

That would be enough

This has been issue 247 of *To Win Just Once*, published 30th August 2024. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2024

Deadlines

Orders for *Railway Rivals* and *Star Trader* to Mike by Friday 13th September 2024.

Orders for *LPBS*, Trophy Hunter entries and any other contributions to Pevans by 20th September 2024.

(Next deadlines: 18th/25th October, probably)

Waiting lists

En Garde! new players are always welcome in *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*. You will need the rules to *En Garde!* in order to play: www.engarde.co.uk

Railway Rivals – Gerald Udowiczenko and Mike Dyer are on the list for a new four-player game: “Only two more needed for a game of *Railway Rivals!*”. (Working map and rules provided).

Star Trader – There’s room for one more player in the current game and the list for the next one starts with Mike Dyer. (Rules provided)

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 247 was written and edited by Pevans. The *LPBS* masthead (page 25) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood as is the illustration on pages 26. The drawings on pages 28, 29 and 30 are by Nik Luker and the one on page 36 is by Bryan Lea. Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Pevans took the photos, except where noted. and played with Photoshop.

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Web: www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO

To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)



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ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank, Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
SE	Stephane Etrange	11	27	OK	Lt.Colonel CPC/Hvy Brigade Maj.	3	Thomasina	Hunt	4	Neil Packer
YS	Yve Stanbul	11	17	OK	Captain QOC/LtGen's Aide (Cav	5	Sheila	BG	4	Pam Udowiczenko
TdLL	Sir Thomas de la Lune	11	F	Comfy Bdr-General		7		Hunt	5	Peter Card
BN	Sir Beau Nidle	10	F	OK	Major CPC/CPC Regt. Adjt.	2		Hunt	3	Paul Murphy
CA	Come Asiouar	10	F	OK	Lt.Colonel QOC	5		Hunt	4	Jacob Andersson
JdA	Jean d'Aubergine	9	15	OK	Colonel 4A	3	Carole	Hunt	3	Paul Robbins
TPN	Thilbault Pinot-Noir	9	F	OK	Major CPC	5		BG	3	Tim Rattray
BLC	Botte Le Chimiste	8	17	OK	Major GDMC/Drgn Brigade Maj.	2	Eve	BG	4	Tym Norris
HF	Hugo Furst	8	13	OK	Lt.Colonel 13F	5	Violet	BG	2	Graeme Morris
EIF	Elroi le Flingue	8	F	OK	Major GDMC/GDMC Regt. Adjt.	6			4	Daniel Racke
TB	Thierry Boule	7	F	OK	Captain CPC	4		F&P	6	John Cooke
FdB	François de Blanchefort	6	F	OK	Captain CPC	3		F&P	4	Peter Farrell
PPuf	Percival Puffington	6	F	OK	B.Bdr-General PM	4		F&P	5	Tony Taylor
AA	Armand Alsace	6	F	OK	B.Bdr-General 53F	8		F&P	4	Sebastian Emde
GdA	Grenville d'Arkrite	6	F	Poor	Captain GDMC	4			5	Gerry Sutcliffe
AH	Arent Hayes	5	F	OK	Captain CPC	4			3	Mark Cowper
OLS	Octo Lucretius Souris	5	F	OK	Captain CPC	5		F&P	5	Olaf Schmidt
ID	Ian Dediette	5	F	OK	B.Captain QOC	2		RP	2	Nik Luker
X2		4	0	OK		1			2	Terry Crook
X4		4	0	Poor		5			3	Ben Edwards
CPL	Charles PiedLuminaire	4+	18	Poor	Captain PLLD	5		RP	3	Nick Tyrrell
X3		3	0	Poor		6			2	Jonah Schmiechen
JD	Jon Dicehateme	3	RIP							Steven Malecek
GdBm	Gaston de Boum	2	RIP							Ray Vahey

An F under SPs means that the character was at the Front, RIP that he died. Ret that he retired.
+ against SL means it went up this month, - means it went down.
Cash: Poor = <500, OK = 500-1500, Comfy = 1500-5000, Wlthy = 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
BRJS	Count Beau Reese Jean Seine	25	F	Rich	B.Bdr-General	RFG/State Min.	14		Flr	4	Bill Hay
GdB	Count Greg de Bécqueur	24	60	Rich	B.Lt-General/Div	Commandr	13	Bette	Flr	5	Anthony Gilbert
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	24	25	Fthly	General/Fld Army	Commndr	24			6	Ben Brown
BeV	Count Ben e Volence	24	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General	CPC/War Minister	11		Flr	3	Ash Casey
JJ	Count Jean Jeanie	23	58	Fthly	General		32	Jacky	Flr	4	Andrew Kendall
CdP	Marquis Camille de Polignac	23	F	Wlthy	Lt.Colonel RFG/FMshl's Aide		4		Flr	4	James McReynolds
TC	Count Terence Cuckpowder	22	53	Wlthy	B.Lt-General/City Mil.	Gov	7	Justine	Flr	6	Mike Dommett
BdLS	Count Bernard de Lur-Saluces	22	F	Fthly	Lt-General		19		Flr	3	Rob Pinkerton
HDS	Viscount Henri DuShite	21	F	Rich	B.Lt-General/1 F	Brigadier	15		Flr	4	Dave Marsden
ZUT	Baron Xavier Ulric Turenne	20	34	Comfy	Lt-General/2nd Div	Commandr	4	Laura	Flr	1	Bob Blanchett
RS	Marquis Rick Shaw	20	F	Wlthy	General/Chancellor		2		Flr	6	Charles Burrows
JIT	Viscount Justin Thyme	19	34	Rich	B.Bdr-General	QOC	16	Guinevere	Flr	2	Gerald Udowiczenko
LR	Baron Louis Renault	17	40	Rich	Lt-General/Cav Div	Commandr	3	Maggie	Both	4	Roy Bleasdale
CdN	Sir Claude de Nord	17	F	Wlthy	B.Bdr-General	KM	4		Both	4	Andrew Larder
LSD	Sir Louis Severin Descartes	16	F	Wlthy	B.Bdr-Gen	GDMD/Fld Army QM	Gen.4		Both	1	Chris Schotmann
JH	Sir Jacques Hatt	15	26	Comfy	B.General		4	Cath	Both	3	Joel Halpern
NM	Sir Neville Moore	15	F	Wlthy	Captain RFG/C.Prnce	Aide	1		Hunt	2	Cameron Wood
ZvT	Sir Zeold von Tu	15	F	Wlthy	B.Bdr-General	CG/Gds Brigadier	7		Both	3	Tim Macaire
FXC	Sir Frank X Change	14	F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	KM	6		Both	4	Nigel Monaghan
MdG	Martin de Garnache	14	F	Comfy	Major RFG/Gds	Brigade Maj.	3		Both	4	Bill Howell
BS	Marquis Balzac Slapdash	13	38	Wlthy	Colonel	DC	19	Alison		5	Matthew Wale
FS	Baron Felipe Savant	13	F	Wlthy	Captain	RFG	5		Both	4	Brick Amundsen
HWB	Hector William Boone	13	F	Wlthy	Major	RFG	5		Both	5	Paul Wilson
AlCh	Marquis Alvin Charles	13	F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	GDMD	12		Both	2	Graeme Wilson
HJ	Sir Hugh Jeneaux	12	F	OK	Major	ALC/Gen's Aide	7		Hunt	3	Bruno Giordan
TTT	Tiny Thierry Toothpick	12	F	Comfy	Captain RFG/LtGen's	Aide (Fnt	5		Hunt	1	Jason Fazackarley

Chatter

I was intrigued to learn that “barrister Paul Powlesland, who ... was called to jury service last week, made judicial history [with his] oath: ‘I swear by the River Roding, from her source in Molehill Green to her confluence with the Thames, that I will faithfully try the defendant and give a true verdict according to the evidence.’” (From *The Guardian*, 3rd August 2024) Brilliant! Not sure Roding has popped up in the “Rivers of London” books. Yet...

Meanwhile, I’m feeling rather pleased with myself after successfully completing a bit of DIY: replacing the bin under the kitchen sink. Not as simple as it sounds as the bin was attached to the door and the side of the cupboard so it swung out when the door was opened.

The old bin had been there since we had the kitchen fitted over 20 years ago, but finally bit the dust when a crucial bit (that had already been jury-rigged) broke off. Time to order a new bin. Apparently, they’re sized by capacity in litres. So we measured the old one – 12 litres with room to spare – and ordered a new 12-litre bin. When it arrived, it immediately looked smaller than the old one. A quick check and it overflowed at 11.8 litres. Pah!

12-litre bin returned, 15-litre bin ordered. This was clearly bigger than the old one, but should fit (fingers crossed). Now comes the tricky part: fixing it in place. It doesn’t look too difficult, except the measurements are dauntingly precise: 312 millimetres here, 166 there and then a further 8 here.

