
Bridge News August 2024 - Build the game

1 message

Nicky <bridgeforpleasure@79572582.mailchimpapp.com>

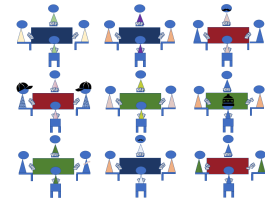
26 August 2024 at 11:56

Reply-To: bridgeforpleasure@gmail.com

To: Nicky <nickyrbainbridge@gmail.com>

[View this email in your browser](#)

Bridge
Enhances
Lives !



AUGUST
2024



www.bridgeforpleasure.co.uk

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Thanks to everyone who gives feedback about the newsletter!

The audience for this newsletter is growing. If you would like to receive it, you can subscribe at:

Click here to subscribe to this newsletter

What we do

NEWS

This newsletter was created during the pandemic to provide information and support for duplicate bridge clubs.

It has appeared roughly monthly for four years. All back editions are available at <http://www.bridgeforpleasure.co.uk>. This is a BridgeWebs hosted site.

DISCUSSION

Roughly monthly for almost four years we held a meeting on

Zoom to discuss anything clubs were interested. Recordings are available at <http://www.bridgeforpleasure.co.uk>.

CLUB DATA

Information about duplicate bridge clubs is collected and collated to provide a picture of life, and some idea of trends, in club life. Analysis, updated once a fortnight, is available at <http://www.bridgeforpleasure.co.uk>. A taster is included in each newsletter.

TEACHING SCHEME

Also on the website are materials for a teaching scheme, available entirely free of charge to anyone.

Tony Russ

We were very sorry to hear of the death of Tony Russ. He was a great supporter of grass roots bridge especially in Somerset. He was always ready to talk, and disagree agreeably.

BIABD

Tony was the inspiration, and for as long as he could, the leader of the astonishingly successful Bridge It's a Big Deal Festival. The quantity of events, may approach three hundred. There's been a great variety of publicity. Lately there seems to be more Open Day and Taster Sessions, hopefully bringing new players to the game. It seems likely that the target of £60,000 for Cancer Research may be met. It shows what the amazing community of people who run clubs and counties, affiliated or not, English, Scottish or other, can do.

Let's set a slightly different target for next year. This would represent an increase in players that would secure the future of bridge for many years to come. We need to recruit those people, and we need to get as many as possible teaching, directing and organising bridge as possible.

Let's aim at 60,000 players in the EBU database.

English Bridge
Education & Development

Youth Bridge Camp
LEARN TO PLAY BRIDGE!

The world's greatest card game
Aug 30 Sept 1st
King's Park Northampton

All ability levels welcome from beginners to advanced!

- Social Activities
- Outdoor Fun
- Bridge Tuition
- Bridge Sessions
- Competitions
- Parents Bridge

A weekend of fun & bridge for young people of all levels. Activities & bridge sessions for accompanying adults. We also teach adults from scratch. Everyone is welcome even if you have never played before!

All inclusive meals & accommodation at this beautiful venue. Many other activities will be running during the stay. Families welcome! Come and join us.

All inclusive Accommodation & meals

Expert Bridge tuition & curriculum provided by England coaches, former international players and leading Bridge teachers.

Scan the QR code to register/enquire

Everyone is welcome parents included

ENQUIRE NOW 01296 317217 ebedcio.org.uk/youth
lisa@ebedcio.org.uk

Youth Summer Camp

This is a great opportunity to introduce junior members of your family to bridge.

Take them to this camp and stay to play, help, learn.

Contact Joan Bennett to find out more:

07548 782538. joan@ebedcio.org.uk.

Data, GDPR, Membership

EBU Contacts your players after your events

If you are an affiliated club, and you recently submitted a result to the EBU, you may have been surprised to find that the players received an email from the EBU as a consequence.

Here's an example:



Your results from Kenilworth Bridge Club on Wednesday 7th August

Dear Nicky,

Congratulations for having played in this session, your 10th session at Kenilworth Bridge Club this year and your 91st session played anywhere this year.

