



New Zealand Bridge

25 March 2010

Masterpoints

Bridge is a competitive game and bridge players by and large are competitive people. Whatever their skills and attitudes are in the larger world, put cards in their hands and they want to do well whether it is four friends whiling away a cold winter afternoon or National Teams doing battle at the World Championships.

This competitive nature both of the game and of its players has resulted in the bodies that control the formal part of the game, clubs, regional and national organisations, introducing schemes by which players across the wide spectrum of player abilities can measure success: masterpoints. Not only can players measure their success against their peers by the results of a single session, club event or tournament but also over a prolonged period involving many sessions and events and of the different forms of the game such as pairs and teams.

National Bridge Organisations worldwide operate Masterpoints Schemes, all with very similar aims to that of New Zealand, which are:

- To stimulate interest in duplicate Bridge
- To provide a means of measuring and recording the achievements of the players of organised duplicate Bridge
- To provide NZ Bridge with a source of revenue to be used for the benefit of the game

No system is perfect in describing the ability of players. At best it is a broad brush approach, but to satisfy the players' demand for accuracy in describing their competitive spirit, a wide range of events needs to be covered by a Masterpoint Scheme. Whenever there is a formal session of bridge (organised by a Club), where the scores matter towards a trophy or prize or merely "bragging rights"; it needs to be included in the Masterpoint net to meet the player's expectations.

From this year (2010), NZ Bridge requires that all sessions of a competitive nature held by a Club and Tournaments run by Clubs, Regions and NZ Bridge shall be submitted for the award of Masterpoints according to the scales published in the Masterpoint Manual appropriate to the event.

Of course there are sessions of bridge conducted by a Club that are not subject to the award of masterpoints. If the purpose of the session is:

- 1) **Educational** – eg beginners classes, improvers or advanced classes, training sessions etc – where the purpose of the session is to learn rather than to do battle with your fellow players.
- 2) **Purely Social** – a non-competitive session where bridge is or is part of the entertainment of the session, where if the scores are kept, they do not matter; eg Christmas or other special occasion functions.
- 3) **Non Duplicate Bridge** – where the form of bridge played is beyond the scope of the Masterpoint Scheme eg Rubber Bridge, QuickBridge (Mini-Bridge)

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