



## EUROPEAN BRIDGE LEAGUE

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*President*

### EBL Events 2020 - Covid-19 Update

Dear Friends

Since my last report, there has been no good news as far as Europe is concerned. The buzz words we are getting used to are “Social Distancing”, “Flatten the Curve”, “Herd Immunity” and “R0 numbers”. Many countries are going into virtual lock-down, restricting both gatherings and travel.

Whereas Eastern Asia seems to have turned the corner, showing a slowdown in new cases, the European situation is the opposite. The curve is steepening almost everywhere. The more testing, the more confirmed cases. An interesting statistic, taken from “worldometers.info”, is the percentage of “active” cases compared to “total” cases. In China that number is now around 10% whereas in Europe it is still close to 100%.

The EBL Executive is following the situation very closely, coordinating with the Portuguese and Madeiran bridge federations as well as the WBF. We are fully prepared to cancel the June European Teams Championships in Madeira if the forecast does not improve dramatically in the nearby future.

Our “Plan B” is to **postpone** the championships, retaining the Madeira location, until **November 11 - 21**.

That is the only period we are sure to have the venue available. It would force us to exceptionally move the dates for the Champions’ Cup and we will discuss this with the concerned NBOs. It will likely be advanced to October, in which case the qualified NBOs will be based on the ranking at the ENTC 2018 in Ostend.

We will hold a full Executive Committee meeting as scheduled in early April (via Skype or similar rather than at our offices in Lausanne as planned) and it is likely a final decision will be taken then, if not before.

In relation to the European National Youth Pairs (and Transnational Teams) championships scheduled for Salsomaggiore in August, the situation is partly linked to what the WBF intends to do with its World National Youth Teams Championships, scheduled at the same venue in Salsomaggiore immediately preceding the EBL event; linked administratively, logistically as well as financially. If the WBF goes ahead, the EBL can of course still decide what to do, whereas if the WBF cancels, we would probably have to follow suit.

Unlike the “grown-up” events it is more difficult to reschedule Youth events in the calendar due to the school/college calendar. If the event is cancelled at some stage, we will then discuss how to progress from that point with the EBL Youth Committee.

I understand the uncertainty and frustration this situation creates, but trust you all understand that we are in uncharted waters, trying to make the best of a very complex and fluid situation. Although there are always conflicting interests involved, rest assured that our primary concerns are the well-being of the participants and our faithful staff, as well as the integrity of the championships.

Best regards, and stay safe.

Jan Kamras