

That would be enough

This has been issue 177 of *To Win Just Once*, published 30th August 2017. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2017

Deadlines

Orders for *Railway Rivals* and *Star Trader* to Mike by Friday, 15th Sept 2017.

Orders for *LPBS*, shots in *Great White Hunter* and all other contributions to Pevans by Friday, 22nd September 2017.

(Last deadlines for 2017 are: 27th October/3rd November, 1st/8th December)

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 current game is halfway through. Rob Pinkerton is up for the next one, who else? Working map and rules provided.

Star Trader – a new game is setting up and we have room for a few more players. Rules provided.

Online games

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

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

Imhotep (at www.yucata.de): Pevans

Keyflower (at www.boardgamearena.com): Pevans, Brad Martin

Navegador (at www.yucata.de): Pevans

Pax Porfiriana (at www.yucata.de): Pevans

Puerto Rico (at www.boardgamearena.com): Pevans

Through the Ages (at www.boardgaming-online.com)

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 177 was written and edited by Pevans. The *LPBS* masthead (page 24) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood. The drawings on pages 24 and 28 are by Tim Wiseman and the one on page 26 is by Nik Luker. Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Photos were taken by Pevans (except where noted), who played with Photoshop.

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To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)

RHODES
PIETER BOOTS

Pevans reports from the Great British Beer Festival

And reviews Rhodes

And Colony

THE GAME MASTER

Contents

Contents 2

Chatter..... 3

Letters..... 3

Olympic Beers..... 4
Pevans at the 2017 Great British Beer Festival..... 4

Beneath Colossus..... 7
Pevans reviews *Rhodes* 7

After the apocalypse: dice! 10
Pevans reviews *Colony*..... 10

Reading Matter..... 15

Games Events..... 18

Great White Hunter..... 20
Turn 1 20

Subscribing to TWJO 22

Online Games..... 23

Obama (Railway Rivals game 12)..... 23
Held over..... 23

Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses..... 24
November 1669 (309) 24
Press 29
Points Arising..... 33
Announcements 34
Duels 34
New Characters 35
Tables..... 35
Army Organisation and 1670's Summer Deployment 35
Brigade Positions 36
Frontier Regiments..... 36
Battle Results 36
Other Appointments 36
Regiments..... 37
Femmes Fatales..... 37
The Greasy Pole 38

That would be enough 40
Deadlines 40
Waiting lists 40
Credits 40

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
IM	Inigo Montoya	12	34	Comfy	Captain	GDMD/LtGen's Aide (BdLS)	5	Deb	Both	3	Graeme Morris
SdM	Swindelle d'Masses	12	32	OK	Major	QOC/HGds Brigade Maj.	4	Lucy	Both	4	Craig Pearson
PM	Sir Percy Mistic	12	14	Comfy	B.Bdr-General	ALC/Hvy Brigadier	8		Hunt	3	Ray Vahey
CLD	Charles Louis Desapear	11	31	Comfy	Bdr-General		3	Emma	Hunt	4	Martin Jennings
RBCB	Raoul Bernard de Chenin Blanc	11	0	Poor			5		Hunt	4	Olaf Schmidt
JD	Jacques Diabolick	11	+33	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	PM/1 F Brigade Maj.	1	Mary	Hunt	3	Cameron Wood
SDS	Sébastien Da Silva	10	F	OK			6		Hunt	2	Paul Wilson
LOUT	Louis Oeuf Ur Terribles	10	+39	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	RM	2	Sue	BG	5	Dave Marsden
PN	Sir Pépé Nicole	9	F	Comfy	Colonel	69A	7		BG	3	Colin Cowper
FAG	Felix Anton Gauchepied'er	9	F	Comfy	B.Lt.Colonel	KM/Gen's Aide (SdIC)	7		Hunt	4	Jason Fazackarley
HD	Henri Dubois	9	+30	Comfy	Captain	DC	1		BG	3	Wayne Little
XM	Xavier Money	8	20	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	GDMD	5	Betty	F&P	3	Pam Udowiczzenko
FSdM	Florent Sans de Machine	8	10	Comfy			3	Charlotte	BG	4	Nik Luker
JZ	Jacques ZeLad	6	19	OK	Major	13F	5	Angelina	F&P	2	Francesca Weal
JTC	Jean Tétreault-Cauchon	6	RIP								Daniel Blanchette
RM	Ranso Mware	6	+21	OK	Major	PM	2		F&P	3	Graeme Wilson
X1		5	15	OK			5		F&P	1	Gerald Udowiczzenko
RB	Roméo Boudreaux	4	+27	Poor	Captain	PM	1	Thomasina	RP	4	Mark Nightingale
BS	Balzac Slapdash	3	-2	Comfy	B.Bdr-General		9			4	Matthew Wale
X5		2	F	Poor			3			5	Marc Blanchette

An F under SPs means that the character was at the Front, RIP means that he died.

+ against SL means it went up this month, - means it went down.

Cash: Poor = <500, OK = 500-1500, Comfy = 1500-5000, Withy = 5000-10000, Rich = 10000-25000, Flthy = 25000+

Last seen is the lady the character was last seen with in public.

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

The Greasy Pole

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank, Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
BdZ	Viscount Bill de Zmerchant	24	63	Comfy	Fld Marshal/War Minister	7		Flr	3	Tim Macaire
PLS	Earl Pierre le Sang	24	60	Withy	General/State Min.	7	Guinevere	Flr	4	Bill Howell
PC	Count Pierre Cardigan	24	39	Rich	General	9	Edna	Flr	5	Matt Shepherd
UXB	Count Uther Xavier-Beauregard	23	65	Withy	B.General/2nd Army Commandr	16	Henrietta	Flr	4	Pete Card
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	21	65	Fithy	B.Lt-General/Cav Div Commandr	21	Belle	Flr	6	Ben Brown
EB	Marquis Etienne Brule	21	63	Comfy	Colonel DG/Chancellor	12	Freda	Flr	4	James McReynolds
FdA	Earl Frele d'Acier	21	F	Rich	Lt.Colonel DG/Min w/o Port	9		Flr	3	Peter Farrell
AdA	Count Amant d'Au	19	F	Rich	Colonel RFG/Min w/o Port	23		Flr	5	David Brister
JJ	Count Jean Jeanie	19	F	Rich	Lt.Colonel RFG/Min w/o Port	23		Flr	3	Andrew Kendall
RS	Viscount Richard Shapmes	19	F	Withy	Lt-General	15		Flr	4	Charles Popp
DdE	Sir Duncan d'Eauneurts	19+57	Comfy	B.Bdr-General	KM/CPS	5		Flr	5	Paul Lydiate
SdLC	Baron Sebastian de la Creme	18	49	Comfy	B.General/Min w/o Port	4	Di	Flr	5	Alan Percival
TC	Baron Terence Cuckpowder	17	38	Rich	B.Lt-General QOC/HGds Brig'dier	6	Fifi	Both	4	Mike Dommett
WNM	Viscount Was Nae Me	16	37	Rich	B.Lt-General	4	Vera	Both	3	Mark Farrell
GM	Sir Gaz Moutarde	16	21	Comfy	Bdr-General/1st Army QM Gen.	5	Marie	Both	2	Mike Clibborn-Dyer
SA2	Sir Sebastian Adis II	16	F	Comfy	Major RFG/Min w/o Port	4		Flr	4	Mark Cowper
BRJS	Baron Beau Reese Jean Seine	15	32	Comfy	Bdr-General	8	Sheila	Both	3	Bill Hay
CC	Sir Chopine Camus	14	F	Withy	Major DG	8		Both	4	Stewart Macintyre
JE	Sir Jean Ettonique	14	F	Comfy	Bdr-General/Gds Brigadier	5		Both	5	Tony Hinton-West
LdH	Sir Leonard de Hofstadt	14+43	Comfy	Colonel RM/1st Army Adjutant		2	Bess	Both	3	Neil Packer
GIS	Sir Gaston le Somme	13	39	Withy	Lt.Colonel CG/1st Div Adjutant	3	Madelaine	Both	2	Jerry Spencer
AdF	Sir Alan de Frocked	13	19	OK	Major CG	5	Ava	Both	3	Charles Burrows
Jdl	Sir Jean d'Ice	13+43	Withy	B.Lt-General/Adjutant Gen		7		Both	2	Tym Norris
BdLS	Bernard de Lur-Saluces									Rob Pinkerton

Chatter

The latest development where I live has been the replacement of some of the streetlamps along our road. The difference is very obvious. The old lights are orange bricks, shedding as much light sideways as down. The new ones are bright, white and hooded so that they only shine down.

