

Regional Representatives Meeting

31 August 2019

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all attendees and emphasised that the meeting was about the attendees telling him what is happening in the regions.

Attending:

Rob Ward (Councillor and Southern Highlands Rep)

Carol Sheldrake (Zonal Councillor, Metropolitan)

Ron Maxwell (Far South Coast Rep)

Allan Rosenberg (Eastern Metropolitan Rep)

Derek Ponsford (Metropolitan Northern Rep)

Vince Cariola (Metropolitan West Rep)

Philip Houlton (Mid North Coast Rep)

Ronnie Ng (Central Coast Rep)

Neil Badger (Zonal Councillor, Northern)

Glenda Parmenter (North Inland Rep)

Marjorie Askew (Far North Rep)

Agnes Levine (Company Secretary and Councillor)

John Scudder (Chairman and Councillor)

Julian Foster (ABF Delegate)

Phil Halloran (Councillor) from 2pm

Warren Lazer (Councillor) 1.45-2pm

Apologies: Alan Bustany (Zonal Councillor, Outer Metropolitan); Peter Reed (Central West Rep); Paul Rooms (Hunter Rep); Claire Bruce (Mountains Rep); Steve Hurley (South Coast Rep); Adrian Thompson (South West Rep)

Regional Representatives Reports

What's happening in my region

Rob - Southern Highlands and NSWBA Councillor

Bowral is home club. 3 clubs 40 tables on a Monday and growing

No concerns expressed by members. Feel well supported. State Veterans' Pairs came out of this meeting 6 years ago. Building own clubhouse and have funding. Seeking a Directors' Course locally.

One issue for directors and scorers – experience in Comms scoring in a team's environment.

A huge Zone is another issue – too much area to cover for one Zonal Councillor.

Ron – Far South Coast

Batemans Bay 200 club membership kept up because of Canberra closeness and retirees. Playing numbers going down since 2015 but steady now. Regular Saturday session has been cancelled but 10-12 tables at regional event on a Saturday.

Issue of when we have regional finals with country teams and GNOT and requirement for a non-playing director which is sometimes hard to find. Geoff Hart in Wollongong is regional tournament director. Is it possible to reduce this requirement? Can we have a "senior club director" – Michael Wilkinson (GNOT Director) has permitted this in the past (Marjorie)

NOTE: Country Teams Regulations say

4.3 Directors of Regional Finals must be non-playing and qualified at championship level (C2) or above. The Zonal Coordinator may approve a non-playing grade D director if no grade C2 director is readily available.

So, the problem appears to be “non-playing”

The GNOT regulations are stricter

4.2 Directors at the Regional Final must be non-playing and qualified at congress level (C1) or above

ACTION: Refer to Tournament Committee

Alan - Metro East

This region has three large unaffiliated clubs including Grand Slam.

There is a “social” game on a Monday night at Easts Rugby Club that has grown to from 4 to 30 tables. Evening sessions are dropping. There is no interclub activity.

Clubs are having premises problems, Harbourview is limited to 16 tables, Easts is losing its venue due to the success of the Roosters in the NRL which means that the venue is commandeered for supporter functions, Randwick lost its premises because of the federal election. The Grand Slam Club is installing new toilets on the same level which will improve its attractiveness. There is a reluctance of new players to play in Open sessions, a theme that was echoed by other Regional Representatives.

Derek – Metro North

He is very new to the role. Plays at Trumps – Evening sessions have dropped off. Open session attendances are declining. Conversion from beginner to Open is low – intimidated by rude players. If beginners don't improve the game will die.

Vince – Metro West

Pennant Hills numbers are down Tue night Wed pm down to 10 Thurs night down to 4-6. Tried promotions; very low conversion rate and some moved to other clubs in area. Too many little clubs with Pennant Hills, Parramatta and Carlingford all playing same place and same time all want to keep own patch. Red point considerations always there, if they amalgamated there would be a lower entitlement. Table money is \$5 and resistance to increase. Cost of premises 40% of total cost of session. They are losing money on sessions with a paid director.

Phil – Mid North Coast

Finances are not a problem due to the super congress and we own our own premises. There are dwindling table numbers. Congresses used to have up to 30 but now down to 22 tables.

COMPSCORE2 – endless trouble due to input error unless computer savvy. Considering switching to Score Bridge which is more user friendly and being used by some nearby clubs, waiting for Tony Howes to say what he wants for the Congress..