You scored 63.36% and came 2nd N/S out of a field of 9 N/S pairs; there were 18 pairs overall. The strength of opposition was 47.13% according to the EBU's [National Grading Scheme \(NGS\)](#) and your score translates to 7.69% higher than NGS predicted - well done! Your new NGS grade is 51.94%. You have earned 20 local master points.

You can see the full results on our website [here](#) or on your club website [here](#).

This was your 10th best performance this year out of 90 sessions according to the NGS system.

Overall, you have played in 2235 sessions since the current system of submitting results started in 2010

- 193 at Kenilworth Bridge Club since the system started
- 1134 with Jim Bainbridge since the system started

You have received this email as the English Bridge Union (EBU) has started sending out session results emails when you play in a session at an affiliated club. If you do not want to receive these emails, you can unsubscribe using the link in the footer. Feedback can be sent by replying directly to this email.

With best wishes,

The English Bridge Union

I know this came as a surprise to many. Although there were a few references to this new "service" in some EBU documents, it was not formally announced until 7th August, and it began immediately. I got my first EBU communication when I played in another club on 9th August.

I enquired of the EBU what problem this "service" was intended to address. I got no answer.

My club always sends an email to each of the players in our events with a link to the BridgeWebs record of the event. A second email could only be confusing.

I turned this facility off before it was implemented. You can do this in your club's information form, available in your clubs MyEBU. Players can turn this off for themselves.

Additional information

Scoring system Scorebridge	Visitors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Call in advance <input type="checkbox"/> Pairs only <input type="checkbox"/> Host
<input type="checkbox"/> Registered charity <input type="checkbox"/> VAT registered <input type="checkbox"/> Ltd company <input type="checkbox"/> Owns premises <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Include in EBU public web directory <input type="checkbox"/> We always run online sessions only. No venue address to be shown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open to new members <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Novice-friendly
Facebook page if any: RugbyVillageBridge	Teaching <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beginners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advanced <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supervised play
Twitter name if any:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pre-dealt boards (dealing machine) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electronic scoring
Bridgewebs username (just the username, not the whole web link): heartofengland	Refreshments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tea/Coffee <input type="checkbox"/> Licensed bar <input type="checkbox"/> Vending machine
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do not send results emails to players for sessions played at this club	Disabled facilities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Access <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Toilets <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parking
Notes on this submission. Please use this space for any details that cannot otherwise be included, or queries or requests for contact:	Car parking <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On site <input type="checkbox"/> On street <input type="checkbox"/> Public car park

Form completed by:
Nicky Bainbridge

Position:
Proprietor

[Submit club details](#)

[Log out](#)

Consultation/Communication

This is a great example of something that could have been communicated in "Updates from Aylesbury". An announcement at

least a couple of weeks would have been good. This is communication. An early announcement that it was under consideration would have been even nicer. That would be consultation.

I have some issues with this. (Yes, I am being a little cynical.)

1 This is not the best use of development resources at the EBU, there are far more valuable things they could have done. (For example promote and expand the EBU Teacher Directory, still not growing or changing despite promises)

2 It is not clear where the idea came from, or what problem it solves, or whether any effective consultation took place.

3 The EBU says it is to promote the Master Points and National Grade systems to players, thereby hoping to tie the club into affiliation and its costs? We need to promote bridge to non bridge players.

4 Finally will the EBU to stick to this particular content? How long before they start promoting their events in these emails?

For many years some clubs have expressed unhappiness with the EBU marketing EBU events, of all kinds, to players. When you are still trying to build numbers after Covid, it can feel that the EBU is competing with clubs for a limited player/session market.

It is quite an effort to recruit new bridge players to a club/classes. There will be quite some time before they will be interested in Master Points or National Grade. While they are learning I prefer to keep them focused on the bridge activities I provide or recommend (e.g. No Fear Bridge).

