



## WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION YOUTH COMMITTEE

Panos GERONTOPOULOS  
*Chairman*

To all WBF Zones & NBOs

7 February 2004

Dear Mr President and Colleague,

### **1st World Junior Individual Championship / 6th World Junior Camp 14-16 & 17-24 July 2004 / New York, USA**

I am very glad to be sending you today the official announcement leaflets for the above events.

These two events are different than the ones we have had before, so let me take a few minutes of your time to explain what we are up to and how you can help in the success of this plan.

#### **The plan**

As you know, the flagship competition of our youth programme is the World Youth Team Championship for the *Ortiz-Patiño Trophy*, a top-level event reserved for the most talented Junior players. In addition, every other year we hold in Europe the *World Junior Pairs Championship* and *World Junior Camp*, which are events for *all* young players, whether bridge is their first hobby or just one among many other.

Now, the time has come to balance this programme with another event, also calling for the participation of all Junior players. The **World Junior Individual Championship** will be launched this summer in New York, USA. It will be followed by the first **World Junior Camp** ever to be held in North America.

## The new events

The *World Junior Individual Championship* will be played with a common simple system of bidding and card play that everybody can understand. Such a championship requires competitors to be able to team up with players who may have a completely different level or cultural background. Dominated by the social element, the competition, therefore, supports qualities that are most valuable in life itself. The *Junior Camp* is probably the most advanced event we provide to our youngsters, cultivating long-lasting friendly relationships under the umbrella of our sport.

In cooperation with the *American Contract Bridge League*, we have planned these events to be technically excellent while keeping the cost for the participants at a particularly low level.

The *World Junior Individual Championship* will be played with the barometer system which allows competitors to know their exact score as the tournament progresses. Thus bridge is no longer singled out as, possibly, the only sport where participants do not know - but can only speculate - how they are performing. The championship will be hosted at the *New York Hilton*, in the middle of Manhattan, which is the site of the *North American Bridge Championships* this summer. Accommodation will be provided in suitable smaller hotels and hostels nearby, at a cost that will not exceed \$70 per person per night, full-board (i.e. with breakfast, lunch and dinner included). The entry fee is \$100 per person for the entire 4-session tournament, and includes the Victory Dinner and Prize Giving which will be an exclusive occasion - a real showcase for bridge. The greatest names of bridge administration from the WBF President and President Emeritus to zonal Presidents and International Executives will be there to honour the young players, and so will, undoubtedly, many of the world's greatest players. A great effort is being made to have public dignitaries, the press and other media also attending.

Once the championship is over, Juniors will be offered transportation to Nyack, a picturesque village on the shore of Hudson river, some 37 km north of Manhattan, where the *World Junior Camp* will take place in the premises of the local College. For one week, our youngsters will be able to learn and practice both bridge and their friendly relationships with people from many different backgrounds - religious, financial, cultural, political, etc. Qualified teachers will be delivering lectures daily, and bridge tournaments of all kinds will be available for training and international competition. However, the programme also includes physical sports and recreation, and, of course, a lot of fun. Over the past 30 years, Camps have played an important role in Junior bridge, providing a unique alternative to thousands of players; the rule is that whoever came to a Camp once, came back again and again, as often as possible! The cost of the Camp is \$425 per person for the entire 8-night stay, with all expenses included.

## How can we help

We are aware, of course, that the world is too diverse and that what seems very easy in one place may be extremely difficult elsewhere. In particular, this applies to money and the possibility of travelling far away. We do understand, dear colleagues, that most of you have the best intentions but still feel unable to offer the financial support that young people usually need. We wish we could step in and fill the gap, but unfortunately, the WBF does not have such possibilities. However, let us not give up too easily. There are things that can be done, probably by everyone.

First and foremost comes **publicity** - the spreading of information itself. For sure, nobody can be interested to participate if he does not know that the events will take place. So, please, make sure that you give the new events the best possible publicity - through your bridge media, the clubs, personal contact, etc. Even if it seems impossible, you never know. Maybe some people were planning a summer trip anyway for a language school or holidays, maybe they have some relatives there who could help, etc.

Then comes the **administrative** support. Your organization could help with the entries, accommodation, visas, if required, plane tickets, etc., either directly or by providing advice. Just providing our Committee's contact details may be enough!

Finally, it is of course the **financial** support that will make the difference. If you are able to offer some support, please do so, knowing that you are doing the right thing. If you feel unable to help directly, please see if you can do so indirectly, by arranging something for the Juniors - maybe a useful contact with a company that could sponsor the trip, a fund raiser, etc. - and adding the gravity of your voice to their appeal. Even when everything seems hopeless, there is still a chance. As they say, nothing can stand in front of a man's will.

Dear colleagues,

We all know how important Junior bridge is for the future of our sport. Let us support our belief with our actions. Let us do something, now! Our young members will be grateful. Our organizations will be grateful. Bridge will be grateful.

I would like to take this opportunity in order to thank you personally and most sincerely for whatever you can do in support of the young players. Even if it difficult, I can assure you that it certainly worthwhile! By trying our best, we are very likely to succeed - but even if we fail now, we shall be in a much better position to succeed next time.

Naturally, all of us on the Youth Committee are at your disposal to help wherever and whenever we can. All together, we can make a difference for our youngsters. Let's try to achieve just that.

With very best wishes,



**Panos Gerontopoulos**  
*WBF Youth Cmte Chmn*