The Super Congress venue max is 110 tables and always a sell-out but needs to be increased, how?. To have 2 venues would spoil nature of Congress.

Trying to get Universities and schools to garner interest. How do you get rid of the public perception of the aged population. Seniors do not want to go out at night. 5 tables for evening session once a week for the business people, otherwise you lose them.

Initiative – putting on demonstrated game in a public centre – have tried and an absolute flop 20 years ago.

Beginners not so scared of staying in restricted section – they are afraid of coming last. Can there be a handicap system (e.g. a 20% initial loading) when they enter the “shark tank”? It may encourage beginners.

Rude players – talk to them up front to stop them criticising if new people are introduced and the newbie should feel ready to go straight to director.

His experience is that shopping centre promotions do not work.

Ronnie – Central Coast

4 clubs in region, one, Bateau Bay, is isolated and do only the Australia wide novices. They have low MPs due to recent affiliation. Just want to have a game. Other three clubs Long Jetty, Woy Woy and Gosford have beginners' lessons with follow up of buddy system. Supervised game on Wednesdays. Allan Bustany is our Councillor and running some Director training. Gosford steady numbers. Brisbane Waters had weak turn out on Wednesdays but reinstated after attempted cancel 3-4 tables. Night sessions Monday at Gosford 6-7 tables. Their teachers are directing graduates of beginner courses to the quieter sessions to try to build these sessions.

Glenda – North Inland

Armidale BC. 7 sessions a week and beginners lessons and supportive sessions. 140 members and growing.– Four sessions for supervised/rookie players - Wed is a less intimidating day for newer and lower MP players. Events in regions for teams and individual days. Continual lessons once a month for more advanced players. Teacher education sessions; recently Joan Butt gave training.

Have an engaged bunch of people and keep in touch with what club members want. Try old things again – be optimistic and energetic and keeping in touch with what members want. Leadership is important and poor behaviour needs to be addressed with Director or take to Committee. It can destroy the club. Own their premises or almost.

Nine clubs in region and they are more problematic. Decreasing interest due to age and less travel to congresses. Infighting in clubs imploding and destroying – taking legal action against each other – it's crazy.

As regional rep I don't know what my role is – what should I do about issues that do arise.

Seeking guidance on role.

Sessions in Armidale all daytime except one evening session which is only about 4 tables but keep it up. Novice days popular.

Marjorie – Far North Coast

Region covers Grafton to Tweed Heads – Ten Clubs Ballina booming with nearly 300 members. Ownership of premises was due to great foresight 20-30 years ago. Local clubs doing OK at other clubs – lot of teaching and hand holding with supervised teaching. MP system is problematic – people get obsessed with MPs. If get too good, then can't play on the other days and so drives them away. Technology is problem with directors – scoring and directing can be separate roles.

Gone hell for leather with COMPSCORE.

They have switched the display of percentages on the BridgeMates off and it makes for a faster and more pleasant game with no gloating.

School project discussed with Peter Cox at Coffs Harbour – ABF offered a carrot and then withdrew it for program in schools. It needs financial help. What subsidies are there out there.

Julian – technology front will address later.

Other issues

Allan – re Masterpoints and other systems. In East and at Trumps – there is a rating system within the club which encourages moving from supervised to restricted group. Seeking a better conversion solution for Grand Slam players at ABF level to enable Congress entries. At present Grand Slam players need to have a rating of 56% or below to be considered Restricted

Carol on MPs – those who have achieved higher levels but lost advantage over time and aging. Some handicapping – “no fear” event supervised more up and up to 18 tables. Behaviour is an issue – boasting and bragging and discussing hands and control all this.

Bridgemate is flexible with settings and in COMPScore.

The internet is an enemy – need to make playing at the club exciting and enticing.

There was a general feeling that the website is unfriendly and needs more direct links, e.g. how to find the Grants page (route is Clubs =>Affiliated Clubs =>Financial =>Grants & Assistance =>NSWBA . Could have a link to an FAQ page on the home page.

ACTION

Review the of the website

Why is communication with the clubs so hard?

The web-based club details page was shown. It provides a mechanism for the clubs to update their details on a regular basis.

Emails are going out to clubs and responses are low or nil. What is happening to the emails?

- If an email to a generic club address is read by a person for whom it is not intended the UNREAD flag is lost and so it may not reach the intended person.
- Separate email addresses for the various roles in a club useful, especially the Treasurer.
- Use of google drive across all clubs may be a solution.

