



## **NEW ZEALAND BRIDGE REGIONAL CONFERENCE**

**Held at the Jet Park Hotel Auckland Sunday August 22nd 2010**

**PRESENT Board:** Kay Nicholas (Chair), Alan Turner, Graham Wakefield, Michael Ware, Jenny Wilkinson & Julie Atkinson.  
Chief Director Arie Geursen, Secretary Alister Stuck, Bridge Development Officer Richard Solomon.

**Regional Representatives:** John Mitchell, Lynne Fegan (Otago/Southland), Joan Small, (Canterbury), Steve Gray (Top of the South), Tony Sutich (Wellington), Wayne Burrows, (Central Districts), Alan Barclay (Waikato Bays), Rosaleen Koch (Auckland)

Apology: Patsy Walters

### **1 WELCOME**

Kay welcomed all to the meeting and referred every one to the Conference Agenda which had been previously circulated.

### **2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

It was moved that the minutes of the Regional Conference held in Auckland on February 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> 2010 were a true and correct record of the meeting.

**CARRIED**

### **3 PLAYER RECRUITMENT & RETENTION**

Kay and Alan outlined the Teacher Resource and accreditation Project. A group comprising Regional Representatives and Board Representatives will be invited to join a Project Workshop scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> October.

Discussion ensued after which Graham suggested that Clubs be surveyed re their Lesson Plans for 2011. It was noted that this information could be sought as part of the annual return process later in the year, and Alan Turner will oversee the design of a suitable questionnaire template.

#### 4 **TOURNAMENT ATTENDANCE**

Michael led a discussion on the tournament schedule process.

The Key points are summarised below:

- Tournament attendances tend to be growing in most areas except in the South
- 2011 National Tournament Calendar – some readjusting required due to National Congress being held in July
- Number of Tournaments seems to be satisfactory
- Innovation scheduling of events, is providing for 2 events being held at a particular venue over one weekend rather than spreading over two weekends.
- Multi grade events are very popular.
- There are issues with the quality of some events.
- Changes to Grading Benchmarks have affected the attendance at Open Events in some Regions as players formerly ranked as Open have been re-ranked to Intermediate.

#### ***Template for Tournament Management***

Kay made available a template / checklist that she developed for the previous Canterbury Centre. This is to be emailed to the Regions and Clubs for their reference / use if desired.

#### ***2011 Schedule 'Change of date' Application Form***

Alister outlined plans for the management of the Tournament Schedule from 2011 including a key goal to minimise Tournament clashes where possible. An application form is to be introduced and will be required to be completed for all "change of date" requests in the future. Clubs seeking to reschedule a Tournament will be required to complete the application form and forward to their Regional Committee. If approval is granted by the Regional Committee the application will be sent to NZ Bridge for final sign-off. The form is to be emailed to the Clubs with a copy of the 2011 Tournament Scheduled and made available via the Website.

#### ***Notification of Match Committees***

Arie outlined the requirements and the background to the Policy. Regional Committees must furnish details to National Secretary of the Match Committee appointed to supervise the running of 10A & 15A Tournaments before the appropriate Tournament Flyer is released.

#### 4 **PRESENTATION – "WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED"**

Kay gave a "PowerPoint" presentation detailing the numerous milestones achieved by the organisation over the past 2 years and eluded to a number of projects that are still work in progress. The presentation concluded with an outline of the rationale behind the new logo adopted by NZ Bridge. It was agreed that Alister would email a copy of the presentation to all Delegates so that the information could be shared with the Regional Committees and Clubs in their area.

## 5 FINANCE

Alan spoke to his report which had been previously circulated.

### ***Annual Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010***

A draft of the Accounts was discussed at the Conference however Alan stressed that this could not be released until the Audit had been completed.

A full set of audited Financial Statements will be circulated prior to the AGM (25<sup>th</sup> September 2010) together with the Chairperson's Report.

### ***Expense Claims and Honoraria Payments***

Alan spoke to the Letter received from our Accountants BDO Manawatu regarding the treatment of Honoraria Payments and the reimbursement of expense claims. Wayne Burrows asked for this to be reviewed in light of information that he had sourced from the IRD Website regarding the reimbursement of expenses where the amount can not be verified. Alan undertook to seek a further opinion from BDO. Graham reminded the meeting that the Board Policy for the reimbursement of expenses is included in all "Scope & Delegation of Authority" Documents namely "No reimbursement of expenses is permitted except those properly incurred and approved and supported by receipts for audit purposes".

## 6 SUPPORT FOR THE ORGANISATION

### ***Annual Levies and Masterpoint Charges***

Alister briefed the meeting regarding issues with the accuracy of levy and Masterpoint Returns. There are instances where Clubs have returned inaccurate Membership figures as part of the Annual Return process. There are further instances of Clubs not including normal Club sessions in their Masterpoint Returns. As a result of such practices the Board's Levy & Masterpoint income is affected and consequently is lower than it should be.

Alister reminded the delegates that the Annual Return process will differ this year. While Clubs will be required to complete the Annual Return form, the Membership numbers for Levy purposes will be taken from the NZ Bridge Masterpoint Database as at 7<sup>th</sup> February 2011. It is important that the Clubs keep their membership records as up to date as possible and review the membership lists provided by NZ Bridge on a quarterly basis.

It was agreed that Graham would use a letter recently sent to a couple of Clubs and the original Bulletin as a basis for a revised Bulletin to be sent to all Clubs regarding this issue at an appropriate time.

