



# Upcoming Tournaments

## Denver Summer Sectional July 9-12, 2009

## Ruidoso Christmas in July Sectional July 10-12, 2009

Denver's summer bridge tournament is July 9-12 at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds Exhibit Hall at 15200 West 6th Ave.

The new early 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. starting times continue on Saturday, with the rest of the schedule fairly standard, but there is more food on tap. Please see the ad this *ScoreCard* issue for schedule details.

You have two opportunities to play bridge in Ruidoso, New Mexico this year. Practice up for the October Ruidoso Regional at their sectional July 10-12 at the Ruidoso Convention Center. The ad elsewhere in this issue of *ScoreCard* provides all the crucial information. Join us in July and then return to the same playing site October 5-11.

## Bridge Squad Keys

By Rod Bias

Late in 2008 the Phoenix Unit launched Bridge-Squad, a pilot project targeted to involve kids in bridge. Bridge-Squad meets before school at El Mirage Elementary and after school at Dysart Elementary.

### Key #1 - Coaches

One key to Bridge-Squad success was the mobilization of about two dozen volunteers from Kiva West Duplicate Bridge Club in Sun City West. Club president Rick Starbuck and Jane Woolley spearheaded the recruitment and retention of coaches

### Key #2 - School Sponsor

Another key to Bridge-Squad success was enthusiastic promotion and recruitment by Julie Mackenzie, a non bridge-playing schoolteacher at Dysart.

On Oct. 22, the first session at Dysart attracted 27 students (six tables). Buzz around the school swelled that to 35 students (nine tables) by the third session on Nov. 4. By winter break, 45 students had been exposed to bridge basics using a MiniBridge-based approach designed by Rod Bias.

### Key #3 - Student Anticipation

Another key is the Bridge Boot Camp materials that students receive when they reg-

ister for Bridge-Squad. They arrive at the first session primed and prepared, expecting things to happen. The Bridge Boot Camp packet can be downloaded from the web site below.

Each school also has a "secret site" that only Bridge-Squad members can access.

Students start with a "cheat sheet" that allows them to quickly begin playing four-deal bridge (Chicago-style) with non-vulnerable scoring.

After drawing for partners, each player deals once, completing one "chukker." After the chukker, they redraw for partners.

The cheat sheet and other info can also be downloaded from the web site.

Each student is given a deck of cards and a *Student's Guide to MiniBridge* at the first meeting they attend.

### Key #4 - Student Participation

Kids not only play at school, they play at home and at clubs. Most importantly, they join ACBL and play at tournaments in team games.

Fifteen have joined ACBL; eight have begun piling up masterpoints locally.

For information, access *Bridge-Squad.info* or *Bridge-Coach@Bridge-Squad.Info* or Rod Bias at 623 444-7960.



## Editor's Desk

By Jared Johnson  
ScoreCard Editor

It's summertime! A regional in sizzling Las Vegas in June. A regional in scorching Phoenix in August. And a North American Bridge Championships in sultry, steaming Washington, D.C. in-between. Life is good.

## Is It Really The Final Word? - Book Review

By Jared Johnson

ScoreCard Editor

What? A whole book just about asking for aces? The fifth edition of Eddie Kantar's *Roman Keycard Blackwood* (Master Point Press, Toronto) is subtitled "The Final Word."

Right. Sure. You bet. Why the skepticism? Well, part of the explanation is right there - fifth edition.

The first edition of this comprehensive book appeared way back in 1991. In the introduction to that first version, Kantar explained how frustrated his publisher became with him as printing deadline approached, because Kantar kept getting back in touch with just one more change, one more revision, one more thing to add.

In many ways, the evolution of the book parallels the evolution of deciding on how to play a particular convention with your partner. Sometimes no matter how many permutations of possibilities you go through, something will invariably fall in the cracks and your bidding understandings will have to be revised and expanded.

What is Keycard Blackwood? As virtually every bridge player knows, regular Blackwood asks partner how many aces he has during slam exploration. After that you can ask for kings. Regular Blackwood is one of the two most widely played bidding conventions along with Stayman.

Four notrump in most scenarios is regular Blackwood and the responses show specific numbers of aces.

However, a few decades ago, some wise bidding theorists realized that the king of trumps was almost as important as an ace. If you are off a king in a side suit, it might not matter. Declarer or dummy might have a singleton. Or you might set up a long side suit for discards.

But there is no way getting around the king of trumps. You have to deal with it. At best you might have to finesse for it. But you'd rather not. You'd rather know before deciding whether or not to bid slam

(or whether to bid a small or grand slam) if partner has the trump king.

The progressive responses over the ace asking four notrump bid are then based on five aces.

But there is much more to it than that.

For Keycard Blackwood to work, the trump suit must be agreed upon. An auction with explicit agreement (one player bids a suit and the other raises) may be clear. But there is a never ending variety of auctions where trump support may be only implied and where ambiguities arise.

No matter how much you discuss with your partner all the possible auctions that might arise with respect to establishing the trump suit, something undiscussed will come up. You can count on it.

Still, the convention is a virtual necessity for duplicate and tournament players. With Keycard Blackwood you are even able to inquire about the queen of trumps (sorry, no method yet for asking about jacks and tens).

You can also ask for specific kings. With A-Q-J-x in a side suit and a singleton in another, you are interested in one particular king and a generic king-asking bid, unless partner turns up with the rest, won't tell you what you need to know.

