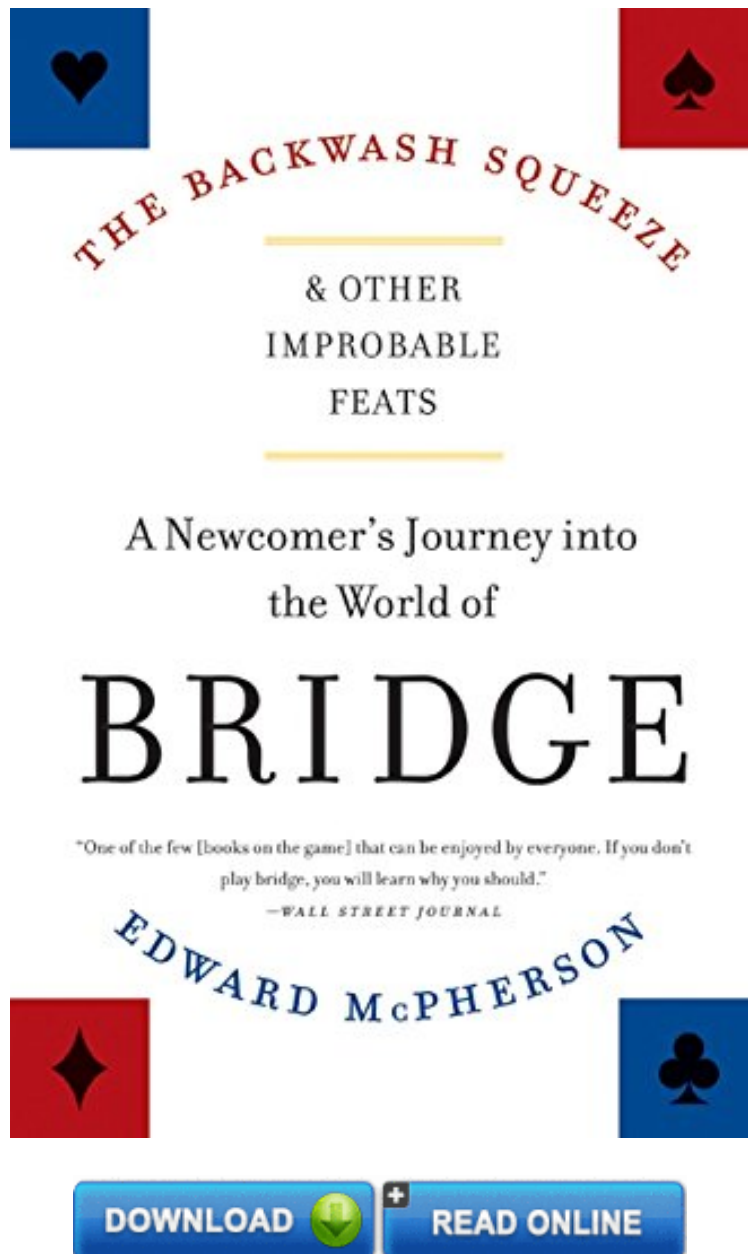


(Download pdf) The Backwash Squeeze and Other Improbable Feats: A Newcomer's Journey into the World of Bridge

# The Backwash Squeeze and Other Improbable Feats: A Newcomer's Journey into the World of Bridge

Edward McPherson

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#1435356 in Books Edward Mcpherson 2008-06-24 2008-06-24 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x .83 x 5.311, .63 #File Name: 0061127655368 pages The Backwash Squeeze and Other Improbable Feats A Newcomer s Journey into the World of Bridge | File size: 22.Mb

**Edward McPherson : The Backwash Squeeze and Other Improbable Feats: A Newcomer's Journey into the World of Bridge** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Backwash Squeeze and Other Improbable Feats: A Newcomer's Journey into the World of Bridge:

19 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Witty, engaging portrait of the bridge world  
By E. Thomas  
This a wonderful book for bridge players, as well as for those are unfamiliar with the game. It offers a fascinating portrait of the game's history and the myriad characters who have played it, past and present (my personal favorites are the colorful denizens of the Manhattan Bridge Club, each of whom McPherson delineates perfectly). There is also plenty of information about the ins and outs of the game itself. One of the book's many charms is that you feel as if you're learning about the game as McPherson, who was new to bridge when he began, does. That said, it is certainly not "Bridge for Dummies" (thank goodness), so if you're looking solely for a how-to book, this might not be the one for you. But if you're interested in an extremely well-written, almost Tom Wolfean take on this game and the culture surrounding it, I'd recommend it highly. It was total delight to read.  
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.  
Don't Bother  
By Carol Strickman  
Wasn't very good.  
2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A wonderful view into the world of bridge from a beginner's perspective  
By Hanoi Rondn  
I got this book because its name and summary somehow caught my attention. It was a very nice experience for the author covers the way he entered the world of bridge and he interviews some interesting famous characters and visits tournaments and clubs sharing his experience and making it a nice read for those interested in bridge, whether they play it already or are looking forward to learning it. The book doesn't even show a bridge hand diagram so you won't be learning any technical stuff, however it does explain some psychological and social aspects of the game that might be useful for people who already play it. I guess what the author intended was to write a book for people who would be interested in knowing about bridge but also to cater for those playing the game that want to share someone else's experience. If I could have taken off half a star I would have done it, but it wouldn't be very fair. Some parts of the book can be slow (when the author describes the 'touristic' part of his trips) and other frustrating (when the he can't remember something said by one of the important bridge figures), but this is probably because I already play bridge and was looking forward to learn stuff from the 'masters'. All in all this is a great book recommended for bridge players and those who want to become one (the only 2 types of people in the world).

At one time the game was even bigger than baseball. Today bridge is played by more than twenty-five million people in the United States alone, with Bill Gates, a sitting Supreme Court justice, and the guys from Radiohead among its devotees. In this spirited homage, Edward McPherson recounts the colorful history of the game and his attempts to master its mysteries in time to compete at the North American Bridge Championships despite being barely able to shuffle cards, let alone play competitively. Insightful, funny, and steeped in respect, *The Backwash Squeeze* is an affectionate view of a grand game by an outsider trying to make his way into the inner circle.

From Publishers Weekly  
McPherson is an amusing writer who believes that bridge is a battle between fate and chance mediated by skill. In this lighthearted book, he relates bridge's history and tours its contemporary universe. Originally derived from the British game of whist, the modern version of contract bridge was developed in 1925 by railroad heir Harold Stirling Vanderbilt. McPherson provides snapshots of men such as Ely Culbertson and Charles H. Goren, whose writings and activities spurred a bridge craze in the '30s and '40s. Traveling to Kansas City, Gatlinburg, Tenn., Las Vegas and London, among other locations, McPherson attended tournaments and visited clubs, interviewing famous players and collecting fascinating anecdotes. During classes at the Manhattan Bridge Club, the author became friends with 83-year-old Tina and persuaded her to accompany him to Chicago where the two played as partners in an annual tournament. The author says the bridge-playing population is aging, a process exacerbated by the current preference for poker among younger card players. Although McPherson provides a brief introduction to the rules, those who have played bridge will derive the most enjoyment from this breezy, absorbing account. (July 3) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.  
From Booklist  
Like Anthony Holden's *Big Deal* (1990), this entertaining book takes us inside the sometimes-cutthroat world of a card game that can become a way of life for its devotees. Holden wrote about poker; McPherson writes about bridge, a game that, in one form or another, dates back to the early 1500s, although its most familiar form, contract bridge, wasn't devised until 1925. McPherson was almost entirely unfamiliar with bridge when he decided to write a book about it, and we sit alongside him as he attempts to learn the game. Bridge, he soon discovers, is almost incomprehensibly complex. Its devotees (from ordinary citizens to world leaders) run the gamut from a little bit odd to downright spooky, but the author writes about them with affection; foibles aside, they've all learned to play an almost mind-numbingly difficult game and play it well. Bridge aficionados will enjoy McPherson's lighthearted journey into their world, and readers unfamiliar with the game might find themselves developing a hankering to learn it, just to see if it's really as tough as everybody says. Pitt, David "A lively book..." --*The New Yorker* "McPherson is an intrepid traveler... A charming and literate companion, he approaches his task with becoming modesty... Entertaining stuff... One of the few [books on bridge] that can be enjoyed by everyone." --*The Wall Street Journal* "[McPherson] writes with a light, entertaining touch and gives interesting insights into bridge and its players." --*The New York Times* "A delightful account... McPherson has a keen eye for detail and an easy sense of humor... Engaging enough to convince even a non-bridge-playing jock to sit

down at the table and hazard a few hands." --Bloomberg News