

That would be enough

This has been issue 205 of *To Win Just Once*, published 12th June 2020. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2020

Deadlines

Railway Rivals and *Star Trader* games are held over.

Orders for *LPBS* and *Trophy Hunter* plus any other contributions to Pevans by 3rd July 2020.

(Following deadlines are 31st July/7th Aug, 4th/11th Sept, 9th/16th Oct)

Waiting lists

En Garde! new players are always welcome in *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*. You will need the rules to *En Garde!* in order to play: www.engage.co.uk

Railway Rivals – Christian Bien, Mark Cowper, Rob Pinkerton, Anthony Gilbert, Jonathan Palfrey, Gerald Udowiczenko and Bob Blanchett are awaiting the next one, anyone else? (Working map and rules provided).

Sopwith – up for this game of WW1 aerial combat are: Rob Pinkerton, Jonathan Palfrey, Anthony Gilbert, Pevans.

Star Trader – Joel Halpern is waiting for the next game. Rules provided.

Online games

Agricola (at www.boiteajeux.net): Pevans, Brad Martin

Brass (at brass.orderofthehammer.com):

Keyflower (at www.boardgamearena.com):

Pax Porfiriana, (at www.yucata.de): Pevans, Brad Martin

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

Snowdonia (at yucata.de): Pevans, Mike Reeves, Brad Martin

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

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 205 was written and edited by Pevans. The *LPBS* masthead (page 16) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood. The drawings on pages 18 and 22 are by Nik Luker and on page 21 by Bryan Lea. Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Pevans took the photos and played with Photoshop.

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To Win Just Once

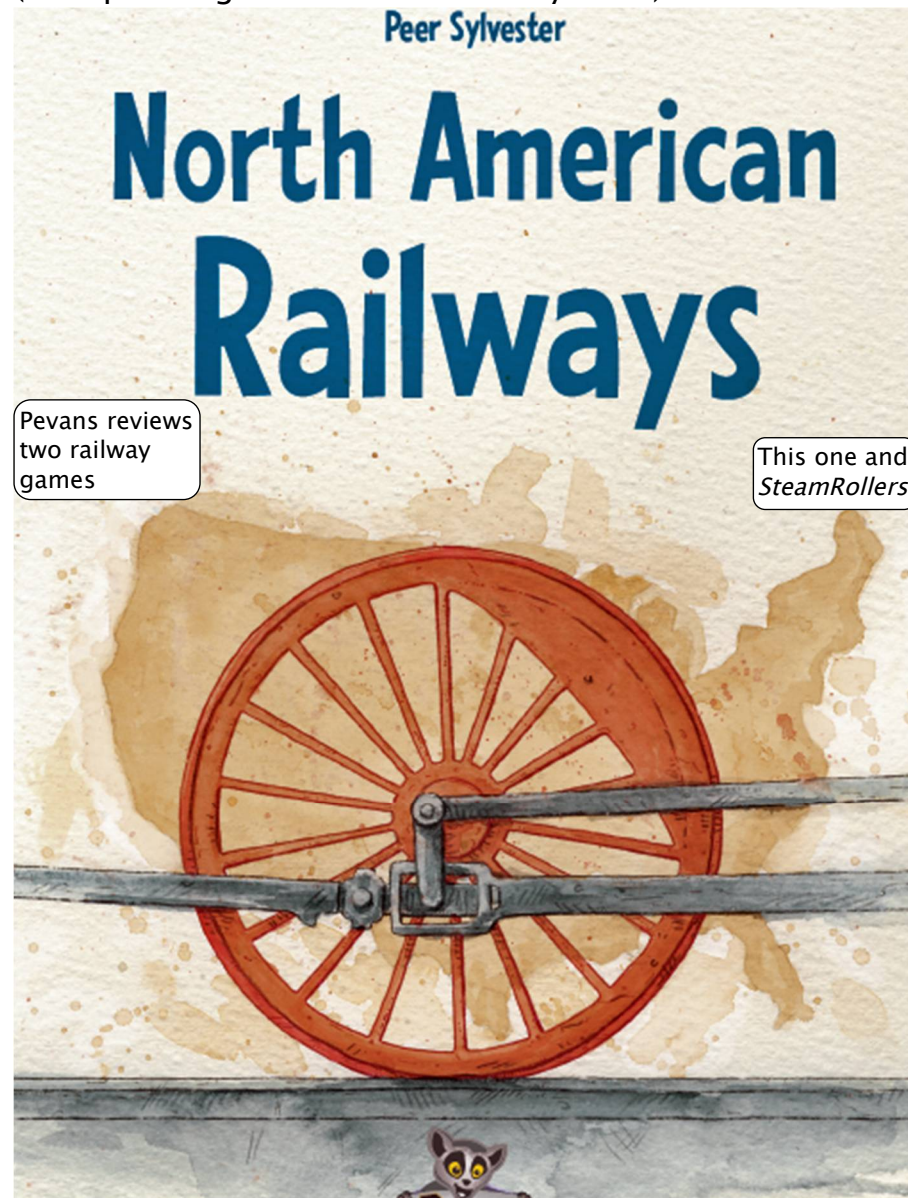
(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)