The Keycard Blackwood books have likely set records. At 244 pages for this edition and 266 for the last edition (both about double the length of the first book), these may be the longest bridge books ever written on one limited topic.

One caveat: The author warns that you don't even mess with this book, as technical as it is, unless you have a partner who is willing to work painstakingly through it with you.

One more tip from the book: "Not every slam problem can be solved using RKB. Cuebidding is still allowed! Also, there is not a slam in almost every hand, as there is in this book!"

The final word? We look forward to the sixth edition.

## Chris Hasney's Simplicity Bridge -- E-Book Review

By Jared Johnson

ScoreCard Editor

Inroads are being made in the world of bridge e-book publishing, bridge books available for downloading on the Internet. Chris Hasney, an Arizona tournament player, has *Simplicity Bridge, A Simple Approach to Contract Bridge Bidding and Play*. Writes Hasney in the Introduction, "In its present form, bridge is just too hard to learn. It takes years to develop the ability to confidently play the game with experienced players."

He recommends a new approach to learning and playing bridge.

The straightforward caveat is right on the cover page, "This book does not teach high level matchpoint tournament play methods." Still, if you mastered most of the material in this book you would probably do well at club or tournament matchpoint play even without detailed knowledge of the special strategies for matchpoints, such as sometimes risking your contract for overtricks or placing special emphasis on the possibly riskier notrump over the safer but lower-scoring minor suit contracts.

Often just getting to a good contract and making it is enough.

Hasney has a crisp, conversational writing style (think Mike Lawrence) that takes players through all the basics of bidding and play. Every section closes with a list of books for further study. Most of it is basic bread and butter with a few special bidding gadgets and gimmicks tossed in here and there. After all, you're got to have Blackwood, Stayman and Jacoby Transfers.

Learning the basics shouldn't be taken lightly. You need a sound foundation to build on later when (if) you start playing club or tournament bridge.

Yes, sometimes even the top players get a bad result because they have goofed up playing one of their fancy, complicated bidding conventions. But other times top players can get a bad result because they have forgotten (or simply disregarded in the greed of matchpoint play) basic bridge.

The book is about 165 pages, a manageable size. That's another consideration. Sometimes even introductory texts are intimidating. There are a few bridge books out there (one might recall the old *Charles Goren Bridge Complete*) that look like college level math books.

Start with something more comfortable.

Of course, most of the readers of *ScoreCard* are already devoted duplicate and tournament players, but certainly you have some bridge friends who who might be interested in getting a bit more serious about the game and you'd like to provide them with something instructive that won't scare them off. Try this.

*Simplicity Bridge, A Simple Approach to Contract Bridge Bidding and Play* is available for \$19.95 at:

[www.simplicitybridge.com](http://www.simplicitybridge.com)

## New Life Masters



Mary Boyd  
Sun City West, AZ



Lynn Jacobson  
Colorado Springs

### Roadrunner Spring Sectional

June 12-14, 2009  
DUKE CITY BRIDGE CENTER  
8616 Northeastern Blvd NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87112  
505-271-2877

<b>Friday</b>	<b>June 12, 2009</b>	
Open Stratified Pairs	Single Sessions	9:00am / 1:00pm / 7:00pm
I/N Stratified Pairs	Single Sessions	9:00am / 1:00pm
Bracketed Knockouts	Round 1	1:00pm
Bracketed Knockouts	Round 2	7:00pm
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>June 13, 2009</b>	
Bracketed Knockouts	Final Round	9:00am
Open Stratified Pairs	Single Session	9:00am
Strati-flighted Pairs	2 sessions	1:00pm and 7:00pm
*Single session entries available on request		
I/N Stratified Pairs	Single Sessions	9:00am / 1:00pm
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>June 14, 2009</b>	
Strati-flighted Swiss Teams	2 sessions	10:00am and TBA
A and A/X play together, B/C/D play together		
Separate I/N Swiss Teams (if sufficient entries)		
Stratified Events: A: 2000+, B: 750-2000, C: 0-750		
Strati-flighted Events: Flight A: 3000+, A/X: 0-3000, B: 750-2000, C: 0-750; Saturday Pairs B: 750-2000, C: 200-750, D: 0-200 Sunday Swiss		
I/N Events: Strata: A: 100-200; B: 50-100; C: 0-50		
Mid-chart methods allowed in Flight A events and in top flight of KO		
Entry Fees: \$8.00/ person/session (ACBL Members)		
\$9.00/person/session (non/unpaid members)		
\$4.00/person/session (Juniors U19)		
\$80.00 per Swiss Team (includes meal between sessions on Sunday)		

Chairperson: Felicity Moore (f.moore@netscape.com) 505-344-5209  
Partnerships: Keesha Ashanti 505-890-8014  
Automated partnership desk at [www.abqbridge.com](http://www.abqbridge.com)

Director-in-Charge: Bill Wittmann Sanction # S0906081

Information and results at [www.abqbridge.com](http://www.abqbridge.com) Results posted online after every session.  
Pre-duplicated boards for all pairs events.  
Complimentary coffee, tea, snacks and finger food at all sessions.  
Non-smoking tournament with breaks.

Directions to DCBC: From I-40 take Wyoming Ave Exit North to Northeastern Blvd (approximately 1 mile) Turn right (E) on Northeastern Blvd (traffic light), DCBC is second building on right.