. Appointment of the Assembly Committee

On the proposal of the President, the Assembly unanimously appointed Mr. Kaj G. Backas, Mr. Eitan Levy and Mrs. Silvia Valentini as members of the Assembly Committee.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the General Assembly, Ostend 2010

The Assembly unanimously approved the minutes of the General Assembly held in Ostend on 27th June 2010.

4. President's Report

The President presented the following report to the Assembly:

"Dear Presidents Emeritus, Honour President, Delegates and friends,

I am pleased to present my report of the 2010-2012 activities to you.

The results of our activities are listed below and divided into several categories :



1) **Institutional activities**

a- Executive Committee meetings

Since Ostend there have been four Executive Committee meetings :

- *In Izmir (Turkey) during the Champions' Cup in November 2010*
- *In Poznan (Poland) during the European Open Championships in June 2011*
- *In Bad Honnef (Germany) during the Champions' Cup in November 2011*
- *In Dublin (Ireland) during the European Team Championships in June 2012*

b- Presidential Council

Filippo Palma as usual hosted the Presidential Council in Tuscany in May 2011 and in May 2012.

c- WBF meetings

I attended the following meetings :

- *as delegate of Zone 1 in the Executive Council :*
 - *Philadelphia (USA) in October 2010*
 - *Veldhoven (Netherlands) in October 2011*
- *as member of the WBF Management Committee in :*
 - *Poznan in June 2011*
 - *Memphis in March 2012*
- *as member of the WBF Youth Committee in :*
 - *Opatija (Croatia) in August 2011*

d- NBOs' Seminar

This took place from 2nd to 5th February 2012 in Budapest. It was organized by Jan Kamras, Chairman of the EBL NBO's Liaison Committee and by Josef Harsanyi with the cooperation of the Hungarian Federation and, in particular, its President Tibor Nadasi and Vice-President, Andras Booc. There were 45 participants from 32 NBOs.

Gianarrigo Rona, WBF President, honoured us by attending the final meeting and speaking about the relationships between the EBL and WBF, IMSA and the IOC. During the plenary sessions, there were discussions on various matters presented not only by EC Members but also by Piret Aava and Slawek Latala about the structure of the Estonian and Polish Federations and by Oryah Meir about the Israeli Youth Programme.

The participants were especially interested when the topics of the dues and the new WBF & EBL Eligibility Rules were discussed.

However it should be recognised that the success of this Seminar was due mainly to the active individual participation in the various workshops during which over 15 topics were discussed in small groups.

The most animated discussions during these sessions were "How to organize an EBL championship" ; "What the EBL can provide to the NBOs" ; "Youth Bridge and educational material" ; "Promotion and development" and "Social Media and Internet".



Despite the bankruptcy announced by the Air Company Maalev, every participant was able to travel home without a problem, and undoubtedly the event provided the delegates with a better knowledge of the EBL together with ideas to be applied in their own NBO. For the EBL EC Members it provided them with a greater knowledge of what is done in the NBOs and what they are waiting for from the EBL.

e- Regional TD's Courses

Josef Harsanyi is the Chairman of the Tournament Directors' Committee; In November 2010, he presented an action plan on the EBL training programme to the EBL Executive Committee, which was approved by the EC Members.

This action plan consists of two levels of TD courses, one main TD course every 2 years as has been held in the past, together with one or two Regional TD courses each year to enable many more TDs to participate and improve their knowledge and skills.

The teaching is given by Ton Kooijman and Maurizio di Sacco with Peter Eidt as Secretary of the TD's Committee also contributing.

Josef Harsanyi worked hard to organize the first two Regional workshops, each one over a four day period :

- *March 2011 in Zagreb (Croatia) attended by 23 participants from 7 countries*
- *December 2011 in Orebro (Sweden) attended by 20 participants from 7 countries.*

I travelled for 2 days to Zagreb and Orebro to attend the courses and to award the certificates.

I had also the opportunity to meet in Zagreb Jurica Caric, President of the Croatian Federation and in Orebro Jan Kamras, Vice-President of the Swedish Federation who, with Micke Melander, was in charge of the organization.

f- EBL Headquarters in Lausanne (Switzerland)

- *6th October 2011*

I travelled to Lausanne on 6th October with Gianarrigo Rona, WBF President, and Marc de Pauw to visit our new headquarters in the Maison du Sport International. During this visit, we were able to clarify and agree some details concerning Sport, Law and Taxes subjects. We also had the opportunity to meet the new President of the FISU, Claude-Louis Gallien and the General Director, Eric Saintron. Geert Magerman, FISU/EUSA liaisons with EBL also attended this meeting.

