

That would be enough

This has been issue 64 of *To Win Just Once*, published 22nd April 2006. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a postal game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks.

Deadlines

Orders for *Railway Rivals 4* and *Star Trader* to Mike Dommett by 5th May.

Orders for *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses* and *Easy Money* bids to Pevans by Friday 12th May 2006.

(Remaining deadlines for 2006 are 9th/16th June, 14th/21st July, 18th/25th August, 22nd/29th September, 27th October/3rd November, 1st/8th December.)

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Per game turn	£0.50	£0.50
11-turn subscription	£5.00	£5.00

Games played

If you are interested in playing any game, please let Pevans know.

En Garde! Pevans has room for more players in *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*. You will need the rules to *En Garde!* in order to play: www.engage.co.uk.

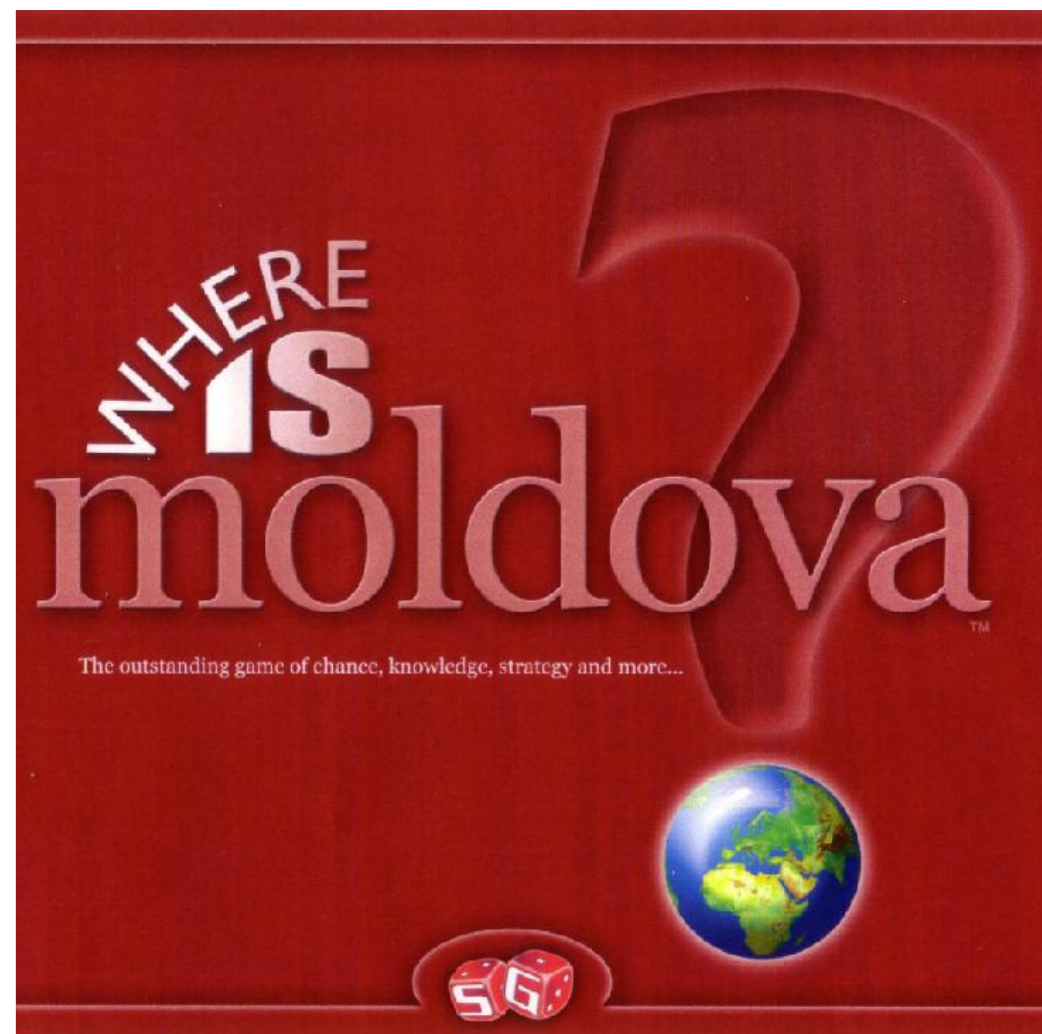
Railway Rivals on the North of England or Severn Valley map. So far we have Edward Walkington (North), Steve Bunce (either), Nathan Richards (either) and Colin Parfitt. We provide rules and a working copy of the map.

Star Trader We have a position available in the current game – let me or Mike know if you're interested. Colin Parfitt wants to join the next game. Rules provided.

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To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)



One of the new games on show at the 2006 London Toy Fair
See page 7 for the report (and page 16 for the answer)

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ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank, Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
HdE	Horatio d'Escargot	11+	55	OK	B.Bdr-General ALC	4	Henrietta	BG	3	Graeme Wilson
LN	Leo Nemie	10	F	Poor		4		F&P	5	Chris Boote
WB	Walter Butts	9	23	Comfy	Major KM	4		Flr	3	Richard Newby
DdL	Dan de Lyon	9+	65	Comfy	B.Bdr-General QOC/CPS	1	Emma		6	Ashley Casey
AU	Armand Unejambe	8-	7	OK		3			4	Mark Barrowcliffe
RdM	Rob d'Masses	8	13	Poor	Major GDMD	4		BG	3	Craig Pearson
JRG	Jean-René Gratien	8+	45	Poor		1		BG	3	David Lopez
DF	Dexteur Facteur	8+	42	OK	Major QOC	4		HGds	2	Kevin Morgan
EM	Egon Madd	8+	25	OK	Major CPC	6		BG	2	Tym Norris
JLF	Jean Laissez Faire	7+	44	OK	Captain QOC	2		HGds	3	Filipe Silva
StSy	Stewart Senquiry	6+	47	Comfy		1	Ada	F&P	2	Colin Parfitt
AE	Auray Enri	5-	4	OK	Major QOC	3			4	Chris Rudram
MD	Marc Desade	5+	47	Poor	Captain 53F	1		RP	2	Mark Stretch
RPdE	Roland Pollee d'Eaulee	5+	22	Poor	Subaltern QOC/Bdr's Aide (RdO)	6	Marie	RP	3	Pete Card
MIO	Michael l'Ovnotwore	5+	20	Poor		2		RP	2	Justin Key
LdLR	Lucien de la Rue	4	9	Poor	B.Subaltern QOC	5		RP	6	Olaf Schmidt
PdVB	Pierre de Vin Blanc	4+	29	Poor	Captain PM	5	Josephine	RP	4	Keith Bristow
FP	François Phresh	4+	20	Poor	Captain PLLD/PLLD Regt. Adj.	5		RP	4	Charles Burrows
X4		3	RIP							Mark Gilby
PD	Pate Derry	3+	19	Poor	Subaltern PLLD	6			1	Tim Macaire
MM	Mad Morty	2-	0	Poor		6			3	Mark Mortimer
X5		2-	2	OK		2			1	Gerry Sutcliff
X6	Pas de Nom	2	F	OK		5			2	James Guiton
EF	Emile Fitoux	1-	15	Poor		4			5	Timothy Hunt

An F under SPs means that the character was at the Front, RIP means that he died. + against SL means it went up this month, - means it went down. Cash: Poor = <500, OK = 500-1500, Comfy = 1500-5000, Withy = 5000-10000, Rich = 10000-25000, Flthy = 25000+
Last seen is the lady the character was last seen with in public.

EC is Endurance Class: 1 = <60, 2 = 60-90, 3 = 91-120, 4 = 121-159, 5 = 160-200, 6 = 201+

The Greasy Pole

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank, Regiment/Appointment	MA Last seen	Club	EC	Player
CWAE	Count Co W. Ard Extrême	24	41	Poor	General	5	Flr	3	Benedikt Löwe
SDL	Count Stan Dandy Liver	23	47	Withy	Lt-General/War Minister	11 Kathy	Flr	4	Guy Arnold
CIG	Marquis Charlemagne le Gosse	23+	84	Rich	B.Lt-General/Adjutant Gen	11 Lois	Flr	2	Neil Packer
GdSM	Count Gaston de St Marque	23+	74	Comfy	Fld Marshal/Chancellor	9	Flr	3	Nathan Richards
ZTMG	Count Zachary The Money Goes	22-	21	Withy	Colonel KM/Min w/o Port	11 Anna	Flr	4	Gerald Udowizenko
SS	Baron Sean Sondamour	21+	76	Withy	General/Fld Army Commandr	5 Sheila	Flr	2	Pete Holland
LI	Count Lokwot Isaw	21+	67	Withy	Colonel RFG/State Min.	19 Sue	Flr	3	Barry Townsend
BR	Baron Beau Romir	19	57	Withy	Captain RFG/C.Prince Aide	7 Frances	Flr	3	Graeme Morris
BdM	Viscount Beppe de Marko	19	44	Fithy	Bdr-General	17 Katy	Flr	2	Mark Moores
GdLi	Baron Gar de Lieu	19	31	Comfy	B.General	3 Leia	Flr	4	Bill Hay
RdO	Baron Revaulvin d'Or	18	56	Rich	Bdr-General/Justice Min.	8 Bette	Flr	4	Jerry Spencer
OdC	Baron Orson de Combat	18	48	Comfy	Bdr-General	6	Flr	5	Francesca Weal
RO	Rene Ouai	18	33	Comfy	Lt-General	3	Flr	5	Peter Denison
JS	Sir Jacques Shitacks	17	46	OK	B.Lt-General	3	Both	4	David Olliver
OP	Marquis Omi Palone	17+	60	Comfy	Major KM/Gen's Aide	4	Both	4	Mike Dommert
BdW	Baron Bud d'Wiser	16	50	Comfy	B.Bdr-General GDM/Min w/o Port	11 Maggie	Flr	2	Francesca Huskinson
DC	Devlin Carnate	16	43	Comfy	Colonel PLLD	4 Angelina	Both	2	Bruno Giordan
EH	Marquis Euria Humble	15	44	OK	B.Bdr-General DG	14	Both	5	Matthew Wale
JdV	Sir Joseph de Veevre	14+	50	Comfy	B.Bdr-General 13F	3	Both	5	Andrew Kendall
FLAG	Sir Fernand Louis Adelmo de G'l	14+	48	Comfy	Lt.Colonel KM	5 Charlotte	Hunt	4	Hajo 'Red' Schlosser
CD	Baron Ced Deucer	13	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General CG	10	Hunt	3	Nigel Monaghan
AdA	Averell de Alton	13+	56	OK	Major RFG	3 Mary	Hunt	4	Martin Jennings
LdE	Lucien d'Escaillehuittaillement	13+	42	Comfy	Major CG	3	Hunt	4	Nik Luker
TT	Thomas Tudo	12+	48	OK	Lt.Colonel ALC/FMshl's Aide	4 Cath	Hunt	5	Ben Brown
AV	Sir Antoine Valois	12+	40	Comfy	Lt.Colonel DG/2nd Div Adjutant	1	Hunt	4	Simon Burling
LaT	Lun a'Tic	11+	68	OK	Major RFG/Gds Brigade Maj.	1 Bess	Hunt	2	Paul Wilson
PdMR	Sir Pierre de Mont Réal	11+	65	OK	B.Lt-General/Insp.Gen.Inf	8		5	Pam Udowizenko
MdS	Sir Magnon de Sources	11+	57	Poor	B.Bdr-General PM/I F Brigadier	4 Betty	Hunt	5	Robert Carter

Chatter

I don't know what happened to last issue's cover, but those of you who get the printed edition will have had a rather purple version of what should have been the brown cover of the new edition of *Britannia* from Fantasy Flight Games. I blame the new cartridge in my printer...

My apologies that this issue is a couple of days late. I spent the last week in the USA at Alan Moon's Gathering of Friends, playing lots of games. Jet lag and work commitments then took their toll this week and the result is that *TWJO* is a bit late. Look out for my notes on the new games I played in the next issue.

In the meantime...

I don't believe it!

What does the preposition "pre" mean? "Before" is the answer. "Prehistory" means "before history." So what does "pre-existing" mean? It means "existing!" The "pre" is redundant and confusing. Grrr!

It seems to have originated with in medical insurance policies when talking about a problem that someone already has when they take out the policy. An "existing condition," in fact. I can only assume the "pre-" is there for emphasis.

Like the "pro-" in "pro-active." What does "pro-active" mean? "Active" is what it means! Some clown decided that the opposite of inactive couldn't be active and came up with pro-active to emphasise how active s/he was. Grrr! And it's even being written "proactive" now. I don't know what a proact is, but I'm glad it's possible to be proactive...