Time to assemble some trusty tools, including my 40 (or so) year-old electric drill, from the gradually collapsing box in the garage. First, measure up... and the door hinges are in the way of the measuring tape. With quality control from Geraldine (and remembering the tailor’s adage: measure twice, cut once) the measurements were done.

Components fitted together, everything screwed into place and, ta-da, new working bin. And one that holds a bit more than the old one. Easy-peasy, really. Now, how about rebuilding the porch...?

Spiderwatch

Geraldine warned me early in August that “it’s spider breeding season – they’ll be everywhere.” I settled down for some serious spider watching and here are the results. Number of spiders of any size seen anywhere in the house during August: nil. None. Not one! They must all be getting it on in secluded corners.

Online stats

Last issue only appeared on 1st August, so didn’t trouble the log files in July. However, the PDFs of *TWJO* 245 were downloaded 99 times, making 160

downloads in two months. There were 40 more downloads for issue 244, a total of 203 since publication.

UK 'Zine Poll 2024

Alex Richardson has announced this year’s poll and sent these details.

- a) WHO MAY VOTE? Anyone who sees at least one eligible 'zine.
- b) WHICH 'ZINES ARE ELIGIBLE? Any 'zine published in the British Isles which has produced an issue in 2024 (up to and including the Poll deadline); is distributed by post, as an e-mail, as an attachment to an e-mail or as a download from a website; and runs games that we would recognise as “postal” ones (eg *Diplomacy*, *Railway Rivals*, 18xx, *En Garde!* or *United*, among many others). NB The 'zines should be UK ones, but the voters may come from anywhere – all that matters is that you are a regular reader.
- c) HOW TO VOTE. This year I'd like you to list up to 10 eligible 'zines, from “most” to “least” favourite, in any combination of tied or single spots that you wish. Editors may vote for their own 'zines. Votes should be sent by e-mail from the voter's own account to alex (dot) bokmal (at) googlemail (dot) com, or by post to Alex Richardson, 32 Newtown, Potton, Sandy, Beds, SG19 2QH.

The Poll deadline will be midnight on THURSDAY 31ST OCTOBER 2024. Results will be sent by e-mail to each voter and published by at least one of the editors whose 'zines you read.

TWJO placed 12th (out of 23 – bang in the middle) last year, which is not surprising as it's not in the mainstream of games 'zines. Alex also gave a medals table (for fun) with each 'zine getting gold, silver and bronze according to their ranking with each voter. TWJO was sixth on this table, with 3 golds out of 8 votes.

Letters

Alex Richardson offers a “Quick *Rivers of London* comment.”

It's pretty obvious that twenty-something geek Peter Grant is just a ventriloquist's dummy for his middle-aged geek author. In most novels this would be a fault. (There's only so much obscure knowledge you can explain away by saying "I know this because we did a project about it at school". And what exactly has Peter/Ben got against people who knock their living rooms through into the dining room or kitchen?) However, as thee and me are both middle-aged geeks ourselves, it's obviously not a problem at all.

I think you'll especially enjoy one bit that's going to come up in False Value, but won't say any more so as not to spoil it...

Now I'm on tenterhooks... Eddy Richards has his own contribution.

Femmes Fatales

No	Name	SL	Attr	Lover
66	Morgane Le Fay	24	B	
67	Justine Caisse	22	I	TC
65	Therèse Le Vert	21	B/W	
7	Chris Pacquette	19		
61	Bette Noire	19	I/W	GdB
64	Edna Bucquette	18	W	
3	Kathy Pacific	17	B	
54	Madelaine de Proust	17		
35	Katy Did	16	I	
42	Maggie Nifisent	16	B	LR
55	Jacky Tinne	16		JJ
52	Guinevere d'Arthur	15	B/W	JiT
10	Frances Forrin	14	B	
48	Fifi	14	B/W	
62	Alison Wunderlandt	14		BS
11	Laura de Land	13		ZUT
26	Ella Fant	13	B	
27	Lucy Fur	13	B	
45	Cath de Thousands	13		JH
8	Lotte Bottle	12	B	
17	Henrietta Carrotte	12	I/W	
28	Vera Cruz	12		
31	Bess Ottede	12	I/W	
1	Sue Briquet	11	B	
4	Anne Tique	11	W	
23	Agnes Sorel	11	I/W	
40	Sheila Kiwi	11		YS
63	Carole Singeurs	11		JdA
20	Emma Roides	10	I	
38	Pet Ulante	10	W	
43	Di Lemmere	10	I	
53	Angelina de Griz	10	B	
6	Viv Ayschus	9		
59	May Banquot l'Idée	9		
19	Jenny Russe	8	W	
32	Sal Munella	8	W	
47	Eve Ningalle	8	I/W	BLC
34	Freda de Ath	7	W	
39	Thomasina Tancenjin	7	I	SE
5	Belle Epoque	6	B/I	
24	Violet Bott	6	I/W	HF
25	Lois de Lô	5	B	

Mistresses in Paris. Attr(ibutes): B= Beautiful, I=Influential, W=Wealthy. Lover only if seen together in public this month.

Regiments

	RFC	CG	KM	DC	OO	ALC	CPC	RM	CDMDPM	13F	PLD	53F	27M	4A	69A	Gscn
Col	BRJS	ZVT+	CdN	BS	JiT	CA	BeV	LSD	PPuf	N6	N1	AA	N7	JdA		
LCol	CdP	N6	FXC	N6	N1+	N3	SE+	AlCh	HF			N6+	N3	N6		
Maj 1	MdG+		N4	N6	N4	N4	BN	ELC+				N3	N5	N4+		
Maj 2	HWB						TPN	ELF*				N3	N5	N5		
Capt 1	NM	N1	N3	N5	N4	N5	N3	N6	N4	N6	N2	N5*	N4	N5		
Capt 2	FS	N6	N2	N6	YS	N5	TB	CdA	N5	N4	N3	N2	N4	N3		
Capt 3	TTT	N1	N1	N4	ID	N5	N1	N6	N1	N2*	N1	N1	N5	N6		
Capt 4	N4	N1	N6	N6*	N5	N4	FdB	N2	N2	N4	N6*	N5	N3*	N3*		
Capt 5							OLS				CPL					
Capt 6							AH									

This table shows the ten senior positions in the 17 regiments by rank. Entries are Character abbreviations, N (+MA) for NPCs, blank for vacant. * shows the regiment adjutant; + indicates the reserve position of a character assigned elsewhere due to their appointment or brevet rank.

Frontier Regiments

	F1	F2	F3	F4	(Assault for Mar-May)
Colonel	N3	N5	N6	N4	RNHB N5
Attached					
Also at the Front					

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

Battle Results

Guards Brigade: 4
Royal Foot Guards: 1
Cardinal's Guard: 4
King's Musketeers: 3
1st Foot Brigade: 1
Royal Marines: 2
Picardy Musketeers: 4
Crown Prince Cuirassiers: 1
Grand Duke Max's Dragoons: 3
53rd Fusiliers: 2

Frontier regiment 1: 4
Frontier regiment 2: 4
Frontier regiment 3: 3
Frontier regiment 4: 4
RNHB regiment: 2



The “Rivers of London” series is very readable and the magic system pretty well defined. Though, as in many series of this type, there tends to be a bit of power creep amongst the entities, with more and more being introduced. Still, a series we (my wife also likes them) do tend to acquire the new ones of when they come out.

Another series of magic set within a modern world is Jim Butcher’s “Dresden Files”. Also good stuff, getting darker as the titular hero gets more enmeshed in the various magical schemes put in motion by assorted powerful magical entities and factions. Allies become enemies and vice versa. And one bit I particularly liked in one of the books, though I forget which one, Dresden comments to himself that in spite of being very powerful magically, some of the long-lived creatures don’t use their power very intelligently, whereas he, although weaker might, for example make the floor frictionless using telekinesis, thus negating a speed advantage. As this is something I often internally criticise magic-users in stories for, I was pleased to see it articulated!

Back in my Dungeons & Dragons day (‘Advanced’ Dungeons & Dragons was my version). I made a point of trying to find innovative uses of the standard spells. Such as using passive spells to attack with!

Jonathan Palfrey’s been doing some reading.

I read for the first time This Is How You Lose the Time War, which is elegantly written but didn’t grab me. I didn’t actively dislike it, but it seemed implausible in every kind of way.

I commented on this in TWJO 213: “I found it hard going – my sympathies were not engaged – and am still baffled by the ending.” What I haven’t yet done is re-read it “while not taking morphine”. Back to Jonathan.

