

That would be enough

This has been issue 261 of *To Win Just Once*, published 26th January 2026. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2026

Deadlines

Orders for *Railway Rivals* to Mike by Friday 6th February 2026.

Orders for *LPBS* and to Pevans by Friday 13th February 2026.

(Probable next deadlines: 13th/20th March, 17th/24th April.)

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 – Mike can run a second four-player game if enough people are interested. So far that's Anthony Gilbert, Mark Cowper and Gerald Udowiczenko. "Only one more needed for a game of *Railway Rivals!*" (Working map and rules provided).

Star Trader – The list for the next game starts with Pevans, Mark Cowper and Anthony Gilbert. At least two more needed – and room for up to eight. (Rules provided)

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 261 was written and edited by Pevans with contributions from Mike Dommett. The *LPBS* masthead (page 20) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, as are the drawings on pages 27 and 29. Other illustrations are by Nik Liker (page 21), Bryan Lea (page 22) and Tim Wiseman (page 24). The hat on page 31 is by Roy Bleasdale (with AI 'assistance'). Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Pevans took the photos, except where noted, and played with Photoshop.

Printed and published by Margam Evans Limited
(A company registered in England and Wales, number 05152842,
Registered office: 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF)
Tel: 020 7183 6256, E-mail: TWJO@pevans.co.uk,
Web: www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO

To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)

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Game Designer
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Issue 261: Jan-Feb 2026
(LPBS 398: April 1677)

£2.25 (where sold)
and online at www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO

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ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank, Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
HF	Sir Hugo Furst	13	F	Comfy	Bdr-General/2 F Brigadier	5		Both	2	Graeme Morris
CS	Con Stantinople	13+43	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	QOC/HGds Brigade Maj.	6	Anne	Hunt	1	Pam Udowiczenko
Elf	Sir Elroi le Flingue	13+40	OK	Lt.Colonel	GDMD	7	Lucy	Both	4	Daniel Racke
FdB	François de Blancheport	12	36	Comfy	Colonel CPC	5	Freda	Both	4	Peter Farrell
PPuf	Sir Percival Puffington	12	F	Comfy	Bdr-General/1 F Brigadier	6		Hunt	5	Tony Taylor
AH	Arent Hayes	12+39	Poor	Lt.Colonel	CPC	4		Hunt	3	Mark Cowper
HS	Hugo Serre	11	F	Comfy	Captain KM	6		Hunt	3	Paul Murphy
MD	Maurice Danseur	11+40	Poor	Major	DG		Belle	Hunt	5	Andrew Whiteley
CPL	Sir Charles PiedLuminaire	10	F	Wlthy	B.Bdr-General PLLD	8		F&P	3	Nick Tyrrell
BC	Sir Barthélemy Chifflet	10+	F	Comfy	Major PM	6		Hunter	4	Charest
AA	Armand Alsace	9	16	Poor	Bdr-General	11		Hunt	4	Sebastian Emde
PDT	Pierre De Terre	9	F	OK	Major GDMD/LtGen's Aide (2nd	7		BG	2	Manoj Nair
CdF	Chemin de Fer	9	F	Comfy	Major RM/1 F Brigade Maj.	5			3	Rod MacDonald
JS	Justin Saad	8+	26	Poor		3		F&P	3	Gerry Sutcliffe
SDS	Steve De Sade	7	F	Comfy	Major GDMD/BdGen's Aide (3 F	5			5	Jon Dean
BT	Beau Taux	7	F	Poor	Captain 53F	4		F&P	4	Paul Robbins
CE	Charles Etfeevor	7	F	OK	Major 13F	3		F&P	4	Andrew Kendall
VdF	Vaux de Fon	6	10	Poor	Captain CPC	1		F&P	4	John Cooke
SBC	Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux	6	F	OK	Captain 53F	1		RP	2	Peter Card
MdP	Maximilien de Piquemaire	5	F	Comfy	Captain GDMD	6		RP	2	Max Pieksma
DJA	Dee Jean Aise	5	F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel PLLD	5			3	Jovan Bogdanovic
BdV	Beaumes de Venise	4	8	Poor	Private 27M	6		RP	6	Jeremy Tullett
HDF	Henri De Flection	4	F	Poor	Captain 13F	6		RP	4	Peter Jenkins
IP	Ignace Pardailon	3	1	OK	Subaltern GDMD	5		RP	3	Grégory Meurant

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
BeV	Count Ben e'Volence	24	64	Rich	B.General/2nd Army	Commndr	11		Flr	3	Ash Casey
GdB	Count Greg de Bécqueur	24	58	Withy	B.General/1st Army	Commndr	13	Bette	Flr	5	Anthony Gilbert
HDS	Count Henri DuShite	24	55	Fithy	Bdr-General		16		Flr	4	Dave Marsden
RS	Earl Rick Shaw	23	70	Rich	General/State Min.		3		Flr	6	Charles Burrows
BdLS	Count Bernard de Lur-Saluces	22	59	Fithy	Lt-General/Prov.Mil.Gov		20		Flr	3	Rob Pinkerton
TC	Count Terence Cuckpounder	22	F	Withy	B.Lt-General/Cds Brigadier		7		Flr	6	Mike Dommett
CdP	Earl Camille de Polignac	22	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General RFG/War Minister		6	Edna	Flr	4	James McReynolds
LSD	Marquis Louis Severin Dcartes	21	48	Rich	Bdr-General/3 F Brigadier		6		Flr	1	Chris Schotmann
JiT	Count Justin Thyme	20	35	Rich	B.Bdr-General QOC		18	Guinevere	Flr	2	Gerald Udowiczenko
ZUT	Marquis Xavier Ulric Turenne	20	28	Withy	B.General		4		Flr	1	Bob Blanchett
FXC	Earl Frank X Change	20	F	Withy	B.Bdr-General CG/Min w/o Port		12		Flr	4	Nigel Monaghan
ZvT	Baron Zeold von Tu	19	54	Withy	B.Lt-General/1st Div	Commandr	8		Flr	3	Tim Macaire
JH	Sir Jacques Hatt	18	55	Withy	B.General/3rd Army	Commndr	4	Cath	Flr	3	Joel Halpern
LR	Marquis Louis Renault	18	47	Withy	Lt-General/2nd Div	Commandr	3	Maggie	Flr	4	Roy Bleasdale
CdN	Baron Claude de Nord	18	F	Rich	B.Bdr-General KM		4		Both	4	Andrew Larder
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	16-	2	Fithy	Fld Marshal		24			6	Ben Brown
BS	Earl Balzac Slapdash	16	32	Rich	B.Bdr-General DG		21	Therèse		5	Matthew Wale
TTT	Sir Tiny Thierry Toothpick	16+	59	Comfy	Lt.Colonel DG/CPS		6	Madeline	Flr	1	Jason Fazackarley
NM	Baron Neville Moore	15	F	Rich	Major RFG/Capt.K's Esc		1		Hunt	2	Cameron Wood
MdG	Martin de Garnache	15	F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel RFG/1st Div	Adjutant	3		Both	4	Bill Howell
CA	Earl Come Asiouar	15	F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel CG/FMshl's Aide		9		Both	4	Jacob Andersson
FS	Baron Felipe Savant	14	F	Rich	Captain RFG		5		Both	4	Brick Amundsen
TCdS	Thibault Chanson de Skye	14+	43	Poor	Bdr-General/4 F Brigadier		6	Katy	Both	5	Bill Hay
BLC	Botte Le Chimiste	13	40	OK	Colonel GDMD/Cav Div	Adjutant	2	Eve	Both	4	Tym Norris
ID	Sir Ian Dediette	13	25	Comfy	Major QOC		3		Both	2	Nik Luker
HJ	Marquis Hugh Jeneaux	13	F	Rich	B.Bdr-General ALC/Chancellor		9		Hunt	3	Bruno Giordan
MHD	Sir Marcel Hatch Dupree	13	F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel RM		7		Hunt	4	Graeme Wilson
HWB	Baron Hector William Boone	13	F	Withy	Major RFG		9		Both	5	Paul Wilson

Chatter

Happy New Year!

The start of 2026 marked the end of my latest course of phototherapy. Specifically, ultra-violet radiation to combat my psoriasis. This has meant visiting the hospital three days a week for eight weeks to spend an increasing amount of time (5 minutes by the end) standing in a booth being bombarded by stronger and stronger UV light. (Disappointingly, after eight weeks being irradiated I still don't have any super-powers!)

Making the journey mid-morning meant it only took 15 minutes (when Geraldine was working there, it could take 30 or more). But I've noticed a couple of common things in those 15 minutes. First is flashing blue lights. There have only been a couple of days (New Year's Eve was one) that I haven't encountered at least one emergency vehicle with its lights on. The record was an unmarked police car, followed by an ambulance, then a marked police van (one of those minibus affairs), a second ambulance, a first responder car and, finally, a fire engine. All heading in the same general direction...

