



# Strategy Review

ABF Midyear Meeting  
November 2015

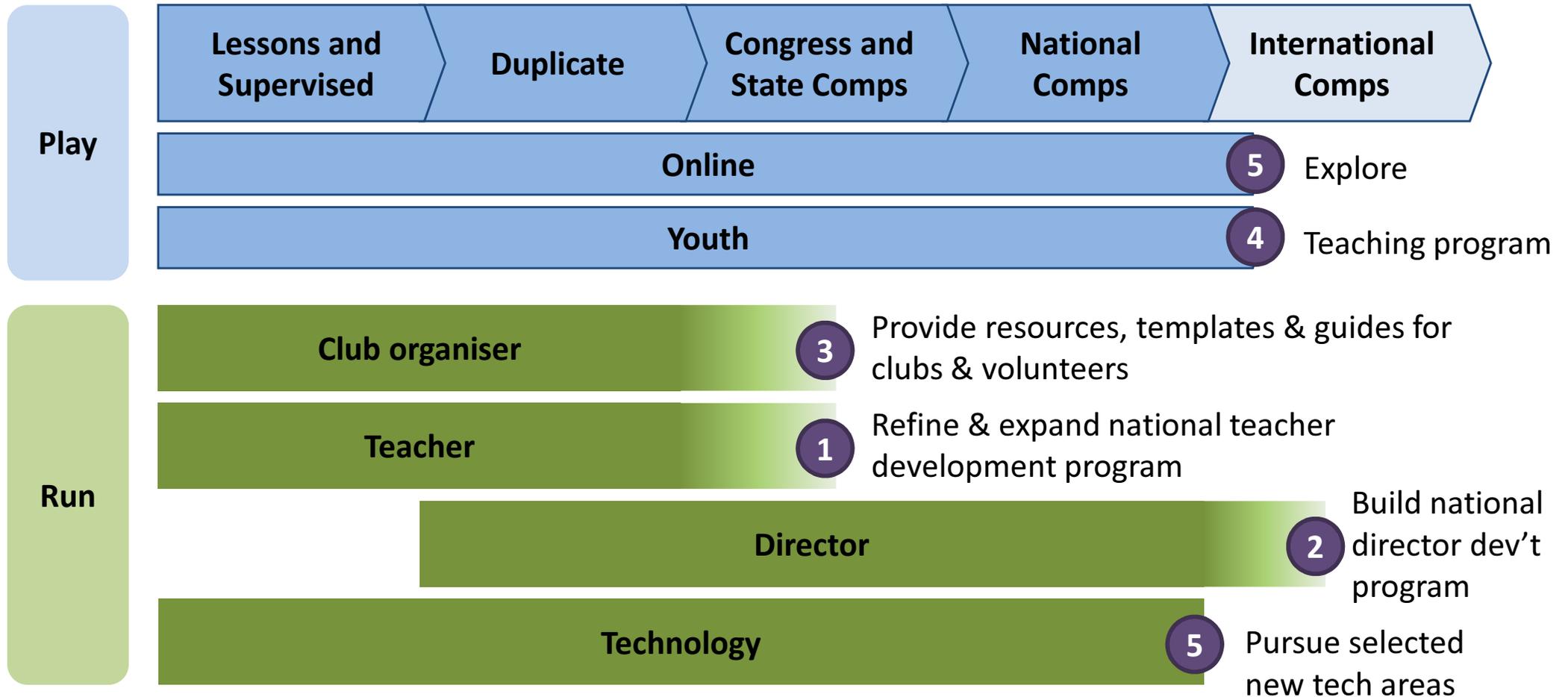
- Strategy Summary

- Survey Results

# ABF Strategy 2015-2019 Summary



**Goal: Attract & retain people to our widely-known positive bridge community**



# Your Goals



## Primary Goals

- Attract and retain people to play bridge
- Enhance the profile of bridge within the Australian Community
- Encourage and support a climate giving players a positive experience at all bridge sessions