I very recently finished the latest, just-published novel by S. M. Stirling, To Turn the Tide, which is about five modern Americans who get thrown back in time to the year 165 AD, where they decide that they don’t want to be part of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, so they’d better try to do something about it. It’s quite a long novel, but it’s intended to be the first of a series, so this is only Part 1 of the story.

As usual with Stirling, it’s heavily researched, he’s dug up all the details about how things worked in 165 AD, and fans of the Roman Empire will enjoy all this stuff. The excitement level is relatively low: his time-travellers start with a number of advantages that most time-travellers don’t have, and they make steady progress towards their goals without encountering serious setbacks (in Part 1). Perhaps they will run into greater difficulties in later volumes. Stirling expects Part 2 to come out around this time next year.

I don't think this is Stirling at his best (I prefer The Peshawar Lancers, Island in the Sea of Time, or perhaps In the Courts of the Crimson Kings), but for me it makes a pleasant, mildly interesting read with nothing to dislike about it, and I expect to buy the sequels when they come out.

I don't think I've read anything of Stirling's, so no comment from me. Jonathan also reports that he's recovering well from his operation a couple of months ago. However, he "will take more time to heal." "I hope to be fully recovered sometime in October," he concludes. All the best from me, Jonathan.

A mixture of old and new

What I've been playing recently

Yes, I've played quite a few games with my local group, Ruislip BGGs, in recent months. Let me start at the end of April, when Tom D introduced us to *Skull*.

Skull is pretty simple and very colourful. Everybody has a hand of beermat-like round cards, all but one of which show a rose. The last has a decorated skull. Everybody places a card face down and then play goes round the table: either add a card to your pile or make a bid. You bid the number of cards you think you can flip over without finding a skull.



Players can then outbid or pass. Whoever bids most turns over cards, starting with their own, to the number they bid. If all are roses, they succeed and win the round. First to two rounds wins the game. However, if they find a skull, they lose a card and are out if they have no cards left.

It may sound simple, but we quickly learnt that it isn't. For example, having played my skull, I suddenly realised this

constrained any bid I might make! It's a game of psyching out your opponents so that you can work out who's played a skull – and avoid it!

We were four for our first game, which went over well. So well, we immediately played again, adding the latest arrival to make it five players. Much fun was had.

Having been introduced to *Free Ride USA* at the Gathering this year (see *TWJO* 245), I'd brought my copy of the original game, *Free Ride*, to try with the gang.

Tables

Other Appointments

King's Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Cardinal's Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Aides: to Crown Prince NM	to Field Marshal CdP
Provincial Military Governors: N/N/N/N/N	
City Military Governor TC	Adjutant-General N
Inspectors-General: of Cavalry __	of Infantry __
Commissioner of Public Safety __	
Chancellor of the Exchequer RS (until end August 1676)	
Minister of Justice __	
Minister of War __	
Minister of State BRJS (until end January 1677)	

Shows who holds appointments outside military units (except Aides): ID for Characters, "N" for NPC, __ for vacant, "CPS" for extra posts held by the CPS

Army Organisation and 1676's Summer Deployment

Field Army (Siege)	JdG/_/_/_/LSD
First Division (Siege)	GdB/N/N1
Guards Brigade (Siege) - RFG CG KM	
1st Foot Brigade (Siege) - RM PM	
Second Division (Siege)	ZUT/N/N5
2nd Foot Brigade (Siege) - 13F 53F	
3rd Foot Brigade (Siege) - 27M 4A	
Cavalry Division (Siege)	LR/YS/N2
Horse Guards Brigade (Siege) - DG QOC	
Heavy Brigade (Siege) - ALC CPC	
Frontier Division (Siege)	N1/TTT/N3
Frontier Regiments (Siege)	
Dragoon Brigade (Siege) - GDMD PLLD	

Organisation and Deployment for the Campaign Season with Army and Division posts (Commander/Aide/Adjutant/QMG)
Entries are ID for player characters, "N" (+ MA if needed) for NPC, __ for vacant

Brigade Positions

Guards Brigade	ZvT/BeV/MdG
Horse Guards Brigade	N4/N/N1
Heavy Brigade	_/_/_/SE
Dragoon Brigade	N4/N/BLC
First Foot Brigade	HDS/_/_/_
Second Foot Brigade	N3/N/N6
Third Foot Brigade	N3/N/N4
Fourth Foot Brigade	N2/N/_/_

Current CO/Aide/Brigade Major of each Brigade; entries are ID for player characters, "N" (+ MA if needed) for NPC, __ for vacant

Announcements

All characters may use Influence (and/or a bribe) for or against these actions.

Ben e'Volence applies for Brigadier of Heavy Brigade

Duels

Results of February's duels

Martin de Garnache (with BRJS, gains 1 Exp) beat Xavier Ulric Turenne (with LR).

Tiny Thierry Toothpick didn't turn up to fight Claude de Nord and lost SPs.

Zeold von Tu (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Claude de Nord.

Zeold von Tu didn't turn up to fight Frank X Change and lost SPs.

Jon Dicehateme didn't turn up to fight Arent Hayes and lost SPs.

Jon Dicehateme didn't turn up to fight François de Blanchefort and lost SPs.

Balzac Slapdash (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Yve Stanbul (with LR).

Grudges to settle next month

Henri DuShite (Cutlass, 5 rests) has cause with Terence Cuckpowder

(Sabre, Seconds ZUT, adv.) for pinching Justine.

Thomas de la Lune (Rapier, Seconds JdA, adv.) has cause with Martin de Garnache (Rapier, Seconds BRJS, 4 rests) for pinching Katy.

Camille de Polignac (Rapier, Seconds BdLS, 5 rests) has cause with Terence Cuckpowder (Sabre, Seconds ZUT, adv.) for pinching Morgane.

Martin de Garnache (Rapier, Seconds BRJS, 5 rests) has cause with Terence Cuckpowder (Sabre, Seconds ZUT, adv.) for pinching Katy.

"adv." shows who (if anyone) has the advantage of higher Expertise: his first duelling sequence need only contain six actions.

All duels listed above (including any to be voted on) must be fought next month unless held over (below). Orders conditional on a challenge being voted cause are acceptable.

New Characters

Ray Vahey gets the Bastard son of a wealthy Merchant: Init SL 2; Cash 225; MA 1; EC 2 (X1).

Steven Malecek gets the Second son of a very wealthy Merchant: Init SL 3; Cash 500; MA 4; EC 5 (X5).



Here's the board as we're getting started: locomotives on starting cities and everybody's initial builds marked in their colour. On the left are the sets of cards waiting to be picked up – each set of three offers two possible journeys (pick up at A and deliver to B or from B to C). Green has just finished the link needed to deliver their load to Bucharest (from Budapest – no distance at all!).

The two games are much the same, except that this one is on a map of Europe, so my earlier introduction works fine. The other difference is that *Free Ride* starts with bonus coins on certain cities on the edges – first to build there gets the coin.

Everybody got into the game quickly and it played smoothly – it just took a while with five playing. Paul B ran out as the winner, after some clever tactical plays (and people insisting on using the bits of track he built!)

Early in May we were able to get together for a games Saturday (an afternoon + evening session), which was a chance to play a longer game than usual. In this case *Civilization*, one of the longest games there is!

We played Tom D's Gibson's edition of the game (my copy is at the bottom of the games filling the cupboard under the stairs) and actually had the full seven players. However, Steph and Hannah played as a team because Hannah might need to leave early.

Despite having most of the day, we made the game less than full length, playing to the fourth line on the 'Archaeological Succession Table'. This means everybody would have to pass the third barrier: holding seven *Civilization* cards.



This is an early stage of the game with Babylon (red) behind on the AST (bottom left) for not building any cities yet. Egypt (orange) has, but now has the lowest population (shown on the Census just below Egypt's position). I am demonstrating my usual rush-for-the-Levant strategy to be able to build cities along the Mediterranean coast and ignore the flood plain in my rear (also works for Egypt).

I got an early choice of empire (the random element in the game!) and went for Babylon rather than my favourite, Crete. (I like the ducking and diving element to Cretan survival.) I stopped at the first barrier (two cities), which Babylon gets to early. I feel scrabbling to build the cities cripples expansion over the next few turns. And I always hope that everybody will have to stop at least once. (Though that isn't certain.)

Steph & Hannah were Egypt and they dropped behind at subsequent barriers. Moving into Africa lifted them up again, but too late to catch up. Paul's Asia (black) and I 'negotiated' a border and he then worked into Asia Minor before taking cities off me. Jim's Thrace (purple) went into the Balkans, but floundered on trade. Tom's Italy (blue) made great progress, but finally had to stop at the 7 cards barrier. Veronica's Crete (white) took islands and parts of Asia Minor, but struggled on

Points Arising

Next deadline is 20th September

Rather worryingly, I have heard nothing from either of the two new players – Jonah Schmiechen and Ben Edwards – since they joined the game, despite several attempts to contact them. If anybody is in contact with either, please ask them to get in touch with me. I floated both their characters this turn.

