

Zoom Video Conference.

Attendance: Steve Moese, Jeff Bayone, Steve Gaynor, Rich Carle, Betty Starzec, Kathie Macnab, Henry Meguid, Ellis Feigenbaum, Susan Miguel, Silvana Morici

Guest: Shireen Mohandes, RealBridge

Key Links:

Committee Documents: <http://www.district11bridge.com/BoG/2017BoGTCODocs.html>

BoG Reports: http://www.district11bridge.com/ACBL_board_reports.html

BridgeWinners Clubs & Teachers Forum: <http://bridgewinners.com/forums/browse/clubs-and-teachers/>

Priorities - Grow Membership, Grow Tables, Grow Classes

NEXT MEETING Tuesday April 23, 2024 - 8 PM ET, 5 PM PT

AGENDA

Shireen Mohandes, RealBridge – Background and business model.

This Committee offers thanks to Shireen for a very informative presentation on a very capable bridge service. The simple business model is attractive. We also recognize the barrier that the time difference caused Shireen, and deeply appreciate her taking the necessary time for us to learn about RealBridge.

Discussion

The entire slide presentation is incorporated in appendix.

- The present members introduced themselves to Shireen.
- Shireen is a business analyst in the broadcast sector, Editor of the ABTA Journal, a bridge player, and past European Marketing Director for OKBridge, and a principal in RealBridge
- RealBridge is a business to business company.
- RealBridge does not manage game table fees. They bill game owners per table (\$1.64).
- RealBridge recognizes their further depends on creating new bridge players.
- User experience designed to be as realistic as possible. Integrated audio/video.
- RealBridge creates social connections missing from other online experiences.
- Most game formats are
- Payment by local currency – not exchange issues.

Q&A

Steve Gaynor – Is regular play available for people to play solitaire?

Shireen: No, we support your game schedule. We have no robots. So sit outs are possible.

Steve G: Will you be offering games with ACBL Masterpoints next year?

Shireen: We hope so – We are not engaging a bidding competition. Our business model is the same for everyone.

Shireen: We do have social bridge opportunities. Blocks of 3 hours. Run by clubs. People join ad hoc after paying a table fee. Not sanctioned.

Steve Moese: What you shares is magnificent and much better than current competition. We are trying to solve the following business problem. Online bridge today is about consumption. Online teaching creates players. How so we create new members using RealBridge? What are other places doing.

Shireen: Bath England Tennis Club started a club online to teach new players. Limited attendees to 24 people for education reasons. People are being turned away!

Kitchen bridge players wanted some structured training to avoid embarrassment at clubs. I put them in contact with another online club and they improved their play and results.

University of the Third Age – 5 bridge clubs in the UK. Started with minibridge 2x per week. Then small games. Offered online minibridge certificate. (Checklist on learning).

South Africa – one group continued their teaching during covid online. When covid crisis ended, the players demanded RealBridge to complement their F2F play. Experienced starters, rusty returners, and players choosing to play more in addition to their F2F club.

Australia – became members again when they found they could play online. Distances to F2F clubs in Australia can be tremendous.

UK Federation tends to run weekend games when clubs offer little opportunity. Money raised usually used to support region-wide children's even, an education event, or international bridge.

Henry Meguid: We are dealing with whether clubs are creating ACBL members. Hypothetically I can charge a membership to my Real Bridge Club where they play at reduced cost. I build ACBL membership into my club cost. Couple membership to m club to ACBL membership. A very doable model.

Shireen: EBL Conference learning – French Bridge Federation strongly believes clubs must own the relationship with their customer. Not about stopping players from playing elsewhere. Rather its about creating the proper club culture. Help players build friendships, play with beginners, lay with people better than you. The whole club culture reinforces the desire for membership (retention).

Steve M: Does RealBridge collect the club membership fee and game fee?

Shireen: No, we do not collect player funds. That's up to the club owners. People run off several models.

