

EBL WOMEN'S NEWSLETTER MARCH 2022

55th European National Team Championships

Funchal, Madeira Island, Portugal • 12-22 June, 2022

Women/Seniors Pairs • Open/Women/Seniors/Mixed Teams



CONFIRMED
THE NEWS
WE HAVE
WAITED FOR!



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Dear Players,
Our President, Jan Kamras, has a solemn message for you. At this time, sadness is intermingled with the excitement that the 55th European

Team Championships will take place as planned in Funchal, Madeira starting June 12th and ending 22nd of June, 2022.

The EBL National Women's/Seniors' Pairs will take place 12th to 15th at the Savoy Palace Hotel, Madeira. Information is on page four.

Other good news is that 13 EBL teams will now compete in the Venice Cup. That's only a few weeks away. 'All the Best' to our teams most of whom play twice monthly in the EBL Women's Practice matches.

Our end of the year EBL Women's Series was sponsored by BBO and the February series was run on the RealBridge platform. France and Germany were the winners respectively.

As we move in to the long awaited 'Face to Face' most of us can reflect on how the online platforms served us well; a time when the world became a smaller place with opportunities of networking and playing to each player's highest competitive level. Fortunately for EBL Women, Practice matches were already established pre Covid-19.

Mark Horton reflects on 'How times are a changin' for the English team and some teams who have recently received invitations from the WBF to play Venice Cup, write of their delight, planning and fundraising. Tuna Elmas writes about her Dream Mixed Team and Samantha Punch reports on BAMSA.

Let's follow the Venice Cup in Salsomaggiore Terme, Italy from 27th March to 9th April, 2022 and play National Women's Pairs in beautiful Madeira in June.

Mary Kelly Rogers
Editor
EBL Women's Committee

MESSAGE FROM EBL PRESIDENT JAN KAMRAS



Dear Friends,

It is with a heavy heart I am writing this message to you. The deplorable, unprovoked, invasion by Russia of sovereign Ukraine has put a damper on our feelings of joy over getting back to face-to-face bridge. I condemn this action in the strongest possible terms and support the Ukrainian people in their fight for freedom.

The EBL stages the official European National Women's and Seniors' Pairs Championships June 12-15, at the Savoy Palace hotel, before the start of the respective National Teams Championships in those categories.

They are open not only to pairs who will then represent their countries in the Teams but also to other national pairs nominated by their NBOs, without a limit to the number of pairs per country. European medals and master points will be awarded.

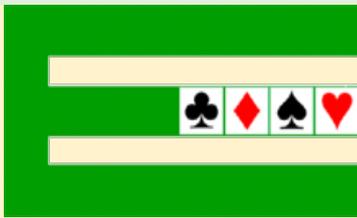
Further details such as registration and payment information as well as Conditions of Contest will be published on the EBL website for the event.

It is a great opportunity to combine four days of top level bridge with a visit to this beautiful island, known for its perfect climate, low crime rate and very reasonable prices for accommodation and restaurants.

I am looking forward to seeing you there.

Best regards,

Jan Kamras
EBL President



Women/Senior Pairs

REGISTRATION

Saturday 11th June
10:00 – 20:00

Registration desk will be located at the Congress Centre of the Casino Da Madeira

Qualification and Finals

Sunday 12th to Wednesday 15th June

Prize-Giving Ceremony

Wednesday 15th June at 19:30

AWARDS

EBL Gold, Silver and Bronze Medals will be awarded. The winners will receive the title of European Women Pairs Champion respectively European Seniors Pairs Champion. EBL Master Points will also be awarded.

11th European Women's National Pairs Championship
Savoy Palace Hotel
Funchal, Madeira
June 12th to 15th



FUNCHAL, MADEIRA ISLAND, PORTUGAL WOMEN/SENIOR PAIRS

Savoy Palace Hotel

12th to 15th June 2022



FORMAT OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP

It is anticipated that each Championship will consist of two stages: a Qualifying Stage, and a Final Stage (Final A and Final B). However, should the number of participants permit, there will be a one stage all-play-all (Endless Howell) competition. Details of the competitions may be changed according to the final registration of participants. Further information is available in the Supplemental Conditions of Contest on the EBL Website.

(<http://www.eurobridge.org/regulations/conditions-of-contest/>)

<http://www.eurobridge.org/>

Winners of the 10th



Gold Ferda Zorlu and Nilgun Kotan of Turkey
Silver Katarzyna Duftrat and Justyna Zmuda of Poland
Bronze Anna Sarniak and Danuta Kazmucha of Poland



BBO sponsored the END OF THE YEAR EBL WOMEN'S SERIES and the event was organised jointly by Diana Eva Serban of BBO and the EBL Women's Committee. Bula and Aurora were Diana's team for this and it was a day of superb team work. "France wins EBL Women's Series (December 29).

