ALT-OCBL GRAND FINAL BULLETIN

Issue N. 4. Friday, 10 January, 2025

SPRING WIN THE GRAND FINAL!

The winning team: SPRING
top row: Rajath Shourie, Matt Brown, Guy Mendes de Leon, Oscar Nijssen, Thibo Sprinkhuizen
bottom row: Stefan Thorpe, Tim van de Paverd, Michael Whibley, Gavin Wolpert, Jenny Wolpert

SPRING emerged victorious at the ALT-OCBL Grand Final, defeating GREENBERG 43-8 in the Final match.

Following their Semifinal victory against EPSTEIN, SPRING advanced to the Final where they won to claim the ALT-OCBL Grand Final trophy.

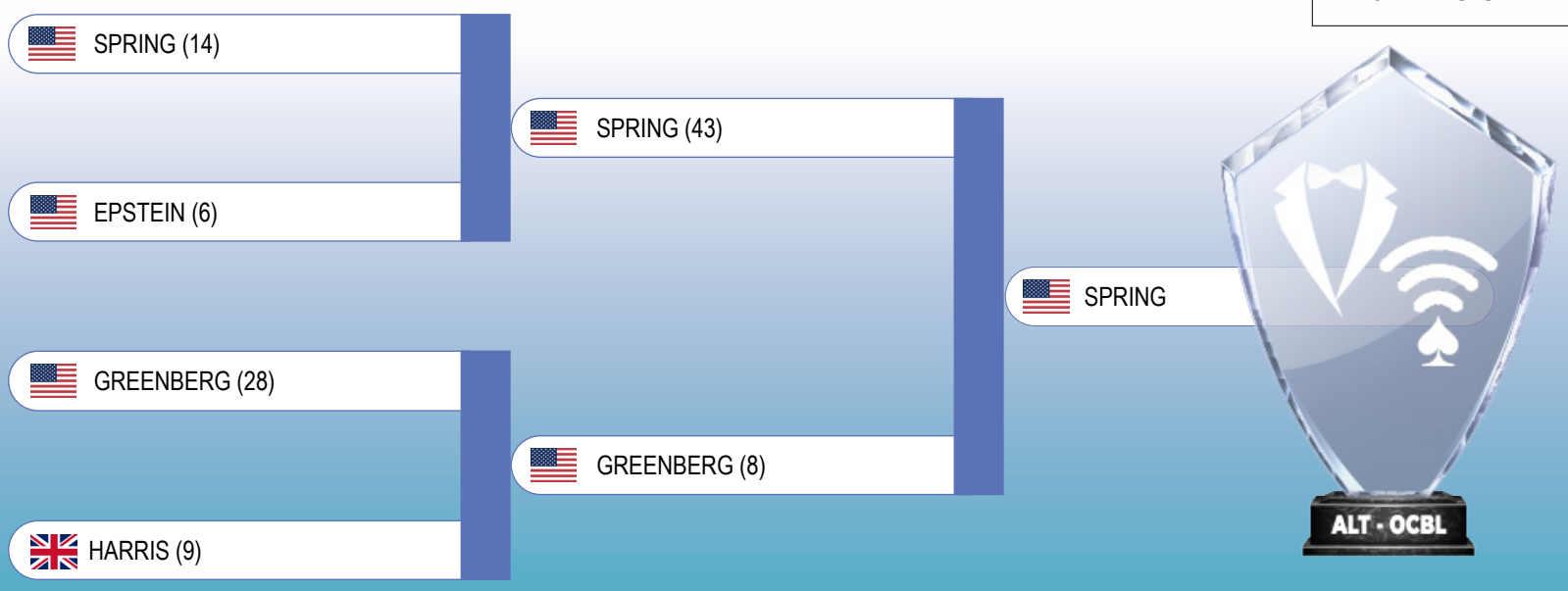
1st. Spring: Rajath Shourie, Matt Brown, Guy Mendes de Leon, Oscar Nijssen, Thibo Sprinkhuizen, Stefan Thorpe, Tim van de Paverd, Michael Whibley, Gavin Wolpert, Jenny Wolpert