## *Secondary Goals*

- Improve the ability of the ABF, State Associations and affiliated clubs to attract grants and sponsorship
- Improve our reach and efficiency through our use of technology
- Improve our international relations with the WBF and other country bridge associations
- Explore means to improve performance of the Australian International teams
- Clarify relations between ABF, States and Clubs

## Build it and they will come...



- Much of Council's focus is clearly on building the right infrastructure (good teachers, good directors, support networks for clubs & volunteers, seamless technology) – much of it designed to deliver a great player experience
- Relatively few of the ideas and comments provided address how we get people in to lessons in the first place, and similarly from lessons into regular play
  - The roadmaps for a schools program are somewhat of an exception in outlining a plan to interest teachers and principals, and how to pique kids interest
- It's important to consider how we can ensure our ongoing marketing and communication efforts best support the key objectives and activities
- The major strategic projects all require co-ordination between the ABF and the State associations, and clubs to some extent. The first implementation step for each project should be engaging with the States.

# 1 Refine & expand national teacher development program

- Objective “Have a robust national teacher training and accreditation program with a distributed network of quality teacher teachers”

## Review

- Investigate overseas practice (and establish links)
- Could ABF accreditation fit in the AQF structure (certificate I-IV)?
- Liaise with states and ABTA (still alive?) on roles & responsibilities

## Structure

- Clarify role of national teaching co-ordinator
- Establish paid state co-ordinator roles (eg to give TTP/CPD; manage local teacher network)
- Establish hubs / centres of excellence (incl outside capitals)

## Materials

- Develop framework for course content covering various broad course types (not tied to any particular system or style)

## Feedback

- At national level, regularly gather feedback from students, teachers and clubs in standard format (incl delayed followup)
  - In practice, requires clubs to register all beginners
- Organise regular teacher meetings to share learnings

- How do we “grandfather” in existing experienced teachers?
- How do we attract people to teaching (who is interested & why)?

## 2 Create integrated national director development program

- Objective “Have a robust national director training and accreditation program with a distributed network of quality director teachers”

### Review

- Investigate overseas practice (and establish links)
- Could ABF accreditation fit in AQF structure (certificate I-IV)?
- Liaise with states and ABDA on roles & responsibilities

### Structure

- Have one consistent, integrated national program
- Establish (paid) state co-ordinator roles
- Establish hubs / centres of excellence (incl outside capitals)

### Materials

- Develop modular framework and common content for courses covering all levels of directing and director accreditation
- Develop training videos and make available online
- Develop common national approach to testing, including theoretical and practical assessment

### Feedback

- Organise regular director meetings at national/state to share learnings (encourage lower level directors to attend too)

- How do we “grandfather” in existing experienced directors?
- Can we / should we subsidise / incentivise participation?

### 3 Plan and create national youth teaching program

- Objective “Support local delivery of a national schools program”

#### Review & Plan

- Investigate overseas & local practice (and establish links)
- Cultivate contacts in state/federal education departments
- Identify members who are teachers (leverage their knowledge)
- Establish (survey research) educational benefits of bridge
- Is best approach online or schools? Survey youth players

#### Structure

- Establish national schools / youth teaching co-ordinator

#### Materials & Events

- Source or develop youth-specific teaching materials (incl videos, online materials)
- Develop & provide resource kit (online & physical)
- Develop & operate youth-specific teach-the-teacher sessions
- Expand youth events, eg (online?) Schools Championship

#### Feedback

- Establish (online) forum for youth teachers to share learnings
- Support (online) youth forum(s) and feedback

- Need to develop sustainable processes to ensure program continuation
- Can we interview / survey members on job benefits of bridge?

