Scottish Bridge Union

Troubleshooting Computer Related Problems   Version 1.1

The vast proportion of the time tournaments will run without problems, but occasionally things do go wrong. This is a guide to help deal with these problems if they do arise.

It deals with scoring using Bridgemates, the main scoring software described is Jeff Smith/EBU Score (JS/EBU). There is some coverage of using Scorebridge. If it assumed you are running the programme on a PC or laptop using Windows XP or later version.

1   The System Basics

1.1   Data

The vital thing is to get a result. The good news is that it is very unlikely that the scores will be lost.   The scoring data is stored in a number of places: in the Bridgemate, in the bridgemate server (the beige box that plugs into the computer USB port), in the database created by the programme to link the server and the scoring programme and in the scoring programme itself.

1.2   How It Works

After the tournament details (number of tables, movement etc.), the scoring software creates a database file and then launches the Bridgemate Control Software (BCS). This sends the tournament data to the Bridgemates. The scores coming in go up to the Bridgemate server which sends them to the database file. The scoring programme picks up the data from the database file and stores it in the file for the event.   The data is constantly being pushed up the chain. If one bit is missing, the data will be stored lower down and will flow up when the chain is restored.

1.3   The Bridgemate server sets up the network that enables the Bridgemates to communicate, transmits information to and from the bridgemates and also keeps a copy of the data that it transmits. It has a battery inside to maintains the data in the case of a power loss.

1.4   There is an excellent Manual available for running bridgemates and the control software. It is available from the bridgemate website: http://www.bridgemate.com/resources/documents/BM2manual.pdf

2 Problems & Possible Solutions

Problem	Possible Solution	Where to Find it
Bridgemates accepting data but it is not showing in scoring software	Check BCS. Is it running and receiving Data? If not restart.	Para 3.1
	Is Server still connected to the scoring computer? Check Server Information	Para 3.2
	Close and Restart Scoring Programme	Para 3.3
Scoring Software stops working. Results still coming into BCS.	Close Programme and Re-open	Para 3.3
Computer Freezes	Power down and reload	Para 3.4.1
Power Cut	Restart Computer and rest of the system	Para 3.3.2
Bridgemates go to start or start of event in the middle of a session – possibly after a break	Reset Server	Para 3.5
Reset Server selected in error	Recover Server on BCS	Para 3.5.4
Bridgemate settings are wrong	Procedure for changing settings	Para 3.7
Movement is wrong	Simple change – eg Arrow Switch missed	Para 3.8
	Major change eg number of pairs playing	Para 3.8.3
JS/EBU Error Message: "You may need to recreate the Multi(Control) Event."	Recreate Control Event	Para 3.6
Total Computer Failure	Procedure to start using new computer	Para 3.12
BCS running but Bridgemates not accepting player info	Bridgemate server too far from Bridgemates	Para 3.9
	Firmware incompatible	Para 3.10
Bridgemate shows "Press OK to test LCD" or Factory Test Mode	Need to Exit Test Mode	Para 3.11
Users Bridgemate problems		Appendix B

3   Description of Problem Solving Techniques

3.1   Restarting the Bridgemate Control Software

3.1.1 If this programme is not running, data from the bridgemates will not come into the scoring programme. Check for the programme icon in the taskbar shown below (icons of running software usually at the bottom of the screen) or press alt & tab or see all the programmes currently running:

3.1.2 You can open the programme from within the scoring software. With JS/EBU go to "Bridgemate Scoring" in the Event menu. Select "Restart" – (red button bottom right). You will be asked to confirm Restart. Go to to "Create Database"   There are two options Click "No" to resume an existing event. Check that "Reset Server" is unticked. (See below about doing this with Server Reset ticked). You can now select Launch BCS".
3.1.3 For ScoreBridge there are a series of option in the Wireless Control screen. Click on "Restart" (top left) and the options appear. "Restart Wireless Program" is the first one.
3.1.4 You can also launch the programme directly, The programme is in C:/Program Files (x86)/Bridgemate Pro. Select BMPro. Then select File > Open and select the database for the session you are running. (It can be useful to have a BCS programme icon on the desktop.)

