

EUROPEAN BRIDGE LEAGUE

Yves Aubry
President

Mr. José Damiani
President
World Bridge Federation

1st July 2010

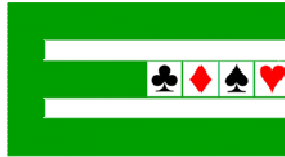
Copies to Gianarrigo Rona, President Elect of the WBF
Presidents of the Zones of the WBF
members of the WBF Executive Committee
Presidents of the Federations of the EBL

Dear José,

International Federation of Poker

At a recent meeting of the Executive Committee of the European Bridge League, you informed the Council of the decision of IMSA to accept the International Federation of Poker as a member of IMSA. You explained the basis of inclusion of Duplicate Poker as a mind sport and the potential financial benefits that might accrue to the other Mind Sports Organisations. You further explained your views as to the desirability of the establishment of National Mind Sports Organisations. The Executive Committee expressed its resistance to these proposals.

The Executive Committee met again yesterday and has asked me to write to you, in your role as President of the World Bridge Federation, and make you aware of its total opposition to any links between the organisation that controls poker and those that control the game of bridge. You have worked hard to establish bridge within the international community as a positive activity which can benefit young and old alike and contribute toward the aims of the Olympic Charter. The recognition that was afforded by the IOC, in accepting the WBF as a sporting organisation, has enabled many Bridge Federations to receive support from their National Olympic Committees and obtain acceptance within the wider community and, most importantly, within educational establishments.



Poker is an activity which is banned in many countries and is not regarded in positive terms by most people. It is directly associated with gambling and the negative connotations that are inevitably linked with such activity. It is very definitely not linked with being a sport.

You have worked tirelessly in achieving the positive way in which bridge is regarded. We do not believe that allowing bridge to be linked with poker will be beneficial to our good standing in the community. On the contrary, we believe that any links with poker will cause serious damage to our reputation and place in jeopardy all that you have strived towards.

You are therefore respectfully requested to avoid the establishment of any international agreements, congresses or championships which incorporate the game of poker with the game of bridge until such time as the Executive Council of the WBF has considered such proposals and given its approval or otherwise of the same.

The Executive Committee further believes that there are significant risks to our recognition by the IOC if an umbrella organisation such as IMSA pursues its own attempts to achieve recognition as a sporting organisation. We do not believe that it is in the best interests of bridge for it to be subsumed into an umbrella organisation which is then seeking recognition by the IOC. We believe that it is imperative that the link between the WBF and the IOC is a direct relationship between those two bodies.

The Executive Committee was unanimous in its opposition to the inclusion of poker as a mind sport, rejects any proposals that would allow poker to be played alongside any of our championships and is opposed to IMSA progressing any application for recognition by the IOC which may risk the recognition of the WBF as a sporting organisation..

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yves Aubry', written over a horizontal line.

Yves Aubry
EBL President