Peer Sylvester

North American Railways

Pevans reviews
two railway
games

This one and
SteamRollers



Issue 205: June 2020

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Contents

Contents..... 2

Chatter..... 3

Letters..... 3

Of shares and railways..... 4
 Pevans reviews *North American Railways* 4

Dice rolling and steam trains..... 7
SteamRollers reviewed by Pevans 7

Reading Matter..... 11

Games Events..... 11

Online Games..... 12

Trophy Hunter..... 13
 Turn 7..... 13

Subscribing to TWJO..... 15

Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses..... 16
 April 1672 (338)..... 16
 Press..... 24
 Points Arising..... 28
 Announcements..... 28
 Duels..... 28
 New Characters..... 30
 Tables..... 31
 Army Organisation and 1672's Summer Deployment..... 31
 Brigade Positions..... 31
 Frontier Regiments..... 32
 Battle Results..... 32
 Other Appointments..... 32
 Femmes Fatales..... 33
 Regiments..... 33
 The Greasy Pole..... 34

That would be enough..... 36
 Deadlines..... 36
 Waiting lists..... 36
 Credits..... 36

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank, Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
CdP	Camille de Polignac	9+	37	OK	Subaltern RFG/Bdr's Aide (Jdl)	4		BG	4	James McReynolds
HDE	Hercule D'Engin	9+	29	Comfy	Major 53F/2 F Brigade Maj.	2		F&P	2	Gery Sutcliffe
BS	Balzac Slapdash	8	25	Comfy		9	Alison	BG	4	Matthew Wale
TIH	Tarquin le Hatter	8+	40	Poor	Captain KM	1	Leia	BG	5	Jason Fazackarley
NdB	Norman de Bastille	8+	36	Poor	Major QOC	1	Anna	HCds	4	Mark Williams
JF	Jerome Fortmayne	8+	32	OK	Subaltern CG	4		BG	6	Bill Howell
LK	Lars Kristmass	7	16	OK		4		BG	3	Martin Jennings
RS	Rick Shaw	7	13	Poor	Major ALC	2		BG	6	Charles Burrows
JIT	Justin Thyme	7	8	Comfy		5		BG	2	Gerald Udowiczenko
IED	Ivor Edward Defrane	7+	29	OK	Major RM	7		F&P	3	Graeme Wilson
PFL	Phillipe F'Loppe	6	12	Poor	Subaltern DG	3		F&P	4	Phil Urquhart
PdT	Pierre de Terre	6+	27	Poor		6		F&P	2	Paul Murphy
ZUT	Zavier Ulric Turenne	6+	25	Poor	Major PM	3	Lois	F&P	1	Bob Blanchett
PGR	Petit-Carson Riche	5	10	Comfy		1	Emma	F&P	2	Mark Cowper
HB	Horace Bury	5		RIP						Sebastian Emde
WdB	William de Beast	5+	36	OK	Captain PLLD	6		RP	4	Simon Peck
AC	Alex Craitmant	5+	28	Poor	Subaltern PM	1		RP	4	Toby Nightingale
EJ	Edouard Jogue	4	9	Poor	Subaltern PM	1		RP	4	Nik Luker
JH	Jacques Hatt	4+	34	Poor	Subaltern GDMD	3	Ada	RP	3	Joel Halpern
RdM	Rob d'Masses	4+	19	Poor	Private CPC	4			6	Craig Pearson
LV	Lascar Vivrebras	3	5	Poor	Subaltern PM	4		RP	4	Olaf Schmidt
CdL	Cyrano de Lancet	3	3	Poor	Subaltern PM	1		RP	4	Rik Stewart
HJ	Hugh Jass	3	F	Withy	Colonel 13F	3		RP	3	Ray Vahey
GC	Gilles Colbert	2	6	Poor	Captain Gscn	2			3	Mark Nightingale
SO	Serge Orri	1-	1	Poor		3			5	Mark Gilby

An F under SPs means that the character was at the Front, RIP that he died. Ret that he retired.
 + against SL means it went up this month, - means it went down.
 Cash: Poor = <500, OK = 500-1500, Comfy = 1500-5000, Withy = 5000-10000, Rich = 10000-25000, Flthy = 25000+
 Last seen is the lady the character was last seen with in public.
 EC is Endurance Class: 1 = <60, 2 = 60-90, 3 = 91-120, 4 = 121-159, 5 = 160-200, 6 = 201+

