



## CACBF PRESIDENT'S REPORT

to the Executive Council of World Bridge Federation  
Wuhan, China, September 2019



CACBF President, Douglas "Kip" Rotchell, front row third left with WBF Executive Committee

### The Status of Bridge in our Countries

Zone 5 is one of the smallest, if not the smallest, by membership of the eight zones. Like the other small zones, we too are consistently having to overcome obstacles, especially financial obstacles, and this meeting of the Executive Council is the only opportunity where our plight can be discussed. So, forgive me for cutting to the chase!

#### Participation or Income

We, the WBF, have to decide whether participation takes preference to income. Being as widespread as we are (over 2.75 million km<sup>2</sup> of Caribbean Sea), we find ourselves geographically disadvantaged in as much as movement within the region is horrendously expensive for all NBOs. In many cases it is cheaper to fly from the islands to North America than it is to fly inter island. Travelling between Central America and the wider Caribbean is much the same cost wise. This makes the movement between our NBOs cost prohibitive. It is not possible to move screens, bidding boxes, tables and other materials around the region without incurring great expense far beyond our means.

Notwithstanding this, Zone 5 has three teams in Wuhan, one each in the Bermuda, the Venice and the Mixed Teams. The cost of these three teams represents 35% of our finances but while expensive we believe in participation wherever possible. It should be noted also that each player had to cover several thousands of dollars of their own money to make the trip.

As such I would like to appeal to the Board that consideration be made to ease the financial commitment required to attend WBF tournaments around the world. One suggestion I respectfully offer is that the entry fee for the Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup,

D'Orsi and the newly named Wuhan Mixed Teams be discounted by 50%. In recognition of this courtesy, any of my NBOs attending these games would not automatically be entitled to play in the Transnational Teams without paying an entry fee of some sort.

#### NBO Update

At our Zonal Championships held last May in Costa Rica and having been approached by the representatives from the Cuban Bridge Association (CBA), the Board awarded the hosting of the 2021 CACBF Championships to Cuba. However, 10 weeks later we were informed that the President of the CBA, 84-year-old Ms. Emma Castro (Fidel's Sister) had decided not to continue an active role in the CBA and preferred to play socially. The knock-on effect of her decision is the collapse of the CBA and ultimately a decision was made by them that they could no longer host the Zonal Championships in 2021. It is hoped that when they have restructured their NBO they will be back in the fold again.

With this unexpected news I contacted all my NBOs requesting any of them that might be interested in hosting and I am pleased to say that three of them have stepped up and are prepared to host in 2021. The merits of each application will be considered, and an announcement will be made by the end of the first week of October.

On a positive note Suriname has rejoined CACBF and we look forward to its participation moving forward.

#### Bridge Youth Development

Several of our NBOs are aggressively encouraging our youth to participate in classes. In Barbados we are visiting several schools with the intention of creating a small local tournament for students which we hope would lead to a Zonal Tournament. This effort is also being tested in other NBOs around the region and I hope to be able to report its success the next time we meet.

#### Regional Tournaments

Barbados has held its Sun, Sea and Slams tournament every year since 1990. Held in February, this small tournament has grown and next year we are expecting in excess of 70 tables to be in play, making it the largest annual tournament in the Zone. Located on the south coast of the island we have already filled the hotel of its 106 rooms, and we are now making a dent in its sister hotel opposite with 20 rooms already booked.

### The Bermuda Bowl 2025

I have firm instructions from Barbados to insist, not request, that my NBO in Bermuda host the Bowl in 2025 to mark the 75th Anniversary of its inception. Needless to say, I will rise to the occasion and talk with them over the next few weeks.

In closing, I would like to thank you all for being so kind to the "New Kid o The Block"! It has truly been a pleasure to meet you all and I look forward to working with you in the future. Should any of you be tempted to visit our Gem in the Caribbean I can think of no better place to enjoy our Sun, Sea and Sand in a place famous for its flying fish and whistling frogs than Barbados. Even our capital city should be inviting..... Bridgetown!

*Douglas "Kip" Rotshell*

### **TEAM CACBF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS RESULTS**



Team CACBF played bravely at the 44<sup>th</sup> Championships in China. Guadeloupe finished 23<sup>rd</sup> of 24 in the Bermuda Bowl, Trinidad and Tobago 24<sup>th</sup> of 24 in the Venice Cup and Barbados won four out of 23<sup>r</sup> matches to finish 22<sup>nd</sup> of 24.

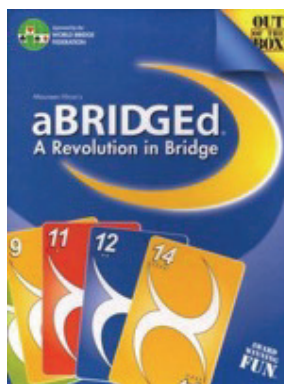
According to Barbados Captain, Dave Blackman, "We were outplayed in all aspects of the game, and will need to have a completely new view on the development of bridge if we wish to be competitive at the highest level."

### **PANAMA TO HOST CACBF 2021 CHAMPIONSHIPS**



The 2021 CACBF Championship Games will be held in Panama City, Panama from 7th to 15th May. The venue is Las Americas Golden Tower, a 5-star hotel in prime location.

### **ABRIDGED, ANYONE?**



Fifteen ago, British International player Maureen Hiron set out to create a faster, funkier version of our game to bring younger players flocking to the green baize.

Maureen use to run a school bridge league in London catering to 100 schools that shrank to just six by 2004.

According to Maureen, "What we have to say is that if young people aren't playing the game, it's our fault. We've made the game too hard."

She wanted young players, so she created **Abridged**, a simplified version of bridge that gets rid altogether of bidding - the most complex part of the game. To make matters even simpler, the game has colours, not suits. Face cards have been replaced by the numbers 11, 12, 13 and 14. First released in 2006, Abridged was huge hit in America with an initial sell-out run.

Abridged was welcomed by Bill Gates and Warren Buffett - themselves million-dollar investors in youth bridge schemes - and by the American Contract Bridge League.

#### How 'Abridged' differs

Learning time 20 minutes. Instead of using a conventional pack of cards, there is a special Abridged pack: consisting of red, green, yellow and blue "suits". There are also no face cards in an Abridged pack - the ace, king, queen and jack have been replaced by 14, 13, 12 and 11. Each of those replaced cards also has a number of "pips" on it - four for 14, one for 11 - so that players can calculate their own hand's strength.

The major difference between bridge and Abridged comes at the first stage. In Abridged, there is no bidding. The contract is calculated by a different method. Going around the table, players first state their hand strength, and then state their colour strength (how many of the most numerous colour you are holding). The team with the highest number of points immediately becomes the declaring team and must estimate how many tricks he thinks his partnership can win. A contract has been arrived at, and play can start.

Perhaps a Merry Christmas present for our teenagers?

