

28 October 2026

Newsletter No 5 for 2026

As we head towards the business end of the playing year the focus now is congress starting just over a week from now.
Preparations are well in hand, and we are delighted that another record has been broken with close to 900 players joining us.
Bridget asks that those who have not yet paid for their entries do so over the next couple of days. A reminder too, that we have a congress app which can be downloaded here
The app contains useful information in the lead up to, and during the event. Even if you are not attending congress, the app will give you access to the results and bulletins during the week.

Tournament Return Forms
Our thanks to those clubs who have completed and submitted your return form after hosting a tournament. The information has proved valuable from which a couple of initiatives will be rolled out in the coming months.
Firstly, the board will provide funding to the regions to run workshops on scoring. We are aware that this happens in some regions already, but our plan is to make this training available across the network. The seminars we hope will have a 'troubleshooting" focus and be offered either in person, online, or a mix of both.
The second will see the development of a tournament planning checklist and we thank our friends at the Cambridge Club for this suggestion.
Once this is in place we will most likely dispense with the requirement to submitting a post tournament return to NZ Bridge.

Planning Workshop with Regions
The Board will host a workshop with representatives from the regional committees at the end of February 2027. The workshop will enable us to review the 2026 year and agree some planned activities and funding for 2027.

In addition, we are proposing to host a session covering the gaming grant application process. If you know of any experts in this area, we would love to hear from them.

Tournament Grades & Ranks

Last week we shared details of changes to tournament grades for 2027. The board has approved two additional grades (Restricted & Novice). As with the existing grades, they will apply for the full calendar year giving players certainty as to what tournaments they plan to play.

In addition, a new rank (District Master) will be slotted in between Local & Provincial Master. As is always the case when such changes are made, there will in 2027 be some players who will no longer qualify to contest intermediate level tournaments.

National Director Appointments

NZ Bridge congratulates Kevin Hu & Babs-Merel de Visser who were recently appointed as National Directors.

Teaching and Learning

The recent series of online lessons were hugely popular with well over twenty tables attending every session. With topics ranging from leads and signals to doubles these were a great opportunity for players to hone their skills or develop new ones. This now concludes the supported play and online lessons for 2026. The Teaching and Learning Committee would like to thank all the teachers, helpers and volunteers who have contributed so much. 2027 planning is now underway with announcements to follow before the end of the year.

There is going to be an informal meet-up for teachers at National Congress. This will be after play on Thursday - everyone is welcome.

Accessibility and Inclusion Audit

Over sixty clubs completed the inaugural Accessibility and Inclusion Audit. We'd like to thank everyone for their time and effort. The data is now being analysed. It will be discussed at the November Board meeting before key findings are shared with clubs and regions.

NZ Bridge Regional Championships Survey

The recent NZ Bridge survey on the future of the Regional Championships attracted 385 responses from players across all regions, providing a clear mandate for the event to continue. Two-thirds (66%) of respondents rated the continuation of the Championships as important, with support extending beyond those who have previously represented their region. Players particularly value the opportunity to represent their region, the rivalry and

camaraderie between regions, and the opportunity for player development, especially at Intermediate level. There is also a strong preference for retaining the face-to-face nature of the competition, with almost two-thirds (65%) favouring finals played entirely or mainly in person. Affordability, particularly travel and accommodation costs, emerged as an important consideration, alongside encouraging participation and ensuring fair competition between regions. Overall, the findings demonstrate the value players place on the Regional Championships, both as a competitive event and as an opportunity to bring the bridge community together.

Until next time.

Peter

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♠ 5

♥ AK1084

♦ K54

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Questions? Email paul.dalley@hotmail.com