Play a monthly fee and play as often as they like.

Others ask players to put money on account and refresh the account when it runs down.

External funds handline online.

Henry M: Real Bridge provides game access. Clubs have websites to collect funds. RealBridge then charges the table fee to the club. Can use Zelle, Venmo, Square, Credit Card, Pay Pal.

Steve M: the only concern is that separating the payment form the access to the bridge service site, people can cheat the club.

Shireen: Our experience shows this issue doesn't happen. People are honest and the amounts of money are quite honest.

Steve M: Does RealBridge have the bandwidth to expand with demand?

Shireen: My normal business practice is to avoid talking about competitor technology. consider a game as a rented tent. When the game is over, the tent folds, and the capacity returns to us. The capacity is linearly scalable on the cloud. ACBL has the architecture detail.

Steve M: Can you comment on data transfer to ACBL LIVE

Shireen: 2 Main output files are EUSEBIO and .pbn replay. Both are acceptable and usable by many countries worldwide. ACBL use Eusabio. Have not proven the transfer will work.

Henry M: Are you familiar with the ACBL ACA and BWS Files?

Shireen: No. We are however familiar with the intricacies of the scoring logic. Have discussed issues with McKenzie Meyers.

Henry M: What's the next step.

Steve M: The ACBL can't make any change until July 2025. I am hopeful RealBridge will become a competitor.

Shireen: Have had several conversations with Bronia. Have not yet met with the Task Force. We want more players in North America to experience our platform. Do I need to open the platform for players to try? Always best if players play with friends and partners.

Steve M: Hoping clubs and teachers will have the interest to try what you offer. ACBL has 80K people play every month. About 40K play online. We need to grow opportunities for competition.

Steve G: Need to be proactive. Don't expect the ACBL to reach out to you.

Steve M: We can get you time 15-20 minutes with the 75 member Advisory Council.

Shireen: Met with Bronia 3 times and Stefanie Threlkeld who wants to pilot a social bridge program.

Betty S: Can RealBridge interact with EDGAR? Or isn't it necessary.

Shireen: We have a very good relationship with EDGAR. They can use our Eusebio Files. The Video showing all 4 players creates a social pressure to behave ethically. Did test several times whether people could detect if I was looking at my phone. Can easily see when people are looking at another screen or typing. Thirdly, we are following the technology that has proctored high level online exams.

With no more discussion, Steve M thanked Shireen for her presentation. Shireen left the meeting.

END PRESENTATION

Debrief

Susan M: I cannot believe that the competitor has nothing near this capable. I can drive this easily, but I have to be able to give them Masterpoints®. Could have couple of hundred people playing regularly.

Steve M: The inability to award masterpoints is a barrier to entry. The concern is if the Board believes they want the \$500K for exclusivity. That would be a big mistake.

Henry M: Is BBO privately owned?

Steve M: Yes 52 Entertainment is a privately held investment company in France.

Steve M: Can the average club manager set up an online payment system?

Henry/Susan: Yes its very easy to do.

Steve M: Another benefit with RealBridge's model is the ability for clubs to advertise their game to their target audience without the distraction of having other games competing to their attention on the same service. (This might allow the ACBL to create a list of weekly online games outside the umbrella of any one bridge service provider). Much more flexibility to the owner, stops it from being BBO or RealBridge centric and makes it Club centric and likely more.

Henry M: I do have a social bridge club on RealBridge. I use SharkBridge for teaching. Not everyone wants video on when they play. When you run a tournament, when there is a sit out or someone didn't finish, the system waits for you. Can have half a table, no robots. Just like being at the club.

Steve M: Thank you, Henry for arranging to get Shireen to talk with us. I will ask Adam Parrish to join us to share Swan.

We discussed the value of the recent Advisory Council meeting.

We discussed the rejection of our proposal to create a Committee of the Corporation for Clubs and Teachers.

We look forward to contributing to the new task force appointed by Margot Hennings.