2nd: Greenberg: Ted Greenberg, Mustafa cem Tokay, Ton Lucassen, Rob Walker

3rd: Epstein: Linda Epstein, Federico Primavera, Neil Silverman, Gabriele Zanasi

FINAL RANKING

1. SPRING
2. GREENBERG
3. EPSTEIN
4. HARRIS
5. PIONEERS
6. AVOCADO
7. BC CRASH
8. NETBRIDGE
9. SELIGMAN
10. COCONUT
11. NEW AMATEURS
12. RIPPEY
13. SCOTCH LOVERS
14. SCOTTISH SELECT
15. SCOTTISH IMPS
16. MAGICIANS



Round 8, Semifinals, Final

by Mark Horton

The Full Danish

Here's a brief survey of the deals from the last match of the round robins:

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

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

Greenberg v Spring

Open Room

West	North	East	South
M. de Leon	*Tokay*	*Sprinkhuizen*	*Greenberg*
—	1♡	4♠	Pass
Pass	Dble	All Pass	

South led the ♡6 and North won with the ♡K and switched to the ♠10, declarer winning with the ♠A and cashing all his remaining trumps. Followed by the ♣A. Nothing good happened so that was one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Lucassen	*G Wolpert*	*Walker*	*Shourie*
—	1♡	Dble	2♡*
2NT*	4♡	4♠	Pass
Pass	5♡	Dble	All Pass

2♡ Weak
2NT Minors

East led the ♠K and switched to the ♢Q, declarer winning with the ♢A, drawing trumps and playing the ♣Q. East won and continued with the ♠A, declarer ruffing, cashing the ♣K, crossing to dummy with the ♢K and playing the ♣10 for the (almost) marked ruffing finesse, +650 and 11 IMPs.

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

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

New Amateurs v Pioneers

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Yang	*Falk*	*Song*	*Lo*
—	—	1♢*	Pass
1♡	1♠	3♡	4♠
5♢	Pass	Pass	Dble
All Pass			

1♢ 10-15, 1+♢

South led the ♠A and then played two rounds of clubs. Declarer ruffed, drew trumps and played the ♡10, +550.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Falgout	*Wang*	*King*	*Li*
—	—	1♢	3♣
3♢	All Pass		

You must admire South's overcall.
Declarer took eleven tricks but lost 9 IMPs.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

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

Scotch Lovers v Rippey

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Baroni	*Spears*	*Gandoglia*	*B Shenkin*
Pass	1♢*	1♡	3♣*
Pass	Pass	Dble	Pass
3♠	All Pass		

1♢ 4+♢ unless 4432
3♣ Weak jump

North led the ♣10 for the king and ace and South switched to the ♡2, declarer taking North's ♡J with the ♡K and continuing with the ♡3 (a spade is best). South ruffed and returned the ♢9 for the queen and ace and declarer ruffed the ♡10, played a spade to the jack and a diamond for the jack and king. North could play two rounds of spades restricting declarer to seven tricks, two down, -200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
D Shenkin	*Marcinowski*	*M Diamond*	*Rippey*
Pass	1♣*	1♡	5♣
Pass	Pass	Dble	All Pass
1♣	2+♣		

East led the ♠K and declarer won, ruffed a spade and played a diamond for the king and ace. East returned the ♣K and declared had to lose a diamond, a heart and a club for two down, -500 and a 12 IMP loss.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

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

Avocado v Coconut

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Lee	*Franceschetti*	*Gan*	*Robert*
—	Pass	Pass	1♢
1NT	Pass	2♡*	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass
2♡	Transfer		

North led the ♡J and declarer won with the ♡A and played the ♠10 to North's king. After ruffing the third round of hearts declarer claimed, +420.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Lorenzini	*Deng*	*Bessis*	*Wang*
—	Pass	Pass	Pass
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

With so many soft values, looking for the nine trick game with the East hand has its attractions. However, on the lead of the ♡10, declarer had no chance, one down, -50 and 10 IMPs away.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

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

New Amateurs v Pioneers

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Yang	*Falk*	*Song*	*Lo*
—	—	—	1♠
2♡	4♠	All Pass	

West led the ♡A and switched to the ♢K, followed by the ♢Q. That was the last trick for the defence, +620.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Falgout	*Wang*	*King*	*Li*
—	—	—	1♠
2♡	4♠	5♡	5♠
All Pass			

The same defence yielded -100 and 12 IMPs.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