The second thing is lorries labelled "HGV Training". Presumably training Heavy Goods Vehicle **drivers**. Again, there were very few days when I didn't meet/follow at least one of these. I'm guessing the shortage of HGV drivers will soon be over.

Earworms

Last month it was Christmas carols, natch. "O Come all ye Faithful" in particular. I managed to avoid Wham!ageddon right up until "Last Christmas" featured in the GCHQ advent calendar puzzles. Sigh.

This month it's been the Eurythmics "Angel" which popped up as incidental music in a TV programme and I've not been able to shake since.

'Tis the season

There's nothing much to add to my 2025 mince pie reviews. I didn't get to try the Waitrose ones that Which? had top of their list, so ended up sticking with the Sainsbury's bakery offerings.

Oh, and what do I see the first time I go into Sainsbury's in the new year? A huge display of hot cross buns! Only three months early.

Beery Advent

Last issue had the highlights from the first 40% of my advent calendar, so here's what I've picked out from the remainder (it did take me until the new year to finish them off). There were an awful lot of pale yellow, hazy, hoppy beers usually called "adjective Pale Ale" to drink, but I managed.



Choc-work Orange (5% alcohol by volume) from Outland, a craft beer brand from Hall and Woodhouse (aka Badger – www.badgerbeers.com) whose beers were a formative part of my beer drinking). It's a nice-looking stout with a definite chocolate nose. The taste is chocolate and then there's a real tang, which could be orange, as it goes down. Lovely: 9, though I'm tempted to deduct half a point for the groan-worthy name.

S189#14 (4% abv), a craft lager from Williams Brothers (williamsbrosbrew.com) in Alloa (Scotland). Apparently, it's the fourteenth recipe from their S-189 yeast. It looked like a Pilsner, it smelled like a Pilsner and it tasted like one. A surprisingly tasty Pilsner, without the harshness they often have. If I have to drink Pilsner, this would be my choice: 8/10.



Barghest (4.3%), a stout from Ossett Brewery (ossett-brewery.co.uk) in Yorkshire. Dark brown in the glass with a smoky, roasted aroma. It tasted smoky, too, with maybe some chocolate as well. And very dry: 8/10.

Auntie Flaunty (6%), a "Hopfenweisse" from Brothers in Law Brewing (www.brothersinlawbrewing.nl) in Utrecht. Yes, it's pale yellow and hazy. But it's a wheat beer. With lots of hops. So the aroma is wheat beer, with the hoppiness underneath. And the taste, again, was dry and hoppy. Very nice – that's a 9.



Wee Heavy (7.5%), a heavy from Wiper and True (wiperandtrue.com) in Bristol. Dark brown in the glass with a flat head, it smells of malt and caramel. That's the rich taste, too, with a hint of sweetness as it goes down. I'd not tried a heavy before (it's a traditional Scottish beer style), but I'll certainly be drinking it again: 8.



Femmes Fatales

No	Name	SL	Attr	Lover
66	Morgane Le Fay	24	B	
67	Justine Caisse	22	I	
65	Therèse Le Vert	21	B/W	BS
7	Chris Pacquette	19		
61	Bette Noire	19	I/W	GdB
64	Edna Bucquette	18	W	LSD
3	Kathy Pacific	17	B	
54	Madelaine de Proust	17		TTT
35	Katy Did	16	I	TCdS
42	Maggie Nifisent	16	B	LR
55	Jacky Tinne	16		
52	Guinevere d'Arthur	15	B/W	JiT
10	Frances Forrin	14	B	
48	Fifi	14	B/W	
62	Alison Wunderlandt	14		
11	Laura de Land	13		
26	Ella Fant	13	B	
27	Lucy Fur	13	B	EIF
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	CS
23	Agnes Sorel	11	I/W	
40	Sheila Kiwi	11		
63	Carole Singeurs	11		
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	FdB
39	Thomasina Tancenjin	7	I	
5	Belle Epoque	6	B/I	MD
24	Violet Bott	6	I/W	
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

	Col	LCol	Maj 1	Maj 2	Capt 1	Capt 2	Capt 3	Capt 4	Capt 5	Capt 6
	CdP	MdG	HMB	NM	FS	N2*	N2	N3	N4	N5
	FXC	CA	N6	N2	N3*	N6	N3	N4	N4	N6
	CDn	N1	N1	N3*	HS	N6	N2	N4	N4	N6
	BS	TTT	MD	ID	N6	N3	N4	N4	N4	N6
	OO	CS+	CS+	ID	N4	N4	N4	N4	N4	N6
	ALC	N6*	N6*	N6	N6	N6	N6	N6	N6	N6
	CPC	FdB	AH	N3+	N3+	N6	N6	N6	N6	N6
	RM	N6	MHD	CdF+	N4	N2*	N2	N2	N2	N2
	CDMDPM	BLC	EIF	PDT	SDS	N5	N3	N2*	N3	N3
	13F	CPL	DJA	N6	N1	N3	N2	N2	N2	N2
	53F	N2	N1	N4	N4	N5	N5	N5	N5	N5
	27M	N8	N3	N4	N4	N5	N5	N5	N5	N5
	4A	N6	N6	N4+	N4+	N5	N5	N5	N5	N5
	69A	N3+	N3+	N3+	N3+	N3	N3	N3	N3	N3
	Gscn	N5	N5	N5	N5	N5	N5	N5	N5	N5

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	(Assault for Mar-May)	
Colonel	N1	N2	N1	F4	RNHB
				N4	N6
Attached	2 Sqn GDMD				
Also at the Front					
	Guards Brigade (Royal Foot Guards, Cardinal's Guard, King's Musketeers)				
	1st Foot Brigade (Royal Marines, Picardy Musketeers)				
	2nd Foot Brigade (13th Fusiliers, 53rd Fusiliers)				
	Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers				
	Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons				

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

Battle Results

Guards Brigade: 4	53rd Fusiliers: 2
Royal Foot Guards: 4	Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers: 4
Cardinal's Guard: 1	Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons: 1
King's Musketeers: 5	Frontier regiment 1: 2
1st Foot Brigade: 4	Frontier regiment 2: 6
Royal Marines: 3	Frontier regiment 3: 4
Picardy Musketeers: 5	Frontier regiment 4: 5
2nd Foot Brigade: 2	RNHB regiment: 2
13th Fusiliers: 4	

Other Appointments

King's Escort: Ensign N	Captain NM
Cardinal's Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Aides: to Crown Prince N	to Field Marshal CA
Provincial Military Governors: BdLS/N/N/N/N	
City Military Governor N	Adjutant-General __
Inspectors-General: of Cavalry N	of Infantry N
Commissioner of Public Safety TTT (until end June 1677)	
Chancellor of the Exchequer HJ (until end August 1677)	
Minister of Justice __	
Minister of War CdP (until end February 1678)	
Minister of State RS (until end February 1678)	

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

And, last in the box, Crimes Against Brewing (8%), a chocolate fudge sundae pastry stout (no, really!) from Neon Raptor Brewing Co (neonraptorbrewingco.com) in Nottingham. I got lots of chocolate and some coffee in the aroma and chocolate and vanilla in the taste. Yummy, but so rich I was glad it wasn't in a larger can: 8.



That's a total of ten excellent beers in the 24, with 13 very drinkable ones and one which will remain anonymous.

Online stats

I got TWJO 260 out on 20th December and the PDFs were downloaded 134 times in the rest of the month. December saw 85 downloads for the PDFs of TWJO 259, making 213 in six weeks or so. And issue 258 was downloaded 47 times for a total of 270 since publication.

Letters

Never mind the weather in the UK, Tim Macaire is worried about the Antipodes.

Storms in the part of the country not covered by snow; makes you wonder what New Zealand is like at this time of year.

Balmy, I expect. Jonathan Palfrey sends his own new year greetings.

Happy new year 2026—welcomed in with a bang as Trump is discovered encouraging illegal immigration (Maduro and wife).

Well, that's one way of looking at it.

I wish I was on that N17!
(Stone walls and the grass is green)

I mentioned last issue that I got to see the Saw Doctors on their 2025 end-of-year tour, after missing them in 2024. Nephew Tom joined me for the evening.



The Saw Doctors in full swing.

Unlike 2023, when I last saw them, the band had some support this time. This was Noelie McDonnell, who’s part of the Saw Doctors these days (and is also from their home town of Tuam, just rather younger!). He gave us some of his own material. This was unfamiliar songs, of course, but I could see these being performed by the whole band. Who knows?



Lots of bald heads in the audience!

After a decent interval the stage lights went down and the boys came on to the Superman theme, which I found amusing. When the lights came up, the audience was hit by a wall of guitars (okay, one was a mandolin) across the stage and then by a wall of noise as they launched into “World of Good” (as quoted in last issue.)

