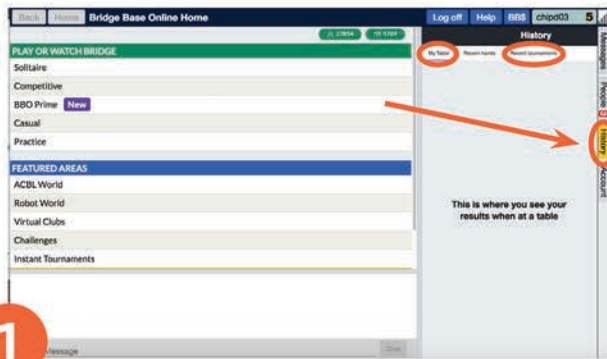


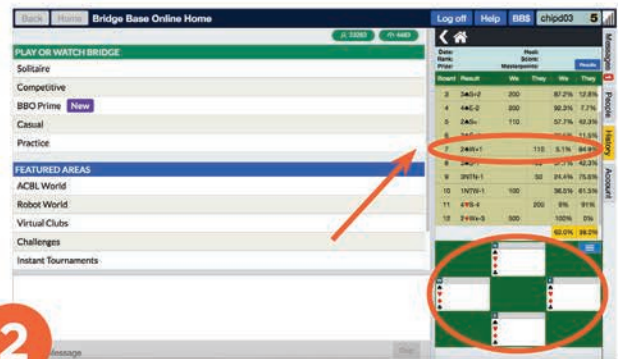
BBO Help Desk

How to report a deal

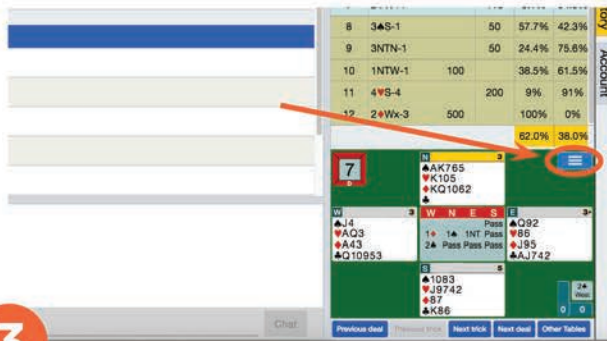
When something happens in an online game that seems suspicious to you, you may want to report it. There are several options: You can call the director, you can file a player memo with the ACBL recorder, you can flag the deal for BBO to review, or you can simply save a deal for your own records.



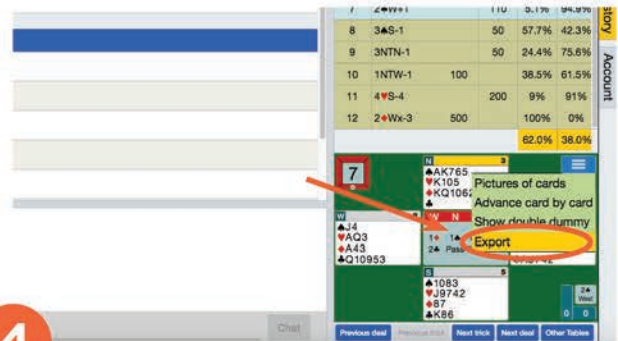
1 During or after a game, you can find your played deals in the History tab. If it's during the game, go to My Table. If it's later, go to Recent tournaments and find the appropriate game.



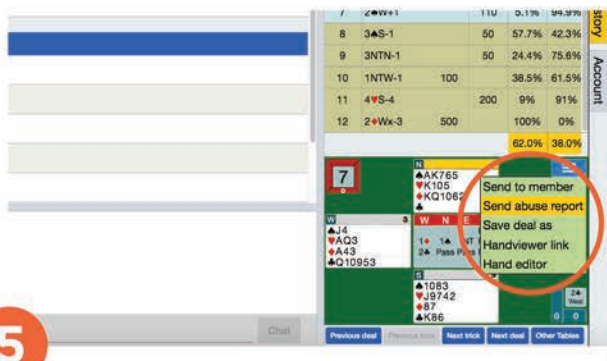
2 Once you are in the results of either the current game or the past game you are looking for, select the board you want to look at by clicking on that line. The deal will appear in the bottom of the right panel.



3 Focusing on the bottom right corner of the screen, click the triple bar in this area to access the menu.



4 From this menu, select Export. That will bring up another menu of export options.



5 To flag the deal for BBO, click Send abuse report. A prompt will allow you to enter your comments about the deal. To save the deal for your records, click Save deal as. To file a player memo, click Handviewer link. You can copy and paste this link into an email, a text file or the player memo form at acbl.org/bbomemo.



6 If you want to call the director during a game, click the triple bar in the main section of the screen at top left. From the menu that appears, select Call Director. You can also use this menu to view your opponents' convention cards.



