

Attendees:

1. Adrian Thompson (South West)
2. Alison Minchin (Southern Highlands)
3. Bruce Neill (NSWBA)
4. Christine Chandler (Hunter)
5. Dave Reddel (Central West)
6. Dominic Kwok (Blue Mountains)
7. Duncan Munro (NSWBA)
8. Jan Mitchell (Far South Coast)
9. John McIlrath (NSWBA)
10. John Scudder (NSWBA)
11. Julian Foster (NSWBA)
12. Liz Fanos (NSWBA Office)
13. Louis Koolen (NSWBA)
14. Michael Wilkinson (NSWBA)
15. Nicoleta Giura (Eastern Suburbs)
16. Nye Griffiths (NSWBA)
17. Pauline Gumby (NSWBA Webmaster)
18. Sandra da Silva (Inner West)
19. Warren Lazer (NSWBA)
20. Warren Robinson (NSWBA Honorary Solicitor)
21. David Weston (ABF and State MP Secretary) – masterpoint session only
22. Matthew McManus (Chief State Director) – director session only

Apologies:

1. Trish Carter

Meeting Opened at 10:30am 4th June 2011**Welcome & Introduction**

- Discussed the purpose of the meeting today.
- The intention is to hold this meeting annually at this time of year before the Teams of Three.
- Discussed some of the tools that NSWBA already has to help.
 - The letter to schools for starting bridge programs.
 - The NSWBA bridge promotional brochure.

Discussion Session (all participants): Identify priorities

What are the key issues for clubs? How can the NSWBA (and the ABF) help?

Directors

- Director development
 - Getting existing directors to do the directors' exam.
 - Some country directors also play in the duplicates, some are stand-by to play if someone walks in without a partner.
 - Discussed the possibility of having a lower level of directors' accreditation to facilitate for voluntary club directors.
 - Communicate clearly to the country clubs what the director accreditation requirement is for running each level of event.
 - Make country clubs aware of John McIlrath's "The Director is Called" book which is great for helping new directors deal with commonly occurring unfamiliar situations. The Judi McKee book on movements is also helpful for new directors.
 - Helping directors become more familiar with different scoring software.
 - Discussed the directors' seminar being held in Sydney in October 2011.
- Possibility of running local directors' workshops
 - Discussed the possibility of developing a 'circuit' for one or more qualified national directors to go around to each country region periodically to help develop local directors and assist with any issues clubs are having with directing or scoring programs etc.

MATTHEW MCMANUS

- How to encourage more directors?
 - Maybe start by finding out why people don't want to direct?
 - Increase the status of the director somehow?
 - Let directors play in their regular partnership as usual – don't have them as the "spare" person for someone turning up without a partner. (Some clubs may want to find another way to satisfy individuals who arrive without a partner.)
- Technology acting as a disincentive to directing? Yes
 - Could someone else (eg someone more tech savvy) do the scoring?

Teaching

- Teaching resources, including financial support
 - Developing qualified bridge teachers, including getting the ABTA involved.
 - Need for qualified bridge teachers to travel to the country to teach the intermediate and advanced players.
 - NSWBA website has a 'submission for teaching grant' form in the Clubs section which can be used to apply for financial support to country clubs for holding teaching sessions.
 - Discussed the possibility of holding seminars at country congresses as well as at NSW national events (SNOT, Coffs Harbour, ANC).
- Helping beginners to progress from supervised play into the regular club duplicates
 - Often tendency for players to want to stay in supervised together
 - Important to get friends to come together – then they progress together

- Important to get existing players to treat newcomers well – but hard to enforce (“P” plate concept – eg protected pair status perhaps?)
- Opportunity for talented country players to further develop their skills as bridge players
 - Discussed the possibility of introducing a mentoring system online through BBO to help talented country bridge players to develop further and to meet other good country players who they can partner in state and national events.

Publicity and Marketing

- Attracting new players
 - Game is often perceived to be “too hard”
 - Should we reduce the formal structuring of lesson etc?
 - Depends on how it’s taught – card play first is better than bidding
 - Some ABF guidelines on how to attract new players were circulated
 - (N.B. ABF guidelines on retention of club members has since been circulated).
- Attracting young players
 - Discussed pro-forma letter to schools that has worked in a previous circumstance.
 - Often hard to get in – especially in term times.
 - Can NSWBA endorse the letter for clubs to use and ensure that it is circulated to regional representatives?

Grants and Loans

- Acquisition of premises for country clubs, including loans, grants and help with approaching local councils
 - James O’Sullivan trust fund from ABF (loans - typically about \$30k)
 - Dept Sports and Rec – can sometimes apply for grants
 - Could NSWBA put equity into a club? Doubtful – certainly not structured for it at present.
- Advertisement of available grants from the NSWBA for country bridge clubs
 - Forms for teaching/promotion grants circulated
 - ABF grant is available too
- Discussed the NSWBA dealing machine subsidy and its intended purpose.

Communication between NSWBA and Country Clubs

- More feedback and communication between country clubs and the NSWBA
- Access to IT and technology resources

- Communicate with country clubs about the availability and pros/cons for different bridge scoring systems.
- Discussed the availability of materials on the NSWBA website to assist country clubs.
- NSWBA offers a dealing facility to country clubs for running congresses.
- Providing regional clubs with information about the regional representatives system
- Publicising State bridge events
 - Clubs need to keep contact details up to date – otherwise runs the risk that information like mailouts don't get to the right people
 - Issues with calendar co-ordination – but draft calendar for next year is already up on the website to assist with planning for clubs
 - Why don't clubs want to send pairs to finals? Mainly money. Extra table money is perceived as subsidizing the few players that qualify (usually the same ones each year!) Prohibitive cost to the club to pay for a pair (but can't they cover this by adding a little bit to table money across the whole year?)
 - But also pairs just don't want to travel etc.
- More surveys. One was done in the Southern & Western Zone asking clubs for basic information (members, trends, use of technology etc). Can that information be stored somewhere? Probably not on the public site – but maybe at Rep level? Basic club information is already held in the Clubs directory (ex FABC).
- NSWBA Bulletin
 - Is it known about/used? Yes it's read – but no contributions or information about regional activities tend to come in.
 - Would regions like to contribute articles? Perhaps on a rotation basis around the regions? Hunter Valley region volunteered to do something for next Bulletin.

Handi Dup dealing machine demo

J Mc demonstrated it. Connect it to laptop. Pull cards out of it manually and it scans them (need barcoded cards) and tells you which hand they go to – generates hand records with them too. \$500 – much cheaper than a full blown dealing machine. Practical for a weekly club duplicate – but maybe too much work for a lot of sessions.

Masterpoints (Dave Weston attended)

Clubs can submit MPs monthly or quarterly – up to them.

Clubs over 40km from any other can get 3 extra red point sessions – by application to State MP secretary.

Concern raised about reduction of gold points in GNP – explained that the original allocation was out of synch with all other gold point events (and excessive) hence this is putting it back to be in line with all other events.

Assorted other questions.

What is fee for registering as new club? \$85. But that's not intended to be a separate fee – it's just a min capitation fee based on 10 members. Clarification of logistics worth doing.

Logistics of the Rep structure

Is this structure OK? Any suggestions/ideas?

SW zone working well at present

Annual meeting here feels ok. Regional reps should communicate with their zone rep more regularly (but this probably already happens).

Ex FABC structure – anything to copy from that?

Club handbook was good. Updated version is supposed to be being provided to Pauline to put on the web. Who is updating it though?

Better for NSWBA to email direct to regional reps about forthcoming events etc – they can then disseminate more efficiently locally.

Timing & length of meeting? Should we start this at 12 noon rather than 10.30am? Gives time to travel in that morning? Would also be good to make it a half-day.

Expenses

NSWBA will be reimbursing costs for those that have travelled. To be organized.

Any other business

Capitation fees – why are they out of synch between NSWBA (31 October) and ABF (31 March)? Can it be brought in line? Doesn't seem to be any specific reason why they are separate dates? But if it were, then clubs would have to pay out State and ABF affiliation fees at the same time – currently the cost is spread out. NSWBA to research and report back.