The Greasy Pole

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
UXB	Count Uther Xavier-Beaureg'd	28	77	OK		General/Min w/o Port	20	Henrietta	Flr	4	Pete Card
BRJS	Viscount Beau Reese J Seine	26+	78	Withy		Lt.Colonel RFG/War Minister	7	Maggie	Flr	3	Bill Hay
DdE	Count Duncan d'Eauneurts	25	67	Comfy		B.Bdr-General KM/State Min.	8		Flr	5	Paul Lydiate
PC	Count Pierre Cardigan	24	37	Rich		Captain ALC	9	Edna	Flr	5	Matt Shepherd
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	23	27	Fithy		General/1st Army Commndr	24		Flr	6	Ben Brown
JJ	Count Jean Jeanie	22	64	Fithy		B.Bdr-General RFG/Gds Brigadier	28	Jacky	Flr	3	Andrew Kendall
LdH	Baron Leonard de Hofstadt	22+	66	OK		B.General/3rd Army Commndr	7	Frances	Flr	5	Neil Packer
TC	Viscount Terence Cuckpowder	21	49	Withy		B.Lt-General/Min w/o Port	6	Madelaine	Flr	5	Mike Dormmett
BdLS	Marquis Bern'd de Lur-Saluces	19	50	Rich		Lt-General/Insp.Gen.Cav	14		Flr	3	Rob Pinkerton
Jdl	Baron Jean d'Ice	17	36	Withy		B.Bdr-General CG/3rd Army QMG	8		Both	3	Tym Norris
CK	Earl Chris Knight	17+	87	Withy		B.Bdr-General CPC/Chancellor	11		Hunt	2	Paul Wilson
HD	Baron Henri Dubois	17+	51	Comfy		Lt.Colonel DG/HGds Brigade Maj.	7		Both	3	Wayne Little
BdLG	Sir Bastian de LaGarde	16	36	Withy		Major RFG/Gds Brigade Maj.	4	Lotte	Both	1	Jerry Spencer
GM	Sir Gaz Moutarde	15	38	Withy		Bdr-General	3	Anne	Both	2	Mike Clibborn-Dyer
Anon	Les Anonyme	15	32	OK		Colonel 53F/1st Army Adjutant	3	Carole	Both	4	Bruno Giordan
GdB	Greg de Becqueur	15	25	Comfy		Lt.Colonel KM/1st Div Adjutant	6		Both	5	Anthony Gilbert
GH	Sir Georges Hommemince	14	41	Withy		B.Bdr-General PLLD/Drgn Brigadier	6		Hunt	1	Cameron Wood
AFL	Sir Alonzo Fonde-Lapatric	14	29	OK		Major RM/1 F Brigade Maj.	7	Ella	Both	2	Graeme Morris
XM	Sir Xavier Money	12	30	Withy		Bdr-General	7	Betty	Hunt	3	Pam Udowiczzenko
BeV	Sir Ben e'Volence	12+	66	Comfy		Lt.Colonel CPC/Cav Div Adjutant	5	Fifi	Hunt	3	Ash Casey
HDS	Henri DuShite	11	28	Comfy		Lt.Colonel RM	7	Katy	Hunt	4	Dave Marsden
CdC	Conrad de Coverlet	11	22	Poor		Major DG	1		Hunt	4	Stewart Macintyre
RdL	Robert d'Lancier	11	19	Comfy		Colonel RM	7	Bess	Hunt	4	Steven Malecek
EdL	Eclair de Lame	10	25	Poor		Major RFG	4	Freda	BG	3	Peter Farrell
RC	Ruman Coake	10	RIP								Tony Hinton-West
TdA	Thierry d'Actyl	10+	34	Poor		Major CG	1		Hunt	2	John Cooke
AF	Augustin Fourier	9	28	OK		Lt.Colonel GDMD	3	Pet	Hunt	3	Brick Amundsen
MdZ	Marc de Zorro	9	22	OK		Colonel QOC	8	Deb	Hunt	4	Tim Macaire

Chatter

I'm still waiting for all this spare time to materialise during 'lockdown'...

On the other hand, my hair is now the longest it's been since ... the 1970s? (Before I had a beard.) It's somewhere in between the 'mad professor' look (© Albert Einstein) – I have naturally curly hair – and Dilbert's pointy-haired boss (just needs a little gel). Talking of gel, with a bit more I could do a passable *Babylon 5*-style Centauri...

My other affliction in recent weeks has been a series of 'ear worms'. The first one arrived when Geraldine insisted on watching the not-Eurovision programme a few weekends ago. This marked the lack of Eurovision this year (hooray!) with a 'best of' compilation going back over the years. The one that got to me was not the obvious winner (Waterloo!), nor even the ever-catchy "Making your mind up!", but the oldest song featured: Volare! Or, as it is properly titled (that nice Graham Norton told us), "Nel blu, dipinto di blu". Gah, now it's started again...