I don't provide any contact details for new players to the EBU when I

set up their membership. In the past I probably wouldn't have set them up at all until they had completed a beginners course, but now I use the BridgeWebs member account function, and that is driven by EBU number, so I get EBU numbers for players early. I provide no details beyond a name.

Each time I do this, I get an email from a diligent member of the EBU staff asking me for contact details.

There is still an "anonymous" tick box in the membership set up form, presumably I should check this.

Not ticking the "Receive EBU emails" and "Receive EBED emails" does not prevent EBU contact. Aylesbury considers there are "essential" emails that they still send, including asking for a postal address.

The Club Terms of Affiliation were updated in February. There is no reference to providing member data to the EBU. It also includes requirement to conform to the EBU bylaws. They are not well written, but there is no reference to providing member data. I cannot see that affiliated clubs are obliged to do so.

<https://www.ebu.co.uk/documents/membership/Club-terms-of-affiliation.pdf>

<https://www.ebu.co.uk/documents/official-documents/Bye-Laws.pdf>

By the way, the Bye Laws and Articles are being reviewed. There is no communication on why, what the goals are, or what the timetable is. Perhaps there could be communication/consultation?

Player Numbers

The number of club sessions analysed in detail has reached 1605 from 641 clubs, but 561 posted table numbers on their web site.

This has now reached the level where it seems reasonable to estimate the number of player sessions, playing duplicate, in all clubs in the database.

It's around 70,000!

Hints, tips and help for clubs

Bridge Club Newsletters can help to keep members informed, interested and helping to run the club.

There are some brilliant examples about.

It can be tricky to find interesting content on a regular basis.

I have created many, hopefully timeless, items for my club and are copying them to a page on the Bridge for Pleasure web site.

You are welcome to copy into your club newsletter.

No charge, no obligation, a credit for "Bridge for Pleasure" would be nice, but not mandatory.

If you edit an item, then no credit please, it's your work now ♥

BFP Club Newsletter Item Library

Hints, tips and help for teachers

Free MiniBridge Resources

Online, there's a complete course on MiniBridge, with 80 practice hands, without a requirement to provide personal details.

As a teacher you can use it, by sharing your screen in an online

meeting, to provide lessons introducing newbies to bridge.

Or, you could direct your learners to this course and leave them to introduce themselves to bridge. This is the approach that a major U3A initiative is taking. Unlike other "free" online lesson offers, you do not have to worry that they will be recruited to other teachers or clubs.

It's provided by No Fear Bridge. Check it out here:

No Fear Bridge MiniBridge Web Site

Bridge for Pleasure Teaching Scheme

There is a completely free teaching scheme, hundreds of Plans, Notes, Quizzes, Deals, Commentaries etc at this address:

<http://www.bridgewebs.com/bridgeforpleasure>

Let's provide chances all over the country to observe teachers in action; practice teaching and discuss teaching with experienced, qualified teachers. Please contact me to add you to this list if you can provide the same opportunity.

Heart of England Bridge Club (Rugby):

heartofenglandbridge@gmail.com

Five goals for the EBU in 2024 **AUGUST Update**

1 EBU Member Numbers

Let's see this deficit get smaller in 2024

It is now **NINE** months since it emerged, that in the year to Nov 2023 there was a 3.000 net loss in membership. That's a half of a year. The EBU will have access to the latest position and so will know whether there is any sign of improvement.

Overall player membership of the EBU is down from 55,000 to 50,000 in four years.

However, fewer players are playing more often, This means UM income to the EBU has stabilised, possibly leading to less focus on player numbers within the EBU organisation.

BUT

The average age player members is estimated at 74, If they have an average of ten years playing life left, and they are not replaced there will be none in ten years. No UMS. No EBU.



2 The Annual General Meeting

Let's have a more practical, more open, more democratic format in 2024.

