



NEW ZEALAND BRIDGE REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Held at the Hamilton Bridge Club commencing at 10.00am

Wednesday April 25 2012

PRESENT Board: Kay Nicholas (Chair), Graham Wakefield, Lynne Fegan, Patsy Walters, Jenny Wilkinson, Alan Turner & Allan Barclay

Secretary Alister Stuck, Bridge Development Officer Richard Solomon,

Regional Representatives: Kristen Collins, Anne-Louise Stokes (Otago/Southland), Trish Scott, (Canterbury), Chris Marshall (Top of the South), Karen Martelletti, Brett Glass, Rona Driscoll, Ray McCully, Jan Spaans & Judith Bishop (Waikato Bays), Peter Bowyer (Auckland) Dinnie Hall, (Wellington) Alan Doddridge, (Central Districts)

Technical Support: Keith Nicholas

Apologies: Arie Geursen & Michael Johnstone

1 WELCOME

Kay opened the conference and introduced Ann Archbold, Vice President of the Hamilton Bridge Club who welcomed everyone to Hamilton and their Club.

2 ANZAC DAY

The meeting observed a moments silence in honour of ANZAC Day.

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was moved that the minutes of the Regional Conference held in Wellington on August 6 2011 were a true and correct record of the meeting.

CARRIED

4 REGIONAL REPORTS

Written Reports from Auckland, Waikato, Wellington, TOTS, Canterbury and Otago Southland were circulated prior to the Conference. Copies were attached.

5 GENERAL BUSINESS

Group Insurance (Wellington Region)

Dinnie Hall sought feedback from the meeting regarding the situation a number of Clubs are facing with a significant increase in earthquake insurance cover. The Wellington Region suggested that the Board use the leverage of 110 potential clients with the view to obtaining a group Scheme and reduced premiums.

Graham Wakefield responded for the Board and reminded the delegates that there was a voluntary scheme in place already through Brokers Jardine Lloyd Thomson. New Zealand Bridge has a longstanding relationship with Jardines and enjoys their support by way of sponsorship of Congress.

It was noted that there is a significant increase to Earthquake cover throughout the country as the market reacts to and repositions following the Christchurch earthquakes.

The meeting agreed that this issue would be best revisited in 12 months time once the full impact of the premium increases was known. Alister is to contact Jardines to ask that they include some information specific to this issue in their next newsletter

Treatment of GST (TOTS Region)

Chris Marshall presented this topic on behalf of the TOTS Region who were seeking a further review of the Board Policy as it relates to the treatment of GST on Regional transactions. The Region expressed concern regarding the GST position on some of their major outgoings as they did not directly benefit from any GST refund. Graham Wakefield responded and reaffirmed the Boards position as previously promulgated at the last Conference.

No transaction is treated in isolation for GST purposes and confirmed that on the converse side the Board meets all GST obligations relating to all income across the group and does not seek to recover any such component from the Regions.

Accordingly the Board was not willing to amend its current policy and allow certain transactions at a Regional level to be treated in isolation for GST purposes.

11.45 am - Graham Wakefield left the meeting due to a prior commitment.

System Cards & Pre-Alerting (TOTS Region)

Chris Marshall presented a paper seeking changes to the Tournament and Alerting Regulations namely the abolition of all pre-alerting and making the carrying of approved System Cards mandatory for all Tournaments. The delegates discussed the two facets of the proposal at length; there was little support to amend the pre-alerting Regulations but significant support to have the System Card Regulations reviewed.

Moved that the Board consider an amendment to page D37 in the Manual which would see it mandatory for System Card to be carried at all Tournaments.

CARRIED

Stratified Tournaments for Masterpoint Purposes (TOTS Region)

This idea was first presented at the previous Conference where it was agreed that Chris Marshall would collate further information. The Region would like the ability to offer additional Masterpoints at 8B tournaments to the highest placed Intermediate and Junior Pairs who finish outside the placings where Masterpoints would be awarded ordinarily.

The proposing Region felt that this would encourage lower grade pairs to participate in these events if there was more of an opportunity to earn Masterpoints in addition to any grade based prizes that might be on offer with the Intermediate Pair earning 5B Points and the Junior Pair 3B Points. There was some support for the proposal but equally a number who felt that this had the potential to prematurely bump players up a grade. It was agreed that the Board be asked to consider further.

Moved that the Board consider the proposal further with the view to amending the awards for 8B events.

CARRIED

Presentation- NZ Bridge Website

Alister gave a short presentation including a preliminary look at the new Website that is being commissioned for NZ Bridge. It is expected that the new look Website will be fully operational by the end of the year.

Presentation- Changes to the 15A Tournaments from 2014

Alister outlined the changes approved by the Board to the 15A Tournaments effective from 2014.

The North Island and South Island Pairs and Teams Tournaments are to be upgraded to 20 A Point events and re branded as Island Championships. These events will be hosted by rotation by each of the Regions in the particular Island. The minimum board requirements to be increased to 120 and the Pairs events must include a Barometer final.

The remaining 15A events (Centre Island Pairs, Teams and the recently approved Swiss Pairs) will be re branded as NZ 15A Pairs, Teams or Swiss Pairs and will circulate around the 3 Regions not hosting an Island event in the particular year.

Workshop- Growing our Business

The remainder of the conference was dedicated to a discussion around promotion of Bridge as a preferred leisure activity and opportunities to grow and retain increased membership.

To set the scene Keith Nicholas presented a series of slides detailing membership trends at a National, Regional & Club level in addition to the number of registered Bridge players per head of population in the main Centres.

Karen Martelletti and Allan Barclay gave a presentation of the Region wide Website facility that operates in the Waikato Bays Region. The Regional Committee manages the site which includes a page for each Club in the Region and a facility for electronic entry for Tournaments.

The meeting discussed this and cited player retention and the perceived image of Bridge as the major barriers to success.

A number of opportunities (listed below) to grow the membership were discussed Branding & Image of Bridge including:-

Social Media Opportunities

Casual & Social Bridge events

500 Tournaments

Graduation Certificates for learners

Session Times that suit players

The Board was scheduled to meet in Christchurch at the end of May for a Strategic planning day and the ideas raised at the Regional Conference would be carried forward to that session.

News from NZ Bridge Foundation

Karen Martelletti gave a brief report on the activities of the Foundation including a proposal to explore joint venture fundraising initiatives with the Neurological foundation.

Clubs at Risk

Brett Glass raised an issue that had been discussed at a Regional level at a recent meeting. The Waikato Bays Committee has received feed back from one of its smaller Clubs (Huntly) following the release of the Bulletin by NZ Bridge reminding Clubs that all regular bridge sessions are to be included in Masterpoint Returns.

The Meeting was advised that the Huntly Club has not, and does not wish to include its day time session for Masterpoint purposes. It was suggested that the reason behind this was that in smaller Clubs often the same people were winning regularly and thus accumulating significant Masterpoints.

The Waikato Region supported this opinion and felt that as a result it was leading to grade promotions where players were out of their depth.

Alister advised that on the flip side there are numerous players both at small and large Clubs who are eager to amass Masterpoints and be regraded.

In the absence of any specific information it was difficult to gauge the full extent of the problem. Alister undertook to collate some information which could be considered at the next Board meeting.

There being no further business Kay thanked the Delegates for their attendance and participation during the day.

The meeting closed at 4.45pm

Next Regional Conference
Saturday August 25 2012

TOTS Region- Blenheim