

That would be enough

This has been issue 191 of *To Win Just Once*, published 31st January 2019. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2019

Deadlines

Orders for Watercress to Mike by 15th February, 2019.

Orders for *LPBS* and *Wits & Wagers*, plus any other contributions to Pevans by 22nd February.

(Next deadlines are: 22nd/29th March, 26th April/3rd May, 31st May/7th June)

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, Jonathan Palfrey and Christian Bien are up for the next one, any more? (Working copy and rules provided).

Star Trader – Time for a new game! Anthony Gilbert, Przemek Orwat and Pevans are already waiting and there's room for plenty more. Rules provided.

Online games

Agricola (at www.boiteajeux.net): Pevans, Martin Abrahams, Mark Cowper +1?

Brass (at brass.orderofthehammer.com): Pevans, Steve Jones, Mike Tobias +1?

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

Keyflower (at www.boardgamearena.com): Pevans, Brad Martin, Al Tabor +1?

Pax Porfiriana (at www.yucata.de):

Rajas of the Ganges (at www.yucata.de): Pevans

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

Credits

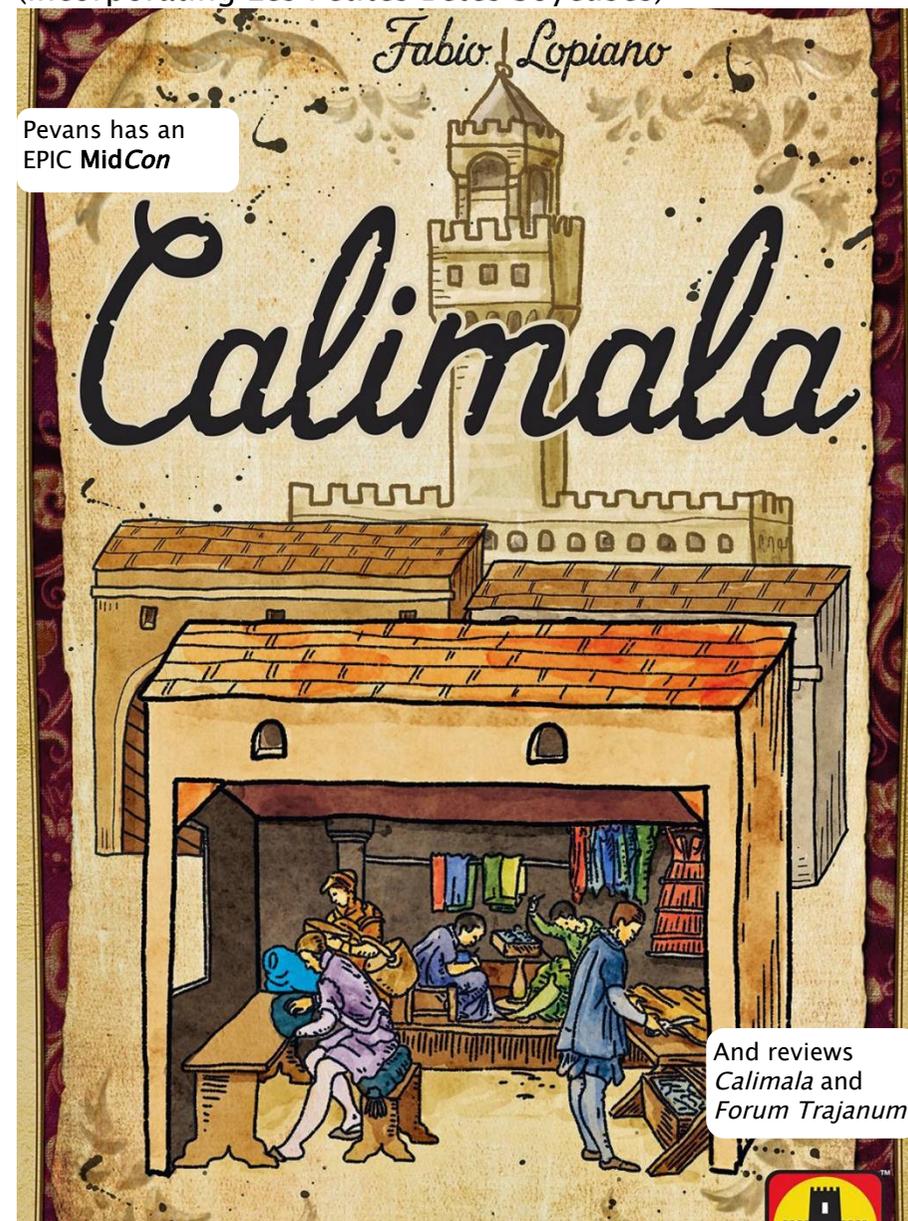
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To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)



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(LPBS 324: February 1671)

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ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank,	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player	
FSdM	Florent Sans de Machine	10	27	Comfy	Major	KM	3	Charlotte	Hunt	4	Nik Luker	
RdL	Robert d'Lancier	10	26	OK	Colonel	RM/2nd Div	7	Bess	Hunt	4	Steven Malecek	
ADD	Arthur 'Dekka' Dent	10	F	OK	Colonel	PLLD/1st Army	8		Hunt	1	Graeme Morris	
CK	Sir Chris Knight	10	F	OK	Lt.Colonel	CPC	10		BG	2	Paul Wilson	
GH	Georges Hommemine	10	F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	PLLD	6		Hunt	1	Cameron Wood	
X3	9-	2	Poor				6			4	Charles Popp	
GdB	Greg de Becqueur	9	19	Poor	Captain	GDM/ GDMD Regt.	Adjnt.	6	Jenny	Hunt	5	Anthony Gilbert
PdU	Paul d'Uderjuan	9	F	Comfy	Captain	DG	3		BG	3	Bruno Giordan	
XM	Xavier Money	8	13	Comfy	B.Bdr-General	GDM	5		BG	3	Pam Udowiczenko	
RS	Richard Shaw	8	RIP								Dave Marsden	
GD	Georges Dueppre	8+	25	Poor	Colonel	PM	6			3	Mark Nightingale	
BS	Balzac Slapdash	7	11	Comfy			9	Mary	BG	4	Matthew Wale	
PDG	Padamus Da Grim	7	F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	GDM	8		F&P	2	Graeme Wilson	
X1		5	0	OK			5			2	Gerald Udowiczenko	
ASS	Alain SansSous	5	RIP								Olaf Schmidt	
AF	Augustin Fourier	5	F	OK	Captain	GDM	2		RP	3	Brick Amundsen	
HDE	Hercule D'Engin	4	4	OK			2			2	Gerry Sutcliffe	
ARGH	Antoine Robert G Herville	4	3	Poor	Captain	PM	5			2	Bob Blanchett	
BeV	Ben e'Volence	4+	18	Poor			5	Belle	RP	3	Ash Casey	
HJ	Hugh Jass	3+	18	Poor			3	Marie		3	Ray Vahey	
BO	Boul Ogne	2-	0	OK			2			4	Dean Talbot	

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	78	Rich	Fld Marshal/Min w/o Port	16	Henrietta	Flr	4	Pete Card
PLS	Viscount Pierre le Sang	25	56	Fthy	General/2nd Army Commndr	7	Guinevere	Flr	4	Bill Howell
EB	Marquis Etienne Brule	25	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General DG/Chancellor	3		Flr	4	James McReynolds
AdA	Count Amant d'Au	25+94	Rich	B.Bdr-General	RFG/Min w/o Port	11		Flr	5	David Brister
PC	Count Pierre Cardigan	24	54	Rich	General/Min w/o Port	9		Flr	5	Matt Shepherd
DdE	Viscount Duncan d'Eauneurts	24	44	Rich	B.Bdr-General KM/State Min.	8		Flr	5	Paul Lydiate
FdA	Count Frele d'Acier	24	F	Comfy	Colonel ALC/Min w/o Port	18		Flr	3	Peter Farrell
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	23	45	Fthy	B.General/1st Army Commndr	24		Flr	6	Ben Brown
SdIC	Marquis Sebastian de la Creme	23	F	Comfy	General/Min w/o Port	4		Flr	5	Alan Percival
BRJS	Marquis Beau Reese Jean Seine	22+68	Withy	Major RFG/Min w/o Port		4		Flr	3	Bill Hay
JJ	Count Jean Jeanie	21+64	Rich	Lt.Colonel	RFG	25	Jacky	Flr	3	Andrew Kendall
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
JE	Viscount Jean Ettonique	17	F	Rich	Lt.Colonel DG/Min w/o Port	16		Both	5	Tony Hinton-West
GM	Sir Gaz Moutarde	16	31	Withy	Bdr-General	4		Both	2	Mike Clibborn-Dyer
AdF	Sir Alan de Frocked	16	F	Withy	B.Bdr-General CG/1st Army QMG	3		Both	2	Charles Burrows
Jdl	Sir Jean d'Ice	15	27	Comfy	Lt.Colonel CG/FMshl's Aide	6		Both	3	Tym Norris
SdM	Sir Swindelle d'Masses	15	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General QOC/Min w/o Port	6		Both	4	Craig Pearson
FAG	Baron Felix A Gauchepied'er	14	39	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 Desappear	13	19	Withy	Bdr-General	3		Both	4	Martin Jennings
HD	Baron Henri Dubois	13	F	Comfy	Major DG	3		Both	3	Wayne Little
BdLG	Bastian de LaGarde	13+45	OK	Major RFG/LtGen's Aide	(1st Div)	4	Cath	Both	1	Jerry Spencer
LA	Luc Azzat	12	35	OK	Captain RFG/Capt.K's Esc	3		Both	2	Tim Macaire
PUFF	Sir Percy Urbain Fanci-Free	11	F	OK	Major DG	6		Hunt	2	Mark Cowper

Chatter

One of my indulgences over Christmas was to get in a "Christmas Selection" case of beer (12 bottles). As expected they were all strong, dark beers, several porters amongst them, and they did me very nicely over the holiday season. All were perfectly drinkable and a few of them stood out.