The result is pools of almost daylight, but with complete darkness between them where they're far enough apart. The old orange lights may not have been as bright, but they did provide some continuous illumination. And, while the new lights don't shine directly into windows, their brightness means that they produce powerful reflections – especially if a parked car is at the right angle.

Meanwhile, the new sheltered accommodation blocks at the end of the road (Lancaster and Lysander houses) are proudly proclaiming “85% sold!” The other large banner says “Now Recruiting!” Hmm, shouldn't they have thought about staffing the place **before** it was 85% sold?

I trust everyone's had a good summer. It's now my turn to take a break, but I'll be back in good time for the next deadline.

Railway Rivals and new Star Trader

Mike has had orders from very few players, so we're holding over the start of the new *Star Trader* game. Anyone else who'd like to join in is welcome – see the details in last issue.

Similarly, only two of the *Railway Rivals* players got orders to Mike by the deadline – and he's now away – so this is also held over.

TWJO online

The PDF versions of issue 175 of *TWJO* attracted 159 downloads in July, after being available from the 1st. There were 33 downloads for issue 174, taking it to 285 in two (and a bit) months. And 173 was downloaded 39 times in July, for a total of 285 since publication. Top of the other downloads was my review of *High Frontier* from 2011 with lots more reviews following on.

Letters

Nik Luker is celebrating his Fictionary Dictionary win.

Well I certainly wasn't expecting that! Thought I might manage an honourable third place or maybe a jammy second, but to pinch first... what can I say? Big thanks to everyone for all their highly imaginative and entertaining wordplay in what is still one of my favourite games. It never fails to bring a smile to my face!

And Andy Kendall has his tongue in his cheek.

A grudging grumpy congratulations to Nik! Can we play over 9 rounds next time?

Brigade Positions

Guards Brigade	LdH/N/N5
Horse Guards Brigade	TC/_/_/SdM
Heavy Brigade	PM/N/N4
Dragoon Brigade	N6/N/N6
First Foot Brigade	N3/N/JD
Second Foot Brigade	N4/N/N2
Third Foot Brigade	N2/N/N5
Fourth Foot Brigade	N5/N/N6

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

Frontier Regiments

	F1	F2	F3	F4	(Defence for Dec-Feb) RNHB
Colonel	N4	N1	N3	N6	N9
Attached					
Also at the Front					

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

Battle Results

- Guards Brigade: 4
- Royal Foot Guards: 3
- Frontier regiment 1: 5
- Frontier regiment 2: 3
- Frontier regiment 3: 3
- Frontier regiment 4: 4
- RNHB regiment: 3

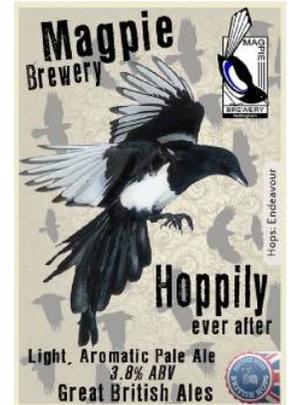
Other Appointments

King's Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Cardinal's Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Aides: to Crown Prince N	to Field Marshal __
Provincial Military Governors: N/N/N/N/N	
City Military Governor N	Adjutant-General BdLS
Inspectors-General: of Cavalry N	of Infantry N
Commissioner of Public Safety DdE (until March 1670)	
Chancellor of the Exchequer EB (until April 1670)	
Minister of Justice CPS (until March 1670)	
Minister of War BdZ (until August 1670)	
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.

And it was over to bars 17 and 18 I trekked next, checking on the whereabouts of the wonderful Triple Chocoholic (4.8% abv) from the Saltaire brewery in West Yorkshire. It was a bit early for this, but I picked up my next beer here anyway. This was Session (3.8%) from Eight Arch Brewing (Wimborne in Dorset – not a county I particularly associate with brewing). I was warned that this was an unfiltered beer (very trendy, I understand) and thus cloudy in the glass. And so it was: pale yellow and a bit murky. However, it had a bright taste ("crisp and refreshing" say the tasting notes), almost sweet, with a nice kick of hops. This was a really excellent beer.

Returning to the nearby bars later, I simply had to try a beer called Hoppily Ever After (3.8%) from Magpie in Nottinghamshire. My warning this time was about the Endeavour hops used in this beer: apparently they're an acquired taste. I seem to have it as I certainly appreciated this beer. It's another yellow beer and had a real yeasty, bready smell. The hops then really kicked in when I tasted it. It was nicely bitter with a musty, almost chocolatey aftertaste. Good stuff – though I'd put it just behind the Session.



The next beer to tempt me was Ginger Pig (4.4% as I moved up the alcohol scale) from Springhead in Nottinghamshire (near Retford). In colour this was more of an amber, rather than the yellow beers I had been drinking. There was a definite whiff of ginger to the nose, but the taste was mainly beer. It had a musty aftertaste with a definite ginger tang – though the brewery's website tells me that it's rosemary in the beer. To my taste, it was just not hoppy enough.



Okay, you can tell the colour of the beer: this one's the Silver Pig.





Time to turn to the dark side. Unfortunately, the Triple Chocoholic was not available – a fresh barrel was settling and unlikely to be drinkable until the following day. Instead, I went 25 Silver Pigs (4.7%) from the Ramsbury brewery (Wiltshire). The beer's label suggests the name is really about pigs, not ingots of metal (as in *The Silver Pigs*, the first Falco book) As a stout, it was black, of course, with a smoky, hoppy smell. There was a smokiness to the taste, too. The taste was nicely bitter, but quite sharp. It was also quite a thin beer, feeling more like a porter than a stout to me. ("Stout" originally meant strong and it was simply the strongest porter, but I think of it as a thicker, dark beer – like Guinness – compared to the bitter, dark beer I see as porter.)

Returning to the closest bars again, I tried Smokey Joe Porter (4.9%) from Ferry Ales in Lincolnshire. This was billed as "a classic porter". It was certainly nicely smoky, but not at all hoppy, which I found disappointing. It was a decent beer, but no more than that.

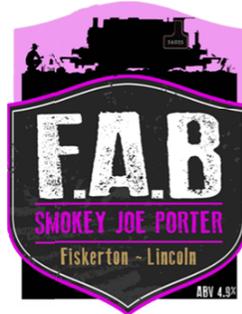
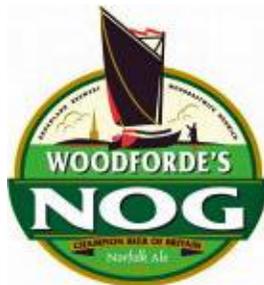


Next up was Papa Jangles Voodoo Stout (4.5%) from Totally Brewed (no, really), also in Lincolnshire. Another dark beer, of course, this was a nice, smooth stout with smoky tones, but a bit bland. (As you can see, my notes are getting briefer as the day goes on.)

I reckoned I could manage one more and that was Norfolk Nog (4.6%) from Woodforde's of Norfolk. The programme classified this as a "dark brown porter" while Woodforde's themselves describe it as "a classic 'Old Ale'". It's definitely a dark brown, rather than black, and with none of the smokiness of the

stouts and porters. It tasted wonderfully rich with both plenty of hops and a touch of sweetness. Definitely one I'll be drinking again.

It was after 7 pm by the time I finished the Norfolk Nog, so I decided to head for home. The halls had been noticeably busier for over an hour – the after-work visitors were quite noticeable when they arrived as many were wearing suits. It was an excellent afternoon in good company – many thanks to Mark and Andy for joining me. Now, what's the next beer festival I should go to? Hmm...



cause as neither stood down over Emma.

Henri Dubois (Sabre, Seconds JE) and Swindelle d'Masses (Sabre, Seconds TC) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Henri Dubois (Sabre, Seconds JE, 5 rests) and Terence Cuckpowder (Sabre, Seconds JE & UXB, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

New Characters

Daniel Blanchette gets the Second son of an Impoverished Gentleman: Init SL 4; Cash 40; MA 3; EC 5 (X2).

Tables

Army Organisation and 1670's Summer Deployment

First Army (Field Ops)	N1/N/GIS/SA2
First Division (Field Ops)	__/_/_/AdF
Guards Brigade (Field Ops) – RFG CG KM	
Dragoon Brigade (Field Ops) – GDMD PLLD	
Cavalry Division (Field Ops)	JdG/_/_/__
Horse Guards Brigade (Field Ops) – DG QOC	
Heavy Brigade (Field Ops) – ALC CPC	
Second Army (Siege)	UXB/N/_/_/N
Frontier Division (Siege)	__/_/_/N3
Frontier Regiments (Siege)	
Third Army (Defence)	__/_/_/N2/N
Second Division (Defence)	WNM/N/N3
3rd Foot Brigade (Defence) – 27M 4A	
4th Foot Brigade (Defence) – 69A Gscn	
RNHB Regiment (Defence)	
Third Division (Defence)	__/_/_/N2
1st Foot Brigade (Defence) – RM PM	
2nd Foot Brigade (Defence) – 13F 53F	

Organisation and Deployment for the Campaign Season with Army and Division posts (Commander/Aide/Adjutant/QMG)

Entries are ID for player characters, "N" (+ MA if needed) for NPC, __ for vacant

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.

