



NEW ZEALAND BRIDGE REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Held at the Miramar Golf Club commencing at 10.00am

Wednesday 6th February 2013

PRESENT **Board:** Graham Wakefield, Lynne Fegan, Patsy Walters, Allan Barclay & Alan Turner.

Secretary Alister Stuck, Bridge Development Officer Richard Solomon.

Regional Representatives: Kristen Collins,(Otago/Southland), Michael Johnstone (Canterbury), Steve Gray, (Top of the South), Rona Driscoll (Waikato Bays), Peter Bowyer & Angela Royle (Auckland Northland), Dinnie Hall, Tony Sutich, Allan Joseph, Joan Waldvogel & Paula Jenner (Wellington), & Don Nightingale,(Central Districts)

Apologies: Arie Geursen, Kay Nicholas & Jenny Wilkinson

1 WELCOME

Alister opened the conference and passed on Kay's best wishes to those attending for a successful day.

2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was moved that the minutes of the Regional Conference held in Blenheim on 25 August 2012 were a true and correct record of the meeting.

CARRIED

There was some discussion regarding the timing of the changes to the Grade Trigger Points with some delegates expressing concern at a lack of notice and consultation with this initiative and the decision to move the Interprovincials away from the National Congress.

Graham drew attention to page 3 of the August Conference Minutes where it was clearly mentioned that the Tournament Grades would be reviewed with particular regard to those players ranked Local Master with Stars.

It was the Boards view that this matter had been clearly communicated via meeting minutes, presentations at both the August Regional Conference and

the 2012 AGM with details included in the Newsletter to Clubs and Regions distributed early in December 2012.

Graham advised the delegates that the matter of the relocation of the Interprovincials would be covered in detail under General Business.

3 REGIONAL REPORTS

Written Reports from Auckland Northland, Waikato, Central Districts, Wellington, TOTS, Canterbury and Otago Southland were circulated prior to the Conference. (Copies attached to these Minutes)

4 ARISING FROM THE REGIONAL REPORTS

Rona Driscoll reported that the WB Regional Committee did not support the proposed changes to the Tournament Grades or the plan to relocate the Interprovincials.

On a positive note the Regional Committee acknowledged the great work that Jane Stearns was undertaking to revitalise and increase the membership of some of the smaller Clubs in the Region. The Cambridge Club was hosting a Graded Teams Tournament in 2013 and the Region was holding a Rubber Bridge Promotional day comprising a training session with Christine Gibbons and an opportunity to play Rubber Bridge in the afternoon.

Peter Bowyer of Auckland Northland congratulated Susan Humphries who organised a fund raising Tournament held in December at Howick Bridge Club to assist with the funding of 2 youth Teams to the Canberra Youth Week and NOT in January. This initiative was supported by the Region, NZ Bridge and the Bridge Foundation. The Youth Players who went to Canberra performed very creditably and Alister gave special mention of the fact that the Team members had written to the Board thanking them for their support and for the opportunity to attend the event.

Kristen Collins reported that the Otago Southland Regional Committee continues to be very proactive engaging all of the Clubs and taking the opportunity to hold Committee meetings at various locations and involving local players and Club personnel.

The Region was holding a 2 day Directors workshop with Allan Joseph with 50 confirmed registrations for the first day and 17 for day two which would cover Tournament directing. A Teachers workshop rescheduled from early Feb would be held shortly.

Steve Gray from Top of the South reported that he had received very positive feedback from people who had attended the recent Teaching Workshop in Chch. The Regional Committee covered fully the travel costs to enable a number of Bridge Teachers to attend.

5 GENERAL BUSINESS

Earthquake Insurance Cover

Tony Sutich updated the Delegates as to an issue that his Home Club, Kairangi, had regarding the renewal of its Earthquake Cover. Following a review of the cover by their Insurer the Club faced a monthly cost of \$1000 which was untenable.

The Club had its property assessed and found that it did not meet earthquake standards and would face significant cost to bring it up to scratch. Pending relocation the Club has elected to terminate its Earthquake cover which has implications for them when they have members & visitors on premise. The Club is seeking advice presently as to what disclosure it is required to make and whether it needs to include an appropriate statement on Club mailouts and Tournament Flyers.

Tony has undertaken to report to the Board following a meeting of Club delegates scheduled for later February to scope the extent of the problem in the Wellington Region. Graham and Alister will seek an update from the brokers, Jardines, and will flag for discussion at the March Board meeting.

Presentation- NZ Bridge Marketing Survey

Allan Barclay and Richard Solomon presented this segment. Allan provided some background to this initiative and thanked Kate Terry for putting the survey together. Part one was directed at Clubs with in excess of 60 Clubs participating. Richard outlined the key findings which are to be presented to the Board for detailed analysis.

Part two of the project is to comprise a survey directed at individuals and would be released within a matter of weeks.

Presentation- Social Media Options

Allan introduced Eva Maria from E Ideas Ltd who gave a presentation covering an introduction to the use of Social Media including Facebook and Twitter and how it might be of benefit to NZ Bridge and the Regions.

Presentation & Discussion- "What works and why"

Graham introduced Angela Royle, Secretary of the Auckland Northland Region and proprietor of the Royle Epsom Bridge Club which is the only privately owned Club currently affiliated to NZ Bridge. Angela has successfully doubled the membership of her Club and cited player retention as a key to success. Making sure that all players have an opportunity to enjoy their Bridge and participate at a level where they are comfortable and with their friends and peers could not be overstated. Angela shared many thoughts, ideas and processes to operate and manage a bridge club in a member focused way.

The delegates unanimously endorsed Angela thinking and thank her for sharing the basis to the success of the Royle Epsom Bridge Club.

Presentation – Grade Changes & Membership Breakdown

Graham outlined the rationale behind the decision to move the grade trigger bands and covered the before and after breakdown of the membership by Grade.

Peter Bowyer tabled feedback from the Auckland Bridge Club regarding the timing and impact of the changes.

Graham responded and advised that the Board was committed to changes implemented and believed that the reconfiguration of the makeup of the various Tournament grades was appropriate. It was acknowledged that where ever the trigger points are set there will be players on the cusp who will be affected adversely or otherwise.

Presentation - Relocation of Interprovincials in 2013

Graham confirmed the Boards recent decision to take the Interprovincials away from the National Congress and hold the event at the Wellington Bridge Club from Friday 29 Nov to Sunday 1 Dec 2013.

Play will commence at 2pm on the Friday and will comprise a double round robin including a bye in each round, no final with play concluding at approx 4pm on the Sunday.

Each Region will participate via 4 person Teams (with a playing Captian) in each of Open, Women's, Senior, Intermediate and Youth categories and a Regional Chef de Mission.(21persons per Region)

Graham advised that further information will be circulated to Clubs and Regions by Bulletin in due course.

Presentation – Regulations Committee

In his final presentation Graham detailed some initiatives that were being adopted collaboratively by both NZ Bridge and the ABF.

Firstly is a regulation change to bring in "announcing" of 1 Club and 1NT opening bids to be implemented once ratified by the Board and the ABF Management Committee.

Graham then reported progress on the development of a common electronic System card with both NZ and Australian options. This will be demonstrated to the Board at the March meeting for final sign off and would be available via the NZ Bridge Website site for download.

Graham concluded with a brief outline of the changes to the Teams VP Scales recently released by the World Bridge Federation. To allow sufficient time for scoring programmes to be updated it is expected that the new scales would be bought into use in NZ and Australia from 31 October 2013.

Copies of all of the presentations are attached to these Minutes.

Preparation- 2014 Tournament Schedule

Alister advised that work would shortly commence on the drafting of the 2014 Tournament Schedule. Rona Driscoll would co-ordinate this project and would be contacting the Regional Committees shortly to get underway with the 10A and above events. This includes the 4 Island events to be upgraded to 20A status in 2014.

Alister asked the Regional Delegates to ensure that they keep Rona informed with progress at a regional level and to ensure that any responses to Rona are timely.

Masterpoint Returns

Alister reported that the Board would shortly release a clear policy statement to Clubs and Regions reinforcing its position that all sessions must be included in a Clubs Masterpoint Return.

There remain a number of Clubs who exclude sessions from their monthly returns depriving players of their entitlement to Masterpoints and the Board and Regions income. Offending Clubs will be identified and contacted.

Update – Presence at Women’s Expos

Richard gave a further update regarding the Women’s Expos’s scheduled for 2013 at which Regional Committees had agreed to have a presence.

There being no further business Alister thanked the delegates for their participation and for giving up their public holiday to attend the Conference.

3.45pm meeting closed

Next Regional Conference

Details to be confirmed but likely August 2013 in Wellington



OTHER INITIATIVES 2013

POLICY

- Harmonise as far as possible with Australia on regulatory matters
- Joint discussion between ABF and NZB officials at Canberra in January 2013 re progress on various issues
- Key matters
 - (a) announcing
 - (b) adoption of a common system card
 - (c) timing of introduction of new WBF VP scales

ANNOUNCING

- Draft Regulations for the use of announcements in respect to the HCP range of natural 1NT opening bids and the nature of 1C opening bids were tabled
- Agreed that announcements should be made in a consistent (prescribed) manner and that should be relatively simple

ANNOUNCING

- 1C opening bids:

For natural (Green) systems – the appropriate length of the club suit (“2 plus”, “3 plus”, “4 plus” etc) should be announced

For Strong Club (Blue) systems – the word “Strong” together with the minimum HCP holding (eg “16+”) should be announced

For system options other than the above (eg a Polish 1C) – the word “Unusual” should be used

ANNOUNCING

- Natural 1NT opening bids:
The appropriate HCP range should be announced (eg “12-14” or “15-17” etc)
- Need to realign definitions / wordings in NZB Manual
- Laws relating to mistaken explanations and unauthorised information apply *mutatis mutandis* to incorrect announcements

ANNOUNCING

- Directors will be encouraged to exercise suitable tolerance in respect to inadvertent non-compliance until most players become familiar with the new procedures
- Gold Coast tournament will be used to introduce in Australia
- NZ Board to discuss at March meeting

SYSTEM CARDS

- Australian system card revisited and new editable PDF version developed
- Version is still “a work in progress” but is robust and is intended to be rolled out into public domain shortly (pre Gold Coast tournament?)
- NZB version proposes to use same IT under licence, with textual and logo modifications – NZB to discuss demo at March meeting

WBF VP SCALES

- New VP scales have been prepared after a special review and are starting to be used
- Scales make each IMP significant and result in decimal place outcomes in the VP conversion
- Discussion around the timing of the wider implementation / adoption of these scales in ABF / NZB tournaments
- Maybe unpopular with Club and Congress players, at least initially – conversions are complex and computer is required

WBF VP SCALES

- Algorithm and documentation has not been widely disseminated – time is needed to update and test the raft of scoring packages in use by Clubs / NBO's and to socialise their use
- 31 October 2013 recommended for introduction
- NZB Board to discuss at March meeting



INTERPROVINCIALS 2013

IP's 2013

- Will not precede the National Bridge Congress this year
- Venue is the Wellington Bridge Club, 17 Tinakori Road, Thorndon, Wellington
- Friday, 29 November 2013 – Sunday, 1 December 2013
- Start – 2.00 pm Friday
Finish – 4.00 pm Sunday

IP's 2013

- Board will consider other rotation options in future
- Format is a double round robin of 12 board matches, with a bye in each round
-12 x 12 board matches = 144 boards
- Director in charge – Alan Joseph

IP's 2013

- Each Region will participate via 4 person teams in each category ie Open, Womens, Seniors, Intermediate / Junior and Youth, accompanied / managed by a Chef de Mission
- Each 4 person team will have a designated player captain
- Participation is 7 x 21 players = 147

IP's 2013

- Change from previous 6 person teams with non playing captain
- Old format would require 7×35 persons = 245
- Apart from very significant additional costs this format leads to 125 persons on the sidelines at any given time throughout the competition

IP's 2013

Contrast non playing participants:-

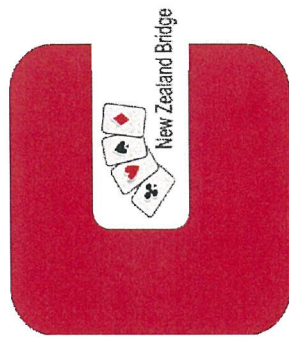
- 6 member team format
35 NPC's
60 non playing team members – 6 x 10
30 non playing participants due to bye Region
- 4 member team format
7 Chef de mission
20 non playing participants due to bye Region

