

TCNews

BULLETIN OF THE FIP THEMATIC COMMISSION

N. 8 - JUNE 1999

FOREWORD

This issue of TCNews is released for the coming Conference of the Commission that will take place on the occasion of Philexfrance 99.

It is a great pleasure to welcome the delegates in Paris, for a session that will discuss the proposed changes to the SREV.

In the last days I have received the input from the members of the Bureau and other delegates requested by the same Bureau to give their comments. This enlarged team has been put in place to ensure an appropriate representation of all continents and of different thematic experiences.

The members of the team received from me in February a combined document with the GREV, the SREV and a proposal for the Guidelines. As soon as the final draft of the SREV will be approved, the proposal for the new Guidelines will be also updated and circulated.

In the comments received I have found a general consensus for the assumptions that I circulated in my introductory letter to the delegates.

- The Guidelines have the task of providing advice and explaining in a more detailed way the concepts of the SREV (which is already a long text).

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- The Guidelines should not establish any new rule but clarify those presented in the GREV and in the SREV. Their approach must be positive, explaining how to do things, rather than negative, i.e. listing what not to do.

I am expecting the full cooperation of the delegates in improving our Guidelines so that they are apt to the role we assign them: *clear, consistent, comprehensive, and constructive.*

- The GREV is a document common to all exhibitors, and covers both postal philately and revenue philately. It must be considered as a given, as it is established at FIP general level.
- The SREV of the thematic class presents the definition of the exhibits belonging to a postal philately class. In this respect, it

is proposed and maintained by the Commission.

Its layout must be consistent with the GREV, of which it represents a specialised extension. Its content must be clear and concise.

I am sure that after this last review the thematic SREV is closer to the final definition. The members of the Bureau unanimously approved the draft in London and a large majority of them believes that it represents the most appropriate choice. In our meeting we shall discuss and approve it.

For the meeting in Paris we have proposed a new scheme of agenda, in order to give more time to delegates to present innovative national experiences of international relevance. With so many Federations represented it is a must to capitalize on the achievements (and on the errors) already

experienced, to multiply the first and to avoid repeating the second ones.

Furthermore, delegates have been asked to propose a topic for a panel. I am looking forward to receiving other proposals so that we can decide the most interesting and appropriate subject. Based on the indications received, it will be addressing some key aspects of judging. I have been asked to look into subjects like balance of thematic judgement between national and international level, consistency of judgement through exhibitions and with other classes, education of international jurors and team leaders aimed at ensuring a larger consensus.

I wish the organisers of Philexfrance the best success and I am welcoming all delegates to a fruitful meeting, as we had at Philexfrance 1982 and 1989, and in 1995 with the Bureau.

Giancarlo Morolli

THEMATIC COMMISSION Meeting

Paris, 9 July, 1999

Delegates are invited to attend the Conference of the Commission that will take place in Paris on Friday, July 9th, from 10.00 to 13.30, in the "Salle Cérés", on the Exhibition premises of PHILEXFRANCE 99.

Agenda:

Business Session (10.00 - 11.45)

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of the minutes of the previous conference (see TCNews 7/1999, page 2)
3. Activity report of the President
4. New SREV
5. Miscellaneous

6. Next Meeting

Communications Session (12.00 - 13.30)

1. Presentation of Delegates
2. Panel on specific topic (to be announced)

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THE NEW SREV: AN OPPORTUNITY AND A CHALLENGE

The new SREV is, at the same time, an opportunity and a challenge.

It is an opportunity for the following reasons:

1. It creates the conditions for a wide discussion among the delegates, who in turn have to implement it in their countries. This implies

- **A common understanding of the terms used.** In the recent days I received some comments from the members involved in the definition of the text to be presented, and it was evident that some terms are of different meaning to different delegates.

Those delegates who have been in the Commission for a long time and have participated directly into its activities have a sound understanding of the concepts, because they have been exposed to the process of change. Those who have joined recently the Commission or have been unable to participate to its meeting may have developed a different understanding of the same concepts. For instance, terms like "original" and "creative" are interpreted differently.

- **A common implementation of the concepts.** It should be clear that the FIP regulations are valid, *per se*, at FIP international exhibitions and it is responsibility of each national Federation to extend their validity at national Federation. Some Federations, in full autonomy, have different regulations at national level and that has to be respected. In the latter case, it will be a task of the individual exhibitor to adapt the exhibit to the different regulations, depending of the type of exhibition the same is showing at.

Anyway, there should be no difference in implementation in those Federations that adopt FIP regulations at national level. The only difference may be in the table linking awards and points needed to achieve them, that normally is one or two levels milder, depending on the level of the show (national, regional, etc.).

- **A common effort to stay on the same track.** Today we have developed too many de facto separate definitions and pseudo rules that have no reference in any FIP official document. In preparing the new guidelines each delegate must
 - verify that they fulfill their role, and
 - contribute to change those parts that are not adequate.

Once that is performed its should be the end of these "undefined" rules, and all experts should only use the concepts of the SREV and of the Guidelines.

