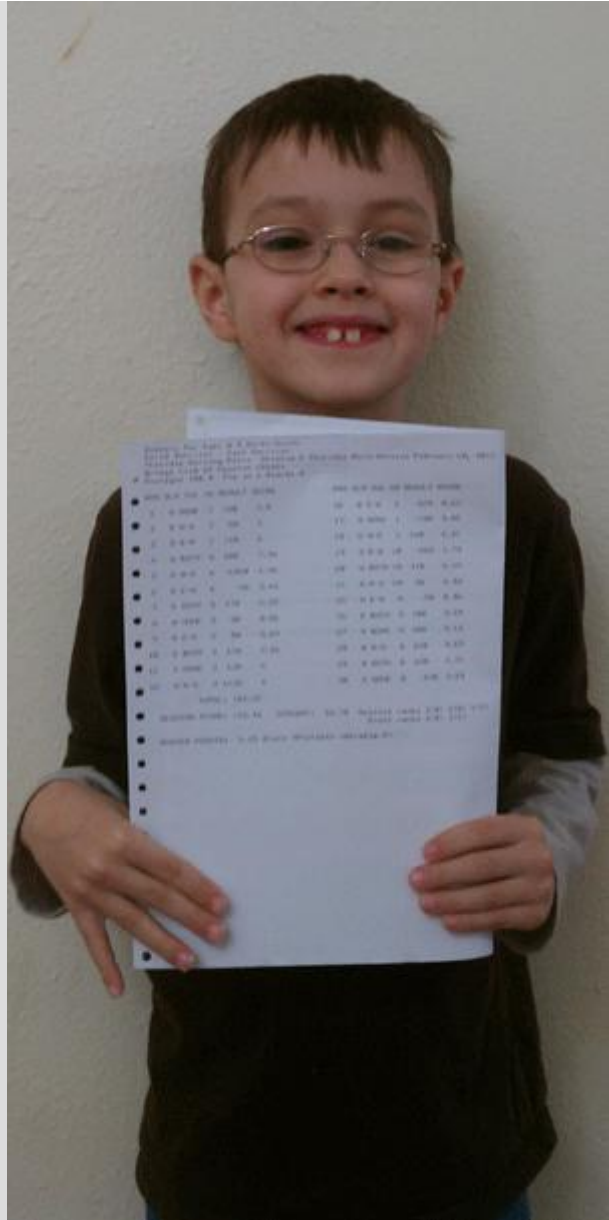


## Zach2002 ACBL's Youngest Life Master



Zach at the Houston Regional, where he made Life Master

⑤ Zach2002 (Zach Garrison) became the youngest life master in the ACBL on February 1st, 2012 at the Houston Lone Star Regional, at the age of 9 years, 2 months, and 7 days. He began the regional needing 11.14 points to become a life master. Zach and his dad, David Garrison, won the Tuesday morning side game, earning 3.49 points. Then his team (Zach's mom, Kristy, and his dad, David Garrison, Eric Watson, and Pam Whitney) won second in the Swiss teams Tuesday night earning Zach 5.93 points. Wednesday, his team (David and Kristy Garrison and Karen and George Fillis) advanced to round three of knockout 3 putting him over the top with 302.70 master points.



**On February 10, 2011 Zach won his first Masterpoint at the Bridge Club of Houston**



**Zach at the San Antonio Regional**

**Zach** inherited his parents love for bridge. They think they infected him with the "bridge bug". The little boy often had to stand on the sidelines and watch his parents play with his older siblings. Then in Nov. 2009 he saw **Richard** and **Andrew Jeng** in the Bridge Bulletin. He had just turned eight and was very excited to see that other kids played bridge. He told his parents that he could play too. So early in 2010 his mother began teaching Zach and his younger sister **Sarah** to play bridge. Zach developed a fascination with the game and couldn't wait to begin playing for real. Zach had some money he had received for Valentines day and he said he would pay his own way if someone would take him. He wasn't ready for duplicate bridge (he didn't know all of the rules, or bidding, or defense), but **Lorraine Coomes** (the director of the 299er game at the **Bridge Club of Houston**) allowed him to play with his mother during the Friday morning 299er games.

During one of his earliest bridge auctions, his mom and the opponents were bidding, and Zach had been passing. Finally he placed his STOP card on the table, waited a few seconds, then placed the pass card on the table and put the STOP card back away. After the round, his mom asked him about the auction since she hadn't taught him about the stop card yet. He replied that "I wanted you to STOP BIDDING!" He thought this was a perfect use for that card. He loved playing in this game and played every Friday for several months. Then he took a break from bridge for about eight months. Life happens.

Then after the 2011 Houston Regional, he expressed an interest in bridge again. He still wanted to be the youngest life master, stay in hotels, and eat out. So he started studying bridge, learning more about bidding (he only knew how to open and first round responses), declarer play, and basic

defense. He wanted to play so bad he spent hours taking the cards out and sorting his hand, counting his points, and deciding his opening bid so he would be fast enough. On February 10, 2011 he earned his first masterpoint at the Bridge Club of Houston playing with his Dad. He was so proud. Over the next year, he's played as much as possible attending 6 regionals (Shreveport, San Antonio, Baton Rouge, Dallas, Corpus Christi, and Houston), many sectionals, and playing in the local Houston games regularly. After every game, he would sit down with mom and figure out how many more points he needed to reach his goal.

In one of his first games, Zach opened in fourth seat with 1 club, LHO passes, and Dad bid 1 notrump which was passed out, and Dad made three. Zach is paying more attention to everyone else in the room ([Eddie Wold](#) is his favorite) than the card play as dummy, or so everyone thinks. When the hand was over, he asked dad what the bid 1NT means, and gets the reply no 4 card major, 6-9 points. Zach replied, "but you had 10 dad."

During his spare time, when he's not playing bridge, Zach likes to make up interesting bridge hands, work puzzles, play chess and checkers, and play video games. He hopes to play soccer this summer. He loves all things [Mario](#) and is an avid [Star Wars](#) fan.

Zach is homeschooled by his mom and has three sisters (**Danielle**, **Samantha**, and **Sarah**). He plays bridge mostly with his parents, but he has had many different partners and teammates over the last year and has played in many different events. His favorite event is Swiss teams.

Zach has been very blessed with the support from everyone in the local bridge community. In fact we received several calls and emails here at BBO from Zach's friends announcing us of his fantastic achievements. **5** **Anniebmisc (Ann Bullard)** helped us connect to Zach's family and get the story out to all BBO members.

Zach loves playing online and is really enjoying the new [18 board games](#). He found BBO because both his parents play online occasionally. They have used the bidding tables and teaching tables to help teach Zach. "Zach has spent hours practicing bidding at the bidding tables. He likes to play speedball. It seems to be the perfect amount of time for him," says his mom, Kristy.

Congratulations to Zach and to his family. Zach is not only is an excellent player, but a young gentleman ... a credit to his family and to the game.