IP's 2013

- 6 person team = 96 boards per player over 3 days
4 person team = 144 boards per player
- Premises do not allow for 98 additional persons on sidelines for each match (90 min)
125 minus 27 = 98
- Old format does not facilitate 8 Region circumstance in future
- Issues with catering, accommodation, travel and associated expenditures are multiplied

IP's 2013

- Accommodation
Kingsgate Wellington – walking distance
indicative room rate \$129 for two persons,
discounted breakfast \$10 pp
Other options to be investigated / negotiated



GRADING 2013

WHY GRADING?

USED FOR: -

- NZ TOURNAMENT ENTRY ENTITLEMENT
- GUIDE FOR OVERSEAS PARTICIPATION (AUSTRALIA)

BLUNT INSTRUMENT

- JUNIOR
- INTERMEDIATE
- OPEN

TOURNAMENT HIERACHY

BIAS FAVOURS PARTICIPATION NOT EXCLUSION

- Junior (3B)
- Intermediate (5B)
- Restricted (8B)
- Open (8B)
- Open (3A) - Club
- Open (5A) - Club / Local
- Open (10A) - Regional / Metropolitan
- Open (15A) - Island (North / Centre / South)
- Open (20A) - Major Championships
- Open (25A) - National Pairs & Teams Championships

SPECIAL CATEGORY EVENTS

- SENIORS
- MIXED
- MENS / WOMENS / SAME SEX
- MULTI-GRADE
- INTERPROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIP
- REGIONAL / NATIONAL SELECTION TRIALS

WHAT IS GRADING?

- Grading is not (and never has been) the measure of a player's current skills level

We do not have the toolbox to do that:-

- No examinations
- No knowledge how many conventions used / known
- No knowledge of depth of partnership understanding
- No knowledge how often an individual plays
- No knowledge with whom an individual plays on any occasion
- No knowledge of player results (except when masterpoints awarded)
- Etcetera

WHAT IS GRADING?

So a change in grading does not necessarily mean a player has got markedly better than the previous year

Grading is a direct measure of the extent of a players past success, whether at club, local, regional or higher level

Achieved using a combination of

- Masterpoints
- Rating Points

WHAT IS GRADING?

- Masterpoints are the aggregate of all a players past success
- Rating Points are a formulae focused upon weighting a players most recent successes (5 years)

Both are necessary to achieve an outcome that is fair to all

When a player has achieved to a particular level (grade threshold) then they go up a grade so that other players have their fair opportunity for success

WHAT CHANGES IN 2013

Two changes only

- One of the grade thresholds for Open adjusted from Provincial Master (100 MPs including 50A points) to Local Master 5* (300 MPs)
- An additional grade threshold to distinguish Junior / Intermediate inserted of Local Master 0* (50 MPs)

BEFORE AND AFTER

- As at 1 January 2013 NZB has 14,254 affiliated players on our masterpoints data base
- Comparable figure as at National Congress 2012 presentation was 14,367

Both these figures exclude persons designated within “overseas players club” – presently 355

BEFORE AND AFTER

% in grade after roll over	2012	2013
• Junior	76.2	54.7
• Intermediate	16.0	33.4
• Open	7.8	11.9

BEFORE AND AFTER

Players in grade	2012	2013
• Junior	10,942	7,794
• Intermediate	2,304	4,763
• Open	1,121	1,697
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	14,367	14,254

BEFORE AND AFTER

- Some players moved naturally over the twelve months
- Large “peer group” has moved up alongside any individual player
- Pre modelling suggested thresholds would move about 2900 players from Junior to Intermediate (all have 50+ MPs) and about 450 players from Intermediate to Open (all have 300+ MPs)

BEFORE AND AFTER

- Alignment with Australia (Novice up to 50 MPs and Restricted up to 300 MPs)
- Problem with using Rating Points exclusively is that ceasing or limiting playing causes reduction in calculation over time
- Problem with using A Points as a threshold (Provincial Master) is that some players avoid or reduce participation in such tournaments