Running a Successful VuGraph for Your Event on

BridgeBase online

Step by Step Instructions for Being a VuGraph Operator

Contents

Introduction

The VuGraph function of Bridge Base Online (**BBO**) is becoming increasingly popular by organizers of national and international bridge events around the world. Users find it an excellent way of promoting bridge and highlighting the talents of the leading players in these world class events.

As BBO works to serve the bridge community in more and more exciting ways, we are gratified by the response we have received to our VuGraph feature. The demand has now outstripped our ability to attend all of these events and commentate on them. We have, however, found that the VuGraph system is easy to install, to understand, and to operate by almost anyone with an intermediate knowledge of computers and a passing knowledge of the game of bridge and the scoring systems in use in these kinds of competitions.

The simple steps found in this document should aid you in getting up and running, and in presenting your audience with an accurate, entertaining, and illuminating broadcast of the game that all of us love. If, upon working through the steps below, you find you are having some problems, please feel free to contact help at support@bridgebase.com.

Installation

First of all, if you are already using BBO to play bridge online or even just to kibitz, you already have most of what you need already loaded on your computer.

If you do not have BBO loaded on the computer you want to use for your VuGraph session, go to http://online.bridgebase.com/intro/download.php and follow the instructions to get the system installed onto your machine.

Even if you already have BBO loaded on the computer you want to use for your VuGraph session, it is advisable to ensure you have the **latest** version of BBO installed onto your machine as well.

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**IMPORTANT**	If you are going to use an existing installation of BBO, make sure you have your existing user name and password written down somewhere. If you set up a duplicate system, the BBO program will only remember the current password. Once you enter your VuGraph username and password, you will have to re-enter your regular username and password the next time you sign on to get back to your usual access.

Access

As a prospective VuGraph operator, we have provided you with a unique username and password for your VuGraph functions. These have already been installed into the system so you do not have to go in as a new user and, of course, this name and password gives you some special privileges. Your username and password were provided to you in the email that accompanied this document. **But be careful** - this password is case sensitive, so enter it with care.

A Trial Operation

In the e-mail that contained these instructions, there is a file called *viewgraph.lin*. Copy this demonstration file to the same subdirectory as your BBO program is located (possibly **c:\bridge base online**). This will give you some sample demo data to use in your first trials. We will talk about creating the actual user files later in this document.

You should have a screen icon for Bridge Base Online on your computer's desktop. Click on that icon and you will get a window that looks like this:
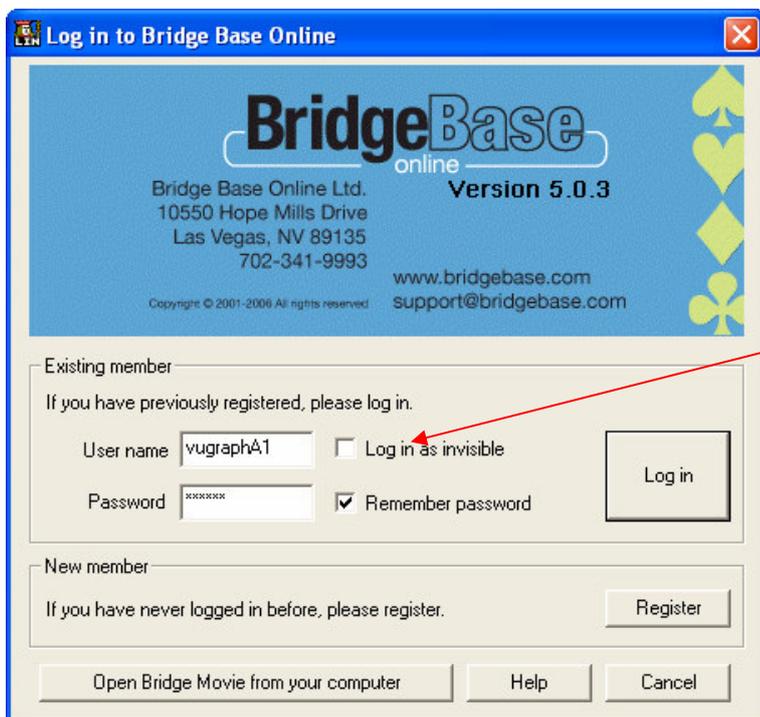
Enter your assigned VuGraph **User name** and **Password** into the spaces provided.

