Rules, Advice and Recommendations for BBL on-line

Whilst the majority of the rules in place for F2F bridge as defined on the BBL website will still apply, a small number of changes/additions are required to allow BBL to operate on-line for next season. These, along with some recommendations, are as follows:

1) BBO is the default platform for playing on-line matches. However, if both captains agree, BCL may be used, although this is not recommended because of a lack of flexibility in the number of boards that can be played in a match and the manner in which this takes place

2) Matches will be scheduled by playing week only to allow maximum flexibility in setting a day and time. For the purposes of this document, the first named team in the fixture schedule is defined as the home team

3) A match will be 24 boards, although this can be reduced to 18 if both captains agree. Such agreement must be made before the match commences. The IMPS to VP conversion will be applied according to the number of boards played, as defined in the EBU White Book and as listed on the BBL website.

4) Both halves of the match should be played in one session unless both captains agree to play it over two sessions, i.e. two times twelve or nine boards. The same 8 players must play in both halves of the match even if these are played on different days.

5) For the purposes of creating an overall match on BBO, each half (of 9 or 12 boards) should be created separately using the procedures defined in Setting up team matches on BBO . A very useful check list for setting up matches is also available on the BBL website here

6) The home captain is responsible for setting up the match on the agreed playing platform (BBO or BCL), unless this is swapped either by mutual agreement or as required by rule 7 below. Before doing so, the home captain must inform the away captain of his/her pairings (A & B). The away captain must then inform the home captain of his pairings along with the players BBO (BCL) names. Each team should have second member who is competent in setting up a match in case connection is lost by their captain.

7) Should the away team wish to exercise their seating rights, they need to inform the home captain and the away captain must take responsibility for setting up the match to meet their seating requirements.

8) A number of settings described in the above link must be made when creating each half of the match on BBO. These are as follows
   - **Barometer scoring** set to 'off' to avoid a running total of the IMPS position being displayed as the half proceeds
   - **Allow Undos** set to 'off' to comply with EBU rules for on-line bridge. Players are strongly advised to set 'confirm bids' and 'confirm cards played' in their own account settings to avoid mis-clicks
   - The **+slow+** string included in the match description to avoid automatic time-out after a while if it takes too long to complete

9) If, by mistake, the Barometer scoring setting is not set to 'off', then the half in which this occurred must be re-started.

10) If the **+slow+** string is omitted by mistake and a board is timed out, the captains should try and agree the result for the board. If not they should agree the situation and send clear information to the committee for adjudication. Any board that is timed out will be automatically removed from the overall score generated by BBO.

11) The following settings in the match description are advised
   - The **+private+** string is included to prevent unknown players from requesting to sit in the empty seats if a connection is lost or a player delayed
   - The **+nokill+** string is included to keep the team match pending until all seats are filled.

12) Alerting system appropriate to the chosen platform must be adhered to. On BBO if any clarification of a bid is requested then the explanation must be made in the 'Alert Box' rather than via 'chat' to the whole table as this may provide unauthorised information.

13) All pairs should either complete a convention card using the appropriate facility to do so in BBO (BCL) or should, on introducing themselves to their opponents, give a brief summary of their bidding system and carding arrangements. Either captain may request information on their opponent's bidding system(s) whilst arranging a match and, if seen as necessary, request sight an electronic version of both convention card(s) prior to the day of the match.

14) The default option is Boards dealt randomly. Pre dealt boards may be used if both teams agree, with responsibility for creating the deal resting with the home team

15) By mutual agreement teams can use audio comms (Zoom, WhattsApp etc) during the match, as long as at least one player from each team is in the comms in each head-to-head. The comms co-ordinator will normally be the home captain who must distribute appropriate contact details to all players before the match.

16) Any disputes occurring in a match that require a director ruling must be agreed/recorded and forwarded to the fixture secretary for resolution in accordance with F2F procedures. Captains should note that, on BBO, a full record of completed hands/bids/alerts etc is available on the home page under the 'hand records' tab to assist in the recording.

17) On completion of the overall match, the result/details must be inserted into LMS in accordance with existing F2F rules

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