Similarly, I've had nothing from Terry Crook since April or Ray Vahey since June. Again, please ask them to get in touch, if you are in contact with them.

Next month is the start of a new season. **All characters start the month in Paris and all duels must be fought.** Any vacant appointments not taken by player characters will be filled by NPCs. A player character with an appointment that lets him appoint another post chooses who gets this – a player character, an NPC or left vacant. So, if you hold or have applied for an appointment – or a rank – that allows you to make other appointments, don't forget to do so (or NPCs will get the jobs).

Absent friends

I didn't receive orders from the following (No Move Received) and they suffered the consequences:

GdBm Gaston de Boum (Ray Vahey) has NMR'd. Total now 2 and is sent to a Frontier regiment

Terry Crook got the benefit of the doubt and X2 was floated.

Notes

The *En Garde!* rules are available to LPBS players at a reduced rate: see any month's Points Arising page at www.pevans.co.uk/LPBS.

There's an email group for *En Garde!* players and GMs, providing a forum to swap stories and ideas. Sign up at: <https://groups.io/g/EnGarde>

Reminders: It is worth sending orders in even if they're late: I may be able to action the orders and should be able to use any press. It also reassures me that you're still there.

Orders (and press) should be emailed to lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk – you'll get an automated reply when the message arrives in my mailbox. Please give your name and your character's name and specify actions in full detail. If you want a query answered before the deadline, please use LPBS@pevans.co.uk instead.

Gentlemen of Paris (social level 8 and above), please bring your ladies to an Easter Egg Hunt in March, Week 4. There will be a prize for the lady wearing the most unusual Easter Bonnet. Members of enemy regiments will not be admitted.

Yours etc, † Yve Stanbul

Personal

Messieurs,
Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned but, Thierry Tiny Todger Toothpick, you will soon learn that this is but a dim spark compared to the furnace I will throw you into. Your treachery and betrayal are breathtaking and I will have revenge – in this life or the next!

† Claud De Nord

Heard the news?
One of the RFG officers is getting uppity.
Who was that with Madeleine?
That little fellow, is it Toothpick?
Oh, I thought she was with de Nord.
Looking for a fight with a member of a Friendly Regiment?
Ouch, who is his second?
Seconds to each other, aren't they?
Eh, what the hell is going on?
Falling out, big time.
RFG Officer getting above his station.
I think Toothpick needs to be put in his place.
Every chance the little coward skips the duel.
No seconds, will surrender be accepted?
Doubt I would accept it in de Nord's place.
Second that sentiment!

Poetry Corner

(All signed poetry submissions gain their author at least 1 SP)

Gentlemen, volunteer,
Time to pack up your tack and gear.
Off to the front again
To fight against the men of Spain,
The Brandenburgers and the Dutch.
To strengthen with a touch of steel
Our Frontier forces
With fighting men and fresher horses.
It will be cold, so don't forget
To take along an extra blanket
And, to keep you warm 'til you get back,
Take a bottle or three of fine cognac.
† FXC

1 Brave Sir Louis had a problem:
Swordplay can leave a scar.
He's a lover, not a fighter,
What's just one faux-pas?
2 Now his words come back to bite him,
The sword will have its say.
His liver fears examination:
Lily, puce, or beige?
3 Never fear, my trembling peer,
Your friends will see you right.
They'll keep you safe from cut and thrust.
Your name, alas, is mud.

† TdIL

trade. Having stopped at the first barrier, Babylon lagged behind for most of the game. I finally caught up at the 7 cards line to win.

What a brilliant day! Playing my favourite game with a break for al fresco fish 'n' chips in the May sunshine. And beer.

We were down to the hard, hard core for the first Monday in June: me, Paul and Veronica (what with new babies and new houses keeping others occupied). And then Paul had to deal with a work issue.

So Veronica and I had a go at *Hey Yo* – yet another of the daft little games that Oink produces. This one is co-operative, with players taking turns to add a card to the row they're building up. The tricky bit is that this must be done in time to the rhythm of the little device included (or use the "Rhythm Machine" on YouTube) – there are penalties for getting out of time.

As you can see in the photo, each card has two lines and may have a word on either or both lines. And sometimes two of them. At the end of the game, you score by counting the number of times the appropriate word appears along the line from the card that shows that word in a yellow star. Hence, you're looking to get those cards on the end of a line – or as close to it as possible.

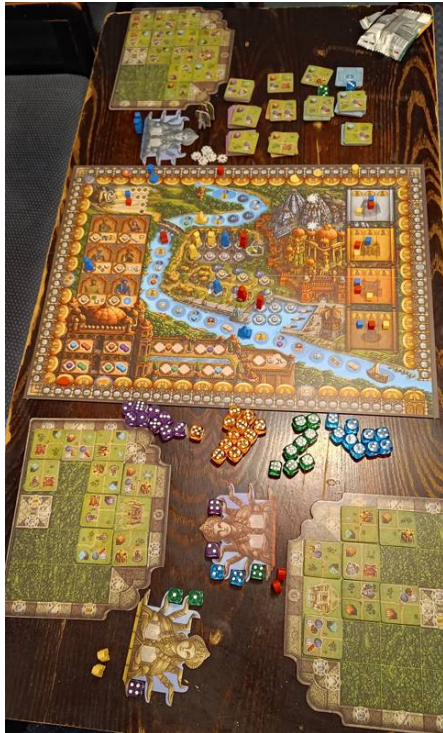
We found the mechanics of the game straightforward – it may have helped that Veronica is a musician (and piano teacher), so was bang on the rhythm. I tried. Trickier was hanging on to the yellow star cards to play at the end of a row. Or extending the row in one direction only.

Our first attempt was a bit haphazard, but gave us a better idea of how the scoring works (the rules aren't crystal clear). Our second was much better and passed the 50 points to be able to move on to the next level (with fewer cards).



I think we need a bigger table! Spot the yellow stars on the left end of the rows to maximise our scores. And, if I remember correctly, the "level" cards are taken out as you go up levels.

Played straight, it's not much of a game (though it would certainly be more difficult/fun with more players). And it's meant to be a party game, the rules suggesting players use their own music and dance along while playing.



Yep, it needs the whole table – this is the end of our second game.

Other commitments meant it was a couple of weeks before we were able to meet again – and it was just the three of us again. I introduced the other two to *Rajas of the Ganges*, which I haven't played face-to-face for a while.

Despite the game being new to the other two, we played briskly to a conclusion. I made a point of warning them about managing their stock of dice, but both were reduced to picking up a single die at one point. It didn't seem to hinder Veronica's game as she came in the winner, overtaking me by a couple of points after I finished the game.

And they clearly enjoyed *Rajas* enough that we played it again the following week. It was another close game, but I came out on top this time with my two markers just meeting while Veronica's were a few points apart. I've threatened them with some expansions next time we play...

We were down to three again for our last session in July. Veronica had brought *Sheriff of Nottingham*, which was new to me but has a decent rating



Now that's what I call efficiency – I've used all my dice and finished the game.

Press

Announcements

The Royal Foot Guards seeks officers and men. Apply to regimental HQ.

† Beau Reese Jean Seine

Lt General's Aide and Divisional Adjutant sought for 2nd Division Commander for upcoming campaign. Apply with Particulars ASAP – Bullet dodgers need not apply.

† Lt Gen ZUT, 2nd Division CO

Fleur bonds sought. Open to all reasonable offers.

† Beau Reese Jean Seine

**** Join the QOC ****

Gentleman of Paris, if you are new to the city or are looking for a new Regiment, then you can do no better than join the Queen's Own Carabiniers.

Please contact me for more details, and some financial help is available.

† Viscount Thyme

Matters of Honour

The barracks of the CPC, a large courtyard and a large and lean chap sweeping it.

Octo saunters up to him nonchalantly, chewing on some twig to clean his teeth.

"Oi, Arent! I saw that note on the posts earlier today. Are you in trouble, mate? If yes, I could support you against whoever wants to cross blades with the Crown Prince's Finest! Are you in?"

Social

Jacques As Warmup Race

After the successful turnout of my last race, I have decided to organise another one!

Let's all prepare for the Jacques As Memorial Stakes in April by running another race in March.

When: Week 2 of March.

Where: Le Prix d'Or.

Entry price: 50 GC per racer.

Who is welcome: Everyone, except the lame donkey-riders of the ALC.

Audience welcome, ladies welcome, drinks will flow freely.

Looking forward to another big turnout.

† Sir Louis Severin Descartes
Br Brigadier GDMD, Quartermaster
General

But what's the prize pot?

