

2019 WBF World Championships and Executive Council meeting, Wuhan, China

[44th World Team Championships & 12th World Transnational Open Teams](#) September 14<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup>.

Opening Ceremony and Banquet Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup>; Play, September 15<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup>; Closing Ceremony September 28<sup>th</sup>

[WBF Website](#) contains complete [results](#), [Daily Bulletins](#), [Running Scores](#) and [much more](#).

For example, all Teams/Players by zone and country can be found [here](#). Link on boxes below.

<b>NABF Zone 2</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Bermdua Bowl Team Members*</b>	<b>Venice Cup Team Members</b>	<b>d'Orsi Senior Trophy Team Members</b>	<b>Mixed Wuhan Cup Team Members</b>
	<b>CANADA</b>				
	<b>USA 1</b>				
	<b>USA 2</b>				

\* click on box for team members



USA 1: Joe STOKES NPC, Cheri BJERKAN, Howard WEINSTEIN, Jill MEYERS, Allan GRAVES, Christal HENNER, Uday IVATURY

USA 1 Mixed Teams –Silver Medal, [losing the final to Russia, 175-170](#).

USA 1 Bermuda Bowl finished 4<sup>th</sup> losing the [bronze medal playoff to Norway](#).

USA 1 Venice Cup lost in the [quarterfinals to Sweden](#).

USA 2 d'Orsi Senior Trophy lost in the [quarterfinals to the Netherlands](#)

USA 2 Mixed Teams lost in the [quarterfinals to Romania](#)

A [look](#) at all the medal winners

The Venue was within walking distance from nearby hotels, and a taxi ride was 10 Yen (\$1.50). Most bathrooms at the venue were not Western style, and that was very inconvenient, but Western toilet could be found. The playing conditions were, as usual, outstanding, with all electronic scoring and spacious 25' distances between table centers. The local help was quite abundant and efficient. Local BBO operators

lacked the skills necessary for a best show. Even some technical issues that are frequently observed in China, such as firewall issues and troublesome Wi-Fi, only presented minor problems. Adam Wildavsky reports error messages sometimes when checking on match results, and checked on this issue with the WBF software specialist and website administrator (Fotis Skoularikis). (AL, as Technology chair, I observe that our tech staff can overcome any obstacle!)

### **Executive Council meetings and various committee meetings, September 15<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup>**

Members of the Executive Council, along with short bios

Gianarrigo RONA *President*; José DAMIANI *President Emeritus* Alvin LEVY *1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President*  
Patrick CHOY *2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President* Marc DE PAUW *Treasurer* David HARRIS *General Counsel*  
Marcelo CARACCI – Alberto (Beto) COHEN \*– Giorgio DUBOIN – Nader HANNA \*– Jan KAMRAS \*– Eric LAURANT \*– Eitan LEVY \*– N.R.Kirubakara MOORTHY \*– Kari-Anne OPSAL \*– Bernard PASCAL – Douglas (Kip) ROTCHELL \* Janice SEAMON-MOLSON– Esther SOPHONPANICH \*– Suzi SUBECK \*– Ben THOMPSON \*– Adam WILDAVSKY \* *Members*

\* New Members to the EC, elected from 2018 on, with term ending in 2022

Zone 2 EC members in attendance:

Alvin LEVY Suzi SUBECK Nader HANNA Adam WILDAVSKY

Beto Cohen did not attend, Janice Seamon-Molson (representing the High Level Players Commission) attended part of one meeting, as she was playing in the championship. The HLPC members who sit on the Executive Council try to attend the meetings if they can get away from their player responsibilities.

Also in attendance were invited members of the Committee of Honour, Georgia Heth, Panos Gerontopoulos, John Wignall and Mazhar Jafri. The Committee of Honour recognizes people, generally administrators, who have made a significant contribution to the enhancement and growth of bridge throughout the world.

### **Zone 2 representative committee assignments:**

Alvin Levy - 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President. Management Committee, Technology chair, Awards, E-bridge, Finance, Championship, Laws;

Suzi Subeck - Management Committee, Women's;

Adam Wildavsky - Credentials, Rules & Regulations, Laws;

Nader Hanna - Constitution & By Laws, Senior, Master Point;

Beto Cohen - no assignments.

### **Executive Council summary**

The President's report highlighted the functionality of the WBF's decision making, with the function of the Executive Council and Management Committee. The report references the new Bylaws and Statutes, with the current term of office in a 4-year cycle, starting January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 and ending in 2022. To complete the EC, next year the Congress will elect 3 members, with their term ending at the end of the current 4-year cycle. (AL observation: A different focus than usual. The past president's reports focused on the president's travel and interaction with bridge organizations, see for example, the 2018 President's report.)