What is the best communication flow?

- Regional and Zonal Councillors need to be included in email mail outs always.

ACTION

The NSWBA needs to promote the role of the Regional Representatives more.

ACTION

We will improve our communications with bulk emails to clubs being copied to Zonal Councillors and Regional reps.

Can invoices go out much earlier than December?

ACTION

Employ someone to process the data to produce the invoices during the first week of November.

The Affiliated Clubs Handbook has all the information but finding it is not intuitive.

Can we have an FAQ section on website.

Can there be a “How to Do it” email that can be distributed to new administrators.

Can Regional reps get to clubs and ask for updates of Committee information.

Should the NSWBA have the AGM dates of all affiliated clubs and then send out a reminder after the AGM to update the club’s details?

Demystifying Masterpoints

Carol Sheldrake

Discussed her draft “Masterpoints for Dummies” manual – emailed to everyone

Generally well received and little additional comments. Some issues regarding distribution of draft document.

Probably ready to go when appendices added. It has been sent to the State Masterpoint Secretary for comment.

The subject of Masterpoints needs to be added to all Director Training courses.

It is important for the MP Secretary to tell the TDs what the weighting of each event (other than standard duplicates which is the default for all scoring programs) before the event starts especially if it is a multi-session event.

State Championship Qualifying Events

Warren Lazer

A paper on the available state events was circulated.

The Regional Reps were shown the page on the website that lists the possible state championships that their region could run. The route is Tournaments=>State events=> read more. It should be more accessible
It is reproduced here

Daytime Pairs	Daytime Teams
Men's Pairs	Men's Teams
Novice (<100 MP) Pairs	Novice (<100 MP) Teams
Restricted (<300 MP) Pairs	Restricted (<300 MP) Teams
Seniors' Pairs	Seniors' Teams
Women's Pairs	Women's Teams
Veterans' Pairs	Veterans' Teams
Youth Pairs	Youth Teams

Hierarchy of calendar entries is WBF – ABF – NSWBA - Local

So, if you opt for one of these events then you get priority over existing Congresses.

The Restricted and Novice events are taken for 2020.

2021 ANC in Orange

Rob Ward

Annual event rotated around Australia

2019 Hobart; 2020 Melbourne; 2021 Orange

Attendance is 200-250 per week

1st week Interstate Teams and Congress side events

2nd week Butler (need 70 tables) and Congress side events

This is to be as much an event as a bridge tournament – packaged up accommodation and train/coach travel

Destination NSW support of \$10K which may be used for transport to venue

Good sponsor support eg photocopier \$2k saved

Marketing starting next year – will have own website

Rob will send out video about event

TBIB (Insurance company) as a sponsor

Has signed up for 2021 ANC – Rob to NSW point person for TBIB

Proposal to Council later – they will support 20 Congresses around NSW metro and country \$100 prize to winning restricted pair and free entry to Spring Nationals.

Structure of the NSWBA

John Scudder

The structure of the NSWBA is a pyramidal structure – Zones, Regions, Clubs

NSW REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Contacts for the zones and regions are:-

Zone	Region	Representative	Email
Metropolitan	Zonal	Carol Sheldrake	sydneymetro@nswba.com.au
	Metro East	Allan Rosenberg	allenrosenberg5@gmail.com
	Metro North	Derek Ponsford	derekponsford@gmail.com
	Metro South	TBA	
	Metro West	Vince Cariola	vcariola@bigpond.com
Northern	Zonal	Neil Badger	neilgbadger@gmail.com
	Far North	Marjorie Askew	marjorie.askew@gmail.com
	Mid North Coast	Philip Houlton	bambiphil@gmail.com
	North Inland	Glenda Parmenter	glenda_parmenter@yahoo.com.au
Outer Metropolitan	Zonal	Alan Bustany	alan.bustany@gmail.com
	Central Coast	Ronnie Ng	rng.bridge@gmail.com
	Hunter	Paul Rooms	qrprint1@bigpond.com
	Mountains	Claire Bruce	centennial95@gmail.com
South & Western	Zonal	TBA	
	Central West	Peter Reed	petlee12000@yahoo.com.au
	Far South Coast	Ron Maxwell	ronald.maxwell@bigpond.com
	South Coast	Steve Hurley	tamma2@optusnet.com.au
	South West	Adrian Thompson	adriant43@bigpond.com
	Southern Highlands	Rob Ward	rob@robward.com.au

Primary role of the Regional Representative

- Part of the NSWBA network
- A communication conduit between players and clubs in your region and the NSWBA:
 - Be an advocate for the NSWBA in your local area
 - Be a spokesperson for clubs/players in your local area to the NSWBA

What should a Regional Representative do?

