# Bridgemate Play

## Create your own hybrid bridge club



## Instruction manual for bridge clubs

# Content

# Introduction

This document describes how to organize a hybrid bridge club session using the new platform "Bridgemate Play". Bridgemate Play is a joint product developed by Bridgemate and Pianola, and allows bridge clubs to create a true hybrid bridge game with offline sections and an online section which are played and scored in real time as one event.

Bridgemate Play extends your usual club game to the online environment. An online section can be added to create a hybrid club setting in which online players and face-to-face players play simultaneously, and their scores and rankings are compared and calculated in real time as one seamless game. Bridgemate Play hybrid club games are possible with any scoring program that supports Bridgemate. This document is designed to give you a complete overview of how to set up a hybrid game. At the final page of this document, you find a convenient checklist which helps you throughout the process of setting up your Bridgemate Play hybrid club game.

# One-time only preparations

Before you start setting up your first Bridgemate Play game, make sure you have made the following preparations:

### Create a Bridgemate club account

The club must have a Bridgemate club account. If the club does not have a Bridgemate club account yet, create it as follows:

- Go to https://www.bridgemate.com/app/club-login/
- Click on "Create an account"
- Complete all details as accurate as possible and press "Submit". An email is sent with the Bridgemate club account number to the specified email address. Make sure you remember the password that you have entered.

### Complete the Bridgemate club account settings

Go to https://www.bridgemate.com/app/club-login/ and log in with the Bridgemate club account number that you have received by email, and your password. After you have successfully logged in:

- Click on "Club information – General info" and complete accurately all information and click on "Save". Make sure you set the correct time zone!
- Click on "App configuration" and enable "Use Bridgemate app" and click on "Save". Go to the bottom of the screen and write down the 'app verification code'. If you use the Bridgemate app together with Bridgemate Play, you can further configure the other settings for the Bridgemate app. See the manual "Bridgemate app – manual for clubs" for more information.

### Mark a player as Tournament Director (TD)

Players must register first with the club. See the documentation "Bridgemate Play – Information for players" for more information. The person that acts as a TD in the online game must also register first as a player with the club. Once this person has registered with the club, go to section "Player registrations" and mark this player as "Manager/TD".
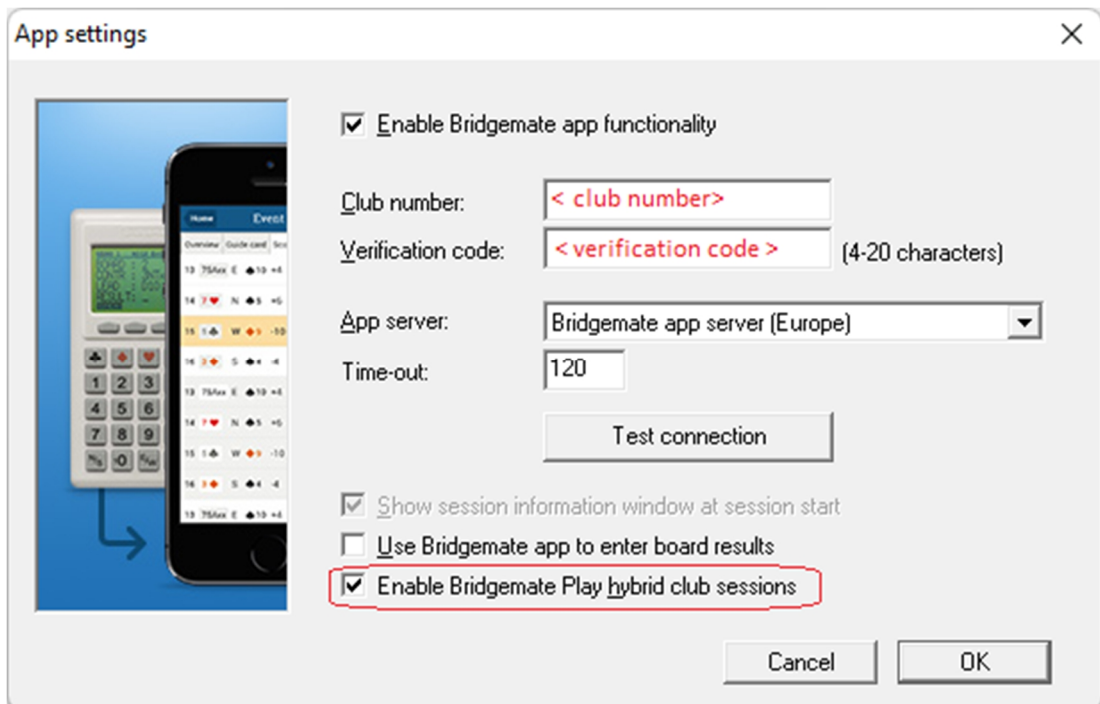
### Install Bridgemate Control Software 3.9.6 or later