**Term of office of members of the Executive Council.** Article 30 (Statutes)- Executive Council Members elections:

- The election of the members of the Executive Council shall take place every fourth year from and including 2022 (each such year being an “electoral year”) save that the initial election of members elected by Congress will take place at the Congress in 2020 with those elected serving for a term of two years.
- All elections by the Zonal Conferences or the HLPC must be made in advance of the Congress taking place in the electoral year; such elections must be notified immediately to the WBF Secretary.
- The term of office of the Executive Council members shall start on the day following their election and shall cease in the subsequent electoral year at midnight on the day on which the relevant body (i.e. Zonal Conferences, HLPC and Congress) elects its representatives for the next Executive Council.

In summary, from the minutes of the Management meeting, May, 2019:

*The elections of the members of the WBF Executive Council according to the WBF Statutes, report by GA Rona*

*The President reminded that according to the WBF Statutes, all the members of the WBF Executive Council must be elected for a quadrennial term. Zone 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 and HLPC are already in line with the rule and will elect or re-elect their members for the Legislature 2022/2026 before the 2022 WBF Congress.*

The members of the WBF Executive Council elected by the Congress in 2020 and the members of the WBF EC elected or re-elected by the other Zonal Conferences in 2019 or 2020 will finish their term in 2022

Jan Kamras was (s)elected Honorary Secretary, which places Jan on the Management Committee.

The Management Committee, which can make some decisions for the EC, consists of President Gianarrigo Rona, President Emeritus, Jose Damiani, 1<sup>st</sup> VP, Alvin Levy, Honorary Secretary Jan Kamras, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Partick Choy, Treasurer Marc De Pauw, Suzi Subeck and Ben Thompson, with legal counsel David Harris.

Note, from the [Statutes](#), Article 34 - (limit of) Management Committee Powers

The Management Committee shall have and may exercise, when the Executive Council is not in session, all the powers of the Executive Council except those requiring a qualified majority (such as Bylaw changes, AL)

The next Management Committee meeting will take place at the San Francisco NABC, Sunday afternoon, December 1<sup>st</sup> - Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. One of the 2020 MC meetings will be held at the European Championships and the other is yet undecided. (AL - It will be difficult to hold a future MC meeting at an ACBL NABC. Up to now the ACBL and EBL have hosted one meeting a year, in part in exchange for the WBF paying all the EC members expenses to attend the annual EC meeting. The new zone 2 governing body, North American Bridge Federation (NABF) is unlikely to host a future meeting and the ACBL no longer has an obligation to do so.

**Treasurer’s report:** (the following gives an insight into the WBF operations, as well as its financial position). Treasure’s report includes the 2018 accounts, an update of the 2019 budget and proposed 2020 budget. The WBF holds bank accounts in Switzerland in € (euros), US\$ and CHF (Swiss Francs). The € is the bookkeeping currency. Most of the income and expenses are in euros. The CHF is the official currency when dealing with the Swiss Tax Authorities. Dues are in US\$, currently at \$1/member, so income in euros varies with the exchange rate. The 2018 exchange rate was 1€ = \$1.20; \$1 = 0.883 €.

The balance sheet is in two parts, 1. fixed income & expenses and 2. variable income & expenses. The fixed income is mostly the dues and the fixed expenses are the operational expenses (offices, salaries, management expenses, meeting expenses, technical, accounting, communications, legal and others). The goal is a break-even fixed account. In 2018, with 620 k members, the goal fell short by 47 k€, partially due to the weak \$ which produces less €, and the decrease in zone 1 and zone 2 membership.

The variable income & expenses are related to various championships and competitions. These included the Orlando World Bridge Series, World Youth Teams, World-Wide Bridge Contest and other smaller events. This produced a positive result of 158 k€, which was due entirely to the Orlando World Bridge Series.

The overall result of 111 k€ was allocated between an increase in Equity (61 k€), Youth Fund (6 k€) and Development & Promotional Fund (44 k€).

The General Provision account gave a subsidy of 75 k€ to the EBL, contributing to their cost of litigation expenses from recent cheating cases.

At 2018 year's end the Capital & Reserves Equity was 2,206 k€

The WBF website contains [past financial reports](#), for example see the [2018 Treasure's Report](#).

**The Audit**, dated May 29, 2019: "Based on our limited statutory examination, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements do not comply with Swiss law and the company's articles of incorporation." In US terms, a clean audit.

