



12<sup>th</sup> April, 2017

Well – here we are in the Chair, effective as of that auspicious date of 1<sup>st</sup> April. I have often smiled when I read of important changes taking place on that date; but humour is an important part of life and bridge so let's hope the date was a good omen.

Even before I was “installed”, things got quite busy: thanking most of the lovely people who were kind enough to send congratulatory messages (I am particular grateful for John Skipper's support) and even attending my first regional meeting.

We had the first meeting of the new Board on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April, and I was most encouraged by the positive forward looking approaches taken to issues – sure there were one or two backward looking moments, but nothing sufficient to derail our united approach on working for the betterment of bridge and bridge clubs in particular. The Board minutes will be online in a few days, and I hope that as time goes by we'll be able to be more expansive than seems to have been recent practice. But regardless of the minutes themselves, and they must naturally be somewhat formalistic, it is my intention to publish a [less formal](#) “Notes from the Chair” piece after every meeting, and hopefully even more regularly.

We received a very promising report from Karen Martelletti on progress with [changes to the website to allow clubs to manage their members and upload masterpoints automatically](#). It is currently undergoing a trial run with three clubs. A few “bugs” have been sorted out, and it should be ready to go operational in a few months. Karen's report will be attached to the Board minutes.

We sorted out what committees we would have this year, although we didn't have time to allocate individual responsibilities to Board members. That will obviously be an early priority. An exception was the Conduct and Discipline Committee which I had previously chaired. That responsibility was given to Len Anderson of Dunedin – thanks Len. Fergus More of Invercargill was reappointed as Hon Solicitor. Thanks for offering your services for another year Fergus.. Another early priority will be filling the vacancy that exists on the Board. [A notice seeking expressions of interest will go out shortly](#).

We did appoint myself and Alan Turner to the Constitutional Review Committee. Alan and I will co-opt other help on to the committee in the weeks to come, and start a consultation process with a view to having any major changes ready to go to next year's AGM. Please start thinking about any changes you'd like to see, or even send your ideas in now.

An issue which has been raised after the election is the non-publication of the votes received by each candidate. I gather that NZB has never released the voting figures. We decided that it was time to break with this tradition, and as of next year the voting figures will be made public. As to this year's results, we decided that individual candidates could get their figures from the Returning Officer if they wished; but that no public announcement of the list would be made.

One of the areas which has attracted much comment of late is the issue of master points, ranks and grading. As I commented during my campaign, I reckon there may well be potential for getting greater participation if a few changes were made. This issue needs a lot of thought, and has to be done well. I'm sure that whatever we come up with will attract healthy criticism; but at least I trust that no one will be able to say they never got a chance to have their say.

So there we are – less than 2 weeks in, getting my “feet under the table”, learning how much there is for me to learn, and enjoying the prospect of working with a great team united for the good of the game.

Alan Dormer  
NZB Chair