We discussed the timing of AC meetings and work underway to better enable cogent input to the BoD. There is recent difficulty getting what we need in time for AC deliberation.

Ellis F: Real Bridge is a problem because it is a good platform and we cannot use it. The BoD needs to let us run sanctioned games on RealBridge.

Next Steps

Invite Adam Parrish to discuss SwanBridge's capability and business model.

Steve M. will seek to get Shireen invited to present at the Advisory Council.

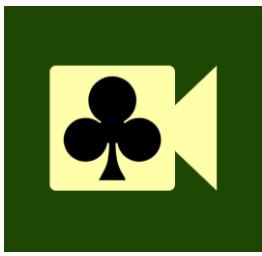
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Submitted Respectfully

Steve Moese

Chair Advisory Council Teacher & Club Manager Committee

Appendix: Shireen's Presentation Slides



RealBridge Presentation to the ACBL Advisory Council Teachers & Club Owners Committee

Shireen Mohandes

RealBridge

March 26, 2024



Agenda



RealBridge

- Who we are, what we do

The RealBridge Platform

- Directing, playing, teaching

The RealBridge Service

- What's included, pricing, practicalities

Who we are



Graham Hazel – CEO & CTO

- Games software developer
- Bridge player

Shireen Mohandes – Commercial Director

- Business analyst
- European Marketing Director for OKBridge in the 1990s
- Bridge player

Andy Bowles – Operations Director

- Project manager and software developer
- Bridge player



What we do

Provide a platform

- First bridge platform with integrated audio & video
- Tournaments, club duplicates, teaching
- Customers on every continent
- In more than 50 countries
- Individual teachers, clubs, national bodies, zonal organizations, WBF
- We support clubs and teachers - don't compete with them
- Simple, transparent, affordable pricing
- Business-to-business



What we do

Support our users

- Free training for TDs and teachers, delivered by RealBridge team
- Free practice sessions for new users
- Immediate telephone and email support
- Responsive to requests for new functionality
- Continuous innovation



What it costs

Example: 20 boards with all features including video broadcasts

- Price per table:
 - **USD 1.64**
 - **CAD 2.16**
- No additional charges

What we do



Build communities

- Sister cities
- Up-over vs Down-under

Junior bridge

- Regular international junior events

Teacher conference, October 2023

- 32 speakers from around the world

Cheltenham et Annecy sont jumelées depuis 1956.
Bonne chance à tous.
Cheltenham and Annecy have been twinned since 1956.
Good luck to all players.



UP OVER

Take part in a challenge: your opportunity to represent the super teams of North "up over" versus South "down under".

The date: Tuesday 4th July, 2023

New Zealand: 8 pm Australia (AEST): 6 pm
Kenya: 11 am South Africa: 10 am
UK and Ireland: 9 am

vs.

Matchpoints pairs
22 boards

... book early to
ensure a seat...

DOWN UNDER



What we do: North America

ACBL Education Foundation

- Pro-Ams in 2022 and 2023
- Ongoing relationship



ACBL Educational Foundation



North American events

- US and Canadian trials / national championships





The RealBridge platform

Player experience

- As close as possible to real-life
- Instantly easy-to-use

Audio-video

- Built-in audio and video
- Individual media controls

The screenshot displays the RealBridge platform interface during a bridge game. The central area shows a green card table with a white card labeled '2' and a green card labeled 'PASS'. Below the table, a list of cards is visible: 2NT, 3NT, 4NT, 5NT, 6NT, 7NT, and a 'PASS' button. The bottom of the screen shows a hand of cards: 6♠, 5♠, 3♠, A♥, K♥, J♥, 4♥, Q♣, J♣, 5♣, K♦, Q♦, 9♦, and 9♦. The interface includes video feeds of four players: Andy Bowles (top right), Janet Marsh (middle left), Sam Knox (bottom left), and Derek Marsh (bottom right). The top left shows a score of 1 for North. The bottom right has a settings gear icon and buttons for 'Last trick', 'Undo', 'Auction', 'Director', 'Claim', and 'Leave'. An 'ALERT' button is also visible on the right side.



