ALT-OCBL GRAND FINAL BULLETIN

Issue N. 4. Saturday, 30 December, 2023

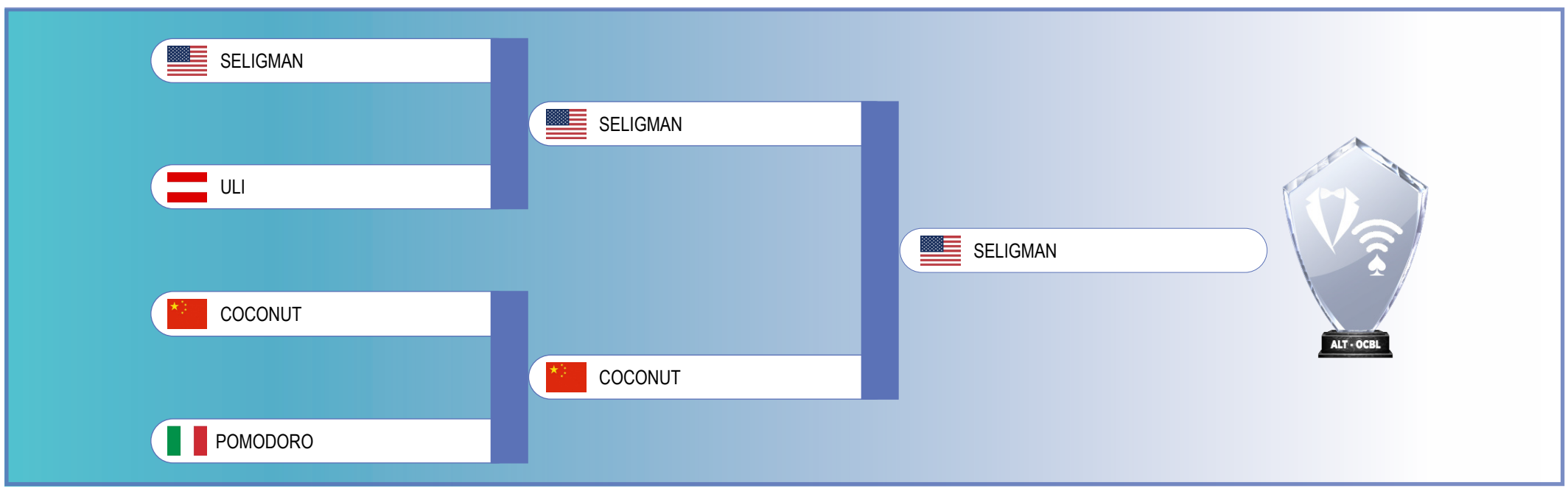
SELIGMAN WIN THE GRAND FINAL!

Team Seligman (M. Seligman, J. Pszczola, M. Kwiecien, W. Starkowski) won the ALT-OCBL Grand Final, 2023 Edition!

In the Final, they faced team COCONUT (Wang D. , Deng X. , Gu J. , Huang N. , Leung S.).

Team Pomodoro (H. Setton, P. Franceschetti, C. Lorenzini, A. Versace, A. Sementa) placed 3rd since they won the match for the 3rd place versus team Uli.

Full results:
https://bridgeresults.org/o/2023_alt_ocbl_grand_final/2023_alt_ocbl_grand_finals.asp



Rounds 6, 7 & 8. Semifinals. Final.

by Mark Horton

Mission Impossible?

With three rounds to go, Seligman, Pomodoro and Coconuts were in a strong position. Uli had possession of the remaining slot, but could they hold on to it? Their most dangerous rivals appeared to be Greenberg and in the main the focus will be on the battle for fourth.

Round 6

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

	♠ 6 ♡ Q 9 8 5 2 ♢ K J 8 6 4 ♣ 10 5	
♠ 9 5 ♡ 6 3 ♢ 10 5 ♣ K J 8 7 6 3 2		♠ K 7 2 ♡ J 7 4 ♢ A Q 9 7 ♣ Q 9 4
	♠ A Q J 10 8 4 3 ♡ A K 10 ♢ 3 2 ♣ A	

Netbridge v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zanasi	*Bouwen*	*Romano*	*v den Hoek*
3♣	Pass	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

West led the ♢10 and East took dummy's jack with the queen, cashed the ♢A and exited with the ♢7. Declarer ruffed with the ♠J, went to dummy with the ♡10 and took the spade finesse, +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Vlam	*Primavera*	*v Roosmalen*	*Schuster*
Pass	2♡*	Pass	2NT*
Pass	3♢*	Pass	3♠*
Pass	4♢	Pass	5♣*
Pass	5♢	Pass	6♡
All Pass			

2♡	Hearts and another suit, 5-10
2NT	Strong relay
3♢	Minimum with ♢
3♠	Strong
5♣	Cue

East led the ♣4 and declarer won perforce with dummy's ace, cashed the ♠A and continued with the ♠Q, ruffing it with the ♡8. A heart to dummy's ace was followed by another spade ruff and declarer then drew trumps and cashed the winning spades, East taking the last two tricks with the ♢AQ, one down, -100 and 12 IMPs away.

If declarer comes to hand with the ♡Q at trick two and takes the spade finesse, he can then ruff a spade, draw trumps and claim.

Pomodoro v Greenberg

Open Room

West	North	East	South
T Edis	*Sementa*	*E Edis*	*Versace*
Pass	Pass	1NT*	Dble*
2NT*	Dble	3♣*	4♣*
Pass	4♡	Pass	5♠
All Pass			

1NT	12-15
Dble	Points
2NT	A long minor or 54♢♣ strong, transfer to ♣
3♣	Forced

West led the ♢10 for the jack and queen and East switched to the ♣9. Declarer won, crossed to dummy with the ♡Q and took the spade finesse. When the king refused to appear under the ace he claimed 10 tricks, one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Lorenzini		Tokay	Setton Greenberg
Pass	Pass	1♢	Dble
Pass	2♡	Pass	3♢*
Pass	4♡	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♡	All Pass	

East led the ♠2 and declarer went up with dummy's ace, ruffed a spade, cashed dummy's ♡AK, ruffed a spade, drew the outstanding trump and claimed, +650 and 13 IMPs.

Seligman v Pioneers

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Liu	*Pszczola*	*Han*	*Seligman*
Pass	Pass	1♢	Dble
2♣	2♡	3♣	4♠
5♣	Dble	All Pass	

North led the ♠6 and South won with the ♠10, cashed the ♡KA and the ♠A and continued with the ♠J. Declarer ruffed with the ♣J and played the ♣K, finishing with eight tricks, three down, -800.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Yang*	*Kwiecien*	*Song*
Pass	Pass	1♣	Dble
3♣*	4♡	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♢	Pass	5♡
All Pass			

3♣ Weak

Having won the club lead with dummy's ace declarer crossed to the ♡Q, took a spade finesse, cashed the ♡K, ruffed a spade, went to the ♡A and claimed 12 tricks, +680 but 3 IMPs away.

Board 10 Dealer East. All Vul.