Announcements

Jacques ZeLad asks NPC Lt.Colonel of 13th Fusiliers to resign

Pierre le Sang applies for Minister of State

Louis Oeuf Ur Terribles applies for Brigade Major of 1st Foot Brigade

Swindelle d'Masses asks NPC Lt.Colonel of Queen's Own Carabiniers to resign

Duels

Results of November's duels

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

Swindelle d'Masses declined to meet Etienne Brule as he was under half Endurance.

Terence Cuckpowder declined to meet Etienne Brule as he was under half Endurance.

Frele d'Acier (with EB, no Expertise) beat his enemy Swindelle d'Masses (with TC).

Terence Cuckpowder declined to meet Frele d'Acier as he was under half Endurance.

Swindelle d'Masses declined to meet Jean Ettonique as he was under half Endurance.

Terence Cuckpowder declined to meet Jean Ettonique as he was under half Endurance.

Percy Mystic didn't turn up to fight Inigo Montoya and lost SPs.

Felix Anton Gauchepied'er didn't turn up to fight Jean Ettonique and lost SPs.

Bill de Zmerchant didn't turn up to fight Jacques Diabolick and lost SPs.

Grudges to settle next month:

'X1' (Foil) and Charles Louis Desapear (Foil, adv.) have mutual

Beneath Colossus

Pevans reviews *Rhodes*

I was pleased to see a new strategy game from Dutch publisher The Game Master at Spiel '16, so *Rhodes* was high on my list of games to try. The game is set on the eponymous island in Ancient Greece, where the players are farmers and traders. They each have an agricultural estate (tiles) and a warehouse in town with ships to move goods from the former to the latter.

Players' warehouses are shown on the main board, alongside the harbour where the ships dock – both players' ships and neutral, 'Egyptian' ships. Players can buy goods from the ships, the cost decreasing as more ships arrive. The neutral ships may bring gold, one commodity that players' farms don't produce. Purchased goods – along with any from a player's own ships that reach the end of the harbour – go into the player's warehouse. They use the goods in their warehouse to complete contracts – there are several contract tiles available on the board – which are the main way of scoring points. And what do points make?

However, I'm getting ahead of myself. Let me back-track and cover the meat of the game. The rest of the board has areas for some of the actions players can take, various information tables and a scoring track around three edges. The



Rhodes on display at Spiel '16

most important item is the “player sequence” table, which is a clever mechanism at the heart of the game. Players’ markers start each round on the left side. Players move their marker right for each action they take. When everybody’s had two actions, the round ends.

Before starting the next round, players choose a new position on the left side for their marker, in reverse order. Taking a top position has a cost, but may be worth it if you need to go early in the round. Conversely, taking a low position brings money or extra goods on their estate. This mechanism is like a mini game in its own right. If I want to go first, is it enough to take second or will somebody pay more – outbid me, in effect – for the top slot? If I want to guarantee going first, then I need to pay. Similarly, how much stuff do I want that I’m prepared to risk being last? And, of course, the last to choose has a free choice of what’s left (there are more spaces than the maximum number of players), while one of the rewards for being last in one round is having first choice of position for the next round. That’s a neat touch. This is also the point when more neutral ships may arrive at the harbour.

Time to look at the actions players can take when it’s their turn. They have two markers to place, indicating which actions they’ve taken and stopping anyone else taking that position – though there’s space for more than one marker on most of the actions. The most obvious one is ‘production’: generating goods (cubes of the appropriate colour) on their ‘estate’. Except that the action is a bit more complicated than that and other players may benefit.

First, the player chooses two production chips to place on the board. The chip shows how much is produced, the position it’s placed in indicates which good. The player then distributes that number of cubes of the appropriate colour around all players’ estates, starting with their own. A cube is added to each farmland tile of the same colour that isn’t already full. This continues until all cubes have been placed or all relevant tiles are full. The obvious advantage is choosing chips that will give you more cubes than other players – there’s only one ‘1’ chip. This action can be taken twice in a round and, the second time, has to involve chips and goods that weren’t used the first time. Another clever mechanism.

As I’ve mentioned that players have an estate of tiles, you won’t be surprised that another action is buying new tiles – for money. Players start with a ‘farmhouse’ tile and one or two (depending on the number of players) farmland tiles. The tiles they buy can be additional farmland, increasing or diversifying what they produce, or ‘development’ tiles. The latter provide additional activities or bonuses – such as the very useful Wagon, allowing a player to transport a good direct to their warehouse.

The tiles in a player’s estate are triggered when they take the ‘Farm’ action, placing an action marker on their farmhouse. This actually does a couple of things. First off, the player gets the benefit (cash or points) from their farmland

Jean Ettonique

I fully understand your feelings, and bear you no ill will. Should the post remain vacant after this month, I will consider your name once more.

† Cuckpowder

Poetry Corner

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

A two handed sword is great,
For those who need to compensate!

One lady has fallen,
Soon I’ll come callin’

On another needing a randier date!

† Jacques Diabolick

Points Arising

Next deadline is 22nd Sept 2017

Next month is the start of a new season. **All characters start the month in Paris and all duels must be fought.** Any vacant appointments not taken by player characters will be filled by NPCs. However, if a player character appoints the position, they may leave it vacant. (If you have an appointment or a rank that allows you to appoint other characters to posts, don’t forget to do so).

Next month is December and mistresses’ influence will be renewed at the end of the month. A good reason to court a new mistress next month and gain twice as much influence. ☺

Let me tell you of Inigo Montoya.

He went and got himself a Libel Lawya.

All because of what Percy Mystic done said:

That all could see Inigo was left ‘anded.

† Beau Reese Jean Seine

Absent friends

I had no orders (“No Move Received”) from the following and they suffered the consequences:

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

JTC Jean Tétreault-Cauchon (Daniel Blanchette) has NMR’d. Total now 3 and is sent to a Frontier regiment

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

PN Pepé Nicole (Colin Cowper) has NMR’d. Total now 2 and is sent to a Frontier regiment

X5 (Marc Blanchette) has NMR’d. Total now 2 and is sent to a Frontier regiment

BdCB (Olaf Schmidt) has been floated as Olaf sent me a name for his new character, but no orders...

Dear Ranso Mware,

I do not know you and hence my servants did not grant you admittance to my little soiree last month. However, I cannot bear to see a man disappointed of glory, of friendships to come or in love. So, if you would like to make my acquaintance at some time in the future, please drop me a line

† Sir (Oooh I do love the sound of that!) Gaston Le Somme,
Colonel Royal Marines

It was late in November when Raul Bernard crossed the line into Paris proper. The city huddled together to weather the downpour and the river was swollen, its dark waters rising nearly on top of the nearby streets. Outside the city, parts of the land were covered in brackish waters, muddying the fields and the roads.

Raul checked the pockets of his coat and sighed. Apart from what he was wearing – the thick leather coat with high collar and tricorne hat – the weapon of his father and high leather boots were worth more than ten times what he had as ready money with him.

So, the name of his family (now deceased or fled to the new colonies) and his abilities were his only assets which could support him and turn the downward spiral his life had become around.

He squared his shoulders, readied himself and entered the city. “Let’s see if there is a papéterie somewhere,” he thought to himself.

To: Everyone
Darlings,

Trissy and I send a big sorry and oodles of kisses to all those who were inconvenienced by the postponement of our ‘7 Naughty Nights’ Party this month. Somewhat pressing military matters caused our sudden departure to the Front and there was simply no time sweethearts to let you all know.

In way of making amends, we shall be organizing a much larger gathering in the near future and, to compensate those of you who were left wanting, gifts and presents will be forthcoming.

Love to you all,

† Felix Anton Gauchepied’er &
Tristram de Gaye

Letter to Count Amant d’Au,
Commander of the Royal Foot Guard
to His Majesty, the King of France
Monsieur,

I humbly ask you to have a meeting at your earliest convenience to discuss my possible application to the esteemed regiment of the Royal Food Guards.

My name is Raul Bernad de Chenin Blanc and your regiment comes highly recommended.

I therefore would like to discuss the possible application to the Guards to serve the King in my highest capacity.

Yours,

† Raul Bernard de Chenin Blanc
d’Anjou

[OOC: Raul applies for RFG in December.]