Colin Parfitt chips in: "And English that winds me up? 'Learnings' – things we have learnt. Grrr!" Not a usage I'd come across, so I asked Colin to elaborate.

"'Learnings' might just be my company. At the end of a project, we document the 'Problems' and 'Learnings.' I've argued that 'Lessons' has the same meaning and is a real word. However, I have been told that 'Lessons' has a negative meaning (!). The use of Learnings is similar to 'deferred success.'"

Anyone else come across this or is it just Colin's employer?

The Observer of 26th March had an article by Michael McCarthy, emeritus professor of applied linguistics at the University of Nottingham, entitled "I'm happy to boldly get it wrong. Are you?" Prof McCarthy asserts that people get upset about lots of grammatical rules, but "Most of these don't matter as long as they're used in appropriate contexts."

I sort of agree with him. Particularly that sloppiness in speech is excusable as people don't have time to think about what they're saying. Where I differ from the professor is that I think people should get it right when it comes to writing. If you've had the time to write something, you've had time to get it right! And professor McCarthy seems to agree as he gives a final example of a very wrong airline announcement. "It's lazy, sloppy communication." And he concludes "Grammar matters deeply when it's a question of good and bad communication." Amen to that.

Caylus reviewed

Back in 2004, one of the games causing a stir at Spiel was *Ys* from French publisher Ystari Games. I was rather taken with this game (designed by Cyril Demaegd), despite my usual inability to out-guess my opponents at secret bidding games. Last year Ystari did it again with *Caylus*, which created even more of a buzz. I got to try it late on in the show and was impressed. I've played it a few more times since then and I'm even more impressed.



Let's start with the brightly illustrated board. This shows a zigzag road running from the castle at one end. Along the road are the first buildings of a growing town: it's the players' job to extend the town and complete the castle. Each building provides some service for the player whose worker is there. This is the heart of the game: identifying what you need each turn and getting your workers into the right buildings ahead of your opponents. It is also the challenge, as there are so many things you need to do and you can guarantee that you'll miss out on some of them as other players get there first.

I've mentioned workers, so let me explain that each player gets six of these cylindrical pawns (in their chosen colour, natch). Players also have wooden house-shaped pieces to mark ownership of buildings and elements of the castle. Plus a set of marker discs to show turn order and other things. There are lots of cubes for raw materials and plenty of plastic coins for money. A couple of special, white pawns (Bailiff and Provost) control the expansion of the town. And there are the chunky, square tiles that represent the buildings.

The first few buildings are printed on the board and are standard for every game. They do things like changing player order and providing extra cash – as shown by the icons on each building. They cannot be re-developed (by playing another

Regiments Organisation																		
		RFG	CG	KM	DG	QOC	ALC	CPC	RM	GDMD	PM	13F	PLLD	53F	27M	4A	69A	Gscn
Col	LI		CD	ZTMG	EH	DdL	HdE			BdW	MdS+	JdV	DC					
LCol				FLAG	AV		TT			N6								N3
Maj	AdA	LdE	N4	OP	N6+	DF	N2+	N1	N4	RdM	N5	N1	N6+	N5+		N2+	N5+	N5
Maj	LaT+			WB		AE	N2	EM			N5+	N5		N2		N6	N6	
Capt	BR	N2	N2	N2	N2	N5	N5	N5	N3	N2	N1	N6	N6	N2	N1	N6	N5	N6
Capt	N2	N2	N2	N4	N3	N3	N5	N4	N3	N3	N2	N5	N2	N3	N5	N1	N3	N3
Capt	N2*			N6	N3	JLF	N1	N2	N5	N1	N4	N5	N3	N3	N2	N6	N3	N3
Capt				N5*	N4*	N4	N4*	N6*	N6*	N2*	N4	N5*	N5	N2*	N3*	N5*	N6*	N5*
Capt											PdVB		FP*	MD				
Capt																		
Capt																		

Entries are Character abbreviations, N (+ Military Ability) for NPC, blank for vacant, * shows the regiment adjutant. + shows ranks held by characters with a brevet rank or an appointment elsewhere.

Hell Hath no Furry...

No	Name	SL	Attr	Last
61	Bette Noire	19	W	RdO
64	Edna Bucquette	18	W	
3	Kathy Pacific	17	B	SDL
35	Katy Did	16	I	BdM
42	Maggie Nifisent	16	B	BdW
55	Jacky Tinne	16		
60	Polly Hydronne	16	W	
52	Guinevere d'Arthur	15	B/W	
10	Frances Forrin	14	B	BR
48	Fifi	14	B/W	
16	Ophelia Derriere	13		
26	Ella Fant	13	B	
27	Lucy Fur	13	B	
30	Leia Orgasma	13	B	GdLi
45	Cath de Thousands	13		TT
8	Lotte Bottle	12	B	
12	Charlotte de Gaulle	12		FLAG
17	Henrietta Carrotte	12	I/W	HdE
28	Vera Cruz	12		
31	Bess Ottede	12	I/W	LaT
1	Sue Briquet	11	B	LI
4	Anne Tique	11	W	
9	Deb Onairre	11	I	
40	Sheila Kiwi	11		SS
63	Carole Singeurs	11		
20	Emma Roides	10	I	DdL
33	Anna Rexique	10	I	ZTMG
38	Pet Ulante	10	W	
43	Di Lemmere	10	I	
53	Angelina de Griz	10	B	DC
56	Ingrid la Suede	10		
6	Viv Ayschus	9		
57	Ava Crisp	9	I	
59	May Banquot l'Idee	9		
2	Betty Kant	8	I	MdS
19	Jenny Russe	8	W	
32	Sal Munella	8	W	
41	Marie Antoinette	8	B/I	RPdE
47	Eve Ningalle	8	I/W	
49	Mary Huana	8	B/I/W	AdA
34	Freda de Ath	7	W	
39	Thomasina Tancenjin	7	I	
50	Ulla Leight	7	I	
5	Belle Epoque	6	B/I	
13	Josephine Buonoparte	6	I/W	PdVB
24	Violet Bott	6	I/W	
15	Ada Andabettoir	5	B/I	StSy
25	Lois de Low	5	B	CIG

This table shows the mistresses in Paris.
B=Beautiful, I=Influential, W=Wealthy,
Last = Last lover seen with this month

Tables

Other Appointments

King's Escort: Ensign N	Captain N	Shows who holds appointments outside military units: ID for Characters, N for NPC, __ for vacant, CPS for additional posts held by the CPS.
Cardinal's Escort: Ensign N	Captain N	
Aides: to Crown Prince BR	to Field Marshal TT	
Provincial Military Governors: N/N/N/N/N		
City Military Governor N	Adjutant-General CIG	
Inspectors-General: of Cavalry __	of Infantry PdMR	
Commissioner of Public Safety DdL		
Chancellor of the Exchequer GdSM	Minister of Justice RdO	
Minister of War SDL	Minister of State LI	

Battle Results

Cardinal's Guard: I

Frontier regiment 1: 4

Frontier regiment 2: 5

Frontier regiment 3: 4

Frontier regiment 4: 5

RNHB regiment: I

Army Organisation and Summer Deployment

Field Army (Field Ops)	SS/ __/ __/ __
First Division (Field Ops)	__/ __/ N3
2nd Foot Brigade (Field Ops) – 13F 53F	
3rd Foot Brigade (Field Ops) – 27M 4A	
Second Division (Field Ops)	__/ __/ AV
4th Foot Brigade (Field Ops) – 69A Gscn	
RNHB Regiment (Field Ops)	
Frontier Division (Field Ops)	__/ __/ N4
Frontier Regiments (Field Ops)	
Organisation and Deployment for the Campaign	
Season plus Army and Division posts	
(CO/Aide/Adj't/QMG):	
ID for chars, N (+ MA for CO and Adj't) for	
NPC, __ for vacant	

Brigade Positions

Guards Brigade	__/ __/ LaT
Horse Guards Brigade	N2/N/N6
Heavy Brigade	N5/N/N2
Dragoon Brigade	N1/N/N6
First Foot Brigade	MdS/N/N5
Second Foot Brigade	__/ __/ N5
Third Foot Brigade	__/ __/ N2
Fourth Foot Brigade	__/ __/ N5

Entries as Army Organisation Table

Frontier Regiments

(Assault for Sept-Nov)

	F1	F2	F3	F4	RNHB
Colonel	N3	N2	N4	N2	N7
Attached	LN		X6		

Also at the Front

Cardinal's Guard – 2 Bn 3 Bn only

This table shows the Colonels of Frontier regiments (N + MA for NPCs), together with the volunteers assigned this season.

building over them), so they remain through the game. The next section is spaces for the half dozen neutral building tiles. These are the same in every game, though their order varies. There are a couple more pre-printed buildings and then the vacant spaces – for players to build on – begin. The neutral buildings provide raw materials (of different types and combinations) and, crucially, the opportunity to build wooden buildings.

The wooden buildings give more options – like swapping, selling or buying cubes – and one of them allows stone buildings to be built. Stone buildings are more powerful – like the bank, which generates gold. Then there are the residential buildings, which are built in place of other buildings and generate some victory points immediately and extra income each turn. These, in turn, can be re-developed into prestige buildings, which generate victory points and the very useful royal favours (more about these later).

If you're with me so far, you can see how important it is to get your workers into the right buildings. Say you want to get the Mason into play. This is the wooden building that allows players to build stone buildings. It is quite an important building (though in the first game I played, we didn't realise that). You need to get a worker onto the carpenter building to have the opportunity to build. You also need to have the raw materials for the tile you want to build (each tile shows what's needed to build it). This means placing more workers to get these cubes or having them left over from the previous turn. And then you need to get your chance to build before anyone else can take the Mason tile – timing is important in this game.

Speaking of timing, I'd better walk you through the sequence of a turn, so that you can see just what happens when. Each turn starts with everybody getting a couple of coins. (Interestingly, there was some confusion about this and the game has been played with players only getting one cash each turn. This makes a big difference: money is much tighter and players face a big challenge to manage their cash flow.) Then players put their workers on the board. The first player places a worker in an empty building (or the castle) and pays the cost – 1 coin to start with. The second player does the same. Then the third and so on until someone passes.

The first player to pass gains a coin. They also increase the cost of placing a worker for the remaining players: it's now two coins. This is a very clever mechanism as it gives passing a positive value, rather than just being what you do when you've run out of things to do. When a second player passes, the cost goes up to three coins per worker and so on. So, once one person's passed, the others tend to pass soon after as the cost quickly becomes prohibitive. Except that one building keeps the cost down to 1 – for the player who took control of it the turn before – and the cost of putting a worker into a building you own is

always 1. This sums up the game quite neatly: a clever tactical option that makes other tactical opportunities available.

Once everybody's passed, it's time to activate the buildings, moving along the road. This means that the player who has a worker on the building gets the fruits of whatever the building does. After the first few buildings, the board shows a bridge across the river below the castle. At this point, players get the opportunity to move the Provost pawn, starting with whoever passed first. Moving the Provost costs money, so why do it? Because buildings that are after the Provost on the road do nothing this turn – wasting any worker placed on them. Again, this provides some tactical options for the players, depending on just where their workers are and how much cash they have. Once that's been dealt with, the remaining buildings take effect, in sequence, until the Provost is reached.

This brings us to the castle – though it's actually at the head of the road. Every player who's placed a worker in the castle has the opportunity to build a bit more of it. For each set of three different cubes (there's a penalty if they have none), they add one of their house pieces to the current section of the castle. They score some victory points. In addition, the player who adds the most houses in the turn gains a royal favour. What's more, as each section of the castle is declared complete, players who haven't put enough houses in lose victory points. Those who've put in lots of houses get extra favours.



So I'd better explain what favours are all about. Each time a player gains a royal favour, they move their marker disc along one of the four tracks on the board. Depending on the track, the player gains extra victory points, extra cash, extra raw materials or an extra building. Initially, the reward from a favour isn't that good: 1 victory point, for example. But the further along the track, the bigger the reward. The 5 points at the end of the victory point track are well worth having. In the first game I played, my opponents didn't bother with favours. Until they

Zachary The Money Goes applies for

Minister of War

Duels

Results of this month's duels:

Mad Morty didn't turn up to fight Pierre de Mont Réal and lost SPs.
 Stan Dandy Liver (with OdC & SS, gains 1 Exp) beat Gaston de St Marque (with OdC & ZTMG).
 Orson de Combat (with EH, no Expertise) beat Gar de Lieu (with SDL).
 Gar de Lieu declined to meet Antoine Valois as he was under half Endurance.
 Joseph de Veevre (with OP & RdO, gains 1 Exp) beat Lun a'Tic (with HdE).
 Dan de Lyon (with RPdE, gains 1 Exp) beat Jean-René Gratrien - voted cause 8:5.

