

That would be enough

This has been issue 189 of *To Win Just Once*, published 28th November 2018. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2018

Deadlines

Orders for *Railway Rivals* and *Star Trader* to Mike by Friday, 7th Dec 2018.

Orders for *LPBS* and all other contributions to Pevans by Friday, 14th Dec 2018.

(First deadlines in 2019 are: 11th/18th Jan, 15th/22nd Feb)

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 halfway through, Martin Jennings, Rob Pinkerton, Anthony Gilbert and Jonathan Palfrey are up for the next one, who else? (Working copy and rules provided).

Star Trader – Time for a new game! Anthony Gilbert is already waiting and there's room for plenty more. Rules provided.

Online games

Agricola (at www.boiteajeux.net): Pevans

Brass (at brass.orderofthehammer.com): **1 more needed**

Innovation (at www.boardgamearena.com): Pevans, Martin Abrahams

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

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

Rajas of the Ganges (at): Pevans

Through the Ages (at www.boardgaming-online.com): Brad Martin, Pevans

Credits

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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
RdL	Robert d'Laucier	10	28	OK	Colonel RM/2nd Div Adjutant	7	Ava	Hunt	4	Steven Malecek
FSdM	Florent Sans de Machine	10	18	Comfy	Major KM	3	Charlotte	Hunt	4	Nik Luker
GH	Georges Hommence	10	16	Comfy	Lt.Colonel PLLD	5		Hunt	1	Cameron Wood
ADD	Arthur 'Dekka' Dent	9	23	OK	Colonel PLLD/1st Army Adjutant	8	Ulla	Hunt	1	Graeme Morris
PdU	Paul d'Udderjuan	9	14	OK	Captain DG	3	Carole	BG	3	Bruno Giordan
FvB	Frederick von Bismarck	9		RIP						Dave Marsden
XM	Xavier Money	8	14	Comfy	B.Bdr-General GDMD	5	Betty	BG	3	Pam Udowiczzenko
CK	Chris Knight	8		F OK	Lt.Colonel CPC	8		BG	2	Paul Wilson
GdB	Greg de Becqueur	8+	32	OK	Captain GDMD/GDMD Regt. Adjnt.	6	Jenny	BG	5	Anthony Gilbert
GD	Georges Dueppre	7	17	Poor	Colonel PM	6	Di	BG	3	Mark Nightingale
BS	Balzac Slapdash	7		8 Comfy		9	Mary	BG	4	Matthew Wale
LI	L'Inconnu	7		F Comfy	Captain GDMD	5		BG	1	Gerald Udowiczzenko
PDG	Padamus Da Grim	7		F OK	Lt.Colonel GDMD	7		F&P	2	Graeme Wilson
ASS	Alain SansSous	5		F Poor	Captain PM	6		4	Olaf Schmidt	
AF	Augustin Fourier	5+	20	OK	Captain GDMD	2	Josephine	RP	3	Brick Amundsen
ARGH	Antoine Robert G Herville	4+	12	Poor	Captain PM	5		2	Bob Blanchett	
X2		3		0 Poor		3		3	Ray Vahey	
X3		3		RIP						Francesca Weal
HDE	Hercule D'Engin	3+	10	Poor		2		2	Gerry Sutcliff	
X1		2		RIP						Gavin Wright
X4		2		RIP						John Wright
BeV	Ben e'Volence	2+	9	Poor		5		3	Ash Casey	

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
UXB	Count Uther Xavier-Beauregard	26	79	Rich	Fld Marshal/Min w/o Port	16	Henrietta	Flr	4	Pete Card
EB	Marquis Etienne Brule	25	65	Comfy	B.Bdr-General DG/Chancellor	3	Ella	Flr	4	James McReynolds
PLS	Viscount Pierre le Sang	25	57	Fithy	General/2nd Army Commandr	7	Guinevere	Flr	4	Bill Howell
DdE	Viscount Duncan d'Eauneurts	24	57	Rich	B.Bdr-General KM/State Min.	8	Edna	Flr	5	Paul Lydiate
PC	Count Pierre Cardigan	24	55	Rich	General/Min w/o Port	9	Edna	Flr	5	Matt Shepherd
FdA	Count Frele d'Acier	24	F	Comfy	Colonel ALC/Min w/o Port	18	Maggie	Flr	3	Peter Farrell
SdIC	Marquis Sebastian de la Creme	23	59	Comfy	General/Min w/o Port	4	Maggie	Flr	5	Alan Percival
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	23	49	Fithy	B.General/1st Army Commandr	24		Flr	6	Ben Brown
AdA	Count Amant d'Au	23+102	Rich	B.Bdr-General	RFG/Min w/o Port	11		Flr	5	David Brister
RS	Count Richard Shapmes	21	RIP							Charles Popp
JJ	Count Jean Jeanie	20	61	Rich	Lt.Colonel RFG	25	Jacky	Flr	3	Andrew Kendall
BRJS	Marquis Beau Reese Jean Seine	20+69	Comfy	Major RFG/Min w/o Port		4		Flr	3	Bill Hay
CC	Marquis Chopine Camus	19	54	Withy	B.Lt-General/Insp.Gen.Cav	9	Sheila	Flr	4	Stewart Macintyre
TC	Marquis Terence Cuckpowder	19	49	Withy	B.Lt-General/War Minister	6	Leia	Flr	4	Mike Dommatt
LdH	Sir Leonard de Hofstadt	18	42	Comfy	B.Lt-General/1st Div Commandr	5	Frances	Flr	5	Neil Packer
WNM	Count Was Nae Me	18	39	Rich	B.General	14	Vera	Both	3	Mark Farrell
JE	Viscount Jean Ettonique	17	F	Withy	Lt.Colonel DG/Min w/o Port	14		Both	5	Tony Hinton-West
AdF	Sir Alan de Frocked	16	35	Withy	B.Bdr-General CG/1st Army QMG.	3	Madelaine	Both	2	Charles Burrows
GM	Sir Gaz Moutarde	16	31	Rich	Bdr-General	4		Both	2	Mike Clibborn-Dyer
SdM	Sir Swindelle d'Masses	15	39	Comfy	B.Bdr-General QOC/Min w/o Port	6		Both	4	Craig Pearson
Jdl	Sir Jean d'Ice	15	29	Comfy	Lt.Colonel CG/FMshi's Aide	6		Both	3	Tym Norris
FAG	Baron Felix A Gauchepped'er	14	25	Comfy	Major CG/CPS	8		Flr	4	Jason Fazackarley
BdLS	Baron Bernard de Lur-Saluces	14	F	Withy	B.General	10		Both	3	Rob Pinkerton
CLD	Charles Louis Desapear	13	26	Withy	Bdr-General	3	Emma	Both	4	Martin Jennings
HD	Baron Henri Dubois	13	25	Comfy	Major DG	3		Both	3	Wayne Little
BdLG	Bastian de LaGarde	12+38	Comfy	Major RFG/LtGen's Aide (1st Div)		4	Cath	Hunt	1	Jerry Spencer
PUFF	Percy Urbain Fanci-Free	11	27	Poor	Major DG	6	Fifi	Hunt	2	Mark Cowper
LA	Luc Azzat	11+34	OK		Captain RFG/Capt.K's Esc	3		Hunt	2	Tim Macaire

Chatter

It looks like this will be the last issue of *To Win Just Once* published before Christmas, so let me take the opportunity to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Spiel has come and gone since last issue – it already seems to have been ages ago – as has this year's *MidCon*. My report from Spiel starts this issue and will be augmented with the games I played a week later in Derby.

In the meantime, my mince pie habit has taken a hit. This year's Sainsbury's 'Taste the Difference' mince pies are just not very nice. We have a (small) Co-op in the village, so I've tried their mince pies. They're not much better. Then there's a Waitrose nearby and Geraldine picked up both their standard and luxury (All Butter) varieties for me to try. I preferred the ordinary ones, despite the slightly odd spices, but neither was particularly good. So I'm now on plan B: panettone!

Since then Which? has published their 2018 mince pie taste tests and guess which are the bottom three supermarkets? Yes, Co-op, Sainsbury's and Waitrose. Which? reckons that Asda's Extra Special mince pies are the best, so I'll have to make an expedition to get some. When I've finished the panettone, that is.

Change of address

Mike Dommatt is moving house (and heading further west) even as this issue comes out. *Railway Rivals* and *Star Trader* players in particular should take note of his new address.

New Star Trader game

Our current *Star Trader* game, Voyager, has come to an unexpectedly early end – see this issue's report for details. This means Mike will be looking to get a new game going, though probably not in next issue. If you're interested in playing, let Mike or me know and we'll pass on a copy of the rules so you can get stuck in.

Online stats

TWJO 188 was published on 12th October and the PDFs were downloaded just 36 times in the rest of the month (the contents were clearly not a big draw). Issue 187 attracted 12 downloads through the month, taking it to 170 over two months. *TWJO* 186 was downloaded just once in October, for 230 since publication.

Letters

Alex Bardy and I managed to say hello to each other at MidCon, since when Alex has sent some comments on *TWJO* 188.

I totally feel your pain with regards to 'upgrading' to DVD - we did ours years ago, but still have VHS boxed sets of all the *Friends* series and *Ally McBeal* (3 seasons I think, might be more) - we just couldn't let go of these... lol

Pride of my personal DVD collection is a special edition of the original, animated *Lord of The Rings*, a complete set of the (new, revamped) *Battlestar Galactica* series, a 10-volume *Star Trek* movie collection, a complete *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* series collection (criminally under-rated *ST* series that one), and a collection of classic animé from a misspent youth... The sad thing being that half of these are still shrink-wrapped... bonkers!

I'm with you on *DS9* - my second favourite *Star Trek* series (the original series wins, natch). I saw Bakshi's animated *Lord of the Rings* in the cinema and remember being disappointed that the second film was never made.

I have a copy of *Bunny Kingdom* and, much as I quite like the game, the end-of-game scoring is a bit of a nightmare, frankly, especially with all the varied Parchment cards available - we generally take 12-20 of them out before we even start the game now (depending on player numbers). That seems to work much better and avoids the embarrassing situation when a player decides to just collect all the Parchment cards (because nowt else appealed) and then goes on to win.

Not familiar with many of the others, although heard that *CIV* was well worth a go. Interesting to read about MW's *London* - is this what *Nanty Narking* is based on, d'you know? Also, I get very confused about the two new *Brass* games (both look gorgeous) - I believe the Lancashire one is more complex (with shipping and such-like), but I may have them the wrong way round... I haven't played either of them yet, but your mention of playing *Brass* with beginners reminds me of my first game of *Terraforming Mars* - we played at MidCon on the Saturday night (started at 11.30pm-ish incl. a full rules explanation for me, and finished at 4.10am - we did drink a bit, too, though...)

Nanty Narking is a re-working of Martin's *Ankh-Morpork*, transferring the game to Victorian London (which was apparently where Martin got much of his inspiration for the original game). Assuming *Brass: Lancashire* is much the same as the original *Brass*, I reckon *Brass: Birmingham* is the more complex.

I also got to play *Key Harvest* for the first time at MidCon this weekend (with a couple of 'veteran' players of the game) and rather enjoyed it - I think they let me off easy, though, and let me scrape a win... (That doesn't happen often!)

I very much doubt any of those guys would give you (or anybody else) an easy ride, Alex.

