



New South Wales Bridge Association



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Dear Club Secretary,

If you are not responsible for running events or bridge sessions in your club in 2024, please pass this letter to the person who is, *viz.* your Tournament Organiser, President or Chief Director.

You are probably aware by now that the NSWBA is undergoing a major restructuring. It currently owns and operates a bridge club (the Sydney Bridge Centre) and is also the governing body of bridge in NSW. Over the past 18 months, many people have spent thousands of hours to effect a complete separation of these functions. Work is ongoing and formal separation is expected to occur in the latter half of 2024. Your club is currently affiliated to the NSWBA. After separation, your club will be a member of Bridge New South Wales (BNSW), which will take over the running of all GNOT qualifying and State Championship events previously organised by the NSWBA. In the interim, it will be business as usual, but with a few twists:

- Some events will have a new Tournament Organiser.
- BNSW will employ a new Executive Officer (from late January) who will take on the parts of Wing Robert's duties associated with the affiliated clubs.
- BNSW will have a new website.

Back to the main thrust of this document; *viz.*, to ensure all clubs are aware of the NSW State Championship events and the advantages of participating in them at the club level. Most importantly, participating in State events is the cheapest way for your club to award red masterpoints to your members. Not only are red masterpoints for State Championships issued at twice the rate of Club Championships, these sessions are additional to your club's B4c entitlement. Apart from the Country Teams, there is no requirement for your club to send club representatives to the next stage of the event.

The screenshot shows the NSW Bridge Association website. The navigation menu includes 'Home', 'About Us', 'Tournaments', 'Results', 'Club Handbook', 'Publications', 'Clubs', 'Youth Bridge', 'Links', and 'Contact'. The 'Tournaments' menu is expanded, showing 'General Information', 'Regulations', 'Entry Administration', 'State Events', and 'Substitution Form'. The 'State Events' link is circled in red. Below the navigation, there are sections for 'AT THE NSW', 'LATEST NEWS', and 'AROUND THE STATE'. The 'AT THE NSW' section includes 'RealBridge', 'Player Guide', 'Camera and Microphone', and 'Kibitz'. The 'LATEST NEWS' section features a headline about the team to represent NSW in the ANC Women's Teams in Adelaide in July, listing players like Hazife Bashir, Kinga Moses, Rena Kaplan, Giselle Mundell, and Avril Zets. The 'AROUND THE STATE' section includes 'Congress News' and 'Current and Coming Up' events like 'Trumps Bridge Centre Summer Teams February 13' and 'Trumps Bridge Centre Directors Course March 6'.

Go to www.nswba.com.au. Hover over **Tournaments** and then choose **State Events** from the drop down menu that appears, as shown in the screen shot.

On the State Events page you will find links to each event, listed in chronological order. Full details for any particular event can be found by following the relevant link.

COVID-19 and the development of online bridge software, notably RealBridge, have changed the way many of us now play. An ABF committee continues to examine and make recommendations on all aspects of online bridge. Health concerns and significant increases in travel and accommodation costs have had a big impact on players' willingness to travel to events.

How did all this affect the major championship events in NSW in 2022? Club participation rates in most events were down about 10% compared to pre-COVID levels. The previously very popular Country Pairs and Country Mixed Pairs Finals in Sydney were not held as there were not enough eligible pairs. Two spots in the Country Teams Final (held in Sydney) were unfilled. Some GNOT regions were unable to fulfil their commitments.

Well done to all those clubs that held lessons and membership drives to replace those players who did not return post-COVID. A pleasing rebound in numbers was seen in 2023, with participation rates in the GNOT, Mixed Pairs and Open Pairs being almost back to pre-COVID levels. The major change of 2023 was that the Finals of the State Open and Country Teams were held on RealBridge – a huge saving in time and money for the six country teams that participated.

Most clubs have lost members and are working hard to get them back and teach new members. Clubs holding qualifying rounds of the various NSW state championships and the [GNOT](#) may be able to use the red and gold masterpoints these events award to lure players back to the bridge table. A short summary of the events organised by the NSWBA is given on the following pages.

Warren Lazer (Chairman, NSWBA Events Committee)

The events listed below include club qualifying sessions. They provide clubs with red MP sessions in addition to their B4c allowance.

The State Mixed Pairs Championship (incorporating the Country Mixed Pairs Championship)
www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2024&E=smp

You can play up to 4 sessions of this event in your club. Red masterpoints are awarded with a weighting factor of 3.75 and the NSWBA pays up to \$30 of their cost if you send a pair to the State Final.

Online sessions are restricted to members of clubs affiliated with the NSWBA.

Qualifying rounds to be completed before Friday 10th May 2024.

There are travel & accommodation grants for representatives of country clubs attending the Finals at the NSWBA on 18th & 19th May 2024.

Tournament Organiser: TBA smp@nswba.com.au

The State Open Pairs Championship (incorporating the Country Pairs Championship)
www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2024&E=sop

You can play up to 4 sessions of this event in your club. Red masterpoints are awarded with a weighting factor of 5.00 and the NSWBA pays up to \$30 of their cost if you send a pair to the State Final.

Online sessions are restricted to members of clubs affiliated with the NSWBA.

Qualifying rounds to be completed before Friday 8th November 2024.

There are travel & accommodation grants for representatives of country clubs attending the Finals at the NSWBA on 16th & 17th November 2024.

Tournament Organiser: TBA sop@nswba.com.au

The State Wide Pairs

www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2024&E=swp

This event is a single session event played during the week of 1st - 7th August.

All pairs play the same hands and the results are scored across the state and the hand records include a short analysis of each deal.

Red masterpoints (paid by the NSWBA) are awarded at level B4s and there are generous prizes including cash, Bridge Shop Gift vouchers and certificates.