- *17th February 2012*

For a second time, I travelled to Lausanne with David Harris, EBL Treasurer accompanied by Gianarrigo Rona and Marc de Pauw, WBF President and Treasurer to sign on site some documents requested by the Swiss Authorities. In order to maintain our Headquarters in the Maison du Sport in Lausanne, the WBF and EBL must have at least one employee and organize at least one yearly meeting in Lausanne.



2) Championships

a- The EBL organized or supported (for Small Federation Games):

- *The 10th European Youth Pairs Championships, July 2010, Opatija, Croatia*
- *The 3rd Small Federations Games, September 2010, Ptuij, Slovenia*
- *The 9th European Champions' Cup, November 2010, Izmir, Turkey*
- *The 5th European Open Bridge Championships, June 2011, Poznan, Poland*
- *The 23rd European Youth Team Championships, July 2011, Albena, Bulgaria*
- *The 4th Small Federations Games, September 2011, San Marino, San Marino*
- *The 10th European Champions' Cup, November 2011, Bad Honnef, Germany*
- *The 51st European Team Championships, June 2012, Dublin, Ireland*

1) *The 10th European Youth Pairs Championships was held in Opatija from 14th to 17th July 2010, a few days after my election as EBL President. Of course, Gianarrigo Rona, EBL President Emeritus had already undertaken the organisation of the event and he honoured us with his presence throughout the Championship.*

278 players from 24 countries participated in this event which saw the Victory of Greece in Junior, Poland in Girls and Sweden in Youngsters. The local organization was perfectly run by Goran and Branka Grguric and the Croatian Federation with Opatija are candidates for the organization of future EBL events.

2) *The 3rd Small Federation Games in Ptuij in September 2010, Jean-Charles Allavena has been Chairman of the EBL Small States Committee since 2010. The Small Feds Games are always a successful event as from a total of 22 countries eligible to participate in this event ; two-thirds regularly take part. The third edition was in Ptuij in Slovenia and the winner was Slovakia. I had the opportunity to meet the President, Tomaz Butina and also all the delegates from the participating countries during the usual Small Federations meeting held during this event.*

3) *The 9th European Champions' Cup in Izmir attracted as it does every year the best European players. The Italian players won 7 of the 8 first editions but on this occasion it was the Dutch team of Onstein that won the trophy. The organization was of great quality and our Turkish friends, their President Serhan Antalyali, Sevinç Atay, EBL EC member and Ata Aydin, WBF Youth Committee Chairman, made us extremely welcome.*

4) *The 5th European Open Bridge Championships in Poznan were a great success in every way - with regards to the participation, the organization, the technologically advanced systems and of course the financial results for the EBL.*

The President of the PBU, Radek Kielbasinski once again demonstrated the efficiency of the Polish Bridge Union when it comes to organizing International Bridge Championships.



756 pairs and 251 teams participated in these Championships and a new record of 376 pairs was set in the Open Pairs event.

The Gold medals were shared between France (3), Poland (2) and the USA, Turkey and the Netherlands.

On the organizational side, for the first time the matches were played as 10 board segments.

On the technological side, the players appreciated being able to obtain their personal score card at the end of each session, thanks to the bar code on their badges.

Finally, on the financial side, the EBL achieved and even exceeded its objectives which will permit to us put in place new promotion and development actions.

5) The 23rd European Youth Team Championships

These championships were organized in Albena on the Black sea Coast. Sea, sun and bridge for 50 teams (22 in the Junior series, 18 in the Youngsters series and 10 in the Girls series) with a victory for Israel in the Juniors and Poland in the 2 other series

During this Championship, we had the opportunity to meet with the EBL Youth Committee for two days. The debates were extremely useful and several propositions were raised. The WBF President, Gianarrigo Rona, was present and the participants were able to discuss the number of different WBF and EBL Youth competitions which seem to cause problems to some federations.

6) The 4th Small Federations Games in San Marino. These championships lasted 4 days and were very much enjoyed by the participants. The event was held in the prestigious site of the Principality of San Marino. The players were received in excellent conditions by the President, Fiorenzo Fiorini, and the Opening Ceremony with the Closing Dinner were two very special occasions. Montenegro was a new Federation playing in these Small Feds Games in which the Team of Luxembourg in the presence of its President, Philippe Banchereau, was the winner.

7) The 10th European Champions' Cup.

This event was held from 17th to 20th November with 10 teams. Josef Harsanyi, EBL EC member, was the Championship Manager for its organization. The President, Ulrich Wenning warmly welcomed the Executive Committee for their meeting in Bad Honnef.

One month after Veldhoven, it was the revenge of the semi-final between Italy and the Netherlands but this time the Italian from G.S. Allegra won.

