

## **Interview with Thomas Bessis**

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One of the more distinguished guests of the 40th festival is 21-year-old Thomas Bessis from Paris, France. Thomas represented France 5 times in the European Junior Championship, winning 3rd place in Antalya 2000 (Schools) and in Riccione 2005 (Juniors). He was also a member of the French Junior team winning 4th place in the World Championship in Australia 2005. We talked to him during a break in the Mixed Team event at the opening day of the festival.

### **What do you do besides playing bridge?**

I study mathematics in Paris. Now in the 4th year of University.

### **Are you going to be a bridge professional?**

No, I have no such plans. Maybe later in life. I have played in Estoril (World Championship 2005) with a sponsor but I don't like sponsors. Maybe I can do something else connected with bridge such as creating software.

### **Who is your regular partner?**

I have been playing together with Julien Gaviard for 8 years. He was always my partner in the Juniors and recently we won 3rd place in the French open team championship and 4th place in the pairs championship.

### **Is he coming to this Festival?**

No, unfortunately he couldn't come, so I am playing here with my Israeli friends whom I have met during the Junior championships: Dana Tal, Ron Hoffman, Ron Segev, Eldad Ginossar, Yotam Bar-Yosef. In the

Open Pairs I am playing with Thalia Koren. And today, in the Mixed Teams, I am playing for the Ron Segev team.

### **So, none of your French friends has come together with you?**

No. My uncle, Alain Levy (member of the world champion French team of the 1990s), who has once trained the Israeli team, was training the Turkish team 2 weeks ago and he had to spend some time together with his family so he can't come here.

### **What are your impressions of Israel?**

I haven't seen very much of it yet, just arrived this afternoon. But I am going to have some free time to visit Haifa and Jerusalem.

### **How do you like the Tel Aviv Festival?**

Everything is perfect; and the atmosphere here is more friendly than in French festivals.

**Thank you very much**