Grudges to be settled next month:

Auray Enri (Sabre) has cause with Roland Pollee d'Eaulee (Sabre, Seconds DdL, adv.) for pinching Marie.
 Bud d'Wiser (Sabre, adv.) and Horatio d'Escargot (2-Hand, 1 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.
 Bud d'Wiser (Sabre, adv.) and Thomas Tudo (Sabre, 3 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.
 Dexteur Facteur (Sabre, 3 rests) has cause with Thomas Tudo (Sabre, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Jean-René Gratrien (Rapier, 3 rests) has cause with Thomas Tudo (Sabre, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.
 Egon Madd (Sabre, adv.) and Marc Desade (Rapier, 2 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.
 Lucien d'Escaillehuitaillement (Rapier, 4 rests) and Omi Palone (Rapier, Seconds ZTMG & FLAG, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.
 Lucien d'Escaillehuitaillement (Rapier, 5 rests) and Zachary The Money Goes (Rapier, Seconds FLAG, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.
 Fernand Louis Adelmo de Gaulle (Rapier, Seconds OP, adv.) and Lucien d'Escaillehuitaillement (Rapier, 1 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

"Adv." Indicates player with the advantage in Expertise: his first duelling sequence need only contain six Actions.

Duels held over until December:

Ced Deucer versus Jacques Shitacks.

All duels (including any to be voted on) must be fought next month unless held over due to one or other duellist being at the Front. Orders conditional on a challenge being voted cause are acceptable.

From the Diary of Egon Madd
Ah Paris, city of a thousand bodies
and, hopefully, some dead ones. A
perfect place to carry on with my
research. I can remain anonymous
here; no-one will stumble on my
laboratory and call me a “monster” for
“tampering with God’s domain.” No-
one will raise an angry mob against
me. No-one will chase me from my

Points Arising

The following didn’t get their orders in
on time (“No Move Received”) and
suffered the consequences.

LdlR Lucien de la Rue (Olaf Schmidt)
has NMR’d. Total now 1

LN Leo Nenmie (Chris Boote) has
NMR’d. Total now 1

MM Mad Morty (Mark Mortimer) has
NMR’d. Total now 1

RdM Rob d’Masses (Craig Pearson)
has NMR’d. Total now 1

X5 (Gerry Sutcliffe) has NMR’d. Total
now 1

X6 Pas de Nom (James Guiton) has
NMR’d. Total now 4 and is sent to
a Frontier regiment

WB (Richard Newby) was floated at
his request.

Mark Gilby (X4) has decided that he
doesn’t have the time to devote to the
game and has resigned.

Announcements

François Phresh applies for Regiment
Adjutant of PLLD

home – the petty-minded fools will
regret that, once I succeed. Then we’ll
see who runs away, then we’ll see
who’s right I’ll show then, I’ll show
them all, I’ll ...

[At this point, the writing
becomes illegible and trails off in
a scrawl ending in what look like
toothmarks on the page.]

Solicitors Saisir et Courir have charge
of the trust fund established by the
late Charles à Tanne and supported by
the late D Arth Vader. The fund, of
6,000 crowns, will be paid out to
whoever kills Co W Ard Extrême.

Reminders: It is worth sending orders in
even if they’re a day or two late: I may be
able to action the orders and will
probably be able to use any press. It also
reassures me you’re still there.

You are welcome to submit orders and
press by e-mail. Getting your press this
way is particularly helpful. Send your
orders to lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk and
you’ll get an automated reply when your
message arrives in my mailbox. Please
give your name and your character’s
name and specify actions in full (since it’s
without your character sheet). Attached
files should have your character ID and
the month in the name. If you want
queries answered before the deadline, e-
mail LPBS@pevans.co.uk. ◇ P

Magnon de Sources applies for
Brigadier of 1st Foot Brigade

saw how well I was doing from them! And a good way of getting favours is by
adding to the castle.

At the end of the turn, the Bailiff (that other neutral pawn) moves forward. It
moves one space if the Provost pawn is behind it and two if the Provost is ahead.
As players have the opportunity to move the Provost, they can thus influence the
length of the game. You’ll often see the player who’s ahead forcing the Bailiff
forward to reduce other players’ opportunities to catch them. The Bailiff also
triggers the scoring for completing sections of the castle when it reaches specific
points on the road.

The game ends when the third section of the castle has been scored. Players get a
few more points for any resources they still have. This provides another tactic:
collecting gold. Each gold cube is worth three points at the end of the game, so
having a couple of these are significant. Apart from being produced by some of
the buildings, gold is available from the gold mine space printed on the board.
Players need to keep an eye on this: letting someone stockpile gold is bad news.

As you can see from the length of my description, this is a complex game. It is
also a very tactical game. What you can do depends on the sequence of the
buildings on the board, the order of play, how much cash you have and what
other players do. Players have to remain flexible so that they can take advantage
of what’s available on the board – in my experience you definitely need plans B
and C each turn. Doing the things other players aren’t doing will usually give you
an edge, but what this is will change from turn to turn.

I think this is a brilliant game. The richness of the tactics means you are never
stuck for something to do. But your limited resources mean you have to decide
what you can and can’t do. There’s always the opportunity to find combinations of
effects that others have overlooked. And, after five months, I’m still finding new
things in the game. I’m sure the options are finite, but I’ve not reached the end of
them yet. Highly recommended.

Toy Fair 2006

If it’s January, it must be time for this year’s London Toy Fair. This is the annual
showcase of the toy industry, where manufacturers and distributors show off the
products they hope are going to be the big hits next Christmas. This includes this
year’s new games – since games are considered just a sub-set of toys. I am always
fascinated to see the new games – the games that will be in toy shops and
department stores later in the year. A day is just about enough time to work my
way round the companies with games at the Toy Fair and I’m happy to keep my
visit down to one day.

As usual, the big boys take up most of the space at the Toy Fair and produce most of the games. However, one section of the show (conveniently next to the Press Office) is reserved for small new companies. The Greenhouse features lots of small stands and is where most of the more interesting new games can be found. However, let me start with the established publishers.

First, though, my usual disclaimer. If I say a game is like another, this does not imply that one game is a copy of the other. This is just a shorthand description of the game by referring to a different game that readers may be familiar with. And let me warn you that all my comments are highly subjective.

As always the large Hasbro stand dominates the north hall. It wasn't high on my list of priorities, as the most interesting games from Hasbro are to be found at the stand next door. This is where Esdevium Games shows off the games it distributes, which include Hasbro's Wizards of the Coast and Avalon Hill ranges. And very good it all looked, too. Esdevium had a substantial stand and it was stuffed full of interesting games – though most of them were already familiar to me. However, I was surprised to see *Polarity* among this number. This is a unique dexterity game where players lean the magnetic playing pieces against each other. If you get it right, the result is a whole bunch of pieces apparently suspended in the air. An amazing game and one I'm pleased is available again.



Some of this year's good-looking games from Front Porch

New games included the interesting looking *Dragonology*. The display case had a number of impressive dragon models along with the game's board, but they won't be part of the production game (or it would cost an awful lot more!). The game is based on the *Dragonology* book and is published by Sababa Toys. I was also rather taken with the Front Porch range. These 'coffee table games' look

Without wishing to name names, ZTMG seems to be unable to gain promotion: is it incompetence or just prejudice against a fine officer?

† Le Bladder Rouge

My dear Omi Palone

Of course His Majesty King Pevans, our sovereign liege lord appointed by God, is worthy of our devotion and our obedience as we are both soldiers of France and his loyal subjects. However, according to the teachings of the Church, only his Holiness the Pope is infallible – and I am sure that His Majesty would never seek to set himself in opposition to the Pope and the Church by claiming to be so! Given that His Majesty can be wrong, it is the duty of every loyal citizen to try to protect His Majesty from error even where that means pointing out such mistakes of judgement. Thus, whilst we are sworn to and must obey, if His Majesty insists, his royal commands, whether in error or not, we can always seek to persuade him otherwise.

Thankfully, such occasions are few in number, as God has blessed his Majesty with uncommon good sense. In reference to the current debate, His Majesty is indeed King, but Lord Percy Percy was right. However, Lord Percy Percy abandoned the moral high ground in favour of abject servility and that is all I sought to note. This is not about the King – it is about Lord Percy Percy. He has pricked the egos of so many of the rich and famous in his time, that he can hardly complain if the quill turns in his hand and bites him back upon occasion!

† Field Marshal Gaston de St Marque

Lord Percy Percy says, as fashion is tending towards the insolvent, Co W. Ard Extrême is starting to look fashionable at last.

To SDL

I hope my support for your quest for Minister of War continues to ensure that France has the best Regiments fighting at the Front.

† Baron Bud d'Wiser

ClG:

One is always civil to members of His Majesty's forces, of course, following your own fine example. † OP

"Mlle du Poisac, who is this dishevelled figure in the corner? I thought that the Fleur de Lys was a first-class establishment and only the most prominent nobles of Paris could enter. Who is this mumbling fool?"

"My dear Comtesse, you have spent too many years in Marseille. You do not recognize our former Minister of State and Field Marshal? That is General Extrême. No one knows for sure what happened to him, but he didn't have any sane conversation for the past six months or so."

"Mon Dieu! This is shocking. He is wearing a stained vest and his shirt is dirty. Where are his servants?"

"I heard that he lost all of his money, no one knows how..."

(From the corner, someone shouts "Where is my Aide? He doesn't want to quit, but doesn't want to do his duty either!") The two women blush and avert their gaze.)

(A letter delivered in the early morning by messenger to the members of the QOC.)

To my dear Friends and Comrades in Arms

I am sorry if you have been worried about my lack of communication. I am finally able to write you what has transpired on my home trip.

As you know, we had given the rabble at Arras a good beating and were about to return to Paris to be feted for our bravery.

Alas, when one feels most secure is the time fate strikes without warning. On our way home, as you will recall, I asked to take a leave for visiting my family in Vintage Sur Mer and, thanks to our gracious commander, I was able to take off.

Sadly I never arrived at my home town because I disturbed some plundering bandits. Needless to say, I charged headlong into that ragtag band of miscreants, ran two into the ground and battled the other three. I don't need to tell you that I fought with utmost bravery. However, one should never underestimate the strength of numbers and so the tide of battle turned. I was pulled down from my horse and the three brutes had every intention of ending my life rather painfully and disturbingly soon. I kicked out frantically (normally I don't resort to this kind of fighting tactic) and was able to plunge my sabre into another when the leader pulled out his pistol and took aim.

Normally I don't put too much faith into something which produces not much more than a lot of smoke and a loud bang (like the Dragoon Guards),

but this time I felt the urge to get out of the way. So I turned tail and ran. Sure enough, I heard a bang. Then something hit my left shoulder. I kept on running to get some distance between me and my opponent – with the intention of circling round and getting the bastard from the side.

But then something strange happened. After a while I was drifting in and out of consciousness – or rather of awareness. I don't remember much at the moment, only that I kept on running and that sometimes in between I was slogging through something like a bog. It was as if I was watching the doings of a stranger, but only in snippets.

The next clear thought I could grasp was when I was lying on some kind of bed in a wooden lodge. Apparently a couple who made their life raising livestock had found me face down in one of their fields.

They took me in and cared for me – even through my fever ramblings. I must have said something that disturbed them greatly but they did not reveal what that was. I was only able to pay them with the mere monies I had with me, but they just said they were glad that I had not succumbed to the fever or worse. (I have no idea what they would mean by that.)

As I was a good way south, it took me until yesterday to reach Paris and the first thing in the morning I gave this letter to the depechée and took off to the barracks.

I hope to celebrate my return to Paris next month with all of you.

Yours sincerely,

† Lucien de la Rue

magnificent and the line includes lovely wooden versions of Shut-the-Box and *Liar's Dice*. The Adventure Games line features a pirate game and a *Master and Commander* game. Again, these games are good lookers and I'll be interested to find out how they play. There's more about Esdevium at www.esdeviumgames.com.

Just along from Esdevium was Britannia Games, who specialise in producing board game versions of TV shows. They were still making much of their *I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here* game. New games include a *Captain Scarlet* trading card game – based on the new animated series, not the classic puppets – and a *Thunderbirds* board game. Britannia is also working on a new *Family Fortunes* game and had a prototype of their horror board game, *Forbidden Terrortory*, based on the Hammer oeuvre of films. See www.britanniagames.com for more information.