Make sure you tick '**Log in as invisible**' so your trials do not cause hundreds of users to flock to the VuGraph room to see your VuGraph. Using this sample data, you cannot create event and session information, but that, too, we will get to a little later.

Once you get to the home screen within BBO, click on the '**VuGraph (live broadcasts with commentary)** button.

Now you will see the first feature which is different as a VuGraph operator. Instead of a notice of the next VuGraph broadcast, you will see a box called **Start live broadcast**.

Click this button.

A window will open that asks if you wish to broadcast from the **OPEN** room or the **CLOSED** room or **BOTH**.
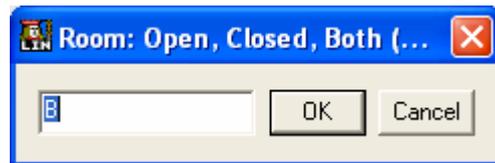

IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THE MEANINGS AND IMPLICATIONS OF EACH OF THESE CHOICES.

If you are running **single table coverage** of a match this means that you will be sole operator for this match. You should therefore choose '**B**' for **BOTH** because you will be entering the score manually for the *other room.* (We'll cover the mechanics of that later).

If you are running **dual table coverage** of a match, this means that both you and a friend or colleague will be covering both tables of the match. Whoever is covering the **OPEN ROOM** should log into BBO first and choose '**O**' for **OPEN**. When your second operator (the person covering the **CLOSED ROOM**) logs into the VuGraph Theatre they need to connect to your table in order to synchronize the VuGraph broadcast from both tables and ensuring the auctions and cardplay can be viewed for the other table.

To do so, the **second** operator needs to go to the VuGraph Theatre and look for the Open Room table of the match he wants to synchronize with:
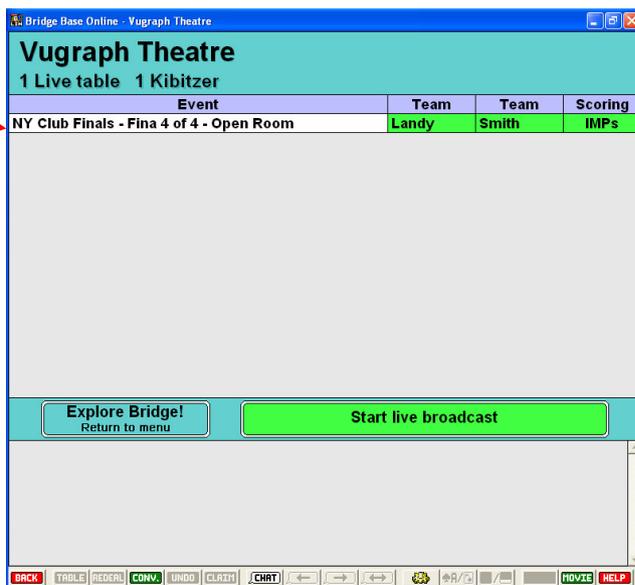
When the operator clicks on this match (in the column labeled **Event** in the example to the right) , a message will appear:

You **MUST** click on **YES** to synchronize the tables.

You are just about ready to get started. Before you do, it is important that you are comfortable with the layout of the screen. When you are in BBO, you can set up the screen to suit your own preferences.

 Opens the Options window.
  - **Turn sound off**.
  - The rest as you please.

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One of the options is to enable keyboard entry of the bids and cards played (tick **Keyboard entry for bidding/ play**). If you have good keyboard skills, you may find it quicker and easier than using a mouse.

During the bidding	Type a number followed by C, D, H, S or N.
	To **alert** a bid, type an **A** either before or after the number (or **Ctrl-A** after the entire bid).
	Type **P** for pass, **D** for Double or **R** for Redouble.