After 10 rounds of play, team **France** (Donatella Halfon, Sylvie Willard, Danièle Avon, Babeth Hugon, Clara Bouton, Margaux Kurek-Beaulieu) won the tournament, defeating runner-up **Turkey** (Dilek Yavas, Serap Kuranoglu, Ozlem Kandolu, Eren Ozan, Irem Ozbay, Hatice Ozgur) by 7 VPs. **Norway** (Liv Marit Grude, Bodil Oigarden, Åse Langeland, Gunn Helness, Lisbeth Glærum, Ida Wennewold) secured the bronze and Irish team **Kenny** (Joan Kenny, Jeannie Fitzgerald, Rebecca O'Keefe, Gilda Pender) finished in 4th. " BBO gave a 5th Prize and it went to Irish team **Gannon** (Elva Gannon, Mary Trench, Miriam McConville, Valerie Hand).

Winning French Team

Sylvie Willard is the most titled female French player holding three World titles and six European titles.

Elisabeth Hugon World champion (Venice cup) 2015 Runner-up in 2001.

Danièle Avon holds several medals from European Team Championships.

Donatella Halfon the EBL Qualifier was first major championship.

Margaux Kurek-Beaulieu has been playing for the French U26 women for three years.

Clara Bouton has just started playing with Margaux in youth teams. She also won the online PCU Trophy (a bridge tournament for European students) with her team during the 2021 lockdown.

EBL WOMEN'S SERIES DECEMBER 29, 2021

BY MARK HORTON BRIDGE RAMA N°21

The Daily Bridgerama
LATEST NEWS

ALL THE HOT NEWS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S TEAM TOURNAMENT **KEEP UP TO DATE TRIPLE F ALT POINT RACE**

TOP OF THE TREE

BBO marked the end of the year by hosting and sponsoring an International Women's team tournament organised by the EBL Women's Committee. **France** (Donatella Halfon, Sylvie Willard, Danièle Avon, Babeth Hugon, Clara Bouton & Margaux Kurek-Beaulieu) finished 7 VP clear of **Turkey** (Dilek Yavas, Serap Kuranoglu, Ozlem Kandolu, Eren Ozan, Irem Ozbay & Hatice Ozgur) with **Norway** (Liv Marit Grude, Bodil Oigarden, Åse Langeland, Gunn Helness, Lisbeth Glærum & Ida Wennewold) a further 2 VP behind.

THE STARS WERE SHINING BRIGHTLY

100 stars from all over the world supported Norway's junior bridge players by participating in a Pro/Am tournament organised by Kurt-Ove Thomassen on 2 January. The online auction resulted in these 24 players contesting the Super final alongside their buyers:

LAUGHTER – THE BEST MEDICINE

Top Norwegian Junior Sofie Sjødal posted on Bridge Winners that following a suggestion from the Dutch Bridge Federation the Norwegian Bridge Federation decided to make a short film about ethics, which featured Boye Brogeland as one of the players. The film is in Norwegian, but has English subtitles. You will find it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smOG-ungzyk> It is well worth watching – see if you

can count the number of mistakes – a tip from Sofie – there are more than you think!

TRIPLE F RACE

Each individual player participating in any Alt event in 2021 was automatically included in the Triple F Alt Point Race sponsored by the Dutch Company Triple F Logistics. When the season concluded at the end of December, the leaders were rewarded with cash prizes:

	Points	Euro
David Gold	4745	€1000
Jacek Kalita	4650	€500
Michal Nowosadzki	4650	€500
Andrew Black	4295	€100
Andrew McIntosh	4295	€100
Gunnar Hallberg	4295	€100
Simon Hult	4295	€100
Thomas Paske	4295	€100

THE CENTURION

Legendary Australian player, writer and analyst Tim Bourke reported that Len Dixon celebrated his 100th birthday on 27 December. Len has been the bridge correspondent of the *Canberra Times* for more than 53 years, his first article appearing on 17 October 1968.

LEN DIXON COMPETING AT THE AUSTRALIAN SUMMER FESTIVAL – THE OLDEST VERSUS THE YOUNGEST!

DON'T HESITATE TO CONTACT US AT: BRIDGERAMA@LEBRIDGEUR.COM

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RealBridge

RealBridge was the platform chosen by the players for the February series. Nine teams played, seven of which will play Venice Cup next month. As is the norm, the RealBridge team of Shireen Mohandes and Andy Bowles, gave this event the same time and support as if it were a major championship. TDs were Vigfús Pálsson and Ken Johnston both of whom were excellent.

This Round Robin played over two days with 96 boards had Norway in the lead after Day 1 followed closely by Turkey and Germany lay third. In the final result Turkey fell away to fourth, Germany with a strong performance overtook Norway to win the event, Norway was second, Ireland third.



Ida Wennevold and Gunn Helness

Norway's Gunn Helness and Ida Wennevold will take the place of Liv Marit Grude and Bodil Øygarden for the Venice Cup. Gunn and Ida have represented Norway many times before

As many as 24 teams have taken part in twice monthly Practice matches; the EBL Series allows teams to play against one another competitively, supplementing the Practice matches. Both are tools, that the EBL Women's Committee have in place, to assist women's teams as they prepare for international championships.