Cards Inc is a new name to me, which may explain why I failed to spot their stand. This is a shame as I'd have liked to take a look at *Fleeced*, a Wallace and Gromit game! Designed by Nick Park himself, the game has players rescuing stolen sheep. It's a family game aimed at ages 8+. The other game from Cards Inc is *Big Brother Truth or Dare!*. Players win by answering questions correctly or carrying out dares – all based on things that have happened in *Big Brother* and divided into Prude, Rude or Lewd categories. Clearly this is more of a party game. Both games will be in the shops later this year. Find out more at www.cardsinc.com.

While most of the games publishers were in ExCeL's north hall, a few were tucked away in the south hall. One of these was Drumond Park. Their new crop of games included the inevitable Sudoku game. In this case, *Carol Vorderman's Sudoku Board Game*. I was more bemused by *Rubik's Sudoku*, a physical puzzle that crosses *Rubik's Cube* with Sudoku. The new board game was *Chain Reaction*, a party game for teams. The idea is to keep coming up with things that fit an initial category. ("Things your parents told you not to do," for example.) First person to run out of time loses the turn. Like earlier Drumond Park games, this is a fun game for family and friends. All you need is the right company!

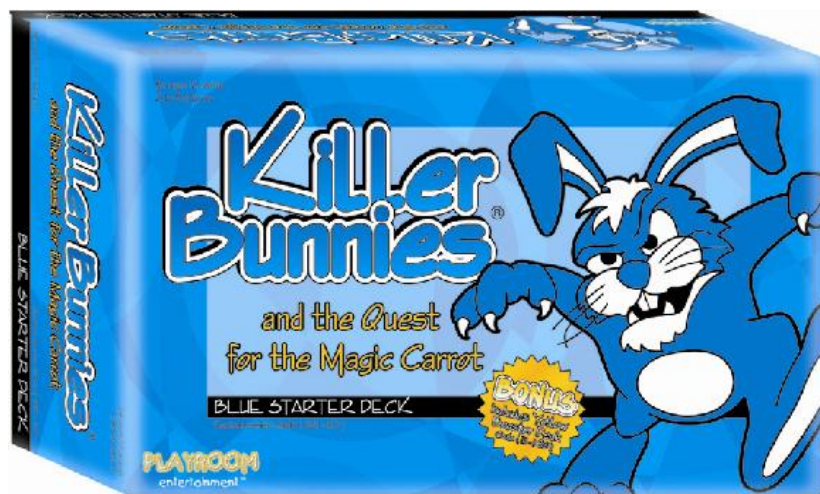
Also on show was an electronic *Deal or No Deal* game, though it wasn't clear how this adapted the TV show for tabletop play. Drumond Park is producing *The Official England FA Who Wants to be a Millionaire Board Game* for late Spring. However, what I most enjoyed was the *Jack and the Beanstalk* game, which is all about knocking your opponents off the beanstalk. I can't help it. Take a look at the games at www.drumondpark.com.

The veteran Gibsons was in its usual position in the north hall. Nowadays the company's main business is in jigsaw puzzles, but it had a few new games on

display. *Frantic Frogs* is an action game: roll the dice, grab for the appropriate frog and see who gets the most. *Cheese Please* is a dice-based memory game of cat and mouse with the aim of getting the most cheese. *Woof Woof* is about collecting bones using the magnetic nose on your dog. All three are aimed at pre-school children and are UK editions of games from Piatnik. Gibsons also has *Alias*, a *Taboo*-like word game previously published in Scandinavia by Tactic. Gibsons website is at www.gibsonsgames.co.uk.

These days Hobbygames describes itself as an “entertainment merchandise specialist” and fantasy products seem to dominate. There were some interesting things on the stand, though. Lurking in one corner were Orchid Games and their new game, *Yvette Fielding’s Ghosts*. This takes the idea of the *Most Haunted* TV show and offers players the chance to try their hand as “ghost detectives.” The game is played on a board showing the rooms of a haunted house. The investigators have to get concrete evidence of a ghost. They may have various bits of equipment, but they certainly have limited time. Meanwhile the ghosts avoid the investigators and “play gruesome tricks on anyone who gets too close to the truth.” Is it me, or does this sound like an episode of *Scooby-Doo*? I’m intrigued enough to want to try it out though. You’ll find more about Orchid Games at www.orchidgamesstudio.com

Hobbygames is also carrying Orchid Games’ simple wargame, *Battle Group Commander*, which sounds interesting. Hidden City Games’ *Clout Fantasy* is a game that uses collectable ‘chips’ that are thrown around. Aimed at playground games, this has been doing well and further expansions are coming this year.



How can anyone resist a game called *Killer Bunnies and the Quest for the Magic Carrot*? This is a new collectable card game from Playroom Entertainment and

I am happy to sponsor the proposed Grand National and invite all gentlemen of courage and skill to take part: week 3 next month.

I propose that the race take place around the churches of St Paul The Liar, St Julio Iglesias and Notre Dame and from there to the oak tree that stands on the bank of the River Aisne. It will be called the Aisne Tree Steeple Chase.

† Baron Revaulvin d’Or

A Horse Race in Honour of the New Field Marshal
My Lords, Officers and Gentlemen of Paris,

It is a distinct honour to sponsor a horse race in the fourth week of October to celebrate the recent campaign and look forward to the next.

During the summer I had the opportunity to communicate with Field Marshal Viscount Gaston de St Marque about a possible appointment as his Adjutant and he mentioned to me at that time his love of horse racing. I subsequently offered to sponsor a race and he agreed, so please join me in week four to race against him, to race in his honour and to enjoy the last of the fine weather before the onset of winter. I extend this invitation to the members of the Dragoon Guards; it will give me the chance at the very least to arrange a meeting with them in November on the duelling grounds of Paris.

Yours in honour,
† Brigadier-General Dan de Lyon, QOC

As a newcomer to Paris, I will be holding a “Getting to know you” party at Blue Gables in Week 1 of October. Everybody welcome, including hunchbacks. † Egon Madd

Personal

To Dan de Lyon

Bravo! Good luck representing the cavalry against that foolish guardsman Gratrien, and only he is foolish. † Antoine Valois

Bdr-Gen Dan de Lyon,

I must sincerely apologise if I underestimated you! Your letters of last month put me right about your true abilities.

First you publicly admit that your “military acumen leaves a lot to be desired,” and whom the Minister of War, no less, describes as having a “complete misunderstanding of military matters.”

Having proved by your own words and actions that anyone can make it in the cavalry, you then challenge me to a duel for having voiced that very same opinion.

I am not able to rightly apprehend the kind of confusion of ideas that could provoke such a challenge.

I am but a poor man; will someone take pity on me? I have been sick and stuck in Paris for two months now; I need to do something worthwhile...

† Emile Fitoux

He’s but a poor boy, from a poor family... † Le Roi

Press

Announcements

To All Loyal Men of Paris,
Come and join the country's premier regiment, the King's Musketeers and ensure that France's enemies are hunted down and dispatched. Places are still available, but please apply early to avoid any disappointment. Generous bonuses available and help with purchasing your commission.

† B.Bdr-General The Money Goes,
King's Musketeers

I am in need of a new Aide. All interested Captains should send me their applications at their earliest conveniences. † Lt. General Liver

FLAG sports a new uniform, but that is not the sole reason why the ladies swarm all over him ... he also sports a new invention ... the first Eau de Cologne ever smelt in Paris!

To: The up-and-coming Captains of France.

I am still without an Aide and would very much appreciate an application to this position from a military man of suitable rank. Obviously, such a job would require the incumbent to be at my side as much as possible – especially taking down notes in the Fleur at my expense. I look forward to hearing from someone soon, or else I will be appointing one of the numerous non-entities that are in the City at the moment.

† Marquis Lt-Gen Charlemagne le Gosse

The RFG remain and always will remain France's premier fighting regiment, especially now that they have France's top military [sic] brain at the controls of the regiment. To be the best doesn't just take showboating at the Front to get mentions in despatches, it takes hard work and the best military ability to make sure all the plans work ok.

Vacancies

The CG is seeking applicants of above average endurance and military aptitude. There are appointments of Regimental Adjutant and Aide to Brigadier being kept open for suitable candidates.

† B. Bdr General Baron Ced Deucer,
CG

Social

A NEW GAL FOR PRINNY?

Is there a new love in the life of ever-popular man-about-town The Crown Prince (otherwise known to his friends as Prinny)? Revellers last night at the exclusive Fleur de Lys Club in uptown Paris caught no more than a glimpse of swishing silk and a fluttered fan as the royal party swept past, but all were sure that the Prince was entertaining yet another, new 'mystery companion.'

Based on reports from a source 'close' to the royal household, 'L'Etoile' can exclusively reveal that the mystery lady was none other than Beau Romir!

the aim is to defeat the other bunnies and grab that magic carrot. The same company has a Reiner Knizia-designed game for 2006, too. *King of the Beasts* is a card game where players try to get their preferred animal elected King by playing cards. Aimed at children (8+), it sounds like it may be a simplified *Quo Vadis*?. Hobbygames' website is www.hobbygames.com.

I had no time, alas, to spend with Living and Learning, who produce some fine games (and toys) for children. Those who are interested can see the range on their website: www.livingandlearning.com.

Mindware is a US company that produces "brainy toys for kids of all ages" and was appearing at the London Toy Fair for the first time. The company has a range of good-looking puzzles and educational toys and books. The one game on show is called *Gambit* and was described as being "a bit like *Rush Hour* for two." The centre of the board holds a grid of coloured square pieces. These can be pushed along their rows onto and off 'carriers' on either side. These move pieces up and down the rows where they can be pushed back on. Completing a row of one colour scores a point and most points wins at the end. Simple stuff (once you've got your head round my description), but a clever little game for ages 8+. More at www.mindwareonline.com.

The only new thing I noticed on the Paul Lamond stand was ... wait for it ... a Sudoku board game. Check it out at www.x-ibitor.co.uk.

I looked wistfully at the Orchard Toys stand as they produce a lot of terrific games (and toys) for children (up to age 10), but lack of time meant I had to pass them by. You can find their full range at www.orchardtoys.com.

Re:creation handles lots of small manufacturers, so there are usually some interesting games to be found on their stand. Not surprisingly this year's crop includes a range of Sudoku games – published by Cardinal. Cardinal is the only publisher I've seen to include a Kakuro game in their range. There were also a couple of new TV tie-in board games: *Lost* and *The OC*. *World of Beer* is a trivia game and a follow-up to the earlier *World of Wine*. *Typecast* is kind of a *What's My Line* game. The game contains some 300 photos of people and numerous questions about them. The aim is to guess from the photo what the person does, their favourite food or their hobby. *Welcome to Real Vegas* is a board game that features casino games – as played in Las Vegas, of course. Players work their way round the board, trying to win money at the various gambling games and avoid the pitfalls. These all seem to be standard family fare – though *The World of Beer* piques my interest of course! Full details of re:creation's range at www.recreationplc.com.

An interesting new title from Upstarts! is *The Really Nasty Motor Racing Game*. As with its older stablemate, *The Really Nasty Horse Racing Game*, this is a fairly simple race game. What raises it above that level are the Event cards that enable players to, umm, handicap their opponents' cars at strategic moments. At first glance this looks like it could be just as much a cult favourite as *Horse Racing*. Expect it to retail at £15. Upstarts! has also got in on the Sudoku craze. *Code Sudoku* provides competitive Sudoku for up to four players (my brain hurts already). *Travel Code Sudoku* is a magnetic version. And *My First Code Sudoku* is a children's (ages 4-10) version that uses pictures rather than numbers.

Other games from Upstarts! this year include a children's version of the set-collecting game, *Sequence*. A clever idea is *Identikit*, which uses the old three-parts-of-a-face idea. The aim is to re-create the face given to you by combining the features in your book. It's done against a timer, of course! Then there's *The Really Wild Bug Eating Party*. Less a game, more a gourmet meal for insectivores. Yes, the idea is to accept the challenge and eat the creatures included in the game. Ants I could probably cope with, particularly if covered in chocolate, but a scorpion?! I have only one thing to say: I'm a nobody – get me out of here! See www.upstarts.co.uk for the full range.



The UK Winning Moves company specialises in producing *Top Trumps* and regional *Monopoly* games. Plus a few other things – like *Pit*, a new edition of *Pass the Pigs* and more. The latest additions to the range are the Bath, Swansea and Wigan *Monopoly* sets and *The Sudoku Game*. Yes, another variation on Sudoku. More about Winning Moves at www.winningmoves.co.uk.

