

## **Record Run**

### **KAY BLAKE & JIM BARROW**

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Softcover

Point Pursuit



### **THE AUTHORS:**

#### **James Malcolm Barrow**

Jim was raised in Pensacola, Florida. While attending Jr. College, he was introduced to bridge by a close friend, Don Caton, the youngest life master in the country at the time. Jim received a degree in Business Administration from the University of Southern Mississippi. His love of bridge led him to spend a great portion of his life playing bridge professionally. In 1980 he made a McKenney (the yearly masterpoint race at that time) run, and came in second, winning more points than anyone had prior to that year. He always wanted to go back and do it right. This led to the Top 500 run in 1999. Record Run is the story of that year on the circuit when he broke the all time record.

#### **Katherine Krause Blake**

Kay is a member of a pioneer family in Lake Charles, Louisiana. She attended Louisiana State University, University of Colorado, and McNeese State University where she obtained a B.S. degree. She was married to William D. Blake in 1954. They have three daughters and seven grandchildren. Kay was a full time Mother and community volunteer during her child-rearing years. Recently she has developed an interest in computers, duplicate bridge, and writing. Kay and her husband purchased and remodeled a building for the Lake Charles Duplicate Bridge Club. It is one of the finest bridge facilities in the United States. Writing Record Run with Jim Barrow about his year on the circuit allowed her to incorporate all three of her new hobbies into the task.

### **REVIEWS**

To anyone who complains about how "easy" it is to win masterpoints these days, I commend this book - a chronicle of Jim Barrow's odyssey in 1999 on his way to the Barry Crane Top 500 title. Indeed, it would take a hearty - or desperately foolish - player to undertake that campaign after reading this tale of the tournament trail.

Barrow, one-time Phoenix resident now living in Lake Charles LA, was the runner-up to Ron Andersen in the 1980 masterpoint chase after playing most of the year, more or less as a lark, with Roger Jourdan, since deceased. The experience apparently stayed with Barrow, and he tried

again in 1999, this time admonishing himself that it would be "all business." Ominously, Barrow concludes the preface of his book with the statement, "The fun would have to wait."

To put the book together, Barrow made audio tapes and notes at the various tournaments he attended, sending them back to Kay Blake, his Lake Charles-based co-author. The narrative is written in the third person from Blake's perspective.

This is a complete record of the highs and lows - it seems like there were more of the latter than the former - of chasing masterpoints all over North America. Barrow literally flew from coast to coast on a couple of occasions for back-to-back tournaments and was so dogged in his pursuit of even the smallest award that he often played at the club in Lake Charles when he was home, supposedly resting up for the next trip.

Every tournament, every event, every partner is documented in this tale, and his frankness in discussing some players is as refreshing as it is surprising in some cases. There are problems with punctuation in places and most of the deals are uninspired (he favors reporting the auctions on grand slams his side reached). There is also an infuriating reference to a "funny incident" at a tournament that he then declines to describe. Also, a photo of Barrow is conspicuous in its absence.

Nevertheless, it is an interesting read - a fascinating look at the tournament scene and what it takes to haul in a record 3584.26 masterpoints in one calendar year. Easy to win masterpoints? Just ask Jim Barrow.

**Brent Manley** in *The ACBL Bulletin*

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Also available from the ACBL Sales Department and other bridge supply houses.

"The author, a driving force behind this new publishing venture, needs no introduction. His output is prodigious and encompasses all aspects of the game but I suspect he derives most satisfaction from fulfilling his reputation as the pre-eminent writer of humorous bridge fiction. Few will not be familiar with his stories about the Abbot and monks of the St Titus monastery and the nuns of St Hilda's provide another strong case to amuse and instruct.

"The highly entertaining text is complemented by some excellent hands."

**Simon Ainger** in *Mr. Bridge Circular*

"Truly captures the dedication and emotional resolve needed to produce a record-breaking performance. Takes you behind the scenes and involves you in the real nitty gritty."

**Paul Soloway**

"The riveting and detailed account of the winning of every one of those 3,584.26 masterpoints, the tournaments, the partners, the teammates, and much much more."

**Mike Passell**

"Far and away, the best book ever written about a Top 500 run, and not just because it's the only one! Tournament players will love it."

**Jeff Meckstroth**