During the play   If the hand you are playing **can** follow suit, you need only type the number of the card. If the hand you are playing is leading to a trick, or is discarding then you will need to enter a **suit letter** then a **card number**.

Useful Hotkeys

Ctrl-C	Claim
Ctrl-R	Redeal
Ctrl-U	Undo
Ctrl-S	Opens the chat window

♠A/🂠   Displays either pictures of cards or the Index (A,K,Q…2).

◻/▢   Reduces or increases the chat area. Smaller chat area recommended.

When the players are seated, advise them that:
- Other than confirming the number of tricks claimed at the end of a hand, generally there will be no communication with the players during the match. The VuGraph operator shall not under any circumstances disclose the running match-score.
- It would be helpful if they fully release played cards and try not to obscure their cards when played.
- It would be helpful if the 4th hand playing to each trick leaves his or her card face up for one or two seconds.
- If they want to get up to leave the table during the match, make sure they comply with the tournament regulations and ensure that they do not walk behind or near the VuGraph operator.

Now all four hands will come up for the first board. You can enter the names of the four players in the correct positions by left clicking on their nameplate with your mouse and then entering the name.

The **Name on Screen** field is limited to 10 characters so you may need to do some judicious abbreviating.

The **Real Name** field has room for 30 characters, so you can insert the player's full name here.

E-mail address: we'd suggest you keep this field blank.

Other information: There's room for 99 characters to put in a brief biography or something nice about the player.

You will bid and play the cards for all four players. When it is a player's turn to bid you will be able to click on Pass, Double, Redouble, or a number from 1 to 7 and then a symbol for clubs, diamonds, hearts, spades or no trump.

At the end of the auction (three passes after the last bid), it is time to play the cards. Just click on the card you want to play and it will appear in the centre of the screen in front of the player just like you are looking at the table from above.

If the match is using screens, wait until both players on one side of the screen have made their bids or played their cards before entering them. One purpose of screens is to avoid letting the players on the other side of the screen know which player had a problem over a bid or play. If the players can hear your mouse click or even your keyboard entry, they may receive Unauthorized Information.
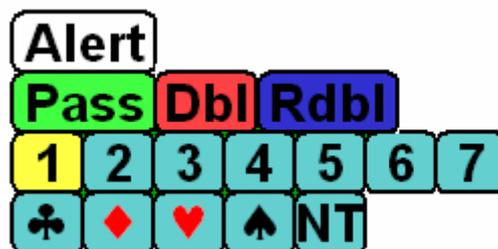

Try to show alerts. If you are using the mouse, just click on **Alert** before you enter the bid. After you have entered a bid, you can alert and explain it by clicking on the bid that shows in the bidding diagram and typing in the explanation.

IMPORTANT: It is NEVER necessary to double click in this program! Only single click. If you double click, you might make some mistakes

When a deal is finished, it will remain on the screen until you are ready for another deal. When that time comes, click on the **REDEAL** button on the program's toolbar.

A little window will appear. Type the letter O (as in open) plus the board number of the next board that should appear. If you are going in sequence, the next board should appear automatically and you simply click on '**OK**' for the board to appear.
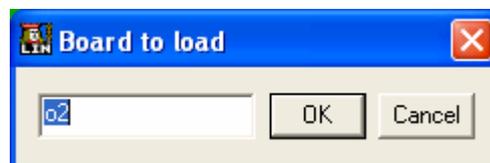

It is not good practice to put a board up on the VuGraph too long before play is initiated. While unlikely given the ethics of bridge players, it is possible that a player going off to the washroom might see all four hands on a VuGraph screen before sitting down to play.

UNDO: If you enter a wrong bid or card, you can use the **UNDO** button on the toolbar to take back the last bid or play made. This button can be used multiple times if necessary to get back to where you need to correct the mistake.

CLAIMS: If a player claims, click the [CLAIM] button on the toolbar. This will bring up the CLAIM box.

