

Playing in the WCBU Duplicate Novice Bridge Pairs Competitions

We are delighted that you wish to play in WCBU Duplicate Novice Bridge Pairs Competitions which take place on BBO each Friday morning at 10h00. We hope you so enjoy the experience that you come back each Friday for more!

These notes provide instructions on how to prepare for your first game and what to do when you are playing.

Preparing Ahead of Time

If you have never played on BBO, then the first thing you need to do is to go to the BBO website <https://www.bridgebase.com/> and click on register. You will be required to give yourself a BBO 'nickname' and a password. We suggest you also give your proper name so those playing against you know who you are.

To get familiar with BBO, click on *Solitaire* and then *Just play Bridge (Free)*. You can now bid and play hands. Some of the bids made by the others at the table might seem odd to you but don't worry about that.

You are going to need a partner for your Friday game. Get them to register on BBO too. Click on the People button and at the bottom type their BBO nickname where it says *Add friend*. Whenever your partner logs on to BBO, their BBO nickname will be listed on your People page. (If you don't have a partner, E-mail markkenyon25@gmail.com ahead of the game; he might be able to assist)

If you have two more friends who are BBO players, list them too as friends. Once they are all logged on you can choose *Casual – Start a Table* and play some hands. They will each get an invitation to the game and, once they have all accepted, you can start bidding. This will get you used to playing on BBO. If you click on History, you can see the results as you complete each hand.

You can use the blank space below the hands to chat to the others at the table. In the tournament, it's the place to say 'Good morning' as you start playing against new opponents and 'Thank you' once you have played the hands against them.

If you make a mistake in bidding or playing and click in the wrong place, you can click on Undo and your opponents should let you take back what you have done. However, you must not request an undo when you have made a mistake rather than a misclick. Once you start playing tournaments, Undo's are only allowed during the bidding so think before you click when declaring or defending.

So far everything has been free. Unfortunately, BBO requires that we charge you their minimum of BB\$ 1,25 (about R 25) to play in our tournament. Even more unfortunately, BBO requires that you buy a minimum of BB\$ 10 (about R 150) most of which which you can also use for future games. Just grit your teeth, click on the blue BB\$ button and pay. Prefer to make the payment via the website rather than the BBO App in order to get better value for your money. If paying is a problem, contact us and we will see how we can help.

Finally, send brian@mbendi.com an E-mail with your name and E-mail address so we can arrange for you to get an E-mail after each tournament analysing your performance.

What to do on Friday

A few minutes after 09h30, logon on to BBO and go to *Virtual Clubs – South Africa*. One or more tournaments will be listed. Click on the People tag so you can see when you partner logs on. Now click on the WCBU tournament. You will need to enter the BBO nickname of your partner and press

enter. If a screen appears asking for your SABF number, just click enter and it will go away. Now you are ready to play and the WCBU line will show you the time till the game starts and the number of pairs playing. Don't move off this screen.

At this point, click on the History tab so you can see how you are doing as you play. The way duplicate works is that all the players play the same hands, half playing North South and half playing East West. You should always try to get a better score than all the other pairs. However, don't try to analyse past hands as you go; save that to the end when you can discuss your performance with your partner.

You will be playing 6 rounds of three hands (we refer to them as 'boards'), each round against a different pair. You have 8 minutes to complete each board and you should watch the clock on the left hand side to make sure you are all on track. The tournament director (TD) will probably be lenient about this on the first round. However, it's unfair to all the players involved to bid and play very slowly.

Once the time for the three boards has elapsed, another pair of players will appear to play against you. You can click on their BBO nicknames in order to discover their real names. They might be old friends in disguise!

Chat is allowed, however, do NOT let chat delay the game.

If you run into problems, you can call the TD by clicking on the three bars on the left of the screen.

For the more experienced players

I use the following, which you may wish to take ideas from:

Unlike table bridge, the Bidder Alerts the Opponents, not the Responder. To Alert, do so before making a bid - press the Alert button and enter the explanation before making an Alertable bid. Your Partner does not see this, just the Opponents.

If you forget to Alert then click on your bid and enter the explanation retrospectively.

When alerting, type in the meaning of the bid (EG Spades and Hearts) not just the name (EG Ghestem).

Claim (and accept claims if valid) as soon as possible to speed up playing.

Connectivity to BBO: There are several things you can do to minimise WiFi disruptions:

- Use a laptop rather than your phone or tablet
- Keep it plugged in
- Position yourself close to the router
- Switch off the microwave, if close by
- Close down other programs and apps running in the background
- Minimise usage of other devices using your WiFi. And, of course, ask the others in your household to not use Netflix, Showmax or Catchup whilst you're playing

To ensure you can see and click on the Yes to accept from Invite, you may need to reduce your web browser's Zoom level. If you can see Invite but cannot see Yes at the bottom then you'll need to do this

Should you lose connection and it will not reconnect then WhatsApp your partner immediately so he/she can tell the tournament director.

Over 95% of mis-clicks are caused by not paying attention or rushing. Therefore, avoid distraction and remain at your computer for the full session. Always pay attention and be careful; try moving the cursor away after making a bid or play then carefully bring it back to select.

Enjoy your morning! We would love to get your feedback so we can improve the experience – just drop an E-mail to markkenyon25@gmail.com. And be sure to come back and play again the next Friday!