



SOMERSET CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION



October Newsletter

Autumn Swiss Pairs

25th October 1pm

online on BridgebaseOnline

6 x 6 board rounds with a short interval after three round. Register online as normal. Cost \$5 BBO

Online Bridge for less experienced players:

Relaxed Nine-High games on weekdays

Daily – games at 11am and 7.30pm
\$1.50 on BridgeBaseOnline

Log on – click on **competitive**, then **all tournaments** and enter **ebu** in the search box to bring up a list from which you can select the appropriate game to register for. Registration from two hours prior to the commencement time.

Tournaments with feedback from Lou Hobhouse

Tuesdays 4.30 pm 18 hands in 2.5 hours

Thursdays 3.00 pm 12 hands in 2 hours

Cost £6 per session

More info here: <https://www.bridgewebs.com/somerset/LOUTournament%20flyer.pdf>

Ongoing events include the Lockdown League now in its fifth incarnation with eight teams in a single division. This will run through to the beginning of December so you have plenty of time to organise a team for Christmas!

RealBridge

Following a successful trial a second taster session has been organised for 13th October at 1pm. The idea is to try to create more of a natural feel to a table so that players can see each other and converse as they would in a club. Ideally players should have a partner but please get in touch if you are without one and efforts will be made to pair you up. This session will be free to play and all the details are here:

https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwx/bw.cgi?club=somerset&pid=display_page97



The normal Somerset games on BBO will continue as follows:

Mondays 1pm – MP pairs

Wednesdays 1pm – MP pairs

Thursdays 1pm – Swiss pairs

Fridays 1pm – IMPs Pairs

All events are played over 18 boards at a cost of \$3 BBO per player.



West of England Congress Online

An extended week of bridge on-line to compensate for the lack of opportunity to put on the real thing in Weston-super-Mare as in normal times.

26th September **WoE Open Pairs** won by Keith Rayford and John Brandon-Joyce

26th September – **Relaxed Pairs** won by Camilla and Thomas Grundy

27th September – **Swiss Pairs** won by Roy France and Katharine Hodgson

28th September – **Open Duplicate Pairs** won by Jason Frost and Michael Friis

29th September – **Midweek Duplicate Pairs** won by Janet and Barbara Cohen

30th September – **Open Duplicate Pairs** won by Frank Coltman and Colin Simcox

1st October – **Swiss Pairs** won by Mike Clack and Ian Morris

2nd October – **Cross-imp** pairs won by Steve Fletcher and Pip Duncan

3rd October – **WOE Championship Pairs**

The qualifier was headed by Richard Feetenby and Hilary Anthony

A-Group Final – won by Catherine Curtis and Paul Fegarty

B-Group Final – won by Charles Bucknall and Diana Nettleton

Open Pairs – won by David Jones and Adrian Thomas

4th October – **WOE Swiss Teams**

Won by Ron Davis and Miles Cowling with Steve Preston and David Huggett

The cross Imps table was headed by Adrian Thomas and Tony Disley

Congratulations to all the winners. The events were very well supported and there were some excellent results from Somerset players. Thanks to all who put in the hard yards organising the show.

Detailed results for these and all other Somerset competitions can be found here:

[https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwoo/bw.cgi?
club=somerset&pid=display_past](https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwoo/bw.cgi?club=somerset&pid=display_past)

The **County League** has now begun and you can keep up with progress of the various teams here:

[https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwoo/bw.cgi?
club=somerset&pid=display_page28](https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwoo/bw.cgi?club=somerset&pid=display_page28)

Also occurring:

Wiltshire have a **Swiss Teams** event on **Sunday 18th October**. Full details can be found here:

<https://www.bridgewebs.com/wcba/>

The EBU through EBED offer **relaxed duplicate sessions** within a supported environment. Full details can be accessed here:

[https://www.ebu.co.uk/documents//education-and-teaching/pdfs/EBED-
relaxed-duplicate.pdf](https://www.ebu.co.uk/documents//education-and-teaching/pdfs/EBED-relaxed-duplicate.pdf)

The Axe Virtual Bridge Club

The Axe Virtual Bridge Club is an EBU ‘Virtual Club’ playing on Bridgebase Online (BBO). It is a collaboration between Wedmore, Cheddar and Winscombe bridge clubs, started because no single club had sufficient members wishing to play online to make the enterprise viable. Together, however, we now have a successful club which regularly gets around 11 or twelve tables per week making it financially viable. Full details can be found [here](#).

