



20 August 2026

Newsletter No 4 for 2026

While the daylight hours are slowly getting longer it has certainly been wintery and cold across the country. Thankfully bridge is an indoor activity.

We have been progressing through several projects since I last wrote and expect to finalise a number of them in the coming days. The board is meeting in person early next month to make a start on our planning for 2027. We will share our thoughts and plans with you after our workshop.

Congress 2026

This will be the 40th NZ Bridge National Congress, it is shaping up to be the biggest ever! 8th to the 14th of November 2026.

- Events for all grades every day
- Enter and pay by 30 September 2026 and go in the draw to win your entry fee back - four chances to win.
- Quiz Night - Tuesday 11th November. Register your Team
- Fancy Dress Day - Wednesday 12th November - Theme is the letter D
- Celebrity Speakers Monday to Friday.

Marketing, PR and social media activity

NZ Bridge continues to invest in marketing and PR. We have moved from strategy development to active delivery. PR activity is well established, and a national story pipeline is in place. Next month's theme is 'Bridge and Culture' - celebrating the place of bridge in our communities. If you have a story you'd like to share, please get in touch,

July highlights:

- 📊 20,000+ people reached organically across Facebook.
- 📰 2 media stories secured, with further interest from RNZ, Stuff and Hutt News.
- 💬 Community engagement remained strong, with an average 3% engagement rate and approximately 15 community conversations managed.
- 🤝 Relationships strengthened with bridge clubs across New Zealand, creating a growing pipeline of future stories and media opportunities.

Teaching and Learning

The Sunday supervised play sessions finish on 30th August. They have been very popular again this year with 20-24 tables playing most weeks. We look forward to continuing them in 2027! Thanks to all the helpers who have given their time to provide support and advice.

Accessibility and Inclusion Audit

Later this week we will be sending clubs our inaugural Accessibility and Inclusion Audit. NZ Bridge is committed to making bridge welcoming and accessible for everyone. This audit will help us understand:

- the accessibility needs of members across New Zealand bridge clubs
- the support and resources already available within clubs
- the barriers that may prevent people from participating fully
- what additional resources or guidance would help clubs become more inclusive.

The information collected will assist NZ Bridge in developing future resources, training and support for clubs.

NZ Bridge Regional Championships Survey

New Zealand Bridge is reviewing the future of the Regional Championships (formerly known as the Interprovincial Championships). We will shortly send a survey to regions and clubs. It will also be on the NZ Bridge website for players to share their views. We are keen to hear from players who have represented their region, players who would like to play in the event in the future and those who are aware of the Regional Championships but would not want to play in them.

Tournament Regulations

Clubs and Regions will have received a copy of the 2026 Tournament Regulations which come into effect on the 1st of October 2026. A copy will be emailed to all qualified Directors and can be found on the NZB website.

The most significant change is the introduction of Levels in the System Regulations. There are 8 levels, from Level 1 (basic natural system) through to Level 8 (HUMs). From the 1st of October these levels will be used to identify what systems are permitted at different tournaments. If a Tournament is Level 3 then all systems and conventions permitted in the levels up to and including level 3 are permitted.

The current classification of systems by colour remains to provide an easy indication of the type of system being encountered.

HUMs are no longer permitted in pairs events but only in 10A teams and above playing 8 or more boards in each match.

Details are found in the appendices of the Tournament Regulations from page 72 onwards.

Importantly, most players will not be affected by the new regulations. They will still be permitted to use systems they currently use.

Masterpoint Offerings

Changes are being made to the award of A points in Matchpoint Pairs events.

Partial As are to be introduced for session placings and, there will be a change to the award of overall A points in those pairs events that have a Final & Plate.

Currently, when a Pairs event has a qualifying session and breaks into a Final & Plate +/- Consolation, overall A points are awarded to, approximately, the top 3rd of the overall field. This means that if the field is split equally into a Final and Plate then those playing in the Plate are not competing for any A points.

In 15A and 20A the current regulations allow for the Consolation to be run as a separate A point tournament providing it accepts new entries but not for those playing in the Plate.

In future, both the Plate and Consolation, if there is one, will be run as separate A point tournaments. Specific details, including the date of implementation of these changes, will be posted on the website.

Additionally, partial A points for session placings in pairs events are to be introduced. The details are still being worked out and require some changes to the masterpoints software and will therefore take longer to implement.

Director Training and Assessment

Changes have been made to the assessment of candidates for the position of National Director.

Candidates apply to the Director and Scorer Development, Assessment and Retention Committee (DSDARC) and once approved must direct as many 5A (or 10A with supervision) tournaments as they can. At the completion of each Tournament, they must send a written report to the Chair of the DSDARC outlining the setup of the event, any difficult rulings describing how they were dealt, and any appeals.

They must then complete a series of six simulations in which they are sent the basic outline of a situation and must request more information and decide which laws and regulations apply. They are able to consult and poll to come to a ruling as they would when directing.

They must make themselves available to direct some or all of NZ Congress and as an assistant director at some of the NZ Bridge Major events.

To complete the qualification, they must direct one of the NZ Bridge Major Events, under the supervision of the Chair of DSDARC or the Head Director.

Until next time.

Peter