EBL WOMEN'S SERIES FEBRUARY 19-20, 22

1st Germany



Mieke Plath, Karin WENNING, Karin Wenning
Susanne Kriftner, Richard Bley(NPC), Gisela Smykalla
Ingrid Gromann, Annaig Della Monta

2nd Norway



Ann Karin Fuglestad, Marianne Harding, Gunn Helness
Torild Heskje, Jon-Egil Furunes(Coach)
Anne-Lill Hellemann, Gunn Tove Vist, Ida Wennevold

3rd Ireland



Joan Kenny, Teresa Rigney, Diane Greenwood
Jeannie Fitzgerald, Gilda Pender, Rebecca O'Keeffe Brown

PLAYERS for VENICE CUP



Richard Bley
(NPC Venice Cup)



Julius Linde
(Co-ordinator EBL Women's
Practice Matches and Series)

GERMANY 1st EBL WOMEN'S SERIES FEB' 22

2021 saw a new German women's team. In addition to **Ingrid Gromann & Karin Wenning**, who as regular members of the women's team form a solid partnership with a lot of international experience, two new partnerships made their debut.

Mieke Plath & Susanne Kriftner: Mieke just started on the international scene and rapidly built a strong partnership with Susanne who has been a regular member of the women's team in the last years.

Gisela Smykalla & Annaig Della Monta complete the team. They played at different times with different partners in the women's team and made a new start together.

Last but not least, our new captain **Richard Bley**, brought along welcome optimism and plenty of motivation in addition to his organizational skills.

The fact that we were able to prepare well was to a large extent thanks to **Julius Linde**, who coordinated several online trainings for us and took our wishes and busy schedules into consideration. Besides the training with other German teams, we especially enjoyed the EBL women's games and Leif Stabell's Sunday training with Norway and South Africa.

After months of playing bridge exclusively online, it was a great feeling to finally come together as a team in Berlin and play the World Championship qualifier. After four intense days, including a nerve breaking last day, we unfortunately missed qualification at the very last moment.

But as we say in German: *"Die Hoffnung stirbt zuletzt"* (**While there's life, there's hope**). Shortly after the tournament we heard rumours that due to the unclear pandemic situation not all qualified teams could participate in the Venice Cup. So, we kept on hoping that there still would be a call from the WBF and we would be asked to go to Italy ... And indeed, the good news finally reached us!

For final preparation, the German Bridge Association is organizing a training weekend, which will give us an opportunity to fine-tune the system once again and to strengthen the team. For Gisela and Annaig, it will be the first time they sit together at the same table after 15 months of online bridge.

Our ambition for Salsomaggiore? First of all to have fun, enjoy the game with real cards and real players and meet again our international bridge friends. Right now, we are finding ourselves in an underdog position and profiting a lot from tailwinds and a good run. We are very much looking forward to Salsomaggiore!

Annaig Della Monta and Mieke Plath

Mark writes



Mark is Editor of the monthly magazine Bridgerama US but he somehow finds time to write the odd bridge book – his latest two, *Misdefend These Hands with Me* and *Misbid These Hands with Me* having recently been published by Master Point Press. He has just been appointed Editor of the book on the upcoming World Championships.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ A 9 6			
♥ 9 3			
♦ A Q 10 9 3			
♣ K Q 9			
♠ 10 7 3	♠ Q 8 2		
♥ Q 8	♥ K J 10 7 5 2		
♦ 8 7 4 2	♦ 6		
♣ A 6 5 4	♣ 8 7 3		
	♠ K J 5 4		
	♥ A 6 4		
	♦ K J 5		
	♣ J 10 2		

David Burn
 Nicola Smith
 Gillian Fawcett
 Sally Brock
 Fiona Brown
 Catherine Drapier
 Nevena Senior

The times they are a-Changin

Mark Horton

Everyone is looking forward to the resumption of major face-to-face events as we get ever closer to the upcoming World Championships in Salsomaggiore in March. They will be followed by the return of the European Championships in Funchal in June before the show moves on to Wroclaw at the end of August and the second World Championship of the year.

In Italy England will be one of the favourites for the Venice Cup, their team including household names Nicola Smith, Sally Brock, Fiona Brown and Nevena Senior. However, following the completion of England's trials, the team for Funchal has a different look, as mesdames Smith, Brock and Brown all failed to qualify, Nevena Senior and Catherine Draper being the only 'survivors' from the team appearing in the World Championships.

Those two are joined by established stars Anne Rosen and Catherine Seale and newcomers, Ewa Wieczorek & Ewa Kater.

Here are a couple of deals from the trials:

Board 11.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Smith	Senior	Leslie	Rosen
—	—	—	1♣
Pass	1♦	2♥	Dble*
Pass	3♥	Dble	3NT
Pass	4NT	Pass	6♦
All Pass			

South's double on the second round led to the poor slam. As you can see, declarer needs a lucky position in spades to be able to dispose of the losing heart.

It reminded me of Napoleon's oft quoted, 'I know he's a good General, but is he lucky?'