	♠ A Q 9 6 4 ♡ A 9 ♢ 5 3 ♣ K 10 9 8	
♠ 10 ♡ Q 10 8 7 6 4 ♢ K 4 2 ♣ 7 4 2		♠ 8 7 ♡ 5 3 2 ♢ A Q J 9 8 7 ♣ 6 3
	♠ K J 5 3 2 ♡ K J ♢ 10 6 ♣ A Q J 5	

Netbridge v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zanasi	*Bouwen*	*Romano*	*v den Hoek*
—	—	3♢	3♠
4♢	5♠	All Pass	

West led the ♢2 and the defenders took two tricks in the suit, +650.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Vlam	*Primavera*	*v Roosmalen*	*Schuster*
—	—	2♣*	2♠*
Dble*	4♠	Pass	Pass
5♡	5♠	6♡	Pass
Pass	Dble	All Pass	

2♣	Game forcing or diamonds
2♠	'Good hand, 5+♠'
Dble	Takeout

The defenders took their three black suit winners and subsequently collected two trumps, four down, -1100 and 10 vital IMPs for Uli.

Coconut v Harris

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Harris	*Deng*	*Malhasyan*	*Wang*
—	—	2♢	2♠
3♢	4♢*	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

The defenders took their diamonds, +650.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Tiholov*	*Huang*	*M Gold*
—	—	2♢	2♠
5♢	6♠	All Pass	

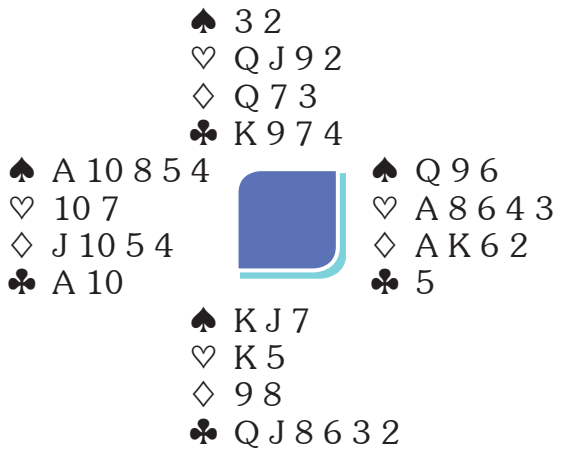
'Mirror, mirror, on the wall, what's the cruellest distribution of them all?'

One down, -100 and a 13 IMP loss.

Uli had collected 11.85 VP, Greenberg 18.00 VP. The gap between the two teams was down to 0.73VP.

Round 7

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.



Greenberg v Seligman

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Seligman	*Tokay*	*Pszczola*	*Greenberg*
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	Pass	1♡	2♣
Dble*	4♣	All Pass	

West led the ♡10 and East took the ace, cashed the ♢K and switched to the ♠6. When declarer played the ♠K West won and the defenders had three more tricks to come, -150.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
T Edis	*Starkowski*	*E Edis*	*Kwiecien*
—	—	—	2♣*
Pass	2♢*	2♡	Pass
2♠	3♣	4♠	All Pass

2♣ Precision style
2♢ Asking

North led the ♣K and declarer won with the ♣A, ruffed a club and played the ♠Q for the king and ace. A spade to the nine saw South win and return the ♣Q, declarer ruffing, cashing the ♠10 and running the ♢J for 11 tricks, +650 and 11 IMPs.

Uli v Pomodoro

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	*Primavera*	*Sementa*	*Schuster*
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	Pass	1♡	2♣
Dble*	4♣	Pass	Pass
Dble	Pass	5♢	All Pass

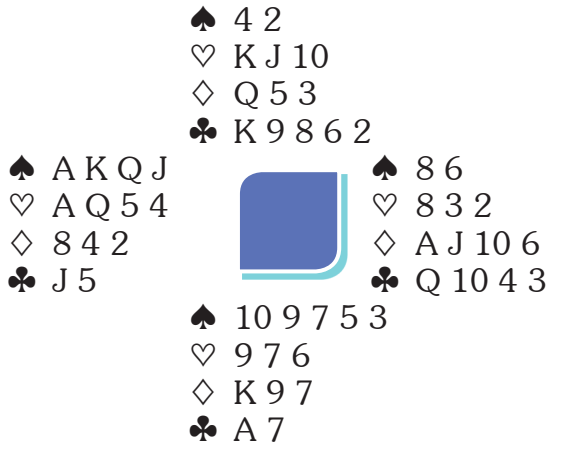
South led the ♣Q and having taken dummy's ace declarer played the ♠4 for the three, nine and jack, South continuing with the ♣2. Declarer ruffed, cashed the ♢A, played a spade to dummy's ten and ran the ♢J. When that passed off peacefully he claimed 11 tricks, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Romano	*Lorenzini*	*Zanasi*	*Setton*
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	Pass	1♡	2♣
Dble*	Pass	2♢	All Pass

Having taken the ♣Q with the ace, declarer ran the ♢J, cam to hand with the ♢A and advanced the ♠Q for the king and ace, soon claiming 11 tricks, but losing 10 IMPs.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.



Greenberg v Seligman

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Seligman	*Tokay*	*Pszczola*	*Greenberg*
1NT	All Pass		

North led the ♣6 and South took the ace and switched to the ♠10. Declarer won with the ♠Q, played the ♣J which held and then played a diamond to the ten. South won and now switched to the ♡9, but declarer ducked and after winning with the ♡10 all North could do was exit with a spade. Declarer won, took a diamond finesse and played the ♣10, securing nine tricks, +150.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
T Edis	*Starkowski*	*E Edis*	*Kwiecien*
1♢	Pass	1NT	Pass
2NT	All Pass		

South led the ♠5 and declarer won with dummy's ace and played the ♢2 for the five, jack and seven. A club to the jack saw North win with the king and return the ♠2. A diamond to the ten saw South win and switch to the ♡7, covered by the queen and king, North returning the ♡J. Declarer cashed her winners for +120, losing an IMP.

Uli v Pomodoro

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	*Primavera*	*Sementa*	*Schuster*
1NT	All Pass		

North led the ♣2 and South won and switched to the ♠10, declarer taking the ♠A and playing the ♣J. When it held a diamond to the ten saw South win and continue spades, declarer winning, playing a diamond to the jack and the ♣10, +180.

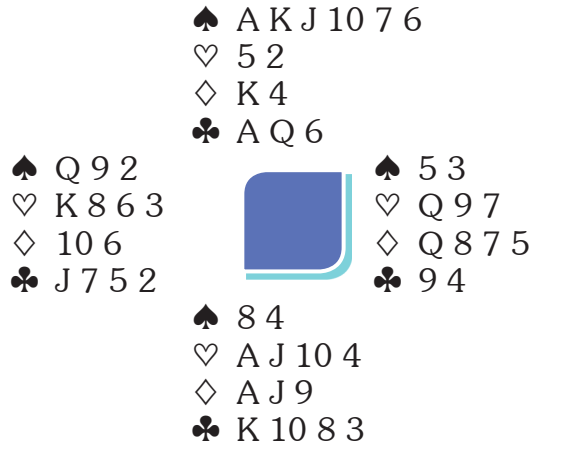
Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Romano	*Lorenzini*	*Zanasi*	*Setton*
2♣*	Pass	2♢*	Pass
2NT*	Pass	3NT	All Pass

2♣ Strong or balanced 18/19 or 22/23
2♢ Waiting
2NT* 18-19 balanced

North led the ♣6 and when South put in the ♣7 declarer won with the ♣J and played a diamond for the ten and king. Declarer won the spade switch with the ♠A, repeated the diamond finesse, came to hand with the ♠K, cashed the ♠Q and played the ♣5. When North put up the ♣K declarer had 11 tricks, +660 and 10 IMPs.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.



