

JTS BRIDGE



BIDDING SYSTEM

JTS Talking Bridge Bidding is a data driven bidding engine that incorporates some unique features. It allows you to modify or create complete bidding systems. It is intended for beginners or average bridge players. You won't have to complain that the program doesn't bid like you would, because you can change it. It also simulates a real bridge game, where bids are made verbally, thereby giving you the chance to practice bidding in a more natural way. It is much easier to switch to a real bridge game after practicing on this computer game. You must register to get the utilities for changing/creating bidding rules.

With this Shareware version, to take advantage of the sound capabilities, you need to have a SoundBlaster sound card and Monologue for Windows installed and the \Monologw directory must be in the Dos Path, or the files in the \ Monologw directory can be copied into this directory, but in any case, this program must be able to find the Monologue files. The registered version comes with it's own speech synthesizer, so it won't need Monologue and it should run with any sound card installed in Windows.

CONTENTS

The Menu System

Modifying Opening Bids

Entering User Defined Hands

Register This Program

The Bidding Box

Modifying Responding Bids

Playing All Hands Manually

Playing All Hands Manually

You play cards by clicking on the **sweet spot** on each card with the left mouse button. For hands displayed horizontally, the **sweet spot** is the left 1/2 inch of the card. For vertically displayed hands it is the top 1/4 inch of the card. After each trick is played, the program will advise who is to lead next (the last winner). The program keeps track of which hand won the trick and will pile the tricks in the appropriate spot for each team. When six tricks are won by a team, the trick pile spacing will change, so it is easier to see the tricks that count toward a contract.

The shareware program will not force you to follow suit however, so it is your responsibility to ensure that the correct suit is played by any hand.

In this shareware version of the program there is not a "take back" key, so once a card is played, it will remain there. You can replay the hand at any point though, if you find you made a mistake. The registered version allows you to "unplay" a card by clicking the right mouse button and it forces you to follow suit.

Entering User Defined Hands

When you select this option from the **Deal/Bid** menu you will see an input screen in which you can enter all the cards for all the hands. If you click on the **Modify Current Deal** button, you will see all the cards in the current deal, and you can change any or all of the cards in each hand. This will give you the opportunity to try small changes in card locations in testing a bidding system. You can use this option to enter hands printed in publications such as the newspaper. Cards are entered using letters for cards higher than nines, T = Ten, and the single digit numbers for the cards 2 - 9. Leave a space between each card value, and use the tab key to move between suits and hands. (Shift/Tab moves back).

When you select **OK** or press the **Enter** key, the program will check your entries to see if there are any duplicate cards or cards missing. If the hands are valid, the program returns to the main screen with this user defined hand loaded as the current hand. You can then select **Rebid/Play Hand** from the **Deal/Bid** menu and begin bidding this hand. Remember, you can save any current hand to a file for later use by selecting **Save Deal** from the **File** menu item.

The Menu System

File	Talk	Deal/Bid	Show	Utilities	Slam Conventions
Help					

The main menu items above, can be selected by placing the mouse cursor on the item and then clicking. They can also be accessed using the keyboard by Pressing and holding the **Alt** key and then pressing the letter underlined in the menu item. Items in pulldown menus can also be accessed by the keyboard, by simply pressing the underlined key shown in the item (there is no need to press the **Alt** key in pulldown menus.)

File (Pulldown menu)

Load Deal - Through a file selection menu, you can reload a deal that was previously saved. You can then rebid/play the hands.

Save Deal - Allows you to save the current deal to a file for later retrieval.

Print Deal - The current deal including all the hands can be printed including the bidding history so that different bidding systems can be compared. The printed deals can also be taken to a duplicate bridge club so the bidding system can be tested against human players as well. The registered version also allows you to print the play history if you have played out the hand first.

Quit Program - Exits the game and returns to Windows.

Talk (Pulldown menu)

Sound On/Off - Toggles the sound off or on. When you started this program, you selected yes or no for a sound card. If you selected yes, the sound is automatically turned on, to turn it off you must toggle this switch by clicking on it once. You can turn the sound back on again by once again clicking on this menu item. The setting will remain through the current session only.

Minimal Talk - Normal mode. Only talks when necessary (bids only).