Close-up of goods on ships and in warehouses (courtesy of The Game Master)

(only the cheapest tiles don’t do anything except produce and store goods) and development tiles. Then they must fill one of their ships with goods and add it to the end of the queue in the harbour, pushing the other ships along. A ship that reaches the end is emptied to the owning player’s warehouse.

The ‘Harbour’ action is how players complete a contract. First they have the opportunity to buy goods from ships in the harbour. These go into their warehouse. Then they can complete a contract using the goods in their warehouse. Note that the more valuable contracts require gold, which can only come from the ‘Egyptian’ ships. Players are allowed to use one or two goods direct from their estate to complete the contract – at a price. You can see why the Wagon is useful.

There are two final actions available to players. The first is to sell goods to the market: first player to do so in a round gets more money than those selling later. The second is to spend money buying points. Money and gold are worth points at the end of the game, but players get a better rate buying points during the game. The game ends when there are no more contracts, but players complete the round before totting up the scores.

From the available actions, you can see how an “engine” can work. Develop your estate to produce more – and different – goods, which you then ship to the harbour (or sell for cash). The goods may end up in your warehouse but, if someone else buys them first, they’re providing you with the funds to buy what you need to complete a contract. Or just to buy points.

As far as I can see, the major source of victory points is the contract tiles. Players can see what goods each other is collecting, so there’s potential for grabbing

contracts other players are lining up. Completing contracts requires goods – or the money to buy them. Which in turn requires an estate that produces the right goods – either direct for contracts or to sell for the cash. Hence, the early stage of the game has to be building up your estate with a key decision being when to concentrate on completing contracts.

However, it seems that the most important thing is to be aware of what the other players are up to. There's no point lining up a lucrative contract if another player can take it first. Conversely, if you see another player collecting the goods for a contract that you can take, grab it.

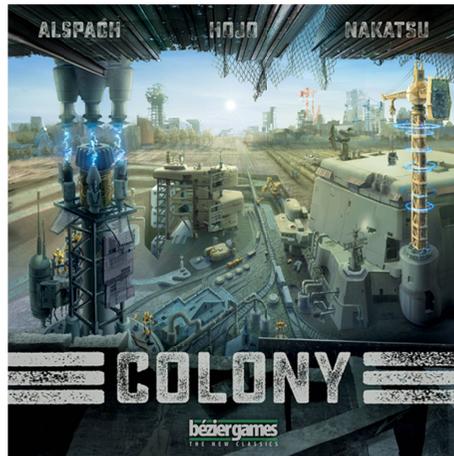
The publisher describes this as “a light, strategic board game” and suggests it's suitable for family play. I think it's a middleweight strategy game and have to say that I can't see my family coping with it – except for the gamers amongst them. *Rhodes* provides an entertaining challenge for out-thinking the other players without melting a significant number of brain cells. I give it 8/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Rhodes is a strategy board game for 2–5 players (I suggest 3–4), aged 10+, and takes 90–120 minutes to play. It was designed by Pieter Boots and is published by The Game Master (in the Netherlands, though the game is in English, French and German as well as Dutch). This review was first published in the Winter 2017 issue of *Gamers Alliance Report*.

After the apocalypse: dice! Pevans reviews *Colony*

My introduction to *Colony* came at the Bézier Games stand at Spiel '16 last October. Seeing the serried ranks of cards held in place inside the square box by the slots in the plastic insert, I remarked, “It's just like *Dominion!*” “Yes,” responded co-designer and Bézier main man Ted Alspach, “it's **exactly** like *Dominion!*” Luckily, he was joking – the physical components are the main similarity between the two games.

To start with, *Colony* is a dice game. The box insert is cunningly designed so that the cardboard strip that identifies each set of cards clips into place over the central section. It holds everything else in place: the cardboard



Sir Gaston,
Please feel free to call on me at the Fleur de Lys on the first and second weeks of the month.

I see that you are climbing up the ranks of both the military and society, so please do let me give you some advice. When addressing a Minister you should refer to him as “Your Excellency”. Perhaps we could discuss etiquette when we meet, I would hate for someone to offend the wrong person?

Best regards,

† Baron De La Creme

Many thanks! (You know who you are...)

† JZL

Mother, It was so depressing in Paris – there was no events for a person of my Social status available last month (they don't seem to understand that the lower SL members need to have access to parties to raise their status), so I figured that I would see if I was able to gain a little Combat experience.. The Squadron ran in to a Spanish Scouting Party – we beat them, gaining some welcome cash and a Mention, not to say that it wasn't quite a lot closer than I would of liked. Mother, I am at the front this coming month and there is always the possibility of fatalities. I hope that everyone is well and I will write soon (I Hope).

† Sébastien

De Frocked and Gauchepied'er are merely bosom chums.

Lord Percy Percy says, as fashion is tending towards the red faced, Sebastian de la Crème is making great efforts to become fashionable.

At the Barracks of the King's Musketeers...

“What's this I hear about you refusing Monsieur Felix Anton Gauchepied'er entry into the regiment, Sergeant?”

“Well, begging your pardon, Sir, but he's camper than a bell tent and the way he dresses would make the doxies of the Rue Bourdel blush. He's a complete Mignon, Sir.”

“I take it you're referring to those who took part in The Duel of the Mignons in April 1578, Sergeant? If you recall, the three Mignons in question fought to the death. Provided a man upholds the honour of the regiment on the field of battle and in single combat, I don't care how he dresses or what his proclivities are. Why did you wilfully ignore my standing order, Sergeant?”

“Standing Order, Sir...?”

“Yes, it's posted there on the wall behind you (though I admit it's somewhat faded now and has never, yet, been put into practice).”

“Oh, yes, Sir. Does it say ‘All gentlemen of sufficient breeding and blessed with a powerful frame to be admitted automatically’, Sir?”

“It certainly does, Sergeant, and I want it followed to the letter in future, d'ye hear? I don't know what you have against Mignons, frankly. Just means more rampant totty for us **real** men...”

To my comrades in the Horse Guards parade,
You have once more inflicted great wounds and I am unable to take the field. But we will clash swords for honour again.

† Cuckpowder

To Felix Anton Gauchepedier [sic]
Sir, I trust your tailor did not shed too many tears over the ruin of his creation when he thought. Alas, you have taken exception to my station once more and we must meet again on the field of honour as soon as I return from exercising my men at the Front. At least your tailor will be weeping tears of joy at the impending destruction of another set of clothes and your inevitable order of its replacement.

Yours faithfully,

† Major Jean Ettonique
Dragoon Guards

To Swindelle de Masses

Sir, it seems you lack the sense to learn from a situation and require from me another lesson in the swift punishment that can be delivered by my cavalry sabre. I look forward to repeating your lesson upon my return from the Front.

Yours faithfully,

† Major Jean Ettonique
Dragoon Guards

Social

BdZ apologises for the illness that kept him from hosting his party. All are welcome at the Fleur for the first and second weeks of December.

To the citizens of Paris,
I hope you've been enjoying my parties. I am being asked to throw more and, since I am in Paris, why not? We all still alive and still French – both facts must be celebrated. We must mourn those that we have lost and we must toast our glorious King. If you wish to suggest a week to come join me at the Fleur de Lys, please contact me and I will see what I can do. Please note, the Fleur does have standards, so only those of sufficient standing should apply, rejection often disappoints!

† Baron De La Crème

*****NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY

– Week 4 December *****

The Grand Duke Max's Dragoons will be hosting a New Year's Eve Party in their mess. Dress uniforms, please. All friends of the regiment are invited to attend with their ladies. Costs paid. Anyone still present at dawn will be expected to join the regiment in our annual ritual of a New Year's swim in the Seine.

† Lt. Colonel XM

Personal

Baron Sebastian de la Creme
Most Noble Sir,

It seems I have forgotten to request admittance to your party and beg the boon of being added, however latterly, to the guest list. I would consider it a great favour and promise you my assistance in all your endeavours.

Yours,

† Sir Gaston Le Somme
1st Army Adjutant

scoring track and all the dice, cardboard chips and wooden scoring markers. Thus everything stays where it's supposed to be when carrying the game around – on its side or even upside down – which is great news when so many dice and cards are involved.

The story of the game is that “Eighty years after the nanocalypse ... it's up to you to rebuild civilization ... it's a race to see who can build up their colony first.” The cards represent buildings in player's colonies. They provide victory points (usually just one, but a few cards are worth two) as well as some benefit to the owning player (extra dice being an obvious one). The game ends as soon as a player achieves the target number of points – 15 in a four-player game, more with fewer players.

The way players acquire cards is to 'buy' them with dice (“Resources”) of the right value. Thus, a “Fabric Replicator” requires three ‘5's and a ‘2’, while a “Fallout Shelter” needs four dice of the same value (any value) and one ‘6’. Cards are placed in front of the owning player with their basic side face-up. They can be upgraded (to the “2.0” version), which generally adds an extra victory point and improves the card's benefit.

