

Chelmsford BC – Configuring and Directing a RealBridge Session

1 Introduction

This note has been prepared to assist those who are unfamiliar or less experienced with configuring and directing a Chelmsford BC RealBridge session. It only covers basic items, and the settings shown are tailored to the requirements of regular pairs sessions at Chelmsford Bridge Club.

Much more detailed information is available on the RealBridge website (<https://realbridge.online/>) under menu heading “Guides & Training”.

This note assumes that the RealBridge session has been created beforehand in the RealBridge Club Admin account, and the links to join the session are available.

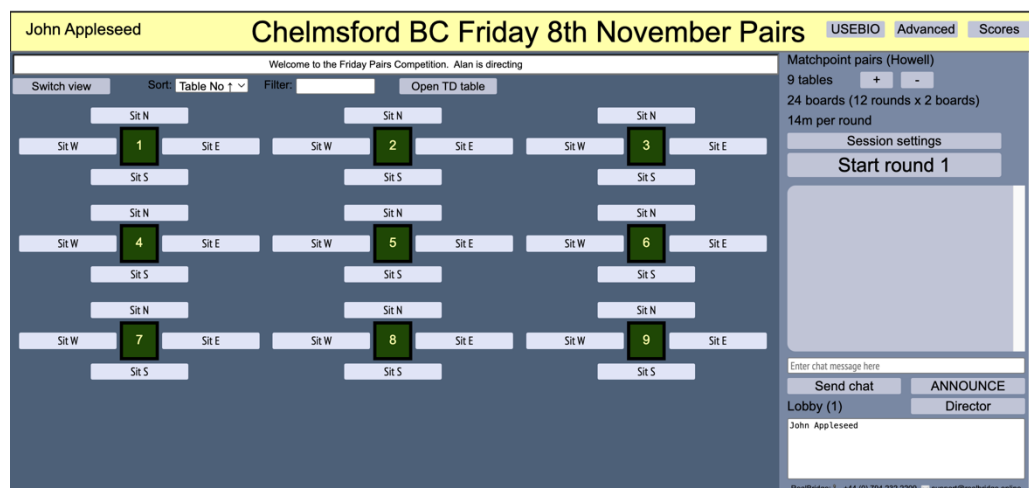
There are two different login links for each session:

- Players
 - o available on the website for players to join the session
- Directors
 - o distributed to potential directors by email
 - o allows the director to both play and direct

2 Setting Up the Session in RealBridge

Login using the director login link.

The session should have been configured and opened already. If so, you should be presented with a screen like the one below.



2.1 Session settings

Set the details by clicking the “Session settings” button. Only the General tab settings need to be changed. The Options tab settings should not be changed.

Session settings

General

Options

MiniBridge

Matchpoint pairs

Scoring method

MiniBridge

Howell (1 winner)

Movement

None

VP scale

2

Boards per round

12

Number of rounds

14m

Time / round (eg 15m, 14:30)

Show min only

1

First board

Auto- $\times$: NS=EW at half-time

Randomize starting positions

PBN file load

Boards

Boards + results

Load PBN file

No PBN file loaded

OK

Cancel

The recommended settings to be used depend on the number of tables.

Tables	Movement	Boards per round	Number of rounds	Time / round
3	Howell (1 winner)	5	5	35m
3.5 to 4	Howell (1 winner)	4	6	28m
4.5 to 6	Howell (1 winner)	3	8	21m
6.5 to 11	Howell (1 winner)	2	12	14m
11.5 or more	Switched Mitchell (1)	2	12	14m

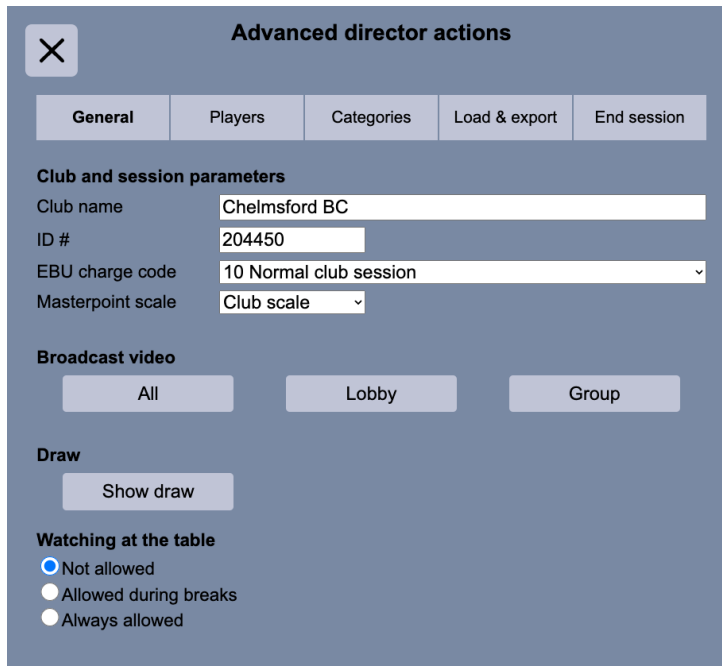
All the regular club sessions use “Matchpoint pairs” scoring.

