



16 Dec 2021

## Newsletter No: 5 for 2021

Hi Everyone

- **It is time** to be with family and friends.
- **It is time** to celebrate and put the horror of 2021 behind us.
- **It is time** to lock in our 2022 bridge calendar. The Protection Framework, aka Traffic Light system, means under most circumstances we can play bridge.

### Traffic Light System

	<u>Vaccine Pass Required</u>	<u>Vaccine Pass Not Required</u>
<b>Red</b>	Events up to 100 attendees and based on 1m distancing (whichever is the lesser) per defined space.	Events cannot be held
<b>Orange</b>	No limit	Events cannot be held
<b>Green</b>	No limit	Events up to 100 attendees and based on 1m distancing (whichever is the lesser) per defined space.

This has to be positive news. We can now pursue those elusive masterpoints. What is more pleasing is that from 30 December the bulk of the country will be set at orange allowing events for those vaccinated to take place without restriction.

Throughout the year we have talked about online bridge and that it has in many respects allowed us to enjoy our passion for the game. It is now clear that the future delivery of the game will change. Online bridge whether you are a fan or not will be part of the offering. Nevertheless, the Board is united to have, and to prioritise face-to-face bridge. The over whelming reason why most of us play the game is for friendship and socialisation. Whilst modern bridge platforms allow this to happen it does not truly substitute physically getting together and having a chin wag.



There will however be occasions when playing online is the thing we should be doing. The Board at its last meeting approved online bridge and awarding of masterpoints, under certain circumstances. We wish to remain flexible to cater for changes in circumstances or changes to the Protection Framework, and we do not want to see any further tournaments cancelled. The decision to allow online tournaments is not open ended and will only be approved on a case-by-case basis and only under certain conditions.

NZ Bridge has an expectation that all sanctioned face to face tournaments will be subject to players having a vaccine pass.

At this stage there are only a limited number of circumstances that could give rise for a tournament to be approved. They are:

1. Unable to hold a tournament due to a limitation on numbers. This will only apply under the red traffic light. Likely to only apply to mini congresses or 10A and above tournaments. Other events are unlikely to exceed 25 tables.
2. Unable to hold a tournament because the landlord imposes restrictions.
3. Unable to hold a tournament if there is an active case or the club is a place of interest.

In addition, there will be at least one national event each year played online.

The regulations committee have been asked to draft changes to the manual. Online tournaments and masterpoints will be effective from 1 January 2022.

Many people ask us "is congress going ahead in February". It is evident that the Protection Framework is all about normalising life, as much as possible. We have to learn to live with Covid-19 in the community. We need to be sensible and take whatever precautions we see fit. Unlike the old Alert Levels, it does not appear you take your traffic light colour with you. Therefore, the only circumstance likely to give rise to the event not proceeding face-to-face is if Tauranga is at red or borders are imposed. 2022 Congress should be a buzz and we recommend you make arrangements. There will be plenty of bridge for everyone.

On Wednesday the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022, from 4pm to 6pm, we will be holding an open forum to discuss matters relevant to bridge in New Zealand. We would like a good turnout so please mark your diaries.

Over the last few weeks, you will have seen a change in our branding. We hope you like the new look and find it refreshing and welcoming. We have also established a new website for new players- [playbridge.co.nz](http://playbridge.co.nz)- a new Facebook page and Instagram. Marketing collateral is being worked on so watch this space.

Over the last few months, I have received a number of emails, thanking us. This is hugely appreciated. We are trying to help as best we can. At each AGM I usually acknowledge the contribution by the many that make the running of our game easier and successful. I know I am a little premature, but I want to thank Alister and Richard for their dedication and hard work this year.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and hope your 2022 bridge is exciting, rewarding and brings you joy

Best wishes from the Board of New Zealand Bridge

Cheers Allan