♠ A K Q
♡ 9 4
♢ 7 6 4 2
♣ K J 4 2

♠ 10 7 5
♡ 10 8 7
♢ A J 10 5
♣ Q10 7

♠ 9 3
♡ J 5 2
♢ K Q 9 8
♣ 9 6 5 3

♠ J 8 6 4 2
♡ A K Q 6 3
♢ 3
♣ A 8

New Amateurs v Pioneers

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Yang	*Falk*	*Song*	*Lo*
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♡
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT*
Pass	5♠*	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

4NT RKCB
5♠ 2 keycards +♠Q

West started with two rounds of diamonds, declarer ruffing, cashing the ♠AK followed by the ♡AK and a heart ruff, +980.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Falgout	*Wang*	*King*	*Li*
Pass	1♢	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♢*
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

2♢ Artificial, game forcing

Here West led the ♡7 and declarer took all the tricks, +510 but a loss of 10 IMPs.

Looking at the ♠AKQ, North might have bid 4♣ over 3♠.

Across the two groups six pairs bid 6♠.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ Q 6 4 2
♡ K Q J 10 7 5
♢ 7 6 2
♣ —

♠ 8
♡ A 9 6 4
♢ Q J 8 4
♣ K J 8 3

♠ K J 9 5
♡ 8 3
♢ K 10 3
♣ A 10 9 5

♠ A 10 7 3
♡ 2
♢ A 9 5
♣ Q 7 6 4 2

New Amateurs v Pioneers

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Yang	*Falk*	*Song*	*Lo*
—	2♡	Dble	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

North started with the king and queen of hearts, declarer winning as Soth parted with the ♣6. A diamond to the king saw South take the ♢A and return the ♢9. Declarer cashed two diamond and then ran the ♠8. South won with the ♠10. When South continued with the ♠A before switching to a club declarer was home, +600.

If South holds on to the ♠A, a club switch holds declarer to eight tricks, but declarer could have put in dummy's ♠J, which would have ensured nine tricks.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Falgout	*Wang*	*King*	*Li*
—	2♡	All Pass	

East led the ♢3 and declarer took dummy's ♢A and played a heart to the ten followed by the ♡K. When that held declarer played a spade to the ace – and could no longer make the contract, -50, but an 11 IMP gain, Pioneers winning 34-24.

Avocado v Coconut

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Lee	*Franceschetti*	*Gan*	*Robert*
—	Pass	1♣*	Pass
1♡	3♡	Pass	3♠
Dble	All Pass		

1♣ 2+♣

I think we can assume that 3♡ also promised spades, don't you?

West led the ♣8 and declarer ruffed in dummy and played the ♡K, West taking the ♡A and switching to the ♢4. Alas, the train had already left the station, declarer winning with the ♢A, ruffing a club, pitching a diamond on the ♡Q and then overruffing East's ♠5 on the next high heart. Another club ruff was followed by the ♡10 and this time East ruffed with the ♠J. If declarer discards the ♢9 an overtrick will be on the horizon, but here declarer overruffed with the ♠A, ruffed a club and played the ♡7, discarding the ♢9 when East pitched the ♢3. West ruffed and returned the ♢Q, declarer ruffing to secure his ninth trick, +530.

There is no reason for West to lead a diamond (although many players prefer not to lead away from a king, especially when partner might not have a significant holding ion a suit they have bid) but were West to do so, which one would you select?

If you lead the ♢Q you run the risk that dummy will have say ♢A10x and declarer the ♢K. You might consider leading a low diamond, because if declarer has say ♢K8x then playing low from dummy sees partner play the ♢9.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Lorenzini	*Deng*	*Bessis*	*Wang*
—	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♡	Pass	1♠	Pass
2NT	All Pass		

North led the ♡K and declarer took the next round as South pitched the ♣7. A diamond to the ten saw South win and switch to the ♠3 for the queen and king and declarer cashed three diamonds and the ♣K, followed by two more rounds of clubs, scoring the last teo tricks with dummy's ♠J and ♣10, +150 and 12 IMPs that saw Avocado win 36-18.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

♠ K Q 9 5 4 2
♡ 8 2
♢ A 4 3 2
♣ 5

♠ A J 7
♡ A J 5 3
♢ 10
♣ Q 9 4 3 2

♠ 10 3
♡ Q 7 4
♢ K 9 7 6 5
♣ 8 7 6

♠ 8 6
♡ K 10 9 6
♢ Q J 8
♣ A K J 10

Greenberg v Spring

Open Room

West	North	East	South
M. de Leon	*Tokay*	*Sprinkhuizen*	*Greenberg*
—	—	Pass	1♣*
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♡*
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

