

That would be enough

This has been issue 139 of *To Win Just Once*, published 23rd October 2013. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2013

Deadlines

Orders for *LPBS* and the *Bonking Game* and any other contributions to Pevans by Friday 15th November 2013.

(Next deadlines: 13th/20th Dec, 24th/31st Jan 2014, 28th Feb/7th Mar 2014)

Waiting lists for games played

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 Andrew Burgess, Jonathan Palfrey, Pevans and Mark Cowper are in for the next game – anyone else? Working map and rules provided.

Star Trader Pevans, Mateusz Ochman, Mike Dyer, Przemek Orwat, Martin Jennings, Mark Cowper for the next one? Rules provided.

Online games

These are online implementations of board games that I have set up for readers of *To Win Just Once* to play. The games have “TWJO” as the start of their name and the password “pevans”.

Brass at brass.orderofthehammer.com

Puerto Rico at www.pr-game.com

Through the Ages at www.boardgaming-online.com

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 139 was written and edited by Pevans with additional material from Olaf Schmidt. The *LPBS* masthead (page 21) is by Lee Brimicombe-Wood, as are the drawings on pages 25 and 27. The drawing on page 22 is by Tim Wiseman. Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Except where noted, photographs were taken by Pevans, who also played with Photoshop.

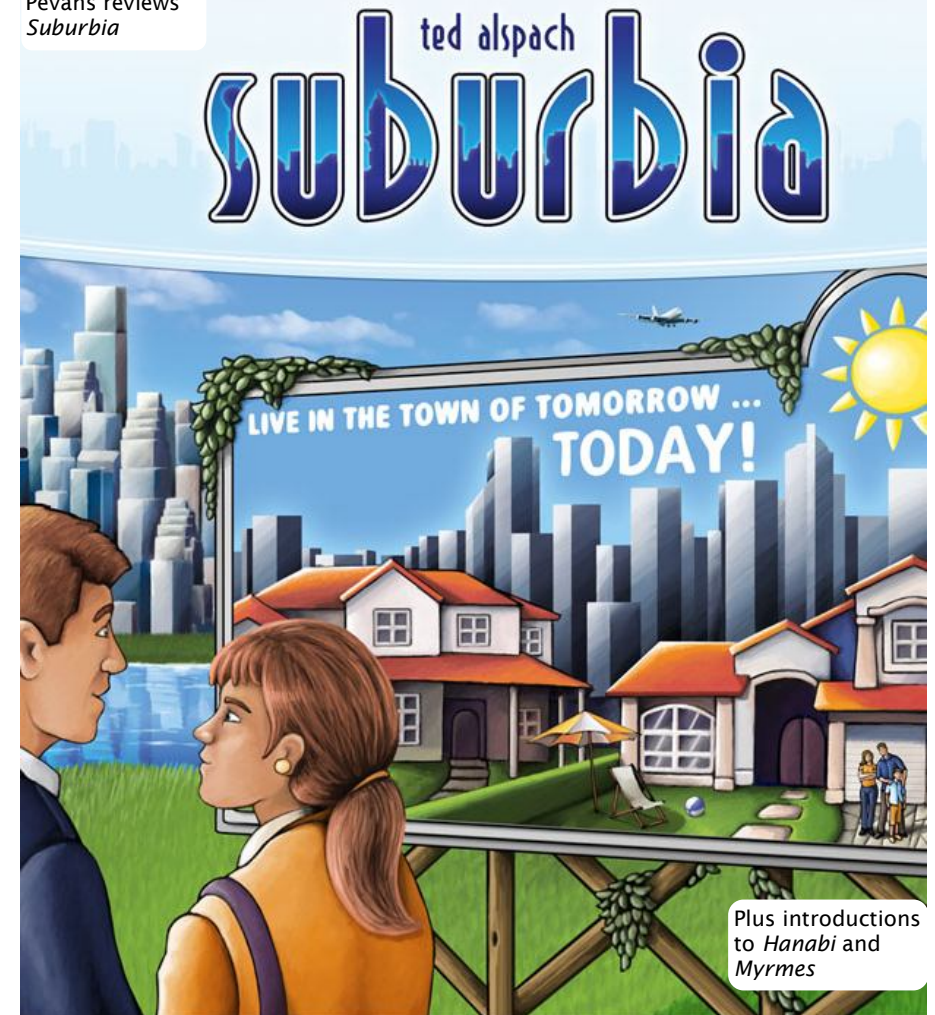
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To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)

Pevans reviews
Suburbia



ergames

Issue 139: November 2013
(LPBS 267: May 1666)

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ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank,	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
GM	Gaz Moutarde	12-	9	Withy	Major RM		3		Both	2	Mike Dyer
ASii	Armand Slice	12	31	Comfy	B.Bdr-General 53F		5	Lotte	Hunt	5	David Williams
LL	Lothario Lovelace	12	17	OK	Captain CG/Capt.C's Esc		5		Hunt	4	Geoff Bowers
YVB	Sir Yves Vrai Bretheauteque	11	22	Withy	B.Bdr-General DG		5		HCds	1	Chris Boote
JA	Jacques As	11	18	OK	Major GDM/Drgn Brigade Maj.		1		Hunt	4	Joe Farrell
DS	Dexter Simistre	10	24	Poor	Lt.Colonel GDM		2	Ava	Hunt	3	Martin Adamson
CC	Chopine Camus	10	15	Poor	Colonel GDM		4	Sheila	BG	4	Stewart Macintyre
JJ	Sir Jean Jeanie	10	F	Comfy	Major RFG		6		Hunt	3	Andrew Kendall
TC	Terence Cuckpowder	9	27	Poor	Lt.Colonel QOC		3	Lucy	Hunt	4	Mike Dommert
FdA	Frele d'Acier	9	14	Poor	Subaltern GDM/Dbr's Aide (Drgn)		4	Freda		3	Peter Farrell
TM	Tourtière Mangetout	9	F	Withy	Lt.Colonel 53F/Cav Div Adjutant		3		BG	4	Howard Bishop
AS	Arnaud Surfinmaise	8	11	OK			5	Betty	BG	5	Nik Luker
HB	Henri Bastar'd	7	21	OK	Subaltern CG		6		BG	3	Carl Chambers
MdA	Marmotte d'AI	7	16	OK			2	Cath	BG	2	Neil Packer
WNM	Was Nae Me	7	F	Poor	Major CPC		5			3	Mark Farrell
DDA	Dick D'Asterdly	6	F	Poor	Major CPC		1			4	Gerry Sutcliffe
X1		5	0	Poor			6			4	G Udowiczenko
RPW	R Pierre Whit	5+	18	OK	Captain PM		4		RP	4	Cameron Wood
SN	Sebastian Nuisance	4-	3	Poor	Major 27M		4			4	Paul Appleby
X4		4	RIP								Mike Bird
X3		4	RIP								Rohan Keane
HdE	Horatio d'Encore	3	F	Poor	B.Subaltern CPC		2			3	Olaf Schmidt
CdG	Charles de Gaulle	2	4	Poor	Private GDM		4			3	Colin Cowper
X2		2	F	Poor	Subaltern		3			1	Martin Jennings

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
GI	Viscount Gustav Ind	28	52	Withy	Major CG/State Min.	9		Flr	6	Ashley Casey
DC	Count Devlin Carnate	27	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General RFG/Min w/o Port	10		Flr	2	Bruno Giordan
GdLi	Count Gar de Lieu	26	66	Poor	General/Justice Min.	8		Flr	4	Bill Hay
JS	Count Jacques Shitacks	24	59	Rich	General/Chancellor	3	Madelaine	Flr	4	David Oliver
EM2	Viscount Egon Mad 2	24	39	Withy	Bdr-General	9		Flr	3	Tym Norris
PC	Earl Pierre Cardigan	23	61	Comfy	Fld Marshal/Min w/o Port	9	Fifi	Flr	4	Matt Shepherd
JdG	Viscount Jacques de Gain	23	39	Rich	B.Bdr-General KM/3rd Army QMG	17		Flr	4	Ben Brown
TH	Count Euria Humble	21	57	Withy	B.Bdr-General CG/Min w/o Port	16		Flr	5	Matthew Wale
TIM	Marquis Tomas le Matelot	21	43	Comfy	General/1st Army Commandr	8		Flr	4	Tim Skinner
QLB	Baron Quasi Le Bossu	19	F	Withy	Lt-General/1st Div Commandr	11		Flr	6	Mark Cowper
PLS	Baron Pierre le Sang	18	45	OK	B.General/2nd Army Commandr	7	Kathy	Flr	4	Bill Howell
AE	Arsène Est	17	40	Poor	Lt.Colonel CG/FMshl's Aide	6	Lois	Both	6	Ray Vahey
UXB	Marquis Uther Xavier-B'regard	17	37	Withy	B.Bdr-General PLLD/Drgn Brigadier	9		Hunt	3	Pete Card
AdL	Sir Armand de Luce	17	F	Withy	Bdr-General	5		Both	2	Francesca Weal
RS	Sir Richard Shapmes	16	38	Comfy	B.Lt-General/2nd Div Commandr	8	Ella	Both	4	Charles Popp
SYAA	Marquis Sheikh Yadik Al-Abowt	16	33	OK	Major CG/CPS	5	Katy	Flr	3	Jason Fazackarley
AV	Marquis Ali Vouzon	16+	49	Rich	B.Lt-General/Gds Brigadier	7	Angelina	Both	1	Graeme Morris
DOG	Baron Donald O'Grady	15	41	Withy	B.Lt-General/Adjutant Gen	5	Jacky	Both	3	Bob Bost
EdM	Marquis Eric de Miabeille	15	39	Withy	Colonel QOC	13	Anna	Both	3	Pete Holland
EB	Sir Etienne Brule	15	31	OK	Major DG/Gen's Aide (1st Army)	2	Frances	Both	4	James McReynolds
WP	Baron Warren Peece	15	31	Rich	Bdr-General/HGds Brigadier	11	Ingrid	Both	2	Pam Udowiczenko
CMK	Baron Connor McKnight	15	24	OK	Bdr-General/2nd Army QM Gen.	3		Hunt	5	Graeme Wilson
VV	Sir Voulo Vault	15+	52	Comfy	Major RFG/Gds Brigade Maj.	2	Ophelia	Both	2	Mark Booth
ROS	Rick O'Shea	14	22	OK	Lt.Colonel RM/Fntr Div Adjutant	3		Both	6	Paul Wilson
JIF	Sir Jacques le Franc	14	F	Withy	Major RM/1 F Brigade Maj.	12		Both	6	Charles Burrows
EdSS	Earl Eglise de Sant-Suplice	14	F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel CPC/Hvy Brigade Maj.	6		Both	2	Jerry Spencer
MC	Sir Monty Carlo	13	32	Withy	B.Lt-General/Cav Div Commandr	10	Charlotte	Hunt	4	Andrew Burgess
AdA	Baron Amant d'Au	13	F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel RFG	5		Both	5	David Brister
BdZ	Sir Bill de Zmerchant	13	F	OK	B.Lt-General/Hvy Brigadier	5		Both	3	Tim Macaire

Chatter

I forgot to make my annual complaint last issue: it's only September and there's Christmas stuff already appearing in the shops! However, it does mean that mince pies are now available. I reckon I've got four months of fruity munching to come. Mmm...

