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# **WORLD PUZZLE** *news letter*

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**INFORMATIVE BULLETIN OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL PUZZLE FEDERATION\***  
NO.2, APRIL 1997

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## SEE YOU IN CROATIA

by Cristea Ionijă, Romania

Hello, friends! We meet again within the pages of a fresh "News Letter". The second one. A year passed away since we set up this work instrument of our international puzzling community and at the end of it, we all can proudly register numerous elements of progress in the context which joined us. I refer to the more and more spectacular performances realized by the competitors and teams, to the technical studies and syntheses, to the pleasing entry of new nations into the ring, to the publishing and multimedia novelties offered by the associate publishing houses. And, naturally, to the magnificent Dutch edition of the World Puzzle Championship, last October.

Of course, these subjects form the focal points of the present issue, as an attempt to put down in writing the main coordinates of the evolution in the international puzzling phenomenon, not least as a way to inform puzzle institutions from nations not yet involved in our cooperation. In the same time, our démarche understands itself also as a factor of acceleration of this very evolution, proposing themes of meditation and of action on levels of strategic and organizational components. Components which we consider - just like you do too - to be essential for the success and the future of our common project. Components of which we think - just like you do too - that our great family of puzzlers can handle in many ways.

Except in one: slowly.

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## WORLD PUZZLE

news letter

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## AS IT WAS

at the 5th World Puzzle Championship and Congress, Utrecht, the Netherlands  
 by Rob Geensen, The Netherlands

*In the afternoon of October 15, 1996, fourteen national teams and their captains, coaches and guests arrived in the city of Utrecht, which was enjoying unexpectedly sunny autumn weather. That evening, while the team members (the Americans and Japanese, for example) were trying to shake off the jet lag that had evidently been part of the bargain, publisher and host Rob Geensen opened the Fifth World Puzzle Championship during an informal welcome party in the bowling hall of Midland Hotel, where more than one hundred people involved in the WPC would be staying for the next five days.*

### Informal

During the preparations for the WPC, which lasted an year, the organizers set themselves a number of goals. The event was to take place in an informal atmosphere and should allow plenty of time for exchanging experiences and entertainment. This required careful planning in order to avoid waiting times. We agreed to adhere strictly to the schedule for all activities in the programme.

### Experiments

The competition itself, the puzzles, would have to be able to stand even the most severe test of criticism. We had decided right from the start to take the championship itself really seriously. Based on the experience gained during the four previous WPC editions, we drew up strict rules which all the puzzles had to comply with. In addition, we decided to

(continued on page 4)



(continued from page 3)

create as much variety as possible in terms of the types of puzzles used. This called for a mixture of individual and team assignments, puzzles on paper and three-dimensional games, as well as the odd time bonus and points where strategic choices had to be made. There should also be space for experiments with new types of puzzles. This recipe was to guarantee a high-quality championship.

#### Linguistically and culturally neutral

One essential condition was that the assignments should be linguistically and culturally neutral. This meant that puzzles that typically involve diagrams or letter fields, such as crosswords, Mephisto crosswords or word finders, widely popular virtually all over the

world, were ruled out because of the language factor. General knowledge, or quiz questions, or descriptions that presupposed knowledge of specific cultures, could not be included either. Dutch people are evidently more familiar with the paintings of Johannes Vermeer or Karel Appel than people from Poland, Romania or Turkey, for example. Similarly, the average American can be expected to know more about representatives of pop art like Andy Warhol, "crooners" like Frank Sinatra or the designer/architect Frank Lloyd Wright, than Dutchmen or Japanese.

#### Transparent jury system

This was another of our objectives. We agreed that the assessment procedure should be as transparent as possible. It was decided to distribute new sets of assignments and solutions to the team captains after every section of the programme, so that the intermediate results could be compared. A jury team of over fifteen members was on stand-by in the strict assessment structure

and the results for each puzzle were checked at least three times before the scores were entered into the computer system and even that step was double-checked. The results and running scores were announced as soon as possible after each round, as well as the appeal deadlines for each particular puzzle.

#### Instructions

During the meeting on Wednesday morning (October 16), the participants were informed in English about the various types of assignments they could expect. They were also given written instructions, so that participants whose command of English was not up to scratch had every opportunity to study the rules and regulations. Many questions were asked, so that in the end all participants

had a clear view of the advantages of the selected procedure.

The rest of that Wednesday was devoted to a trip to Amsterdam. After luncheon in the winter garden of Krasnapolsky Hotel, the participants went on an excursion of their choice (three options). A sailor's meal in traditional Dutch style concluded the day.

#### The competition

The actual competition began on Thursday morning, after a brief opening ceremony outside the entrance to the Jaarbeurs Complex, the venue for the championship. After launching red, white and blue balloons (the colours of the Dutch flag) and taking part in a photo session with an authentic Dutch barrel organ, the participants set to work. Until Saturday morning, they were to solve approximately 110 different puzzles in eight rounds.

One remarkable round was number 5, called the Screenshot, during which the participants were given a series of assignments by means of a high-speed audio-visual presentation system. This new method went down very well among the participants.

Round 6 took place on the exhibition floor of the National Games Days at Jaarbeurs Utrecht, which coincided with the WPC. The

teams were presented, with a number of three-dimensional assignments designated on the basis of existing games. This experiment was not an unqualified success. The jury had urged the participants to stick to the rules of fair play, but the large surface area of the hall made it impossible to check whether they really did. One of the last rounds on Saturday morning included a number of three-dimensional assignments, too, which generated a great deal of amusement as well as hard work.

#### Practising and training

In addition to the competition hall, the venue included a foyer where the participants could have hot or cold drinks throughout the day. Another room was designated the WPC meeting room and the jury deliberated behind closed door in the jury room until late in the evening. Luncheons were served in the same complex. After the rounds, the participants were bussed to their hotel, where they had dinner. The participants exchanged experiences in a lively atmosphere, at Jaarbeurs Utrecht, during the bus trips and at the hotel. The teams prepared themselves thoroughly for the next assignments on the programme.



