Warwickshire Online Club

General Guidance / Rules

Registration

BBO

- The first thing required is to set up a BBO user id. To do this, go to www.bridgebase.com and click the Login/Register button at top right. Then select the "Become a member (free)" button and register, where you will select a BBO name.
- Once registered you will need to set up your BBO account and buy BB$ which will be used when you play on BBO. For this you will need to use a credit card or PayPal account. Before playing you will need to make sure you have enough BB$ for the event.
- NB. Note that the BBO charge is in US$ which is then converted to £ sterling. When buying BB$ it is best to use a browser rather than a tablet app to get the best exchange rate.

RealBridge No pre-registration is needed.

Joining an event

BBO

- Some events will require you to register either as a pair or singly. This seems a bit complicated at first but will become easy once you have done it once or twice. Step-by-step instructions on how to do it can be found under Warwickshire Online Club – WOC Connecting to an Event.
- If you register with a partner then you will need to know his/her BBO name. You can opt to pay for your partner if you are feeling very generous!
- When joining an event which has a number of options (eg Divisions in WPL Online) it is vital that you select the correct Division. Selecting the wrong option can cause havoc!
- If you register without a partner then be aware that you may not be able to play if no one else does the same.

RealBridge You will receive an email shortly before the event providing a link which you will need to join the event.

Half Tables/Sit Outs

BBO

- There seems to be no consistency in how BBO deals with an odd number of pairs. Sometimes it allows the event to commence with a sit out (which the TD will try to fill if there are any of our players about), and sometimes it just drops a random pair. There is nothing the TD can do when a pair is randomly dropped. Sorry about that.
- It is possible to use a pair of robots to avoid this situation and this may be used in some events.

RealBridge There is currently no robot facility in RealBridge, so a sit out will occur in the event of a half-table.

If you are sitting out please be conscious that the round will end when all tables in the section are finished, so you may not always get the length of break you expect. Please make sure you are ready at least 5 minutes in advance of the start of the next round.

Start of Play

When starting against new opponents it is customary to say hello and give a very brief summary of your methods, eg weak NT, 4CM, 3 weak 2s, where 4CM = 4 card majors. Your opponents can ask for more information using the Chat facility (or verbally on RealBridge).

One benefit of playing online is that you can't bid or play out of turn! And declarer can't play from the wrong hand! And you can't make an insufficient bid!

There are also a number of acronyms which some use in Chat such as typ = thank you partner, glp = good luck partner, wpp = well played partner. These are entirely optional.

Chat/Video/Voice

BBO — In BBO the Chat facility is the default communications channel, but voice is available. WCBA does not currently pay to use BBO's camera facility.

RealBridge — Video and Voice capability is available as standard in RealBridge, which makes the experience as close to face-to-face as possible. Unless technical reasons prevent their use, players will be expected to use Video and Voice. It is possible also to switch off - without deactivating your own camera - the Video of partner and the opponents if you prefer less distractions on screen.

The Chat facility is the formal means of communication unless all four players are using Voice. If Screens are used then Private Chat should be used to communicate with an opponent who is blanked out.

During tournaments, all table history is recorded including chat (individual and private) between players (and TDs) in the tournament. This is available to TDs, and may be used for the purposes of resolving disputes about timing or disclosure, and other disciplinary/ethical matters.

Alerts & Announcing

It is expected that at least one member of the partnership will post a brief summary of the system at the start of each round

There is no announcing – only Alerting. NB we use self-alerts, so even players on camera must alert and not announce.

The alert process is the opposite to playing face-2-face at the table. The player making a call should click the alert tab and explain the meaning in the box provided **before making their call** (this is called self-alerting). This applies to all calls, even those above 3NT. RealBridge also allows standard alerting but we will use the self-alerting option.

