

President's Patch # 6. September

New Rules

A revised Rules was approved at the Special General Meet on Sept 22nd. The likely noticeable impact of the revisions will be on 2017 Subscriptions. One change related to banking arrangements. It was acknowledged that having single signing authority for bank accounts is less than best practice, however dual signing authority for both cheque and internet doesn't seem economically feasible with our current bank. Further work will be carried out to determine if this can be improved.

From the Subcommittees:

Social/Tournament:

The Intermediate tournament was held in September with a significant improvement in table numbers from 8.5 to 11.5. Next tournament scheduled is the PN Open on 15 October. This had a major uplift in participation to 18 tables in 2015 with the change to Swiss Pairs.

Consideration is being given to holding separate Intermediate and Junior tournaments on the same day in 2017. With improved technology (see below) this should prove possible. This will effectively halve the volunteer resource required.

Social Bridge on Sundays continues with 4-6 tables, usually about once per month. Next session October 23rd.

The annual tri-series interclub with Hawera and Wanganui is being held on October 9th in Wanganui. Liz Burrows is organising. Please contact her if you are interested in playing. Two teams from each club, with each team having 2 pairs of Open, Intermediate, Junior players (NZBridge gradings).

Recruitment and Retention:

The Improvers Series of Lessons is nearing completion with usually ~ 13 participating. Combined with the Beginners Series PNBC will have provided 19 teaching sessions of ~ 2hrs each this year. In addition, two 'edu-social' events, being Butler Pairs with prepared hands cum social cum 'post mortem' have been held, one on Tuesday night, one on Monday night.

To assist with future marketing we are considering a banner display on the Cook St frontage aimed at driver eyeballs.

Finance, H&S, Legal:

Work is being finalised on the 2017 subscriptions. To encourage greater membership take up and retention there is planned to be more membership categories with varying levels of payment required, eg those outside Palmerston North who have a closer competing Club can expect to pay less. Stay tuned.

Some investigation has started on becoming a Registered Charity. The primary purpose is not only to improve grant funding access (and we have a major carpet replacement of \$25K+ in the not too distant future), but also allows donations to be tax deductible. There is a short FAQ prepared which can be sent to anyone interested. Progressing this has been deferred until probably 2nd half of 2017 as Incorporated Societies face a significant increase in accounting regulatory compliance costs/time/effort in 2016 (a result of all those finance companies going bust a few years ago) and we want to get that out of the way first.

Sessions:

The 2017 Club Calendar is being rejigged. As detailed in President's Patch #3, Tuesday night (Open) is to have a compressed season of quality events, starting early April, including one event open to non - members. Depending on demand Tuesday Summer Bridge (non-members welcome) may continue through February/March. Monday night (Novice Plus) will continue with the revised plan introduced midway thru' 2016, which eliminated the Teams event, brought forward Champs to mid-year, altered session start time, and reduced number of played boards. Thursday night (Multi-Grade) will be mostly similar to 2016, with revisions around replacement of one teams event with a Swiss Pairs, introduction of a Butler Pairs event, and shift of Champs to earlier in the year. However, in 2017 a Gold (previously Senior Reserve) player will be eligible to win events provided they play with a lower graded player (ex Champs).

Regrades will shortly be made for 2017. The primary criterion is an average of 55%+ on a given night (or 48%+in a higher standard night). Minimum 10 nights.

Maintenance/Upgrade:

You will have noticed the new security fence on the south boundary which is a major improvement on the old battered corrugated iron fence. In order to stop the new fence becoming battered a grant for wheel stops for ~ \$2k has been applied for. In the meantime temporary wooden post wheel stops have been placed.

We now have a significantly improved sound system, with a new mixer amp and microphone. This serves both rooms with distributed sound via ceiling speakers. I would encourage room reps and directors to use this where possible as the message is more likely to get received, particularly as we cater for many people with hearing disabilities.

Some of the electrical equipment has been playing up, eg sound system, dishwasher, hot water boiler, cold water dispenser. We are currently developing an inventory of things that can play up, with how old, when last major repair etc, so we are better placed to anticipate and not be reactive to such things.

Technology:

A grant application is being made to apply for replacement of the 'red devils', with generic Huawei tablets and associated bridge licencing software. This involves \$5.8k. Care has been taken to ensure these have adequate battery life which bedevilled some earlier versions. Thought is being given to how best protect these tablets from going awol!

Our new Pianola based email system appears to be working well, reducing maintenance and allowing targeted emails. Thanks needs to be made to Goff Ashwell who single-handedly maintained our previous system, probably from when email first appeared on the technology scene.

A reminder for the few who don't receive "Pianola" emails but want to. An email to the club or note to the Administrator can easily fix this.

Conduct:

Nothing to report (good!)

New members:

A warm welcome to 4 associate members, HENK VANDERPOEL, MIEP VANDERPOEL, GEORGE MACLACHLAN, ANITA THIRTLE.