Bridgemate Control Software 3.9.6 or later must be used on the club's scoring computer. This program can be downloaded from:

https://support.bridgemate.com/en/support/solutions/articles/44001826956-download-latest-bridgemate-control-software

## Configuration of Bridgemate Control Software (BCS)

Start Bridgemate Control Software (BCS) from the Windows Start menu by clicking on the search bar on your Windows taskbar and enter "bridgemate" (or press the Windows key on your keyboard and then type "bridgemate"). Bridgemate Control Software will appear. Click on the icon to launch the program.

- Go to Tools à Options à App settings. You see the following window:



- Tick checkbox "Enable Bridgemate app functionality", fill in your Bridgemate club number and Verification Code which you have found at the "App configuration" section in your Bridgemate club account page. Note that the verification code is NOT the same as the password that you use to log into your Bridgemate club account.
- Tick checkbox "Enable Bridgemate Play hybrid club sessions".
- Press "Test connection". You should see the message "The connection to the Bridgemate app server has been successfully established." If you don't see this message, then check the club number and verification code, and make sure your computer is connected to the internet.
- Press "OK" to close this window and to store your Bridgemate club credentials.

At the start of each session, you are now prompted to specify the section that is played online. Should you want to stop using Bridgemate Play, simply disable this option.

# Further requirements

There are a few more things you should know before starting your first Bridgemate Play game:

- A stable, high-speed internet connection is required. The club computer (the computer running Bridgemate Control Software) continuously uploads information to the Bridgemate cloud server system, and a poor internet connection dramatically impairs your Bridgemate Play experience. Dial-up connections are not recommended. Using 3G/4G internet dongles or mobile phone wireless hotspots are usually not a problem, but make sure your data plan is sufficient to cover the upload.
- Minimum of four pairs in an online game. As in a face-to-face game, there must be at least four pairs (eight players) participating in an online game in order to run it.
- Use pre-dealt boards. To create a fully hybrid game where online scores are compared and calculated with face-to-face scores, the face-to-face game muse use pre-dealt boards. The hand records of these pre-dealt boards must be used in the online section as well by either uploading them in your scoring program or in Bridgemate Control Software before the game starts.

# Overview of the procedure to set up a hybrid game

After you have completed the one-time preparations, you follow below steps for each Bridgemate Play hybrid game:

### 1. Create the online part of the hybrid game

Each hybrid game begins with creating the online part of the game first. This can be done days or weeks in advance. When creating the online game, you specify the date and time of the game, whether it requires pre-registration, the type of game and the tournament director.

### 2. Let players join the online game (with pre-registration if needed)

After the online game has been created, online players can start registering for the game (if pre-registration is enabled), and joining the lobby when the game is about to start and forming partnerships. Online players can use any PC, laptop or tablet with an internet connection to join the game.

### 3. Confirm the number of pairs in the online game and set up the game in your scoring program

When all online pairs are formed and ready to play, entrance to the online lobby is closed and the complete game – face-to-face section(s) and online section – is set up in the scoring program. Section(s) for the face-to-face game are created, as well as a section for the online game. The movements for all sections are selected, hand records are imported if your scoring program allows this, and the game is set to be scored across the field.

### 4. Start the Bridgemate system and begin the hybrid game

The next step is to start the Bridgemate system from your scoring program. Upon starting Bridgemate Control Software, you specify which section is played online and how many minutes a round will last. Hand records are now imported in case your scoring program doesn't allow this. The hybrid game is now automatically started and all sections are ready to play.

