



## Newsletter No: 1 for 2020

26 March 2020

The recommendation to close Clubs was not taken lightly as we know how important they are to our community. Our concern was the welfare of players and staff. As we now move into lockdown we are seeing all sorts of initiatives emerge as we strive to feed our addiction and to stay in touch. I urge you to take advantage of everything on offer. Give BBO a go. If BBO is foreign to you there are, I am sure, many around who will willingly help. The lockdown provides a window to study and improve your game. Come back when we are allowed, vitalized and ready to show off your new skills.

Above all, this is a time about being safe. Heed the advice about personal hygiene and washing hands. We know Bridge plays a big part in mental health. One of the risks of prolonged isolation is a breakdown in mental health. Create a phone tree or use "whats app" to stay in touch. Phone a person a day. Be kind and look after the people around you.

### National Office Open

Richard and Alister both work from home based offices and will continue to do so during the lockdown. Please do continue to contact them as need be either by email or phone. We want to hear from you and to help where we can.

There is Government support for Incorporated Societies and charitable organisations. Have a look at the Covid 19 website for what is available. There are for instance, wage, leave and isolation subsidies.

### National mailing list & sharing the message

We have for long enough grappled with the challenge of sharing information and ensuring that it reaches our club officers and players alike. The recent happening with Coronavirus is an example of this, with instances where our bulletins emailed to Clubs have not made it past the inbox.

Clubs please help us by forwarding our mail outs to your club members, or at least to your committee members if you do not maintain a club email list. This brings me to a project that we have discussed previously but will now prioritise - the development of a national database and mailing list. I hope Clubs and players alike will get behind this initiative and support it. There is nothing to be afraid off. Over the coming months we will be in touch and share with you how we are going to give effect to this. We are very conscious of the position of clubs and the need to ensure privacy. We would like to work with you. Perhaps your club would like to designate someone to be a liaison point.



### **Welcome Sue Brown**

It is our pleasure to welcome Sue Brown of Kerikeri to the Board. Sue's 3 year term officially starts on 1 April 2020. Sue brings to the table extensive financial management skills, heaps of governance experience and a long history of involvement at club and regional level.

### **Special thanks to Clare Coles**

I wish to take the opportunity now to acknowledge and thank retiring Board member Clare Coles of Cambridge. Notwithstanding a big job with the Waikato DHB Clare has dedicated energy, time and skill to make NZBridge a better organisation. 3 years ago NZBridge faced a number of challenges. Clare was instrumental in focusing our attention on what was important and has been part of our strategy implementation. Even though Clare leaves us next week she has willingly put up her hand to assist. I won't say good luck in retirement as I know Clare has a big role ahead.

### **Tournaments Cancellations**

Events at 10A and above are the responsibility of NZ Bridge either directly or by way of a delegation to Regional Committees. To give organisers and players, especially those that would need to book travel, some clarity NZ bridge will make and publish a decision 8 weeks prior to the scheduled date regarding cancellation.

As a result, there are events on the calendar scheduled for May and early June that will be cancelled shortly. Sorry but we have no choice.

### **IP Trials**

The interprovincial trials scheduled for the weekend of May 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> are cancelled. Without knowing when normal activities can resume and with a clogged tournament calendar it will be very difficult the reschedule. As an alternative we are inviting or recommending that Regions invite pairs to nominate, provide details of their playing history and results and that the Regions select their teams for 2020.

### **Regional Committee Elections**

With Clubs out of action for the next while it will be difficult to seek nominations and conduct any elections for the Regional Committees in time for the new term of office which commences 1 July. The Board has resolved to defer the elections until later in the year and to extend the current term of office until 31 October 2020. We have asked the existing members of our Regional Committees to continue in their roles beyond 30<sup>th</sup> June.

## **World Teams Champs 2020**

The Board is waiting for a firm decision from the World Bridge Federation regarding two major events that we have made commitments to send teams to. Firstly, the World Youth Teams Championships at the end of July and the World Teams Championships late August. Both events are scheduled to be held in northern Italy. The WBF have advised that they will provide contesting countries further information early next month. The window for NZ Bridge and our selected players to prepare for and arrange travel to these events narrows by the day.

To support our international players, we have decided to appoint a national coach- GeO Tislevoll. As to when GeO starts will largely depend on whether we participate in Italy. We are confident the additional support on offer will help our teams but equally will filter down to the club player.

## **Tournaments**

Over the last month and a half, there have been a number of major events here and in Australia. Participation was good as was the quality of bridge. Congratulations to those who succeeded.

## **Teaching**

Some things we do go unnoticed. The teaching committee of Karen Martelletti, Shirley Newton, Jenny Wilkinson and Richard Solomon have been hard at work. I refer you to the website.

I thought I would share some of the statistics with you.

1. Beginner Lessons-student notes. Estimated downloads or viewed last 5 years - 649,317
2. Improver lessons-student notes. Estimated downloads or viewed last 5 years- 180,648
3. Intermediate lessons-student notes. Estimated downloads or viewed 5 years-51,273

With the lockdown there may be an opportunity to introduce our wonderful game to people who are looking for something to do. We are investigating ways we can bring this opportunity to clubs.

## **NZBridge Foundation**

The Foundation continues to play a valuable role as our charitable arm. To do more it needs to grow the fund. As you think about the future and plan your financial arrangements, we ask that you consider making a bequest or donation to the Foundation.

## **Manual**

Rewriting the manual is near completion. One advantage of the lockdown is available time to finish some of these tasks.

## **Financial Matters**

The organisation is in a healthy state to weather the storm. Alister and Richard will continue in their roles. If these early days are anything to go by, they will have more to do. To lighten the blow we will be applying for the Government support.

## **Board Roles and Responsibilities**

We have recast the roles and responsibilities of the Board. Changes are designed to fall in line with how we plan to report to members. I refer you to our website for the detail.

Before wrapping up what has turned out to be a long newsletter, I want to reinforce our desire to stamp out bad behavior. Over the last few months, we have received, a number of complaints about inappropriate behavior. NZBridge alone cannot stamp this out. Responsibility must and should rest with players. Think before you act. Think about what you say and how you say it. Call the director, don't try and solve the problem on your own. Treat your partner and opposition with respect. Give full explanations when an opponent asks a question.

As we all embark on 4 weeks in isolation, we wish you all well as you work through it. Do take advantage of the online bridge play that a number of clubs are hosting on BBO. We will be posting items of interest, jokes and whatever else comes our way, on our Website every day and we invite you to enjoy these.

Finally, from us all here at NZ Bridge, take care, be safe and please contact us any time.

Cheers

Allan