Very Chatty - Talks much more. Comments on most menu selections and insults you occasionally.

Deal/Bid (Pulldown menu)

Random Deal - Normal randomized deal - millions of possible hands. The deal will automatically rotate around the table with South dealing first at start up.

Best to North - Deals randomly, then picks the best hand and gives it to North to play. North's old hand is then given to the player that contributed the best hand.

Best to South - Same as above but best goes to South.

Best to East - Ditto.

Best to West - Ditto.

Game Points N/S - Deals randomly, then gives the best hands to North and South, then counts the points. If North and South have a combined point count of 26 points or more, the deal stands, otherwise the program redeals.

Slam Points N/S - Same as above but points must be greater than 32 combined points.

Part Score Hand - Deals randomly, then checks North and South point count. If points are greater than 22, it redeals.

User Specified - An input screen is presented and you can **enter** all hands. The hands can then be bid and/or saved to be bid again later. This allows you to enter hands from other publications, and use them to test the bidding system.

Rebid/Play Hand - Starts the bidding engine using the current hands in memory. The **Dealer** is selected from the sub menu that appears when this item is selected. An additional sub menu is presented where you can select which hand should be the Dealer, and therefore the person to start the bidding.

Replay Hand - Allows you to replay all the hands manually. It may be useful if you played the wrong card on a trick and want to start over. It won't be used as much in the registered

version as a card can be taken back by clicking the right mouse button.

Shift Hands Left - Moves all the **hands** one position clockwise. This allows you to bid the hand from a different perspective. Four shifts returns the hands to their original positions.

Select Dealer - You can force the **Dealer** to be any one of the positions, to override the automatic rotation invoked by the program.

Set Vulnerability - Presents a submenu that allows you to make neither, either or both teams vulnerable.

Show (Pull-down menu)

Bidding History - Shows the **bidding history** for the hand. Rather than show this history at all times, the program tries to play like a real game of bridge, where you must remember the verbal bids if sounds are turned on. It is here for forgetful ones.

Play History - Only available in registered version, where it will show all the cards that have been played to each trick to date.

Display All Hands - Repaints all hands to the screen, ready for manually playing. Useful if you went to check a help file while cards are displayed on the screen, as the screen will be cleared upon exiting help.

Utilities (Pull-down menu)

Configuration - Only available in the registered version, where an input screen is presented allowing you to set values for startup, including the sound toggle, slam convention, and select one of five different card designs.

Change Bidding Rules

Modify Opener Rules - Allows you, through an input screen to modify the rules used to determine opening bids. A selection screen of *OBR files is presented. **Using Modify Openers Screen**

The buttons for saving, adding or deleting a rule are disabled in this unregistered version.

Caution! - The format (spacing etc.) of these files must remain exactly the same on each line, for the program to properly process the information. No formatting characters are allowed, always make a backup of the file before editing.

Modify Responder Rules - Allows you to modify the *RBR files which contain the rules for bidding by the **Responder** to the **Opener**. The same editing and general rules apply as in modifying opener rules. **Using Modify Responses Screen**

Make a Set of Bidding Rules Current - Allows the you through a file selection screen to select a previously created/modified set of bidding rules. This feature is only available in the registered version.

Drills: - In the registered version a number of drills are available to allow you to practice point counting, leading, and play planning. These drills can be run as quickly as you want, and will help you develop bridge skills much faster than playing out each hand. These drills are probably worth the cost of the program by themselves.

Slam Conventions (Pull-down menu)

Blackwood - The default convention for this shareware demo.

Gerber - On registering, this option will load a 4 club (Gerber) set of rules for slam bidding.

None - On registering, this option will cause the program to not consider any special rules for slam bidding, but instead it will use the regular bidding rules as defined by you or others.

Help (Pull-down menu)

Windows Help - General help provided by Windows.

JTS Bridge Main Help - Help specific to this program (this file).

Menu Help - The main menu is described in detail.

Bid Box Help - Help on how to operate the buttons in the Bidding Box. This topic can also be selected from the Main Help file.

Opening Bid Rules Help - Help on how to modify opening bid rules. This file can also be selected from the Main Help file.

Responding Bid Rules Help - Help on how to modify responding bid rules. This file can also be selected from the Main Help file.