And we were off into a fine selection of the Saw Doctors’ repertoire, with a sprinkling of new songs. This was something they didn’t have in 2023 and suggests renewed enthusiasm from the old dogs (they’re only a few years younger than me!). I certainly felt they were more energetic on stage – one of the things that attracted me to the band in the first place was their energy on stage – possibly helped by having a couple of younger guys in the line-up.

The audience (including Tom and me) was singing along to most of the songs (some older stuff was unfamiliar to Tom – “Presentation Boarder”, for example), but went into overdrive for “I Useta Lover”, their biggest hit (with its unforgettable opening line: “I have fallen for another, she can make her own way home”). Followed by the gymnastics of “Tommy K” and one of my favourites, “Red Cortina”. And “N17” wrapped up the set. Tom and I were surprised they hadn’t left this for the encore.

When they did come back on the third song was one that should be familiar to all my readers: “To Win Just Once”. Another great anthem that got everybody going again. The band has the habit of covering a 1960s number in the middle of their encore. In the past this has been “Downtown”, but this time we had “Waterloo Sunset”, led by Anto Thistlethwaite. Brilliant! And they finally wrapped up with “Hay Wrap” (“Bale ’em. Bale ’em, Hay! Hay!”), probably their silliest song ever.

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

Justin Thyme (voted cause 15:2) versus Claude de Nord.

Terence Cuckpowder (voted cause 16:1) versus Tiny Thierry Toothpick.

Camille de Polignac versus Henri DuShite.

Duels held over to June

Charles PiedLuminaire versus Henri De Flection.

Tables

Army Organisation and 1677’s Summer Deployment

First Army (Field Ops)	GdB/N/N5/N
First Division (Field Ops)	ZvT/N/MdG
Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - RFG CG KM	
Dragoon Brigade (Field Ops) - GDMD PLLD	
Cavalry Division (Field Ops)	N1/N/BLC
Horse Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - DG QOC	
Heavy Brigade (Field Ops) - ALC CPC	
Second Army (Siege)	BeV/N/__/N
Frontier Division (Siege)	N1/N/N3
Frontier Regiments (Siege)	
Third Army (Defence)	JH/N/N3/N
Second Division (Defence)	LR/PDT/__
3rd Foot Brigade (Defence) - 27M 4A	
4th Foot Brigade (Defence) - 69A Gscn	
RNHB Regiment (Defence)	
Third Division (Defence)	N2/N/N3
1st Foot Brigade (Defence) - RM PM	
2nd Foot Brigade (Defence) - 13F 53F	

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	TC/__/__
Horse Guards Brigade	N2/N/CS
Heavy Brigade	N3/N/N3
Dragoon Brigade	N6/N/__
First Foot Brigade	PPuf/N/CdF
Second Foot Brigade	HF/__/N4
Third Foot Brigade	LSD/SDS/N4
Fourth Foot Brigade	TCdS/__/N3

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

Duels

Results of April's duels

Beaumes de Venise (gains 1 Exp) beat his friend Barthélemy Chifflet (with PPuf).

Charles Etfeevor didn't turn up to fight Hugo Furst and lost SPs.

Arent Hayes (with FdB, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Beau Taux (with ID).

Beaumes de Venise (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Henri De Flection.

Beau Taux declined to meet Botte Le Chimiste as he was under half Endurance.

Balzac Slapdash declined to meet Con Stantinople as he was under half Endurance.

Balzac Slapdash declined to meet Justin Thyme as he was under half Endurance.

Beau Taux declined to meet François de Blanchefort as he was under half Endurance.

Beau Taux declined to meet Vaux de Fon as he was under half Endurance.

Louis Severin Descartes (with JH & ELF, gains 1 Exp) beat Tiny Thierry Toothpick (with MD) - voted cause 16:1.

Grudges to settle next month

Justin Thyme (Sabre, Seconds ZUT & RS, adv.) and Maurice Danseur (Sabre, Seconds LSD, 2 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Justin Thyme (Sabre, Seconds ZUT & RS, adv.) and Tiny Thierry Toothpick (Dagger, Seconds MD, 4 rests) have mutual cause for enemy regiments.

Con Stantinople (Sabre, Seconds JS & TCdS, 1 rests) and Maurice Danseur (Sabre, Seconds LSD, adv.) have mutual cause for enemy regiments.

Balzac Slapdash (Rapier, adv.) and Con Stantinople (Sabre, Seconds JS & TCdS, 5 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Balzac Slapdash (Rapier, adv.) and Justin Thyme (Sabre, Seconds ZUT & RS, 5 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

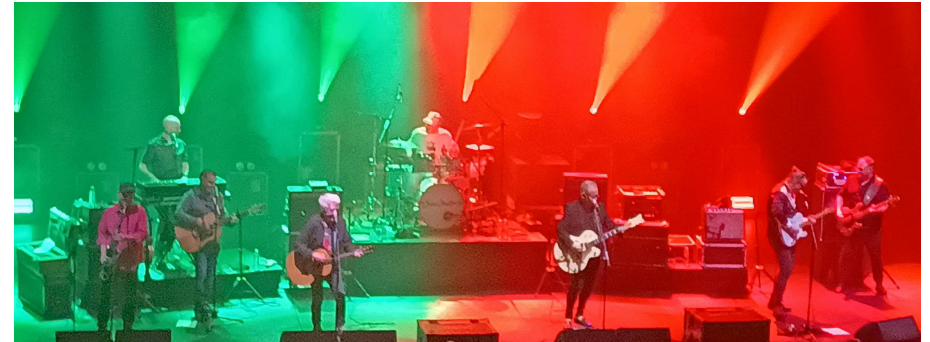
Balzac Slapdash (Rapier, adv.) and Ian Dediette (Sabre, Seconds GdB, 5 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Con Stantinople (Sabre, Seconds JS & TCdS, adv.) and Tiny Thierry Toothpick (Dagger, Seconds MD, 1 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Ian Dediette (Sabre, Seconds GdB, 2 rests) and Maurice Danseur (Sabre, Seconds LSD, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Ian Dediette (Sabre, Seconds GdB, adv.) and Tiny Thierry Toothpick (Dagger, Seconds MD) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

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



Oh, the Green and Red of Mayo!, I can see it still, its soft and craggy boglands, it's tall majestic hills, where the ocean kisses Ireland and the waves caress its shore and the feeling it came over me to stay for evermore... for evermore! (Cue sax...)

Much as I love the Saw Doctors' music, you have to see them live to get the full impact. With extra guitars in the line-up, I felt they were a bit 'heavier' this time – noticeable, in particular, on "Clare Island – and Tom agreed. Mind you, when I first saw them, back in 1991, I reckoned there was a punk edge to their performance. Over the years more traditional Irish/folk influences have come in (I suspect ex-Waterboy Mr Thistlethwaite may have contributed to this) – Wikipedia even describes the band as "folk-rock". Or maybe they've just mellowed.

Completing the Austrians

Pevans and Evert finish off the expansion

Specifically, the *Austrian Army* expansion to *Commands & Colors: Napoleonics*. Long-term readers will know that I'm a fan of the *Commands & Colors* family, particularly *Napoleonics*. I have been playing the different expansions for this game with my regular opponent, Evert, for some time. (We play online, using Vassal – www.vassalengine.org – and aim for a game a week.)

There are 20 scenarios in the Austrian expansion and we play each twice, swapping sides for the second game, so that's 40 games in all. (Because the scenarios are not balanced, playing both sides and combining the scores evens this out.) With interruptions for holidays (and other real-life events), it actually took us 16 months to complete the Austrian scenarios.

The final scenario is the third covering the Battle of Wagram in April 1809 and focuses on Davout's attack on the Austrian left on the second day of the battle. Here's the set-up (from CommandsAndColors.net):



The French (blue) are at the bottom of the picture, the Austrians (off-white) at the top. The river that crosses the battlefield can be forded. While either player holds a majority of the town hexes (outlined) they have victory banners: one for the Austrians, three for the French. The French also get one for occupying the Stone Tower (centre) and a banner for each unit while it's on the Austrian side of the blue line. The Austrians start with the banner for Markgrafneusiedl and 12 are needed for victory.

Historically, the Austrians attacked first, but Davout's men rode this out and then attacked the Austrian defensive positions on the hills behind Markgrafneusiedl. In game terms, it looks like the French could easily score a lot of banners for getting units onto the hills, so my Austrians will have to defend hard. (Tricky when they run away quickly and advance slowly!)

After initial skirmishing, first blood went to the Austrians when a lone French Line infantry attacked the lower part of Markgrafneusiedl and fell to its opposite number in the town. That makes the score 2:0 to me with the banner for holding the majority of the town.

Evert continued to attack on the left of the battlefield only to lose another French line to the defenders' muskets: 3:0.