- **A clearer understanding with the jurors of the other classes.** It addresses better the situation in those countries, where the judgment of thematic exhibits is made jointly by thematic and other jurors. The new scheme, that is by far closer to that of the GREV, enables jurors accredited in other classes to apply the thematic methodology with the same level of confidence that thematic jurors apply to the other classes.

This aspect has validity also at FIP level, as the awards of all classes are approved by the whole jury and discussions and objections are dealt at best using commonly shared criteria rather than emotional or subjective approaches.

2. To have a commonly shared SREV implies also that its implementation at international level is **consistent through the exhibitions**

and coherent through the classes. Furthermore a consistency has to be reached between judgement at international and national level, for those Federations who have adopted the SREV also nationally.

The problem of judgment refers also to the processes of approval of jurors, of appointment of the same, of education of jurors and team leaders.

The Bureau will analyze the facts, and already in TCNews 7 Gunnar Dahlvig presented his opinion on the results of the thematic class *vis a vis* the other FIP competitive classes. To define the adequate approach it is necessary a discipline in the analysis, and a generic message of consensus or dissent does not help much. Again, emotional comments based on sporadic facts are of no use.

Commission Presidents are not involved in the process of composition of the jury, but they, and the Bureau, can drive the education process of those who are candidate to be selected so that a common methodology is applied. More focus on team leader responsibility should also be established, so that they are fully aware of the responsibilities they have to take.

3. Finally, we have to bear in mind that **our addressee is the collector.** Almost all jurors are also collectors and most of them are, at present, exhibiting from time to time.

The best way to serve the collector is to present clear and easy documents, so that he or she can learn out of them and improve the exhibit. We have to avoid that the new Guidelines will present hermetic or cumbersome concepts, understandable by advanced philatelists only. Exhibitors should look at our papers as help available any time they have a doubt or a question.

Furthermore, we have to give collectors who become exhibitors a correct sense of

expectation, i.e. make clear that **international exhibitions are the top of the world** and that there is no bias in starting with lower awards. It is up to the exhibitor to work hard and to improve the exhibit: Results will follow. I always remember that Prof. Emmanuel Eylan started with a silver bronze at IBRA 73 and ended up in the FIP Championship Class.

It is unfortunate that among several newcomers there is the (wrong) belief that adding important pieces the way to gold is shorter and faster.

It should be clear that if the same items were not melted with the other pieces of the exhibit in a well thought development the award would not be satisfactory. The concept that thematic philately is at the same time attractive and difficult should be very clear, and the first level of difficulty resides in the globalisation of the pieces to be searched and studied, thematically and philatelically. Love at first sight with a piece could be wrong....

The new SREV is aiming at giving those exhibitors who tame the difficulties the highest awards.

To make the SREV well implemented and received: this is the challenge that faces all of us. With a good spirit of cooperation we shall succeed.

Giancarlo Morolli

**DELEGATES ARE INVITED TO
GIVE THEIR CONTRIBUTION
TO TCNews
BY SUBMITTING INFORMATION
OF INTERNATIONAL RELEVANCE**
- **ACTIVITIES**
- **PUBLICATIONS**

SPECIAL REGULATIONS FOR THE EVALUATION OF THEMATIC EXHIBITS AT FIP EXHIBITIONS

Article 1: Competitive Exhibitions

In accordance with Article 1.4 of the General Regulations of the FIP for the Evaluation of Competitive Exhibits at FIP Exhibitions (GREV), these Special Regulations have been developed to supplement those principles with regard to thematic exhibits.

They are explained in the Guidelines to these Special Regulations.

Article 2: Competitive Exhibits

A thematic exhibit, which is a part of a collection, develops a theme according to a plan, demonstrating the thematic and philatelic knowledge through the items chosen.

Such knowledge should result in the best possible selection and arrangement of the material and the accuracy of the relevant thematic text.

Article 3: Principles of Exhibit Composition

3.1 Appropriate Philatelic Material

3.1.1. A thematic exhibit uses all types of appropriate postal-philatelic material. No non postal-philatelic items cannot be admitted (ref. GREV Art 3.2).

3.1.2. Each item must be connected to the chosen theme and present its thematic information in the clearest and most effective way. Moreover, this information must emanate from a postal authority.

3.2. Thematic Treatment

The treatment of a thematic exhibit consists of the definition of the structure of the work (title and plan), and the elaboration of each point of the same structure (development).

3.2.1 Title and Plan

The title with any subtitle defines the scope of the exhibit.

The plan defines the structure of the ^{collection} exhibit and its subdivisions. It has to be correct, logical and balanced, and cover all major aspects relevant to the title. It should be entirely structured according to

thematic criteria. The order of the main chapters and their subdivisions should demonstrate the development of the plan rather than list its main aspects.

The title and the plan must be presented on a page at the beginning of the exhibit, written in one of the official FIP languages.

3.2.2. Development

The development means the elaboration of the theme in depth, aiming to achieve an arrangement of the material fully compliant with the plan.

The elaboration utilises the thematic information available from:

- the purpose of issue
- the primary and secondary elements of the design
- other postal characteristics.

