

That would be enough

This has been issue 238 of *To Win Just Once*, published 14th October 2023. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2023

Deadlines

Orders for *Railway Rivals* and *Star Trader* to Mike by Friday 27th October 2023.

Orders for *LPBS*, Trophy Hunter entries and any other contributions to Pevans by Friday 3rd November 2023.

(Remaining 2023 deadlines: 1st/8th Dec)

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 – a four-player game starts in this issue and Gerald Udowiczenko is on the list for three more to join him. (Working map and rules provided).

Star Trader – start is in this issue and there's room for one more player. (Rules provided)

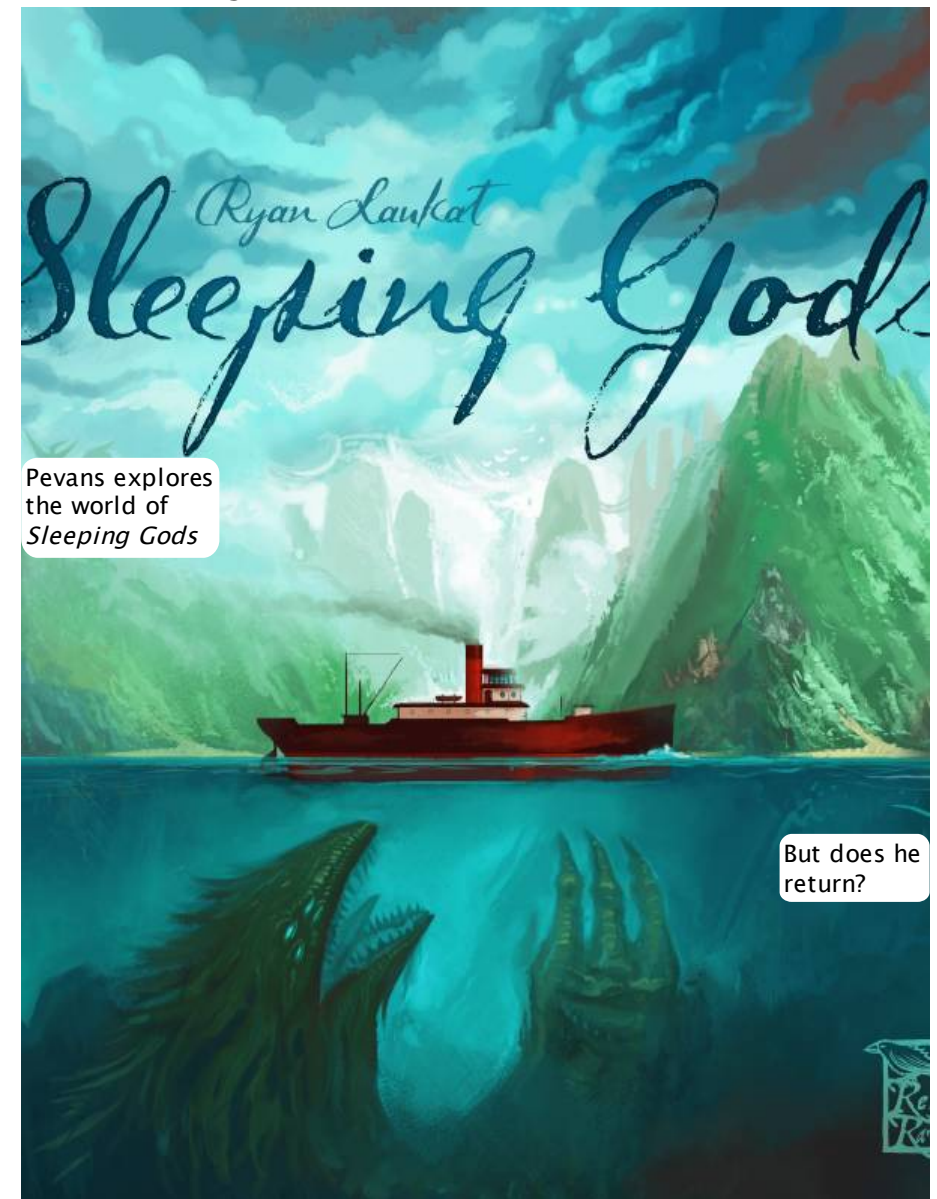
Credits

To Win Just Once issue 238 was written and edited by Pevans. The *LPBS* masthead (page 19) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, as is the drawing on page 25. The illustrations on pages 22 and 29 are by Bryan Lea, the one on page 23 by Tim Wiseman and the drawing on page 27 is by Nik Luker. Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Pevans took the photos and played with Photoshop.

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To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)



Pevans explores
the world of
Sleeping Gods

But does he
return?

Issue 238: October 2023
(LPBS 374: April 1675)

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Contents

Chatter	3
Letters	4
Should we let them lie?	4
Pevans experiences <i>Sleeping Gods</i>	4
Reading matter	11
Games Events	12
Subscribing to TWJO	13
The Wizard of Anharitte (<i>Star Trader</i> game 12)	14
Start-up.....	14
Star systems map.....	15
Trophy Hunter	16
Turn 1	16
Troodos (<i>Railway Rivals</i> game 18 – RR2528CY)	19
Start-up.....	19
Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses	20
April 1675 (374).....	20
Press.....	30
Points Arising.....	33
Announcements.....	33
Duels.....	33
New Characters.....	34
Tables.....	35
Other Appointments.....	35
Army Organisation and 1675's Summer Deployment.....	35
Brigade Positions.....	36
Frontier Regiments.....	36
Battle Results.....	36
Femmes Fatales.....	37
Regiments.....	37
The Greasy Pole	38
That would be enough	40
Deadlines.....	40
Waiting lists.....	40
Credits.....	40

Chatter

Geraldine and I have been away for a couple of weeks – stuck in a luxury seaside holiday apartment. It's a dirty job, but...

Rather than the usual panorama of sunny sea and coast, here's a shot of the sea in a different mood. It's "Northwest 4 to 6; Moderate or rough, occasionally very rough; Showers, rain later; Good, occasionally poor."



The best thing is watching the squalls and showers cross the bay, producing rainbows as they come and go.



And the other best thing is breakfast. Here's an "Ulster Fry". That's soda farl, potato bread and pancake to make sure you get enough carbs. And then I've added an extra egg to the establishment's Large Ulster Fry.



Spiderwatch

Number of large wasp spiders ejected from the bedroom: 1. Number of very small spiders greeting us on our return from holiday: 3. Medium-sized spiders accidentally washed down kitchen sink: 1. (I'm sure it wasn't there when I turned the tap on!)

Online stats

I published *TWJO* 237 at the start of September and the PDFs were downloaded 114 times in the month. The previous issue came out at the start of August and attracted 148 downloads in two months. August and September added 104 downloads for issue 235, making a total of 207 since publication.

Letters

Mark Cowper notes, after my review of *Fort* last issue:

My gaming group has played FORT a lot as a filler, and it is very good once you get your head around how it works.

Should we let them lie?

Pevans experiences *Sleeping Gods*

I picked up a copy of Ryan Laukat's *Sleeping Gods* some time ago as I'd heard good things about it. I took it with me on holiday, intending to have a go at playing it solitaire. However, nephew Tom spotted the chunky box (it looks a standard square box, but it's actually 5 mm longer on one side, and is some 11 cms deep, compared to the more usual 7-8) and asked about it. And then demanded we play it!

So this review follows our experience with the game with, I hope, no spoilers as the game is all about discovering things. I took Tom through the introduction, which I'd tried myself the day before. This covers the basics and the most complicated bit, combat. Then we set off on our travels.

But I'd better set the scene. *Sleeping Gods* is a paragraph game – that is, “Multiple action options are presented to the players via a narrative format.” There's a large ring-bound book of story paragraphs that give players choices and skill tests they have to beat to earn rewards and progress the story. Of course, along the way you boost your characters' skills (four characters each in a two-player game – plus the Captain) and acquire helpful things.

This kind of game may be anathema to some, but it's something I really enjoy. (*Tales of the Arabian Nights* is one of my top ten games, after all – and a game I make a point of playing at least once a year.) In this case, the players are the crew of a 1920s tramp steamer suddenly thrust into a fantasy world. Here, they are told, they must find 'totems' that will wake the eponymous sleeping Gods who alone have the power to return them to their own world.

Inside the box are boards for each character and their ship (which usefully shows the sequence of play – something I didn't spot for a while). There are wooden markers, cardboard markers and cards. Lots of cards. Plus the hefty paragraph book and a thinner ring-bound 'atlas' – the maps on which the good-looking ship model moves. It's a high quality production that includes boxes to hold crucial decks of cards.

You'll notice there are no dice in the game. Instead, the deck of 'Ability' cards is used. Each has a large 'Fate' number in the top left corner. When Fate is required – and any skill challenge means you add up the skills of the crew involved and add Fate – you draw a card and use that number, then discarding the card. Players also draw Ability cards into their hand and can use them to improve a character's skills. Hence you will go through this deck several times. Of course, cards that are in hand or applied to characters change the odds of the Fate number you'll draw – the rules allow the use of a standard six-sided die instead.

Having set everything out, off we went.

We started on a particular page of the game's atlas with a couple of 'quests' (cards) to give us initial goals. Following these quests took us around the islands on the



Here are my crewmembers, looking a little battered after three hours' play. The gold markers show fatigue, the red hearts injuries.

map, finding interesting people and creatures that we fought, helped and/or traded with. A deck of large-format cards provides the creatures to fight – each drawn by their specific index number rather than randomly.