8) The 51st European Team Championships

Initially, this championship should have been held in Porto Carras, Greece. Despite the economic situation, the Greece had maintained their candidacy and



I went to Athens on 16th and 17th May 2011 with David Harris and Marina Madia to finalize the contract with the Hellenic Federation. Due to some difficulties with the hotel in Porto-Carras, the Championship had been relocated in Athens. Unfortunately at the end of October 2011, in view of the political and economic situation, Greece had to withdraw from the organisation of the Championship. We had then a short period in front of us to find a replacement venue. I sent a request to all countries, and more precisely to those which, during the past years, had shown some interest in organizing this type of championship. Very quickly, the candidacy of Ireland emerged ; it had the following advantages of :

- maintaining the championship in the same period*
- having a place with an easy access*
- having playing rooms with adequate space*
- having the hotel on site*

The last point was the financial conditions because this event was neither scheduled nor included in the Irish Federation's budget.

David Harris, EBL Treasurer, went to Dublin in December 2011 and met Paul Porteous (CBAI General Secretary). It was a visit of preparation to check the feasibility of this championship's organization. Later on January 2012, I went to Dublin with David Harris and met Mary Kelly-Rogers (IBU President) Joe Moran (CBAI President Emeritus), Paul Porteous and Tomas Roche (Joint Honorary Secretary). The Irish representatives showed a great professionalism and we came easily to a common agreement.

I would like to underline to all the NBOs that such an organisation as the European Team Championships does not require a great financial investment. Greece would have been able to organize it and now Ireland has demonstrated that it is affordable in reality based on the fact that the Federation has a well-structured organising committee, a good financial plan and more-over a great deal of enthusiasm.

I returned to Dublin on 20th to 22nd March accompanied by David Harris, Jan Kamras, Josef Harsanyi, Maurizio di Sacco, Fotis Skoularikis and Catherine Vitry for the complete technical visit.

3) Future events

a) Championships 2012

After Dublin, 3 other EBL Championships will be held in 2012 :

- *11th Youth Pairs Championships, Vejle (Denmark)
The Danish Federation raised its candidacy to organise European championships and the location of Vejle, near the Billund airport in the Jutland Peninsula was agreed.
More than 250 Juniors will participate this year with a new category of Mixed Pairs being introduced.*



I would like to thank the Organizing Committee and in particular Flemming Bøgh-Sørensen, Per Egelund, Charlotte Koch-Palmund and Henrik Friis for all their efforts and am very happy to note quality of the Danish staff present in Vejle.

- *5th Small Federations Games, Tallinn (Estonia)*
This event is opened to the EBL Federations which have a maximum of 500 members (22 as of today) and will take place from Monday 24th to Wednesday 26th September. My thanks to Jean-Charles Allavena, Chairman of the Small Federations Committee, and to Aarne Rummel, Chairman of the Organising Committee who have scheduled these games which I am sure will be a great success not only from the sporting aspect but also from the point of view of the friendliness of the Games.

- *11th Champions' Cup, Eilat (Israel)*
The 11th Champions' Cup will take place in Eilat in the King Solomon Hotel on the Red Sea from 15th to 18th November.
The Cup will be contested by the national team champions from the top ten countries in the Open classification of the 2012 edition in Dublin plus the defending Champion of 2011 and the host country.
I went to Israel in February 2012 during their Tel Aviv Festival accompanied by Maurizio di Sacco where we met Modi Kenigsberg, Eitan Levy and David Birman to discuss the requirements and finalize the contract.

These 3 EBL championships in Vejle, Tallinn and Eilat are each being held immediately before important local Bridge Festivals in which the players are also able to participate.

b) Championships 2013-2014 and afterwards

- *Open European championships*
2013 : *The championships will probably be held in San Remo from 14th to 29th June 2013. The City of San Remo has shown a great interest in welcoming this championship as it did in 2009. I have visited San Remo twice with Filippo Palma and David Harris where we were received by the Political Authorities (town, county) and by the Hotels union. The contract is on the right track but has not been yet signed because there will be local elections in May. After Dublin, the signature of this contract will be the first priority of the EBL.*

2015 : *Trømsø, North of Norway, is a candidate located in the North of the Arctic Circle, which if it is agreed will mean that the Championship will be held under the midnight sun.*

This candidacy is strongly supported by the Norwegian Federation and I visited Trømsø from 3rd to 5th June 2012.

Trømsø will organize the Chess Olympiads in 2014 and wishes to be seen as an organisational town for the Mind Sport events. I met the General Manager of the Chess event. This is an important organization with players coming from 150 countries.



I would like to express my gratitude to Rune Handal, present General Secretary of the Norwegian Federation, who organized the meeting with the concerned people from the Trømsø town and with the authorities of the County. I met the Mayor of Trømsø and the Vice-President of the County who are ready to support us significantly on a financial side. Thank you also to Jan Aasen, President of the Norwegian Federation, to Knut Brinchmann, the future General Secretary and to all the Bridge players in Trømsø I was able to meet and who are enthusiastic to welcome a Championship in Norway where the previous EBL event was in 1969.