You'll notice that this is a thin issue of *TWJO* and is without either of Mike's games. Last Friday Mike informed me that his mother, the formidable Marguerite, had taken a turn for the worse and was "not expected to last the weekend". I've heard nothing since, so I'm not sure where things stand, but my thoughts are with Mike and all the Dommetts.

The Spirit magazine

Issue 9 of *The Spirit* has a useful round-up (to which I totally failed to contribute) of the ways to play board games online – the pros and cons of the various websites and game assistance apps like Vassal. If you want to take a look (and why wouldn't you?), you'll find it online at: bit.ly/TheSPIRIT9_2BHjXZ3

Online stats

TWJO 204 was published on 13th May and the PDFs were downloaded 197 times in that month. May saw 39 downloads of issue 203, taking it to 282 in two months. *TWJO* 202 was downloaded 25 times in May for a total of 275 since publication.

Letters

Bob Blanchett has a few things to tell us.

I'm running a lockdown PBEM game of the old Avalon Hill Speed Circuit game on the Hockenheim [circuit] which has just started. If anyone wants to follow along or enter in a future race, details and turn-by-turn maps [are] at txti.es/nwaf1

Frontier Regiments

	F1	F2	F3	F4	(Assault for Mar-May) RNHB
Colonel	N1	N3	N5	N4	N7
Attached	3 Bn RFG			HJ	
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

- Frontier regiment 1: 3
- Frontier regiment 2: 2
- Frontier regiment 3: 3
- Frontier regiment 4: 2
- RNHB regiment: 2

Other Appointments

King’s Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Cardinal’s Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Aides: to Crown Prince N	to Field Marshal N
Provincial Military Governors: N/N/N/N/N	
City Military Governor N	Adjutant-General N
Inspectors-General: of Cavalry BdLS	of Infantry N
Commissioner of Public Safety N (until May 1672)	
Chancellor of the Exchequer CK (until August 1672)	
Minister of Justice N (until May 1672)	
Minister of War BRJS (until February 1673)	
Minister of State DdE (until November 1672)	

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



North American Railways laid out ready to play at the UK Games Expo

The next decision is what to pay for the share. Yes, the buyer decides how much to pay. If it’s the first share in a company, then whatever they pay goes into the company’s treasury. It’s placed next to one of the wooden locomotive pieces in the company’s colour, while the player takes the other loco to show that they’re Director of the company (which has its rewards). However, being Director is precarious: if another player gets as many shares as the Director, they take over the Directorship.

When a player selects a share of an existing company, they name a price and the Director gets first refusal. If the Director buys it, they pay the amount specified, half of which goes to the company and half to the player who selected it. (Yes, this is a way of getting extra money.) Alternatively, you can pitch the price too high for the Director (money is secret, though). If the Director can’t or won’t pay for the share, the selector pays: half goes to the company and half to the bank. The first time I played, I didn’t bother defending my Directorships. This seems to be a quick way to lose.

A player may select a share for a company they are Director of. In this case, they pay \$1,000: half to the company, half to the bank. At the start of the game (and possibly all the way through), this is seriously expensive option, though it does put a nice pile of cash into the company.

Once all players have had a go at buying a share, it's time for the companies to expand their network. Except there's no geography in this game, just a set of 'City' cards, and a company can go to San Francisco then to New York and then to Los Angeles quite happily. These cards are laid out in four columns as well and only the cards at the bottom of each column can be bought.

Play continues round the table and players can buy a city, using the money in the company's treasury, for any company that they hold a share in. That's right, it's not just Directors who expand the company. Clearly there's room for some tactical shenanigans here, but remember that if you own a share in a company you probably still want it to have some value – unlike shares in companies you don't own.

Apart from their price, city cards also show an income value and may have bonus icons. The bonus is paid out at the end of the game and, by my reckoning, generates most of the cash players hold at the end. The winner is the player with the most money, by the way. Price, income and bonus are all factors in deciding which city to buy, along with which card you're making available to the next player.



Playing at G3 Day: the companies (bottom of photo) have cash and city cards

City buying continues round the table until nobody can buy anything else (players are only allowed to make one purchase for a particular company). Then it's income time. For each company, you take the total income on its city cards. Whatever can be evenly divided between the shares held by players is paid out (dividends!) to the shareholders (the lowest bank note in the game is \$100). If there's anything left over, \$100 goes to the Director and the rest to the company's treasury. Thus if players hold three shares in red and its income is \$400, each share earns \$100 for its owner and \$100 goes to the Director.

Tony Hinton-West gets the Second son of a wealthy Marquis: Init SL 8; Cash 500; MA 1; EC 4 (X2).

Roy Bleasdale gets the Bastard son of a very wealthy Gentleman: Init SL 4; Cash 675; MA 1; EC 4 (X3).