Then the French cavalry cut loose on the right (Evert played a "Cavalry Charge"), taking out an Austrian Cuirassier and General Nostitz. That's 3:2.

Poetry Corner

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

Justine, you were heartbroken when
Count Seine died.

I was there to console you when you
cried.

Now here are my orders to guard our
frontiers.

That is my duty, and my greatest fear
Is to leave you in Paris worrying for
me.

So I say, worry not, consider yourself
free,

Find support and affection in some
other's arms –

That way I'll be sure that you come to
no harm.

† Frank

Points Arising

Next deadline is 13th February

Grégory Meurant reports that he's
recovering well from surgery (yay!)
and expects to resume his place as IP
with effect from May 1677.

And May is the last month before the
campaign season starts, so make the
most of your month in Paris, soldiers!

Absent friends

IP Grégory Meurant was floated.

ZUT Bob Blanchett 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.

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.

Announcements

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

Charles PiedLuminaire asks NPC
Brigadier of Dragoon Brigade to
resign

Charles PiedLuminaire applies for
Brigadier of Dragoon Brigade

Henri De Flection applies for Aide to
Brigadier-General

Louis Renault asks NPC Brigadier of
Dragoon Brigade to resign

Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux asks
NPC Major 1 of 53rd Fusiliers and
NPC Major 2 of 53rd Fusiliers to
resign

To: His Majesty, King Pevans
Sire,

It's terrible. I swear you've fallen victim to some sinister sorcery cast upon you by that arch-fiend, Cuckpowder.

Do you know that I attempted to see you this month, to alert you to the immense danger that our country is facing but the Guards, men I had commanded a mere month or so ago, refused me and my ministry officials entry? It's clear Cuckpowder has ensorcelled them, too. There has to be a way to stop the wretch before it's too late... I almost had him last year: GUILTY he was – arrested, prosecuted, adjudged GUILTY and sentenced to DEATH. Only to have that black-hearted witch Morgane Le Fay get his charges reduced to some feeble fine! She needs to go, too, Your Majesty. That was another one I nearly had until some halfwit masquerading as an interim Minister of State let her off.

However, take heart, Sire. There is a way to save the realm: make me Commissioner for life AND give me the joint powers of arrest and sentencing. That should do it. We'll soon have the country cleaned up.

Now, I know you've recently appointed that Rick Shaw fellow as MoS, but he ought to be focusing on other matters, like appointing Ministers, attending government meetings and stuff like that. There's no need for him to interfere with the judicial side of things.

So... if you can just get a royal decree drawn up and have it dropped off at the Bastille, I'll get straight back to work. Apart from Cuckpowder, Le

Fay, that Lois de Lô woman, Justin Thyme, Hayes, Renault and de Bécqueur, is there anyone you'd like sorted out? Just let me know, Sire, and I'll ensure they're brought straight in by my lads to a damp, dark cell in the Bastille.

Your most loyal servant,

† Lt. Colonel Toothpick
Commissioner of Public Safety
Dragoon Guards

To: Earl Rick Shaw
Minister of State

Your Grace,

Please allow me to be the first to congratulate you upon your recent appointment as Minister of State.

As His Majesty's Commissioner of Public Safety, you and I will need to work closely together to steady a country that is suffering greatly at the hands of the diabolist Cuckpowder and his coven of licentious witches. You'll no doubt be glad to know that I have contacted King Pevans with a suggestion to address the problem, I await His Gracious endorsement before then getting down to work. This will leave you more time to concentrate on other State matters while leaving the judicial side of things to me. Rest assured, though, that I'll keep you fully updated as to which is the latest traitor to lose his/her head.

Sincere regards,

† Lt. Colonel Toothpick
Commissioner of Public Safety
Dragoon Guards



Apart from the initial set-up, the pictures are saved from our game on Vassal. Ordered units are shown by an elliptical shadow below them. Lines show units' movements, yellow circles show the attacking unit, red the latest target and blue those that have already attacked - or can't. And you can see the victory banners along the top and bottom edges.)

As the cavalry battle continued a French Light cavalry fell, then two Austrian Light to make the score 4:4. A "Rally" card let me recover one Austrian cavalry to eliminate an opposing Heavy cavalry and restore some infantry to finish off the damaged French Line infantry on the bridge (left of centre). That's me back in the lead 6:4, but there's very little left on the Austrian left flank.

Evert pressed the French attack on the left again, only for me to use a "Bayonet Charge" to counter-attack and remove a French Line (7:4) The French artillery took out an Austrian Line in exchange. (7:5) And my guys got another French unit, while the Austrian cavalry put the last French infantry on the left into square. (8:5)

Time for the French cavalry to get back in the act: they eliminated the Austrian Horse artillery as they moved into the centre. (8:6) However, the Austrian muskets took out the Light cavalry. And Gen Montbrun. (10:6)

The French attacked across the battlefield ("Forward" is such a useful card). On the right, the French cavalry removed the last Austrian cavalry. Infantry from the centre attacked the town and, with artillery support from the left, eliminated the French infantry holding it and moved in. The French also got a victory banner for their cavalry on the hills while the Austrians lost one for no longer having the majority of the town. This evens up the score at 9:9.

In turn the Austrian infantry re-took the town, eliminating the French unit there, and chased the French cavalry off the hills – 10:8. Evert pushed infantry forward in the centre and took out an Austrian infantry. (10:9) But I reclaimed the banner for the town and removed one of those advanced French units to win 12:9.



Phew! That was quite a fight: 28 turns in just under two hours. And a week later we re-convened for the re-match and my turn to play the French.

My starting hand contained two "Cavalry Charge" cards, an "Assault Right" and an "Attack Right". So of course I flung the French cavalry on the right flank against their opposite numbers. First blood to me and the score is 1:1 (Evert has one for holding the majority of the town).

Social

Soldiers of the Third Army:

During the second week of May, I will hold a gathering for all soldiers serving in this army. I will cover all costs. Ladies are welcome. If there are other folks who believe it would be helpful to improve military coordination with the Third army, please let me know.

† Brevet General Jacques Hatt



The Maggie Nifisent hat

The straw hat has, in the centre of the crown, a large Bow made from a yellow/gold coloured ribbon, surrounded by a generous quantity of Lily of the Valley, that cascades over the edge. The band is made from Navy Blue velvet. Pinned beneath the lower edge of this velvet band are clusters of orange Siberian Wallflowers, inextricably entwined with yellow flowers of Ragwort. The brim is filled with white ostrich feathers. "The colour of the bow, the white feathers and flowers, and the band are inspired by the King's royal

standard," explains Louis. "The yellow ragwort is not there for its colour but as an obnoxious weed entwined with Orange Wallflowers."

Marquis Renault and Miss Nifisent invite the Ladies and Gentlemen of Paris to a May Ball during week 2, formal dress for men and ball gowns for the ladies. Music and refreshments will be courtesy of your hosts.

Unfortunately, the invitation does not include members of the Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers due to their differences with my aide, Captain Pierre De Terre.

Personal

Dear Sirs,

I can see how some of you would be offended by my actions, but I feel I must make it clear I was only following orders and the letter of the law, however distasteful some of you may have found it.

I have given the matter a great deal of deliberation and then the other night the answer came to me in a dream.

In the dream I was a piece of cheese being chased by a giant orange mouse. At first I thought this might be a result of my late-night supper and a drop of wine. Then I realised it was a sign. A sign to resign as one of Tiny Toothpick's weasels as it was not healthy. And a sign to avoid camembert and pickles before bedtime.

God Save the King !

† CdN

Press

Announcements

**** 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.
† Count Thyme

B. Gen le Marquis Camille de Polignac requires an aide. Volunteers are requested to send their applications so that the chosen candidate can be hired by May.