The producers and organizers of the First World Puzzle Championship.  
From left to right: Peter Ritsmeester, Jan Lam, Juh. Grootman, Hans Fendebak and Martin Overduik

## RESULTS

### Scores of the national teams

1 United States	3013
2 Czech Rep.	2557
3 Turkey	2149
4 The Netherl.	2135
5 Poland	1933
6 Russia	1872
7 Germany	1840
8 Japan	1726
9 Hungary	1657
10 Slovakia	1638
11 Romania	1588
12 United Nations	1313
13 Croatia	1066
14 Great Britain	811

The winners of the Fifth World Puzzle Championship: the US team, with Wei-Hwa Huang, Ron Osher, Zack Butler, Nick Baxter and team captain Will Shortz, who is being presented with the award by organizer Rob Geensen (above)

Number 2 in the world rankings: the Czech Republic, Team captain Vitezslav Koudelka (right) and players Petr Nepovim, Zdenek Vodicka, Pavel Kalhous and world champion Robert Babilon (middle)

The Turkish team, the main rival of the Dutch team right from the start, managed to secure third prize by a margin of 14 points. Team captain Nevzat Erkmen (centre), flanked by Ferhat Çalapkula, Güray Eras, Hâsni Sincar and Kamer Alyonaycan, (below)



### The final days

The participants visited the world's largest harbour, Rotterdam, after the last round on Saturday afternoon, while the jury was deliberating about the final results. The final event, at Jaarbeurs Utrecht on Saturday (October 19) evening, consisted of a luxury dinner accompanied by the all-female, nine strong drawing-room orchestra "Silut d'Amour". The high point of the evening was the announcement of the winners of the Fifth World Puzzle Championship. The US team won the world title with a score of 3013. The Czech Republic and Turkey came in second and third place, scoring 2557 and 2149 respectively, followed on their heels by the Dutch team with a score of 2135. The list of individual rankings was headed by Robert Babilon (Czech Republic), followed by Zack

Butler and Wei-Hwa Huang (both from the United States). In her concluding speech, Helene Hovanec (USA), who chaired the congress that coincided with the World Championship, said that the 1996 championship had set a new standard for the international development of puzzle sport. She also pointed out that considerable progress had been made in the establishment of an international puzzle classification system. A working group was charged with the preparations for the World Puzzle Federation, to be established soon. The federation will be formally inaugurated during the 1997 World Championship to be held in Croatia.

The individual champions and Wei-Hwa Huang, in this order, constitute the

### See you in Croatia

After the presentation of the awards, rock group "The Clarks" accompanied a dance party that lasted until the small hours. Only a few hours later, the first participants got up again and went to the railway station or to the airport to get home, full of new experiences and after many new friendships had been established or existing ones renewed. All were already looking forward to the next world championship. See you in Croatia!



Rob Geensen is the publisher of some thirty puzzle magazines sold under the brand name Puzzelsport. The Puzzelsport project is incorporated into the VNU Magazine Group.

## RESULTS

### Individual scores (top 10)

1	Robert Babilon	Czech Republic	692
2	Zack Butler	USA	632
3	Wei-Hwa Huang	USA	624
4	Pavel Kalhous	Czech Republic	550
5	Ron Osher	USA	531
6	Paul Jacobs	The Netherlands	527
7	Nick Baxter	USA	516
8	Markus Gegenheimer	Germany	509
9	Petr Nepovim	Czech Republic	489
10	Güray Eras	Turkey	488



Robert Babilon, Zack Butler and Wei-Hwa Huang, in this order, constitute the

*The team captains met six times in Utrecht – for a short organizational meeting on Wednesday morning (October 16), two sessions each on Thursday and Friday, and a wrap-up session on Saturday morning. The following were the major matters discussed or decided.*

#### World Puzzle News-Letter

Ovidia Șperlea (Romania) reported that, with the cooperation of Cristea Ionșiță and "Ecran Magazin" Publishing House, the first issue of the "World Puzzle News Letter" had been sent to all teams in April. He thanked everyone who contributed to it. He invited participants to send material to him for the next issue by February 15, 1997.

#### Puzzle Classification

Vitezslav Kouzelka (Czech Republic) presented a work-in-progress from team member Zdeněk Chroňý, which, when completed, will classify all known varieties of puzzles.

## REPORT ON THE CAPTAIN'S MEETINGS IN UTRECHT

by Helene  
Hovanec,  
USA

Vladimir Dubrovsky (Russia) also presented a classification of puzzles, organized compactly according to a different system.

The purposes of the classification are threefold: 1) To provide a guide for WPC organizers and contestants alike on the varieties of puzzles used in previous championships and new varieties that could be added in the future; 2) To identify which specific puzzle varieties are acceptable (or fair) for the event and which are not; and 3) To be a

useful reference for all puzzle lovers worldwide.

#### Organization and Funding

Andreas Franz (Germany) reported that no international registration is legally necessary for the WPC, but that registration and incorporation might be commercially useful in the future.

He suggested that each team sponsor contribute up to \$ 1,000 a year (or whatever it can afford) to carry on the work of the organization between championships.

#### Increasing Participation

Adam Sumera (Poland) recommended that WPC organizers invite observers from



previously unrepresented countries for the purpose of building interest in the WPC and attracting full teams from them in the future. Captains were asked to forward the names and addresses of puzzle companies and other potentially interested parties to Stjepan Horvat in Croatia. Rob Geensen will send Stjepan Horvat the current address list, including all 1996 additions.

Vitezslav Kouzelka recommended hiring a full-time secretary to coordinate the

work of the organization between championships. This person's functions would include disseminating information on the WPC to prospective members, handling inquiries, attracting publicity for the event, helping publish the news-letter, etc. Ideally, this person would be centrally located in Europe and fluent in English, French, German and other languages.

It was also suggested that the WPC establish a web page on the Internet to spread information about the WPC worldwide.

#### Hosting the Championship

Adam Sumera noted that the WPC accommodations, food and programs have increased in quality each year – and that the increased expense to the organizers might discourage others from offering to host the event in the future. He said it should go on record that an organizer, minimally, needs to provide only three things: a place to stay, food to eat and good puzzles. Regarding fees for participation, Adam Sumera recommended that the current three-tier system be adopted as official policy: 1) The first six people from each country pay a basic fee (which in the past has been US\$ 300/person – considerably less than the organizer's actual cost); 2) The next two individuals from a country pay a somewhat higher fee; and 3) Any additional people from a country would pay the actual cost of their attending.