The AGM reverted to Face to face in a London hotel. Representatives from counties some distance from London faced more expense and travelling time. Many resorted to proxies. The meeting was only open to shareholders and their proxies, no public, no press, no playing members, no representatives of clubs, teachers or other bridge organisers. It was not recorded, so the record of the proceedings is limited to formal minutes and informal notes and discussions.

The chair undertook to look at a hybrid online and face to face form with electronic real time voting. This would allow a far greater audience, more participation, and a recording easily made widely

available.

A London hotel has been booked for the 2024 AGM. It is has been noted that there is no need for a Hybrid online/F2F meeting. No change to the "rule" that only shareholders or their proxies may attend.

NO PROGRESS

In fact documented decision not to change.

In the meantime.....



The WBU AGM will be held online on Zoom on Sunday 2nd June 11am.

The long awaited AGM, which was delayed by the Covid-19 situation, will be held on Zoom on Sunday October 11th at 11.45am for a midday start. To register for the AGM, please click on this link: or send your name and WBU number to ceri@wbu.org . You will then be emailed a link to join the meeting.

"WBU FOCUS GROUPS

You are ALL invited to come along to the first focus groups of the WBU, which will be held on Zoom. This is an opportunity to air your views and share your ideas on how the WBU can change and improve. It is also a chance for you to volunteer your time / skills to help us achieve that improvement. We welcome ex-members as well as current members – we want to hear from you all."



3 Updates from Aylesbury

Any member able to request this newsletter by opting for it in their member account.

That way more people can be informed about bridge organisation.

The monthly update from Aylesbury is largely used as a vehicle for marketing EBU run events. However, it can contain information important to club and county organisers, and of interest to teachers and players.

At present, the EBU sends to its own distribution list of club and county officials. It is difficult to keep this list up to date.

It would be so good if the EBU could adopt a policy of actively informing and educating about bridge, especially organising bridge. You have to persist in searching the web site for so many things, or directly request access from individuals. It would be so much more powerful if any member can subscribe or unsubscribe from a complete and dynamic list of interests e.g. events, teaching, directing etc.

There's no progress here. This would be an issue that I would want to tackle urgently. I know from years of running this newsletter just how poorly members, players, club organisers etc are informed. I am sure this constricts the flow of volunteers to help.

July - We are going to have to do this ourselves. See above.



4 EBU Teachers Directory

There were about 200 entries in February. With wide publicity, let's double this number in 2024.

This directory is used by the EBU to pass on enquiries for lessons. Any

teacher can be on the directory. It's not limited to EBEDTA members, or to those who use particular materials, systems or methods. It has real potential to boost numbers learning the game. Teachers put themselves into the directory.

Regrettably the count on 2nd March is still 200 entries. This is an area the EBU should be using all channels to promote. This directory has the potential to be the "landing page" for all people looking to learn bridge. This is key to recruiting new bridge players.

The EBU could promote it in:

All EBU members email

All Club/County organisers email (Updates from Aylesbury)

By agreement with EBED to EBTA members

None of the above has happened. However there are an additional six entries in the directory as of 10th May. At that rate it will be doubled in a mere 8 years. This is important because teachers recruit new players. Connecting potential learners to existing teachers helps this happen. The independence of this directory from EBED is crucial to its success. Please can the board understand this. Don't use the irrelevant upsets to delay this real progress.

JULY UPDATE We are told this directory is going to be merged with EBEDTA. Hopefully no restrictions on who can be listed will be introduced. More hopefully some effort will be made to further grow the number of entries. THEN some effort at national PR to attract potential learners to it would be lovely.

AUGUST UPDATE No visible progress here despite the closeness of the September/October course starts. Any chance of a plan for January?



5 Freeze UM

Freeze UM in 2025/26 to reduce financial pressure on clubs.

UM is a cost of doing business for affiliated clubs. The level of EBU plus County UM has reached about 50p per player per qualifying session.

Table money is generally £2, £2.50 or £3. The median is £2.50. That means the EBU UM is 20%. Clubs have venues, and various other expenses to meet.

There is no official response to this idea. Informally, the comment is that the EBU don't see how they can afford it.