Regiment Needed. † JS

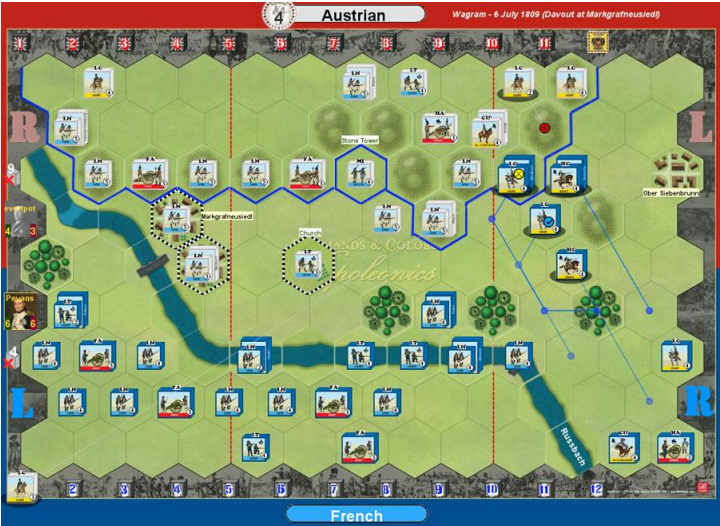
**** Aide Required ****
I am looking for a competent aide. Please contact me with your credentials.
† (Brevet) Bdr-General Count Thyme

Matters of Honour

For the attention of Henri De Flection, Captain of the 13th Fusiliers
As one who has recently arrived in Paris from the rural areas of France, it is tempting to refer to you as a "country bumpkin". However, I will not stoop to such epithets. Instead, I will try to explain your transgression in terms that you will understand. In Paris, as I am sure is also true in whatever benighted backwater you hail from, it is considered bad form to "Plough another man's furrow". This you have done through ignorance or

malice. If ignorance, then I predict your career in the 13th Fusiliers will be short, because any soldier who fails to reconnoitre a position before advancing will swiftly be returning home to Paris in a box. If malice, then I see no reason for such spite, but small minds have little use for logic. On one level you have helped me, in that you have revealed the fickle nature of Violet's affections, and I will abandon her forthwith (more fool her since I have just gained a Knighthood and would have been able to entertain her in places previously beyond her reach). However, my gratitude for this revelation does not counteract the grievous insult you have offered me and I expect to meet you on a field of honour when we are next both in Paris. I could possibly accept a sincere apology, if I believe you are truly repentant, but you would have to convince me that you had learned your lesson from this unfortunate situation. I would regret bloodying my blade for what may have been an innocent mistake.

† B.Brigadier-General Charles Piedluminare
Princess Louise's Light Dragoons



But the Austrian horsemen fought back! Some lucky dice took out General Montbrun as well as his Light cavalry and it's 1:3.

My second "Cavalry Charge" took out two more Austrian Light cavalry (3:3), only for Evert to move up some Light infantry (!) to finish off a Heavy cavalry (3:4). I continued to push forward with the cavalry, but lost the other Heavy cavalry and Gen Grouchy. That's now 3:6.



Evert flung infantry from the centre forward with some joining the fight on the right, eliminating another French cavalry (3:7) and forcing the last one to retreat.

Time for the French infantry to get into it. Attacking centre right with a “Bayonet Charge” eliminated two Austrian infantry: 5:7.



Continuing their attack in the centre, the French infantry took out an Austrian Light infantry (6:7) and occupied the church (in the centre), albeit with a very damaged unit. In response the Austrian infantry eliminated a French Line right of centre (6:8), followed by two more as they re-took the church (ignoring my combined arms attack on the right). At least Gen Friant escaped. That puts the score to 6:10 and it's looking grim.

Feeling confident now, a “Bayonet Charge” saw the Austrian infantry take the offensive. This removed a French Line at the cost of a Militia unit (charging regular troops?!). 7:11 and it's nearly over.

Finishing off an Austrian Line in the centre and having some Cuirassiers behind the Austrian lines took the score to 9:11. But a sudden attack on the left saw battered French Light infantry succumb to Austrian muskets: 9:12 and it's all over in another Austrian win.

The Royal Foot Guards meet stiff resistance for a change. All boss man Camille de Polignac gets is a Dear John letter. There's a Mention for Lt-Col Martin de Garnache (“Did better than his boss”). And a similar one for senior Major Hector William Boone, who becomes a Baron on the strength of it. Junior Major Neville Moore just gets a MiD, while there's no reward for Captain Felipe Savant.



Rebuffed from their own attack, the King's Musketeers retire to lick their wounds. CO Claude de Nord is Mentioned (“At least he rallied his men”). As is Captain Hugo Serre. There's a perfunctory Mention in Despatches for Guard Brigadier Terence Cuckpowder: “Could have been worse”.

In First Foot, the Royal Marines make some progress – enough that Lt-Col Marcel Hatch Dupree is able to loot well over a thousand crowns' worth of goodies. Not so the Picardy Musketeers, but there's still a (brief) Mention (“Standing firm”) for Major Barthélemy Chifflet, followed by a Knighthood. Brigadier Percival Puffington sees his rank (Brigadier-General) made permanent and Brigade Major Chemin de Fer gets a Mention.

The 53rd Fusiliers are the second success of the month, bringing some glory to Second Foot Brigade. Both Captains, Beau Taux and Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux, receive Mentions in Despatches (“Good work”). Their comrades in the 13th don't do as well, but there's still a MiD for Captain Henri De Flection and promotion for Captain Charles Etfeevor (who can afford the extra horses required for his new rank). Both of those rewards come to Brigadier Hugo Furst as well. He is promoted to full Brigadier-General alongside his Mention and monopolises the looting to gain fifteen hundred crowns' worth. And a Knighthood comes his way to boot.

Cavalry support comes from the Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers and the Princess Louisa Light Dragoons. The Cuirassiers' patrols are uneventful, but commander Hugh Jeneaux appears in the Despatches (“Very necessary work”). Conversely, the Dragoons are in the right place to chase down fleeing Spaniards – and their plunder. Leader Charles PiedLuminaire seizes well over a thousand crowns' worth of rewards, but Lt-Col Dee Jean Aise amasses a full two thousand worth.

Second squadron of Grand Duke Max's Dragoons is attached to Frontier regiment 1 and brings them success in battle. Major Pierre De Terre is Mentioned twice (“Dragoons!” “With the Frontier troops?”), while Captain Maximilien de Piquemaire concentrates on looting (getting over two thousand crowns' worth) and Captain Steve De Sade takes promotion to Major. Plus fifteen hundred crowns' worth of plunder that more than covers his purchase of two more horses. ❖

Who was where – in the bawdyhouses

Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Bawdy houses	MHD + FC AH + FC AA + FC ID + FC	CE + FC	VdF + FC: Mug 0 BC(G 40) + FC	JS + FC: Mug 0 MdP + FC RS: Mug-23

Shows who went to the red light district: FC = Female Companionship; Mug n = Mugged & amount lost; (G) = Gambled.

Who was where – round and about

Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Practising	FdB - Sabre BS - Rapier VdF - Sabre JdG - Rapier BeV - Sabre BdLS - Foil	BS - Rapier JiT - Sabre VdF - Sabre HDS - Cutlass JdG - Rapier BeV - Sabre ID - Sabre BdLS - Foil	FdB - Sabre HDS - Cutlass BLC - Sabre JdG - Rapier RS - Sabre LSD - Sabre BeV - Sabre ID - Sabre BdLS - Foil	HDS - Cutlass JdG - Rapier BeV - Sabre BdLS - Foil

Regimental Duties BdV BdV IP

Busy haranguing the King TTT

Shows everybody else: Weapon = Weapon practised with; For those doing nothing: -club = not a member of a club; -Cash = insufficient funds; -SL = insufficient Social Level; ??? = Toadying to unknown host.



That was 28 turns (exactly the same as last time) of a hard battle that took just over two hours – a bit longer than last time. And the aggregate scores? A draw at 21:21! (Our second draw.)

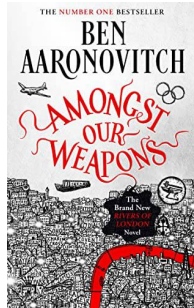
You’ll find this report (with more pictures) in my blog on BoardGameGeek, along with my reports on the other games: <https://boardgamegeek.com/blog/8392>

And that’s all 20 of the Austrian scenarios played – 40 games in total. Of those 40 games, I won 21 and Evert 19. Looks like we’re pretty evenly matched. However, looking at the aggregate scores for the 20 scenarios, I won 11 to Evert’s 7 with 2 draws. I guess I do better than Evert when I lose a battle!

Reading Matter

I’ve just finished novel number 9 in Ben Aaronovitch’s “Rivers of London” series, *Amongst Our Weapons* (go back to TWJO 250 for my thoughts on the previous one). Hmm, I thought, is he referring to... Then I spotted the section titles: “Surprise...”, “Fear...”, “Ruthless efficiency...”. Yes, it’s an extended Monty Python reference – one of the characters even says, “I wasn’t expecting that!” later in the book.

The plot starts with a dead body. A dead body with a hole through its body where its heart used to be. And, when our apprentice police wizard Peter Grant



investigates, definite signs of magic being used. The dead person turns out to have been looking for a ring. A magical ring, apparently. And not only that, it's one of a set of seven (cue *Lord of the Rings* reference – by the characters).

Peter's police enquiries are thus hunting a killer, while his magical enquiries are finding the rings and working out what they do. Luckily, the two overlap considerably. As well as this, Peter has the imminent arrival of his twins on his mind. His heavily-pregnant partner, Beverley Brook, is making arrangements for the big day, which will definitely involve other rivers of London...