#### Principles of Fairness and Puzzle Guidelines

Will Shortz (United States), with the advice of the committee on puzzle standards, presented a statement of General Principles on fairness in the championship (see page 14). The subject included language neutrality, cultural neutrality, originality, fair warning on new puzzle varieties and full and open infor-

mation on scoring. The principles were adopted.

Will Shortz also presented a work-in-progress on Puzzle Guidelines for the championship (see page 14), covering the percent of the scores that should come from the various categories of puzzles. He proposed printing their guidelines in the next WPC news-letter for discussion and debate at the 1997 championship.

#### Planning Committee

A new committee was formed to develop a business plan for the WPC and begin work on it before the 1997 championship. The members named were Will Shortz, Stanley Newman, Rob Geensen, Vitezslav Kouzelka, Andreas Franz and Helene Hovanec.

Will Shortz and Stanley Newman agreed to meet with John Williams, the head of the National Scrabble Association (United States) and the director of the World Scrabble Championships, to develop ideas for enlarging the event.

#### Future Tournaments

The captains unanimously accepted Croatia's offer to host the 6th WPC in Koprivnica, in September or October 1997. The exact date will be accepted later.

It was also agreed that the United States will host the 9th WPC in New York in 2000.

Any country interested in hosting a championship for another year was asked to contact Helene Hovanec in New York City (telephone 212-628-2087; fax 212-628-1908; e-mail Helenechov@aol.com).

#### Thanks

The captains expressed hearty thanks and congratulations to Rob Geensen and to the staff of Puzzelsport magazines for their unusually fine work in organizing the 1996 WPC.



PRO DOMO

*We want to thank all of you for the articles, comments, annotations, suggestions or good words sent in. We appeal to our colleagues from all meridians of the puzzling world to continue backing up the "News Letter" with the same active generosity. We expect your texts at the following address: Ovidia Șperlea, Schubart-Str. 7, 74321 Bietigheim-Bissingen, Germany, tel. & fax. 0049-7142-31517. See you in Koprivnica!*

## Time for action

In December, Stanley Newman and I met with John Williams, the Executive Director of the National Scrabble Association (United States) and the head of the publicity firm Williams & Co., to discuss problems facing the World Puzzle Championship and a plan to meet them.

Besides overseeing American Scrabble tournaments and promotions, John also directs the World Scrabble Championship – an event with many similarities to ours in style and challenges. Despite the fact that the world Scrabble event is inherently limited to the English language, under John's leadership it has now grown to include 30 countries.

John's unique background combining marketing skills, interest in games, and experience with international competition makes him ideally suited to offer us advice. The following is his report and analysis. (W.Shortz)



### MEMORANDUM

To: World Puzzle Championship steering committee  
From: John Williams, USA

**Objectives** ■ To explore ways to promote the World Puzzle Championship ■ To increase the number of participating countries ■ To enlarge the constituency of puzzle lovers worldwide.

**Where the Event Stands** ■ The WPC is an annual event, since 1992, in which participants compete in a variety of puzzles using logic, mathematics, observation, memory, etc. Since this is an international event with a diverse group of participants, puzzles and challenges are "language and cultural neutral".

Recently, the event has been held in Germany, Romania and the Netherlands. It will be held in Croatia in 1997 and the United States in 2000. Typically, 12-14 countries participate, with four-person teams plus one or two coaches per team. Individual competitors are also accepted from countries that do not field a full team. Most teams are sponsored by puzzle magazine publishers or newspapers or magazines with prominent puzzle features. Organizers have tried to obtain sponsorships from other sources such as Mensa, governmental bodies and non-puzzle publishers without success. As partial compensation for team sponsorship, each sponsor gets the right to reprint the WPC puzzles in its own country.

The participation fee has been \$300/person for room, board and the competition. As the actual cost usually greatly exceeds this figure, the difference is made up by the organizer and its own sponsors. The participants are responsible for the costs of travel to and from the event.

Between championships, the participants stay in touch via the "World Puzzle News Letter", published by "Ecran Magazin" and "Rebus Labirint" from Romania.

**Problems** ■ Many countries do not have their own puzzle magazines and in those that do, the publishers have not always shown interest in the WPC. Lacking sponsorship, many potentially interested competitors have lacked the means to attend. Despite the millions of people who do puzzles, there is still a low awareness of this event both in the United States and worldwide. The international puzzle scene remains a very loose group of affiliates with no long-term plans.

**Solutions/Plan** ■ The group needs to formalize its existence with an announcement, a statement of purpose and eventually international registration. The group should hire a full-time secretary – someone fluent in English, German, French, Spanish, and other languages, if possible. This person could be based in the Czech Republic or another centrally located participating country.

Some modest and realistic publicity ideas for 1998 and beyond need to be finalized. Via a web site on the Internet and other means, the group needs to recruit members, build a database and get membership money. A budget for 1998 needs to be finalized. A base amount of \$10,000 - \$15,000 would come from team sponsors – a suggested \$1,000 - \$2,000 apiece, or whatever a sponsor can pay. Commercial sponsorships from international firms (such as computer/technology companies, communications firms, etc.) should be sought in the future.

During the event, consider a means by which players can play along on the Internet for a fee to test their skills against the world's best puzzle solvers. Perhaps this can be licensed to America On-Line or another Internet provider.

Create a public relations awareness campaign to challenge countries that do not currently participate but should. For example: "Hey, Sweden – you honor the world's smartest people with the Nobel Prizes. Now it's time to prove your own skills!" The campaign should make it a matter of national pride for countries to show that they are as smart and clever as the rest of the world. Remind the French and Italians that Plato said that a sound mind and sound body go hand-in-hand. Their countries send teams to the physical Olympics. What about the mental Olympics as well?

Consider finding a celebrity spokesperson and/or appropriate charity for tie-in.

Strongly encourage participating countries to hold qualifying contests for their teams. These would greatly increase interest in the event and entry fees could generate income. Such contests can be held via the Internet, fax or more traditional means. Everyone wants to know how smart they are compared to others. Mensa sends out thousands of its IQ tests every year. Create a tantalizing, quick, five-part test to tease potential participants.