As I mentioned in *TWJO* 138, it's that time of year: when avid gamers make their way to Essen for the Spiel games fair. It's all change this year, as the fair is moving to the three big halls on the western side of the Messe. Now, one of the things the organisers, Friedhelm Merz Verlag, try to do is put exhibitors in much the same place each year. Thus, if I want to visit Queen Games, I know to go to the corner of hall 10. While 2F Spiele is in the opposite corner. This year it will be a voyage of discovery: I hope I don't miss anybody! Mind you, that's a bit of a forlorn hope as there's so much going on at Spiel that there are always things I miss. Expect my initial report of the games I played/saw in next issue.

One of the events hosted at Spiel is EuropeMasters, the European board games Championship. I've been drafted into the Four Dobbbers, so I shall be spending the Saturday of the fair playing four games against the cream (ahem) of European gamers. It's always good when these are games I enjoy, but Saturday is a good day not to be on the exhibition floor as it can get very crowded.

This year's games are *Ginkgopolis*, *Keyflower*, *Myrmes* and *The Palaces of Carrara*. I've played *Keyflower* quite a bit (and reviewed it in *TWJO* 132), *Ginkgopolis* and *Palaces of Carrara* I saw at Spiel '12 (see *TWJO* 129), but *Myrmes* is new to me. See below for my first thoughts on the game.

We're without Mike's games this issue, as we wait for new starts. Normal service will be resumed next time!

The games

We have four people signed up for the next *Railway Rivals* game and six for *Star Trader*. That's enough to get us started. However, there's room for a few more players. Mike will start the new games next issue, so this is your last chance to sign up if you're interested – just drop me or Mike a note. We provide copies of the rules and, for *Railway Rivals*, a working copy of the map.

The Bonking Game is coming to an end, so it's time to start a new all-player game. I decided on my own take on Fictionary Dictionary: see page 15 to find out more and let me have your definitions.

Online games

Our first *Brass* game at brass.orderofthehammer.com has concluded with a win for me over John Boocock and Steve Jones. The three of us have started a second game – I think they want revenge! However, I do prefer the game with four players, so who else would like to join in?

We also have a game of *Through the Ages* under way (at www.boardgaming-online.com), which looks like it will be a close finish. And I've set up a game of *Puerto Rico*, too, at www.pr-game.com, which needs some players.

All these games are played correspondence style with the website providing the equivalent of the board and pieces and handling the housekeeping. Players can take their turns at their leisure and get an e-mail when it's their next turn. If you'd like to join in, sign up at the appropriate website and join a game – they are all named “TWJO” something and have “pevans” as their password.

If there are other games you'd like to play online, let me know and I'll set something up – I'm looking at the huge range available at www.yucata.de and www.boiteajeux.net and will start some more games when I'm back from Spiel.

TWJO online

The PDF version of issue 138 was downloaded 67 times in the 10 days of September after it was published. Issue 137 saw 65 downloads in September, taking it to 150 in two months. There were 17 further downloads for issue 136, a total of 175 since publication back in July.

I mentioned last time that my website was getting nearly as many referrals from BoardGameGeek as Google. The same is true in September, but leaping into second place (once I've added up all the different countries' Google domains) is Baidu, the Chinese search engine. What's that about?!

Letters

Tim Macaire wants to start something.

There's something disorientating about planning a summer campaign while debating whether it's cold enough to light the fire and toast some crumpets (not quite, unfortunately). If my character dies in a hail of musketballs he assumed were snowballs, I shall start a campaign to tie the *LPBS* seasons to the real seasons, since then I will have a sporting chance of knowing where we are.

The only problem with this is that there are 10 issues of *TWJO* each year and an *LPBS* year takes at least 11 turns... Or is this part of Graeme Morris's campaign to play *Snowball Fighting* in *TWJO*?

Ants in the garden

Pevans looks at *Myrmes*

Designed by Yoann Levet and published by Ystari (Rio Grande do the US edition), *Myrmes* is about ant colonies: each player starts with the entrance to their colony in a different part of the board. The board is divided into a hexagonal grid, showing where the ants can collect food and materials and polish off other insects (for food and/or VPs). Players have their own board showing the different

Femmes Fatales

No	Name	SL	Attr	Last
64	Edna Bucquette	18	W	
3	Kathy Pacific	17	B	PIS
54	Madelaine de Proust	17		JS
35	Katy Did	16	I	SYAA
42	Maggie Nifisent	16	B	
55	Jacky Tinne	16		DOG

Regiments	RFG	CG	KM	DG	QOCALC	CPC	RM	GDMMD	PM	13F	PLLD	53F	27M	4A	69A	Gscn
Col	DC	EH	JdG	YVB	EdM	N4	CC	N6	AV	UXB+ASli	N5	N5	N6	N1+	N3	
LCol	AdA	AE	VV+	GI	EdS+ROS	DS	CC	N3	N5	N4	TM	N5	N6	N1+	N3	
Maj	JJ	SYAA	LL	N6	N4	N1	N5	N2	N2	N3	N4++	SN	N1+	N6	N4	N4
Capt	N6	LL	N6	N4	N1	N5	N2	N2	N6	N6*	N4	N1	N6	N4	N4	N4
Capt	N5	LL	N5	N2	N2	N1	N3*	N4	N1	N3	N4	N2	N3	N5	N6	N6
Capt	N4	LL	N5	N3	N5	N3	N5	N4	N4	N4	N1	N1	N2	N6	N3	N3
Capt	N2	LL	N5*	N2*	N5*	N3	N1*	N4*	N6*	N5	N6*	N6*	N5*	N5*	N5*	N1*
Capt																
Capt																

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.

No	Name	SL	Attr	Last
52	Guinevere d'Arthur	15	B/W	
10	Frances Forrin	14	B	EB
21	Helen Highwater	14	W	
48	Fifi	14	B/W	PC
62	Alison Wunderlandt	14		
11	Laura de Land	13		
16	Ophelia Derriere	13		VV
26	Ella Fant	13	B	RS
27	Lucy Fur	13	B	TC
30	Leia Orgasma	13	B	
45	Cath de Thousands	13		MdA
8	Lotte Bottle	12	B	ASli
12	Charlotte de Gaulle	12		MC
17	Henrietta Carrotte	12	I/W	
28	Vera Cruz	12		
31	Bess Ottede	12	I/W	
1	Sue Briquet	11	B	
4	Anne Tique	11	W	
9	Deb Onairre	11	I	
40	Sheila Kiwi	11		CC
63	Carole Singeurs	11		
20	Emma Roides	10	I	
33	Anna Rexique	10	I	EdM
38	Pet Ulante	10	W	
43	Di Lemmere	10	I	
53	Angelina de Griz	10	B	AV
56	Ingrid la Suede	10		WP
6	Viv Ayschus	9		
57	Ava Crisp	9	I	DS
59	May Banquot l'Idee	9		
2	Betty Kant	8	I	AS
19	Jenny Russe	8	W	
32	Sal Munella	8	W	
41	Marie Antoinette	8	B/I	
49	Mary Huana	8	B/I/W	
34	Freda de Ath	7	W	FdA
39	Thomasina Tancenjin	7	I	
50	Ulla Leight	7	I	
5	Belle Epoque	6	B/I	
13	Josephine Buonoparte	6	I/W	
24	Violet Bott	6	I/W	
15	Ada Andabettoir	5	B/I	
25	Lois de Low	5	B	AE

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

Brigade Positions

Guards Brigade	AV/N/VV	First Foot Brigade	N3/N/JIF
Horse Guards Brigade	WP/N/N5	Second Foot Brigade	N2/N/N4
Heavy Brigade	BdZ/N/EdSS	Third Foot Brigade	N6/N/N1
Dragoon Brigade	UXB/FdA/JA	Fourth Foot Brigade	N3/N/_

Current CO/Aide/Brigade Major of each Brigade; entries as Army table

Frontier Regiments

	(On campaign for June-Aug)				
	F1	F2	F3	F4	RNHB
Colonel	N4	N3	N5	N4	N4
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

Heavy Brigade: 4	Frontier regiment 1: 2
Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers: 3	Frontier regiment 2: 5
Crown Prince Cuirassiers: 4	Frontier regiment 3: 4
Royal Foot Guards: 1	Frontier regiment 4: 2
	RNHB regiment: 3

Other Appointments

King's Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Cardinal's Escort: Ensign N	Captain LL
Aides: to Crown Prince N	to Field Marshal AE
Provincial Military Governors: N/N/N/N/N	
City Military Governor N	Adjutant-General DOG
Inspectors-General: of Cavalry N	of Infantry _
Commissioner of Public Safety SYAA	
Chancellor of the Exchequer JS	Minister of Justice GdLi
Minister of War CPS	Minister of State GI

Shows who holds appointments outside military units:

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

areas within their colony. Here the player's nurses, soldiers and workers are born and put to work.

Each round starts with the players simultaneously placing their nurses (wooden pawns). This phase essentially decides what you are going to do this round, so a lot of thought goes into it. Nurses can be used to create larvae (as they're called in the rules – they look like eggs to me), soldiers and workers. As soldiers and workers do things later in the round, you can see why planning is needed.



Nurses can also be sent to the 'atelier' where they can make another nurse (with the right materials), upgrade their colony (ditto), score one of the available bonus tiles (if they have achieved the necessary goals) or dig a new exit for their colony.

Once everybody's positioned their nurses, players take it in turns to use a worker. Within the colony they can produce things and are then available for next turn. Sending them outside is a one-way trip, but there's a lot they can do out there. First, they can lay a 'pheromone' (though this is actually the last thing a worker does). In game terms, this is a tile that covers several spaces and produces food and resources according to the type of each space.

The size of pheromone tile depends on the development stage of the ant's colony and the larger ones score points when laid. Later on in the game, empty pheromones can be removed – at a cost. Removing an enemy pheromone needs a soldier, but scores points again and leaves a nice empty space for your own pheromone. Workers can also move to other insects, which can then be removed, by spending soldiers, to get food and/or points.

