

An Introduction to Online Bridge

Most of you are by now itching to do something bridge-related. Fear not! There are dozens of ways to get your fix from your easy chair. A few of my favorites are:

1. Bridge Base Online (www.bridgebaseonline.com) – this is a free site which offers paid ACBL games around the clock. At any given time, there are thousands of players logged in from around the world.

There are also free tournaments, many of those are individuals, where you play with one robot and against 2 robots. Warning! The robots bid abominably. And their defense ranges from brilliant to totally insane, often on consecutive tricks.

Joining is free, you just assign yourself a username and set a password and you are off. There are teaching materials – I highly recommend the “Learn Bridge” series of tutorials to those of you who are still learning the game. You can also kibitz world class players pretty much around the clock, and their vugraph app is almost always showing high level tournament play, often with commentary.

Some usernames for people from our unit: 1stPanda (me), bf06 (Bernie Fudor), mpg1000 (Phil Goulding), JBCoyle (Fred Schenker), printsus (Arlene Port), patapa (Pat Anders), burghboy (Bill Holt), raz3191 (Bob Zimmermann), ronfrank (guess), ALBuNy (Alan Leaver), jjfrac (Jim Fox), and JWHPGH (Jack Hawthorne). Some great people to kibitz – most any vugraph match from the US, England, South Africa, or Australia. And if you are fluent in other languages, there is a big Turkish community online and also frequent events from France, Germany, and the Far East. Individuals to kibitz include JEC (Jimmy Cayne, who has high-level team matches daily), rfp (Richard Pavlicek, who plays 24 board set games almost every night), and RalphK (Ralph Katz, who often practices with Nick Nickell in the evening).

2. www.bridgewinners.com is a terrific site where you can read about many aspects of bridge, and where a lot of news from the world of bridge is posted. And you can post your own questions, too. I am a frequent poster there. Logins on this site are strongly encouraged to be your real name, and the site is heavily moderated, so be nice in your posts. You can always find something to read there, and there are multiple special-purpose forums that I seldom visit, too.

There are also useful tools for editing and saving convention cards, and a good search function that you can use if you want to research, say, Jacoby 2NT (warning, you will get a hundred or more hits on almost anything by now).