

Bridge with Frank Installment 25

Last week I held a hand with the most high card points I have ever held. The hand was SAKQxxHAKx DAQ CAKx.

I didn't know how to bid this hand. After all, how often do you get a 29 point hand? This is my highest point total in over 50 years, although I was once at the table when my partner had 30 points. Remember that whatever you think you should be doing, you have to communicate with partner who also doesn't know what bids show 29 points. I started with 2C. Partner bid a waiting 2D. It looked like I should bid NT at some level. A jump to 5NT might be a logical choice to show 29 or 30 points. I decided on a safer course and simply bid 2S. Partner bid 3C which we use to show a double negative. Partner has 0 – 3 points. Even with a maximum we would only have 32 points, so I wistfully checked out in 3NT.

The opening lead was a low diamond and partner tabled S xx H QJ10x D 10xxx C 1098.

The opening lead gave me a second diamond trick and when spades divided 3-3, I took all the tricks for +720. Slam was an OK contract even without the diamond lead. It required a 3-3 spade split or a winning diamond finesse and 4-2 or better spade split, all-in-all about a 60% proposition. I thought many pairs would bid a slam and we would get a bad board.

Not to worry, we got 6 match points out of 8. Only 2 pairs

bid a slam, but, amazingly enough, 3 pairs played in a part score. How can this happen on a hand with a combined total of 32 high card points? At one table at least, the auction started the same as my auction, but the 3 point hand passed the 2S rebid.

Usually I'm like Charlie Brown (wishy-washy) or like Tevye (always looking at both sides of the issue), but here I'm going to take a stand in large type bold-face.

After a strong 2C opening bid, an auction cannot end in 2 of a major or 3 of a minor - period end of story, not one of those discuss with partner issues.