

Lancashire Online Teams League (LOTL) – Season 5

Information for Captains

Thank you for entering Season 5 of the Lancashire Online Teams League – we hope you enjoy playing. The season will start on **Thursday 15th April** and finish on **Thursday 10th June**. If you haven't already paid then please transfer £22 to LCBA via BACS as soon as possible – payment details can be found on the LCBA website.

You'll find below some further details and resources that will help you organise your matches. This document cannot cover every aspect of running an online bridge league – if anything is not specifically covered here then the EBU's [White Book](#) and [Skyblue Book](#) shall be used for clarification.

1. League Structure

We have 36 teams entered which means 4 divisions of 9. Teams that played in Season 4 have been allocated to their division based on their Season 4 performance and new teams have been allocated according to their available NGS data. Attached is a list of teams in your division. **Please check that your contact details are correct and let Andrew Petrie know if there are any errors** (contact details below).

Appendix 3 describes how divisions are arranged from season to season when there is a change in the number of teams in the league.

The League will use the EBU's League Management System (LMS) to record results and work out league positions. EBULeague is available through the [My EBU](#) area on the EBU website. To log in you will need an EBU number and password. Team captains and players must log in to their personal EBU account. Once logged in to My EBU, EBULeague can be found under the Utilities menu. This lists the name of the League event ("Lancashire Online Teams League 2021 Apr – June Division x"), with your team's name in parentheses. The icon at the far left tells you if you are the captain of this team, or just a player. Anyone can view the draw and results but only captains are able to amend team details and submit results. The window/globe icon links you directly to the public results pages for the league.

Your team will be set-up in LMS by Jeff Smith. **Please check your team's details by logging into LMS as soon as possible.** Please contact Jeff Smith if you are encountering problems with LMS (contact details below).

If you don't have access to EBULeague then you can send your results to Jeff by email.

2. Matches

To keep the EBU costs and hence the entry fee down to £22, matches will be **14 boards**. Matches will be played in two 7-board halves with a change of opposition partners after 7 boards **unless both captains agree** to play the match in one 14-board set. The person who sets up the match on BBO chooses the line-up for the match. If the match is played in two 7-board halves, do not attempt to create the second half match until the first 7 boards have been completed at both tables, otherwise the first half will be automatically cancelled by BBO.

3. Fixtures

You know when you are playing your matches - every Thursday 7pm starting on 15th April until you have played all the teams in your division. The LMS will tell you which team you are playing and their captain's contact details. You will also be send a copy of your fixtures before the start of the season. Note that your team will have a sit-out on one Thursday during the season if there are an odd number of teams in your division.

If you are the **home captain**, it is your job to organise the set-up of the match on BBO. If you are the **away captain** you must email the home captain with all the names of people in your team, their BBO Usernames and the partnerships. You will also receive a document that tells you how to set-up a teams' match on BBO.

Please make sure that Barometer Scoring is switched **OFF** (see the Setting Up instructions attached) and that you have set the number of boards to 7 for each half of the match (or 14 if you are playing the match in one set). **All 8 players should be online for 6:45pm**. If you encounter unexpected difficulties setting-up, then please ring one of the contacts below and please remember it may be inconvenient but it's not the end of the world if matches start late!

BBO keeps a tally of the IMP's so at the end of the match you need to note the final score and convert this to VP's using the scale at Appendix 1. Please make sure that the two captains agree the IMP and VP score. **The winning captain (or if it is a draw, the home captain), should enter the result into LMS as soon as possible**. Appendix 2 describes how you do this. The other captain should always check to ensure their result has been entered into LMS correctly.

As well as the result, you should also indicate which players in your team played in the match. This information will be used by the EBU to award masterpoints at the end of the season – see 'Masterpoints' section below. If you are not an EBU member then you must email the result to Jeff Smith and please copy the other captain in on the email.

4. Postponements and matches not played

LOTL has been designed for matches to be played on the due date and fixtures are scheduled well in advance. The rules about additional players and reserves are **very** flexible. Therefore under normal circumstances captains are expected not to request a postponement. If it's not a last minute emergency then please get a reserve or reserves. If it is a last minute emergency, then we expect the opposing captain to try and be flexible and to accommodate a rearranged date. The opposing captain should aim to offer 2 dates/times within the next 7 days, with an evening start time. If a match has to be cancelled, then the team not able to play on the due date will be awarded 5 VP's and the opposition 15 VP's. Any disputes about postponement in an emergency should be referred to one of the Organising Committee.