➤ Team championships

2014 : no venue has been decided.

Albena (Bulgaria) has presented its candidacy but it is linked to the new Congress Centre construction which is not yet finished. Albena organized the Youth Team Championships in 2011 and Mr Stanev, the Resort Manager, wishes to organize some other Bridge events with the cooperation of the Bulgarian Federation.

Others countries have indicated their interest but have not yet sent their official candidacy (Israel, Germany).

➤ Youth Team Championships

2013 : Poland will organize the Youth Team championships from 11th to 20th July. At the beginning, the site of Stargard (where the 2001 World Junior Pairs Championships were held) was proposed and I went to Poland in January 2012 accompanied by Radek Kielbasinski and Slawek Latala and was received by the Regional & Local Authorities.

But finally, following a request from the Polish Bridge Union President, the final venue will be Wroclaw in which the PBU organized the European Youth Pairs Championships in 2008. The final contract between EBL and the Polish Federation will be signed in Dublin and next autumn, I will go to Wroclaw in order to meet the Authorities and make the technical visit.

2015: two candidacies have been received : Orebro in Sweden and Trømsø in Norway. I already visited the Orebro site with Jens Auken and Jan Kamras and we feel is perfectly adapted for the organization of a Youth Team Championships. Trømsø is both candidate in 2015 for the European Open Championships and the Youth Team Championships.

➤ Youth Pairs Championships

2014: During the NBO's Seminar in Budapest in February 2012, the Hungarian Federation showed a strong interest in organizing the Youth Pairs Championships in 2014. This Championship's format was modified in 2012 with the creation of a Mixed category and the EBL Youth Committee would like there to be a Youth Camp organised just before or immediately after this championship with a different format to the previous ones held up to 2006.

➤ Champions' Cup



As of today, we have no candidacy for the organization of this event in 2013 and the following years. This event is simple event to organize since it is only over a 4 day period and so is financially affordable for the hosting Federation.

➤ *Small Federations Games*

In contrast to the other Championships, a lot of candidates organize the Small Federations Games.

In 2013, the event will be in Kosice in Slovakia. This event falls in the year when it will be the official European Capital of the Culture.

For 2014 and 2015, the venues will be decided in September 2012 during the next Small Federations Games.

The Small Federations Games have become a fixture the EBL calendar with a preferred date in September in order to avoid to competing with the WBF or EBL Championships or, indeed, any other international competitions.

I have been present in the previous events in Vilnius, Ptuij and San Marino. This is a great opportunity to meet the Presidents and the players of the small Federations which often have particular and specific requests to the EBL. This is also the opportunity to invite them to participate to the main EBL Championships.

c) *TD's courses*

From now on, the EBL calendar contains the following :

- One EBL main TD's Course and examination held in the odd-numbered years*
- One or two Regional TD's Courses every year*

In 2011, the EBL organized its first two Regional workshops in Zagreb and in Orebro and the next one will be in Poland in October 2012.

The EBL main TD's Course will be held in January 2013 in the Netherlands or in Germany. For this main Course, the participation by EBL invitation only (EBL official TDs + the best participants of the Regional courses) will probably also include some participants from other WBF Zones.

d) *NBOs' Seminar - 2014*

The EBL will continue to organize an EBL NBOs' Seminar every two years. The Cyprus Federation confirmed its interest to organize in Cyprus the 2014 event. This point will be examined by the EBL Executive Committee in Dublin.

4) Visits to NBOs

a) *Linked to Championships*

During the past two years, I have visited Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, San Marino, Slovenia, Sweden and Turkey. I was always warmly welcome by their Presidents and the Board Members.



b) Other EBL events

- Presence in Zagreb, Orebro (TD's Courses)
- Presence in Budapest (NBOs' Seminar)