† Le Roi

Gentlemen of Paris,

During week 2 Miss Nifiscent and I will be dining at my club and be delighted to receive gentlemen and their ladies for polite discussion and to play cards; refreshments at my expense.

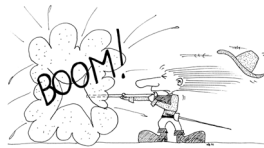
Unfortunately, this invitation does not include members of the Dragoon Guards as they continue to try and put holes in my aide, Captain Stanbul.

† Baron Louis Renault

Neville Moore invites everyone to his club in the third week of March for the third annual chess tournament. First prize is 1,000 crowns, second prize 500 crowns and third prize 250 crowns.

And so to the Guards Brigade, which finds itself confronted with an assault by a combined Dutch and Spanish force. The Cardinal's Guard and King's Musketeers hold off the attack. KM CO Claude de Nord is Mentioned expansively in Despatches ("A fine piece of defence work, what with his deployment in teams of three to reload and fire...") and makes a few crowns from a captured enemy officer. His Lieutenant-Colonel, Frank X Change, gets only a minor Mention ("Frank"), but is Knighted as a result.

It is the Royal Foot Guards who see off the enemy attack, waiting until the other regiments have absorbed the brunt before getting stuck in. As commander, Beau Reese Jean Seine directs his men to where the pickings are best, resulting in a round thousand crowns worth of booty for him. And a short MiD ("Formidable!"). Lt-Col Camille de Polignac doesn't do quite as well with his plundering and he's short of the 1,000 mark. On the other hand, Major Hector William Boone is up there with his CO as far as loot goes. Captains Felipe Savant, Neville Moore and Thierry Toothpick all seize around a thousand crowns each. Savant is just above that; Moore well above, thanks to a getting a premium on his hat with a bullet hole in the crown. However, Toothpick is just below – though he does get a footnote in Despatches. Yes, it's in very small print at the bottom of the page.



Guards Brigadier Zeold von Tu's bravery brings him a little too close to the action and he, too, has a hole in his hat from a Spanish musket ball. He makes a quick withdrawal with just a couple of hundred crowns worth of loot. Brigade Major Martin Garnache sticks to his superior and gets much the same amount of booty.

Lending First Frontier regiment a hand (hoof?) is Lt-Col Come Asiouar's squadron of the Queen's Own. Sitting comfortably behind the infantry's defences, the cavalymen are at no risk. In spite of this, there's a Mention in Despatches for Asiouar ("Good work getting a horse onto those ramparts!"), while new Subaltern Ian Dediette is promoted to Captain.

Having volunteered for action, Jon Dicehateme finds himself with Frontier regiment 3. He sticks his head over the parapet at the wrong moment and a musket ball misses his ear by inches. It goes straight through his forehead. RIP.

Major Hugh Jeneaux has brought his squadron of Archduke Leo's to assist Frontier regiment 4. A short MiD ("Major Jeneaux") brings him a Knighthood.

And we have three General officers commanding battalions of the RNHB. Brigadier-General Thomas de la Lune has a month's experience of this already and picks up over 300 crowns worth of loot with a Knighthood into the bargain. Lt-General Bernard de Lur-Saluces outdoes this with booty worth close to five hundred crowns and a bountiful Mention ("Is that his own tartan? Not bad for a Sassenach.) General Rick Shaw does equally well with his own pair of MiDs ("A General! In a kilt!!") and close to 500 crowns. ❖



Who's Sheriff? Oh, it's my turn.

on BGG. The idea is that you're merchants bringing goods – and contraband – into Nottingham for the market. The Sheriff is on guard against this sort of thing, though he can be bribed...

Each round one player is Sheriff. The others start by discarding cards and then drawing more to fill their hand, trying to collect sets of the same card. Players can take cards from the face-up discard piles as well as the draw deck, but must take them from the top down. Then they put cards into an envelope and tell the Sheriff what they're bringing to market. Or rather, say how many cards are in the envelope and which commodity they are.

It's then up to the Sheriff to decide whether to challenge any (or all) of these declarations. But first, they can lean on the players and solicit bribes. And then decide what to do. Regardless of this decision, players put out legal cards and unchallenged contraband. If they were challenged but told the truth, the Sheriff also pays them the value of the cards. However, the player has to pay the Sheriff the value of any contraband found.

The game ends once each player has been Sheriff twice and there are (substantial) bonuses for having the most (and second most) cards of each commodity.

The game immediately reminded me of the old Pepys game, *Contraband*, that I played as a youngster. That was much simpler, but was a card game with the same central idea of bluffing to get your contraband past the customs officer/Sheriff.

Paul showed an immediate aptitude for smuggling followed by a keen nose as Sheriff. Then we started on the double-bluffs... Yes, it's one of those games that's all about psyching out your opponents. It's fun enough, but I found it not much more than a filler.

After which, it was time for the evening's main event: *Pandemic* with the *On the Brink* expansion, which was new to me. We incorporated the Virulent Strain, making one of the viruses even more challenging, something I haven't played before. In fact this was a bit of a bust. When the Virulent Strain was finally revealed, we already had a cure for it!

My Dispatcher, Veronica's Contingency Planner and Paul's Researcher made up the team. Chosen randomly, so it's an odd group, but it seemed to work. We headed into Asia, with a side mission in Europe, and worked up cures for three of the viruses fairly quickly.

This left the yellow peril that was infesting the Americas and Africa. Time to shift our operations. Just as we were feeling smug, the fourth bug exploded, triggering a chain reaction of outbreaks. And we lost. Dammit!

Why has it been so long since I last played *Pandemic*?



It's all over for humanity!

We ended July with a co-operative game designed by Matt Leacock, so we started August with a co-operative game designed by Matt Leacock. This time it was *Thunderbirds*!

Like me, Paul and Veronica have fond memories of the original TV show and Henry, who joined us this week, knew it despite being much younger. I found the theme tune on YouTube to get us in the mood. Thunderbirds are go!

Reinforcements in Flanders

One thing that isn't entertaining is the continuing war in the Low Countries. The French defences are augmented by the arrival of the Guards Brigade and two cavalry regiments. Oh, and the 53rd Fusiliers. There isn't much to show for this increased deployment, though. Oh, apart from the 53rd Fusiliers. They prove to be decent marksmen, beat off a Dutch attack and their commander, Colonel Armand Alsace, is brevetted to Brigadier-General.

It's a good month for the Crown Prince Cuirassiers too. They intercept a Dutch supply train and chase off its escort in short order. There's a brief Mention in Despatches ("Supplies!") for CO Ben e'Volence. He picks up well over five hundred crowns worth of booty. Senior Major Beau Nidle is Mentioned twice ("Supplies, supplies!"), which brings him a Knighthood. He's too busy fighting to pick up any loot. Junior Major Thibault Pinot-Noir goes for the loot – well over 500 again – and is Mentioned ("Him too"). A Mention in Despatches comes the way of Captain Thierry Boule ("Awful"), but that's all. Captain François de Blanchefort's name goes into the Despatches as well, but only briefly ("Frank"). For the Subalterns, Arent Hayes and Octo Lucretius Souris, there is promotion to Captain. They get their snouts in the trough for some plunder: just under 500 crowns worth for Octo, while Arent grabs a bit more than 500.

Grand Duke Max's Dragoons find the opposition – Spanish cavalry in this case – a bit tougher. Having volunteered for this, regimental commander Louis Severin Descartes gets little reward, despite his personal bravery in going toe to toe (stirrup to stirrup?) with a Spanish officer. He picks up a couple of hundred crowns for his booty – those plumed helmets are worth quite a bit back in Paris. Lieutenant-Colonel Alvin Charles does rather better, receiving two Mentions in Despatches ("Alvin Charles? Charles Alvin?"), looting a little bit more than two hundred crowns and gaining the title of Marquis. Major Elroi le Flingue and Captain Grenville d'Arkrite survive handily.

First Foot Brigade has been in action since last month and the troops are well dug-in. Picardy Musketeers CO Percival Puffington manages to plunder a little, but that's it. Brigadier Henri DuShite talks up the Brigade's performance and finds himself brevetted to Lt-General. He scoops up most of the loot – nearly 500 crowns worth.



Who was where – with the ladies

Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Bawdy houses	CPL + FC			
FC = Female Company; Mug n = Mugged & amount lost; (G) = Gambled;				
Katy				TC succeeds ex-MdG
Eve	BLC succeeds	Out	Out	Out
Alison		BS at home		Out
Morgane				

Shows who was with a mistress or on a doorstep: Out = Mistress with current lover; I = Indiscreet (+ mistress name); EX-id = Pinched from former lover.

