CNZ Strategy Session

11 October 2015

Brentwood Hotel, Wellington

10:00 am – 12:20 pm

All delegates received information about the strategy session with the AGM papers so they could discuss with their respective associations about the four questions posed:

1. Focus on what we want to be as a sport – if all our wishes and dreams could come true, what would croquet look like throughout the country?
2. What are we currently doing that supports collective and agreed upon dreams?
3. What roles do clubs, associations and CNZ have in making this happen?
4. What are our priorities?

The difficulty of addressing all questions within the limited time period was recognised at the beginning of the session. All agreed to progress through as much as time and energy permitted. The session was facilitated by Annie Henry and Murray Goldfinch.

The session started off with learning who was new to the AGM and who has been to many of them. There were 9 new delegates, many of them presidents of their associations. There were a few who had been 2- 5 times. A couple of delegates have been to 9 or more AGMs. This is a great mix of new ideas and collective wisdom.

The activities and discussion focussed primarily on what we want to be as a sport and what we are doing currently to make it happen. We discussed the roles of the clubs, associations and CNZ. The notes for each activity are listed below.

The session ended with requests for workshops for the next AGM. The suggestions were listed with the realization that not all of them could be accomplished at the next AGM. The Executive will review the priorities identified from the strategy session and look at those identified by CNZ to determine where there is a match and set up sessions accordingly at the next AGM. The intention is to provide useful sessions for the delegates.

Strategy Session Activities:

The first session was to take the roof off the club house and look at what is happening inside as well as on the lawns. In 5 years’ time, what would be happening? What would interactions look like? What would be happening at the club level? At the association level? The delegates were divided into regions with a least one large city in each group. Within six minutes, these are the dreams identified:

1. Auckland, Counties -Manukau, Northland, Thames Valley, Waikato-King Country, & Phillip Drew.
   1. Double membership
   2. Internal competitions
   3. Increased volunteer base
   4. Other groups included such as schools, etc
   5. Playing most days of the week
   6. Recompense for work
   7. Increased facilities
   8. Consistency with local authorities
   9. Mixture of age/race/ability
   10. Reduce water rates
   11. Support from Council
   12. Publicity/TV
   13. Lawns used 7 days a week
   14. Additional comments during discussion:
       1. Fri Night on Kiwi Living – publicity
       2. Pay club manager to organise corporate event to increase revenue stream for the club and CNZ
       3. Clubs use lawns for practise and competitions at all hours (lights, possible indoor facility, artificial turf)
       4. Different way of charging – pay for play
       5. Different types of membership
2. Canterbury, Otago, South Canterbury, Southland, and West Coast:
   1. A happy cohesive group enjoying their sport.
   2. Good organised leadership
   3. Good cross section of community
   4. Lawns to top players’ standard regardless of location
   5. Complex aesthetically inviting for other groups to use
   6. Guidelines for lawn care and standard
   7. Money to do it all!
   8. Active social side to club
   9. Good fundraising from Exec
   10. Efficient coaching mentor system/buddy system
   11. Getting along with neighbouring sports clubs
   12. Strategic plan to ensure future; plans to encourage new membership
   13. Communication
   14. PUBLICITY
   15. Little clubs, especially having speakers such as Seniornet
   16. Etiquette on the courts [lawns]
   17. Twilight to encourage young, younger workforce
   18. Tuition for club officers and others
   19. Keep subs reasonable.
3. Bay of Plenty, Hawke’s Bay, Manawatu-Wanganui, South Taranaki, Taranaki, Sue Roberts, and Dallas Cooke:
   1. More volunteers stepping up – spread the load
   2. Cooperation between clubs
   3. More referees, umpires (for games)
   4. Dream to have “own” club house – dedicated facilities
   5. Outdoor lighting for night croquet
   6. Change in demographic of players – workers, youth
   7. Getting buns on seat – hands on mallets
   8. Additional comments during discussion:
      1. Publicity – half hour programme on TV about how to play croquet with a David Attenbourgh type of commentator.
4. Nelson, Marlbourgh, Wairarapa (absent), Wellington, Baubre Murray, Brain Boutel, and Murray Taylor:
   1. More expensive membership due to less volunteers (golf club model)
   2. National office fully funded to organise tournaments around country (golf club model)
   3. Full membership with all generations
   4. Corporate model (artificial/corporate) all days/evenings/all weather
   5. Cash rich time poor – don’t want to do work just come to play
   6. Needs to be more training for volunteers
   7. Succession plan
   8. More public awareness of croquet
   9. More facilities around club house (hub of community)
   10. Welcoming at all levels
   11. Social outlets/(not just competition) activities to meet everyone’s expectations
   12. Enough lawns
   13. Additional comments from discussion:
       1. National croquet centre [like Australia]
       2. Youtube