c) Others

- o NBOs : Orebro (Nordic Congress) : I met the Executive Members of the six Nordic countries : Denmark, Faroe Island, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden
Benidorm : Open Spanish Championships : I met the President, Eduardo Molero, and the Spanish Executive Committee
- ACBL : Seattle in December 2011. Following the request of Craig Robinson Chairman, I made an address and answered questions raised by the ACBL Board of Directors.
Memphis in March 2012 during the WBF Management Committee : we visited Horn Lake, Missouri, the ACBL Headquarters
- Events : Australia : in February 2011 further to the invitation of the President Keith Mac Donald and the Australian Federation Board Members. I participated in the celebration of the 50th Gold Coast Congress with Gianarrigo Rona, WBF President and John Wignall, First WBF Vice-President. I was also invited to one of the Australian Executive meetings and questioned on several topics and in particular on the EBL Youth programme.
Monaco in October 2011 : further to the invitation of the President of the Monegasque Federation, Jean-Charles Allavena. I attended the Prince's Cup at which the Prince Albert de Monaco was present.
Germany in May 2012 : I went to Bad Godesberg for the 28th edition of the Nation's Cup which each year gathers 16 European National teams, under the invitation of Ulrich Wenning, President of the German Federation, the Bridge Club of Bonn and Goran Mattsson who was in the past an EBL EC Member. Once again, I met several Board Members of the German Federation whom I already met in 2010 during the General Assembly of the Deutscher Bridge Verband.
- WBF : Philadelphia ; Poznan ; Veldhoven ; Milan ; Lausanne
- FISU : Lausanne (President) ; Kaoshiung Taiwan (Championship)
- EUSA : Minsk-Mazowiecki (Championships) ; Bruxelles (President)

5) Undertakings and projects

a) Undertaken

1) New formats

- for TD's Courses
- for all Pairs Championships with 10 board segments



- for Youth Pairs Championships, starting 2012, with the introduction of a 2 day Mixed event
- for NBO's Seminar : Starting with the Budapest event and mainly from 2014, following the recommendations of the NBOs Liaison Committee

2) *New EBL Eligibility Code*

- application effective on 1st April 2012
- Harmonized with the WBF Eligibility Code

3) *New technology in Championships*

- With new programs, bar codes & personal Score Cards and Internet results.

4) *New contracts with :*

- Maurizio di Sacco : with Gianarrigo Rona, WBF President, I signed a contract with M. di Sacco, employed by both the WBF and EBL as a Technical Director for all Championships.
- Catherine Vitry : Marina Madia moved to WBF. Catherine Vitry was hired on a part-time contract as EBL Secretary.

5) *Cost reductions*

In this period of crisis, the financial situation is difficult for both the EBL and all the NBOs and it has become nearly impossible to find main sponsors. I have always focused, with the support of the EC Members, in reducing the costs.

For the Championships, and you have certainly noticed it in Poznan and in Dublin, we have reduced the number of staff, The Executive Members who don't have an official role are only participating in the weekly meetings, the Ceremonies are shorter without a following dinner.

But the main points, that is to say the technical organization and the players' comfort, cannot be reduced. The EBL must maintain his high standards in technology and offer accommodation and playing conditions in order to satisfy all participants in the EBL events and of course give a better service on internet.

b) *Projects in development*

1) *New Website*

- It will be in place on 1st January 2013

2) *New contract*

- Fotis Skoularikis will be the new Webmaster for the WBF and EBL and will be located starting 1st January 2013 in the Headquarters of the Maison du Sport in Lausanne.

3) *New format*

- The EBL Executive Committee has discussions concerning the modification of the format for the European Open Championships and Team Championships. Next Year in San Remo, it is expected that a new format will be applied
- The Youth Team Championships which is currently held over a 11 day period should be shortened from 2013 to 9 days. We have the



project to reduce it to 7 days following requests from several NBOs and the EBL Youth Committee in order to reduce NBO expenses.

4) Youth Camps

- There has been no EBL Youth Camp since 2006 and some young people regret this cancellation.*
- We already have some Youth Camps – for example one held in Poland or the Nordic Youth Camp which is supported by the EBL. In 2014, EBL wishes to recreate the EBL Youth Camp with a new format not based on trials.*

5) Youth Fund

Some actions on promotion, teaching and documents printing are in progress.

6) Relations with IMSA and WBF

a) WBF

Europe has many senior positions within the WBF : Gianarrigo Rona is President, Marc de Pauw is Treasurer and Radek Kielbasinski is a Vice-President. I am myself part of the Management Committee.

Concerning the WBF Committees, European personnel, not only EC Members, are serving on all the Committees. Some are Chairman :

- Finance Committee : Marc de Pauw*
- IOC Liaison Committee : Radek Kielbasinski*
- Credentials Committee : Yves Aubry*
- Laws Committee : Ton Kooijman*
- TD's Committee : Jean-Claude Beineix*
- Youth Committee : Ata Aydin*
- Senior Committee : Guido Resta*
- Promotion, Public Relations and Sponsorship Committee : Sevinç Atay*
- Anti-doping Commission : Jens Auken*
- Women's Committee and Protocol & Ceremony Committee : Anna Maria Torlontano*

Beside Al Levy, Chairman, Jan Kamras is a senior member of the Technology Commission.

Without considering our friendship years with Gianarrigo Rona, I can say that the EBL and WBF have a common view for the future of Bridge which largely explains our common projects.

b) IMSA

The beginning of my mandate has been marked by a difference of opinion between the EBL EC and the IMSA President, José Damiani, concerning Poker. This issue continues to be discussed and Duplicate Poker has not yet been accepted as a member of SportAccord.