1♣ 2+♣
2♣ 6♡/♠ weak or 5♡+5♠ strong

East led the ♡4 and West took dummy's ♡K with the ♡A and switched to the ♢10, East winning with the ♢K and returning the ♢9. West ruffed, returned the ♡3 to East's ♡Q, ruffed the diamond return and still had the ♠A to come, declarer carefully crossing to dummy with a club after ruffing to play a spade, avoiding a trump promotion, one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Lucassen	*G Wolpert*	*Walker*	*Shourie*
—	—	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

When East led the ♢5, declarer won with dummy's ♢Q, played a spade to the king, a club to the ace, pitched a heart on the ♣K and played a second spade. West took the ♠A and exited with the ♣9, declarer ruffing, cashing the ♠Q and playing the ♢2, establishing a tenth trick, +620 and 12 IMPs that gave Spring a 35-6 win along with first place in the group.

The Big Four

The semifinals pitted Harris against Greenberg and Spring against Epstein.

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ A 8 5 3
♡ 10 9 2
♢ K Q 9
♣ 6 4 3

♠ K J 10
♡ A K 5
♢ A 8 7 3 2
♣ 8 7

♠ 9 2
♡ Q J 8 7 6
♢ J 9 4
♣ K 6 5

♠ Q 7 6 4
♡ 4 3
♢ 10 5
♣ A Q J 10 9

Harris v Greenberg

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Walker	*Bucknell*	*Lucassen*	*Kennedy*
—	1NT*	Pass	Pass
Dble*	Pass	Pass	2♣*
Pass	Pass	2♡	Pass
3♡	Pass	4♡	All Pass

1NT 9-11 may have a singleton
Dble 15+
2♣ Clubs or two suited without clubs

South led the ♢10 and North won with the ♢Q and switched to the ♣6 for the king and ace, South cashing the ♣9 and then playing the ♢5. Declarer took the ♢A and exited with a diamond, North winning and cashing the ♠A for two down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Root	*Tokay*	*Malhasyan*	*Greenberg*
—	Pass	Pass	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♢	Pass
2♡	All Pass		

2♢	Transfer

North led the ♢K and declarer won, cashed the ♡A, played a heart to the queen, a heart back to the king and a diamond, North winning and switching to the ♣6 for the king and ace. South cashed two more clubs before playing the ♠4 and when declarer put in the ♠J he was home, +110 and 5 IMPs.

Spring v Epstein

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Silverman	*Shourie*	*Epstein*	*J Wolpert*
—	Pass	Pass	Pass
1NT*	Pass	2♢*	Pass
2♡	All Pass		

1NT	14+-17
2♢	Transfer

North led the ♡2 and when dummy's ♡6 held declarer played a diamond to the seven, North winning and returning the ♡9. Declarer won with the ♡A and played two rounds of diamonds, North winning and switching to the ♣6 for the king and ace. When South returned the ♠7 declarer put in the ♠10 and North won with the ♠A and played the ♡10, declarer claiming, +140.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Brown	*Ga*	*Whibley*	*Primavera*
—	Pass	Pass	1♣*
Dble	Rdbl	1♡	Pass
Pass	Dble*	Pass	1♠
Pass	Pass	2♡	Pass
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

1♣	2+♣
Dble	Takeout

Three rounds of hearts saw declarer ruff, play a diamond to the king, a club to the queen and a diamond, West taking the ♢A and exiting with the ♣8. Declarer took East's ♣K with the ♣A, played a spade to the ace and a spade to the queen and king, claiming eight tricks, +110 and 6 IMPs.

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

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

Spring v Epstein

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Silverman	*Shourie*	*Epstein*	*J Wolpert*
—	—	1♢	Pass
3♣*	All Pass		

3♣	Invitational with clubs

North led the ♠5 and declarer won with the ♠Q and played the ace, king and jack of clubs, finishing with ten tricks, +130.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Brown	*Ga*	*Whibley*	*Primavera*
—	—	1♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT*	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass

1♣	2+♣, can be light, can be longer diamonds
2♠	8-11, 6+♣
2NT	Asking
3♣	No shortage

South led the ace, then queen and king of diamonds before switching to the ♠J. Declarer won with the ♠A and played three rounds of clubs, South taking the ♣J with the ♣Q at which point declarer claimed, +400 and 7 IMPs.