Saltaire is a brewery I know as the producers of Triple Chocoholic. That wasn't in the case, but their White Christmas beer was (4.8% alcohol-by-volume). This was the only pale beer in my selection. It was tangy, hoppy and refreshing. Apparently orange and coriander are added to the brew, but I didn't notice them.



Brewdolph Winter Warmer (5% abv) from the Great Orme Brewery was fairly typical of what was in the case. First off, it had a seasonal pun as a name. It's a nice dark, malty beer with a good fruity taste and lingering aftertaste. It definitely warmed me up.

Hook Norton's Twelve Days (5.5%) was a decent porter. A dark reddish brown in colour with a slight smokiness on the nose, it tasted rich and smoky.



However, the absolute highlight was Bah Humbug (5%) from the Wychwood Brewery. A dark amber, this one, it had a malty nose with something spicy lurking. Taking a swig I immediately thought toffee! Like a big mouthful of soft, vanilla-ish toffee. Absolutely gorgeous, though I'm not sure I could drink it in any quantity. Luckily (?) I only had the one bottle.

The other thing I noticed that several of the stronger beers (the 6% ones) did a good job of hiding their strength. Sam Smith's Winter Welcome Ale, for example, was very quaffable with plenty of hops. But at 6% you'd quickly notice its effects.

My plan for next year is to select my own beers rather than relying on somebody else's choice. And probably get a couple of bottles of each. Bah Humbug will definitely be on the list.

UK Games 'Zine Poll

I keep forgetting to report the results of this, despite pollster Alex Richardson publishing them at the end of November. Alex reports that 31 people voted, expressing their judgement on 17 'zines. Alex scored the votes in two different ways, combining them to give the final table.

And the winner is... *Variable Pig*. I thought this had stopped years ago, but it's still going strong and can be found at variablepig.org - the latest issue is 171, dated 19th January 2019. Congratulations to editor Jim Reader, if I remember the name correctly (checking the latest issue, there are innumerable games - from postal gaming classics to adaptations of more recent board games - but no mention of who produces the 'zine).

The highest scoring 'zine that I see was Colin Bruce's *Fury of the Northmen* at 5th and *TWJO* placed 13th. Oh dear. More voting next time, please!

New Star Trader game

The game end statements for Voyager are in this issue (see page 26), so it's time to think about the next game. If you're interested in playing and not already on the waiting list (see the back page), let Pevans or Mike know. Mike's thinking about making this a Corporation game - any comments?

Letters

Alex Bardy had extensive comments on my report from Spiel in the last couple of issues. Let me pick out a few highlights.

Pandoria IS a game I feel qualified to comment upon, because I have a copy - I had read a Designer Diary on BGG and knew this to be the kind of game I like: clever mechanics, simple gameplay, plenty of strategic possibilities, and not entirely beholden to the whims and randomness found in many other games today. At time of writing, I've only played *Pandoria* a couple of times, but already it's a bit of a fave for me... capturing large bonuses for large areas becomes so much harder when everyone else is playing cut-throat politics and slicing up your potential profits!

I'm glad to hear positive reports of *Pandoria*, as I've only seen negative stuff so far - people frustrated by the game as they found play counter-intuitive.

I think it might feel like that during the first few plays (because your meeples are only scoring when they're on the BORDER of an enclosed area, and are only returned to you (without scoring) if they're INSIDE the area just 'closed off'. If you've played *Architects of the West Kingdom* you'll probably be a bit more familiar with the concept of "your workers don't come back to you unless something happens to make them do so". it's only counter-intuitive because people probably expect to score first before having their workers returned to them... lol.

Definitely one to try as I like most of Bernd Eisenstein's games - though this one's co-designed with Jeffrey Allers. Changing subject to reading matter, Charles Burrows chips in.

Femmes Fatales

No	Name	SL	Attr	Last
64	Edna Bucquette	18	W	
3	Kathy Pacific	17	B	
54	Madeline de Proust	17		
35	Katy Did	16	I	
42	Maggie Nifisent	16	B	
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	
62	Alison Wunderlandt	14		
11	Laura de Land	13		
16	Ophelia Derrière	13		
26	Ella Fant	13	B	
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		
31	Bess Ottede	12	I/W	RdL
1	Sue Briquet	11	B	
4	Anne Tique	11	W	
9	Deb Onairre	11	I	
40	Sheila Kiwi	11		CC
63	Carole Singeurs	11		
20	Emma Roides	10	I	
33	Anna Rexique	10	I	
38	Pet Ulante	10	W	
43	Di Lemmere	10	I	
53	Angelina de Griz	10	B	
56	Ingrid la Suède	10		
6	Viv Ayschus	9		
57	Ava Crisp	9	I	
59	May Banquot l'Idée	9		
2	Betty Kant	8	I	
19	Jenny Russe	8	W	GdB
32	Sal Munella	8	W	
41	Marie Antoinette	8	B/I	HJ
49	Mary Huana	8	B/I/W	BS
34	Freda de Ath	7	W	
39	Thomasina Tancenjin	7	I	
50	Ulla Leight	7	I	
5	Belle Epoque	6	B/I	BeV
13	Josephine Buonoparte	6	I/W	
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	CK	XM	CD	ADD	N4					
Maj 1	BRJS	N2+	N1	HD	N3+	N2	N2+	N3	N2	N1+	N3	N4	N2	N6			
Maj 2	BdLG	FAG	N3	PUFF	N1	N6	N6	N1	AF	N4	N5	N4	N4	N1	N6	N2+	
Capt 1	LA	N3	N3	N3	N1	N6	N6	N1	N6	N4	N1	N5	N6	N1	N6		
Capt 2	N6	N5	N1	N2	N4	N4	N2	N2	N6	N2	N3	N3	N3	N5	N6	N2	
Capt 3	N3	N5	N6*	N2*	N6	N4	N6	N2*	GdB*	N6*	N4*	N6	N3*	N5	N1	N1	
Capt 4	N2*	N1		PdU	N3*	N4	N2	N2	N2	ARGH	N6	N3*	N3*	N6*	N5*	N2*	
Capt 5																	
Capt 6																	

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/__
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	F4	(Siege for Mar–May) RNHB
Colonel	N4	N6	N3	N6	N7
Attached					
Also at the Front					

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

Battle Results

Cardinal's Guard: 5	Frontier regiment 1: 2
Dragoon Guards: 3	Frontier regiment 2: 2
Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers: 1	Frontier regiment 3: 3
Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons: 4	Frontier regiment 4: 6
	RNHB regiment: 1

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 __	
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.

I read your thoughts on Stieg Larsson's trilogy with interest as I have just re-read them after many years. The style is interesting and for me Blomkvist's character is never fully developed. For example, I never really got the idea why he was a hit with women, other than the fact that he was famous (more relevant in the 2nd and 3rd books). I agree they are page turners and enjoyable. The films were described as awful, though, so be prepared.

Chris Baylis has seen the films.

I have read the trilogy at least three times, as well as the 2 sequels by David Lagercrantz (they're okay but not quite up to Larssen's standard) and I have seen the film with Daniel Craig and the latest movie with Claire Foy as Lisbet, both were okay but not brilliant.

My suggestion to you is that you watch the original 3 movies (which were six 90-minute TV shows in Sweden) that have been dubbed (very well) into English. Michael Nyqvist plays Mikael Blomkvist and Noomi Rapace is Lisbet Salander. They cover all three books extremely well and are much better at telling the story. The Daniel Craig version just doesn't cut it if you truly like the books.

Thank you for that recommendation, Chris.

EPIC MidCon!

Pevans reports from the Derby convention

It may have been all the way back at the start of November (a week earlier than usual), but I'm only just getting round to reporting on the 2018 **MidCon**. Not least because it took place just a week after Spiel and was thus an opportunity to take a closer look at some of the games launched in Essen. Which I mostly didn't.

I keep forgetting that the convention now starts on Friday morning. Geraldine and I arrived at lunchtime to find everything in full swing. We checked in, had a late lunch and I went to see what was going on. I spent a while saying hello to people, including Marianne and Mark Benson – Mark and I had a date for *Commands & Colors: Napoleonics* on Saturday, so we needed to finalise details.

They were looking for a filler before they went for an early dinner and were happy to try *City Explorer: Tainan*, a little card game that the nice guys at Moaideas Design (www.wix.moaideas.net) had thrust on me at Spiel. Designed by Yuo, I suspect this is intended to promote tourism – there's an earlier title, *City Explorer: Kyoto*, which is essentially the same game with different artwork.

The game is basically a deck of cards – robust cardstock with a linen effect feel. These depict the sights of Tainan which, according to Wikipedia, is the oldest city on the island of Taiwan. Some of the pictures are enhanced with cartoon characters enjoying their sightseeing. However, for the game the important bits



The card array at an early stage of our three-player game of *City Explorer: Tainan*

are the suit (shown by a colour and icon and the number of cards in the suit) and type (Popular, Exotic and Iconic) of the card.

Depending on how many are playing, a number of cards are laid out face-down in a grid and the card at the left end of each row is turned up. Players then choose another card each to turn up. At the start of each round, two more cards will be turned up and one of the ways the game ends is when all cards are face-up. This is something to keep an eye on as players need to take their scoring opportunity before this happens.