Since cards provide victory points, acquiring and upgrading them lie at the heart of the game. Of course, you need to spend dice to do both of these, so gaining buildings that give you more dice gives you more choice and better buildings. However, rolling dice means you can't be sure what values you're going to get, making the game tactical. Adding buildings that provide specific values of dice let you plan more, making the game more strategic.

Okay, I'd better go into a bit more detail. Players start with their own set of the same four cards, providing the initial actions available to them. “Construction” allows you to build one building, paying the dice required for that building to add the card to your ‘colony’. If it's not used to construct a new card, Construction gets you a chip instead – an important point that I keep forgetting. “Upgrade” lets you flip a card over to its “2.0” side by spending four dice: a ‘1’, ‘2’, ‘3’ and a ‘4’. “Supply Exchange” swaps two dice of the same value for one die – usually a different value, of course. And the fourth card is your “Warehouse”. This is important as it lets you store dice between turns. What's more, you know the values on these dice, allowing you to start looking at what options you will have next turn.

The other cards go onto the table so that they're available to construct. However, there will only be 13 different buildings in a game: six of these are standard and seven ‘variable’ – drawn from the other 28 sets of cards in the box. Note that there will only be as many in each ‘variable’ set as there are players in the game. However, players are not limited in what cards they construct, so this doesn't mean that every player will be able to get one of each building – multiples of the same building can be very useful.



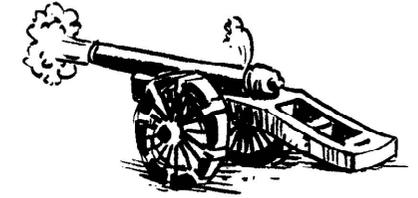
Colony in play at Spiel '16

The variable buildings come in seven different types (including attack, defence, trading...) and the introductory set-up uses one of each type. It's easy enough to alter this by substituting a different card of the same type, or to change the balance of the game by swapping for a different type. The rules have some suggestions for different mixes of cards, each giving a particular emphasis to the game, and there's an app available on the publisher's website (beziergames.com) to provide random set-ups.

A player's turn starts with rolling three white dice. They can also throw in up to three chips, if they've acquired any, to roll grey dice as well. Grey dice represent unstable resources and are discarded at the end of a player's turn if they haven't been used – only white, stable resources can be stored in a player's warehouse. (An important point to note here is that the "Supply Exchange" lets you turn a

Colonel Amant d'Au. Brigadier Leonard de Hofstadt is reasonably happy as a promotion sees his rank made permanent. He picks up a little (very little) cash,.

Major Jean Ettonique and his squadron of the Dragoon Guards are attached to Frontier regiment 1, which suffers heavy losses from Spanish artillery. However, the guns are unsupported and the threat of a cavalry charge sees them pack up in short order. Major Ettonique is Mentioned twice, which brings him a Knighthood.



Things go very wrong for RM Major Sébastien Da Silva, attached to Frontier regiment 3 with his battalion of the Royal Marines. An alert sees the soldiers spring to their posts – except for Major Da Silva. He is later found in his tent, claiming that he over-slept. This cuts no ice with the court martial and he is dismissed from his regiment.

The loudest thing on the frontier is Felix Antoine Gauchepied'er, newly arrived to join Frontier regiment 4 with first battalion, King's Musketeers. This apparition so bemuses the opposing Spanish forces that they fail to spot the battalion's levelled muskets. A couple of volleys later and Major Gauchepied'er is now (brevet) Lt-Colonel Gauchepied'er. He is Mentioned in Despatches, too ("What the hell is he wearing?!")

Lt-General Richard Shapmes takes command of a battalion of the RNHB so effectively that he is elevated to the title of Viscount. There is a Mention in Despatches for him and he pockets a hundred crowns. ❖

Press

Matters of Honour

To Brigadier General Terence Cuckpowder
General, it has been an education serving with you at the Front and sparring with you in words before then. Long have I wished to cross swords with so eminent a swordsman as yourself and may I say that I thoroughly enjoyed the experience. I do hope our recent practice with the blade will make you consider how useful such skill as I possess would be in your appointment as Brigade

Major, regardless of regimental rivalry.

The matter of the honour of our regiments must regrettably await my return from the Front: a recent inspection of my squadron has suggested that they do not get the right kind of exercise in Paris ... so we will go and practice a while on the enemy. I look forward to our next bout on the field of honour.

Yours faithfully,

† Major Jean Ettonique
Dragoon Guards

It's not all parties. Many Parisians spend time in the clubs to which they belong through the month. Etienne Brule and Belle Epoque pass two weeks in the Fleur. Frele d'Acier takes Freda de Ath to the same place. Pierre Cardigan and Edna Bucquette are there, too. Pierre le Sang visits for two weeks, bringing Guinevere d'Arthur with him and accepting his monthly gift from Etienne. Uther Xavier-Beauregard visits the Fleur with Henrietta Carrotte.

Apart from the parties, Bothwell's is visited by Chopine Camus and Sheila Kiwi and Jean d'Ice and Ava alongside Sebastian's party, while Gaston and Bess have the place to themselves in week 3. Blue Gables sees Florent Sans de Machine and Louis Oeuf Ur Terribles start their month there, accompanied by Charlotte de Gaulle and Sue, respectively. It turns out Jacques ZeLad and Angelina are in the Frog & Peach all month. They see Ranso Mware pop in for two weeks – after his trip to the city's red light district – and Xavier Money and Betty for just one. Meanwhile Was Nae Me tries to visit his club. Only problem is that his application to the Fleur was rejected and he's already resigned from Hunter's. Oops!



This month's iron men are Balzac Slapdash and Jacques de Gain, both of whom spend all month in their respective gyms practising rapier. There are plenty of others practising for three weeks' once they've got an initial party out of the way: Chopine Camus (sabre), Frele d'Acier (rapier), Florent Sans de Machine (rapier), Gaz Moutarde (cutlass – though his first week was spent with

his lady friend), Inigo Montoya (rapier), Jean d'Ice (rapier), Pierre Cardigan (sabre), Swindelle d'Masses (sabre) and Uther Xavier-Beauregard (sabre). This is why the clubs were empty!

Putting in two weeks' practice are Duncan d'Eauneurts (rapier – after a visit to the Bawdyhouses), Jacques Diabolick (rapier), Louis Oeuf Ur Terribles (cutlass), Roméo Boudreaux (rapier), Sebastian Adis II (rapier) and Terence Cuckpowder (sabre). And others made room for a week's practice in their schedule.

Supporting the Frontiers

The Frontier troops have some support this month, not least from the Royal Foot Guards, the sole regiment of the Guards Brigade in action. It seems the Spaniards don't feel like challenging France's premier regiment. The only man to see any action is Lieutenant-Colonel Jean Jeanie, who takes out a patrol and skirmishes with a Spanish patrol. He receives a Mention in Despatches ("The Jeanie in action!"), but there's nothing for Major Beau Reese Jean Seine or

pair of unstable resources into a stable one.) The player chooses one of the white dice (and all the greys) to keep. The next player chooses one of the remaining dice and puts it into their warehouse and the third player (or first player again in a two-player game) gets the third.

Some cards are 'Production' and give players extra dice at the start of their turn. Each "Fabric Replicator", for example, provides its owner with a '4' grey die (once upgraded to its '2.0' side, that's a white die). Using the dice they've rolled, produced and taken from their warehouse, players then carry out any and all of the actions available to them from their cards. However, each card can only be used once: the rules recommend players tilt cards slightly when they 'Activate' them, to keep track of which cards have been used. Once all actions have been completed, any new cards are added and the player adjusts their victory point total on the scoreboard. They discard any unused grey dice, white dice left over go into their warehouse and it's the next player's turn.

As you can see, the basic mechanics of playing the game are straightforward. It's the cards that hold the complexity and the dice that limit players' options. Tactically, what you do in a turn depends on the dice available to you. However, strategically, you can aim to acquire specific dice to make it easier to construct specific buildings. A case in point is the "Fallout Shelter" mentioned earlier. Having one of these is worth a point. Two give you three points, three score six and so on. It's thus a very useful building – when other players are adding one or two points to their score each turn, being able to jump ahead is a significant advantage. As constructing these needs a set of four dice of the same value, getting several of the same production building makes it more likely you'll be able to buy one.

The games I've played so far have followed a similar pattern. Player's scores have stayed roughly level as each acquires or upgrades one card each turn. They remain so as players start acquiring a card **and** upgrading one in the same turn. Someone then takes a lead, perhaps by acquiring another Fallout Shelter, and the race is on to the finish line. In effect, the early stages of the game are preparation for this race.