Regarding 2019 Dues, the USBF's reported membership of 144,170, a drop of approximately 5,000 primarily due to a drop in ACBL membership. The CBF reported 5,296, a drop of approximal 14,500, due to CBF accounts. The CBF dues is an issue to be resolved.

### **Minutes of the most recent Management Committee Meeting, Lucignano, Italy May 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>**

The minutes: [Minutes](#) were referenced and ratification given.

One item covered in Lucignano was the minutes of the Medical Committee, and the recent drug violation of Geir Helgemo along with the disqualification of Team Zimmerman from the Rosenblum Team Championship.

For reference, also see the [Anti-Doping Hearing Guidelines for Anti-Doping Minutes of the Medical Commission Meeting regarding case](#).

### **Review of the Team Zimmerman disqualification and reinstatement from the Rosenblum Team Championship:**

The WBF received the recommendation to have at least two players found positive to the doping order to proceed against the entire team, according to the WADA Rules concerning the team's competitions. Therefore, the MC unanimously agreed: 1. to modify the WBF antidoping rule including the suggested specification: Title revoke will become automatic if two players are found positive to the antidoping controls. 2. To confirm that the Executive Council has the right and the power to decide to reassign the title, readjusting the ranking or to maintain it vacant. 3. To confirm that a new document, including the updated Guidelines for antidoping, must be attached at the commitment form.

Regarding the Geir Helgemo case, the General Counsel provided an outline of the Drug Violation by Geir Helgemo during the Rosenblum Cup Final in Orlando that led to a hearing of the WBF Anti-Doping Tribunal that took place in February; Geir Helgemo had accepted that he was guilty of the violation and was suspended for a period of 12 months. As a consequence of that breach the Tribunal automatically disqualified the result of Team Zimmerman and the Team was therefore considered to have lost the final. Following the disqualification, Pierre Zimmerman appealed the decision to CAS. Gianarrigo Rona was keen to find a resolution of this issue that would enable Team Zimmerman to have the title restored to them while maintaining the integrity of applying our rules. The MC fully supported the President's proposal to find a solution in the terms suggested.

There was further discussion at Executive Council meeting. It was already decided that Team Zimmerman was reinstated as the winner of the Rosenblum (based on the new ruling that to be disqualified two members of the team have to be tested positive). Reference to Team Lavazza not wanting the win (which they may not have received anyway, as leaving the title vacant was a possibility) was provided, as well as a letter from Pierre Zimmerman praising Team Lavazza's good sportsmanship.

Relationships with International Organizations was covered by IOC, ARISF, GAISF, SportAccord was presented by GAR, and an [IMSA report](#) was given by Marc De Pauw.

(AL – I will be representing the WBF at the upcoming SportAccord Regional conference, December 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> in Fort Lauderdale, FL. The theme 'A United Approach to the International Sport Landscape in the America!')

### **Youth Activities**

Various reports were presented including on the World Youth Open Championship, Opatija, August 2019, Youth Online Championship, Youth website, Development of New tools for NBOs, and the World Youth Teams Championship 2020.

Regarding the dates of the 2020 Championship. Jan Martel noticed that the tentative proposed dates might overlap the summer NABC, which ends on July 26<sup>th</sup>. After speaking to Gianarrigo (AL) it was agreed that the event would not start before July 31. Also noted was the new Under 31 category, with two teams invited from the USBF. Update news...The Opening Ceremony will be on the evening of July 31 and play will start on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Updated news...the USBF will consider hosting the 2022 Youth Championship following the summer NABC.

Simon Fellus [presented](#) the [Youth website](#) and social media youth activities on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). A great youth promotional website with articles, videos, and dedicated youth social media on, and. There are many videos on [YouTube](#) as well.

The [Youth Online Championship](#) were discussed, with events taking place in 2018 and 2019. In 2019 33 countries took part in the online championship event.

Also presented was the [Teaching Tools](#) that have been supported by WBF funds and are on the [Youth website](#). From the website... *An excellent teaching programme has been developed by the Swedish Bridge Federation and translated into English for anyone to use freely. It is provided in three formats ... PDF files, PowerPoint Presentations and also in Document format that you may edit for your own use as required.*

## Reports were presented on:

Simon Fellus [presented](#) the updates to the [WBF website](#). Almost anything you want to know about the WBF as well as information about bridge worldwide can be found on the website. One nice feature is the People Finder, which you will not find on the ACBL website. For example, take a look at Adam Wildavsky's [bridge record](#)

See <http://www.worldbridge.org/what-is-bridge/> A promotional section on the WBF website. It covers a wide range of ideas on promoting bridge, including bridge as a sport. There are promotional comments from many, including Bill Gates, Warren Buffet, Zia, Martina Navratilova, Bob Hamman, Dr Magnus Olafson (Nobel Peace Prize, 2005), Ernest Hemingway, and others.