Each year the American team receives half-price airline tickets from Lufthansa to travel to the world championship. In return, Lufthansa is mentioned in all the team's publicity. Invite other teams coming from long distances to make similar arrangements with Lufthansa or another airline. Or have the WPC itself arrange for an international airline sponsor to offer all teams discounted tickets.

**Conclusion** ■ I think it's safe to say that both the puzzle world at large and the WPC itself are very viable entities for growth. Remember that the single most important element is already strongly in place: Millions of people throughout the world do puzzles every single day. The culture and market already exist.

As I see it, someone needs only to take ownership of this situation, similar to the way the manufacturers of Scrabble took ownership of the existing coffee house circuit 20 years ago. As with any other enterprise, all it will take is time, money, a little luck and good planning.

**Our photo:** Utrecht 1997. Before the actual competition was opened, a brief ceremony was staged outside the entrance to the Jaarbeurs Complex. The official group photos of the participating teams were made, accompanied by the festive sounds of a traditional Dutch barrel organ.

## CONCRETE AND CONCERTED

by Ovidiu Sperlea, Romania

### CONDITIONS

The puzzle culture (especially the genre "crossword puzzle") represents the most disseminated, the most popular and in the same time the most accessible leisure-time activity. According to topical statistics (AWA, 1993), 65.4% of the Germans (for instance) keep themselves busy with puzzle solving, in different degrees of intensity, while 16.7% indicate this even as their main hobby. In this way, the popularity level of the puzzle culture and the number of active practicers exceed those of all other leisure-time activities.

Moreover, the puzzle culture offers a variety of valuable coordinates of cultural, didactic, competitional (etc.) nature, which in the context of their entertaining character and of the particular popularity can count on an efficiency above average.

This problem gets more significance in the context of the constantly growing non-working time in society, the enlarging international integration at all levels and the generosity of technical means.

### OBJECT

The main aim of the International Puzzle Federation should consist in the complete and multilateral exploitation – on international basis – of the puzzle culture potential in entertaining, competitional, didactic and educational fields, in stressed cooperation with the associated publishing houses and organizations, by coordinated addressing to the largest public with a complex, modern and adequate offer.

The present project aims at building and running a complex technical and organizational structure in the field of international and national puzzle culture, with the following main components:

1) **Puzzle sport** – worldwide system of puzzle sport events (national championships, European championship, world championship, tournaments); corresponding organizational structures (puzzle sport clubs, national puzzle federations, International Puzzle Federation); parallel/convergent competitions held through the

puzzle press, Internet, live tournaments etc.

2) **Puzzle tourism** – staging of "club tourism" with emphasis on puzzle entertainment, by shaping the stay as a collective and individual tourism & puzzle program with marked entertaining and utilitarian character (reciprocal increase of both components).

3) **Puzzle on computer** – complex offer of "translatable" puzzles, puzzle events and puzzle informations in the Internet (also CD-ROM). Contents: ● free choice of language, alphabet (writing), genre, theme, solving strategy, level of difficulty, dimensions; ● presentation on screen in an adequate, dynamic form, by appropriate using the multimedia means of expression; ● possibility of thematic documentation by multimedia access to references; ● possibility of simultaneous and interactive use by two or more users (puzzle matches etc.). (see page 16).

4) **International puzzle publishing** – international periodical puzzle magazines, radio and TV programmes based on linguistic neutral puzzles, informations, puzzle sport etc., as common products of the International Puzzle Federation and of the associated publishing houses and organizations from different countries.

The individual part projects are to be understood also as closely interwoven, forming a homogeneous unity. Within the individual part projects, the "Rebus Labirint" Publishing Agency (with various cooperations) realized coherent projects and first applications.

### VALENCIES

The project offers increased entertaining, competitional and didactic advantages, combined with the possibility of international/linguistic neutral use: ● high-grade individual and collective entertainment; ● educational-informative-didactic efficiency (self-examination in essential areas of personality, training and extension of the personal qualities, improvement of the general education, foreign language training, memory training); ● active and creative character; ● promotion of the interhuman contacts on the base of common interests; ● promotion of the international contacts and understanding on the level of the widest public; ● mass character and international homogeneity, also suitability for high-performance sector; ● accessibility for all social and age groups; ● sense giving activity for the youth; ● possibility of individual distinguishing.

Our Japanese friends - always a charming presence



### TARGET GROUP

On the base of the high popularity level of the puzzle culture in the whole world, it is safe to assume that the latent target group for the present project counts only in the states of the European Union between 55 (highly active) and 230 (in different degrees of intensity) millions people, a number which can be enlarged spectacularly by a coherent strategy.

### SUITABILITY FOR PUBLICITY

In the context of advancing globalization of the economy, the project offers excellent chances for adequate advertising. The main coordinate consists in the worldwide accessibility and in the possibility to spread the publicity message in attractive, entertaining ways (inclusive by the means of thematic puzzles).

Because of its specific moral and intellectual significance, (i.e. ■ upgrading the intelligence as a social recognized quality; ■ general accessibility; ■ aspects of international communication and integration for extremely wide sectors of the world's population) the puzzle culture may recommend itself to certain (compatible) sectors of the national and transnational economy as an ideal factor of identification.

### FINANCIAL ASPECTS

Both the global project and the part projects mentioned above obviously present a high degree of economic profitability, which guarantees not only a short- or medium-term self-financing, but also considerable gains.

Consequently, the realization of the project requires only limited, rapidly amortized investments. This are to be made available by economically profitable cooperation with compatible companies and through appropriate international political coordination (EU, UN).

### ELEMENTS OF STRATEGY

On the base of its suitability for advertising, the most satisfactory solution of establishing rapidly a coherent and successful system of puzzle activities seems to consist in the assumption of the patronage for the entire project by a leading economic company with worldwide presence. The individual part projects could be realized within this frame, in cooperation with specialized companies from the respective fields (software, tourism etc.).

An adequate procedure should comprise the following steps:

(1) Immediate officialization of the International Puzzle Federation (as a credible and authorized interlocutor for the following negotiations);

(2) Identification of corresponding partners from the economy and appropriation of the project by the most adequate one (● a global patron, ● partners in the individual part projects);

(3) Gradual realization of the individual project related structures.