There were no further swings of any real significance, Spring collecting several overtrick IMPs to lead 14-8 at the half.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

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

Harris v Greenberg

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Walker	*Bucknell*	*Lucassen*	*Kennedy*
—	—	1♠	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♡	Pass
3♢*	Pass	3♡	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

2♣	Natural, game forcing
3♢	Fourth suit forcing or natural

North led the ♢8 and Declarer won with dummy's ♢A and played the ♣10 for the jack and ace. He cashed his minor suit winners and exited with a diamond, scoring the ♡K at the end, +630.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Root	*Tokay*	*Malhasyan*	*Greenberg*
—	—	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♡	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♡	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♢*	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

4♢	Control

North led the ♢8 and declarer took South's ♢J with the ♢K and played five rounds of clubs, discarding the ♢A. He cashed three diamonds and then played a heart for the queen, king and ace and had to go one down, -100 and a 12 IMP loss.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

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

Harris v Greenberg

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Walker	*Bucknell*	*Lucassen*	*Kennedy*
Pass	1NT*	Pass	2♢*
Pass	3♢*	Pass	3♡
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

1NT	9-11 may have a singleton
2♢	Game forcing relay
3♢	Natural, not 4♡/♠

East led the ♠6 and West won with the ♠A and returned the ♠7 to declarer's ♠K. A club to the king saw West win and play the ♠10 East winning and switching to the ♡3. Declarer won with the ♡J and played a heart to dummy's ace, East discarding the ♢5. Declarer cashed two more hearts and saw East pitch another diamond and a club. When he continued with a club to the queen he had to go one down, -50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Root	*Tokay*	*Malhasyan*	*Greenberg*
Pass	1♢	Pass	1♡
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠*
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

2♠	Game forcing

East led the ♡3 and declarer won with the ♡J and played a club for the king and ace. West switched to the ♠10 and East won with the ♠Q and returned the ♠5, declarer winning with the ♠K. He cashed two hearts and then played a club to the ten, scoring ten tricks, +430 and 10 IMPs, Greenberg winning the first half 28-9.

Second Session

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

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

Spring v Epstein
Open Room

West	North	East	South
Primavera	*Whibley*	*Ga*	*Brown*
1♡	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♡	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♢*	Pass
3♡	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♢	Pass
4♡*	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT	Pass	6♣	All Pass

4♡	Control
4NT	'Better than 5♣'

South led the ♣3 and declarer won with dummy's ♣5 and played a spade for the king and ace, club to dummy's nine and a second spade, South winning with the ♠10 and returning the ♣8. There were only eleven tricks, -100.

Suppose declarer, after seeing the ♠K, draws trumps and cashes the ♡AK. When South discards, declarer plays the ♠9 and South wins with the ♠10 but then has no good move.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
J Wolpert	*Epstein*	*Shourie*	*Silverman*
1♡	Pass	2♣	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

2♣	Artificial game force

North led the ♢2 and South won with the ♢K and returned the ♢10, declarer cashing her winners for +630 and 12 IMPs.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

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

Harris v Greenberg
Open Room

West	North	East	South
Walker	*Bucknell*	*Lucassen*	*Kennedy*
—	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♢*	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

2♢	3♠, 9-11

West led the ♣7 and declarer won with dummy's ♣Q and played the ♡7, East winning with the ♡K and switching to the ♠3. Declarer took the ♠A, ruffed a heart and played a club to the king. West ruffed, cashed the ♠K and could cash a heart, +140.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Root	*Tokay*	*Gross*	*Greenberg*
—	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

2♣	3♠

The first four tricks were almost identical, but having ruffed a heart declarer ruffed a diamond, ruffed a heart and only then played a club, +620 and 10 IMPs.

Over the closing deals Greenberg added 7 IMPs to take the session 26-3 and the match by 37.90 IMPs.