Tables

Army Organisation and 1672's Summer Deployment

First Army (Field Ops)	JdG/_/_/Anon/_/_
First Division (Field Ops)	N5/N/GdB
Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - RFG CG KM	
Dragoon Brigade (Field Ops) - GDMD PLLD	
Cavalry Division (Field Ops)	N6/N/BeV
Horse Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - DG QOC	
Heavy Brigade (Field Ops) - ALC CPC	
Second Army (Siege)	N6/N/N4/N
Frontier Division (Siege)	N3/N/N1
Frontier Regiments (Siege)	
Third Army (Defence)	LdH/N/_/_/JdI
Second Division (Defence)	N6/N/N6
3rd Foot Brigade (Defence) - 27M 4A	
4th Foot Brigade (Defence) - 69A Gscn	
RNHB Regiment (Defence)	
Third Division (Defence)	N4/N/N5
1st Foot Brigade (Defence) - RM PM	
2nd Foot Brigade (Defence) - 13F 53F	

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

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

Brigade Positions

Guards Brigade	JJ/N/BdLG
Horse Guards Brigade	N1/N/HD
Heavy Brigade	N6/BdZ/N5
Dragoon Brigade	GH/N/N6
First Foot Brigade	N3/N/AFL
Second Foot Brigade	N4/N/HDE
Third Foot Brigade	N1/N/N6
Fourth Foot Brigade	N1/N/N5

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

Conrad de Coverlet (Sabre, Seconds HD) has cause with Greg de Becqueur (Sabre, Seconds HDE & DdE, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Conrad de Coverlet (Sabre, Seconds HD, adv.) and Norman de Bastille (Sabre, Seconds MdZ & LdH, 3 rests) have cause for enemy regiments.

Camille de Polignac (Rapier, Seconds EdL, 1 rests) has cause with Greg de Becqueur (Rapier, Seconds HDE & DdE, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Chris Knight (Sabre, Seconds IED, 1 rests) and Hercule D'Engin (Rapier, Seconds GdB, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Eclair de Lame (Rapier, Seconds CdP) has cause with Greg de Becqueur (Rapier, Seconds HDE & DdE, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Ivor Edward Defrane (Cutlass, Seconds CK, 1 rests) has cause with Greg de Becqueur (Sabre, Seconds HDE & DdE, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Greg de Becqueur (Rapier, Seconds HDE & DdE, adv.) and Jerome Fortmayne (Rapier, 3 rests) have cause for being in enemy regiments.

Lars Kristmass (Foil) has cause with Greg de Becqueur (Rapier, Seconds HDE & DdE, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

New Characters

Mark Gilby gets the Second son of a Peasant: Init SL 2; Cash 10; MA 3; EC 5 (SO – Serge Orri).

Sebastian Emde gets the First son of an Impoverished Gentleman: Init SL 5; Cash 44; MA 6; EC 3 (X1).

Greg de Becqueur (Rapier, Seconds HDE & DdE, adv.) and Thierry d'Actyl (Rapier, Seconds Anon & HDE, 2 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Tarquin le Hatter (Rapier, Seconds XM, 1 rests) has cause with Greg de Becqueur (Rapier, Seconds HDE & DdE, adv.) as he's not Noble etc.

Henri Dubois (Sabre, Seconds CdC, adv.) and Norman de Bastille (Sabre, Seconds MdZ & LdH, 4 rests) have cause for being in enemy regiments.

Hercule D'Engin (Rapier, Seconds GdB, adv.) and Rob d'Masses (Sabre, 3 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Jerome Fortmayne (Rapier, 2 rests) and Tarquin le Hatter (Rapier, Seconds XM, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Thierry d'Actyl (Rapier, Seconds Anon & HDE) and Tarquin le Hatter (Rapier, Seconds XM, adv.) have cause for being in enemy regiments.

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

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

This, of course, provides players with cash to buy a share in the next round. The start player (signified with a black loco piece) moves to the left and we start again. The game ends at the end of a round in which the last share or city was bought or no city was bought (which could mean an early finish if money is tight).

This is where the bonuses kick in. For each bonus icon on its cities, a company pays out \$100 to each and every share. Thus instead of, say, \$200 split between the shares for normal income, it's \$200 to each share. This is a big difference and is essentially how you win the game: shares in companies with lots of bonuses. Needless to say, there's a lot of competition for cities with several bonus icons.

The games I've played so far have gone the same way. Players have been careful about how much money they spend on their initial share, wanting to keep \$1,000 in hand so that they can take a second share and safeguard their Directorship. This means the companies have had restricted funds, limiting their options on which city to buy, thus keeping income low, which in turn means there's not much money going into the companies in subsequent rounds. The games have generally ended when the share cards run out – though one finished when nobody could buy a city.

