Guide to Online Bridge; April 2020; Hungerford B.C. is offering members the opportunity play club duplicate sessions online, using "Bridgebase Online." This document is intended to help newcomers to online bridge to set up an account with BBO and take part in these sessions. Be assured it is simpler than it looks; you should have no difficulty in being registered and playing within a an hour or so.

Registration:

(i)   Go to www.bridgebase.com. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the site functions best when using "Chrome" or "Firefox" as your browser.

(ii)   Click on *Login/Register,* then *Become a member (Free)*

(iii)   Click on the top line, labelled Username, and type in your chosen username. This field is not case-sensitive. It is a good idea to choose a simple, short username – no need for anything complicated. If the username you choose is already in use by another member, you will see "Unavailable" displayed, so make an appropriate change and keep trying until you see "Available".

(iv)   Now fill in the next three required fields with your password, confirmation of password and your email address.

(v)   Moving to the next column, your real name is not required, but, in a club session, it is nice for your opponents to be able to see who they are playing against.

(vi)   Leave ACBL number empty.

(vii)   Next is a space labelled Other. If you wish, you can use this to give a brief summary of your system e.g: *Acol, 4CM, weak NT.*

The next two steps are optional, but most players complete them:

(viii) **Skill Level**; most people select *Intermediate.*

(ix)   **Country**; the four home countries are listed separately, or you can choose "Great Britain".

(x)   Click to accept the Terms and Conditions, then click on "Register"

Although you will now be taken to the Login page, you must first check your email Inbox to click on the validation email which BBO will send you. (If it is not there, check your "Spam" folder.)

Logging in: Enter your chosen username and password. Tick the "remember me" box, if you wish. You have now entered what is called "The Lobby".

Your username should be visible at the top RH corner of the screen. If you click on it, a pop-up box will appear – this is the information that other players will see if they click on your username. It is best to close this pop up page, because it will obscure information that you might need. Next to your username is a button labelled BB$. This is where you purchase credit which you will need to play in some of the tournaments, including sessions run by Hungerford BC. ***Note: if you are logged in via the App rather than the BBO website, BB$ are purchased by clicking on the trolley symbol. However, they are much more expensive here than on the main website.***

Now look for a set of four tabs, probably on the RH side of your screen, labelled; Messages/People/History/Account.

Messages: In this section, you will find News/Chat/Mail. We will return to "Chat" later in the guide.

People: When you click on this, you will see five options along the top – at the moment we are only concerned with "Friends". As a new member, you don't have any friends, but you can add them at the bottom of the page, where there is a caption, in very feint print, "Add Friend". You click on this, and then type in the username of the person you want to follow. A good start is to enter the BBO usernames of your partners. When you have some names entered, if you click on "Friends" at the top of the section, a list will appear of those of your "friends" who are on line. There is a button at the bottom RH corner labelled "Offline". If you select this, all your friends will be listed, whether or not they are logged in to BBO.

History: This is where you go to look at hands you have played previously. If you select this tab while you are playing, it acts as a personal scorecard.

Account: This takes you to Profile/Settings/Convention Cards/Deal Archive options. The Profile page is displayed as a default, showing your skill level, country and real name, and your basic system, if you have chosen to enter them. In Settings, it is probably best to stay with the default settings until you have played a few times. Convention Cards allows you to upload detailed convention cards for all your partners – probably not necessary as a new member. Deal Archive can be ignored.

Playing Bridge: Now, close any pop up windows you may have opened, such as your profile or the BB$ page. On the left hand side of the Lobby Page, you will see a section titled "PLAY OR WATCH BRIDGE". Select "SOLITAIRE", then
 "Just Play Bridge, (Free)".

Now, you are at the table, playing with three robots. Unfortunately, they only play Standard American, (SAYC), but you should take this opportunity to bid and play a few hands. If you click on another player's bid, you will get an explanation of the bid displayed. Similarly, you can look to see what your own proposed bid means in SAYC. For example, if you are thinking of bidding 2NT, click on "2", then **hover** your mouse pointer over "NT", and again, an explanation will appear. You will find there are some advantages to online bridge; it is impossible to make an insufficient bid or revoke.