5. Final positions/promotion & relegation

The final league positions will be decided on total VP's. Any ties will be decided by the results between the teams tying – VP's then IMP's. If this still does not split any tie then Section 3.2.7 of the White Book applies.

If any team drops out of the league during the season then every other team in that division will be awarded a score against the drop-out team as specified in Section 2.4.2 of the White Book.

It is the intention that two teams should be promoted from each division below Division 1, and that two teams are relegated from each division except the lowest one. However, at the end of

the season, new teams may join or leave, and it's in nobody's interest for a team to be completely in the wrong division. The method for determining the size of the divisions from season to season, and which teams get promoted or relegated, is described in Appendix 3. If you get 'bumped' out of a promotion spot then apologies but we are hoping to avoid this as far as possible.

6. Masterpoints

At the end of each season, all results and player names will have been entered into the LMS by the team captains. Non-EBU team captains cannot directly access the LMS and should ensure that their results are emailed to Jeff Smith for inclusion. A few days after the last match of a season, The LMS is 'finalised', i.e. it is checked to ensure that all data has been entered correctly, and then submitted to the EBU for masterpoints. The EBU will then award masterpoints to each player individually. It is essential that captains enter their team data correctly otherwise their players might not be awarded the correct number of masterpoints. The number of masterpoints awarded for each win (half for a draw) are as follows:

	Div 1	Div 2	Div 3	Div 4	Div 5
5 Divisions	84	74	63	53	42
4 Divisions	74	63	53	42	

7. League ethos

This league has been established to provide friendly online teams bridge to a wide spectrum of the Lancashire bridge playing population. Please be patient with people who are new to BBO and online bridge. Particularly, please help your opponent set-up a match if he/she is struggling.

Although our league's ethos is to be a friendly league we still have a duty to operate under the regulations contained in the EBU's [Sky Blue Book](#). We would particularly draw your attention to the following:

- If you do have a disagreement with your opponents (hopefully very rare!) we recommend completing the board and referring the issue to Jeff Smith for a ruling as the "after the event TD" - effectively an appeal against the result;
- Players should greet their opponents at the start of a match, give a brief description of their system, and self-alert their conventional bids with a clear description of the meaning – see 'Using BBO' below for further details. We would expect all pairs who play regularly in LOTL to have agreements in place that enable them to answer questions from their opponents about their bids, leads and signals/discards.

8. Using BBO

At the start of each match players should greet their opponents and give a brief description of their system and carding methods. Something like "Acol, 3 Wk2s, Weak NT, Standard leads, standard signals and discards (HELD), Weak jump overcalls". Regular partnerships should complete a BBO convention card which the opponents can then access during the match (convention cards can be completed by clicking on the Account tab and selecting 'Convention cards').

Players should always **self-alert their conventional bids** as well as bids which would normally be announced when playing face-to-face. For online bridge this is extended beyond the F2F limit of 3NT, so Blackwood, responses to Blackwood, cue bids etc should be self-alerted. It is also

very helpful if people self-alert things like NT rebids and strength of jump overcalls. The explanation of a self-alerted bid is only visible to the opposition and not to the alerter's partner. In cases where it is necessary to give a longer explanation, players can use the chat box only if it is private chat to the opposition – under no circumstances should players chat to the 'Table' when describing bids.

You can request an explanation of a bid by clicking on the bid. Not giving clear explanations when you self-explain is an infraction. If a player makes a reasonable request for more information and does not receive it, play should continue and, if necessary, the issue should be referred to Jeff Smith at the end of the match for a ruling.

Undos should **only** be requested for bidding misclicks and **not** carding misclicks. Although most matches will have Undo's switched ON, some players who are fairly new to online bridge may find it helpful to change some of the switches on their BBO account, particularly the **Confirm bids** and **Confirm cards** switches ON, which will mean you will be asked after every bid or play to confirm it's what you meant to do. You do this by going into the 'Settings' option on your 'Account' tab on the right hand side of the screen.