- Maintain active contact with the clubs in your region
- Encourage them to get involved in NSWBA events
- Push for directing / teaching / other assistance for clubs in your region as needed
- Advise the NSWBA of any key issues or concerns from clubs in your region
- Keep abreast of NSWBA communications to the clubs in your region (NSWBA should copy you on any of these)
- Liaise with other Regional representatives in your zone
- Liaise with your zone Councillor
- Attend the annual NSWBA Regional Representatives meeting
- Try and attend key activities at clubs in your region

- Be able and willing to answer common questions about the NSWBA (see below)

Common questions and suggested answers with NSWBA website references

Q. What do we get from the NSWBA for our affiliation fees?

A. Free insurance cover (yes the ABF organises it but most of the cost is passed to the State bodies) Assistance with bridge teaching, directing, marketing, and all activities relating to running a bridge club. Access to assorted State championships Administration of all Congresses and the calendar NSWBA bulletin Contribution to State teams' travel to Interstate ANC's.

www.nswba.com.au/clubs/affiliation_structure.asp

Q. What's the difference between the NSWBA and the ABF?

A. NSWBA is the State body your club affiliates to. ABF is the National body that NSWBA affiliates to.

www.nswba.com.au/clubs/affiliation_structure.asp

Q. Who do we ask for help with directing/teaching/other?

A. Your Regional Rep in the first instance – they will be able to advise who at the NSWBA is responsible for that area, or contact them for you. A variety of general information for clubs is available on the website: www.nswba.com.au/clubs/

Q. What can we get funding for?

A. Loans for premises/other large capital expenses, see www.nswba.com.au/clubs/clubhouse.asp

A variety of other things:

- Teaching tours
- Directing workshops
- General bridge promotion activities
- Sending pairs or teams to State finals

See www.nswba.com.au/clubs/promotion.asp

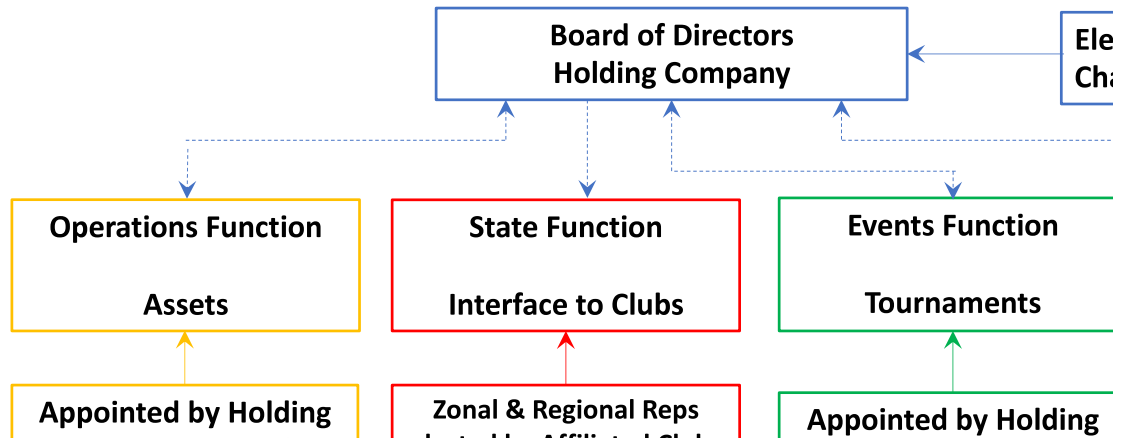
Q. What competitions can we run?

A. GNOT Country / Metro teams, State Mixed Pairs, State Open Pairs, Statewide Pairs, Country Carnival, State Under 100 MP Pairs, Interclub Competitions, Congresses.

See www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/index.asp

The Chairman unveiled a proposed new structure.