In their turn, players take a look at any face-down card and then move a **column** up or down, shifting the displaced card to the other end of the column. Alternatively, they may take a **row** of cards, which they will score at the end of the game. It seems the idea is to manipulate the cards to get a high-scoring row. The game also ends once all players have taken a row – and you must take a row if you're the only player left.

Thus, the game is all about the scoring. First off, players score according to who has the most in each suit. The more cards in the suit (5-9), the more points it's worth – ties are broken by whoever holds the Iconic card in that suit, so that's a particularly useful card to have. Players then get a point for each Popular card they hold, five points for each set of three Exotic locations and a magnificent nine for having cards in all suits.

Trials

Uther Xavier-Beauregard will be on trial at the start of March (after duels have been fought, but before anything else happens) on charges of Murder and being the second Horseman of the Apocalypse. CPS Felix Anton Gauchepied'er will prosecute and Minister of State Duncan d'Eauneurts sits in judgement. All characters are welcome to submit testimony, interventions or complete nonsense, but you should also send this to the CPS and MoS if you want it to have any effect. If convicted, UXB may appeal to the King to have his sentence commuted and any character may use influence for or against this.

New Characters

Olaf Schmidt gets the Second son of an Impoverished Gentleman: Init SL 4; Cash 40; MA 2; EC 5 (X2).

Dave Marsden gets the Orphaned First son of an Impoverished Gentleman: Init SL 5; Cash 144; MA 5; EC 4 (X4).

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

CLD (Martin Jennings) has been floated as Martin's down with flu

X1 (Gerald Udowiczenko) and XM (Pam Udowiczenko) have been floated

Notes

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

There's 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/>

Announcements

Bastian de LaGarde applies for Brigade Major of Guards Brigade

Greg de Becqueur asks NPC Regiment Adjutant of King's Musketeers to resign

Luc Azzat asks NPC Aide to Crown Prince to resign

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

Luc Azzat applies for Aide to Crown Prince

Swindelle d'Masses asks NPC Brigadier of Horse Guards Brigade to resign

Uther Xavier-Beauregard asks NPC Adjutant General to resign

Duels

Results of February's duels

There were none!

Grudges to settle next month:

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

Chris Knight (Sabre, Seconds PDG, adv.) has cause with Hugh Jass (Sabre) for pinching Marie.

Felix Anton Gauchepied'er (Dagger, 3 rests) and Florent Sans de Machine (Rapier, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

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

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.

City Explorer: Tainan is a simple little game and I now know more about the city of Tainan than I did. However, it's also a memory game, which puts me off. In our game, I blinked first, taking a row with a couple of good cards, but mainly unknowns. This left Marianne and Mark playing chicken before grabbing their own rows. Scores were close, but it was victory for Marianne. Memory games are so not my thing that I doubt I'll be playing *City Explorer: Tainan* again. If you do like this sort of thing, it makes a nice filler. It gets a provisional 4/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Marianne and Mark having departed in search of dinner, I met up with Keith Rapley, one of my regular gaming buddies, who was in search of a game. I suggested *Skull Port*, the pirate-themed dice-rolling game I picked up at Spiel '17, and Keith was happy to give it a go. We were joined by Iain Alexander and John Boocock, all of us **MidCon** veterans.

You'll find my first impressions of *Skull Port* in my Spiel '17 report (www.pevans.co.uk/Reviews/Spiel17.html) and in *TWJO* 180. To recap, players roll dice to make *Yahtzee*-style sets to add crewmen (tokens) to the various pirate ships and ports. They will also earn coins, which they can spend at the ports to adjust die rolls or use to buy cards providing bonuses or special actions (such as rolling an extra die).

It plays until everybody's placed their tokens and then everything scores, adding to player's cash: crewmen, according to ship and position; ports, according to how



A significant look from Iain as he heads for victory in *Skull Port*

much has been spent there and the value of players' tokens; bonus points from cards. Most money becomes pirate king. (And it is, it is, a glorious thing to be a pirate king!) It's a fairly light game with a big luck element, but offers some tactical decisions to make and is thoroughly enjoyable.

I made a bit of a mess refreshing myself on the rules, but we got the hang of the game and a good time was had by all – especially by Iain, who ended up winning. *Skull Port* was designed by Ivan Ferencaj and Hrvoje Kordic and is published by 4Hogs (www.4hogs.org). It gets a solid 7/10 on my highly subjective scale.

This was my cue to take Geraldine for a late dinner and then I made an early night of it – I must be getting old.

First thing on Saturday was to drop off some games at the bring 'n' buy (I drove up this year, so I was able to bring a few boxes to get rid of). This is ably organised by John Harrington and Pete Card, who did their usual efficient job. Then it was my date with Mark Benson and *Commands & Colors: Napoleonics*.

We were using the *EPIC* expansion for Richard Borg's simple wargame (published by GMT Games – www.gmtgames.com) to give us a larger battlefield than the standard game. Several other expansions were involved to provide the troops needed for our re-fighting of the Battle of Austerlitz (Napoleon's France versus Austria and Russia). We were also playing with the terrain models (cunningly sculpted to allow blocks to stand up) made by a friend of Mark's – they really added to the look of the game as I hope the photos show.

I was first surprised by the sheer number of units on the board. They were practically shoulder-to-shoulder across the battlefield at least twice on both sides. The second surprise was how close the two armies were to each other. I expect



Starting positions from the Allied side: note the two French units holding the town on the left (from this side) and the various Russian cavalry units on the right flank.

The Foot Guards think they look so fine,
All formed up for battle in line;
With their tunics of red,
One can't see if they bled,
Nor tell where they spilled last night's wine.

† Le Salame Disparu

There once was a very honest CPS walking along the street one day,
When he heard a voice saying "help me, Commissioner, help me please," the voice did say

The CPS looked round and all he could see was a tiny frog sitting on the ground.

"Was it you who spoke to me, little frog, was it you who spoke when I heard that sound?"

"Oh yes," said the frog. "Help me, Commissioner, I'm not really a frog you see."

"I'm a choir boy really, but a nasty fairy cast a wicked spell on me

And the only way that I can be saved from that evil spell," the little frog said,

"Is for someone to take me and place me down where a legal man has laid his head."

The CPS took him home and laid him on his pillow and there he lay till the break of day.

And the very next morning, a blessed miracle: the spell was broken, I'm glad to say.

And there was the choir boy in bed with Gauchpied'er and I hope you think this all makes sense,

For there, my Lord and members of the jury, rests the case for the defence.

Après le Wedlock, Frederick

Wear a bonnet, roll an egg,
Come and celebrate with Greg.

Tomorrow we shall go to mass,
But here, tonight, let's raise a glass;
Drink a toast to pagan rite,
And frolic freely all the night.

† Greg de Bécqueur

Points Arising

Next deadline is 22nd February

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

Absent friends

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

BO Boul Ogne (Dean Talbot) has NMR'd. Total now 1

HDE Hercule D'Engin (Gerry Sutcliffe) has NMR'd. Total now 1

X3 (Charles Popp) has NMR'd. Total now 1

ARGH (Bob Blanchett) has been floated while Bob's in hospital

The Ongoing Trials and Tribulations of Percy Urbain Fanci-Free

It is north toward the fields of Flanders for the Dragoon Guards as there seems to be some unrest with the locals and, heaven forbid, they have created a movement called the “Gilets Jaunes” and are threatening to block the supply of La Roi’s favourite Foie Gras and Brussels Paté. Well, that won’t do at all!! Anyway, we came across a group of them blocking a road, so we swept in, forcing most of them to flee into a ditch. On the way back, I realised my brand new hat had come adrift so I rode back to get it on my own and was immediately surrounded by an angry mob all wearing those silly bright yellow coats. I was so annoyed I let rip – did they know what they looked like, don’t they have any fashion sense, what are they thinking? Yellow is a spring/summer colour and it is fricking freezing, so it can hardly be summer? Anyway, they are only peasants and they were suitably abashed and promised to be good boys and girls, put aside their pitchforks and dress in sensible and seasonal grey-black or even burgundy (if they can afford it, which I doubt) colours. Anyway, the CO thought I was being very brave when I sauntered back (complete with my new hat) and is going to recommend me for a knighthood. What a nice man! I see a clear mission for me now to restore our family name – bring fashion to the masses. I need to start with our CPS – he is setting a very bad example.

Lord Percy Percy says, as flatulence is becoming fashionable, the new CPS is very fashionable.

Our intrepid reporter can reveal that the flowers all around the court room were bought from a friend of the commissioner at a cost well above market rate. † Le Vache Rouge

To Baroness Gauchepied’er,
Commissioner of Public Safety:

Ma’am,
I have no intention of reporting to the Bastille to be ‘interviewed’ about I know not what. If you wish to speak to me, you will find me at my club. I am sure we can agree a mutually acceptable time at which to meet.

† Major Sans de Machine,
King’s Musketeers

Notice to the Public:

Viscount Pierre le Sang is interested in increasing his holdings of Fleur de Lys bonds and is offering face value plus 10%. If you hold such bonds and are interested in liquidating them, please contact him at the Fleur de Lys any day this month.

I commend Camus’s devotion to His Majesty’s forces. There are many loyal to His Majesty. † Cuckpowder

Poetry Corner

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

Cold winds, driving snow
Frost glitters on naked steel
Would Knighthood bring warmth?

† GH



The Allies have now taken the town on the right (in this photo) and Marshall Davout has met his fate, while both sides’ cavalry units lick their wounds (left flank).

some initial manoeuvring before the armies engage. That clearly wasn’t going to happen here (apparently the historical battlefield was misty and the two armies were almost engaged by the time the mist cleared).