As usual, the book is an entertaining romp, mixing the magical with the police procedural (nay, bureaucratic – Aaronovitch has a good line in the policeman's paperwork lot) and the personal. And Peter, being Peter, is not only trying to solve the case, but to save everybody involved as well. I was a bit surprised to find the talking foxes appearing so often, but other characters re-appear as well.

One of the reasons I enjoy these books is that Aaronovitch's London is one I recognise. This time he's rude about Great Eastern Street, which amused me as I worked in an office there 1999-2001 (it's the only place I've worked where the taxis arriving in the evening were not picking up workers going home, but delivering people to the bars and clubs – that's Hoxton for you). This story even has Peter leave London to go 'up North' – something he manages without the apparent trauma incurred the first time he left the city (in book 5, *Foxglove Summer*).

I've worked out one of the reasons I find it hard to stop reading these books. Aaronovitch ends his chapters on cliffhangers. Which means I just have to continue to the next one to see what happens. I wonder if this is something transferred from his TV scripting days? However, he does break up his chapters into sections – switching from one scene to another. So I've taken to stopping reading at one of these breaks when I need to, rather than finishing the chapter.

Anyway, *Amongst Our Weapons* is highly recommended, but you should really start with the first book in the series, *Rivers of London* (see TWJO 228), to get the full experience.

Games Events

Next up is SoRCon: 20th-22nd February at the Holiday Inn in Basildon (Essex). As the website says, it's "a board games convention run by an enthusiastic group of boardgamers." It's essentially a weekend of open gaming in a friendly, inclusive atmosphere – there is a bring 'n' buy and the infamous 'QuizAHunt'. Full details on the website: www.sorcon.co.uk

Then it's Elroi, Greg, Louis R and Thibault – the latter two finally finding some pace. Trotting up next are Jacques and Thierry, chatting as their horses practically march in step. François, Rick and Zeold are spared last place which goes, jointly, to Botte and Justin S.

Dismounted and cleaned up a bit, the riders rejoin their ladies (in most cases) to be greeted by the Dauphin. Already wearing hers, Lucy hands Elroi his "very flamboyant Easter hat". However, Prinny is not so welcoming to those who haven't participated. Thus Armand Alsace and Vaux de Fon are given the cold shoulder. Beaumes de Venise is aware of his Highness's preferences and watched the race from the cheap seats where he finds a whole group in orange uniforms and face paint cheering on "Tiny" Thierry.

There are thin pickings for the footpads this month. Their victims are Ian Dediette, but he's spent his cash, and Beaumes de Venise, who has only a couple of crowns left. It's mixed results for those socialites who go courting: Henri DuShite succeeds (bad news on its way to Camille de Polignac), while Rick Shaw fails.

The strangest sight in Paris this month is a mob (okay, it's not really a mob, more a large group) of orange people congregating outside the Louvre. This is, of course, "Tiny" Thierry Toothpick's entourage (of "Public Safety Ministry employees") and he is at their head, demanding an audience with the King "upon a matter of national security!" Thierry harangues the guards on duty: "I used to be your Major until recently"; "I'm a Lieutenant Colonel now, you know"; There's skullduggery afoot"; "His Majesty must see me, I'm the Commissioner of Public Safety!" When Thierry's entreaties meet blank faces, he starts ranting that "Cuckpowder must have bewitched His Majesty into becoming a recluse... poisoned his mind against his ministers..."



To Cambrai!

The French offensive against the Spanish Netherlands continues, bolstered by substantial reinforcements. The focus this month is Cambrai, which gets the attentions of First and Second Foot Brigades as well as the Guards. The major success is the Cardinal's Guard, storming the ramparts to go looting. Frank X Change, commanding, gathers nearly a thousand crowns worth of loot. This is on top of his double Mention in Despatches ("Outstanding!" "One for His Eminence!"). However, number two in the regiment, Lieutenant-Colonel Come Asiouar, grabs twice as much booty – though not quite worth two thousand crowns. His own MiD ("That's the way

to do it!") brings him an Earldom as well.

Who was where – with the ladies

Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Anne	Out	Out	Out	Out
Belle	Out	Out	Out	Out
Bette	Out	Out	Out	Out
Cath	Out	Out	Out	Out
Edna	Out	Out		Out
Eve	Out	Out		Out
Freda		Out		Out
Guinevere	Out		Out	Out
Justine		RS fails		
Kathy	HDS succeeds ex-CdP			
Katy	Out	Out	TCdS at home	Out
Lucy			Out	Out
Madelaine	Out	Out		Out
Maggie	Out	Out	Out	Out
Morgane		ZvT at home		
Thérèse			Out	Out

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; st.down = stood down to rivals.

HandyCon’s Prostate Cancer games Day is on 1st March: 9 am to 9 pm at Liston Hall in Marlow (Bucks). A day of open gaming for a good cause. See the HandyCon website at: www.handycon.co.uk

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: 29th-31st May 2026 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 space. For details see www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk

Spiel: *the* board games event of the year. 22nd-25th October 2026, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen, Germany. Publishers from around the world show off their latest games and, importantly, let people play them. And buy them. See www.spiel-essen.de/en

MidCon: early November 2026 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

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

	UK	Rest of World	Games only
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Fictionary Dictionary

It is the end!

Final scores

Hemipode, it turns out is another name for the button quail, a small terrestrial bird of genus Turnix found in tropical and sub-tropical regions.

While zizith is, in Judaism, the tassels or fringes attached to the corners of a prayer shawl.

Top scorer this round is Mike Pollard with 6 points spread across his two definitions.

With our leader, Colin Bruce, not scoring this round, he’s left on 34 points. Nik Luker’s score of four puts takes him to 33! So close, but still second. Graeme Morris also nets 4 more points to maintain his third place.

Congratulations, Colin, and thanks to all who participated.

The scores		
Player	This round	Total
Colin Bruce	0	34
Mark Cowper	1	16
Mike Dommett	2	16
Anthony Gilbert	5	25
William Hay	0	17
Andrew Kendall	2	19
Andrew Larder	0	8
Nik Luker	4	33
Tim Macaire	1	18
Nigel Monaghan	0	1
Graeme Morris	4	29
Jonathan Palfrey	1	21
Mike Pollard	6	23
Pam Udowiczenko	2	14
Bruce Whitehill	0	3
Andrew Whiteley	0	2

By Popular Demand

Start-up

Time for a new all-reader game and a return to this one. I have cribbed the rules from the *Variable Pig* website. You can find the originals (with lots of variants) at: <http://variablepig.org/rules/bypop.html>

Each turn the GM lists six categories and a letter. For each category, players name something that fits it and begins with the initial letter. They score points equal to the number of people who give the same answer. Most points at the end wins.

Example: The initial letter is A and the category is cities in Holland. 13 people give Amsterdam as their answer and score 13 points each, 6 people suggest Alkmaar and score 6 points each, 3 suggest Arnhem and score 3 points each.

Racing with horses

And then the runners and riders line up for this year’s Jacques As Memorial Stakes with his Highness the Dauphin putting up a generous prize pot of 5,000 crowns. For the betting man, the early favourites are Balzac Slapdash and Justin Thyme. The Prince himself starts the race, dropping a fragrant handkerchief from his prime viewing position in the main grandstand, amidst the spectating ladies.

The dash to the first corner sees Con Stantinople (riding Blinky this time) take the lead, half a length up on “Tiny” Thierry Toothpick. Justin Thyme is on Thierry’s tail with Louis Severin Descartes just behind him. Arent Hayes is just in front of the pack. The first row of this consists of Balzac, Elroi le Flingue, Maurice Danseur and Ian Dediette. Then it’s Greg de Bécqueur, Zeold von Tu and Jacques Hatt, closely followed by François de Blanchefort, Justin Saad and Louis Renault. Botte Le Chimiste and Thibault Chanson de Skye are at the back.

Con gives his horse its head and it streaks down the back straight to enter the final corner over two lengths clear. Despite being in front of the pack of the pack, Thierry’s horse seems to have taken a knock in the corner and can only trot. He is passed by Arent and Louis SD, both at top speed, then the cantering Justin T and the galloping Ian and Maurice, now beside Justin. Balzac, Greg and Jacques come alongside Thierry with Louis R just behind. Elroi is another whose mount is struggling. He’s next, beside Thibault, who’s charging hard. Zeold has dropped back to join François and they’ve been caught by Rick. Botte is still at the back, but has at least caught up with Justin S.

Onto the final straight and it’s a sprint to the line. Seeing the big gap behind him, Con eases off, cantering to a win by two lengths. Arent and Louis SD can get no more from their horses and drop back. It’s Maurice who hurtles past them to claim second place. Just half a length behind all the way to the line is Balzac. Ian catches Louis SD on the line for joint fourth, and Justin T is alongside Arent as sixth equal.