## Club support ideas oriented towards “templates” for a good club



- Objective “Put resources into supporting clubs and volunteers (eg in dealing with bad behaviour)”

### Review

- Liaise with states on roles & responsibilities
- Research best practice (including overseas, with clubs) re handling bad behaviour, operating a “good” club etc

### Structure

- Establish National Bridge Volunteers Association (and an ABF role to support the NBVA)
- Establish national volunteer awards (perhaps some by nomination for exceptional service & others by years of service)

### Materials

- Develop / source procedures and guidelines for dealing with bad behaviour (and other potentially litigious issues, eg cheating)
- Develop / source guides on running a club (especially important for smaller clubs)
- Develop resource kit re grant applications and grant sources

### Feedback

- Aggregate and disseminate learnings on retention (especially from lessons to playing)
- ABF/States to run roadshows for club admins

## 5 Several specific technology targets with much interest



### Support online lessons / play?

#### Qualified Yes

- It's going to happen anyway, so we need to get involved even though it involves some competition with ABF clubs & teachers
  - A few are opposed to almost any support here on competition grounds
- No need to develop lesson materials – link to quality online materials including on youtube (act like a curator not a writer/teacher)
- Perhaps support Australians already pursuing online teaching (eg Peter Hollands)
- Need an online play presence, especially for youth players who will expect it; eg ABF club on BBO with e-masterpoints (but be aware that cheating is easy)

### Pursue new areas/uses of technology?

#### Clear Yes

- Best to leave many areas (eg scoring) to commercial providers. If there's demand, they will meet it
- Standardise results presentation (mostly for nationals and ABF-branded events)
- Develop common event entry/payment site?
- Will need to invest in technologies to assist in preventing and detecting cheating (eg tablets for bidding behind screens)
- New technology to deal, and record full bidding and play, at the table is interesting (eg Bridge+More from Denmark)
- Appoint a (paid) national technology officer to continually review recommend new tech

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## Reminder - MC's Proposed Goals from August



1. Enhance the profile of bridge within the Australian Community
2. Attract and retain people to play bridge
3. Improve the ability of the ABF, State Associations and affiliated clubs to attract grants and sponsorship
4. Encourage and support a climate to give players a positive experience at all bridge sessions
5. Improve our reach and efficiency through our use of technology
6. Improve our international relations with the WBF and other country bridge associations
7. Explore means to improve performance of the Australian International teams
8. Clarify relations between ABF, States and Clubs