Having been round the main body of the show – and carefully avoided spending too long playing *Scalextric* – it's time to see who's in the Greenhouse. Bearing in mind that this is a World Cup year, I'm expecting a few football games. *All About Football* seems to fit the bill nicely. This is a football trivia game in which the players work their way through the divisions by answering questions. There are a few wrinkles to the game with players allowed substitutes if they don't like a question and penalty shoot-outs to decide the big points. Apart from the generic version, there are specific versions for major clubs such as Arsenal, Liverpool, Spurs and so on. The game was launched last October and can be found in a number of retailers: see www.allaboutfootball.tv for more information. It's not my cup of tea, though.

Buonaparte, around their week at Zack's party. Pierre completes the month without Josephine, spending a week practising rapier.

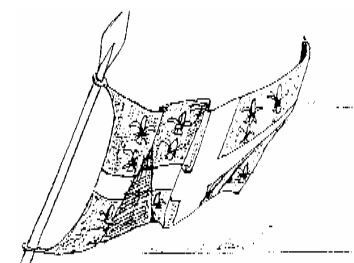
In the gyms is where Antoine Valois and Euria Humble are to be found this month. They each put in four weeks' practice: Humble with cutlass, Valois with sabre. After provoking those duels, Thomas Tudo heads for the gym as well and puts in three weeks work with his sabre. Magnon de Sources practises his rapier for the second half of September, as does Roland Pollee d'Eaulee. François Phresh does the same with sabre. And a few others (Rene Ouai, Armand Unejambe, Joseph de Veevre and Michael l'Ovnotwore) fit in the odd week's work-out around the partying.

Egon Madd spends his time failing to woo a certain lady and finishes his September with a visit to the bawdyhouses. Joseph de Veevre also pays the red lights a call when he doesn't get anywhere with his courting. Armand Unejambe is doing a little of everything this month. He has the same problem as Joseph and heads for the bawdyhouses too. For a drink. The end result is that his social standing drops and his membership of Hunter's is revoked. Michael l'Ovnotwore and Pierre de Mont-Réal have no luck with the ladies either and both can be found in the Bawdyhouses in one week or another. Jacques Shitacks, on the other hand, is successful in his courting, so Ced Deucer gets a 'Dear John' letter. Jean Laissez Faire follows his partying with a visit to the bawdyhouses. He takes a chunk of cash with him and places a series of bets on the tables. He ends up 50 crowns in the black, but losing a little status.

The saddest sight if the month is that of the poorest socialite in Paris: Emile Fitoux. Emile starts the month unable to cover his living costs. He gets in to Gar de Lieu's party, but can't afford a drink. He isn't eligible to join a club, so he heads off to one place he can get a drink: the bawdyhouses. Needless to say, he still can't afford a drink and as for female company... His September ends with his social standing going down.

What the Deucer?

On the frontiers, France's troops have been ordered to attack. This has mixed results. Private Leo Nonmie is with Frontier regiment 1. After the fighting is over, he is found in his tent and is disciplined for his lack of backbone. Ced Deucer has volunteered two-thirds of the Cardinal's Guard, which allows him to show the Frontier troops how it's done. The Guards pounce on an English outpost and rout the godons. Bdr-Gen Deucer is Mentioned twice in the Despatches. He collects a cartload of English knick-knacks, which he sells for 1,200 crowns. ❖



fine New Zealand red” in honour of Abel Tasman, Dutch discoverer of Van Diemen’s Land. Orson de Combat wishes “to remind everyone that in every pleasure there is a lurking snake.” He is dressed as a bottle of snake wine – whatever that is. Revaulvin d’Or is dressed entirely in forest green as a bottle of absinthe. He starts going up to the ladies and asking them to put their hands in his breeches to “look for the fairy.” Bette soon puts a stop to this. Unfortunately, Devlin Carnate doesn’t meet Stan’s criteria for his guests and he is refused entry. He stands outside the Fleur all week, dressed as a bottle of Abbot Ale. Angelina discards her ‘Blue Nun’ costume and heads for home.

On top of this, various other events are going on in the Fleur. To start with, Gar de Lieu holds a wake for his “dear departed uncle, Thierry Umberto de Lieu” in week 1. With Leia Orgasma at his side, Gar is joined by Emile Fitoux, François Phresh, Marc Desade, Magnon de Sources and Betty Kant and Pate Derry. Then there’s Gaston de Marque’s military ball. It gets off to a slow start when no-one visits in week 1. Except Fernand Louis Adelmo de Gaulle, who won’t pay for a ticket and is left outside. Fernand tries again the following week, but still won’t pay and still doesn’t get in. Jacques Shitacks is prepared to pay and joins Gaston. So do Magnon de Sources and Betty Kant. And Marc Desade. Marc’s arrival is noticed by Egon Madd, who temporarily abandons his host, Stan, to swap insults with his regimental enemy. Jacques returns to Toady to Gaston again in week 3 and they are joined by Dan de Lyon and Emma Roides. Jacques has had enough and so it’s just Gaston, Dan and Emma for the final week.

In other news

Apart from all the parties, several members are in the Fleur on their own – Bud d’Wiser has already been mentioned. Charlemagne le Gosse is there with Lois de Low all month. He is half expecting Omi Palone to Toady to him, but Omi has better things to do. Instead, Pate Derry appears in week 2, claiming to be Charlemagne’s guest. Charlemagne ignores him and Pate spends the week outside. Beppe de Marko brings Katy Did to the Fleur and they stay in these comfortable surroundings all month. He joins the general mourning in week 4, but without Toadying to Stan. Lokwot Isaw spends the first half of September here with Sue Briquet before going partying on his own. A rather degenerate Co W Ard Extrême is also in the club from week 2 onwards, but the management contrives to keep him away from everybody else. That leaves Beau Romir who turns up to Toady to the Crown Prince in week 2 with Frances on his arm. The Dauphin is pleased to have his drinking buddy back, but less pleased that Beau and Frances spend the rest of the month in other people’s parties.

The other clubs are all but empty. Armand Unejambe turns up at Hunter’s at the end of the month, chucks a hundred crowns on the gaming table and doubles his money. Red Phillips has two visits from Pierre de Vin Blanc and Josephine de

At first sight, *Pickout* is one of those deceptively simple games. It’s lots of coloured discs in a bag. Plus some bigger discs for collecting sets. Five different games can be played with these pieces. The basic game involves being the first to pick the pieces of your colour out of the bag. While Reverse Pickout is about being the last to get the four pieces. All the games depend on being lucky and are intended for family play with younger children. This is the first game from Colin Buckmaster and Buckmaster Games – see more at www.pickout.co.uk (though this website doesn’t work with all browsers).

Cuberty is the name of a new 3-D word game from designer Nigel Newberry and his company, Game Ideas. Under its original name, *Stact*, the game won a prize from SAZ (the German games designers’ association) in their competition at Spiel ’04. The game uses letter dice to build words across the table or up into the air. I didn’t manage to find out how the game plays, but it certainly looks interesting. Full details at www.gameideas.co.uk.

Gamma Games Oxford had a number of games on show. The first was *Commuter*, a road safety game for youngsters, which was previously (some 20 years ago) published as *Trafikant*. *Palindrome* is a puzzle game in which players try to get their counters into a symmetrical pattern. And *Grand Slam* has players positioning counters on a grid according to the roll of the dice. Four in a row wins the game.

HL Games was back to show off a junior version of *GO mental*. The aim of the game is to identify the odd one out from a set of four things listed on a card – and it’s not as easy as it sounds! The new version is called *GO mental FUNDamental* and will be available in the UK later in the year. As well as the US version of the standard and junior games, the US subsidiary publishes *GO mental SACRAmental*, which applies the game’s system to religious matters. Find out more at www.hlgames.com.

Wheeler Dealer is a game about making deals – profitably! Players get the option to buy commodities by landing on the appropriate squares as they go round the board. Once they get a set, they can sell – at a profit. They can also buy cards off other players, which can be a faster way to complete the set but means sharing some of the profit. Once they’ve raised enough capital, players can enter the inner circle of the board where the stakes are higher. Deals cost more, but the profits are bigger. And so are the risks. First to reach a set amount of money wins the game. There’s clearly a big luck element in this game, but it looks intriguing and challenging. Designed by Ken Cottingham and published by his imprint, KC Games, *Wheeler Dealer* made it in to the shops last year. Production (by Carta Mundi) is of a high standard and the game retails at £20. It can also be bought direct from the publisher at www.kcgamesltd.com.

Every few years a golf board game pops up at the Toy Fair. This year we got *Matchgolf*. This is a nicely-produced board game that simulates a game of golf across a 9-hole course. As you'd expect, the board shows the course. Each hole is marked out by spaces showing the distance from tee to green – and beyond. Players choose the club they want to use for each shot and draw a card that says how far that shot has gone. There is a certain skill in judging the best club to use – though the range of each is shown on the board – and in avoiding the hazards. Players also start with a hand of cards and must use these up. Making the best use of these gives some further tactical options.

The bulk of the rules of the game are, of course, the rules of golf. Which means that the aim is to complete each 'hole' in as few 'strokes' as possible. There are lots of nice touches to the game: a medal for the winner, a cardboard golf buggy that holds the cards for the different clubs. *Matchgolf* is a pleasant family game, but doesn't offer much of a challenge to gamers. Designers Peter Penfold and Keith Harris have done an excellent job with the game. It retails at £25 and there's more about it on the website: www.matchgolf.co.uk.



Another newcomer was *Mentality*, which is at heart a memory game. Players progress round the spiral track by remembering which cards are where in the four different sets. Just to confuse things, more cards appear as the game goes on – and they can be moved around. First person to the centre wins. The game is well-produced with little brains as playing pieces and lots of cards packed into the triangular box. As well as the rather challenging "International Edition", there is a children's version, *Junior Mentality*, which uses fewer cards and brightly coloured pictures. I might be able to cope with that. The game is published by an Irish company, who have already had some success with the game in the USA. See www.mentality.com to find out more.

EleMental is the name of the two-player abstract strategy game from Minds United. Designed by Chris McMann, players' pieces (and the layers of the board) represent the four elements (air, fire, water and wind). Each element has a speed and strength, which changes depending on the layer they're on. There is also one piece that represents time, which must be carried by another playing piece. The ultimate aim is to get to creation – the peak at the centre of the board – and combine all five elements. Other ways of winning add an element of uncertainty to the game. The basic set costs £20 and is available (+ p&p) direct from the publisher's website: www.mindsunited.co.uk.

In week 3 another Musketeer arrives: Fernand Louis Adelmo de Gaulle. Fernand has Charlotte de Gaulle on his arm and takes the opportunity to pick a fight with Lucien as well ("Oh, wow: heavy!" mumbles the Cardinal's man). He and Charlotte stay for the second half of September. The other arrivals in week 3 are only there for a week. These are Beau Romir, accompanied by Frances Forrin, Lokwot Isaw, Joseph de Veevre and Marc Desade. Lokwot congratulates Zack on his ministerial appointment. Bud d'Wiser also turns up, but is refused entry as he didn't serve in last season's campaign and won't pay for a ticket! He spends the week kicking his heels outside the Fleur. Attendance for the final week is down to half a dozen socialites and their other halves. The surprise is that Stewart Senquiry returns with Ada Andabettoir on his arm. That explains what he was doing the week before.

The rest of the parties

The only serious competition to Zack's party is Stan Dandy Liver's fancy dress memorial to the late Colonel Alphonse Qué Holique in week 4. First, however, Stan and Kathy play host to various others. Revaulvin d'Or and Bette Noire attend a quiet dinner for four in week 1. The following week Egon Madd appears. Then there's a bit of a mix-up. Stan and Sean Sondamour both arrive at the club and declare themselves to be the other's guest. As neither will take precedence, neither of them gets in and Kathy goes home in a huff.



The fancy dress party is much better organised, though. In honour of Alphonse Qué Holique, Stan is dressed as a barrel of the finest Brandy with a hat of 'blue flame.' In honour of Alphonse's demise, Kathy's costume is a barrel of gunpowder, sporting an upturned pipe for a hat. Averell de Alton and Mary Huana turn up in their normal party clothes; as does Rene Ouai. After the previous week's debacle, Bud d'Wiser makes sure he and Maggie get in – even if they are just dressed as themselves. Nor has Sean Sondamour bothered with fancy dress, but he does set about opening every bottle he can find out of respect for the late Holique. Beau Romir has covered himself in chocolate, stuck "a piece of wood up my arse" and eaten some ice cream. He claims to be a magnum. Nobody understand this description of a double-sized bottle. Frances refuses to get involved in this and is wearing her favourite ball gown. The gin bottle turns out to be Gar de Lieu. Having Leia with him is a bit of a giveaway. Lokwot Isaw is dressed as a bottle of wine. Which he describes as "a

Living it up with Zack

The event of this month has to be Zachary The Money Goes' party. It's at the Fleur de Lys and it goes on all month. Zack holds court with Anna Rexique by his side. Omi Palone joins them for the whole month. So do Horatio d'Escargot and Henrietta Carrotte. And Lun a'Tic and Bess Ottede. Averell de Alton brings Mary Huana along and stops for three weeks before defecting to Stan Dandy Liver's bash. Devlin Carnate and Angelina di Griz follow the same pattern. Jean René Gratrien also Toadies to Zack for the first three weeks. In week 1 he offers a public toast to the memory of Alfonse Qué Holique: "It is with great regret that I will not have the honour to serve under his command." Come the second week, Jean is a little the worse for wear. His toast is "to the RFG and the memory of AQH," before he slumps back into his seat. His toast in the third week is incomprehensible as his speech is slurred and interrupted by bouts of sobbing. Stewart Senquiry also Toadies three times, but it's Week 3 that he misses.

