

VUGRAPH OPERATOR INSTRUCTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR USBF EVENTS

Thank you for volunteering to assist as a Vugraph operator for one of the USBF Championships. Both we and your BBO audience are very appreciative of your hard work. The suggestions below will hopefully make your first experience as an operator easier. Most of what you do as an operator will be very similar to what you do as a player on BBO. The biggest differences are that you “play” for all 4 players but don’t have to decide what to bid or play, and that you are also responsible for dealing the hands and entering the right scores all the time.

1. Getting started:

- When you get to the room in which you will be the operator, take a few moments to make sure that the chair & computer are comfortable – you can adjust the height of the table on which the computer sits and move closer to or farther away from the playing table before the match starts, but it will be difficult to do so once you’ve started. There will be a paper on the table to the right of the computer with some instructions, mostly those are a subset of what’s in this document and hopefully deal with the most important things you’ll need to know during a broadcast. If you have time to log on invisibly and enter your name into the player profile and adjust the various settings, please do so. If you have logged on invisibly, please make certain that the “invisible” checkbox is not checked when you log on for real (the box stays checked when you log off after having logged on invisibly).
- When you are ready to start the broadcast, log on to BBO and click on “Vugraph” to get to the Vugraph theatre. If you didn’t get a chance to enter your name in the “Profile” box, you can do that now if there’s time. If you are in the **Open Room**, once **all** of the players are in the room, click on “START LIVE BROADCAST.” A dialog box will come up asking you what room you want to broadcast from. It will have a “B” in it, and you need to change that to “O.” Then click on OK and you will be taken to your table. If you are in the Closed Room, wait until the name of your match appears on a green line in the Vugraph theatre and then click on that line and then on “yes” to join the match. In short, at the beginning of a broadcast, the Open Room starts first and the Closed Room joins. Jan will usually be available to help you start.
- If by some chance a box comes up at the start of a segment saying “Unfinished broadcast detected, do you want to continue it?” **Click on “no.”** This is **really** important – very bad things can happen if you click on “yes” here.
- Enter the last name of each player in the appropriate position by **right-clicking** on the North, South, East & West boxes. So long as you enter the player’s name

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accurately, lots of information about the player will appear on a pop up when spectators using the browser version of BBO click on the name box. Sadly, you can't see that information (full name, picture, links to system forms, sometimes biographical information) on the Windows version of BBO, but if it hasn't appeared Jan of AI will probably ask you to change the way you have entered the player's name. The name you enter is normally the player's last name with the first letter capitalized. If there are two players with the same last name, and that last name is no more than 8 characters long, you enter first initial (capitalized), followed by a space, followed by last name (first letter capitalized). For players whose last names are too long, delete the space, then letters from the end of the last name (so if both Pamela & Matthew Granovetter are playing, so we need to distinguish which is which, they would be PGranovett and MGranovett (if you enter too many letters in the last name, the BBO software will automatically truncate).

- When the players have taken out their cards for the first hand, click on the green "redeal" button at the bottom of the screen and enter the first board number, with either "o" for the Open Room or "c" for the Closed Room in front of it, and click on OK. When the hand appears on your screen, check one player's hand against that on your screen. If it doesn't match, first make sure they have the right board on the table, then make sure the board is correctly oriented (check to see that the South hand you are looking at does not match the North hand on your screen. If things still don't match, ask the players to wait for a moment and call the director, because something has gone wrong. After the first board, the "redeal" dialog box should have the right board number entered, unless the players have managed to get the boards out of order.

2. Entering bids:

- I recommend that you enter the bids by using the keyboard although you can use the mouse if you prefer. To enter the bids from the keyboard, just type the number then the suit (1s will get you a 1 spade bid). P is Pass, D is Double, R is Redouble, N is Notrump. If you type something and the chat box appears instead of a bid, someone may have changed the "at a table" options so that keyboard entry of bids isn't checked – to fix that, click on the yellow gear wheel 6 boxes from the right on the tools bar at the bottom of the window and put a check mark in "keyboard entry for bidding/play." If you are using the keyboard to enter bids, you can enter bids as they are made, by typing quietly. If you are using the mouse to enter bids and the room is quiet enough that the mouse clicks can be heard by the players, please enter the bids two at a time as

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the tray is passed under the screen so the players on the other side of the screen don't know when bids are made.

- Please try to show alerts. The easiest way to do so is to type an “a” either before entering the bid or between the number and the bid (“a1s” or “1as” or “ad/ap/ar” will all cause the bid to be highlighted). After you have entered a bid, you can alert and explain it by clicking on the bid that shows in the bidding diagram and typing in the explanation. Often you will not know why the player(s) alerted – just leave the alert box empty or type an “!” in the alert box in that case. If only one player alerts a bid, type in “alerted by N.”
- 3. **Chat.** The audience will appreciate anything you tell them about what is going on in the room (player A is thinking; player B said “sorry;” that sort of thing), but remember not to comment other than to pass on what is happening. If the players take a bathroom or smoking break, try to type a quick “short break” message to the audience, but most importantly, minimize the table and movie windows so that players can't accidentally see things as they go in and out of the room.
- 4. **More about Keyboard entry.** If you are reasonably adept at typing, you will find it easier and faster to enter the bidding using the keyboard instead of the mouse. I also find it easier to enter the play with the keyboard, but some people find the mouse easier. You enter plays by typing the suit, then the number (T is ten); the thing that makes keyboard entry for play faster than the mouse is that after the first card in a trick is played, you can enter just the number not the suit, and if you do an “enter” or “return,” you will get the lowest card of the suit led. Of course, if a player is showing out, you do have to enter the letter for the suit s/he plays. CTRL-U will undo in either bidding or play. You can also click on the “undo” box in the toolbar to undo.