Once the workers have done their stuff, players harvest a cube from each of their pheromones. Then they spend resources on actions at the atelier before checking that they can store the cubes they have. After three rounds – spring, summer and autumn – there is a winter turn when players simply have to have enough food for their colony. The game lasts three years, after which the player with the most points wins.

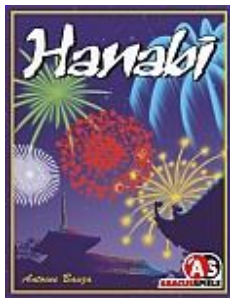
Myrmex is a hugely tactical game with a lot of elements to think about. To start with, how are you going to deploy your nurses? Remember that they produce workers and soldiers that can then be used the same turn. Then, how are you going to use the eggs, workers and soldiers produced? Have you got the resources you'll need for actions in the atelier – and the right amount of food at the end of Autumn? There are always several ways of doing things, giving players some serious decisions to make. It should be fun in the tournament.

An introduction to *Hanabi*

Olaf Schmidt tells all

Olaf Schmidt noted that I had "had a brush with Hanabi" and sent this short overview of the game – which has just won the prestigious Spiel des Jahres (Game of the Year) prize in Germany.

The game is a coordinated effort of the players to score big with a nice firework display (to please the gods and, more importantly, to please the crowd so they get the job the next year). A firework display is a 'straight' – cards numbered 1 through 5. However, the cards are not equally distributed. There is only one 5, but three 1s, and two of each other number. The cards come in five colours, so altogether there are 50 cards to the deck.



As you mentioned, the clue is that each player only sees the BACKSIDE of his/her cards, but the front of all the others. The game now consists of giving hints to the other players about the cards they are holding. This is along the lines: "You have 2 blue cards here and here" (pointing to the cards).

Only two statements are allowed: a statement about the colour and a statement about the numerical value. Statements are limited but can be refreshed by discarding a card or finishing a straight. Discarded cards are on the table for reference. You must start the straight with a 1 and finish with a 5.

The game ends if: no more straights can be completed or three cards are laid out in error. Points are the sum of the highest card laid out for each colour, so 25 is the max number.

The game is quick (10 to 15 minutes) and a useful training for hidden meaning. I gather it is a good communication practice for workshops or the like, because you develop a sense for what someone is saying. For example, he is telling me the numbers when it is safe to lay them out.

I tried to get even more into it by giving the order of the cards or a colour by tapping them in numerical order, but my hardcore gamers decided that was gaming the system! I pointed out that this was what it was all about, but they required me to randomise in order to not make it too easy... Our best game of the evening was 19 points.

Thanks, Olaf. Hanabi was designed by Antoine Bauza. The original version, from Abacusspiele, only has rules in German, but an English edition has now been published by R&R Games (that's the box on the right) in the US (and I should be able to get this in for Games from Pevans).



Grudges to be settled next month:

Yves Vrai Bretheauteque (Sabre, 3 rests) has cause with Arsène Est (Sabre, Seconds PC, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Eric de Miabeille (Sabre, Seconds EdSS, adv.) and Yves Vrai Bretheauteque (Sabre, 2 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Jacques de Gain (Sabre, adv.) has cause with Uther Xavier-Beauregard (Sabre, Seconds QLB) for pinching Henrietta.

Henri Bastar'd (Rapier, Seconds SYAA, 4 rests) has cause with

Armand Slice (Sabre, Seconds PIS & TM, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Etienne Brule (Rapier, Seconds DOG, 1 rests) and Terence Cuckpowder (Sabre, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

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

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

New Characters

None

Tables

Army Organisation and 1666's summer Deployment

First Army (Defence)	TIM/EB/N3/N
Guards Brigade (Defence) - RFG CG KM	
Second Army (Assault)	PIS/_/N5/CMK
First Division (Assault)	QLB/N/N6
1st Foot Brigade (Assault) - RM PM	
2nd Foot Brigade (Assault) - 13F 53F	
Second Division (Assault)	RS/N/_
3rd Foot Brigade (Assault) - 27M 4A	
4th Foot Brigade (Assault) - 69A Gscn	
Frontier Division (Assault)	_/_/_/ROS
Frontier Regiments (Assault)	
Third Army (Field Ops)	N1/N/N5/JdG
Cavalry Division (Field Ops)	MC/N/TM
Horse Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - DG QOC	
Heavy Brigade (Field Ops) - ALC CPC	
Dragoon Brigade (Field Ops) - GDMD PLLD	

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

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

Notes

The *En Garde!* rules are available to LPBS players at a reduced rate: see any month's Points Arising web page at www.pevans.co.uk/LPBS; or send a cheque (payable to Margam Evans Limited) for £8.40 (inc postage to UK addresses) to LPBS, 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF.

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

Jacques Shitacks asks NPC Aide to General (JS) to resign

Duels

Results of May's duels:

Marmotte d'Ai (gains 1 Exp) beat Was Nae Me (with FdA).

Eric de Miabeille (with EdSS, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Etienne Brule.

Henri Bastar'd declined to meet Arsène Est as he was under half Endurance.

Terence Cuckpowder didn't turn up to fight Arsène Est and lost SPs.

Armand Slice (with PLS, gains 1 Exp) beat Henri Bastar'd (with SYAA).

Armand Slice (with PLS, gains 1 Exp) beat Dick D'Asterdly.

Terence Cuckpowder (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Etienne Brule (under half Endurance).

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

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

Was Nae Me applies for Aide to General

Henri Bastar'd declined to meet Gaz Moutarde as he was under half Endurance.

Gaz Moutarde didn't turn up to fight Terence Cuckpowder and lost SPs.

Henri Bastar'd declined to meet Jacques As as he was under half Endurance.

Henri Bastar'd declined to meet Lothario Lovelace as he was under half Endurance.

Henri Bastar'd declined to meet Rick O'Shea as he was under half End.

Rick O'Shea was 'floated' for his duel with Terence Cuckpowder.

Bill de Zmerchant didn't turn up to fight Frele d'Acier and lost SPs - voted cause 4:3.

Town planning

Pevans reviews *Suburbia*

It's taken me a while to get to *Suburbia* as Bezier Games sold out at Spiel '12 – good news for designer and publisher Ted Alspach, but bad news for me. Mind you, it was my own fault as it wasn't until the Sunday that I got to Bezier's stand as I worked my way round the halls. However, a new printing is now with us and I've been able to catch up.

As the name suggests, the game is about developing a city's suburbs, or 'Boroughs' as the rules call them. Each player starts with the same buildings in their Borough. Through the game, they buy more tiles to expand this, increasing or decreasing their income (which provides the money to buy more buildings) and reputation, which attracts population. At the end of the game, the player with the highest population + bonuses wins.

The key component of the game thus comprises the hexagonal building tiles. There are three sets of these and, in time-honoured style, the 'A' tiles are available first, then the 'B's and, finally, the 'C's. Even in a four-player game,



My borough at the end of a game. Note the "Housing projects" next to the Landfill...

only about two-thirds of the tiles will be available during the game. One effect of this is that the game will be different each time you play, as a different assortment of tiles will emerge. A second effect is that it also stops players planning for a specific building as they cannot be sure it will appear – even if there are three of them. The overall effect is to make the game more tactical than strategic.

To start the game, tiles are set out (face-up) in the ‘market’ and are available for players to buy. As well as the purchase price printed on the tile, buildings after the first two in the market cost a premium. As tiles are bought, those remaining in the market are moved along and a new tile goes in to the most expensive position. It’s unlikely that tiles with a big premium will be bought (certainly in the early stages of the game when money is tight), so this does give players some warning of what tiles may come into play.

A special tile, the “1 More Round” tile, is shuffled into the middle portion of the ‘C’ stack. When it is drawn, the players complete the current round and then play one more. They then score any bonuses that they can and convert money to population/points. The winner is the player with the most points of course.

Let’s put some flesh on those bones. Players start with a ‘Borough’ board each. This has two tracks, one of circular spaces for income and the other of square spaces for reputation. Players’ markers – a cylinder and a cube – go onto these tracks to show their current levels. Players also have a square marker that goes on the separate ‘Population’ score board. As markers move along the scoring track they pass red lines, which get more frequent as the score rises. Each red line reduces the player’s income and reputation. (The idea is that suburbs become less attractive as more people move in.)

Players add their starting building tiles alongside their Borough board. The symbols on these tiles show how their starting Income, Reputation and Population are arrived at. Players also get some cash and decide who will start the game (a copy of Ted’s *Start Player* might be useful here!). The only purpose of this is to make sure that all players get the same number of turns.

There’s one other thing to do at the beginning of the game: pick the circular goal tiles that will give bonuses at the end of the game. First, as many random goals as there are players are laid out for all to see. Second, each player gets two goal tiles and chooses one to keep. Goals are generally achieved by being the player with the most or least of something at the end of the game. Any player can get a public bonus – but a tie means nobody gets it – while only the owner can achieve their own goal (again, they need to do better than tie).

The goals do provide a strategic element to the game. However, players need to balance the points available from achieving a goal with the cost of going for it. For example, yellow (industrial) buildings generally increase income. Going for the “fewest yellow buildings” goal thus means it’s harder to increase income. On

Points Arising

Next deadline is 15th November

It looks like most characters will be at the front for the campaign season, so I will run June and July as a single turn. Please send two sets of orders for this deadline. Orders for July may be conditional on what happens in June – if there is any major impact on particular characters in June, I will give the affected players an opportunity to re-do their July orders. Replacement characters for anyone who dies in June will start in August rather than July.

June is the start of a new season. All characters start the month in Paris and **all duels must be fought**. Any vacant appointments not taken by player characters will be filled by NPCs – unless appointed by a player character, who may order that they are left vacant (if you have a post or a rank that allows you to appoint other characters to posts, don’t forget to appoint people).

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

Next turn is the last month characters can make investments. The return on investments is paid in September.

Three Sails Trading Company

As noted in the report, the ship the company chartered last year has returned and investors will get double their investment next month.

The money owed to deceased characters (JLBR and ILB) gives the company capital of 6,000 crowns for financing future voyages...

Absent friends

The following didn’t get their orders in on time (“No Move Received”) and suffered the consequences.

EH Euria Humble (Matthew Wale) has NMR'd. Total now 1

JA Jacques As (Joe Farrell) has NMR'd. Total now 1

LL Lothario Lovelace (Geoff Bowers) has NMR'd. Total now 1

SN Sebastian Nuisance (Paul Appleby) has NMR'd. Total now 1

CMK (Graeme Wilson) and ROS (Paul Wilson) were floated as Graeme and Paul are spending much of their time visiting a sick relative.