Sean Sondamour accompanies Sheila Kiwi to Zack's party for the first two weeks before heading for Stan's do. Turning up for just the first week are Beau Romir, accompanied by Frances Forrin, Michael l'Ovnotwore, Rene Ouai and Pierre de Vin Blanc, who has Josephine Buonaparte on his arm. Then Thomas Tudo and Cath de Thousands arrive and cause ructions. First off, Jean René Gratrien takes exception to this son of a gentleman mixing with his betters. Discovering Thomas's social standing provokes a challenge from the Baron's son. The shouting that accompanies this attracts the attention of others in the club. Including Bud d'Wiser, who's in the Fleur as a member for a quiet week with Maggie Nifisent. Bud spots Thomas's uniform and the two trade challenges – as does Thomas's regimental colleague, Horatio d'Escargot. Next up is Dexteur Facteur (attending on Dan de Lyon elsewhere in the club), who also takes exception to Thomas's lowly birth and issues a challenge of his own.

Dexteur is one of the members of the QOC who spend week 1 Toadying to the regiment's CO (and new CPS), Dan de Lyon. Dan has Emma as company and his other guests are Jean Laissez Faire and Roland Pollee d'Eaulee (following a private invitation). Roland has Marie Antoinette on his arm. Dan (and Emma), Dexteur and Jean all move on to Zack's party in week 2 and stop there for two weeks. Other new arrivals for Zack and Anna are Revaulvin d'Or and Bette Noire, Gar de Lieu and Leia Orgasma, Orson de Combat and Pierre de Mont-Réal. All of these attend for the middle two weeks. Lucien d'Escaillehuittaillements also shows up. He is a little surprised to be allowed in – given he's a member of the Cardinal's Guard, Zack's enemy regiment – but he is admitted. Despite trying to calm everyone down ("Peace, man!" he exclaims several times), he then exchanges challenges with Zack and the only other King's Musketeer in attendance, Omi Palone.

Mobile Intelligence Games launched the UK edition of their travel trivia game, M.I.G., at the show. The game comes in a chunky box, most of which is packed with question cards. A couple of special dice give players a choice between 2 of the five topics to answer a question on. The other die decides whether the player carries on if they get it right or have to end their turn. After this, it's a pretty standard trivia game: first to get a question right in each of the categories wins. It's nicely produced, but nothing special. The website is at www.playmig.com to find out more.

As far as I'm concerned, a company called Natchos Limited has to be worth a visit. Their game is *The Beautiful Game*, a game of World Cup trivia, puzzles and tasks. As players progress round the board (by rolling a die, naturally) they build up their team of 11 players (cards) by getting the questions right or completing the puzzles and tasks – though they may lose some to hazards and failure. This builds up to a final showdown in the "World Cup Final." As someone who's not keen on either trivia games or football, this is definitely not for me. Since the Toy Fair I've learnt that the game has been picked up by Marks and Spencers. Find out more at www.natchos.co.uk.

Another game I seem to have missed on my way round the Toy Fair is *Cash Trap* from New Century Games. The aim is to get your nice 'money bag' playing pieces across to the far side of the board. To do this you play movement cards from your hand and move your money bag. Or someone else's, depending on the card played. While avoiding the cash trap obstacles. Another game that I'd like to try. Find out more on the website: www.cash-trap.com.

Playerz Games is a Dutch company staffed, if the guys at the Toy Fair are anything to go by, by a bunch of nutters. I liked 'em. They have invented a cast of cartoon characters with attitude and the games revolve around them. *MadWish*, their first game, is happening, it's down on the street, it's roll the dice, move your pawn and do what it says on the square. Oh dear. This is essentially a pretty ordinary game of challenges and forfeits jazzed up (or 'pimped', even) for a young, urban audience. Which isn't me. I hope the game goes down better in the 'hood. The second game, *KidzWish* is due out later in the year and looks to be much the same game aimed at an even younger audience. (I can say things like this now I've passed fifty.) Take a look at www.madwish.com (but be warned: there doesn't seem to be any way to switch the music off!).

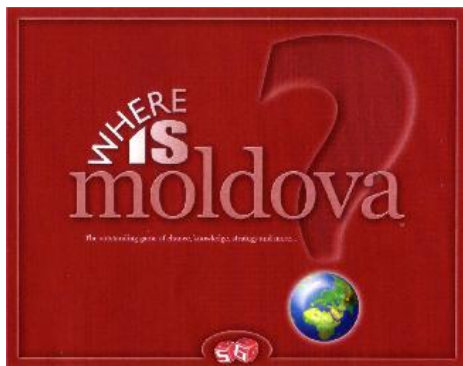
RTL Games was back at the Toy Fair to report more success for their *Destination* ...taxi games. *Destination Brighton & Hove* and *Destination Delhi* (now there's a strange juxtaposition) launched in 2005. This year kicked off with *Destination New York* (for which the company's yellow colour scheme seems well matched) and *Destination Las Vegas*, *Destination Orlando* and *Destination Dublin* are set to follow. Also due out this year is *Destination World*, a junior version using a

map of the world and aeroplanes (rather than taxis). There's more at www.rtlgames.co.uk.

The first thing you notice about Seager Games' *Where is Moldova?* is the sheer size of the box. It's easily the biggest game box I've come across. Hang on ... a little work with the tape measure tells me the box is 63 x 50 cms (or over 2 x 1.5 feet in old money). The reason for this is that one of the chief components is a metal-backed map of Europe. With the addition of a couple of feet, this stands up so that players can mark the countries they control with magnetic markers. Get five in a row and you win the game.

The second board – which goes flat on the table – is where the game play takes place. This is the classic mechanism of rolling the dice and moving a pawn around the *Monopoly*-style track along the edges of the board. There's a second track on the inside, which you get to by playing a 'strategy card', that provides some tactical options. Not surprisingly, if you land on a square representing a country you get the chance to 'buy' it. This you do not with money, but by answering a question (or rolling the dice and getting lucky).

The questions vary between complete trivia and Europe-related trivia, some of them being multiple choice ("What nationality was Ivan the Terrible: Latvian, Russian or Polish?"). A neat touch is that there are 12 questions on each card and you roll dice for which question you get. Two 6-sided dice means more of questions 6, 7 and 8, which are easier than 1, 2, 11 or 12. Using the 12-sided die gives an even chance. This provides a handicapping system – though we are also promised some "Kidz Kwestions" (sic, very) as an expansion to the game.



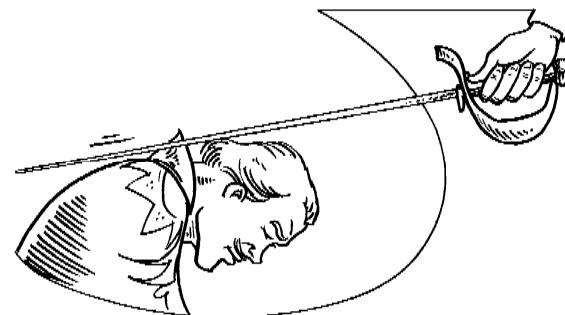
The full box for *Where is Moldova?*

The game provides further tactics by allowing the ownership of countries to be challenged. This is a way of getting the crucial link in a chain when an opponent has got there first. Of course, to do this you have to land on the right square, so the luck of the dice still controls the game. Essentially, designer Peter Seager has given us a trivia game where you need to roll the right numbers on the dice as well as knowing it all. And it comes in a big box. Huge. (Ivan the Terrible was Russian, but you knew that. And Moldova fits neatly in between Romania and Ukraine.) Full details at www.whereismoldova.com.

these, Charlemagne le Gosse has given a substantial sum to the Field Marshal. "This is purely a donation," he points out. "In the current political circumstances, I wish to make it clear that I in no way expect to be nominated to any positions which he may appoint, such as Adjutant-General." Le Gosse is appointed Adjutant-General and then keeps the Division commands vacant, turning down Jacques Shitacks' applications. Thomas Tudo gets to be Aide to Field Marshal de St Marque (in preference to Antoine Valois), but neither Sondamour nor le Gosse appoints an Aide.

... I can do that!

As Minister of War, Stan Dandy Liver gets to choose the Inspectors-General. Rene Ouai would like either of the jobs, but is ignored. Instead Liver appoints Pierre de Mont-Réal as Inspector-General of Infantry and leaves the Cavalry job empty. Nor does he assign himself an Aide. De Mont-Réal leaves most of the Infantry Brigade commands vacant, but does name Magnon de Sources as First Foot Brigadier. Joseph de Veevre is disappointed not to be Second Foot Brigadier. Antoine Valois finally gets a job – as Second Division Adjutant – and Omi Palone becomes Aide to a General (though one without a command). Beau Romir's request to be re-appointed Aide to the Crown Prince is supported by Gaston de St Marque. Prinny is happy to have Romir continue as his Aide.



Roland Pollee d'Eaulee gets a job when Revaulvin d'Or hires him as his Aide. Ced Deucer and Dan de Lyon do without Aides for the time being – and so do Gar de Lieu and Rene Ouai. The only Regiment Adjutant appointed this month is François Phresh, who takes on the role in Princess Louisa's Light Dragoons, courtesy of Devlin Carnate. Ced Deucer, Dan de Lyon and Magnon de Sources keep this position vacant in their regiments: the Cardinal's Guard, Queen's Own Carabiniers and Picardy Musketeers, respectively. The rest of the regiments select their junior Captains. Having bought his way to Major in the RFG, Lun a'Tic gets to be Guards Brigade Major as his name comes out of the hat. None of the other Brigade Majors is recognisable.

The only volunteers this month are parts of the Cardinal's Guard. The regiment's commanding officer, Brigadier-General Ced Deucer, orders second and third battalions into action under his leadership. Co W Ard Extrême might have joined a Frontier regiment, but avoids the ignominy of failing to pay his debts thanks to a loan from Stan Dandy Liver.

a slash, Gratrien blocks, but gets his timing all wrong. He lunges just as the slash appears and partially deflects his attack. Both men are wounded, but Gratrien is hit harder and he surrenders immediately.

Gi's a job ...

After the campaign season, the military is re-organised for next year's campaign and new appointments are made. But first there are some changes in the Government. Some eight people have applied for the post of Minister of War, but all the favours are called in for just one man. Stan Dandy Liver uses his own influence and is supported by Bud d'Wiser, Charlemagne le Gosse, Co W Ard Extrême, Lokwot Isaw, Revaulvin d'Or and Zachary The Money Goes. The Money Goes, le Gosse and Gaston de St Marque reach the shortlist, but Liver gets the job. His re-appointment as Minister of War also brings Liver the title of Count. Minister of State Lokwot Isaw provides some consolation for de St Marque and The Money Goes. He appoints them Chancellor of the Exchequer and Minister without Portfolio, respectively. De St Marque joins Liver in becoming a Count. Le Gosse would also like to be a Minister without Portfolio, but Isaw turns him down. Finally, Isaw appoints Dan de Lyon Commissioner of Public Safety in preference to the other applicants: Antoine Valois, Devlin Carnate, Omi Palone and Pierre de Mont-Réal. Anyone insulting cavalrymen could be in serious trouble now!

