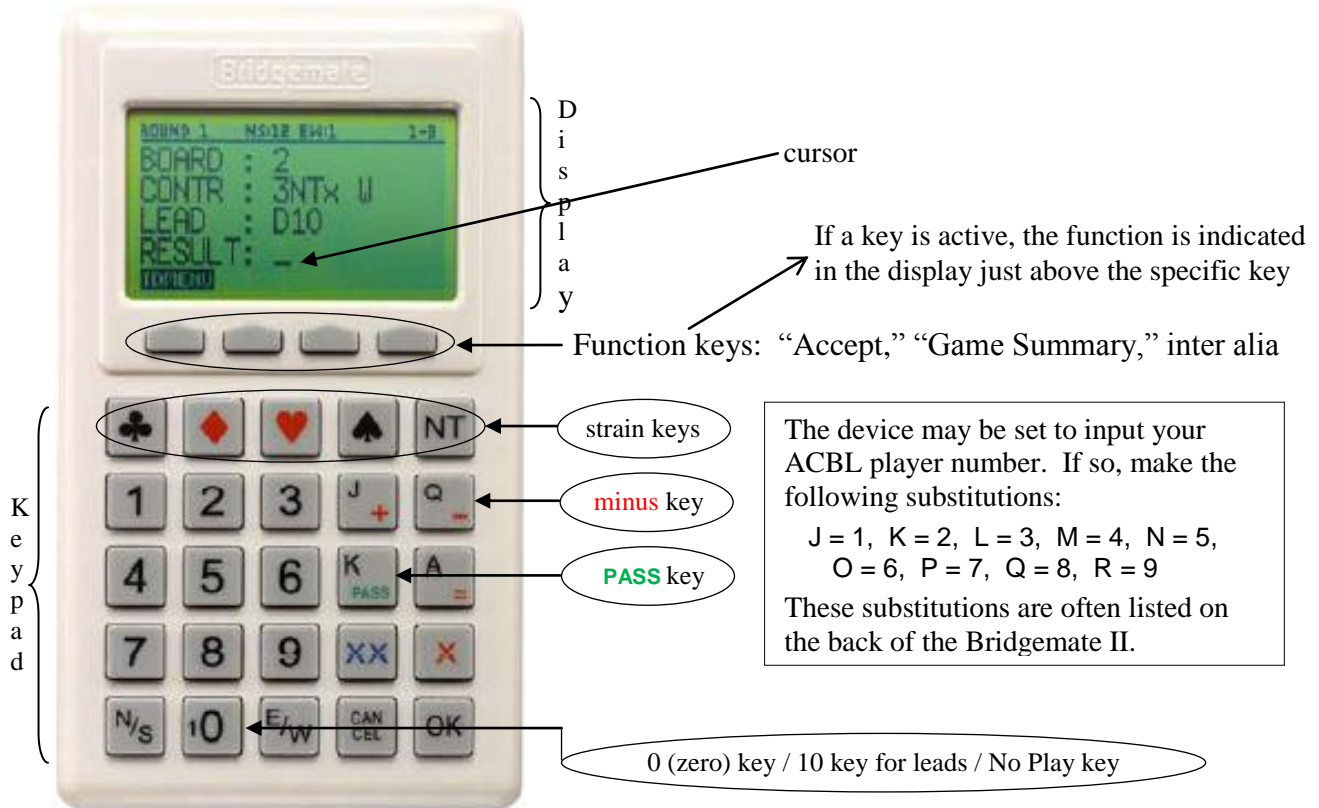




Bridgemate II On-Table Electronic Scoring

by Bob Gruber

While the Bridgemate II, pictured below, is fairly intuitive to use, some introductory instruction (not intended to be comprehensive) will reduce culture shock for many players. In general, North is expected to operate the device and pass it to East or West to verify/accept the entries.



In addition to the keypad, each Bridgemate has a small display at the top to reflect your entries. On this display, the cursor indicating the current position is a short underline. There are function keys just below the display window. The function of each key varies with the context and, if active, the function is indicated in the display just above the specific key. For instance, when the result is ready to be verified by E-W, the rightmost function key becomes the "Accept" key.

The Bridgemate must be initialized by the directing staff at the central computer. If you click OK in the lower right, you may see a message indicating the device is not yet ready. If so, be patient. Usually, a director will announce when the devices are ready for use.

Jumping ahead in the process (by ignoring entry of the table # and pair numbers), let's say you're ready to enter the contract (CONTR in the display). First, enter a number for the level (1-7) and then press a key for the strain—a symbol for one of the 4 suits or the NT key for No Trump. Now you need to enter declarer's direction. Locate the N/S and E/W keys on the bottom row. On the appropriate key, press once for North (or East) and then a 2nd time for South (or West). Additional presses will continue toggling back and forth between the two choices for the given key.

N/S & E/W
keys are
toggles



When the contract (CONTR) has been entered, tap OK in the lower right. The cursor will advance to the next line. Throughout this article, we'll see that OK is the predominant key on the Bridgemate.