- Intuitive results browser
- View bidding and play at any table
- Double dummy solver - result for each possible play, which plays cost?
- Explore play in alternative lines and alternative contracts
- Available forever

Scorecard							
Bernard Plumb & Liz Rothwell							
Bd	Vs	Contract	Lead	+	-	MP	%
1	Tom Green & Mark Madeley	2♠+1 N	♥K	140		21 / 52	40.4%
2	Tom Green & Mark Madeley	3♥-2 W	♠5	100		12 / 52	23.1%
3	Jacky Snowden & Caroline Moseley	4♥= W	♦4		620	24 / 52	46.2%
4	Jacky Snowden & Caroline Moseley	3NT+4 E	♠7		720	41 / 52	78.8%
5	Mike Porter & Peter Goldson	2♠= E	♦K		110	44 / 52	84.6%
6	Mike Porter & Peter Goldson	3NT+2 W	♣2		660	7 / 52	13.5%
7	Ron Birch & Lin Birch	2♠= S	♥K	110		40 / 52	76.9%
8	Ron Birch & Lin Birch	4♥= E	♠5		420	27 / 52	51.9%
9	Alan Bryant & Geoff Webber	3NT+2 N	♠5		420	27 / 52	51.9%
10	Alan Bryant & Geoff Webber	2♥= W	♠5		110	44 / 52	84.6%
11	Karen Murphy & John Lemmey	3♠= S	♠5		420	27 / 52	51.9%
12	Karen Murphy & John Lemmey	3NT-2 N	♠5		420	27 / 52	51.9%
13	Irene Pacey & Carol Hulse	1NT-2 E	♠5		420	27 / 52	51.9%
14	Irene Pacey & Carol Hulse	1NT+1 S	♠5		420	27 / 52	51.9%
15	Harriet Dinwoodie & Rodney Light	1NT= N	♠5		420	27 / 52	51.9%
16	Harriet Dinwoodie & Rodney Light	3NT+1 E	♠5		420	27 / 52	51.9%
17	Nicky Bainbridge & Jim Bainbridge	4♥+1 N	♠5		420	27 / 52	51.9%
18	Nicky Bainbridge & Jim Bainbridge	1♥+2 E	♠5		420	27 / 52	51.9%

The RealBridge platform



Tournament features

- Pairs: Mitchell, Howell, Swiss
- Teams: Head-to-head, Round robin, Swiss
- Scoring: IMP teams, BAM, matchpoints, IMP pairs
- Three VP scales
- XIMPs in team events
- Three-way matches
- Auto-rotate at half-time
- Multi-session events with carryover

Session settings

General Options MiniBridge

Matchpoint pairs ▾ Scoring method ☐ MiniBridge

Mitchell (2 winners) ▾ Movement

None ▾ VP scale

2 Boards per round

2 Number of rounds

0m Time / round (eg 15m, 14:30) Show min only ▾

1 First board

☐ Auto-↔ : NS ↔ EW at half-time

☐ Randomize starting positions

PBN file load

☒ Boards ☐ Boards + results Load PBN file

No PBN file loaded

OK Cancel



The RealBridge platform

Director features

- Easy-to-use setup
- Start when you like
- Add late-arriving pairs
- Start the next round while some tables are still finishing – no need to remove boards
- Score adjustments and changes – whenever you like
- Handicaps
- Penalties



The RealBridge platform

Director features: communication and announcements

Audio and video

- Conversation with entire table
- Private conversation with one or more players
- Broadcast to whole session

Text and image-based

- Table notices
- Information panel
- Banner announcements
- Broadcast text
- Text chat with one or more players



The RealBridge platform

Language support

- 16 languages (players and directors)
- 4 languages for players with no vision
- RealBridge is used by deaf clubs and international events for the deaf

