

16th World Bridge Games 2024 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Canada, Open Teams Report

Venue and Administration:

The Convention Centre was huge and provided large rooms with ample space and supplies of water. There were many very efficient caddies, always ready and able to help in any way. All players, Captains, and kibitzers had official badges with bar codes to identify the person.

Security was excellent. Washroom breaks were controlled by director approval. Caddies brought the players to the washroom and were able to confirm via the badges that the person's teammates were not in the washroom at the same time. Cameras with real-time timers were at each table focused on all. When a director was called, the camera was removed and brought to the director's table and reviewed. There would be no arguments about who did what, and how long they took. Appeals were pointless for these issues.

Rules were strictly enforced. At the captains meeting we were informed that cell phone and electronic devices must be left outside or be turned off and put in the pocket at each part of the screen for the duration of the match. Random spot checks occurred and people were searched for electronic devices. Penalties were strict and severe. Two teams were sent home for violation of the rules.

At the start and end of each match, caddies cleared away any garbage and collected convention cards and phones left in the pockets on each screen when players forgot and left them behind (as I did many times). It was always easy to recover your phone or Convention Card from the director's table.

Recommendation 1: Future captains should ensure that they are familiar with all the conditions of contest. There are several documents. There is a ton of paperwork to prepare including: Registration forms, Commitment forms for CBF and WBF, Convention cards in WBF format, and TUE forms if necessary. All players must follow the WBF Anti-doping policy. The anti-doping regulations follow the WADA prohibited list for all drugs. Players must ensure that medications that are on the prohibited list get approved via a Therapeutic Exemption Certificate which requires several steps.

Recommendation 2: As in most large venues, temperature was a big issue. It was usually extremely cold in the playing area. All players in the event always had to wear their uniforms (for the CBF and most other teams this was a polo shirt). Severe VP penalties were applied for nonconformance. One team was warned when a player wore a generic jacket over their uniform in a way that the uniform was not showing. Several counties were prepared for the cold by including a matching sweatshirt/jackets matching their uniform shirt. I would strongly

recommend that the CBF provides the same type of wear. It is an extra cost, but well worth it and it shows serious support from the home country at reasonable cost. Another option would be to have the company that makes the shirts also have these light jackets with the same colours and logos available to purchase.

CBF and other Support including support from Local Units:

The CBF paid for the uniforms and card fees for all the Canadian teams.

I believe that this year was the first year in many, that in addition to those costs that the CBF did not provide the teams with \$10,000 to help defray costs. \$10,000 amounts to \$1428.57 per person. This year the CBF provided \$5000.00 to our team which amounts to \$714.28 per person which did not put much of a dent in my approximate \$7000 + expenses.

Unit 181, my local Unit provided \$1500 towards my flight costs for which I am very grateful. Our Unit recognizes the importance of supporting local players. Hopefully, what I learned from my experience in Buenos Aires can be passed on to future players in our Unit and perhaps may encourage other players to make the leap themselves. Our Unit indicated that they may have been able to some fund raising if they had more time.

Victoria and Vancouver Units also donated funds to players on our team from those Units.

Recommendation 3: While I understand the financial position of the CBF, I feel strongly that changes need to be made to help support Canadian teams. How this is done should be part of a much larger discussion by the CBF and its members. The CBF needs to have a conversation and be open to discussion with members about this.

The Team:

The Canadian Open Team consisted of Brad Bart, Jeff Blond, Michael Roche, Daniel Lyder, Fred Gitelman, Mark Caplan, and me, Bob Todd NPC. Before the event started, the team discussed and agreed to a lineup where pair 1 played matches 2-3 every day, pair 2 played matches 1-2 and pair 3 played matches 1-3. All pairs would play equally throughout with the final day open for discussion in case we needed a push to try and qualify and some pairs were playing significantly better than others. All three pairs played quite well but of course there were some blips.

Two of our team members had extensive international experience, and one had several Junior appearances. Our team gained a lot from this experience, and I have no doubt it will leave all players better prepared and ready to play in the future.


I have captained many teams over the last 35 years. My teammates have always been picked based upon skill, integrity and equally important, being nice people who are able to get along and do what's best for the team. I have to say that I was immensely proud to have captained this team. Everyone carried themselves beyond reproach and were incredibly supportive of partners and teammates. I did not hear even one negative comment about partners, teammates, or opponents. I kibitzed several matches and almost every team we met were very pleasant and friendly, often introducing themselves. Truly a great experience with world class players.

We met and chatted with other Canadian teams and offered support and encouragement. We were extremely happy to cheer when Dan Jacob and Piotr Klimowicz won the Seniors Pairs for Canada.

The Event:

There were two groups of 17 teams in Open Teams. The groups were randomly drawn, and we ended up in what we thought was the slightly tougher Group B. Canada was seeded 10th out of 17 in our group. The top 8 teams from each group continued to the KO phase of 16 teams to get to the final 8 team playoffs.

After the round robin group B standings were as follows:

16th World Bridge Games							Round 17	OPEN B Teams	
Table	Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs		VPs		Final Rankings		
			Home Team	Visit. Team	Home Team	Visit. Team	Rank	Team	VPs
11	SWITZERLAND	DENMARK	35	18	14.39	5.61	1	CHINA	247.23
12	AUSTRALIA	TURKIYE	48	18	16.73	3.27	2	ITALY	229.61
13	AUSTRIA	KOREA	14	56	1.67	18.33	3	SWITZERLAND	228.11
14	NORWAY	CANADA	43	43	10.00	10.00	4	POLAND	213.06
15	POLAND	HUNGARY	33	18	13.97	6.03	5	FRANCE	207.03
16	ITALY	BRAZIL	62	13	19.07	0.93	6	NORWAY	192.17
17	FRANCE	INDIA	54	3	19.25	0.75	7	KOREA	185.57
18	CHINA	FINLAND	63	24	17.97	2.03	8	DENMARK	178.00
19	KUWAIT	Bye	0	0	12	0.00	9	BRAZIL	170.03
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the team record, click on the team name • For the match scorecard, click on the table number • To see all scores of the round, click here • To see all hand records of this round, in web form, click here. 							10	FINLAND	167.71
							11	CANADA	161.51
							12	HUNGARY	160.63
							13	INDIA	151.02
							14	TURKIYE	146.55
							15	AUSTRALIA	140.41
							16	AUSTRIA	101.88
							17	KUWAIT	36.48

Team Canada finished in a respectable but unhappy 11th spot. All of the top 8 seeds placed in the top 8 except Australia. Korea, the 16th seed, was the only surprise on paper and they finished nicely in 7th spot.

Each day for the first 3 days we won half or very close to half of the VPs. The 4th day was a killer for us. After losing a close match to Italy by 9 Imps, we lost to Brazil and Australia in swingy matches that could have gone either way. This put us 15 VPs below average – approximately where we ended up, 16.5 VPs from qualifying.

We needed to move big on the 5th day. We started well with 19.06 VPs out of 20 against the novice Kuwait team. Then came Denmark. We bid a slam the went down on a Heart lead with the AQ offside. Then the opponents bid a slam that required the heart King onside, and it was. Lose 24. If the cards are reversed on those two hands with pick up 24 Imps instead of losing 24 for a swing of 48. Bridge is tough!

We played well on the last day scoring 18.44 out 20 against Turkiye and playing to a dead tie against Norway, but it just wasn't enough. In summary, the team played well but not good enough to make the playoffs. It felt like we were maybe a little unlucky when more bounces went against us than for us. Sometimes you have to make your own luck. Nevertheless, it was a terrific experience, that made us proud to represent Canada.