



15 December 2022

Newsletter No: 8 for 2022

Hi Everyone



As I have already reported Richard Solomon has decided to retire from year end, ending a distinguished career. Richard's decision to retire has given us cause to review the level of support and services sought by clubs and players and how best to deliver such support and services in the future.

We all know the last 3 years have been a challenge. We also know as we look ahead the economy will experience severe head winds which may impact membership as players behaviours and routines may change. The Board has a very clear focus and that is about helping clubs run efficiently and effectively; to be financially healthy; to grow membership; and to grow player participation. Richard was an integral part of the work planned.



We know if we are going to achieve our goals we need to plan. Unless you are very lucky failure to plan will result in the goals never being achieved. This applies to all of us - Clubs, Regional Committees, and New Zealand Bridge. You may ask why this narrative. It is simple- we see clubs as the centre piece of the work we do. We want to ensure the work we do is aligned with the plans of clubs. **We are therefore keen to hear from you about your plans for next year and how best we can help you.** It will also help us with our resource plan. We ask that you communicate with us even if your plans are not fully developed.

Online Bridge

By now you will have read our planned strategy for online bridge, we have listened to clubs, regional committees and players. Finding a solution that harmonizes in-person and online bridge was never going to be easy. What we have shared with you we believe is in the best interests of the game. The decision to trial the plan throughout 2023 will allow us to have confidence that we are doing the right thing or to modify our plans.

Congress

Congress was a substantial part of Richard's role, and it is a role we need to replace as soon as possible. **If you are interested, can you register your interest with Alister (secretary@nzbridge.co.nz).** Ideally, we are looking for someone with event management experience and people management skills. Whilst bridge knowledge is a benefit it is not necessary. This will be a paid role.

Whilst on the subject of Congress the overall feedback from Tauranga was players enjoyed being back face-to-face and enjoyed the new venue. A few teething problems that we are certain these will be resolved for next year. Even though Covid was still around we had ~630 players at Congress. Pleasingly 80% of those who attended Congress will be back in 2023. A good signal that we got a lot right.

We say thank you to those who responded to the player survey. Below is a summary of the best things and suggested areas for improvement.

Best Things

Areas for Improvement

The venue	Get the room temperature sorted
The playing rooms Spaciousness/space between tables	Review playing format, especially for open pairs
Playing in one room	Finishing times
The location- Tauranga/Mt Maunganui Being together and playing face-2-face	Sound system and displaying draw/results
Parking	Shorten lunch break
Catering	Start later and fewer boards
No night play	Improve hot and cold water stations

Atmosphere	Bring back SI subsidy
Seeing friends/making new friends	Hold congress closer to the amenities
Format including drinks and nibbles at the end of Congress	Be more welcoming to juniors and intermediates
	More events for juniors and intermediates

95% of players were quite or very satisfied with Congress 2022

Board Meeting

In mid-November we held our usual monthly Board meeting. Pretty much business as usual. The Board met on the 5th and 6th of December to consider the findings of the Online Review. See above comments and the summary already posted on the website

During the Board meeting we debriefed the AGM and received the minutes which will be held in draft until next years' AGM. A copy of these will be shared with clubs shortly.

As part of the review the following changes will be made around registration of delegates, lodging of general business items effective from 2023:

- Delegates to be pre- registered by due date and that list will be updated and published on the website.
- People not pre-registered as club delegates may attend as observers only, with no voting rights, and speaking rights at the discretion of the chair.
- Only general business items formally advised by due date be allowed.
- Subsequent items from the floor be allowed as a discussion item only after the formal business is conducted and the meeting proper closed.

Derek Evennett, chef de mission of the international squad has elected to step down after many years leading our teams offshore. Again, Derek is another person who has unselfishly given his time, experience and knowledge to bridge but now recognises it is time for someone new. Jonathan Westoby has been appointed as the new chef de mission. He has large shoes to fill but we are confident the international squad will be in very good hands. Thank you to those who have registered interest for the role of non-playing captains.

We are delighted to report we have received a healthy response from those keen to represent the country. The international committee met on 1 December. More information to follow.

We are presently reviewing the setup of our website. There is an incredible amount of information, but it is not always easy to find. Also, because it is an open website, we effectively give away our intellectual property. This makes no sense. We are keen to hear from you what you want from the website.

Directors

Following Congress, we held a tournament directors' training and assessment weekend with four candidates qualifying. This is good news as we build more resource. Also, we have a small batch of players qualifying as club director.

Interprovincial Championship

A successful weekend with the event played in good spirits. Congratulations to the winners:

1. Open- Auckland/ Northland
2. Seniors- Canterbury
3. Women's- Auckland/Northland
4. Intermediate- Wellington

Wellington showing the greatest consistency winning the prestigious Dougal Mclean Trophy.

Enjoy your bridge and remember to stay safe and well

Cheers Allan

