

As the sun rose over Zenith Bay, Nelson Bay on 31st January 2020, it shone brightly on the start of the 1st South Pacific National Tournament Directors' Development Course.



The aim of the course was twofold: firstly, to develop the knowledge and skills of Tournament Directors; and secondly to help create a network of directors around the region.

A total of 28 National Directors and aspiring ones from each State (& Territory) plus New Zealand attended this NEW venture in terms of an educational process for and of directors at National Events. The Course was fully supported and sponsored by our Australian Bridge Federation and NZ Bridge. In addition, there were our presenters, our three leading (and International) Directors, plus members of the National Directors Accreditation Committee (NDAC) to oversee all the development of the participants. It was a gruelling 3 days of intense study and work. All participants were given “homework”, on movements / claims / revokes - to “get them in the correct mind-set” for the start of the course.

So, for three days now, the structure was: -

Component 1. An entry test – to see what we knew or didn't as the case may be,

Component 2. Lectures on

“Polling” (new in Australia from 1st January) and

“Procedures and Pitfalls” (Good procedure, consistently applied, leads to better rulings)

Component 3. Table Simulations, where we had to **RULE** under live conditions in front of the facilitator and observer and our peers. We remained in the same three (3) groupings and went through 12 different simulations.

Component 4. An exit test – to see how we had developed with all new found information.

Everyone gathered on the Thursday evening having flown into Williamtown / Newcastle airport. There are direct flights from Canberra / Melbourne / Brisbane / Auckland. From any other city one needed to change flights.

As the sun set over Nelson Bay on Sunday 2nd February, we all had to say goodbye to all our re-newed and new found colleagues. One of the main trusts of the weekend was “networking” and this was a huge success. Achieved partly through group dinners where we enjoyed each other's company. We started with Tapas style on the Thursday evening, Italian cuisine on Friday and buffet at the local Bowling Club on Saturday.

Special mention and thanks must go to our presenters, Laurie Kelso, Matthew McManus & Peter Marley without whom we would not have as successful as this course turned out to be. Also, to our observers John Brockwell (chairman) & Jon Free (member) of the NDAC. In closing, this venture would never have got off the ground except for the total support and financial commitment of the Australian Bridge Federation and NZ Bridge Organizations. To you, thanks from all the directors who attended and benefitted so much from your investment in this training, educational and personal development course. We are all better for the experience.



John McIlrath, ABF National Director Development Officer.

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