

Virtual Club Player Questions (aka FAQ)

CANNOT SIGN ON TO BRIDGE BASE ONLINE (BBO)

- 1) **Usually, it is because BBO is busy. Just keep trying.**
- 2) Remember that your **password is case sensitive** Fubar and fubar are not the same.
- 3) Your **cache (aka Site Data) might be corrupted**. Clearing the cache is done differently for each browser. Find the browser's Options and then Privacy and delete the cache (the exact names of these operations will vary with each browser).

CANNOT SIGN UP FOR FIRST TIME PLAYING A SPBC VIRTUAL CLUB GAME.

- 1) Sign off and back on.
- 2) If you have not played in our club games since 1/1/2019, there is a special procedure you need to follow. Email Elaine elaine.garofalo@gmail.com or Joanne jbwharton@tampabay.rr.com
- 3) If you are playing in a limited game, you must have no more than the maximum points and you must have an ACBL number registered with BBO. To register your ACBL number from the Home page click *ACBL World* then click *Update your ACBL number*. Enter your ACBL number and click *Update*. Return to Home page. The most common reason for problems is not registering your ACBL number or entering an incorrect number.
- 4) You must have at least \$6.00 in your BBO account. To add money to your BB\$ account click *BB\$* on the upper right of the Home page. Follow the instructions shown.
- 5) If you are using an old Android or iOS app, you might not be able to sign in. As of this writing, the current version of both apps is 3.0. The Windows app and the old Flash version of BBO are problematic. It is better to access via a browser and use the new version. As of this writing, if you are using the current version, you will see <https://www.bridgebase.com/v3/> in the browser's Address bar.
- 6) **Contact the director.** The Director in charge of our games always has the BBO name of VACB127001 (those round things are zeros). One or more of the directors might be available, also. Elaine's BBO name is *egarofalo*; Pam's is *njpetdoc*; Paul's is *guido*. Capitalization does not matter for BBO names.

CANNOT SIGN UP FOR OUR GAMES (YOUR OR YOUR PARTNER)

First sign off BBO and sign back on. Sometimes it works and can't hurt.

Remember you Cannot sign up for our Virtual Club games earlier than two hours before starting time.

When registering for a game, both you and your partner must be on the BBO Home page or the Virtual Clubs area. If one or both of you are elsewhere, you will not be registered nor allowed into the game

If you are signing up for a limited game, you must have no more than the maximum points.

If you are signing up for a Limited game (e.g., 0-499), both you and your partner must be a member of the ACBL and your correct ACBL number(s) must be registered with BBO.

If not registered click on ACBL World and down at the bottom of the page click on Update your ACBL number. Enter your correct number in the field provided. If your ACBL number is entered incorrectly you need to email Rick.beye@acbl.org with your correct number and real name and BBO log in name.

You must have at least enough BB\$ in your BBO account. For our regular games this is \$6.00 for yourself or \$12.00 if you are also paying for your partner.

.If you or your partner never played at the St Petersburg Bridge Club since 1/1/2019, you will not be allowed to play without the approval of the Director. There are several factors limiting the possibility of being “unblocked.” You or your partner should message VACB127001 (the Director’s special log in name) a half hour before game time providing name, ACBL number and BBO log in name. If it is possible for you to play the director will tell either you or your partner when to sign off and sign back into BBO. If this is not done when (not before) asked to do so, the system will block your partner from joining our game.

In other cases, message the director. See 6 in the question above for details.

WHY COULDN’T I PLAY IN THE GAME I REGISTERED FOR?

Both you and your partner need to be in the main area (Home page) or in the Virtual Clubs area of BBO when the game begins. If you are elsewhere, such as playing in the Casual area you will not be “pulled” into the game. Please be in the required area at least five and preferably 10 minutes before the scheduled beginning of the game.

HOW DO I LOAD A CONVENTION CARD?

Select *Account* and then *Convention Cards*. Choose the card and click *Edit*. Enter the BBO name of your partner in the *Partner* box and click *Save*. When you and this partner play in our Virtual Club game this convention card will load automatically.

HOW DO I CALL THE DIRECTOR?

Find the blue box in the upper left. It contains several options including *Call director*. You want to call the director this way rather than through private messaging for two reasons. First, the directors see a special box for such messages so they will not be missed, while private messages are easily missed. Second, if there is more than one director, following the above suggestion will be seen by *all* directors.

THE OPPONENTS DIDN’T ALERT OR THEY DIDN’T EXPLAIN OR I DON’T UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY WROTE

Private message both opponents asking for an explanation. If that does not work try a message to the Table. If you still need assistance call the director.

I CLICKED THE WRONG BID OR CARD. HOW DO I GET AN UNDO?

Undos are not allowed in our games. The software protects you from many errors such as revoking, making an insufficient bid, and bidding or leading out of turn. You have to face the consequences of the latter errors in face-to-face bridge. Mis-clicks are basically the same thing.

HOW CAN I PREVENT MIS-CLICKS?

Select *Account* on the vertical menu on the far right. Then select *Settings* near the top of the window. Under *Playing* move the slider to the right (it will light up) for both *Confirm Bids* and *Confirm Cards*. Turning these on means you have one additional step for both bids and plays which gives you an extra chance to correct a mis-click. Once you get used to the extra click, it will take almost no time.

WHY ARE NON-SPBC PLAYERS PLAYING IN OUR GAMES?

There are two reasons. First, anyone who has not played face to face bridge at SPBC since 1/1/19 can request a waiver from their home club to play in a specified other club (in this case ours). There are several players who want to play with friends who are SPBCers and have obtained a waiver.

