

Regional Director Report – June 2025

The online bridge world is changing. The ACBL signed a new agreement with BBO effective June 1, 2025, which replaces any previous contracts.

The previous BBO contract gave BBO the exclusive right to give ACBL masterpoints to players competing online and to award masterpoints in robot games. BBO paid the ACBL \$550,000 annually plus the normal table fees for this privilege.

Under the new contract, there is no exclusivity of any kind. BBO and the ACBL will continue to work together to attract new bridge players and to increase online play under a revenue sharing agreement.

This will allow other vendors like Shark Bridge, Real Bridge and IntoBridge to provide games on their platforms that award ACBL masterpoints, increasing the number of choices that bridge players have in their pursuit of masterpoints.

The goal is to provide a more competitive market and to get more players playing bridge. Real Bridge and Shark Bridge specialize in different kinds of platforms and each provides something different.

Real Bridge provides the opportunity for organized clubs and groups to hold their games on their platform, which closely resembles face-to-face play because of their audio and video capabilities. Real Bridge is a business-to-business model.

Bronia Jenkins, Executive Director of the ACBL, said, *"We are delighted to offer an ACBL sanction to RealBridge. Through RealBridge's work with the ACBL Educational Foundation and the ACBL's Social Bridge Nights, we have become familiar with their technology and their commitment to quality. We're confident that expanding the options available to players to include platforms like RealBridge is good for bridge."*

Shark Bridge, which has built its business on providing an excellent platform for teaching the game of bridge, is working with ACBL in the release of "Bridge War", an introductory bridge game that hopefully will attract new players to the game of bridge. Bridge War has no bidding, just trick taking fun. Shark Bridge is also planning to run daylong robot games to attract new players to its platform.

The new open online world will encourage innovation and give bridge players more opportunities to enjoy our game.