We cooked food (cardboard markers we've acquired and stored on the ship) to remove fatigue and heal crew members. And, even as we finished quests, we acquired more. Over the page my crew have been 'equipped' with Ability cards – tucked under their boards improve their skills and provide special abilities.

Rather than continue exploring the starting map (a strategic error? Was there more stuff to pick up?), Tom and I followed our quests and headed east, away from the initial wooded islands into an expanse of desert islands (another page of the atlas). We started exploring these islands, suffering from some tough encounters in the deserts and damage from the hazards at sea – not least when we encountered a large band of pirates.

Our poor ship was on its last legs – one more red damage cube and it's good night, Vienna. (Though playing in 'Normal' mode gives us three lives.) At least we have some carrots (food). As shown below, we've almost completed our first Event deck (one card a turn) – bottom right corner of the ship board. And the Captain's Fatigued, despite having 'Endurance', which lets her take an extra marker. This is when Tom and I called it a day (our evening meals were calling).



You play the game in 'campaigns', which last through three Event decks (18 cards each, so that's 54 turns) unless the game comes to an early end. The record sheet shows a number of Endings, quite apart from losing the game by having no crew or no ship left. And I'd guess there's a big punch-up if you finish all three Event decks without reaching an Ending – which may be an Ending in its own right. But that will have to wait for another day.



Here's a shot of the whole game at the end of our first session – yes, it's taking up most of the table.

The game has a detailed mechanism for saving the status of a 'campaign' at the end of a session so that you can pick it up again later. And rules for adding or removing players. However, Tom and I just left the game set up for the next day.

Starting our second session, we fully expected the ship to take its final damage soon. However, our next couple of encounters among the desert islands were benign and profitable. This meant we could repair the ship and restore the crew in the nearby port.

Setting off again full of optimism, we ran into "Carnotaurus". We decided to fight them, rather than run away, and promptly made a tactical error. Adversaries like these need to be hit several times to defeat them and some hits have to be several points worth to count. Our mistake was to wear out our hard hitters (with the damage from the opponents' counter-attacks) without getting the multiple-point hits in.

The effect was to leave one Carnotaurus that we couldn't take out. It reduced all the crew to zero health. Oops! In Normal mode that means we go back to the



Carnotaurus! Their heads were the problem.

nearest port and restore the crew. Phew. (We also had to discard Event cards, in effect shortening the game.) The port was also a 'Market', so we went shopping to pick up some more weaponry. With this and a refreshed crew, we returned to see off the Carnotaurus. Yay!

We hadn't been everywhere on this map, but several Quests were pointing us towards the city of Alzarria to the south. So we headed off to a third atlas page, finding a region of red sandstone – and more deserts.

Alzarria itself was a treasure trove of adventure, opportunities and more Quests. We were building up an impressive array of 'stuff' that made our crew more powerful. The drawback is that most of these require the use of 'Command' tokens (the light blue wooden markers you'll see in the photos) and our supply of these was limited. Hence we were having to think carefully about what we spent our Command on. I'm now wondering if there are other sources of Command to be found in the game...

We called a halt after another five hours of totally absorbing play, by which time we were on our third and final Event deck. As the picture over the page shows, both ship and Captain are in much better health this time. And I can see a pot-roast in the near future (we have meat and vegetables).

Other things intruded the next day, but we re-convened two days later to finish off our Campaign. We managed to cover most of the red sandstone map, though there are still things we could go back to. However, I was keen that we pursue an intriguing Quest that would take us back to the wooded islands of the starting map. Off we went to the north-west, discovering that we were now strong enough to take on almost anything – though we also needed the resources to recover after a fight.

Generally, Quests don't direct you to a specific location, just an area. We had just one Event card left (almost game over) when we found the right place for our



The fabled city of Alzarria – do visit!



The end of day 2 and the ship's looking much better. Note the Quest cards on the left with keywords that will trigger things in the right circumstances.

Quest. Which turned out to contain one of the eponymous sleeping Gods! Yes, we had to fight a God. And its minions. Oh boy.

It turns out these Gods aren't as big as they think they are. We trashed the minions and took down the God (demi-god at most, I reckon) with (a few) resources to spare. Wow! What I hadn't expected was that, returning to the ship and setting off again, the familiar cityscape of New York appeared. We were home and that's a win! Just when we were expecting to lose. Wow again!

Over the page is a final shot of what was covering (most of) the table at the end of the game. Our 'stuff' is the cards in the middle of the bottom half of the photo, blue Command tokens in place where things have been used. The array of cards left of centre show keywords we haven't resolved – there's more to do!

The game has a scoring system (in particular, you get a bundle of points for playing in Brutal mode and lose points for each life lost in Normal mode) and we racked up exactly 100. However, there's nothing in the rules to say whether this is good or bad. Checking what's been reported on BoardGameGeek, it seems we were at the lower end (but not bottom) of successes.

For Tom and me, that was 13 hours of thoroughly absorbing and enjoyable play (in three sessions over four days). I was concerned initially that the game might not last long enough to get much done. I was very wrong, clearly. And a single turn can take a while – especially when there's a fight. I'm just blown away and *Sleeping Gods* gets 10/10 on my highly subjective scale.



The Manticore, its victorious crew and all their loot!

Sleeping Gods was designed by Ryan Laukat and is published by his imprint, Red Raven (www.redravengames.com). It is a paragraph/storytelling co-operative

game for 1-4 players, aged 13+, and can be played in 1-2 hour sessions with a full campaign taking up to 20 hours. Much of this review was originally published on my BGG blog (boardgamegeek.com/blog/8392) where you can also find reports of what else I played while I was away.

Reading matter

The second story in my CJ Cherryh omnibus (see *TWJO* 237 for the first) was *Serpent's Reach*, which I thought I'd read back in the day. It didn't take me long to realise that it was completely new to me. It's another story about humanity and aliens living together: in this case, the insectoid *majat*. Individuals are taller, faster and stronger than humans, but the *majat* are a hive mind. Which gives them a problem relating to humans where each individual is a Mind.



When the story opens, humans and *majat* have lived together in *Serpent's Reach* (star systems in the Hydrus constellation) for over 700 years, quarantined from the rest of human civilisation (Cherryh's Alliance-Union setting). Allowed to settle one ship of colonists on the *majat* planet, humans have spread to several systems about the Reach, taking *majat* with them (one of the ways the *majat* have benefitted from co-existing with humans).

This human society is highly stratified. At the top are the Kontrin, families descended from the original ship's crew who control trade (capitalising on the innate ability of *majat* as chemical engineers). They are fabulously wealthy and, essentially, can do whatever they want. The Betas – normal human beings – are the bulk of the population. At the bottom are the *azi*: genetically engineered with a short life span, indoctrinated/trained from birth to fulfil their particular role. This can be as a domestic servant, factory worker or soldier, for example, but a lot of *azi* go to the hives, providing hordes of dexterous workers for the *majat*.

The story centres on Raen, a teenage daughter of the “Sul sept” of the Meth-maren clan – the “hive-masters” who deal with the *majat* on behalf of humanity. However, another Meth-maren sept is estranged from the rest (families, eh?) and the story starts with them taking a bloody revenge. Raen escapes to blue hive, returning with a *majat* force to take her own vengeance. And leaving her as the only Meth-maren. Oops! This introduces us to the politics amongst the families, something Raen now has little influence over – though she does seem to have friends there.

The episodic story (it's divided into “Books”) dips into Raen's life at various times as she roams the Reach. However, there is increasing turmoil after 700 years of stasis, involving human politics, *majat* conflict and outside humans (there's one trading station as an interface between the Reach and human civilisation). Raen is at the heart of this, trying to get the ‘right’ outcome while not being sure what other factions are up to (nor they her).

Once again I was completely sucked in to the universe that Cherryh creates. The majat are wonderfully realised and suitably alien – though the human society portrayed is pretty alien too. And the story is as gripping as always, with Raen struggling to control – or at least influence – what’s happening. Though a major factor in the climax is a part of the majat lifecycle that humans haven’t experienced (they’ve only been there 700 years!). Highly recommended though, again, I’d like to see the beings of Serpent’s Reach in the larger setting of Alliance-Union space.

I thought it was about time I finished off the last of Bernard Cornwell’s “Sharpe” novels, *Sharpe’s Devil*. Except that Cornwell has now published *Sharpe’s Assassin* and *Sharpe’s Command* – one set before Devil and one after. More to enjoy!



Sharpe’s Devil takes our hero from his new life as a Normandy farmer to Chile, where his old friend, honourable Spaniard Don Blas Vivar, has disappeared. He was fighting both the rebels, who want independence, and the corrupt Spanish rulers, who are out for what they can get. Patrick Harper is along for the ride, of course – though he has to shed the weight he’s put on as a Dublin publican.

However, I suspect the whole thing is really an excuse for Cornwell to have Sharpe (courtesy of the Spanish officers whose journey across the Atlantic and Harper share) make a detour to a remote island called St Helena. Yes, Sharpe gets to meet the man whose armies he’s been fighting all these years. That’s just the prologue.

When he gets to Chile, it’s no surprise that things are not as expected. Sharpe’s plans change, he falls foul of the Spanish authorities and ends up fighting with the rebels. Cornwell has great fun introducing us to the larger-than-life but real Lord Thomas Cochrane. As a Royal Navy Captain Cochrane was so effective against the French and Spanish navies that Napoleon nicknamed him “The Sea Wolf”.

Disgraced in a Stock Exchange scandal, Cochrane became vice-Admiral of the rebel Chilean navy, his most notable exploit being the capture of Valdivia with just two ships and 300 men despite the seven forts defending the city. This battle is the climax of the novel and you have one guess who is right there in the middle of the fighting, ensuring Cochrane’s victory.

