

Individual Competitions

Bridge is usually considered as a game for more-or-less regular partnerships, but many clubs like to run an annual Individual Championship or a more light-hearted Individual event at the Christmas Party, where there are no fixed pairs but each individual member plays with as many different partners as possible during the course of the session.

Individual events are rather like Marmite – you either love them or loathe them – but they can be fun. It's important that everyone plays the same simple system; else you spend too much time discussing things that will never come up and then rush to play the two boards in the time available.

Criteria for the ideal Individual Movement

The ideal Individual movement should satisfy four criteria:

1. Each player partners every other player once
2. Each player meets every other player twice as an opponent
3. When a player is met as an opponent it is once as a left-hand opponent and once as a right-hand opponent
4. When any two given players play the same boards at different tables, the second player should play half of those boards in the same direction as the first player and half in the opposite direction.

Very few movements come anywhere near satisfying all the criteria, and even the simplest Individual movement of all (that of 8 players at two tables – see below) does not satisfy criterion 3.

Prime Number movements

The easiest Individual movement to run is a 'Prime Number' movement, sometimes also known as a Rainbow Movement. So 5, 7, 11, or 13 tables are what you look for. In a Prime Number movement you have 4 lines of players – the North line, the South line, etc., plus you have the boards.

Let's take 11 tables as an illustration. We are going to play eleven 2-board rounds, so 22 boards altogether. Put out two boards per table.

Number the players as follows:

- North players take the table number.
- South players add 11
- East players add 22
- West players add 33

(Some scoring software adds different numbers – you need to check what yours will do)

At the end of each round comes the move (it looks worse than it is):

- North players stay where they are
- South players move up one table
- East players move up two tables
- West players move down two tables
- Boards move down one table.

If we use Table 4 as an example, the North player stays in place, the boards move to table 3, South goes to table 5, East goes to table 6 and West goes to table 2.

At the end of 11 rounds you will have completed the movement. Table guide cards are not necessary providing everyone remembers what they have to do. You will have a 4-winner movement, one for each line.

Of course, this movement does not go very far in satisfying our first criterion of having each player playing once with every other player, but you can improve on it by rotating the players at each table after each board. If playing 3-board rounds, North remains stationary while the other players move clockwise around him, i.e. East to South, South to West and West to East. If playing 2-board rounds, South and East can swap places for the second board. At the end of the round players continue by moving to their original positions on the next table of the movement.

This movement will not work if you have a non-prime number of tables, such as 6, 8 or 9, since the players would meet the same boards at some point. Other movements for different numbers of players are available either from your scoring program or from the *EBU Movement Manual* (edited by the late John Manning). With these it is best to use movement guide cards placed on each table. The *Movement Manual* is available from the [EBU Bridge Shop](#) 01296 397851.

Scoring

Most scoring programs include Individuals, so that the events can be scored in the usual duplicate fashion and Master Points awarded. You need to make sure that your scoring program does include the Individual movement you propose to use.

Special travelling score slips for Individual events (EBU 0005), where each of N, S, E and W can fill in their number on each board, are available from the EBU Shop.

If you are running a non-serious party event, you might like to make life simpler for the Scorer by having a winner on aggregate, where each player adds up his or her own total score. You could then also give other semi-random prizes, e.g. for whoever achieves a score closest to zero, or gets the second lowest score. (It is best to avoid having a prize for the lowest score to prevent people from deliberately aiming for the lowest score.)

Movement for 8 players

The simplest movement for 8 players at two tables is a Howell-type movement, with one player stationary at North 1 and all the other players moving around. The two tables share boards, so boards are played and completed on each round. Seven rounds are played, so 21 or 28 boards are the norm.

Here is the movement table for eight players:

	Table 1					Table 2			
Round	N	S	E	W	Boards	N	S	E	W
1	8	1	5	7	1-3	2	6	4	3
2	8	2	6	1	4-6	3	7	5	4
3	8	3	7	2	7-9	4	1	6	5
4	8	4	1	3	10-12	5	2	7	6
5	8	5	2	4	13-15	6	3	1	7
6	8	6	3	5	16-18	7	4	2	1
7	8	7	4	6	19-21	1	5	3	2
	N stays put S moves to W1 E moves to E2 W moves to S2					N moves to S1 S moves to E1 E moves to W2 W moves to N2			

This won't necessarily be a great deal of use at the club's Christmas party but can be good for a private bridge party at home.

As a match pointed event it isn't very interesting – 2 points for winning a board, 1 point for drawing. An alternative is to use IMP scoring. On each round the NS pair at table 1 and EW at table 2 form a team. Similarly for EW 1 and NS 2. So they can IMP their scores. The winner is the player with the most IMPs.

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