During enquiries we made before the 2023 AGM, it emerged that the Aylesbury building has been valued at £1.1M. There is over a million pounds of shareholders money invested in a building that is clearly too big.

The EBU Board lost its treasurer and has supported a director with no financial experience to stand in until November. (The board has appointed another of its directors with no financial experience as EBED treasurer). There is no sign of active management of the finances to make possible a UMS freeze.

JULY UPDATE Hopefully the EBU is intending to reduce the financial burden on clubs by freezing rather than the usual rather automatic increase.

AUGUST Update

There was a consultation earlier this about changing the structure of UMS. You might be interested to read about it here - a post on EBU Forum by David Guild <https://forums.ebu.co.uk/discussion/1554/change-to-ums-fees-structure>

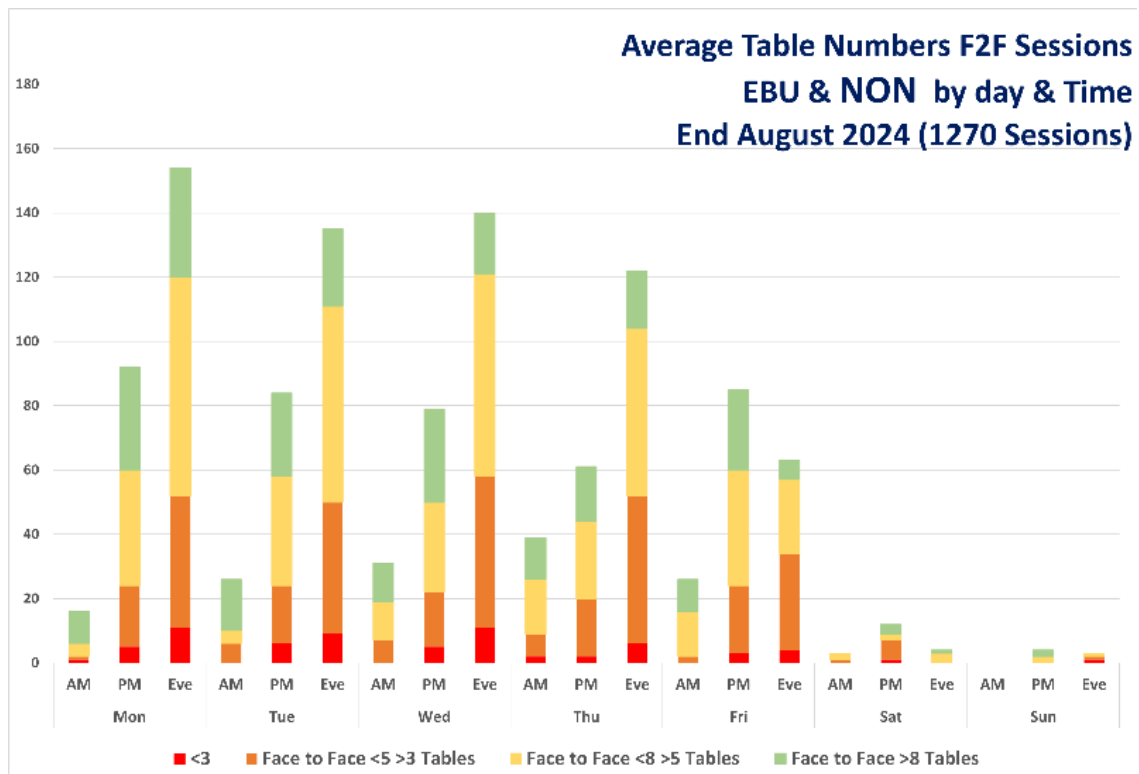
I think there was an announcement that the idea was dropped. Please could the EBU consider a consistent process, as widely publicised as possible, for consultations of this nature. It will improve the quality and the acceptance of the outcome.

How are clubs doing?