Eyes on the Street

Your role in keeping the game honest

BY SUE MUNDAY

Bridge is a fun challenge – whether played with friends and club mates in a social setting or competitively in a tournament, where everyone is doing their honest best to win (*honest* being the key word). A positive, trusting environment allows everyone to play their best game.

Unfortunately, trust seems to be in short supply, now that bridge has been quarantined online. Without the ability to physically see and hear each other, doubt creeps in. The rules of the game haven't changed just because the environment has changed; cheating is still cheating, and players still know right from wrong.

Urban planner Jane Jacobs coined the term “eyes on the street” to describe “the unconscious self-policing that citizens provide in lively, well-trafficked public spaces.” The lively, well-trafficked playing tables are our public spaces, and you and all your fellow players are ACBL's eyes on the street.

Your role doesn't come with a badge and a gun – you are not empowered to investigate, make accusations or throw anyone in jail. In fact, publicly accusing another player of cheating is, itself, a conduct violation of the ACBL's Code of Disciplinary Regulations, punishable by 180 days probation and/or up to 180 days suspension. If, on a wild, unauthorized, accusatory bender, you stain another player's reputation or in any way violate their enjoyment of the game, you'll be doing penance long

after your 180-day suspension is up.

Investigating questionable activity and prosecuting cases where the evidence of cheating is convincing are the jobs of the ACBL National Recorder's office. If you haven't met the League's National Recorder, Robb Gordon, through his online video or the many educational articles he has written for this magazine, make it a point to know his name. He's the ACBL's sheriff. BBO also has its software flags, abuse-reporting mechanism and teams of investigators.

Robb and his assistants are aided by experts who volunteer hundreds of hours analyzing hundreds of deals. They look for system departures both egregious and subtle, the frequency of lucky leads or shifts on defense, and inexplicable style variations – a reliably aggressive bidder goes silent with a seven-card suit at favorable vulnerability; a player who unfailingly upgrades 4-3-3-3 14-point hands to open 1NT suddenly downgrades a 15-count with a five-card suit; the out-of-the-blue, for-no-good-reason lead of a low card away from an honor sequence, finding partner with the missing honor. And every time, the unique layout of the cards favors the odd action. Coincidence? Is there another explanation – maybe a mislick? Inattention? A partnership misunderstanding? One deal does not tell the story – nor 10, nor, maybe, dozens.

Statistical analysis may provide some clues, but to make a case stick, the investigators study patterns of behavior as well as outcomes and frequency. In order to do that, they need to build a database of example deals. That's where you – the eyes on the street – come in.

When the auction takes an odd turn, or declarer's or defenders' hands become known and your spidey senses

tingle, get into the habit of filing a Player Memo.

BBO makes it easy to save a deal to your files or report suspect action. See the illustration at the end of this article.

Experts analyze their peers' calls and play at a level so complex that it would take pages to explain what the expected play should be and how that call or line of play was egregiously violated.

Instead, let's look at a couple of very elementary examples, where the explanation for what happened could be completely innocent. Or, it could be a puzzle piece that helps demonstrate a pattern that points to suspect behavior. Let's say that over the course of an 18-board virtual club game, one pair submits these results.

① ♠ J 8 7 6 ♥ K J 4 3 2 ♦ A ♣ Q 5 2

<i>You</i>	<i>Partner</i>
	1NT
?	

② ♠ A Q 6 3 ♥ A 10 4 3 ♦ K Q J 2 ♣ A

<i>You</i>	<i>Partner</i>
1♦	1♥
?	

③ ♠ K J 7 2 ♥ K 10 ♦ A Q 7 6 ♣ A J 4

<i>You</i>	<i>Partner</i>
1♦	1♥
?	

④ ♠ 8 ♥ 9 8 7 ♦ Q 10 5 3 ♣ A J 10 9 8

<i>West</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>You</i>
1♠	2♥	4♠	?

⑤ Let's finish this set off with a lead problem. You're on lead against 2♥:

♠ K 9 4 2 ♥ 7 5 ♦ 6 ♣ K Q 10 8 5 4.

<i>West</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>You</i>
1♣	1♦	1♥	Pass
2♥	All Pass		

What happened at the table?

① 2♣, Stayman, would be the tra-

ditional foray, looking for a four-card major. Instead, this responder chose to transfer to hearts and bid 3NT, giving partner a choice between 3NT and 4♥. When you look at the recap, you learn that most pairs are in 4♠ going down because of the poor spade spots and a foul split. Maybe your hand chose to disregard the spades because of the poor suit quality. Maybe this is a less skilled player who doesn't know what to do holding five of one major and four of the other when partner opens 1NT. Partner's hand:

♠ Q 5 4 3 ♥ A 10 5 ♦ K Q J 9 ♣ A 3.