Femmes Fatales

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

Col	Regiments																
	RFC	CG	KM	DG	OOO	ALC	CPC	RM	GDMD/PM	13F	PLLD	53F	27M	4A	69A	Gscn	
LCol	AdA	AdF	DdE	EB	SdM	FdA	N4	RdL	XM	CD							
Maj 1	BRJS	N2+	N1	HD	N3+	N4	N2+	N3	N2	N1+	N4+	N4					
Maj 2	BdLG	FAG	N3	PUFF	N2		N6	N1	N6	N6	N4	N4	N3	N2	N3+	N2+	
Capt 1	LA	N3	N3	N6	N1	N2	N6	N1	N6	N4	N4	N3	N3	N4	N6	N6	
Capt 2	N6	N6	N1	N1	N4		N4*	N6	AF	N4	N1	N1	N5	N5	N6	N2	
Capt 3	N3	N3	N6*	N2	N6		N5	N2	N3	N2	N6	N3	N3	N3	N5	N1	
Capt 4	N2*	N4*	N6*	N2*	N3*		N1	N2*	N6	N6*	N4*	N5	N3*	N3*	N6*	N1	
Capt 5	N6			N2					LI	ARCH						N2*	
Capt 6				PdU					GdB*	ASS							

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.

Brigade Positions

Guards Brigade	N2/N/N2
Horse Guards Brigade	N5/N/N3
Heavy Brigade	N2/N/N2
Dragoon Brigade	N4/N/N5
First Foot Brigade	N2/N/N1
Second Foot Brigade	N2/N/N4
Third Foot Brigade	N4/N/N3
Fourth Foot Brigade	N5/N/N2

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	(Field Ops for Dec–Feb)	
				F4	RNHB
Colonel	N3	N1	N2	N3	N8
Attached		1 Sqn DG 1 Sqn GDMD	1 Sqn CPC	LI ASS	BdLS
Also at the Front	Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers				

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

Battle Results

Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers: 2	Frontier regiment 3: 3
Frontier regiment 1: 6	Frontier regiment 4: 3
Frontier regiment 2: 3	RNHB regiment: 3

Other Appointments

King’s Escort: Ensign N	Captain LA
Cardinal’s Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Aides: to Crown Prince N	to Field Marshal Jdl
Provincial Military Governors: N/N/N/N/N	
City Military Governor N	Adjutant–General N
Inspectors–General: of Cavalry CC	of Infantry __
Commissioner of Public Safety FAG (until September 1671)	
Chancellor of the Exchequer EB (until April 1671)	
Minister of Justice N (until February 1671)	
Minister of War TC (until August 1671)	
Minister of State DdE (until November 1671)	

Shows who holds appointments outside military units: ID for Characters, “N” for NPC, __ for vacant, “CPS” for additional posts held by the CPS.

The Essen Tales

Pevans journeys to Spiel ’18

Time for my annual pilgrimage to Essen and the Spiel games fair. For the first time I used a sat nav on the journey and it directed me via Brussels rather than Antwerp. It didn’t seem to make much difference: one traffic jam is much like another. And, as usual, what should be a four-hour drive (from Eurotunnel in Calais) was closer to six – though that does include coffee-and-comfort breaks.

Having parked up, I stuck my head into the halls to see how set-up was going. As usual, some stands were done and dusted, many were works in progress and a few were still waiting for things (such as stock) to arrive. I, however, could wander off to meet up with my regular wing-man, Pete Card, and have a leisurely dinner.

My aim this year was to spend more time sitting down playing games, rather than trying to absorb a summary of every game I came across. Yes, this means covering fewer games, but Spiel is too big to see more than a fraction of what’s on offer anyway. And I hope to be able to give a more meaningful introduction to the games I do see. Plus, my feet will be much happier.

Come Thursday morning and Pete and I trotted in to find PSC Games (www.pscgames.co.uk) as Pete had things to pick up from them. As well as the



The calm before the storm: demo games waiting at Gigamic’s stand

latest bits for *The Great War* (the French tank models look terrific), PSC had two new games on show. The first was *Lincoln*, Martin Wallace’s two-player game of the American Civil War. This is a (distant) development of Martin’s *A Few Acres of Snow*, which is a cracking game, so I’m looking forward to this. However, there was no opportunity to play it at the show.



Ian Brody extolling QMG: *The Cold War*

The second game was PSC’s joint production with Griggling Games (www.grigglinggames.com), *Quartermaster General: The Cold War*. Designer Ian Brody was on hand to talk us through the game. The title is a bit of a misnomer as the game is really about the Cold War heating up. The three factions – NATO, Warsaw Pact and non-aligned nations – deploy and manoeuvre their forces (nice little models) across a map of the world according to the players’ card play. Though the non-aligned are a loose grouping (China, India and others) that doesn’t co-operate as well as the other blocs.

As with the other *Quartermaster General* games, the emphasis is on supply. The details are different, of course. For a start, enemy pieces have to be in the same area (rather than adjacent) to start a fight. And then there are “Weapons of Mass Destruction”. The theme of this game means that nuclear weapons are available. However, using one of these cards comes with a penalty – a loss of victory points. Though this will be reduced by the level of ‘tension’ between the two factions – one of the game’s neat mechanisms.

The factions score points every few rounds and win outright if they have at least 20 points more than

the last-placed faction. First, however, the faction in second place gives points to the one in third place. If the gap reduces below 20, there’s no win (yet). This is a clever way of harnessing the three-player dynamic and really makes players think before they attack someone (you may push them back into last place, but then have to give them points!).

I wasn’t particularly enthused when I discovered that the Cold War was the theme of the latest *Quartermaster General* game. Now that I’ve had a closer look at it, I’m impressed by how Ian has tweaked the original mechanisms to provide a clever three-way challenge. And this is on top of the usual challenges of *Quartermaster General* (playing too many cards; playing too few cards; not preparing enough, preparing too much; and so on). While the game was designed

Anton Gauchepied'er (Dagger, 4 rests).

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

Challenges to be voted on

Duncan d'Eauneurts challenges Felix Anton Gauchepied'er “for arresting my MOTHER!”

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

New Characters

Dave Marsden gets the Second son of an Impoverished Marquis: Init SL 8; Cash 40; MA 5; EC 4 (X1).

Charles Popp gets the First son of an Impoverished Earl: Init SL 10; Cash 44; MA 6; EC 4 (X3).

Tables

Army Organisation and 1671’s Summer Deployment

First Army (Defence)	JdG/_/_/ADD/AdF
Cavalry Division (Defence)	N5/N/N3
Heavy Brigade (Defence) – ALC CPC	
Dragoon Brigade (Defence) – GDMD PLLD	
Frontier Division (Defence)	N4/N/N5
Frontier Regiments (Defence)	
Second Army (Siege)	PIS/N/N5/N
First Division (Assault)	LdH/BdLG/N1
Guards Brigade (Assault) – RFG CG KM	
1st Foot Brigade (Assault) – RM PM	
RNHB Regiment (Assault)	
Second Division (Siege)	N5/N/RdL
2nd Foot Brigade (Siege) – 13F 53F	
3rd Foot Brigade (Siege) – 27M 4A	
4th Foot Brigade (Siege) – 69A Gscn	
Horse Guards Brigade (Field Ops) – DG QOC	

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

Absent friends

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

LI L'Inconnu (Gerald Udowiczenko) has NMR'd. Total now 2 and is sent to a Frontier regiment
SdM Swindelle d'Masses (Craig Pearson) has NMR'd. Total now 1

X2 (Ray Vahey) has been floated due to work pressures

Farewell

I have removed X1 (Gavin Wright) and X3 (Fran Weal) as neither player sent in orders and their previous characters died of NMRs. (Their subscriptions have expired too.)

Notes

The *En Garde!* rules are available to LPBS players at a reduced rate: see any

Announcements

None

Duels

Results of December's duels

Sebastian de la Creme (with PIS, gains 1 Exp) beat Beau Reese Jean Seine (with AdA).

Greg de Becqueur (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Frele d'Acier (with EB).

Duncan d'Eauneurts (with WNM & FSdM, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Alan de Frocked (with LdH & FAG).

Felix Anton Gauchepied'er didn't turn up to fight Duncan d'Eauneurts and lost SPs.

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 that 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.

Robert d'Lancier (gains 1 Exp) beat Georges Hommemince (with ADD).

Grudges to settle next month:

Augustin Fourier (Sabre, adv.) and Antoine Robert G Herville (Rapier) have mutual cause as neither stood down over Josephine.

Pierre Cardigan (Sabre, 1 rests) has cause with Amant d'Au (Dagger, adv.) for pinching Edna.

Duncan d'Eauneurts (Sabre, Seconds WNM & FSdM, adv.) challenges Felix



A closer look at *Quartermaster General: The Cold War*

for three, Ian reports that it's worked well in playtests even with six players. The additional players come on board as partners in one of the factions, though this does slow things down as the partners need to discuss what they're doing. I give it a provisional 7/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Just across the aisle from PSC, Pete and I found the Ragnar Brothers (ragnarbrothers.com) showing what they expect to be the last game they publish, *The Romans*. (The plan is to design games for other people to publish in the future.) Ragnar Phil was demonstrating the prototype in its solitaire form – a neat idea as it introduces all the game's mechanisms in a contained fashion – so Pete and I sat down (hooray!) to see what it's all about.

The theme is rather obvious from the title, not to mention the artwork. This features cartoon-style Ancient Romans rather reminiscent of *Asterix* – his adversaries, anyway. The game follows the Ragnars' recent “quantum games” in giving each player their own board for their own version of Rome. Players buy legions and use these to conquer the



Phil explaining *Romans*



A closer look at a player board from *The Romans* - the figures are not part of the standard game

lands around their initial city. As Rome expands, becoming an Empire, their income increases, allowing them to develop further. This has the added benefit of pushing Rome's enemies further away - each round players will have to fend off attacks from these non-player forces.

However, they are competing with the other players for the limited actions available each round. If someone else gets their senator onto the action you want this round, you'd better have a plan B. The game is played over five Eras with the added complication of the arrival of Christianity in the latter Eras. How players manage the spread of the new religion can be important as they get points for each Christian city on their board.

Apart from the geographical expansion, players can improve and develop their version of the city. However, they are competing with the other players for the limited actions available each round. If someone else gets their senator onto the action you want this round, you'd better have a plan B. The game is played over five Eras with the added complication of the arrival of Christianity in the latter Eras. How players manage the spread of the new religion can be important as they get points for each Christian city on their board.

The game had been launched on Kickstarter before Spiel and was successfully funded in the middle of November. It's expected to arrive in May 2019, but don't be surprised if it's a bit later. I thoroughly enjoyed my introduction to *The Romans*, which I found more immediately appealing than the Ragnars' recent games. The actions and gameplay seem to mesh well and provide an interesting challenge. There is a definite element of 'multi-player solitaire' to the game, but that's something I enjoy. I give it a provisional 8/10 on my highly subjective scale.

After this, Pete and I trotted off to Sierra Madre Games (www.sierra-madre-games.com) for our scheduled demo game of *Pax Emancipation*. This continues the sequence that designer Phil Eklund started with *Pax Porfiriana*. The second game, *Pax Pamir*, added geography and playing pieces to the original card game while the third, *Pax Renaissance*, moved the action to the realm of ideas. *Pax Emancipation* builds on this, adding further mechanisms.

The theme is all about the 18th century fight against slavery and the spread of this campaign across the world. Much of this is similar to *Pax Renaissance*, with geographical areas, routes between them and pawns of several types and colours to deploy, representing the various forms of opposition to slavery. The key element of all "Pax" games is the 'market' of cards which players can buy (though the cost is calculated differently in this game). Here the cards are ideas and

himself close to the patient and, with Trissy to his immediate side, they hear the following.