IMSA created a great event in 2008 in Beijing with the World Mind Sport Games then the SportAccord World Mind Games event was also held in Beijing in December 2011.

Of course, the EBL supports everything that can be done promote Bridge within Mind Sports and wishes President José Damiani a great success for the second WMSG in Lille next August.

7) Memberships

The EBL has 49 affiliated NBOs, although Armenia and Georgia are currently in default. The Executive Committee, according to the Statutes, will consider whether to suspend Armenia and Georgia consequent upon its persistent failure to pay its membership dues. The affiliated NBOs have a declared membership of a level just under 400.000 members, although it is apparent that some Federations are selective in their method of counting. France remains the leading Federation with more than 100.000 members followed by the Netherlands at 85,000.

The EBL is pleased to know that the EBU (English Bridge Union) has instituted a Universal Membership system in England which will give the EBU a representation more conformed to reality.

8) Financial situation

The financial situation for the period 2010-2012 will be presented to you by the EBL Treasurer, David Harris.

The important participation in 2010 in Ostend and in 2011 in Poznan has permitted us to create good financial results.

The EBL continues to ensure that it has a sound financial footing to take it forward in what may be difficult and uncertain times ahead.

And, of course, as I have already stated, the EBL is committed to reduce the functioning expenses.

9) Executive Committee

Just after the previous General Assembly held in Ostend in 2010, during its first meeting, the Executive Committee, based on the proposal of the President, appointed the Vice-Presidents, the Secretary and the Treasurer.

Appointed :

- 1st Vice-President : Marc de Pauw*
- 2nd Vice-President : Radek Kielbasinski*
- Secretary : Jens Auken*
- Treasurer : David Harris*

Two other members were appointed to be members of the Presidential Council :

- Sevinç Atay*
- Jan Kamras*

The WBF Zone 1 (EBL) appointed five members to the WBF Executive Council with at least one representative of each sex. The five delegates were :



- Sevinç Atay
- Yves Aubry
- Jens Auken
- Marc de Pauw
- Radek Kielbasinski

Jens Auken has been unable to travel abroad since the beginning 2012, and accordingly asked to be replaced in his role of European representative to the WBF Executive Council and David Harris was appointed as delegate in his place.

To replace Jens in his function of EBL Secretary, Jan Kamras was appointed by the EC Members in Dublin.

The full EBL Executive Committee meets twice a year :

- *In June during the first week of the European Championships (Open or Teams)*
- *In November for 3 days during the Champions' Cup*

The Presidential Council usually meets once a year in May.

Other meetings can be held if necessary.

As the EBL Headquarters are located in Switzerland, it became necessary to organize an annual meeting in Lausanne.

EBL committees

Each Member of the Executive Committee is Chairman of at least one EBL Committee and a member of a maximum of 3 committees.

- *Marc de Pauw : 1st Vice-President - Chairman of the Credentials Committee.*
- *Radek Kielbasinski : 2nd Vice-President - Chairman of the Youth Committee*
- *Jens Auken : Secretary – Chairman of the Systems Committee and the Disciplinary Committee. Outside the Championships he is also President of the Appeals Committee.*
- *David Harris : Treasurer – Chairman of the Financial Committee and the Statutes Committee*
- *Sevinç Atay – Chair of the Women's Committee*
- *Jan Kamras: New Secretary – Chairman of the Technological Committee and NBO Liaison Officer, including responsibility for organisation of the NBO's Seminar*
- *Jean-Charles Allavena - Chairman of the Small States Committee*
- *Panos Gerontopoulos - responsible for Communications and Press Relations.*
- *Josef Harsanyi - Chairman of the TD's Committee and responsible for the organisation of the TD Courses.*
- *Filippo Palma – Chairman of the Seniors Committee and the Sponsorship and Marketing Committee*
- *Pim Vaders - Chairman of the Promotion and Development Committee (which includes the Teaching Committee) and of the Master Points Committee.*



You had the opportunity to meet all of them during the NBO's Seminar in Budapest in which many of them made a presentation or led a workshop on a subject within their specialist area.

You will certainly have noticed that I did not mention the Championship Committee. When I was elected as EBL President, I have asked for a discussion about the role and number of persons of this committee. For many years, Jean-Claude Beineix and Tom Kooijman had many responsibilities in organizing the championships. But in Ostend, we celebrated their departure during the staff party and we had to consider a new organization.

During the first two years, I was the Chairman of the Championship Committee with the aim of setting up a new organization and adapting ourselves to the technological evolution, to new formats within the Championships and to consider the numerous requests made by the NBOs when the EBL is organizing a Championship.