I suspect there's an alternative strategy of pumping money into companies, enabling them to buy several cities and generate lots of income. I also suspect gamers will be wary of spending big as it may leave them at a disadvantage to those who have been frugal. I'm going to try it in my next game, though.

All in all, *North American Railways* is a neat and entertaining little game. The 45 minutes claimed for playing time is accurate, so it definitely doesn't outstay its welcome. And it has paper money – what's not to like? It gets 8/10 on my highly subjective scale.

North American Railways was designed by Peer Sylvester and is published by Flying Lemur Games (with Surprised Stare Games as the UK publisher: RRP £20). It is a tactical card game for 3–5 players, aged 14+, and takes about 45 minutes to play. This review was first published in issue 3 of The Spirit.

Dice rolling and steam trains

SteamRollers reviewed by Pevans

The first thing to note about *SteamRollers* is that there are no steamrollers in it. It is, instead, a railway-themed game in which dice are rolled. Need I say more?

Okay, as the designer notes, the game is inspired by Martin Wallace's *Age of Steam*. In fact, the game uses the same central mechanism of building railways in order to score points by delivering goods (cubes) between cities. The challenge is to review it without constantly referring to AoS (one of my all-time favourites).



Central *SteamRollers* board – with cubes awaiting delivery – plus Action and Order tiles

Let's start with the small, central game board. This shows a hexagonal grid divided into six regions – two grey ones in the centre with red, yellow, blue and green around the outside. Each region is numbered as well as coloured and has a central 'city', denoted with a die face showing that number. There is also a 'town' – a black dot – in one space in each region.

At the start of the game, coloured cubes are drawn at random and placed in the cities. The colour of a cube indicates the region it must be moved to. Players score points by getting cubes to the city in that region along their railway lines. (Cubes placed in the same colour region are removed – or replaced with black ones, which can be delivered to any city).

Each player then gets a paper version of the board, on which they will draw their own railway lines. While the cubes are on the central board, players can only move them along the lines on their own sheet. The sheet also has spaces for marking players' points as they score them and keeping track of other aspects of the game.

A round starts with the first player rolling some dice (one more than the number of players). In turn, players then use one die each to power the action they take. Of course, this reduces the choices available to the subsequent players. And, depending on the numbers available to you, only certain actions may make sense. The game continues until the end of a round when at least three cities are empty of cubes. Players will have scored points for shipping goods during the game and add points for their network to find their final score. Most points wins, of course.

Hercule D'Engin (with GdB, gains 1 Exp) beat Camille de Polignac (with EdL).

Duncan d'Eauneurts (with GdB, gains 1 Exp) killed his friend Ruman Coake.

Alex Craitmant (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Gilles Colbert.

Rick Shaw (gains 1 Exp) beat Ben e'Volence (with PFL).

Norman de Bastille (with MdZ & LdH, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Phillipe F'Loppe (with BeV).

Ruman Coake was dead before duelling Rick Shaw.

Duncan d'Eauneurts (with GdB, gains 1 Exp) beat Justin Thyme.

Grudges to settle next month:

Georges Hommemince (Sabre, 5 rests) has cause with Duncan d'Eauneurts (Sabre, Seconds GdB & TIH, adv.) for pinching Angelina.

Lars Kristmass (Foil, 1 rests) and William de Beast (Sabre, Seconds NdB, adv.) have mutual cause as neither stood down over Mary.

Conrad de Coverlet (Sabre, Seconds HD, 2 rests) and Robert d'Lancier (Cutlass, Seconds BdLG, adv.) have mutual cause as neither stood down over Guinevere.

Georges Hommemince (Sabre, 1 rests) and Robert d'Lancier (Cutlass, Seconds BdLG, adv.) have mutual cause as neither stood down over Guinevere.

Tarquin le Hatter (Rapier, Seconds XM, 3 rests) has cause with Henri

DuShite (Cutlass, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Bastian de LaGarde (Rapier, Seconds HDE, 5 rests) has cause with Duncan d'Eauneurts (Sabre, Seconds GdB & TIH, adv.) for pinching Lotte.

Alex Craitmant (Sabre, Seconds ZUT, 1 rests) and William de Beast (Sabre, Seconds NdB, adv.) have cause as neither stood down over Marie.

Jerome Fortmayne (Rapier, 5 rests) has cause with Duncan d'Eauneurts (Sabre, Seconds GdB & TIH, adv.) for pinching Lucy.

Les Anonyme (Rapier, Seconds TdA & HDE, 1 rests) and Ben e'Volence (Sabre, Seconds PFL, adv.) have cause for being in enemy regiments.