"Who... who... are you... groan... moan... what do you want?"

"You have done well, young Felix," comes an Arabian accent.

"Yes, very well indeed. We have been watching you, my boy," sounds a slightly high-pitched, nasal accent. "And now your time has come to secure greater rewards, for you and for us all."

"Urrghh... sigh... what do you mean... who are you?"

"We are your predecessors, fine men who were cheated from our own just glories, but now, through you, we live again and together we three shall conquer all!"

"Yes, yes, it is time to cleanse Paris in a river of blood!"

"No, Sheikh, in a **sea** of blood!"

"No, No, both of you: an **ocean** of blood!"

"Ah, you learn quickly, my boy. You do us proud, Felix, for soon Paris will be ours and then France and then the WORLD... mwah ha ha ha ha!" At this the young man in the bed slumps back into unconsciousness.

"Mein gott, dis is a most serious case. I have read of such before, but I..." Another knock on the door interrupts the doctor.

Points Arising

Next deadline is 14th December

Many thanks for the contributions to the trial reports and other business especially to Paul and Jason for their double act. Unfortunately, I've had to

"Miss Trissy, there's a second visitor here: some big Arab-looking guy with a huge axe. Says he's come about getting his old job back?"
To be continued. Watch this space!

Lord Percy Percy says, as fashion is tending towards the untenable, Gauchepied'er is very fashionable.

Greg de Becqueur

You are progressing well in Paris society. Might I suggest you join a more fashionable regiment?

You might find this hard to believe, but I started my career as a lowly trooper with the GDMD. I then moved to the Dragoon Guards and left them to take up command of the ALC.

I hope this is the last time we cross swords on the duelling field.

Kind regards, †Count d'Acier

Poetry Corner

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

There once was a young man from France,

Who invited his friends to a dance.

But the courier thunk

That the mail was junk,

So now he posts press in advance

edit it savagely to fit in the 'zine, but will put the full text in the website version.

The ongoing Trials and Tribulations of Percy Urbain Fanci-Free

There I am again, skulking in the dark waiting for Lt General Cuckpowder, when up comes a Coach and out he gets and it is straight to business. He is a big boy and he gave me a thorough whipping. As I lie there waiting for the end, he extends a hand, lifts me up and kindly got two of his henchmen to stretch me to the nearest hospital. What a Gent, sigh! I hope it is not another of my man crushes coming on.

I hobble back to barracks for my interview for the vacant Majority. There is one other candidate, a Monsieur d’Udderjuan, but he is a bit green so I get the post after my fine display of bare-back riding (well no way could I bear to sit on a saddle after my duel). So, straight home to pick up Fifi and it’s out to party. Well, it is all happening: three arrests by our new CPS – and one is his predecessor’s mother – apparently due to interference in matters of state. I don’t think so, this is just plain jealousy as the Lady d’Eauneurts is a true lady with some modicum of dress sense, though slightly 1650s in style –I mean, Tartan! Not nowadays; this is the 1670s, whereas our CPS... well, where do I start? Definitely not a lady and the most GHASTLY dress sense imaginable – Mon Dieu! I shudder even now when I think of it. I pity the topiary of Paris as our CPS must have been dragged through all of it backwards to get that look! I cannot wait for the trials next month, if just

to see what else he has locked away in his wardrobe.

Lying in a large bed, set in the centre of a flower bedecked room, a tall young man tosses from side to side, mumbling to himself and barely responding to the tender ministrations of a ginger-bearded sligher man, who tearfully and gently mops his brow.

“What are you saying, Felix? Who are you talking to?” sobs the ginger fellow, “Can you hear me?” Before any reply is forthcoming, a knock on the door interrupts his nursing,

“Miss Trissy, Sir, err I mean Madame or errr Mademoiselle is it err...” stammers an awkward-looking CPS agent. “The doctor has arrived, shall I send him in?”

“Yes, wonderful, send him in immediately.”

Moments later, a modest looking portly man carrying a small bag bustles into the room.

“Ah, Doctor von Qwak, thank goodness you’re here – it’s been simply terrible,” sobs Trissy. “Poor darling Felix has been feverish ever since falling over and he’s been talking to himself for days now. The strange thing is it’s like he is also talking to other people, too – well, to two people really – and he keeps changing his accent! I mean it’s bizarre: one moment he’s got an Arabian accent, the next a slightly high pitched nasal accent and then he’s himself again. I’m so worried Doctor”.

“Ya, ya, let oos see what is der problem hier.” The doctor places

historical personalities that will help players’ progress while also providing extra actions they can take – even without being bought.

Players also have a set of pawns (‘Agents’), which have multiple uses. Importantly, the pieces on a player’s board represents their limited funds. Once these are spent, players will have to use an action (and they only get two each turn) to raise money. Managing your funds is thus an important part of the game. The key thing players need to do is remove the ‘Barriers’ (cardboard chits) in each geographical area, thus making it cheaper and less risky to combat slavery in that area.

We played the co-operative version in which the players need to achieve a minimum total points score, but only the points of players who’ve achieved their individual goal count towards this. As we grappled with the game’s mechanics, it was clear that this is an intricate, tricky game, even at the Basic level. I struggled to work out how to get my actions to work together. I kept finding that, in order to do what I wanted, I needed to do something else first, which meant I couldn’t then do what I originally wanted.

Clearly I need a better understanding of how the game works and then how to achieve what I need to. The question is whether it’s worth putting that amount of effort in. *Pax Emancipation* has moved a long way from *Pax Porfiriana*, where the complexity lies in the interaction of the cards. In fact, I think it may have suffered from being forced into the “Pax” mould. The market, for example, is not a market in this game and the game may have been better as a more conventional board game. Having said that, I will give it another go, once I’ve had the chance to work through the rules (and probably try the solitaire game). For the time being, it gets a provisional 5/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Having dissolved quite a few brain cells, Pete and I needed something more accessible. We found it at the stand of the entertainingly named Jolly



Pax Emancipation in play – cards in the ‘market, geography at the top (with barriers) and red’s player board

Dutch Productions (www.jollydutch.com). They were demonstrating the prototype of *Chartered: the Golden Age*, which was funded on Kickstarter before Spiel. This is an expansion and merging game in the pattern of the venerable *Acquire*.

Playing a number card allows a player to place one of the very nice warehouse pieces on the corresponding square (on a looping track). This may extend a warehouse (for a cash bonus) or start a new one, for a different commodity. Or they may buy (or sell) shares in the commodities – the price of these goes up as the corresponding warehouse expands. Or they may take a new number card.

The game gets interesting when two warehouses meet: the larger absorbs the smaller. Shareholders in the smaller cash in their shares, while the larger jumps in value according to the size of what it's absorbed. Key to winning the game looks to be being the person with the most shares in the largest warehouse.

We had great fun playing this, though we were facing a Dutch couple who'd already played the game once. I had some useful starting cards and began building a large (Opium) warehouse. Unfortunately, Pete had the same idea and his (Gold) warehouse was not very far away. We raced to expand, taking over a couple of smaller warehouses, but Pete managed to stay ahead of me. Eventually Gold absorbed Opium and became the largest (and most valuable) warehouse.

However, Pete was denied the win: one of our opponents had planted her 'free shares' flag on the Gold warehouse, preventing Pete from doing so and tipping the shareholdings in her favour. *Chartered* was fun and I found it more accessible than *Acquire* (it may be a classic, but I've never got to grips with it). This is a rather different game and gets a provisional 8/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Then it was back to the Sierra Madre stand to try the prototype of *Pax Transhumanity*. The idea here is that scientific and engineering advances will allow humanity to transcend the obstacles (climate change, over-population et al) currently facing it. The game is plainly a development of *Pax Emancipation*, incorporating the Agents and Barriers we'd been introduced to earlier in the day.



Chartered: the Gold warehouse is swallowing all as the game nears an end

Party announce for week two of January: all of SL 13 or above invited, costs will be met for gentlemen with ladies.

† T Cuckpowder

Captain Luc Azzat invites all (but not necessarily sundry) to celebrate his appointment to the King's Escort in Week 2 of January. 7.30 for 8, carriages and stomach pumps at midnight.

Military Missives

Gentlemen of Paris

The ALC has some vacancies for 1 Major and 2 Captains. Please note the regiment is at the front for winter training.

Kind regards, † Count d'Acier

Personal

Balzac Slapdash

I note you are not in a regiment I would like to point out to you a vacancy in the ALC at Major that you could fill.

Kind regards, † Count d'Acier

Concerned at the arbitrary action of justice and always eager to curry favour with his superiors (though none better), Bastian LaGarde mustered the 1st Battalion of the Royal Foot Guards and ordered them to scour the low pot houses, knocking shops, brothels, doss houses and other places of disrepute (Huguenot churches and the like) in the Pigalle and around the Bastille for the delinquent Private d'Ancer, of the

sister regiment of the Musketeers. Whores, demi-reps and even gentlewomen were accosted and searched (thoroughly) in case the odious d'Ancer had disguised himself as a woman. Pawnbrokers, money-lenders and Louisiana stock companies were visited in case d'Ancer had attempted to launder the regiment's silver. Molly houses too – where he was known to offer himself to supplement the meagre pay of a Private – were the subject of the search by the loyal but somewhat inebriated troopers of the Guard. Hélas! No sign of the cowardly miscreant was found, his cunning too much for an honest Frenchman. Why, he might almost be English, and perfidious to boot.

To Baroness Gauchepied'er, CPS
Ma'am,

Whilst I do not dispute that it is your right, indeed, your duty as CPS to detain anyone you consider a risk to the safety of the Realm, I feel I must raise a concern about the way in which you appear to have treated Lady d'Eauneurts. Dragging her to the Bastille in chains and throwing her into a cell therein is not appropriate for one of her social standing; I would have expected you, being of a female persuasion yourself, to have shown a little more sensitivity and respect to the Lady. Ma'am, I fear you dishonour both yourself and your position.

† Major Sans de Machine, King's
Musketeers.

Despatches from the Front

To Field Marshall Count Xavier-Beauregard,
Sir, here is my report from the Front:
It's bloody cold there in November –
we should stick to having wars in
the summer.

Your aide,

† Lt.Colonel Sir Jean d'Ice

Matters of Honour

Earl Duncan d'Euaneurts, to
Baron Felix Anton Gauchepied'er
Lady, You go too far !!!

Not content with your constant
bandying about of tiresome libels
concerning the size of my male
appendage, you have dragged a loyal
officer under my command and MY
MOTHER before the courts on
fictitious charges merely to satisfy
your overweening spite. Such
dishonourable actions have no
parallel in the annals of France!

I invite you answer for your
despicable actions at the point of my
sword at your earliest convenience.

I expect that your complete lack of
spine will preclude your attendance,
as with all our previously arranged
meetings, and have no doubt that the
only result of this exercise will be to
demonstrate once more how totally
unfit you are to hold a position in
either government or His Majesty's
armed forces.

† Earl Duncan d'Euaneurts

M. le Redacteur

The "titchy" comment was very
hurtful – I prefer "svelte". † ADD

Social

Greg de Bécqueur cordially invites all
gentlemen of SL 1 to 8 and their
ladies to join him at Blue Gables in
week one of January to see in the new
year.

Carousing costs will be paid.