Greenberg v Seligman

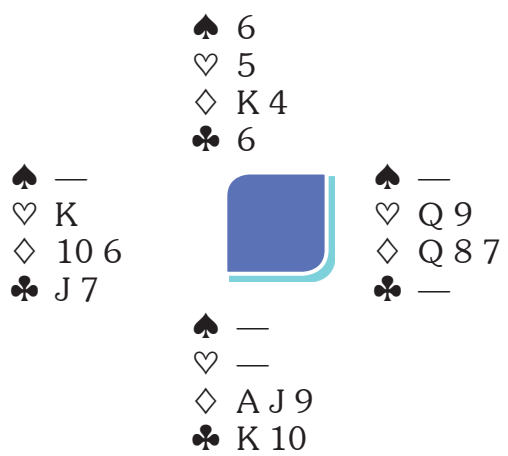
Open Room

West	North	East	South
Seligman	Tokay	Pszczola	Greenberg
—	1♠	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣*	Pass	4♢*
Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♡*
Pass	5NT*	Pass	6♣
Pass	7♠	All Pass	

2♣ 2+♣, game forcing
4♣ Cue
4♢ Cue
4NT RKCB
5♡ 2 keycards
5NT Grand slam try
6♣ ♣K

South had denied the ♠Q, but North possibly expected more than a doubleton spade opposite.

That particular issue was immediately resolved when East led the ♠5 for the queen and ace and declarer took four rounds of the suit discarding two hearts and then played a heart to dummy's ace, a club to the ace and cashed the ♠7 and ♣Q to reach this position:



When declarer continued with a diamond to dummy's ace the contract could no longer be made, -50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
T Edis	*Starkowski*	*E Edis*	*Kwiecien*
—	1♣*	Pass	1♡*
Pass	1♠*	Pass	2♢*
Pass	2♠*	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♢*	Pass	4♡*
Pass	4♠	Pass	5♢*
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

1♣ Polish ♣
1♡ 4+♡, 7+
1♠ 4+♠ forcing for one round
2♢ Game forcing
2♠ 5+♠, 18+
4♣ Cue
4♢ Cue
5♢ Cue

East led the ♣9 for the ten, jack and ace and declarer played three rounds of spades, claiming, +980 and 14 IMPs.

Uli v Pomodoro

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	*Primavera*	*Sementa*	*Schuster*
—	1♠	Pass	2♣*
Pass	3♠*	Pass	4♣*
Pass	4♢*	Pass	4♡*
Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♡*
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

2♣	Game forcing
3♠	Solid or semisolid
4♣	Cue
4♢	Cue
4♡	Cue
4NT	RKCB
5♡	2 keycards

East led the ♡7 and declarer took dummy's ace, played a spade to the ace, cashed the ♠K and then took three rounds of diamonds, finessing, enabling him to dispose of the losing heart, +980.

In isolation, as I'm sure everyone knows, the technical play in the trump suit is to finesse on the first round, catering for a possible ♠Q932 with West.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Romano	*Lorenzini*	*Zanasi*	*Setton*
—	1♠	Pass	3NT*
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

Who needs science?

Here too East found the threatening heart lead and declarer won with dummy's ace, cashed the top spades and the ♣Q and then tried his luck in diamonds, +980.

Uli lost, collecting 8.5 VP, but so did Greenberg, their 6.86 VP leaving them 2.37 VP adrift.

Round 8

On paper Greenberg had the easier match, as Uli had to meet the leaders.

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

	♠ 10 5 3 2 ♡ 8 3 ♢ A K J ♣ J 7 5 4	
♠ K Q J 7 4 ♡ Q 10 7 5 2 ♢ Q ♣ 8 2		♠ 6 ♡ 6 ♢ 10 9 8 7 6 4 3 ♣ K Q 9 6
	♠ A 9 8 ♡ A K J 9 4 ♢ 5 2 ♣ A 10 3	

Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Romano	*Starkowski*	*Zanasi*	*Kwiecien*
—	Pass	3♢	3♡
All Pass			

West led the ♠K and declarer won and cashed the top hearts, finishing two down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Seligman	*Primavera*	*Pszczola*	*Schuster*
—	Pass	3♢	3♡
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

East led the ♣Q and declarer took dummy's ace, cashed the ♡AK and played a diamond, no doubt pleased to see the queen appear. He won, played a club to the ten and continued with the ♠8, West winning with the jack and returning the ♠K. Declarer took dummy's ace and continued with the ♠9, establishing the game going trick, +600, a great 11 IMP start for Uli.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

	♠ 7 ♡ J 10 5 4 ♢ K Q 10 9 7 ♣ 8 7 2	
♠ Q J 6 5 ♡ K 8 7 3 ♢ A 8 6 5 ♣ J		♠ K 10 9 8 ♡ Q ♢ J 4 3 ♣ A Q 9 5 3
	♠ A 4 3 2 ♡ A 9 6 2 ♢ 2 ♣ K 10 6 4	

Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Romano	*Starkowski*	*Zanasi*	*Kwiecien*
—	—	—	1♣
Dble	1♢*	1♡*	2♡
Pass	Pass	Dble	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

1♢	Hearts
1♡	Takeout

North led the ♠7 and when dummy's ♠8 held declarer played the ♡Q. South won and played two rounds of spades, declarer finishing with just seven tricks, -300.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Seligman	*Primavera*	*Pszczola*	*Schuster*
—	—	—	1♣
Dble	1♢	4♠	All Pass

South led the ♠2 and declarer won with the ♠10 and played the ♣3, South going up with the ♣K and returning the ♠3. Declarer won with the ♠8, cashed the ♣AQ pitching two diamonds, ruffed a club and played a heart for the queen and ace. Had South now played two rounds of spades there would have been no story, but he exited with a diamond and declarer took dummy's ace, cashed the ♡K, ruffed a heart and played the ♣9. South can recover by ruffing with the ♠A and exiting with his last spade, but when he discarded declarer threw dummy's remaining diamond and played a diamond ensuring a tenth trick, +620 and 14 IMPs – a huge blow to Uli's chances.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

	♠ 10 8 ♡ J 9 7 ♢ 9 4 3 ♣ K Q 9 5 4	
♠ 9 7 4 3 ♡ Q 8 6 ♢ K Q 10 7 ♣ J 6		♠ K 6 5 2 ♡ 10 4 ♢ A J 6 ♣ 10 8 7 2
	♠ A Q J ♡ A K 5 3 2 ♢ 8 5 2 ♣ A 3	

Harris v Greenberg

Open Room

West	North	East	South
T Edis	*Tiholov*	*E Edis*	*M Gold*
—	Pass	Pass	1♣*
1♢	Dble*	2♢	2♡
Pass	3♡	Pass	4♡
All Pass			

1♣	16+
Dble	5-7

West led the ♢K and East overtook it and returned the ♢J. West cashed two more tricks in the suit and waited for a trump trick (should that be known as a 'Donald'?) -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Harris	*Tokay*	*Malhasyan*	*Greenberg*
—	Pass	Pass	1♡
Pass	2♡	Dble	4♡
All Pass			

West led the ♠4 and declarer took East's king, cashed the ♡AK and played three rounds of clubs disposing of a diamond, +620 and 12 IMPs for Greenberg.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

	♠ 10 6 ♡ Q ♢ Q 8 7 5 4 2 ♣ J 9 8 3	
♠ K 2 ♡ K 10 8 7 6 5 ♢ — ♣ A 10 7 5 2		♠ Q 9 7 3 ♡ 9 4 2 ♢ K 10 9 6 3 ♣ 4
	♠ A J 8 5 4 ♡ A J 3 ♢ A J ♣ K Q 6	

Harris v Greenberg

Open Room

West	North	East	South
T Edis	*Tiholov*	*E Edis*	*M Gold*
—	—	—	1♣*
3♡	Pass	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

1♣	16+

West led the ♣5 and when dummy's ♣8 held declarer played the ♣6 and continued with a diamond to the jack. That was followed by the ♣Q and West won and correctly exited with the ♣10, declarer winning as East, fatally, discarded a second heart. A low spade saw West take the king and switch to the ♡K, but declarer won and continued with a spade to dummy's ten, East winning and exiting with a diamond. Declarer could win and cash out, +600.