Structure with four Func



New South Wales Bridge Association Ltd, ACN 000438648

- Incorporated Body, only legal entity
- Owns all Assets
- Employs all Staff
- Board of Directors has to meet 9 times per year
- Meetings can be electronic
- Considers reports & recommendations from the other committees
- Has the disciplinary powers over members of the NSWBA Ltd
- Delegates tasks to other committees
- Profitable(2018: \$12K)

Operations Function

- Office Staff, Treasurer and Premises Councillor
- Provides and maintains premises for the State, Club & Events functions to rent
- Budget determined by Rent Received, Interest Received, Equipment Hire (2018: \$130K)
- Loss Making (2018: \$30K¹)
main expense is owning the premises (\$160K)

Note 1: – Depreciation was \$37K so not a cash loss

State Function

- Members are elected by affiliated clubs plus ABF Delegates
- Election processes are in place for Zonal Reps
- Need new election process for regional representatives
- Meet electronically, possibly two face to face meetings in Sydney
- Handle all state affairs including interface to the ABF
- Liaises with the Congress Disciplinary & Ethics Committee
- Recommends actions to the Holding Company Board for expenditure
- Budget determined by affiliation fees & congress licence fees (2018: \$135K)
- Profitable (2018: \$10K)
main expense is sending teams to the ABF events, ANC, GNOT, etc (\$51K)

Events Function

- Tournament Committee - members are appointed by the holding company
- Meet monthly face to face at night
- Organise all State Championships
- Organise all Monday Night events that are not State Championships
- Organises events on behalf of the ABF, Spring Nationals, Coffs, etc
- Selects NSW Representative Teams & Pairs, as required
- Recommends actions to the Holding Company Board for expenditure
- Budget determined by entry fees, GNOT fees & affiliated clubs' state qualifying event fees (2018: \$150K)
- Profitable (2018: \$19K)
main expenses are rent (\$29K), prizes (\$16K) & staff (\$61K)

Club Function– Sydney Bridge Centre

- Members are appointed by the holding company, Councillors, Office Manager and volunteers
- Meets monthly face to face in the daytime
- Organises all club duplicates, club championships, state qualifying events & GNOT qualifying events
- Organises all Workshops
- Provides all teaching
- Recommends actions to the Holding Company Board for expenditure
- Budget determined by members subscriptions & entry fees (2018: \$386K)
- Profitable (2018: \$12K),
main expenses are staff (\$200K), affiliation fees (\$15K) & rent (\$137K)

Following the acceptance of this strategy by the attendees, the chairman stated that there was a four month period for him to flesh out this proposal. One amendment to the Constitution was required, reducing the number of meetings from 9 to 4. This would be done at the AGM. Otherwise the changes would be done by By-Laws.

Will sub committees of the Council be covered by legal liability?

Steve Weil of TBIB confirmed that any volunteer, not being a member of the NSWBA, would be covered by the ABF's Management Liability Insurance policy.

ABF – Julian

Technology

Main driver the scoring programs devised by Matthew McManus and Peter Bush who control the existing National Events scoring. Investigating existing scoring programs around the world.

Unfortunately, the ACBL had had a disastrous implementation of its new scoring program and has poor IT structures so little to gain from them. Looking at the UK & NZ

Also, what can the ABF do for clubs (2-3 vision) - build technology for all players.

Julian displayed a very early stages prototype where players have a personalised entry process and profile. On-line entry and payment system for all events - this exists for individual congresses.

Clubs could then set up events to use system.

NZ Bridge and UK Bridge has something already and concept is that player registers with ABF number and has a dashboard about sessions played, results, events booked, masterpoints.

Links to results such as in Pianola, a calendar, subscribe to various publications/communications, mailing lists.

The above is from a player's perspective.

Club Admin and director access e.g. a scoring module; teaching programs.

Marketing

Noted general disappointment in Peter Cox's presentations.

Standardisation of Tournament regulations

Nationally and state-wide – systems, procedures in principle desirable nationally.

Nobody has an overview of this problem as each state guards its independence.

ACTION

Warren Lazer to take to the ABF Tournament Committee as a project.

Demographics

Encouraging youth

Marketing to schools

ABF Newsletter cites a couple in Victoria who have developed a kit for school children.

Another person in Burnie Tasmania – marketed successfully to school kids there at a couple of schools.

However, it was agreed that our existing market of retirees & about to retire people was the most important. They could have a twenty year long playing career so they must not be ignored. The important thing is the retention rate which is too low. The beginners need to be nurtured with friendly games structured for them and the experienced players need to understand that they are seen as formidable, rude & gloating which is driving newbies away. Games with upper MP limits are to be encouraged, over 70% of our members have less than 100 MPs.