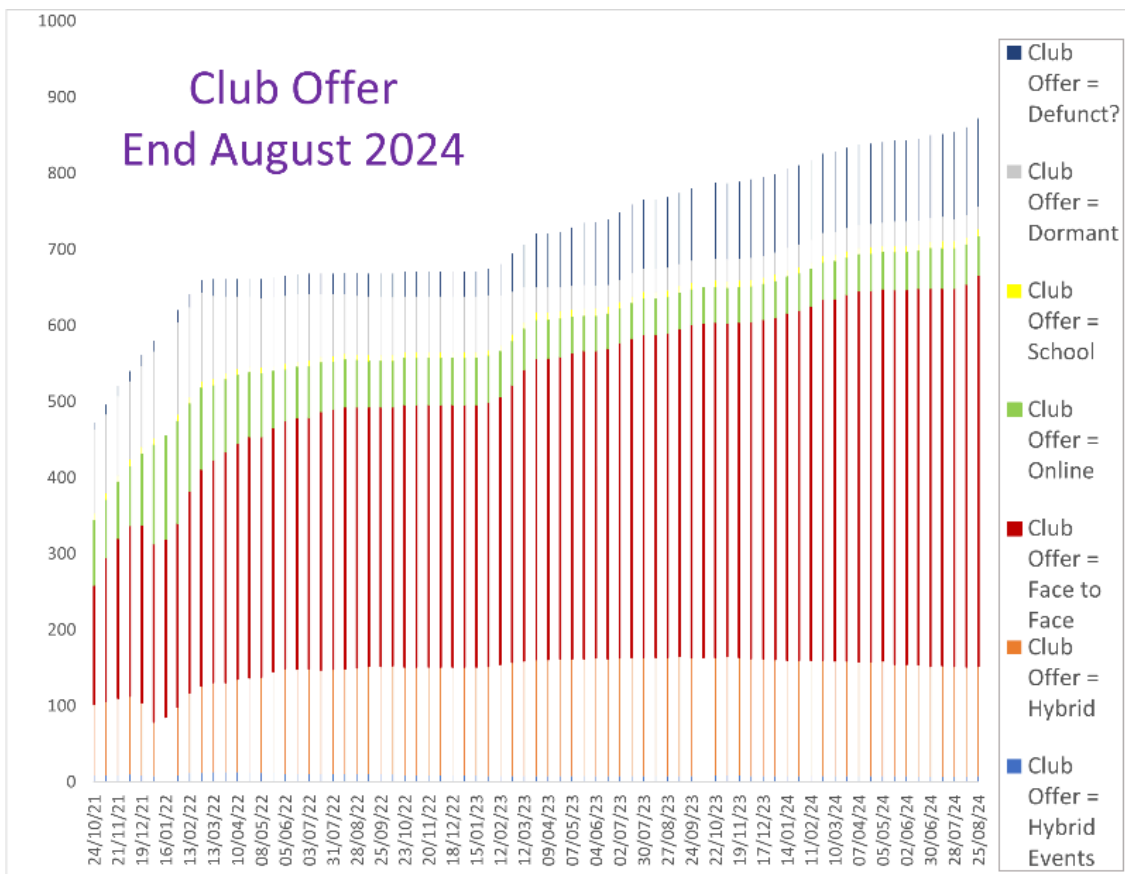
F2F Average Tables

END AUGUST

All Clubs F2F	6.69
EBU Clubs F2F	6.86
Non Affiliated Clubs F2F	6.40
Dedicated Premises	7.34
Shared Community	6.55
Multi Sport Club Section	6.17



Here's how face to face and online sessions are distributed across the week.