For the first item I suggest an urgent procedure comprising:

● the elaboration of a provisional statute (compiled after the model of similar international organizations);

● the provisional registration in one or (simultaneously) several of the involved countries as a "registered association";

● the adoption of a plan of action for item 2;

● an agreement upon a system of basic moral, logistic and financial support from the associated publishing houses and organizations;

● the appointment of a full-time executive secretary for the realization of the primeur démarches in that sense;

● elaboration of detailed application programmes in the technical and organizational area.



## Matters in discussion

*The purpose of the World Puzzle Championship is to recognize and honor the world's best puzzle solvers, to provide a means to exchange puzzle ideas internationally, to encourage innovation in puzzle-making, and to foster friendships among puzzlers around the globe.*

*In the championship itself the puzzles should be as diverse and entertaining as possible, while allowing all contestants, irrespective of their native language and culture, to compete on an equal basis.*

### WHAT IS FAIR? CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE PUZZLE FUND OF THE WPC

by Will Shortz, USA

The principles of fairness in competition are:

#### 1. Language neutrality

Knowledge of any particular language should not be necessary – or even helpful – in solving the championship puzzles.

- Puzzle instructions should be provided in a common, international language before the competition with ample time allowed for translation, questions from the teams and clarification of any ambiguous or unclear points.

- The puzzles should not involve answering clues in English or any other non-neutral language.

- If a logical or visual word puzzle (such as a crisscross or a word search puzzle) contains a final message to be discovered among designated letters, this message should be in a neutral language, so that no-one has an unfair advantage in guessing it.

- Nothing in these specifications should preclude the use of puzzles employing the Roman alphabet, with which it is assumed all contestants are familiar.

#### 2. Cultural neutrality

The puzzles should not contain tests of knowledge that would give unfair advantage to any country over another.

- Tests of knowledge on cultural subjects such as history, politics, literature, art, film, sports, etc., should be used with extreme care:

if, at all, as education and culture vary radically from one country/region of the world to another.

- However, geographical questions, if fairly distributed around the globe, are proper subjects for the competition, as are tests using principles of science and other generally-known but non-technical matters.

#### 3. Originality

The puzzles used in the championship should be previously unpublished.

#### 4. Fair Warning

If any new types of puzzles are planned for the championship whose use the organizers believe would give unfair advantage to any country – for example, because of one team's prior familiarity with them – the organizers should inform all teams in ample time before the event so that everyone can be equally prepared.

#### 5. Information on Scoring

The scoring for the championship should be fully explained and open to review.

- A complete explanation of the scoring system and points to be awarded for each puzzle should be provided to teams before the competition.

- A reasonable amount of time should be provided to teams after the competition to examine their solutions and challenge their scores.

- Results should be posted as soon as practicable after each round.

- Any challenges to the scores – or to the fairness of particular puzzles in the competition – should be considered and resolved by a majority vote of the team captains.



*While the participants were grinding away their assignments, the team leaders conferred on matters of joint interest. One of the topics discussed during the congress was the establishment of the World Puzzle Federation.*

### PUZZLE GUIDELINES FOR THE WORLD PUZZLE CHAMPIONSHIP

by Will Shortz, USA

An ideal World Puzzle Championship contains a diverse assortment of puzzles in both new and old varieties ranging in difficulty, from easy to hard. The object is to provide as wide, rigorous, entertaining and fair a test of contestant's solving abilities as possible.

Organizers should try to achieve the following mix of puzzle types:

Puzzle Category	Percent of score
Logical <sup>1</sup>	35-50
Numerical and geometrical	15-25
Observation and pattern recognition <sup>2</sup>	15-25
Mechanical <sup>3</sup>	5-10
General knowledge	0-10
Miscellaneous	0-20

(<sup>1</sup> – including fill-in and other word-logic puzzles, which should comprise 10-20% of the overall score; (<sup>2</sup> – including word search and other word-observation puzzles, which should comprise 5-10% of the overall score; (<sup>3</sup> – sliding-piece puzzles, jumping-peg puzzles, put-together or disentanglement puzzles and other hands-on challenges).

The team-solving portion of the championship, which can include any of the above puzzle categories (preferably a diverse mix of them), should comprise 15-30% of the event. These scores should count only in the team competition, not in the individual competition.

Because of the difficulty in assigning categories to puzzles, which sometimes can be classified in more than one way, the above ranges of percentages can only be general recommendations rather than fixed limits.

In the case of general knowledge puzzles, if they are used, the utmost care must be taken to be fair to everyone. As knowledge and culture vary radically from one part of the world to another and as it is almost impossible for the persons of any country to anticipate all the differences in backgrounds and to deal with even the known evenhanded differences, puzzles in this category should be used very sparingly, if at all.

## THE NEED OF CROSSWORD LINGUISTIC NEUTRALITY BY USING LANGUAGES

by Ovidiu Sperlea, Romania

### FAIRNESS ABOVE ALL

Of course, it is vital for the credibility and future of the international competition puzzling system to guarantee a full equality of chances between the competitors of any geographic, linguistic and cultural horizons. In this context, the technical efforts of the Dutch organizers at the WPC 1996 (but not only), as well as Will Shortz' constant vigilance deserve high appreciation.

The modality practised until now in order to ensure this chances equality concerned predominantly the *linguistic and cultural neutrality of the competition puzzles* (as defined at page 14). This principle is impeccable from ethical point of view and indisputably beneficial for all national puzzle cultures involved, which reciprocally enrich themselves with new puzzle genres (like those remarkable Japanese ones in the case of us, Europeans).

### THE LIMITS OF NEUTRALITY

On the other hand, yet, these circumstances entailed the concentration of the puzzle offer at the international competitions into the corner of logical and mathematical tests, with an almost complete elimination of crossword (and other similar) puzzles (with the partial exception of the WPC editions 1994 and 1995). The – admittedly – objective reasons which determined this process don't change the fact that in this way we withdrew from circulation the most spread and beloved puzzle genres, with the following disturbing aspects and effects: ■ the renascence of the worldwide most important means of expression in the puzzle culture, which is the language-bound one; ■ the annulment of a huge popularity potential and consequently, the narrowing down of the mass bases for our present and future international competitions, with effects also on the economic aspects for all involved parties. The loss of representativity towards the established puzzle fund (in all our countries) can lead even to calling into question the "puzzle" character – in the usual sense of the word – of our present competitions.