Spring v Epstein
Open Room

West	North	East	South
Primavera	*Whibley*	*Ga*	*Brown*
—	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2♢*
2♡	4♠	5♡	Dble
All Pass			

2♣	Drury
2♢	Interest in game

North led the ♠9 and South won and switched to the ♣9, continuing with the ♣10 when it held. Declarer ruffed, drew trumps, ruffed a club and played a diamond to the ace, taking ten tricks, one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
J Wolpert	*Epstein*	*Shourie*	*Silverman*
—	Pass	Pass	1♠
2♡	3♡*	4♡	4♠
All Pass			

3♡	Spade raise

West led the ♣7 and declarer won with dummy's ♣Q and played the ♡7, East winning with the ♡Q and returning the ♢6. Declarer ruffed, ruffed a heart, played a spade to the ace, ruffed a heart and played the ♣J to his king. When that held he exited with a spade, claiming +620 and 11 IMPs.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

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

Spring v Epstein
Open Room

West	North	East	South
Primavera	*Whibley*	*Ga*	*Brown*
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	Pass	1♢	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♢	All Pass

2♣	Transfer to 2♢

South led the ♣4 and North won with the ♣A and switched to the ♠10, declarer winning with dummy's ♠J and playing a diamond for the king and ace. The ♠A and the ♠5 saw North ruff, and when North returned the ♣6 declarer put in the ♣10 and was two down, -200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
J Wolpert	*Epstein*	*Shourie*	*Silverman*
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	1♡	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♡	All Pass	

2♣	3 card Drury

East led the ♠K and declarer won with dummy's ♠A and played two rounds of diamonds, East winning and playing two rounds of spades. Declarer ruffed, ruffed a diamond and played a heart for the ten and queen. East exited with the ♡5 and West won and played the ♠J. If declarer ruffs this with the ♡K, East is squeezed in a funny way – he can't throw a club so had to pitch the ♢K. the declarer exits with ♡8 and scores three club tricks after the enforced club return. Not easy to see, and when declarer ruffed with the ♡8 East overruffed and played the ♢K scoring a club at the end for one down, -100 and 7 IMPs for Spring.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

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

Spring v Epstein
Open Room

West	North	East	South
Primavera	*Whibley*	*Ga*	*Brown*
1♡	1♠	4♡	4♠
All Pass			

East led the ♡A and switched to the ♣6, West winning with the king and returning the ♣4. Declarer won with the ♣A and with no club ruff coming there were ten tricks, +420.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
J Wolpert	*Epstein*	*Shourie*	*Silverman*
1♡	1♠	4♡	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♡	Dble
All Pass			

North led the ♠K and declarer could not avoid the loss of a spade, two diamonds and two clubs, three down, -500 losing a couple of IMPs.

Board 9. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

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

Spring v Epstein

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Primavera Whibley		*Ga*	*Brown*
—	2♢*	Dble	3♢
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

2♢	Usually 5♢, 0-7(8)

North led the ♡9 for the king and ace and South returned the ♢5, North taking dummy's ♢Q and returning the ♢3. That put the defenders ahead 3-0 and there were two more tricks to come, two down, -200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
J Wolpert	*Epstein*	*Shourie*	*Silverman*
—	Pass	1NT*	Pass
2♡*	Pass	2♠	All Pass

1NT	14+-17
2♡	Transfer

South led the ♣7 and declarer won with dummy's ♣J and played a spade for the jack and king. Eight tricks were inevitable, +110 along with 7 IMPs.

Spring took the session 30-29 and the match by 13.10 IMPs. It would be an all American final.

The Grand Final

The final would be between Spring and Greenberg.

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
J Wolpert	*Tokay*	*Shourie*	*Greenberg*
—	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♣*	Pass	3♢*	Pass
3♡*	Pass	3NT	All Pass

1NT	14+-17
3♣	Puppet
3♢	No five-card major
3♡	4♠

South led the ♣4 and declarer won with the ♣Q and ran the ♢Q, North winning and returning the ♣10. Declarer won and had time to play a club, but when South won and switched to the ♠ it was time to cash out, +400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Walker	*Whibley*	*Lucassen*	*Brown*
—	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♢*	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

2♣	Stayman
2♢	No major

South led the ♠J and declarer won, ran the ♢Q and saw North switch to the ♣9 (the system card suggest they lead the nine from a doubleton headed by the nine, but the ten from 109). When declarer put in the ♣Q South won and switched to the ♡6, declarer winning in dummy and ducking a club. South won with the ♣J and cashed two spades for one down and 10 IMPs.

There is a way to make 3NT, but it is not easy.

