



Newsletter 1

Dear Friends,

We are looking forward to seeing you all in Stuttgart in February of next year. These newsletters, of which this is the first of four (see below, "Newsletters"), will serve to inform you of the general state of play in the preparations for the tournament, and of any deadlines, schedules, etc. correct at the time of going to press. For the latest up-to-date information between newsletters, visit our website, www.schoolsdebate.de.

We wish we could claim a hoary and resplendent tradition of English debating at German schools, but there ain't any! In 1994, we at one school accepted an invitation from our twin city of Cardiff to send a team as part of their 1,000th anniversary celebrations, and we entered the spirit of it not even knowing the rules. A year later, we applied to register for WSDC 1995, also in Cardiff, but our application got mislaid. Despite those setbacks, we have entered a WSDC team every year since then, and we are proud to be able to run WSDC 2004 for the first time in "old Europe."

We started up at one school and until three years ago we were strictly regional, centred in and around Stuttgart where, with two dozen active local schools, we still maintain ascendancy. Nevertheless, we are now debating in Saxony, the Rhineland-Palatinate and Hamburg as well - making four "Bundesländer" out of 16 - and with an offshoot in Geneva. While remaining a grassroots activity, and essentially dependent on the enthusiasm of individual teachers and the good will of head teachers, we have set up an umbrella organisation, the Debating Society Germany e.V., and we offer regular workshops as in-service training for teachers of English and at teacher training colleges. We run annual all-German competitions in May, and every November we invite a dozen other European (and Israeli, and American) teams for a week's contest. Maybe we are fostering the use of English as a lingua franca for young people in the EU.

Official Germany is still sceptical. Our "points of information", our clashes, and our being called upon to defend either side of any argument, all go against the grain. Symptomatically, German-language debating, under the auspices of "Jugend debattiert", which has followed on our heels and which has been systematically and richly sponsored from above, seems to want to propagate harmony. Participants are encouraged to find a "middle path" and to stretch out a hand to the other side. Debaters are individual speakers, not teams, and may change sides. We wonder whether this reflects a yen for harmony in German society.

We still have a long way to go, but we are grateful for the opportunity to debate against top teams from English-speaking countries and not to be relegated to an apartheid second league of non-native-speakers. How many readers have tried debating in a language other than English?

Registration and Deadlines

Having already been in contact with China, Seoul, Hungary and Macedonia, we now need to start getting a sense of how many countries will be coming in 2004. Could each country please therefore send an e-mail to Angelika Hoeness (hoeness@t-online.de) asap containing

the country contact person, contact details (e-mail, fax, post and telephone), how likely your participation will be and how many people you are likely to send.

1st October 2003: **Registration opens.** We will accept **up to 36 teams** (in the order of the dates of registration).

15th November 2003: **Final last registration,** full payment of entry fees.

30th November 2003: Wishes for sightseeing trips in and around Stuttgart
(see below, “Tentative Schedule” and “Sightseeing”).

You can register on-line, all payments can be done electronically. As you should all be aware, the entry fee will be nearly the same as in Lima. We are working hard to find more sponsoring and thus reduce it, but for the time being, the entry fees for WSDC 2004 will be as follows:

? **Debaters** (3-5 per country), **coaches** and **adjudicators** (1 per country): **300 .- €**

? Additional adjudicators: 350 .- €

? Observers: 1.000 .- €

Accommodation

All accommodation will be in Maritim Hotel, situated right at the centre of Stuttgart offering a wide range of facilities and easy access to the Swabian capital's cultural highlights. The actual competition will take place at schools partly in Stuttgart and various schools all over Baden-Württemberg.

Transport

All participants will receive a Stuttgart Transport ticket which will be valid for all public transport within the city area.

Tentative Schedule

Wednesday 11th - Arrival, registration

Thursday 12th - (morning) - Adjudicators' briefing (compulsory for adjudicators!); free time for debaters

(afternoon) - Stuttgart City Council reception & guided tour of Stuttgart

(evening) - Opening ceremony

Friday 13th - (morning) - Round 1 and

(afternoon) - Round 2 (Stuttgart schools)

Saturday 14th - Sightseeing (Heidelberg or Tübingen)

Sunday 15th - (morning) - Free

(afternoon) - Round 3 (Stuttgart)

Monday 16th - (morning) - Round 4 and

(afternoon) - Round 5 (various venues in Stuttgart vicinity)

(evening) - Bosch reception

Tuesday 17th - (morning) - Round 6 and

(afternoon) - Round 7 (various venues in Tübingen)

(evening) - Stuttgarter Zeitung reception

Wednesday 18th - (morning) - Round 8 and

(afternoon) - Octofinals (Stuttgart schools)

(evening) - Visit to opera, musical or play

Thursday 19th - (morning) - Quarter-finals and

(afternoon) - Semi-finals (venues to be announced)

(evening) - Party (carnival?)

Friday 20th - (morning) - Worlds Council

(afternoon) - Grand Final

(evening) - Dinner (Liederhalle?)

Saturday 21st - Departure

Sightseeing and other activities

We really want you not only to benefit from the battle of wits that will ensue, but to taste, see and enjoy Southern Germany and Stuttgart, and of course, an excursion to Heidelberg or Hohenzollern Castle and Tuebingen will definitely be included. In addition there are plenty of facilities:

In Stuttgart: Sports centres, swimming baths; rack & pinion railway, TV tower, station tower, Wilhelma Zoo; Staatsgalerie (art gallery), Lindenmuseum (prehistory), Altes Schloss (state museum), Daimler-Chrysler and Porsche Automobile Museum; Planetarium. Cinemas, theatres. For further information, visit the City of Stuttgart's website, <http://www.stuttgart-tourist.de>, or telephone the (English-speaking) staff at Stuttgart Marketing, Tel. **(0711)-222280-0**.

In vicinity: Heidelberg, Tübingen (old university towns), Black Forest and Swabian Jura (skiing if weather suitable)

Weather

Stuttgart during the month of February can be cold (temperatures down to -25 ° C. are known!) and wet. Snow is becoming increasingly rare, although the higher areas in the vicinity (Black Forest and Swabian Jura) sometimes have enough snow cover for gentle downhill or cross-country skiing. You should bring some warm clothing for outdoor activities, including such useful heat-trappers as hats, gloves and scarves.

Currency

Germany's currency is the Euro, which at the moment is worth just over one US dollar.

Eating and Drinking

Stuttgart is well supplied with restaurants, fast food outlets and snack bars and stalls. Prices, as in all capital cities, tend to be higher in the city centre than in the suburbs and towns around. However, if one avoids obvious tourist traps one should be able to get a pizza for eight euros and a bottle of coke for three euros, or to have a reasonable three-course meal for 30 euros.

Newsletters

There will be 3 more newsletters: mid October 2003
mid December 2003
January 2004.

In our handbook we would like to publish profiles of the teams participating; so **by the end of November** please send us a short (max. 120 words) description of your team (with photos), and of your triumphs (and disasters!) to date!

We strongly believe that this event will be a really rewarding experience for all participants. Events such as this reinforce our belief in humanity, peace and a better world.

We hope that you will be able to enter a team and we look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

With best wishes,

Angelika Höness and Michael Pates