The only thing to be a little careful with when using the keyboard is if you want to chat to the audience. When you are using the mouse for input, typing will open a chat window. That doesn't happen when you are using the keyboard for input. You need to either click on “chat” with the mouse, or type CTRL-S (speak) to open the chat window (CTRL-C is claim).

With keyboard input enabled, you can still use the mouse if you want – you may find it easier to use the mouse for playing the cards, for instance. The mouse will almost always be easier for claims and often for undo and redeal. You can also deal the next hand by typing ctrl-D.

- 5. **Troubleshooting.** First and foremost – don't panic! No matter what you do wrong, someone else has done it before. And most mistakes can be remedied.

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- The most common mistake we all make is to omit a pass in an auction, so that the bids get assigned to the wrong player. To correct this, just click on “Undo” (or type ctrl-u) the appropriate number of times to get back to the missing pass, and then reenter the correct bids. If there are a lot of wrong bids, it may be faster to click on the “redeal” button (or type ctrl-D) and start over – you will need to change the board number in the dialog box that comes up to the one you want to start over with, since the suggested one will be the next board.
- Another common mistake is to play the wrong card. The players often don’t show you the card they’ve played and you have to guess. Then later you may be unable to play the card they’re actually playing because you’ve already played it. If you find out soon enough after playing the wrong card, you can use “undo” to go back and fix it, but often that won’t be possible. So when they play that card later, just play some different card of the same suit and hopefully things won’t get too confused. If it becomes impossible to continue to enter the play, usually because someone is leading a suit in which s/he has no cards, just wait until the hand is over and then claim the appropriate number of tricks. The audience will appreciate it if you explain what happened and perhaps give them a summary of how the play is going.
- If the deal on the screen is not the one the players are playing, first check the number of the board – sometimes the players manage to put the wrong board on the table. If that is the case, you can fix your screen by clicking on “redeal” (or CTRL-D) and entering the board that’s being played (remember to enter o or c for open or closed room, followed by the board number). Then when the players manage to get the missing board onto the table, you’ll have to fix the number for that one in the same way. If the board number matches, but the cards are wrong, make sure that the board is “rightside up” on the table (it will look wrong if they managed to point the North arrow at South), if the right board number is facing the right way but the cards don’t match what is on your screen, tell the players there’s a problem and summon the director. Sometimes the boards have been mis-duplicated and everyone will appreciate the opportunity to get things corrected (except your audience who will probably never get to see the board that is actually played). Sometimes the wrong set has been loaded into your computer (the board that didn’t match was the first one of the set); in that case hopefully the person who is organizing Vugraph will be able to correct things.
- Sometimes a result may get “lost,” either because things got so messed up that you had to move on or because it was the last (or first) board and just didn’t get entered. If you can ascertain the correct contract and result on the board, you

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can go to the movie, click on the board and enter the contract and result. The format for entering results in the movie is below.

- The instructions on your table deal with what to do should you get disconnected. Hopefully that won't happen, but if it does, just log back on and rejoin the match in progress. Be sure to "join" the other table if it is still up, **whether you are in the Open or Closed room**. In this situation, if it offers you the opportunity to continue a discontinued broadcast, say "yes" and you won't have to enter players' names again.

6. Entering a score in the movie

When you need to enter a score in the movie (because you or the players mis-claimed or because the score got lost or because play started before the Vugraph broadcast or whatever), go to Movie and click on the contract box for the board, then when the little window asking you to enter the result opens, type in the result in **exactly** this order: contract, which should be one number and one letter (3NT is 3N, not 3NT), followed by declarer (N,S,E,W), followed by x or xx if the contract was doubled or redoubled, followed by the result (=, +# or -#). If it says you've entered the result in the wrong format, try again (I always get doubled contracts wrong – it just seems right to enter 4sxn instead of 4snx)

7. Ending the broadcast.

When **both** tables in your match have finished, please check the movie to make sure all the results have been entered, then click on the "back" button & say "yes" to end the broadcast. Please use the "back" button to back out; don't just close the window. If your table finishes before the other one, it is important not to close it, because just in case the other table experiences internet problems and gets disconnected, it will be much easier for that operator if your table is still there. You are welcome to leave the computer unattended (but please minimize the table window so the players don't mess with it).

8. If players want to watch the other room or another match, after they have finished playing, open a browser window, go to www.bridgebase.com, click on the yellow highlighted line to get to the web version of BBO and then click on "Look around our site" and on "Vugraphs." **Do not let the players do anything with the BBO window where you are logged in as a Vugraph operator ☺.**