② Was 2NT on your radar? Sometimes what you're seeing is just bad bridge, and investigators have a difficult time slogging through bad bridge to get to motive. Or sometimes – as in real life – players are mentally absent from the table, though they continue to bid and click cards. Maybe the 1♦ opener forgot she opened the bidding, and thought she was using Jacoby 2NT to respond to partner's 1♥ opening. It happens in real life. Partner passed and 2NT was touch and go. The field was in 4♥ – whether they got there by using a 4♣ splinter or just bidding 4♥. Just because you got a good result doesn't justify the opponents' illogical bidding. Sometimes bad bridge players are also bad cheaters. Partner's hand:

♠ 9 8 ♥ Q 7 6 2 ♦ 8 7 ♣ K J 7 5 4.

③ 2NT seems the most logical choice. Or, if you can't abide the thought of missing a 4-4 spade fit, maybe 1♠ if it's natural, shows four and can be a balanced hand. This opener chose the astounding rebid of 4♠. It's hard to find an excuse for this one, except that she could see everyone's cards and knew partner wasn't going to bid again:

♠ Q 10 9 5 ♥ Q J 9 4 ♦ 5 ♣ Q 10 9 3.

④ Sometimes your opponents just get lucky. But 5♦ lucky? 5♦ was passed, and here's the gold mine – or rather diamond mine – that declarer lucked into:

♠ 6 ♥ K Q 10 6 5 ♦ A K 7 6 4 2 ♣ 2.

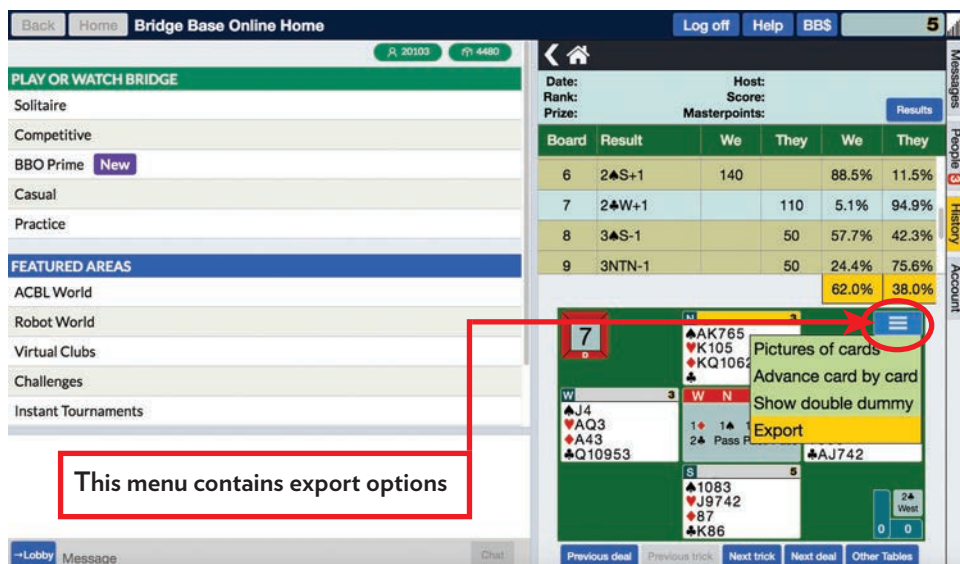
A misclick maybe? Diamonds and hearts are right next to each other on the BBO selection interface. But this is definitely a deal to save in your BBO files for ready reference when you file your Player Memo.

⑤ The opening leader tabled her lowest club – the suit dummy opened – finding partner with ♣Ax. Partner's overcall of 1♦ makes the singleton diamond a logical, if not automatic, lead. If you're allergic to leading partner's suit, however, the top of an honor sequence, even if it is dummy's bid suit, is a vague alternative. A trump lead? Maybe safe, maybe not. An aggressive fourth-best spade doesn't sound appealing. (Partner's diamond overcall consisted of ♦10 x x x.) Clubs were 3-2 between dummy and declarer, and the lead enabled the defending side to grab their club tricks before they disappeared on a side suit. Save the hand to your BBO file. File a Player Memo. Stat!

From the Recorder's office

As of July 16, 2020				
Active investigations	Cases pending	Negotiated resolutions	Cases heard & decided	Members disciplined
47	10	11	5	14

The online Player Memo is at acbl.org/playermemo. An even easier version, streamlined for online play reports, is at acbl.org/bbomemo. Or send an email to recorder@acbl.org. At a minimum, indicate the BBO game number, date, board number and screen names of your opponents. If you've saved the deal to your BBO folder, you've got a URL you can paste into your email.



To save a deal or report suspicious activity on BBO, find the deal in your History tab. When the deal is in the bottom right corner of the screen, click on the triple bar within that section to bring up a menu of options. Click on Export. A new menu with five choices will appear: (1) Send to member, (2) Send abuse report, (3) Save deal as, (4) Handviewer link and (5) Hand editor. The Handviewer link provides a shortcut to the deal that you can copy and paste into an email or a player memo. Select Send abuse report to file a report with BBO. A more detailed illustration of this process will be shown next month in BBO Help Desk.