



19 August 2024

Newsletter No 5 2024

**Hi Everyone**

**General**

Congress 2024 is just over a month away. The programme is exciting and caters for all grades. If you have not entered, you are encouraged to get on with it. This is a chance to pit your skills against your peers. Your chance to win a national title.

Shortly after Congress our representative teams will be off to the world championships in Buenos Aires. We wish them well.

On the Friday immediately before Congress we will hold our Annual General Meeting. Clubs are encouraged to send a representative. Whilst we do not envisage anything contentious it is an opportunity for you to be kept abreast of what is happening. At the meeting we will be seeking Clubs approval of a new constitution, in accordance with the Incorporated Societies Act 2022.

Recently I attended the Auckland Northland Regional Committee conference. The meeting provided an opportunity for Mel Auld to share what is happening in the marketing space and where we can help regions and clubs. Much of the focus is about growing numbers and participation. In March our overall membership was down to 12,182 whereas at the end of July the number was up to 12,975. We are confident by March 2027 we should have achieved our target of 15,000 if every club does its bit. The meeting also provided an opportunity for Anne Barrowclough to share the work we have done on writing a new constitution and the tools available. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August Anne will hold a webinar on the subject, and you are encouraged to attend and can register here.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/constitutionalchanges>

Anne also shared a template for the planned toolkit.



Most interesting were two presentations given by new players. It won't come as a surprise, but it should be of concern. Poor behaviour by seasoned and experienced players is a real turnoff. We need to call out these people, and they should be sanctioned. We are working hard to grow numbers', and we do not need forces working against everything we are trying to do. I know in my early working life I was told you have two ears and one mouth, so listen twice as much as you 'speak'. The other presentation was about buddying up new players. The recommendation was this should be for an extended period. I have requested a copy of the presentations which I will share as there are many learning moments.

### **Board Meeting**

Last week we held our usual monthly meeting. The following matters were discussed.

1. We realized an operating surplus in June and July. As at the end of July YTD we were in surplus of \$21.3k. The pleasing fact we are seeing a lift in membership and participation.
2. A debate over the future of 'stop cards', with a decision to follow our September meeting.
3. We raised \$7000 for the international team travelling to Buenos Aires. Thank you to those who played the Matariki fund raiser.
4. A new framework for members of regional committees was approved and will be released shortly.
5. A shout out to the following clubs- Auckland (26), East Coast Bays (22), North Shore (26), Rotorua (12), Te Puke (10), Waitomo (6), Waikato (7), Te Awamutu (7), Gisborne (8), Hutt (20), Karori (13), Victoria (11), Waikanae (14), Rangiora (18). Congratulations to all the others who increased their membership.
6. The supported play programme taking place on Sundays between 4pm and 5.30pm is well supported. Thanks to all those people who are giving their time to make this happen.

### **Tournaments**

Often, I am asked about tournaments. We need to remember the tournament schedule was created to give all clubs a chance to arrange an event for their members and extend an invitation to neighbouring clubs. Every club was allocated a 5A event. However, the composition of clubs has changed with the bulk of membership being junior and intermediate. There are no barriers for clubs to change their event to a different denomination- either 3A, 5B, 8B. Remember the event is primarily for the benefit of your membership.

I am also asked about the future of online. As I have said harmonizing the two forms of the game is a challenge. Few clubs have requested a change from face-to-face to online. Most clubs want to continue playing face-to-face. Playing some of the national events online is welcomed by many players.

**Online Improvers lessons**

Rona Driscoll is hosting a series of 3 improvers lessons online via real bridge during August. The first session was well supported. Players wishing to join the remaining 2 sessions (22<sup>nd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> August or on Tuesdays during September) can do so via the following link. <https://nzbridge.helloclub.com>

**Cheers**

**Allan**