If East holds on to two hearts, discarding a diamond, declarer can try a low spade, but as long as West plays the ♠2 there should only be eight tricks.

However, if declarer wins the opening lead in hand (!) and plays a low spade the defenders may struggle. Say West wins and switches to the ♡K. Declarer ducks, wins the next heart and plays the ♣K. West must duck that, but now declarer plays a second spade and East wins and returns a heart. Having won, declarer cashes her winners discarding clubs from dummy and then plays the ♢A followed by the jack, East having to surrender the last trick to dummy's ♢Q.

Only the Rueful Rabbit could defeat this contract for certain, accidently leading the ♡K!

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Harris	*Tokay*	*Malhasyan*	*Greenberg*
—	—	—	2NT
Pass	3♠*	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

3♠ Minors

East led the ♢3 and West ruffed dummy's jack and played two rounds of clubs. East ruffing and returning the ♢6. West ruffed and played the ♣5, East ruffing and switching to the ♡9 (a spade is best). Declarer took dummy's ace and tried the ♠A but when West discarded he was three down and 14 IMPs were lost.

If declarer ruffs a heart and plays the ♣J he can then take a spade finesse, saving a trick.

Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Romano	*Starkowski*	*Zanasi*	*Kwiecien*
—	—	—	2NT
3♡	3NT	All Pass	

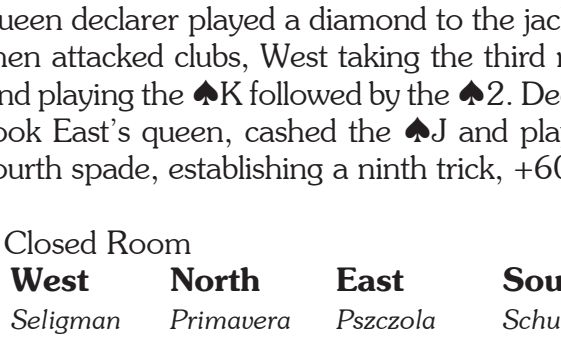
West led the ♡6 and having won with dummy's queen declarer played a diamond to the jack and then attacked clubs, West taking the third round and playing the ♠K followed by the ♠2. Declarer took East's queen, cashed the ♠J and played a fourth spade, establishing a ninth trick, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Seligman	*Primavera*	*Pszczola*	*Schuster*
—	—	—	2♢*
2♡	Pass	Pass	Dble
Pass	3♡*	Dble	3NT
All Pass			

West led the ♡7 to dummy's queen and a winning diamond finesse was followed by three rounds of clubs, West winning and continuing with the ♡K. According to the play record declarer followed with the ♡J, which looks like a mouse click error. That meant he was two down, -200 a most unlucky way for Uli to loose 13 IMPs.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.



Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Romano	*Starkowski*	*Zanasi*	*Kwiecien*
1♡	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♡	Pass	3♡	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♡	All Pass

2♣ Game forcing

3NT might have been exciting – were North to find the dramatic lead of the ♠K three rounds of the suit followed by a club switch would leave declarer with a nasty guess.

When North led the ♡3 against the 10 trick game declarer drew trumps and played four rounds of diamonds disposing of the ♣K10, +420.

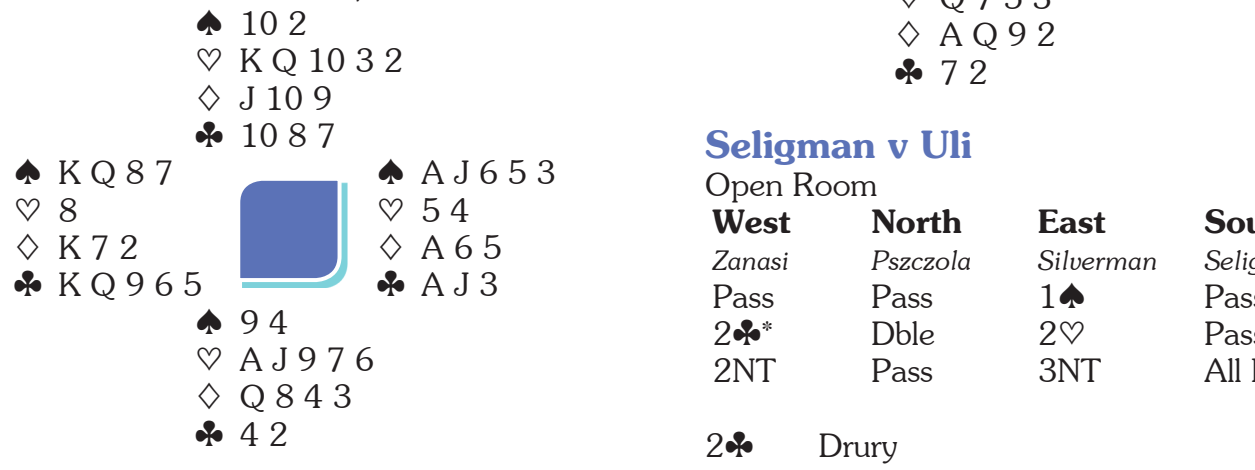
Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Seligman	*Primavera*	*Pszczola*	*Schuster*
1♡	Pass	2NT*	Pass
3♣*	Pass	4♡	All Pass

2NT Hearts
3♣ Minimum

North found the devastating lead of the ♠K and three rounds of the suit saw South switch to the ♣3. Hoping for a miracle declarer tried the ♣K and was two down, -100 and 11 vital IMPs for Uli.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.



Harris v Greenberg

Open Room

West	North	East	South
T Edis	*Tiholov*	*E Edis*	*M Gold*
—	Pass	1♠	Pass
4♡*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♢*	Pass	5♡*	Dble
Rdbl*	Pass	5♠	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

4♡ Splinter
4NT RKCB
5♢ 1 keycard
5♡ ♠Q?
Rdbl 'Not void in hearts, have ♠Q'

South led the ♠4 but declarer had 12 top tricks, +1430.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Harris	*Tokay*	*Malhasyan*	*Greenberg*
—	Pass	1♠	Pass
2NT*	Pass	3NT*	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

2NT Game forcing with 4♠
3NT Not minimum

If West had elected to bid on with 4♣ and then bid 4♡ over East's 4♢ a slam would have been reached, but you can understand his reluctance to keep going without a single first round control. 12 IMPs changed hands, keeping Greenberg's hopes alive.