Les Anonyme (Rapier, Seconds TdA & HDE) and Chris Knight (Sabre, Seconds IED) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Les Anonyme (Rapier, Seconds TdA & HDE, adv.) and Rob d'Masses (Sabre, 1 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Ben e'Volence (Sabre, Seconds PFL, adv.) has cause with Greg de Becqueur (Sabre, Seconds HDE & DdE) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Ben e'Volence (Sabre, Seconds PFL, adv.) and Hercule D'Engin (Rapier, Seconds GdB) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Balzac Slapdash (Rapier, adv.) has cause with Greg de Becqueur (Rapier, Seconds HDE & DdE, 5 rests) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Points Arising

Next deadline is 3rd July

And that is why you need to be careful about when you surrender in a duel...

The tenure of the current Commissioner of Public Safety and Minister of Justice expires at the end of May. Anyone wishing to apply for either or both of these should do so with their May orders. Bear in mind that both are appointed by Minister of State Duncan d'Éauneurts.

Absent friends

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

HJ Hugh Jass (Ray Vahey) has NMR'd. Total now 5 and is sent to a Frontier regiment

Welcome

Mark Gilby re-joined us (it's been a few years) in time for this turn.

Announcements

Georges Hommemince asks NPC Aide to Brig-General GH to resign

Jean Jeanie asks NPC Captain 2 of Royal Foot Guards to resign

And a new player joins us in the shape of Roy Bleasdale.

Welcome, both, and enjoy the game.

Notes

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

There's a Yahoo! group for *En Garde!* players that provides a forum for players of different games to swap stories and ideas. Sign up and get talking at: <http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/EnGardePlayers/>

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

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

Duels

Results of April's duels

Duncan d'Éauneurts (with GdB, gains 1 Exp) killed Horace Bury.

Pierre Cardigan asks NPC Major 1 and Colonel of ALC to resign

Rick Shaw applies for Brigade Major of Heavy Brigade

Henri DuShite (gains 1 Exp) beat Greg de Becqueur (with HDE & DdE).

But back to players' actions during the game. The most obvious action is to build railway track. You choose a die and draw a line in one space in that region on your sheet. Tracks can be straight across the space, between two adjacent sides or between two non-adjacent sides (that is, straights, sharp curves and gentle curves). The shapes available depend on what's shown on another die (rolled by the start player with the normal dice).

Note that each space can only be drawn in once and there are no junctions or cross-overs in this game. Apart from this, any space can be drawn in; it doesn't need to connect to anything else. In this way, players gradually build up their own network of connections across the board.

The next action is to deliver goods, of course. If there's a yellow cube in, say, the red city and you've drawn a connection between the red and yellow cities on your sheet, you can take the cube. You can do this even if your route goes via any towns or other cities (provided it doesn't loop back on itself). However, you must have a locomotive powerful enough for the route – counting each town and city entered. Thus, taking a cube direct from the red city to the yellow one just needs at least a '1' strength locomotive. You also score one point (marked on your sheet). Moving from red to yellow via a grey city, say, would need a '2' (or more) locomotive and would score two points.

It will be no surprise that another action is to increase the power of your locomotive. You can use any die value to do this, but only once. You cross off the



My *SteamRollers* board and action tiles and the all-important dice

box on your sheet for that value and the strength of your locomotive is the total of crossed-out boxes. Note that this starts with nothing crossed off, so you need to improve your locomotive at least once before you can ship anything.

This is the core of the game: build railways, improve locomotive and ship goods to score points. Clearly, you've got to keep an eye on what the other players are up to. Otherwise that red cube you wanted to ship may not be there when it's your turn. This is doubly annoying when someone else scores a couple of points with something that was worth considerably more to you!

However, there are a few further features. Players can also use the die they choose to take the appropriate action tile. These are double-sided with the particular side chosen at random at the start of the game. Some have a one-off effect (switching your die to any number you want, for example), while others give players a permanent bonus (such as being able to draw any shape of track, regardless of the die roll). This is a neat little mechanism that gives players something else to think about. The right tile at the right time can be a valuable boost, but having one hanging around doing nothing is less useful.

Then there are the 'Order' tiles that may be added to the game. These show a set of cubes and the number of points this combination is worth. When using these, players retain cubes they deliver and can then trade in a set for the tile it matches, scoring the points at the end of the game. This is another neat feature, giving players incentives for taking certain cubes. I find it helps focus what I'm trying to do in the game.

Starting power tiles are another optional feature. Each gives a boost to a player's starting position (such as crossing off a box on their locomotive). These are drafted, in reverse turn order, at the start of the game and give players a helping hand. The final option is to make the game harder: adding barriers to players' maps according to a die roll. Though how difficult this makes things will depend on which cubes are where.

To me, the core of this game is a simplified distillation of *Age of Steam*. The significant differences are, first, that it is powered by dice rather than a fiendish auction. Secondly, players are building their own, private network, rather than sharing one on the central board. Thus players can't make use of tracks built by other players and must keep on checking what the others have built to see what cubes they can ship. And this is my big problem with *SteamRollers*. Rather than being able to see from the central board who might be about to ship the cubes I'm interested in, I have to look at every player's own version of the map to see what connections they have. Made all the harder when each map is in a different orientation.