### THE "TRANSLATABLE CROSSWORD"

Therefore, it is necessary to find technical ways to permit the large scale use of the crossword puzzle in international puzzle competitions, by completely meeting the principle of chance equality. Concrete, this objective amounts to the replacement of the principle "neutrality on the base of language elimination" by the principle "neutrality on the base of languages interchanging", which means constructing the crossword puzzles in such a way, that they are perfectly equivalent in any of the implicated languages, i.e. that each crossword can be solved by anyone in his own mother tongue. The translation of the crossword puzzles (identical definitions and identical solution-words) would annul also the incompatibility between different writings (Roman, Cyrillic, Arabic, etc.).

The realisation of the "translatable crossword puzzle" project, which is unpracticable in the context of printed (flat) presentation, becomes perfectly possible by means of the modern computer technic. In the meantime, the corresponding technical solution and a first step of its practical realisation are finished.

### HORIZONS

Besides the use in the actual competition sector, this approach offers a variety of applications (via CD-ROM, Internet, etc.) which could considerably amplify the international puzzling cooperation at all levels. The main component consists in the centralized address (in the name and to the benefit of the International Puzzle Federation) of an extremely large public from all over the world, the attraction of highly numerous participants to the complex offer of international puzzle activities (see page 12), and the completion of an efficient international integration on puzzle field.

In the competition sphere, the overcoming of the linguistic limitations by full integration of the languages in the puzzle offer would seriously amplify the range of suitable puzzle genres and would start an innovative process without precedent, capable of definitely consolidating the technical basis of our future international mass sport and culture with puzzles.

*The "New Letters" wants to be a platform for the technical and theoretical discussion in the field of international puzzle culture. Use it!*

## Puzzle theory

### CLASSIFICATION OF PUZZLES

by Vladimir Dubrovsky, Russia

Before we start to classify anything, we must decide what our classification will be based on, which depends on who will use it and what for. The classification of puzzles proposed below is designed, first of all, for those who solve them rather than just look at and admire them as in museum; in particular, it is intended to be used in preparation for puzzle competitions. From this point of view, the first thing we have to consider deciding whether to put two puzzles into the same pigeonhole is their *linguistic neutrality*. This is a clear and useful characteristic; and further classification essentially depends on which of the two "realms" – language neutral or language-dependent – a puzzle belongs to. Next is the kind of *mental skill* required to solve a puzzle. Then, we'll look at the kind of *assignment* we have to carry out (e.g., fill out a grid, draw a path, derive a general rule, etc.; in fact, there are not too many of them – I counted a little more than a dozen). Finally, we'll compare *details* of the assignment, the "material" with which we play (such as symbols, numbers, pictures, words) and other puzzle attributes. This system proved to be quite efficient – it pigeonholes most puzzles uniquely. Of course, some puzzles may combine different kinds of – say, skill and it's impossible to say which of them is the most important. We put such puzzles into *Mixed* subdivisions of different level. Another kind of a "singular point" is *Surprise* or *Lucky guess* puzzles, where the very fact of including a puzzle in a certain group could be an essential hint; these are classified separately. *Miscellaneous* divisions include puzzles that seem to be the "too individual" to form a separate class.

With respect to mental-skill, *language-neutral* puzzles can be divided into those that require only "psycho-physiological" (YP) abilities, such as keen eyesight, memory, and the like (I united them with those that need, so to speak, only common-sense logic, like "scrambled comics"); general knowledge; geometric imagination, nonstandard thinking and inventiveness (in surprise puzzles); and mathematical abilities. Mathematical puzzles are subdivided into arithmetical, combinatorial and logical. Admittedly, this subdivision is rather cloudy: practically all mathematical puzzles are combinatorial, because they deal with finite sets, and all of them use logic, of course. So it is based mostly on the "material"; logical puzzles deal with propositions or relations, arithmetical with numbers (chiefly, these boil down to equations and/or inequalities in integers), all the other mathematical puzzles in the collections I used (see the references) can be called combinatorial – most of them deal with arrangements in grids (the Japanese influence!).

In all *language-dependent* puzzles you have to figure out words (as language units) or phrases. Therefore, first and foremost, they require knowledge, though some logical work is often helpful too. Setting logic aside, I tried to classify language puzzles according to the sort of information about unknown words they provide. This resulted in a scale, one of whose ends is occupied by the puzzles based only on hints to spelling and, maybe, grammar, while in the puzzles at the other end of the scale, words are to be guessed only from their meanings. "Pure" puzzles of either sort are very rare (some anagrams and cryptograms at one end and plain quizzes at the other). So major divisions are formed by puzzles that are significantly closer to one of the scale's ends – that is, can be solved, at least, theoretically, ignoring one kind of hints; for lack of better idea I called them *Word recombination* and *Q&A* puzzles, respectively. Special divisions are formed by puzzles with indirect clues (which must be extracted from the context, or refer only to the final solution rather than to each separate entry, or are too vague to be used by themselves) and by rebus – both find themselves somewhere in the middle of the scale.

In the classification below the names of some types of puzzles were coined anew to give some idea about the nature of these puzzles, but the terms *Latin* and *Greek-Latin* games are standard in mathematics.

## LANGUAGE NEUTRAL PUZZLES

### Word puzzles

- **Search**
  - wordsearch (S124-128)
  - find hidden picture (S230)
  - count all triangles (squares, etc.) in a given pattern (S237, C25)
- **Common sense puzzles**
  - find mistakes (S233)
  - scrambled comic (S232, NY41)
  - chopped image (C11/1, S228)
- **Memory test** (NY52)
- **Matching puzzles** (find differences, identical fragments or silhouettes, etc.)