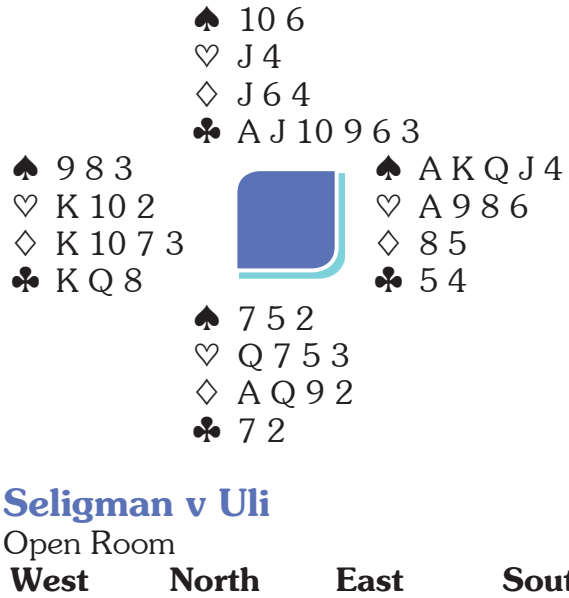
With one deal remaining Greenberg led 25-19 while Uli was tied at 27-27. An overtrick IMP gave Uli a win and 10.39 VP, taking their total to 86.95. Greenberg's projected score was 12.18 which would only be good for 86.37, so they needed to score at least 2 IMPs. It was not to be, and Uli advanced to the semifinals. Would they be a team of destiny?

Semifinal

The Fab Four

After an exciting struggle, the semifinals of the OCBL-ALT Grand Final matched Seligman against Uli and Coconut against Pomodoro. Seligman enjoying a carryover of 8.10 and Coconut one of 4.10.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.



Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zanasi	*Pszczola*	*Silverman*	*Seligman*
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣*	Dble	2♡	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

2♣ Drury

North led the ♡J and declarer took dummy's ace and played a club for the king and ace, assured of nine tricks as soon as North continued with the ♡4, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Primavera*	*Kwiecien*	*Schuster*
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣*	Dble	2♡	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

2♣ Drury

North led the ♣J and declarer won with the king and cashed five spades, discarding two diamonds while North discarded all three diamonds. Now one winning line for declarer is to play a heart to the ten, endplaying North. However, misreading the position, declarer played a heart to the king, a heart to the ace and a diamond, South winning, cashing the ♡Q and then playing a club for one down, -100 and 12 IMPs, taking the score to 17-0.

Coconut v Pomodoro

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	*Deng*	*Sementa*	*Wang*
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣*	Pass	4♠	All Pass

2♣ Drury

South led the♣7 and when dummy's king held declarer took two rounds of trumps and then played a diamond, South taking the ace and exiting with a club. North won and continued clubs, declarer ruffing high, playing a diamond to the king, ruffing a diamond, taking two rounds of hearts ending in dummy and ruffing a diamond with the ♠Q, dummy's ♠9 being the game going trick, +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Franceschetti*	*Huang*	*Setton*
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♡	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

2♣ Limited raise in spades

North led the ♣J and declarer won with the king, crossed to dummy with the ♠A and played a heart to the ten. Having won, North switched to the ♠10 and declarer won in dummy, ran the ♡8 and was assured of nine tricks. When South pitched her remaining club declarer could score a diamond for +630 so there was no swing.

Should North have found the deadly diamond switch?

As the cards lie, the only certain way to make 3NT is to duck the opening lead! That cuts defensive communications.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

	♠ 8 7 ♡ 10 9 8 6 ♢ A K 8 7 4 ♣ 9 6	
♠ K J 10 6 4 ♡ J ♢ J 3 2 ♣ A K J 3		♠ Q 9 5 3 2 ♡ 5 3 ♢ Q 9 6 ♣ Q 8 4
	♠ A ♡ A K Q 7 4 2 ♢ 10 5 ♣ 10 7 5 2	

Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zanasi	*Pszczola*	*Silverman*	*Seligman*
—	—	—	1♡
1♠	4♡	4♠	5♡
Dble	All Pass		

West cashed the ♣A and switched to a spade, but declarer was soon claiming, +850.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Primavera*	*Kwiecien*	*Schuster*
—	—	—	1♡
1♠	2NT*	3♠	4♡
4♠	Pass	Pass	4NT*
Pass	5♣*	Pass	5♡
All Pass			

2NT Inviting with 3+♡
5♣ 1 keycard

West cashed the ♣A and switched to the ♠K, +650.

Coconut v Pomodoro

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	*Deng*	*Sementa*	*Wang*
—	—	—	1♡
1♠	3♢*	3♠	4♡
Dble*	Pass	4♠	All Pass

3♢ 7-9, 4♡
Dble Takeout

North led the ♢A and switched to the ♡9, South winning and returning the ♢5, one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Franceschetti*	*Huang*	*Setton*
—	—	—	1♡
1♠	4♡	4♠	5♡
All Pass			

West cashed two clubs and switched to the ♠J but declarer had the rest, +650 and 11 IMPs.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

	♠ 8 6 5 2 ♡ A Q 8 ♢ Q 6 3 ♣ 10 6 5	
♠ A Q 10 ♡ 5 ♢ A K J 10 7 ♣ A K Q 3		♠ K ♡ J 10 9 6 4 3 ♢ 9 8 5 4 ♣ 9 4
	♠ J 9 7 4 3 ♡ K 7 2 ♢ 2 ♣ J 8 7 2	

Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zanasi	*Pszczola*	*Silverman*	*Seligman*
	Pass	Pass	Pass
2♣*	Passs	2♢*	Pass
3♢	Pass	3♡	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♢	Pass
6♢	All Pass		

Marc Smith has been writing a series of articles for Bridgerama+ US about responding to 2♣ with a weak hand. I'm sure he would have applauded when East continued with 4♢ over 3NT.

Alas, EW were out of luck here, one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Primavera*	*Kwiecien*	*Schuster*
—	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣*	Pass	1♢*	Pass
2♢*	Pass	2♡*	Pass
3♢	Pass	3♡	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♢	Pass
5♢	All Pass		

1♣ Polish ♣
1♢ 0-6, any 7-11 or minors
2♢ Any game force
2♡ 4+

It proved to be a good time to stop, +600 and 12 IMPs to Seligman.

Coconut v Pomodoro

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	*Deng*	*Sementa*	*Wang*
—	Pass	Pass	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♢	Pass
3♠*	Pass	4♢	Pass
4♡*	Pass	4♠*	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♢*	Pass
6♢	All Pass		

2♢ Hearts or waiting
3♠ Diamonds and Clubs, equal length or longer ♢, not 3♡
4♡ Cue
4♠ Cue
4NT RKCB
5♢ 0 keycards

Good bidding had to be its own reward, one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Franceschetti*	*Huang*	*Setton*
—	Pass	Pass	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♢*	Pass
3♢	Pass	3♡	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

North led the ♡A and switched to the ♠6, declarer winning in dummy and playing three rounds of diamonds. North won and continued with the ♡8, but having won with the ♡K South went back to spades, +630 and 12 IMPs

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

	♠ A K Q J 9 8 7 6 2 ♡ 10 8 ♢ 8 ♣ 10	
♠ 4 3 ♡ A J 5 3 ♢ K 5 3 ♣ J 8 7 6		♠ 10 ♡ Q 9 2 ♢ A J 10 6 4 ♣ K 9 3
	♠ 5 ♡ K 7 6 4 ♢ Q 9 7 2 ♣ A Q 5 4	

Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zanasi	*Pszczola*	*Silverman*	*Seligman*
—	—	Pass	1♢
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♢*	Pass	2♡
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

2♢ Artificial game force

East led the ♣3 and declarer took his tricks, +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Primavera*	*Kwiecien*	*Schuster*
—	—	Pass	Pass
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Here the lead was the ♣2, no swing, leaving the the set score 27-18 in favour of Seligman.

