

## It's Your Call –Book Review

By Jared Johnson  
ScoreCard Editor



Marshall Miles

**M**arshall Miles is well into his 80s and has won a major championship in seven consecutive decades, plus a world championship just a few years ago. He still plays and writes and is widely acknowledged as one of the game's leading theorists. Certainly even Miles himself would not have guessed when he started playing bridge back in the 1940s, that someday he would write a book called *Competitive Bidding in the 21st Century* and have it published in the 21st century.

His *How To Win at Duplicate Bridge* from half a century ago is one of the classics. His latest book is *It's Your Call* (Master Point Press, Toronto). For a quarter century he moderated a bidding panel feature in *The Bridge News*, the monthly bridge publication of ACBL District 23 (Los Angeles), with some of the material also appearing in this publication. Each month had several bidding problems. You get to see one hand and the auction up to a certain point and then it's your call. The panel of experts would provide answers with explanations and on some hands it was amazing how, even among the game's top players, there was so little agreement about what to do. Sometimes the format was to show the entire hand with an auction that led to a disaster for one side of the other, with the panelists then asked to apportion the blame. This, of course, is always an important part of the game of bridge, placing the blame. It's so much fun.

Also full of bidding quizzes is Fred Parker's *Win at Duplicate Bridge, Bid Difficult Bridge Hands Like an Expert* (Vivisphere Publishing, Pough-

keepsie, New York). The first two thirds of the book focuses on basic bidding (openings, responses, overcalls, doubles, etc.), while the last third gives special attention to the Two-Over-One system and a variety of popular conventions.

The book is worth it just for chapter two on conventions in general and the last 50 pages on conventions in detail. Parker suggests it is better to play a few conventions well than to play many conventions without understanding all the ramifications.

To determine the value of a convention you need to consider several factors including how often it comes up, how easy it is to remember, and what natural bids you give up.

He has four categories of conventions. The first is highly recommended, virtual necessities for any serious bridge player, duplicate or otherwise. He suggests the Two-Over-One system over Standard American, along with negative doubles, responsive doubles, support doubles, Roman Key Card Blackwood, Jacoby Two Notrump, splinter bids, new minor forcing, fourth suit forcing, weak jump shifts, and a few others.

Category two includes conventions that frequently come up such as, help suit game tries, maximal doubles, inverted minors and Lebensohl.

The terrain gets trickier with category three, conventions that offer limited advantages and should only be adopted by seasoned partnerships such as Puppet Stayman, Namyats, and Drury.

Parker describes category four as, "... not worth considering, let alone playing." Here he consigns Roman Key Card Gerber, Minor Suit Stayman and Bergen Raises. Of the latter, he particularly warns "Stay away!" although many tournament players would beg to differ as the convention has avid defenders who appreciate the convention's precision and preemptive value.

Plenty of food for thought and problem hands to keep you busy.



### International City Unit 159 El Paso, Texas Haberstroh Memorial Valentine Sectional

February 12, 13, 14, & 15, 2010  
Westside Community Center - (See Map on Back)  
7400 High Ridge, El Paso, Texas 79912  
Sanction #1002100

#### Friday, February 12

10:00 a.m. Bracketed K.O. #1 Session 1  
Stratified Pairs (Single Session)

3:00 p.m. Bracketed K.O. #1 Session 2  
Stratified Pairs (single session)

#### Sunday, February 14

10:00 a.m. Bracketed K.O. #2 Session 2  
Stratified Pairs (single session)

3:00 p.m. Bracketed K.O. #2 Finals  
Stratified Pairs (single session)

**Stratification:** (A) 2000+; (B) 500 - 2000; (C) 0 - 500

**Entry Fees:** \$10.00 per member per session;  
\$11.00 per non or unpaid ACBL members per session  
\$84.00 per Swiss Team on Monday (includes lunch)

Players with fewer than 200 masterpoints who win their strata/section on Friday afternoon will be awarded a free play entry on Saturday afternoon.

**Director:** Bob Craig

**Partnerships:** Peter Peca  
(915) 581 1637  
[Ppeca@aol.com](mailto:Ppeca@aol.com)

**Hospitality:** Arline Yonack  
Rosli Duffy  
Maria Elena Norte

**Chairpersons:** Beverly Thrasher  
(915) 833 3777  
Maria Elena Norte  
(915) 307 3145

**Caddies:** Gloria Lavis  
915-584-1357



# RIVERSIDE REGIONAL



January 25-31, 2010 • Riverside Convention Center

**New Dates!**

3443 Orange Street, Riverside, California

Website: [www.TheRiversideRegional.com](http://www.TheRiversideRegional.com)

Prime Time events 10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.  
Evening Pairs & Teams games available

#### Pairs Games

Charity Pairs - Monday single sessions .....2:00 & 7:30 p.m.  
Stratified Pairs daily, Tuesday-Saturday .....10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.  
Side Game Series (3) Tues.-Sat. ....10:00 a.m., 3:00 & 7:30 p.m.  
Fast Pairs - Sunday (out by 4:00 p.m.) .....10:00 a.m. & TBA

#### Knockout Teams

Monday-Thursday KO Teams evenings .....7:30 p.m.  
Wednesday-Saturday KO Teams evenings .....7:30 p.m.  
Tuesday-Compact KO Teams .....10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.  
Wednesday-Thursday KO Teams both days..10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.  
Thursday-Compact KO Teams .....10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.  
Friday-Saturday KO Teams both days .....10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.  
Saturday Compact KO Teams .....10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.

#### Swiss Teams

Single Session Swiss Teams - Tuesday-Saturday .....3:00 p.m.  
Single Session Swiss Teams - Tuesday & Saturday .....7:30 p.m.  
Two Session Swiss Teams - Thursday-Friday .....7:30 p.m.  
Sunday (6 matches of 8 boards) .....10:00 a.m. (playthrough)

Sanction R1002019

#### Tournament Highlights

- ♥ Plenty of D22 Hospitality
- ♣ Ice Cream, Beer & Pizza
- ♦ Giveaways and Section Tops
- ♠ Pre-Duplicated Boards in Pairs Events
- ♥ Daily Speakers

Parking is Free at the Riverside Convention Center

**Chairman:** Jody Pedri, Ph:714 546-4685 • [jodypedri@yahoo.com](mailto:jodypedri@yahoo.com)  
**Partnerships:** Audrey Wicks, Ph: 949 559-5990 • [audwix@aol.com](mailto:audwix@aol.com)  
**Director:** Betty Bratcher • **Hospitality:** Ann Cressman  
**Card Fees:** \$12.00 (\$14.00 for non & unpaid members)



#### The Beautiful, Historic Mission Inn Host Hotel

3649 Mission Inn Avenue, Riverside, California 92501

**Special Bridge Rate:** \$105/sgl/dbl

**Reservations Phone:** 951 784-0300

or call toll free at 800 843-7755

Cut off Date: December 28, 2009

2010