



Newsletter No: 4 for 2019

11 June 2019

On Saturday we held our national conference with representatives of the Regional Committees, executive and Board in attendance. It would be fair to say there was a very positive vibe and a commitment to the future wellbeing of our game.

Topping the agenda was a discussion on the proposed new constitution. As you are aware this document is out for consultation and we have already received feedback. The opportunity for you to have your say will stay open probably until the end of July. To date the feedback has been positive. The views expressed on Saturday were no different. Unless there is a radical shift I think we are substantively there. The plan is that members will vote on adoption of the new constitution at the AGM on the 28th of September.

The next significant item discussed was the regional committees and their ongoing role. We all know running voluntary organisations is a challenge and we need to think how we are best served in the future. The meeting resolved to undertake a review over the next 12 months. We will put together a small working party who no doubt will seek input.

A presentation on the performance of the RBMs was given by Jane. A positive story on every metric we measure. The Board decided earlier in the month to extend the programme until 31 December whilst we consider our needs for 2020 and beyond. The response from regional committees has been most positive. Nevertheless the Board will be consulting further with regional committees and RBMs in July to ensure we have the programme appropriately structured for 2020 and beyond.

The meeting then received presentations on marketing and XG grades. The former took the opportunity of sharing some of the work the Board is doing in this area. We are focused on identifying the bridge communities in New Zealand, how and why they play bridge, and identifying how and what NZB can do to grow the numbers playing and quality of the game played. It is all about greater engagement and greater participation at all levels. It is clear we need to position ourselves as the leader of all things Bridge in New Zealand. To achieve this aspiration we will have to lift our head from a club focus and lead in a much broader capacity. This is not a bad thing as inevitably clubs will be the beneficiary of greater interest and greater numbers. It is important we grow the game in all facets. Unfortunately due to death alone we are losing 3 players a week. It is important we raise the profile of the game generally, move the perception of bridge away from 'old people in old clubs' and reposition Bridge as a "Game for Life".



Rona Driscoll delivered a presentation on XG grades used in the Waikato Bays. The work has been developed by Bob Ferns and showed us what could be done. We know there is concern about the current grades and interest in a handicap system. Work in this area has been delayed whilst we undertook a range of fixes to our operating platform. We will now put our minds to what is best for players and clubs. As you can see more work is required, we will keep you posted.

Richard gave a report on the aims of the NZ Bridge Youth Program in this, the second year of the 5 Year Plan. By the end of the year, the aim is to have Regional representatives for each region, some short form lessons suitable for teaching at schools and both a New Zealand Bridge and Duke of Edinburgh series of awards in place for bridge to give young players learning in both schools and clubs targets and rewards for playing the game.

Lastly Jane was able to showcase the work done to present our lessons in Chinese Mandarin. The first lesson has been videoed and translated into Chinese Mandarin. It is now being tested and if proven to be valuable will be extended.

The New Zealand Wide Pairs this year will benefit the New Zealand Bridge Foundation. The Foundation is getting behind NZB and are supporting our 5 year youth strategy. This is an important initiative as we need to build the next generation of bridge players. The Board approved a change in the cost of the NZ Wide Pairs. This year it will cost \$10. We are hopeful all the money will go to the Foundation and that Clubs will get behind this initiative and not charge anything additional for the evening. NZB are supporting the event and will absorb its costs for the event and will not be charging masterpoints. We are hopeful that you will see \$10 as a modest amount for 3 hours entertainment and that you will support our youth strategy. Let us work on having the biggest turnout ever.

Today the APBF starts in Singapore. You are encouraged to stay in touch by keeping a daily eye on the NZB website and follow the NZB Facebook page and from Wednesday matches will be on BBO.

Enjoy your bridge.

Cheers Allan