Coconut v Pomodoro

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	*Deng*	*Sementa*	*Wang*
—	—	Pass	1♢*
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♢*	Pass	2♡
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

1♢ 4+♢
2♢ Game forcing

When East led the ♡2 declarer tried dummy's king, soon claiming 10 tricks, +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Franceschetti*	*Huang*	*Setton*
—	—	Pass	1♢
Pass	1♠	Dble	1NT
2♡	3♡*	Pass	3NT
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

East led the ♡2 and that was a rapid two down, -200 and 13 IMPs giving Coconut a 33-11 lead.

Set 2

Board 2 Dealer East. N/S Vul.

	♠ J 7 6 4 ♡ A J 3 ♢ A 8 ♣ Q J 9 2	
♠ K Q 8 2 ♡ Q 8 ♢ K J 4 3 ♣ A 4 3		♠ 9 3 ♡ K 9 7 6 4 2 ♢ 9 7 6 2 ♣ 7
	♠ A 10 5 ♡ 10 5 ♢ Q 10 5 ♣ K 8 5 4 3	

Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zanasi	*Pszczola*	*Silverman*	*Seligman*
—	—	2♡	Pass
4♡	All Pass		

South led the ♣3 and declarer took dummy's ace, ruffed a club and played a heat for the five, queen and ace. Declarer ruffed North's ♣Q, played a diamond to the jack and ace, won the diamond return with dummy's king and played the ♠K, finishing two down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Primavera*	*Kwiecien*	*Schuster*
—	—	2♢*	Pass
4♣*	Pass	4♢*	Pass
4♡	All Pass		

2♢	Multi
4♣	Transfer to your major
4♢	Hearts

Here North led the ♣Q and declarer won, ruffed a club and played a heart for the quen and ace, North exiting with the ♡3. Declarer took dummy's king and played the ♢9, running it when South failed to cover. North could win, but declarer now had nine tricks via the diamond finesse, -50 and 2 IMPs.

Coconut v Pomodoro

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	*Deng*	*Sementa*	*Wang*
—	—	2♡	All Pass

Declarer managed nine tricks after a club lead, +140.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Franceschetti*	*Huang*	*Lorenzini*
—	—	2♡	Pass
Pass	Dble	Pass	3♣
3♡	Pass	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

East led the ♡6 for the five, queen and ace and declarer knocked pouty the ♣A, ran the rertun of the ♣3 to dummy's ♢10 and played the ♡10, establishing a ninth trick, +600 and 12 IMPs.

Only an unlikely lead in one of the pointed suits gives the defenders a chance.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

	♠ Q 10 ♡ 10 6 3 2 ♢ A Q 9 3 ♣ 10 8 3	
♠ A 3 ♡ K 9 ♢ J 7 6 5 ♣ Q J 9 7 2		♠ K J 9 7 6 5 4 ♡ A J ♢ K 2 ♣ A K
	♠ 8 2 ♡ Q 8 7 5 4 ♢ 10 8 4 ♣ 6 5 4	

Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zanasi	*Pszczola*	*Silverman*	*Seligman*
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Would Gazzilli have helped here?

South led the ♡4 and declarer took all the tricks, +510.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Primavera*	*Kwiecien*	*Schuster*
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	Pass	1♣*	Pass
1NT*	Pass	2♠*	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♡*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♣*	Pass	5♢*	Pass
5♡	Pass	5♠	All Pass

1♣	Polish ♣
1NT	10-11
2♠	17+, 5+♠
4♡	Cue
4NT	RKCB
5♣	1 keycard
5♢	♠Q
5♡	No, ♡K

Close, but no quite there, no swing after a heart lead.

Coconut v Pomodoro

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	*Deng*	*Sementa*	*Wang*
—	—	—	Pass
1♣*	Pass	1♡	Pass
1NT*	Pass	2♢*	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT*	Pass	4♣*	Pass
4♡*	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♣*	Pass	6♠	All Pass

1♣	Any 12-14 balanced or natural
1♡	Spades
1NT	Not 3♠, 12-14
2♢	Game forcing
3NT	Minimum
4♣	Cue
4♡	Cue
5♣	1 keycard

North led the ♢A, +1430.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Franceschetti*	*Huang*	*Lorenzini*
—	—	—	Pass
1♣	1♢	1♠	3♢
Pass	Pass	5♠	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

South led the ♢4, no swing.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

	♠ Q J 4 2 ♡ K 10 9 ♢ Q 7 ♣ Q 8 6	
♠ A K 10 5 3 ♡ A Q 2 ♢ K 8 ♣ A 3		♠ 9 8 7 ♡ J 8 6 ♢ J 6 4 3 2 ♣ 10
	♠ 6 ♡ 7 5 4 3 ♢ A 10 9 5 ♣ J 7 2	

Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zanasi	*Pszczola*	*Silverman*	*Seligman*
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

North led the ♠Q and declarer won with the ace, played a spade to nine and a heart for the queen and king. He ducked the club switch to South's jack and put up the ♢K when South returned the ♢5, North unblocking the ♢Q. He cashed the ♠K, unblocked dummy's ♣A cashed two hearts ending in hand, took the ♣K and then ducked a diamond to South who had to surrender a trick to dummy's ♢J.

Not too shabby, I'm sure you will agree, a magnificent +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Primavera*	*Kwiecien*	*Schuster*
2NT	Pass	3♣*	Pass
3♠*	Pass	4♠	All Pass

3♣	Puppet Stayman
3♠	5♠

North led the ♣9 and declarer could not avoid the loss of two spades a heart and a diamond, -100 and a 12 IMP swing.

Coconut v Pomodoro

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	*Deng*	*Sementa*	*Wang*
2NT	Pass	3♣*	Pass
3♠*	Pass	4♠	All Pass

3♣	Puppet Stayman
3♠	5♠

North led the ♣8, one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Franceschetti*	*Huang*	*Lorenzini*
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

North led the ♠2 and declarer won with dummy's eight, played a diamond to the king and a low spade, North taking the jack and switching to the ♣6. Declarer won with dummy's king, took the heart finesse and claimed nine tricks after Norh had cashed the ♢Q, a 12 IMP swing.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

	♠ A 8 5 4 3 ♡ 4 ♢ Q 7 5 ♣ K 10 6 4	
♠ K 2 ♡ Q 7 6 5 3 ♢ K J ♣ Q 9 7 3		♠ 10 7 ♡ K J 9 8 ♢ 10 6 4 3 ♣ A J 2
	♠ Q J 9 6 ♡ A 10 2 ♢ A 9 8 2 ♣ 8 5	

Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zanasi	*Pszczola*	*Silverman*	*Seligman*
—	—	—	1♢
1♡	1♠	2♢	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♡
Pass	3♠	All Pass	

East led the ♡9 and having taken dummy's ace declarer played a club for the king and ace, ducked the diamond switch to West's king, won the next diamond with the queen and played two rounds of spades, +140.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Primavera*	*Kwiecien*	*Schuster*
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♠*	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

2♣ Drury
2♠ Minimum

East led the ♢6 and West won and retuned the ♢J to declarer's queen. A heart to the ace was followed by the ♠Q and the 2-2 break with the king onside was all declarer needed, +620 and 10 IMPs.