## Survey – key results



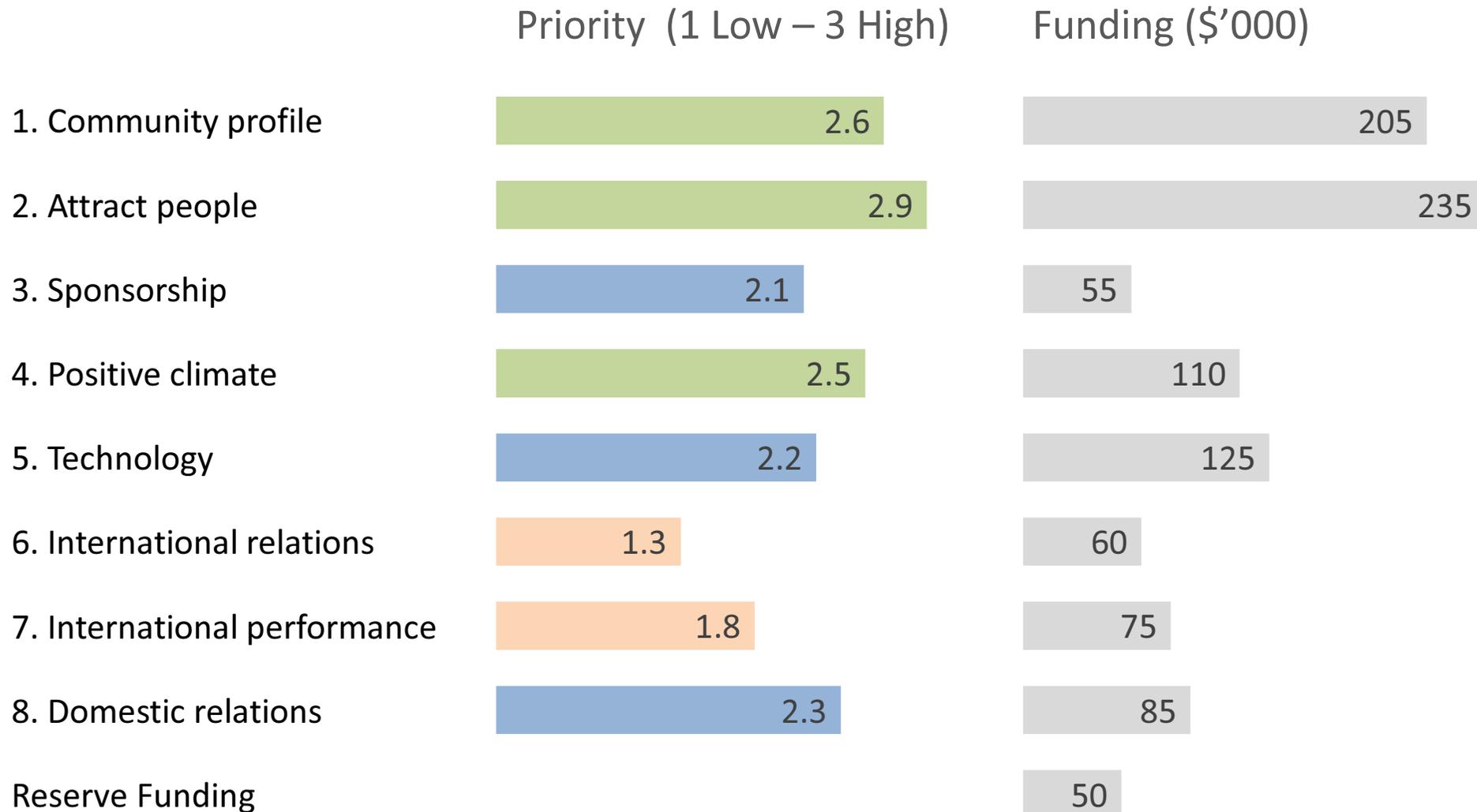
- Councillors said their highest priority goals are 1 (enhance bridge’s profile), the related 2 (attract and retain players) and 4 (ensure a positive playing climate).
  - The international goals (6 and 7) were seen as low priority; although current spend is regarded as reasonable, Councillors would like to see better “bang for buck”
  - Funding guidelines largely followed prioritisation, although technology attracted a somewhat outside share.
- The most important specific objectives to Councillors were around building strong national teacher and director training and development programs, supporting local delivery of a national bridge-in-schools program, and putting in resources on the ground to support clubs and volunteers. Follow up identified specific activities here.
- Technology is seen as an important enabler, with interest in a variety of possible activities while the website is seen as a business-as-usual ongoing investment.

## Survey – other results



- Strategy is as much about what you don't pursue as much as what you do. Councillors considered that a number of proposed objectives shouldn't be pursued or should be reframed:
  - We should engage with many demographic groups in ways that work for them, rather than focusing overly on women's bridge.
  - Simplifying the masterpoint scheme was mentioned several times. Quite a few don't see the value in introducing a ranking scheme.
  - Hosting big international events is seen as expensive without a correspondingly large benefit.
  - Olympic recognition was largely seen as low value.
- Some objectives attracted a lot of comment (although somewhat general in nature). We can view many comments as focussed on helping clubs with retention – for example supporting clubs in taking action on bad behaviour; helping clubs to help their improving players.
- Good international relations are seen as somewhat useful, for example in terms of avoiding duplication of effort
- The more promising avenues for attracting funding were seen as working to develop further sponsorship and through promoting the mental health and social benefits of bridge.