Declarer must take the ♣A on the first round of the suit and play a spade. South wins and exits with a heart, but declarer wins in dummy and plays the ♠10, pinning North's ♠9.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
J Wolpert	*Tokay*	*Shourie*	*Greenberg*
—	—	Pass	1♣
1♠	Pass	3♣*	Dble
3♠	All Pass		

3♣	Mixed raise

South followed the modern approach of doubling top show a good hand, not just some decent clubs.

North led the ♣3 and South took the ♣A and switched to the ♠J, declarer winning with the ♠A and playing a heart for the seven, ten and queen. He won the return of the ♣Q, cashed the ♠K, ruffed a club with the ♠10 and played two rounds of hearts, ruffing before exiting with the ♢2. North played the ♢J and three rounds of the suit meant two down, -200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Walker	*Whibley*	*Lucassen*	*Brown*
—	—	Pass	1♣*
1♠	Pass	3♠	Dble
Pass	4♡	All Pass	

1♣	2+♣

East led the ♠3 and West won with the ♠K and switched to the ♢3 for the jack, queen and ace. When declarer continued with the ♡K East won and returned the ♢6, declarer winning with dummy's ♢K, drawing trumps and playing a club to the eight. West won, but that was the last trick for the defence, +420 and 6 IMPs.

There is a way to defeat 4♡, but I doubt anyone would find it.

West must switch to a heart at trick two. East wins and has to return a spade, forcing declarer to ruff in dummy. Then there is no longer a route to ten tricks.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
J Wolpert	*Tokay*	*Shourie*	*Greenberg*
—	—	Pass	1♢*
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♡*	Pass	2♠*
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♣*	Pass	4♢*
Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♢*
Pass	7NT	All Pass	

1♢	4+♢
2♡	Fourth suit forcing
4♣	Control
4♢	Control
4NT	RKCB
5♢*	3 keycards

West led the ♠10 and having won in dummy declarer cashed the ♢K and saw the ♢J appear.

If that was a singleton, declarer could cross to his hand and run the ♢9, but it is not unknown for a resourceful defender to have played the ♢J from say ♢J10x and after some though he continued with the ♢Q and saw East pitch the ♣4. If declarer judged that was the 'idle fifth' it might be a vital clue. Marking time, declarer cashed dummy's spades, East discarding the ♡97 and ♣5, while West parted with the ♡65 the ♢5 and the ♡4. A diamond to the now bare ace saw East pitch the ♡8. The ♣3 saw West play the ♣7. Could declarer rise to the occasion by playing the ♣K and then the ♣J, pinning West's ♣10?

Not this time, the ♣Q scoring when declarer played the ♣J, one down, -100.

With 7♠ being cold might that prove to be expensive?

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Walker	*Whibley*	*Lucassen*	*Brown*
—	—	Pass	1♢
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♡*	Pass	2♠*
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT*
Pass	4♣*	Pass	4♢*
Pass	5♢*	Pass	5♡*
Dble	Pass	Pass	Rdbl*
Pass	5NT*	Pass	6♢*
Pass	7♠	All Pass	

2♡	Fourth suit forcing
2♠	2♠
3NT	Non serious
4♣	Control
4♢	Control
5♢	Control
5♡	Control
Rdbl	First round control
5NT	RKCB
6♢	3 keycards

East led the ♡8 and declarer took dummy's ♡A, drew trumps, cashed the ♢K and claimed, +2210 along with 20 IMPs that left Spring in a commanding position, ahead 41-1.

Session 2

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Whibley	*Tokay*	*Brown*	*Greenberg*
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	1♡	1♠	3♣*
4♠	4NT*	Pass	5♣*
Pass	6♡	All Pass	

3♣	Mixed raise
4NT	'Slam try'
5♣	'1/4 keycards'

East led the ♠A and continued with the ♠Q, declarer ruffing and cashing the ♡A. When East pitched the ♠3 he played the ♣10 and seeing no danger East followed with the ♣2. When dummy's ♣J held, declarer played a heart to the ten, overtook the ♣K, drew trumps via the marked finesse and cashed the ♢AK, collecting West's ♢Q as if it was his due for a spectacular +980.

