



Newsletter No: 10

16 November 2018

It is now a few months since you have had a report from the Chair. We have not been standing still in the intervening months.

At the AGM we had the pleasure of inducting two new life members- Alan Turner (Tauranga) and Robyn Young (Renwick) - for their service to the game over a very long period. There was a very positive vibe at the AGM.

As you are aware one of our overarching objectives is to grow the game and increase player participation. This we are tackling on several fronts:-

- For the first time in many years player numbers are in excess of 14,000 (14250). We are tracking at 3% annual growth which is tremendous.
- Congratulations to the clubs who are getting people into lessons and retain them within the club.
- Clearly the RBM initiative is having a positive impact. In the Clubs being aided by a RBM we have had a 93% increase in people joining clubs from lessons (143:74).
- *Through the RBM initiative we have had a 130% increase in the retention rate of beginners still playing at the end of October.
- Tournament attendance is up by 689 and novice events attendance up by 296.

The increase in membership doesn't just happen. It is a result of reaching out and improving the profile of the game and making people aware of the beauty of the game.

However we need to recognise this requires a concerted effort, probably over many years. Over the last 12 months the RBM's have jointly submitted over 130 articles to local and national papers, with many being published.

As a society we tend to hide under a bushel and are reluctant to have photos and articles published. You may be surprised to learn these photos and articles are extremely positive and give our support a human face.

We therefore ask that you don't be shy and help in this initiative to grow the game. For those doing their part, thank-you.



Another initiative that NZBridge supports is the "Bridge Zone". This is proving to be a great broadcast and is another way of profiling the game and getting the message out. I hope you are listening.

The New Zealand Congress was held late September/early October. We had record numbers in attendance. Following congress we undertook a survey. Thank you for those who participated. The results are still being assessed, but already, we have decided to make some changes Congress in 2019.

Later this month (24th to 26th) we have the Inter-Provincials happening in Auckland. This is one of our premier events so we hope you will get behind your regional team and use this event to once again to profile the game.

If you are in Auckland come along and watch, otherwise do look at the matches on BBO.

Last week trials for Open and Mixed teams took place at the Orewa Club, north of Auckland. Some wonderful bridge if you has the opportunity to tune in. Congratulations to those selected for both these teams and for the Women's and Seniors. Personally I would like to thank the Orewa Club who hosted the two days. They did a wonderful job.

The board meeting last Tuesday was predominately business as usual. Work on the constitutional reviews ongoing. The plan is to go out for consultation in the first quarter of 2019.

On Tuesday we received a 5 year (2018:2022) youth strategy. We have set time aside in December for some "blue sky" thinking and will be considering the youth strategy and a new marketing strategy. Our 2019 business plan and budget will take place following this meeting.

We continue to do further work on player grading and a handicap system. We will keep you in the loop as soon as we have something to share. We know a revision of the grading is important so players are more accurately matched against their peers.

For those considering responding to the 'expression of interest' for a youth co-ordinator I remind you we require something by the end of the month.

Last Friday we held the NZ Wide pairs. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to Richard for all the work he does on this event.

We have been running this event for a number of years as a fundraiser for the Foundation. We are interested to hear if you are happy with the event or whether you would like some changes. Please email the secretary of NZBridge with your thoughts.

Next year both Greg Whitten and Anne Barrowclough are required to stand down as board members. Both have advised they will be standing for re-election. Nomination and voting papers have been sent to your club.

Best wishes
Allan

