TBA BBO Online Bridge

The TBA is running 'virtual' club sessions on Bridge Base Online (BBO). This allows club members to play together online with people they know, and earn ABF Masterpoints. These sessions are available for members of any TBA affiliated club. Please contact your club if you are interested in playing.

What to do before your first session:

There are some one-off things to do before you can play in a TBA session:

- Create a BBO account.

- Buy some BBO$ to pay your table money (here).
  - BBO$ are purchased in US dollars (1 BBO$ for US$1, approximately A$1.55).
  - It is recommended to avoid purchasing through the BBO app on mobile devices as this may involve extra cost.
  - Table money will be 2-3 BBO$ depending on the number of boards played.

- Register your BBO username with the TBA, so you are on the list of players allowed to join a session.
  - TBA members should email their BBO username to the TBA.
  - Members of affiliated clubs should contact their club for details on their process.

- Register your BBO name with the ABF so that Masterpoints can be allocated correctly (and so you can play in ABF Australia Wide competitions on BBO).
  - You can easily check whether your BBO name is registered with the ABF at this web page. Detailed instruction on how to register are available here.
  - If you do not already have a profile with the ABF (for example from signing up for ABF emails) go here and complete the form, including your BBO name.
  - If you already have a profile and need to add your BBO name fill out the form here. At the end of the process it will say that it can't update your profile because the email address is already in use. The system will then send you an email containing a link to a page that will allow you to update your details successfully.

- Become familiar with BBO, and particularly the alerting and claiming mechanisms. These videos may be helpful:
  - Pete Hollands tour of BBO features
  - Pete Hollands introduction to a BBO table (alerting, claiming, calling the director etc)
  - A detailed introduction to BBO

Please make sure that you have registered your BBO username with the TBA at least 24 hours before your first session so that there is enough time to get your name into the system.

What to do on the day:

- Login to BBO
    - Please be online at 15 minutes before the session start time.
    - If it is your first TBA BBO session please check your access at least 30 minutes before the session (see the instructions below).
- Select "Competitive"
- Select "All Tournaments" (Note that the tournament will only appear in this list 2 hours prior to the start time)
- Search for "TBA" or "vABF7801"
- Select the tournament
- If you have a partner enter their BBO name, if not select the partnership desk tab and either add your name or invite somebody already there. Note that if registering as a partnership there is the option to pay for your partner. See here for more about registering.
- Wait for the session to start, then enjoy your bridge

Finding the results:

- Thanks to some fantastic work by Simon Edler, Chris Carolan and our website host (Altosoft, also makers of CompScore2) results for the recent BBO sessions are now available in the TBA website results section.
- The results for earlier sessions can also be viewed from a public Pianola page (here). No Pianola account or Pianola email link required.
- All participants can see the results in BBO under the "History" tab in their account.
- Players who have supplied an email address will receive a Pianola results email and the results will be in their Pianola history as usual.

Tips and Tricks

- Real names - Please put your real name (or at least your first name) in your user profile. This is a friendly environment, and people can see your profile if they click on your username!
- Checking access - If you haven't played a TBA BBO session before, please check that you can get into the session at least half an hour before the start (so that there is time to help you if need be). If you can register at the Partnership Desk then your username is known. If you are blocked please don't call, but use the BBO message function to send a message to the TBA Club Manager account (vABF7801) including your real name. To do this:
    - Click the '->Lobby' button at the bottom left of the window.
    - Click on 'Private', enter "vABF7801" in the "Chat to" field, click 'OK'

- o Type your message (eg 'I am [name] from [club] and I am blocked), click 'Chat'

- <u>Registering for a session</u> - When you arrive in the tournament to play there are a number of ways you can register:

  - o <u>As a pair</u> - If you have a partner both of you must be online to register as a pair. If your partner isn't online the best approach is simply to wait for them before registering. You can add your partner to your Friends list so that you will see when they are online. This is done in the People tab on the right of the BBO page. The system can notify you when somebody on your friends list logs on. To switch this on go to the Account tab, select Settings and look at the Notifications section.

  - o <u>Without a partner</u> - If you do not have a partner, check the Partnership Desk and preferably invite someone already there to play, or register yourself. Please note that the director has no ability to match up people waiting there.

  - o <u>As a substitute</u> - If you are still waiting when the session is 5 minutes or so from the start time, you can go to the Register panel, press Substitutes and register as a substitute for the event. The director has no access to see who was waiting at the Partnership Desk once the event starts. If you do this you will then appear on the Substitute list which the director uses to fill any sit-outs at the start of the event. In this situation you may be paired with someone from around the world who has registered as a Substitute for any event!
    If you have registered as a Substitute and you stay online you can open the running event and join any table to watch (kibitz). Should any player lose their connection you may be temporarily substituted for them until they return, and if they do not return you will be able to play on there. Note that Substitutes do not pay any entry fee.

- <u>BBO$</u> - When you log in to BBO you should see a message with your current BB$ credit. You can also check Your Account Balance after pressing the BB$ button. If you don't have enough credit and your partner does, they can always register the partnership and pay for you. You can return the favour next time once you have arranged enough credit.

- <u>Alerting</u> - Alerting is different in online bridge. *Alerts are made by the player making the bid*, not their partner. The bidder types the meaning of the bid in the bidding box field and then makes the bid. The explanation is sent to the opponents and the spectators but is hidden from the bidder's partner (to avoid unauthorised information being conveyed). The other important difference is that the alerting function is used for a wider range of bids:

  - o Bids that should be announced (ie 1C and 1NT)

  - o All normally alertable bids (eg 2C opening)

  - o Any bid that the opponents may want explained (eg weak 2s, cue bids)

  - o Bids at all levels, not just up to 3NT (eg 4NT, 4C)

- <u>Explanations</u> should give the meaning of the bid not just the name of the convention (eg '5:5 majors, 6-9 or 16+' not 'Michaels'). The purpose of all of this is to minimise the need for a player to query the meaning of a bid or ask for an explanation of the auction, both of which take time when typing. If you forget to

alert a bid you can use chat to send the explanation manually, but this should be directed to the opponents only, not the table. Clicking on an opponents bid at your turn to bid asks for an explanation of that bid. The bidder is presented with an explanation field to complete. Neither the request nor the explanation are shown to the bidder's partner. Queries and explanantions should not be made through chat to the table.

- <u>Etiquette</u> - Normal social etiquette applies at an online table, eg saying hello and thank you, introducing yourself and acknowledging good play. This is all done through the chat function directed to the table. To save typing some commonly used abbreviations are:
    - o, opps - opponents
    - p - partner
    - thx, tx, ty - thank you (eg typ, thx opps)
    - wd, wp - well done, well played (eg wdo, wpp)
    - s - sorry (eg sp)
    - gl, bl - good luck, bad luck (eg glp, blp)
    - np - no problem
- <u>Connection problems</u> - If you experience problems with your connection to BBO during a session you can try logging out of BBO and reconnecting. When you successfully reconnect BBO will take you straight back into the game.

If you are having problems:

TBA members can email the TBA with any issues. Members of affiliated clubs should contact their club in the first instance.