### ***Standardised Letterhead & Envelopes***

Kay provided a sample of the new standardised Letterhead and envelopes that would be made available to Board and Regional Committees shortly. Kay also outlined the objective to achieve an organisational standard for correspondence and provided a sample letter format which the delegates were asked to share with their Committee members.

### ***Skype Facility for Meetings***

A number of Regional Committees and the Board are using Skype for their meetings. This is proving a cost effective alternative to conference calls and face to face meetings where significant travel is required. Wayne gave a brief account of the successful implementation of Skype meetings in the Central Districts Region.

## **7 NEW ZEALAND BRIDGE MAGAZINE**

Richard led a discussion on how to better promote the magazine and improve circulation and readership. The delegates provided Richard with feedback and suggestions including such things as Magazine content and layout.

## **8 GENERAL BUSINESS**

### ***Scoring Programme***

Julie advised the meeting that she has been designated as the Board's liaison person responsible for advocating on behalf of Clubs with Martin Oyston, BridgeNZ Ltd, re the Scoring Programme. Her focus in the medium term will lie with the "Administration" section of the Scoring Programme and she is interested in receiving suggestions from Clubs which can be used to form the basis of a wish list for development.

### ***Tournament Directors Exams (Auckland & WB Delegates)***

The Auckland Region sought discussion regarding the step up from the Club to the Tournament Directors Exam suggesting that the 80% pass mark could be too high for the Tournament Directors exam.

The Waikato Region requested NZ Bridge be asked to establish an information resource for helping Club Directors pass Tournament Director exams, and indicated frustration due to a lack of Tournament Directors and the lack of authoritative information available for people willing to undertake the exam. The Region also wants the exam modernised somewhat in recognition that computers are more efficient counters than humans.

Arie and Julie responded and were of the firm view that the difference in competence level required between the two levels was deliberate and important to maintain. They also advised that they would not support a reduction to the exam pass mark and put it to the meeting that it would be unwise to have Tournament Directors who got less than 80% of their rulings and decisions correct. The meeting concurred with this view.

Julie supported the request from the Waikato Region to provide training to aspiring Tournament Directors. While the previous exam papers were not available for distribution because the questions were recycled, Training Seminars could be arranged. It was suggested that this is best initiated at a Regional level in the first instance.

### ***2011 Club Teams Championship (Auckland Region)***

The Auckland Region suggested that the overall winner of the Club Teams should have automatic entry for the following year therefore the winning region could have a second team in the final competition. This would make an even number of teams competing and assist the play-off situation in the South Island. The suggestion will be referred to the Congress Committee who will consider it before committing to the organisation of the event for 2011.

### ***Promotion Idea - Club of the Year***

Alan canvassed the Delegates as to initial support for a "Regional Club of the Year" competition. This was following an email from Peter Farley of Gisborne who outlined a similar initiative that his local Bowls Centre was trialling.

The plan would be to set some criteria and identify the areas that would be judged (eg Membership retention, Learners & Improvers Programmes, participation in Club Play offs etc). The meeting supported the idea in principle and it was agreed that Alan would provide a detailed proposal at the next Regional Conference.

### ***Marketing Initiatives – NZ Bowls***

Further information from Peter Farley outlining some of the membership and recruitment initiatives implemented by NZ Bowls was also received. Delegates received this information to share with Clubs in their Regions.

### ***Regional Reports***

Due to time constraints it was decided that the Regions be invited to prepare and circulate written reports prior to the Conference. Reports were received from Wellington, Central Districts, Waikato Bays and Top of the South.

### ***Regional Committee Functions***

The Board and the Central Districts Regional Committee had received correspondence from the Wanganui Bridge Club regarding the "Biennial meeting of Regional Committees with Clubs". The primary reason for the meeting is to elect the Regional Committee and in a number of cases the meetings were suspended as no vote was required.

The Club raised concerns that the meeting was not held in Central Districts and as such there was no opportunity for the Clubs to have a "face to face" meeting with their Regional Committee. It was felt that this matter should be tabled at the Conference and the delegates given the opportunity to discuss the situation.

There was little support from the delegates to enforce a biennial meeting simply to deal with the election of Regional Committee personnel. It was agreed that this matter alone could be managed by a postal ballot and reduce the significant travel times that some clubs would face attending such a meeting.

It was suggested that the Board consider an amendment to the Constitution in this regard and Board members agreed to give the recommendation

detailed consideration in time for any alteration to be proposed by Remit to the AGM.

Wayne advised that Central Districts Regional Committee had hosted two meetings in its Region and invited Delegates from all Regional Clubs to attend. The Waikato Region has undertaken a similar exercise and both Regions felt that the meetings were worthwhile and should continue.

It was the collective view of the meeting that the Regions be encouraged to hold an annual gathering of Clubs and invite Delegates to attend and contribute to the Agenda.

### ***Otago Southland Region Proposals***

Three items of general business from the Otago Southland Region covering the administration the following areas (Coaching Grants, Annual Tournament Calender & Regional Tournaments) were withdrawn as the information sought had been provided prior to the meeting.

### ***Presentation – Regulations Committee***

Julie gave a presentation outlining the projects that the Regulations Committee are working on. This centres on a review of our current Regulations including pre-alerting, use of Stop Cards and a trial currently being undertaken in three Clubs where the range of 1NT openings are announced.

**The meeting closed** at 5.10pm

### **Next Regional Conference**

13<sup>th</sup> February 2011 – to be hosted by Otago / Southland Regional Committee