3.2   Bridgemate Control Software (BCS) and the Bridgemate Server.

3.2.1 Server "Not Connected"
3.2.1.1 There is a box towards the top left of the BCS entitled "Server Information". The first item is "bridgemate server". This should show "Connected". If not the Scoring computer is not talking to the Server.
3.2.1.2 If you are using the server with a computer for the first time, you may have to install a driver (a piece of software on a computer to enables attachments to work). This is available on the Bridgemate web site. More information in the Bridgemate Manual.
3.2.1.3 Check the connection between the server and the computer.   Try an alternative USB socket. Restart the computer with the Server attached.

3.2.2 Channel Issues
3.2.2.1 The Bridgemate network has the facility to work on different channels. This allows two or more bridgemate servers and sets of bridgemates to operate at the same time. To change channels you have to change it on each Bridgemate (in setup) and the server. Bridgemates and the Bridgemate server must be set to the same channel. Bridgemates that

have been used in a major event which requires more than one bridgemate server or been lent out may have had their channel changed. See the Bridgemate manual to see how to check and reset the Bridgemate channel setting.

3.3   Closing and Restarting the Scoring Programme

3.3.1 Close the programme in the normal way (either using "exit" or clicking on the "X" in the top right corner. If the programme is stuck, you can force the programme to close by pressing the "Ctrl, Alt, Del" keys together. A screen will appear with a number of options. Select "Task Manager", a small window will appear with a list of programmes running. Select the scoring software programme and click "End Task". If this does not work, see 3.4.

3.3.2 At the desktop, start the programme in the normal way. Select the event you are running. Sometimes the session you were running will start over. Sometimes you will get a message asking if you want to use an existing database. Say yes, the system will go to a file select window – select the database and the session should restart.

3.3.3 In JS/EBU the database is stored in the "database" folder in the module you are running. (eg C:/PairsScorer/databses for EBU c:/EBUscore/Pairs/databases.) For Scorebridge it is in the "Bridgemate" folder in the appropriate club folder.
(eg c:/BridgeData/*club name*/Bridgemate)

3.4   Closing down the PC/Laptop

3.4.1 If the normal ways of closing do not work you can close the whole computer by turning off the power to a PC, or removing the battery pack with a laptop.

3.5   Resetting the Server

3.5.1 This deletes all the data on the server and replaces it with new data which is then sent to the bridgemates. The effect of this is to re-write the information from the database (bws) file to the server and thus to the bridgemates. It should be used with care as any data stored on the server or the bridgemates which has not been passed to the scoring software will be lost. The reset usually causes the system to go to the start of a round or a session so players will need to re-enter data for any hands scored in the round or session restarted.

3.5.2 To reset the server manually, retrieve BCS, select *Session*, *Update Movement* and start from next round. To get the names back, in JS/EBU go to Bridgemate Scoring, Names tab and select "Write Names to BCS"

3.5.3 (It has been suggested that using JS/EBU ticking "reset server" when sending the new movement should have the same effect. I have not been able to test this.)

3.5.4 If Reset Server has been ticked in error this is the procedure for sorting the problem. In BCS go to *Session*, *Synchronise client* then the Recovery tab. Select Recover server. Go through the "are you sure?" procedure. The table number may need to be re-entered on the bridgemates (or press OK if they are programmed with the table number.) Check that they are all showing as green on BCS.

3.6   Recreating the Multi(Control) Event (JS/EBU only)

3.6.1 If you are running a Multi event that controls two or more events (eg running a Swiss event) and you change something in one on the events you may get this error message: "Event Details updated, You may need to recreate the Multi(Control) Event." To do this, delete the current multi event, select the two (or more) events and select "Combine Sessions". A new multi will be created. Retrieve this the new multi, when you select "Create Database", select the one you were using previously and the event should restart where it left off. No data should be lost as the data is not stored in the control event.