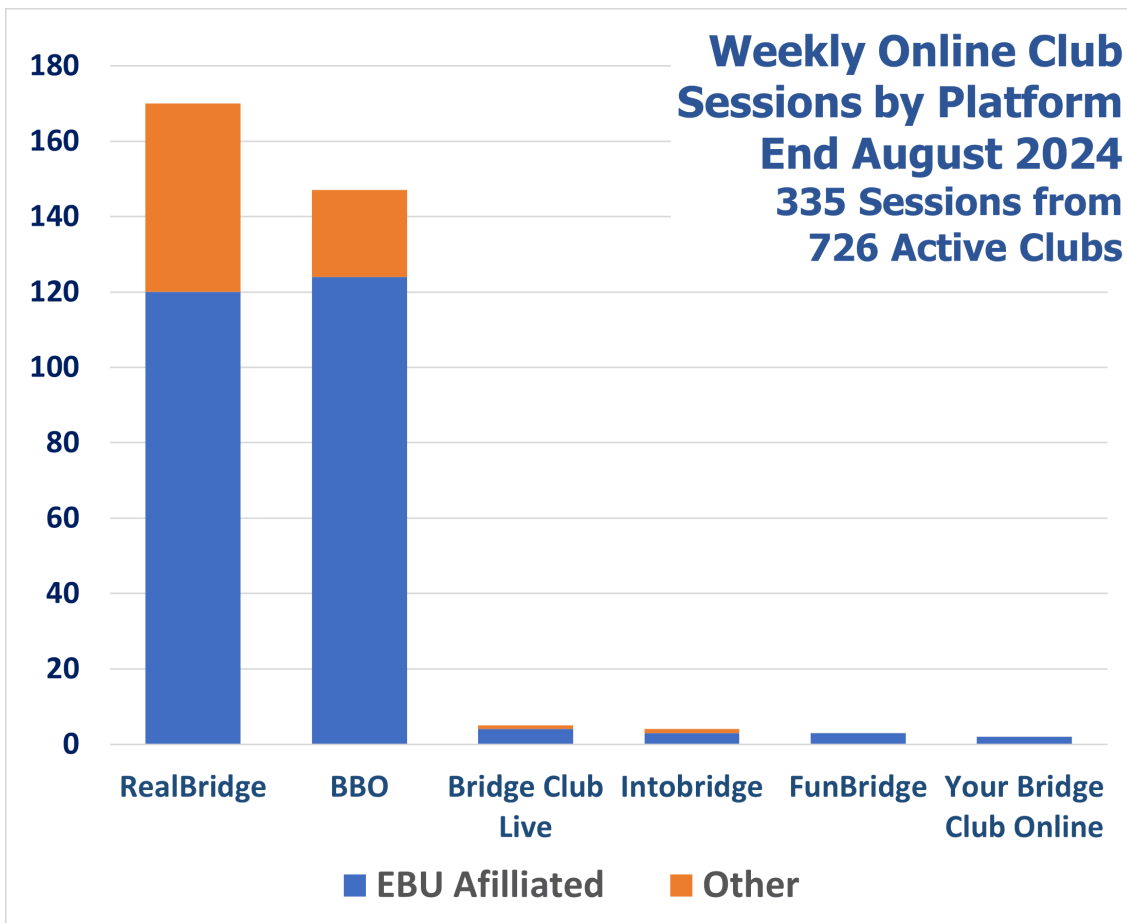
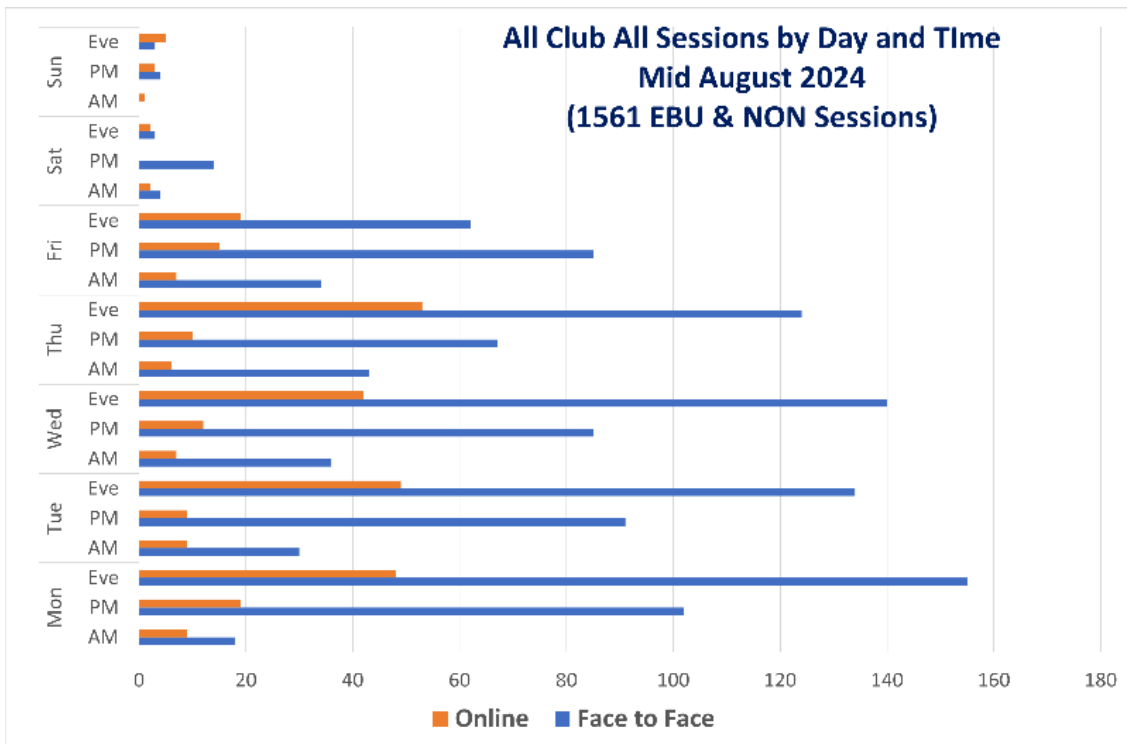


