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Five Weeks To Winning Bridge



Synopsis

This is a paperback book giving instructions on how to learn strategies and hopefully win at bridge after only five weeks!

Book Information

Mass Market Paperback

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (37 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

****UPDATE**** This book is back in print! Hooray! Even though it's over fifty years old and mentions five-card major bidding style only in passing, I'd pay the inflated price happily. Here's the redacted text of my original review, which I posted without name many years ago.[While Alfred Sheinwold's FIVE WEEKS TO WINNING BRIDGE is out of print, it's no surprise that it still commands good prices used. For this is one of the best if not THE best all-in-one introductions to bridge, which will take the total newbie into the mysteries of bidding, play, strategy, and defense, with wit and efficiency both.Although this volume was first produced in 1960, it would probably still be in print if not for the fact that most bridge players (home-style and duplicate both) now play a version of bridge called "five-card majors," which will not permit the player to open "one heart" or "one spade," even if s/he has four great cards in that suit -- it has to be five cards or more.Still, so excellent is this book that it might well be worth the beginner's time to seek it out used. I still use and treasure mine. Thanks for reading this!]

Allen Smalling (updated June 2008 and August 2013)

No other book can match Sheinwold's "Five Weeks to Winning Bridge" for introductory level Bridge. Simply put, this book details the fundamentals of the game without condescending to its readers -- ever. Sheinwold is smart, concise, logical, droll - everything one wants in an instructor. While the book lacks discussion of important modern conventions (having been written decades ago), the lion's share is still extremely relevant and will prepare any card-playing novice for parlor play. I have gone back to Sheinwold again and again for solace, refreshers, and just plain pleasure. I

wholeheartedly, unreservedly, and without hesitation recommend this magical book for anyone interested in learning to play Bridge.

This book is so fun and easy to read, it actually got me, a non-player, interested in bridge. Then when the internet came along, I was able to play easily using the Yahoo! servers. That's when I picked it up again. It's organized logically: 35 lessons, 1 per day for 5 weeks, in the following order: rules, scoring, bids, notrumps, rebids, slams, competitive bids, doubles, finesse, squeezes, and on to esoteric tips that only the masters need to learn about. It covers the conventions naturally, as they come up, and also lets you know which ones are frequently needed and which are "once in a blue moon." There are plenty of examples and self-tests along the way, which let you know if you need to reread a section. Best of all is the writing - Sheinwold is witty, making you feel like an insider to the world of smart bridge playing. If you're a beginner, you'll find him lucid and easy to follow; even a pro should take tips from the later sections. You needn't get far through the book before you start wishing you had a better partner, which I think is probably the ultimate test of any bridge book. Sheinwold himself is an interesting fellow - a native of Great Britain, he grew up in the USA, then headed the Department of Codes and Ciphers of the O.S.S. during World War II. He returned to bridge when the war was over, making his living at playing and writing about bridge. This book was written in 1959, but isn't dated at all, and its long life should be the best testimony to its merit. There are two very, very mildly misogynistic jokes ("who can ever tell what a woman is thinking?" is the worse of them) scattered in the text, which were well within the bounds of repartee in 1959, but which don't seem appropriate in 2003. That's the only bad thing I can find to say. If you have any interest in bridge, you ought to read this book!

This book is excellent for someone who wants to get a full basic education in bridge bidding and play. In addition to giving you the rules of bidding, it explains the logic behind the bidding, so the player can use the techniques to communicate fully within their partnership. It is laid out in a simple to use format and was terrific for bringing me up to speed as a Bridge bidder. In addition, Alfred Sheinwold was the author of the daily bridge column in most newspapers, which has been taken over by Frank Stewart, so that the reader/player can practice on a daily basis, the concepts introduced with the same bidding system. After going through this book, I found I could usually get the newspaper quiz right, due to the knowledge gained from this book, which is not true for most of the people I play with, although they have years more experience. Worth the time and effort for beginning players, and intermediate players who think they need to fill in gaps in their game.

In order for you to understand why I recommend this book, I must share a personal anecdote. In the fall of 1971 I had just started law school at UC Davis. Believe it or not, at the beginning of the year there was not that much going on, and a few bridge games were starting in the lounge. I had only played twice in my life..barely knew the rules..but since a fourth was always desperately needed I was drafted to participate. What a cut-throat crowd! My partners were merciless and would criticize any mistakes I made, and those were plentiful.Five Weeks To Winning Bridge provided my redemption. The woman who owned the house where I boarded had a copy, and as I read it I began to learn what the game was really all about. I would study the lessons, all set out very logically, on bidding, play and defense..the point count required for various actions, how to handle no trump and trump contracts. These lessons, coupled with WAY too much play for a law student, had me playing at a quite respectable level by the year's end. In time, I would play in duplicate tournaments and achieve several wins in regional events. This book provided the foundation. The major drawback to Five Weeks is that it was written long ago, and thus various modern conventions and treatments are not included. But as a beginner's introduction to bridge, I would strongly recommend it. Sheinwold has a knack for setting out just what you need to know in an orderly fashion. If the student provides the discipline, I am sure he or she can be playing decent bridge in a few months.

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