Always claim in terms of the declarer, even if it is a defender who claimed at the table. If the claim involves losing one or more tricks, you will need to adjust the claim using the **Less** button in the **Claim** box.
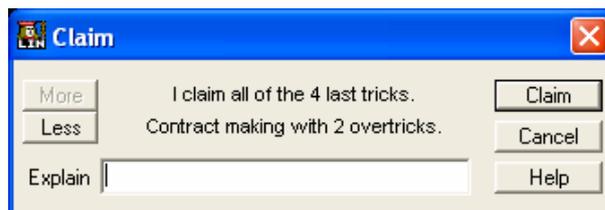
If you go too far you can adjust the claim upwards by using the **MORE** button. When you have it right, click on the **CLAIM** button in the CLAIM box to register the claim. Make sure the claim is correct and is accepted at the table before you enter it since it can only be reversed by manually changing the score in the **MOVIE** window.

LOST CONNECTION: About the worst thing that can happen during a show is if you lose your connection to the Internet or our server. This is very unlikely if you have a reliable ISP. If it happens, just log in again and return to the VuGraph Theatre. You will get a message like:

Say '**Yes**' if you were just disconnected.
If you ever see this message and you were not disconnected, say '**No**'.
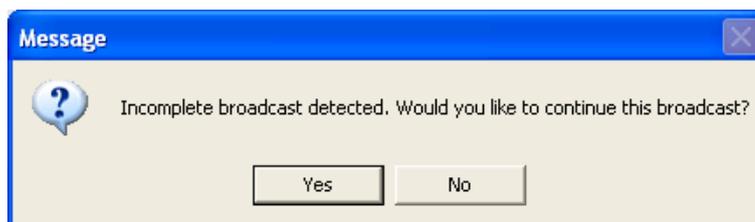
Ending the Broadcast

Single Table coverage: When your table finishes, check the **MOVIE** to make sure all the results have been entered, then close the table by clicking the **BACK** button.

Dual Table coverage: Do not close your table until the other, connected table has finished its last board as well. This will ensure the integrity of the outputted .lin (results) file is not damaged.

Troubleshooting

- The most common mistake that is made 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 re-enter the correct bids. The only time this will not work is when the auction has been completed. At that point, you will have to wait until the hand is over and correct the auction and score by clicking on the **MOVIE** button and correcting the score as described in page 10). Should that happen, explain to the audience what is really going on, then make a random claim and go to the movie to enter the correct contract and result.

- Another common mistake is to play the wrong card. The players often don't properly show you the card they've played and you have to guess (this is less critical with small cards than honours). 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 you played the wrong card, you can use **UNDO** to go back and fix it. If not, 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 they have no cards, just wait until the hand is over and then claim the correct 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.

- 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 it just didn't get entered. If you can determine the correct contract and result on the board, you can go to the movie, click on the board and enter the contract and result.

That's pretty much all there is to it. Please give the software a try when you get a chance - I think you will find that it is very easy to do all of this. There are a few 'finer points' discussed below that will make the broadcast more interesting and easier to manage, but it is best that you learn the basics first.

The Fine Points

Using Duplimate Files

We assume that you are using a Duplimate dealing machine to deal the cards for the event or have another way to get a computer file of the deal with a *.dup suffix. If you are not using a Duplimate machine, contact us at support@bridgebase.com and we will discuss alternate methods.

If you are using a Duplimate machine, you can instruct the Duplimate program, either using the native deal generator or something like the ACBL deal generator converted to Duplimate language, to give you a file with whatever file name you choose and the .dup extension. We have provided a sample .dup file as a companion file to the .lin file in the email attachments. It is called *sample.dup* and can be used for the next set of trials. We have supplied the *sample.dup* file for you to play with as well as the other files attached to the email that included these instructions.

To get that file into Bridge Base, follow these steps:

Click on the Bridge Base Icon on your screen just as if you were going to log in.