X1 (Gerald Udowiczenko) has been floated at his request.

Farewell

Mike Bird has decided that “my mind just isn’t in the mood to play,” so I have removed his character. Mike donated the last issue on his sub to our newest player, Cameron Wood.

Rohan Keane did not provide orders for his new character after his previous one died without orders and I have killed off his character.

The street was dark, the rain of the day slowly draining in the filth, a near full moon mirroring in the puddles.

He was standing in the shadow of a derelict building, the roof sagging under the weight of age, rot and broken shingles, glistening wet in the moonlight.

He sniffed the air tasting a mix of putrid odours: the sweet smell of carcasses and the occasional vomit from the patrons of a nearby brothel. As he watched the brothel, a figure exited the door, accompanied by the sound of artificial laughter and a piercing beam of light amidst the darkness and sweet perfumes.

Then the door was closed again and the light and warmth of the place, even though pretentious and false was gone once more.

The observer detached himself from his hiding place and followed the figure. Paris was a dark and filthy place indeed and he would help the Commissioner to clean it up.

Checking his Sollingen-made blade and pair of (new) pistols he followed the shadow through the dark.

Dear Baron Le Bossu,

So sorry to have missed you at the Boozers party, but my people tell me that not only did you manage not to get your head blown off, but His Majesty thinks that you did such a good job of not being killed he has made you a Baron. Well done, we will have to assemble the Boozers on your return. I would mention the Bell word, but they get so excited!

Regards, † Count Shitacks

To Subaltern R Pierre Whitt

You have been recommended to me as a suitable person to be my Aide.

Consider yourself hired!! Duties are light: guard my beer, polish my bells, provide succour to the fallen women of Montmartre during their mourning for ILB, help Count Shitacks organise B&B events, laugh at Armand de Luce's terrible jokes, avoid the CPS (stab him up if no one is looking and you can catch him before he runs away) and always take the pee out of the Gascons.

Bonne Chance,

† Quasi le Bossu

Poetry Corner

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

There once was a Marquis
Beauregard,
Planned a party for Charles, dealt
death's card,

But his status was low,
So the Fleur said "No!"

And his guests were left in the yard!
† RPW

The Sheikh held a party at the Fleur:
Whores came for the medallion's lure.
As his carriage rocked, though not
due to cobbles,
With phallus in right hand it moved
to the wobbles,
The climax for the sheikh was not a
bonheur.

† The Hokey Cokey

the other hand, yellow buildings tend to reduce reputation, so that should stay high. It calls for a low cost strategy!

Each turn's play is pretty simple and will always involve removing a building tile from the market (and doing one of four things). The most likely action is to take a tile and build it, placing it adjacent to an existing building in your Borough. The building cost of the tile is shown on the left and you also have to pay the market premium if it's not in a \$0 slot at the bottom of the market.

Then the tile takes effect. To start with, there may be an immediate adjustment to the owner's income, cash, reputation or population, according to the symbol(s) on the tile. A banner at the bottom of the tile tells you what other effects it may have, depending on other tiles in play. These other tiles may be adjacent, anywhere in your Borough or, indeed, anywhere in play! The corollary of this is that you also have to check your other tiles to see if they're affected by the one just played.

For example, the Office Building (a blue, Commercial, tile) increases the owner's income by one and adds a further one for each adjacent blue building. When they place it, they thus get more income by putting it next to other blue buildings. What's more, their income goes up by one every time they subsequently place a blue building next to their Office. This produces a zoning effect as buildings tend to cluster – or spread out – according to what they do.

Another example is the Airport. This gives income and/or reputation for **every** airport in play (it also reduces reputation for adjacent green, Residential buildings). So, when you add an airport, you gain according to the number of airports already in play. Even better, you gain more every time any other player adds an airport. As there are plenty of this sort of tile, any purchase may affect your position, so you need to stay alert to what other players are up to.

As you will have worked out by now, it's the interactions between the tiles that make the game. Thus it's good to know what tiles are available. The game comes with a useful four-page sheet that shows all the different buildings (and the goals). There is additional information on the trickier tiles and a note of how many of them there are. Bear in mind, though, that no more than two-thirds of each set of buildings will be used in any game.

The second action for players is to take a building from the market, paying any premium, and place it upside down in their Borough as a 'Lake'. This can be done with any market building and the cost is zero. A lake gives the owner \$2 (cash) for each adjacent building – when it's placed and when buildings are added. One first-time player asked me what the point of lakes was. He quickly realised when he ran out of cash in round 2! I have even seen a player win using cash-generating tiles like lakes, rather than building up his income. Another reason for building a lake is to deprive other players of a useful building, of course, without needing to spend money.



The end of a two-player game at Swiggers games club

In addition to the buildings in the market, players can get extras of the starting buildings. There's no market premium on these, but the player must also discard a tile from the market and pay any premium on this. These buildings do not have big effects, but they are cheap. Again, I've seen a player win this way. Buying several of these early on helped build up his income before he started buying the more expensive buildings.

Finally, each player starts with three Investment ("x2") markers. Instead of adding a building, they may place one of these as their turn. This costs the construction cost of the tile and doubles its effects. Yes, it means a lake is worth another \$2 per adjacent building at zero cost. Note, however, that it only doubles the tile's own effects, not the effects of other buildings triggered by the doubled tile. Players must, again, discard a building from the market and pay any premium on it.

Having taken one of these actions (play a market building, a lake, a starting building or an investment marker) and adjusted everything, a player ends their turn by taking their income in cash and moving their marker along the population track according to their reputation. (It is possible for income or reputation to be negative and, yes, you lose cash/population!) Then they adjust their income and reputation for any red lines they passed through. Finally, the market tiles are moved along to fill the gap and a new tile added to the end. Then it's the next player's turn.

Dear Editor,
I have some interesting news about Grosse Blouse, aka Sheikh y'dickallabowt. Apparently he can't!! My informants have told me that during his service at the Court of Sultan Abbas II, he was known as the "White Eunuch" on account of his incredibly small (minuscule was the word used) meat-and-two-veg. Not enough to feed a sparrow, apparently. Not surprising really, as he certainly lacked the balls to fight me. This is what was wrongly reported by your war correspondent last month. I was shouting in mirth "he (SYAA) has got no balls" not "the balls, the balls". It also appears that he was thrown out of Constantinople after being caught "in flagrante" with a particularly pretty Camel called Dolly, one of the Sultan's favourites on account of her long curly lashes. My sources also tell me that he fled to Indus, where he was trained on drug use by a villain called Usama Ban Liden, head of a shady anti-Christian sect called Kai-ida. It is certainly the case that more honest and true heroes of France have died at his hands than on the battlefields. This would never have been allowed to happen in Minister d'Or's day. More later.

Yours,

† Baron Quasi le Bossu, on field operations with the RNHB, Spain

ANON (on the Privy Wall near Notre Dame): Being a craven cur, no wonder SYAA is so good at sniffing out lycanthropy.

One of Percy Percy's, I think...† Oscar

Heard at the Cabaret Comedie last night (if easily offended please stay away)
Captain Bawdy-Witt "Oh dear! I seem to be suffering from Premature Evacuation!" (sniggers)
Mistress Comequickly: "To the Front?"
BW: "Naturally. Where did you expect?" (some laughter)
Mme C: "Are you sure?"
BW: "Here is the proof – in this French letter." (Holds up a regimental despatch) (groans from the audience)
Mme C (Aside behind her fan to the audience): "Now he is going to assure me this has never, ever happened to him before!" (Wry smiles from the ladies)
BW: "I assure you, darling, this has..." (drowned out by cheering)

Lord Percy Percy says that it would be wise of Lord Percy Percy not to continue making derogatory comments about the CPS if Lord Percy Percy wants to continue being Lord Percy Percy! (Signed Marquis Al-Abowt, CPS!)

Sir Bill de Zmerchant,

Thank you for your time and your help. I am looking forward to hearing more of your tales in the officers' mess. I am quite taken with how you were able to use a 2 handed sword to exterminate "pests and undesirables".

Yours, † Was Nae Me

Lord Percy Percy says, as fashion is tending towards the insignificant, Euria Humble's 'manly weapon' is exceedingly fashionable.

To: The people of Paris

Notice is hereby given that a bounty of 1000 crowns has been placed for the capture, dead or alive, of the suspected **WITCH** and **TRAITOR** and **Cowardly Renegade Quasi Le Bossu**.

This wretch was last spotted fleeing to the border with Spain and may have sought to hide himself amongst the ranks of the Frontier forces.

Any loyal subject who apprehends Le Bossu or provides information leading to his subsequent capture and execution may lay claim to this bounty by contacting the Commissioner of Public Safety, C/o The Bastille.

† Sheikh Yadik Al-Abowt
Commissioner for Public Safety

Despatches from the Front

Apologies to those responded to The Rogues & Vagabonds invitation last month and found it was not on. Clearly there must be witchcraft about Confusing & Confounding my humours ... I believed I was to go home.. it may also have been the constant thunder of the guns too. ...I've seen more action over many years than many in Paris. Back into Action!! Vive le Roi!!

† Armand de Luce

Social

The Minor Saints' Society will be taking a Summer break, but will be meeting again in the Autumn.

† Monty Carlo

** Party – Week 1 September 1666 **

All,

This is advanced notice of a party to celebrate the return of our victorious army in Week 1, September 1666. Keep the date free in your diaries.

Yours etc, † WP

I regret the mix-up last month. It's a mercy really, as I'm not sure about a club that has the Shady Sheikh as a member. We can try again after the campaign season. † UXB

Personal

To CPS SYAA

Sir, I have to inform you that, at the current time, the science of Treasonometry is unable to determine whether or not a person is suffering from lycanthropy. However, it should be able to find out in a more conventional way: as everyone knows, the victim becomes a werewolf at the time of the full moon. Therefore all one has to do is to confine them over this period and see if they undergo this change. Of course to be fully scientific about this one should imprison a similar person at the same time in the same way and check that they do not change. Those guarding the prisoners should not know which is which (perhaps one could use some kind of metal mask to hide the subjects' identity?)

I hope this advice is of use to you,

† Viscount Madd

The Cutlass is a weapon for sailors. It is odd to see so many duellists deciding to use such a coarse, crude weapon.

Once the final round has been played, players see who, if anyone, has achieved the public goals and their individual goals. Money is converted to points (\$5 = 1 population) and the player with the most points wins. My experience is that the winner will score over 100 points (but less than the 150 that is the maximum on the track). Hence, achieving a 20-point goal is likely to be a significant proportion of your score. Even a 10-point goal is not to be sniffed at.

