



To bid, or not to bid ...?

Let's start with a question that is as much about your bidding style as about right vs. wrong. You're vulnerable, they are not. Partner deals and passes, RHO opens 1D and this is your hand:

♠ AQ76
♥ J87642
♦
♣ J42

What will you do?

The Trumps Teams played in the first week of July was convincingly won by WATTS (Marlene Watts - Michael Prescott, Susan Crompton - Peter Gill). They had a solid victory over our team in round 4, to which the board shown below was a major contributor. The South hand raises important questions:-

- 1) with a distributional hand and a long suit, do you "get in there" every time you can?
- 2) is a third-seat overcall more about competing for the part-score or helping partner with the defence when the opponents win the contract?

Board 5	♠ JT82		♠ K543
Dlr: N	♥ 53		♥ AT9
Vul: N-S	♦ J97		♦ AT85
	♣ AT76		♣ 53
	♠ 9		
	♥ KQ		
	♦ KQ6432		
	♣ KQ98		
	6	♠ AQ76	N: 2♥ 1♠
	15 11	♥ J87642	S: 2♥ 1♠
	8	♦	E: 1♣ 5♦ 2NT
		♣ J42	W: 1♣ 5♦ 2NT

Susan Crompton and Peter Gill found their way to an over-optimistic 6D contract, but I had overcalled a heart, so partner eschewed his natural lead of a spade and led my suit instead. The spade loser vanished, as did partner's equanimity. At the 14 tables in play, 12 reached contracts of 3NT or 5D, all successful, including our team-mates. The 21 IMP swing was almost the entire margin of the match!

A small informal poll leads me to believe that there's about a 50-50 split on whether or not one should overcall, with the likelihood being inversely proportional to age ...



The full hand is:-

Board 3 ♠KJ8
 Dlr: S ♥853
 Vul: E-W ♦JT987
 ♣53

♠T962		♠A4
♥64		♥QJ97
♦65		♦AK32
♣AKJ96		♣Q72
5	♠Q753	N: 1♦
8	♥AKT2	S: 1♦
16	♦Q4	E: 3♣2♥1♠2NT
11	♣T84	W: 3♣1♥1♠2NT



Finally, just for fun, here's a hilarious hand that's not from the Trumps Teams, but was played a couple of weeks earlier in the NSWBA Butler pairs:

Board 26 ♠J75
 Dealer E ♥J7
 Vul Both ♦KQT864
 ♣82

♠		♠KT8643
♥Q9542		♥3
♦AJ9		♦732
♣T9653		♣QJ7
	♠AQ92	
	♥AKT86	
	♦5	
	♣AK4	

As East, I opened a fairly miserable multi-2D. The subsequent auction was too gruesome to describe here, but NS reached 4S, after having been doubled in 4H along the way. Feeling that I'd made quite enough trouble with my opening, I was quite happy to wait for whatever penalty would now be coming our way, so I passed rather than doubling. I'm still waiting. Parter led ♣5. Gary Lane proceeded to play the hand in a manner that ought to have made Deep Finesse feel jealous. Picking me for 6-1-3-3 shape, he took ♣A, then played ♥A and a diamond towards dummy. Partner rose with the ♦A and played another club to the king. Now declarer ruffed his third club, played ♦KQ throwing 2 hearts, and led a heart towards hand. At this stage, East was reduced to holding only trumps and had to ruff, then was forced to exit a trump into the choice of tenaces. The result was that declarer eventually lost only a diamond and 2 trump tricks! Unsurprisingly, absolutely no one else in the room played in 4S, but Gary was able to demonstrate just why Deep Finesse could assert that 4S was cold on a 6-0 break ...