



# Charles Goren

1901 – 1991

No name is more closely associated with the game of bridge than that of Charles Goren. Indeed, Goren earned and proudly bore the nickname of "**Mr. Bridge**". Born in Philadelphia, Goren earned a law degree as a young man but practiced only briefly before bridge became first in his life.

As a protege of fellow Hall-of-Famer Milton Work, Goren adapted Work's point-count evaluation method and published the now-familiar 4-3-2-1 system. The idea caught on quickly and was used by millions of players. Goren --- a tireless worker --- promoted his ideas through books, tours and lectures. Overnight, point-count displaced Ely Culbertson's honor-trick approach to hand evaluation. Goren's hugely successful books, *Contract Bridge Complete* and *Point Count Bidding*, made his methods --- dubbed "Standard American" --- the most widely played system in the history of the game. Goren's talents were not limited to writing and lecturing. He also hosted the popular television program *Championship Bridge with Charles Goren* from 1959 to 1964.

The record for the most number of wins in the annual McKenney contest (now the Barry Crane Top 500 masterpoint race) is held by Goren, who won it eight times. He also holds the record for the most number of consecutive victories in the contest: five, from 1947 through 1951.

His tournament career was outstanding. Goren won 34 national championships (now NABCs) and earned a world championship title when the U.S. squad won the inaugural Bermuda Bowl in 1950. The name of Goren became synonymous with bridge to millions. His importance as a world figure was recognized when he was on the front cover of *Time* magazine. His classic *Contract Bridge Complete* ran to 12 editions. It is estimated that Goren books have sold more than 10 million copies. His writings have been translated into a dozen languages. His books include: *Better Bridge for Better Players*, *Standard Book of Bidding*, *Contract Bridge Made Easy*, *A Self-Teacher*, *Point-Count Bidding in Contract Bridge*, *Goren Presents the Italian Bridge System*, *New Contract Bridge in a Nutshell*; *Sports Illustrated Book of Bridge*, *Goren's Winning Partnership Bridge*, *Charles Goren's Bridge*

Complete, and Goren on Play and Defense. Goren became a world champion in Bermuda in 1950 when the first Bermuda Bowl World Championship was staged. He placed 2nd in the 1956 and 1957 Bermuda Bowls, was a member of the U.S. team that finished 4th in the first World Team Olympiad in Turin in 1960. His television show, Championship Bridge with Charles Goren, ran from 1959 to 1964. It was called the first successful bridge program on television and won an award as one of the best new television features.

A lifelong bachelor, Goren may genuinely have been married to the game. In spite of his work as writer, lecturer, promoter, TV personality (unlike Culbertson, who grew bored with the game when he became successful), Goren was devoted to tournament play. He seldom played rubber bridge, and never for high stakes. He considered his playing status amateur and once turned over to the Damon Runyon Cancer Fund the full amount of a \$1,500 purse which he won in a charity tournament played in Las Vegas .

Before his retirement from active competition in 1966, he captured virtually every major bridge trophy in U.S. tournament play. He was elected the ACBL Honorary Member of 1959, one of the first three elected to the ACBL Hall of Fame (then of The Bridge World) in 1963. He was a member of the ACBL Laws Commission from 1956, contributing editor of The Bridge World, member of Editorial Advisory Board of The Bridge Encyclopedia. Goren was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by McGill University in 1963.

After retiring from the tournament scene in the late Sixties, Goren lived quietly at his home in Miami Beach. For the last 19 years of his life he lived with his nephew, Marvin Goren, in Southern California. Because of poor eyesight and failing health, he was seldom seen in the Seventies. There were rare appearances on the According to Goren panel shows at North American Bridge Championships and in 1972 he hosted a party for the press at his Miami Beach home during the Fourth World Bridge Olympiad.

His personal record by events includes :

won the Bermuda Bowl in 1950, placed 2nd in 1956 and 1957; 3rd in the World Team Olympiad in 1960. On the national level he won the Vanderbilt in 1944 and 1945, placed 2nd in 1934, 1936, 1949, 1950, 1953, 1955, 1959 and 1962; Asbury Park Trophy (later the Spingold) 1937; Spingold Master KO Teams in 1943, 1947, 1951, 1956 and 1960, 2nd in 1939 and 1950; Reisinger B-A-M Teams (formerly Chicago) in 1937, 1938, 1939, 1942, 1943, 1950, 1957 and 1963, 2nd in 1944 and 1951; the Master Mixed Teams in 1938, 1941, 1943, 1944, 1948 and 1954, 2nd in 1946, 1949, 1950 and 1951; Men's B-A-M Teams in 1952, 2nd in 1946 and 1955; the Life Master Pairs in 1942 and 1958, 2nd in 1953; the Open Pairs in 1940; the Mixed Pairs in 1943 and 1947, 2nd in 1934; the Men's Pairs in 1938, 1943 and 1949, 2nd in 1935; the Masters Individual in 1945; the McKenney Trophy in 1937, 1943, 1945, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950 and 1951.