

Wessex League 2023/24 on RealBridge – Main League, Teams of Eight

Instructions for Players (updated September 2023)

1. Using RealBridge

Any players unfamiliar with RealBridge should familiarise themselves with the platform in advance and, if possible, ensure they have a working microphone and webcam. This link on the RealBridge website provides a good guide for players: <https://realbridge.online/player-guide.html>.

RealBridge transmits both video and sound, although all players can turn off their own video and/or sound if they need to do so. Turning off your own video can sometimes help if you have a poor internet connection but, as a matter of courtesy, should not normally be done otherwise. You can also turn off video and sound for other players at your table.

Players joining a match will use a “player link” for that particular match, which can be obtained from the OBA website at

https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwoo/bw.cgi?club=oba&pid=display_page12

They must log in with their normal name – the one the EBU knows them by – and their correct EBU numbers. They will arrive in the lobby area for the match and should then click on the appropriate seat according to instructions from their captain.

Once players are seated, the RealBridge platform takes care of the movement, ensuring that each pair plays each opposing pair and plays two stanzas in each direction.

Although matches are deleted from the RealBridge “live” server shortly after each event, the information is preserved in archive form and the links can be revisited at any time to view hands and results. Additionally, captains can upload each match result to their own website, allowing X-IMP analysis and a permanent record of the match.

2. Convention cards and system announcements

It is an EBU regulation that pairs are required to have two fully completed system cards containing the same information, and make these available to their opponents at the beginning of each round or stanza.

Prior to the start of the season, at least one player from each pair should create an electronic copy of their convention card*. A selection of editable templates for this purpose can be found at

<https://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/system-cards>

The standard EBU~ card is the EBU 20B system card, although other shorter versions may be used if the partnership's methods are simple enough to be fully described in this way.

The completed card should be uploaded to your “My EBU” area on the EBU website, following the instructions at

<https://www.ebu.co.uk/member-wiki/myebu:system-cards>

Alternatively there is a video from OBA member Dave Tarsky at

<https://youtu.be/DKEGmQRVo80?si=RKENklhs0zIXZpm>

which gives very detailed step by step instructions.

This will create a link which must then either be included in your system announcement (see below), or uploaded to RealBridge at the beginning of each match (see Dave's video), or both.

*(*Any pairs who already have a link to their convention card stored on the EBU or OBA website do not need to do this, unless their card needs updating.)*

As well as uploading a convention card, you must still give your opponents a **SHORT** summary of your system at the start of each set, preferably by typing or pasting a statement into the chat box (although in Divisions 3 and 4, this may be provided verbally). Unless you play a very basic system, you will probably find it helpful to save your statement somewhere handy (e.g. on your desktop) so that you can easily copy and paste it. Some guidance on writing system statements is given below.

Note that even if an alertable or announceable bid is listed on your convention card AND covered by your system summary, **you must still self-alert or self-announce (in Divisions 1 and 2) or alert and announce (in Divisions 3 and 4) any bids that require such action .**

Your team captain is responsible for checking that your partnership has a suitable convention card and system summary, and will provide help if you need it.

Note that there have been some significant changes to the alerting and announcing rules, described in the Blue Book: [Blue Book 2023 \(ebu.co.uk\)](http://ebu.co.uk)

3. System summary

Your system summary should cover both bidding, and defensive carding. Abbreviations are acceptable if obvious and non-ambiguous (e.g. don't use pts for "playing tricks" when it could be read as "points").

"Standard" carding means: leads as given on the back of the EBU system card; attitude signals on partner's lead and count signals (if used) on declarer's lead; high = encouraging/even count in the suit played (either when following suit or when discarding), low = discouraging/odd count in the suit played.

Bidding: you should give your general system, the strength of your opening 1NT (including the point range, not just "weak" or "strong"), say whether you play 4 or 5 card majors, and mention any opening bids that are not standard in the system you play. **DO NOT INCLUDE OTHER CONVENTIONS**, such as your version of Blackwood, or your defence to 1NT – these will be alerted where appropriate and explained during the bidding. The only exception to this is if you are playing as a scratch partnership without an agreed system card.