Teaching and coaching



Supervised play

- At the table coaching
- Spectators with two-way audio and video
- Rewind and replay a deal
- Jump to another deal

The screenshot displays a virtual bridge game interface. At the top, a scoreboard shows the game is in progress (1-0) with North as the declarer. The interface includes four video feeds of the players: Andy Bowles (top right), Janet Marsh (top left), Derek Marsh (bottom right), and Sam Knox (bottom left). The central area shows the cards for each player and the trick being played. The bottom of the screen features a 'Last trick' section with buttons for 'Undo', 'Auction', 'Director', 'Claim', and 'Leave'. The bottom right corner has an 'ALERT' button and a settings gear icon.

Player	Hand	Trick
North (Andy Bowles)	Q♥, K♥, J♥, 10♥, 9♥, 8♥, 7♥, 6♥, 5♥, 4♥, 3♥, 2♥	1
South (Janet Marsh)	K♥, J♥, 10♥, 9♥, 8♥, 7♥, 6♥, 5♥, 4♥, 3♥, 2♥	2
West (Derek Marsh)	K♠, J♠, 10♠, 9♠, 8♠, 7♠, 6♠, 5♠, 4♠, 3♠, 2♠	3
East (Sam Knox)	K♠, J♠, 10♠, 9♠, 8♠, 7♠, 6♠, 5♠, 4♠, 3♠, 2♠	4



Teaching and coaching

Supervised play

- Text commentary on travelers
- Show ideal auction and play
- Info button for helpful hints
- Imposed actions
- Load external results for comparison – “one-table duplicate”

✕

☰

☰

Board 1
Dealer N
None Vul

♠ AK1065
♥ A4
♦ Q102
♣ A95

♠ 3
♥ KJ532
♦ 8643
♣ Q107

♠ J987
♥ Q1087
♦ AKJ5
♣ 2

♠ Q42
♥ 96
♦ 97
♣ KJ8643

	NT	♠	♥	♦	♣
N	9	11	9	11	6
S	9	12	9	11	6
E	3	1	4	2	6
W	3	1	4	2	6

Par +980 6♠= S

NS: 17 + 11 = 28 HCP
EW: 6 + 6 = 12 HCP

W	N	E	S
	1♠	P	4♣ ¹
X ²	4♥ ³	P	4♠
P	5♣ ⁴	P	5♦ ⁵
P	6♠	P	P
P			

¹ Splinter
² Lead a ♥
³ Cue bid
⁴ Cue bid
⁵ Cue bid

When South splinters in clubs, West takes the opportunity to double, asking for a heart lead. With their extra values North checks for diamond control, then bids slam.

Even with the heart lead, slam is excellent. Declarer tries ♥10, in case East has ♥J. Then they cash the top spades, hoping that ♠Q will fall. Finally they play diamonds, hoping that the player with ♠Q has at least three diamonds, so that the heart loser can be thrown in time.

None of this works - East ruffs the third round of diamonds, and plays a heart to West's king. Unlucky for NS, but also a good result for EW's agreements.

NS	EW	Contract	Lead	Score
Karyn Pert & Pam Moore	Mike Neels & Graham Baskerville	4♠+1 N	♥9	450



Teaching and coaching

Group broadcast


- Audio and video conversation
- Share content (eg PowerPoint slides)
- Demonstrate a deal
 - Single hand (eg West's point of view) or all four hands
 - Demonstrate bidding and play
 - Demonstrate different sequences and lines
 - Review how your students played