Such elaboration requires:

- a thorough knowledge of the chosen theme
- a high degree of philatelic knowledge
- a thematic text, to ensure the necessary thematic links and to provide thematic details, whenever needed.

3.2.3 Creativity and Originality

Creativity refers to the introduction of new themes, or new aspects of an established or known theme.

Originality refers to new approaches for known themes.

Both Creativity and Originality may refer to all components of Treatment.

Article 4: Criteria for Evaluation

The general criteria, as specified in GREV Art. 4, are adapted to the peculiarities of the thematic class.

4.1. Thematic Treatment

Treatment will be evaluated according to the title and the plan, the development, the creativity and the originality shown in the exhibit.

4.1.1. The title and the plan will be evaluated considering the:

- consistency between the plan and the title
- presence and adequacy of the plan page
- correct, logical and balanced structure (division and subdivision)
- coverage of all major aspects necessary to develop the theme.

4.1.2. The development will be evaluated considering the:

- correct assembly and positioning of the items in conformity with the plan
- depth, shown through connections, cross references, ramifications, causes and effects
- balance, by giving to each thematic detail the importance corresponding to its significance within the theme
- elaboration of all aspects in the plan
- conciseness and relevancy of the thematic text.

4.1.3. Creativity will be evaluated considering the introduction of a theme not previously shown.

Originality will be evaluated considering the degree of new analysis and/or synthesis applied to a known theme.

4.2. Knowledge, Personal Study and Research

The criterion for Knowledge, Personal Study and Research requires the evaluation of the thematic and philatelic aspects of the exhibit.

4.2.1 Thematic Knowledge, Personal Study and Research will be evaluated considering the

- appropriateness and correctness of thematic text
- correct thematic use of the material
- presence of new thematic findings for the theme.

4.2.2 Philatelic Knowledge, Personal Study and Research will be evaluated considering the

- full compliance with the rules of postal philately
- presence of the widest possible range of postal-philatelic material and its balanced use

- suitability of postal documents
- appropriateness and correctness of philatelic text, when required
- presence of philatelic studies and related skilful use of important philatelic material.

4.3 Condition and Rarity

(ref.: GREV, Art. 4.6)

4.4 Presentation

(ref.: GREV, Art. 4.7)

Article 5: Judging of Exhibits

5.1. Thematic exhibits will be judged by the approved specialists in their respective field and in accordance with the section V, Art. 31 to 47, of the GREX (ref.: GREV, Art. 5.1).

5.2. For thematic exhibits, the following relative terms are presented to lead the Jury to a balanced evaluation (ref.: GREV, Art. 5.2).

Treatment	35
Title and Plan	15
Development	15
Creativity and Originality	5
Knowledge, Personal Study and Research	30
Thematic	15
Philatelic	15
Condition and Rarity	30
Condition	10
Rarity	20
Presentation	5
Total	100

Article 6: Concluding Provisions

To be updated in the final draft.

TCNews N. 10 will be issued in October 1999.
News and reports must be sent either to the President or the Secretary to by 15.9.99.
Input should be sent preferably on diskette or via e-mail, in MS Word or text format.

THE FIP THEMATIC COMMISSION

We welcome the following **new delegates**:

- Greece

Mr. Pandelis Leoussis
1, D. Ralli str.
GR 111-44 Athens

- New Zealand

Mr. Doug South
P.O. Box 3237
Richmond, Nelson

To *Manos Anagnostou* and *Brian Vincent* the best appreciation for their cooperation and the best wishes from all the delegates.

Furthermore, the following addresses published in TCNews 6, page 5, are to be corrected in the part underlined:

Dr. Ruben Reis Kley
Caixa Postal 3370
01060-970 São Paulo, SP, Brazil

Mrs. Ann Trigg
4865 Spaulding Drive
Clarence NY 14031, USA

With reference to the **e-mail address** list published in TCNews 7, page 4, please note the following updates

- New

Damian Läge dlaege@allgpsy.unizh.ch

Geoffrey McAuley mcauleyg@indigo.ie

- Additional

Dan Dobrescu (home) dand@mail.rtms.ro

Changes

Manfred Bergman
manfred.bergman@olimpic.org

Luis Fernando Diaz lfdiaz@cariari.ucr.ac.cr.

**NEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEW
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Thanks to Hans-Walter Bosserhoff

The German Federation formalized the change of delegate anticipated in the previous TCNews. The President of the Commission expressed his friendly and deep thanks to Dipl. Ing. Hans – Walter Bosserhoff who worked for the Thematic Commission for more than 25 years as expert, delegate, member of the Bureau and Vice President of the same Commission.

Thematic Seminar in China

Shi Weilin, Commissioner General of China '99, also on behalf of the All China Philatelic Federation, has invited Giancarlo Morolli to hold a Thematic Seminar on the occasion of the international exhibition in Beijing.

The Seminar, addressing both advanced collectors and general ones, is scheduled on August 27th at 9.00.

Franceska Rapkin receives the Distinguished Topical Philatelist Award

Franceska Rapkin, member of the Bureau, will receive the DTP award on the occasion of the celebrations for the 50th birthday of the American Topical Association, scheduled in Milwaukee late July 1999.