All in all, this is a romp as our familiar heroes get themselves into and out of trouble before doing what they do best – defeating the enemy. (Once they have identified just who the enemy is in this case.). It’s good fun and great to have Sharpe and Harper (I’ve just realised the two names are almost anagrams) back in harness, but I don’t think it adds much to the series.

Games Events

Handycon 10 takes place over the weekend of 27th-29th October at the Marriott Delta Hotel in Milton Keynes. I’ve never been to this event, but have had good

reports from those who have been. It’s mostly open gaming – with a games library of over 300 titles – plus some demo and exhibition games and a Bring ‘n’ Buy. See www.handycon.co.uk for more information.

The following weekend, 3rd-5th November, is an event I have been to: **MidCon** at its new venue of the Mickleover Court Hotel in Mickleover (near Derby). Expect open gaming and a few organised events, including a Bring ‘n’ Buy and a quiz. See midcon.org.uk for details.

The following box concentrates on events I used to attend.

Swiggers: games club that meets most Wednesday evenings (co-ordinated on WhatsApp) upstairs at The Shipwright’s Arms, 88 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TF (next to London Bridge station) – though without me these days. For more info, see www.pevans.co.uk/Swiggers

UK Games Expo: 31st May - 2nd June 2024 at the NEC. This is a public event that showcases games of all sorts with a huge trade hall plus demonstration and participation games and guests. For gamers there are lots of tournaments and open gaming. For details see www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk

Spiel: the board games event of the year. 3rd-6th October 2024, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany or see www.spiel-messe.com/en

MidCon: 3rd-5th November 2023 at the Mickleover Court Hotel in Mickleover (near Derby). **MidCon** is a friendly board games convention, but has been in a new venue since 2021 that I haven’t been to. Expect open gaming and a few organised events, including a Bring ‘n’ Buy and a quiz. See midcon.org.uk

Subscribing to TWJO

TWJO is published on paper and online at www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO (as a free PDF). If you want to play in any (or all) of the games in *TWJO*, you have two options. You can subscribe to the paper edition, which includes playing in the games. Or you can take the PDF edition and pay the “games only” subscription.

The table on the right shows the costs for the paper edition, including postage, and the games only subscription.

	UK	Other Europe	Rest of World	Games only
10-issue (1 year) subscription	£27.00	£36.00	£43.00	£5.00

To subscribe, send your name, address and payment to *To Win Just Once*, 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF, UK or TWJO@pevans.co.uk. You can pay by bank transfer (contact me for the account details), by UK cheque (payable to Margam Evans Ltd) or by PayPal to TWJO@pevans.co.uk. Or subscribe online at www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO, where you can pay by credit card or PayPal account.

The Wizard of Anharitte (Star Trader game 12)

Start-up

Five Corporations are expected to exploit the quadrant, though any arrivals will compete with little handicap. COSTA NOSTRA COFFEE INC. (CNCI) has an additional Piccolo Hull. MADNESS & MAYHEM (M&M's) has a Battle Comm Pod on their ship, which might be ominous. The boss of SOLAR SPICE & LIQUORS (SSL), Pevans van Rijn, has recruited Agent Crip to their team, which may prove advantageous. TREKBOER (TB) begins with a Flute hull rather than a Clarinet, streamlined and defensively useful as well. ROCKET TRADERS (RT) has influential friends!

Corporation Table

Corporation letter and name	Connections Bus/Crim/Pol	Init'v Turn Bid order	Cash Rep	Player
A Costa Nostra Coffee	7 0 0		500 20	Mark Cowper
B Madness & Mayhem	2 5 0		500 20	Anthony Gilbert
C Solar Spice & Liquors	1 3 3		500 20	Paul Evans
D TrekBoer	0 7 0		500 20	Mike Dyer
E Rocket Traders	9 0 0		500 20	Przemek Orwat

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

News

There are three new News chits. The current list (new chits in **bold**) is:

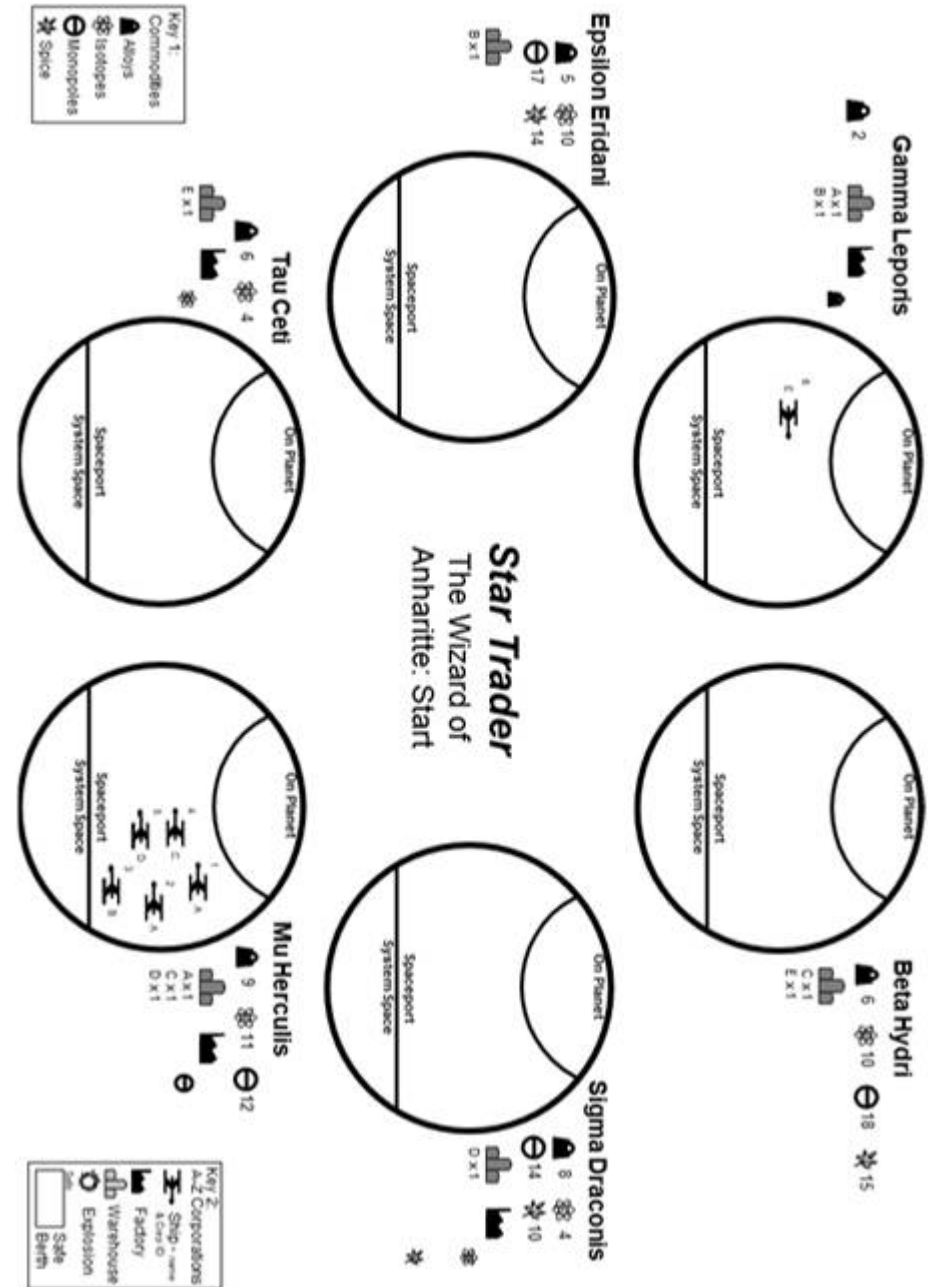
- Turn 2 C3
- Turn 3 P5 B4

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

GM Notes

Questions, ask me, Clever ideas, run them past me first. I hope you enjoy the game.

**Orders to Mike Dommatt, 12 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ
or by e-mail to mike_dommatt@yahoo.co.uk
by Friday 27th October 2023**



Trophy Hunter

Turn 1

This turn's shots

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

Key

Animals	Symbol	Size (squares)	Number on grid	Points Value
Bush	B	1	12	0
Monkey	M	1	12	4
Antelope	A	2	9	8
Snake	S	2	?	10
Gorilla	G	3	4	-12
Lion	L	3	4	15
Elephant	E	4	3	20

Other symbols

	X	Missed shot
--	---	-------------

UPPER CASE = this turn, lower case = last turn,
~~Strikeout~~ = dead animal

Notes: animals go up and down or left and right, not diagonally, with two exceptions. Elephants are blocks of four squares; each Snake is two diagonal squares and moves by up to three squares a turn.

Animals only touch (if at all) at corners and only Snakes will go next to a Bush.

What's this all about?

This game is essentially a *Battleships* variant and is open to all readers of *TWJO*. The 20 x 20 grid represents a safari park that needs to cull some of its animals (except the gorillas). The players are hunters who've paid to bag trophies.

All you have to do each turn is nominate two squares to take pot-shots at: F9 and M17, say (the second is only used if the first misses). Letters (A-T) run across the top of the grid and numbers (1-20) down the side (A1 is thus the top left corner).

The first hit on each animal scores points in proportion to its size. For example, a Lion is three squares and worth 15 points, so the first hit scores $15/3 = 5$ points. If several players hit the same square at the same time, they share the points; if several players hit different squares of the same animal at the same time, they get the points for the square they hit.

