



Canterbury Regional Committee of
New Zealand Bridge Inc

MINUTES OF THE CANTERBURY REGIONAL COMMITTEE AND CLUBS MEETING HELD on Sunday 8th December 2013 at 1.00pm at the Rangiora Bridge Club

PRESENT Michael Johnstone – Chair (CRC), Judith Calder (CRC), Fiona Temple - Secretary/Treasurer (CRC), Helen Good (CRC), Dave Putt (CRC), Giles Hancock (CRC), Marcia Ardmore (Acting President – Crockfords), Shangar Singh (President – Christchurch), Maree Felstead (Vice-President – Rangiora), Paula Gregory (Vice-President – Timaru), John Knight and Bev Smith – Ashburton, Bob Calder- Rangiora, Jenny Hassall - Rangiora

APOLOGIES Shirley Newton, Trish Langbein (Crockfords), Sue and Richard Lovett (Akaroa), Nikki Luisetti (Rangiora), Susan Edwards and Bruce Anderson (Christchurch), Kay Nicholas (Timaru).

Welcome by Michael Johnstone (Chair)

Part 1 - General Business

1. 2014 Intermediate and Junior League.

Fiona presented the final results with a break down of some statistics regarding the 2013 league. She gave feedback of the success of the 2013 league, explained how the league worked and answered questions. She encouraged clubs to get behind the league by promoting it well – not to just post flyers but to talk to their members about it and encourage participation. The 2013 league has been a great success and further participation and expansion is expected in 2014 as more players become aware of the league and how it runs. Fiona encouraged those in attendance to look at the Regional Website, as it is a great resource of information on the league as well as other things.

2. How to for clubs to do their own online tournaments.

Fiona handed out a document with a step by step guide for clubs to create and manage their own online tournaments. She explained the benefits of having on line entries and answered questions regarding this. She encouraged all clubs to promote the use of on line entries with the view to slowly encouraging most players to enter online as this facility is easier for users and administrators alike. A copy of the handout will be sent to clubs a long with their online log in details.

It was suggested that it would be good to be able to import the entry lists into the scoring programs. However this is a feature that needs to be part of the scoring program.

3. New Club Director's Manual.

Giles spoke about the manual as a reference resource and best practice manual for new club directors. All clubs were encouraged to use the manual as it is a great resource and notified the extra copies can be downloaded from the Regional website as a PDF. Some parts of the manual

will be available as a word document on request so that they can be altered to be relevant to a particular club. The manual as a whole will be kept as a PDF to ensure its continued integrity. Clubs were encouraged to notify the committee of any ideas or requests for changes as the manual is a living document.

4. Development of a Canterbury zero tolerance policy.

The idea of developing a zero tolerance policy towards bad player behaviour was raised. Clubs agreed that having a standard policy for all of Canterbury was a good idea. Everyone was in favour of the use of the Protocol Booklet by Carla Heslop and there was general agreement that greater use of the Protocol Booklet would be a great beginning in educating the Canterbury Bridge playing population. Timaru said they were going to try and give a copy of the booklet to all their players. Clubs all wished for the booklet to be available to them. Michael and Paula talked about how Timaru is close to developing their own zero tolerance policy and the Wellington Bridge club policy was circulated. It was agreed that once Timaru had finished their policy it would be used as the basis from which to develop a Canterbury policy in consultation with all clubs. Part of the policy would include guidelines as to steps for dealing with difficult players and penalties that could be used consistently across the province in clubs and at tournaments.

5. Developing a forum for clubs to share problems

In various meetings with clubs throughout 2013 it has come to the attention of the CRC that some clubs would like a mechanism/ forum in which they could raise problems they may have with another club. Usually these problems involve issues regarding a member from another club. Clubs would like a less formal way to approach another club to sort out a problem before it may escalate in to a bigger problem. After some discussion it was decided that each club would nominate a go-to person that another club could make contact with as a first point of reference. The CRC would be cc'd in to this correspondence just for their information and act as a collator of information in case the same problems are occurring at different clubs unbeknownst to them. Fiona will send out a request to all clubs for the name and contact details of each go-to person and distribute the details to clubs.

6. The rotation of regional and national tournaments.

The CRC asked the clubs if they were all interested in having regular rotation of regional and national tournaments. There was some interest so Fiona will send out a request to clubs to indicate which tournaments they are interested in running.