England's Venice Cup team



Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ K Q J 5 4	
♥ K 7 2	
♦ 2	
♣ Q 6 4 2	
♠ A 9 3	♠ 10 8 7
♥ Q 10 9 4 3	♥ A J
♦ Q 4	♦ A J 8
♣ K 7 5	♣ A J 10 9 3
♠ 6 2	
♥ 8 6 5	
♦ K 10 9 7 6 5 3	
♣ 8	

Newcomers



Ewa Kater



Ewa Wiczorek

- Nevena Senior
- Catherine Drapier
- Ewa Wiczorek
- Ewa Kater
- Anne Rosen
- Catherine Seale

Board 1.

West	North	East	South
Kater	Green	Wiczorek	Rampton
—	1♠	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♠*	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

North led the ♠K and declarer ducked, won the next spade, and played a heart to the jack. When it held, she cashed the ace and now had to turn her attention to the club suit. She came to hand with the king and then took the finesse. The good news was that it worked; the bad news that South pitched the ♦3. Declarer tried cashing the ♦A, but North's diamond was not the one she was hoping to see. She exited with a spade, but North won and cashed out for one down.

Have you spotted how declarer could have given herself a much better chance?

At trick three she can play the ♥Q. Assuming it holds she remains in hand and can now play a club to the jack. As the cards lie that will result in an easy overtrick. Having missed that, when returning to hand with the ♣K declarer must retain dummy's three! The fall of South's eight means that declarer can run the seven on the next round and then repeat the finesse which gets her up to nine tricks.

It will be exciting to see how this amalgam of old and new fares in Funchal – perhaps the answer lies in these lines penned by Bob Dylan:

*Come writers and critics who prophesize with your pen
 And keep your eyes wide, the chance won't come again
 And don't speak too soon, for the wheel's still in spin
 And there's no tellin' who that it's namin'
 For the loser now will be later to win
 For the times they are a-changing.*

England's team for 55th European National Team Championships



EBL TEAMS

SWEDEN

Kathrine BERTHEAU
Sanna CLEMENTSSON
Louise HALLQVIST
Ylva JOHANSSON
Jessica LARSSON
Emma OVELIUS
Linnea EDLUND

POLAND

Cathy BALDYSZ
Sophia BALDYSZ
Katarzyna DUFRAT
Danuta KAZMUCHA
Anna SARNIAK
Joanna ZALEWSKA
Miroslaw CICHOCKI

TURKEY

Ozlem KANDOLU
Serap KURANOGLU
Eren OZAN
Irem OZBAY)
Hatice OZGUR
Dilek YAVAS
Belis ATALAY
Halil ATALAY

FRANCE

Danielle AVON
Muriel CLEMENT
Sylvie GOMBERT
Donatella HALFON
Elisabeth HUGON
Anne-Frederique LEVY
Wilfried LIBBRECHT

HUNGARY

Brigitta FISCHER
Orsolya HEGEDUS
Hanka LAJOS
Villo SZUCS
Eszter TICHY
Agnes ZALAI
Peter TALYIGAS

ENGLAND

Sally BROCK
Fiona BROWN
Catherine DRAPER
Gillian FAWCETT
Nevena SENIOR
Nicola SMITH
David BURN

SPAIN

Laura CASTELLS
Marina CASTELLS
Paula DE LORENZO
Margarita FERNANDEZ
Maria Eugenia HERNANDEZ
Montserrat MESTRES
Jaime PONS

EBL TEAMS FOR VENICE CUP 2022



EBL TEAMS

Sweden, Poland, Turkey, France, Hungary,
England, Spain
Italy, Norway, Germany, Denmark, Belgium
and Portugal

45TH WORLD 2021 BRIDGE TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Salsomaggiore Terme, Italy • 27 March - 9 April 2022



ITALY

Monica AGHEMO
 Monica BURATTI
 Margherita CHAVARRIA
 Simonetta PAOLUZI
 Francesca PISCITELLI
 Ilaria SACCAVINI
 Valerio GIUBILO

NORWAY

Ann Karin FUGLESTAD
 Marianne HARDING
 Gunn HELNESS
 Torild HESKJE
 Gunn Tove VIST
 Ida WENNEVOLD
 Anne-Lill HELLEMANN
 Jon-Egil FURUNES

GERMANY

Annaig DELLA MONTA
 Ingrid GROMANN
 Susanne KRIFTNER
 Mieke PLATH
 Gisela SMYKALLA
 Karin WENNING
 Richard BLEY

DENMARK

Dorte Lilleborg BILDE
 Lone BILDE
 Anita BUUS THOMSEN
 Charlotte KOCH-PALMUND
 Helle RASMUSSEN
 Charlotte KOCH-PALMUND
 Peter WESTRUP

BELGIUM

Sylvie CAUWELS
 Antonella COUTEAUX
 Marie-Francoise STAS
 Yael TOPIOL
 Burcu USKUP
 Caroline VANDENBOSSCHE
 Herve HUNTZ

PORTUGAL

Ana DE MAGALHAES PEREIRA
 Mariana LEITAO
 Anabela OLIVEIRA
 Rita RUSSO
 Alvaro CHAVES ROSA

THE VENICE CUP

Like the Bermuda Bowl, the **Venice Cup** was born out of a challenge match between the women's team from Italy representing Europe and a United States women's team and took the name from the City of Venice where the first edition was held in 1974 and which provided the prestigious trophy awarded to the winners of the World Championship for Women's Teams. The Italian Bridge Federation generously provides the replicas for the winners on each occasion. This

contest is of more recent origin than the Bermuda Bowl, but in other respects the development of the two competitions has been remarkably similar.

