

**Minutes Otago Southland Regional Committee Sunday 28 August 3pm 2022
via Zoom**

Present: Judith Lawton, Philip Noye, Lynne Fegan, Carole Bee, Sonya Adams (Regional Bridge Support Person -RBSP), John Schipper NZBridge and Sam Coutts NZBridge

Apologies: Nil

Minutes of the previous meeting: “That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2022 be taken as read and moved as being a true and accurate record.”

Moved Lynne/Judith - Carried

John and Sam gave an informal briefing regarding the state of bridge nationally and answered questions. A brief Summary follows:

The NZ Scene is still facing many challenges, one of which is encouraging people back to “face to face” bridge after a long period away. A large majority of past members that stopped during covid are now not playing at all. A lot of clubs are at risk of folding, and it is not just small country clubs. This is a global trend.

Phil noted that another issue is that a lot of clubs have the financial burden of much larger club rooms than they now actually need.

NZBridge is working on, through the consultation processes, an online strategy for those for whom travel to bridge (though expense, time constraints or just large distances) is difficult. A lot of Auckland players are not playing club bridge...just A Point tournaments. This will all change the face of the bridge scene in 5 to 10 years.

Support by clubs of learners needs to be intensive after the lessons finish. Some ideas: Support person/volunteer for a small group to stay in touch with and get advice from; increasing the number of sessions to allow for a special novice session; Have grades within one session so if you get “promoted” you don’t have to change your playing night.

Cost of travel and accommodation is becoming a barrier to travel to tournaments now.

Phil asked if the NZ board has any succession planning in place as there are several key roles that have been filled for a long time and these people have a

lot of knowledge. John thought that there were people who would step up should the situation arise. This issue has been discussed at the board level.

Lack of qualified tournament directors is becoming a bigger issue. Maybe for several grades it is possible for a club director to direct with a “phone a friend” tournament director available if needed. The pass rate of the directors’ exams has been too low in the past so now there is some study and preparation required before you will be accepted for the course. Phil Noted that this information is not easily found on the website and will let Allister know.

Bridge laws now expect the director to make the correct decision at the table and not to let play continue and then rely on an appeal to sort it out at the end of the day. Club directors can and should consult with each other and higher grade directors.

Caroline Wiggins has been appointed by NZBridge to support training of directors and she has produced some material for this already. NZ Bridge needs to contact directors that do not pass and see if there is a pathway to get them over the line.

Consideration to teaching rubber bridge so that players can play any time.

Lynne suggested that bridge needs to be promoted as a mind sport and maybe aligned with e-sports.

Sam reported that the national handicapping system is progressing, and they hope to have the algorithm sorted this year and then it is a matter of making the internet interface usable.

Phil gave a brief report on the think tank re online bridge so far:

Made up of 14 people (1 from each region and some seconded) with a wide range of views on online bridge. 3 sub-committees have been formed:

Tournaments co-ordinated by John Schipper

Teaching & Learning co-ordinated by Kate Terry

Revenue and Resources co-ordinated by Phil Noye

Meeting every Thursday for an hour and subcommittees now pushing on. They received about 110 submissions. The team are very dedicated in their effort to come to a consensus from the submissions even if it goes against their personal view. As a whole, they have been stunned by the situation that some of the clubs are in. Auckland clubs are struggling and contrary to popular belief there is no money in online sessions for clubs.

So far it seems there is potential in online bridge to promote interclub competitions and reaching a greater group of learners.

A National Interclub Comp may be possible online through NZBridge.

The report is expected to be on time but not complete as the think tank view it as a living document that will need regular reviewing as the environment changes.

Our region is also weak in reams competitions so online may be a way we can offer more of these.

It was noted at this point that sadly the Central Otago teams was cancelled well ahead of their scheduled date without notification to our committee. We would have liked the opportunity to maybe support the Alexandra club to allow these to go ahead. Judith to write to Allister to ask how it could be cancelled so early without our knowledge.

Also noted from round the table discussions is that no other regional committee runs any tournaments. They are all given over to clubs to run. Labour weekend congress still showing Otago Southland region and not Otago Club. Carole to email Alister. We need to be very mindful of our directors, especially our sol Tournament level director as she is often being required to direct more than one tournament in a weekend with a lot of travel required to cover the region. Ross Sherwood is directing in Wanaka with phone support from Lindsay.

Lynne also brought to our attention a document “The Scope and Delegation of Authority” for regional committees. She will circulate for comments from committee members and then forward these to NZBridge. Unsure if it has some or any relevance or relationship to what actually happens in the regions.

Correspondence:

INWARDS:

As per emails:

1. Winton re change of Intermediate Teams event date 2023
2. Gore re lack of support for Club Director's exams
3. Gore request to change Junior/Intermediate tournament dates to separate these.

OUTWARDS:

1. Approved date changes for Gore to Rona

As per emails:

Motion: “That the Correspondence be accepted as dealt with.”