### 5. Process information for the hybrid game

Keep your computer and Bridgemate Control Software running and all data is automatically and instantly shared between Bridgemate Play and the Bridgemates. Bridgemate Control Software collects all the information and passes it on to your scoring program.
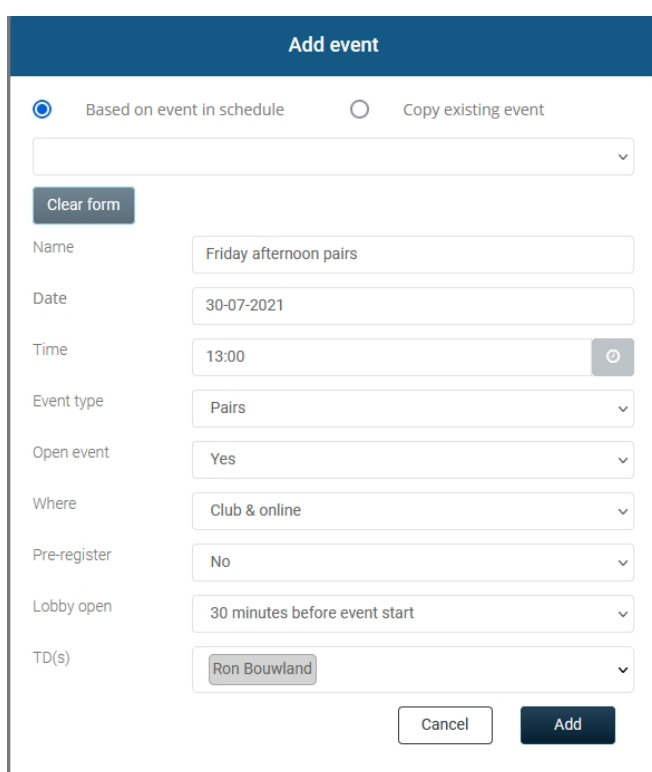
The next chapters explain each step in detail.

# Create the online part of the hybrid game

## Start the online part of a new hybrid game

Each hybrid session must be created in the Bridgemate club account panel first. This can be done days or weeks before the actual event date. By creating the online part of the hybrid game, you create a virtual playing area for your club, where the online players meet each other at the specified date and time. Follow the steps below to create the online part of the hybrid game:

1. Go to https://www.bridgemate.com/app/club-login/ and log in with your Bridgemate club account number and password.
2. Click on "Online events".
3. Click on "Create new event". The following window appears:



4. If you have completed your event schedule in the "Club information" -> "Event schedule" section, you can select an event from the drop-down list to fill in certain information automatically. If you want to create an online game based on an earlier event, select "Copy existing event" and select the previous event from the list. Only the last ten events are displayed. If you don't want to use any previous information, just press "Clear form" to clear any data and fill out the form from scratch.
5. Fill in the event details:
   Name: This is the name of the online part of the hybrid game.
   Date: The date of the hybrid game.
   Time: The time the hybrid game is scheduled to start.
   Event type: The type of game that will be played. You can choose Pairs, IMP or Cross-IMP.
   Open event: Specifies whether the game is only for club members or also for non-club

members.

Where: The game can be played as fully hybrid (online and club) or online only. Both types are organised in the same way, but a full hybrid game has one section online plus one or more sections offline at the club, whereas online only games have just one section, which is played online.

Pre-register: If players need to register upfront in order to participate, set this field to Yes.

Registration start/end: When Pre-register is enabled, specify when registration is open to players. Players must register within this period to be able to play in the online game.

Lobby open: The number of minutes (between five and sixty) before the scheduled start time that the lobby opens to players.

TD: The TD for the online part of the game. The TD must be a registered player listed in "Player registrations" and marked as tournament director. The TD can be a playing or non-playing TD.

6. Press "Add" to create the online game. If the game is within the next seven days, the game is visible to the players from the Bridgemate Play console. See "Bridgemate Play –Player manual" for more information.

The event appears in the list of online events:

| Date: | 30-07-2021 13:00 | Where: | Club & online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Name: | Friday afternoon pairs | Registration start: | No | |
| Event type: | Pairs | Registration end: | No | |
| Open event: | Yes | Lobby open: | 12:30 | |
| TD(s): | Ron Bouwland | Status: | Scheduled | |

## Modify or delete the online part of the hybrid game

If the hybrid game has not yet been started from Bridgemate Control Software, it is possible to make changes to the online game or delete it. In the list of created online events, click on the green pencil "edit" icon of the online event that you want to change. Click on the red icon to delete the online event.

# Let players join the online game

For both the online and the face-to-face part of the game, players join the game before game start. Face-to-face players gather as usual at the club, online players join the game through the Bridgemate Play portal website.