### General knowledge puzzle

- **Language-neutral quiz**
  - questions in pictures (C42/2)
  - multiple-choice (R1/3)
- **Miscellaneous pictorial**
  - matching pairs (C24, C28, C50)
- **Geometric puzzles**
  - 3-D imagination
    - establish identity (S231, S238, S239, C11/1)

- fitting pairs (NY27)
- different views (C7/2, C16/3)
- dice (C15/2, S183)
- **Drawing paths**
  - maze (C17/1, S235, S236)
  - through given places (S208, S211, C8/1, C23/2, C35/2)
  - in given directions (S213, S214)
  - disjoint connections (NY29, S217), with the given number of turns (S209, S210, S212)

- **Discussion**
  - into given polygons (S190)
  - cut and rearrange (e.g., an equilateral triangle into a square, and many other) (L, NY81)
  - of labeled grids: dominos (S188), separating labels (S200), and freuting like shapes (S191, S197, S201)
  - "cut by numbers" (S202, S199)

- **Tiling**
  - tangrams (NY44 and many other)
  - polyominoes: traditional problems (S130 also, see G), pentominoes with restrictions (S196, S198)

- **Punching problems** (C20/1) ● **Miscellaneous**
  - square squeeze (C2/2)
  - comparing volumes (C20/3)
- **Combinatorial puzzles**
- **Counting paths** (NY18/2)
- **Miscellaneous** (S195)
- **Arrangements in grids**
- **Flword**
  - across and down (or diagonally) (S83, S84, S86; S73; S129, C37/2)
  - along a path (S92)
  - fitnumber (S87, C23/1)

- **Across and down count**
  - paint by numbers: given all segment lengths (S222, S223); given the longest segments (R4/4); pointillism (C19/1)
  - battleships - 1 (S218)
  - "pointers" (R4/8)
  - 4-symbol arrays (R1/4, S185)
  - "Latin forward" (R3/7)
  - urban planning (S206)
- **Neighborhood count**
  - diamonds and variations (S219, S221)
  - battleships - 2 (S220)
  - honeycomb (R1/13)



The winners of the individual and national leagues received a prize which is a puzzle itself, designed by the Ukrainian puzzle-maker Serhiy Grubarchuk.

- **Latin squares** (C44/1)
  - super-Latin square (R4/7)
  - Gero-Latin square (R3/7)
  - "Latin tiling" (S203)
  - other variations (S192, S193, S194, S207)
- **Counting attacks** (the classic puzzle of this sort is "The Queen Problem"); arrange eight queens on the chessboard so that they don't attack each other (S215, S216, C34/2, R2/14)
- **Isolated pairs** (S205)

- **Logical puzzles**
  - "Who is who?" (S181, S182, S186/7, C13/1, C18/7)
  - **Logic of order and choice**
    - mastermind (S146, S147, S187)
    - miscellaneous (C18/1, C18/2, C22/2, C32/1, C48/2)
  - **Retrospective analysis of tournaments**
    - mixed robin (NY26/1, NY34/2)
    - play-off (S184)

- **Arithmetic**
  - **Verbal problems** (C5/1)
  - **Alphametic variations** (S169, S170, C16/2, C41/2)
  - **Crossnumbers**
    - alphametic (S167, S168)
    - clued (S174, S175, S179, S180)
    - interleaving equations (S176, S177)
    - interleaving inequalities (S178)
  - **Magic patterns** (S171)
  - Latin magic (S172)
  - **Dominos cross sum** (S189)
  - **Collect given or maximum total**
    - from a given set of numbers (NY11/2)
    - along a path or in certain directions (S166, C36/1)
    - by dissection (S204)
  - **Miscellaneous**
    - multiplicative triangle (C40/2)
    - equal sums (C40/2)

- **Surprise/Lucky guess**
  - **Discovering patterns**
    - math and logic (C17/2, C25/1, C26/3, C33/2, C41/1)
    - general knowledge and common sense (C30/2, NY17, NY36/2)
  - **Miscellaneous** (C6, NY26/2 dice, C32/2 Morse code, NY39/2)

## Mixed

- **Logical anagramsearch** (C36/2)
- **Crossnumber** (general knowledge and arithmetic) (S49)

## LANGUAGE-DEPENDENT PUZZLES

### Word recombination

- **Anagram** (S135, S150)
- **Letter choice** (S138, S151, S134)
- **Syllable pick** (S139)
- **Cryptogram** (S145)
- **Gaps** (S152)
- **Restore a crossword**
  - anagram crossword (S72)
  - choice words (S75, S76, S82)
  - cross cryptograms (S80)
  - fill gaps (S81, S89, S90)
  - blackout (S74)
  - separate and fit (S79, S85)
  - letter fit (S77, S78)
  - syllable fit (S88)
- **Word chains** (S153)

### Word mastermind Puzzles with indirect clues

- **Context puzzles**
  - story crossword (S68-70)
  - complete a rhyme: anagram (S154, S163), homonym (S155), charade (S156, 160), palindrome (S157), metagram (S158), number code (S161)
- **Thematic wordsearch** (S137)
- **Anagram** (S148, S149)
- **Mastermind - single puzzles** (S131, S159, S162)

### Rebus (S240, S241)

- **Quiz puzzles**
  - **With independent answers**
    - quiz as it is (C2/3)
    - multiple-choice quiz (S141)
    - elimination quiz (S113)
  - **With answers linked indirectly**

### References:

- (NY) - 1st World Puzzle Championship ("Games");
- (G) - 2nd World Puzzle Championship ("Lucky");
- (R) - 4th World Puzzle Championship ("Rebus Labirin'Ecram");
- (S) - The Sumera Canisepw (draft);
- (L) - H. Lindgren, "Recreational Problems in Geometric Dissections and How to Solve Them", NY, 1972;
- (G) - S. Golomb, "Polyominoes", NY.

- only by the final solution, which appears: along grid lines (S104, S114-117, S120); by way of a number code (S94, S118, S119), exotic puzzle (S121); by word recombination (S106, S144)
- syllable constructors (S142, S108, S103)
- quiz across and fitword down (S61)

- **With answers sharing common letters**
  - chainwords (S100, S102, S133)
  - answer recombination (S96, S97, S122, S123; S99, S105, S107, S109-111)

- number coded answers (S112)
  - crosswords and variations (S95 (min), S4-6, S8-11, S14, S17, S18, S20-23, S24-30, S35, S36, S32)
- crosswords with pictures (S7-S47), wordplay (S15, S48, S50, S51), wordsearch (S12)
- "gearworks" (S32-34, S37, S38)
  - magic crosswords (S41-44)
  - two-way wordbreaks (S98)
  - double spiral (S101)

### Crosswords with uncertainty

- **Two-valued clues for one or two grids** (S45, S46, S54)
- **Uncertain direction of entries** (S16, S23, S56)
- **Uncertain positions of some entries** (S39, S40, S55, S57-60)
- **Jigwords** (=quasi+fitword) (S62-67, S71)
- **Miscellaneous** (S19)

## Mixed

- **Tilwords** (S91, S132, S133)
- **Wordplay jumble** (S136, S143)
- **Quiz patchwork on a grid** (S55)
- **Cross-chainword** (S13)

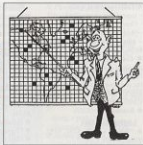
### Surprise language puzzles

- (C6/1 - 1, 2, 4, 5, 7), tricky reading (S234)

## Puzzle news

Authors, editors, team captains, competitors, enthusiasts, wise men and children at the same time, thinkers and doers, hosts and visitors, colleagues, partners, rivals. Friends. And a whole world full of puzzles and magazines and solvers and places to see and things to be done.