# Attracting people to a positive environment rated highest



Note: Funding calculated as average excluding top & bottom amount for each item then rescaling to a total of \$1m  
 Source: Survey of ABF Councillors plus a few other ABF/State officials (n=12, not all respondents responded on all items)

# Goal 1: Attracting people to lessons is primary objective



	Alignment (1 Low – 3 High)	Success is
1.1 Women's bridge	1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most: More women in senior roles</li> <li>• Some: More women playing/engaged</li> </ul>
1.2 2019 world champs	2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most: running it well with good press</li> <li>• Some: solid well-costed plan</li> </ul>
1.3 2018 CNBC	1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well run event with good press</li> <li>• Int'l view that we run good events</li> </ul>
1.4 Attract to lessons	2.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many: more new &amp; retained players</li> <li>• Some: more clubs running lessons</li> </ul>
1.5 Health benefits	2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain government support; press</li> <li>• Increased player numbers</li> </ul>
1.6 Youth perception	2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most: more youth players (participation)</li> <li>• Some: Well-funded schools program</li> </ul>
1.7 New patron	2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get a good patron</li> <li>• Better press coverage, inc regular columns</li> </ul>

Note: Some comments are paraphrased and/or combined with similar ones; Specific targets or measures were suggested for most objectives

Source: Survey of ABF Councillors plus a few other ABF/State officials

# Goal 2: Quality teachers considered key to attracting people



Alignment (1 Low – 3 High)

Success is

2.1 Attract via tech



- More & more engaged BBO viewers
- More players (esp. young players)
- Increased social media activity

2.2 Club all 50k places



- Most: more bridge clubs
- Some: increased participation rate

2.3 Recognise volunteers



- Many: awards program (ABF/State)
- ABF model/program to recruit & train vols
- More volunteers

2.4 Quality teachers



- More (accredited) teachers
- ABF has a stand-alone teaching package
- More lessons with more happy attendees

Note: Some comments are paraphrased and/or combined with similar ones; Specific targets or measures were suggested for most objectives

Source: Survey of ABF Councillors plus a few other ABF/State officials

# Goal 4: Reduce bullying & bad behaviour



Alignment (1 Low – 3 High)

Success is

4.1 Publicise values



- Increased perception of values
- Have feedback mechanism

4.2 Minimise bullying



- Develop (improved) reporting mechanism
- Reduced incidence
- Increased number of players

4.3 Min'ise bad behaviour



- Develop (improved) reporting mechanism
- Reduced incidence
- Increased number of players

Most saw minimising bullying and minimising bad behaviour as just two aspects of the same objective

## Much support for resourcing specific structural support activities



Develop national teacher **and** director training programs

- “Training and general education of the providers is very important”
- “Should also apply to directors, as they greatly influence the enjoyment of the game for players”

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Build teaching delivery network

- “One person can only do a few TTP or CPD days in a year [...] it’s not sustainable.”

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Support local delivery of a national schools program

- “Develop (and spend money) on teaching support for schools (equipment, teaching aids, getting bridge-playing parents to help run bridge programmes)”
- “Kids become the players [and eventually] administrators and stalwarts”

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Put resources into supporting clubs and volunteers

- “Providing on-going support via resources is much more important than just acknowledgment”
- “Build a network of (paid) people at regional levels [...] physically talking to clubs and players ”

# Much interest in exploring online & technology possibilities



Web site continual improvement should be BAU

- “Technology is always moving forward”
- “Cost benefit of attracting players is very efficient”
- “Effectively now the face of the ABF ”
- “Develop a [template] all (small) clubs can use”
- “Help State bodies and Clubs”

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Use social media intelligently

- “Advertise on social media that is targeted at prospective new or returning players”
- “Active Internet discussion groups, mailing lists and vibrant Facebook pages are the way forward”

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Should the ABF support online lessons / play?

- “Aging players don’t want to travel [...] offer structured club or tournament play via BBO or other technology”
- “Is online bridge detracting from the club experience. How does it bring \$\$\$ to the bridge community?”

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How far could/should we push?

- “Look more radically at technology (e.g. use of BBO, scoring technology)”