***** New Year's Eve Party. *****

On behalf of Grand Duke Max's
Dragoons, I would like to invite the
Ladies and Gentlemen of Paris to a
party to welcome in the New Year in
their officers' mess. All members of
the regiment and of friendly
regiments are invited together with
non-military friends.

Please bring your ladies. † XM

Christmas, Rewound!

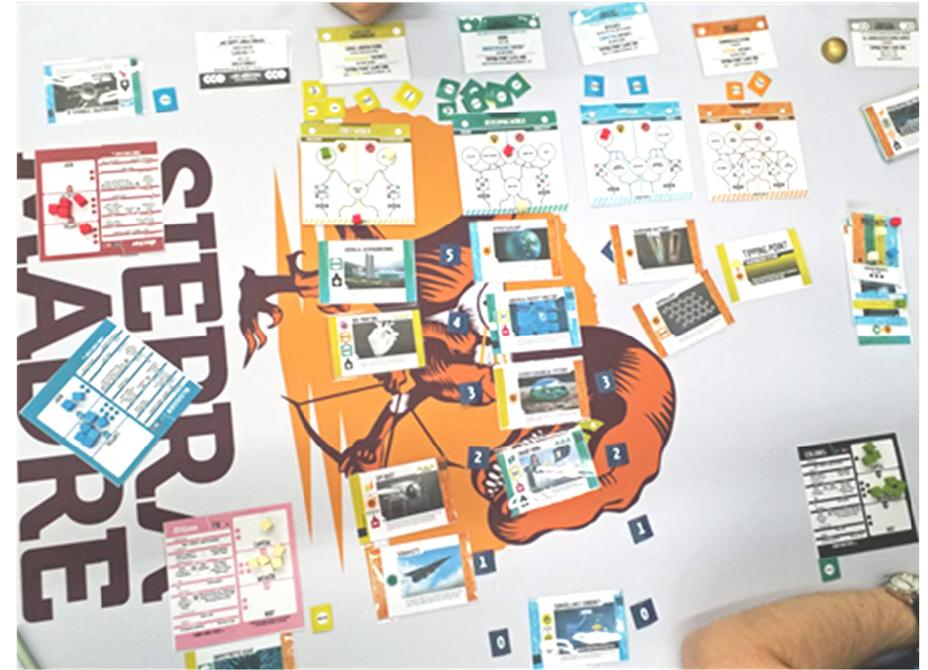
Well, for the lower ranks of society,
Christmas 1670 was a total non-event
as we all stood shivering with our
noses pressed to the windows while
the Scrooges of the upper echelons
denied us the festive largesse of their
'exclusive' events.

Do not despair! Just think Orthodox
and celebrate Christmas along with
me according to the Julian calendar...
starting on January 7th.

So let's go all out:

WEEKS 1-4 OF JANUARY: Col.
Arthur (just call me 'Dekka') Dent
invites ALL MEMBERS of the
'deserving' lower classes (i.e. SL 3 or
above) to party with him at his club.
Mistresses welcome but I'm afraid it's
'buy your own booze'.

Be there or be Tiny Tim Cratchit,
again!



The four markets of *Pax Transhumanity*, players' cards and more

Here there are four 'Markets', in different areas of 'infrastructure', from which scientific ideas can be bought. Research also removes cards to provide patents or a think tank (players' own technologies for commercialisation). Hiring staff reduces barriers, making research and commercialisation cheaper.

We had a run-through of a few rounds, in which we were guided through the game's mechanics, rather than actually playing it. It left me largely baffled. Place cubes here, move cards there, do this, do that. This gives you a company, which removes a barrier. That gives you an employee, which lets you produce stuff. Now move your employee down the track...

One thing I did spot was the re-appearance of the 'Topples' from *Pax Porfiriana*, here re-themed as 'Tipping Points'. The game can only be won when one of these is triggered and what you need to win depends on the current 'Regime' – in this case the predominant field of science. My first impression is that this is the most intricate of the "Pax" games – perhaps **too** complex. However, it's difficult to make a proper assessment, so I'll refrain from giving it any ranking at this stage.

Thursday evening saw a compulsory part of my annual visit to Essen: dinner at the *Hausbrauerei*, the local brewpub. The food is great (and served on large metal

plates) and they brew their own beer – what more could you want? Well, how about a whole barrel of said beer at the end of the table? Mmm, beer...

While I was collecting things on Saturday morning Pete got into a lengthy game, so I was on my own when I came across Taiwanese publisher EmperorS4 (en.emperors4.com). They've been going for a few years, but this was their first time at Spiel. I joined an international group to try *Discovery: the Era of Voyage*. Gameplay is straightforward so, once we'd picked it up, the game moved quickly.



The ports in my *Discovery* game at Spiel '18

placing their shield token alongside it. Each investment improves trade at that card for them. It may also be worth points at the end of the game: whoever has the most shields at a card gets the points it's worth. These are added to the points scored from trades during the game plus a bit for any leftover goods and most points wins.

This was a thoroughly enjoyable game. It's fairly light, but there are decisions to be made and options to choose from and it certainly didn't out-stay its welcome. Different mixes of port cards and varying their order gives plenty of replay value to the game. I give it a provisional 7/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Meeting up with Pete again we came across the prototype of *Magnate: The First City* (magnategame.com) from Naylor Games (naylorgames.com) and main man James Naylor set us up to play. As property developers, what we do is simple: buy plots of land, construct buildings and attract tenants. This brings in income in the form of rent. However, the amount of rent depends not just on the building itself, but also on what other buildings are nearby. Thus putting up a particular building may not only be profitable for you, but also provide opportunities for other players.

We start with cards (ports) arranged around a central one. Each card shows what goods players can acquire there or the trades they can perform, while the central card lets them pick up money. Each turn players move their ship and carry out the trade at the card they land on, building up their stock of goods.

The other action they can do is to spend goods to invest in a card,

Something similar happens to Ettonique, too, and he gets 200 crowns worth of plunder as well. Plus a Mention in Despatches ("goes well with ice"), which earns him the title of Viscount.

The disgraced Frederick von Bismarch serves with Frontier regiment 3 where he tries valiantly to display his qualities. Unfortunately, he runs into a bullet coming the other way. RIP. Chris Knight's squadron of the Crown Prince Cuirassiers is attached to this regiment and the cavalymen chase off the Spanish fusiliers responsible. This brings Lt-Col Knight a Mention in Despatches ("That'll teach 'em").

PM Subaltern Alain SansSous is with Frontier regiment 4, where his abilities are recognised and he is promoted to Captain. The commander of the Frontier troops is very happy to sell him the horse he needs for his new rank.

Both Bernard de Lur-Saluces and Richard Shapmes have chosen to command battalions of the RNHB, where there's a bit of a competitive vibe going on. General Lur-Saluces demonstrates that he can march his men up hill and down dale, earning a Mention in Despatches ("Good to see well-dressed ranks of kilts"). Lt-General Shapmes demonstrates that he can march uphill, trip over a fallen log, pitch himself head over heels down a steep slope and break his neck. RIP. General Lur-Saluces pockets 250 crowns. ❖

Press

Announcements

Outside the King's Musketeers' HQ:

ATTENTION!

Maurice d'Ancer, a private in E Company of the King's Musketeers, placed in the regimental lock-up on the charge of striking an officer, has escaped – and effectively deserted the colours! Patrols are hereby ordered to scour Paris for this reprobate – with especial attention paid to the Isle de Palais and Bastille areas. The fugitive is bearded and may well adopt a disguise – indeed he may attempt to pass himself off as a woman to escape detection. All suspicious characters resembling the description will be detained and brought to the KM barracks to have their identities verified.

Vacancy for aide to Minister of War:
Apply Offices † Cuckpowder

Gentlemen of the ALC

I am taking the regiment to the front for winter training. Please ensure your affairs are settled before leaving.

Kind regards, † Col D'Acier

Suitable candidate required for Inspector General of Infantry: Apply the War Office, attn Cuckpowder

WARNING ORDER. Gentlemen of the Dragoon Guards. Enjoy Christmas. Settle your affairs. We're taking the field in January.

† B.Gen(Brev.) the Marquis Etienne Brule

They're empty. Other visitors to the attractions of the red light district are Ben e'Volence and Duncan d'Euaneurts. The new Minister of State makes a point of visiting "The Mare's Meadow", an establishment renowned for catering to "stallions" with members of prodigious size". He doesn't mention the other people he meets there, though. The one week that Hercule is not in the red light district, Henri Dubois puts in an appearance, in need of some female company. And Felix Anton Gauchepied'er is there for the last week, having quite recovered from his accident the week before (see Press) – though it's not **female** company he's after.

Jacques de Gain may put in his traditional four weeks practice with his rapier, but he has competition for the title of iron man this month. Beau Reese Jean Seine also practises rapier all month (once he's repaid his loans and when not assisting Duncan d'Euaneurts in the search for Maurice d'Ancer), as does Jean d'Ice, so the honour (?) is shared three ways. Arthur 'Dekka' Dent practises sabre for three weeks, along with Chopine Camus, Pierre Cardigan and Paul d'Udderjuan. Duncan d'Euaneurts is with his rapier for three weeks (in between leading patrols seeking Private d'Ancer and then court martialling the miscreant), as are Balzac Slapdash and Leonard de Hofstadt. And Gaz Moutarde works out with his cutlass for three weeks before visiting his mistress. Apart from those already mentioned, Alan de Frocked and Florent Sans de Machine manage a couple of weeks each with their rapiers and several others pop into the gym for the odd week.

Who's missing? Ah yes, Amant d'Au, who spends the whole month away from the limelight, first stuck on a doorstep, then being rejected and finally winning over the object of his affections so that he can spend the final week with her. Pierre Cardigan has something to say about this, though.

And, finally, the word in Paris is that the new Viscount d'Euaneurts, Minister of State, has acquired land and property in the Caribbean colony of Saint-Domingue. It is generally assumed that this is the destination of his mother and sister, particularly as his acquisitions include a distillery.

Horsemen on the frontier

If it's December it must be the start of a new season. And yet there are plenty of volunteers joining the Frontier troops shivering on France's borders. The Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers head south to avoid the frost and Colonel Frele d'Acier spends the month putting them through their paces along the Mediterranean coast. He gets nothing for that.

The first squadron of the Dragoon Guards, commanded by Lt-Col Jean Ettonique, and Grand Duke Max's Dragoons, led by Lt-Col Padamus Da Grim, are attached to second Frontier regiment. Things are relatively quiet here, with just the odd patrol to keep them busy. This doesn't stop Da Grim collecting a couple of hundred crowns worth of loot when his patrol runs into an Austrian one.



Part of the city in our game of *Magnate* with buildings and tenants (discs)

As more land is bought, the market goes up, making things even more profitable. Eventually, however, there will be a crash and property prices will tumble. Key to the game is thus spotting when the crash is imminent and selling up while prices remain high. And if there wasn't going to be a crash, players selling up will trigger one. The player with the most money wins, of course. James started us from a mid-game position so that we were able to play a few rounds, boosting our portfolios and cash, before the crash.

This looks like it will be quite a lengthy game: starting from nothing, it's going to take players a while to buy and build a significant amount. The crash is a neat way of bringing the game to a close and watching out for it keeps the players on their toes. There's certainly something appealing about raking in wads of cash (I do like paper money and the denominations are millions). The game looks terrific, too, with lots of model buildings. Expect it on Kickstarter in 2019. For the time being it gets a provisional 6/10 from me.