At the time the delegates did not sort through the universalities across the groups nor categorize the comments such as publicity, membership, etc. However, if you look at all the groups, there are some themes that emerged:

* Training at the club and association levels to help with governance
* Increase membership and participation
* Publicity that helps the community to become aware of croquet
* Increase variety within the club such as youth, workers, different races, and ages.

Next we looked at what is currently happening or needs to happen at the **club** level. These were the suggestions:

* Volunteers – mind set of assisting – this needs to change. Discussion was around that volunteers at the club are vitally important in many ways: taking care of grounds and club house, managing tournaments, refereeing games, social aspect of sport, and creating a club feeling. A problem is that some members don’t understand the culture of a club and being a part of it. When considering one of the ideas about paying a manager to bring people in, it was seen as possibly furthering the deterioration of volunteers. On the positive side, someone with those skills would save a great deal of time and resources providing the person was adding more value to the club.
* Training – different roles that club members take on need more training than what currently exists.
* Job description – it would be good for CNZ to organise job descriptions of the offices so people have a better idea of what is involved.
* Effective leadership – training is needed for people to take on leadership roles.
* Succession planning – helps with continuity of the club.
* Publicity is ongoing. Question raised: How many clubs have a publicity officer?
* Improving club/organisation models.

Association Level: The role of the association is or should be to:

* Train volunteers
* Leadership training
* Succession planning – CNZ could develop a succession planning model.
* Strategic planning
* Administration of referees and umpires
* Coordinate between clubs for interclub and tournament – there was discussion that the boundaries of associations are becoming more blurred with clubs starting in different areas. It didn’t seem to be a major issue at this juncture but it is something to consider for the future.
* Association vs Regional model: The delegates were asked if we could do away with associations and have regions. The majority thought that associations have a purpose and we need to work with them.
* Look after clubs

CNZ Level: CNZ’s role is or should be to:

* Develop job descriptions/manuals that can be used at the club and association levels with follow up training sessions. Training sessions could be conducted by RSO (Regional Sport Organisation such as Sport Tasman).
* Responsible for referees and umpires examination and structure
* Recognise non-competitive play (move highly respected officials to capabilities)
* Communicate directly with clubs – Discussion focussed on what that should be and when it is appropriate. Delegates thought that it was fine to contact clubs directly but they would be kept in the loop. [Further discussion needs to clarify when this would be appropriate.]
* Effective communication
  + Information to associations
  + How information flows
  + Functioning association (model or manual)
  + Chart to show structure
  + Networking
* Develop policy and procedural manuals

Another discussion focused on what is CNZ giving the associations, clubs, and members? Responses were:

* Coaching Level 1 course – recommendation: needs regional delivery
* Opportunities for competitions at all levels
* Qualifications for referees and umpires
* Ensure association can coach, provide refs and umps
* Facilitation when needed
* Link with the world
* Provide guidance
* Develop high performance players
* Look into long term future

This session was rich with ideas from the delegates. It will be the responsibility of the Executive to sort through all of this and look at the priorities we select. CNZ should be providing leadership for the associations and clubs.

AGM 2016 ideas: Delegates were asked for ideas for the next AGM. While not all of them can be incorporated all suggestions will be considered and selected based on available time during the AGM. They are:

* Wine tasting at Murray’s.
* Sport organisation to speak in specific area, e.g., membership (Lyn Dawson)
* How to manage transition (Jenny, Hawke’s Bay)
* Follow up of this AGM ideas at next AGM
* Sport NZ strategy (Lyn Dawson)
* Seniornet (Bonnie)
* AGM alternate North and South Islands
* Greg to talk—miss not hearing from him.

Thanks to everyone for your participation. It was a very productive session. We hope that you will take this information to your associations and ultimately to the clubs in your area.

Kind regards,

Annie Henry

President

Croquet New Zealand