Full details on how how to create a Bridgemate player account, joining an online game, and forming online partnerships, are explained in the manual "Bridgemate Play – Player manual". Below only a short summary is explained.

### Requirements for online players

Before players can join the online game on Bridgemate Play, the following requirements must be met:

1. You must have created an online game that is scheduled for today.
2. Players must have created a Bridgemate account and registered with your club.
3. If you enabled pre-registration for today's game, players must have registered for this game within the registration period.
4. The current time is within the specified lobby-open period.

### Joining the online part of the game as player

When the above requirements have been met, players (and also the TD assigned for this game) join the online game as follows:

1. Open your internet browser and go to https://www.bridgemate.club
2. Log in with your Bridgemate account details.
3. After logging in, the player sees today's events that they can join:
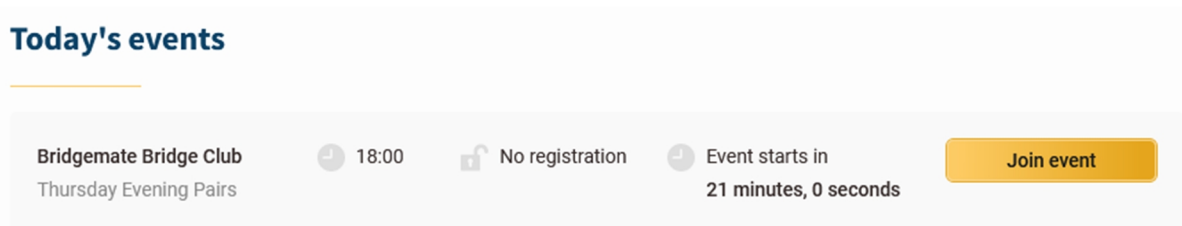


4. Click the "Join event " button to enter the lobby area of the online game.
5. Find your partner in the list of players that are awaiting a partner, and press on the button "My partner" to select that player as your partner.
6. Wait for the director to start the game.

## Joining the online part of the game as TD

The procedure for TDs to enter the online part of the game is the same as for online players. The player that is selected as TD for the online game, is automatically recognized as TD and given TD rights for this game after joining the game. A TD can make themself playing TD by selecting a partner. Other players cannot select a TD as their partner. If the TD does not select a partner, the TD remains a non-playing TD.

# Confirm the number of pairs in the online game and set up the game in your scoring program

After all online pairs have logged in to the session and are ready to play, entry to the online lobby is closed. Once also the face-to-face pairs at the club are ready to play, the hybrid game is set up in the scoring program.

## Close entry and freeze online pairs

The assigned TD  for the online game logs in at https://www.bridgemate.club with their Bridgemate account details and joins the online part of the game. When all partnerships are ready, or it's time to start the game, the director clicks on the yellow "Click here to freeze pairs" button.
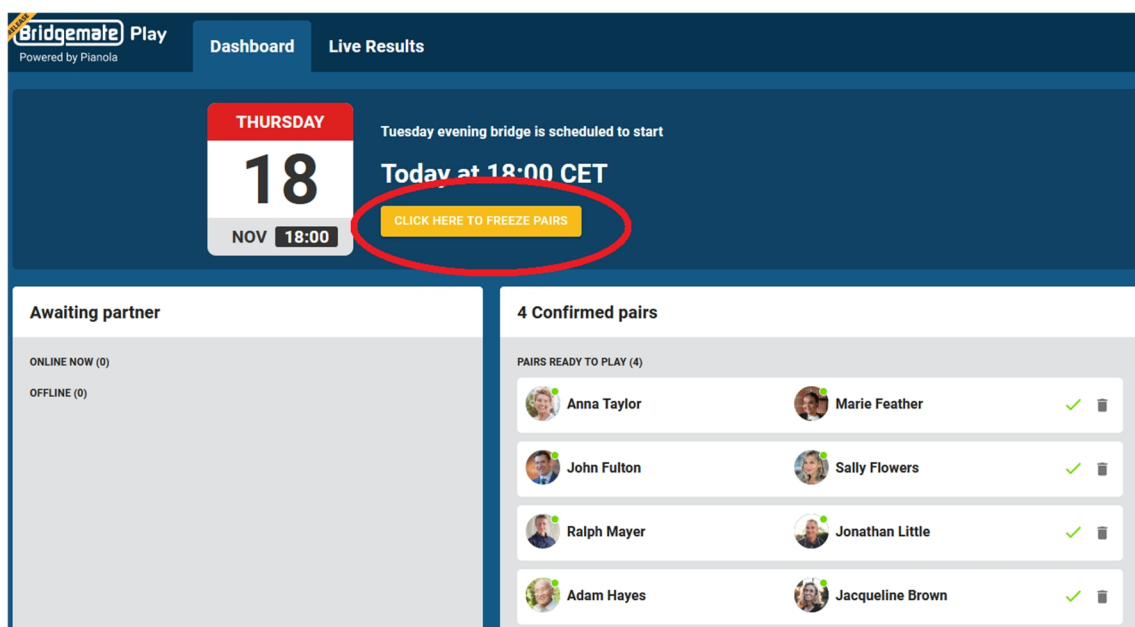