Part 2 – Bridge Development in the region

7. Recruitment and retention of members, and increasing player numbers.

A general discussion was held on this topic. Clubs shared their experiences and practices. While many things were raised some key points and ideas were made:

- The timing of lessons is important. Retention of players who take lessons after August is more difficult than those earlier in the year.
- All agreed that having lessons on the night that they will move continue to play on is important.
- Crockfords had an excellent idea of having a buddy system where each new learner is given a buddy who rings them up and makes sure they are playing, encourages them to play and helps them with any bridge related problems they may have. One on one attention makes people feel wanted and they make more of an effort to carry on

- Clubs agreed that it was important to tell the players already playing in the Junior section NOT to give advice to the new players coming in to the grade. It is a major source of confusion to new players and puts them off.
- Have a supper break when lessons are on so that the Junior players mingle with the people taking lessons so as to make the shift from lessons to a proper session not so daunting.
- Most clubs do not charge subs for the rest of the year in which a new person learns but do charge table fees. Many were in favour of allowing cheat sheets to be used for some time in the Junior grade.
- Clubs should have a good package for those finishing/taking lessons. Good information such as a copy of the Protocol Booklet, details of beginner sessions and tournaments. Also information on practical and approachable ways of how to find partners and deal with the 'relationship' aspect of bridge and having/finding a partner.
- Tutors need to be available to attend sessions following lessons to give on going support and help to new players.
- While recruiting new players can be affective in some areas with advertising in local papers, having open days, mail drops etc it was felt that word of mouth was still the best way to get people to learn and give bridge a go.
- Developing good email lists of players is an important way to ensure contact with current members. As evidenced with the earthquakes clubs can lose track of members if they shift house but often their email addresses remain the same. It can be time consuming establishing emails lists but they are an effective and long-term method of instant communication with the club membership.

8. Director development

- A notice will be sent out to clubs asking them what training they would like to see for their directors. Where possible directors should also be consulted as to what training they would like.
- One area that showed up as requiring training was how to be a good Playing Director. This role has its special challenges. Most of the smaller clubs have playing directors and there are no resources or training on the protocols of how to do this.
- Rangiora would like to make sure that directors in the region who direct at different clubs should be familiar with the technology of different clubs. This is certainly an aspect that a tournament match committee should consider.
- We also considered how to encourage more people to direct. Clubs are and need to shoulder tap people who might be interested and would be good. Perhaps some resources need to be developed on the benefits of being a director.

9. Tournaments

- Not all clubs were aware that they could now run 22 board Junior Tournaments. It was believed this is a good initiative by NZBridge.
- A suggestion was made that the Charity Pairs could be run in more than one centre on the same day. Discussion was had regarding how much of the table fees should go to the charity. Several clubs donate all the takings to the charity but may not provide lunch.
- Michael explained to the group how Swiss pairs and the Cambridge Sixes work. It was agreed that when running tournaments or Club sessions with different movements, such as Swiss pairs that a better explanation be given to players as to how the movement works so that they understand it better and get more enjoyment from it.

- Some clubs had experience failures in getting members to try new types of play such as Swiss Pairs or different session times, but agreed that you just have to repackage the idea better and try again.
- Ashburton had had good feedback when it staged sessions where seniors had to ask a Junior to play.
- Fiona mentioned running two sessions on a Friday starting earlier and running for about two hours each. Players could play both or just one. Initially aimed at providing alternative time sessions for the youth players it may also encourage those who don't want to play for a whole evening to have a go.

10. How can NZBridge and the CRC help you?

Two main points were raised here:

- Some of the smaller clubs would like to be able to receive advice and guidance from NZBridge on what equipment and scorer programs to buy.
- Clubs felt that there was a lack of explanation in response to letters they had sent to NZBridge regarding the rise in levies. While clubs could see that the levy rises were in themselves not unreasonable they felt that there was a lack of transparency regarding the NZBridge accounts. They felt that there was little information or explanation regarding proposed initiatives and details of some of the expenditure. They questioned why there was no budget forecast for years to come and why so much was being spent on the International area. They would like more detail on the financial situation and questioned why NZBridge had not forecasted the drop in player numbers and raised the levy earlier so as not to get in to such a bad situation.