Well, some spectacularly wild shooting starts things off. Charles Burrows and Chris Rudram show their intent by hitting the same Gorilla. Oops! Now they're a bit more endangered.

Mind you, Andrew Larder, Tim Macaire and Paul Wilson all hit something: bushes that look suspiciously like stalking Lions. Apparently.

Trust Mike Pollard to open the scoring by winging an actual Lion, but he is matched by Pam Udowiczenko, who hits one of the elusive snakes. Targets acquired!

And I've just realised that, sadly, one thing missing from this game will be the late Chris Baylis's wacky interjections. Could anyone else take up his mantle?

Once an animal has been identified, subsequent shots share the points of new squares hit (no more points for the first square/s). So if players A and B hit the second square of that lion and C gets the third, C gets 5 points, A and B 2½.

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

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

Scores

Player	Shots	This turn	Total
Colin Bruce	J7, K10	0	0
Charles Burrows	C5, G7	-4	-4
Mark Cowper	M13, T20	0	0
Anthony Gilbert	H2, S4	0	0
William Hay	K5, K7	0	0
Andrew Kendall	A4, T10	0	0
Andrew Larder	B3, C3	B	0
Tim Macaire	C3	B	0
Brad Martin	E2, G9	0	0
Graeme Morris	C9, L15	0	0
Mike Pollard	I16, H15	5	5
Eddy Richards	T2, S4	0	0
Alex Richardson	A1, T20	0	0
Chris Rudram	G6	-4	-4
Pam Udowiczenko	C5, F11	5	5
Matthew Wale	S19, B2	0	0
John Watson	J18, C4	0	0
Graeme Wilson	C4, H6	0	0
Paul Wilson	D7	B	0

GM Notes

I've adjusted the numbers of animals slightly from what I said in the start-up: two fewer Gorillas and one more Lion and Elephant.

Send shots to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF or to TWJO@pevans.co.uk by 3rd November 2023.

Troodos (*Railway Rivals* game 18 - RR2528CY)

Start-up

The new game is on the Cyprus Map and starts with four players. Not run this map before.

MediTerranean (MT), Anthony Gilbert – Red

Starts: Larnaca

Points: 20 = **20**

Canterbury Railways (CR), Rob Pinkerton – Blue

Starts: Famagusta

Points: 20 = **20**

All Greek To Me (AGTM), Mike Dyer – Black

Starts: Kyrenia

Points: 20 = **20**

Inland Ironhorse International (III), Chris Rudram - Green

Starts: Lapithos

Points: 20 = **20**

GM Notes

Order layouts: Your Name, Company Name, Company Colour

The Troodos Mountains are where the built railway (the Cyprus Government Railway) terminated.

[Pevans notes: the map has "Famagusa" instead of Famagusta, but I've added the t on my copy.]

First Builds: **4, 3, 6**

**Orders to Mike Dommett, 12 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ
or by e-mail to mike_dommett@yahoo.co.uk
by Friday 27th October 2023**

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

**Orders for May 1675 to Pevans at 180
Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10
8UF, UK or lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk
by Friday 3rd November 2023**



April 1675 (374)

It seems some of the duels scheduled for the start of April are just Fool's errands. Only one of the six expected actually takes place – though Come Asiouar and Zeold von Tu have doctor's notes to excuse them from their appointments. And we shouldn't overlook Tiny Thierry Toothpick's excuse – he's "too busy being Colonel".

Thomas de la Lune and Frank X Change are made of sterner stuff and cross swords – rapier for Lune and sabre for Change. Lune is carrying some old wounds, which would make this an even fight, but Change is far less proficient with his weapon. Neither man has a second, Ben e'Volence not deigning to show up in support of Change.

Change goes defensive, opting for a parry against the possibility of a lunge. But Lune simply thwacks him with a slash – not that this does much damage with the side of his rapier. Change expects a cut and jumps aside only to be hit by a lunge. This is not going well for the Cuirassier. He finally gets in a lick with a slash of his own before trying a second parry. Lune just hits him with another slash and then a lunge. The final blow is a cut from Lune following another jump from Change, who now surrenders, well battered by the five blows.

Of lice and men

Next on the calendar is the trial of Subaltern Zeold von Tu of the Cardinal's Guard. A good crowd gathers in the public gallery as there hasn't been a decent trial for months. Neville Moore splashes out to provide refreshments – including wine – for his associates on the hard seats.

The Commissioner of Public Safety, Sir Claude de Nord, prosecutes the charges of "financial irregularities and malicious activities pertaining to the health and wealth of the King". His case rests on the testimony of one man: M Croc. A well-dressed elderly gentleman takes the stand. He is wearing black patent leather shoes, knee high white stockings and pale blue velvet pantaloons with a matching jacket. Atop his head is a towering three-foot high grey powder wig – more akin to a wedding cake than a hairpiece.

"Monsieur Croc, please take the oath and confirm your name and occupation," the prosecutor requests. After swearing allegiance to the King, the witness states: "Didier Croc, purveyor of fine wigs and fashion accessories to the crown and nobility."

Composing himself, Nord asks, "M Croc, please tell us what happened to your business and reputation."

"It is quite outrageous, sir. About two months ago a man entered my world-famous toupée emporium and offered to supply me with quality human hair at half the price of my normal supplier. I, of course, being an astute business man, accepted his offer on the condition I could view the goods first. He showed me some exquisite samples and I placed an order for 1,000 crowns worth of pubic hair."

Raising his hand, Sir Claude interrupts, "Male or female?"

"I don't discriminate, Sir. My motto is 'If I like the hair, I do not care'. Although sometimes a petite sniff can reveal the origin." The CPS looks quizzical. "You see the male pubic hair has a certain odour," continues Croc, "different from that of the lady..."

"There's no need for too much detail, M Croc."

"The first order arrived and, on inspection, appeared clean and healthy. This batch was assigned to an order for the palace staff and possibly the King himself." A small outbreak of chattering ripples round the public gallery – along with another tray of snacks. "My weavers and tailors had begun to construct the wigs when they found eggs."

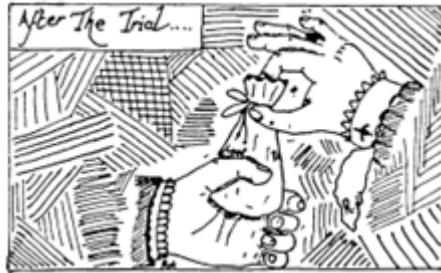
"Eggs, monsieur? Please elaborate."

"Pubic lice oeufs! Can you imagine the catastrophe if my wigs, full of lice, ended up at the palace? If, at some diplomatic reception, a crab leapt from the head of King into the prawn vol au vent of some head of state?" Mutters and rumbles of disgust fill the court.

"M Croc, looking around the courtroom, do you see the charlatan, fraudster, despicable con man that falsely sold you this inferior pubic hair?" enquires Sir Claude.

M Croc steadies himself and sits up straight, “Oui, sieur. It is the man that is here today as the accused, Zeold von Tu!” The Prosecutor relaxes and concludes, “That is the case for the prosecution.”

Von Tu is eager to present his defence. “Your Grace,” he addresses Minister Beau Reese Jean Seine in the judge’s seat, “I cannot believe that the insensate rage and anti-clericalism of the heathen CPS can be allowed to affect the just and mature deliberations of your Court. I have never done anything to offend His Majesty (Whom God Preserve) or any of his Ministers.



But ever since I devoted a portion of my time to serving Mother Church and her Cardinal, the fiend de Nord has lost no opportunity to attack me. Last month his blade put me closer to death than any officer has ever been without burial. This month, not content with these obviously baseless charges, he is attempting to murder me again in what he calls a duel and Paris will call an abuse of brute strength. Duels are outside your sphere, but I implore you not to let the Fiend’s abuse of the office to which he should never have been appointed besmirch my good name and that of this honourable Court.” This recital of the abuses perpetrated on him has clearly affected von Tu and he weeps piteously.

Minister Seine scratches his head, almost dislodging his fine wig. “While the charges are somewhat of a surprise and the evidence not wholly convincing, I am sure the defendant, a religious man, will agree with me that we are all sinners in the eyes of the Lord. I am also sure the Commissioner would not have charged the defendant if they weren’t up to something. I therefore find the defendant guilty and sentence him to pay a suitable fine.”

After conferring with the Minister, who is busy filling a purse from his own funds, Court officials assess the suitable amount to be 800 crowns. Coincidentally, this is the same amount that von Tu receives from a benefactor right after the trial. However, von Tu clearly feels the shame of his conviction, despite the minimal penalty, and insists on offering his services to a Frontier regiment in atonement.

Goings and comings

After the commander of the First Division refused to retire last month, Beau Reese Jean Seine, Camille de Polignac and Rick Shaw gang up on the man this time. Their combined influence makes the pressure on the Lieutenant-General irresistible and he duly quits. Adjutant General Shaw is thus able to appoint Lt-Gen Louis Renault to command First Div (while continuing to leave Second Div without a leader). Renault sends Polignac a thank-you gift.

Armand Alsace is a new arrival in Paris and wastes no time in signing up for the 53rd Fusiliers. He is a well-funded young man, able to buy the rank of Major and the required horses immediately. Then he’s off to assume command of First Battalion in action.

After their casualties last month, the Grand Duke Max’s Dragoons need fresh officers, so CO Louis Severin Descartes is quick to accept applicants. And there is no shortage of these. Elroi le Flingue is the first and takes the rank of Subaltern.