Pat Morris ♦ Queen of Diamonds Bridge Club ♦ Scores

Value of the Honour Cards

Add your **High Card Points** (HCP) together

Ace	A	=	4 points
King	K	=	3 points
Queen	Q	=	2 points
Jack	J	=	1 point



Each suit total = **10** points Each deal total **40**

Enter chat message here

Send chat Raise hand

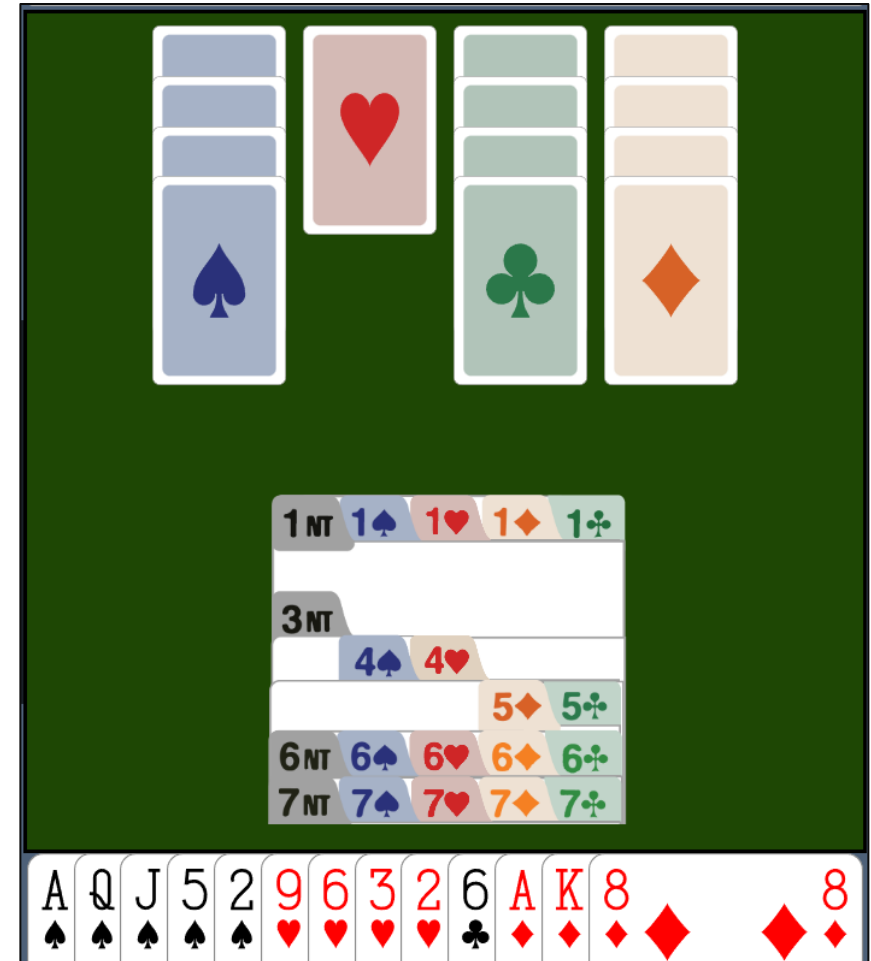
Private chat



Teaching and coaching

MiniBridge

- Configurable contracts and rules
- Gradually introduce new elements of bridge as players advance
- Looks like bridge
- Tools to help with counting
- Special effects





Why online teaching?

Online teaching and practice

- Saves time, travel and hotel costs
- More people can play
- People can play more
- Keeps momentum, especially in holiday time

Complements face-to-face bridge – doesn't compete



The RealBridge service

What's included

- Free training in using the platform
- Top-up training
- Unlimited free support
- Continuous addition of new features



The RealBridge service

Pricing

- For 20 boards with all features including video broadcasts
- Price per player:
 - **USD 0.41**
 - **CAD 0.54**
- No additional charges
- For a 3-hour teaching & playing session, that's US 14¢ per hour



The RealBridge service

How it works

- You sign up for an account
- You create sessions as and when required
- A session can have 4 participants or 400
- We track your usage
- Each month we bill you for the previous month's usage
- Payment by credit card, Google Pay, or money-transfer service
- Flexible terms



Thank you

Shireen Mohandes

RealBridge

March 26, 2024