The thin blue band at the bottom represents clubs that offer both face to face and online and combine at least one session into a hybrid result.

Above it, the orange section represents clubs that offer both face to face and online sessions.

Of over 700 (roughly half EBU Affiliated) active clubs the majority are offering only face to face. That's the steadily growing red section.

The green belt above that shows clubs that are only offering online sessions. Most of these are quite small and are unable to persuade their members back into the bridge room.



Here's some information on choice of online platform.

There's more information here, typically updated once a fortnight.

New contributors

If you would like to contribute an item, please send it. Please make it no more than 200 words. Please make it positive, and supporting the goal of keeping grass roots bridge alive. That will keep elite bridge going.

[Click here to view previous newsletters](#)

Your Feedback

You can provide likes, dislikes and comments on the content of the Bridge For Pleasure website by registering on it.

Click on this link to send an email to register:
bridgeforpleasure@gmail.com

To quote the wonderful "Sorry Partner", BE NICE, or we'll call the director.

Festivals and Futures - An open discussion

Let's have a discussion on
Friday 27th September 2024

Topics:

How did BIABD go?

Do we want to do it again?

How would we like it to be different?

Anything you suggest?

Anyone like to do a short (five minutes) on how they see the future of bridge?

Previous New Normal Zoom Discussions

The meetings are informal gatherings. They are intended to bring together a wide range of perspectives. They should allow constructive debate.

The proceedings are informal and are recorded and published on YouTube. Links to the recordings are available on the Bridge For Pleasure web site.

New Normal Newsletter

This is issued roughly once a month. It is written and distributed on an entirely non profit basis, takes no advertising or commission.

Previous New Normal newsletters and a subscription form are available on the Bridge for Pleasure web site.

A freely available bridge teaching scheme with lesson plans, notes, deals, homework quizzes and answers is there for all.

Bridge for Pleasure - Information Web Site

Please forward the letter to anyone in the bridge world who might be interested. Anyone can subscribe using the link below,

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If you don't want to receive this newsletter, click "Unsubscribe" below. I am always keen on feedback, good or bad, so do tell me...

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