Next is the fresh face of Marche D’Eon. He has his sights set a bit higher, on a Captaincy. He touches up Xavier Ulric Turenne – presumably a friend of the family – for a loan, but doesn’t get one. Instead, Turenne gives him some money. Sadly, not enough for Eon to realise his ambition. He has to settle for the rank of Subaltern. This is particularly bad news as he doesn’t have the rank to take the position as Aide to Lt-General Turenne that he’s been promised. Mind you, Turenne already has an Aide, so there’s no vacancy to begin with.

Another new man in Paris is Pierre Lonjue and he, too, applies to the GDMD. However, he’s first paid a visit to the moneylenders and borrowed the cash needed to buy a Captaincy. Once Descartes has admitted him, Lonjue is quick to secure the rank (and a horse). Like the other new GDMD recruits, Lonjue is off to join the regiment in action.

Commander of the Crown Prince Cuirassiers Ben e’Volence signs up Stephane Etrange, who’s resigned his Captaincy in the 13th Fusiliers in anticipation of this. Receiving a hefty gift from his new CO, Etrange resumes the rank of Captain in his new regiment.

The surname Chevalier-Cavalier may be familiar, but Michael C-C – cousin to the late Kitt – is new to Paris. He applies – with a letter of recommendation – to Phillipe F’Loppe for entry to the Dragoon Guards and F’Loppe “wholeheartedly approves”. Chevalier-Cavalier purchases the rank of Captain and looks forward to his first month in Paris.

However, Horse Guards Brigadier Terence Cuckpowder has other ideas. He sends the Dragoon Guards to the front, which F’Loppe wasn’t expecting. Nor was Lt-Colonel Claude Oppere, who had been keenly anticipating the Jacques As Memorial Stakes at the end of April.



The Royal Marines are on the march as well, CO Henri DuShite mobilising them in anticipation of a river-born attack on Dutch positions. This takes Major Jean-Claude Etienne by surprise – he, too, wanted to take part in the horse race.

Sport(s) of Kings

The big events in April have to be Neville Moore's Chess tournament (Hunter's, week 2) and the annual Jacques As Memorial horse race (Prix d'Or, week 4) sponsored by the Crown Prince. In addition, the devout Louis Renault holds court in Bothwell's (week 3) and Xavier Money hosts his annual Easter Egg hunt (unfortunately clashing with the race).

Hence, the first week of the month looks quiet – *Poisson d'Avril* pranks aside. However, Greg de Bécqueur takes the opportunity to host a few friends (?) in the Fleur with Bette Noire. Xavier Ulric Turenne is first to arrive, with Laura de Land on his arm. Eclair de Lame is next, accompanied by Lucy Fur. Justin Thyme escorts Guinevere d'Arthur. Les Anonyme has Carole Singeurs with him. And Lou Scannon brings Bess Ottede. A good time is had by all.

Less so by Louis Renault, who arrives at the Fleur expecting to be admitted as the guest of Camille de Polignac. However, there is no sign of Camille. Ben e'Volence is certainly in the club, showing Lotte Bottle a good time. Bernard de Lur-Saluces takes up a table on his own, nursing a drink. Beau Reese Jean Seine is in attendance with Chris Pacquette. Claude de Nord celebrates his first (and crucial) successful prosecution with Madelaine de Proust. Jean Jeanie brings Jacky Tinne. And Pierre Cardigan and Justine Caisse occupy their usual table – they'll probably be there all month.

Bothwell's has visits from Martin de Garnache and Fifi and Rick Shaw and Therèse Le Vert. But outside the club is Camille de Polignac, expecting to be the guest of Louis Renault. Oops! Some diary co-ordination required, gentlemen.

Antoine d'Eques is to be found in Hunter's with Eve Ningalle. Antoine brings up the topic of horses "in the hopes of getting a few tips for the end-of-month race". It seems that this is not one of Eve's interests, so Antoine asks if she can remind him "what the horsey is really called in chess." The same club is where Neville Moore and Vera Cruz pass the time. For Frank X Change and Agnes Sorel, it's Frank's new club, Blue Gables. The Frog & Peach sees new member Stephane Etrange bring Thomasina Tancenjin and Tiny Thierry Toothpick escort Sue Briquet. Even Red Phillips is occupied, the member in question being Ray de Sofdelosdarc, who has Lois de Lô for company.

The Bawdyhouses do a decent trade as well, Maurice Pauvre, Ramond Repose de la Tombe and Vinne d'Pooh all get their oats. Maurice looks an attractive target to the footpads (though it's Ramond who's received enough cash from Louis Renault to pay off his loans and buy a new horse), but his purse is empty.

Felipe Savant, Hector William Boone and Pierre a'Noyer are in their regimental gymnasium (they're all members of the Royal Foot Guards) to practise their rapier skills. It's rapier practice for Jacques de Gain, of course. And Horse Guards Brigadier Terence Cuckpowder is the one man improving his sabre expertise.

Black and white

You wouldn't expect a Chess tournament to be rowdy, but Neville Moore finds the one he's hosting a real challenge. With 10 entrants, the initial round of matches involves just the four lowest-rated players. Both games go to form, Maurice Pauvre beating Louis Renault and Ramond Repose de la Tombe (confident, since he's playing white) defeating Ray de Sofdelosdarc. Ray is consoled by Lois while Louis relaxes alone.

Maurice's reward is a match against top seed Felipe Savant. Felipe has a mare of a game, missing some obvious moves, and loses conclusively despite the support of Pet Ulante. (Good job he borrowed some cash as there's no prize money for him.) Second seed Tiny Thierry Toothpick is the opponent for Ramond (less confident with black) and it's a straightforward win for the little man, despite his complaint that the pieces are too big. The mid-ranked players are in the tournament now. Antoine d'Eques takes on Vinne d'Pooh and they draw two games before Antoine wins one. Gaz Moutarde beats Come Asiouar in a tight game.

This means the semi-finals are Antoine versus Maurice and Gaz versus Tiny Thierry. Antoine romps home in his match while Gaz baffles Thierry with his unusual opening to take an unexpected victory. Sue is on hand to comfort Thierry. However, Antoine (egged on by Eve Ningalle who's standing behind his opponent and waving her arms around) has the measure of Gaz's gambit and wins the final easily to claim the 500-crown first prize – half that for second-placed Gaz, loyally supported by Anne Tique (whom he was at home with the week before).

Now that their attention is lifted from the chequered board, the contestants take in the other uniforms and people present. To start with, Antoine and Ray are in enemy regiments. Ray breaks away from this disagreement to challenge the non-nobles he's spotted: Maurice and Vinne d'Pooh, who's the tournament's sole spectator. Vinne is also an



enemy of Tiny Thierry, so that's another argument. In addition, Thomas de la Lune is in Hunter's this week and attracted by the commotion. He is challenged by his regimental enemies, Come, Maurice and Ramond, and those who consider him hoi polloi – Ray and Thierry. And, not to be out-done, Louis has cause with Thomas too. That's his mistress, Katy Did, now on Thomas's arm!

Chess has no attraction for Greg de Bécqueur – he continues to host guests in the Fleur. Eclair and Lucy, Justin and Guinevere, Les and Carole, Lou and Bess, Xavier and Laura are all in attendance again. They are joined this week by Xavier

Money and Kathy Pacific (who spent the previous week together at her place) and Camille de Polignac.

The others in the Fleur this week are much the same as last week: Beau and Chris, Ben and Lotte, Bernard and Pierre and Justine. Martin and Fifi take their places in Bothwell's again, as do Rick and Thérèse. Blue Gables remains the venue for Frank and Agnes, while Stephane and Thomasina are back in the Frog & Peach.

The gyms continue to be popular, with Hector and Pierre in the RFG's facilities with their rapiers. Jacques de Gain continues working out, of course. The sabre-wielding Terence is still at it too. Claude de Nord opts for sabre practice, which means he can't use the King's Musketeers gym. And Jean Jeanie is paying for his rapier training.

Week 3 sees Louis Renault's post-mass "polite discussion" in Bothwell's. Louis is without his usual co-host now that Katy has transferred her affections elsewhere. This doesn't stop plenty of socialites from showing up, of course. We start with Antoine d'Eques and Eve making "polite social intercourse". Then we have Claude de Nord and Madelaine. Felipe Savant brings Pet. Gaz Moutarde and Anne are out and about again. Martin de Garnache escorts Fifi, while Maurice Pauvre is alone. Neville Moore has Vera on his arm. Then Ray de Sofdelosdarc arrives with Lois and the fun starts. First, Ray renews his challenge with Antoine, then he takes further exception to Maurice. Ramond Repose de la Tombe strolls in during all the fuss without anyone noticing. Tiny Thierry Toothpick accompanies Sue Briquet. Vinne d'Pooh is last on the list, swapping confrontations with Thierry and being sneered at by Ray again.

Rick Shaw and Thérèse are the other members in Bothwell's. Thomas de la Lune is staying out of the fray by visiting an otherwise empty Hunter's with Katy. Blue Gables contains Frank X Change and Agnes once more. And it's Stephane Etrange and Thomasina at the Frog & Peach.

This leaves Greg de Bécqueur and Bette's continuing bash in the Fleur de Lys. The guest list is a bit shorter this week: just Les Anonyme and Carole, Camille de Polignac, Eclair de Lame and Lucy, Justin Thyme and Guinevere and Xavier Money and Kathy. Bernard de Lur-Saluces has a guest too. Xavier Ulric Turenne has brought Laura to Toady. And Lou Scannon and Bess Toady to the Crown Prince so that the Prince can finalise arrangements for next week with his Aide.

Jean Jeanie and Jacky return to the Fleur. Ben e'Volence and Lotte are there again. So are Beau Reese Jean Seine and Chris. And Pierre Cardigan and Justine.