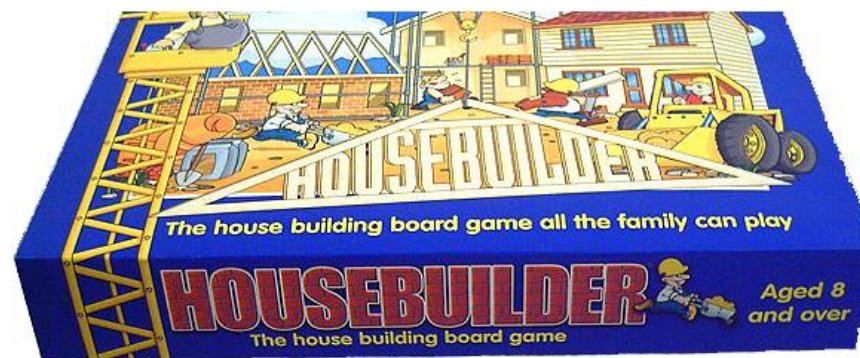
On the military side, various people try to join various regiments. Armand Unejambe applies for the Royal Foot Guards, but the regiment's new Colonel, Lokwot Isaw, rejects him. Zachary The Money Goes turns him down for the King's Musketeers and Euria Humble doesn't want him in the Dragoon Guards. Unejambe finishes September still without a regiment. Humble declines Egon Madd and Stewart Senquiry, too. Madd gets in to the Crown Prince Cuirassiers, though, and buys himself a Majority. Senquiry goes for the Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers, only to be turned down by Horatio d'Escargot. Devlin Carnate signs up François Phresh and Pate Derry for the Princess Louisa Light Dragoons. Phresh buys himself the rank of Captain, while Derry is happy with being a Subaltern. Finally, Pierre de Vin Blanc joins the Picardy Musketeers, thanks to CO Magnon de Sources, and buys a Captaincy with the help of a little cash from Senquiry and a loan from the Shylocks.

The Field Marshal, now the Count de St Marque, has to choose between applicant Generals Gar de Lieu and Sean Sondamour for the command of the Field Army. He goes for Sondamour, who can then fill the posts of Quartermaster-General and Army Adjutant. He leaves both vacant, despite the requests for the jobs from Joseph de Veevre and Devlin Carnate, respectively. De St Marque also gets to appoint the Adjutant-General. Charlemagne le Gosse, Jacques Shitacks, Pierre de Mont-Réal and Rene Ouai are the candidates. Of

Somehow I managed to miss Shannon Boardgames' stand this year. I shall chase them up to find out what's new for 2006. In the meantime, take a look at www.shannonboardgames.net.

Disqualified! comes from Tucker Enterprises and is described as "an action packed family board game which capitalises on Britain's excessive speeding penalties." Hmm, do I detect that designer Andrew Tucker has been caught speeding a few times? The aim of the game is to complete a journey of 100 miles while evading the hazards of speed cameras and traffic cops. Except for the police player, who's trying to get 12 penalty points on everybody else's driving licence. The game has *Formula 1*-style dashboards to record speed, fuel and damage for each player – a neat touch. The demo games used some nice model Minis, which are available as an add-on. It looks good and I'll be interested to see whether the game play matches up to its looks. Advance orders can be placed on the publisher's website at www.disqualified.co.uk.

Vickers Holdings is a property development company and the publisher of *Housebuilder*, a game about building houses. The board has a figure-of-eight track, which allows players to raise funds and buy the raw materials they need to build their house. This is carefully done in several stages, ending with the roof (seems logical!). The game is clearly intended to be realistic – go past your overdraft limit and you're out! However, there's a strong luck element in what movement around the track lets you do. Production is of a high standard, with little hard hats as the playing pieces. As family games go, this is an interesting one. It's been available since May 2005 at £30 and can be bought direct from the publisher at www.housebuildergame.co.uk.



Looking over the Toy Fair as a whole, I didn't spot many trends. Though there were a lot of Sudoku games and quite a few football games (must be something in the air). And, on the toy side, no end of Daleks! As always, the games on show were almost all aimed at a family market, but there were several that will be of interest to hobby games-players.

London Drinker Beer Festival

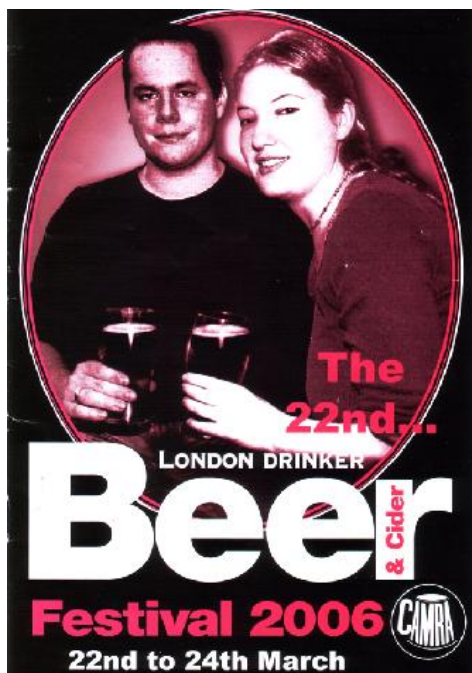
I can't remember whether I've mentioned this before, but the people who attend beer festivals look much the same as those who attend board games conventions.

That's 95% male, 99% white, mainly middle class, age distribution skewed to middle age, a high proportion of baldness and beards ... damn, it's me! The notable exceptions this year included a French group – I wonder what they made of all this warm beer? There was also a bunch in satin and leather clutching tankards who had to be a role-play group – or extras from *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Actually, one of them did look uncannily like one of the pirate characters in *Skallywaggs* (Crewman 12 for those who have the game).

Anyway, enough about the people, what about the beer? My initial walk round identified few familiar beers – which is how I always like to start. I settled on Wells Bombardier (4.3% ABV) to wet my whistle. A good, solid, brown pint, it smells like beer and it tastes like beer. A good mix of malt and hops. And nicely dry. It went well with the "Spicy Pinto Stew" I had for lunch (though there wasn't much spiciness). I recommend eating one of the day's specials at the London Drinker Beer Festival. This was good, filling stuff, just right to set me up for an afternoon's drinking.

I started the serious tasting with Marquis from Brewsters (based in Stathern, Leicestershire, 3.9% ABV). Another brown beer, this had a slightly sour nose. It tasted a bit sour, too and the aftertaste was mouth-puckeringly dry. It was a brown taste – almost woody. A bit like a really dark stout, but without the dark – or the stout. An okay beer, but not one I'd want to drink in quantity.

Next was Centennale (Custume Beers, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, 3.8%). This had a lighter colour – a dark amber – and a very fruity nose. It was a huge contrast with the previous beer and I could feel my mouth unpuckering. But only a bit, as this was still pretty dry. It was very fruity though – there were definite overtones of lychee. Another okay beer.

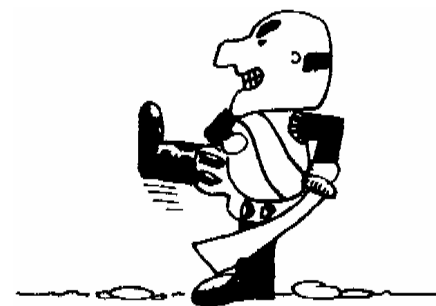


Joseph de Veevre and Lun a'Tic meet to settle their dispute (over a young lady) with their rapiers. De Veevre is backed by Omi Palone and Revaulvin d'Or, while Horatio d'Escargot seconds a'Tic. The slight a'Tic is clearly at a major disadvantage against the hefty build of de Veevre. Nevertheless he starts the fight aggressively with a (furious) lunge. De Veevre is ready for this and stops it with a parry. Rather than riposte, he regains his poise and makes his own lunge. This catches a'Tic as he prepares his cut and scores first blood. A'Tic concedes the duel at once.

Foiled again!

After cleaning his blade from his own duel, Liver hurries off to second Gar de Lieu against Orson de Combat. Euria Humble turns up as de Combat's second. This is an odd fight as de Combat has ended up using a foil. He specified that he was using his regimental weapon, but is no longer a member of any regiment. Old injuries to de Combat mean this is another even fight, though de Combat's expertise with foil is much less than with sabre and he is thus at a disadvantage against de Lieu's rapier. De Lieu starts in defensive mode and parries for a while, expecting a lunge. Instead he gets a similarly defensive start from de Combat: a parry and a jump. Then de Lieu spots de Combat closing in and jumps out of the way as de Combat swings his boot. The kick fails to connect and de Lieu responds with a slash and lunge, both of which injure de Combat.

De Combat moves in again and this time succeeds in planting his boot in de Lieu's midriff. De Lieu responds with another slash and lunge combination, hitting de Combat twice more. Then he drops back into defensive mode. This allows him to catch de Combat's lunge with a parry. A riposte scores another hit for de Lieu. De Combat is clearly suffering badly and is slowing down. However, he gathers his strength and closes in to deliver another kick. Against this, de Lieu's parry is useless and he takes another powerful blow. The winded de Lieu just about makes his surrender audible. Both men are in need of medical attention and de Lieu is unable to meet Antoine Valois, his other appointment this month.



This leaves us with the encounter between Dan de Lyon and Jean René Gratrien. Carabinier de Lyon has challenged Gratrien for "insulting the Cavalry" and Paris decides there is cause. Gratrien's medium build is no match for the hulking de Lyon, making the fight something of a mismatch. To make matters worse, de Lyon has a sabre while Gratrien is wielding a rapier. Fellow Carabinier Roland Pollee d'Eaulee seconds de Lyon and jeers at the unfortunate Gratrien. Expecting

Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses 190

Being a postal game of *En Garde!* run by Pevans since April 1986 and now published as part of *To Win Just Once*.

If you'd like to play, you'll need to subscribe to *TWJO* (see back page). You will also need a copy of the published rules to *En Garde!*.

Orders for October 1659 to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF or lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk by Friday, 12th May 2006



September 1659

Suddenly Paris is busy again: the army is back and society is in full swing. But first there are some matters of honour to be decided. But not by Mad Morty, who doesn't turn up to his rendezvous with Pierre de Mont-Réal. The Field Marshal, Gaston de St Marque, meets Minister of War Stan Dandy Liver though. Viscount de St Marque brings a rapier, Zachary The Money Goes and Orson de Combat to the duel. Viscount Liver brings a cutlass, Sean Sondamour and ... Orson de Combat. Nominated as a second by both parties, de Combat acts as a neutral referee. This is a very even fight, though Liver does have the advantage of the greater expertise. He starts defensively and parries de St Marque's initial lunge. Liver then attacks, slashing with his cutlass, only to be stopped by a solid block from de St Marque. His rapier is not up to it, however, and the thin blade snaps under the impact of the heavy one.

Undeterred, de St Marque lunges. The remnants of his blade don't reach far enough to hit Liver, who is still regaining his balance after his slash. Liver goes for another slash as he has a clear advantage now. De St Marque catches the blow on the hilts of his broken rapier and blocks it. Another lunge from de St Marque fails to reach its target, but gives Liver a chance to strike home with his third slash. De St Marque staggers back and tries another futile lunge. The cutlass swings round in another slash, the second to hit. This is enough for de St Marque and he concedes the fight.

Bargee (E&S Elland, Elland, West Yorkshire, 3.8%) was brown again, but had no smell compared to the last two. After Centennial's fruitiness, it had a slightly metallic aftertaste. This mellowed as the beer went down, leaving something ... well ... nondescript. Probably a good session beer, but not something I can write many tasting notes about.

Barnstormer (Frankton Bagby, Church Lawford, Warwickshire, 3.8%) was billed as "a golden beer", but it looked rather darker to me. It smelled and tasted a bit sweeter than previous beers, with a touch of sharpness as it went down. This was the first beer that got my saliva going! However, there was also a slight sourness that put me off. Something I'd drink if there wasn't a better option.

A beer from Glasgow (or thereabouts) had to be worth trying. I took a sniff at my glass of Goldihops (Kelburn, Barrhead, Strathclyde 3.8%) and recoiled: it smelled sparkling and almost ginger! It was a really bright taste too, with some real astringency. Nice stuff. Usually, beers that taste like this are a pale yellow. This one was a definite amber. However, there was something a bit metallic in the aftertaste. Almost a winner.

Time for something a bit stronger and I couldn't resist a beer called Orange Wheat (from the Green Jack brewery, Lowestoft, Suffolk, 4.2%). Two reasons: 1) Orange; 2) Wheat. This was another amber beer that smelled of orange in the same way Grand Marnier does: dark & oily! It tasted like a stout: dark and crunchy! And quite unlike a wheat beer. Terrific stuff, though. I think I'll invent a new category of beer: after dinner (or *digestif*, if you prefer). That's what this is. Lovely stuff to taste, but not something I could drink in any quantity.

If I was trying to sober up, black coffee would be called for. Instead, I'll have some Oatmeal Stout (Wentworth's, Wentworth, South Yorkshire, 4.8%). It looks like black coffee, it smells like black coffee, it tastes like ... roast nectar. And it's dry. I didn't think so at first, but halfway through I realised just how dry it is. Mmmmh! Gorgeous stuff and another after-dinner beer.

