



15 June 2020

Newsletter No: 5 for 2020

Gosh it is good to be back face to face at the table. Think how lucky we are as for many countries they have weeks maybe months before any form of normality returns.

We want to acknowledge the contribution of many during Alert levels 2-4. The many helped keep the game alive with online bridge. We however have to recognize a large number of players did not play online so it is great that those players can now resume playing at their club.

Over the last few days, I have taken the opportunity to talk to a number of players who played online. Without exception they enjoyed the opportunity, in many cases pitting their skills against elite players. They did not see it as a daunting experience but a chance to learn. I know during lockdown I took the opportunity to kibitz good players like Ashley Bach, Mike Cornell, Matt Brown, and others to learn a little about their ability to work out the shape and to learn from their card playing skills. I am sure there will be more online bridge so take advantage to kibitz and learn.

I am delighted we have completed a review of the manual. It sounds like a simple task, but it is not. Many thanks to Murray, Alister and the Board for bringing this piece of work to a conclusion.

Whilst acknowledging contributions it is appropriate to mention the efforts of both Alister and Richard. Hopefully during lockdown, you have enjoyed Richard's daily articles. Alister has worked tirelessly behind the scenes keeping the organisation going.

The Board met a week ago for a scheduled meeting. For many you will be pleased to hear that Congress 2020 is on, subject of course to no change in Government policy. Around Covid 19. The Congress team recently canvassed players as to whether they would be playing Congress. Overwhelmingly we had a very positive response. There a number who will not be at Congress for a variety of reason, both personal and caution. We respect their decision and hope we will see them back playing Congress in 2021. We have a number of friends from Australia who help with staffing at Congress. We hope the Australian bubble is open so they can attend. If not, we have a plan B.

Over the lockdown you will have noticed we have shifted the search function on the website. Hopefully, this makes it easier for you to navigate the site. During lockdown we shared with you our intentions to review the website, not from an information/knowledge basis but to ensure it is consumer friendly and appropriately represents the organisation to our target market. We enquired amongst our community whether there was anyone out there who might be willing to help develop a



digital strategy. The invitation remains open and if you think you might be able to help in some small way please contact Alister in the first instance.

On the subject of online activity, we here have noticed an increase of spam emails. A number of these purport to be from bridge organisations across the globe. A timely reminder to be cautious when opening such emails, if in doubt don't!

There is no question that the focus of Clubs and the Board is about getting players back playing and increasing participation at all levels.

We hope over time there will be less resistance to mingling and that everyone will support players returning to live bridge. Next month we have a planned strategy day. This will give us the chance to look at what we are doing and determine whether we need to change or modify our plans.

We are pleased to report notwithstanding a hit to our revenue during lockdown our financial position remains strong primarily due to the fact the World Bridge Games were cancelled. On the subject of cancellations tournaments and events that have been cancelled will not be reinstated or rescheduled. We have a full calendar of events for the rest of the year and if we start playing with the schedule it will have an adverse consequence on someone. There is plenty of bridge ahead. I implore you not to keep asking Rona to change events as it is wholly unfair on her.

We have posted notice to Clubs that our AGM will take place in Hamilton as usual on Saturday 26th September.

On the 23rd the Bridge Zone will celebrate their 100th programme. Please tune in as they have a wonderful mystery guest.

Enjoy your bridge.

Stay safe, stay well

Cheers Allan