3.7   Changing BCS Options While the Event is in Progress

3.7.1 The bridgemate settings (BCS options) default to the setting usually previously . It is possible to change the settings during an event. In JSS/EBU, it is easily done between rounds if you have to manually start each round (eg in a Swiss).   Just change the settings before launching BCS.

3.7.2 During a round, select BCS options, make the change, select update movement (ensure Reset Server is **unticked**). There is a method of doing from within BCS described in the BCS manual. This is the best method if you are using Scorebridge.

3.8   Changing Movement Settings While the Event is in Progress

3.8.1 It is possible to make changes to the movement selected while the tournament is in progress. Only changes that would not invalidate scores in previous rounds should be considered. The most likely scenario is forgetting to include an arrow switch.

3.8.2 To add an arrow switch in JS/EBU: - Return to the 'Select Movement' and re-define the movement. Ensure 'Retain Results' is ticked. When asked for confirmation. Press OK. Go to 'Bridgemate Scoring'- use 'Update Movement' button from round 'next round'. It is possible that the EW pair numbers will change as an arrow switch requires unique NS and EW pair numbers.

3.8.3 If you need to make a change in the first round (eg an extra pair turn up) it is best to start again. Any change that alters the movement after the first rounds is likely to make the scores already entered invalid – it is likely that they will need to be re-entered. Best to restart the system unless you are very confident of what you are doing! To do it, use the procedure described in 3.8.2.

3.8.4 To close event and start again: tell players to stop entering results. Close BCS. In JSS/EBU, exit Event Menu, Delete the event/s in events list and start again. Remind the players to re-enter any scores they entered prior to the reset. In Scorebridge, close the event, go back to the event menu, delete the event and any associated files and start again.

3.9 Weak signal

3.9.1 Bridgemates operate through a wireless network created by the server. Like all wireless networks the signal strength will decrease when there are obstacles (such as walls) between the Bridgemate and the server. A weak signal can make the Bridgemates slow to operate and can lead to a "data not sent" error message.

3.10 Incompatible Firmware

3.10.1 There are regular upgrades for the Bridgemate server and the Bridgemates. Details of these are on the Bridgemate web site support page. They often provide very useful new futures. The server and the Bridgemates need to have compatible firmware. If you are using a server and Bridgemates that are not usually used together (for instance if you borrow a set from another club because you have a large event) you will need to check this. The procedure for checking is detailed in the manual and the list of compatible versions is on the web site.

3.11 Exiting Test Mode

3.11.1 Pressing the following keys should sort the problem: 2, 5, NT, diamond. It may be necessary to press "OK" to go to a screen where this works. See the manual for more detail on this process.

3.12 Starting with a New Computer

3.12.1 Assuming that the Bridgemate server has not been turned off (it has continued to run on battery), all existing results will have been retained in the server's memory. In this situation you will need to revert to another machine if you have one available. You will need to recreate a new (blank) .bws file and read the results from the server into it. You may need to load the bridgemate server drivers on the new machine – see 3.2.1.

3.12.2 On the new machine -

Start JSS/EBU (a similar sequence should work for Scorebridge)
- Recreate the event, and the movement
- Select Bridgemate Scoring
- Create Database. *Ensure 'Reset Server' is unticked*
- Launch BCS. *Ensure 'Reset Server' is unticked*
- Within BCS, select 'Server' tab
- Select 'Show Tables'
- Select all the tables (select the top one, and with the 'shift' key depressed, select the bottom one)
- Click on 'Retrieve Scores' – all server results will be read by BCS and the .bws file will be re-populated (and hence JSS/EBU).
- To resend the names from BCS, within the 'Names' tab 'Read Names From BCS'

3.12.3 This does not read the results from the Bridgemates internal memory. There is a function in the TD menu on the bridgemates to resend data this may work in the case where the server has lost the data.