Time to finish off and that means another familiar beer. Hophead (Dark Star, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, 3.8%) is a golden-amber beer with the bright summery aroma of ... nettles! It tastes fresh, fruity and sparkling with a bit of bite. Is this the best pint of the day? Yes. It is a lovely beer. Mind you, I have had a few by now. All these people, hic, they're my best friends!

And a good afternoon was had by all. The next beer festival on my list is Beer on Broadway, the Ealing Beer Festival. It's at Ealing Town Hall from 10th – 13th May (more at www.beeronbroadway.org.uk). I fancy spending the Friday afternoon there – that's 12th May. Anyone want to join me? It'll be the LPBS deadline, so you can even give me your orders!

Games Events

Beer & Pretzels happens in Burton-on-Trent on 13th and 14th May. It's a mix of board games, wargames and other things in Burton's Town Hall. The event is run by Sal and Phil Bootherstone of Spirit Games and has been a fixture in the calendar for years. Check the details on the website at www.spiritgames.co.uk/bnpdetails.php.

And then it's time for Maycon! 26th-29th May (late Spring Bank Holiday) at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel at Heathrow. Board games, role-playing, freeforms and lots of other things, including SpielChamps, the UK Board and Card Games Championship, on the Sunday (the *To Win Just Once* team will, of course, be competing). Details at www.maycon.org.

This box concentrates on events I expect to attend.

Swiggers: games club that meets every Wednesday evening (though December dates depend on venue availability) at the Bunch of Grapes, St Thomas Street, London SE1. Board games and occasional role-playing. No charges, all welcome. For more information, see www.pevans.co.uk/Swiggers.

Games Games Games Days: from noon(-ish) on the second Saturday of every month at the Duke of York pub at 35 New Cavendish Street, London W1. A day of board games, with those present covering the cost of the room and sandwiches.

Winter Stabcon: early January 2007 at the Britannia Hotel in Stockport.

Maycon: late May bank holiday weekend (26th-29th May 2006) at the Ramada Hotel at Heathrow. This friendly convention is a mixture of board games and role-playing and includes SpielChamps UK – the UK Board and Card Games Championship and qualifier for the European Championships. Keep an eye on the website – www.maycon.org – for the latest details.

Summer Stabcon: early July at Woolton Hall, Manchester University. A mixture of board games, wargames, CCGs and role-playing at this friendly convention. Sign up with the [stabconinfo](mailto:stabconinfo@yahoo.com) Yahoo group to find out more: groups.yahoo.com/group/stabconinfo.

Spiel: the board games event of the year. 19th-22nd October 2006, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany, www.merz-verlag.com/spiel.

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 64 was written and edited by Pevans. The LPBS masthead (page 26) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, as is the picture on page 29. The illustration on page 27 is by Tim Wiseman, on page 31 by Nik Luker and on page 33 by Spencer Marlow (I think). Games' artwork is courtesy of the respective publishers. Pevans took the photos and played with Photoshop.

Share prices			
Red	Green	Blue	Yellow
24	31	17	32

Mike Dommett and Matthew Wale over-bid on their purchases this turn and ended up with Black shares. Neil Packer throws in the towel and most of the new subscribers drop out.

This turn Blue and Yellow are (largely) cashed in while Green and Red are (mostly) bought. Michael Martinkat buys shares this turn, so Ben Brown regains the lead, just a few ahead of Jerry Elsmore, with two turns to go.

For next turn just send me your bid:
"Buy/Sell n shares of Red/Green/Blue/Yellow."

**Bids for Turn 11 to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE
UB10 8UF or TWJO@pevans.co.uk by Friday, 12th May 2006.**

What's this about?

Devised by Chris Boote, *Easy Money* is a game for all readers of *To Win Just Once* – **if your name isn't in the list above, let me know and I'll add you in**. The game takes 12 turns, the winner being whoever has the most money (not including the value of shares) at the end of the game.

There are four tradable stocks (red, blue, green, yellow) plus black, which never changes price. All stocks start at a price of 10p per share. Players start with 100p money and one of each tradable stock.

Each turn, each player must bid to buy or sell a number of shares in one colour of stock (except Black). A Buy bid is limited to the highest number of shares the player can afford at the current price. The price of the stock rises by 1p for each share in bids to buy and falls by 1p for each share in bids to sell. Players' sales and purchases take place after making these adjustments. The price of a stock cannot fall below 1p.

If a player can't afford to buy their shares at the new price or fails to make any bid or tries to sell shares they don't have (or anything else that invalidates their bid), then they buy a black share. Should a player not be able to afford a black share, they buy one for all their remaining money (even if they have 0 money, they get a black share). Players are out of the game if they own four black stocks. They are also out if they have no money and no tradable stocks.

Easy Money Turn 10

This table lists the people still in this game (originally everybody who reads *To Win Just Once* – the people I knew about anyway – with new readers added in as they subscribe). It shows what they bid last turn, what they actually got and what they hold now.

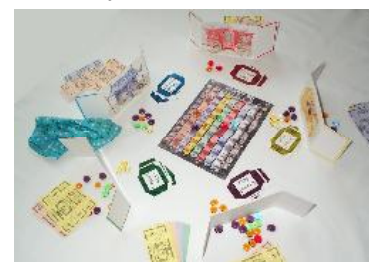
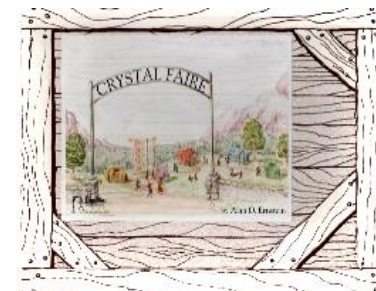
Player	Bid			Actual			Holding					
	Buy/Sell	No	Colour	Buy/Sell	No	Colour	Red	Grn	Blue	Ylw	Blk	Money
Guy Arnold	B	1	Red	B	1	Red	1	0	3	0	1	0
Chris Boote	S	4	Blue	S	4	Blue	0	0	0	1	3	103
Ben Brown	S	1	Yellow	S	1	Yellow	0	0	0	0	0	215
Simon Burling	B	1	Green	B	1	Green	4	1	0	0	1	16
Charles Burrows	S	1	Blue	S	1	Blue	0	3	2	0	1	69
Robert Carter	B	1	Green	B	1	Green	2	5	0	0	1	87
Mike Dommett	B	3	Green	B	1	Black	0	0	2	0	3	81
Jerry Elsmore	S	1	Yellow	S	1	Yellow	0	0	0	0	0	206
William Hay	B	2	Yellow	B	2	Yellow	0	0	0	2	3	8
Pete Holland	S	1	Blue	S	1	Blue	1	0	0	0	1	107
Andrew Kendall	B	3	Green	B	3	Green	0	5	0	0	0	19
Justin Key				B	1	Black	1	1	1	1	4	OUT
Nik Luker	S	2	Red	S	2	Red	0	3	0	0	2	113
Tim Macaire	S	1	Yellow	S	1	Yellow	1	1	1	0	3	102
Michael Martinkat	B	1	Red	B	1	Red	1	0	1	0	2	160
Bill Michell	B	1	Black	B	1	Black	0	0	0	0	3	116
Graeme Morris	B	2	Red	B	2	Red	3	0	4	0	2	1
David Olliver	S	1	Yellow	S	1	Yellow	0	0	0	0	1	107
Neil Packer	B	1	Black	B	1	Black	0	0	0	1	4	OUT
Colin Parfitt	B	2	Green	B	2	Green	0	2	0	0	1	78
Craig Pearson				B	1	Black	1	1	1	1	4	OUT
Chris Rudram				B	1	Black	1	1	3	1	4	OUT
Mark Stretch				B	1	Black	1	1	1	1	4	OUT
Alan Tabor	B	1	Yellow	B	1	Yellow	0	0	0	1	1	144
Gerald Udowiczzenko	B	1	Red	B	1	Red	1	0	3	0	1	16
Pam Udowiczzenko	B	1	Red	B	1	Red	1	0	3	0	1	16
Matthew Wale	B	5	Green	B	1	Black	0	0	0	0	1	119
Graeme Wilson	S	1	Yellow	S	1	Yellow	1	2	1	0	3	62

Games from Pevans

www.pevans.co.uk/Games

Crystal Faire

Just in is the new game from Alan Ernstein and Hangman Games. Players bid to score points in the different types of crystal available while manipulating their value. But a successful bid means losing crystals, so choose your timing carefully!

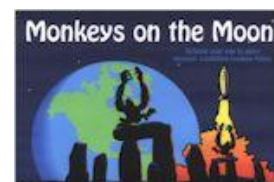


This is a clever tactical game and rather lighter than recent games from Alan Ernstein. *Crystal Faire* is a limited edition: each copy is individually numbered.

3-5 players, playing time 90 minutes: £22.00

Special offer to the end of April (while stocks last)

Monkeys on the Moon and The Penguin Ultimatum



Two terrific games from Eight Foot Llama. The whimsical titles belie the challenging games that are inside the boxes.



Get the pair for: £21.00 (+p&p)

Monkeys on the Moon: 3-4 players, playing time 1 hour
The Penguin Ultimatum: 2-4 players, playing time 45 minutes

Add in Eight Foot Llama's first (and funniest) game,

Who Stole Ed's Pants?

All three games: £30.00 (+p&p)



Full catalogue on the website: www.pevans.co.uk/Games

Games from Pevans is a trading name of Margam Evans Limited

Oh, Mr Porter!

Railway Rivals game 3 – Game End

Edward Walkington (winner)

I was lucky enough to build a line through the narrow strip between the North Downs and the Thames Estuary, meaning I had a rare monopoly service to some towns on this crowded map. This was the first time I had played a postal game, and the first time I had played *RR* against so many players! I put my success down to beginner's luck; I didn't have a proper strategy throughout the game. What this game taught me was that it's really not necessary to connect to all the major cities; dumping your tracks on someone else's a few tiles short will do! I was lucky to be the sole contender in many races, but in almost all I made use of someone else's tracks. Many thanks to Mike for GMing and letting me take part!

Timothy Hunt (2nd)

Enjoyed the game immensely, and kicking myself for NMRing on the turn where there were two "steal" runs for me which were still available the next turn – I could have had them to myself, which would have put things a lot closer.

Steve Bunce (3rd)

So, Edward takes the honours, and it's hearty congratulations to him, and to everyone else who took part in this, my first ever PBM game. From being a complete novice at the beginning to a podium finish at the end, I feel quite pleased with the result, and looking back, if I hadn't had the race round when I felt I couldn't sensibly enter a single race, I may yet have given Edward a bit of a scare. Before the last round races were announced I even fancied my chances for a surprise win, but you can't really expect three storming rounds in row, can you? So again, well done Edward, and to let you all know that I am now well and truly bitten by the PBM bug and am now involved in a number of games – including the next *Railway Rivals* – so watch out!

Gerald Udowiczenko (4th)

Many congratulations to Edward on wining this game of *Railway Rivals* and well done to Steve Bunce, who hadn't played before and got a very creditable 3rd place.

I hadn't played this map before and didn't realise (until too late) how compact the centre would get. Maybe, if I had gone directly West from the first turn, rather than getting a few early points from Dover and Deal, I might have been able to get to London with relative ease and things might have been different... As not getting into the North West of the map was quit costly for me.

But even if I had been able to do, I still think my 'luck' would have been my downfall. Race 38 (Seaside – Haywards Heath) really summed up my luck with the dice (or should I say Mike's fantastic ability to roll so badly for me ... again ☺). On the shortest legal route of 6 hexes, I still managed to only come in joint second. ☹

I'd be interested to know which players NMR'd early on in the game (second or third turn I think?) and if that affected them and the overall outcome at all.

As always, many thanks to Mike for running the game (if not his dice rolls) and to the other players, who made it such fun.

Chris Boote (6th)

Sorry for playing so badly after the half way mark. I was in the middle of changing contracts and left all my *RR* files & map at the old place. Yes, I know I could have got the map from Mike and re-applied everything, but I didn't. Congratulations to TOOT: a very close finish I thought – three people only £10 apart! Thanx to all; especially Mike for running it.

St Mary's

Railway Rivals game 4 – held over

As Mike was away for several weeks in March and April, there is a double deadline for this game. The report in *TWJO* 63 is still current.

Next turn's Build is 14

**Orders to Mike Dommett, 119 Victoria Road, ALTON GU34 2DD
or by e-mail to mike_dommett@yahoo.co.uk by 5th May 2006.**

Mission of Gravity

Star Trader game 3 – held over

As Mike was away for several weeks in March and April, there is a double deadline for this game. The report in *TWJO* 63 is still current.

**Orders to Mike Dommett, 119 Victoria Road, ALTON GU34 2DD
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