



16 September 2021

Newsletter No: 3 for 2021

Greetings and Salutations

Covid-19

Hopefully, the increase in the number of people being vaccinated will mean that the Government will not have to rely on lockdowns to manage Covid-19, and we will be able to return to "normality" in the not-too-distant future.

Our primary concern in dealing with Covid is doing our best to ensure we protect the health and wellness of players. We want to thank clubs who have taken a very responsible approach on how bridge is being played under Alert Level 2. Hopefully, next week the rest of New Zealand will be at Alert Level 1 and club sessions and tournaments can return to normal. Auckland of course will have to wait a few weeks before it can enjoy that moment.

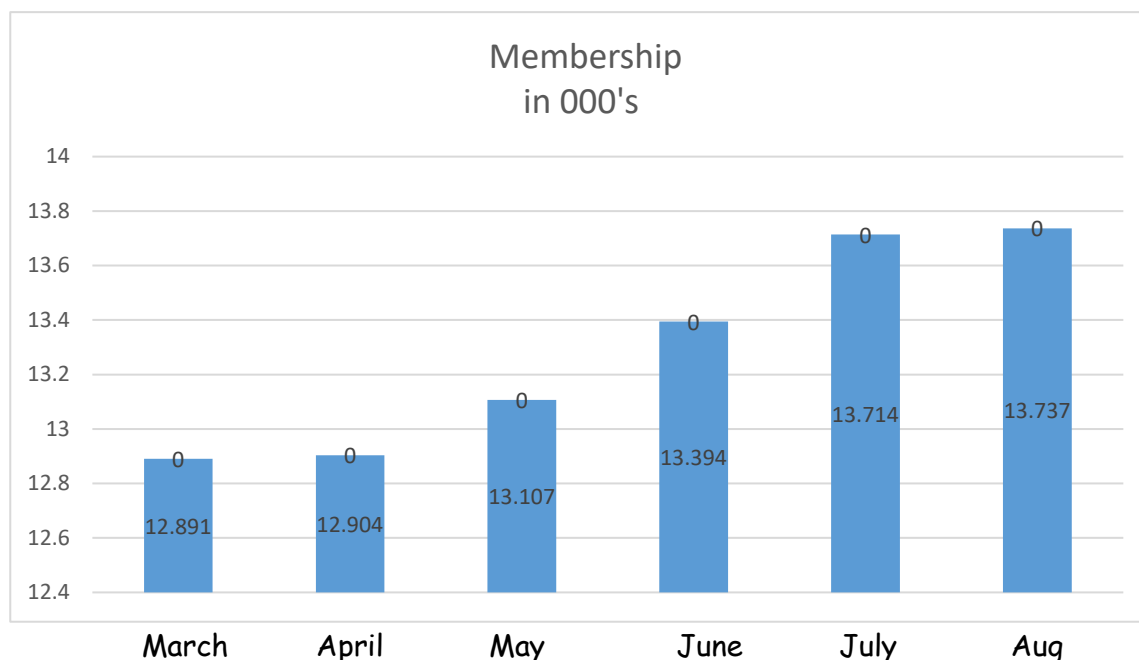
To help clubs manage risk and consider what controls are required, we have put together a risk check list. Hopefully, clubs find this helpful and that it provides a useful tool when considering the practices and procedures you need to think about.

A few clubs have through lockdown set up sessions on BBO. On behalf of all the players we thank the organisers and directors who have helped us retain an element of sanity. Also, we are aware of clubs who have taken the opportunity to provide (online) improver lessons to their members. The turnout for these latter sessions has been wonderful which supports the view that players are keen to improve their game.

Growth

One of the outputs from the National Conference and from recent research is the desire by clubs to grow and retain their membership and increase player participation. Over the last 6 months (March to August) we have seen very pleasing growth in player numbers. We now total 13,737.