Once everybody's settled down, the Brigadier (Zeold von Tu) mobilises the whole Guards Brigade for a month's action. With Ben e'Volence volunteering the Crown Prince Cuirassiers, Louis Severin Descartes the Grand Duke Max Dragoons and Armand Alsace the 53rd Fusiliers, it seems most of Paris will be fighting the Dutch this month. Not wanting to miss out, Bernard de Lur-Saluces and Rick Shaw join Thomas de la Lune with the Royal North Highlanders.

Just one party

The one party that survives the departure of so many notables from Paris is hosted by Louis Renault and Maggie Nifisent in Bothwell's. It's a relaxed and peaceful affair. The one fly in the ointment is that Hugo Furst isn't there. That's because he turns up at Bothwell's a week late! Must be all that mulled wine he and Violet have been drinking in in Blue Gables. Intriguingly, Louis and Maggie have a four-way tête-à-tête at the end of the month with Balzac Slapdash and Alison Wunderlandt, fresh (if that's the word) from punting on the Seine... with a very long pole.



Thunderbirds 1 and 2 are still on Tracy Island, but Tin-Tin just carried out a rescue on the Moon with T3. The blank space at the bottom is where the Hood's cards were.

We drew characters at random, so our foursome were John Tracy (endlessly orbiting in Thunderbird 5), Gordon Tracy (demanding underwater rescues so he could get Thunderbird 4 into play), Lady Penelope (who left FAB 1, her six-wheeled Rolls-Royce, behind to travel the seas in FAB 2, a rather large boat) and Tin-Tin (in her bright red plane). Yes, I have the expansions and I'm not afraid to use them.

We played with the expanded character boards which allows the characters to 'level up'. This means they start weaker than normal (level 1), but can become more powerful than the standard versions (level 3).

For those who haven't played it, the Tracy brothers and sidekicks in International Rescue are faced with a stream of disasters (new card drawn every player turn) around the world (and in outer space). They use the ahead-of-their-time Thunderbird craft and ancillary equipment (go Mole!) to rescue people from these. If the line of unresolved disaster cards reaches the end of its track, the players lose. Ditto if the deck runs out.

On top of this, the players have the challenge of defeating the Hood. As always, he's bent on mayhem and stealing International Rescue's technology. As well as triggering events, the Hood has three long-term schemes, which the players must thwart in order to win. These are tougher than the standard disasters, but players have advance notice of each one, so can build up to defeating them. However, if any of them is triggered, the players lose.

Cue much discussion of who’s going to take what machine/s where to deal with which disaster/scheme and then position things for the next one... We bowled along nicely for an hour or so, picking off most of the disasters and frustrating two the Hood’s schemes. Highlights of this were Tin-Tin piloting Thunderbird 3 (the spacecraft) to rescue astronauts stranded on the Moon and Lady Penelope using FAB 2 instead of Thunderbird 2 (the main transport craft) to shift equipment around the world. We had everybody up to level 2 and some on level 3.

And then the disasters rolled over us. Concentrating on trying to stop the Hood’s third scheme, we lost control of the row of disasters and lost! It was great fun, though, and I really must get round to reviewing this properly.

As I mentioned in my Gathering report (see *TWJO* 244), one of the games I enjoyed there was *Dune: Imperium*. Since then, everybody’s been telling me that *Dune: Imperium – Uprising* is a better game. So that’s what I’ve bought.

Essentially, it’s a second edition of the game. There are a few changes (notably the “Mentat” – an additional worker available for one round only – has gone and players have spies to place for future advantage, sandworms to use in combat and an optional CHOAM module that introduces contracts with the mercantile side of the Empire), but it’s mostly the same game. Hence my overview of *Dune: Imperium* holds good for this game too.

Having tried the solitaire game, I then took it along to see what the group made of it. While none of us is big on deck building, the combination of this with worker placement went down well. What we didn’t do, however, was manage our decks – by the end we were all suffering from having too many cards. Which rather proves the point about our deck-building expertise. Expect a full review when I’ve played it a bit more.

In the latest session, Tom D and I tried *Pilgrim*, my first proper play of this (I played a solitaire game back at the end of 2022 – see *TWJO* 230 – and was duly thrashed by the Ab-bot). Tom had a great verdict at the end of the game: “it’s less than half as complicated as the rules make it seem.”

There are 26 turns in the game and I could see it lasting several hours. However, we played briskly and completed the game in 90 minutes. This is helped by each turn being quite simple as all you do is take one action. What’s trickier is stringing your actions together to get the results you want and this is where you need to do some thinking. Making your plan takes a while; executing it does not. As we were learning the game, we didn’t bother planning too much.

A turn consists of moving a bunch of your pawns (“Acolytes”) mancala-style, distributing them around the action tiles. Then you take an action, which is usually more powerful if you have a plurality of the pawns on the tile. (With two players, a third colour’s Acolytes are distributed around the actions to get in the way. And they did.)

Who was where – in Paris				
Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Fleur de Lys	JJ + Jacky TC + Justine JIT + Guinevere CdB + Bette	CdB + Bette	JIT + Guinevere CdB + Bette	JJ + Jacky CdB + Bette
Bothwell's	JH + Cath	LR + Maggie . ZUT + Laura . JJ + Jacky . JIT + Guinevere . YS + Shella . CPL		LR + Maggie . BS + Alison
Outside Bothwell's			HF (LR)	
Hunter's	SE + Thomasina JdA + Carole	SE + Thomasina	SE + Thomasina	SE + Thomasina JdA + Carole
Blue Gables	HF + Violet YS + Shella	HF + Violet BLC + Eve	YS + Shella BLC + Eve	HF + Violet BLC + Eve
Practising	ZUT - Rapier BS - Rapier JdG - Rapier LR - Rapier	JdG - Rapier JdA - Rapier JH - Sabre	ZUT - Rapier JJ - Rapier BS - Rapier TC - Sabre JdG - Rapier JdA - Rapier CPL - Sabre JH - Sabre LR - Rapier	ZUT - Rapier JIT - Sabre YS - Sabre JdG - Rapier CPL - Sabre JH - Sabre

Shows who was in or outside a club: . = Toadying to character above; (G) = Gambled; CP = Crown Prince; (id) = expected host. Weapon = Weapon practised.

Ignoring that he's meant to be fighting Frank X Change next, Zeold hurries off for medical attention, only to find just how minor his injury is.

Jon Dicehateme doesn't appear at either of his duels (possibly because he's packing his kitbag, which is no excuse), so Arent Hayes and François de Blanchefort are disappointed.



This leaves the duel between Balzac Slapdash and Yve Stanbul. Balzac is the bigger man, but uses a rapier against Yve's sabre. However, he's also a much more skilled swordsman. Louis Renault pops up again as Yve's second. A lunge from Balzac is followed by a slash from Yve. Balzac's second lunge coincides with Yve's cut. The deflected lunge does little damage compared to the cut, but it's Yve who gives up.

Who's Minister?

Then we have the fun and games of the race to be the next Minister of State. His Majesty has three candidates to choose from: the current Minister of War, Ben e'Volence; incumbent Beau Reese Jean Seine; and City Military Governor Terence Cuckpowder. However, Ben puts his influence behind Beau, effectively ruling himself out. Beau calls in every favour he can to bolster his chances and is further backed by Louis Severin Descartes and Rick Shaw. (It may also help that he's just paid the Exchequer tens of thousands of crown in 'back taxes'.) Terence was prepared to support Ben in preference to Beau, but has no choice except to back himself. However, the King favours Beau by a big margin and re-appoints him. Beau loses no time in not filling the vacancies for Minister of Justice and Commissioner of Public Safety.

In military circles, Ben e'Volence calls in another favour to try to remove the current Brigadier of Second Foot. The man is determined to stay, however, so Thomas de la Lune's application for the post goes nowhere.

"Tiny" Thierry uses his influence to make sure the Colonel of the 13th Fusiliers stays in post, thwarting Hugo Furst's ambition to take that rank. Balzac Slapdash has no such problem as he purchases the Colonelcy of the Dragoon Guards.

Charles PiedLuminaire applies to the Princess Louisa's Light Dragoons. He gets influential support from Louis Renault and is readily accepted. Louis finances a horse to go with Charles's purchase of a Captaincy, but Louis' offer of a further loan is not accepted.

Ian Deditte is admitted to the Queen's Own Carabiniers by CO Justin Thyme. Justin then provides the cash for Ian to buy the rank of Subaltern (and the requisite horse).



Spot the differences from the *Dune: Imperium* board pictured in TWJO 244. I (blue) have won this combat and it's level pegging with Tom (green) on the VP track.

The actions let you do things like recruit and deploy Acolytes, increase your Piety (required for certain things), gain resources (stone, grain and money), give alms (it's good for the soul – and victory points!), build roads and shrines (aiming to



Hexagonal board, check; divided into quadrants, check; with eight Action tiles around the edge, check. Yes, it's *Pilgrim*. At the end of our game: I'm blue, Tom's white. Note my Acolytes on the Alms board (in the middle on the left) – that's a useful 11 points.

complete a route to one of the major pilgrimage sites around the board), add buildings to your abbey (for discounts/bonuses) and so on.