(From WBF Website)

The Venice Cup

USA	1974	1976	1978	1987	1989	1991	1993	1997	2003	2007	2013	11
France	2005	2011	2015	3								
Germany	1995	2001	2									
Great Britain	1981	1985	2									
China	2009	2017	2									
Netherlands	2000	1										
Sweden	2019	1										

(From WBF Website)

WINNERS WUHAN, CHINA 2019

1. SWEDEN: Kathrine Bertheau, Sanna Clementsson, Ida Gronqvist, Jessica Larsson, Emma Ovelius, Cecilia Rimstedt, Kenneth Borin (npc), Carina Wademark (coach).

2. CHINA: Yan Liu, Yan Lu, Qi Shen, Nan Wang, Wen Fei Wang, Xiaoxue Zuo, Xiaojing Wang (npc), Xiaojing Wang (coach).

3. ENGLAND: Heather Dhondy, Catherine Draper, Gillian Fawcett, Nevena Senior, Nicola Smith, Yvonne Wiseman, David Gold (npc), David Burn (coach).

Portuguese Women's Team



Alvaro Chaves Rosa (NPC)

Alvaro, the team's NPC, has been the key coordinator of the Portuguese high-competition programme since 2013, arranging regular online training matches, against both other Portuguese teams and top/national teams from other European countries.



Antonio Palma (Coach)

The team has been very fortunate to have Antonio as coach. A regular member of the Portuguese Open Team in recent years, he is currently the top ranking Portuguese player, and has been giving invaluable, regular lessons to the players since 2019.

PORTUGAL FOR VENICE CUP – BUT FIRST – THEIR FUNDRAISER

The invitation – received in February – to participate in this year's Venice Cup, as the 24th team in the competition, came as a most welcome surprise to the team. The Portuguese Bridge Federation is unfortunately not in a position to fund this participation, due to pre-existing commitments with the organisation and participation in international events (including the European Championships in Funchal). However, the team is committed to finding alternative ways to finance its participation. This includes an online fundraising tournament – see below for details.

Online Fundraising Tournament

- Matchpoint pairs tournament, in a single session of 20 boards, to be held on **RealBridge** on **Sunday, March 6th**, at **7:30 PM UTC (8:30 PM CET / 2:30 PM EST)**.
- There is no fixed registration fee. The registration fees will revert to the financing of the team's participation.
- For registration please contact rucapalma@gmail.com.
- Payment of the registration fees/donations is done online through the GoFundMe platform, via this link: <https://gofund.me/7fb34a15>
- Prize for the winning pair: registration for this year's Madeira Open Festival.

– Help the Portuguese Women's Team



The Portuguese Women's Team: Anabela Oliveira, Ana de Magalhaes Pereira, Rita Russo and Mariana Leitao



Anabela and Ana are two of the most experienced women players in Portugal. They have represented Portugal in several EBL Women's championships, since 1990. Having played together for several years in the past, they initially enrolled in the Portuguese high-level programme with different partners, but re-established their partnership in 2019.



Anabela Oliveira and Ana de Magalhaes Pereira

Mariana and Rita have been playing together for more than 10 years, and have participated in the Portuguese high-level programme continuously since 2013. They have been members of the Portuguese Women's Team since 2018.



Mariana Leitao and Rita Russo

Alvaro Chaves Rosa

THE PLAYERS

In 2021, our team was faced with the challenge of having to play as a 4-person team in the EBL Qualifier for the 2022 Venice Cup. The team started well, and for a big part of the competition remained in contention for a qualifying place. In the final rounds, however, the effort of playing all the matches took its toll, and some lapses of concentration brought the team down to 13th place.

Since then, the team remains strongly engaged in the Portuguese high-competition programme, in preparation for the European National Teams Championships in June this year.

GOOD NEWS CAME



Lone Bilde writes:

Our women's team has been practicing online since the first Covid cases were found in 2019. To date, one of our pairs has never played together in a live international tournament, although they do have thousands of online boards "in their legs". So, the longing to play international live bridge again is huge among all players.