Coconut v Pomodoro

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	*Deng*	*Sementa*	*Wang*
—	—	—	1♢
1♡	Dble*	2NT*	Pass
3♡	Dble	Pass	3♠
All Pass			

2NT Mixed raise

West led the ♡3 and declarer played carefully for nine tricks, +140.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Franceschetti*	*Huang*	*Lorenzini*
—	—	—	1♢
1♡	Dble*	3♡	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

West led the ♡3 and declarer won, drew trumps via the finesse and could not be denied 10 tricks, +620 and 10 IMPs.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

	♠ K Q 6 5 ♡ A Q 3 ♢ A K 9 3 ♣ 8 5	
♠ 10 9 8 3 2 ♡ 9 7 6 2 ♢ Q 8 5 4 ♣ —		♠ A 4 ♡ 8 ♢ J 10 7 6 ♣ A K Q J 9 6
	♠ J 7 ♡ K J 10 5 4 ♢ 2 ♣ 10 7 4 3 2	

Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zanasi	*Pszczola*	*Silverman*	*Seligman*
Pass	1♢*	2♣	Pass
Pass	Dble	Pass	2♡
Pass	Pass	3♣	All Pass

South led the ♡J and North won with the ♡A and played three rounds of diamonds, South ruffing and switching to the ♠J which was enough for one down, -50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Primavera*	*Kwiecien*	*Schuster*
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♢
Pass	3♡	Pass	4♡
All Pass			

2NT 18-19 balanced
3♢ Transfer

East led the ♣A and when West discarded the ♠3 he switched to the ♡8, declarer winning with the ♡A. Hoping to ruff a club in hand declarer played the ♣8 and East followed with the ♣6 forcing West to ruff. However, it didn't help, declarer winning the trump return in dummy and playing the ♠J to East's ace. There was no way to prevent a club ruff, +420 and 9 IMPs for Uli.

East needed to win the second club and play a third round of the suit! Now West ruffs forcing declarer to overruff with the ♡Q. When East gets in with the ♠A another club allows West to score a trump.

Declarer can avoid this by playing a spade at trick three.

Coconut v Pomodoro

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	*Deng*	*Sementa*	*Wang*
Pass	1♢	2♣	Pass
Pass	Dble	Rdbl	2♡
Pass	Pass	3♣	All Pass

South led the ♡J and North won and returned the ♡3. Declarer ruffed and cashed three trumps before exiting with the ♢10. North won and played the ♡Q allowing declarer to score a seventh trick, two down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Franceschetti*	*Huang*	*Lorenzini*
Pass	1♢	2♣	Pass
Pass	Dble	Pass	3♡
Pass	4♡	All Pass	

As an aside I recently read an article that suggested that a redouble by East should say 'I have a good hand' and not be simply showing good clubs.

West led the ♠10 and East won and played three rounds of clubs, declarer uffing, drawing trumps and claiming, +420 and 8 IMPs.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

	♠ 7 6 5 2 ♡ 6 ♢ K Q 10 6 ♣ J 8 6 5	
♠ A K J 4 ♡ K J 8 7 4 ♢ 8 5 ♣ 4 3		♠ Q 10 9 8 3 ♡ 9 5 3 ♢ J 7 ♣ K 10 7
	♠ — ♡ A Q 10 2 ♢ A 9 4 3 2 ♣ A Q 9 2	

Seligman v Uli

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zanasi	*Pszczola*	*Silverman*	*Seligman*
—	—	Pass	1♢
1♡	Dble*	2♡	3♣
3♡	4♢	All Pass	

Declarer ruffed the spade lead and ended up with 11 tricks, +150.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Primavera*	*Kwiecien*	*Schuster*
—	—	Pass	1♢
1♡	Dble	2♡	Dble
Pass	3♢	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

South's double was no alerted, suggesting it was for penalties.

West led the ♠A and that quickly scuppered 3NT, declarer finishing two down when he relied on the heart finesse, 8 IMPs away.

Anyone for 6♢?

Coconut v Pomodoro

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Versace	*Deng*	*Sementa*	*Wang*
—	—	Pass	1♢
1♡	Dble*	2♡	Pass
Pass	3♢	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

It was the same story here, declarer going two down, -200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Franceschetti*	*Huang*	*Lorenzini*
—	—	Pass	1♢
1♡	Dble	2♡	3♣
Pass	3♢	All Pass	

Declarer got a trump lead and easily secured 12 tricks, +170 which was worth 9 IMPs.

Two thrilling matches.

When I checked the scores, Seligman had won 52-49, Coconut 53-51.

Final

Pas de Deux

We were down to the last two teams, Seligman and Coconut. Who would wear the crown?

The match opened with a trio of regulation 3NT contracts, Seligman leading 2-1 in overtricks.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

	♠ 7 6 ♡ Q 9 7 5 4 3 ♢ J 9 2 ♣ K 6	
♠ A K Q 2 ♡ — ♢ A 10 8 6 4 ♣ A Q J 3		♠ 10 5 ♡ J 10 ♢ K Q 7 3 ♣ 9 7 5 4 2
	♠ J 9 8 4 3 ♡ A K 8 6 2 ♢ 5 ♣ 10 8	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Pszczola*	*Huang*	*Seligman*
1♢	1♡	2♢	4♡
6♢	Pass	Pass	6♡
Dble	All Pass		

Ther was nothing to the play declarer losing two spades, a diamond and a club, three down, -800.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Deng*	*Kwiecien*	*Wang*
1♣*	1♡	Pass	4♡
Dble	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5NT*	Pass	6♣	All Pass

1♣	Polish ♣
4NT	Minors
5NT	Pick a slam

Declarer ruffed the heart lead, cashed the ♣A and then played three rounds of spades, North ruffing with the ♣K. If the missing clubs had been the other way round…

As it was +1370 gave Seligman 11 IMPs.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

	♠ A 10 ♡ A K 8 3 ♢ K J ♣ J 10 8 6 4	
♠ Q 3 2 ♡ J 10 5 ♢ A 10 5 2 ♣ K Q 3		♠ 9 8 7 6 5 4 ♡ 4 ♢ Q 6 4 ♣ A 7 2
	♠ K J ♡ Q 9 7 6 2 ♢ 9 8 7 3 ♣ 9 5	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Pszczola*	*Huang*	*Seligman*
—	1NT	Pass	2♢*
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♢*
Pass	3♡	All Pass	

2♢	Transfer
2NT	Good with 4♡
3♢	Retransfer

With clubs 3-3 nine tricks were never in doubt and a winning guess in diamonds would give declarer 10. After a trump lead declarer took three rounds of the suit and played a club, West winning and returning the ♢2. Declarer played the… ♢J, +140.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Deng*	*Kwiecien*	*Wang*
—	1NT*	2♢*	Pass
2♡*	Pass	2♠	All Pass

1NT	14-17
2♢	One major
2♡	Pass or correct

South led the ♣9 and declarer won with dummy's queen and played a spade, South winning with the jack and playing another club. Declarer won, played a spade and could not be denied nine tricks, +140 and another 7 IMPs.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

	♠ A 10 2 ♡ A K 2 ♢ A Q 9 ♣ 10 8 7 4	
♠ 6 ♡ Q 9 7 6 ♢ 5 4 ♣ A K Q 6 5 3		♠ K Q 9 8 3 ♡ 10 8 3 ♢ K 8 3 2 ♣ 2
	♠ J 7 5 4 ♡ J 5 4 ♢ J 10 7 6 ♣ J 9	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Pszczola*	*Huang*	*Seligman*
—	1NT	Pass	2♣*
Dble	Pass*	Pass	Rdbl
Pass	2♢	Dble	Pass
Pass	2♡	Pass	Pass
Dble	All Pass		

2♣	Stayman

North's pass usually suggests at least four clubs, otherwise with no major you bid 2♢.