The random draw for sides gave me the French against Mark’s Allies. The initial fighting was on French right, where the allies were trying to capture a town, plus cavalry skirmishing on my left. I withdrew the advanced French units behind the river on the right, while bringing up some line infantry to support them. (Very historical, I’ve since discovered.) The cavalry skirmishes on the left saw a Russian cavalry unit eliminated and the Cossacks chased off. That’s a good start.

Then the Allies made a massed cavalry charge, throwing in even the Russian Guard Heavy, against the French left flank. The French cavalry counter-attacked to even the score. On the right, Allied infantry assaulted across the river. The French line infantry stood firm and forced them back. This gave us eight victory banners apiece – first to 19 (!) wins this scenario. Then Marshal Davout went down in the continuing firefight on the right flank: 10:8 to the Allies.

A bit of a lull followed, with some more skirmishing as the two armies manoeuvred. It was broken by a French Bayonet Charge in the centre, which initially lost two units, but then, thanks to some lucky dice, cleared the hill in the centre. The Russians moved across on their left to reinforce the hill on that side, while the Austrians counter-attacked. The French moved up more forces in the centre, but not fast enough as the Allies retook the hill.

Bringing up the Grenadiers, the French attacked the hill again. The battle raged back and forth in the centre, both sides losing units, while skirmishes continued on the flanks. However, the French gradually crept ahead and finished the battle with an attack by their rallied cavalry on the left to snuff out an exposed enemy cavalry unit. The final score was 19:16.



The final positions: there aren't many troops left in the centre, but the French cavalry on the left flank has just won the battle.

The game was enthralling, keeping Mark and me engaged for some six hours of play. (There goes Saturday!) I really do enjoy *Commands & Colors: Napoleonic*, despite this not having been my period in my wargaming days.



Once Mark and I had packed up the game, I sat down with Pete Card for a quick two-player game before dinnertime. (Pete is on t'committee, so **MidCon** is one convention where we often don't see much of each other.) The game was *D-Day Operation Overlord*, sequel to the same designer's (Tom Lee) and publisher's (Little Bighorn Games – littlebighorngames.com) *Western Front*, which Pete and I enjoyed at the UK Games Expo back in 2016.

As with the original, this is a simple game at heart. The two players have a hand of seven 'Battle' cards, each with a numeric value (both players have the same set of values). Each plays a card face-down and, when revealed, the higher value wins. Best of the seven wins that invasion beach and whoever wins the most beaches (of five) takes the game. Thus, it's simply a matter of playing your lowest card against your opponent's highest and then beating each of their remaining cards with one a bit bigger. If only you knew when they were playing each one!

However, it's not that simple. First of all, players also have 'Equipment' cards and can play one with their Battle card. There aren't as many Equipment as Battle cards, so deciding when to play them needs some thought. What's more, while some Equipment cards add to the player's own strength, most of them counter a specific card from their opponent – if they played it. This really needs thinking about.

To provide more variety, 'Event' cards set extra conditions for each invasion beach as you fight it. All in all, this is a fine little package with the esteemed

My Dearest Edna,

Yes, I quite understand Pierre enjoyed spending time at your parents' vineyards. If I could but spend time imbibing of your beauty and your family's unfairly maligned ambrosia, I would. I have, however, had an urgent summons from His Majesty to defend France once again. I go to my possible death dreaming of better days ahead with you and your lovely family. † Amant

Brigadier-General Viscount Duncan d'Eauneurts, His Majesty's Minister of State, OC the King's Musketeers, to

Those Gentlemen recently threatened by the Commissioner of Public Safety, Greetings!

Gentlemen,

It now seems clear that the Commissioner has finally lost his (habitually tenuous) grip on reality completely.

Please be assured that any spurious charges he brings to any court over which I preside will be greeted with the contempt they deserve.

Should the Commissioner have the lunatic presumption to arraign me before the King on spurious charges of treason, I can only hope that those gentlemen having the ear of His Majesty will show me the same consideration. The thought of a mad Commissioner having the power both to charge and to judge his peers is too horrible to contemplate.

Your Servant ,

Viscount Duncan d'Eauneurts
Minister of State

Pierre,

You might have been gentleman enough to warn me of the mother and the swill at the very least.

† Amant

Cher Georges

Quelle horreur! What can I do but apologise?

It is clear that the maître d' took a rather too literal interpretation of my instructions – and an over-protective one at that.

As my duelling companion, you will be aware of my recent contretemps with an individual who has elevated himself in society despite his unennobled status.

I had mentioned to the maître d' my wish to avoid a repetition of this ["do not admit non-noble of higher SL"] never once guessing that you (the one person to whom such a restriction should never have applied) would honour me with your presence. The fault is mine.

How may I make amends for this unfortunate series of slights?

Yours in amity, † Arthur

I see, dear Arthur. I had hoped it was a misunderstanding of some sort. Perhaps we can make it up with dinner and drinks with our lady friends at the club on a quiet week?

Best, † GH

Some time later:

Hmm, then I guess, dear Arthur, we best not meet for drinks until I get knighted or you increase your social standing...

Press

Announcements

Minister of War requires Aide.

Apply Ministry of War

† Cuckpowder

WANTED

Lieutenant-Colonel, one Major and two Captains for the Royal Marines before they head for the front in March.

† RdL

Official Ministry Announcement, Office of the Public Safety Commissioner People

A reward of 3,000 Crowns is offered for the safe return of CPS Official (Interior Designer) Tristram de Gaye. He has been kidnapped and falsely imprisoned by miscreants within the regiment formerly known as The King's Musketeers. The corruption of this despicable regiment, rotten from the core right through to the top, is no longer to be tolerated and thus, by Ministerial Decree, they are formally abolished and henceforth to be reformed as The Emperor's Own and their Commanding Officer shall be the Spirit of Sheikh Yadik Al-Abowt, issuing his formal orders through Commissioner Gauchepied'er.

† Baroness Gauchepied'er
Commissioner of Public Safety

To the Men of His Majesty's Royal Foot Guard, March comes and so does the RFG. We may meet the Devil himself in our enemy. Still, it is better than cheap wine with a harpy.

† Colonel Amant d'Au

Royal Marines: TO THE FRONT NEXT MONTH, PREPARE YOURSELVES TO BRING GLORY TO THE KING AND FRANCE!

Social

Greg de Bécqueur will celebrate Easter in his club in the final week of March. All gentlemen and their ladies are welcome; refreshments will be provided.

Personal

Dear Felix,

I am sorry that I am unable to attend the Bastille in person, but you may have noticed that some "Gilets Jaunes" Militia groups are causing a bit of trouble and we have been dispatched to sort it out. I presume your summons is because you wish to hire me as your "Fashion guru" in place of that Trollope, "Dis-tress, Miss-tress" – whatever the Svengali calls itself. I am happy to accept because you are a fashion disaster. Some quick advice for free, but any further consultations by appointment only and charged at 10 Crowns per session.

1. Rouge should be applied with a light touch to accentuate the cheekbones, not plastered on.
2. Ditch the Canary Yellow, Gold and Silver – it is just so 1670. Cornflower yellow is OK, Burgundy is best.
3. Purchase a new wig.
4. Avoid turbans.
5. Tinsel – no, just plain wrong.

Regards,

† Percy

central mechanism of out-guessing your opponent. It makes a good filler for two and I give it 7/10 on my highly subjective scale.

A sociable dinner on Saturday evening (Geraldine and I joined Pete, Lee and Mark Jones and others) saw us back at the hotel just in time for the Quiz – one of **MidCon's** fixtures. Our skilled quizmaster is David Norman, who runs a tight ship. My usual strategy for the Quiz is to be on the same team as Chris Dearlove and Mark Jones, but they'd already organised their team this year. Instead, Geraldine, Pete and I made an outnumbered team of three and did creditably, I think, finishing bang in the middle of the scores. It was, as usual, good fun.

Post-breakfast on Sunday morning, I found Lee and Mark setting up a game of *Cottage Garden* with Keith Rapley and grabbed the fourth seat. This is (just) my favourite (8/10 on my highly subjective scale) of Uwe Rosenberg's trilogy of flora-themed puzzle games from Edition Spielwiese (spielwiese-berlin.de/edition). (I haven't played the two-player *Patchwork* that preceded this sequence.) The game is about fitting polyomino flower tiles onto your flower beds to score points when you complete a bed. It also involves cats.

Mark's spatial awareness is something else: he was able to simply pick a tile and place it. The rest of us spent a while each turn working out how best to fit in each tile. It was no surprise that Mark won this one – by nearly 20 points. The rest of us were separated by just one point each. For more on *Cottage Garden*, my review of all three games is in the latest *Gamers Alliance Report* (www.gamersalliance.com) and in *TWJO* in due course.



Mark re-fills the board while the other two ponder their *Cottage Garden*



My *Azul* board is looking healthy – the circular boards are what we choose pieces from

We followed this with my introduction to *Azul*, which was reviewed by Nik Luker in *TWJO* 184. Designed by Michael Kiesling and published by Plan B (planbgames.com), it won the prestigious *Spiel des Jahres* (German Game of the Year) prize for 2018. Gameplay is straightforward, but involves careful decisions right the way

through. Players take sets of tiles from the central areas and place them on a ‘feeder’ row on their own board – any that don’t fit are penalty points.