I have been playing *Suburbia* quite a bit in recent weeks and having great fun with it. I suspect the random aspects will put some people off, but I like the fact that each game is different and that you can't predict which buildings will be available. The game is quite tactical, but the goals add a strategic element. It certainly demands your attention because what other players do can affect your own position.

The rules – and what you do in a turn – are fairly simple. The complexity is in the building tiles and how they work with each other. Thus, how and what you play depends on the tiles: those you have, those other people have and those in the market. As well as keeping an eye on what other people are doing, I suggest thinking about when to use an Investment marker. You get nothing for these at the end of the game, so it's definitely worth using them – when they're better than adding a new tile.

I think I would sum up *Suburbia* as a middleweight game with a significant luck element. I really enjoy playing it and am still discovering new buildings each time I play. It's also interesting how the absence of a building can change the game. In my last game there was only one airport, so it didn't provide the expected dividend.

Suburbia was designed by Ted Alspach and published by Bézier Games. It is a tile-laying, tactical board game for 1-4 players (I haven't tried the solitaire version), aged 8+, and takes 90 minutes to play (I'd allow a bit longer, especially with beginners). I give it 8/10 on my highly subjective scale.

This review was first published in the Fall 2013 edition of Gamers Alliance Review: www.gamersalliance.com

Reading Matter

Fantasy of a very different kind (see the last couple of issues) is George RR Martin's "A Song of Ice and Fire" series (better known by the title of the first book, *A Game of Thrones*):. This is nominally (and sometimes actually) rip-roaring sword 'n' sorcery. However, there is actually very little magic on display and Martin is as interested in political machinations as clashing swords. After book 4, *A Feast for Crows*, ignored many characters familiar from the previous volumes, book 5, *A Dance with Dragons*, sees their return. However, so big is book 5 that it's published in two volumes, the first being *Dreams and Dust*.

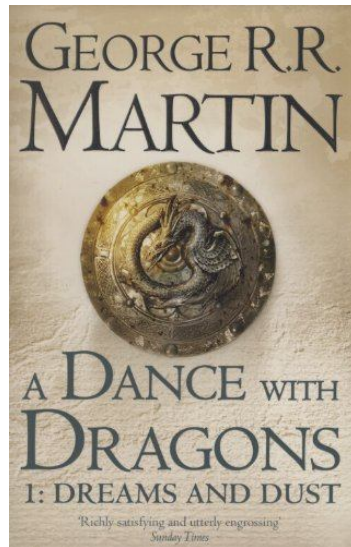
The action in this book is largely in parallel with book 4 – to begin with, anyway. The wars in the Seven Kingdoms of Westeros – whose thrones are the subject of the ‘game’ – have pretty much exhausted themselves. But the scheming continues. As usual, each chapter continues the story of one character and it can be several chapters (or even a complete book) before we return to this character. I’ve been known to skip ahead to resolve the cliffhangers, but I managed to resist the impulse this time.

In particular, *Dreams and Dust* continues the stories of Jon Snow, now commander of the Night’s Watch, Tyrion Lannister, on the run from his own family and just about everybody else, and Bran Stark, believed to be dead by most people in Westeros. I defy anyone to have predicted how any of these stories would go and Martin keeps taking us to new parts of the world he has created.

One of the things that strikes me about the whole saga is the way Martin has resisted the predictable. The prime example of this is the Starks. Meeting the family at the very start means they were the reader’s first viewpoint into the story, so we have an attachment to them. They have shown themselves to be honourable and to care for the people they rule. So have they gained the iron throne? Are they ruling for the benefit of all in Westeros? Are they heck as like!

Let’s see, the father’s dead, the mother’s dead, the eldest son is dead, the two young sons are believed dead (though we know different), the elder daughter is widowed and on the run, the younger daughter has been replaced by an impostor (and we don’t know where the real one’s gone) and the foster son turned against the family. This leaves the bastard son, Jon Snow, now lord commander of the Night’s Watch, defending the realm against the horrors from north of the Wall. It’s not at all what I was expecting!

A component of Martin’s unpredictability is that he’s not afraid to kill off main characters (see above) or, indeed, maim them. However, the flip side of this is that sometimes they’re not as dead as we believe. Hence we readers know the youngest Starks are still alive, but what about the others? Two dead characters reappear in this book: one that I expected – I just didn’t believe the report of their death – and one I didn’t. As far as I was concerned, this character had long gone, only for him to pop up again in a rather different guise. This makes me re-consider all the dead characters...



the vacant Major’s slot and buys the extra horses he needs. However, there’s no reward for Major Was Nae Me.

Brigadier Bill de Zmerchant is brevetted to Lt-General and his personal bravery gains him 500 crowns of booty. His Brigade Major, Lt-Col Eglise de Sant-Suplice, is right behind him but can only manage 300 crowns worth of goodies.

The Royal Foot Guards show the frontier troops how it’s done, storming over the Spanish ramparts to rout their opponents. Major Jean Jeanie receives a Mention in Despatches (“He’s outrageous!”) and collects 1,200 crowns worth of loot as the troops ransack the enemy fort. He then receives a Knighthood from an amused monarch. Lt-Colonel Amant d’Au sticks to the looting, but doesn’t do quite as well, gathering 1,100 crowns worth. Brigadier-General Devlin Carnate, commanding the RFG, is Mentioned and plunders 1,400 crowns.

Frontier regiment 1 does well, too, sacking the fortifications in front of them. RM Major Jacques le Franc gets his name into Despatches (“He’s a Marine!”) and pockets 1,300 crowns worth of booty. There’s equal success for Frontier regiment 4 where Private ‘X2’ is serving. He is promoted to Subaltern and Mentioned in Despatches (“Who is he, anyway?”).

Frontier regiment 3 holds its own, as do the Royal North Highlanders. Attached to regiment three, Bdr-General Armand de Luce finds 500 crowns for himself. Lt-General Quasi Le Bossu commands a Battalion of the RNHB and his looting brings him 900 crowns, but nothing else.

Frontier regiment 2 doesn’t do so well when their own ramparts collapse and several men are buried. 53F Lt-Col Tourtière Mangetout keeps out of the mess and is Mentioned in Despatches (“He hasn’t got mud all over him”). ❖

Press

Announcements

Members of the Royal Foot Brigade
I apologise for our sudden departure to the front, caused by reports that the Spanish were intending to make an early push before the summer which needed to be countered. All rumours that Lois broke my heart when she accepted the advances of Lt. Colonel Est are completely untrue. I emphatically did not leave Paris because I could no longer bear to walk along the streets where we used to promenade.

† Count Devlin Carnate, Colonel

Aide Required for Brigadier-General.
Must like horses and dogs. good filing skills needed.

Yours etc, † WP

To the officers and men of the Horse Guards

Lads (and Ladettes – I know there are a few of you hiding your identities), remember we’re going to War in June: kiss your loved ones goodbye and put your houses in order.

† Brigadier-General WP

Etienne makes his way to the gaming tables and attracts attention by throwing down a 500-crown wager. He wins it and stakes the same amount. As people gather to watch, he cuts the next two bets when the house rolls high, losing what he won on the first bet. Unfazed, he puts down his original 500 crowns again and wins. Then Terence interrupts to challenge him for his uniform – a confrontation that Etienne answers with spirit. However, no-one comes up with the morale-boosting war stories that Voulo wanted and his little prize goes unawarded.

Ali and Angelina and Voulo and Ophelia are back in Bothwell's to close the month. Frele d'Acier and Charles de Gaullible are kicking their heels outside Hunter's as there's no sign of Jacques As, who they expected to be hosting them. And for this Frele got himself excused from his regimental duties! It's not a good month for Charles as he's had to spend half of it on duty. He also visited the Bawdyhouses, as did R Pierre Whit (after his courting earlier in the month came to nothing). They were the only people to do so this month and both were attacked by footpads. They had spent their cash, though.

After the triumphant success of his Treasonometer in court this month, Egon Mad 2 gives his brain (while, I assume it's his...) a rest and goes for some physical exercise: four weeks of it with his rapier. Gar de Lieu is in the gyms all month as well, practising sabre. Jacques de Gain puts in four weeks with his rapier. And Tomas le Matelot works out with his sabre for four weeks. Arnaud Surfinmaise is in the gym for the three weeks around the Minor Saints' meeting, practising rapier. Etienne Brule sticks to his rapier apart from his gambling at Voulo's party.

Arsène Est goes for three weeks' sabre practice after his week in Bothwell's. Donald O'Grady does the same with a two-handed sword. So does Eric de Miabeille, though his weapon of choice is the sabre. Gaz Moutarde visits his young lady before practising for three weeks with his cutlass. Uther Xavier-Beauregard has some successful courting and spends the following three weeks with his sabre and a big grin.

There are big grins all over the place with the news that the Fair Wind has returned from the West Indies, a little battered, but intact. Investors in the Three Sails Trading Co can expect to double their money once her entire cargo has been sold.

Mud and blood

Bolstering the Frontier troops with the Heavy Brigade may not be such a good idea when the troops are engaged in sieges – the cavalry has limited impact in these circumstances. The Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers and Crown Prince Cuirassiers can – and do – patrol the countryside, warning of – and hopefully preventing – Spanish reinforcements arriving. Their engagements this month are limited to skirmishing. CPC Trooper Horatio d'Encore proves to be a competent soldier and is brevetted to Subaltern. Captain Dick D'Asterdly is promoted into

As always, the book is great fun as we follow the adventures of so many familiar characters – and a few new ones. The plot remains unpredictable as Martin introduces new twists and turns. However, I'm prepared to predict that the sunny, sleepy, southern land of Dorne is about to become more important in the game of thrones. I fully expect this to be in ways that I don't anticipate, though. And there are still a few familiar people whose stories have been left hanging. Time for book 5, volume 2...

Games Events

I'm off to Germany for Spiel as soon as this issue of *TWJO* is out. If you're not on your way as well, you've missed it!

Coming up in November is, of course, MidCon, which is one of my favourite games conventions. It's now settled in its new home in Derby, where the Hallmark Hotel provides a comfortable venue. While MidCon's mostly about playing games I expect a quiz, secondhand games and a few other distractions. For more information, see the website at www.midcon.org.uk

This box concentrates on events I expect to attend.

Swiggers: games club that meets every Wednesday evening, usually upstairs at The Shipwright's Arms, 88 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TF (a few minutes' walk from London Bridge station). Board games and very occasional role-playing. No charges, all welcome. For more information, see www.pevans.co.uk/Swiggers.