There is an awful lot going on in this game and my suspicion is that you don't need to do all of them. I reckon concentrating on a few will be the way to win – though the corollary of this is that you can't afford to let another player monopolise one of these. I thought Tom was doing better than me, but the final scores saw me win by a point. Tom did out-score me on almost every category, but I got a big chunk of points from being the only one to give alms.

I thoroughly enjoyed this. As Tom noted, it's nothing like as complicated as you think it's going to be. I hope to get it back on the table soon – and expect a full review in due course.

Joined by Paul and Veronica, we finished that evening with *Sea Salt and Paper*, a neat card game that Tom has been trying to get us to play for a while. The cards are of several types, each of which scores in a different way. No surprise that you're trying to build up scoring sets in your hand.

Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses

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

New players are always welcome. If you'd like to play, you'll need to subscribe to *TWJO* (see page 24). You will also need (access to) a copy of the published rules to *En Garde!* (see www.engarde.co.uk).

**Orders for March 1676 to Pevans at
180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE
UB10 8UF, UK or
lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk
by 20th September 2024**



February 1676 (383)

It's all fun and games in Paris this February – starting with this month's duels. First up is Martin de Garnache versus Xavier Ulric Turenne. Having failed to be specific about his choice of weapon, Xavier has a standard foil and is looking disbelievably at this unfamiliar blade. Martin is very comfortable with his accustomed rapier and has a heftiness advantage over the pocket-sized Xavier. He has the just-lapsed Minister of State, Beau Reese Jean Seine, as his second and the advantage of greater skill as well. Louis Renault is Xavier's second and thus on the receiving end of his complaints. Still, there's nothing for it but to cross swords with his adversary. Expecting an immediate lunge, Xavier jumps back. Martin just follows up and runs him through. Xavier surrenders immediately and stomps off to find a doctor.

Next up is Claude de Nord, who's facing "Tiny" Thierry Toothpick first. Given that they are in friendly regiments and that Claude has all the advantages (he's bigger (much bigger), has greater expertise and uses a sabre), it's not really a surprise that Thierry and his dagger don't show up.

Claude's next opponent is Zeold von Tu, a less-skilled rapier user with no second. Claude's second should be Thierry – ho, ho, ho – but of course he's not there. Claude steps back and cocks his sword-wielding arm. Zeold looks confused, but takes the opportunity to draw first blood with a lunge. Then Claude throws his sabre. It hits, but its blunt tip does very little damage, leaving Zeold to complete his furious lunge. While Zeold recovers from this exertion, Claude mimes lunging with the sword he's not holding any more. Eventually Zeold hits him with another furious lunge and it's over, Claude conceding defeat.

Troodos (Railway Rivals game 18 – RR2528CY)

Turn 7 revisited

One race (highlighted in red below) has been changed for being under 6 hexes long.

Next turn’s races

Race	From		To	
7	16	Limassol	23	Evrykhou
8	24	Pedhoulas	36	Larnaca
9	65	Theodoros	41	Morphou
10	56	Lefkoniko	44	Nicosia
11	66	NE Cyprus	13	Kilana
12	34	Zyyi	53	Kyrenia

GM Notes

If a race cannot be changed after player builds, a decision will be made at the time.

Orders/revisions to Mike Dommsett, 12 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ
or by e-mail to mike_dommsett@yahoo.co.uk
by 13th September 2024

Subscribing to TWJO

TWJO is published on paper and online at www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO (as a free PDF). If you want to play in any (or all) of the games in TWJO, you have two options. You can subscribe to the paper edition, which includes playing in the games. Or you can take the PDF edition and pay the “games only” subscription.

The table shows the costs for the paper edition, including postage, and the games only subscription.

	UK	Rest of World	Games only
10-issue (1 year) subscription	£36.00	£47.50	£5.00

To subscribe, send your name, address and payment to *To Win Just Once*, 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF, UK or TWJO@pevans.co.uk. You can pay by bank transfer (contact me for the account details), by UK cheque (payable to Margam Evans Ltd) or by PayPal to Games@pevans.co.uk. Or subscribe online at www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO, where you can pay by credit card or PayPal.

However, when you have two of the same “Pair” (one of the types), you can play them immediately. They’re only worth a single point, but they give you an extra action – like taking another turn. There are also a few “Mermaid” cards that score for having cards of the same colour (which is otherwise irrelevant).

Once you have seven points, you can call a halt to the hand. In a clever twist, you either score up immediately or challenge the other players to beat your score. This gives them one extra turn each before scoring their cards. If anyone beats you, your score is minimal. If you succeed, you get a bonus and their scores are minimal. Note the scores and the game ends when somebody hits 30 points – most points wins.

This proved to be an intriguing game. In particular, you can either take cards from the deck or from one of the discard piles in your turn. This makes what – and where – you discard important. Especially when you know what someone’s collecting. After dropping behind initially, Tom succeeded in a challenge and took a substantial lead. I pulled in front of him by doing the same on the following hand and then ended the next hand quickly to win the game.

We had a couple of issues with the icons, but the game went down well with everybody. And the cards are illustrated with charming pictures of intricate origami shapes.

Reading Matter

Geraldine and I are fans of the *Shetland* and *Vera* television series, both of which are based on books written by Ann Cleeves. So I thought I should try her books, starting with the first in each. *Raven Black* begins the “Shetland” novels and introduces us to police Inspector Jimmy Perez (an ancestor was allegedly a Spanish Armada survivor). However, it is some time before Perez makes an appearance.

First, Cleeves introduces us to the characters around the murder that is the focus of the story. We learn about each person’s current circumstances, something of



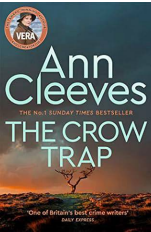
One draw deck, two discard piles and I’ve just played a pair of crabs: 1 point and take a card from one of the discard piles.

their background, their hopes and fears and what they think of the other characters. The police are there only as a passing presence to start with. This is very different from the TV series which centres on the Lerwick police station and the police’s investigation of the crimes.

When Perez does appear, we get his internal life added into the mix. I reckon this is a much younger Perez than the television version. Here he’s only just returned to Shetland, for example, and is agonising over whether he should give up the police and return to take over the family’s smallholding on another island. Whereas he’s the established head of the Shetland police on TV.

Because of the way Cleeves has introduced the characters, we get to see what the witnesses are withholding from the police as well as what they actually tell Perez. His approach seems to be to soak up information from all and sundry, apparently getting no closer to the culprit, until a final piece tells him (but not us, as we don’t know what was said) who dun it.

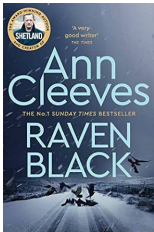
The arrest is suitably surprising (I never know who the culprit is) and then we have the repercussions on the people involved. The book is a hugely different approach from the television series – though I don’t know how you could reproduce Cleeves’ presentation in a visual medium (copious character voice-overs would quickly get tedious). I did not find the book as entertaining, but I was intrigued by how Perez’s career/life will progress from this point and whether it will connect to his depiction on television.



The first of the “Vera” novels is *The Crow Trap*. Again, it is some time before Chief Inspector Vera Stanhope appears (she does have a cameo at a funeral, but is thought to be a bag lady getting away from the cold). The first third of the book takes us through the life histories of the three women at the centre of the story: their current circumstances, their background, their hopes and fears and what they think of the other characters. Sound familiar?

When Vera does appear in her main role, she stomps about the area talking to all those involved. And I can just hear Brenda Blethyn (who plays the television Vera) delivering those lines. However, Blethyn’s portrayal is nothing like as coarse as the way Vera is described in the book. To alleviate her psoriasis, she keeps her legs bare (my own approach!) and wears large sandals (even when clambering up hill and down dale), not the wellies and waterproofs that Blethyn has.

As with the Shetland novel, the police are almost incidental to the story. Cleeves is focused on the people, not the investigation, while the TV show again concentrates on the police team. My problem with this is that I didn’t really care about the people and found the detail tedious. On the other hand, the crime and



Key

Animals	Symbol	Size in squares	Number on grid	Points Value
Bush	B	1	12	0
Monkey	M	1	12	4
Antelope	A	2	9	8
Snake	S	2	?	10
Gorilla	G	3	4	-12
Lion	L	3	4	15
Elephant	E	4	3	20
Other symbols				
	X		Missed shot	
UPPER CASE = this turn, lower case = last turn, Strikeout = dead animal				

Notes: animals go up and down or left and right, not diagonally, with two exceptions. Elephants are blocks of four squares; each Snake is two diagonal squares and moves by up to three squares a turn.