Officers Seminar 2019, held in Singapore June 8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>. A zonal Officers Seminar is now an annual event, to better communicate with our zonal officers on ways to promote bridge, teach, organize youth events, expand play to online play, and enhance the playing experience of the players. (AL – My family responsibilities did not allow me to attend, but I made two presentations by Skype. They appeared to be well received and I took part in a Q&A after each.)

[World Bridge Tour](#), by Jan Kamras. A proposal for an International Bridge Tour that may start in 2021.

[Worldwide Bridge Contest 2019](#) by Anna Gudge. The successful annual event was held June 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>.

The WBF 60-year virtual book and virtual museum, by Panos Gerontopoulos. The projects progress was reported.

WBF Robot Tournaments, by Al Levy. The Funbridge site and bookkeeping records are in place. The mechanics and play are well organized and operational. Play has been very low, with the reward of WBF Online Masterpoints not being an attraction. A promotion of the best 3 players receiving an invitation, with expenses paid, to an upcoming Pair Championship, has not attracted many more players.

Tablet Bridge, by Al Levy. Plans for a Tablet championship tournament in the near future is being considered. Plans are underway for the preparation, including finalizing CoC, Tablet play Laws, and R&R. Experimental games have taken play using LoveBridge Tablets with mostly positive reviews, but with problems that still need to be addressed. Some feedback came from the Youth Open Championship held in Opatija. Some players found that they had very 'tired' eyes. An issue of the lighting needed to play on tablets was raised. Also, the youngsters like interacting with other youngsters at the table, as they get their fill of sitting in front a laptop or a Smartphone.

World Online Championship 2020 by José Damiani. The project is quite ambitious with the need for many thousands to participate and with significant prize money, which can raise issues. See the [announcement](#) on the WBF website.

University of Sterling Professor, Samantha Punch, presented her Sociology of Bridge project, a PhD program to better understand the sociology of bridge. The WBF has donated toward this project.

Ameresh Deshpande presented his HOOL game, a form of bridge designed to get to the play without the traditional bidding. In the 'bidding' portion the players pass limited information designed to help place a final contract.

It was recognized that the NBOs of zone 6 are recognized by the Ministries of Sport and all (except Macao) participated in the 2018 Asian Olympic Games, which gave bridge visibility in a worldwide competition.

Reports were presented from the [TD Committee](#) (Josef Harsanyi, chair); [Systems Committee](#) (John Wignall, chair); Laws Committee (Ton Kooijman, chair)

Zonal presidents' reports were presented. Jan Martel submitted [zone 2's NABF president's report](#).

The HLPC presented a [report](#) on their position on discipline. The report presents guidelines to provide greater control over all that happens at the table that involves a potential "ethical" violation.

Item on 'Transparency' was added at the request of Adam Wildavsky. It was agreed that certain reports should be on the WBF website. These include a financial report, the annual Audit and the Executive Committee minutes. It was mentioned that certain items that may have legal ramifications might be omitted. As a start, see the WBF website page on [Minutes & Reports](#).

Future Championships, possible sites:

2020 Qingdao also spelled Tsingtao, China (Istanbul, Turkey is on the table but has little chance), mid-September – early-October

2021 Marrakesh Morocco

2022 Poland

2023 Hong Kong

2025 Bermuda (75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Bermuda Bowl)

Congratulations to USA players for winning gold in the U26 Youth Bridge Online Championship, held online between March – August, 2019, Ilan Wolff, Nathan Finkle, Hakan Berk, David Soukup, Victor XU, Cyrus Hettle, Daniel Sooner, and special kudos to David Caprers (NPC and coach)

<http://youth.worldbridge.org/usa-u26-the-new-world-champions-yoc-2019/>

A USA youth team won gold in the 6<sup>th</sup> World Youth Open Championship, held August 20-29, in Opatija, Croatia. Congrats to Kevin Rosenberg, Ben Kristensesn, Cornelius Duffie and Sarah Youngquist. The team thanked Marty Fleisher, Max Schireson and Cadir Lee for all their support. Canadians Bruce Zhu and John Dong, won the bronze medal in the U21 Pairs and along with Americans Harrison Luba and Finn Kolesnik, won bronze in the U21 teams. Congrats to all. <http://youth.worldbridge.org/sivy-b-in-opatija-by-kevin-rosenberg/>

Submitted by Alvin Levy, on behalf of, and with input from, the WBF representatives to the Executive Council