Hector William Boone and Pierre a'Noyer keep on practising with their rapiers in the RFG gym. Commercial establishments are where Jacques de Gain and Terence Cuckpowder continue their workouts. His courting at the start of March having succeeded, Come Asiouar opts to do nothing this week.

Galloping on

Which brings us to the horse race. And the Easter Egg hunt. Guess which is better attended? Despite the competition, Xavier Money gamely continues his event in his new club, Bothwell's, with Kathy Pacific. Claude de Nord brings Madelaine to hunt the chocolate – and finds plenty on offer. Ramond Repose de la Tombe and Vinne d'Pooh come without companions, keen to find those eggs. Pierre Cardigan and Justine have the Fleur to themselves.

Jacques de Gain is still practising with his rapier, while Bernard de Lur-Saluces and Hector William Boone are in the red-light district. Separately! Beau Reese Jean Seine takes the opportunity to go courting, only to find his intended is out.

Everybody else has gone to the Prix d'Or. The influx of socialites along with the Dauphin's escort mean the Prix is free of the more disreputable types. For the moment. This allows Jean Jeanie to visit with Jacky and observe the race. A total of 19 horsemen – of varying proficiency – line up at the start. Joint favourites are Ben e'Volence (cheered on by Lotte) and Justin Thyme (supported by Guinevere).

His Highness signals the start of the race from his place on the grandstand, surrounded by the ladies. The two favourites are in the lead as the horses arrive at the first corner, closely followed by Eclair de Lame (Lucy shouting encouragement), Greg de Bécqueur (Bette is his supporter) and Terence Cuckpowder (Morgane is in the stand) with Frank X Change (backed by Agnes) just behind them. The main pack is in two halves: Antoine d'Eques (who would really like another cushion on his saddle), Camille de Polignac (Angelina cheering him on), Felipe Savant (backed by Pet), Gaz Moutarde (with support from Anne), Tiny Thierry Toothpick on his pony (Sue cheers for both of them) and Xavier Ulric Turenne (championed by Laura) are the first line, followed by Les Anonyme, Louis Renault, Martin de Garnache (with backing from Fifi), Maurice Pauvre, Rau de Sofdelosdarc (Lois backs him), Rick Shaw (getting support from Thérèse) and Stephane Etrange. And Neville Moore brings up the rear despite Vera's vocal encouragement from the grandstand.

They jostle around the bend and first to enter the back straight is Justin. He's just half a length ahead of Ben, who's been caught by the speedy Gaz and Thierry's

nimble pony. Eclair is next, ahead of Antoine, who's now level with Frank. Greg and Terence are the next pair. Neville has made good progress, catching up with Felipe and Xavier – as has Louis. Les, Camille and Maurice have all



dropped back, but not as badly as Martin and Stephane. Ray and Rick are now in the wooden spoon position, losing out badly in the jostling.

Time to give the horses their heads down the back straight. Arriving at the second corner it's a flying Eclair in the lead. Hanging on to his stirrups (not literally!) is Tiny Thierry, who's got half a length ahead of Gaz. Justin's mount seems to be just trotting and he's now in fourth, with Ben alongside him. Maurice is another man with a really fast horse and is now half a length behind those two, bumping shoulders with the almost as fast Louis, Neville, Greg and Antoine. Stephane has speeded up and is in the next group with the struggling Frank and Terence. Camille, Felipe and Martin are next. Zavier has gone backwards quite a bit to be level with Ray and Rick, who are feeling better now they've put Les behind them.

Pounding round the corner, the riders urge their horses into the final sprint for the line. And, at the finish, Eclair has eased off a bit, allowing Justin to catch him (now he's applied his spurs) for a joint win. They are a full length up on the fading Thierry (both pony and rider only have little legs after all) and Gaz, who are joined on the line by Greg to be joint third. Antoine, Ben, Louis and Maurice just miss out. Half a length back is Stephane, just ahead of Camille, Felipe, Ray, Rick and Terence. Frank's horse hasn't got any faster while Neville's appears blown and they are next to finish. Martin trots in behind them, followed closely by Les. Zavier is dead last.

The muddy horsemen join the Prince (and their ladies) in the grandstand for presentation of prizes and the promised refreshments. A trio of men in pristine outfits present themselves at the door, but are summarily dismissed. His Highness's invitation was only for those taking part in the race. Come Asiouar, Pierre a'Noyer and Thomas de la Lune really should have read the published invitation. The Prince's Aide, Lou Scannon, whose uniform is also immaculate, is able to get to the Prince's side. "Didn't I see you last week?" demands His Highness, waving his goblet a little wildly. "Well, once a month is plenty – bugger orf!" And Lou trudges home.

Another thrashing

The French forces in the United Provinces are still being pressured by the combination of Spanish, Imperial and Dutch forces. The Grand Duke Max Dragons are bolstered with fresh recruits and Dragoon Brigadier Jacques Hatt carefully chooses his new Brigade Major – the senior Major from the Princess Louisa's Light Dragons. Does this help? Well...

Louis Severin Descartes, commanding the GDMD, is certainly more circumspect in his approach. When they encounter Imperial cavalry this month, Descartes draws up his men into a battle line, checking the terrain between them and the enemy. Then the opposing horsemen retire to reveal massed artillery batteries. The opening salvo destroys the organised ranks of the Dragons, officers trying to

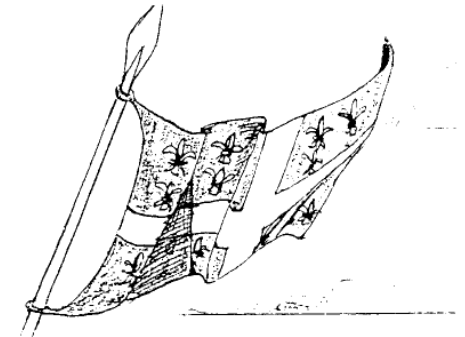
rally their commands and retire in good order. Except for new Captain Pierre Lonjue, who is a direct hit for a cannonball. RIP.

Descartes receives a Mention in Despatches, as does Lieutenant-Colonel Alvin Charles. But only Charles gets a Knighthood. Subaltern Elroy le Flingue dodges a cannonball and is brevetted to Captain. And Subaltern Marche D'Eon gets the Captaincy he couldn't afford to buy.

By contrast, the PLLD have a peaceful month so there's no reward for the commander, Balzac Slapdash.

Keeping an eye on the GDMD, Brigadier Hatt has a close call with the artillery barrage, too, which gets him Mentioned.

The Dragoon Guards did not anticipate being in action, which may explain why they don't expect the Spanish ... cavalry. Well, it's actual Spanish and Imperial horsemen who attack them, but it's hard to tell the difference when you're being hacked by a sabre. There are two Mentions for Phillipe F'Loppe as he tries to steady his men and then leads the core of the regiment in a "tactical withdrawal". Captain Michael Chevalier-Cavalier gains a Mention, too, as he follows his commander's lead and is brevetted to Major. But Lt-Colonel Claude Oppere tries to stand firm against the attack even as the troopers around him melt away and gets on the wrong end of several sabres. RIP.



It's a quieter month for the 53rd Fusiliers and the under-strength regiment holds its positions under artillery fire. New Major Armand Alsace is brevetted to Lt-Colonel and thus takes over command of the regiment. He also makes a little cash sending *objets* (aka shrapnel) back to Paris as "battlefield souvenirs".

The big success is the Royal Marines, who take to the water. Using small boats appropriated from the local peasantry, they surprise siege positions outside Maastricht and chase off the Dutch forces. The returning boats are rather more heavily laden than when they left. CO Henri DuShite claims some 700 crowns worth of captured loot, but Major Jean-Claude Etienne amasses nearly a thousand crowns worth. However, DuShite collects a Mention in Despatches into the bargain, for his daring escapade.

Having volunteered for some action, Cardinal's Guard Subaltern Zeold von Tu is attached to Frontier regiment 3. Manning battlements isn't usually a job for Guardsmen, but von Tu acquits himself well against probing attacks from the Dutch, to earn promotion to Captain. ❖

Press

Announcements

Aide sought for Brigadier General.
Apply to myself.

† Beau Reese Jean Seine

The 4th Arquebusiers welcome any likely lads (as in like a fight). † TdLL

Aspiring Captain sought for Aide position to LtGen Turenne.

Bullet-dodgers need not apply. † ZUT

The Picardy Musketeers are looking for fine young men, especially those with the qualities that would make them good Officers. Financial assistance available to those Officers that need it.

Officers and Men sought for France's premier regiment.

† Beau Reese Jean Seine,
officer commanding RFG

**** Join the QOC ****

Gentleman of Paris, if you are new to the city or are looking for a new Regiment, then you can do no better than join the Queen's Own Carabiniers.

Please contact me for more details, and some financial help is available.

† Marquis Thyme

Matters of Honour

Apparently I missed a duel with Tiny Terry Toothpick. If I can find him, I'll fight him. But he is hard to see...

Despatches from the Front

It is with a heavy heart that we give our final salute to our fine officers and friends, Tristand Sault and Fouche la Vache.

The Reiksguard has cut short their promising military careers and, as their commanding officer, it is my painful duty to notify their next of kin and to see them off from this world to the next.

May God bless their souls and give them the peace they could not enjoy in this life.

And now, where is that Reiksguard stationed? We have ourselves some Imperials to kill!

† Louis Severin Descartes
Br. Brigadier General GDMD
Aide to Field Marshall

Social

I will be hosting a reception for 4A and friends (and enemies!) at my club next month, week 1. † TdLL

Colonel Maurice Pauve will host a Party week 4 at his club, for any who would not have cause to duel with him. April, Week 4, costs paid for gentlemen and their ladies carousing.