The game does offer a 'forlorn hope' option to catch up, if you've fallen behind. A player can discard a card (out of the game) in order to roll and keep as many white dice as the difference in points between them and the leader. As this means losing at least one point, you need to be able to make good use of the extra dice for this to work.

As I've described it, the game is light on player interaction. This is provided by 'Attack' cards – giving players a potential opportunity to steal from one another – and particularly by the "Trade" cards. Having one of these lets a player propose a deal to swap (white) dice with another player. As a bonus, both parties to a successful deal get an additional die as well. Since "dice good; more dice better" is



Standard starting cards in *Colony* (from the rulebook)

a good axiom for this game, agreeing to a trade is to both players' advantage – if they have enough room to store the extra die and what they're losing isn't critical to their plans.

The issue with *Colony* is down time. The point at which a player can work out what to do in their turn is after they've rolled the dice. They then need to consider the dice available and what they could do with them before they decide which dice to pass on. In theory, the rest of their turn should be quick as they've already worked out what they're going to do. However, that initial thinking time can be considerable. Particularly when players have cards allowing them to swap dice. Or trade dice. Or steal dice. In theory, you can do some of this thinking during other players' turns and thus know what you're going to do depending on what you roll. In practice it's too complicated. And other players' turns are when you offer them, ahem, helpful advice.

Despite this – and it isn't that big an issue for me – I've really enjoyed playing *Colony*. I've tried it with 2, 3 and 4 players and it's worked well in each case (apart from always being beaten by my teenage nephew when we play two-player). And I'm aware I've only scratched the surface of the game so far with different cards to try out and different mixes of cards to explore. *Colony* gets a solid 7/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Colony was designed by Ted Alspach, Toryo Hojo and Yoshihisa Nakatsu and is published by Bézier Games (beziergames.com). It is a strategy card game for 1–4 players, aged 13+ and takes around 60 minutes to play (as always, allow more time when learning the game and I would expect a game with significant trading to take longer). This review was first published in the Spring 2017 issue of *Gamers Alliance Report*.

de Lys that is completely empty through the second half of November. The problem is, everybody's decided to Toady to Bill de Zmerchant, but there's no sign of the Field Marshal and War Minister. This leaves Duncan d'Eauneurts, Etienne Brule, Pierre le Sang, Sebastian de la Creme, Terence Cuckpowder and Was Nae Me kicking their heels outside the club as they wait, fruitlessly, for their host. Only Duncan and Terence find better things to do once they realise Bill isn't going to show – the other four remain outside the club for both weeks.

Those attending on Alan de Frocked are more successful. Alan greets them at Bothwell's with Madelaine de Proust on his arm. This is clearly a new relationship. So, too, is the connection between Charles Louis Desapear and Emma Roides, who are two of Alan's guests. Charles's first attempt at wooing Emma didn't get very far when he met 'X1' on the doorstep and neither would give way. Even worse, Josephine got wind that he was straying and gave him the heave-ho. Luckily, Emma was more understanding when he presented himself as a single man. While 'X1' preferred the less demanding option of visiting the Bawdyhouses.

Alan's guests continue with Henri Dubois, who remains unaccompanied (though a visit to the Bawdyhouses has featured in his month's activities). Jacques Diabolick brings Mary and returns to the gaming tables. He wins his first wager, so makes another bet of the same amount. This one disappears, leaving him in the same situation as earlier: with the same amount of cash and a brownie point. The final guests are Louis Oeuf Ur Terribles and his companion, Sue Briquet.

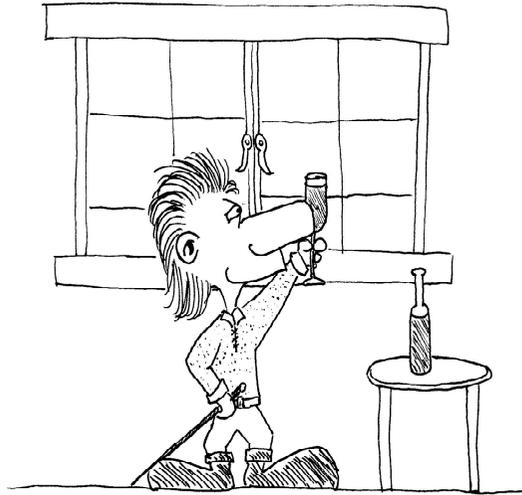


Down market

Somewhere down market, Jacques ZeLad is partying at the Frog & Peach with Angelina di Griz. He's invited "lads and ladettes" to join them. They get Roméo Boudreaux, Thomasina, Xavier Monet and Betty. Drinking games ensue, but the participants have increasing trouble trying to remember the rules: "Bizz... no, fuzzy... oh, just give me another drink." Somebody probably won Jacques' promised prize for the best drinking game, but no-one can remember who it was.

Less jovial are the two socialites hanging around outside Hunter's. Sebastian Adis II and 'X1' are expecting to attend Felix's ARSE club. However, with the flamboyant one out of Paris ~~servicing~~ serving with the troops, all they get is a week on the cobbles.

Joining the volunteers already mentioned are Major Jean Ettonique and his squadron of the Dragoon Guards. Lt-Gen Richard Shapmes volunteers to command a battalion of the Royal North Highland Borderers.



Loyal toast

We kick off November with the battle of the Sebastians. General S de la Creme is in the Fleur de Lys, but only accepting guests by invitation. Bdr-Gen S Adis II is in Bothwell's with an open house at his bonfire night. Joining Sebastian and Di Lemmere in the Fleur are Bernard de Lur-Saluces and Gaston le Somme, the latter accompanied by Bess Ottede. It's a small, select gathering who join in Sebastian's toast to "all those ensuring that the King's justice is carried out."

Down the road in Bothwell's, Sebastian and Marie Antoinette welcome a larger, more raucous crowd. The guest list starts, it seems, with Alan de Frocked, who donates 100 crowns for the Fallen Women of Montmartre. Charles Louis Desapear arrives next, with Josephine Buonoparte. Henri Dubois attends alone, but has a further 100-crown donation for the fallen women. Inigo Montoya has Deb Estaround on his arm and 20 crowns for the Montmartre charity. Jacques Diabolick brings Mary Huana and heads for the gaming tables. He loses his first wager, but promptly gambles the same amount again. He wins this time, leaving him with the same cash he started with, but slightly more kudos.

Returning to Sebastian's guests, Roméo Boudreaux escorts Thomasina Carrotte. Ranso Mware comes alone. Then it's Terence Cuckpowder, along with Fifi. As commander of the Queen's Own Carabiniers, Terence takes exception to the Dragoon Guards uniform worn by Henri. Their argument sucks in Terence's QOC colleague, Swindelle d'Masses, who was having a quiet drink in his club with his lady friend, Lucy Fur. Was Nae Me accompanies Vera Cruz and has 100 crowns more for the fallen women of Montmartre. Xavier Monet and Betty Kant would complete the guest list – along with a further 20 crowns for charity – but the mysterious figure known only as 'X1' is also in attendance. He regards Charles as hoi polloi who should not be breathing the same air and issues a challenge.

Week two sees Bernard, Gaston and Bess attending on Sebastian and Di at the Fleur again, but Bothwell's is devoid of anyone but staff. Strangely, it's the Fleur

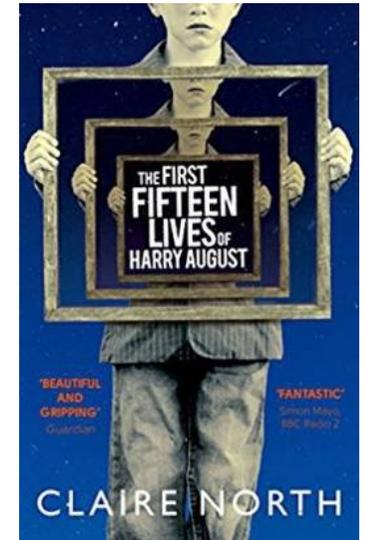
Reading Matter

This column has been missing for a while – I just haven't found room for it. So I thought I'd make sure it got in to this issue. David Brain recommended Claire North's *The First Fifteen Lives of Harry August* to me some time ago and I'm very glad that he did. Harry August is an ordinary bloke, though his birth is in unusual circumstances on New Year's Day, 1919. He lives his life and dies in the mid-1990s. Harry August is born on New Year's Day, 1919 in unusual circumstances. As he grows older, memories of his previous life come back to him. He goes mad and commits suicide. Harry August is born on New Year's Day, 1919 in unusual circumstances. As he grows older, memories of his previous lives come back to him...