But what if you hit OK prematurely? What if you made a mistake? Let's say you entered West, but it's actually East declaring the hand. Press CANCEL on the bottom row. Now you can enter declarer's proper direction and press OK.

Oh wait! I forgot the contract was doubled. Can I enter that now after declarer's direction? In the latest software versions, you can. In the original version, that status needed to be entered after the strain. You pressed CANCEL multiple times until the display showed the contract but not declarer's direction. Then you pressed the red-colored X. If the contract was redoubled, you pressed the blue-colored XX key instead.

Once the proper doubled status was entered, you reentered the direction, and pressed OK. At that point, you set the device aside until the making status of the contract was determined.

When the hand has been played, you'll probably need to "wake up" the device in order to enter the RESULT. Tap the OK key. For making contracts, simply press the number of tricks made (1-7) and then OK. For contracts going down, first enter the minus key (-), which shares the same key as the "Q," and enter the number of undertricks. Hit OK. The Bridgemate knows the vulnerability and displays the proper score.

At this point, pass the device to one of the opponents to verify the score is correct. If the RESULT is correct, he/she will press the "Accept" function key, which is what the rightmost function key has become. If not correct, you'll need to CANCEL your way to the spot with the error, make the correction, and then reenter any needed information on the way back to the point for the opponent to verify the score and transmit it by pressing "Accept."

When the device is passed back to you, it should be ready for you to hit OK to advance to the next board in the round. If this is the last board of the round, your pressing OK will advance to the next round.

So far, we've described the general operation of these devices. Now, we need to identify a couple of keys we haven't touched upon and describe the start-up process.

Remember, on the Bridgemate, the minus sign (-) and "Q" share the same key.

Also, the PASS key, used when a hand is passed out, is at the bottom of the "K" key in green lettering.

Pass Out

It's also possible that a board be entered as a Late Play or No Play. For these situations, press the zero (0) key on the bottom row. It may be necessary to call the Director to verify the Late Play entry.

No Play
Late Play

Finally, we're back to the start up of the device for the session. If the central computer has been configured (including the movement for each section) and set to transmit, pressing OK will bring up a screen requesting you to identify the table number and pair numbers. Use the keys described previously to fill in whatever information is requested, using OK as a completion key. When this setup information is correct press OK and put the device aside until needed to enter the first contract information.



At each table, after the last board of the game there, a game summary to that point in time may be available. Hit the function key that has become “Game Summary.” The Bridgemate II displays the N-S and E-W rankings and percentages. Hit “OK” to display the N-S matchpoints. To see the E-W matchpoints, tap the ^E/_W key on the bottom row.

As stated early on, this treatise is not intended to be comprehensive, merely introductory¹. Plus, the Bridgemates can be configured to enter other information, such as ACBL player numbers and the opening lead on each hand. Setup will vary, so you need to actually work the device at the table to become comfortable with its operation. But, if successful, this introduction will speed up the learning process.

¹ But a good audience deserves an advanced tip, so here’s one. If your director has chosen to let you see the scores so far at the other tables, a built-in count-down timer may make them go poof before everyone has seen them. You can reset the count-down timer simply by hitting a number on the keypad. What you don’t want to do is tap the OK key. That makes the scores go poof immediately!



Summary of Bridgemate II On-Table Electronic Scoring

Device Start Up



Initialized at Central Computer	Action	Done Key
Respond to prompts: †		
Table #:	enter #	OK
Pair #(s):	enter #(s)	OK
All setup is correct		OK
Set aside until 1 st board completed		

Function keys: “Accept,” “Game Summary,” inter alia

strain keys

minus key

PASS key

0 (zero) key / 10 key for leads / No Play key

Optional Entry of ACBL

The device may be set to input your ACBL player number. If so, make the following substitutions:

J = 1, K = 2, L = 3, M = 4, N = 5,
O = 6, P = 7, Q = 8, R = 9

These substitutions are often listed on the back of the device.

Entry Functions during the Game

Function	Action/Entry/Entries	Completion key
“Wake up” device	---	OK
Enter Board number	Enter #, 1-36	OK
Enter CONTRact	# strain [X or XX] N or S -or- E or W -or- PASS if hand is passed out -or- 0 key for a Late Play or No Play	OK
Enter RESULT	making: # tricks made down: - key # undertricks	OK
E/W verification	Pass device to East or West, who will confirm (by pressing)	“Accept” function key
Advance to next board	---	OK
Correct an error	return to point of error make correction re-enter info as needed	CANCEL as needed OK if needed OK as needed

At each table, after the last board of the game there, a game summary to that point in time *may* be available. Hit the function key that has become “Game Summary.” The Bridgemate II displays the N-S and E-W rankings and percentages. Hit “OK” to display the N-S matchpoints. To see the E-W matchpoints, hit the ^E/_W key on the bottom row.

† The Table #, Pair #s and/or Board #s may already be set at the central computer.