9. Contact details/queries

Queries on setting-up matches

Preston BC members – Veronica Petrie	vpetrie@btinternet.com	07855 012008
Bolton BC members – Jeff Smith	jasmith@nildram.co.uk	01617 023773
Southport BC members – Sue Woodcock	n.woodcock772@btinternet.com	07938 990787
Other clubs – Jeremy Stanforth	jeremy@stanforth.f9.co.uk	07775 974704

League organisation, registration and payment

Andrew Petrie	a.petrie.pbc@gmail.com	07474 165 723
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League Management System and rulings

Jeff Smith	jasmith@nildram.co.uk	01617 023773
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The LOTL Organising Committee

April 2021

Appendix 1 – VP Scale for 14 board matches

IMPs	VPs
0 – 1	10-10
2 – 4	11-9
5 – 8	12-8
9 – 12	13-7
13 – 16	14-6
17 – 21	15-5
22 – 26	16-4
27 – 33	17-3
34 – 40	18-2
41 – 50	19-1
51+	20-0

Appendix 2 - How to use the LMS to submit results

Clicking on the link or on the edit match icon will take you to a form where you can enter the result of the match. It will look like this:

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Edit Match: Rebecca's Rovers vs Marnie's Miracles". The form contains the following fields and options:

- Match Date:** A text input field containing "2015-08-13".
- Rebecca's Rovers IMPs:** A text input field containing "75".
- Marnie's Miracles IMPs:** A text input field containing "26".
- Rebecca's Rovers VPs:** A text input field containing "18".
- Marnie's Miracles VPs:** A text input field containing "2".
- Rebecca's Rovers Players:** A list of four names with checked checkboxes: Michael Clark, Peter Jordan, Dawn Mertens, and Ian Mitchell.
- Marnie's Miracles Players:** A list of four names with checked checkboxes: Barry Capal, Gail Nancarrow, John Pain, and Peter Stockdale.
- Buttons:** A red "Clear Match" button, a green "Save" button, and a grey "Cancel" button.

You enter the date, the score and then you check the boxes by every player who participated in the match. You then press *Save* and the match data will be recorded. You can always edit the match again later - nothing is set in stone until the end of the season.

Appendix 3 – How we will arrange the divisions

Background

Certain numbers of teams in LOTL mean it's impossible to have an equal number of teams in each division. Dropouts and new joiners also mean you may need to grow or shrink a division from one season to the next. This appendix explains how the organising committee (OC) will make these decisions and it is therefore part of the conditions of contest for the league. The OC retains the right to amend any of these regulations if it considers circumstances make this necessary.

How the organising committee will allocate teams to divisions from season to season

1. The OC will first decide on how many divisions there should be and how many teams there should be in each division. For fairness, the general principle will be to ensure as close to equity as possible but to maximise 'playing up', when this is not possible, i.e. the extra teams will be in the higher divisions. The configurations we will use are:

Number of Teams	Preferred Structure
30	2x8 & 2x7
31	3x8 & 1x7
32	4x8
33	1x9 & 3x8
34	2x9 & 2x8
35	3x9 & 1x8
36	4x9
37	2x8 & 3x7
38	3x8 & 2x7
39	4x8 & 1x7
40	5x8

2. Having established the season's structure then the OC will populate it using the following principles:
 - a. If it is not necessary to grow or shrink any divisions from the previous season then 2 up, 2 down will apply.
 - b. When we need to grow a division and 1 extra team is needed, the OC has the following options:
 - i) Allow suitably qualified new team(s) to take the available slot(s);
 - ii) Promote an extra team;
 - iii) Relegate one team less.

In general, joiners enter the league in the lowest division, but the OC consider it not to be in the league's overall best interest to have teams in completely the wrong division, if this can be avoided. The OC will therefore use option i) first. If there is no suitable joiner, then the OC will compare (in VP's), how far the relegated team was from safety with how far away the other team was from promotion. If the VP difference is the same, then the OC will choose option ii) – promote an extra team.

If 2 extra teams are needed and there are 2 suitable joiners, then option i) will be used. If there is only 1 suitable joiner, the joining team will be used first and then the VP comparison used to decide between ii) and iii) for the additional place. If there are no suitable joiners, then the OC will promote one team more and relegate one team less.

If more than 2 extra teams are needed, then the OC will use the above principles to make its decision.

c. When we need to shrink a division then

- i) If 1 team less is required, then the OC will relegate one team more;
- ii) If 2 teams less are required, then the OC will promote one team less and relegate one team more;
- iii) If a division is short by more than 2, then the OC will use the above principles to make its decision.