By freezing pairs:

- The online lobby is now closed and new players can no longer enter.
- Players who have not chosen a partner can no longer do so and will not play.
- Existing partnerships can no longer be cancelled.

An odd number of pairs is possible. This creates a sit-out each round for one of the pairs.

A message indicates that the pairs are now frozen as well as the total number of participating pairs. The game can be started from the scoring program.
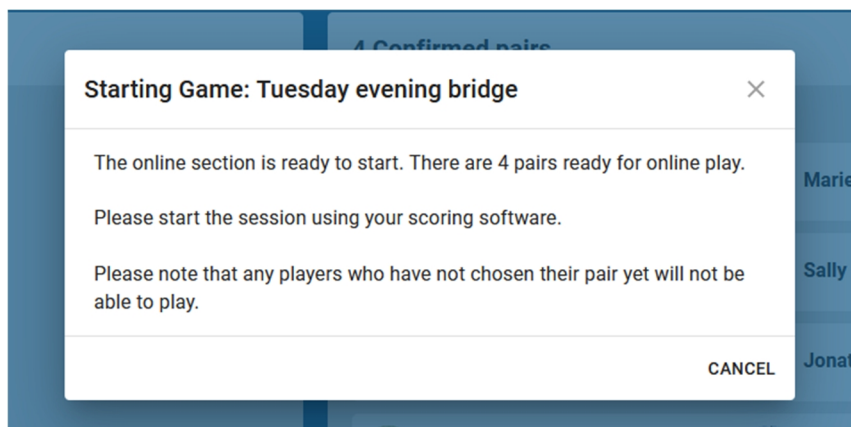
The TD can reopen the lobby again by pressing "Cancel". If the lobby is reopened, the director must freeze it once more before continuing with further preparations.

## Determine the number of pairs and tables in the face-to-face section(s)

As for any other club game, the TD counts the number of tables and pairs in the face-to-face game and uses this information to set up his movement in the scoring program.

## Set up the game in your scoring program

The game is now set up in the scoring program. Be sure to follow the steps below carefully:

1. Create a new bridge session in your scoring program.
2. <u>Add one or more sections for the face-to-face game, for example section A and B, and complete the preparations for these section(s)</u> (choose movement, number of boards, etc). These section(s) are set up in the usual way when you create your club game session.
3. <u>Add an extra section for the online game, for example section C</u>. The number of pairs in this section must match the number of online pairs when the game was frozen. If there is an odd number of online pairs, add one pair in your scoring program to make the number of pairs even and specify the absent pair. You can choose any random pair to be the absent pair. Do not enter player numbers or player names for the online section; these are provided by Bridgemate Play.
4. <u>Select the movement and the number of boards for the online section</u>. You can choose any type of pairs movement you want.
5. <u>Set the session to be scored across the field</u>. This means that all sections are grouped together for scoring purposes and scored as one big group. This requires pre-dealt boards in the face-to-face club section(s).
6. <u>Import hand records for all sections</u>. These hand records are played online. This requires your scoring program to have a hand record import feature. It also requires that your scoring program loads imported hand records into the Bridgemate .bws score file. If your scoring

program does not support this, you can import hand records in Bridgemate Control Software. See the next chapter for more information how to do this.

You are now ready to start the Bridgemate system from your scoring program and start the hybrid game.

# Start the hybrid game

When you have completed setting up the game in your scoring program, you are now ready to start the hybrid game. First, start the Bridgemate system from your scoring program in the usual way. This launches Bridgemate Control Software with all the details of the hybrid game. Provided you have enabled the hybrid game functionality in Bridgemate Control Software (see chapter "One-time only preparations"), the following screen appears:



Be sure to enable "Show session in app". This is needed to upload all the session details of both the online section and the face-to-face sections to the Bridgemate servers.

