

Bridge with Frank Installment 26

A fictional detective once described a voluptuous blonde as having a lot of “this and that and these and those.” I wouldn’t go so far as to describe a bridge hand as voluptuous (OK, yes I would. Let’s face it. I’m as geeky as they come.) Anyway, lately I’ve had a lot of hands with “this and that and these and those.”

Last week I described a 29 point hand. This week I have 3 more powerful hands. One is from several months ago. The other 2 took place in the last week. First, let’s look at the oldie.

S void H AQJ10xxx D AKQxx C A

How would you open the bidding? Most have told me that they would start with 2C, but I read somewhere that an opening bid of 5 or 6 of a major asks partner to go up one level for each high trump honor (A or K) he possesses. I opened 6H and partner with the K of H raised to 7. The diamond suit behaved and 7H made easily. Only one person has agreed with me about my 6H opening bid. Fortunately, it was the only one who mattered.

The first of the 2 recent hands was

S KQJ10 H xx D AKQxxxx C void

Right hand opponent opened a weak 2 heart bid and I decided to double. Mirabile dictu, partner jumped to 4S. What now. Fortunately there is a bid made for this situation. 5S asks partner for 2ⁿ round control or better of the opponent’s suit. Since the opponents have only pre-empted, partner could certainly have 2 aces. I tried 5S. How bad can it be? I soon found out. Partner went down 1. Partner was off 2 heart tricks and also the A of spades. I guess I lack imagination I didn’t visualize S xxxx H xx D x C AKQ10xx Oh well!

Here’s the third hand.

S x H AKQxx D AKQxxxx C void

Right hand opponent opened 1S and I decided to double. Partner surprised with 2H and I raised to 6H. After the auction ended both partner and RHO said they couldn't wait to see this hand. RHO had both black aces. Quite logically she chose the A from her shorter suit – making 7. This was a good score. Some opponents took the ace of spades. One pair saved in 6S and another played in 4Hx, making 6 for +790, a dreadful score, as it even lost to the 800 for 6Sx down 4.

I have a couple of interesting hand from the days when I was editor of the Vermont bridge association newsletter (10 years of service). Here's the first one.

How often have you pre-empted in a suit and would up trumping the suit before the hand was over. This sounds impossible, but here's the hand. This is a real hand from actual play.

North

—
West

S KQJxxxx HQ D 432 C xx

The auction was

S xx Hx D AJ85 C KQxxxx

South S A10x H AJxxx

D KQ109 C 10

East Sx

H K109xxx D 76 C AJ9x

South 1H 3S 4C P 4D P 5D all pass

West

North

East

I led the king of spades. South won with the ace and cashed the ace of hearts. He followed with a club. Partner won the ace of clubs and continued with the 10 of hearts. Declarer played low, I pitched my last club and declarer ruffed in dummy. Declarer now embarked on a 6 trick cross ruff of clubs in his hand and hearts in dummy. Since I had only spades and the 432 of trump, I pitched spades on all 6 tricks. With three tricks to go, I had just the 432 of diamonds remaining. Declarer led a spade from dummy, partner threw his last heart, declarer followed suit and I got to ruff a trick in my original 7 card suit. Declarer finished down 1 --- strange hand.

Since I have a little bit of space left, but not enough to start a new topic, I'm going to entertain you with another song. Many bridge players also play or used to play chess. Both require logical thinking and appeal to the geeks among us. A while back I published a couple of bridge songs, including 1 from the March 1962 issue of Mad Magazine. That song used the caisson song melody. Here is a chess song from the same issue. The tune is Anchors aweigh.

Bishops away my boy Bishops away Move up those knights and pawns Keep your queen in play -ay -ay Castle your king, my lad Don't hesitate Whoops, guess we told you wrong He's got you there, he's got you there Checkmate