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

UK Games Expo: 30th May – 1st June 2014 at the Hilton Metropole at the NEC. This is a public event that showcases games of all sorts with traders, demos and participation games plus guests. For gamers there are lots of tournaments and open gaming on the Friday and on Saturday evenings. For details see www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk

Spiel: the board games event of the year. 24th-27th October 2013, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany or see www.merz-verlag-en.com/.

MidCon: 8th-10th November 2013 at the Hallmark Hotel in Derby. MidCon is a friendly board games convention in a decent hotel. See www.midcon.org.uk.

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

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

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

The Bonking Game

Turn 12

Let's start at the top this time, with Colin Bruce. He bonks "Tim 'Devil' Macaire for his insouciance." Tim's target is Alan Tabor "for being the last person whose name comes after mine in the alphabet." A previous self-bonk means Al has two bonks this turn and goes out!

First, though, he completes the circle (triangle?) by bonking "Colin Bruce (or, perhaps, Bruce Collins?)." He is joined by Nik Luker, who writes: "simple serial coin tossing results in... Colin Bruce." This makes sure Colin goes out.

Who's next? Ah yes, Andrew Burgess: "This month I shall bonk Tim Macaire – why not?" Why not, indeed. Especially as it tips Tim over the edge!

Mark Cowper goes for Mike Dommatt – "for letting the AIA win *Star Trader*. In Turn 11!!" Just let me bask in the glow of glory for a moment ... ah, that's better! Mike targets Bill Hay "for being habitual and therefore of restricted horizons." Bill has a self-bonk hanging over him, as he's well aware: "I've been repeatedly bonking Mike Dommatt for the last few turns and now he can knock me out with a single bonk. I will have my pre-emptive revenge – bonk Mike Dommatt." And this puts both of them out.

Andy Kendall looks at the scores. "That zero probably bodes. I'll bonk Andrew Burgess and take him with me." Andy's bonk does for Andrew, but no-one targets him and he survives. So, too, do Mark Cowper and Nik Luker.

This is interesting: three players left in, one with a self-bonk. With two bonks needed for elimination, it's possible we'll get a winner next turn. If we do, it won't be Mark. If we're left with two players, it's mutually assured destruction and I'll call it a draw.

The last word goes to Graeme Morris, even though he went out last turn: "Bonked? Reckon I'm Bug**red!"

This turn's scores

Player	Self	Total
Colin Bruce	1	3
Andrew Burgess	1	2
Mark Cowper	1	1
Mike Dommatt	0	2
William Hay	1	2
Andrew Kendall	0	0
Nik Luker	0	0

Player	Self	Total
Tim Macaire	0	2
Alan Tabor	1	2

Self is the number of self-bonks (to date); Total is the number of bonks this turn.

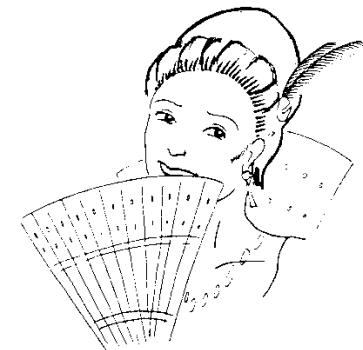
Proust, Fifi, Kathy Pacific and Katy Did, respectively. The heavily bandaged Henri Bastar'd gets to visit the Fleur, too, signed in as the Sheikh's guest after Arsène Est has excused him from regimental duties this month. He has no lady friend to bring with him, though. Jacques and Madelaine remain in the club all month. Apart from this, only Pierre le Sang and Kathy make a return visit, fitted in between Pierre's rapier practice. The Sheikh goes practising for three weeks (with his rapier), as does Pierre Cardigan (with sabre).

Down the road at Bothwell's, Arsène Est escorts Lois de Low. Ali Vouzon brings Angelina di Griz. Donald O'Grady has Jacky Tinne on his arm. Eric de Miabeille brings Anna Rexique. Voulo Vault accompanies Ophelia Derriere. Warren Peece escorts Ingrid la Suède. Caught up in themselves, the couples barely acknowledge each other.

Terence Cuckpowder takes Lucy Fur to Hunter's, as does Dexter Sinistre with Ava Crisp. All that Sheila Kiwi gets is a trip to the Blue Gables on the arm of Chopine Camus. Then Chopine abandons her for three weeks with his sabre. Dexter does just the same. However, Blue Gables gains Marmotte d'Ai and his new mistress, Cath de Thousands. They stay there for the rest of the month.

Ali and Angelina, Voulo and Ophelia and Warren and Ingrid return to Bothwell's for a second week. The club gains one other couple as Richard Shapmes arrives, fresh from a week's rapier practice, with Ella Fant on his arm.

The party is in Hunter's, though, as Monty Carlo hosts the Minor Saints' Society. This month they gather to honour St Peter of Tarentaise the Younger and his tradition of distributing food around his diocese in May. Monty and Charlotte host the celebrations. At the head of the guest list (alphabetically) is Arnaud Surfinmaise, who brings Betty Kant with him. Armand Slice has Lotte Bottle on his arm. Henri Bastar'd has no company but the chip on his shoulder, provoking him to challenge Armand as a commoner. R Pierre Whit is next and Terence Cuckpowder brings up the rear with Lucy.



Voulo's party sucks in much of Parisian society in week 3. He and Ophelia intend the event as a morale booster before the troops march off for the summer campaign. Ali and Angelina top the list again and Armand and Lotte follow them again. Etienne Brule brings Frances Forrin. Frele d'Acier escorts Freda de Ath. Monty and Charlotte appear next. Richard Shapmes accompanies Ella. Then there's Terence Cuckpowder, who brings Lucy, of course. Warren and Ingrid complete the guests.

To put this in perspective, the arch-fiend Bartat had a score of 1.4. So this man is but a gnat's whisker from being THE VERY SPAWN OF SATAN and I request that you kindly him guilty."

Galvanised into action, Minister Ind utters the one word: "Guilty." Despite his protestations ("What about my defence?"), Marquis de Bosset is taken away for execution. However, as Minister of War, Bosset has a few favours to call in. As a result, His Majesty takes note of the man's appeals and commutes his sentence to banishment – which Bosset is happy to accept.

Resignations and recruits

Even after the trial, Sheikh Yadik Al-Abowt is still throwing his weight – or at least his influence – about (no change there, I hear people say). First off, he has a word with the Inspector-General of Cavalry. It can't have been a particularly forceful word as the chap stays in his job. Then he talks to the Inspector-General of Infantry, who is also being pushed into resigning by Arsène Est. The combined influence works and the man quits. Finally, in what can only be called bullying, the might of the CPS descends on the senior Major in the 69th Arquebusiers. The Major can't resign fast enough, leaving both the rank and his position as Brigade Major of the Fourth Foot vacant.

Eglise de Sant-Suplice does not have the power of the CPS, but he does use his influence against his commanding officer, the Colonel of the Crown Prince Cuirassiers. The Colonel laughs him off. Sant-Suplice is able to buy his way as far as Lieutenant-Colonel, though. The regiment gains a couple of recruits, too. Horatio d'Encore is admitted by the laughing Colonel and joins the ranks as a Trooper. Was Nae Me's application is supported by Bill de Zmerchant – a favour the Colonel is happy to accede to. Me takes up the vacancy at Major – though there's room for another one.

There's no rest in Paris for the new Cuirassiers as the regiment, along with the Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers, is taken into action by the Heavy Brigadier, Bill de Zmerchant. This appears to be something the new recruits are not expecting as both have plans for their month in Paris. As does CPC Captain Dick D'Asterdly. Ah well, that's life! Or death.

As a Brigade Major, Jacques le Franc does not have a command to volunteer and the rest of his Brigade (First Foot) is quite happy in Paris this month. Le Franc's journey to serve with a Frontier regiment is thus a solitary one.

Last parties

Paris seems subdued on the eve of the summer campaign. The only event to send the troops off into action is hosted by Major Voulo Vault and this not until the third week of the month. The order of the day seems to be taking your lady to your club. Jacques Shitacks, Pierre Cardigan, Pierre le Sang and Sheikh Yadik Al-Abowt all do so. They are in the Fleur de Lys, in the company of Madelaine de

What's this about?

The name of this game goes back to more innocent times and the game has also appeared under other titles. Each turn, each player bonks (= nominates) another recipient of this magazine who's still in the game. Those who are bonked enough times in a turn are out and can't bonk anyone else. Last man standing wins.

The game is open to anyone who receives *To Win Just Once*. Players just have to send me the name of another *TWJO* recipient (from the list above) and give a reason (it doesn't have to be significant). Players who don't bonk someone else bonk themselves (and self-bonks are cumulative from turn to turn). The nominations needed for ejection will reduce as the number of players goes down.

(If you read *TWJO* and I've left you out of the list, drop a line to TWJO@pevans.co.uk and I'll add you in next time. If you don't want to be included, just wait and you'll be out next turn.)

**Send your bonk to Pevans at
180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF or
to TWJO@pevans.co.uk by 15th November 2013**

Fictionary Dictionary

This game is open to all readers and I guess most of you will have come across it. Each issue I will put up a couple of obscure words. Anybody who wants to participate writes in with fictional definitions for the words. (For example: "Geranium: a ceremonial dagger used by Aztec priests for human sacrifice.") I publish these, anonymously. All readers (not just those who contributed) vote for their favourite definition (a vote for your own definition will be ignored).

Players score points for the number of people who choose their definition. (In other versions of the game, the definitions include the correct one and players get points for spotting it. However, Google and Wikipedia make this too easy, so I've left it out for this game.) We'll run this for 10 issues. The winner will be the player with the most points at the end.

The first two words are: **Brucellosis** and **Clamatorial**.

**Send your made-up definitions to Pevans at
180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF or
to TWJO@pevans.co.uk by 15th November 2013**

The Light that Failed

Star Trader game 6 – Game End Statements

The Corporation game, which we played here, is the original version of the game. It contains 11 defined Corporations, each with their strengths and weaknesses. The pre-set victory conditions and resources do restrict players' options.