The online game(s) appear in the 'Hybrid session' part of this screen. Usually only one online game is displayed and this game is automatically selected. If you have created more than one online game for today, multiple online games are displayed and you should select the one you are now about to play.

Specify which section is the online section and specify how many minutes each online round lasts. If this section does not contain hand records yet, you will automatically be asked to import hand records. Hand records are essential to run the online part of the game. Be sure you import the correct hand record file.

When done, press "Close" to close this window. All information is now uploaded to the online servers and the hybrid game is automatically started. The Bridgemates in the club are started as well, and both the online and face-to-face sections are ready to play the game. All data will be automatically exchanged and synchronized between the online section and offline sections. Make sure you keep your computer running throughout the game (switch off the standby mode of your computer!)

## Troubleshooting

Mismatch of pairs

When the number of pairs set in the scoring program does not match the number of confirmed pairs in the online game, the online game cannot be started. Close Bridgemate Control Software, correct the number of pairs in your scoring program and restart the Bridgemate system.

Number of pairs not confirmed in online game / lobby not closed

If the number of pairs is not confirmed in the online game, i.e. the lobby was not closed, the online game cannot be started. Go back to the online game, confirm the number of pairs by clicking the yellow button "Click here to freeze pairs", then continue to start the hybrid game in Bridgemate Control Software.

Hand records missing

Hand records are essential to start the online game. If the hand records were not imported in the scoring program and forwarded by the scoring program to the Bridgemate system, Bridgemate Control Software warns you about the missing hand records and allows you to import them directly. Import the hand records, then start the hybrid game as usual.

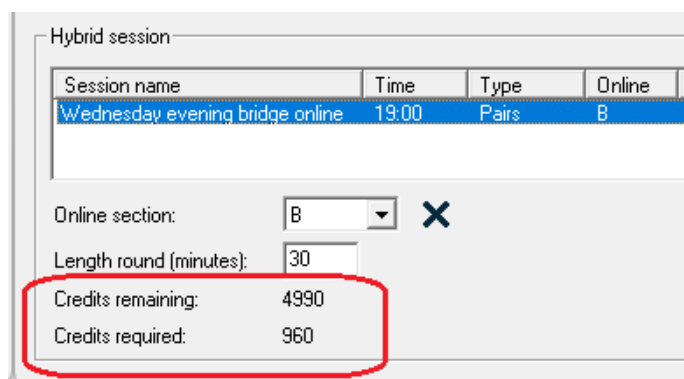# Process data from the hybrid game

After you have started the hybrid game successfully, all data is automatically exchanged and synchronised between the online game, face-to-face game and Bridgemate Control Software. This means:

- Player names and numbers from the online game are retrieved by Bridgemate Control Software.
- Scores from the online game and face-to-face game are processed by Bridgemate Control Software and synchronised across the hybrid game.
- Updated rankings and board result percentages calculated across both the online game and face-to-face game are shared and visible to all players through the Bridgemate scoring devices and Bridgemate Play.

The scoring program retrieves all the information (player names, player numbers, board results) from both the online game and face-to-face game through the Bridgemate .bws file in the usual way. For the scoring program, there is no difference in processing the online game or face-to-face game.

### Have enough Bridgemate credits

To process board results from the online part of the game, Bridgemate credits are required. When you are about to start the hybrid game, Bridgemate Control Software indicates how many credits are required and how many you have remaining.



Five credits are needed for each online board result. A 24 board-per-table session, for example, requires 24 x 5 = 120 credits per table. Should you have eight online tables, 8 x 24 x 5 = 960 credits are required. Board results of the face-to-face sections do not count for the total number of required credits. Credits can be purchased from your Bridgemate distributor. Please contact them ahead of time to be sure you have enough credits.

If you don't have enough credits, you can still play online at Bridgemate Play. However, Bridgemate Control Software won't process the board results anymore until credits have been sufficiently replenished.

You can check your remaining credits by clicking on Session à Show session in Bridgemate app in Bridgemate Control Software, or in your Bridgemate Club Account panel.

# Features for the tournament director

Bridgemate Play offers various features to enable tournament directors to run the online game smoothly.