The EBU and SCBA must be congratulated in putting everything in place that allowed three clubs with little specialist knowledge to start an online collaboration which is completely integrated with the EBU Masterpoints and NGS system and run by directors trained and organised by the SCBA’s efforts. Basically, we provide players’ names and BBO usernames to a paid director and they run the sessions and upload the results to the EBU and the club websites. Players pay BBO for each session and the portion of this money which comes back to the clubs covers our costs.

We play on Wednesday nights from 7:00 p.m. to about 9:15 p.m. during which time we play 18 boards. Players must register for the session in the two hour period before it starts and

be logged in to BBO by about 6:50 p.m.. I prefer to play on a proper computer with a screen and keyboard but you can use an iPad or Android tablet or even a smartphone (though you have to be very accurate in selecting your bids and cards)!

In some ways things are easier online since you can't bid or play out of turn. Somewhat unusually, however, you alert or announce your own bids not your partner's. These alerts are only shown to your opponents so your partner is not reminded by your alert that you agreed to play Lebensohl tonight! I think it is fair to say that not everyone has got used to alerting or announcing their own bids yet but you can ask for explanation of any bid.

When we have an odd number of tables we call upon the help of a couple of BBO advanced robots to make up the numbers. They play a 5 card major 2/1 system ([described here](#)) which is different from Acol but information about any of their bids can be obtained simply by clicking on them. They are told nothing about your system or conventions but, despite this handicap, the robots make formidable opponents.

We have now used them six times and they have averaged 57.2% which makes them a Queen on the NGS scale. (Fewer than 10% of published NGS grades are Queen or above.) They have won their section (N/S or E/W) twice with about 65% both times and have bid two grand slams in 108 boards. There is some evidence that they play better than they defend since they have averaged 61% on hands where they declared but only 53% on hands where they defended but we have too few results to be certain on this.

Grand Slam 1

D 13	N JannyBen ♠ Q10974 ♥ 10 ♦ 1072 ♣ 9743	W N E S P 1♥ P 2NT P 3♣ P 3♦ P 5NT P 7♥ P P P
W Robot ♠ 8 ♥ KQJ86 ♦ AJ84 ♣ KQ10		E Robot ♠ AJ32 ♥ A95432 ♦ KQ9 ♣
S Acramp ♠ K65 ♥ 7 ♦ 653 ♣ AJ8652	7♥ E	NS: 0 EW: 0

An elegant auction started with a five-card major 1H. The game forcing Jacoby 2NT showed 4 card support and 13+ total points after which 3C showed a singleton or void. 3D showed the ace of diamond and 16+ total points. 5NT was a grand slam force which was accepted when holding 2 of the top 3 honours. There is clearly nothing to the play of the hand.

The robots didn't have it all their own way, however, since Sue Gudgeon and Malcolm Scard also bid the grand, even in the face of opposition bidding in their case.

Grand Slam 2

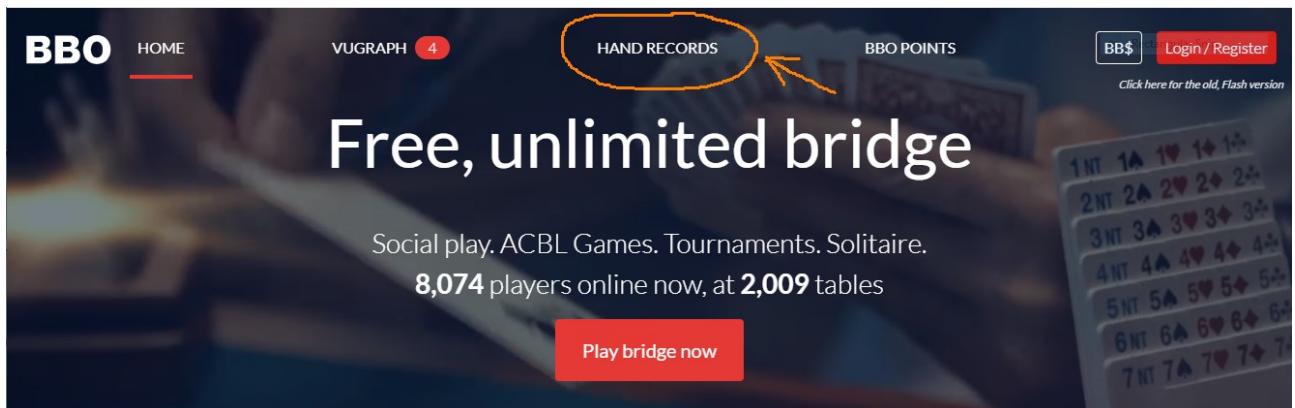
 2 D	N 156269 ♠ 764 ♥ 986 ♦ K97643 ♣ J	W N E S 2NT P 2♣ P 4♦ P 4♣ P P P 7♣ P
W Robot ♠ K85 ♥ KJ42 ♦ J10 ♣ 8732		E Robot ♠ AQ102 ♥ A ♦ A ♣ AKQ9654
S suegudg ♠ J93 ♥ Q10753 ♦ Q852 ♣ 10		7♣ E NS: 0 EW: 0

