



10th EBL NBO Officers' Seminar

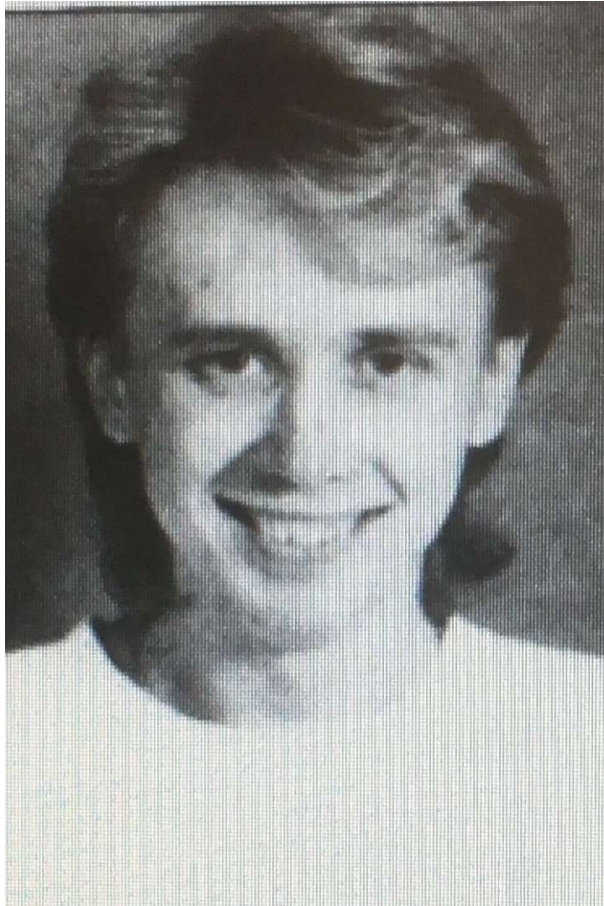
The Helgeland project -Recruiting through primary schools

Kurt Ove Thomassen



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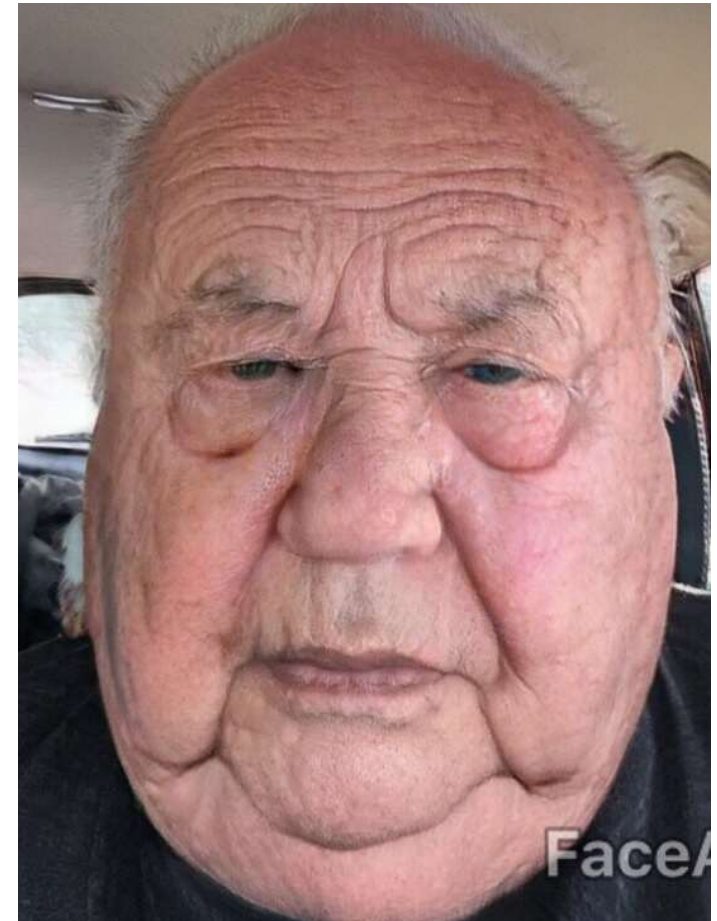
We have an aging crisis



1983 – Youngest player in Båsmo Bridge Club.

2018 – I was still the youngest player in Båsmo Bridge Club.

2053 – The only person to remember Båsmo Bridge Club.





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Initiating the project

- Vision for the project, I've kept this as my secret
- Find more enthusiasts. I found a couple that were eager to turn things around
- Do a mapping of human resources; Enthusiasts, administrators, teachers, helpers.
- Find collaborators, local clubs, national federation, regional federation, sponsors, government
- Set a goal for the project. Mini-bridge courses for 2500 pupils in the Helgeland region by 2020. And junior bridge clubs starting right after the courses.



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Sell it to the schools

- This is the part that those I help to start similar projects dread most to do, but it's really not that hard at all.
- What is bridge:
 - Mathematics
 - Logics
 - Co-operation
 - Communication
 - Problem solving
 - Learning by doing
 - Culture

Each one of these are points a school would be happy to get help with. So, we have a product we can sell to the schools, and the best thing is, they get it for free.



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A day with a mini-bridge course



- Have enough teachers, 1 for each table. Some teachers can manage 2 tables.
- Don't tell them what's smart or not, they do the best learning when they see their own mistakes.
- About 2.5-3 hours is the best, it's hard to concentrate more than that.
- Start playing after 5-6 minutes, then one new thing to learn every board.
- Prepare boards.



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An evening in our junior club

- Have enough teachers. 1 per table in the start up phase.
- Don't tell them what's smart or not, try to lead them to think by themselves. They learning the most when they see their own mistakes.
- Have a social break, maybe something good to eat.
- Don't let the evenings be too long. We spend 2.5 hours. We are not ruled by the number of boards. Sometimes we play 12, other times we only manage 6.
- Slow progression.





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Economics

- One of our main principles is that everything we do will be free of charge for the kids. We want to counteract the social exclusion that we see in other sports. Every kid that wants to play bridge will be able to do so, rich or poor.
- Each year, our members can go to the NBF Summer camp, Norwegian junior championship, Schools championship and our regional winter camp, all for free.
- This is expensive, but from the start of the project, I had made a media plan, and a sponsor-plan. For every positive thing we do, I follow up with a press release, and work to get sponsors after news coverage.
- Nobody get paid for their work, but we cover direct costs.



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The numbers

- 2500 pupils have completed the mini-bridge course since 2018
- More than 500 children have played bridge in our junior clubs
- 40 adults certified as bridge teachers
- 8 junior clubs started up.
- 98 members in the junior clubs today.
- 33 children came to the NBF summer-camp 2019
- 27 children played in Norwegian junior Championship /Cup in 2019
- 32 children in our regional Winter Camp 2019
- 70 children signed up for our regional winter camp 2020
- Our turnover: 2018: € 70.000, 2019: € 60.000,
Budget 2020: € 100.000,
- The project was supported by the Norwegian government with € 40.000 in 2018 and the same amount in 2020.