GAMLEPCO and HOUSTON FEARLESS have Factories and Market Positions and are best off producing and selling, using the market positions to outbid competition. MONOGRAM has the potential to make lots of money because Monopolies sell at a high price and don't occupy cargo space. But there's an initial debt and no ship to start with. ARCHANGEL has the peculiar position of being the Passenger carrier. As other Corporations have shown, carrying passengers brings pretty good profits, if no one else is competing for the passengers and the flights are not being intercepted. EON FLASHCORP and HOLYOKE ARBITRAGE are Corporations flirting with illegality. HOLYOKE has the Leviathan with its massive storage capacity and the ability to carry a lot of weapons as well. QUASAR is another trading Corporation. It has no Factories to start with, but the unrivalled ability to borrow up to 1,000 HTs. This ability of course, as with all loans taken out by Corporations, needs to bring in more profit than the interest payments, but allows the Corporation to consider various options. GATES-LEARJET starts with a bonus on smuggling, which may prove to be advantageous. The ASSOCIATION OF INTERSTELLAR ANARCHISTS and MCRADIE'S CREW both fulfil the role of destroyer. Both have limited amounts of money and it can be very difficult to recover from loss of a ship in both cases. In theory they could collect protection money, but in practice no one pays it. BELISAR POLITICAL has in theory the easiest target, as the Connections and reputation can be gained from trading which adds cash.

Mark Cowper, Belisar Political

Well I certainly didn't see that coming! I'd thought the loss of the Bakunin would put the Anarchists out of the running. I was more surprised that Archangel hadn't already taken the win in the last few turns. Congratulations (read curses!) to Paul, and well done to everyone else.

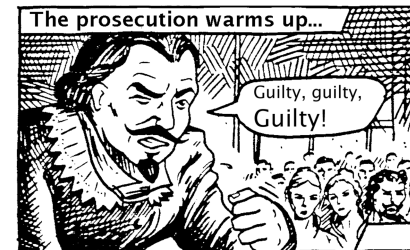
My strategy for Belisar was simple and, I thought, sound. Invest in factories and a couple of cheap haulers to work the low-end Alloy and Isotope markets in high volumes. The Wehrmachtian ship names were just a cheap attempt to throw you all off my objectives and perhaps give the pirates some second thoughts.

The chosen option was B: 10 Business Connections, 40 Reputation, and far too many Credits. The first two points were quickly met and then it was just a matter of time. Hauling cheap loads to stockpile and sell off on guaranteed contract rates. From earlier games I'd seen the margins evolve nicely on these commodities and I wasn't disappointed here. Can't say I managed it very

been witnessed first-hand and the corpses of murdered young women and several dead CPS agents attest to his guilt. It is also an interesting fact to note that the prisoner is another who uses a two part surname, in his case it is Lupus-Bosset. Link that to the late Lamore Bartat and compare it to the renegade Le Bossu and I am sure Your Grace will see that there is an underlying link in all these 'LB' surnames which is too much to be of a coincidence!"

"Research has also long since proven the connection between witches and other servants of evil. Where there is a witch, one is likely to find a werewolf, the two working together against the common good. The prisoner must therefore stand guilty of the secondary charge of 'Aiding and abetting witchcraft.'" The CPS purses his lips, taking his time to regard the prisoner, before continuing, "Each charge in itself calls for the penalty of death, so being guilty of both merits a particularly specific demise. Each of the external limbs should be removed, the wounds then cauterised with a red-hot silver poker. This having been done the head must be removed and a mix of molten silver and belladonna poured in to the neck cavity. The head itself should be jumped up and down upon before being tossed into a big bonfire back at the Bastille, along with all the limbs and other bits & pieces. This is how one truly destroys a werewolf!"

The possibility of such a spectacle seems to please the public, as there is loud applause for the Commissioner's suggested method of execution. This has the useful effect of waking up the Minister of State, who appears to have dozed off during the Sheikh's lengthy peroration. However, Minister Ind is keen to apply science to jurisprudence and brings in Viscount Egon Mad 2 as an expert witness.



Mad enters the court with his valet, Igor, who is carrying a large blackboard. Once it is set up, the Viscount addresses the court. "My Lords, before I tell you the results of the Treasonometry test I gave to the accused, I would like to explain how Treasonometry works so that you can be assured of its place as a tool for establishing guilt or innocence in a Court of Law." With this he turns to the blackboard and begins to write on it. "First you take the Natural Logarithm of the accused's wealth and multiply it by..."

He continues to write furiously for some time, though it is clear he is not holding the attention of anyone in the court. The increasingly loud grumbling from the public gallery drowns out the gentle snores from the bench... Just as the noise gets loud enough to wake up the Minister, Mad comes to a conclusion, the blackboard nearly full of indecipherable scribble. "...From which you can clearly see that this will result in a number lying between zero and seven, where a score of seven is a veritable saint working tirelessly for the good of France and zero is the Anti-Christ himself. Applying this to the accused, we come to a score of 1.5.

Raising himself to his full height, slowly flexing his fingers before him and with a stern countenance upon his face Al-Abowt reflects for a moment as the hubbub dies down. Behind him, Ali “The Axe” Al-Headsoff nonchalantly rubs an oiled cloth across the blade of a large scimitar he is resting upon his knees. “Acting upon instinct,” continues the CPS, “I decided to arrest the ‘Minister’ and bring him to the Bastille for questioning. It was during the course of this questioning that the full horror of the situation became clear and I apologise in advance to the Court for the gruesome details that I am about to relate.”

“Hardly had we got him back when a dreadful transformation took place that almost cost us all our lives! One of my men, Gaston, removed the silver handcuffs we had him in so as to place him in wall manacles. No sooner had he done so when, before my very eyes, I saw the prisoner turn into a crazed wolf that leapt onto poor Gaston and ripped his throat out in an instant. It was only down to the grace of my own sincere piety that I was wearing a silver crucifix which I quickly used to bludgeon the beast unconscious and return the silver handcuffs to his wrists. Just as soon as the handcuffs were back on, the beast transformed back into human. If Gaston had survived, he would obviously verify my evidence.”

“This transformation was witnessed by me a number of times during the course of Lupus-Bosset’s interrogation. Of course I had to think of the safety of my men and so it was only myself and Ali, my personal bodyguard here,” Al-Abowt turns to indicate Ali ‘The Axe’ who nods his head in agreement, “who actually observed the beast, but you may trust our evidence implicitly. Furthermore, whilst referring to the matter of evidence, it was during his incarceration that we acquired yet more proof of his guilt including,” The Sheikh’s dark, piercing eyes flash with a look of triumph “a signed confession – the most damning of all!”

Delving into the chest Al-Abowt reveals a wolf’s claw and a parchment, at the top of which is written ‘Antoine Lupus-Bosset, My Full and Unequivocal Confession’. After several sentences the muddy imprint of a wolf’s paw can clearly be seen at the bottom of the sheet. “Now, Your Grace, the accused may well try to deny the confession in this courtroom, claiming that he has no knowledge of ever signing such but, Your Grace, such is the nature of the beast. The transformation is so total that it takes the memory from the man and it was a persistent factor in Lupus-Bosset’s interrogation that he swore he could not recall his actions while a beast. Nevertheless, due to the diligence of Gregor, my ablest wolf-tracker, the strength of my faith and the coaxing of a heated silver poker we obtained the confession directly from the beast. It, being unable to write, howled and barked its story. This was deciphered and written down by Gregor and to this, the beast put its mark. Alas, ill fortune befell Gregor as he strayed too close when taking the mark and the beast devoured his head in a single bite, otherwise he would obviously verify my evidence.”

“The Prosecution has made clear its case and has produced many items of evidence, including the prisoner’s signed confession. His crime of lycanthropy has

efficiently, but it was getting there. Of course I was also counting on some lucky Op to give me a leg-up of a few hundred credits, as I’m sure everyone else was too. I had my small ship, Rommel, standing by for such a break... until Paul set off those crackers.

Oh well, we still ended up with a good run and the trade was steady. Three more turns maybe could have done it. Good game and appreciation to Mike for running it. May we have another?

Andrew Burgess, Monogram Industries

First of all, thanks to Mike for running the game, and to Paul for his win. As I started the game with a debt which needed repaying, that was my first priority. In real life, it’s probably the best move, although in this game, I would probably have been advised to take on a little more debt so that I could expand more rapidly. I still feel I am learning the ropes, but I’ll try and do better next time. Please put me down for the next game!

Przemek Orwat, Holyoke Arbitrage

Congratulations to Paul! Though it was too easy a victory. I tried to play a vigilante from the beginning of the game, but without support I was not able to stop AIA.

What if all the other players joined my anti-AIA alliance after the first announcement on turn 5? Wouldn’t we stand a chance against Paul?

Waiting for the next game!

You certainly kept track of what was going on, and made serious efforts to stop the AIA winning, despite some bad luck at times that didn’t help you.

Mike Dyer, Quasar

Just like the trail of destruction following the AIA around the Universe, Turn 11 and the Game is over... Shock, probe, horror. I didn’t see it coming, so well played Paul, but it was somehow unfulfilling... only 11 turns and I was doing so well...

I have won with Quasar myself. As long as no one wins quickly, the ability to borrow the large sum of money is immensely useful. You were certainly starting to turn over a lot of cash each turn from your assets.

Martin Jennings, GamLepCo

Hmm... Game End statement, not really sure what to say. It was over too quick, Paul’s victory condition made it possible to go for a quick win while the other corporations were weak, so he took it.

With a Market Corporation, it is almost impossible to go for a quick win; you have to build up resources, contacts and cash. I do not think I was even half-way to my victory condition, I had got into position to start building up the cash flow.

Jury is still out on the corporation game, but ready for the next one. Oh yes, ‘Yaaay Paul!’ on the win ;)

Bob Parkins, Gates-Learjet

First I would like to thank you for taking your time and effort into adjudicating the Star Trader game.

As the Gates-Learjet player my victory conditions were 1,500 HT in assets, all connection levels at 8 and a reputation level at least 30.

I thought I was doing OK to start with. I had factories and spaceships. So I had got production started and was able deliver cargo and passengers in a reliable manner. However the loss of one of my spaceships to an AIA attack put back my development within the game.

I knew the AIA were going to be a problem because their ships are better than most and are not hamstrung by an enquiry.

Therefore the AIA ships had to be taken out. I armed my ships to play my part in doing this. I just hoped the other players were able to do the same. Sabotage, of course, is another problem, AIA needed to be starved of cash.

Well done Paul and a curse on all anarchists.

Having the intersystem craft gives you an advantage in smuggling, using OP chits but nothing worked for you,

Pevans, Association of Interstellar Anarchists

Well, well, well: that’s another ambition achieved! Ever since I discovered *Star Trader* I’ve wanted to play (and win as) the Alliance of Interstellar Anarchists. After all, they get to blow up spaceships without any come-back! I’m sure I’m not alone in that ambition – it brings out the child in us all.

One aspect of playing the game with the Corporations is that everybody has different victory conditions. This is both good – players have different strategies – and bad – it’s unbalanced. The AIA is probably the extreme example as (I think) all the other Corporations need to do some trading. The AIA doesn’t (though it will do some to raise funds). It’s also bad news for Corporations who ship passengers as they have to broadcast where their ships are going.