Playing against real people: When you are happy, go back into the lobby by pressing the **Back** button twice. In **Play and Watch**, select **Casual / All Private and Public Clubs / Acol Players Bridge Club.** Select "Full Tables", then look for a table which allows "Kibbitzers" and click on it. This allows you to familiarise yourself with how a table operates. You will notice that the suits are always displayed in the same rank order.
Now click on **"Back"** then **"Open tables"**
Look for an empty seat without a padlock symbol, and you will be taken to the table. One of the other players has a crown against their name – this is the table host. Whether you are N/S/E or W, you are seated at the bottom of the screen. The player whose turn it is to bid is highlighted by a yellow bar. One unusual feature of playing on line is that you alert your own bid. To do

this, first click on the Alert button, type in a short explanation, then make your bid. If an opponent requires further explanation, an "Explain" box will pop up, and you write as necessary inside it. There is an "Undo" request button in case of mechanical error.

Chat: You need to learn how to use the Chat function as quickly as possible. There is a blue "**CHAT**" button at the bottom LH corner of your screen. Anything you write on the chat line next to it will be sent to the recipient indicated in the box; "**Table**" means the three other players will receive your message, "**Opponents**" is self explanatory, but the one to avoid is "**Lobby**" – your message will go to everybody! If you click on the button, you will be able to select the recipient/s you want. Get into the habit of selecting the recipient first, then write your message. A good start when you arrive at the table is to greet the other players, and perhaps enquire what system partner wishes to play. If you click on their username, you may find they have entered a summary of their system on their profile; (there is also a chat facility within the profile window.) For obvious reasons, you will be unable to chat to your partner during the play of a hand.

Etiquette: BBO monitors behaviour. In particular, you should never leave a table while a hand is being played. It is common practice to make comments such as "typ", (thank you partner), "wpo", (well played opponents) etc. In addition to saying "Hello" when you arrive, it is normal to give notice and say thanks when you wish to leave at the end of a hand.

Play: This is relatively straightforward. Just as the person next to bid is highlighted in yellow, so is the next person to play a card. Be aware that when dummy is laid out to your left, the trump suit is not where you expect it to be.
Tricks won and lost are recorded in the area just below the Table Number Box. Your tricks are counted in the long vertical panel, your opponents' in the short panel. *Note that the tally changes as soon as the 4th card is played, even though the trick is still visible on the table.* By clicking on one of the "Trick" counters, you can get a replay of the last trick.

The current contract and declarer is also displayed in the same area – you can click on this box to get a review of the auction. Click anywhere inside the resulting pop-up window to cancel it.

As in the real game, you should claim when you know how many more tricks you will make, but as ever, you need to be certain! To claim, click on the Claim button and then on the number of remaining tricks that you are claiming.

If you have selected **History** from the main menu, you will have a scorecard visible. Although you are not playing duplicate, your results are being compared with other tables playing the same boards and an IMPs score is shown. Below the scorecard is a printout of the last hand completed.

When you have played a few hands, you might want to change some settings. Go to **Account/Settings.** You may want to select **"Confirm Bids"** and **"Confirm cards."** This prevents an accidental click causing an error.

Please see next page for instructions on how to register for a Club Duplicate session.

Entering a Duplicate Tournament:

Hungerford B.C. is holding club sessions each Wednesday, starting at 7:15pm. You need to register with BBO, then send the Hungerford committee notification of your username. You also need to have BB$ in your account. If you have a partner, you need to know their username. Then, preferably at least 15 mins before the start time;

- Log on to BBO
- Click **Competitive** under Play or Watch Bridge
- Then click **All Tournaments**
- In the Search Box (above where it says "Entries") type **Hungerford**
- Click on the event in the list
- Enter the BBO name of your partner
- Click **Invite**. Your partner will also need to be logged on to BBO in order for them to accept the invitation and for the partnership to be registered.

Invitations need to be accepted promptly – you will see an acknowledgement and confirmation that you are registered. You then wait until the tournament starts; when it does so, your table will appear and the first hand will be dealt.

In a duplicate session, you may have a clock timing each round. This is displayed at the top LH side of the table. If you run out of time, play finishes and you will be awarded a score by the director.

Don't forget: You must "Alert" and describe your own bid before you send it.

If you have select **"History",** then, at the end of each round, you will see your % score for each completed board, and your overall % for the session so far – this is possible because all tables are playing the same boards simultaneously.

Final results are published as soon as the last table finishes playing.

More help is available at: **https://www.bridgebase.com/help/v2help/**

Note: We are all new to online bridge. If you have any ideas for improving this guide in any way, please share them with the committee.