Instead of logging in, click on the button that says '**Open Bridge Movie from your computer**'.
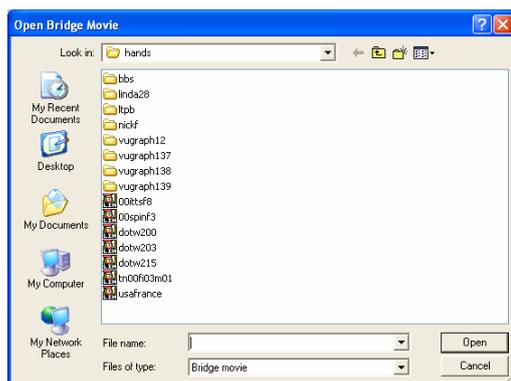
You will see a listing of files and a window that says file name. Enter the path to the test dup file, including the filename and extension (sample.dup). When you are actually doing the VuGraph, your deals may come to you on a floppy disc. In that case, you should type a:<filename>.dup. In this case, for example, if you have copied the test file to a floppy, which can be the easiest way to go, you need simply type, a:sample.dup.

When you click on OPEN you will see a little window titled **Name of Event**. Type the name of the event that you will be broadcasting in that window.
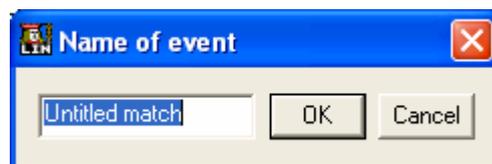
When you click on OK, you will get another window that asks for the **Name of Segment**. Most matches are divided into between 4 and 8 segments with comparative scoring after each segment. You probably want to start with Session 1 or Session 1 of 4 or something similar.
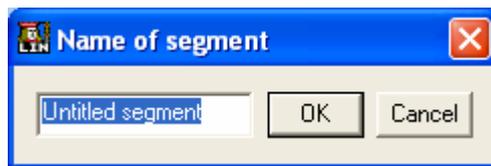
When you enter the name of this segment, you will see a window that allows you to select '**I**' for an IMP match or '**P**' for Pairs scoring.
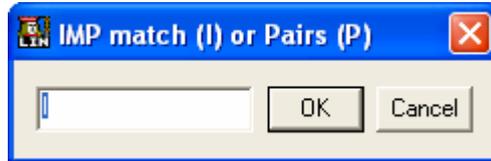
When that is selected (assuming you selected IMPs which is, of course, far the most common), you will be asked to enter the **Name of the home team** (this is the pair that sit North-South in the Open Room). Next you need to enter the **Name of the away team** (this is the pair that sit North-South in the Closed Room. If you are going to broadcast a pairs game, since the teams will be constantly changing, the next question is the number of the first board.
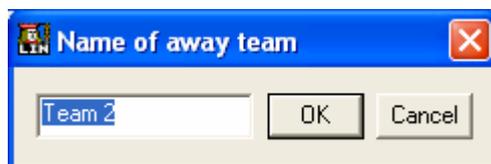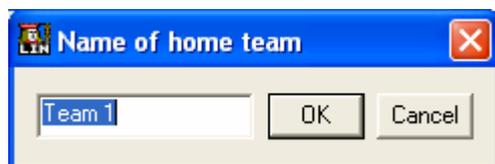
Next you can enter any IMP carryover for the home team (NS in the open room) and IMP carryover for the away team (EW in the open room). Remember the IMP carryover for the first session is, in most cases, zero for the first segment of the match (but not always). For the second and subsequent sessions, you need to current match score so that the running score remains accurate.
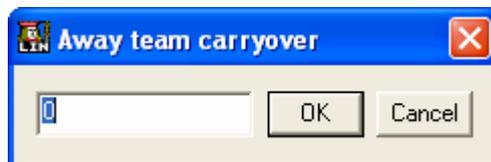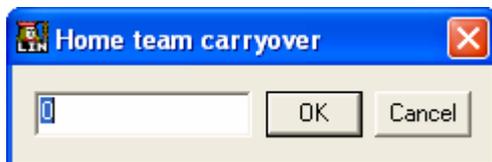
Finally, enter the **number of the first board** for this session.

You will now get a pre-match scorecard appear on your screen, looking something like this:

Now you can exit the program and log in as before. (Click on the screen icon, select Log In, enter your user name and your password, click enter;
(remember to use '*invisible*' **if you are practicing)**.