The other group are “subs.” These are players who substitute either to prevent a sit-out or to fill in when someone gets knocked off-line for more than a minute or so. There are rumors that sometime in the future robot players will be used for subs instead.

HOW MANY PAIRS DO WE NEED FOR A GAME?

We need six pairs but one pair can be subs. Therefore, we need five pairs of SPBCers.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE GAME IS CANCELLED?

There are only two reasons why a game would be cancelled. Either BBO is “down” (non-functional) for an extended period of time or there are fewer than five pairs signed on for a game. In either case you will not be charged for the game.

WHY DO WE SOMETIMES NEED TO WAIT BEFORE THE NEXT ROUND STARTS?

The round ends the earlier of all tables finishing the hands or when the clock runs out. If you are done before the other tables, you will need to wait a bit.

WHY CAN WE NOT START A BOARD WHEN THERE ARE STILL A FEW MINUTES LEFT IN THE ROUND?

If there are only three or four minutes (or less) left in the round, the software prevents the beginning of the remaining board(s) of that round. These are scored the equivalent **as?** Average.

HOW IS A BOARD SCORED WHEN TIME RUNS OUT BEFORE WE FINISH IT?

The software assigns either a percentage score (Average, Average plus, etc.) or a “real score” (4♠ down 1 as an example). The director then reviews the score and allows it or changes it in an attempt to restore equity. The director has only twenty minutes after the game ends to complete these reviews, so speak up early if you think there is a problem.

WHAT DO DIRECTORS DO?

Before the start of the game, they set up the game by inputting the game parameters and load the Common Game hands. They also assist players who are having difficulty signing into the game and try to find a partner for those in need. At the beginning of the game they find subs to prevent sit-outs and during the game, they answer director calls, find subs if and when needed, and answer questions. During and after the game they look at the computer assigned scores for hands not finished and adjust as necessary.

HOW MANY DIRECTORS ARE THERE FOR EACH GAME?

One Game Director. There might be other directors assisting players signing in before the game and during the game offering opinions when asked by the Game Director about adjudication of unfinished hands or watching the tables for director calls or delays while the Game Director does the adjudication.

HOW DO I FIND THE ST PETE GAME?

There are two ways of finding your game. Remember that the game will not appear until two hours before its start time. There are two basic methods. Both require that you go to the list of Pending ACBL Virtual Club games. The name has been changed at least twice already, so no promises on what it is today. When you see the list of club games, make sure *Pending* is selected. The easy way is to use the Find box. Just type in *Pete*and our game appears. The hard way is to scroll down the list of pending games. If you go this route, add VACB27001 to your follow/friends list. This is the i.d. of the active director and friending this name will cause our tournament to be highlighted. Note that the games are in order of starting times and listed in the number of minutes to the start time. As an example, if it is 9:10, our 10:00 a.m. game will be down around 50 minutes on the list. It could be anywhere from 47 to 53 due to the way the system works.

CAN I TALK PRIVATELY WITH MY PARTNER?

Yes, but... Once all the hands for the round are complete, the system allows you to have a private chat with your partner. As soon as the next round begins, private chat with partner is disabled.

WHERE DOES MY \$6 TABLE FEE GO?

BBO takes a percentage "off the top" and the ACBL gets a flat rate per table. The remainder goes for expenses (directors and administration) and to help cover the expenses of the SPBC (maintenance, utilities and fixed costs) while we are closed for on-site activities.

I'D LIKE A GAME AT A DIFFERENT TIME, WHO DO I TALK TO?

Write to Joanne at jbwharton@tampabay.rr.com or let your director know who will be happy to pass on the request to Joanne. Within the limits of ACBL regulations and the BBO software we are always looking for ways to improve the experience for our members.

HOW DO I FIND THE OPPONENTS' CONVENTION CARD

Click the blue box with the three horizontal lines. There are several commands therein including *North-South Convention Card* and *East-West Convention Card*. Click the one you want to see.

HOW CAN I REVIEW THE BIDDING?

The hand diagram includes a box containing the final contract. Simply click on that and the bidding review window pops up. When done, click anywhere on the bidding review window and things will return to normal.

HOW CAN I REVIEW THE PLAY?

The BBO software allows you to review the prior trick. To do so, click on the vertical box showing the number of tricks taken by North-South or the horizontal window showing the tricks taken by East-West. A pop-up window showing the prior trick appears. Click this window to return your screen to normal.

HOW CAN I REVIEW A RECENTLY PLAYED SPBC VIRTUAL GAME?

To see the results, hand records, travelers, etc. for your recently played games: Click *History* then *Recent Tournaments*. The game numbers are listed, but not the date played. Note that they are in reverse chronological order; the most recent game is listed first.

CAN I BE BARRED FROM THE VIRTUAL CLUB?

Yes. We are a Zero Tolerance club. Be kind and there will be no problems. Do not give unsolicited lessons and/or insult anyone. Another way of saying it is *Do not be rude, crude, or lewd*.

THE HANDS ARE WEIRD. ARE THEY PURPOSEFULLY WILD?

The hands you play in the Virtual Club are from the same source, *The Common Game*, as the ones you play face-to-face in our brick and mortar club. The hands are randomly dealt and have been tested to be so.

ARE THE POINTS WON ONLINE WORTH ANYTHING?

Yes, they count the same as points won elsewhere. In most games, just as at the club, you vie for Black Points. Also, just like at the club, some games are for Silver Points. Black point games for Limited Games pay 150% of the number of points won face-to-face at the club assuming the same number of tables are in play. Open Games pay 150% also but since there is not a Limited Game being played simultaneously there is no "other room" to increase the number of tables counted as being in play.

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