When all tiles have been taken, players put one from each feeder row onto their scoring grid to score points, getting more for adjacent pieces. The game finishes when someone has a complete scoring row and players add bonus points for complete columns, rows and sets. It’s neat, attractive and plays in less than an hour – I can see why it won *Spiel des Jahres*. Despite Mark’s famed spatial awareness (see above), I won this one with two complete columns and a set. That’s a provisional 7/10 on my highly subjective scale.

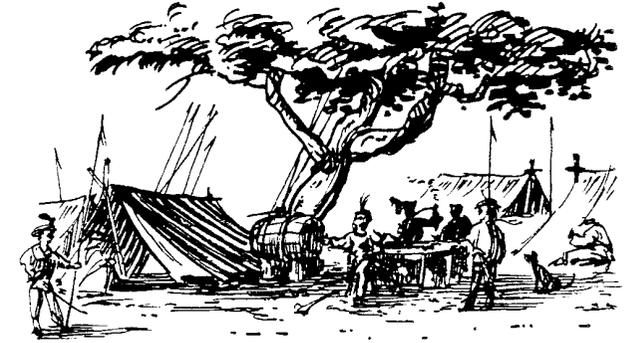
With the drive home still to come, I called it a weekend at this point (no horror stories about transport this time). **MidCon** is a fun convention in a comfortable hotel in the centre of Derby – conveniently surrounded by good restaurants. Many thanks to t’committee for another excellent weekend and I expect to be there in November 2019 (probably the second weekend, but keep an eye on the website for updates: www.midcon.org.uk).

Not built in a day

Forum Trajanum reviewed by Pevans

The title gives away the theme of this game: the huge forum constructed in Ancient Rome by Emperor Trajan and depicted on the game’s central board. The great column listing Trajan’s victories is represented by three wooden pieces whose placement marks the three ‘cycles’ of the game. It is at the end of each cycle that players score points and, of course, the player with the most points wins the game.

The enemy Fusiliers start to advance, but think better of it when the Dragoon Guards appear. A cavalry charge has the effect of restoring the status quo and gives the DGs the chance of some recognition. Colonel Etienne Brule is brevetted to Brigadier-



General, but there’s nothing for Lt-Col Jean Ettonique. A Mention comes to senior Major Henri Dubois (“He didn’t get one last month”) and another to junior Major Percy Urbain Fanci-Free (“He did”). Fanci-Free sweeps up what booty is available: over five hundred crowns worth. Captain Paul d’Udderjuan is the last name into the Despatches (“That newbie again”).

Princess Louisa’s Light Dragoons head south to patrol the border with Spain. They trot up and down the foothills of the Pyrenees, but find no action. No rewards, then, for Colonel Arthur ‘Dekka’ Dent or Lt-Col Georges Hommemince, so their problem continues.

Frontier regiment 2 has a good month, bolstered by first squadron of the Grand Duke Mac’s Dragoons. Continuing skirmishes with Spanish troops give the Dragoons the opportunity for a bit of sport. Captain Augustin Fourier is Mentioned in Despatches for his horsemanship (“Tally ho!”). Lt-Colonel Padamus Da Grim does the looting and enriches himself by nearly a thousand crowns.

Lt-Colonel Chris Knight and his squadron of the Crown Prince Cuirassiers remain with Frontier regiment 3, hauling wood and supplies to keep the frontier soldiers warm and happy. There’s a Mention for Knight (“some sort of quartermaster, I think”) and he earns a few hundred crowns.

Frontier regiment 4 takes another battering and its camp is overrun by Austrian cavalry. Brigadier-General Swindelle d’Masses, attached to the regiment, escapes with a Mention (“Good job he’s on horseback”). However, PM Captain Alain SansSous doesn’t move as quickly and goes down under the horsemen. RIP.

General Sebastian de la Creme takes command of a battalion of the Royal North Highlanders this month, alongside General Bernard de Lur-Saluces. Sticking to the Highlanders’ home ground of the Ardennes mountains, Lur-Saluces shows that he has more experience, escaping an ambush with nothing more than a dented helmet. He receives two Mentions in Despatches (“A wee dram will set him to rights – plus a hammer”) and collects some five hundred crowns worth of booty. Creme pockets slightly less plunder and that’s all. ❖

This third week of February sees Ben and Belle in Red Phillips and Luc Azzat in Bothwell's (staying out of everybody's way – as he did the week before by visiting his lady). Pierre, Guinevere and Beau return to the Fleur where Uther reappears, looking a little haggard, with Henrietta on his arm. Jean Jeanie shows up, too, bringing Jacky with him. Beau successfully places another large wager, so he's a happy bunny.

Only Pierre, Guinevere, Uther and Henrietta finish their month in the Fleur. Ben and Belle return to Red Phillips. Bastian and Cath conclude their party in Bothwell's. Their guests remain Florent, with Charlotte, Georges Dueppre and Robert, escorting Bess. Robert tries another string of bets. He cuts, he cuts, he loses, loses and loses and then he



cuts again. Hmm, it's not been a good month for him.

It's a four-way tie for iron man this month: Amant d'Au, Duncan d'Euaneurts, Jacques de Gain and Jean d'Ice practise with their rapiers all four weeks. Balzac Slapdash takes a week off to go partying, so that's just three weeks rapier practice for him. Leonard de Hofstadt does his partying first and then hits the gym with his rapier. Chopine Camus and Terence Cuckpowder follow the same schedule, but their choice of sword is sabre. Sabre is Pierre Cardigan's weapon, too, but his first week was in the Bawdyhouses for some female company. Gaz Moutarde practises cutlass thrice before visiting his mistress at the end of February. Hugh Jass and Jean Jeanie manage a couple of weeks practice apiece, with sabre and rapier, respectively. Greg de Bécqueur gets a couple of weeks sabre practice around his partying. The red light district gets final visits from Beau Reese Jean Seine and Felix Anton Gauchepied'er, both of whom pay for company of some sort.

It's a dirty job

The Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers continue to soak up some weak winter sunshine on the Riviera. On patrol with first squadron, Lt-Colonel Richard Shaw spots an enemy patrol. "They're mine!" he cries and digs in his spurs. His horse gallops forward but somehow Shaw has not spotted that the enemy is on the opposite side of a ravine. His mount attempts to leap the gap, but it's too wide and both horse and man plummet to their death. RIP. ALC Colonel Frele d'Acier spends the month in his quarters, so there's nothing for him.

On the norther frontiers, the Cardinal's Guard engage in a firefight with Spanish Fusiliers. However, there's only one battalion of the Cardinal's men, so they're quickly on the receiving end. Regimental commander Alan de Frocked orders the men to retire, which they do at some speed. Brigadier-General Frocked is Mentioned in Despatches ("not as fast as his men"). He still finds time to send a contribution to the CPS's office.

Let me start, however, with players' individual boards. These show the square grid of a Roman colonial town ('colonia' in the rules). When setting up, players place small shield-shaped tiles in their colour onto the grid (with certain restrictions). Most of these show resources of different kinds, while some represent a class of citizen and almost all of them start face down.

Each round starts by drawing two cards showing the same symbols that are alongside the rows and columns of the colonia. Players take two tiles from these rows and/or columns. Unless they're able to choose one of the face-up corner tiles, what they get will be pot luck. They then pass on a tile and receive one. In turn order, players play one of their tiles, taking the designated resources, and may then build a building, earning the appropriate rewards. Most tiles are then placed to one side. Player's own tiles, face-down again, are 'envoys' to be sent to the great forum in Rome (i.e. the central board).

There's an awful lot packed into that last sentence. To start with, the resources are mostly meeples – red, green, blue and yellow 'workers', grey 'builders', brown 'assistants' and white 'tribunes' – and coins. Workers and builders are used to construct buildings: one or two-square tiles of the colour of the meeple/s used (double buildings are either a single colour or one colour plus grey). The buildings go into the spaces left by tiles removed from your colonia. Hence, a tactical consideration in what tiles to take is where you want to be able to place buildings.



My *Forum Trajanum* player board – I'm playing blue, so the blue pieces are unused tiles or envoys (bottom right)

Placing a coloured building lets a player put an envoy onto a square of the same colour in the central forum. This is where the tactics really start to come in. Envoys adjacent to one of the eagle squares on this grid will score points and players also get points for their largest connected group of envoys. Thus going next to an eagle is a good starting point, but then you want to build up your



Here's the *Forum Trajanum* main board as the third cycle progresses

group – though there are constraints on what you can place where. In addition, completing a coloured area gains that player a bonus resource or points.

Grey buildings provide a different reward. If they're a 'column', then they just score points (decreasing in each cycle). The other types let players move their marker on the appropriate bonus track (alongside the forum) and take the appropriate bonus. This can be extra resources or a special action – such as placing an envoy **on** an eagle space (very useful in building a group). Grey buildings also score points at the end of the cycle.

What I haven't explained yet is 'citizen' tiles. Positions for these are on the left of each player's colonia grid on their board. Placing a citizen tile on its row gives a permanent bonus – such as scoring for envoys that are diagonally adjacent to eagles. It also increases what you score for grey buildings on that row. However, at the end of each cycle, you will need to pay a coin for each citizen tile or lose its effects. This is the only use of coins, so it's easy to manage the number you need. However, the citizen bonuses are really useful... As I can testify, it's all too easy to overlook the need to pick up some coins.

There are still a few wrinkles I haven't mentioned. The brown 'assistant' meeples are used to change the colour of worker meeples. I haven't found them particularly useful unless you really need a building of a specific colour. The white 'tribunes' can be used to draw a tile from anywhere on your colonia, which

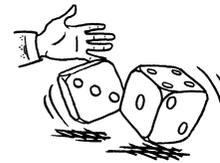
for the moment. So are Bastian de LaGarde, who's taking Cath de Thousands to Bothwell's, and Florent Sans de Machine, who's in Hunter's with Charlotte de Gaulle.