The “First board” should always be set to “1”.

“Randomize starting positions” should always be checked.

2.2 Advanced settings

Press the “Advanced” button towards the right-hand side of the title bar to open the Advanced director actions dialog box.



2.2.1 “Players” tab

You should check that all players have logged in using their full name, and if possible have used their correct EBU number as ID#. (This can be done at any time during the session).

On the Players tab of the Advanced menu, the option to “Validate EBU Nos” can be useful to investigate this. For any anomalies, check with the individual player for the correct details.

Occasionally a player’s EBU number is not known by RealBridge, if the player assures you that the number is correct then it probably is correct.

2.2.2 “Categories” tab

For regular club sessions, use the default options.

2.2.3 “Load & export” tab

For regular club sessions, use the default options.

2.2.4 “End session” tab

This tab contains two powerful options. Both require the button to be pressed twice to activate them.

“Reboot session”

This option closes the session, forcibly logs out all players and resets the session to an unconfigured state. It is *extremely rarely* required, and only to be used in an EMERGENCY. Before using it, please use the Announce facility to inform all players that they will have to refresh their browser, and log in again. You will then need to reconfigure the session from the beginning and open the session again.

An example would be if you have mistakenly configured the session to use 2 rounds of 12 boards instead of 12 rounds of 2 boards and pressed “Start round 1” before realising the error.

“Destroy session”

This option makes the session, the scores and results inaccessible. NEVER use this option, even at the end of the session.

3 Starting the session

Until the start time, keep an eye on the lobby and if necessary direct players to a table.

Increase the number of tables if required.

Just before the start time, make sure all the tables are full and reduce the number of tables if necessary, until there are no empty tables.

If there are two half tables, continue to reduce the number of tables. The two half tables will eventually merge.

To contact someone in the lobby, type in “Enter chat message here” and select “Send chat”.

To send a message to everyone, from the lobby type in “Enter chat message here” and select “ANNOUNCE”.

Just before you start the session, inform everyone (using “ANNOUNCE”) that you are about to start and the number of tables and the number of rounds.

To start the session, click on “Start round 1”. The system will then prompt you to “Confirm start”. Click to start the session (N.B. the system allows you 5 seconds to confirm start).

You will occasionally encounter a situation where one member of a pair is delayed. In this case ask the player who has logged in to contact their partner to establish the likelihood of their partner being able to join before the end of the first round. If so, ask them to wait in the lobby until their partner has joined them and then to call you from the lobby. If the first round has not yet finished you can open a new table or add to an existing half table. Depending on the time remaining you can allow them to play all or some of the first round boards.

4 During the session

In theory, all you need to do now is to keep an eye on the tables, and to start each subsequent round. It may be easier to monitor the tables by clicking on “Switch view” (at the top left of the screen) to show the tables in a more compact view. The next button rearranges the tables according to their speed of play. “Slow” puts the slowest table at the top and “Fast” puts the slowest table at the bottom.

RealBridge shows the progress on each table. For each table, it shows which hand, and which trick they are on. When a table has completed a round, it shows “Rn” (where “n” is the round number).

When more than half the tables have finished, RealBridge allows the director to start the next round by clicking “Start round n”. Chelmsford prefers to wait until all the tables have finished (or perhaps just one table still playing). If you start the next round before all tables have finished, they will continue playing (just like face-to-face bridge).

When you start the last round, “ANNOUNCE” to everyone that it’s the last round and that you hope they enjoyed playing.

4.1 Resolving Issues

As director, you may be called to a table. A message will appear in the chat column calling for the Director, and the appropriate table will be highlighted on the lobby screen.

When you arrive at the table the screen that you will see is shown below. Initially you will not be able to see the hands or the bidding. This is to protect you from Unauthorised Information as a playing director

4.1.1 Resolving Bridge Issues

You don’t normally need to worry about any “bridge issues”, such as leading out of turn, because the system doesn’t allow players to make that sort of mistake. The most likely reason for the director being called is because of a technical issue.

Disputes

In case of (extremely rare) disputes between players, if it is not possible to resolve the dispute at the time, take comprehensive notes at the time from all relevant parties, and take further advice from the Club Committee at the end of the session. One very powerful tool at the Directors disposal is the Board Report. This provides