Following this it was time to join some old gaming friends (Kevin Jacklin, John Mitchell and Andy Parsons – yes, we're all getting on a bit) for a scheduled demo of *Holding On: the Troubled Life of Billy Kerr*. This comes from Hub Games (www.wearehubgames.com), formerly The Creative Hub and originators of the wonderful *Rory's Story Cubes*. *Holding On* was co-designed by Rory O'Connor and Michael Fox and I've been wanting to play it since Michael talked me through it at the UK Games Expo. Michael was on hand to show us how the game works.

To begin with, the game is a fairly standard co-operative game. The players are staff in an intensive care ward and Billy Kerr is our patient – and in a critical state. The first job is making sure enough staff are assigned to each shift. Except that you don't know how many will be required until the shift card is turned over. Of course, staff can work double shifts, but this makes them stressed. Then they have to have a day off, which means you're short of staff for the next day, so more staff will have to work double shifts, get stressed and have to take time off...

Depending on the card, players may have to take action to stop Billy's health deteriorating. They may even be able to improve his condition, but if you get a couple of emergencies in a row, he's almost bound to decline. There's no actual medical stuff here, it's all abstracted: 'care' tokens help Billy and his overall health is on a track – if it hits zero, the patient dies and the players lose.

So far, so ordinary, but now the game really takes off. Simply keeping Billy alive is not enough. He's a troubled man and the players have to help him resolve his troubles. Enter the memory cards. Each of these depicts some event that involves Billy, but the surroundings are blurred, while the other side has a quote from the man himself. Put together, the cards make a 5 x 6 matrix, but the position of each card is not obvious. However, once you've got a few of them, you can begin to fit them together. What's more, you can then try to get clear memories, drawing cards from a second deck. If you get a card that matches a blurry one, you put the clear memory over the top and suddenly you understand what's going on. Maybe.

We played the first scenario, where victory means getting a clear memory in each time period (not enough to really make any sense of Billy's life). However, you have to do this within a week (21 shift cards) and without Billy dying. (Or having anybody struck off.) We managed this by the skin of our teeth – on the final shift



Playing *Holding On* – note the sharp memories top left and those red rings on the pawns (bottom right) show that they're stressed!

Greg's bash duly takes place at the Blue Gables in week three. He and Jenny have the longest guest list of any this month (so it's probably good for his finances that Greg received a hefty gift from Was Nae Me this month). At its head (alphabetically) is Augustin Fourier, proudly escorting Josephine de Bonaparte whose affections he won the previous week. This followed a bad-tempered encounter with Antoine Robert Guillaume Herville (in his nice new Captain's uniform) on Josephine's doorstep at the start of the month. Next on the guest list is the unaccompanied Antoine, who's spent the intervening week working off his frustrations with his rapier. Ben e'Volence is also on his own after his courting failed. Balzac Slapdash brings Mary Huana, who's pleased to have a day out after Balzac has preferred the company of his rapier so far this month. Georges Dueppre (another rapier practiser) accompanies Di and Hercule D'Engin (sabre so far) is on his own. There are no regimental disputes, which suggests good planning by Greg (or maybe Jenny). Xavier and Betty are also in Blue Gables, but steer clear of the party.

To Hunter's come only Percy and Fifi and Robert, while Bothwell's is visited by just Was and Vera this week. Numbers pick up slightly in the Fleur, though. Etienne, Ella, Pierre, Guinevere, Sebastian, Maggie, Uther and Henrietta are all there and along comes Terence Cuckpowder with a new lady friend, Leia Orgasma. It hasn't taken Terence two weeks to win her affections – he paused for a week's sabre practice before being seen with her in public. This week is a complete disaster for Etienne's gambling: three losses and two cuts. He is seriously out of pocket.

The last week of December sees no actual parties. However, Georges Dueppre has Antoine Robert Guillaume Herville as his Toady in Blue Gables, with Di providing a female presence. Henri Dubois emerges from the gym to host Greg and Jenny at Bothwell's as well. Xavier and Betty are the other people in the Blue Gables, while Bothwell's has more visitors: Charles Louis Desapear and Emma plus Was Nae Me and Vera. Hunter's sees the arrival of Bastian de LaGarde with Cath de Thousands – a courting success after his previous attempt failed. Percy and Fifi are still in this club and Georges Hommemince turns up too. He's unaccompanied, despite winning a young lady after three weeks wooing.

This leaves the Fleur where the some four couples are still occupying the same four tables. Etienne and Ella, Pierre and Guinevere, Sebastian and Maggie and Uther and Henrietta. This week's surprise arrival is Jean Jeanie with Jacky in tow. He is able to inform those present that the deserter from the King's Musketeers was apprehended the week before. The scoundrel has been court martialled and sent to the galleys in Marseille.

Apart from his one party this month, Hercule D'Engin spends his time boozing in the Bawdyhouses. He even gets in some female company at the start of the month, prompting the local ne'er-do-wells to check his pockets on the way home.

wagers. He wins the fourth only to lose his winnings again on his last bet. That was an expensive week.

Luc Azzat also has the gambling bug. He's at Hunter's where he stakes smaller amounts, but manages to lose every single one of his five bets. He loses even more money than Etienne. In the club to see this are Arthur Dent, with Ulla Leight, and Florent Sans de Machine, with Charlotte de Gaulle. Luc hides away for the rest of December, licking his wounds with a certain young lady.

Members are visiting the Blue Gables, too. Georges Dueppre brings Di Lemmere to his new club. Greg de Bécqueur, also a new member, has the company of Jenny Russe. And Paul d'Udderjuan holds hands with Carole Singeurs.

Much is happening in Paris away from the clubs, but the return of General Was Nae Me is particularly noticed. He trots into the city on a tired horse and makes his way with some haste to the Ministry of State to confer with (report to?) Duncan d'Eauneurts. Meanwhile there are patrols of Royal Foot Guards to be seen around the city, particularly the Bastille area, on the hunt for a deserter from the King's Musketeers. According to Captain Luc Azzat, Private Maurice d'Ancer has "disgraced his regiment and the whole of Paris by dressing as a woman (begging the Commissioner's pardon)".

Was is back just in time as the second week of December is the scheduled time for his pre-Christmas dinner at Bothwell's. Having scrubbed off the dust of his journey and donned his party finery, Was is in place to greet his guests, Vera Cruz on his arm. They are joined by Alan de Frocked and Madelaine, taking a turn at being Toadies rather than hosts. Charles Louis Desapear brings Emma. Jean Jeanie attends with Jacky. Felix Anton Gauchepied'er would have joined them as well, but Was is very clear that the CPS is not welcome.

The numbers at the Fleur diminish substantially. Etienne and Ella, Pierre (le Sang) and Guinevere and Uther and Henrietta all visit again. Sebastian de la Creme turns up – under his own steam this time – and brings Maggie. Once again Etienne ventures a few wagers. The house's luck does not seem to have changed as he cuts the first two bets and loses the third. However, he wins his final two to recoup his losses for the week and regain a little kudos.

Florent Sans de Machine (fresh from the search for Maurice d'Ancer) and Charlotte are back in Hunter's again where they see two other members pop in. Percy Urbain Fanci-Free escorts Fifi and Robert de Lancier, now feeling recovered from his duel, brings Ava Crisp to his new club. Robert tries his luck at the gaming tables. He doesn't get off to a good start, losing his first bet. He wins the next one, but cuts the third. After another loss, another cut and another win he calls it a day, slightly out of pocket, but gaining a little with his fellows.

Greg de Bécqueur and Jenny are in Blue Gables again, finalising arrangements for next week's private party. Betty Kant is escorted to the club by Xavier Money.

with Billy's health down to 2. Phew! There was a real feeling of triumph that we'd pulled it off. Michael reported a success rate of about one in three that day.

Holding On is just brilliant. The co-operative foundation is solid game in its own right. Helping Billy remember and making sense of his story (over the ten scenarios) takes the game to a whole different level. To say that the game was good fun seems to devalue its theme, but it was certainly absorbing and utterly gripping. It gets a provisional 10/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Andy, John and I then met up with Pete for Pegasus's Friday game night. This is the second year German publisher/distributor Pegasus (www.pegasus.de) has held ticketed events through the evening (from the close of the show to 1 am) on their stand. It gives those attending access to their new games (including those they distribute) and demo staff for the evening. Plus there's a buffet, soft drinks and a goody bag at the end. The big advantage as far as I'm concerned is not having to hang around and wait for a free table as you have to during the day.

We thought we'd give *Coimbra* a go: a new, weighty game from eggertspiele (www.eggertspiele.de), designed by Flaminia Brasini and Virginio Gigli, who've come up with a number of interesting games. The setting is the eponymous Portuguese city during the 15th and 16th centuries. The players represent noble houses, vying to gain the support of the important classes in the city (Clerics, Councillors, Merchants and Scholars – each identified by a colour and symbol).



Coimbra in play – yes, it's very busy

The central board has several sections. There's a small map of Portugal onto which 'Monastery' tiles are placed – players get a reward for each monastery their 'pilgrim' pawn visits. Alongside this are tracks to show players' influence with the four classes and the income this generates. On the other side are city areas and at the bottom are spaces for the 'Expedition' cards that are one way of earning victory points. Each player's board has tracks for the player's holdings in the game's two currencies: money and soldiers.

Central to the game are the 'character' cards. Paid for with either cash or soldiers, they provide instant bonuses, continuing rewards or points at the end of the game. To get cards, players bid for them with dice. There's a general pool of dice, rolled at the beginning of each round, and players draft one at a time, placing it against a row of cards (mostly). Then, in order of the dice, players buy a card, paying the value shown on their die. Players' income depends on the colours of their dice and they finish with the opportunity to invest in an 'Expedition'.

Yes, this is an intricate, involved game with lots of possible things to do and lots of ways to score points. As players acquire permanent cards, things get even more complicated. There are only four rounds to the game, but it still took us the best part of four hours to play – well, it was a learning exercise. I have to say that I did not notice the time passing, though. *Coimbra* is nicely done, but didn't particularly grab me. I'll look for an opportunity to play it again and, for the time being, it gets a provisional 7/10 on my highly subjective scale.

After all this complexity (and time), we wanted something undemanding to wrap up with. The answer was *Reef*, a simple game with brightly-coloured pieces from Next Move Games (www.nextmovegames.com/en) and designed by Emerson Matsuuchi. The idea here is that players stack up the playing pieces ('coral') – in

four bright colours and shapes – on the 4 x 4 grid of their own board. If they can then match the pattern (by looking down at their board) shown on the card they just played, they take the points value of the card in chips.

What makes this tricky is that placing coral pieces may disrupt the pattern you wanted to score. You have a hand of three cards, so you



Reef in progress

Reese Jean Seine, Frele d'Acier and Terence Cuckpowder, while Creme has only Minister Jean Ettonique on his side. It is no surprise, then, that His Majesty confers the appointment on Duncan d'Eauneurts, and elevates him to Viscount.

However, no sooner has Pierre le Sang stepped down from one job than he takes on a new one. Field Marshal Uther Xavier Beauregard appoints the retiring Minister of State as commander of Second Army.

The new Minister of State needs some time to get his feet under the table and fails to fill the vacancy at the Ministry of Justice. The position will be held by somebody or other for the next season. Similarly, suitable officers take over the vacant staff positions in the Guards Brigade.

It seems the uncertainty in Paris this winter has persuaded several socialites to volunteer for active service, despite the prospect of harsh weather for three months. Colonel Frele d'Acier mobilises the whole of the Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers. The first squadron of the Dragoon Guards is given its marching orders by Lt-Col Jean Ettonique. Similarly, Lieutenant-Colonel Chris Knight takes first squadron, Crown Prince Cuirassiers into action.