Animals only touch (if at all) at corners and only Snakes will go next to a Bush.

square at the same time, they share the points; if several players hit different squares of the same animal at the same time, they get the points for the square they hit.

Once an animal has been identified, subsequent shots share the points of new squares hit (no more points for the first square/s). So if players A and B hit the second square of that lion and C gets the third, C gets 5 points, A and B 2½.

An animal is dead when all its squares have been hit. No more points can be scored for this animal.

After 10 turns or when the board is clear (except for any snakes), the player with the most points wins.

What’s this all about?

This game is essentially a *Battleships* variant and is open to all readers of *TWJO*. The 20 x 20 grid represents a safari park that needs to cull some of its animals (except the gorillas). The players are hunters who’ve paid to bag trophies.

All you have to do each turn is nominate two squares to take pot-shots at: F9 and M17, say (the second is only used if the first misses). Letters (A-T) run across the top of the grid and numbers (1-20) down the side (A1 is thus the top left corner).

The first hit on each animal scores points in proportion to its size. For example, a Lion is three squares and worth 15 points, so the first hit scores 15/3 = 5 points. If several players hit the same

Scores

Player	Shots	This turn	Total
Alex Bardy	O14, P15	-2	11
Colin Bruce	A20	2	8.5
Charles Burrows	A6, A19	0	5.17
Mark Cowper	B18	1.67	18.03
Mike Dommett	O19	-4	1
Anthony Gilbert			9.43
William Hay	A17, A19	0	0.04
Andrew Kendall	A17, A20	2	13.83
Andrew Larder	Q13, R13	0	0
Nik Luker	T5, T6	0	14.71
Tim Macaire	C4, D7	0	5.33
Brad Martin	A17, B18	1.67	13.72
Graeme Morris	M14, N14	0	1.5
Rob Pinkerton	P15	-2	6.43
Mike Pollard	J19, J20	0	8.79
Eddy Richards	O15, M19	0	10.5
Chris Rudram			-3.5
Pam Udowiczenko	K3	-4	8.5
Ray Vahey			5
Matthew Wale	A19, B18	1.67	14.75
John Watson	C18	5	9.92
Graeme Wilson	M8, O15	0	3.3
Paul Wilson	A17, A19	0	5

Mark Cowper seals his win with Matthew Wale sneaking into second as Nik Luker doesn't score this turn, but gets third. Congratulations to Mark.

And, next time, I think we'll start another By Popular Demand – I've got a few weeks to decide on some questions...

Mark Cowper chips in at some length, "Hopefully everyone else will hit the same Lion, so I can hold my lead even if I miss. I paid more attention this time by making notes of my own shots to avoid duplication, then jumping on the bandwagon when someone else winged a beast. I also noticed that wherever there is a cluster of Antelope, there is usually a Lion lurking just outside, so shot into gaps nearby." Any Antelope-Lion grouping is purely accidental.

Graeme Morris is off on one: "Oops! RIP Noble gorilla. There goes my honorary membership if the WWF ("We didn't know you wrestled!" I hear you say). And so, to cap off yet another lamentable performance, here is my "two-gun salute" to the victor(s)."

Tim Macaire is "loosing off the last of my ammunition into the blue." That's blue spelt B-U-S-H.

Colin Bruce goes for the Lion and gets a Monkey instead, as does Andrew Kendall!

its solution are interesting and the Vera Stanhope in the book is closer to the character on television than the literary Perez is to his equivalent. My plan is to read the next Shetland book, *White Nights*, and see how it goes.

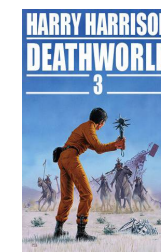
Getting back to the science fiction, I don't seem to have mentioned that the Harry Harrison omnibus e-book I picked up a while ago included *Deathworld* and its sequel, *Deathworld 2*. However, the third in the trilogy was absent. This was disappointing as *Deathworld 3* was my favourite of the three. Our hero is Jason dinAlt, a galaxy-wandering professional gambler with an intermittent psychic ability to alter the odds in his favour – not that Harrison makes much use of this after introducing him. In the first book he is coerced into helping the beleaguered inhabitants of the eponymous planet, whose indigenous lifeforms are relentlessly hostile and constantly adapting to the colonists' weaponry. It's good fun and has an interesting resolution.

Deathworld 2 (also known as *The Ethical Engineer*) sees dinAlt kidnapped by a zealot who wants him to "pay for his crimes". This leads to an interesting discussion, which has stuck in my memory for years, about the difference between "ethics" and "ethos". Prisoner and captor crash on another inhospitable world, where humans eke out a marginal living in nasty, brutish and short lives. It's up to dinAlt's skills (and ... flexible ethics) to keep them alive and find a way home. This one is enjoyable too.

Deathworld 3 was on offer recently, so I was quick to complete the set. This time dinAlt is trying to re-home survivors of the original Deathworld on another planet that has minerals to exploit. Unfortunately, it already has human inhabitants, but dinAlt thinks he can see a way of establishing his guys amongst them. The planet's single continent is spilt in two by a major geological fault that has left a miles-high cliff. The upper side of this is cold and wind-swept grasslands where warring nomadic tribes use an indigenous animal to provide mounts, food and almost everything else. And also where the minerals are. The other half is warm and fertile and supports the equivalent of a late-Medieval society.

DinAlt's plans go awry from the start, but he does make a connection with a tribal chief who has big ambitions: Temujin. Bit of a give-away this as the leader of this name in Earth's history is better known as Genghis Khan! Eventually, dinAlt figures out how to achieve his aim by... Well, that would be telling. The twist (of sorts) is clever and believable, though dinAlt's troubles are far from over.

The interesting thing about this trilogy is how different each one is. The link is dinAlt – a character to rival Slippery Jim di Griz as far as I'm concerned – and his ingenuity, creativity and stubbornness. I'm surprised Harrison didn't use him in more stories, but maybe one Stainless Steel Rat was enough.



Games Events

The latest Raiders of the Game Cupboard games day in Burton-upon-Trent (at the Waterside Community Centre) is on 21st September. It’s described as “an event for people like us who just want to take a day off real life and have fun.” What more could you want? Details at: www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk

A week later and Shake, Battle & Roll (formerly Stabcon South) takes place over the weekend (27th-29th September) at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel in Southampton. According to the website, “people play Board Games, Role Playing Games, CCGs, LCGs, Social/Party Games and all other related silliness.” It’s an open gaming event with the organisers providing a “large games library” on top of what people bring along. More information at www.shakebattleandroll.com

Swiggers: games club that meets on Wednesday evenings (co-ordinated on WhatsApp) upstairs at The Shipwright’s Arms, 88 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TF (next to London Bridge station) – though without me these days. For more info, see www.pevans.co.uk/Swiggers or the BGG Guild at boardgamegeek.com/guild/1672

UK Games Expo: 30th May – 1st June 2025 at the NEC. This is a public event that showcases games of all sorts with a huge trade hall plus demonstration and participation games and guests. For gamers there are lots of tournaments and open gaming. For details see www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk

Spiel: *the* board games event of the year. 3rd-6th October 2024, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany or see www.spiel-messe.com/en

MidCon: 1st-3rd November 2024 at the Derby Mickleover Hotel in Mickleover (two miles from Derby city centre). **MidCon** is a friendly board games convention, now in a comfortable modern hotel. It’s largely open gaming, but the new website allows games to be scheduled in advance – useful if you want lots of players for something. There’s also a Bring ’n’ Buy and a quiz on Saturday night. See midcon.org.uk

Trophy Hunter

Turn 10

This turn’s shots

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
1				x																
2				x		e	e					x		x			e	e		
3						e	e				G						e	e		
4			X																	
5					x		g	x						l	l	l			x	X
6	X						g											x	x	X
7				B			g						x					x		
8							x						X							
9		a						x	a										a	
10		a							a			l			e	e			a	
11												l			e	e				
12	x				m					a	x	l							x	x
13		x						m		a							X	X		
14													X	X	X				x	
15	a	a						l							X	G				
16				a				l			x								x	
17	X			a				l				x	m				a			
18	l	L	L														a			
19	X	X			a	a		x		X			X		G					
20	M									X										

Brad Martin enquires, “I knew there was something there. Now, that Lion is extinct, surely?” It certainly is, thanks to John Watson finishing it off. Mind you, several people pepper the ground around it.

Alex Bardy also has a question: “How has line 14 remained so empty for so long....!?” Maybe there’s nothing there. Though that’s a Gorilla, Alex.

Nik Luker muses, “Hmmm, tricky decision – finish off the Lion along with everybody else or take a couple of random shots and hope to bag a Monkey. Let’s take the random shots.” And miss.