The Championship Committee for each of our different events has now become more flexible. With the exception of the Technical Director, Maurizio di Sacco, the members are not always the same people. There is, for example, a huge difference between the organisation of the Open Championships and the Youth Championships and we are working towards greater professionalism. Of course, the EBL President and the Treasurer will always be members of any Championship Committee.

For Dublin, Josef Harsanyi and Jan Kamras are Co-Chairmen of the Championship Committee with Paul Porteous, the on-site Organizer.

Based on the same scheme, in Vejle, the organisation is headed by Micke Melander, Championship Chairman, Ata Aydin Co-Chairman and Flemming Bøgh-Sørensen, the on-site Organizer.

In comparison with the years before 2010, some Committees have disappeared, notably the Laws Committee and the Anti-Doping Committee which are both under the aegis of the World Bridge Federation which makes decisions in these matters.

Some others committees only exist during the Championships and will be defined at each Championship as the Appeal Committee, the Protocol Committee and the medical assistance.

The EBL has also made some special appointments :

- General Counsel : David Harris*
- FISU/EUSA Liaison : Geert Magerman*
- Head Tournament Director : Antonio Riccardi*
- Head Youth Tournament Director : Eitan Levy*



As of today, the EBL has three salaried personnel working part-time and will have a 4th in 2013.

- *Maurizio di Sacco : Technical Director with a full time contract (50% WBF and 50% EBL)*
- *Catherine Vitry : EBL Secretary has a part-time contract (60%)*
- *Carol von Linstow : is working in the headquarters WBF/EBL in Lausanne with a part-time contract (2/3 of salary paid by WBF and 1/3 paid by EBL).*

In 2013, Fotis Skoularikis will become our IT Manager and Webmaster of the WBF and EBL and his salary will be paid half by WBF and half by EBL.

Some other professionals work on an ad hoc basis for the EBL.

- *Marina Madia : she was the EBL secretary until 2011 and continues to help me and Catherine when help is needed. She contributed a great deal to maintain a high level between the previous team and the present one.*
- *Anna Gudge : she is the EBL System Administrator and has the task to gather, convert to pdf and publish the systems prior to the championships. Her help is also valuable as for the Tournament Rules & Regulations, and she organises and runs the European Simultaneous Pairs each November*
- *Ton Kooijman : he is leading the Teaching team during the TD's Courses helped by Maurizio di Sacco and Peter Eidt.*
- *Eitan Levy a valuable volunteer, helping to adapt and translate into English the Rules & Regulations and to avoid errors when interpreting the texts.*

In his present constitution, the EBL is an organization which merely relies on its elected members in the Executive Committee and on some very motivated part time employees.

Our headquarters are located in Lausanne for several reasons as political, sport and financial. The President, the Treasurer and the EBL Secretary work from their respective homes.

10) Elections

After the first meeting of the new Executive Committee in Ostend, Armand Trippaers resigned. Thus in accordance with the Statutes a new election has to be organized during the forthcoming Ordinary General Assembly.

The EBL received 4 valid candidacies within the deadline scheduled in the Statutes.

By calendar order received to the EBL Secretariat :

- *Mrs Liz McGowan from Scotland*
- *Mr Jerry Stamatov from Bulgaria*
- *Mr Eric Laurant from Netherlands*
- *Mr Andras Booc from Hungary*

The duration of the period of office will be 2 years until the General Election scheduled in 2014.

In 2010 in Ostend, there were "only" 14 candidates for 13 positions.



This time, there are 4 candidates for one place showing the strong interest in this election.

11) Conclusions

Since my election in June 2010, I have greatly appreciated the opportunity to work with a professional and enthusiastic team for the realisation of new projects.

The EBL, despite this important period of crisis, has succeeded in organising all its Championships without any major difficulties.

The membership situation is stable even if we know that in many countries the average age of the members continues to rise.

The financial situation is good but we are very careful in the expenses because we have no new income sources ahead and sponsorship is very difficult to find in this period of crisis.

Some new countries have shown interest in organizing EBL Championships and we can now expect to know two years in advance the location of all our Championships.

I would like to end this report with my personal thanks to my predecessors, the Presidents, José Damiani, Gianarrigo Rona and Bill Pencharz who honour me of their presence at this General Assembly. Thanks to all three of you for your invaluable advice and encouragement.

Thank you also to all the members of my team for their professionalism, their investment of their time and their enthusiasm, and to all the Presidents of the Federations who warmly welcomed me in their country during these past two years.

Thank you again to all the players who encouraged me and also suggest to me some improvement in the organization of the Championships.

I won't of course forget Marina, Catherine and Maurizio with whom I worked on a daily basis.

Bridge is a Sport but also a big family, a common passion.