As it turned out, the "weather gods" were not exactly on our side at the European online Qualifier tournament last summer. To put it mildly, it "rained" with accidents: One player had to go to work, so we played four-handed during the first days. Under normal circumstances this is fine, but already before the first match, one of the four remaining players fell ill and had to play anyway, something which was neither pleasant for her, nor optimal. On top of this, I managed to slip in an oil pool, fell on concrete and broke my elbow with a subsequent long night's stay at the hospital. We did what we could under those difficult circumstances, with a resulting 11th seat in the EBL qualifier. Need I say that we got severe bridge blues from that? More than two years of severe online practice and no qualification!

DENMARK IN VENICE CUP



**Helle Rasmussen, Peter Westrup(Coach)
Trine Bilde, Lone Bilde, Dorte Cilleborg Bilde
Charlotte Koch-Palmund (PC), Anita Buus Thomsen**

Good News came!

However, life is peculiar sometimes. Someone apparently heard our woes, as out of the blue, we received an invitation from the WBF to play at the Venice Cup 2022 anyway.

Participating in a world championship must be the highest goal of any sportsman and for a female bridge player, the Venice Cup is indeed the highest star to reach for. Therefore, we are thrilled that our Bridge Federation can find the funds to send us to Salso, that our workplaces will allow us to take leave on such a short notice, and that our patient kins will (again) take care of children, dogs, cats, hens, plants, houses and farms, while we are away.

All players have previous Venice Cup experience: Dorte Cilleborg Bilde, Trine Bilde and Charlotte Koch-Palmund won the bronze medal in Bermuda in 2000. Anita Buus Thomsen played in Shanghai (2007) with Helle Rasmussen who played two recent Venice Cups with me: 2019 (Wuhan) and Chennai (2015) where we lost the quarterfinal to the later gold medallists of France.

We are looking forward to a great bridge experience in Salso!

Lone Bilde, Denmark

TEAM BELGIUM



Hervé Huntz introduces Team Belgium.

'I am very proud to be captain of the Ladies along with our two coaches: Hans Vergoed and Steve De Roos. Normally Gunther Dauwe would be the Captain but he will play for the Mixed team. *Thanks Gunther for asking me to be Captain.*

The team will do their best and it will be a rich experience for all.'



BELGIUM INVITED TO PLAY VENICE CUP



Sylvie Cauwels, Marie-Françoise Stas, Hervé Huntz
Burcu Uksup, Antonella Couteaux
Caroline Vandebossche, Antonella Couteaux

Antonella Couteaux:

I started to play bridge in my youth in Italy. I joined Belgian Competition after marrying a Belgian citizen.

I had the opportunity to win a few titles in Belgium (Women's Pairs and Mixed) and I have participated 3 times in European championships. However, the Venice Cup (World Championships) in Salsomaggiore is the best gift for my 60th birthday.

I hope to be able to continue to play in a good atmosphere and I am very lucky to be in a super nice team and have a great coach.

Yael Topiol:

I was born in 1970 in Antwerp, Belgium.

I have had the opportunity to play a few times for the EC (Women Teams)

And this has always been a thrilling experience. Not only for playing bridge at the top level but most of all for meeting people from all over Europe.

Playing the Venice cup is a dream that comes true. I'll do my very best for the team when representing my country.



Caroline Vandenbossche:

I started playing bridge at 27 and was immediately hooked. I had the chance to learn and play bridge with a lot of talented players, since reading books about bridge has the effect of a sleeping pill on me. I accepted turbulent character of some of them to improve my skills.

I participated in various international championships (ladies and mixed) and I adore the atmosphere. To get the opportunity to participate in the Venice Cup with a fun and fighting team is a grail I have the chance to earn at 63 years. Here we go, the first week will certainly be rich in emotions. I will enjoy every moment of it with teammates and with our captain who is none other than my husband!



Marie-Françoise Stas:

I am 63. I was a mathematics professor and have played bridge for 30 years.

I live near Liege and I like walking in the country and drinking some beers with friend.



Burcu Uksup:

I started to play cards at a young age when attending my university in Ankara (Turkey) and was selected for championships in Bulgaria 2011, Denmark 2012, Poland 2013 and Turkey in 2014.

In 2015 I decided to apply for a master program in Antwerp, Belgium and I dated Steve De Roos (bridge player of the Open team) and then married him in 2019, we have just had a son, Oscar !

In 2018 I completed my studies and started to work in Belgium and participate in the Belgian Honour Competitions.

In 2021 I played for the Belgian women's team for the first time (EBL online and EBL qualifier)



Sylvie Cauwels:

Born in Brugge, as known as the Venice of the North

I started to play bridge at university and played in Ostende for the Belgian women's team.



Gunther Dauwe:

Team Coach and Co-ordinator of EBL Women's Practice matches and EBL Women's Series.

Dream Team



Tuna Elmas writes:



Let me introduce you to my team mates, adding the fact that I am really proud being part of this Mixed Team and I love all of them! First of all, our captain and also my teacher Suleyman Kolata.