Moved Carole/Phil - carried

Matters Arising: -

1. Email re letter from Winton and Intermediate Teams event for 2023. Judith to ring Winton and see what the ideal solution is.
2. We ratify the decision to allow Gore to separate their junior and intermediate tournaments.
3. Gore letter re director’s exams. Carole to forward to Murray Wiggins, Alister Stuck, Carolyn Wiggins and Alan Morris at NZ Bridge for comments. Please reply directly to the Gore club but cc OSRC in please.

Financial Report: -

Lynne circulated the financial report. There has been no balance change since the last report at \$19,915.

Motion: “That the financial report be received” moved Lynne/ Carole-carried
As we are not a legal entity and NZBridge have to approve all payments we will resist the need next year to get the accounts reviewed.

RBSP Report:

Sonya met with the other region’s RBSP in Wellington. Was reassured by Richard that the roles will reflect what the regions need as they are all different. She will trial a lot of her ideas re promoting and retaining players in Wanaka before rolling out across the region if they are successful. Role is still largely undefined but will be discussed at a meeting of all regions’ nominated representatives and RBSP in October.

The geographical size of the Otago Southland region is a challenge and trying to build relationships is best done in person. We will pay for a zoom account so that we and she can have unlimited meeting times on Zoom.

She has booked a site at the Wanaka 2023 A&P Show (10 & 11 March) and will need support from clubs. Ideally lessons will not start before then.

Also Invercargill A&P show the week prior.

Possible Home and Leisure show in DND 5&6 Nov 2022 she will look into.

A regional wide zoom meeting with Clubs before we plan a conference so we can find out what would be useful for them: 25 Sept Sunday 1pm. Send an email invite.

Strategic Plan:

1. Labour Weekend Congress:

It was decided to offer a Covid Recovery Special all entries will be \$20pp. Lindsay is directing, Venue Otago Club, Phil to ask Judith Smeijers to score and to confirm catering is available.

2. Greg Buzzard is to be the IP Chef de Mission for the Open and Intermediate. Harry Shepperd has agreed to be Cd'M for the Women's team and the senior team will look after that themselves as Phil is part of the team.
3. Thank you to Phil for his time trialling the contestants for the IPs. A huge job and we are very grateful.
4. Rubber bridge competition was won by Brad Johnstone and Sam Coutts of the Otago Club.
5. Cashless tournaments are to continue. We need to get the bank account info onto the front page of the tournament page on the website (not on any sort of attachment).
6. Interclub teams competition, Hamilton Plate, going ahead in Cromwell on 4 September. Contested by Queenstown, Wanaka, Alexandra and Cromwell. Sonya doing the admin and we will try and get something going in other areas of our region. Invercargill and Gore also contest the Lindsay trophy annually but not as a teams event.
7. Clubs in our region currently at risk: Milton & Maniototo. Both small populations and clubs feel no one is interested in laying bridge in their towns.
8. We are to have clubs to contact each to try and keep the conversation going:
Phil: Oamaru, East Otago, Taieri and Otago
Carole: Gore, Winton, West Otago, Wanaka
Lynne: Cromwell, Alexandra, Te Anau, Maniototo
Judith: Balclutha, Milton, Queenstown, Invercargill
Lynne will draft up a fist call topic e Covid recovery to get the ball rolling.

9. Directors' exams... Judith to follow up also to see who we had sitting last year and who we could get through this year with some support.
10. Improvers lessons online was successful.
11. Conference: See earlier minute re Zoom Meeting.
12. Bridge in Schools. Been run very successfully for quite a number of years at Weston. Sonya has NZBridge support to try and get up and running somewhere as a trial but not as an ongoing role.
13. **Motion: "That we ratify the sponsorship of \$500 to the Invercargill Cub for the South Island Teams event that occurred in Invercargill last weekend"**. Moved Carole/Lynne – carried.
14. **Motion: "The Committee agreed to the following payments relating to the 2022 Annual Face-to Face meeting:**
- 1) That travel reimbursement of \$100.00/hour be paid - on one-way travel only (as per Google Maps timings) and one night's accommodation for Phil.
 - 2) That a meal & up to 2 bottles of wine be provided for the committee and South Island Teams Scorer (Anne Williamson from Te Awamutu). Moved Lynne/Judith - carried

Meeting Closed 6 PM Next meeting date Monday 10 Oct 9am Zoom

Critical Actions:

Who	What	When	Actioned
Carole	Email Allister re showing Otago cub for OS Congress	ASAP	Judith
Carole	Invite clubs to Zoom meeting 25 Sept 1pm	ASAP	√
Judith	To phone Winton club and try and resolve the Intermediate teams competition issue	ASAP	√
Phil	Confirm directing/scorer and catering for congress OS	ASAP	
Judith	Notify Allister she will attend RBSP meeting	ASAP	√
Carole	Forward Gore's email re directors to Allan Morris, Alister Stuck and Murray Wiggins for comment.	ASAP	√
Carole	Set up a zoom account for OSRC	By 25 Sept	√
Lynne	Draft first discussion points for calls to our cluster clubs.	By next meeting	