Defensive carding: your summary should include your opening leads (standard or otherwise), whether you play standard or reverse attitude and count, and your discard system, with an explanation of a name such as Roman leads or Italian discards. It is not sufficient to say "odds and evens" since this could have various interpretations.

So, a simple summary might read:

Acol with 3 weak 2s, 4cM, wk NT (12-14); std leads, att, count; discards high enc/low disc

and a more complicated one might say something like:

5cM/better minor, 1NT=14-16, 2D= multi, 2H/2S=weak two-suited; non-standard leads, reverse att and count, Italian discards (odd enc/even suit pref)

4. Undos

Undos will be allowed during the auction for obvious misclicks. If not straightforward, players should call the director using the "Director" button. **Undos will not be allowed during the play.**

5. Alerting and announcing

This year, we have changed the alerting conditions for Division 3, to fit in with majority preferences.

Division 1 in the main league uses self-alerting and screens, which greatly reduces the opportunity to convey “unauthorised information” to your partner. This is the same as last year.

Division 2 in the main league uses self-alerting but will not use screens. This is also the same as last year.

Divisions 3 and 4 in the main league both use partner-alerting (without screens), exactly as you would when playing face-to-face. Last year this applied only in Division 4.

Self-alerting and bids requiring explanations - [Divisions 1 and 2 only](#)

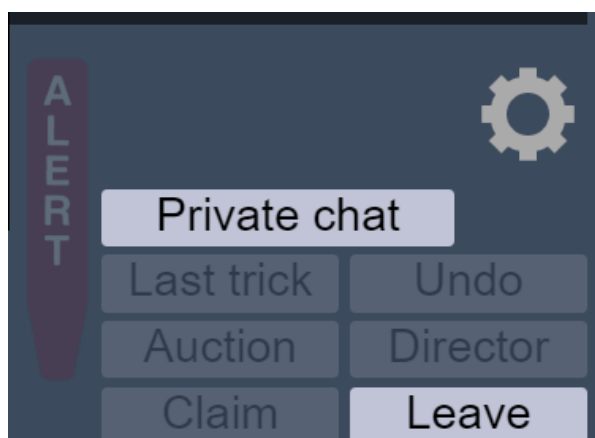
If your bid is conventional, or needs to be announced, then before you make it, hit “Alert”. A box for typing in your explanation will appear. The opponents can see this but not your partner.

In Division 2, your partner can see and hear you, so **YOU MUST NOT GIVE EXPLANATIONS ALOUD**, either for your own bids, or your partner’s. If you need further information about a bid made by one of your opponents, don’t ask aloud: instead, you should request this by using the “private chat” text box - see next page.

In Division 1, self-alerting is used with the addition of screens – see next page. Although this means your partner cannot see or hear you, **you must still TYPE all explanations or announcements**, since if you make them aloud, only one of your opponents will be able to hear you.

6. Private chat

You can “chat” (text) privately to an opponent by selecting the chat icon below their name. This can be used for additional explanations.



These functions are enabled once play has started.

7. Playing with screens- Division 1 ONLY

Matches in Division 1 will be set up using virtual screens, which come into effect whilst hands are in play. This is designed to follow the use of screens at high-level bridge: it minimises the transfer of unauthorised information between partners.

When a screen is in operation, you can see and talk to only one of your opponents and not your partner. Your partner's and your right-hand opponent's bids appear simultaneously: so if there is a hesitation, you are not sure who is responsible.

You must still **TYPE** all explanations or announcements, since if you make them aloud, only one of your opponents will be able to hear you.

If you need to communicate with the opponent you cannot see (for example, to ask a private question about their system), you can do so using the "private chat" option described above.

In Divisions 2, 3 and 4, screens will not be enabled and you will be able to see and hear all four players at all times, unless you use the buttons provided below each player's image to turn off their video and/or sound.