## Features in the lobby before game is started

- Break up pair combinations. In the list of confirmed pairs, you can undo a partnership by clicking on the bin icon next to the partnership. This is only possible while the lobby is still open.
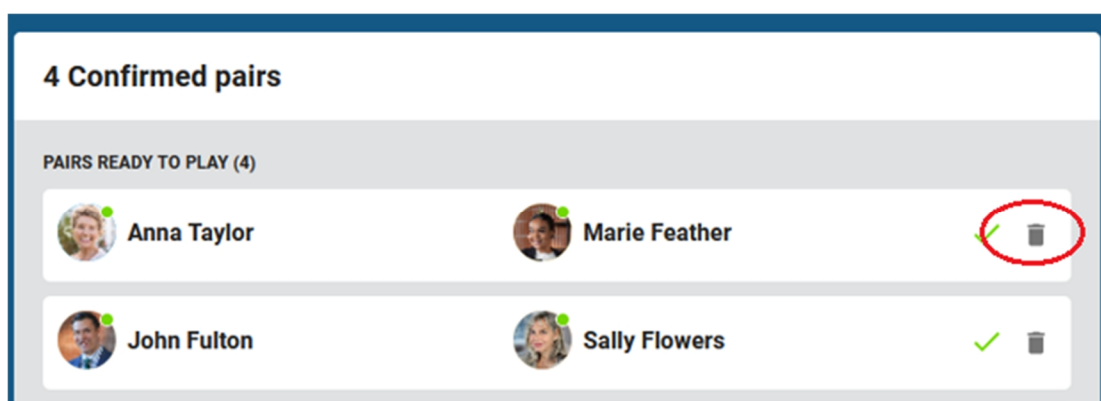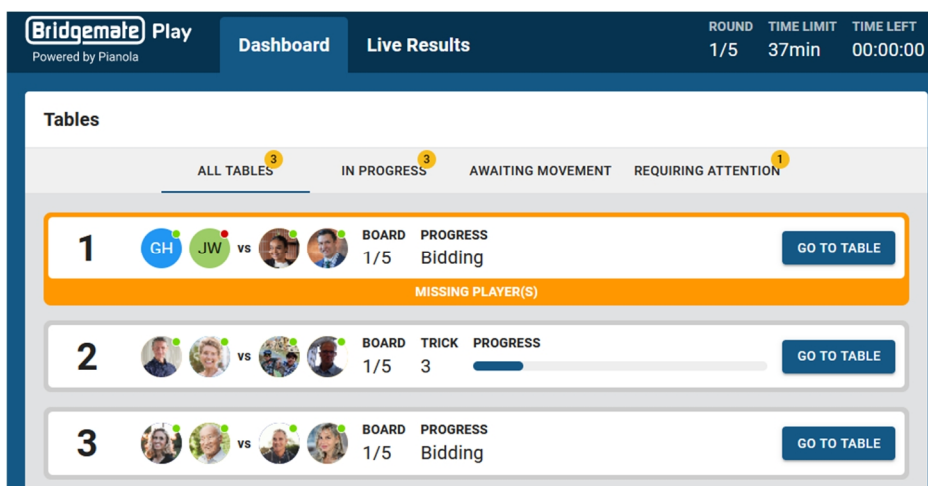


- Confirm number of online pairs. To start the online game, the number of pairs must be confirmed and the lobby must be closed. You do so by clicking "Click here to freeze pairs" button.
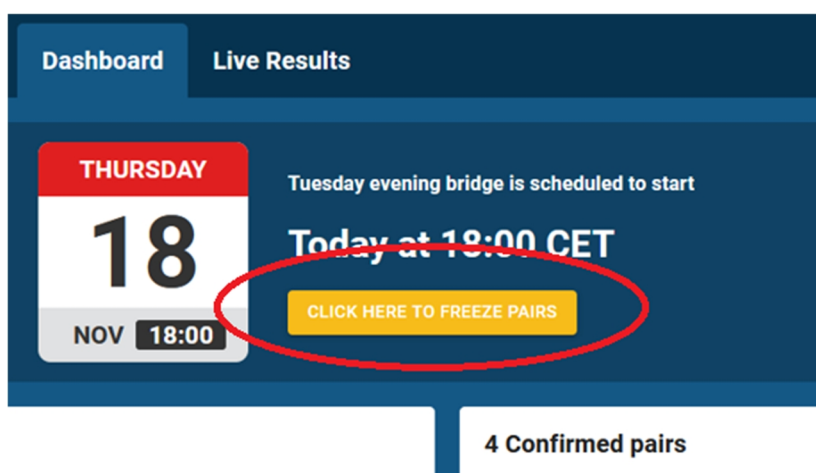


## Features during the game

- View progress of all tables. The dashboard provides an overview of all the tables in play, their current position in the round, and which table requires attention.

