

July 12, 2020



Virtual Club News

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TRIAL WEEK REMINDER

LBC's virtual games are running two trials July 13th – 17th

1. Games will be 20 or 21 boards, about 15 to 20 minutes longer
2. Morning games will start at **9:15 a.m.** instead of 10:15 a.m.
Registration is available starting at 7:15 a.m.

NOTE: The Monday evening game continues to start at 6:45 p.m.

A survey will be e-mailed to our Virtual Club mailing list on Friday morning, July 17th to gather feedback. Survey responses **received by midnight Saturday July 18** will be evaluated to decide on whether to continue either or both changes.

Watch for the Results



An **EMAIL** announcement will be made on **Sunday, July 19th**. It will also be posted on the [LBC website](#).

WHY NOT TRY FASTER PLAY?



Some of our players have asked about shortening the 7 minutes maximum allowed per board to reduce the amount of time waiting for the next round. The directors have considered this but have decided not to do so for the following reasons:

1. The round advances automatically in each section as soon as all tables have completed the boards, so our Open games average about 6.5 minutes per board. When the round goes to the maximum time, at least one table is still playing.
2. While other tables are not aware of the disruption, during most games there are several incidents where a player loses the internet connection to BBO for two or three minutes. Usually people can log back in soon enough to at least finish bidding the last board in the round. This would be more difficult if the rounds were only 6 minutes long.
3. **BBO** does not currently support the option of 6.5 minutes per board, so we would have to go to 6 minutes. This would increase the time pressure on players and increase the number of score adjustments on incomplete boards that the director needs to review.



THE DIRECTOR'S ROLE

Directing a game on BBO is quite different than in face-to-face games at the club. Both require attention to detail in getting the game set up, but on BBO the issue is a matter of setting up the original game listing and description.

The software determines the assignment of pairs to tables, the strats, the size of each section and starts the game. However, the director must determine the type of movement to be used and boards per round. If the number of tables registered is close to one of the tipping points between movements and then changes a few minutes before game time, it is difficult to make the appropriate changes "on time".

It is also stressful as errors **cannot** be corrected once the game starts. That is why we ask that players be registered and **ONLINE at least 5 minutes before game time**.



The next challenge for the director is in the two minutes after the game starts. That is when we find out if we have an even number of pairs, or if we need to find a fill-in pair to avoid a sitout. Typically, while one director posts the announcements, another director scrambles to find a fill-in pair and get them seated quickly.

After that, there are no insufficient bids, no leads out of turn, no revokes. Most of the calls that are routine in club bridge simply do not happen because of controls in the software.

The director can kibitz at any table during the game without disturbing the players. While kibitzing, the director can see the history of alerts and explanations. The director also sees any new chat messages from players to the table. However, the director does not see any chat history.

At any time during the game, a message may flash on the director's screen to say that a player has been logged off or their keyboard is locked. Usually this can be resolved quickly by the player logging in again. If that does not happen within two minutes, the director will bring in a temporary substitute player. We are now able to borrow a robot from BBO for this purpose, and that usually works well. In one recent game, a power failure in part of the city had 3 robots filling in at once.

The Director's Role continued

As the end of each round approaches, we scan to see which tables are in time trouble and may not be able to finish a board. When that happens, the director needs to review the auction and play and determine an adjusted score.

The software will usually suggest a score, which the director may accept or override. We try to avoid giving an *average* score, preferring a bridge result if it is possible to fairly determine one. This process usually involves going back through the auction and trick-by-trick through the play. When there is doubt about a result, the directors confer to reach a reasonable and fair score. The directors spend significant time adjusting scores when boards are not completed within the allotted time.

During the game, the directors (usually two work each game) are in regular communication with each other, mainly through the BBO chat function. Sometimes we are also on the phone with each other, especially if we need to discuss how the play would have been likely to go had there been time to finish the board.

As players start the last round, the director sends the closing announcements. After the last table finishes the last round, we have, at most, twenty minutes to review the results and determine any adjusted scores needed from the final round. Once that time is up, the game results are final and **cannot** be adjusted.

[Login to Pianola](#)

You may have noticed that Pianola has not been updating rank achievements for several months. This is happening for all our LBC members. Pianola is not interacting with ACBL score and rank changes during this modified club game status. However, Pianola is not charging us fees for its ongoing use.

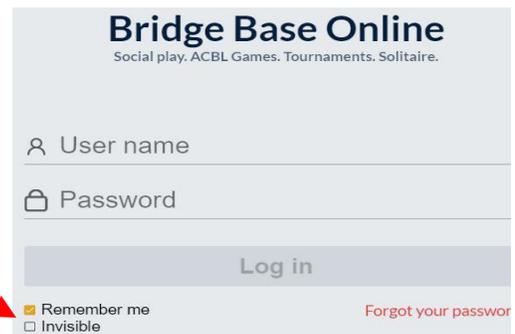
ACBL does maintain updates that are sent to the club. However, these are somewhat delayed and will be noted on our web site as soon as possible.

Please check the heading [Member Info](#)

HOW CAN PLAYERS HELP THE DIRECTORS?

Meet your partner online and register for the game at least 10 minutes in advance of the start time – entries are available starting two hours before game time. **BOTH** you and your partner must be online at the same time. Once you have registered, you do not need to stay logged in.

Avoid logging in as *invisible*. BBO shows you as offline if you are invisible.



Log in at least five minutes before game time and be available in the **Competitive area or Virtual Clubs**.