Entering User Defined Hands - Explains how you can enter your own hands into a deal. You can copy hands from other publications.

Manually Playing all Hands - Explains how to select cards to play, etc.

About JTS - Copyright information.

Show Variables - Selecting this option caused the program to display/save certain information about the hands. Complete information on how this data can be used to test bidding systems will be provided to registered users of this program.

Display Bid Rules Info. - When this option is toggled on, the program will display a small window showing point count and other information just before each responding bid is made. This is also a tool for developing bidding systems.

How to Register - Explains how to print the registration form and where to send it, together with the registration fee.

The Bidding Box



The bidding box is designed to be used by a keyboard or the mouse. Each button can be pressed by placing the mouse cursor on it and clicking, or simply by pressing the key underlined on each button label.

The button labeled "The Bid" will display the bid as it is built.

To build a bid, press a number and then a suit or "No Trump"; or press "Pass", "Double" or "ReDouble". Check the bid as displayed, if it is right, press the "OK Make the Bid" button, or press Enter on the keyboard. You can rebuild the bid by pressing another number before pressing Enter.

The "Computer Bid" button will cause the program to make the bid for you. You do not have to press any other buttons if you press this one.

The "Analyze" button will present a small window showing various statistics about your hand and your partner's hand. This information can then be used to determine your bid.

The "Rebid" button clears the bid history, and restarts the bidding engine.

The "Display Bids" button toggles the bid history display on or off.

With any Dialog Box, including the Bidding Box, if a button label is highlighted with a little dotted box, you can also press the space bar to activate the button.

When you are finished bidding, the registered version of the program will display a play strategy. This will include suggestions for the Declarer as to which suits and cards should be finessed, established, or made ruffable. This tutor will also recommend which hand should lead for the finesses, etc.

Cards are entered by using numbers and letters to represent their values. A= ace, T= ten, 9 = nine, 2 = deuce. A single space is left between each card. You can move between suits with the tab key. Shift/Tab moves back. After all cards are entered, select OK or cancel. Ok causes the program to check the cards entered to make sure no cards are duplicated or missed. The program then loads the deal into memory and the user can bid/play the hand. REMEMBER, you can't move a card from one hand to another without exchanging another card as the hands will not be balanced.

Modifying Opening Bid Rules

When you select this option, two separate screens are presented. The first screen allows you to modify the **distribution** points used by the program.

The first two lines are length and/or short suit values. Most of the time you would probably only use length or short values, but you can have amounts in both if you wish.

The middle two lines are specific to the **Responder's** points. If Responder has unusually long support, you can allow extra points for 6 or 5 card support. If Responder has at least 4 card support, the values for short suits are used instead of length values as short suits become important when a trump suit is known. The values in line 4 will be substituted for the length values in lines 1 or 2 for the **Responder's** hand only. Any length points assigned to the **Opener's** hand will remain.

Line 5 allows you to put in a value for having all aces or none.

Line 6 tells the program how many cards are needed to open generally. If you are developing a 5 card major system, you would put the number 5 for Major Suit.

The second screen is the information needed to make an opening bid. The top half of the screen is devoted to point **ranges** for bid types. This gives you the flexibility to create a very customized bidding system. You can have weak 2 bids with strong 2 clubs, weak 4 bids, weak or strong 1 club, or straight natural bidding points, etc..

The bottom half of the screen is devoted to the **rules/patterns** used by the program to select a bid. These rules are contained in a plain ascii text file called with the extension *.OBR. The active file used by the program is named "CURRENT.OBR".

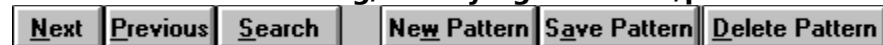
The rules themselves contain a mandatory **bid**, the suit lengths with qualifiers, and a card pattern for each suit. Only information that effects the bid needs to be shown here. If the value of cards in the suit have no effect on the bid, then the pattern can be blank.

The bid is the bid that will be used by the program if a hand matches the lengths and patterns shown.

The program will only search the bids of hands that match the point ranges shown on the first screen. For example if a hand had 16 high card points, the program would search all 1NT bids first, and if it didn't find a match (balanced hand) it would search all 1 of a suit bids for a match. If a hand had 8 points, the program would search for a pre-emptive bid match, and then pass if not found.