The second week sees Greg de Bécqueur's Pancake Day celebration at Hunter's, while Bastian de LaGarde starts his three-week celebration of d'Eauneurts victory in court. With Jenny Russe on his arm, Greg's guests start, alphabetically, with Ben e'Volence who is showing off his new conquest, Belle Epoque (well, you've got to spend your borrowings on something). Balzac Slapdash brings Mary Huana. Hugh Jass, the man with no club, escorts Marie Antoinette and has to meet Chris Knight as a result.

Cath is with Bastian as he welcomes Florent Sans de Machine and Charlotte. Then Georges Dueppre rolls up, complaining that the moneylenders' boys have just repossessed most of his cash, leaving him unable to support his horses, his mistress or his club membership. Robert d'Lancier brings Bess Ottede, after spending the previous week at her place, and hits the gaming tables. He places a series of 100-crown bets, but things don't go well. He cuts the first two when the house rolls high and loses the next one before cutting again. When he finally wins one to recoup some of his losses he promptly loses again. This all leaves him well down on the week.

Pierre and Guinevere are in the Fleur again, as is Beau, placing another wager. He loses this, leaving him all square so far this month. Meanwhile, over at the King's Musketeers' barracks there's a real ruckus going on. Commissioner Gauchepied'er rolls up to search the place, demanding all paperwork to do with the court martial of Maurice d'Ancer. To enforce this, he's brought a battalion of the Cardinal's Guard with him. However, it's just one battalion of the Cardinal's men versus the whole regiment of Musketeers, so this could end badly. Luckily, calm heads prevail. The CPS and his men are admitted to the administrative offices and handed the documentation of Private d'Ancer's court martial. The troops return to barracks.



Win some, lose lots

The second week of Bastian's party sees the same guests return to be joined by Greg and Jenny. Felix also turns up, perusing each of the other guests closely before muttering "Not the one" and moving on. He takes exception to Florent's uniform, though – Florent is a Major in the King's Musketeers, while Felix holds the same rank in the Cardinal's Guard. That's another duel for next month. He accepts 50 crowns from Greg, along with the suggestion that it be used "to buy decent breeches". Robert goes gambling again. His run starts the same as last week when he cuts his first bet. However, he wins the next two before losing one. He then cuts again and wins his last bet. It's a better week: he's actually won a net hundred crowns.

Georges Hommemince, is already marshalling his squadron in anticipation. Both are hoping for a resolution to their mutual problem of honour. However, they are the only volunteers this month.

Regimental enemies

There are no social events to kick off February, so many Parisians simply head for their club for a drink or two. The most popular club is the Fleur de Lys, leading some older members (aren't they all?) to complain that the place is going to the dogs. But not in earshot of the Commissioner of Public Safety, Felix Anton Gauchepied'er, who's clearly in a foul temper. He's without his usual companion, Trissy, but has brought a beefy Arabian gentleman (?) with him. He is engaged in a continuing argument with the two dolls perched on his shoulders. Most members steer well clear of him.

Beau Reese Jean Seine certainly does: he charges straight to the gaming tables. He lays a single, hefty bet ... and wins. Chopine Camus has Sheila Kiwi on his arm and a purse for Felix. Jean Jeanie brings Jacky Tinne with him. Leonard de Hofstadt escorts Frances Forrin. Pierre le Sang accompanies Guinevere d'Arthur. Terence Cuckpowder has Leia Orgasma with him. And Uther Xavier-Beauregard brings Henrietta Carrotte. At the sight of Uther, Felix's eyes light up. "Aha," cries, "War!"

"Yes," replies Uther, "What is it good for?"

"No," responds the CPS with a note of hysteria, "You ride the red horse, you are War! Seize him, Achmed!" As Uther is dragged away, Felix adds, more calmly, "And you are charged with murder."

On the way out, they pass the lonely figure of Luc Azzat. He's expecting to Toady to Minister of State Duncan d'Euaneurts, but Duncan is staying out of the way



is sometimes handy. However, what's really useful is that two of them let you use **both** tiles for resources/citizens.

Almost finally, at the top of each player's board is a track with a bar that shows what they score for their largest group of envoys. One of the 'resources' on tiles is moving the bar along the track to increase your scores. My key strategy so far has been to get a big group of envoys and push this bar to the top. Finally finally, a card drawn at the start of each cycle gives an additional goal for that cycle. What players score for achieving this is indicated by the other side of their scoring bar. In my games so far, achieving these goals has been straightforward.

After four rounds, the cards run out, signalling the end of a cycle and players score points. I've mentioned most of the way of scoring points, but coloured buildings can also score. At the corners of each player's colonia are four coloured 'construction crane' tiles. Any of these that are empty at the end of a cycle trigger scoring for buildings of the same colour (and then go face down). Players score fewer points for these in later cycles, so it's worth cashing in a few buildings early on. Conversely, I have seen someone score a pile of points by concentrating on one colour of building and scoring them all at the end.

To sum up, there are lots of point scoring opportunities, a bit of luck and very little player interaction. It is also easy to overlook something – running out of envoys, for example – so you need to take care and plan ahead. For me, the game just doesn't gel. It has a plethora of little mechanisms, but the whole doesn't feel any greater than the sum of these. *Forum Trajanum* gets 6/10 on my highly subjective scale (will play if in the mood).

Forum Trajanum is a strategy board game designed by Stefan Feld and published by Huch! (in Germany), with the English language edition coming from Stronghold Games. It is for 2–4 players, aged 12+ and takes 1–2 hours to play (I reckon on double that when you're learning). Thanks to Stronghold Games for providing a review copy. This review was first published on BGG.

Cloth for sale!

Calimala review

According to the game's introduction, the *Arte di Calimala* was the powerful guild of cloth merchants in Renaissance Florence. In the game, players are members of the guild: cloth merchants looking for opportunities to ship cloth to other European cities and to contribute to the construction of Florence's great churches. Taken together, these opportunities give 15 different locations that players will score (for majority control) through the game with some additional scoring at the end. The player with the most points wins, of course.



A side view of the *Calimala* board at an early stage of the game – two locations have been scored

The question for me is where to start. Hmm, how about the actions players can take in their turn? There are nine of these, set out (bottom left) on the game's board in a 3 x 3 grid. Only the central one is fixed, the other eight are distributed at random at the start of the game. However, there is a suggested set-up for beginners, which is what I've used as it carefully separates actions that produce stuff from the actions that use it.

Depending on the number of players, each has a number of wooden discs in their colour (plus a couple of white ones). Each turn, they place a disc **between** two

actions (orthogonally adjacent) and take both actions. That's clever – and why I can see a problem with the random set-up if it puts complementary actions next to each other. It gets better, too. If there are already discs on that spot, the owners of the other discs also get to take the two actions. Again. Thus, discs placed early on are likely to trigger actions several times.

Three times is the limit, however. When a fourth disc is placed on a stack, the top three trigger actions and the fourth causes a scoring. At the start of the game, fifteen tiles representing the different locations that can be scored are laid out randomly on the board (top left). That fourth disc goes onto the next empty scoring tile and players gain points: 3, 2 and 1 according to how many (at least one) of their cubes they have on the location.

This is another clever mechanism. Right from the beginning of the game, players can see what's going to score when and can plan accordingly. What's more, as the discs stack up on the action spaces, they can see how likely it is that the next location will score. Some of the time it's about giving up on things you're not going to win, but it can equally be about sneaking an unexpected third place.

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 March 1671 to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF, UK or lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk by Friday 22nd February 2019



February 1671 (324)

The tail-end of winter sees peace amongst socialites break out in Paris. Yes, there are no duels this month, but no doubt things will liven up next month. Who knows, we may even have an early spring...

Let us instead turn to affairs of state, where Minister of War Terence Cuckpowder once again refuses to appoint anyone as Inspector-General of Infantry. Nor does he find himself an Aide – a position General Jacques de Gain also finds superfluous.

In military circles, Percy Urbain Fanci-Free has taken against the incumbent Brigade Major of the Horse Guards. Who knows, perhaps he has designs on the position himself? Anyway, Major Fanci-Free calls in a favour to try to persuade said gentlemen to retire. Unfortunately for him, the Brigade Major has the support of no less a person than the CPS, Felix Anton Gauchepied'er. He has bigger favours than Fanci-Free and he's not afraid to use them. The Brigade Major stays on.

Not so the Guards Brigade Major. RFG Major Bastian de LaGarde and his junior colleague, Captain Luc Azzat, join forces to oust the man. LaGarde then applies for the position. Of course, he might have competition from the other Majors in the Guards...

As it is the last month of the season, there is every expectation of volunteers heading off to join the frontier troops. Arthur 'Dekka' Dent doesn't disappoint us: he mobilises the Princess Louisa Light Dragoons. His Lieutenant-Colonel,

Corporation value by turn

Corp	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A	627	722	639	819	724	1,088	779
B	774	931	1,053	1,074	1,240	1,512	1,575
C	722	693	714	1,186	1,376	1,456	2,144
D	834	720	1,218	1,234	1,438	2,587	2,152
E	842	1,053	1,126	1,274	1,376	1,436	1,626
F	541	511	455	738	X	690	X
G	697	771	702	822	979	1,281	1,298
H	763	804	720	949	907	1,418	1,721
J	875	985	1,027	1,102	1,174	1,240	1,479

Figures assume ships are sold at cost and goods are sold at market value in their current location and ignore any OP chits in play.