All members of the Royal Foot Guards or King's Musketeers and Ministers of the crown are invited to a party at my club in the first week of May.

† Beau Reese Jean Seine

Military Missives

To Colonel F'loppe

I am Michael Chevalier-Cavalier, second son of Baron Chevalier-Cavalier, who for many years was a stalwart of the King's Musketeers. Sadly, that regiment is being run by a Plebian called Du'Nord, so I cannot plunge the regiment into disgrace if I look to follow my father. My father strongly recommends that I apply for the Dragoon Guards instead and I have the funds and credentials to join as one of the Junior Captains. I enclose my father's letter of recommendation and look forward to your reply; hopefully you will approve my application.

Yours hopefully,

† Michael

Note from PFL:

After receiving correspondence from Michael Chevalier-Cavalier to join the Dragoon Guards as a Captain, I will wholeheartedly approve his application.

Personal

To: Sir Claude de Nord, Commissioner of Public Safety

Monsieur Commissioner,

May I say how proud I am to act as your Deputy, wonderful job.

Can I further add if you ever feel that the job gets too much for you, what with you being a Colonel of the King's Musketeers, conducting a relationship etc, then I'd be more than happy to take over from you. I've read all about the job and I found these sets of old scrolls from past Commissioners Fluff-

Bunny and Al-Abowt which give a very detailed explanation of what's required as well as how to 'sniff out' witches and werewolves – apparently there are quite a few of them at large within Paris!

Yes, it must be very tiring for you, and I'd hate for you to become so exhausted you couldn't lead the KMs to war in the coming Summer Campaign. Best you step down now. I've drawn up a contract of succession and if you can just pop your signature down at the bottom, I'll have it sent over to Count Seine so he can add his signature of approval. You'll always be most welcome to drop by if you're ever passing the Bastille, I can even give you a tour of the cells so you can see how criminals get treated – none of your kid gloves stuff under me!

Loyal regards,

† Colonel Tint Thierry Toothpick
69th Arquebusiers
Deputy Commissioner of Public
Safety

As his carriage arrived in Paris, Michael Chevalier-Cavalier once again looked at the scribbled note he had received a month before from his cousin Kit. His uncle had taken the death of his son hard and asked Michael if he would look into events and avenge the family if possible.

“Coz, I am onto something HUGE. It goes right to the Heart of our Government and is electoral fraud on a massive scale, involving the DOMINION. I have engineered a move to the front to meet an informant – should anything happen to me (and that is highly unlikely), I will leave

you a sealed package with Madame Whiplash, House of Paign, Monte Matre, inside a large Creme cake. Enjoy! Otherwise, see you for Christmas.”

Silly Kit, always over-confident, taking risks with that poor soul Pauvre (Garcon-Riche), scared witless, clinging to his coat-tails. Now both gone. But I am clever and not reckless and DOMINION, whatever or whoever you are, I am on your trail...

Mon. Tiny Thierry Toothpick,
Hurry up and get on with your job, you miserable wretch. Also try acquainting yourself with water and soap – you smell like a sow's bottom after curry night on the farm.
You have one thing, one thing to do!
† Claude

Poetry Corner

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

Choosing a Regiment, first can you ride?

If the answer is no, then consider your pride.

If you've got a title, you could join the Guards, but

If not, then for you it's a Brigade of Foot.

You'll be OK to fulfil your mission,

At least until you secure a commission,

When promoted to officer you will need a gee-gee,

So why not learn now? Come join the cavalry!

† FXC

Points Arising

Next deadline is 3rd November

Thanks to Andrew Larder, Tim Macaire and Bill Hay for the courtroom nonsense.

Welcome

Joining us for the May turn is Paul Robbins. Though I should say rejoining as he played many years ago. Welcome back, Paul.

Farewell

Mark Nightingale is “struggling to find time to play properly” and has not taken up his new character. I hope real life calms down soon, Mark, and you can rejoin us.

Absent friends

I didn't receive orders from the following (No Move Received) and they suffered the consequences:
AC Alexandre Capone (Ray Vahey) has NMR'd. Total now 2 and is sent to a Frontier regiment

Announcements

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

Marche D'Eon applies for Aide to Lt. General

Duels

Results of April's duels

Neither Jean-Claude Etienne nor Tiny Thierry Toothpick turned up for their duel and both lost SPs.

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 an email group for *En Garde!* players and GMs, providing a forum to swap stories and ideas. Sign up at: <https://groups.io/g/EnGarde>

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

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

Zeold von Tu declined to meet Claude de Nord as he was under half Endurance.

Tiny Thierry Toothpick didn't turn up to fight Maurice Pauvre and lost SPs.

Grudges to settle next month

Louis Renault (Rapier, Seconds ZUT & MP, 3 rests) has cause with Thomas de la Lune (Rapier, adv.) for pinching Katy.

Antoine d'Eques (Sabre, adv.) and Ray de Sofdelosdarc (Rapier, 3 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Come Asiouar (Rapier, 4 rests) and Thomas de la Lune (Rapier, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Ray de Sofdelosdarc (Rapier, 4 rests) has cause with Maurice Pauvre (Rapier, Seconds LR & ZUT, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Maurice Pauvre (Rapier, Seconds LR & ZUT, 3 rests) and Thomas de la Lune (Rapier, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Ray de Sofdelosdarc (Rapier, 5 rests) has cause with Thomas de la Lune (Rapier, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Ray de Sofdelosdarc (Rapier, 3 rests) has cause with Vinne d'Pooh (Cutlass, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Ramond Repose de la Tombe (Rapier, 5 rests) and Thomas de la Lune (Rapier, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Tiny Thierry Toothpick (Dagger, Seconds CdN, 5 rests) has cause with Thomas de la Lune (Rapier, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Tiny Thierry Toothpick (Dagger, Seconds CdN, 1 rests) and Vinne d'Pooh (Cutlass, 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 unless held over (below). Orders conditional on a challenge being voted cause are acceptable.

Duels held over until June

Balzac Slapdash versus Pierre a'Noyer.

Ray de Sofdelosdarc versus Alexandre Capone.

Louis Severin Descartes versus Come Asiouar.

New Characters

Paul Murphy gets the First son of a very wealthy Merchant: Init SL 4; Cash 550; MA 2; EC 3 (X1).

Steven Malecek gets the Second son of a Peasant: Init SL 2; Cash 10; MA 6; EC 5 (X2).

Paul Robbins gets the Bastard son of a wealthy Gentleman: Init SL 3; Cash 450; MA 1; EC 3 (X3).

Tables

Other Appointments

King's Escort: Ensign N	Captain PaN
Cardinal's Escort: Ensign ZvT	Captain N
Aides: to Crown Prince LS	to Field Marshal LSD
Provincial Military Governors: N/N/N/N/N	
City Military Governor N	Adjutant-General RS
Inspectors-General: of Cavalry N	of Infantry N
Commissioner of Public Safety CdN (until end December 1675)	
Chancellor of the Exchequer __	
Minister of Justice CdP (until end September 1675)	
Minister of War BeV (until end February 1676)	
Minister of State BRJS (until end January 1676)	

Shows who holds appointments outside military units (except Aides): ID for Characters, "N" for NPC, __ for vacant, "CPS" for extra posts held by the CPS

Army Organisation and 1675's Summer Deployment

First Army (Defence)	__/_/N2/N
Cavalry Division (Defence)	N4/N/N2
Heavy Brigade (Defence) - ALC CPC	
Dragoon Brigade (Defence) - GDMD PLLD	
Frontier Division (Defence)	N1/N/N3
Frontier Regiments (Defence)	
Second Army (Siege)	__/_/N4/N
First Division (Assault)	LR/N/N4
Guards Brigade (Assault) - RFG CG KM	
1st Foot Brigade (Assault) - RM PM	
RNHB Regiment (Assault)	
Second Division (Siege)	__/_/N2
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

Brigade Positions

Guards Brigade	GdB/N/EdL
Horse Guards Brigade	TC/N/N5
Heavy Brigade	N2/N/N1
Dragoon Brigade	JH/FLV/N6
First Foot Brigade	N4/N/VdP
Second Foot Brigade	N5/N/AdE
Third Foot Brigade	N3/N/N5
Fourth Foot Brigade	N4/N/N5

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

Frontier Regiments

					(Defence for Mar-May)
Colonel	F1 N2	F2 N5	F3 N3	F4 N1	RNHB N8
Attached			AC ZvT		
Also at the Front					
	Dragoon Brigade (Grand Duke Max's Dragoons, Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons)				
		Dragoon Guards			
		Royal Marines			
		53rd Fusiliers			

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

Battle Results

Dragoon Brigade: 3
 Grand Duke Max's Dragoons: 5
 Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons: 3
 Dragoon Guards: 5
 Royal Marines: 1
 53rd Fusiliers: 4
 Frontier regiment 1: 2
 Frontier regiment 2: 5
 Frontier regiment 3: 3
 Frontier regiment 4: 6
 RNHB regiment: 4