A Dream Come True for Turkish Woman Tuna Almas

"DREAM "is the name of my Turkish Mixed National Team Our team's name "Dream" is our friend Tolga's daughter's name originally. Our "dreams" have turned out to be reality in the end. It is a strong belief that dreams become true when you put your mind into them. In fact, two years ago, we were runners-up in the trials to select our national Mixed team. We have been informed that the winning team is not able to attend the World Championship in Salsomaggiore and so we have been invited by our Federation to take their place. It is a great honour for all of us and altogether and immediately we have accepted the invitation to play Mixed Worlds.

DREAM TEAM



Kolata Suleyman:

I was born in Karaman,1963. I have been playing bridge for 37 years and have been working professionally and tutoring since 1994. I have been a national player many times in different categories winning many firsts in our Federation's tournaments. Once we got 7th position in the teams' category of an EBL Championship and at various times the team has been in 7th, 9th or 11th place and in the upper teams' rankings. I have got 4th place in US the Blue Ribbon Pairs and 2nd place in the Chairman's Cup; 1st place in Israel and 3rd place in the BAM in Monaco. My last Open partner was Ismail Kandemir and my mixed partner is Selen Buke Akdas.

Selen Buke Akdas:

I was born in 1995 in Ankara. I've been playing bridge since 2014. I have been working as a financial specialist. Besides my achievements in Turkey, I have participated in the 26th European Youth Team Championships, Samorin 2017 - Girls Teams (rank 6th) and, 17th World Youth Teams Championships Wujang 2018 - Girls Teams (rank 5th). My regular mixed partner is Suleyman Kolata.



Tolga Ozbay:

I was born in Konya in 1972.

I started playing bridge in 1988. I was able to wear our national uniform in Youth, Open and Mixed categories. Besides many of my first rank prizes in Turkey, I also had the chance to be the captain and coach of the Women and Mixed teams. For about 15 years, I have been working as a professional and also have been co-ordinating a bridge club in Turkey.



Ebru Atesy:

I was born on 16th December, 1978 in Heybeliada, İstanbul. I have been playing bridge since 2002. I have had many degrees and first rankings in Turkey, at several Championships in Women's Teams. In 2014 I played in the team which came 7th in the European Teams Competition. I have only once been a national player. My mixed partner for many years is Tolga. I have been working in a foreign company, as a VP of Human Resources.



Berk Basaran:

I was born in İstanbul in 1979.

I am a mechanical engineer with an MBA. Since 2001 I have been a professional, teaching and also managing a bridge club. I have won many tournaments in first prize in Turkey and have a high ranking. By the way I achieved 4th place in a World Intercollegiate tournament, then 9th twice in transnational competitions. At the last transnational pairs tournament together with my partner Tuna Elmas we won the EBL Cup.



Tuna Elmas:

Ankara, 1968. Graduate of University of Bosphorus in English Language and Literature. I started playing bridge in the millennium year, 2000. My parents were playing the game and then I started. I was a champion many times in Turkey in the Women's Category. I had high finishes in many pairs events also. I got 10th place in Wien Bridge Festival, Austria (Women Pairs) and 2nd place in Montecatini, Italy (EBL tournament/IMP pairs)

I had the honour and tasted the pleasure of winning the EBL Cup of the Transnational Pairs Event, together with my good friend and longtime partner, dear Berk. Recently I also had the chance to be the coach and the captain of Turkish National Women's Team.

Tuna concludes:

The truth of "teamwork" is that; it is always at the heart of great achievement especially, when you are in IMP competition. So, we have been practicing and preparing ourselves to reach our goals in this important task of ours.

I want to end my writing with a saying of Hellen Keller;
"Alone, we can do so little, together we can do so much"
 Inspired by this motto our team is both excited and willing to compete very well. As a result, we have been working hard altogether for the upcoming World Championship and looking forward to be in Salsomaggiore, Italy soon.

Tuna Elmas

**SAMANTHA PUNCH
REPORTS
BAMSA Conference
2021: Bridging
Academia, Policy and
Practice**



Samantha, well known international player, is Professor of Sociology at the University of Stirling, where she has been working to establish the Sociology of Bridge as a new research field. This has included 52 in-depth interviews with top players and a project (with English Bridge Education and Development) on wellbeing, healthy ageing and bridge. In 2019 Samantha launched the global Keep Bridge Alive (KBA) campaign and organised a successful BAMSA conference in June 2021.

Samantha reports:



Bridge: A MindSport For All
Connects People, Challenges Minds

Building a More Inclusive Community

Bridge: A MindSport for All (BAMSA) was invited to present a proposal at the EBL NBO Seminar regarding the development of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy. Gender issues and inequalities within the bridge community are widely known and acknowledged but not by everyone. In particular, difference of opinion resides in what should be done to address gender inequalities and sexism.

Sexism within other sports is widely recognised and addressed, and bridge is lagging behind other competitive arenas in proactively engaging with and tackling everyday sexism and inappropriate remarks made at the bridge table (and within the wider bridge world). Other social inequalities also need to be addressed to ensure equality, inclusivity and fairness for all within the bridge community.