Who was where – in (or outside) the Prix d’Or	
Where	Week 4
Prix d’Or	CP FdB + Freda CP JS CP BS + Therèse CP TCdS + Katy CP JiT + Guinevere CP TTT + Madelaine CP ZvT CP AH CP BLC + Eve CP EIF + Lucy CP RS CP LSD + Edna CP GdB + Bette CP CS + Anne CP ID CP MD + Belle CP JH + Cath CP LR + Maggie BdV
Outside Prix d’Or	VdF (Prinny) AA (Prinny)
Shows who was in or outside: CP = Toadying to Crown Prince; (id) = expected host.	

Parties without horses

The Jacques As Memorial Stakes horse race is clearly the major social event this month. However, it's not until the end of April, so there's plenty of time for other parties. We kick off with Louis Severin Descartes and Edna Bucquette holding court at the Fleur de Lys. Half a dozen socialites attend, most with their lady friends in tow. Elroi noisily congratulates the host for his victory in court and offers schemes to ensure the downfall of the Tangerines. There's no trouble between the guests, but Maurice Danseur deserts Belle Epoque to pick a fight with his regimental enemies. Maurice is in Grand Duke Max's and two members of the Queen's Own are also in the club – Justin Thyme and "Tiny" Thierry Toothpick are both members and the subjects of Maurice's challenges.



At the same time, Thibault Chanson de Skye (who's re-scheduled his loans) and Katy Did welcome Con Stantinople (with Anne Tique) and Justin Saad for a peaceful drink.

Come the second week and Louis SD sees his guests dwindle to Greg and Jacques. A whole new bunch of people (apart from Elroi le Flingue who's switched hosts) are in the Fleur as the guests of Louis Renault and Maggie Nifisent to discuss campaign strategies for Third Army. Elroi is one of the few to provide much input to the discussion, offering "daring and impractical suggestions for the Third Army this campaign season: 'What if you imported elephants from Africa and mounted cannon on them?'" There are no disputes here but, in Hunter's, Con Stantinople and Maurice Danseur argue the relative merits of their opposed regiments. While Justin Saad is left outside Hunter's as he's early for the next week's Easter Egg hunt. "I'm here for the Easter Egg hunt," he tells everybody.

Said event is hosted by Con and Anne (wearing a substantial bonnet covered in yellow flowers) with a prize for the lady with the best Easter bonnet as well as for whoever finds the most eggs. Lucy Fur, accompanying Elroi, wears a bonnet topped with peacock plumes woven into the shape of a fleur-de-lis. Maggie Nifisent, on Louis Renault's arm, has another ornate assembly of flowers (see Press), but also wears a strong perfume to counter the acrid scent of the yellow Ragwort. Belle Epoque wears "a bonnet in the shape of a hatching egg with a little chick's head peeping out", which beau Maurice is very proud of. Steve De Sade claims Thomasina Tancenjin is wearing "the most ostentatious Easter bonnet Paris has ever seen". However, it's Maggie's cleverly composed display that wins the prize – a very large, very solid chocolate egg. Con seems happy to have his regimental enemies attend, which means another exchange between him and Maurice. Balzac Slapdash joins in on Maurice's side and Justin Thyme backs up Con.

I suspect I've got the hardest job: deciding on the categories! So I'll cheat and use some of the same ones as last time. We'll run for 10 turns and see what happens.

Turn 1 categories

- Let's be geographical for the first turn (again):
- 1 A British mountain;
 - 2 A British river;
 - 3 A traditional English county;
 - 4 An English town (but **not** a city);
 - 5 A capital (of a country) and
 - 6 An island.

All beginning with the letter H, please.

My answers have already been recorded.

Send your list to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF or to TWJO@pevans.co.uk by 13th February 2026.

Brat's Hill (Railway Rivals game 19 – RR2559LD)

Turn 7

Welsh Interstate Train Service steamed into an early lead, followed by Seaside Railways. Locomotive Observation Steam Train Company completed its central north-south line and is in last place, while Cart and Barrow closed the gap a little with Seaside Railways.

Race results

Race	From		To		WITS	SR	LOST	CAB
1	13	Port Carlisle	31	Distington	20		10	
2	26	Whitehaven	34	Ravenglass	20+3			10-3
3	61	Carnforth	41	Barrow				20
4	46	Grange over	22	Cockermouth			+5	20-5
5	52	Appleby	14	Wigton	20	10		
6	65	Ingleton	56	Hawes				
7	S5	The South	45	Windermere		20		
TOTAL					63	30	15	42
JR = Joint Run; ERP = Exchange of Running Powers								

Builds and Points

WELSH INTERSTATE TRAIN SERVICE (WITS), Mark Cowper – Red
Starts: Whitehaven
Builds:
(B11) – B12 – Egremont
(M61) – Kirkby Stephen
Points: 73 -3 +7 +63 = **140**

SEASIDE RAILWAYS (SR), Rob Pinkerton – Blue
Starts: Carlisle
Builds:
(D72) – E73 – Ingleton
(Aspatria) – K7 – I8 – Cockermouth – H9 (3 to WITS, 3 to LOST)
Points: 94 -12 -6 +2 +30 = **108**

LOCOMOTIVE OBSERVATION STEAM TRAIN COMPANY (LOST), Gerald Udowiczenko – Black
Starts: Port Carlisle
Builds:
(N23) – N24 – A65 – A67 (1 to WITS)
Points: 34 -12 -1 +3 +15 = **39**

CART AND BARROW RAIL (CAB), Chris Rudram – Green
Starts: Barrow in Furness
Builds:
(Distington) – C10 – Harrington – B9 – Whitehaven (3 to WITS)
(Harrington) – C8 – Workington (L31) – Morecambe (2 to SR)
Points: 47 -7 -5 +42 = **7**

Next turn’s races

Race	From	To
6	65 <i>Ingleton</i>	56 <i>Hawes</i>
8	11 Carlisle	62 Morecambe
9	15 Aspatria	25 Harrington
10	21 Maryport	51 Penrith
11	33 Egremont	44 Lakeside
12	32 Ullock	66 Settle
13	S3 Any Port	53 Kendal
14	S1 Scotland	42 Ulverston

GM Notes

Players can enter up to five races each round – plus any held over from a previous turn (shown in italics above). Make it clear if you’re using Joint Running, or Exchange of Running Powers in your orders.

You may spend up to 10 points building after the races (including payments to other companies – so you could pay a lot more if building parallel).

You cannot build over bodies of water, only rivers.

**Orders to Mike Dommett, 12 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ
or by e-mail to mike_dommett@yahoo.co.uk
by 6th February 2026**

Who was where – in (or outside) the Fleur

Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Fleur de Lys	JIT + Guinevere TTT + Madelaine LSD + Edna . ZVT . BLC + Eve . EIF . GdB + Bette . MD + Belle . JH + Cath LR + Maggie	LSD + Edna . GdB + Bette . JH + Cath LR + Maggie . FdB + Freda . TCDS + Katy . TTT + Madelaine . BLC + Eve . EIF	ZVT(G) JH + Cath	
Bothwell's	TCdS + Katy . JS . CS + Anne			
Hunter's		AH AA CS + Anne MD + Belle	AH AA CS + Anne . BS + Therese . JIT + Guinevere . EIF + Lucy . GdB + Bette . MD + Belle . LR + Maggie	
Outside Hunter's		JS (CS)		

Shows who was in or outside a club: . = Toadying to character above; (G) = Gambled; CP = Crown Prince; (id) = expected host; **bold** = first visit to new club; underline = first time mistress seen in public with this beau.

Charles PiedLuminaire has applied to be Brigadier of the Dragoons without apparently noticing that this position is taken. So next month will be about getting the incumbent out. However, in expectation of this post, Charles has already resigned as Second Division Adjutant.

Hugo Furst offers Henri De Flection the opportunity of being his Aide. Neither seems to have spotted Henri has the rank of Captain and thus is not eligible to be the Aide to a Brigadier-General. What Hugo needs is a promotion (before Henri gets one) so that he can then ask him to be Aide to a Lieutenant-General. So he volunteers the Second Foot Brigade for some action. This comes as something of a surprise to members of the 13th (Charles Etfeevor and Henri) and 53rd (Beau Taux and Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux) Fusiliers.

Crown Prince Cuirassier CO François de Blanchefort wants to get rid of the senior Major in his regiment – presumably so that a more junior officer can be promoted. He deploys some influence to make this happen, but it's not enough.