Femmes Fatales

No	Name	SL	Attr	Lover
66	Morgane Le Fay	24	B	TC
67	Justine Caisse	22	I	PC
65	Therèse Le Vert	21	B/W	RS
7	Chris Pacquette	19		BRJS
61	Bette Noire	19	I/W	GdB
64	Edna Bucquette	18	W	
3	Kathy Pacific	17	B	XM
54	Madelaine de Proust	17		CdN
35	Katy Did	16	I	TdLl
42	Maggie Nifisent	16	B	
55	Jacky Tinne	16		JJ
52	Guinevere d'Arthur	15	B/W	JiT
10	Frances Forrin	14	B	
48	Fifi	14	B/W	MdG
62	Alison Wunderlandt	14		
11	Laura de Land	13		ZUT
26	Ella Fant	13	B	
27	Lucy Fur	13	B	EdL
45	Cath de Thousands	13		
8	Lotte Bottle	12	B	BeV
17	Henrietta Carrotte	12	I/W	
28	Vera Cruz	12		NM
31	Bess Ottede	12	I/W	LS
1	Sue Briquet	11	B	TTT
4	Anne Tique	11	W	GM
23	Agnes Sorel	11	I/W	FXC
40	Sheila Kiwi	11		
63	Carole Singeurs	11		Anon
20	Emma Roides	10	I	
38	Pet Ulante	10	W	FS
43	Di Lemmere	10	I	
53	Angelina de Griz	10	B	CdP
6	Viv Ayschus	9		
59	May Banquot l'Idée	9		
19	Jenny Russe	8	W	
32	Sal Munella	8	W	
47	Eve Ningalle	8	I/W	AdE
34	Freda de Ath	7	W	
39	Thomasina Tancenjin	7	I	SE
5	Belle Epoque	6	B/I	
24	Violet Bott	6	I/W	
25	Lois de Lô	5	B	RdS

Mistresses in Paris. Attr(IBUTES): B= Beautiful, I=Influential, W=Wealthy. Lover only if seen together in public this month.

Regiments

This table shows the ten senior positions in the 17 regiments by rank. Entries are Character abbreviations, N (+MA) for NPCs, blank for vacant. * shows the regiment adjutant; + indicates the reserve position of a character assigned elsewhere due to their appointment or brevet rank.

Col	RFG	CG	KM	DG	OOC	ALC	CPC	RM	CDMDPM	13F	PLLD	53F	27M	4A	69A	Gscn
LCol	BRJS	N6	CdN	PFL	JIT	AC	BeV	HDS	LSD	MP	N5	BS	AA	N7	TdLl	TTT
May 1	EdL+		N1	MCC	N5+	PC	N1	VdP+	N2	CA	N6	N6	AA			N5
May 2	MdG*		N4*	N5*	N1		N1+	JCE	N6*	N3	N6*	N6*	AA+			N5+
Capt 1	NM	N3	N4	MCC+N4	N4		N3	N2	N4	N3	N3	N3	N5	N1		N6
Capt 2	LS	N5	N4	N2	N4		N3	N4*	N4	N3	N4	N4	N6	N3		N5
Capt 3	PaN	N4	N5		N3*		N5	N5	N3	N3	N4	N4	N4	N4		N4
Capt 4	FS	N4	N5		N1*		N3		N3	N3	N3	N3	N4	N4		N4
Capt 5	HwB	N2*	N6				N3		N1*	N3	N4*	N4*		N5*		N4*
Capt 6	ZVT						SE						RdS			

The Greasy Pole

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
BeV	Viscount Ben e'Volence	25+91	Withy	B.Bdr-General	CPC/War Minister	9	Lotte	Flr	3	Ash	Casey
BRJS	Count Beau Reese Jean Seine	24 67	Flthy	B.Bdr-General	RFG/State Min.	12	Chris	Flr	4	Bill	Hay
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	24 41	Flthy	Fld Marshal		24				Ben	Brown
PC	Count Pierre Cardigan	24 41	Withy	Lt.Colonel	ALC	10	Justine	Flr	5	Matt	Shepherd
JJ	Count Jean Jeanie	23 60	Flthy	General		32	Jacky	Flr	3	Andrew	Kendall
GdB	Viscount Greg de Bécqueur	23 60	Rich	Bdr-General/Cds	Brigadier	11	Bette	Flr	5	Anthony	Gilbert
BdLS	Count Bernard de Lur-Saluces	22 60	Flthy	Lt-General		18		Flr	3	Rob	Pinkerton
CdP	Marquis Camille de Polignac	21 52	Poor	Lt.Colonel	RFG/Justice Min.	4	Angelina	Flr	4	James	McReynolds
TC	Viscount Terence Cuckpowder	21 46	Comfy	Bdr-General/HGds	Brigadier	6	Morgane	Flr	6	Mike	Dommett
Anon	Baron Les Anonyme	20 58	Poor	Bdr-General/Min w/o Port		3	Carole	Flr	4	Bruno	Giordan
ZUT	Baron Zavier Ulric Turenne	19+57	Comfy	Lt-General/Min w/o Port		4	Laura	Flr	1	Bob	Blanchett
HDS	Marquis Henri DuShite	18 F	Rich	B.Bdr-General	RM	13		Both	4	Dave	Marsden
EdL	Baron Eclair de Lame	18+79	Rich	Major RFG/Gds	Brigade Maj.	12	Lucy	Both	3	Peter	Farrell
RS	Baron Rick Shaw	18+55	Comfy	B.Lt-General/Adjutant Gen		2	Therèse	Both	6	Charles	Burrows
LS	Lou Scannon	17 48	Rich	Captain RFG/C.Prnce Aide		4	Bess	Both	2	John	Cooke
XM	Baron Xavier Money	17 32	Withy	Bdr-General		7	Kathy	Both	3	Pam	Udowiczzenko
JiT	Earl Justin Thyme	17+69	Rich	Colonel QOC		12	Guinevere	Both	2	Gerald	Udowiczzenko
GM	Sir Gaz Moutarde	15 37	Withy	Bdr-General		4	Anne	Both	2	Mike	Clibborn-Dyer
CdN	Sir Claude de Nord	15 37	Comfy	Colonel KM/CPS		3	Madeline	Flr	4	Andrew	Larder
LR	Sir Louis Renault	15+47	Withy	B.Lt-General/1st Div Commandr		2		Both	4	Roy	Bleasdale
NM	Sir Neville Moore	14 36	Comfy	Captain RFG/LtGen's Aide		1	Vera	Hunt	2	Cameron	Wood
PFL	Sir Philippe F'Loppe	14 F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General DG		4		HGds	4	Phil	Urquhart
MdG	Martin de Garnache	13 36	Comfy	Major RFG/RFG Regt. Adjt.		3	Fifi	Both	4	Bill	Howell
PaN	Pierre a'Noyer	13 26	Poor	Captain RFG/Capt.K's Esc		3		Both	3	Tym	Norris
JH	Sir Jacques Hatt	13 F	Comfy	B.Lt-General/Drgn Brigadier		4		Both	3	Joel	Halpern
CO	Sir Claude Oppere	12 RIP								Paul	Murphy
ZVT	Zeold von Tu	12 F	OK	Captain CG/Ensn.C's Esc		5		Both	3	Tim	Maccaire
LSD	Louis Severin Descartes	12 F	Withy	B.Bdr-General GDMD/FMshl's Aide		3		Hunt	1	Chris	Schotmann

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
AdE	Sir Antoine d'Eques	11 33	OK	Major 1 3F/2 F Brigade Maj.		7	Eve	Hunt	2	Graeme	Morris
FS	Sir Felipe Savant	11 33	Poor	Captain RFG		5	Pet	BG	4	Briack	Amundsen
TdLl	Thomas de la Lune	11 29	OK	B.Bdr-General 4A		3	Katy	Hunt	5	Peter	Card
HWB	Hector William Boone	11 15	Comfy	Captain RFG		5		Hunt	5	Paul	Wilson
BS	Baron Balzac Slapdash	11 F	Withy	B.Bdr-General PLLD		15		Hunt	5	Matthew	Wale
AC	Alexandre Capone	10 F	OK	Colonel ALC		3		Hunt	5	Ray	Vahey
MP	Maurice Pauvre	10+36	Comfy	Colonel PM		3		Hunt	4	James	Waters
AiCh	Sir Alvin Charles	10+ F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel GDMD		8		F&P	2	Graeme	Wilson
VdP	Vinne d'Pooh	9+ 38	Comfy	Major RM/1 F Brigade Maj.		4	Agnes	RP	2	Terry	Crook
FXC	Frank X Change	8+ 42	Comfy	Major CPC		4		BG	4	Nigel	Monaghan
MCC	Michael Chevalier-Cavalier	7 F	Poor	B.Major DG		4			4	Mark	Cowper
TTT	Tiny Thierry Toothpick	7+ 37	Poor	Colonel 69A		5	Sue	F&P	1	Jason	Fazackarley
JCE	Jean-Claude Etienne	6 F	Comfy	Major RM		7		F&P	4	Tim	Rattray
SE	Stephane Etrange	6+ 30	OK	Captain CPC		3	Thomasina	F&P	4	Neil	Packer
CA	Come Asiouar	6+ 23	Poor	Major PM		3		F&P	4	Jacob	Andersson
RdS	Ray de Sofdelosdarc	5+ 44	OK	Captain 27M		2	Lois	RP	4	Nik	Luker
RRT	Ramond Repose de la Tombe	5+ 40	Poor	Lt.Colonel PM		7			1	Olaf	Schmidt
MDE	Marche D'Eon	4 F	Poor	Captain GDMD		6			4	Pauli	Kidd
PL	Pierre Lonjue	4 RIP								Steven	Malecek
AA	Armand Alsace	3 F	Poor	B.Lt.Colonel 53F		6			4	Sebastian	Emde
EIF	Elroi le Flingue	3 F	Poor	B.Captain GDMD		6			4	Daniel	Racke

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

Cash: Poor = <500, OK = 500-1500, Comfy = 1500-5000, 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+