Lieutenant-General Richard Shapmes and General Bernard de Lur-Saluces both volunteer to lead battalions of the Royal North Highland Border regiment. Alain SansSous is only a Subaltern and thus commands no part of his regiment, the Picardy Musketeers. He will therefore serve with a Frontier regiment; as, of course, will be the disgraced Frederick von Bismarch.

It's Christmaaas!

Our first social event of December is Alan de Frocked's carol singing at Bothwell's. Alan hosts, of course, with Madelaine de Proust at his side. They welcome a select guest list, starting with Bastian de LaGarde, who attends on his own. Felix Anton Gauchepied'er is next through the door, but without his usual companion, 'Trissy'. Jean Jeanie brings Jacky Tinne and Percy Urbain Fanci-Free completes the list, escorting Fifi. The presence of the CPS puts most on their best behaviour, except for Percy who initiates some raucous carolling while stuffing his face with mince pies (a fine trick, to be sure). There's one other couple in Bothwell's: Charles Louis Desappear is at a quiet table with Emma Roides.

Over at the Fleur de Lys, former Minister of State Pierre le Sang hosts the man who didn't get his job, Sebastian de la Creme, along with their respective partners, Guinevere d'Arthur and Maggie Nifisent. A lot of other members are in the club to start their month with their ladies. Chopine Camus attends with Sheila Kiwi. Etienne Brule brings Ella Fant. Frances Forrin accompanies Leonard de Hofstadt. Pierre Cardigan escorts Edna Bucquette and Uther Xavier Beauregard has Henrietta Carrotte on his arm. Etienne provides some amusement by hitting the gaming tables and placing some substantial bets, as usual. The house is rolling high, however, and Etienne cuts his first three

used to do this was sending letters containing secret instructions to her son, letters which you cannot produce in Court. Let us assume for the purposes of argument that what you say is true. Should not the blame then fall on her son, Earl Duncan d’Eauneurts, rather than upon her? Lady d’Eauneurts is only a woman, and we are all well aware of the frailty and foolish nature of her sex. If her purported influence has done any harm to the Realm, does not the responsibility lie with her son, for choosing to follow it? No, Baron, this simply will not do! If we start punishing women for giving bad advice to their sons, won’t we soon have to be praising them when they give good advice? What’s next, women serving in His Majesty’s government? No, Baron, it simply will not do!”

The Minister takes a moment to compose himself before continuing. “As for your accusations regarding Lady d’Eauneurts’ prior – shall we say ‘activities’? – they are hardly a matter to be brought before this court since, even if they are true (which has not been established), they represent no threat to His Majesty or France. I would suggest you spend more time looking for traitors here in France and less time worrying about crimes that might or might not have been committed elsewhere. Case dismissed!”

There is cheering from the public benches as the vindicated Lady d’Eauneurts embraces her son and then hurries from the building, escorted by a hand-picked squad of Musketeers under General Was Nae Me. Outside, General Me ushers Lady Isla into a carriage before mounting his horse. Both set off for the river quays, the Musketeers double-timing alongside it. A cordon of Royal Foot Guards commanded by Lt-Colonel Jean Jeanie prevents anyone from following and stops several bearded men “on suspicion of being Private Maurice d’Ancer”.

Lady Isla’s carriage and escort arrive at the quayside to find a boat laden with household goods and containing Her Ladyship’s daughter, Madelein, and personal servants. Me hands her Ladyship into the boat before stepping in himself and ordering the mooring ropes to be cast off. Pushed by the current and the ebb tide as well as its oarsmen, the boat swiftly vanishes downriver, taking the Eauneurts family out of the reach of the Commissioner.

Meanwhile, back at the virtually empty courthouse, Commissioner Gauchepied’er has taken a large hamper to the judge’s rooms to present to Pierre le Sang as “a retirement present”. Trissy is supervising the workers who are taking down the elaborate flower arrangements and curtains (and scoffing the leftover pastries).

Dunkie or Sebbby?

The big question this month is which of the two candidates will get the job of Minister of State as Pierre le Sang finally steps down. Both Duncan d’Eauneurts and Sebastian de la Creme are currently Ministers without Portfolio, so it’s only a small step up for either of them. Because of their current positions, both have the ear of the King. However Eauneurts is supported by fellow Ministers Beau

can plan your moves several turns ahead: add these pieces to match the pattern of the next card; play the coral on that card to set up the pattern on your third card and so on. I thought I was doing nicely once I’d got the hang of this: scoring three points or so each turn. Oops! Only enough to place third. Hey ho.

Reef is an entertaining game that makes a nice filler and gets a provisional 6/10 on my highly subjective scale. With the time past midnight, we summoned our pumpkins and headed for our respective hotels. This takes me to the halfway point and is where I’ll leave Spiel for the time being. There’s plenty more to come in next issue though.

Games Events

December is a bit of a desert for board game events, though there is Dragonmeet on 1st December at the Novotel in Hammersmith. While this was originally an RPG event, there’s something for all sorts of gamers these days. Find out more at www.dragonmeet.co.uk

Then the first weekend of January is winter Stabcon as usual. 4th-6th January 2019 at the Britannia Hotel in Stockport. It’s essentially an open gaming weekend. I haven’t been for a few years, but it’s always been good fun with a mixture of board games, role-playing, CCGs and more. There’s a Yahoo group, groups.yahoo.com/stabconinfo, or email bookings@stabcon.org.uk for more.

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 (next to London Bridge station). For more info, see www.pevans.co.uk/Swiggers

Games Games Games Days: from noon(-ish) on the second Saturday each month – now at the Leon in Spitalfields Market (London E1 6DW). It’s brightly lit, has big tables and they don’t mind us stopping all afternoon. Closest stations are Liverpool Street (Tube and rail) and Shoreditch High Street (Overground).

UK Games Expo: 31st May – 2nd June 2019 at the NEC (Halls 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. 24th-27th October 2019, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany or see www.merz-verlag-en.com

MidCon: early November 2019 at the Hallmark Hotel in Derby. **MidCon** is a friendly board games convention in a decent hotel. Expect mostly open gaming plus a few organised events, including a bring ’n’ buy and quiz. 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

Pevans's *Wits & Wagers*

Round 1 answers

The question is: how many siblings do Paul and Geraldine have between them?

Odds	Answer	Given by
4:1		
3:1	8	Graeme Morris
2:1	7	Brick Amundsen, Al Tabor
1:1	5	Pete Card*, Mark Cowper, Mike Dommett†, Bruno Giordan, Andrew Kendall, Pam Udowiczzenko
2:1	4	Bob Blanchett, Nik Luker, Tim Macaire
3:1	3	Alex Bardy, Jonathan Palfrey
4:1		
5:1	Less than these	

Round 1 bets

Mesdames, messieurs: faites vos jeux! Anybody and everybody can now bet on what they think is the correct answer (staking up to 10 points out of the 80 they start with), regardless of whether they gave an answer or not – nor does anybody have to bet on their own answer. Get it right and your bet pays out at the indicated odds (there's a 10-point bonus for anyone who gave the right answer).

Round 2 question

Here's the next question: how old was Pevans when he passed his driving test?

Bets on round 1 answers and answers for the round 2 question to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF, UK or TWJO@pevans.co.uk by Friday 14th December 2018

What's this all about?

This is our latest game that's open to all readers and is based on Dominic Crapuchettes's *Wits & Wagers* (published by North Star Games and used here with their permission). This is one of the very few trivia games that I give house room to because it's not just about being the biggest know-it-all.

Each round a question is posed that has a number as its answer. Players' answers are sorted and given different odds. The middle number gets odds of 1:1,

* Pete's been a gaming buddy for decades

† Mike's known me for even longer

“The punishment for these crimes must be severe to ensure the future safety of the Realm. Either it deserves the Headman's block or banishment back to Scotland/Spain where she can answer to local magistrates over the deaths of Mr McTavish/Señor Iglesias.” Having presented his case, Felix sits and awaits sentencing. Isla d'Éauneurts angrily rises to speak from dock and it is immediately apparent that the harsh treatment and cruel incarceration she has suffered have in no way dimmed her spirit, or stilled her tongue.

“Hold yer damned horses, ye pansified shirt-lifting blurt! Dae the accused nae longer have the right to speak in their ain defence since the treason court fell into yer poxy sick hands?” At a nod from the Minister of State, she continues, “This preening popinjay nancy claims tae have been unable tae confirm ma true name. Well, let me disabuse him of his lamentable ignorance. I was born Isla Graham, only daughter of William Graham of that ilk, 1st Baronet of Braco, at Braco in God's own country of Scotland in the year of our Lord 1619 – and I've ALWAYS been a lady! Ma son Duncan there will provide the court with a notarised copy of the Braco Parish register confirming the details of ma birth.

“I've nae idea who these other lassies might be, if they actually exist (of which I've grave doubts). SHE ISNAE ME. I married Chevalier Gaston d'Éauneurts at Dunblane Cathedral in January 1645 – Duncan will also provide a notarised copy o' the Cathedral's register tae confirm this.

“As to the charge of “Interfering in matters of State to the detriment of His Majesty and the people of France”, I've never interfered with Duncan's governmental responsibilities – it's nae a woman's place – and even the over-blown creampuff serving as Commissioner admits that there is nae a jot of evidence tae prove otherwise.”

As Lady d'Éauneurts sits down, her son rises to his feet once more and addresses the court. “My Lord, as she has so eloquently, if perhaps less than diplomatically, pointed out, the charges against Lady d'Éauneurts are a tissue of lies and totally without foundation. The only reason Lady Isla was charged is that she refused to become a party to the Commissioner's attempts to propagate his spiteful libels against my person (which are also a matter of record).

“I demand, for the sake of the honour of His Majesty's Courts, that the charges be dropped and the lady be released immediately. I would further suggest that considerable damages be awarded from the Commissioner's purse with respect to the vile treatment she has unjustly received at his hands. The Commissioner has cast an indelible stain upon the very Honour of France!” Composing himself, Duncan d'Éauneurts resumes, “I call for this charade to be brought to a speedy conclusion by her total exoneration – and for suitable damages to be awarded.”

Head in hands, le Sang directs his words at Felix. “Baron Gauchepied'er, you have charged the defendant with ‘Interfering in matters of State to the detriment of His Majesty and the people of France.’ The mechanism you claim the accused

horse in a certain department, I proved it, but should have been more discreet. I accept the punishment the court gives me and apologise again for my conduct.”

Minister of State le Sang has been listening impassively, but it is clear to all that he is not happy. “Baron Gauchepied’er, the purpose of this court is to address serious crimes against the state, such as treason, espionage, or malfeasance in the service of His Majesty. Yet you bring before us a case of this trivial nature? Allow me to acquaint you with this legal maxim: *de minimis non curat lex*. It translates roughly to ‘the law is not concerned with trifles’ and this is as trifling a matter as I can imagine! I don’t care what notes your predecessor left for you; the responsibility for this farce rests solely with you!”

Le Sang turns to the defendant: “Brigadier Desapear, please accept my apologies of behalf of His Majesty’s Government for wasting your time. Case dismissed!”

The Lady’s not for keeping shtum

Looking even more flustered, the Commissioner rises for his final indictment. “This last case is the most serious of the day and raises several questions about other unsolved crimes! Firstly, however, I must apologise to the Court... I am unable to confirm the real name of the woman who stands accused today.