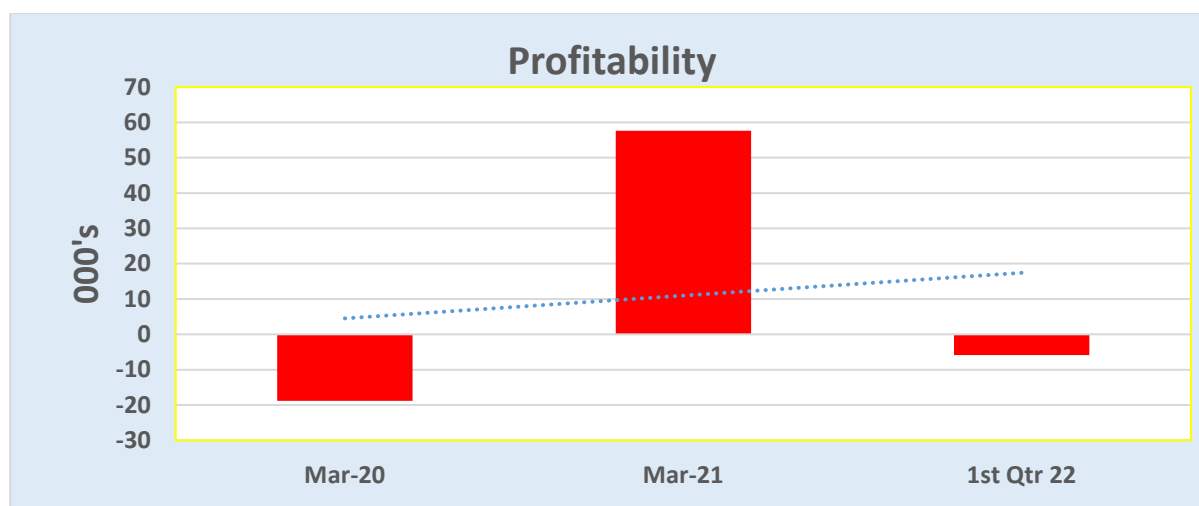


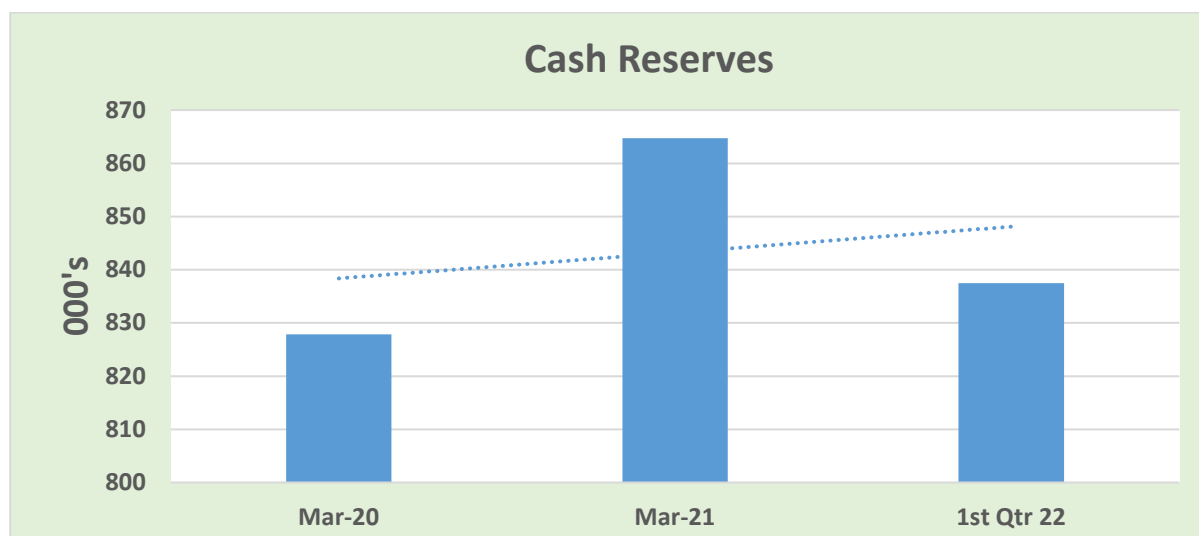


We however know that from a central perspective we need to do more to generate interest in our game and show to the wider public that bridge is a cool game. We have engaged the services of Digital Fish to help us with the journey. To be successful it will be important that Clubs, Regions and NZBridge come together. A collective approach, all pulling in the same direction will deliver the best results. As the plan develops, we will take time to talk, share and consult with Clubs and Regions.

Finances

One of the results of not being able to travel overseas has been our international programme has been curtailed. Whilst disappointing there has been a positive aspect. We have been able to strengthen our finances giving us capacity to invest in improving and growing bridge and to improve the services we offer Clubs and players. Lockdown through August and September will have a small detrimental effect. The two charts below show an improvement in profitability between 2020 and 2021. We are happy with the financial performance for the 1st quarter of 2022.





Directing

We know that directing at club and tournament level is an issue for a number of clubs. To help we have strengthened the resources of the Chief Director and have appointed an assistant. We ask for a little patience as they get up to speed and roll out their development programme.

Congress

As you are aware we took the decision (quite correctly) to postpone Congress until February 2022. We are hopeful that seasoned players and those less exposed to tournament bridge will get behind the event and participate. For those who are new to Congress it is an opportunity of playing competitive bridge with your peers at your level, to learn from others and equally importantly the chance to socialise and make lifelong friends.

Inter-provincials

The IPs are scheduled for November in Auckland. Fingers crossed we are not in lockdown. If Covid-19 gets in the way, we are developing a contingency plan to play the event online.

Babich Simultaneous Pairs

The Babich Simultaneous Pairs is scheduled for November. If any part of New Zealand is in lockdown, due to Covid-19, this event will continue and be available to those who have freedom of movement.

Online Bridge

We are delighted to observe players continue to support the spirit of the game and the way the game should be played. The voice of public opinion does not want cheaters in the game and neither do we. Cheating goes to the very foundation of the game and destroys the integrity of the game. We continue with our zero tolerance towards cheating and put on record that if players are found to have

cheated there will be consequences that may result in limits being imposed that could restrict their future ability to play.

Behaviour

Last month we shared the importance of cutting out inappropriate behaviour and promoting a good standard. We know inappropriate behaviour is one of the largest reasons why players leave the game. Everyone is working hard to grow the game and keep players so something said inappropriately can undo all the good work. A number of clubs responded positively to the last message, so we are keen to hear about how things are going in your club.

We look forward to seeing you at the *Annual General Meeting*. This year it will be held online, 24th September at 4pm.

Stay safe, stay well

Cheers Allan