You don't see a breach of Burn's Law too often, especially in the final of a major event.

East led the ♣2 and West won with the ♣Q and switched to the ♠6. East won with the ♠Q and accurately switched to the ♡3. When West put in the ♡9 declarer won and played club, West winning and exiting with the ♡Q (a low club is best). Declarer won, played a heart to the jack and a diamond to the queen. Although that lost he now had six tricks, two down, -300.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Deng*	*Kwiecien*	*Wang*
—	1NT*	Pass	Pass
Dble*	Pass	2♢*	Pass
2♡	All Pass		

1NT	14-17
Dble	Minor+major, 54
2♢	Asking for the major

Now we had the equally rare (and usually unsuccessful) occurrence of one side playing in the same denomination at both tables.

North started with three rounds of trumps and declarer won, played a spade to the king and four rounds of clubs, finishing with nine tricks, +140 but a 4 IMP loss that made the score 20-8 in favour of Seligman.

Board 11. Dealer North. None Vul.

	♠ K 9 8 ♡ A 8 5 2 ♢ Q 3 2 ♣ K 8 2	
♠ A J 7 ♡ K Q 6 ♢ 10 9 ♣ A J 10 7 6		♠ 10 4 3 ♡ J 10 7 3 ♢ J 7 6 4 ♣ 5 4
	♠ Q 6 5 2 ♡ 9 4 ♢ A K 8 5 ♣ Q 9 3	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Pszczola*	*Huang*	*Seligman*
—	1♣	Pass	1♠
1NT*	Pass	Pass	Dble
All Pass			

1NT	15-18 balanced

Light opening bids and featherweight responses have led to 1NT being used to show a strong hand in this situation.

North led the ♠8 and when South played the ♠2 declarer won with the ♠J and played hearts, North winning the third round as South pitched the ♢8. When North switched to the ♣8 declarer took South's queen and played back the ♣10. North won and switched to diamonds, but the 3-3 break in clubs gave declarer eight tricks, +280.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Deng*	*Kwiecien*	*Wang*
—	1♣*	Pass	1♡*
1NT*	Pass	Pass	Dble
Pass	Pass	2♢*	Pass
2♡	Pass	Pass	Dble
All Pass			

1♣	2+♣
1♡	4+♠
1NT	Strong
2♢	Diamonds and Hearts

North led the ♡2 and declarer won with the queen and played the ♢9, South winning with the king and returning the ♡4 for the king and ace (ducking is stronger), North exiting with the ♡5. Declarer won in dummy (South parted with the ♣3) and cashed the ♡10 on which South fatally discarded the ♢5. However, declarer discarded a club, and then played that suit which saw South put up the queen, declarer winning and exiting with the ♣J, North taking the king and exiting with the ♣2. Declarer won, to arrive at this position…

	♠ K 9 8 ♡ — ♢ Q 2 ♣ —	
♠ A J 7 ♡ — ♢ 10 ♣ 10		♠ 10 4 ♡ — ♢ J 7 6 ♣ —
	♠ Q 6 5 ♡ — ♢ A 8 ♣ —	

When declarer cashed the ♣10 North pitched the ♠8, dummy the ♠4. Now South needs to throw a spade but when he parted with the ♢8 declarer exited with the ♠7 and the defenders were without resource. North followed with the nine and South won and returned the ♠5 but the ace felled North's king for +470 and 5 IMPs.

A perfect illustration of how difficult these low-level part scores can be for both sides. With best defence NS could have collected 500, along with 13 IMPs that would have given them an ideal start to the second half.

Board 15. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

	♠ A 4 2 ♡ K 10 8 4 ♢ Q 5 3 2 ♣ 7 3	
♠ K 8 ♡ A 7 6 5 3 2 ♢ 10 6 4 ♣ 6 5		♠ J 10 9 3 ♡ Q J 9 ♢ A J 9 7 ♣ J 4
	♠ Q 7 6 5 ♡ — ♢ K 8 ♣ A K Q 10 9 8 2	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	*Pszczola*	*Huang*	*Seligman*
—	Pass	Pass	1♣
2♡	2NT	3♡	3NT
All Pass			

East led the ♡Q and declarer won with the king and cashed seven clubs. He could then afford to play a low diamond from dummy, but there were only nine tricks, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Starkowski	*Deng*	*Kwiecien*	*Wang*
—	Pass	Pass	1♣*
1♡	1NT	2♡	5♣

1♣ 2+♣

West led the ♣6 and declarer took three rounds of the suit before playing the ♠7 to dummy's ace. When he continued with the ♠4 East played the ♠J – did the miracle position exist? Declarer covered with the queen, but West ♠K meant there were only nine tricks, -200 and another 13 IMPs went to Seligman.

The remaining deals offered no real opportunities, and it was Seligman who emerged as winners of the 2023 ALT-OCBL Grand Final.

Bridge NEWS

2024 WADA Prohibited List

From the World Bridge Federation website:

You are reminded that the WADA Prohibited List of medications has been updated and will come into force on 1st January 2024. Please ensure that you familiarise yourself with its contents. WADA particularly asks you to note the changes with regard to the major modification concerning tramadol and we remind you that ALL diuretics are banned in competition and require a TUE (Therapeutic Exemption Certificate) to be registered. Click here to download the 2024 Prohibited List:

https://www.wada-ama.org/en/resources/world-anti-doping-program/2024-prohibited-list

2024 NABCs

Online
Contract
Bridge
League

OCBL JANUARY CUP

16 - 18 January, 2024

12 Rounds x 10 Boards

Tuesday, 16 January
R1 - R4
CEST 16.00 - 17.30 - 19.00 - 20.30
EDT 10.00 - 11.30 - 13.00 - 14.30

Wednesday, 17 January
R5 - R8
CEST 16.00 - 17.30 - 19.00 - 20.30
EDT 10.00 - 11.30 - 13.00 - 14.30

Thursday, 18 January
R9 - R12, SF/F
CEST 16.00 - 17.30 - 19.00 - 20.30
EDT 10.00 - 11.30 - 13.00 - 14.30

To follow:

FEBRUARY CUP

27 - 29 February, 2024

Info and pre-registration: WWW.OCBL.ORG

ALT INVITATIONAL

world class online bridge events

UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2024

8 - 11 January 2024	**Alt Event - TBA**
12 - 15 February 2024	**Alt Event - TBA**
4 - 7 March 2024	**Alt Event - TBA**
8 - 11 April 2024	**Alt Event - TBA**
13 - 16 May 2024	**Alt Event - TBA**
10 - 13 June 2024	**Alt Event - TBA**
8 - 11 July 2024	**Alt Event - TBA**
12 - 15 August 2024	**Alt Event - TBA**
9 - 12 September 2024	**Alt Event - TBA**
7 - 10 October 2024	**Alt Event - TBA**
11 - 14 November 2024	**Alt Event - TBA**
16 - 19 December 2024	**Alt Event - TBA**