“The earliest alias we discovered is Anna Nicole MacSmith, a domestic servant to an Edinburgh merchant, Jock McTavish, whose body was found at the bottom of a well. His estate had been plundered of its wealth and MacSmith was missing. We next hear of her in Spain, using the alias of Imelda de Marcos, where she was employed at a tavern by a wealthy Hotelier, Señor Julio Iglesias, whose body was subsequently found at the bottom of a well. His estate had been plundered of its wealth and Mademoiselle Smith was missing.

“The scene next shifts to France, where a certain Isla Robuall appears as a travelling nurse. The late Count d’Eauneurts, a bed-ridden octogenarian employed her services and became her husband. Sadly for the newly-weds, within the month tragedy was to strike.” Felix raises an eyebrow to the court, “yes, you’ve guessed it: Count d’Eauneurts’ body was found at the bottom of a well! The Defendant had become Lady d’Eauneurts with her grubby hands on his wealth.

“Now I turn directly to the charge against the Defendant. As we all know, Earl Duncan d’Eauneurts has become a prominent, if infamous and inept, member of the French Government. The missives between himself and his mother are public knowledge. Most concern mortgages, finance and securing higher government office. Unbeknownst to the public, however, were the Defendant’s secret instructions to Earl d’Eauneurts detailing what decisions he should take over government policies and syphoning off treasury monies to her personal coffers. These letters were regrettably all lost on the way to Court in a freak gust of wind that blew them all into the Seine BUT, as CPS, I can vouch for their authenticity!

those either side of it 2:1, then 3:1 and 4:1 with the final category being 5:1 that the answer is smaller than anything else.

Players now bet on one (or two, in the last round) answer, staking up to 10 each round – except the last where they can go all-in – from their funds (80 to start with). The correct answer pays out at its stated odds with a 10 bonus for those who gave the correct answer in the first place (whether or not they bet on it). After seven rounds, the player with the most money wins.

As you can see, the game has plenty of scope for tactics and the winner is not necessarily the smarty-pants.

Now, the issue with running a trivia game in this medium is that everybody has time to look up (well, Google) the answers. So the questions for this game will be trivia about yours truly. The people with an advantage here are those who’ve known me for donkey’s years (hi Mike, hi Pete), so I’ll flag their answers.

I’ll put the answers into (up to) seven bands, with the median answer at 1:1. If there are more than three answers higher than this, the remainder will be in the top 4:1 band. Anything lower than the lowest 4:1 band will go into the “smaller than anything else” 5:1 band.

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.

Our 69th *Brass* game (at brass.orderofthehammer.com) was a win for Mike Tobias. Yours truly was second, pushing Steve Jones into third by a point. Our fourth player, ‘AllanS’, came in fourth. We still need a regular fourth: interested?

Game 17 of *Through the Ages: a New Story of Civilization* (at boardgaming-online.com) has just ended in a stonking win for Mark Cowper. We’re starting game 18, but I’ve got a couple of people interested in a pacifist (no War or Aggression cards) game – want to join us?

Mike Reeves took our most recent game of *Pax Porfiriana* (at yucata.de). I’m about to set up a new game – want to join us?

Al Tabor is interested in playing *Keyflower* (at BoardGameArena.com), but we need another player or two. Let me have your ID and I’ll invite you into a game.

We’re down to three players for *Agricola* (at www.BoiteAJeux.net), so there’s room for at least one more. Let me know if that’s you.

The latest arrival at BoardGameArena.com is *Rajas of the Ganges*, a dice- and worker-placement game that I thoroughly enjoy. Who’d like to give it a go? Drop me a line and I’ll set up a game.

Watercress (*Railway Rivals* game 13 - RR2344LH)

Turn 7

This turn's races

Race results					Scores					
					BASH	MDCR	SLOUGH	TIS	GREAT	SWIFT
1	11	Brighton	25	Havant/ Cosham				10-8		20+8
2	15	Pulborough /Cranleigh	44	Whitchurch/ Romsey	20			10		
3	26	Hayling/ Gosport	62	London		+5	10-1	0-2		20-2
4	S2	WEST	53	Guildford/ Aldershot	20		0-7	0	10+7	
5	33	Fareham/ Eastleigh	41	Reading	20	0-1	10	+1		
6	61	London	54	Farnborough /Farnham	20+4	10		0-2		0-2
7	32	Southamp- ton	52	Windsor/ Maidenhead	0		20		10	
TOTAL					84	14	32	9	27	44

JR = Joint Run; ERP = Exchange of Running Powers

Builds and points

BASINGSTOKE ASSOCIATED STEEL HIGHWAY (BASH), Bob Blanchett – Black

Builds: None

Points: 22.5 +3 +84 = **109.5**

MISSED, DELAYED AND CANCELLED RAILS (MDCR), Mike Dyer – Blue

Builds: (L8) – M8) – N7 – N6 (cost 5, 1 to BASH, 1 to SLOUGH)

(G8) – Fareham (cost 1)

Points: 74.5 -8 +14 = **80.5**

SLOW LOCOMOTIVES ONLY USED GENTLY ON HILLS

(SLOUGH), Brad Martin – Orange

Builds: (Three Bridges) – J28 –

Haywards Heath (cost 12)

Points: 67 -12 +32 +1 = **88**

TIGER IN SMOKE (TIS), Jonathan Palfrey – Green

Builds: (E18) – D18 (cost 1, 1 to SWIFT)

(E24) – D23 (cost 1, 1 to SWIFT)

(F62) – E63 (cost 1, 1 to SWIFT)

(M14) – N13 – Bordon (cost 6)

Points: 84.5 -12 +9 +5 = **86.5**

hand, I would not put it past our enemies to put forth a false story to sabotage the career of a young officer serving our glorious king and realm rather than the corrupt Hapsburg dynasty. Who knows, this may even be a deliberate attempt to distract us from a genuine spy.”

The Minister nods to himself, as if he has come to a decision. “Since only you know the truth of this matter, Captain von Bismarch, I shall let your actions and Providence decide your fate. I sentence you to one year’s service on the Frontier. If you are innocent, I pray God to protect you. If you are indeed a spy, then I hope that you meet a quick end from a musket ball or the point of a sword.” He then addresses Baron Gauchepied’er: “I’m sure you will be keeping an eye on the good captain, but I caution you that any further charges against him will need to be supported by real proof, not mere conjecture.” He gives the Baron a hard stare: “Otherwise, it could well be concluded that you are not serving His Majesty to the best of your ability which, as we both know, is tantamount to treason.”

Trial the second

Once Bismarch has been led away and his place taken by Brigadier-General Charles Louis Desapear, CPS Felix fishes out his first set of papers and starts again. “I must begin by apologising to the Court and to the Defendant over his appearance here today. As many people will have noted, the previous Commissioner, the disgraced Dunkie d’Eauneurts, recently wrote to me: ‘to let you know that I have given instructions that details of ongoing investigations carried out from my office at Châtelet be made available to you.’

“Well it was amongst those ‘investigation’ papers that I found some scrappy notes making reference to Bdr-General Desapear. I believe the situation arose out of information that the Defendant, whilst enjoying some jocular tomfoolery with his comrades, flashed his ... ooh, how shall I say this? ... ‘manhood’ at his club. Such was the impressive nature of this that Dunkie, who, as we all know, suffers from ‘Little Man’s Syndrome’, became incensed at learning here was another who put him to shame, and spitefully ordered his arrest. In the circumstances all the Prosecution seeks is a token fine of 1 crown.”

Before Desapear can respond, he is hushed by Earl d’Eauneurts, who speaks in his defence. “Of Brigadier Charles Louis Desapear’s alleged conduct unbecoming I know nothing. I can categorically state that no evidence came to light whilst I served as Commissioner and Brigadier Desapear was **never** the subject of any investigation. This charge should be treated with the contempt it deserves.”

Desapear looks baffled. Standing in turn, he throws himself on the court’s mercy. “I apologise for my conduct unbecoming that of an officer. I must admit that, having done yet another round of early morning appointments with other officers, I was in need of a drink. Unfortunately, I may have had one too many and, when asked if the rumours were true if there was a similarity between myself and my

Upon the Minister taking his seat, the CPS rises, respectfully bows and turns to address the audience. "The first case before us is that of Brigadier-General Desappear..." He is interrupted by the banging of a gavel behind him. "No!" exclaims the Minister of State. "The first case today shall be that of Captain Frederick von Bismarch, since it is the most grave offence. Make it so."

Even the copious rouge on Felix's cheeks does not hide his face turning bright red as he shuffles awkwardly through his papers. This is not helped by Trissy intruding a paw and knocking some onto the floor. When he stands again, Felix's wig is askew, a comical note at odds with the serious mien he now adopts.

"Of course, my Lord. Ahem, the **first** case brings before the Court Captain von Bismarch of the King's Musketeers. This individual is a relative newcomer to Paris and, prior to his arrival, I can reveal that he was a Corporal in the Army of the Holy Roman Emperor, Leopold. Apparently von Bismarch was caught red-handed embezzling both pay and rations. Threatened with imprisonment or worse, the Defendant sought a 'plea deal' and was recruited to spy upon His Majesty's Army and the French Government. In proof I have this statement from a Sergeant of von Bismarch's former regiment," Gauchepied'er waves the signed document, "which states that he was directed to 'infiltrate the King's Musketeers since this was led by an incompetent Officer'.

"There can be no leniency in such cases. Either he loses his head or, at the very least, is sent to a Frontier Regiment to prove the innocence that he is likely to plead! Should he prove a better soldier in the French Army only time will tell..."

As Commissioner Gauchepied'er takes his seat, Earl d'Euaneurts casts a contemptuous look at him and rises to defend his regimental subordinate. "I can say with absolute certainty that the charges levelled against Captain Frederick von Bismarch are bogus. Captain Bismarch comes from a noble Alsatian family of unquestionable loyalty to His Majesty.

"It is a truism that the best lies are those clothed in truth and such, I believe, is the case here. Captain von Bismarch journeyed to Paris to impart this information: a certain Captain Cornelius von Linke-Fußzeile, whilst serving as Regimental Adjutant in one of the Holy Roman Emperor's regiments, was found to be pilfering from the pay chest and selling off rations. The monies were to purchase elaborate female outfits for himself and another ... gentleman of questionable habits, nicknamed 'Trixie'. Von Linke-Fußzeile and Trixie simply disappeared, it being rumoured that they had agreed to exile in France where Von Linke-Fußzeile would serve as a spy. "It is not difficult to ascertain the inspiration for the tissue of lies levelled at Captain von Bismarch today."

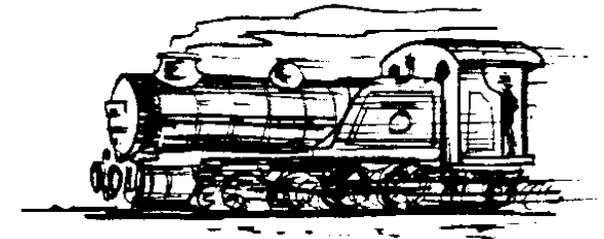
Minister of State le Sang has been listening attentively to both. "At last," he begins, "you have brought a case before this court which actually merits my attention, Baron Gauchepied'er. Your allegations against Captain von Bismarch are serious and seem to have at least some supporting evidence. On the other

GRAND RAIL EAST ATLANTIC TRUNKLINE (GREAT), Rob Pinkerton - Red
Builds: (H27) - Haywards Heath (cost 1, 2 to SWIFT)
 (E45) - Whitchurch (cost 1, 2 to BASH)
 (G24) - F23 (cost 1, 5 to TIS)
Points: -50.5 -12 +27 -5 = -40.5

SLOW WAGON IN FAST TRAFFIC (SWIFT), Gerald Udowiczenko - Yellow
Builds: (F27) - E28 - Brighton (cost 4)
Points: 83.5 -4 +44 +5 = 128.5

GM Notes

All companies may carry out joint runs, and exchange of running powers with other companies should they wish, though it pays to start negotiations for these soon after the adjudication is sent out.