CAUTION

If you are playing in the Casual area, BBO Virtual Clubs shows you as offline. You will **not** be able to play in the game.



Keep an eye on the **countdown timer** which can be found in the box beneath the "call" box as you play. **Please claim if you can.**

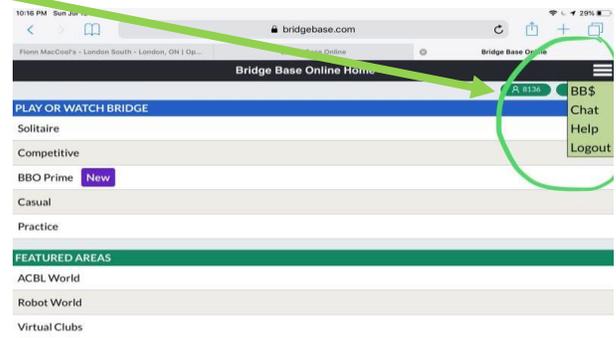
Be aware of, and respond to, messages in the chat box. That is how the director communicates with players when there is a director call.

BUY YOUR BB\$ ON THE BBO WEBSITE DIRECTLY

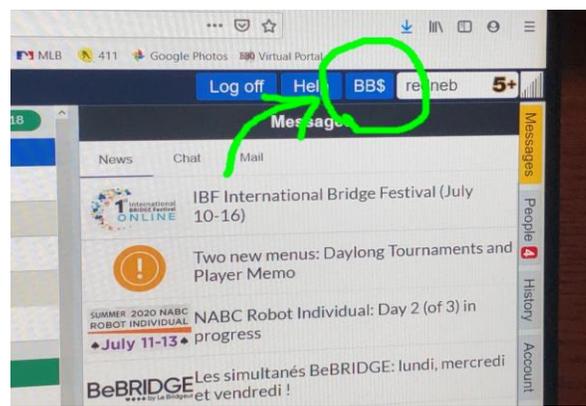
BB\$ are available for purchase directly from the BBO website through the BB\$ icon in the upper right corner or in the top right corner after you are logged in to the home screen (see below). This leads to a secure website.

When using your iPad, this means buying your BB\$ from the BBO home page (as shown below circled in green) before you log in. (<https://www.bridgebase.com/>)

This tab is **not** as clearly available **AFTER** you log in. The exchange rate is about \$1.40 Canadian for \$1 BB.



IPad view to directly purchase BBO\$ after log in. Click on 3 bars at top right.



BBO\$ icon view from desktop (NOT iPad) allows you to purchase BBO\$ directly at a reasonable rate

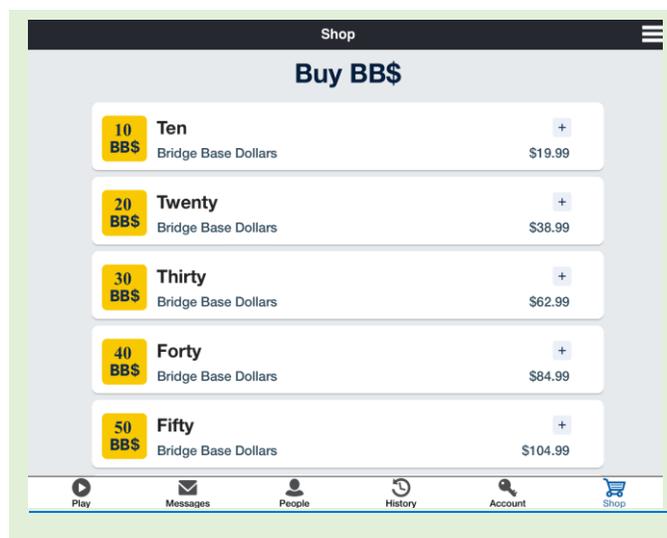
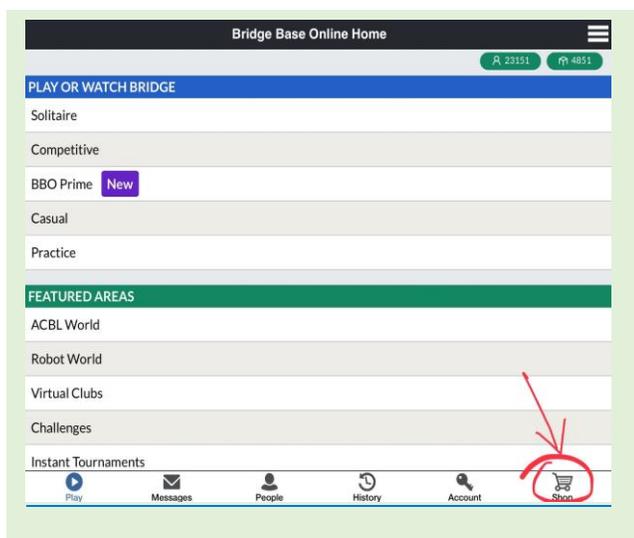
BUY YOUR BB\$ ON THE BBO WEBSITE DIRECTLY

continued

While BB\$ can also be purchased through the *Apple App Store* by using the **SHOP** icon, this will be *significantly* more expensive as you will incur vendor charges and HST.

Do not use the shopping cart icon indicated here which shows up when you have downloaded the BBO app.

If you use this method, you will pay 1.90 to 2.12 Canadian dollars for every 1 BB\$ depending on the amount you buy.



If you have comments regarding the *Virtual Club News*, please contact [Adele Woolfe](#).

**Keep up to date on everything that's happening
at the London Bridge Centre.**

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