Entering the Closed Room Results

Sometimes it is not always possible to simultaneously broadcast both tables from the one match. You may either have not enough operators or you may prefer to show one table from two or more matches. In this case, you will need to manually input the results from the other table (these notes assume you will broadcast the Open Room and input the Closed Room results but it may be the other way around as well).

Usually a *runner* will provide you with the other room's results on a pick up slip. Entering these results takes only a few seconds but you will only have the opportunity to do it during a lull in play at your table.

Click on the **MOVIE** button (bottom right of screen).

This is the Open Room Scorecard – to be able to input scores from the Closed Room you need to switch over to the Closed Room.

Click on the **Closed Room** button (the black-filled rectangle at the top of the screen).

Notice how it says **Closed Room** in a white box in the **3rd** row of the scorecard now?

Click **anywhere** on the line for the board that you wish to enter results on.

A small window will appear that will say '**board x result**'.

Enter the results exactly in the following order:
Contract Level / Strain / Declarer Seat / any X or XX / Result

Some Examples:

- 4 Hearts by East making 5 would be entered as   4he+1

- 3 No Trump by North Doubled down two would be entered as   3nnx-2

- 6 Spades by West redoubled and making would be entered as   6swxx=

- A passed in hand is recorded as   pass

It may take a little time (and possibly a cheat sheet along the top of your monitor), to get the coding down. However, once you have it, it works very well. And, of course, the computer can accurately calculate the result and the IMP margin on each board and overall. If the board has been played in the closed room and entered, it will show up on the open room screen as a notation. Also, of course, as it becomes known what the IMP margin is, it will be calculated on a running score basis.

Allowing Commentators

One of the joys of watching a well run VuGraph presentation is to have expert commentators involved in the broadcast. The VuGraph operator can, of course, comment as the match proceeds, but he or she is likely to be too busy focusing on the play of the hand. You will get much better quality commentary if you have several commentators on line. They need not be at the playing site.

Often, very good, internationally ranked players are quite willing to serve as commentators from their own homes or offices, sometimes on the other side of the world. Bridge Base has a roster of such players and we can usually find you several commentators if you wish. In addition, some local flavour can be added if commentators know the players and their tendencies and records.

Because unsolicited comments are distracting, VuGraph does not allow comments from all viewers. To permit a commentator to make comment online, do the following:

Ask your commentator to log into the VuGraph room just like a kibitzer. They can send you a personal message (to your VuGraph operator ID) to advise you that they are ready.

Find their name in the kibitzers list and **right click** on the name. You will see a very simple and self descriptive choice: **gag** and **ungag**. All kibitzers default to being gagged which prevents them from speaking to the entire audience. Just click on **ungag** and your commentator is ready to go.

Take care not to ungag too many people or your broadcast will become a confusion of comments. Four or five commentators are usually sufficient.

Some commentators enjoy interacting with the audience via private questions and comments. As long as they have **+++** in their ID profile, they can communicate with people in the audience.

You need to take some care in selecting your commentators. After several years' experience we have discovered that the best commentators are:
- Able to type quickly (and accurately!).
- People who will not be critical or rude when players make mistakes (or try to prove how much smarter they are than the players). A good commentator must always try his best to make the players look good.
- Experienced players with reasonable bridge skills.
- Familiar with the players. Commentators who know the players can chat about their style, their experience with their partner, notable things they have done in the past, and the like.
- Someone who can think of something to chat about when the play is slow. In top competition, the misplay of a single card can mean the match, so players often sit for several minutes working out the options. This means that good chatters are sometimes good commentators.

Summary

Now you are ready to go. Take some time before the event to make sure everything is working. Remember to do it as invisible so you do not confuse other members. If you have problems, remember to write to or support@bridgebase.com but do it well before the event. Trying to fix problems as play begins is not likely to give you a lot of success.

Oh, and by the way, once you have everything set to go, do send us information about your event and when the VuGraph is scheduled to operate so we can tell the world. We would love to promote your broadcast to our entire membership online.

Best of Luck
Sincerely,

Fred G

Fred Gitelman
President, Bridge Base Online Inc.