- Go to a table. Click "Go to table" in dashboard to visit a table to view its current activity.
- Resolve claim issues. When a claim is disputed, the TD can review the claim and assign the number of tricks to each pair.
- Make announcements to all tables. Make an announcement to every table at once.
- Start next round. Start the next round by pressing the yellow "Start next round" button. Any boards that have not been completed yet, are marked as "Not played".
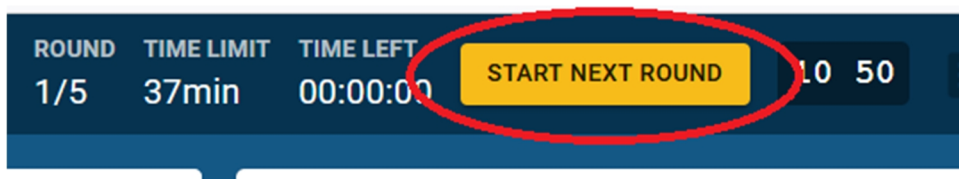


- View scores and hand records. Go to tab "Live Results" to view the current ranking, board results and hand records.
- Make score corrections. View the travellers in Live Results to change a board result.

TDs can be playing or non-playing. Playing TDs only have access to the travellers and hand records of those boards they have already played.

# Use pre-registration to manage player participation

Pre-registration enables clubs to have better control over who participates in the online part of the hybrid game and know how many players there will be. Using pre-registration has the following advantages:

- Only players who have registered during the registration period can join the online game.
- You have an ongoing overview of which players have registered and intend to play.
- You can control who participates in the online game.

## Set the registration period

You specify the registration period when you create the online game. Set the registration start and end times to determine the registration period:



Players may only register during this period. At any time, you can modify the registration period or remove pre-registration by modifying the online game.

## Check and remove registered players

Details of the online game and the registration are displayed in "Current events":



To see who has registered for the online game, click on the dark blue icon on the right:

To remove a player, click on the red cross icon next to the participant you want to remove.

Note:

- While players may have registered beforehand, they can still choose not to play by simply not showing up in the online game lobby.
- When players register but do not show up in the online game, this has no adverse effect on your online game. There are simply fewer players than expected.
- Players who have not registered but still want to play after the registration period has ended, are denied entry to the online game lobby. The only way to let them play is to remove or extend the registration period.

# Checklist

To help you setting up a hybrid game smoothly, print this page and keep it as a checklist next to you while doing all the necessary operations.

### Preparations in avance

| # | Activity | Where | Done |
|---|----------|-------|------|
| 1 | Check remaining Bridgemate credits | Bridgemate club account panel | |
| 2 | Create the online part of the hybrid game | Bridgemate club account panel | |
| 3 | Let players register for the event (optional) | Bridgemate Play | |

### Setting up the hybrid game

| # | Activity | Where | Done |
|---|----------|-------|------|
| 1 | Let players join the online game | Bridgemate Play | |
| 2 | Join the online game as TD | Bridgemate Play | |
| 3 | Freeze online pairs when time to start | Bridgemate Play | |
| 4 | Create session in scoring program:<br>• One or more face-to-face section(s)<br>• One section for online part of the game | Scoring program | |
| 5 | Choose movements for all sections.<br>(movements must match number of pairs in all sections!) | Scoring program | |
| 6 | Set session to "Score across the field" | Scoring program | |
| 7 | Import hand records for all sections | Scoring program (if possible) | |
| 8 | Start Bridgemate from scoring program | Scoring program | |
| 9 | Choose online section and round duration | BCS | |
| 10 | Import hand records for all sections (if not done at step #7) | BCS | |
| 11 | Close hybrid game setup window to start hybrid game | BCS | |

### During the hybrid game

| # | Activity | Where | Done |
|---|----------|-------|------|
| 1 | Keep computer running | Computer/Windows | |
| 2 | Keep Bridgemate Control Software running | BCS | |

Bridgemate Club account panel:    https://www.bridgemate.com/app/club-login/
Bridgemate Play website:              https://www.bridgemate.club