Never had a minus score before. 10% interest added each turn.

Players can enter up to five races (plus any held over from a previous turn).

After the races, you may build up to 10 build points. **Remember: junctions and parallel builds are deducted from these points.**

Next turn's races

Race	From	To
8	13 Shoreham/Haywards Heath	55 Wokingham/Basingstoke
9	66 London	16 Three Bridges/Dorking
10	21 Worthing/Littlehampton	53 Guildford/Aldershot
11	24 Selsey/Bognor Regis	45 Winchester/Stockbridge
12	36 Portsmouth	64 London
13	31 Southampton	46 Alton/Bordon
14	61 London	54 SEASIDE

Orders to Mike Dommett, 12 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ or by e-mail to mike_dommett@yahoo.co.uk by Friday, 7th December 2018

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Voyager (*Star Trader* game 9)

Turn 10

“We’ve got Spice...”

“Yes, Sir.” The customs official yawned. The SMF’s officers looked at each other.

“To sell, lots of Spice...”

“Not much call for it round here, sir.”

“And what is there a call for round here?”

“Ilchester, sir.”

The officers looked at each other again. Le Fromage Gros was not going to be happy.

At Gamma Leporis INTERSIDEREAL NOVICES bought 16 Alloys for 5 HTs each – gaining a Dealership – and loaded them onto their two newly refurbished fire sale ships

At Epsilon Eridani RED STAR LINES sold 4 Liquor for 12 HTs each while OXFORDS NOT BROGUES bought 2 units for 13 HTs apiece. OXFORDS sold 6 Monopoles for 20 HTs each and were made Dealers. TRANSURANIC TRADING sold 6 units at the same price using Percent. SWISS MERCENARY FLEET bid 8

following cut before striking back with a hefty slash. This wound is plenty as far as Acier’s concerned and he concedes at once.

Earl Duncan d’Eauneurts doesn’t really expect Baron Felix Anton Gauchepied’er to turn up for their swordfight and he’s not wrong. However, his second adversary is Sir Alan de Frocked and who should be seconding him? Yes, Gauchepied’er in all ‘her’ finery. And Sir Leonard de Hofstadt. Accompanying Eauneurts are Florent Sans de Machine and Count Was Nae Me.

As we’re all aware, Eauneurts is a big fellow (“And it’s all in proportion,” he enlightens Gauchepied’er), while Frocked is, frankly, a bit weedy. And not too expert with his rapier. Particularly when facing Eauneurts’ sabre. However, he tries a blitz attack, pinking Eauneurts with a (furious) lunge. This helps Eauneurts to keep his mind on the man holding the sword and he responds with a slash. Frocked surrenders. “See you in court,” say Gauchepied’er and Eauneurts, simultaneously.

This brings us to Georges Hommemince, a man even slighter than Frocked, who is nonetheless taking on Robert d’Lancier, who’d make two, no, three of him. Hommemince and his rapier have the support of Arthur ‘Dekka’ Dent, which is probably a good thing. (“Don’t panic,” mutters Dent as he pushes his man towards the foe.) Lancier has a cutlass. He is, after all, commander of the Royal Marines. However, once “En Garde!” has been called, he just prods Hommemince in the chest with the blunt tip of his blade by lunging. Hommemince checks with Dent: “Does that count as a hit?” Dent concurs and Hommemince quickly surrenders before Lancier can do any real damage.

Refurbished courtroom

Much activity by tradesmen is evident prior to the commencement of the day’s official business. Groups of florists can be seen, along with fabric merchants and caterers, entering and leaving the Court building.

As everybody takes their seats, the lavish new decor of the courtroom raises a few gasps of surprise and many a comment. Copious flowers adorn the room, trays of pastries are available for the public and bright curtains give the whole place a jolly warmth. The two most prominent sights are a startling pink, white-fur lined seat and its occupant. Sporting a gold and silver dress, resplendent blonde wig and rouged face, here sits none other than Commissioner of Public Safety Felix Anton Gauchepied’er. Sat to his left on a less gaudy, but cushioned, orange chair is another bewigged and bearded man in a yellow dress.

As he enters to take the less decorative judge’s seat, it’s clear to all that the Minister of State, Viscount Pierre le Sang, would much prefer to be somewhere else, rather than sitting in judgement. Only His Majesty’s direct order to “take care of these things before you go, there’s a good fellow” could have kept him from letting the new Minister of State decide these cases.

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

Orders for January 1671 to Pevans at 180 Aysham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF, UK or lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk by Friday 14th December 2018



December 1670 (322)

The season of Advent opens with the customary display of duelling expertise (or lack thereof). First of the illustrious to brave the icy cobbles are Marquis Beau Reese Jean Seine and Marquis Sebastian de la Creme. They have a little disagreement over Mille Maggie Nifisent to settle. Seine brings his regimental rapier and his regimental CO, Amant d'Au. Creme has his sabre and retiring Minister of State, Pierre le Sang. He's also wearing some bandages, which suggests he doesn't have the advantage over Seine that his size would imply.

Creme starts the duel with a furious lunge. This catches Seine by surprise – well, Creme is the one using a sabre – and draws the first blood. Albeit not very much blood. Seine responds with a (furious) slash. Remember, he's using a rapier, so that's equally ineffective. As both are making furious attacks, their cuts happen at the same time and the sabre does much more damage. The two pause to recover, then both slash. Again, the sabre does more harm and Seine surrenders. However, Creme has launched into another furious lunge and the lunge strikes home even as Seine utters the words. Luckily, the blow is not fatal, just, and Au is quick to step in and ensure nothing more happens.

Next we have Count Frele d'Acier versus Greg de Bécqueur. Both are cavalry officers, so each has his sabre – though Bécqueur is noticeably less proficient with his blade. Marquis Etienne Brule seconds Acier, who is out-bulked by his opponent and carrying an old injury. Despite his lack of expertise, Bécqueur proves the cannier duellist. He blocks Acier's initial slash and dodges the

HTs to sell Petroleum, RED STAR LINES bid 7, but it was FATCAT's bid of 5 HTs that sold: 13 units to gain a Contractorship.

FATCAT were selling Petroleum at Delta Pavonis, clearing 5 at a price of 3 HTs. TRANSURANIC then bought 2 for 5 HTs each. RED STAR LINES got rid of 5 Isotopes on Contract.

Tau Ceti saw RED STAR LINES selling 6 Petroleum for 6 HTs each, this time without competition, and gaining a Dealership. Meanwhile INTERSTELLAR NOVICES bought 5 Isotopes on Contract.

Prices rose at Mu Herculis with the news and, apart from SWISS MERCENARY FLEET's attempt to sell Spice ("Not much call for it round here, sir"), RED STAR LINES sold 13 Isotopes for 11 HTs each and gained a Dealer's position. SOLAR SPICE & LIQUORS sold 10 Liquors for 17 HTs apiece and took a Dealer's position. This undercut OXFORDS NOT BROGUES's attempt to sell at 20 HTs. SOLAR SPICE & LIQUORS also sold 8 Monopoles for 17 HTs each and gained the Market Manager's Position.

No one was selling at Beta Hydri. However, Alpha Centauri saw SOLAR SPICE & LIQUORS sell 5 Spice on Contract and TRANSURANIC TRADING buy 6 Liquors for 13 HTs each.

At Sigma Draconis INTERSIDEREAL NOVICES bought 10 Alloys for 6 HTs each. FATCAT bought 22 Isotopes for 8 HTs apiece to drive the price up and gained a Market Position. TRANSURANIC TRADING then bought 5 units on contract at a rather higher price than they might have liked. COSTA NOSTRA's bid of 2 and INTERSIDEREAL's bid of 7 to buy were both shut out. RED STAR LINES sold a Monopole for 17 HTs, but TRANSURANIC failed to buy, bidding at 16 HTs. FATCAT were selling Petroleum, getting rid of 14 units for 4 HTs each and getting a Dealer's post. This undercut RED STAR (bidding 6 HTs), TRANSURANIC (8 HTs) and INTERSIDEREAL (also 8). Finally, TRANSURANIC TRADING bought 6 Spice for 10 HTs each and SOLAR SPICE sold 5 on Contracts.

COSTA NOSTRA PIZZA INC embarked passengers for Gamma Leporis and Sigma Draconis and then bought 2 Warehouses at Gamma Leporis. The Petroleum factories at Delta Pavonis were sold and 11 Alloy Factories bought at Gamma Leporis. At this point they ran out of money.

OXFORDS NOT BROGUES bought an additional Cargo pod for the Bodkin.

RED STAR LINES visited the Federation Bankers and repaid their loan on time, while continuing to receive their Factory production.

FATCAT sold their Factories at Sigma Draconis at a profit and bought 17 Alloy Factories and one Warehouse at Gamma Leporis, while loading Passengers for Mu Herculis.

INTERSIDEREAL NOVICES took OP 10, buying all the slaves they could fit into their pods, while willing self-loading freight were embarked for Alpha Centauri.

TRANSURANIC TRADING bought a Monopole Factory at Mu Herculis and a Liquor Factory at Alpha Centauri.

SOLAR SPICE & LIQUORS delivered OP 9, took the money and then sold all of their Monopole Factories at Mu Herculis. This sent them off to the Federation Bankers to repay their loan. Their next action was to sell the Java for 90% of its list price and then the Genever and Jakarta for 110% of list. To this they added the sale of all their Warehouses, taking the Corporation to well over 2100 HTs and a remarkably early win.

Corporation Table

Corporation letter and name	Connections Bus/Crim/Pol	Init'v Bid	Turn order	Cash	Rep	Player
A Costra Nostra Pizza Inc	10 0 2	6	5th	81	37	Mark Cowper
B Oxfords not Brogues	8 0 7	0	8th	337	40	Mike Clibborn-Dyer
C FATCAT	9 0 7	12	1st	810	38	Jerry Elsmore
D Solar Spice & Liquors	10 0 6	0+4	2nd	2152	40	Paul Evans
E Swiss Mercenary Fleet	8 0 5	0	7th	130	40	Martin Jennings
F Smitten Kitten	4 0 7	N		66	22	
G Intersideréal Novices	10 7 5	0	6th	237	40	Mateusz Ochman
H Red Star Lines	10 7 3	5	3rd	132	40	Przemek Orwat
J Transuranic Trading	10 0 7	0	4th	341	40	Bob Parkins

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

News

EV 20 (Shortage of Monopoles) took place this turn.

INTERSIDEREAL NOVICES took OP 10.

There was one new News chit this turn. The current list (new chits in **bold**) is:

Turn 11 C3

GM Notes

An early victory in this game. I will start another one but, as I'm moving

Turn 12 B6
Turn 13 B10
Turn 14 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.)

house, probably not in the next issue. I'd appreciate Game End Statements

for the next issue, including how Pevans was lucky and what went right and wrong, And I'd also like

everyone to say "yes, we'll play in the next game", as well as any people who want to try the game.

Game End Statements to Mike Dommett, 112 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ or by e-mail to mike_dommett@yahoo.co.uk by Friday, 7th December 2018