The bidding to the second grand slam was crude by comparison but equally effective. 2C is an artificial strong opening bid which is forcing to 2NT, not game forcing. 2NT shows eight or more high card points with at least two cards in each suit. 4C is Gerber – holding all four aces! 4D, surprise surprise, is 0 or 4 aces. Having learnt nothing, the final bid of 7C could have been made two bids earlier without Gerber. This last bid, however, requires judgement. I'm not sure how GIB (the program controlling the robots) works but most top bridge playing programs would generate a large number of deals all consistent with the bidding and perform a double dummy analysis on each deal to estimate the probability of making the grand slam. The Robots judged correctly that bidding the grand was worth the risk while no human opponents did. Coincidentally, this slam was bid against Sue and Malcolm who didn't therefore have the chance to bid this second grand slam which was also a laydown.

For those of you that are interested, all the data used in this article was retrieved from BBO recently since BBO **stores bidding and play data for each hand** as well as the result. Before you log in to BBO click 'hand records' at the top of the starting screen (see screenshot at the

end of this article) and you will be allowed to request data for hands played by a given user in a given time period.

You can then select a ‘movie’ for any listed hand which shows the screens above with controls which let you see the actual play of the hand, perform a double dummy analysis (GIB) or play through the hand again. You can now prove to your partner that they really did miss that Smith Peter that you used against three no trumps which he could have defeated three months ago!



Click ‘Hand Records’ and you get this form:

Get hands played by a user between two dates

*Enter username:

Enter the start date:

Interval to retrieve:

Interval direction: Backward Forward

Show summaries every:

Logged in as GeOff [Logout](#)

* denotes required field

Filling in the data and clicking ‘Get Hands’ yields:

Tourney 17445-1600279176- played by GeOff										
2020-09-16										
Nº	Time	North	South	East	West	Result	Points	Score	Movie	Traveller
		#17445 Pairs Axe Duplicate				7/22	0.55	54.72%		
1	18:07	Psq56	GeOff	156269	suegudg	5♦xE+1	-650	20.00%	Movie or Lin	Traveller
2	18:11	Psq56	GeOff	156269	suegudg	2♦E=	-90	50.00%	Movie or Lin	Traveller
3	18:21	Psq56	GeOff	cathwray	RogerCliff	5♦E+1	-620	40.00%	Movie or Lin	Traveller
4	18:31	Psq56	GeOff	cathwray	RogerCliff	6♦N-1	-100	0.00%	Movie or Lin	Traveller
5	18:36	Psq56	GeOff	molland	barley2017	3NW+1	-430	65.00%	Movie or Lin	Traveller
6	18:42	Psq56	GeOff	molland	barley2017	4♦S=	420	100.00%	Movie or Lin	Traveller

For each hand now you can click ‘Movie’ to see the bidding and play, perform double dummy analysis at any point or try playing it differently. Clicking ‘Lin’ will download a ‘.lin’

file which may be read into your own software and clicking ‘Traveller’ will show all the scores for that board.

Thank you to Geoff Davies for this magnificent article.

Further details on local virtual clubs can be found from the following people:

Frome - John Perry. jp007g9418@blueyonder.co.uk

Crewkerne & Ilminster - Mike Dobson Jeanneandmikedobson@sky.com

Mendip - Paul Burgess paul.burgess738@gmail.com

Clevedon/Portishead - Liz Tracy Lizzie_tracy@yahoo.co.uk

Axe - Gillian Toogood Gillian.toogood@mail.co.uk

Wells - Charlie Sutton charlie@thesuttonshouse.co.uk

Fivehead - Hilary Scott hils@scottshome.org

Taunton - Mike Leach mikeindex56@gmail.com