The program searches sequentially through the rules, so the order of the rules is critical. Generally, position the most specific rules first, with more general rules next and default (blank) rules last. A rule with no length or pattern information will always be matched successfully.

The buttons for viewing/modifying the rules/patterns.



Next - Displays the next rule.

Previous - Displays the previous rule.

Search - Type in a bid to locate in the BID edit box, and press this button to find and display the first rule for that bid.

New Pattern - Clears the display, allowing a new rule to be inserted at the current position.

Save Pattern - This button must be pressed to save any changes to a rule. The changes will be stored to memory, and saved to the file only if the OK button is pressed when all editing is finished.

Delete Pattern - Deletes the current pattern and saves it to the file when the OK button is pressed.

Modifying Responding Bid Rules

When you select this option, another input screen similar to the Modify Opening Rules screen is presented. The first line of information contains the bid made by your partner, the first suit bid by your partner, if any. Also shown is the first suit bid by you if any, or the best trump suit if after the third round of bidding.

The keys used to view/modify responses rules.



These buttons perform the same functions as the ones in Modify Openers, except that to search for a bid, you enter a new Partner Bid in the top left hand corner of the screen, click on the search button, and the program will then find the first bid rule for that Partner Bid. The suit length and pattern fields are also identical to Modify Openers.

The bottom of the screen is different, as the bid that will be made is determined by the point count of the hand. These points values can also be modified by editing BRIDGE.CFG. Don't try to modify this file until you register and receive complete instructions on how the file formatting works.

If the program is looking for a bid from the partner of the Opener, the point counts will be the hand values for Responders. If the program is looking for a rebid from the Opener, the point values will be opening hand values.

After the first two rounds of bidding, the point values used are total points estimated for both hands, based on the previous bids.

The last line shows a forced bid. This bid is made if the program finds a Pass bid in the correct point range field, but the partner's bid was forcing for one round, or forcing to game.

The text files used by this screen are:

Respons1.rbr, Respons2.rbr, Response3.rbr

Rebid2.rbr, Rebid3.rbr

Blackwd.rbr (and other slam bidding rules when available)

With the number in the file name representing the bid round being considered except that after round 3, the round 3 rule file is used.

The Dealer determines who bids first. If South deals, then South bids first, etc. The dealer is normally rotated one position clockwise by the program automatically with each deal.

The bidding history is a small window that appears in the top left hand corner of the screen. It shows all the bids made by the players to date. It is shown or removed by selecting the **Show** then **Bid History** menu item or pressing the **Display Bids** button in the **Bidding_Box**.

The distribution points are values assigned to a hand for length or shortage in any suit but trump. They are added to the **high card points** to get the total points of a hand for bidding purposes. If honor cards are unprotected (ie: singleton King, doubleton with Queen, doubleton with Jack), the program will subtract the high card value of the card and reflect this in the distribution points value.

The high card points are assigned by the program in the following manner: Aces=4, Kings=3, Queens=2, Jacks=1. If any of these cards are unprotected (singleton King, doubleton Queen, etc.), these values are subtracted in the **Distribution Points** section.

The Responder is the partner of the player who opened the bidding.

The Opener is the player who first opened the bidding for the deal.

To register, print this topic, complete the form below, and send it together with \$25.00 US or \$30.00 CAN for each copy, plus \$5.00 shipping and handling, to the address below. Checks, cheques, and money orders are OK, sorry, no credit card numbers.

REGISTRATION FORM FOR JTS BRIDGE BIDDING SOFTWARE

NAME: _____

COMPANY: _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE/PROV.: _____

COUNTRY: _____

POSTAL CODE/ZIP: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

FTP SITE WHERE YOU DOWNLOADED THE PROGRAM: _____

Number of copies: _____ @ \$30.00 US = Total: _____

@ \$35.00 CAN = Total: _____

B.C.Residents add 7% _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Send To:

JTS MICRO CONSULTING LTD.
10931 LYTTON ROAD, RR#4
LADYSMITH, B.C.
CANADA
V0R 2E0

A disk containing a customized program and supporting data files will be mailed to you immediately. If you have any questions about registering, send an e-mail message to the writer at: tslemko@island.net.