If East covers the ♣10, declarer is an entry short and cannot collect West's ♡Q.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Walker	*J Wolpert*	*Shourie*	*Lucassen*
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	1♡	1♠	3♡*
3♠	4♢	Pass	4NT*
Pass	5♢*	Pass	5♡
All Pass			

3♡	Wide ranging
4NT	RKCB
5♢	0/3 keycards

East led the ♣2 and declarer won with the ♣10, cashed the ♡A, the ♢AK and then overtook the ♣K to lead the ♡9, collecting West's ♡Q for twelve tricks, +480 but an 11 IMP loss.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Whibley	*Tokay*	*Brown*	*Greenberg*
1♣*	1♢	1♡*	3♣*
4♠	All Pass		

1♣	2+♣
1♡	4+♠
3♣	4+♢, 6-9

North led the ♢A and when South followed with the ♢7 he switched to the ♣3 (Derek Rimmington's Bols Bridge Tip, The King lives, long live the King, was that if you led the king of a suit and then switched it might well be to a singleton) declarer taking South's ♣10 with the ♣A and playing two rounds of spades. North won with the ♠K, South discarding the ♡7. When North continued with the ♡Q and declarer followed with dummy's ♡2 would you have found play of overtaking with the ♡A and switching back to clubs? When South did not, declarer could claim, +620.

As an aside, with a singleton in dummy, you can play that your card has suit preference overtones, in which case South might play the ♢10 at trick one. On the other hand North might have switched to the ♡7 rather than the ♡Q. (Hua Yang did exactly that for Pioneers in their match against BC Crash – only to be matched by his counterpart Bas Drijver at the other table.)

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Walker	*J Wolpert*	*Shourie*	*Lucassen*
1♣	Dble	1♡	2♡
3♠			

1♣	2+♣
1♡	Spades

When North led the ♢A South followed with the ♢10. However, after switching to the ♣3 and winning the second round of spades North had to try the ♡Q as two heart tricks would probably be required to defeat 3♠.

Declarer took ten tricks, +170 but 10 IMPs were lost.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Whibley	*Tokay*	*Brown*	*Greenberg*
—	—	Pass	Pass
1♣*	Pass	1♡*	Pass
1♠*	Pass	2♠	Pass
Pass	3♣	All Pass	

1♣	2+♣
1♡	4+♠
1♠	Non forcing, usually 3♠ can be bad with 4♠

East led the ♢6 and declarer won with dummy's ♢J, and played two rounds of clubs. Applying the principle of restricted choice, he ducked West's ♣J on the second round and when the ♣K appeared he could draw the outstanding trump when he regained the lead and develop a heart trick for +110.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Walker	*J Wolpert*	*Shourie*	*Lucassen*
—	—	Pass	Pass
1NT*	Pass	2♡*	Pass
2♠	All Pass		

1NT	14-16

North led the ♢A and when South followed with the ♢J he switched to the ♡5. Declarer took South's ♡J with the ♡Q, ducked a diamond, won the next heart with the ace, ruffed a diamond and played a spade for the jack and king. North cashed the ♡10 and switched to the ♣2. Having seen the ♢AK and the ♠K declarer played dummy's ♣6 and was home, +110 and 6 consolation IMPs.

Greenberg had won the session 17-11, but the title went to Spring.

If Francesca needs a byline perhaps *Spring is in the Air* will fit the bill.

Online
Contract
Bridge
League

OCBL JANUARY CUP

13 - 15 January, 2025

12 Rounds x 10 Boards

Monday, 13 January
R1 - R4
CET 16.00 - 17.30 - 19.00 - 20.30
EST 10.00 - 11.30 - 13.00 - 14.30

Tuesday, 14 January
R5 - R8
CET 16.00 - 17.30 - 19.00 - 20.30
EST 10.00 - 11.30 - 13.00 - 14.30

Wednesday, 15 January
R9 - R12, SF/F
CET 16.00 - 17.30 - 19.00 - 20.30
EST 10.00 - 11.30 - 13.00 - 14.30

To follow:

OCBL FEBRUARY CUP

10 - 12 February, 2025

Info and pre-registration: WWW.OCBL.ORG

ALT INVITATIONAL

world class online bridge events

UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2025

20 - 23 January 2025

24 - 27 February 2025

(24)25 - 27(28) March 2025

21 - 24 April 2025

12 - 15 May 2025

16 - 19 June 2025

7 - 10 July 2025

11 - 14 August 2025

8 - 11 September 2025

6 - 9 October 2025

3 - 6 November 2025

(8)9 - 11(12) Dec 2025