Organiser: Warren Lazer swp@nswba.com.au

The Under 100 Masterpoints Pairs Championships

www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2024&E=uhmp

Red masterpoints awarded at level B4s (paid by the NSWBA).

Restricted to those players with fewer than 100 masterpoints.

Club sessions are held in your club from September through November.

Finals are held at multiple venues around the state during the week 25th November to 1st December.

Short travel times and no accommodation costs associated with Finals.

Prizes (cash, subscriptions to the Novice Australian Bridge magazine and certificates) are awarded in each masterpoint division.

Organiser: Warren Lazer uhmp@nswba.com.au

The events listed below include club qualifying sessions. They provide clubs with red or gold MP sessions in addition to their B4c allowance.

The John Arkinstall State Teams Championship

www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2024&E=sot

Affiliated clubs qualify teams to the State Finals via Regional and Zonal Finals. See the Country and Metropolitan Teams Championships below.

The Finals will be held online on RealBridge on 29th November – 1st December 2024.

Red masterpoints at Level B with a weighting factor of 5.0 are awarded. Sessional awards for the State Finals are increased by 50%.

The Metropolitan Teams Championship - part of the John Arkinstall State Teams Championship

www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2024&E=sotmetro

Red masterpoints awarded with weighting factor of 5.0. There is no requirement to send a club representative team to the Metropolitan Final to receive red masterpoints.

The deadline for receipt of club entries to the Metropolitan Final is Monday 23rd September.

The Metropolitan Final is incorporated into the Pennant Hills Teams Congress on 13th October.

Teams entering at the club level and progressing to the Metropolitan Final pay \$160.

Two teams progress from the Metropolitan Final to the State Final at the NSWBA. At least one of these teams will have qualified via a Club heat.

Tournament Organiser: Warren Lazer sotmetro@nswba.com.au

The Country Teams Championship - part of the John Arkinstall State Teams Championship

www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2024&E=sotct

Two teams from each of the Northern and Outer Metropolitan Zones along with one team from each of the Southern and Western Zones qualify to the State Final to be held online on RealBridge.

Teams enter at the club level and progress to Regional and Zonal Finals. Augmentation rules have been relaxed considerably compared to previous years, making it much easier for clubs to find teams willing to progress to the Regional and Zonal Finals. There is still a requirement that you must send 20% of the field to the Regional Final in order to receive red masterpoints.

Masterpoints are awarded with a weighting factor of 5.0 for club heats and Regional Finals.

Zonal Finals attract both outright and sessional awards.

Tournament Organiser: Helen Milward helenmilwardbridge@gmail.com

A summary of the significant dates for the 2024 Country Teams Championship follows.

Fri 29th & Sat 30th November Qualification rounds of John Arkinstall State Teams Finals
online on the RealBridge platform

Sun 1st December: Final of the NSWBA Country Teams Championship.

Sun 1st December: Final of the John Arkinstall State Teams Championship

Dates for the various Regional and Zonal Finals will be published on the above website as they become available.

The Grand National Open Teams (GNOT) – an ABF Gold masterpoint event

www.nswba.com.au/tourn/2024/gnot/

The NSWBA will qualify 22 teams (7 will come from the Sydney Metropolitan region, the remaining 15 from regional NSW) to the National Final to be played online on RealBridge on 20th – 22nd September. From there, 4 Open teams and 8 non-metropolitan teams will qualify to the National Final to be held in Sydney on 23rd & 24th November.

The ABF provides travel grants to the 12 teams that attend the National Final in Sydney.

The GNOT is the only opportunity for players to earn Gold Masterpoints in their local club.

The following events are State Championships or major events run by the NSWBA. They differ from those listed on the previous pages as players enter them directly. There are no club qualifying sessions.

Online Pairs League

www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2024&E=opl

Venue: Played online on the RealBridge platform

Each season runs for 8 weeks on Tuesdays at 7.30pm playing one 12-board match each week.

Entry fee: \$50 per player, or \$25 per player if <100 Masterpoints.

Tournament Organiser: Alan Bustany alan.bustany@gmail.com

State Seniors Championships

www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2024&E=ss

Players must be born before January 1, 1961

Venue: The Central Coast Leagues Club, Dane Drive, Gosford.

Pairs: Tuesday 28 & Wednesday 29 May 2024

Teams: Thursday 30 & Friday 31 May 2024

Tournament Organiser: Louis Koolen lkoolen@bigpond.net.au

State Individual

www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2024&E=ind

Venue: Online on BBO (Bridge Base Online)

Date: Saturday, 27 July 2024. Two sessions commencing at 10am.

Players must be registered with BBO.

The scoring is normal matchpoints, but your partner and opponents are different each round.

Prior entry is essential.

Tournament Organiser: TBA

State Veterans Championships (All information re the Veterans is yet to be confirmed.)

www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2024&E=sv

For players who have turned 70, or will turn 70 during 2024.

Venue: The Horizons Golf Resort, 5 Horizons Drive, Salamander Bay.

Pairs: Tuesday 1 & Wednesday 2 August 2023

Teams: Thursday 3 & Friday 4 August 2023

Tournament Organiser: Kay Baguley bkbaguley@yahoo.com

State Novice and Restricted Teams

www.nswba.com.au/tourn/state/se.asp?Y=2024&E=srt

For players with fewer than 300 masterpoints after 1 October Masterpoint Centre update.

Novice: < 100 masterpoints

Restricted: < 300 masterpoints

Venue: Illawarra Bridge Association, Figtree Community Hall, 11 Princes Highway, Figtree

Date: Saturday 9 & Sunday 10 November 2024

Entry fee: \$90 per player, includes lunch on both days.

Tournament Organiser: