

That would be enough

This has been issue 161 of *To Win Just Once*, published 14th January 2016. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2016

Deadlines

Orders for *Railway Rivals* and *Star Trader* to Mike by Friday, 29th January.

Orders for *LPBS*, *Great White Hunter* and any other contributions to Pevans by Friday, 5th February 2016.

(Next deadlines: 4th/11th March, 15th/22nd April, 20th/27th May)

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 – the latest game is under way. Pevans and Mike Clibborn-Dyer are waiting for the next one. Working map and rules provided.

Star Trader – the next game has just started and there's room for a couple more players. Rules provided.

Online games

A Few Acres of Snow (at yucata.de): Pevans

Agricola (at www.boiteajeux.net): Pevans, Alex Everard

Brass at brass.orderofthehammer.com: Pevans

Castles of Burgundy (at www.yucata.de): Pevans

Concordia (at www.boiteajeux.net): Pevans

Puerto Rico (at www.boardgamearena.com): Pevans, Brad Martin, Al Tabor

Through the Ages (at www.boardgaming-online.com or boardgamearena.com): Pevans, Al Tabor

Vinci (at www.yucata.de): Pevans

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 161 was written and edited by Pevans. The *LPBS* masthead (page 25) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, as are the drawings on pages 26 and 27. The illustration on page 31 is by Nik Luker. Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Photos were taken by Pevans, who played with Photoshop.

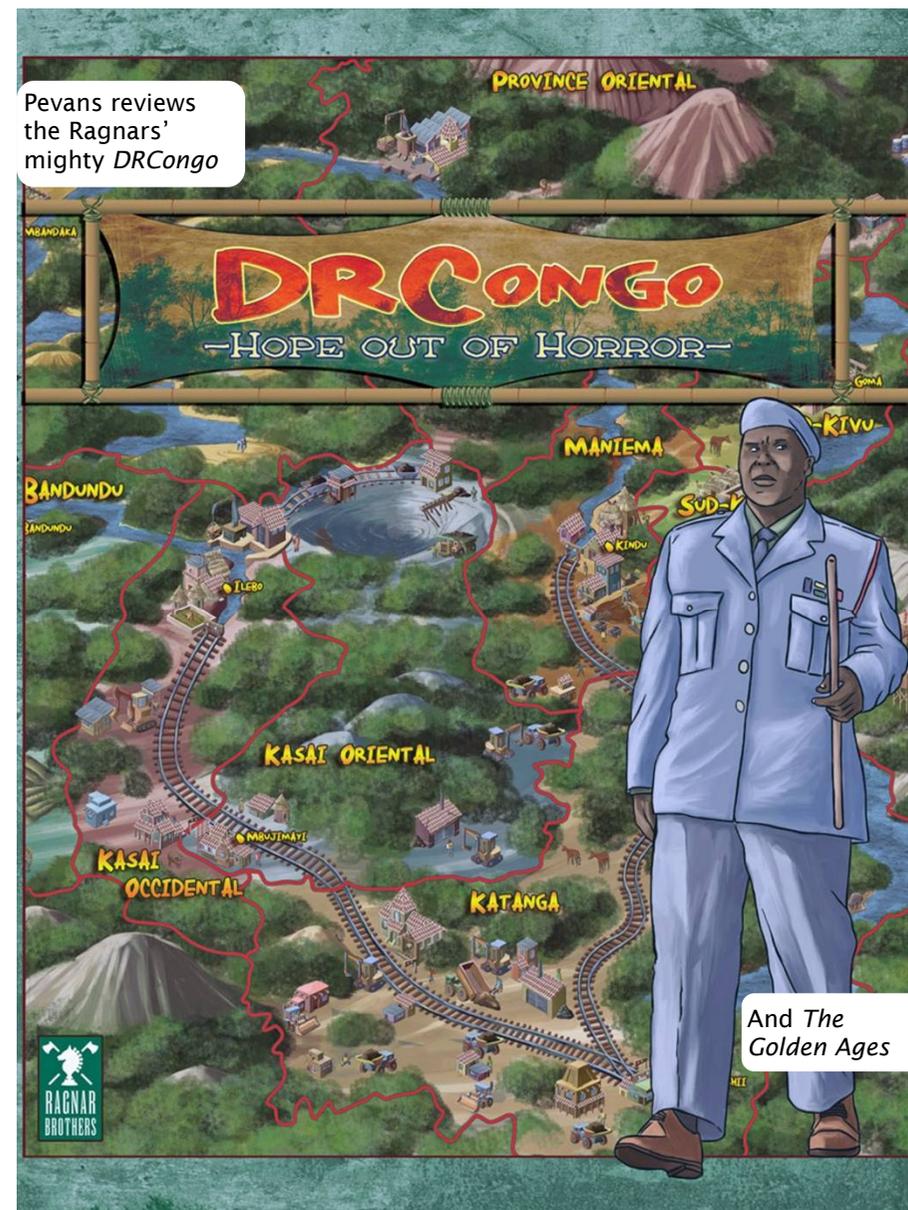
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To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)



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ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank,	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
GB	Grégoory Bonnissel	10	20	Comfy	Captain	GDMD	2	BG	3	Mark	Nightingale
AdF	Alan de Frocked	10	F	OK	Major	CG	3	Hunt	2	Charles	Burrows
CdM	Con d'Masses	10	F	Comfy	Captain	RFG	6	Hunt	2	Craig	Pearson
JE	Jean Ettonique	10	F	Comfy	Major	DG/HGds	7	Hunt	5	Tony	Hinton-West
CT	Claude Talon	10+	35	Comfy	Major	GDMD/Drgn	4	Anna	BG	4	Cameron Wood
XFH	Xavier Four-Hollandaise	10+	31	Comfy	Major	13F/13F	4	Leia	Hunt	2	Francesca Weal
KdM	Kidder de Margaux	9-	2	Comfy	Major	GDMD	6	BG	6	Gary	Phillips
HG	Humphrey Gocart	9	25	Comfy	Captain	PLLD	3	Frances	Hunt	3	Pam Udowiczenko
MED	Maurice Essai Deux	9	12	OK	Captain	KM	4	BG	3	Olaf	Schmidt
FsdM	Florent Sans de Machine	9	10	OK			3	Hunt	4	Nik	Luker
Jdl	Jean d'Ice	9	F	OK	Captain	CG	5	Hunt	3	Tym	Norris
PM	Percy Mystic	9	F	OK	Major	ALC	5	BG	3	Ray	Vahey
CDL	Coeur De Lion	8	20	OK	Major	PM/1 F	5	Ada	BG	3	Graeme Wilson
BdLS	Bernard de Lur-Saluces	8	14	OK	Colonel	13F/3rd Div	5	Adjutant	BG	2	Rob Pinkerton
AFD	Allan Fa-Dân	8+	37	Poor			6	Ella	BG	4	Gerald Udowiczenko
PN	Pépé Nicole	7	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General	69A	5	Josephine	BG	3	Colin Cowper
CLD	Charles Louis Desapear	7+	48	OK	Lt.Colonel	27M	1	David	RP	4	Martin Jennings
X2		6	F	OK			5	David		2	William
FAG	Felix Anton Gauchepied'er	6	F	OK	Captain	QOC	5	Jason		4	Fazackarley
X3		5	RIP					Pete			Holland
CdC	Cyrano de Camembert	5	RIP					Dave			Whiffin
GF	Granville Ferferfchaclloff	3+	17	Poor	Private	GDMD	5	Paul		4	Appleby
CA	Charles Asnovoice	2-	2	Comfy			4	Gerry		4	Sutcliffe

An F under SPs means that the character was at the Front, RIP means that he died.
 + against SL means it went up this month, - means it went down.

Cash: Poor = <500, OK = 500-1500, Comfy = 1500-5000, Why = 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
PC	Viscount Pierre Cardigan	25	66	Withy	Fld Marshal/Min w/o Port	9	Lois	Flr	4	Matt Shepherd
JS	Count Jacques Shitacks	24	60	Rich	General/State Min.	3		Flr	4	David Oliver
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	23	42	Fithy	Bdr-General/3rd Army QM Gen.	20		Flr	5	Ben Brown
UXB	Count Uther Xavier-Beauregard	22	F	Withy	B.Lt-General/Hvy Brigadier	13		Flr	4	Pete Card
PLS	Marquis Pierre le Sang	21	53	Comfy	General/1st Army Commdr	7	Guinevere	Flr	4	Bill Howell
AV	Viscount Ali Vouzon	20	F	Rich	B.Lt-General/HGds Brigadier	8		Flr	1	Graeme Morris
EH	Count Euria Humble	20	F	Withy	Major Gscn/Justice Min.	18		Flr	5	Matthew Wale
BdZ	Marquis Bill de Zmerchant	19	44	Comfy	B.General/2nd Army Commdr	6		Flr	3	Tim Macaire
RS	Earl Richard Shapmes	19+	62	Withy	Lt-General/Prov.Mil.Gov	10		Flr	4	Charles Popp
VV	Sir Voulo Vault	18	F	OK	Major RFG/Gds Brigade Maj.	2		Flr	2	Mark Booth
FdA	Baron Etienne Brule	16	F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel DG	8		Both	3	Peter Farrell
EB	Baron Etienne Brule	16	F	Comfy	B.General DG/1st Army Adjutnt	2		Both	4	James McReynolds
AdA	Marquis Amant d'Au	16	F	Rich	B.Bdr-General RFG	7		Both	5	David Brister
GM	Sir Gaz Moutarde	15	27	Rich	Lt.Colonel RM	3		Both	2	Mike Clibborn-Dyer
CC	Sir Chopine Camus	15	27	Comfy	B.Bdr-General GDMD	7	Sheila	Both	4	Stewart Macintyre
ROS	Marquis Rick O'Shea	15	25	Rich	Bdr-General/Chancellor	5		Both	6	Paul Wilson
TC	Sir Terence Cuckpowder	15	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General QOC/CPS	4		Both	4	Mike Dommatt
JA	Jacques As	14	28	Comfy	Lt.Colonel GDMD	15		Both	4	Joe Farrell
JJ	Marquis Jean Jeanie	14	F	Withy	Lt.Colonel RFG	15		Both	3	Andrew Kendall
MC	Earl Monty Carlo	14	F	Rich	Lt-General	13		Hunt	4	Andrew Burgess
LL	Sir Lothario Lovelace	13	41	Comfy	Colonel CG	8	Maggie	Both	4	Geoff Bowers
WNM	Baron Was Nae Me	13	22	Comfy	B.Bdr-General KM/Min w/o Port	6	Vera	Both	3	Mark Farrell
SA2	Sebastian Adis II	12	23	OK	Bdr-General/4 F Brigadier	5	Marie	Hunt	4	Mark Cowper
DdE	Sir Duncan d'Eauneurts	11	F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel KM	5		Hunt	5	Paul Lydiate
PL	Philippe Lesuer	11	F	Comfy	Subaltern RFG	5			2	Jerry Spencer
BRJS	Beau Reese Jean Seine	11	F	OK	Major RFG	3			3	Bill Hay
SdIC	Sebastian de la Creme	11	F	OK	B.Bdr-General CPC/Gen's Aide(1st)	4		Hunt	5	Alan Percival
LdH	Leonard de Hofstadt	10	30	OK	Major CG	4	Sue	Hunt	5	Neil Packer

Chatter

The run-up to Christmas was enlivened for me by my board games Advent Calendar. Yes, really. Produced by Frosted Games (that's frosted as in American cake icing rather than frozen), this is a big box with 24 slots on the front. Opening a slot each day of December before Christmas revealed a small card: either extra pieces or cards as a mini-expansion for a game. Brilliant!

The expansions were for 24 different games from 24 publishers – so well done Frosted for organising this – and most of them had a Christmas theme. For example, there was a Christmas tile for (*Settlers of*) *Catan*. The rules for each expansion were published on Frosted's website (in English and German) each day, with a single document containing all of them appearing after Christmas. Okay, I don't have all the games, but I know people who do and the expansions I don't want will make nice little gifts. 10/10 to Frosted Games and I hope they do it again this year.

My gaming Christmas present was a copy of *Mega Civilization*. I know I said I was unlikely to be the person owning a copy of this monster, but it turns out I was wrong. Lord knows when I'll get to play it (MidCon, maybe?), but it looks magnificent. Maybe I'll try a 'short' game with just five or six players...

As the new year starts I still have a substantial pile of new games that I haven't played yet, so it looks like being a busy year. Expect lots of reports in these pages in the next months.

Star Trader

There is room for another player or three in the just-started *Star Trader* game (see page 19). Let Mike or me know if you're interested in giving this SF-themed trading game a go.

TWJO online

The PDF version of *TWJO* 160, published 7th December, was downloaded 198 times through the month. The previous issue attracted 66 more downloads in December, making 295 over two months. *TWJO* 158 was downloaded 23 more times to take it to 305 since publication.

Referrals to my website came from the usual search engines and games sites, though Chinese search engine baidu, which featured heavily a few months ago, has disappeared. However, in among the understandable searches was the incomprehensible "serge touko". This search came from Bing, so I tried it myself. Sure enough, on the eighth page was a page from pevans.co.uk with the word "Reviews" highlighted. Go figure.

That's "Democratic Republic of..."

Pevans reviews *DRCongo*

The first thing to get straight about this game is its title. It is not, as many people think (all right, I thought) on first sight, Doctor Congo... It is the latest heavyweight strategy game from the Ragnar Brothers. It is definitely a complex game and I will have to gloss over some aspects or this will be less a review than a re-writing of the rules. The Ragnars acknowledge the game's complexity, introducing the rules in four stages. While I appreciate the approach, I have two problems with it. The first is that the gamers I play with have all proved equal to learning the full game the first time they sat down to it. The second is that any query means you have to check in four places to be sure you have the full version of any particular rule. Make that five if you're playing the solo game - which I recommend, by the way, as it's an excellent way of getting your head round the rules and gameplay. What I need is a separate rulebook for the full game. Maybe if I keep saying that one will magically appear... For this review, I will be looking at the full version of the game.

Those who know the Ragnars' games will be aware that their earliest creations came with a printed cotton 'tea towel' as the board. In a nod to their history, there is exactly this for *DRCongo*. While this worked fine for the monochrome maps of *History of the World* and *Backpacks & Blisters*, the full colour affair for *DRCongo* is less successful. I think it's the way the colours run and the need to iron the cloth before playing... However, the game comes with a more-than-serviceable mounted mapboard and I value the nod to the past.

As you'd expect, the map shows the Democratic Republic of Congo, divided into provinces. Each province has marked spaces where industries of different types can be built, a capital and some potential links to other provinces by rail or ship. Players' markers represent industries, cities and transport, which they will build and then use to produce goods and transport them to market. All three of these will score points for players at the end of the game. Players also score points for developing their cities during the game. You can immediately see the thrust of the game: develop industries, sell your products to earn the money to develop further and do so better than your competitors to win the game.

Provinces on the east and west edges of the board have export routes, allowing players to sell goods for substantially higher prices than they can get from the internal, domestic market. The routes to the east go to the rest of Africa, while the sole province - Bas-Congo - on the Atlantic coast provides the only route to the rest of the world and the highest prices. Tactically, then, there is an early advantage to the player/s who build industries in Bas-Congo or can export through it. The game starts with government-built ship and rail connections from Bas-Congo through Kinshasa, the capital, to one other province, Bandundu, which is thus important at the start too.

Players begin the game by drawing an 'Industrial Baron' card which gives some small variations in starting money, depending on the home province. They immediately place a peacekeeper and build an industry (more about these later) in their home province, giving them a starting position on the board. However, they must pay for these, reducing the capital they have available. The question then is whether to concentrate on your home province or go for Bas-Congo and the rich export route. The important thing is not to let one player have a monopoly on the potential riches of Bas-Congo and Bandundu. My house rule, by the way, is to remove from the deck the baron who has Bas-Congo as his start province, shuffle and deal players two cards

Femmes Fatales

No	Name	SL	Attr	Last
64	Edna Bucquette	18	W	
3	Kathy Pacific	17	B	
54	Madeline de Proust	17		
35	Katy Did	16	I	
42	Maggie Nifisent	16	B	LL
55	Jacky Tinne	16		
52	Guinevere d'Arthur	15	B/W	PIS
10	Frances Forrin	14	B	HG
21	Helen Highwater	14	W	
48	Fifi	14	B/W	
62	Alison Wunderlandt	14		
11	Laura de Land	13		
16	Ophelia Derriere	13		
26	Ella Fant	13	B	AFD
27	Lucy Fur	13	B	
30	Leia Orgasma	13	B	XFH
45	Cath de Thousands	13		
8	Lotte Bottle	12	B	
12	Charlotte de Gaulle	12		
17	Henrietta Carrotte	12	I/W	
28	Vera Cruz	12		WNM
31	Bess Ottede	12	I/W	
1	Sue Briquet	11	B	LdH
4	Anne Tique	11	W	
9	Deb Onairre	11	I	
40	Sheila Kiwi	11		CC
63	Carole Singeurs	11		
20	Emma Roides	10	I	
33	Anna Rexique	10	I	CT
38	Pet Ulante	10	W	
43	Di Lemmere	10	I	
53	Angelina de Griz	10	B	
56	Ingrid la Suede	10		
6	Viv Ayschus	9		
57	Ava Crisp	9	I	
59	May Banquot l'Idee	9		
2	Betty Kant	8	I	
19	Jenny Russe	8	W	
32	Sal Munella	8	W	
41	Marie Antoinette	8	B/I	SA2
49	Mary Huana	8	B/I/W	
34	Freda de Ath	7	W	
39	Thomasina Tancenjin	7	I	JA
50	Ulla Leight	7	I	
5	Belle Epoque	6	B/I	
13	Josephine Buonoparte	6	I/W	CLD
24	Violet Bott	6	I/W	
15	Ada Andabettoir	5	B/I	CDL
25	Lois de Low	5	B	PC

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

Regiments

Col	LCol	Maj 1	Maj 2	Capt 1	Capt 2	Capt 3	Capt 4	Capt 5	Capt 6	RG	CG	KM	DG	OO	ALC	CPC	RM	GDMD	PM	13F	PLD	53F	27M	4A	69A	Gscn
AdA	LL	WNMB	TC	N7	SdC	CC	BdLS																			
JJ	N3	Dde	FDA	N1	N5+	N2	GM	JA																		
W+	AdF	N5	JE+	N4	N2		N6	KdM	CDL+XFH	N5	N6+	N4+														
BRJS	LdH	N4		N4	PM			CT+	N6																	
N1	N3*	N6	N3	N2	N2	N4	N5	N3	N2	N3	N2	N4	N3	N5*	N5											
CdM	N5	N4	N2	FAG	N6	N2	N6	N2	N6	N4	N1	N4	N1	N2	N6	N2	N3	N5	N6							
N2	JdI	N2	N5	N2	N5*	N5	N5*	GB	N1	N4	N1	N2	N2	N6	N2	N3	N3									
N3	N1	MED	N4	N2	N2	N4*	N6	N6*	N3*	N6*	N6*	N2*	N3*	N4	N5											
N4*		N4*																								
N3																										

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; + shows ranks held by characters with a (senior) brevet rank or an appointment elsewhere.

in every province. That's right; the players can do nothing without deploying peacekeepers.

In each round, players will carry out four actions. However, before each set of actions, an action card is revealed. The first half of the card shows which provinces are affected by insurgents. Some of these will be 'major' insurgents, which attack under their own steam and are harder to remove. The up-side of this is that defeating a major insurgent earns a 'medal' (victory point). A tactical point here: it's good to have your peacekeepers in pairs. If a major insurgent pops up and you lose when it attacks, you lose one peacekeeper, but the remaining one continues to suppress the insurgent. The other thing to note is that developing a city makes a province safer from insurgents.

Once insurgents have been placed, the Defence Minister deploys government peacekeepers and may use them to attack insurgents. These are a great help in keeping insurgents under control. I reckon this Minister is the most valuable in the early rounds of the game. However, he is limited in what he can do by the action cards, which may even force him to remove peacekeepers from the board.

The action cards also determine what the Finance Minister can do. Specifically, change the prices of one or two commodities. This can be useful, but doesn't make a huge difference. Finally, each action card specifies how much money goes to the Interior Minister. If a player controls this Minister, they get to take actions on behalf of the Government - though they can only spend the money on the card. The player then gets a kick-back: up to half the amount spent, taking this from the card too. Tactically, it can be useful to have the Government building industries, developing cities or placing transport, but it's even more useful to get that cash. It takes a round or two for a decent amount to build up on the Interior Minister, so this is well worth keeping an eye on for the opportunity to use it.

Once the action card has been completed, with the Defence and Finance Ministers doing their thing, each player in turn carries out an action - there's a turn order marker for the Government as well as the players. Before taking their action, players may deploy peacekeepers and attack with them. Actions are pretty straightforward - build an industry, place a transport, develop a city, produce goods or sell - and are listed on an aide memoire tile for each player. The other side of the tile shows what things cost. The cost of building an industry depends on which type of industry it is: food is the cheapest, oil the most expensive - but their products are priced accordingly. They can only be placed where there is a vacant industry space of the appropriate type, so it's worth keeping an eye on what can be built where - and what tiles you have left, as these are limited.

Ship and train tiles can only be placed on vacant spaces of the appropriate type and then allow any player to move any number of goods between the provinces they connect. Trucks are a bit cheaper and can be placed on any border, but can only move one cube at a time. A province's capital town can be developed into a level 1 city. Once this has been done, the owning player may develop it into a level 2 and finally a level 3 - each player only has one level 3 city. The cost of developing a city is both cash and industrial output. The player must flip over as many industries as the level of the city and at least one of these must be in the same province (and the others in neighbours). These industries cannot produce goods in the same round, but they do discount the cost of developing the city.

Seconds FdA & WNM, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Lothario Lovelace (Rapier, Seconds LdH, adv.) and Was Nae Me (Rapier, Seconds DdE & FdA, 3 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

"adv." shows who (if anyone) has the advantage in Expertise: his first

duelling sequence need only contain six actions.

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

New Characters

Dave Whiffin gets the Second son of a well-to-do Gentleman: Init SL 4; Cash 250; MA 4; EC 5 (X1).

Tables

Other Appointments

King's Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Cardinal's Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Aides: to Crown Prince N	to Field Marshal N
Provincial Military Governors: RS/N/N/N/N	
City Military Governor N	Adjutant-General N
Inspectors-General: of Cavalry N	of Infantry N
Commissioner of Public Safety TC	
Chancellor of the Exchequer ROS	Minister of Justice EH
Minister of War __	Minister of State __

Shows who holds appointments outside military units:

ID for Characters, N for NPC, __ for vacant, CPS for additional posts held by the CPS.

Battle Results

Horse Guards Brigade: 1

Dragoon Guards: 3

Queen's Own Carabiniers: 4

Heavy Brigade: 2

Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers: 1

Crown Prince Cuirassiers: 4

Royal Foot Guards: 2

69th Arquebusiers: 4

The Gascon Regiment: 1

Frontier regiment 1: 3

Frontier regiment 2: 3

Frontier regiment 3: 3

Frontier regiment 4: 4

RNHB regiment: 5

Announcements

Jacques Shitacks applies for Minister of War

Jacques Shitacks applies for Minister of State

Leonard de Hofstadt asks NPC Lt.Colonel of Cardinal's Guard to resign

Terence Cuckpowder applies for Commnr. of Public Safety

Duels

Results of May's duels

Richard Shapmes (gains 1 Exp) beat Allan Fa-Dân.

Xavier Four-Hollandaise declined to meet Jean d'Ice as he was under half Endurance.

Jean d'Ice didn't turn up to fight Duncan d'Eauneurts and lost SPs.

Humphrey Gocart (no Expertise) drew with Jacques As (no Expertise).

Jacques As declined to meet Jean d'Ice as he was under half Endurance.

Jean d'Ice (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Was Nae Me (with DdE).

Alan de Frocked (with LdH, no Expertise) beat his enemy Was Nae Me (with DdE, under half Endurance, losing 7 extra SPs).

Percy Mystic didn't turn up to fight Chopine Camus and lost SPs.

Percy Mystic didn't turn up to fight Claude Talon and lost SPs.

Jacques As declined to meet Florent Sans de Machine as he was under half Endurance.

Percy Mystic didn't turn up to fight Grégory Bonnissel and lost SPs.

Percy Mystic didn't turn up to fight Jacques As and lost SPs.

Neither Kidder de Margaux nor Percy Mystic turned up for their duel and both lost SPs.

Leonard de Hofstadt (with LL, no Expertise) beat his enemy Was Nae Me (with DdE, under half Endurance, losing 6 extra SPs).

Lothario Lovelace (with LdH, no Expertise) beat his enemy Was Nae Me (with DdE, under half Endurance, losing 7 extra SPs).

Charles Louis Desapear (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Xavier Four-Hollandaise.

Duncan d'Eauneurts (with WNM, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Leonard de Hofstadt (with LL).

Duncan d'Eauneurts (with WNM, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Lothario Lovelace (with LdH).

Grudges to settle next month:

Charles Louis Desapear (Rapier) and Xavier Four-Hollandaise (Rapier, Seconds SdIC & FAG) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Humphrey Gocart (Sabre, 5 rests) has cause with Jacques As (Sabre,



The export markets, set at starting prices

Hydro works differently: each cube supplies electricity to one city – in the same or an adjacent province – or goes to the local, domestic market. Cities are flipped over when they're supplied so that they can't be used again. This is another incentive for developing cities: they provide a captive market for your Hydro plants, which can be very lucrative as you develop the city further. The down side of this is providing a market for another player's Hydro...

Selling is done in player order: each player selling one set, then the next player selling one and so on. The price gradually declines, so it's good to get in first. Though if you lose out on one type of good, you may get in first with another. A bit of arithmetic is needed here to calculate your best sequence. The other thing to consider is that the first player with nothing to sell must drop out and take last place in turn order for the next round. Thus, selling goods as one of your actions can be a useful tactic for the round, but may compromise your position for the next round.

At the end of the round, the price markers are moved down to the next empty space, thus reducing prices for next round (but not below a minimum). However, prices are always boosted a bit at the beginning of each round and the machinations of the Finance Minister can change them a bit. Other tidying up between rounds includes flipping industries and cities back over, adjusting the various markers and re-setting Action cards. If the game hasn't ended, it's time for another round.

Industries are also flipped over when they produce goods. One or two pastel-coloured wooden cubes are placed on the flipped industry tile (some spaces show that industries there produce two cubes, so these are the positions to take first when placing industries). Players can use an action to sell one 'set' of goods (the set being everything they have of one colour/type). They will have the opportunity to sell everything after everybody's taken four actions, but there are tactical reasons for selling early. The first of these is, of course, to get the best price.

With the exception of electricity – hydro power – selling goods means shipping cubes via available transport capacity to a province with an export route or selling locally. Exported cubes are placed on the highest empty space on the appropriate price



The valuable western provinces: note the export route from Bas-Congo and the Government city and transport in Kinshasa.

There is one additional wrinkle in the game: Support cards. Three of these are always available and they provide a useful boost: making something cheaper, giving a player extra money or allowing them to bend a rule. Each player may only take one Support card during a round and must use it (or not) immediately they take it. These can be very useful tactical advantages, so keep an eye on what's available and when you could use it.

As you can see, there's a lot going on in *DRCongo*. The obvious strategy is to concentrate on building industries initially to build up your income and then switch to developing cities for the victory points. However, cities plus Hydro industries can be a good combination for providing income and cities also help remove those pesky insurgents. Hence, there's a balance in what you're doing. I find the insurgents are the biggest constraint to expanding. If players work together, and use the government peacekeepers to good effect, the insurgents can be kept suppressed and then removed. Developing cities allows peacekeepers to be re-deployed to other provinces, gradually expanding the areas that are peaceful and stable. However, the random way insurgents crop up and the competition between players mean you can never be sure of having a secure base.

DRCongo is an impressive game, both in the way it models the potential development of a troubled part of the world and the decisions it forces on players. The strategy is clear, but players must keep tactical flexibility to take advantage of opportunities and cope with setbacks. Making good use of the Government Ministers is important, particularly in the early stages of the game, and this is a key area where players need to get ahead of their opponents – one reason for building up an initial war chest. Your

ment characters for anyone who dies in June will start in August.

June 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 – unless appointed by a player character, who may order that they are left vacant (if you have a post or a rank that allows you to appoint other characters to posts, don't forget to appoint people).

June is the start of the campaign season. **All units listed on the "Army Organisation" table will be in action** (any volunteers will serve with the Frontier regiments). Characters who are part of one of these units can only avoid active service by resigning from their regiment and/or appointment.

Next turn is the last month characters can make investments for this campaign. The return on investments will be paid in September.

I had no orders from the following and they suffered the consequences:

BdZ Bill de Zmerchant (Tim Macaire) has NMR'd. Total now 1

CdC Cyrano de Camembert (Dave Whiffin) has NMR'd. Total now 3 and is sent to a Frontier regiment

KdM Kidder de Margaux (Gary Phillips) has NMR'd. Total now 1

MC Monty Carlo (Andrew Burgess) has NMR'd. Total now 1

MED Maurice Essai Deux (Olaf Schmidt) has NMR'd. Total now 1

PM Percy Mystic (Ray Vahey) has NMR'd. Total now 1

VV Voulo Vault (Mark Booth) has NMR'd. Total now 2 and is sent to a Frontier regiment

X2 (David Williams) has NMR'd. Total now 2 and is sent to a Frontier regiment

I removed Pete Holland's new character (X3) as I have not received orders from him for a while (and his subscription lapsed some time ago).

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 a Yahoo! group for *En Garde!* players that provides a forum for players of different games to swap stories and ideas. Sign up and get talking at: <http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/EnGardePlayers/>

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

Orders (and press) should be e-mailed to lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk – you'll get an automated reply when your message arrives in my mailbox. Please give your name and your character's name and specify actions in full (since it's without your character sheet). If you want queries answered before the deadline, e-mail LPBS@pevans.co.uk instead.

Poetry Corner

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

Gentlemen in Paris now abed
Are cowardly custards.
That is all.

† The Secret Blade

(Overheard in the Palais de Justice privy...)

“What????!! Dead you say ???!!!. But I’ve four more verses for my patron, Colonel Nae Me, that I was going to reveal episodically over the coming months !!!

“Oh well, I’ll paint them up all at once then I suppose – and hope the miser pays up...”

Scrawled on a Privy Wall at the Palais de Justice...

1 There was a Commissioner called Fluff

Whose stipend just wasn’t enough
He culled all the Ministers
With methods quite sinister
Then counted his loot in the buff

2 There was a Commissioner it’s said

Whose power went straight to his head

He’d stroll ‘round the city

In armour quite pretty

Not Crimson though, more like Blood Red

3 ‘I’m trying to think of a charge

That’ll sail through red tape like a barge

The subject is Treason!

Who needs rhyme or reason

So long as the payoff is large?”

4 There was a Commissioner called Fluff

Who liked to take walks in the buff

He’d wow all the girls

With his muscles and curls

But the rest? It just wasn’t enough

(Well, not according to Katy anyway...)

† Devlin Carnate,
The Limerick Poet

The Spanish Guns:-

Boom, Boom, Boom, Boom,

Boom, Boom,

Boom, Boom, Boom, Boom,

Boom, Boom.

Points Arising

Next deadline is 5th February

I tried to adjudicate this turn with everybody’s orders on the screen rather than printed out, as I usually do. The result seems to have been more mistakes than usual, so I won’t do that again. Please check that I got your orders right this turn.

Several people mentioned – with their orders – that the link to their character sheet hadn’t worked. Please check the link in your email and let

me know immediately if there are any problems.

As most characters will be on active service for the next three months, **I will run June and July back to back**. Please send two sets of orders for this deadline. Orders for July may be conditional on what happens in June – if there is a major impact on any characters in June, I will give the affected players an opportunity to modify their July orders. Replace-

first game will always be a learning experience, but once you’ve got to grips with the rules it’s a subtle game that produces close results. *DR Congo* gets 8/10 on my highly subjective scale.

DR Congo was designed and published by the Ragnar Brothers. It is a strategy board game for 1-4 players, aged 14+ and takes about 3 hours to play (officially 120 minutes). This is an edited version of the review first published in the Gamers Alliance Report for Fall 2015 (www.gamersalliance.com).

It’s Earth, Jim, but not as we know it

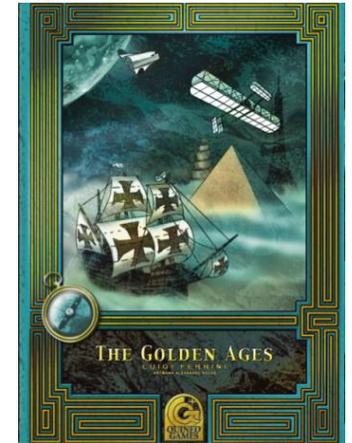
The Golden Ages reviewed by Pevans

I first played *The Golden Ages* at Dutch publisher Quined’s stand at Spiel ’14 and was immediately taken with it. It’s a civilisation development game that takes familiar features and puts them together in a different way – rather like the map on the board, which is built up of tiles showing familiar bits of geography. Points are scored over four eras with some final scoring at the end: for technologies developed, wars fought and, possibly, for the 8-point secret goal each player has been working towards. (In my experience scores are generally around the 100 mark, so eight points is significant, but not overwhelming.)

An era ends when all the players have declared a ‘Golden Age’. When a player does this, they’ve essentially passed for the rest of the era. However, they get cash every time it would be their turn until everybody else has passed. The other advantage is that they choose which end-of-era card will be scored. The clever bit is that this gives the other players a bit of time to beef up their scores. Note that, in the last turn, the other players only get one more action after one player passes. Hence, it can be touch and go whether you get to do everything you want.

Clearly, passing early can be a useful tactical ploy, but players can only declare a Golden Age once they’ve used all their ‘colonist’ pieces (wooden meeples in their colour). An important constraint in the game is that players only have three of these: you start with three, you end with three. You’ll be pleased to learn that there are quite a few actions that don’t require a colonist. And some cards and technologies allow certain actions without using a colonist.

The game is played over a small board, divided into squares (with a scoring track running around the edges). At the start of the game a 2x2 tile is placed in the centre showing familiar land and sea areas. Players take it in turn to add a bit more of the world to this: a three-square L-shaped tile at the beginning, a two-square rectangle at the start of subsequent eras. (The tiles can be positioned to make a map of the Earth, though it’s not likely they’ll end up like this in play.) Each land or island square is marked with one or two resource icons. Players add their capital (an eight-sided column) in one square of their first tile and their colonists start on the same place.



A fresh crop of Wonders and Buildings cards is set out at the start of each era and, most importantly, players choose their civilisation. They start the game with one civilisation card for each era and the first era is simple: everyone turns over their card. They may give an immediate bonus, such as developing a technology level, or a benefit for the era, such as taking a building without using a colonist. The player with the lowest numbered civilisation is start player for the era.

At the beginning of subsequent eras, players reveal their next card, starting with the start player, and decide whether to replace their old civilisation with it or keep the old one. The advantage of keeping the old card is that it will definitely have a lower number than the current era's cards, so you could well be first player. The disadvantage is that you won't get any one-off bonus again.

Preliminaries out of the way, it's on to the meat of the era as players start taking actions. A first action is often taking a building: there are only a few of these each era and when they've gone, they've gone. However, players only have one available space for a building at the start of the game. They must develop the appropriate technologies to get more slots (to the maximum of three). It is possible to discard a current building to place a new one. I do this occasionally (after using the building of course), but it isn't ideal. Taking a building also means using one of your colonists. It goes to the 'agora' tile, alongside the main board, lying down to show it's been used.

Arguably the most important action to take with a colonist is to move it on the board to expand the territory you control. At the start of the game, players can only move each colonist one space (orthogonally). They can improve this by developing transport technologies – aircraft let you move anywhere! Moving a colonist into a square takes control of it, gaining the player gold if they have developed the appropriate technology for the resource symbol/s on that square.



A full board in *The Golden Ages*. Western Europe's in the middle, but what's Scandinavia doing up there?

Dear Uncle Arkwright

I have named my new horse "The Black Widow" – I have got "aboard" already unlike with the original our customer of course – sorry to raise that image in your mind. I didn't want to name her "Nurse Gladys" and make you furious! Ow – how can you tweak someone's ear by correspondence? They'll burn you at the stake if they find out – along with being J.E.W.I.S.H. At least I'm half H-Hungarian. I also now have a groom called Gastrick to pay – though being a Trooper in the GDMD chiefly involves standing behind a horse rather a lot with a shovel. It's hard to see a groom who only polishes the horse as one's inferior.

Your soon to be famous nephew,
† Granville

Sir Frele D'Acier

When the premier cavalry regiments are away, it allows the officers of the foot regiments a chance to compete and enjoy the pleasure of winning. Who knows, perhaps they may decide that the Cavalry are the place to be?

† Cuckpowder

To: All

Darlings, what a simply delightful City. One is so excited to have finally arrived here – as lively as Lyon is, it has nothing on gay Paris!

As for the architecture, ooh I've never seen such large erections and, believe me, I've seen my fair share over the years. Oooh, there I go again, I'm such a tart! I just have to comment on the men too, what hunks, especially those brutes in the Royal Marines. When I first caught a

glance at the size of their weapons well, really, I could have fainted on the spot.

Winners of the most swish uniforms though must be the Queen's Own, I saw them leave Paris as I was arriving and I just adored those tunics, tres chic! I said to myself, "Felix, you simply have to get in with those boys". Not that I'm much of your military type though, I'd be the first to admit, but seems anyone that's anyone is in, so I guess little old me mustn't miss out. But I know once I join I'll stay loyal to them, reminds me of what my dear friend Clarence used to say to me back at home – "Once a Queen, always a Queen". Oh, how I laughed when I remembered that one.

If anyone fancies a drinky-poops at any time do let me know as I'm always keen to widen the circle of my friends.

Ta, ta for now.

† Felix Anton Gauchepied'er
(but you can call me FAG for short)
PS Love you all x x x

Crikey,

Paris is a blinder of a city. Our river's a bit bigger and deeper than back home – can't really see punting down it here. Still, le Roi seems to know quality – right people in charge and all that – for now at least. Not that I've got any aspirations to nab Stinker Shitacks's job. Stabbing one's school chums in the back won't do. For now I'm just going to keep my head down and be a good little soldier. The City Military Governor is a bit of an oik though – I might have to do something about that.

† Beau Reese Jean Seine

Camp of the Imperial Legion, Outskirts of Lille

An air of sadness pervades the camp as the troops go about their business with weary hearts following the tragic death of their new Colonel, Sir Maurice Fluff-Bunny. At the heart of the camp, a tent can be seen, draped in black sheeting and with a circle of lit torches surrounding it. The flaps of the tent are open and a steady stream of officers and men arrive to pay their respects to the late Colonel. Many lay a flower, a regimental tunic button or some other token of affection upon the coffin which lies inside, draped with the Golden Rabbit standard of the Imperial Legion.

Just outside the tent two men are seen in discussion. One, dressed in the garb of a regimental chaplain, stands with a crucifix outstretched before him and the other, a large muscular Arabian-looking fellow, kneels at his feet quietly weeping.

“Grieve not, my son, for he is in a far better place now, free from the pain and corruption of this mortal existence. He died a hero leading his men to glory and no soldier could ask for more,” gently speaks the chaplain.

“I know, Father, but it’s all so unfair: he had his whole life ahead of him and was making such progress in his ministerial career too.” The Arab indicates towards the coffin, “How cruel is fate to take this mighty warrior away from us now? If only I could have spoken to him one last time, just to tell him how much I treasured his patronage after all that he has done for me. Father, I hear that you were at his side almost the instant that he fell and the rumours

amongst the men are, in contrast to the official report, that he didn’t die immediately. Tell me, did he manage any last words?”

“Well, now, it’s strange that you should ask that, for brave Sir Maurice did manage speak to me as he lay there. He was able to impart a few... actually now I come to recall, quite a few really... final words.”

“Oh, please tell me, Father, let me hear what our beloved Colonel, Commissioner and Chancellor said. Please, I implore you.”

“Patience, my son, patience. Let me just think... ah, I think I have it... yes, these were his dying words: ‘No, this cannot be... gasp... cough... not now... so much still to do... wheeze... that bastard Adis... should have realised he was a Slaaanes... cough... damn, never got that swine O’Shea... gurgle... or Zmerchant... so many traitors still at large... did my best to carry on the Sheikh’s work... sigh... would have had Shitacks and that weasly Minister of War up before courts too... meant to be my destiny... pant... rasp... I was going to be King one day... someone must avenge me... no matter how long it takes... with this... my dying breath... I CURSE ADIS... and O’Shea... Zmerchant... Nae Me... Xavier-Beauregard... Talon and As... come to think of it virtually all of ‘em really... arrrrrghhhh.’ That was all, my son.”

“Bless you, Father, I know now what I must do to honour this great man. I shall see that his dying wish does not go unheeded. Paris has not heard the last of The Crimson Knight.”

The colonist is laid down, to show it’s taken an action this era, and the player may also place cube/s to found a city. Founding a city also generates cash. Again, the player’s developed technologies determine how much. Taking control of squares and founding cities are a major source of cash through the game, giving players a big incentive to develop technologies that increase their income. However, once established, there’s no great need to hang on to cities. It’s gaining control and founding cities that produce money.

A variant on the action of moving a colonist is moving one into a square occupied by another player’s city and/or colonist. This starts a war! It doesn’t last long, though, as there is no defence: the attacker pays the cost and removes the defender’s pieces (cubes can be used again, colonists only if they’re standing up). Each player has a track showing the increasing cost each time they attack – and there are only four spaces. The attacker also takes a chip, worth a few points at the end of the game, and covers the space on their track to show that they’ve used it. They may then found a city, as usual.

The final action that uses a colonist is to place one lying down in the agora and score three points. Remember, you can’t pass until you’ve used all your colonist pieces, so this is what you do if there’s really nothing else you want to (or can) do. I’ve rarely seen anyone do this.

There are then four actions that don’t require the use of a colonist. First is buying a Wonder. There are only a few of these each era and they cost money, but players can have as many of them as they want. Each provides some sort of bonus and many of them can also be ‘activated’ (as a separate action) to score a point. This action can also be used to activate a building: the building or wonder is flipped over to show it’s been used this era.

Then there is the action to develop a technology. Each player has their own board, most of which is taken up by their technology matrix. This has four rows, each representing a different area of technology, and five columns. Players start with the first technology in each row available. The others are covered with tiles, which are removed as players develop technologies – you can’t skip tiles along a row, but can develop one row and none of the others.

The front of each technology tile shows what it does (in iconic form – just like the printed space it’s on top of) and what it costs. The reverse shows how many points it’s worth (at the end of the game). As you’d expect, the price goes up as you move along a row, the points increase and the technologies get more effective – an incentive to develop a row. Most of the cheaper technology tiles also show a cube or two on the front and players get these cubes added to their available pool when they develop the technology – an incentive to develop across all the rows.

The transport row provides a good example: the first space lets you move colonists one space and is the technology you have at the start. The second costs 3 and lets you move them two (and makes a cube available). The third costs 5, is worth a point and increases movement to three (and gives you a cube). The fourth costs 8, scores 2 points and lets colonists move anywhere on the board. Finally, the last transport technology costs 12, scores 4 points and lets players attack any space on the board without moving a colonist. Yes, it’s ICBMs! The final technology in each row also provides an immediate bonus when it’s developed. In the case of transport, it’s three points for every gem resource under your control – a reason why you do want to hang on to squares you control.



My first civilisation is Egypt, giving me metal-working technology and look: I've built the Pyramids!

The final action is, of course, to declare a Golden Age. You flip over your capital – there's a 2 gold symbol on the bottom as a handy reminder. The first to do this chooses a bonus card and this is scored once everybody has passed. This concludes the era. A bit of housekeeping follows, laying out new buildings and wonders and standing colonists back up. Then the new era starts with players choosing their civilisation card and laying tiles to expand the world.

Despite the somewhat lengthy explanation I've given here, the rules only take up six pages (there's a two-page sheet detailing what the cards do as well). The complexity of the game is in the detail and in the interplay of the different aspects of the game, particularly the technologies. Hence, the first thing to do at the start of the game is look at what the technologies do and which ones fit with your civilisation cards and your end-of-game bonus (don't get hung up on this bonus, though: I've won games without scoring it and lost games where I did.)

In play, *The Golden Ages* is very tactical. It's about where you can get your colonists to, which actions you need to do when and what you can afford to do. There are lots of decisions to be made, often trading off between your limited time, money and actions. It's useful to have some strategic goals in mind, but you also have to be ready to adapt to what the other players are up to. In particular, there can be competition over specific squares on the board. Despite this, the game plays smoothly and quickly.

I'm pleased to say that *The Golden Ages* has really lived up to the first impressions I got at Spiel last year. It's an entertaining and challenging game that I thoroughly enjoy playing and has gone down well with everyone I've played it with. It gets a solid 9/10 on my highly subjective scale.

The Golden Ages was designed by Luigi Ferrini and published by Quined Games (a new edition appeared October 2015 from Stronghold Games in the US). It is a board game for 2-4 players, aged 12+, and takes about 90 minutes to play. This is an edited version of the review first published in the Gamers Alliance Report for Summer 2015 (www.gamersalliance.com).

4th Brigade HQ – a room littered with Champagne bottles, fine wines and assorted boxes of truffles.

An aide enters with another clanking crate of fine wines.

SA2: “Mon Dieu, who is this lot from?”

Aide: “The friends of Hokey-Cokey – a masked gentleman left it at reception.”

SA2: “I do not understand – why I am I being lauded with these plaudits and gifts? As if I had anything to do with that idiot Fluffy-bunny trying to make the Gascons into some sort of elite Roman all-conquering legion and charging the Spanish dug in behind the barricades at Lille. Field manoeuvres I said: “avoid sheep, march in a straight line, just leave the fighting to the RFG.” It's a shambles. The Gascons only have a captain left as the rest of the chain of command also got themselves killed. Crimson bat? More like Crimson Splat! Too much Blue Nun... ho hum... at least Was Nae will be happy, it was his goading that got him sent to the front anyway.”

Aide: “Well, Sir, we could give all this fine wine away. I hear Colonel Me is holding a do at Bothwell's. I'm sure he'll take it off your hands as it was his idea.”

SA2 (turning purple): “Ahem... now, now, no need to be hasty. Some of this is good stuff... far too good for him. However, here's a thought, get the lads in to share this crate. Then let's fill a few of these empty bottles [nod, nod, wink, wink] then send them to Me!”

Citizens of Paris

The Crimson Shit has left this world. Rejoice but be ever watchful for the next threat to Paris.

Vive le Roi!

† The Brotherhood of Paris

A eulogy to Sir Maurice Fluff-Bunny
Sir, I shall remember you as a friend and a great patriot. You were mocked by many, but they were only jealous of what you had achieved.

I saw how you treated those who committed heinous acts against this great country, I saw how you shrugged off the abuse from republican traitors and the godless alike, I saw how your fervour to root out the evil infested here in Paris caused terror to traitors, but most of all I saw your kindness. For when I arrived in this most magnificent city, you took me in, both into your regiment and as your friend. You mentored me and helped me get to where I am today.

Sir, I salute you as all true Frenchmen would, your death was a tragedy and we will all be worse off for it.

Vive la France and Vive le Roi!

† Major Sebastian de la Creme

“Ding! Ding! The bunny is dead.”

Apparently this ditty is very popular around Paris these days.

† Le Tante avec de vent

Lord Percy Percy says, as fashion is tending towards the vegetable-shaped male organ, Sir Voulo Vent apparently has a very fashionable marrow.

of Subaltern Philippe Lesuer, whose name also appears in the Despatches (“there’s a vacancy at Captain for him now”).

The two cavalry Brigades finish the job, chasing off the remaining Spanish forces. In the Heavy Brigade the Crown Prince Cuirassiers do least well. Colonel Sebastian de la Creme has to make do with a brevet promotion to Bdr-General. The Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers do better, but there’s no reward for Major Percy Mystic. However, Brigadier Uther Xavier-Beauregard gains a Mention in Despatches and picks up 1,500 crowns of loot.

There is rather more recognition for the Horse Guards. The commander of the Queen’s Own Carabiniers, Bdr-Gen Terence Cuckpowder, is Mentioned (“CPS on horseback!”), which brings him a Knighthood. Captain Felix Anton Gauchepied’er gets no official recognition, despite being the most recognisable man on the field, given that his horse has a pink saddle cloth, pink tail and mane bows and he’s mounted on a saddle engraved with pansies and buttercups. His battle cry of “Kill the ugly ones, boys, but make sure you save any handsome ones for me!” doesn’t go down well. There’s a brief Mention for Bdr-Gen Etienne Brule, commander of the Dragoon Guards, who finds some 700 crowns worth of swag along the way. Lt-Colonel Frele d’Acier pockets just 300 crowns. Horse Guards Brigadier Lt-General Ali Vouzon sees the Brigade’s success bring him elevation to Viscount. His share of the booty adds up to a thousand crowns. However, his Brigade Major, DG Major Jean Ettonique, pockets 1,500 crowns worth.

However, the signing of the Treaty at Aix-la-Chapelle brings the French campaign to an end. The Armies’ job in the summer will be consolidating France’s territorial gains. ❖

Press

Matters of Honour

Sir,
You should have not have meddled in my affairs. Elle, by choosing that malcontent over me when I was dealing with serious matter just shows your true upbringing.

† Shapmes

To all officers and men of the Cardinal’s Guard.

My comrades, I am in need of a second, can any of you help?

† JdI

Announcements

Terence Cuckpowder is seeking a suitable Subaltern to be his Aide. Apply to the barracks.

Recruits welcome to Join the QOC at the front. Apply the Barracks. Action this day. † Cuckpowder

Personal

Alan de Frocked
Infirmity spares you from my sword. You will recover and I will have satisfaction, sir.

† Terence Cuckpowder

Reading Matter

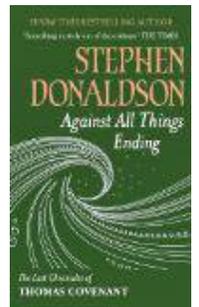
Pevans sees off Thomas Covenant

For some thirty years we have known peace. Lord Foul, the Despiser, defeated by the sacrifice of Thomas Covenant, is locked in the Arch of Time. Only the end of all creation might release him. The spirit of Covenant himself stands guard as Timewarden, ensuring the orderly progression of matters from the past through the present and into the future. But, under the surface, Foul’s machinations continue; his creatures torment and mislead, their manipulations serving their master. We, the readers, know what this means: another great trial as a further episode of “The Chronicles of Thomas Covenant, Unbeliever” is unleashed. We know to expect three mighty tomes filled with anguish and despair – and hope. Three volumes that will require our utmost skill and dedication – and a good dictionary. And so we gird our loins, screw our courage to the sticking place and embark on another odyssey that will test our proficiency, our endurance and our valour to the utmost. Except that, this time, there are four of them!

I have already recounted in these pages (see *TWJO* issues 131 and 137) the tale of the first two volumes in “The Last Chronicles of Thomas Covenant”. In the first, *The Runes of the Earth*, Linden Avery, Covenant’s companion in the second Chronicles, returns to the Land, seeking her adopted, autistic son, Jeremiah, who has been taken by Foul’s servants. She finds centuries have passed and things are rather different in the Land – though there is still much that remains the same. The book sees her gather allies (some trustworthy, some clearly not, some ambivalent) as she journeys across the Land, re-introducing it to her and us.

The second book, *Fatal Revenant*, sees Linden travel to the far past of the land to enlist the help of some of the Land’s legendary heroes, hoping that they can provide what she needs to confront the Despiser in the present. In part, she is tricked into doing this by Roger Covenant, Thomas Covenant’s evil son, now serving Lord Foul and appearing to be his father. As often happens, the Despiser’s plans succeed yet also bring succour to those who oppose him. This book ends with Linden invoking the “wild magic” of Covenant’s white gold ring in combination with the Staff of Law to break the Arch of Time and resurrect Thomas Covenant. An act of apparent desperation that makes her the enemy of some of her allies and, in itself, sets in train the end of all things as “The Worm of the World’s End” awakes. While the Worm may not, literally, be a worm, it has a physical presence and can – and will – devour the whole world.

And so to book 3, *Against All Things Ending*. The resurrected Thomas Covenant struggles to come to terms with being human again, the return of his leprosy and what Linden Avery has done. Despite getting little help from Covenant, Linden and her allies are finally able to locate and rescue Jeremiah. This takes us to other parts of the Land that have not been explored in previous stories, and explains what some of the other creatures we’ve met are all about. However, our heroes have roused another great bane, “She Who Must Not Be Named” (so called, it seems, because no-one – including the creature herself – knows what her name was). The twist here is that, having been jilted by the Despiser in human form, she has become the depository of female despair – quite literally, as she absorbs scorned women (men she just kills out of hand). The threat to Linden forces Covenant back to himself, allowing him to save her.

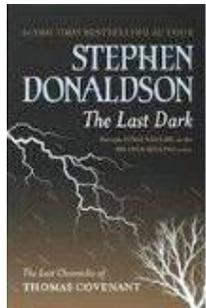


Phew! There's no rest for our heroes, though, as they are thrown into another major fight almost immediately. This is both a physical attack from creatures serving Foul and a more mental struggle to free Jeremiah from possession (by ditto). It illustrates two of the recurring themes of the books: the appearance of unexpected allies and the power of individuals willing to sacrifice themselves. I have to say that I was not expecting the deaths of some of Linden's loyal companions after they'd survived two and a half volumes.

For the finale of *Against All Things Ending*, the story splits into two narratives. Covenant, with a few *Haruchai* (the imperturbable warrior people of the Land) as bodyguards, goes to kill his long-estranged wife. Her insanity has made her white gold ring a tool of the Despiser – the source of one of the perils that we have seen plaguing the Land since *The Runes of the Earth*. Linden and her team support Jeremiah as he uses his *idiot-savant* ability (he constructs things) to free himself from his own mind. However, the book ends with the revelation that the sun will no longer rise as the world enters *The Last Dark* (aka volume 4).

By the end of volume 3, I'd forgotten that Thomas Covenant had only been restored to us at the beginning of the book. He is once again centre stage as Donaldson's convoluted struggle of sort-of-good versus sort-of-evil continues. Actually, scrap that. The Despiser is evil. He manipulates, misleads and coerces others into doing his bidding and his sole goal is power. Thomas and Linden are fallible humans, trying to do good, but knowing that they may be wrong or may have fallen into the Despiser's trap. But when they need help, they ask. Help is freely given as others recognise their only goal is to save those they love – not least the Land itself.

After 1,800 pages, the reader has been sorely tested. They have struggled with plot twists, grappled with new revelations about the Land and fought with arcane vocabulary. Now comes the final confrontation, a last struggle as the Worm of Book's End approaches, devouring all in its path. Words and chapters are thrown in its path, but the end is inevitable. We can only hope there will be some story left.



Yes, if I read too much Donaldson, I get infected. However, *The Last Dark* pits our three heroes – Thomas Covenant, Linden Avery and now Jeremiah – against She Who Must Not Be Named, the Worm of World's End and, of course, Lord Foul, the Despiser. The interesting thing here is that Thomas Covenant is no longer the Unbeliever of the original books. There, it was his refusal to believe, his denial that he had any power, that allowed him to defeat Foul. In the end, in the second chronicles, he was willing to sacrifice himself. Now he is a being of power and he is heading for a final confrontation with the Despiser. He starts by 'marrying' Linden Avery, the exchange of white gold rings making them rightful wielders of their power – wild magic. Linden gives Jeremiah the Staff of Law, embodying the opposite of wild magic. The question is whether Jeremiah will learn to use it: he may not be an Unbeliever, but he is certainly a denier. He cannot see how he, even with the Staff, can confront Foul or the Worm – or is this just despair fed to him by the Despiser?

First, though, Jeremiah must save the mystical *Elohim* spirits from the Worm (they are its first food!). However, they see what he is building as a prison and oppose him. Then Covenant must join forces with an old enemy – the approaching end of the world tends to do this sort of thing – to divert and delay the Worm. Linden makes another perilous journey into the past to find wisdom and, perhaps, an ally. Only then can the full company unite and forge their way towards the final showdown. The climax of the

Allan Fa-Dân finishes his month on something of a downer. He doesn't seem to have noticed the death of Arnaud Surfinmaise back in February and is trying to Toady to him ...

Peace in our time

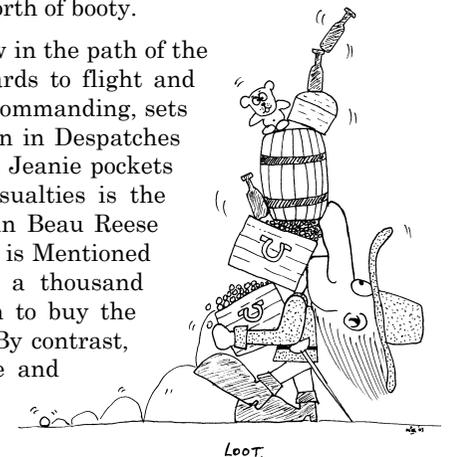
After its eventual success in Brittany, Frontier regiment 3 joins its fellows in besieging territory in the Spanish Netherlands. This does not seem to help as the frontier regiments have an indifferent month. Second battalion of the Cardinal's Guard is attached to Frontier regiment 1. Major Alan de Frocked and Captain Jean d'Ice survive handily. Not so 4A Captain Cyrano de Camembert, also attached to the regiment. In a moment of ~~bravery~~ madness he sticks his head over the parapet and has it blown off by a Spanish musketball. RIP. RFG Major Voulo Vault keeps his head down and somehow finds almost a thousand crowns worth of booty.

The first battalion of the King's Musketeers serves with Frontier regiment 3. Lieutenant-Colonel Duncan d'Eauneurts leads the Musketeers in a counter-attack against an enemy sally, forcing the Spanish troops to retreat pronto. He receives a lavish Mention in Despatches and is further rewarded with a Knighthood. Nor is his pocket forgotten as he picks up 700 crowns worth of plunder along the way. Lt-General Monty Carlo is also attached to third Frontier and gets in on the looting, acquiring nearly a thousand crowns worth for himself.

Like the Frontier troops, the 69th Arquebusiers are bogged down. However, their commander, Brigadier-General Pepé Nicole, is not one to let that stand in the way of a bit of plunder: he grabs 500 crowns worth.

It is the Gascons under their new commander who make the breakthrough, storming over the walls when they spot a weakness as the defenders are busy with a sally elsewhere. Major Euria Humble, the acting commander, covers himself in cash: a total of 1,300 crowns worth of booty.

The Royal Foot Guards are quick to follow in the path of the Gascons, putting the bulk of the Spaniards to flight and grabbing the loot. Bdr-Gen Amant d'Au, commanding, sets the example: 1,400 crowns and a Mention in Despatches ("Can he carry that much?"). Lt-Col Jean Jeanie pockets 1,300 crowns worth. One of the few casualties is the regiment's junior Major, allowing Captain Beau Reese Jean Seine rapid promotion to Major. He is Mentioned for his "meteoric rise" and grabs over a thousand crowns worth of loot, more than enough to buy the extra horses required for his new rank. By contrast, Captain Con d'Masses has a quiet time and makes do with just under a thousand crowns. The same amount comes the way



victories can only be gained with old-fangled methods. I say, send the Musketeers in first, where their abject use of the rapier will lull any heathen scum into a false sense of security. Then follow up with the more skilled men of God and the Cardinal, to mop up any pockets of resistance, trouser gold and generally round up witches who need burning." He interrupts himself with a burp and peers at the paper in his hand before continuing. "Err... there is more here but it's under a wine stain. I am sure it said something insightful about the best methods for burning witches and using gunpowder saved from the lack of muskets." He hiccups and collapses into a chair. Not that anyone's listening by this point. Lothario and Maggie are here, too. Xavier Four-Hollandaise and Leia return, allowing Xavier and Charles to resume hostilities. Xavier's contribution is straightforward: "Never mind the manoeuvres, just go straight at them!"

Pierre le Sang is to be found at the Fleur de Lys all month where he entertains Guinevere d'Arthur. Pierre Cardigan brings Lois de Low in the first week and Richard Shapmes is there for weeks 2 and 3, but that's it for the Fleur.

Hunter's is busier, with Florent Sans de Machine and Leonard de Hofstadt (plus Sue) in residence for the first three weeks. Leonard can't work out whether he's rejoicing or drowning his sorrows. Either way, he spends the time formulating his treatise on modern battlefield tactics for delivery in week 4. Sebastian Adis II brings Marie Antoinette for the first week and Xavier Four-Hollandaise turns up with Leia in the third. Week 4 sees just Humphrey Gocart and Frances Forrin occupying the club. Frances does not seem to have noticed that Humphrey was another young lady's doorstep the week before.

Blue Gables is the only other club with visitors. Coeur De Lion escorts Ada Andabettair here for the whole month. The only other people they see are Claude Talon and Anna, who pop in for week 3. There are three contenders for the title of iron man this month, all of them practising for four weeks. Bernard de Lur-Saluces and Jacques de Gain work out with rapier, but are eclipsed by Rick O'Shea and his cutlass. Chopine Camus (sabre), Sebastian Adis II (rapier) and Pierre Cardigan (sabre) get honourable mentions for three weeks in the gyms. Charles Asnovoise (rapier) and Gaz Moutarde (cutlass) practise for two weeks and Was Nae Me (rapier) pops in for the odd week.

Hitting the bawdyhouses for the first week is Granville Ferferfetchacloff, who then carries out his regimental duties before creeping in to Jacques As's do. Charles Asnovoise is next to turn up in the red light district. The footpads think him a likely lad, but find nothing in his pockets when they roll him. Florent Sans de Machine, Grégory Bonnissel (after finding the object of his affections out when he called) and Richard Shapmes all conclude their May in the Bawdyhouses. This goes swimmingly until the footpads pounce on Richard as he staggers home. His lack of success when courting earlier in the month seems to have led to a lack of caution. He has a substantial amount of money on his person, allowing several of Paris's bandits to retire from their life of crime.

story is both what you would expect and unforeseen. Characters die along the way, but others are re-born in surprising forms. I have a minor beef with Donaldson in the way he introduces hordes of 'red-shirts' at the end simply so that they can die horribly, along with Lord Foul's minions, in the climactic battles. However, the ending is magnificent.

As always, Donaldson's imagination weaves us a huge tapestry, full of detail and revelation, but essentially telling a single story. As I've already mentioned, his protagonists are frail and fallible, their enemies huge and powerful. Yet it is their own weaknesses that save the heroes and their own twisted malevolence that dooms the bad guys. And it's one hell of a journey along the way. If you're already a fan of the Thomas Covenant saga, you will not need me to persuade you to read these books. If you are not, let me urge you to pick up *Lord Foul's Bane*, the first volume of the original Chronicles, and start your introduction to an epic saga.

Games Events

Oxcon takes place over the weekend of 30th and 31st January at the Mitre pub on the High Street in the centre of Oxford. As usual, it features a *Puerto Rico* tournament on Saturday and (*Settlers of Catan*) on Sunday. There are plenty of opportunities to play other games on both days. There's more information on Facebook: www.facebook.com/events/445161822357469

Coming up at the end of February is SoRCon, held at the Holiday Inn in Basildon. More about this in next issue, but check out www.sorcon.co.uk if you want the details now.

This box concentrates on events I expect to attend.

Swiggers: games club that meets every Wednesday evening, upstairs at The Shipwright's Arms, 88 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TF (a few minutes' walk from London Bridge station). For more info, see www.pevans.co.uk/Swiggers

Games Games Games Days: from noon(-ish) on the second Saturday of most months at the Allsop Arms (137 Gloucester Place, London NW1 5AL). The pub has an extensive menu as well as good beer and is convenient for Baker Street and Bond Street Tubes as well as Marylebone station.

UK Games Expo: 3rd-5th June 2016 at the NEC (Hall 1 and Hilton Metropole). This is a public event that showcases games of all sorts with traders, demos and participation games plus 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. 13th-16th October 2016, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany or see www.merz-verlag-en.com

MidCon: mid-November 2016 at the Hallmark Hotel in Derby. MidCon is a friendly board games convention in a decent hotel. See www.midcon.org.uk.

For more extensive information on UK board games events, try the following.

The Labyrinth: <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/the-labyrinth/games/>

The Queen's Lane Advertiser: <http://www.boardgamers.org.uk/qla.php>

Great White Hunter

Turn 8

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

What's this about?

This game is essentially a variation of *Battleships* and is open to all readers of *TWJO*. Set in the late 19th century, a 20 x 20 grid represents an area of the African bush, while the players are all hunters looking 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 grid and numbers (1-20) up and down (thus A1 is the top left corner).

with his enemy, Charles Louis. Chopine Camus (with Sheila Kiwi) and Jacques As (with Thomasina Tancenjin) are also in Bothwell's – well, they are members. Jacques' arrival sparks an outburst from Humphrey, annoyed that someone with no nobility should be his social superior.

The second week of Was's devotions to Mary looks very much like the first. This time Lothario doesn't try to gain entry, but uses his own membership of Bothwell's to take a separate table with Maggie Nifisent. From here he is able to exchange insults with Was to his heart's content. Jacques also returns to his club – though Chopine does not – and gets further dirty looks from Humphrey. For week three, Was's event turns into a KM recruiting drive and attendance drops right off. Just Allan (and Ella) and Charles (with Josephine) turn up to Toady to Was (and Vera). However, Lothario (with Maggie) and Jacques (plus Thomasina) are back in Bothwell's so the exchange between Lothario and Was continues.

Come week 4 and Jacques and Thomasina take over as host and hostess in Bothwell's. Charles Louis Desapear Toadies (with Josephine), as does Claude Talon, unaccompanied this time. Claude has a contribution for the debate: "OK, we have our front line backed by reserves, or line-backers. Behind them are two units for safety. When the enemy exposes their commander, we have a safety unit rush in and get him! I call this a 'safety blitz'. What do you think? Would wine help?" It might help private Granville Ferferfetchacloff. He is wearing a ludicrously tall plume in an effort to make himself look as tall as the rest of the



GDMD. He is completely obsequious, tugging his forelock every time anyone speaks to him, which the staff find rather disconcerting, especially given the nodding plume. Gaz Moutarde puts in an appearance.

Leonard de Hofstadt turns up with Sue Briquet in tow and delivers his prepared treatise. He announces the title, "How to deal with the enemies of France and God" and clears his throat before continuing. "The fact that France still has enemies shows that the use of the new-fangled musket has been an abject failure on the battlefield. Modern

hairdresser, tailor, pastry chef, dog walker and Tristram (aka Trissy), his personal fitness instructor. In addition, cuddled in his lap, is an annoying little poodle called Fou-Fou, whose first act is to try and bite anyone else who comes near. Catching sight of Bdr-Gen Cuckpowder, Gauchepied'er stands in his stirrups and greets him loudly. "Coeee, General, it's me darling, I'm here!" he cries, waving furiously. Dismounting quickly, he somehow produces a large bouquet from his baggage and hands it to the flabbergasted Cuckpowder.

Amant d'Au enlists two new recruits for the august ranks of the Royal Foot Guards: Messrs Beau Reese Jean Seine and Philippe Lesuer. Both men have their eyes on the one vacant Captain's position and both have the same social standing. A toss of a coin gives the Captaincy to Seine, leaving Lesuer as Subaltern. Both men are then on the march to join their regiment.

While all this is going on in the military, Minister of State Jacques Shitacks has the opportunity to fill the sudden vacancies in his Government. As a "safe pair of hands", Terence Cuckpowder gets the job of Commissioner of Public Safety. Hopefully he will not develop the paranoia and dementia that seem to have afflicted recent holders of the post. Rick O'Shea gets the plum job of Chancellor of the Exchequer, while Was Nae Me joins the cabinet without a portfolio. Their ministerial positions produce further advancement for O'Shea and Me: the former becomes a Marquis and the latter a Baron.

With the Horse Guards already on active service, Heavy Brigadier Uther Xavier-Beauregard decides his men should join in as well and gives them his battle cry: "Death or cake!" This means mobilisation for both the Crown Prince and Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers - an unpleasant shock for the new CPC Colonel, Sebastian de la Creme, who had plans for a congenial month in Paris.

Not to be outdone, Major Alan de Frocked volunteers his battalion of the Cardinal's Guard. Lt-Colonel Duncan d'Eauneurts does the same in the King's Musketeers. At least this will keep them away from the duelling for a month. CG Captain Jean d'Ice will accompany them, as he's in Frocked's command.

Fun in Bothwell's

As there are so many socialites enjoying the siege of Lille, Paris is relatively quiet. The action, such as it is, is all in Bothwell's. Was Nae Me holds parties for three weeks with Jacques As wrapping up the month by hosting "another discussion on 'Tactics on the Modern Battlefield'". With Vera Cruz at his side, Was welcomes his guests in week 1 to celebrate the Virgin Mary. Allan Fa-Dân is first, alphabetically, and brings Ella Fant with him. Charles Louis Desapear is next and accompanied by Josephine Buonoparte. Claude Talon brings Anna Rexique. Grégory Bonnissel is unaccompanied, as is Humphrey Gocart. As a member of the Cardinal's Guard, Was's enemy regiment, Lothario Lovelace is chancing his arm when he turns up. He is duly refused entry. Last in the list is Xavier Four-Hollandaise, who escorts Leia Orgasma and exchanges challenges

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 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 the square they hit (there are no points left for the square(s) hit initially) with a minimum of 1 point. So if A and B hit the second square of that lion and C gets the third, C gets 5 points, A and B 2½ each.

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

After 12 turns or when the board is clear (except for any snakes), the player with the most points wins.

Shots and scores

Chris Baylis sets the tone for this turn: "I shall fire into N7 in the hope of putting the Leo out of its misery and with the confidence that other players will reckon everyone else will go for the obvious and thus instead of wanting to share a piece de leon they will fire their blanks elsewhere." It doesn't quite work out like that and Chris has to share the final points for the lion with several others.

One of those is Mike Clibborn-Dyer, who reckons "We'll be having Simba for Christmas this year!" Andy Kendall is certain "surely that must hit that lion!" However, his target is a different lion. He gets one end, along with Graeme Morris, while Brad Martin and Matt Shepherd finish off the other end.

There are clusters of shots to the top right and bottom left that include near misses and one monkey, which falls to Graeme Wilson. Rob Pinkerton remains in the lead, but has several challengers hard on his heels.

Key

Animals	Symbol	Size (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	6	12
Lion	L	3	3	15
Elephant	E	4	2	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.

Player	Shots	This turn	Total
Chris Baylis	N7	1.25	7.92
Andrew Burgess			6
Charles Burrows	G18,N7	1.25	5.5
Mike Dommett	D19,G17	0	8.75
Mike Clibborn-Dyer	N7	1.25	14.25
Alex Everard			5
Joe Farrell			1
Tony Hinton-West			2
Bill Howell			5
Andy Kendall	F14	2.5	7.5
Nik Luker	E10,D11	0	15
Tim Macaire			7.5
Brad Martin	O8,H14	2.5	5
Graeme Morris	F14	2.5	5
Mark Nightingale			0
Craig Pearson	O2,S2	0	2.67
Rob Pinkerton	H18,R3	0	16
Matt Shepherd	G13,H14	2.5	8.42
Gerald Udowiczenko			1
Pam Udowiczenko	N2,R8	0	5
Ray Vahey			7.75
Matthew Wale	B19,S2	0	3
Graeme Wilson	G13,Q3	4	14
Paul Wilson	S2,N7	1.25	14.75

Send your next shots to Pevans at
180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF or
to TWJO@pevans.co.uk by Friday, 5th February 2016.

Online Games

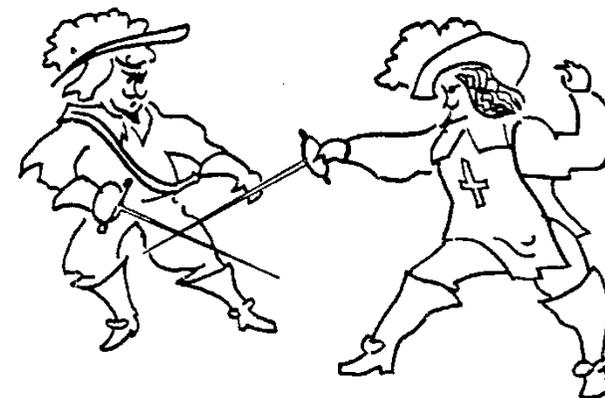
TWJO readers are welcome to join in the various online board games we're playing. Let me know what games you'd like to play and I'll add you in.

Game 31 of *Brass* (at brass.orderofthehammer.com) is reaching a conclusion, so I'll be setting up a new game very soon.

It looks like we have three people lined up for a game of *Puerto Rico* and two interested in *Through the Ages* (at www.BoardGameArena.com) – one more would make the games more interesting. Similarly, we need one more to get a game of *Agricola* off the ground (at www.boiteajeux.net).

I've recently starting playing *Concordia* at Boîte à Jeux and *Castles of Burgundy* at Yucata – both games I haven't played enough. Who'd like to join me?

against his opponent's regimental rapier. Hofstadt's initial block is met by a parry. However, Hofstadt continues blocking, stopping Eauneurts's slash. This is the first part of a furious slash and the cut arrives just after Hofstadt's little skip to one side. This is a big hit, but the Musketeer keeps going. He responds with a slash and a lunge as Eauneurts recovers his balance. Eauneurts hits back with a slash and then the two slash simultaneously. Again, the sabre causes the bigger wound and Hofstadt surrenders.



There is a pause while bandages are applied and Hofstadt then takes his place as second to his CO. Lovelace is also using a rapier against the sabre-wielding Musketeer, but this looks an even match despite Eauneurts's fresh injuries. Both men slash at the same time. Eauneurts follows this with a cut that's just as devastating as his earlier one. Lovelace surrenders, having inflicted not much more than a scratch on his adversary.

Time for some new blood

No sooner is he back from the secluded woods where duels may have taken place, than Leonard de Hofstadt is calling in some favours. His purpose is to persuade the Major above him in the Cardinal's Guard to resign his commission, thus allowing Hofstadt to procure the position. The Major accedes to the pressure and Hofstadt is duly ensconced as the regiment's junior Major.

In the Crown Prince Cuirassiers, the resignation of Euria Humble allows Sebastian de la Creme to spend some of the extra cash he's just borrowed. He buys the rank of Colonel and takes command of the regiment. Humble's destination is the Gascon Legion. Accepted by the surviving Major, Humble buys himself the junior Majority. As his boss is serving as Brigade Major, this makes Humble acting regimental commander and he heads for the siege.

Humphrey Gocart joins the Princess Louisa Light Dragoons and takes a Captaincy. Terence Cuckpowder recruits new boy Felix Anton Gauchepied'er for the Queen's Own Carabiniers. With a gift from Bernard de Lur-Saluces as well as his borrowing Gauchepied'er is flush, but restricts himself to the rank of Captain. Of course he is then off to join the rest of the regiment in action, but he's ready for this. His arrival at the QOC HQ is somewhat noticeable as he is accompanied by an entourage and a host of baggage cases. His servants include his personal

parry. This is technically a win for Frocked, but doesn't help him improve his skill, while Me pays the penalty of not putting up a show.

As a member of the Cardinal's Guard himself, Hofstadt is next on Me's list for another rapier fight. Lothario Lovelace arrives to second his colleague, Hofstadt, who is by far the bigger man even before Me's injuries are taken into account. Having seen Frocked's approach, Hofstadt parries, too. It is equally successful with Me surrendering once the words "en garde!" have been uttered.

Lovelace and Hofstadt now swap places so that the CG commander can take on his opposite number. Lovelace is not only the beefier of the two, he has the greater expertise. He doesn't even bother parrying, but just leans on his sword as Me surrenders.

Meanwhile, in another rapier fight, Charles Louis Desapear of the 27th Musketeers has been taking on Xavier Four-Hollandaise of the 13th Fusiliers. Neither man feels the need for a second and the odds are clearly with the bulky Desapear over the slight Four-Hollandaise. Desapear proves to be a canny duellist, jumping out of the way of both attacks in Four-Hollandaise's furious slash after both men have parried initially. Desapear then strikes twice. First with a slash then immediately with a lunge (the opening move of a furious lunge). The slash may only be a scratch, but the lunge does enough damage for Four-Hollandaise to concede.

Four-Hollandaise's injuries allow him to decline his second meeting, with Jean d'Ice. Put out by this, Ice storms off home, ignoring his other opponents, Duncan d'Euaneurts and Jacques As.



Jacques As has already taken on one opponent, facing Humphrey Gocart's foil with his sabre. As's old injuries put him roughly on a par with Gocart physically and he is by the far the more skilled swordsman. A desperate lunge from Gocart is met by a cool slash from As. Both men score first

blood and both then surrender. The result counts as an honourable draw and provides As with the medical note he needs to decline his fights with Florent Sans de Machine, Jean d'Ice and Percy Mystic. Not that Major Mystic turns up to any of his appointments this month, leaving Chopine Camus, Claude Talon, Grégory Bonnissel and Kidder de Margaux without an opponent. Though Margaux is a no-show as well.

Was Nae Me is still hanging around and seconds Duncan d'Euaneurts when he finally gets a fight. KM Lt-Colonel Eauneurts chooses to take on CG Captain Leonard de Hofstadt first, Lothario Lovelace continuing to do the seconding honours for his colleague. The Musketeer's advantage is that he's using a sabre

Trader to the Stars (*Star Trader* game 8)

Game report - Turn 1

COSTRA NOSTRA IMPORTERS INC bought a Monopoles Factory at Mu Herculis and 3 Spice Factories at Sigma Draconis, before laying down two Corco Gamma hulls, Bonnie and Clyde, after some hesitation at Beta Hydri Shipyards. They then raised their Political Connections, but failed to load Passengers to Mu Herculis as a competitor had already been there.

WHITE STAR LINE laid down two Corco Zeta hulls as Passenger liners Titanic and Britannic at Tau Ceti and Beta Hydri respectively. After selecting Red Choir as their agent, passengers were loaded for Tau Ceti and Reputation improved. The Cargo pods were disposed of from the Olympic, and more Passenger and Light Weapon pods bought.

INTERSIDEREAL GREENHORNS bought 4 Liquor Factories at Alpha Centauri and 4 Isotope Factories at Tau Ceti. Then, with a 122 HT loan over 4 quarters, they increased their Reputation, increased their Business Connections, bought a Warehouse at Tau Ceti, swapped Passenger for Cargo pods and upgraded the ship's crew, before starting a new (incomplete) Phoenix hull (Tracey) at Tau Ceti.

FOOLS AND HORSES bought 6 Spice Factories, improved their Business Connections and spent to improve their Reputation as well.

SWISS MERCENARY FLEET improved their Business Connections and bought 2 Spice Factories. They then laid down two Piccolo hulls with D class crew at Tau Ceti Shipyards, while replacing Passenger with Cargo pods on the Clarinet hull. Very busy this Quarter.

PAVONIS PIONEERS laid down two Phoenix hulls, while upgrading the crews to their existing spaceships. Warehouses were procured at Alpha Centauri and Beta Hydri. They also loaded Passengers to Sigma Draconis. Political Connections were pushed still higher and they took out a 450 HT loan over 4 Quarters to fund this and their Reputation increase.

TRANSURANIC TRADING bought 3 Monopole Factories at Mu Herculis, 2 Liquor Factories at Alpha Centauri and 2 Spice Factories at Sigma Draconis plus a Warehouse at Alpha Centauri. Their ships loaded Passengers for Delta Pavonis and Gamma Leporis.

FATCAT laid down 3 Corco Zeta hulls - Betley at Tau Ceti, Biddle at Beta Hydri, and Birkin at Epsilon Eridani - and 2 Piccolo hulls: Walvern at Alpha Centauri and Weaver at Beta Hydri at the Quadrant's Shipyards. This was parleyed into a 640 HT loan over 4 Quarters. Each Corco Zeta was equipped with D class crews and 4 Passenger pods, while the Piccolos got top notch crews. All received Augmented Jump pods to replace the original equipment. Political Connections were raised and a Phoenix hull Gowy was laid down and equipped with Cargo

Pods and top crew at Tau Ceti Shipyards. Finally, a Warehouse was bought at Mu Herculis.

There was surprisingly little trading this Quarter. At Delta Pavonis, PAVONIS PIONEERS bought 12 Petroleum for 10 HTs each and gained a Dealership. Sigma Draconis was the only other system with trading: PAVONIS PIONEERS bought 12 Spice for 13 HTs each and took a second Dealership this Quarter. Isotopes saw COSTRA NOSTRA buying 4 Isotopes at 5 HTs each after FATCAT had bought 12 for 7 HTs apiece, giving them with a Dealership.

Corporation Table

Corporation letter and name	Connections Bus/Crim/Pol	Init'v Bid	Turn order	Cash	Rep'n	Player
B	4 0 3	N		570	20	Andrew Burgess
C Costa Nostra Importers	4 5 1	0	6th	124	21	Mark Cowper
D Fools And Horses	1 0 7	0	2nd	50	26	Mike Clibborn-Dyer
E FATCAT	1 7 1	7	1st	166	23	Jerry Elsmore
F White Star Line	0 0 7	0	7th	105	25	Paul Evans
G Swiss Mercenary Fleet	1 5 2	0	3rd	186	24	Martin Jennings
H Intersidereal Greenhorns	1 0 7	0	8th	121	25	Mateusz Ochman
J Pavonis Pioneers	2 0 8	5	4th	327	25	Przemek Orwat
K Transuranic Trading	3 0 4	0	5th	50	20	Bob Parkins

N under Initiative Bid means No move received, F indicates the Corp was floated

News

There were five new News chits this turn. The current chits (new ones in bold) are as follows.
 Turn 3 **B8**
 Turn 4 **P7, C2**

Turn 5 **P8, C4**
 (Chits are identified by the Connection type and level required to see them and disappear/take effect in the News Phase of the turn listed.)

GM Notes

Paul Appleby (Corp A) has had to drop out because of circumstances and Andrew Burgess NMR'd.

The table at the bottom of page 16 of the rules shows which Spaceports have Shipyards. Legal spaceships can only be laid down in the 4 systems with Spaceports. Damaged hulls can only be repaired at a shipyard.

Legal pods can be bought anywhere, Illegal pods only on planet as the result of an opportunity chit. If you are buying an illegal hull with pods, you do not need to have a spaceship on the planet, but if you are only buying illegal pods you must have a spaceship on the planet.

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

Orders for June and July 1668 to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF, UK or lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk by Friday 5th February 2016



May 1668 (291)

May is officially the last month of Spring and Paris is certainly warming up – though a lot of socialites seem to be leaving town. Before they go, however, there are some matters of honour that need to be settled. First up is the duel between Richard Shapmes and Allan Fa-Dân. This is a rapier fight and there isn't much to choose between the protagonists, except for Shapmes's superior skill with their chosen weapon. Both men adopt the same approach, starting with a lunge and following with a slash. They do the same damage with their blades, too. It is Shapmes's expertise that wins him the fight as he gets in his third attack, another slash, while Fa-Dân is still regaining his balance. Three hits are enough and Fa-Dân concedes the fight.

Cardinal's Guardsman Jean d'Ice has plenty of opponents and decides to face the King's Musketeers' commander, Was Nae Me, first. This is another rapier fight between well matched adversaries. Me does have a slight advantage in skill – and a second in the form of Duncan d'Eauneurts – but this is probably not enough to be significant. Me scores first blood by launching into an immediate furious lunge. While Ice uses the same attack, he is a beat behind because of the difference in expertise. Both men strike with their lunges, then again with their cuts. It is Me who surrenders.

Despite his serious injuries, Me carries on to meet his next enemy, Alan de Frocked. Seconded by Leonard de Hofstadt and carrying a rapier, the undamaged Frocked looks the fitter of the two. Me seems to think so too. His first action when the pair cross swords is to surrender in the face of Frocked's ferocious

GM Notes

Note that the mutual payments between SMF and BSR for parallel building cancel each other out.

The races start next turn, and each player may enter up to 5 out of 8 each turn.

Held over races don't count towards this limit.

Many races may require Joint Runs or Exchange of Running Powers – talk to each other. Make sure at least one of you specifies a route and the other one at least says “Joint run/Exchange with X, his route.”

After the race, each player may build up to 12 build points, including known costs to others. The build points available after the races will reduce by 2 each turn.

**Orders to Mike Dommett, 119 Victoria Road, Alton GU34 2DD
or by e-mail to mike_dommett@yahoo.co.uk by 29th January 2016**

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The table on the right shows the costs for the paper edition, including postage.

Paper edition	UK	Europe	World
10-issue (1 year) subscription	£27.00	£45.00	£55.00

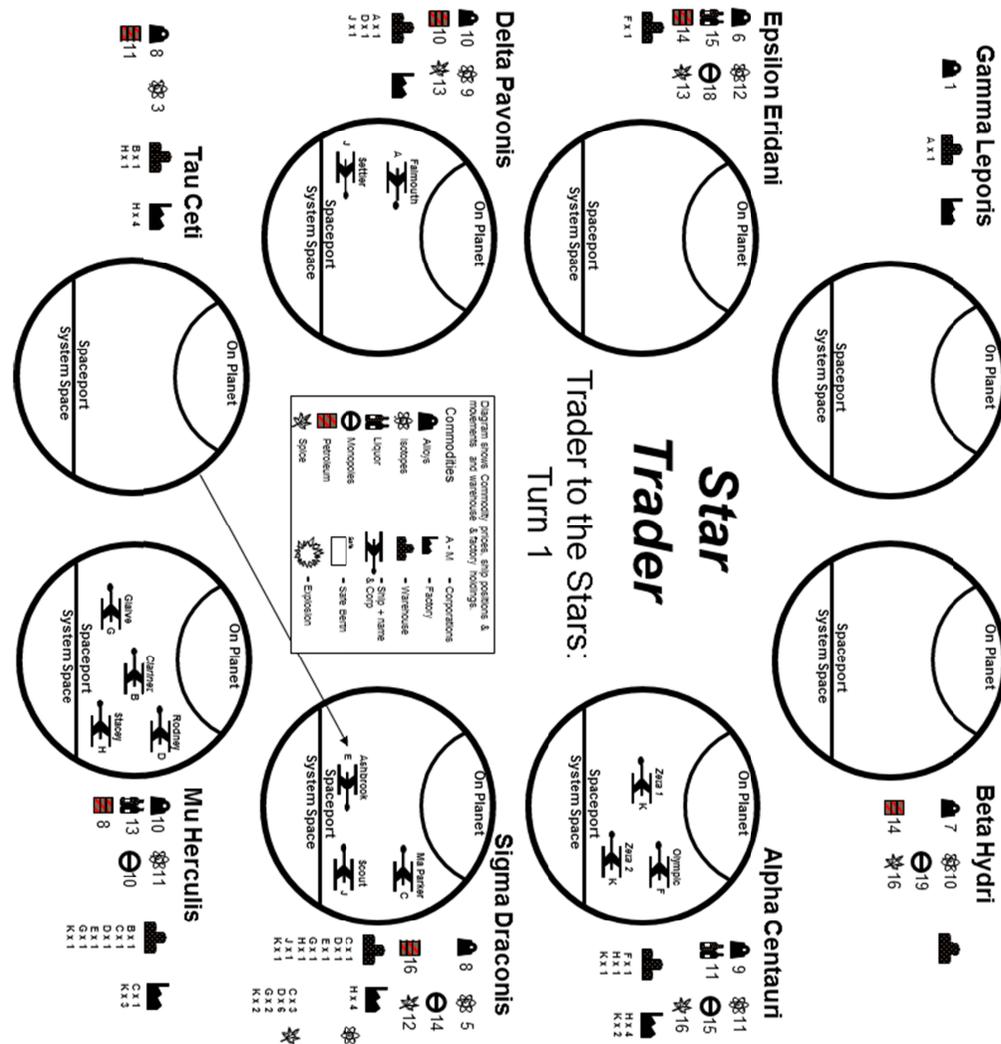
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Illegal hulls, and de-facto hulls with illegal pods can only be repaired at Tau Ceti Spaceport.

**Orders to Mike Dommett, 119 Victoria Road, Alton GU34 2DD
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Banwen (Railway Rivals game 11)

Game report - Turn 6

BLACK SHEEP RAILWAYS connected to Penarth Docks and built alongside THOR to Caerphilly. STEAM MACHINES & FUNICULARS built into Cross Keys in the east and then built through Caerphilly and west, paralleling THOR and BLACK SHEEP. ARRIBA ARRIBA ANDALE connected more of the eastern valleys and avoided the expensive construction. TRAVELLING HOPEFULLY RAILWAY built short links invading other areas and collected payments from others around Caerphilly.



Builds

BLACK SHEEP RAILWAYS (BSR),
Gerald Udowiczenko - Black

- a) (D66) - E67 - F67 - G67 - H66 - Penarth Docks; (N22) - A57
- b) (A57) - C56 - E57 (1 to THOR)
- c) (E57) - F56 - G56 - H56 - Caerphilly; (G18) - F18 (1 to THOR)

Points: 77 -5 = 72

TRAVELLING HOPEFULLY RAILWAY (THOR),
Jonathan Palfrey - Green

- a) (Treharris) - I49 - I50 (1 to SMF); (E56) - F55 - G56
- b) (G56) - H55 - Caerphilly; (B50) - A50 - Ynysybwl (+6)
- c) (Aberaman) - L6 - Aberdare; (Treharris) - G47 - G46

Points: 38 +2 +2 -1 +6 = 47

ARRIBA ARRIBA ANDALE (AAA),
Mike Dyer - Blue

- a) (D86) - Cross Keys; (A81) - A79 - M43 - M42 (+6)
- b) (M42) - Tredegar (3 to SMF); (L50) - L49
- c) (L49) - L46 - Bargoed (1 build short)

Points: 92 -3 +6 = 95

STEAM MACHINES & FUNICULARS (SMF),
Martin Jennings - Red

- a) (G92) - G91 - F90 - F89 - Cross Keys; (Tredegar) - N40
- b) (J54) - J55 - Caerphilly - H56 - G56 (1 to THOR)
- c) (G56) - F56 - E57 - D56 - C56 - B56 (1 to THOR)

Points: 72 -2 +3 +1 = 74

Next turn's races

Race	From	To
1	35 Merthyr Tydfil	21 Crumlin
2	23 Blackwood	S3 Cardiff or Barry
3	15 Brynmawr	41 Hirwaun
4	64 Tonypandy	S5 Barry or Penarth
5	55 Pontypridd	14 Abertillery
6	51 Maerdy	S4 Cardiff or Newport
7	44 Mountain Ash	62 Treorchy

