



Int'l Bridge

Bangkok, May 17 2024

Short historical overview

Initiatives and ideas

Zones

WBF

Food for thought and discussion





Short historical overview - 1

Name zone	Year	nbo's	members
zone 1 EBL	1947	42	282k
zone 2 NABF	2018	3	130k
zone 3 CSB	1955	10	2.7k
zone 4 BFAME	1979	10	6.2k
zone 5 CAC	1971	12	0.6k
zone 6 APBF	1957	11	58.5k
zone 7 SPBF	1991	2	45.8k
zone 8 ABF	2000	<u>8</u>	<u>4.0k</u>
WBF	1957	98	530k





Short historical overview - 2

Every year WBF organizes 1 championship for both youth and adults, in 4 yr cycles:

Odd years WBTC (Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup, d'Orsi Trophy and Wuhan Cup)

Even years WYTBC (transnational teams and pairs)

Odd years WYBTC (comparable to WBTC for 5 groups <16, <21, <26, U26W, U31)

Even years 1x WBS (transnational teams and pairs championship, no limits per country)

1x WBG ('Olympiad', including teams (1 team/country) and national pairs)





Short historical overview - 3

Zones have their own schedules, for instance EBL:

Every year Small Fed Games (3 d), Championscup (3 d) & Wintergames (1 wk)

Odd years European Transnational Bridge Championships:

7 days Senior and Mixed teams pairs BAM

8 days Open and Women teams pairs BAM

Even years European National Team Championships incl 4 days nat'l pairs Senior/Women





Short historical overview - 4

In total only a few thousand participants for both WBF and zones, about 0,5% of members!

Zonal Officer's Seminar: irregular but EBL organizes every 2 years, about 60 participants

Youth Coach Seminar: every 2 years in Europe, about 30 participants, also outside Europe

TD training course/workshop: every year in Europe, about 30 participants, also outside Europe

Since 2024 youth coach and TD training under WBF umbrella, but still organised in Europe





Online initiatives in zone 1

Women Online Training Program, 300+ participants from 20+ countries, see:

<https://sites.google.com/view/wbc-onlinetraining/home>

First European Women Online Team Championships, see:

<http://db.eurobridge.org/repository/competitions/24womenonline/microsite/Information.htm>

2021 Online Qualification for WBTC Salsomaggiore 2022, see:

<http://db.eurobridge.org/repository/competitions/21OnlineNationalTeams/microsite/Information.htm>





Online initiatives in zone 2 and others

USBF trials, see:

<https://usbf.org/2023-usbcs/2023-usbcs/index.php>

<https://usbf.org/2024-united-states-bridge-championships/2024-united-states-bridge-championships/index.php>

Other zones:

?





Online initiatives in WBF

Online Women's Teams 2024, 64 teams, 32 countries, see:

<http://www.worldbridge.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/ListofTeamsWBFWomenOnline.pdf>

Online Small Federations Championships 2024, see:

May 13 email to 55 federations <300 members





Why is Online getting more important?

Participation (players, nbo's) is declining although entry fees are unchanged for decades

Costs face-to-face keep rising: travel, hotel, food for both participants and organizers

Budgets of WBF, zones, nbo's, local organizers and participants keep shrinking as a trend

Environmental discussions (flights are not eco friendly, no more paper daily bulletins)

Attraction to youth (like new tech) and bridge community (all matches can be broadcasted)





Issues with Online bridge (or e-bridge)

Dependancy of platforms like Lovebridge, Realbridge, BBO not under our control

It's not the same game we fell in love with, table presence, social aspects, travel

Security, security and security, but a lot of improvement has been established recent years

All chances automatically call for resistance but one day we have to show leadership if forced

We can be forced by costs (duplication, bbo, transport, caddies) or marketing (all matches)





Food for thought

EBL 2021 Online Qualifier was a success:

94 teams in 4 groups played on Realbridge in central location per country

every location and participant was monitored by independent observer(s)

total EBL costs of organization about \$ 55k, entry fees \$ 55k

survey afterwards showed most players and nbo's liked it (a lot)





Food for discussion

Taking declining participation and budgets and increasing costs and so on into consideration:

Why not investigate a (partial) switch from face-to-face to online or in future to e-bridge?

Or hybrid: qualification phase locally monitored online and knock outs later face-to-face?

Only for national championships? Or also for transnational championships? Youth?

Expanding Women's Online championships to Open, Seniors, Mixed and Youth groups?





But of course now

We have some time for:

remarks

questions

and maybe answers