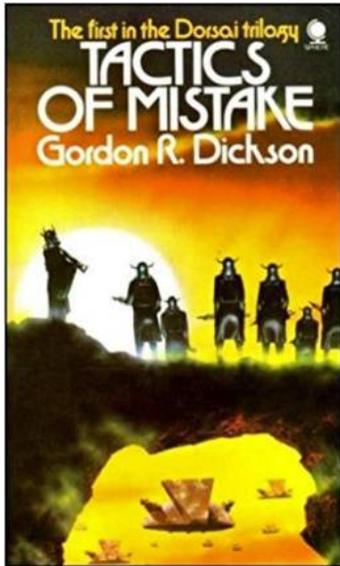
As we quickly discover, Harry is one of a tiny proportion of the population who re-live their lives time after time (less *Groundhog Day* than groundhog lifetime). What an utterly brilliant idea! And so appealing: wouldn't we all like the chance to have another go at our lives? Think what you could do, what you could learn. And Harry does: over several iterations, he seeks knowledge in many ways. In particular, in one life he becomes a professor of Physics at Cambridge. And, of course, he also memorises the winners of certain horse races, football competitions and so on – giving him the funds to get away from his family at an early age each life.

The corollary of this is that people like Harry are a way of sending messages from the future to the past. Thus, at the start of the book, the dying Harry in 1996 is visited by a seven year-old girl and given a message that he takes back to the start of his next iteration in the 1920s. It is this message that drives the plot that arches over the accounts of Harry's many (well, fifteen, anyway) lives. I found the plot rather trite (featuring a 'mad' scientist and a plot to destroy the world – I paraphrase), it's the stories of Harry's lives that make the book (and these are coloured by the plot).

I'm being deliberately vague here so that I don't give away too much of the book, as you really need to read it yourself. The book is written in short, snappy chapters that provide energy and momentum to the story even as it skips between Harry's lives. It is a terrific ride and I wholeheartedly second David's recommendation: read *The First Fifteen Lives of Harry August*.



Meanwhile, my retro reading continues. Having finished off the Lensmen – and discovering that I'd never actually read the last book, *Children of the Lens* – I moved on to Gordon Dickson's "Dorsai" series. I was able to download an e-book compendium of these stories, which included the three novels I remember from my youth. What was interesting about re-reading these was realising that, despite being grouped as the Dorsai series, these stories are part of a wider future history.



The idea here is that discovering space travel and settling other worlds has split homo sapiens into several sub-species: the Splinter Cultures. Each of these is evolving away from the original human stock, specialising in one facet of humanity, at which they are better than ordinary humans. Thus, the Dorsai are the definitive soldiers: physically and mentally. The Friendlies have pure faith (though it looks like puritan Christianity to me). And the Exotics are the ultimate mystics. In the end, these different strands will come together again to produce a superior human being.

The earliest published book, *Dorsai!*, shows the apex of the Dorsai as the brilliant Donal Graeme outwits top businessman, William of Ceta, to resolve a major conflict between the different Splinter cultures. Despite being nominally part of the Dorsai sequence, *Soldier, Ask Not* switches the focus to the ultra-religious

"Friendlies". Then *Tactics of Mistake*, my favourite, takes us back to the beginning of the Dorsai and Cletus Grahame, the man who gives them the discipline, training and organisation that make them the best soldiers.

In the middle of this lies *Necromancer*, a prequel novel that sets up the whole future history (though I have to say I found it heavy going). Then there are *The Spirit of Dorsai* and *Lost Dorsai*, which fill in some of the spaces around the main novels. I had not read any of these three before, so I was pleased to add them into my experience of the canon. I shall have to go on to the rest of the "Childe Cycle", though, and find out the rest of Dickson's future history.

My reading is not all re-treads, though. I also picked up the wonderful *The Long Way to a Small, Angry Planet*, the debut novel from Becky Chambers. My first thought, on seeing the title, was that the small, angry planet would turn out to be Earth. However, it was quickly apparent that I was wrong: in this future, Earth is an almost abandoned, uninhabitable mess. Humanity survived by leaving the

commander, Marquis Etienne Brule, supports his man. The two men cross swords. Then, before Masses can get his sword into play, Acier boots him brutally in the groin. From a foetal position, Masses concedes the fight, while cursing his adversary's lack of sportsmanship.

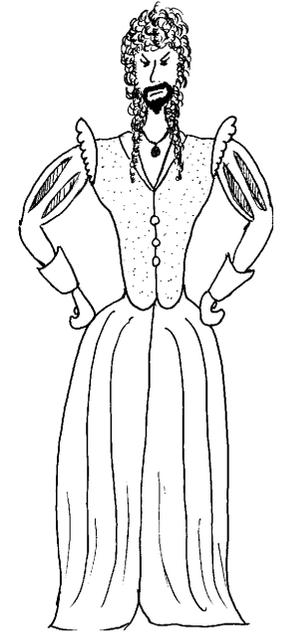
After this encounter, Masses is in no fit state to meet any of his other scheduled opponents. Even worse for them, the Baron Cuckpowder also has a medical note after his battering in October. Even with the DG vs QOC disputes out of the way, there should be several more duels. However, Percy Mistic does not turn up to fight Inigo Montoya and Bill de Zmerchant leaves Jacques Diabolick hanging. Felix Antoine Gauchepied'er is present only in written form with Jean Ettonique. His note, delivered by a large, bearded man in a green dress, informs Ettonique that FAG will not be turning up as he was "far too beastly last time and ruined several of my dresses", but offers to "settle our differences in other, more gentile ways." Ettonique is confused: he had no idea they were following Jewish custom...

Marching gaily

Speaking of the gay blade that is Felix Antoine Gauchepied'er, Brigadier-General d'Éauneurts is on hand this month to sign him up for the King's Musketeers. Gauchepied'er promptly formalises his rank of Major (he's been wearing the uniform for a month) and then volunteers his new command for action on the Frontier – "to see what they're made of." He still has time to accept the job of Aide to General Sebastian de la Creme before following his men out of Paris, keeping a close eye on their rhythmic marching. Or maybe just their buttocks...

RFG Major Beau Reese Jean Seine would like the commander of First Army to move on. He's the only person bringing any influence to bear on the incumbent and it's not enough to persuade him to go. Still, at least Seine finds time to repay his loans before Guards Brigadier Leonard de Hofstadt mobilises the Royal Foot Guards. Like Major Seine, Colonel Amant d'Au and Lt-Colonel Jean Jeanie are caught out by the sudden call to arms. Brigadier Hofstadt is not sympathetic: "Col d'Au did not respond to requests a month old to indicate if his regiment was unfit for duty! They have no-one to blame but themselves."

Elsewhere, Horse Guards Brigadier Terence Cuckpowder appoints Swindelle d'Masses from his own regiment as Brigade Major. Lieutenant-General Gaz Moutarde fails to get command of First Foot Brigade. First, because there's already a Brigadier in place and, second, because he's a **Lieutenant-General**.



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

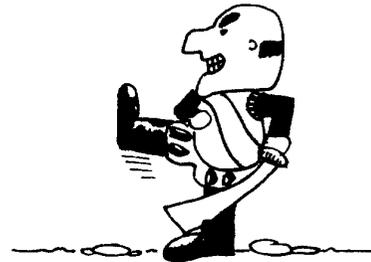
Orders for December 1669 to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF, UK or lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk by Friday 22nd September 2017



November 1669 (309)

The nights are drawing in as Paris wraps up the Autumn season. There seem to be very few people skulking about in the early hours, despite plenty of affairs of honour being triggered last month. One of the few is none other than our Commissioner of Public Safety, the redoubtable Sir Duncan d'Éauneurts. He has Viscount Was Nae Me at his side and his sabre under his cloak as he strides to his rendezvous. No skulking for him. The man he's meeting, on the other hand, is definitely maintaining a low profile. Sir Jean d'Ice brings his rapier, his CO, Sir Leonard de Hofstadt, and a certain air of gloom. Being a slighter figure than the hefty d'Éauneurts, carrying old injuries and having inferior expertise he feels the duel is stacked against him. Nevertheless he squares up to his opponent determinedly. Then he jumps out of the way, expecting a furious attack. Sir Duncan follows up nonchalantly and smacks him with a slash. Sir Jean surrenders.

QOC Major Swindelle d'Masses has decided to meet DG Lieutenant-Colonel Frele d'Acier first in a series of inter-regimental affairs. He out-weighs Acier, but has the disadvantage of his wounds from last month. Plus, he is noticeably less skilled with the two men's regimental weapon, the sabre. He does have the company of his commander, Baron Terence Cuckpowder, while the DG

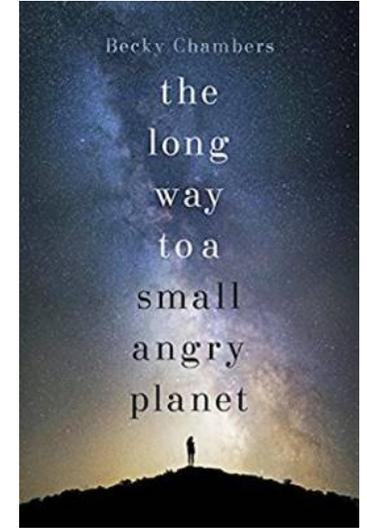


solar system in generation ships. These bumped into some space-faring aliens and humanity is now a junior – and pretty much second-class – member of the Galactic Commons.