- The names of the Players

- Board Number

- Hand Diagram

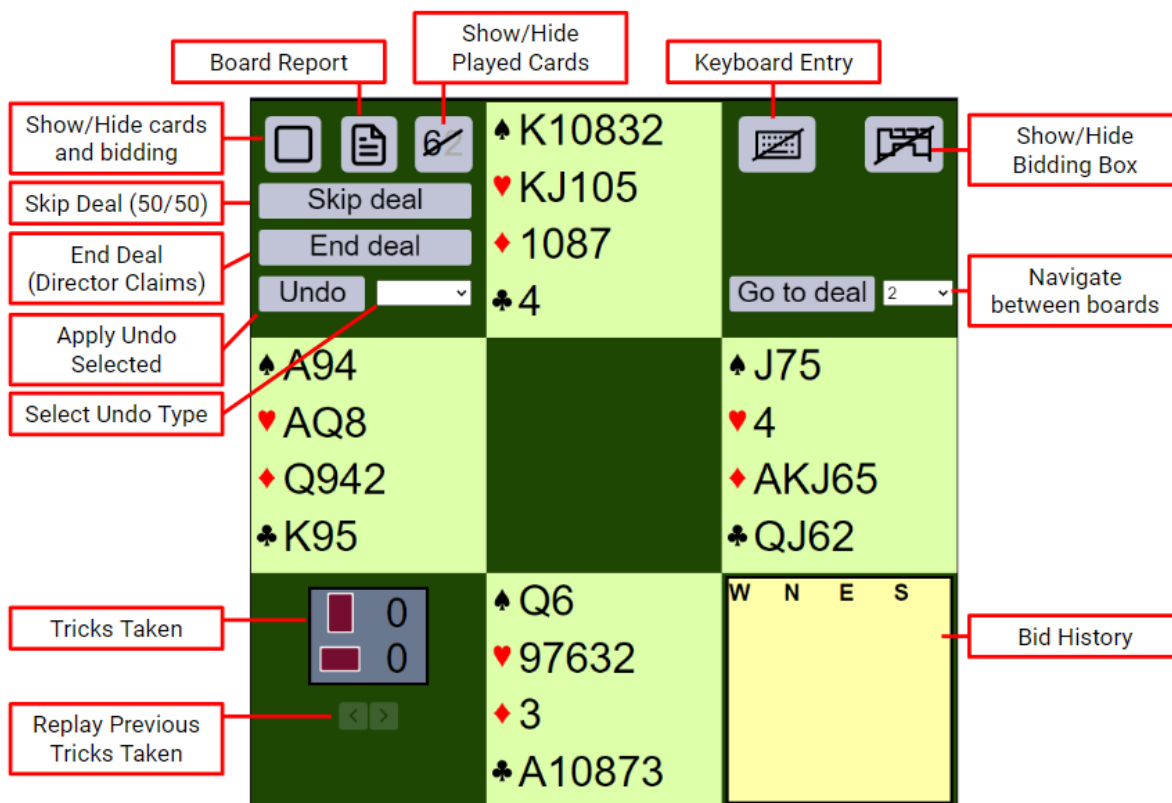
- The Auction and Play with timings of each action

The Board Report is obtained by clicking on the appropriate icon (see below) and copying the resulting report to Notepad or to a word processor file. If you are called in the middle of play it may be best to ask the players to call you back at the end of the hand if they still have a problem.

Similarly, if you know what is required for resolution (e.g. an adjusted score), but are not confident in making the adjustment at the time, again take comprehensive notes at the time, and take further advice about how to make score adjustments at the end of the session.

Slow play

If one table is very slow, such that everyone has finished the round, but they still have one board to play, you can go to the table (by clicking on it) and informing that they will not be playing the next board. When they have finished playing their current board and before they start the next board you select the option to “Skip deal” (see the figure below – courtesy RealBridge) and both pairs will be awarded an average. **If one table is only part way through the last board, all the rest have finished AND time for the round is running out, send a message from the lobby saying “Please keep your eye on the clock” or something similar.**



4.1.2 Resolving Technical Issues

These are the most common issues that are likely to occur.

Missing video or sound

Initially suggest the players select the refresh button (a circular icon with two curved arrows) at the bottom of the screen to the right of the player's name.

If that fails, refreshing the browser window, restarting the browser, or restarting the device sometimes helps. However, as these options take increasing lengths of time, and require the player to log in again, you should consider whether the player can play on without audio or video, or whether it might be necessary to skip a deal or more to allow the table to catch up once the player has returned.

Frozen screen

If the screen is completely frozen, it will probably be necessary for the player to refresh the browser window, restart the browser, or restart the device, and then log in again. As above, consider whether it might be necessary to skip a deal or more to allow the table to catch up once the player has returned.

Player has disappeared

Hopefully the player will log back on. If they can't get back on you have two options:

- a) You take the place of the person missing either on a temporary or permanent basis (N.B. you must leave the table and rejoin where the missing person was sitting). This is only practical for a non-playing director
- b) Before you make the move for the next round you will need to remove the pair from the session by returning to the lobby and clicking on “Advanced” and then on “Players”. You will see an option to “Destroy Pair”. Select the pair that have left and click on “Destroy”. This will remove the pair and also all their scores. This leaves a half table. If there is an existing half table then the system will adjust the field accordingly, however pairs will occasionally find their opponents are a pair they have played earlier in the game; the scoring takes this into account. This action should only be adopted where the pair have played fewer than 18 boards. If they have played a greater number of rounds it will be necessary to skip the remaining boards and award averages for each missing board.

5 At the end of the session

Before you leave, stay in the lobby and make sure everyone has finished the last hand. Some players stay at the table long after the game has finished, probably discussing where things went wrong! That is acceptable, don't worry, they will leave eventually.

No action is needed to end the session. Just leave. After the session has finished, a member of the Committee will upload the results to the club website, and to the EBU.