We, in the EBL, have every day to be more professional in the organization of the Championships, in our encouragement and work with the young players who represent our future, in our efforts for the promotion and development of bridge, and in the service of the NBOs and of all the players.

Thank you for your attention.

“



5. Approval of the President's Report

The President invited questions and comments on his report from the delegates, but there were none.

The Assembly, by acclamation, unanimously approved the report.

The President thanked the delegates.

6. Treasurer's Report

The President called upon the Treasurer, Mr David Harris, to address the Assembly.

The Treasurer presented the report on the financial position of the EBL, including the audited accounts for 2010, the unaudited accounts for 2011, the membership figures 2010 and 2011, and an overview of income and expenses / evolution of the equity position for the years 2010/2011.

He highlighted the following points of his written report:

His responsibilities started as of 2011 whereas the full year 2010 was handled by his predecessor, Mr. Marc de Pauw. The delegates thanked Marc de Pauw for his work during the previous period.

The EBL, as an association domiciled in Switzerland, has to do even more to satisfy the local authorities that our centre of operations is really in Lausanne. This will have both financial and organizational consequences. See also points 1f and 5b.2 in the president's report in this respect.

Due to the fact that EBL's activities vary between odd and even numbered years, the accounts need to be viewed on a two year basis.

The Treasurer apologised for not having produced and presented the accounts in time prior to the Assembly. A mixture of personal professional commitments and problems with the reporting systems have contributed to the delay. This also meant that the audit of the 2011 accounts could not be formally completed in time for the Assembly. The Treasurer invited all NBOs to email him any questions relating to the accounts.

In answer to a question from Thomas Roche the Treasurer said that the reserves of the EBL are presently held in cash and bonds, but that a review of the investments is in progress with the aim of assuring the lowest risk while still getting some, if marginal, return.

7. Approval of the Balance Sheet and Accounts 2010/2011 and Auditors' Report.

The Assembly approved the 2010 balance sheet, accounts and auditors' report. The 2011 accounts were also approved, but subject to the auditors' pending approval. The Assembly approved the nomination of Kingston Smith as auditors,

8. Examination of the budget 2012/2013

The Treasurer presented the budget for 2012/2013, which did not lead to any queries from the Assembly.



9. Membership dues and other fees

In order to align the membership accounting with that of the WBF, the Assembly approved a change to allow juniors under the age of 25 dispensation from annual dues to the EBL.

The Assembly approved a proposal to reduce the minimum annual dues for any NBO to EUR 500, and that the first 500 members of an NBO would not count towards the membership on which the annual dues are calculated.

10. Election of one Member to the EBL Executive Committee for the legislature 2012/2014

The candidates were: Mr. Andras Booc, Hungary, Mrs. Liz McGowan, Scotland, Mr. Eric Laurant, the Netherlands and Mr Jerry Stamatov, Bulgaria.

The Hon. Secretary explained the voting procedure to the attendees.

Following a secret ballot, the President announced that 106 ballots had been handed out and declared the respective votes of each candidate as follows:

Mr Andras Booc	11 votes
Mrs. Liz McGowan	12 votes
Mr. Eric Laurant	55 votes
Mr Jerry Stamatov	28 votes

The President thus declared Mr. Eric Laurant elected a member of the Executive Committee of the EBL.

11. EBL Committees

This item is covered in the President's report.

12. Questions and proposed resolutions sent by the NBO's

No questions or resolutions had been proposed by the NBOs in advance of the Assembly.

The President opened the floor for questions from the delegates:

One delegate raised the issue of the Eligibility rules.

The President answered that all the zones had to be aligned with the WBF Eligibility Code, a principle also espoused by the delegates at the NBO seminar in Budapest.

The Open Series of the Team Championships is split into two groups. One delegate found a large difference in quality between the two groups.

The President stated that most who commented found the groups quite even, that the formula for seeding the groups is automatic and essentially the same as previous years. This notwithstanding, a commission led by J. Kamras will review the entire format for future Team Championships.



One delegate queried why the Seniors were only playing matches of 16 boards. The President answered that many seniors expressed a preference for this to the EBL Seniors Committee, but acknowledges there are differences of opinions. This will also be studied in conjunction with the general overview of the format.

Several delegates expressed some dissatisfaction over the very sparse schedule for the Women Series in Dublin, caused by the lower than expected participation. J. Kamras agrees and regrets that this happened. When the Organizing Committee realised this it was deemed to late to shorten the duration to the same as for the Senior Series, which was the alternative. This also has to be reviewed for the future, with the goal of reducing the uncertainty of participation once the schedule is set.

Bill Pencharz congratulated Yves on his report.

There being no further business, the President thanked all the Delegates for their attendance and contribution, and at 12.15 p.m. declared the General Assembly closed.