However, it is accepted that some players may miss this, in which case you should (on BBO click on the call to ask for an explanation, on RealBridge, chat to your opposition for an explanation). Occasionally your opponent cannot use the chat facility, and that is fine. If you receive no response from one opponent, please do chat to the other, or the table, to ask those questions. The

TD will not entertain any matters relating to a failure to alert if it is deemed that the player could have asked the opponents for an explanation (eg the meaning of doubles).

Undos

If you find you have clicked on a call you did not intend to select, then you can ask for an Undo. The opponents must accept the Undo request (as default). An Undo is granted for a misclick only. Undos are not acceptable for a change of mind. An Undo granted, which later turns out to look very much like a change of mind, will likely result in an adjusted score. Undos are not allowed during the play of the hand.

Tempo in Bidding/Play

Any break in tempo when face to face at the table can cause untold strife, and should always be avoided wherever possible. Online breaks in tempo can occur for all manner of reasons, and far beyond those when face to face, and it is also far more difficult to establish the facts. Therefore, unless there is a break in tempo in the bidding that may cause UI (Unauthorised Information) and a player (partner) to take an action that may have been suggested by the break in tempo (UI), no consideration will be given to any form of ruling/possible redress. Where it is considered that UI occurred, and an action may have been taken that was suggested by the UI, an adjusted score may occur.

Please be aware, however, that any player found to be breaking tempo in too many advantageous positions (ie with singletons in trumps, etc), will be in breach of the spirit of these guidelines.

Claims

Declarer and Defenders can make a claim by clicking the Claim button.

False claims can easily be rectified by the TD. When a player claims it is assumed that he or she is aware of the current position and will take all necessary steps to ensure the claim is valid. For example, drawing all but one trump before a claim is made. If you fail to draw the remaining trump(s), having already drawn some, then it is reasonable to assume that you have forgotten, or miscounted, and the TD may award the trick(s) to the other side.

Where claims are made it is expected that players will take care to check the claim before rejecting (ie rejecting for rejections sake is not in the spirit of our sessions). It is also expected that claims be made when the remaining tricks are clear. Equally, if anyone asks for clarification, that should be provided. If not, a rejection is made, and play continues, bearing in mind the above statement regarding trumps, etc. Please call the TD if this situation occurs, stating the Board Number, and at what trick the claim occurred.

Tournament Director (TD)

To call the TD click on the button on the screen (TD for BBO, Director for RealBridge).

Any matter requiring the TD's attention must be raised with the TD immediately or, if in the final board of the event, within 5 minutes of that board being completed.

The TDs ruling in any matter is final, and there is no right of appeal. Once a ruling, or scoring adjustment, has been made it is acceptable for players to draw the TDs attention to any matter the player feels is relevant, or may have been overlooked. However, if you failed to respond to a

TD's prior request for information, then the TD may disregard such additional information. Once the TD deems the matter closed, and to avoid any ambiguity, the TD will state, 'Thank you. However, I now consider this matter closed.'), that is its end.

Round Time

BBO

- The round will end automatically, so try not to be caught out! If a player has been away for some time, please let the TD know at the start of the next round, and the score will be adjusted accordingly.
- If the board times out (ie you lose it), please refresh and check your scorecard, and if it did not register the final result, please call the TD and indicate the board number, and the TD will review the board.
- Prolonging play in order to obtain an average board (as opposed to the likely score) is not in the spirit of these guidelines.

RealBridge Time arrangements will be covered in the rules of the specific event.

Disconnects

Disconnects occur for all manner of reasons, but it is always expected that a player will make every attempt to reconnect thereafter. Once reconnected, the player will automatically be re-seated. If all attempts at reconnection fail, please let your partner know and they will inform the TD.

Where it is unlikely that a player will return, the TD may bring in a substitute player.

As with any event, players must not leave the event without the express permission of the Tournament Director. If there are connectivity issues, then the TD will notify remaining players of the plan/procedure.

If a tournament is cancelled beyond the half way point, that session will be cancelled.