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 *Brass* game 71 (at brass.orderofthehammer.com) went to our ringer, rbayu2. Game 72 is under way, but we could really do with a regular fourth player.

Game 19 of *Through the Ages: a New Story of Civilization* (at boardgaming-online.com) was close, but low scoring. Mike Tobias edged out yours truly by a single point for his second win in a row with the others close behind. Game 20 has started, but I've got a couple of people interested in a pacifist (no War or Aggression cards) game – want to join us?

We've just started a new game of *Pax Porfiriana* (at yucata.de), but new players are welcome.

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.

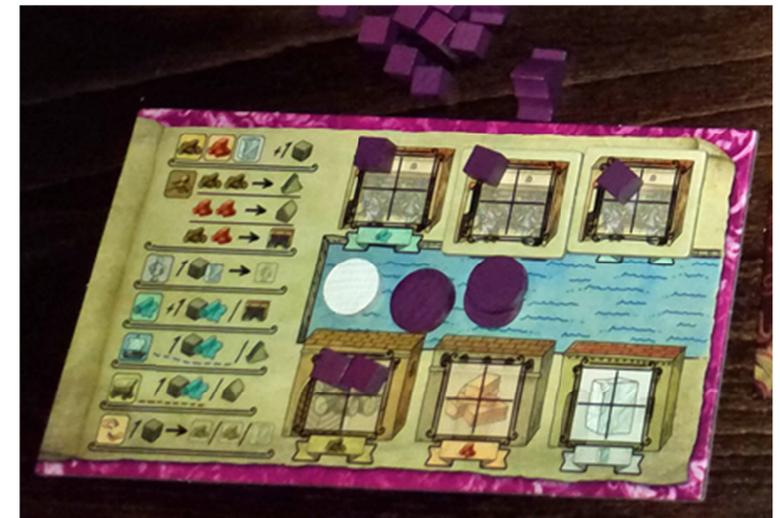
A recent arrival at BoardGameArena.com is *Rajas of the Ganges*, a dice- and worker-placement game that I thoroughly enjoy. Who'd like to give it a go? Drop me a line and I'll set up a game.

Experienced gamers will be asking “what about ties?” Well, if players are tied for the number of cubes in a location, the tie is broken according to who has most – or earliest – discs in the scoring area. Yes, that's more cleverness. And an incentive to place a fourth disc on a stack if it's one of your discs that will trigger the scoring. Though, of course, it's no longer triggering actions.

I mentioned white discs earlier. These can be placed just like players' own discs and they trigger the adjacent actions twice. Very useful when you need stuff. However, they don't belong to any player, so they're not going to give any further actions after they've been placed. (If a white disc triggers a scoring, the current player swaps it for one of their discs, gaining a disc in the tie-breaker area and a white disc to play – neat.)

I've managed to get this far without mentioning what players' actions actually are. To start with, there are four actions that produce stuff: wood, bricks, marble and cloth. Each is represented by placing cubes on players' own boards – the location of a cube tells you what it is. Wood and bricks can be used to build other things (the fifth action). Ships are needed to take cloth to the three cities connected to Florence by sea (the bottom right of the board is a map showing Florence and the cities it trades with). Trading posts are placed in the cities connected overland to let players sell there. And workshops increase cloth production – players get a cube in each workshop when they produce cloth.

There are separate actions for selling cloth by land and by sea. If you have trading posts (only one per player in each city), you move one cube from your



Purple's *Calimala* player board, showing three cloth, a couple of wood and unused action discs

workshops to each of these cities. By sea, you move as many cloth cubes as you have ships, but you can put the cubes in a single city or spread them out.

The other material, marble, is used in a different way. The eighth action is turning a marble cube into a statue. That is, you move a cube from your marble warehouse to one of the three great churches being constructed in Florence (as shown at the top right of the board). This will contribute to your holding when scoring both the church it's in and the row of statues across the churches. However, the churches don't just need statues to decorate them. They require wood, bricks and marble for their construction. The ninth action, in the middle of the board, is donating one of these from your warehouse to one of the churches. As with the statues, this counts when scoring both the specific church and the row of that material across all three.

There's an element of the game I haven't mentioned yet: the action cards. These depict one of the same nine actions that are on the board and can be played to carry out the depicted action in addition to those triggered by placing a disc. Players acquire them when they are unable to carry out one of the actions next to their disc. Thus, if you have a disc next to the statue-making action, but don't have any marble to use, you get an action card instead. The cards can be very powerful, for example providing the materials you need for the build action you've just triggered. However, they're drawn at random, so part of the game is making best use of the cards you have.

The game ends either when all players have played all their discs (any remaining locations are scored) or when the fifteenth location is scored (play continues to the end of the round so that everybody's played the same number of discs). Then the final scoring happens. Each player has a private scoring card, acquired at the start of the game, which they now reveal. These trigger additional scorings at the locations shown, but with the points scored being 5, 3 and 1. Another part of the game is thus trying to deduce which cards other players are holding and therefore which locations will score again at the end.

I've had great fun playing *Calimala*. It quickly becomes clear that you can't do everything, so you have to decide what you're going to concentrate on. I've done well picking either land or sea transport and building appropriately. However, this also depends on what scores when – you need some time to set things up. Depending on what actions players choose, it can be some time before the first location scores. However, once discs have built up, scoring can become frequent.

The one fly in the ointment is the advantage the first player has (their discs go down first and are thus likely to be triggered more and to be first into the tie-breaker area). Play just goes round from the first player and, apart from choosing your first action card, there's nothing to balance this. I haven't played it enough to be sure how big this advantage is, but it's certainly something first-time

clearly the way to go. Though, in line with my other goods, Tempus would be the only thing I was smuggling.

The strategy was all going swimmingly, with a successful Tempus run boosting my profits, when the News chits turned up Events 6 and 20. It was clear that the Monopoles price was going to max out, so it was time to invest in Monopoles factories to sell off at the peak. That all worked out nicely, too.

Mike Dommert GM

Definitely a shorter game than expected. Paul benefitted from the OP chits and Events and quite possibly many did not realise he was close to winning. It certainly hadn't clicked with me. All players were participating, which was good. What did show was that while there are various ways to play the game – we have seen winners who use opportunity chits, winners running passenger lines, winners just involving themselves in trading and, especially if you are not competing with anyone, you can do very well for yourself. What we haven't seen yet is a successful pirate.

Have half a dozen ships moving passengers between the high-level worlds and while you may be paying 50 or 60 HTs interest a turn on the loan you took out to buy the ships, you are bringing in maybe 200 HTs each turn. But if that must be shared between other players the profit drops. Spending on initiative – and first dibs on the passengers matters.

Another way to make money is to buy a dozen factories at a low price – say 3 HTs for the commodity. This costs 300 HTs. The next turn, you bid to buy at 10 HTs, taking perhaps 20 units for a further 200 HTs. IF no one sells that commodity, dropping the price, you can then sell the factories and get 600 HTs back. 100 HTs profit plus 32 units to sell. But you need the money first, and someone selling the goods at the factories' system can reduce the price and perhaps eliminate the profit. Paul, because of fortune with the Event Chits, got the benefits of the rise in price without having to do any buying of Monopoles.

The basics remain sound. Buy cheap and sell dear. When you have a Contractorship, you can deliver goods and sell 5 each turn at the best price and holding agent Percent gives you that ability wherever he is stationed. You need to make a profit overall. Take a loan out for four turns, and you need to make more than four turns interest in profit to make it worthwhile. Hire an agent, and you need make use of him. It has been rightly said that some agents are generally more use than others. Perhaps there is scope to think of another way for Corporations to acquire agents and run as a trial. Players choosing the agent option in free deployment get a choice of two. Perhaps this could be adapted.

Apart from Mark and Martin, all the Corporations were within 500 HTs of the winning margin. I shall consider the victory conditions and perhaps run a Corporation scenario next time.

Voyager (*Star Trader* game 9)

Game End Statements

Firstly, my apologies. Moving to A New House has taken up a lot of my time, so if I have not put your contribution in, that's going to be my excuse.

Bob Parkins TRANSURANIC TRADERS

I was not expecting that. I was playing for a longer game. My game plan was to build up my reputation by trading and then establish a strong factory network. This all takes time and cash. How Solar Spice & Liquors was able to own 16 Monopoles factories and have a reputation of 40 early in the game means I still have a lot to learn. All that is left for me to say is, well-done Paul, a well-earned win, and a big thank you to Mike for running the game.

Mark Cowper COSA NOSTRA PIZZA INCORPORATED

Lackey rushes into the office of Don Corleone, CEO of Cosa Nostra Pizza Incorporated: "Signor, it is all over in the Voyager Star System, the people only want spicy food and booze."

"Mama Mia, we did not even have time to launch the Meat Feast special. (sighs) ... close up the office, withdraw the franchises and move on."

Congratulations to Paul – amazing performance, so well done to him, but for me that is another game that has finished in double-quick time. I remember my first game going for 20+ turns. Is it possible to set different victory conditions next time? Most wealth after 20 turns? I am finding my enthusiasm for the game waning slightly as I was just getting going and boom, game over! Twice in a row!

Przemysław Orwat INTERSIDEREAL NOVICES

Thank you all for the game, congratulations to the winner!

This time I played a manufacturer with criminal connections - to have a chance for some lucrative smuggle opportunity. There was nothing worth the risk, however. The turn four civil war hit one of my ships like two other unlucky players. Then, when the MH Monopoles price rose I knew the game will end soon.

