



EBL

Junior Review

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Editor: Panos Gerontopoulos

EUROPEAN YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS '96

JUNIORS



SCHOOLS



1	NORWAY	509
2	RUSSIA	482.5
3	DENMARK	480
4	ISRAEL	461
5	NETHERLANDS	441
6	SWEDEN	435
7	ICELAND	433
8	HUNGARY	432
9	POLAND	410.5
10	ITALY	403
11	LITHUANIA	402.5
12	TURKEY	392
13	GERMANY	389
14	GREAT BRITAIN	379
15	FRANCE	378
16	AUSTRIA	377
17	IRELAND	375
18	FINLAND	371.5
19	ROMANIA	349
20	PORTUGAL	301.5
21	CZECH REPUBLIC	290.5
22	BELGIUM	273
23	SPAIN	245
24	YUGOSLAVIA	241
25	GREECE	168
26	SWITZERLAND	159

In July 1996, the British Bridge League was host to the European Youth Championships in **Cardiff**, Wales, Great Britain. This was the first European Bridge Championship ever held in Wales. The event was held at *Cardiff University*, which lies at the heart of the attractive city centre.

Entries were a record: **26** nations in the *Juniors* (up to 25 years) where the previous record was 23; and **14** nations in the *Schools* (up to 20 years), one more than the first event held in the Netherlands in 1994.

The *Opening Ceremony* was launched with a traditional Welsh Male Voice Choir, memorable for most of the contestants on their first visit to Wales. Then it was into the *Round Robin* of 20 board matches: 500 boards to be played in ten days.

The home team was reigning European and World Junior Champions, but four of the victorious team were now over 25, and the new

British team began poorly and were never in contention for a medal. **NORWAY**, who arrived five days early in Cardiff to prepare, were the clear winners, with **RUSSIA** and **DENMARK** taking the other medals (provided by the European Commission in Brussels) and qualifying spots for the *1997 World Junior Championships* in Canada. **ISRAEL**, in fourth place, has also been awarded a place in Canada.

In the *Schools* event **GERMANY** was dominant, with **ISRAEL** second and **GREAT BRITAIN** third.

The weather was very hot making it fortunate that the Playing Area was air-conditioned. The *Closing Banquet* with four hundred in Cardiff's magnificent *City Hall*, was a memorable occasion.

Copies of the *Daily Bulletins* were available on *Internet*, the first European championship to provide this service.

Patrick Jourdain

1	GERMANY	255
2	ISRAEL	229
3	GREAT BRITAIN	224
4	SWEDEN	221
5	DENMARK	220
6	AUSTRIA	206
7	ITALY	203
8	FRANCE	202
9	NETHERLANDS	195
10	POLAND	195
11	YUGOSLAVIA	177
12	RUSSIA	139.5
13	IRELAND	125
14	GREECE	87.5

Four EBL countries in World Junior Teams

The *World Bridge Federation* has accepted a request by the EBL to increase to four the number of teams representing Europe in the *World Junior Championship*. The decision comes into effect as from 1997.



JUNIOR CAMP CROSSES THE ATLANTIC

THE FIRST ACBL CAMP IS A MILESTONE FOR

Last August, the *American Contract Bridge League* (ACBL) organized the first Junior Bridge Camp in North America. Following the successful European model, the camp on **Marco Island**, Florida, combined lessons, tournaments and a lot of non-bridge activities. Juniors from all over USA were joined by a big EBL delegation, and all together created a wonderful international atmosphere, necessary for the success of the event.

In 1995, the EBL opened the *European Junior Pairs Championship* and *Junior Camp* to the rest of the world. Among players from Indonesia, Botswana and Australia a big delegation of American juniors crossed the ocean to join the events in Ghent, Belgium. The ACBL offered support for fifty juniors and had no difficulty in filling these places. By the end of the camp in Belgium, the idea of having a camp in America as soon as possible had been born. What sounded as an unrealistic dream came true only one year later thanks to the efforts of **Charlotte Blais** and **Julie Greenberg**, group leaders in Ghent, who are in charge of Junior bridge in the ACBL. They invited the EBL to send a delegation of juniors to the camp and the Youth Committee happily accepted the chance to do so.

As soon as the EBL agreed to sponsor the airfare for 30 Europeans, the Youth Committee started looking for juniors with a lot of camp experience

to carry the spirit of our camps across the Atlantic and help the Americans to get the new event off ground easily. Soon our delegation consisting of juniors from Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal and Sweden was ready to take off for Marco Island.

Marco Island, a small island resort 100 km west of Miami, and *Marriott's Island Resort* provided a very suitable venue for the Junior Camp. The Europeans soon found out that it would be very difficult to find such a fantastic place in our part of the world. The *Marriott's* offered excellent food, spacious rooms, an enormous playing room, beautiful beaches, three pools, ten tennis courts, three volley ball fields and a mini-golf course. Who could ask for more?

The Camp programme was similar to the one used in Europe, with some Americanisms which gave the event its own and very special character. There were many *bridge tournaments*, but the juniors never seemed to have enough as there were always unofficial *side games* organized after midnight. Tournaments varied from *Individual to Teams* and from a *Speedball* to the *Crazy* tournament. To play with a foreign partner is a golden rule in bridge camps, and after a few days everybody acted within this spirit.

Competitions were arranged in mini golf, tennis and volley ball, but the

THE ATLANTIC WORLD JUNIOR BRIDGE

highlight of the week was what had been announced as *'Mystery afternoon on the beach'*. The juniors were divided into groups and had to build a raft out of some strange-looking material. A sea race followed, from which the *Sailing Viking* emerged as the big winner. What looked more like a *Sinking Viking* proved to be a solid construction, leaving the *Titanic* and *Kebab Extra* well behind.

