

# JTS BRIDGE



# BIDDING SYSTEM

JTS Bridge Bidding is a data driven bidding engine that allows the user to modify or create complete bidding systems. Play drills and strategies are included to sharpen skills.

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## **Your Licence to Use This Program**

JTS Micro Consulting Ltd. hereby grants the user named in the title of the main window of this program, the right to use this program on one computer at one time only. The program cannot be rented or sold to anyone else. The program cannot be loaned to someone else unless the user named in the title of the main window removes this program and all the files associated with this program from his/her computer first. This program is not warranted in any way. The user is authorized to create or use other data files to control the operation of the program, but JTS Micro Consulting Ltd. accepts no responsibility for the operation of the program when other data files are used.

## **Playing All Hands Manually**

You play cards by clicking on any exposed part of a card with the left mouse button. 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 program will force you to follow suit by not allowing a card from a different suit to be played, if other cards of the lead suit are in the hand.

If you realize that you played the wrong card, even if it was the right suit, you can take it back before playing another card, by clicking anywhere on the screen with the RIGHT mouse button. Once another card has been played on it, a card cannot be taken back. If you later discover that you played the wrong card, you can always replay the hand.

## 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

<b>File</b>	<b>Deal/Bid</b>	<b>Show</b>	<b>Utilities</b>	<b>Slam Conventions</b>	<b>Register</b>
<b>Help</b>					

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.) Items in pulldown menus can also be selected by using the arrow keys to move the highlight bar, and then pressing **Enter** to select the highlighted item.

### **File (Pulldown menu)**

**Load a Deal** - Allows the user through a file selection menu to reload a deal that was previously saved. The user can then rebid/play the hands.

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

**Delete a Deal** - Allows the user to delete a previously saved deal by selecting it from a selection menu.

**Print Deal** - The current deal including all the hands can be printed including the bidding and playing 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.

**Quit Program** - Exits the game and returns to Windows.

### **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 the user can **enter** all hands. The hands can then be bid and/or saved to be bid again later. This allows the user 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.

**Replay Hand** - Mainly for use when the complete system is in place, but it does allow the user to go back to play the hands manually if he/she made a mistake and wants to start over.

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

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

**Set Vulnerability** - The user can select from another popup menu, whether to make neither or both teams vulnerable, or make only one of the teams vulnerable. This is only used by the program to allocate vulnerability points in the bidding process.

### **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. It is here for forgetful ones. This menu item will also have a play history selection in the completed product.

**Play History** - Shows the **Play History** for the hand. You can use this option to review the play of the hand at any point in the play. This history will also be printed if you select "Print a Deal" from the file options menu, but only if the hand has been manually played first.

**ReDisplay 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)**

**Card Designs** - Allows the user to select one of 5 different card back designs.

#### **Bidding Rules:**

**Modify Opener Rules** - Allows the user through an input screen to modify the rules used to determine opening bids. A selection screen of \*.OBR files is presented. After the user becomes familiar with the \*.OBR text files, used by this module, he/she may find that it is easier and certainly quicker to amend the files directly using a PLAIN TEXT editor. **Using Modify Openers Screen**

**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. See the file "RULES.TXT" for more information.**

**Modify Responder Rules** - Allows the user to modify the RESPONSE.\* 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. These files can also be edited with a PLAIN TEXT editor. **Using Modify Responses Screen**

**Make Bidding Rules Current** - Allows the user through a file selection screen to select a previously created/modified set of bidding rules. These files are then copied into CURRENT.OBR, RESPONSE.1, REBID.1, ETC., overwriting whatever was there previously. These files are then used by the program to make bids.

**Opening Hand Point Drill** - A dialog box is presented that lets you rapidly deal and count opening hand points and compare the result to the computer's count.

**Responding Hand Point Drill** - A dialog box is presented that lets you rapidly deal and count responding hand points with different partner bid suits, and compare the result to the computer's count.

**Opening Lead Drill** - A dialog box is presented that lets you rapidly deal and pick an opening lead with the assumption that the hand to your right is the declarer. You can then check to see what lead the computer would make.

**Play Planning Drill** - A dialog box is presented that lets you rapidly deal and determine how the hand should be played. You can then see some suggestions offered by the computer. The purpose of this drill is to get you in the habit of planning your plays before playing any cards. You probably won't agree with the computer's suggestions many times, but that is OK, as the computer is not very smart.

### **Slam Conventions (Pull-down menu)**

**Blackwood** - The "4 NoTrump" convention, activated by a set of bidding rules.

**Gerber** - The "4 club" convention, also activated by loading a set of bidding rules.

**None** - When this option is highlighted the program will not consider any special rules for slam bidding, but instead it will use the regular bidding rules as defined by you or others. REMEMBER, all bidding rules, including these slam rules can be amended, so

you can create an entirely new set of slam bidding rules. You must keep the same file names (GERBER.RBR, BLACKWD.RBR) however, and the key bid for any system using the Blackwood file is 4NT and the key bid for any Gerber file is 4C. All the subsequent bids can be modified.

### **Register**

Select this item to enter a registration code supplied by JTS Micro Consulting Ltd. The program will then be registered for continuing use.

### **Help (Pull-down menu)**

**Windows Help** - General help provided by Windows.

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

**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.

**Open 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 to use the input screen to manually type in a deal from other publications.

**Manually Playing all Hands** - Explains how to play cards for each trick, and how to unplay one, if necessary.

**Your License** - Explains the license you have to operate this program.

**Copyright Notice** - Copyright and system requirement information.

**Show Variables** - Selecting this option caused the program to display/save certain information about the hands. This data can be used to test bidding systems.

**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.

## 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 program will display a suggested 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. Some of the suggested plays may be redundant and not applicable if other options are exercised, but the computer is pretty stupid, and it will show you all possible plays, even if they are not the best or even if they are not practical. The files it uses to analyse have the \*.PR extension, and they can be modified by you to improve the performance. See the appropriate the file "RULES.TXT" for instructions on how to modify rule data files.



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. The user 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..

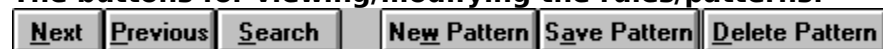
The bottom half of the screen is devoted to the **rules/patterns** used by the program to select a bid. These rules are contained in a plain ascii text file called with the extension \*.OBR. The active file used by the program is named "CURRENT.OBR".

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 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, and the first suit bid by you if any.

### 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. Be careful not to change spacing in the file.

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:

**Response.1, Response.2, Response.3**

**Rebid.2, Rebid.3**

**Blackwd.rbr, Gerber.rbr.**

With the number in the file extension 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 play history is a small window that appears in the top left hand corner of the screen. It shows all the cards that have been played to date. It is shown or removed by selecting the **Show** then **Play History** menu item.

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, 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.