At the 'Bridging Academia, Policy and Practice' conference in June (hosted by BAMSA), the gender discussion panel argued that if meaningful change was to occur, it should be policy-driven. Cheating has been addressed by IBOs and NBOs (international and national bridge organisations) with new policies and procedures recently developed. The outcome of the BAMSA gender research and conference is that it is now time for sexism and other social inequalities to be taken seriously.

What should be done to enable bridge to be a more welcoming and safe environment for people of all social groups, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality and disability? As well as the development of an Inclusivity Policy and awareness-raising, measures may also include the possibility of unconscious bias training for TDs, NPCs, coaches, selection committees etc.

As a result of the presentation, it is hoped that the EBL will develop a template for an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy that can be adapted by all NBOs. If you have expertise in this area and would like to help, please contact Sam at s.v.punch@stir.ac.uk

bridgemindsport.org @bridgemindsport

Conference: <https://bridgemindsport.org/bridging-academia-policy-practice-conference/>

For more information see:

[Gender, Sexism and Bridge](#) session at the BAMSAs Conference - recording of gender panel discussion is at the top of the webpage, the **[Bridging Brains video](#)** discusses neurosexism.

Research evidence on everyday sexism within all levels of the bridge community see:

Rogers, A., Snellgrove, M.L. & Punch, S. (2021) **[Bridging Sexism: Gender Inequality at and away from the Bridge Table](#)**, BAMSAs Working Paper 2, Stirling: University of Stirling.

Academic paper about the gender research:

Punch, S. and Rogers, A. (2021) **['Building, not Burning Bridges in Research: Insider/Outsider Dilemmas and Engaging with the Bridge Community,'](#)** *Journal of Leisure Research*,

Other BAMSAs Publications

The papers can be accessed at: <https://bridgemindsport.org/home/research/bridging-minds/>

Russell, Z., Punch, S. and McIntosh, I. (2022) **['Blurring the Boundaries Between Leisure and Work: Professionals as Devotees in the Mind-Sport Bridge,'](#)** *International Journal of the Sociology of Leisure*,

Punch, S., Russell, Z. and Graham, E. (2021) **['Serious Leisure Experience in a Dyadic Pursuit: Elite Player Motivations and Participation in Tournament Bridge,'](#)** *Leisure Studies*,

Punch, S. (2021) *Bridge at the Top: Behind the Screens*, Toronto: Master Point Press.

For further updates please follow *Bridge: A MindSport for All* on Facebook, twitter (@bridgemindsport) or subscribe to the BAMSAs Bulletins (see bridgemindsport.org).

11th EBL NBO Officers' Seminar Larnaca, Cyprus, Jan'22



L-R WBF President Giannarigo Rona, EBL President Jan Kamras
EBL Treasurer Eric Laurant, EBU Chair Ian Payn



Samantha Punch's Presentation



BAMSAs Project Lead: Professor Samantha Punch

Email: bamsa@stir.ac.uk

bridgemindsport.org



UNIVERSITY of STIRLING





Jan Kamras
(EBL President)

Mieke Plath & Annaïg Della Monta
(Players – Germany)

Mark Horton
(Editor Bridgerama US and Editor of the book on the upcoming World Championships)

Alvaro Charles Rosa
(NPC Portugal)

Lone Bilde
(Player Denmark)

Hervé Huntz
(NPC Belgium)

Tuna Elmas
(Turkey)

Samantha Punch
(BAMSA)

Miguel Teixeira
(Madeira photos courtesy of European Championships local Organiser, Miguel)

Sevinç Atay
(EBL Women's Committee)



Save the Date

EBL NATIONAL WOMEN/SENIOR PAIRS
SAVOY PALACE HOTEL
FUNCHAL, MADEIRA ISLAND
JUNE 12th to 15th 2022

Message from Sevinç Atay



Dear Bridge players,

At last, we have the possibility to return to our live bridge events. The Venice Cup days which will take place in Salsomaggiore are getting close. I am sure that the teams competing in this event are preparing themselves at full speed.

EBL Women's Committee member Mary Kelly Rogers and the different national women's bridge coordinators have had an active programme for practicing online and we hope this has been useful.

The recent EBL Women's Series Online of December 29th and February 19th and 20th have been very successful and I congratulate the winners and the teams that participated.

I wish the best success to teams that will participate in Venice Cup and I thank Mary Kelly Rogers for all her work and support to our events.

Finally, I look forward to meeting you all at the **EBL National Women's Pairs** which take place at the **Savoy Palace hotel, Funchal, Madeira on 12th to 15th June 2022** in the days before the EBL Team Championships.

Sevinç Atay
Chair, EBL Women's Committee



EBL NATIONAL WOMEN/SENIOR PAIRS IN BEAUTIFUL MADEIRA ISLAND

Funchal is the capital city of Portugal's Madeira archipelago. It's backed by hills, and known for its harbor, gardens and Madeira wine cellars. The centuries-old Funchal Cathedral, which mixes Gothic and Romanesque styles, is notable for its carved wooden ceiling. Fronting the harbor is the São Tiago Fortress, built in the 1600s. It now houses the Contemporary Art Museum, with a large collection of Portuguese works. — Google