**Discussion Paper for NZB Regional Conference**

**17 July 2024**

**Use of STOP cards in New Zealand**

We, the Central Districts Regional Committee, would like to submit a proposal to removethe use of STOP cards in New Zealand.

 Their usage is so random and misused, we feel the game would be better off without them.  Learners and Juniors make up the majority of club players, and they have enough to worry about within the game without more complications of using a stop card.  It is also not uncommon for a player to give a lecture to another player if the stop card is used incorrectly. "How many laws and regulations do we need to negotiate to play this game??" and this is just the bidding part!  As we all know, heaps of players attempt to learn the game, but our retention rate is terrible, and we believe this is at least one of the reasons why the failure rate is so high.

 Moving up through the playing levels the STOP card is used randomly - often a player says after they bid "oh I should have used the STOP card" finds one, flashes it around for a couple of seconds, then puts it down defeating the whole purpose of its intended use, or grabs a stop card, puts it in front of the next player for a couple of seconds, then withdraws it!, or the most common way it is misused is that it is put it in front of the next player who completely ignores it and pushes it away, thereby giving partner unauthorised information that they had nothing to think about. There are other situations where STOP cards are misused, such as when a player asks "where are the STOP cards?", thereby alerting their partner to its imminent use, or when a player's hand moves towards (or picks up) the STOP card but then the player changes their mind and does not use the card. In both cases, unauthorised information has been conveyed to the partner.

The Committee members who have played many times in Australian events have found it refreshing not to have to use them, and it would be a very good thing to align ourselves with our Trans-Tasman neighbours in not using them.

 We feel they only cause negative issues and add nothing to our great game.

Submitted by Central Districts Regional Committee 2022 – 2024

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