It could be a more pleasant world if we hear from each other more often - by the "News Letter", for instance. The Olympics of brain and knowledge should become even more Olympics of friendship. And our world, our word and our work would be better too.



### NEVZAT ERKMEN, Turkey

Following are bits of news from Turkey:

■ I don't have much to say, except wishing "A Happy New Year!" to all our puzzle friends and thanking Erja, Tetsuya, Will and Vitezslav for their creative Christmas puzzle cards.

■ I founded within my publishing house, a club called "The Puzzle Club of Turkey".

■ I started a new puzzle championship, called "1st Puzzle Championship For Primary School Children of Turkey". This is an yearly event. I intend to make it international. Anyone interested? No sponsors yet, though.

■ I made a second printing of Paint by Numbers Vol.1. I also published Paint by Numbers Vol.2 & a Multi-Coloured Paint by Numbers Album. This year I intend to publish Vols.3 & 4 too. (All agreements being made with Tohan Corp., the copyrights agency of Tetsuya.)

■ An university in Belgium has offered me a grant of 1,100 US\$ per month for 9 months to do research in their library to complete my work on a "Ulysses Dictionary". Their condition: I have to be younger than 45! Still, this gives me a chance to ask them to form a Belgium Puzzle Team, somehow.

■ Mrs. Mary Robinson, President of Ireland, has sent me a letter congratulating me for the translation of "Ulysses" into Turkish. I am going to make some contacts in Ireland towards the formation of an Irish Puzzle Team, while I am visiting Dublin for a few days to attend the Bloomsday (June 16) ceremonies, where I am invited. Anyone coming?

### ROB GEENSEN, The Netherlands

A number of souvenirs from the WPC in Utrecht have been made available for participants and others who are interested.

1. The book entitled

2. "Wereldkampioenschap Puzzelsport" (World Puzzle Championship).

This book (written in Dutch) contains the puzzles used for the championship (plus the solutions). The screentest and three-dimensional puzzles are of course not included. The price is US\$ 8.00.

2. WPC'96 Video

An one-hour video tape has been compiled of material shot during the championship, with commentary in English. Copies of the video tape (VHS system) are available for US\$ 15.00.

3. CD-ROM "Screentest"

The audio-visual presentation entitled "Screentest" is now available on CD-ROM. N.B.: this material is not for publication and can only be used for demonstrations. The price is US\$ 20.00.

The items above can be ordered by sending a cheque or cash payment by registered mail to:

Puzzelsport-WPC, P.O.Box 1952, 2003 BB Haarlem, The Netherlands.

### ANDREAS FRANZ, Germany

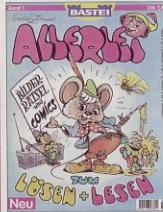
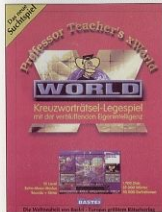
In 1997 we have four items of importance:

1. In March we get an Internet address: <http://WWW.raetsel.de>

2. Our first computer-game "Professor Teacher's x World" as shown on the WPC in Utrecht will be released on the 18th. of March.

3. "Bastei" leads the German market of classical puzzles with more than 80% now.

4. The German national competition will take place from Friday, June 13th, till Sunday, 15th.



The modern times call for modern means of expression - also in the field of puzzle culture. "Professor Teacher's World", for instance, is the new "addictive game" launched by the greatest European puzzle publishing house, "Bastei". The cover at the right belongs to another recent novelty from the same house: a delicious magazine for the growing up generations of puzzlers, entitled "All kinds of" and drawn by Georg Zemann. Maybe, prototypes of international puzzle products for the global market of tomorrow. ("NL")

### JAIME PONIACHIK, Argentina

Dear Ovidiu,

I am grateful for the "News Letter", and for your enduring inspiration.

■ I hope to be in Utrecht with an Argentine team, assembled with players from our New York and Brno teams. We are not making a national competition.

■ Just a few days before Utrecht we are going to carry out the 2nd Argentine Puzzle Congress. Its purpose is to spread puzzledom and to settle bonds with education and art.

■ With respect to the shift towards crossword puzzles, I have some doubts.

■ I think that the WPC should embody some fine board games. It would enlarge the competition puzzle culture as well as the business field. Would you introduce this proposal in the next "News Letter"? You should ask which board games do the team players and captains suggest to include.

I hope we'll be able to talk about these items soon.

## HOT LINES

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- (v.Romania)

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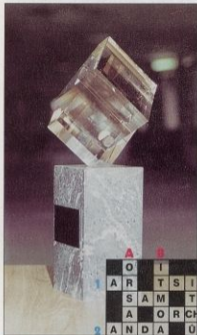
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## YUGOSLAVIA



For the second consecutive time in the possession of the terrific US team: the "Puzzle Star" challenge trophy of the World Puzzle Championship, a work of the Romanian sculptor Alexandru Ghildag.

Among the numerous technical, statistical, analytic, informative or – simply – amicable messages received for this "News Letter" edition, we enjoyed also this marvellous bilingual crossword wish, signed by **Vítězslav Koudelka**, Czech Republic

Najděte cestu od některého vchodu (1–10) směrem k letopočtu 1997 tak, abyste si mohli plynule přečíst vzkaz (26 písmen).

Find the path from one of entries (A – H) to 1997 with a short message (30 letters) for you.

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