The AIA can be stopped, of course. However, it needs one or more Corporations to build well-armed ships to take on the AIA’s Dagger hull. The problem is that doing this handicaps those Corporations, so those who don’t take part in hunting down the AIA get an advantage. Kind of a prisoner’s dilemma thing.

Of course, the AIA can still destroy ships using sabotage – as I did to blow up my fifth and final ship – but this is much harder to do. The AIA does have a decent Criminal Connection level, which helps. However, only little ships are likely to be destroyed outright by a sabotage attack. Hello, little Piccolo hulls!

Frele d’Acier is voted cause against Bill de Zmerchant, but Sir Bill is too badly injured from previous months’ duels to meet him.

Of lycanthropy and treachery

This month’s trial features the luckless Minister of War, Marquis de Bosset, who is arraigned on charges of “lycanthropy and aiding and abetting witchcraft.” On the instructions of the Commissioner of Public Safety, the defendant is shackled in silver handcuffs and leg irons and imprisoned in a silver cage (purchased at the CPS’s expense) for the duration of the trial. According to Marquis Al-Abowt, this is due to “the threat he poses to the Court – don’t want the fellow changing into a werewolf during the trial!” Black-clad CPS agents and a couple of ‘wolf-trackers’ stand guard.

There is much murmuring from the public gallery (where Chancellor Jacques Shitacks is prominent and R Pierre Whit isn’t) at this extravagant security. The Sheikh waits for things to settle down before opening the Prosecution’s case. “Your Grace,” Marquis Al-Abowt addresses the Minister of State, Viscount Gustav Ind, sitting in judgement. “The Public Safety Ministry is heartened to see your continued presence in this Courtroom; you have enabled justice to stand firm in very difficult times. When I last stood in this Court, it was to bring before you a despicable pair of villains who had caused untold misery and mischief to the people of our beautiful city. Thanks to your adherence to protecting His Majesty, and all of his subjects, those villains are no more and today I will be calling upon you to demonstrate the same firm stance with regards to the prisoner who is arrayed here.”

The CPS beckons to one of the “wolf-trackers” who hands him a silver-topped cane. With this Al-Abowt jabs at the Minister of War through the cage bars, forcing the unfortunate Minister to stumble to his feet. “I became suspicious of this fiend following the latest in a series of violent deaths that have occurred over the last month. A number of young women have been found with their throats torn out and savage claw marks across their bodies. While the majority were women of ‘ill repute’, others were simple poor peasant girls who were attacked whilst out alone in the streets at night.”

“Close to the corpse of the last victim my agents found a most interesting clue.” CPS Al-Abowt opens the lid of a wooden chest that sits beside him on the prosecution bench. Reaching inside he pulls out a torn and bloody white shirt. “This shirt was passed to one of my best men, Norbert Le Nez, an agent who specialises in olfactory investigation, and he was able to immediately pick up a scent from it. The trail led us to the gates of the War Ministry whereat we found a second piece of evidence.” Once again Al-Abowt reaches into the chest, this time taking out what appears to be a clump of coarse fur. “Look, your Grace, here is a handful of brown/grey fur which was caught on the railings of the War Ministry gates!” There are loud exclamations from the public gallery and one woman faints at the sight.

assist, so he just sticks his rapier in the ground as he prepares. The fight doesn't last long: Brule lunges, Miabeille slashes, Brule surrenders.

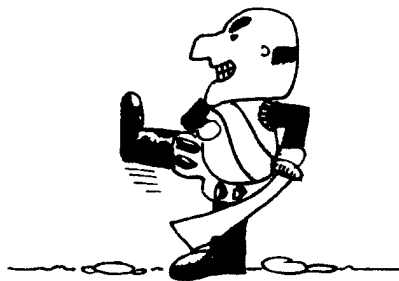
The fresh injury would allow Brule to duck out of meeting Terence Cuckpowder, but he decides he's strong enough to take him on. Like Miabeille, Cuckpowder is a sabre-wielding member of the Queen's Own Carabiniers who's suffering with old injuries. As they cross blades, Brule has second thoughts and offers his surrender. However, Cuckpowder is wasting no time and attacks with a furious lunge, skewering Brule with the initial lunge even as he opens his mouth. The blow redeems Brule from the ignominy of surrendering without being hit and he hobbles off for medical attention.

Cuckpowder refuses to fight Arsène Est or Rick O'Shea. He's saving himself to duel Gaz Moutarde, only to be disappointed when Moutarde doesn't show up.

Newcomer Henri Bastar'd has racked up an impressive number of duels after his first month in Paris. He chooses to take on Armand Slice first. Slice's injuries bring the bigger man down to the level of his opponent, but he still has much more skill. He also has a sabre against Bastar'd's rapier. However, looming behind Bastar'd is the ominous, black-clad form of his regimental colleague, the CPS, Sheikh Yadik Al-Abowt. Slice has Pierre Cardigan as his second, but they still feel outnumbered.

Bastar'd takes an aggressive approach, opening with a furious lunge. He skewers Slice with the lunge and continues into the cut. Slice hits him back with a slash before the cut can land and then launches a furious slash. The slash hits Bastar'd almost immediately, evening the score at two hits apiece. The sabre's cut makes a big difference, though, and Bastar'd concedes the duel before Slice can hit him some more. The blows he has taken allow him to decline his duels with Arsène Est (who isn't fit either), Gaz Moutarde, Jacques As, Lothario Lovelace and Rick O'Shea. Mind you, only O'Shea showed up.

Slice's second opponent is Dick D'Asterdly, Captain in his enemy regiment, the Crown Prince Cuirassiers. This would be an even fight if Slice wasn't injured. As it is, the fit and healthy D'Asterdly has a clear advantage over the battered Slice, despite his lack of skill. However, D'Asterdly betrays his inexperience from the off, starting with a pointless block. He then jumps back, but leaves time for Slice to



follow and hit him with a slash. Annoyed, D'Asterdly closes in and attacks with his boot – just as Slice slashes again. Because he's swinging when D'Asterdly lands his kick, Slice doesn't take too much damage from it. He continues his furious slash and a hefty cut from his sabre persuades his opponent to concede. That's two up and two down for Slice, but he's definitely the worse for wear.

As for this game in particular, I took the obvious victory condition: destroy five hulls. I made a half-hearted attempt to disguise this by suggesting I was blockading Sigma Draconis. I suspect everybody saw through this in short order. Apart from that, it was just a question of positioning my warship to intercept smaller ships – I did not want to take on that Leviathan! It was the Leviathan that got my ship in the end, but not until I'd polished off four ships.

All I needed to do then was Sabotage one of the Piccolos that I knew were flying around, preferably in a Spaceport with a low Law level to keep the cost down. Bad luck for the Rommel when it flew into that lawless place, Mu Herculis.

Thanks to all for the game and Mike for GMing. At the risk of sounding patronising, I think this has probably been a decent introduction for the new players and I suggest you sign up for the next game. The free deployment set-up and victory conditions make it a tougher and more even contest.

I was impressed by the way everyone sent in orders, and all were working well. Paul's AIA was very disruptive and the Corporations affected had to build themselves back up. Players worked out how to use the advantage of Market Positions and, had Paul chosen the option of blockading the Sigma Draconis System, I think that the game would still be going. All are invited to join the next game, a free deployment scenario, where you get to choose your special ability.

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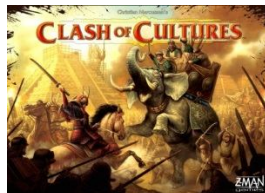
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Clash of Cultures

This **game** has rather taken my fancy: not least because of the fine plastic pieces with which players build up their cities. Each city starts as a circular settlement and up to four different buildings fit around this as it expands. It's very neat and looks terrific.



Exploring the land brings players the space they need to found new cities. Not to mention the resources they need to expand their cities and to discover new technologies. These give the empires different strengths and weaknesses. Add in building 'wonders', keeping down the barbarians and the 'happiness' of the people and there's a lot going on in this game. It's great fun.

For 2-4 players, aged 12+, playing time 4 hours: **£58.00**

Pandemic (2nd edition)

The second edition is a complete re-design of this terrific cooperative game and includes two new roles that players may have. The basic idea remains the same, though: players are fighting viruses that are spreading across the globe. If they succeed, they cure the viruses and save the planet. If they get it wrong, pandemics break out and mankind is doomed! No pressure, then.



Pandemic is an absolutely terrific game that continues to provide a thrill every time I play. I'm sure it will come to be regarded as a classic.

For 2-5 players, aged 12+, 45 mins to play (but you'll want to play again): **£27.00**

Confucius

Back in stock is this is a fascinating and subtle take on life in the China of the Ming Dynasty. Players seek to improve the standing of their family in the three arms of Government. However, they work within the constraints of Confucian philosophy. In particular, gifts are given and received, setting up a network of relationships that will lead one family to dominate the government. This is another clever and intriguing game from designer Alan Paull.



For 3-5 players, aged 12+, playing time 100 minutes: **£25.00**

Online at www.pevans.co.uk/Games

Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses 267

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

**Orders for June & July 1666 to
Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive,
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May 1666

As the summer campaign looms, there's still time for another party or two in Paris – and time for a last ditch volunteer to get some action before the main event. First, though, there are some matters of honour to settle. We begin with Marmotte d'Ai who turns up early for his appointment with Was Nae Me and is swishing his rapier aggressively when his opponent arrives. Me is nervously clutching a foil – “stick him with the pointy end,” advises his second, Frele d'Acier. However, Me's main advantage is that he's the (slightly) bigger man.

The two duellists start tentatively, Ai squandering the advantage of his superior expertise by dodging and parrying while Me gets the feel of his weapon. Ai then closes in and uses his boot just as Me lunges. Both men feel the impact of the other's attack, but recover and try a slash. Ai wounds his opponent for the second time, but the blunt edge of Me's foil has no effect. Expecting his opponent to try a lunge now, Ai parries, but Me just hops around. Not for long, though, as Ai gets him with another slash and the third blow is enough for Me to concede the duel. The angry Ai would have continued, but is restrained by Acier.

Eric de Miabeille has two affairs this month and chooses Yves Vrai Bretheauteque as his first adversary. However, that worthy is not in evidence, so he moves on to face his regimental enemy, Etienne Brule. Both men are suffering from old wounds, but neither is quite injured enough to be able to decline the duel with honour. Eglise de Sant-Suplice joins Miabeille as his second, passing him his sabre once Miabeille has removed his jacket. Brule has no second to