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Author's Note:
I acknowledge my debt to Ian Ross who wrote the original paper on this subject. I welcome comments particularly details of techniques that have been found to solve problems or problems that have been encountered that I haven't covered. You can email me at bridgeIT @ narob.co.uk.

Appendix A Preparation

This section describes things that you can do to avoid problems and familiarise yourself with the system and practice solving problems.

Check your PC/Laptop is not set to go to sleep

There are options available about how you computer behaves. In Windows 10 right click the windows icon, select settings then "Power and Sleep". Set the computer "never" to go to sleep. There is not problem in the monitor going to sleep – this does not affect the data. In fact, the monitor is a much bigger power user than the PC.

Regularly Check for Updates

Software and hardware updates are regularly available. Some provide fixes to problems that have arisen, others provide new features. These should be checked and if appropriate implemented. Beware that some updates can make unexpected changes if the way a programme runs. Ideally you should run a test event to check that all is well.

Check where the key files are stored on your scoring computer

Bridge software tends to run from the base of the hard disk (usually named c: drive.)
The usual set-ups are:
- Jeff Smith sets up a folder for each of the modules,
- EBU Score sets up a folder entitled "EBUScore" and the modules are in sub-folders,
- Scorebridge is in a folder called BridgeData and then a sub-folder with the name of the bridge club.

The file you often need is the bws file which is the link file to the Server. Check where it is and the naming convention, More info in para 3.3.3 above.

Run test events

Set up a test event, put in some score data and practice closing down the software and re-opening it and getting the event running again. Pull the plug on the PC or remove the power pack on the laptop and restart. You should try and avoid the situation where a problem arises in a major tournament and you have to do some of these things for the first time under time pressures and players breathing down your neck!

If you are not familiar with the computer set-up you will be using, there has been a major upgrade, or you are running a particular type of competition you do not run regularly, then you should run a test event.

JS/EBU have a utility called BM Test. The utility generates random scores that allow you to run a test event without using actual bridgemates. (Details of this and a copy of the programme at https://jssscore.weebly.com. This web site also contains lots of documentation on the JS/EBU programmes including details of user problems.)

When you have finished your test event it is good practice to send the bridgemates to end of session by closing any rounds that are still awaiting data. If you don't do this, users can have a problem putting in the table number ina new competition. In BCS goto *Session*, *close rounds*. In the drop down box select the last round then select *Close Rounds*. You will see all the outstanding results marked "no play".

Appendix B BRIDGEMATES – COMMON PROBLEMS

- **BM does not show "Press OK to start"**
  - go *forward* (by pressing OK) until you see "TDMENU". Select then select "RESET"

- **No Names Coming Up (if "show names" selected in BCS Options)**
  - In the latest version of bridgemate firmwave, there is a "NAMES" option on bridgemates that players can select. This allows them to view the names and correct any errors.
  - Names can be added within JSS/EBU in the "Player Names" menu.

- **BM message "Started at another table"**
  - Wrong Section or Table Number entered at start at another table.
  - Identify errant table and pass that Bridgemate to correct table/Section – tell them to change names using NAMES button. May need to delete some scores entered. Give errant table new Bridgemate to start again.

- **Player thinks they have entered wrong score**
  - Remind them they can check using "SCORES"
  - If wrong, Go to TDMENU enter TD pin, Select 3 "Erase Result", then go back until go get the score entry screen, enter the board number and give back to player to re-enter. This will work for any board played at that table including previous rounds. If from a previous round, check that the opponents agree to the change.

- **BM won't accept Board Number**
  - wrong number entered on previous board in round – check previous scores by pressing SCORES" on BM. Delete wrong score as above and instruct to re-enter scores.
  - playing wrong boards – small text at top of BM indicates pair numbers and boards that should be played.
  - Last score of previous round not entered.

- **Broken BM or battery run out**
  - Replace battery. If data lost use replace procedure below.
  - Replace with new bridgemate. When you enter table/section number will ask if you want to replace and will require TD pin