The novel is about a small spaceship, the *Wayfarer*, an independent whose trade is 'building' the wormholes that connect the inhabited worlds of the Galactic Commons. Run by a human Captain, the ship's crew is mostly human – though disparate – but with several, different alien members. Our introduction is through the newest member of the crew, who fills a gap in their organisation. She's human and has a secret to hide. It'll be no surprise to find that the other crew members have secrets, too...

The story really starts when the *Wayfarer* team gets a big job. A job that requires them to travel across several different regions of the Galactic Commons. This allows Chambers to introduce us to several different cultures – human and alien – which they encounter along the way, while we also learn more about the crewmembers (to say nothing of the AI). The *Wayfarer* comes through some scrapes before making it to the scene of the big job: the small, angry planet of the title and the climax of the story. It is typical of Chambers' approach that we get to see even the small, angry aliens' point of view.

What makes the book so wonderful is that the *Wayfarer* crew is a real community. (The obvious parallel is, of course, *Firefly*, though Joss Whedon's creation has only humans in its crew.) All these different aliens know that each of them is different and try their damndest to make allowances. Apart from the one who doesn't, but all the others make allowances for him. It is a wonderful, optimistic view of how a disparate bunch of aliens might get along. Mostly. Oh, including some inter-species sex, which I find intriguing – who gets to put what where? *The Long Way to a Small, Angry Planet* is absolutely brilliant. I can't recommend it enough. Go and read it while I chase up the sequel, *A Closed and Common Orbit*.



Games Events

Andy Merritt's annual Board Games Day (this is the 19th), is on 23rd Sept at Chalk Farm, High St, Babraham, Cambridgeshire CB22 3AG. This is an open gaming day with Andy providing a games library to get things started. He notes that newcomers should "please get in touch for directions as otherwise you may well not find us!" Email Andy at andy.j.merritt@gmail.com or take a look at andy-merritt.co.uk

This is the same weekend as Raiders of the Game Cupboard XL in Burton-on-Trent. This is a day of open gaming at the Waterside Community Centre. Full details at www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk

And the following Saturday, 30th September, is TringCon XXXV in Marsworth Village Hall (near Tring). This is another open gaming event, but space is limited, so book in advance. Details are at www.fwtwr.com/tringcon

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 Marylebone stations and a short walk from Bond Street Tube station.

UK Games Expo: 1st-3rd June 2018 at the NEC (Hall 1 and Hilton Metropole). This is a public event that showcases games of all sorts with a huge trade hall plus demonstration and participation games and guests. For gamers there are lots of tournaments and open gaming. For details see www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk

Spiel: the board games event of the year. 26th-29th October 2017, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany or see www.merz-verlag-en.com

MidCon: 17th-19th November 2017 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 Queen's Lane Advertiser at www.boardgamers.org.uk/qla.php

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.

I don't really want to talk about *Brass* game 54 as I could only manage fourth place on 123 points. Steve got 136, Mike 147, but Patrick won his second game on the trot with 163. Mike took game 55 with 158, while my 146 pipped Steve (on 145) to second and Patrick was last on 116. Now we've played over 50 games, I should probably do some more analysis of the results, but don't hold your breath. Game 56 is about to start and I'll set up another when it does – the password is *pevans56* if you want to join in.

I'm hankering for another game of *Keyflower*. If you fancy playing, let me have your ID at BoardGameArena.com and I'll invite you into a game.

Through the Ages: a New Story of Civilization continues to frustrate me (at boardgaming-online.com). I like the game, but my play is just not consistent. Having said that, I managed second place in the fourth game and our fifth game is under way. If anyone else would like to join in, let me know.

Pax Porfiriana continues (at yucata.de) with the last game going to Mark B, who was just unstoppable as the final Topple approached. Kudos to him. Another game has started and I'm certainly available to play more – let me know if you'd like to give it a go.

My practice game of *Imhotep* at yucata.de did not go very well, but I'm up for a competitive game. Who'd like to join me?

The latest arrival at yucata.de is *Navegador*, my favourite of Mac Gerdts' roundel games. I've started a practice game to get the hang of the online interface and will be looking for opponents soon.

Obama (*Railway Rivals* game 12)

Held over

Only two sets of orders had arrived by the last deadline, so this game has been held over for an issue.

Orders to Mike Dommett, 119 Victoria Road, Alton GU34 2DD
or by e-mail to mike_dommett@yahoo.co.uk
by 15th September 2017

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 score of 1 point. So if players A and B hit the second square of that lion and C gets the third, C gets 5 points and A and B get $2\frac{1}{2}$ each.

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

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

**Send your shots to Pevans at
180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF or
to TWJO@pevans.co.uk by Friday, 22nd September 2017.**

Subscribing to TWJO

TWJO is published on paper and online at www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO (as a PDF document). You can buy or subscribe online or as below.

If you want to play in any (or all) of the games in TWJO, you have two options. You can subscribe to the paper edition, which includes playing in the games. Or you can take the PDF edition and pay the “games only” subscription.

The table 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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Games only	UK & EU	Else-where
10-turn (1 year) subscription	£6.00	£5.00

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Games from Pevans

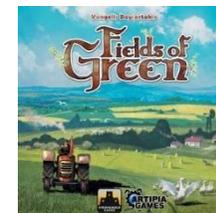
Mail order board and card games in the UK



Fields of Green

It’s very simple: each turn, you lay a tile to expand your farm with fields, buildings and equipment. The tricky bit is that tiles require other things in the vicinity – and score points according to what’s nearby. This is a really clever, tricky game that requires planning and a bit of luck. It’s enhanced by the bright, clear artwork.

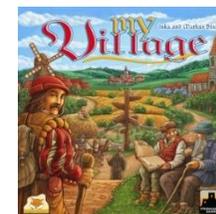
For 2-4 players, aged 12+, playing time 45 minutes: **£35.00**



My Village

This is a clever development of *Village* and gives each player their own village (board). Actions are powered by the dice rolled by the first player. There are a lot of them to choose from and each will provide some benefit in terms of money, resources or the ‘story’ points needed to win the game. Just do this more effectively than your opponents.

For 2-4 players, aged 12+, playing time 90 minutes: **£25.00**



NMBR 9

The idea is to stack up number tiles: 0-9 in specific shapes. The higher they go, the more they’re worth. However, the placement restrictions make this tricky and everybody is playing the same numbers in the same sequence. It’s an ingenious little game.

For 1-4 players, aged 8+, playing time 20 minutes: **£16.00**



Stellar Conflict

How can you resist a game that involves rubber bands and spaceships? Players lay their spaceship cards across the table quickly, trying to bring their weapons to bear on opponents’ ships. The rubber bands are stretched out to show where a ship’s beams go, provoking much laughter when it goes wrong!

For 2-4 players, aged 10+, playing time 10 minutes: **£18.00**



Online at www.pevans.co.uk/Games

Great White Hunter

Turn 1

This turn's shots

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

As the smoke clears from the opening barrage, it's no surprise that most of the shots have missed. However, both Elephants have been winged! A good start for Nik Luker and Graeme Wilson.

Chris Baylis isn't far behind, having found one of the Antelopes. And Charles Burrows hits his target, but it's just a Bush.

Chris also suggests an alternative theme for the game: "Couldn't you have changed it to Politicians rather than animals? You could have had Cons and Labs, LibDems (although they are nearly extinct anyway), PM, SNP, I for

(Independents) etc – much more fun than shooting poor animals.” He may have a point: I'll bear it in mind for the next game.

Scores

Player	Shots	This turn	Total
Chris Baylis	M15,D18	4	4
Charles Burrows	B2,M13	0	0
Mark Cowper	B17,T20	0	0
Mike Dommett	T17,K15	0	0
Bill Hay	K11,P12	0	0
Andy Kendall	M9,F17	0	0
Rob Lee	E16,I19	0	0
Nik Luker	H16,G15	5	5
Graeme Morris	B2,S19	0	0
Rob Pinkerton	T20,P15	0	0
Pam Udowiczenko	P7,B5	0	0
Graeme Wilson	G9	5	5
Paul Wilson	P17,D5	0	0

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).

The first hit on each animal scores points in proportion to its size. For example, a

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.