Paul Evans SOLAR SPICE & LIQUORS

Yes, the quick end of this game took me by surprise, too – though I did see it coming for a few turns. My strategy was my usual one: trade in goods that don't require Cargo pods (all the better to mount weapons), particularly Monopoles, and hire some Agents to see what kind of an edge they give me.

With Dragon giving me an Initiative advantage, Ferret making it easier to land On Planet and Willy providing a boost to black market sales, smuggling was

players comment on. *Calimala* gets 8/10 on my highly subjective scale (a game I'd suggest playing).

Calimala is a strategy board game designed by Fabio Lupiano. The original edition was published by ADC Blackfire (in Germany – www.blackfire.eu) and the new one by Stronghold Games (www.strongholdgames.com). It is for 3–5 players, aged 10+ and takes 75 minutes or so to play (I reckon on under two hours even with beginners). Thanks to Stronghold Games for providing a review copy. This review was first published on BGG.

Reading Matter

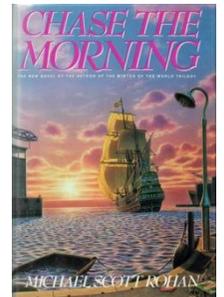
When I was clearing out old books a few months ago, I saved quite a few (to some grumbling from Geraldine) that I fancied re-reading. This included Michael Scott Rohan's novels. Since then I've started on his 'Spiral' series: the central idea is that the mundane world is simply a hub and things get more fantastic the further out you spiral.

In the first book, *Chase the Morning*, our hero, Stephen, stumbles into a dockside tavern populated by characters from the 16th/17th/18th centuries. The tall masts of their ships are just outside. He quickly acquires some friends, which is good news, as the spiral is a dangerous place – at the fringes are powers always seeking to invade the core.

Stephen has unwittingly got involved in the business of one of these powers, emboldening them enough to make a foray into the core. However, this alerts the good guys and, pretty quickly, Stephen and his friends are on a quest to old Haiti (time is a fluid concept in the spiral) to thwart the encroaching evil. I can neither confirm nor deny that Voodoo is involved.

The thing that has always stuck with me from this book is the moment when the three-master set sails into the sunset, heading up into the sky between the clouds. It's a stunning image. In my head, anyway. I have to say that, apart from the quest structure, very little of the plot has stayed with me over the years. I did recognise specific incidents, though.

The second novel, *The Gates of Noon*, is set a few years later with Stephen struggling to recall his time outside the core (the spiral has this effect). Then he becomes involved in a charity's efforts to bring modern equipment to Bali to help locals manage their precarious water supply. This is opposed by terrorists, religious leaders and arcane powers. What better way to get the kit there, than across the spiral?



This time Stephen has a better idea of what he's getting into and the resources available to him. However, he still doesn't really know what he's up against – until the climax of the story, anyway. However, we get to see more of the spiral and the characters who inhabit it. I was particularly taken with the paddle steamer Stephen travels on – technology gets harder to maintain the further away from the core you go, but it still works.

I have enjoyed re-reading these two (two more to go) as Rohan does write a good romp – and I love the romanticism of the whole idea. However, I'm not finding myself as enamoured of them as I was the first time around, so they may well be going into the recycling once I've finished.

Games Events

Coming up towards the end of February is SoRCon, now held at the Holiday Inn in Basildon: 22nd-24th February. This is a board games event run by gamers (who keep nagging me to get along) for gamers. Hence it's largely open gaming with a substantial games library plus what people bring themselves. Apart from this, there's a bring 'n' buy, a trade stand and the unique Quiz-a-thon (Saturday night). Full details and bookings are on the website: www.sorcon.co.uk

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

SLOW WAGON IN FAST TRAFFIC (SWIFT), Gerald

Udowiczenko – Yellow

Builds: None

Points: 128.5 +38 = **166.5**

GM Notes

TIS did very well out of the second round of races completed and has taken the lead. Only GREAT did any building.

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.

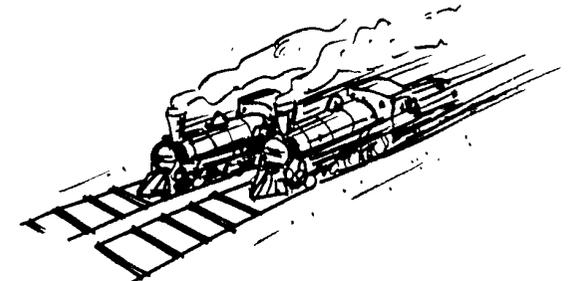
Players can enter up to five races (plus any held over from a previous turn).

After the races, you may build up to 8 build points. **Remember: known junctions and parallel builds are deducted from these points.**

Next turn's races

Race	From	To
15	12 Brighton	34 Petersfield/Bishop's Waltham
16	14 Horsham/Reigate	23 Midhurst/Haslemere
17	35 Portsmouth	22 Arundel/Chichester
18	43 Newbury/Andover	63 London
19	42 Reading	56 Woking/Leatherhead
20	65 London	51 Slough/Virginia Water
21	S6 SHOPPING	15 Pulborough/Cranleigh

**Orders to Mike Dommett, 12 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ
or by e-mail to mike_dommett@yahoo.co.uk
by Friday, 15th February 2019**



Watercress (*Railway Rivals* game 13 - RR2344LH)

Turn 8

This turn's races

Race results				Scores						
				BASH	MDCR	SLOUGH	TIS	GREAT	SWIFT	
8	13	Shoreham/ H'ds Heath	55	Wokingham/ Basingstoke			0-2	20	10+2	
9	66	London	16	3 Bridges/ Dorking	0		20	5-2		5+2
10	21	Worthing/ L'hampton	53	Guildford/ Aldershot				20		
11	24	Selsey/ Bognor	45	Winchester/ Stockbridge		10-8	+6	20- 5+7		
12	36	Portsmouth	64	London	0+4			20- 2+1		10-3
13	31	Soton	46	Alton/ Bordon	20-9	10+18 -5	0-9	+5		
14	61	London	54	SEASIDE	0	0	10-4			20+4
TOTAL					11	25	21	89	12	38

JR = Joint Run; ERP = Exchange of Running Powers

Builds and points

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

Builds: None

Points: 109.5 +11 = **120.5**

MISSED, DELAYED AND CANCELLED RAILS (MDCR),

Mike Dyer - Blue

Builds: None

Points: 80.5 +25 = **105.5**

SLOW LOCOMOTIVES ONLY USED GENTLY ON HILLS

(SLOUGH), Brad Martin - Orange

Builds: None

Points: 88 +21 = **109**

TIGER IN SMOKE (TIS), Jonathan Palfrey - Green

Builds: None

Points: 86.5 +89 = **175.5**

GRAND RAIL EAST ATLANTIC TRUNKLINE (GREAT), Rob

Pinkerton - Red

Builds: (F22) - E23 - Worthing (cost 6)

(L21) - L20 - K20 - J19 - Pulborough (cost 4)

Points: -40.5 +12 -10 -4 = **-42.5**

Pevans's *Wits & Wagers*

Round 2 bets and payoff

Question 2 was how old was Pevans when he passed his driving test. The answer is 30, which nobody got (I lived in London and travelled by bike or Tube - did I need a car?). However, anyone betting on 26+ gets the payout.

Player	Answer	Bet on	Stake	Score	Total
Brick Amundsen		24	10	-10	80
Alex Bardy	23	23	10	-10	60
Bob Blanchett				0	80
Colin Bruce	18	24	10	-10	60
Pete Card				0	80
Mark Cowper	24	24	10	-10	60
Mike Dommett	24	26+	10	40	110
Alex Everard		19	10	-10	70
Anthony Gilbert	<18	23	10	-10	60
Bruno Giordan	19			0	70
Andrew Kendall		26+	7	28	98
Nik Luker	22	24	10	-10	60
Tim Macaire	31	19	8	-8	64
Graeme Morris	25	25	5	-5	70
Jonathan Palfrey	19			0	70
Rob Pinkerton		24	10	-10	70
Alan Tabor	26	26+	10	40	120
Dean Talbot	19			0	100
Gerald Udowiczenko	18			0	73
Pam Udowiczenko				0	80
Everybody else					80

Look at that: my old friend Mike Dommett answered 24, but bet on 26+ for a maximum pay-out. Al Tabor had the courage of his convictions this time and also got a maximum to take a narrow lead (it's early yet). Andy Kendall's probably kicking himself that he didn't bet more as Dean Talbot is still in third place, despite not betting on this one.

Round 3 answers

The question is: what year did Pevans graduate from university?

Odds	Answer	Given by
4:1	1982+	Alex Bardy† (1988), Colin Bruce (1982)
3:1	1981	Mark Cowper
2:1	1980	Tim Macaire
1:1	1979	Mike Dommett*, Alex Everard, Nik Luker†
2:1	1978	Rob Pinkerton
3:1	1977	Anthony Gilbert, Graeme Morris†, Alan Tabor
4:1	1976	Brick Amundsen
5:1	Less than these	Andy Kendall† (1967)

Round 3 bets

Mesdames, messieurs: faites vos jeux! Anybody and everybody can now bet on what they think is the correct answer above (staking up to 10 points), 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 4 question

If you've seen a photo of me (there's one on the front page of my website and there's been the odd one in these pages), you'll know I have a beard (I'd like to call it pepper-and-salt, but these days it's pretty much just salt). I keep it trimmed, but what length (in millimetres) do I trim it to?

Bets on round 3 answers and answers for the round 4 question to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF, UK or TWJO@pevans.co.uk by Friday 22nd February 2019

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,

* Mike knew me **before** I went to University

† These people have met me at least once

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) – default bet is 10. 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.

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10-issue (1 year) subscription	£27.00	£36.00	£43.00

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