No bridge camp can pass without an outing. As we were close to the world-famous *Everglades*, participants were fortunate to be taken to the big swamps and watch out for alligators. Despite some tropical rainfall the trip by bus and boat was a great success.

A bridge camp always provides lectures for those who like to learn a little more about the game. *Audrey Grant*, *Mabel Pavlicek*, *Brian Glubok* and *Barry Rigal* spoke on various topics, and practice sessions followed theory. *Barry Rigal* was also the man behind the daily bulletin, the *'Gator Gab'*, where exciting, funny incidents and news of the day were published.

As food is popular but breakfast normally not well attended, there were some nice surprises after the evening sessions, like the to-become-famous ice cream, pizza and nacho-parties.

Much too soon the week was nearly over and participants prepared for the talent show, traditionally held after the farewell dinner. But before one could admire the French Sumo fighters, una canzone Italiana or a



Canadian *Phantom of the Opera*, the prize giving ceremony revealed that **David Brower** (USA) was the most successful international pairs player. According to the results of a special voting among the participants, **Joel Wooldridge** (USA) was technically the best player, **Janni Hartman** (USA) showed the best ethics at the bridge table, **Tony Seto** (USA) was the best sportsman and **Andrei Mihailescu** (Switzerland) the most congenial player of the Camp.

We hope that the ACBL Camp will become an established event in the bridge calendar. In this way, not only will the young American players gain a great deal, but also the Europeans will have the opportunity to make new friends and discover new worlds across the Atlantic.

Stefan Back

'Mystery afternoon on the beach' was announced in the programme and nobody could afford to miss it. The surprise lived to expectation: material was provided to build rafts which would not only survive the ocean, but also win a race against other participants. The *'Sailing Viking'* looked more like a *'Sinking Viking'* until it emerged as the winner leaving the *'Titanic'* and *'Kebab Extra'* well behind!



2nd World Junior Pairs Championship

11-13 July 1997

2nd World Junior Bridge Camp

14-22 July 1997

Sportilia Sports Academy

Santa Sofia, Forlì, Italy

BRIDGE PROSPERS IN ITALIAN SCHOOLS

During the week of June 17-23, 1996, the Italian Bridge Federation (FIGB) organized an annual camp dedicated to pupils learning bridge in school.

The meeting took place for the second year at *Paestum*, in the region of Naples, and was attended by more than **five hundred** pupils accompanied by their supervisors, coming from all Italian regions and representing **one hundred** institutes and colleges from both middle and high school.

An elementary school also attended the meeting, which shows very clearly that there is no minimum age to begin bridge - and the presence of a French school demonstrated how much bridge can contribute to unity, friendship and harmony. Their professors had the opportunity, at the same time, to attend some separate lectures and advanced lessons specially designed for them.

The event was very well organized, which helped to create a great deal of enthusiasm among the participants: the pupils were able to form groups, to follow the lessons with extraordinary attention, and, during breaks, to play other sports such as football, tennis and swimming both in the sea and at the swimming pool. A visit to *Pompeii* was also organized, where the students and their professors saw the most recent archaeological findings and discoveries.

The experience gained from the Campus enabled us to draw some important conclusions.

As a first impression, we may say that the program we started by promoting the playing of bridge, already at the middle school level, alone demonstrates quite an important development for the future. Moreover, it seems that the interest created by our initiative, exactly corresponds to our original forecast: the establishment of *Sport*



WELL-PLANNED PROGRAMME BEARS FRUIT VERY SOON

Training Centres, necessary for the passage of bridge from the school to the subsequent definitive competitive activity, becomes, in the short run, the main target of our project.

The enthusiasm shown by the pupils, and the support given by their school teachers, shows very clearly how far the '*snow ball effect*' - perceived by us from the beginning, and becoming evident now - can affect our project and ensure its further important development in the near future. In the meantime, we can enjoy this magic moment and appreciate the progress achieved until now.

We are going back home with our heart full of emotion for all the impressions collected, our eyes loaded with all the images registered on the spot, our head still filled with joyful cries. All this is indeed gratifying and encouraging.

We may wonder what have we given to these young people and what have we possibly taken away from their childish joy. As a matter of fact, we have shown them how to grow up in the proper way, keeping them away from the surrounding degradation, having fun and by satisfying the desire existing in all of us, to compete with others and to emerge. In this way the value of



Marina Bruni and Panos Gerontopoulos in Paestum

the school is affirmed and the natural connection between school and life is established.

In some cases we were confronted with the parents' diffidence. This inconvenience is best faced by first letting the parents evaluate the '*jump forward*' reflected in their children's better performance at school. Then comes the discovery of the increased involvement shown by the pupils, caused by the different approach to problems intrinsic in bridge, and thanks to the new atmosphere we were able to inaugurate. All these are, by the way, confirmed by the teachers involved and it would be sufficient to mention their enthusiastic welcome of our school project as was clearly shown at the campus in Paestum.

In the interest of all pupils and their families, we are now obliged to further develop the initiative we started. To this end, we should not lose the cultural patrimony accumulated up to now, but, on the contrary, we must increase it. In this way, when entering life, our young friends, would be able to contribute to a better society, characterized by people's understanding, acceptance of each other, and readiness for peaceful competition of values and qualities.

Marina Bruni

• *Being both a school teacher and a bridge teacher, Marina Bruni played an important role in the development of the Italian programme 'Bridge in School'.*