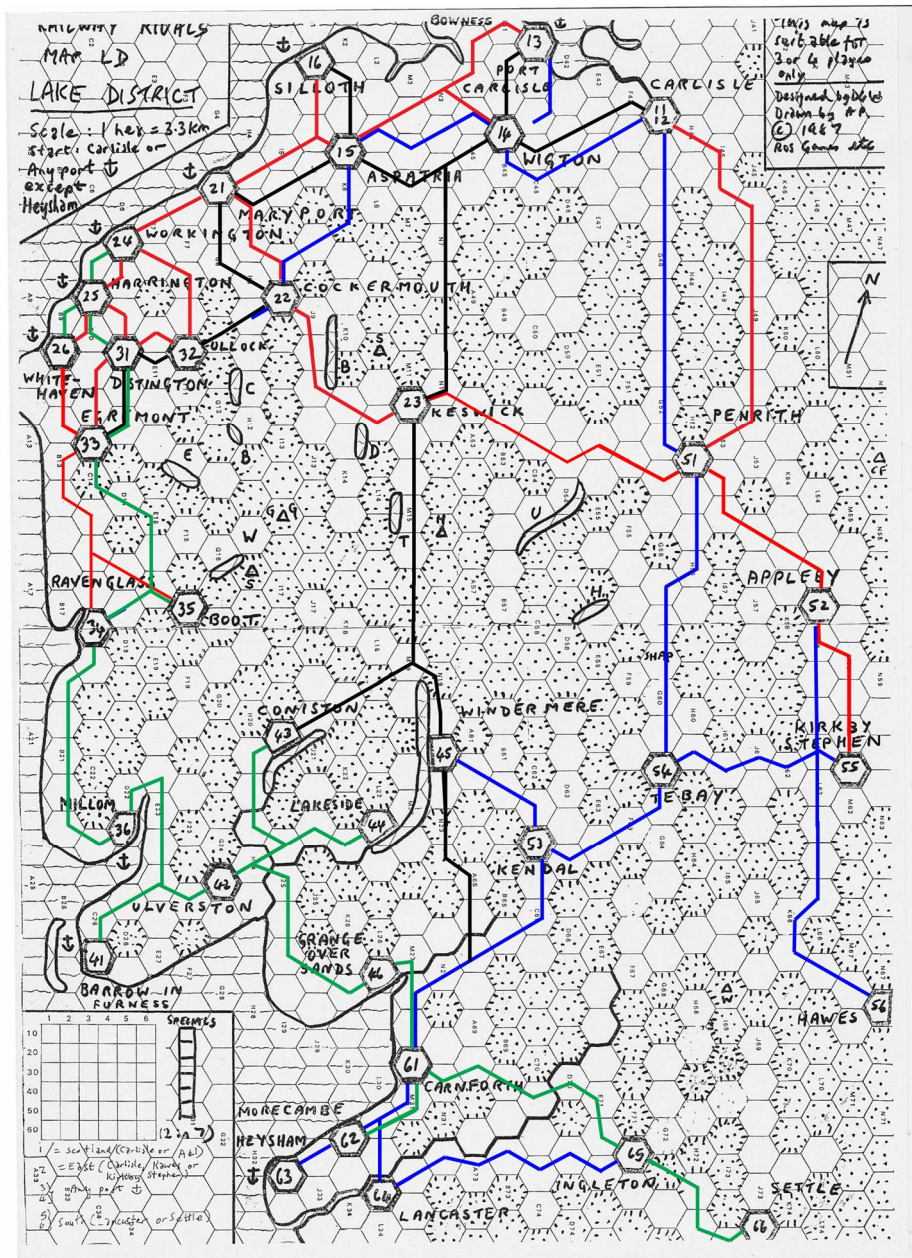
No favours are needed to get rid of the Dragoon Brigade Major. Maurice Danseur, who holds the post, resigns from the Grand Duke Max's, losing both his rank and his appointment. He is quickly signed up for the Dragoon Guards by Balzac Slapdash and buys his way back to the rank of Major – thanks to a substantial gift from his new CO. This is in the wake of Thierry Toothpick purchasing the Lt-Colonel's rank.

In Government circles, Frank X Change quits his job as Minister of Justice a couple of months early. The new Minister of State, Rick Shaw, keeps him in government as a Minister without Portfolio.

Marching for the Low Countries alongside the Second Foot will be First Foot Brigade, whose members are given their marching orders by Brigadier Percival Puffington. This takes the Picardy Musketeers (including Barthélemy Chifflet) and the Royal Marines (with Chemin de Fer – as Brigade Major – and Marcel Hatch Dupree) away from Paris.



Not to be outdone, Pierre De Terre volunteers his squadron of the Grand Duke Max's and Maximilien de Piquemaire and Steve De Sade come along with that. Maximilien pauses only to repay his loan – something the moneylenders really appreciate from debtors who may die soon.



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 15). You will also need (access to) a copy of the published rules to *En Garde!* (see www.engarde.co.uk).

**Orders for May 1677 to Pevans at 180
Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10
8UF, UK or lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk
by 13th February 2026**



April 1677 (398)

Spring finally arrives in Paris and the flowers cheer everybody up – even those with cold steel in their hands, heading for a (potentially) deadly rendezvous. First up, Barthélemy Chifflet is taking his rapier to face a similar weapon in the hands of Beaumes de Venise. Beaumes is both the bigger of the two and more skilled, but Barthélemy has Percival Puffington to bolster his courage. Barthélemy tries to stop the attacks he expects, but Beaumes settles for a standard lunge. This goes straight through Barthélemy's block to score first blood. Miffed, Barthélemy responds with a lunge of his own. Beaumes ignores the wound and lunges again, this time eliciting a surrender from his opponent.

After cleaning his sword, Beaumes trots round the corner to his meeting with Henri De Flection. Henri is another rapier user and, again, more slightly built and less skilled than Beaumes. Beaumes follows the same strategy as his last duel: lunge and lunge again. Unlike Barthélemy, Henri gets his parry right and stops the first lunge, drawing first blood with his riposte. However, Beaumes continues with his lunges. The third attack meets Henri's own lunge and is followed by simultaneous cuts. Henri surrenders.

Next up are Charles Etfevor of the 13th Fusiliers versus Hugo Furst of the 13th Fusiliers. Ah. Realising their predicament, neither man turns up for their encounter, preferring the loss of status to the disgrace that would follow a duel. Hugo treats his comrade to breakfast instead.

Arent Hayes, seconded by François de Blanchefort, has the sole advantage of using a sabre against the rapier of Beau Taux, whose second is Ian Dediette. Arent starts with a parry, but Beau lunges afterwards to score first. Arent launches into a furious slash, hitting Beau with the slash and then a cut. This last blow lands at

the same time as a slash from Beau. The damage from the sabre has told, though, and Beau surrenders.

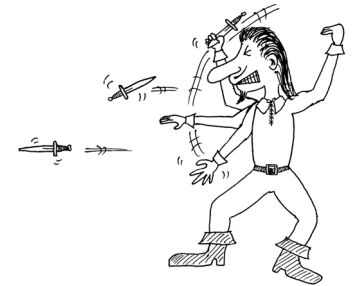
He's now sufficiently injured to be able to decline any further fights, disappointing Botte Le Chimiste, François de Blanchefort and Vaux de Fon.

Balzac Slapdash's old injuries are such that he doesn't even need a duel this month to be able to skip his meeting with Con Stantinople.

This leaves us with just Louis Severin Descartes's challenge to "Tiny" Thierry Toothpick. Paris voted that Louis had cause by a large margin (16:1) and the two men duly turn up at the appointed time. Thierry has heard that, first, his opponent "wishes this to be to first blood" and, second, that Louis would prefer him not to fight with daggers. However, the rules are strict and both men must use their nominated weapon. As a compromise (!), Thierry agrees not to throw any of his knives.

Both men are of small, nay, tiny stature, emphasising the difference between Louis's sabre and Thierry's dagger. Elroi le Flingue and Jacques Hatt second Louis, while Maurice Danseur supports Thierry. Maurice makes it clear that "I do not support his having had the Marquis [Severin Descartes] arrested and tried for treason. I hope to see good displays of honour and will frown upon any displays of knife throwing (this is the field of honour, not a Circus ring!)." Both duellists launch into a furious slash to start.

The sabre cuts into Thierry while his own blade swishes through the air between them. They spin round and cut. Again, Thierry takes a wound while his weapon isn't even close to his opponent. Yes, he has forgotten to allow for the length (or lack thereof) of his dagger! Thierry surrenders while he's still conscious and his Tangerines quickly hustle him off for medical attention.



To Brigadier or not to Brigadier

Sticking with Louis SD, he has an eye on being Brigadier of Third Foot, rather than a Minister without Portfolio. Accordingly, he has asked the current Brigadier to step down. His request is given some force by the support of Greg de Bécqueur, Jacques Hatt and Rick Shaw. Faced with this pressure, the Brigadier quits. Rick then throws his weight behind Louis's application for the post and he is duly appointed Brigadier.

In a similar vein, "Tiny" Thierry has asked the Horse Guards Brigadier to resign. Balzac Slapdash and Thibault Chanson de Skye weigh in to support this. However, Botte Le Chimiste uses his influence in defence of the Brigadier, who stands firm against Thierry's demand.