There are some neat touches to *SteamRollers* that I appreciate. However, I find playing the game heavy going, so it's not one that I'm going to be playing regularly. It gets 6/10 on my highly subjective scale (will play if I'm in the mood).

on with my (now former) lady friend.
While her perfidy is such that I shall
not have her back; there is still an
issue of honour which may have to be
dealt with upon my return. Can I
impose on you to act as my second? I
would be happy to stand for you in
any affairs of honour that may
trouble you in the future.

Yours,

† B. Gen. Sir Georges Hommince

I would be honoured to be your
second, sir, thank you again for your
generosity. † AC

Poetry Corner

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

1 Few words rhyme with Paris,
And my efforts may embarrass,
But my chosen form is couplets,
(Though in bed I like sextuplets),
And so I'll soldier on,
With my rhyming marathon,
Until I meet an orange,
...then I'm buggered.
2 This May I ride the races,
And I'll leave familiar faces,
Choking in my dust,
The course record wholly bust,
In my haste to toady to,
The fine Crown Prince who,
Sponsored us this month,
...what the hell rhymes with month?
3 I hope my medal's gold not silver,
...and I find a word that rhymes with
silver,
And my victory shades F'Loppe's face
to purple,

...myrtle, fertile, nope, can't find one,
I'd best sit back and have a pint,
...full disclosure, I can't find a rhyme
for pint either...

I'll let CP the winner anoint,
And my poem make my social point.
† Norman De Bastille

One look at those poor Musketeers
Reduces a General to tears.
Twenty-seventh's their name
'Cause that's where these guys came,
When ranked in the league of all
years.

† Le Salame Disparu

1 Though I stayed well locked down,
Ventured never to town,
Went not once to my club,
Nor out shopping for grub,
You still found a way
To bring me to affray:
You were shown to be shady
When you courted my lady.
2 Your sword may be big
But I don't care a fig;
I'll try first to stick you,
Then, if that fails, kick you.
If my best won't suffice,
Your foul body to slice,
I shall trust that my friend,
Brings the duel to an end.
3 Then I'll get off right quick
Yet more wounds for to lick,
And return to my training,
Experience gaining.
One day I'll be back,
Once I have the right knack.
You'd better watch out:
I shall win the next bout.

† Greg

To Brigadier General Sir Georges Hommemince

From Private Jacques Hatt

Pardon me for taking your time with this correspondence. I am a new member of the GDMD, serving under your command. This month, I will expect to be moving to the rank of Subaltern. I understand you currently have an Aide in good standing. If for any reason he ceases to be of service to you, I wanted to offer myself for that position. I presume for now all you will do is keep this information in your files.

Thank you for your attention,

† Private Jacques Hatt, GDMD

Dear private hat, my current it is a bit of a non-entity. I should see if I can convince him to find something more suited to his line of work. Perhaps they could use a new janitor over at the Bastille.

† Brigadier-General Georges Hommince

“Gosh, Tarquin, why did you go and kill the poor fellow? He’d surrendered,” mutters a visibly shaken Xavier Money.

“Well, to be perfectly honest, my dear friend, I simply didn’t like the chap. There was something about his eyes and that dandy gait of his that meant he just had to go. I mean what is it about these Nancy-boys in the RFG, eh? They claim to be our friends, well I never agreed to that, no-one asked me! No, Xavier, my only friend in this world is this here rapier. Oh, and you, of course. A man needs to set out his stall and reputation early on, make an

impression and all that. Well one day, Xavier, I aim to bring some proper law and order to this city. The King needs a fine CPS, one who can control the masses and the sedition. I am to be that man: rule the buggers with an iron fist and cleanse the streets of traitors. Come that day, Xavier, I shall remember my friends and they shall rise with me!”

“Tarquin, I believe I may have heard something similar voiced before somewhere, by somebody else... If only I could just remember the name...”

Lt. Colonel de Zorro,

Thank you for your kind introduction to Parisian society. You and your lovely lady, Deb, were consummate hosts and I found myself inspired by your discourse on matters military.

I note that Colonel N’trois has decided that another summer campaign is a step too far and has opted to enjoy his retirement instead, paving the way for you to lead France’s finest cavalry regiment. I expect the Queen’s Own to go from strength to strength under your leadership and this has encouraged me to accelerate my own plans. I therefore hope that you will look favourably upon my application to join the Queen’s Own and to purchase the rank of subaltern.

Yours, † Pierre de Terre

Dear Captain Cramant,

I am returning from Africa having experienced great success at even greater loss. Not only did I lose a fine officer and good comrade; but someone has been brazenly carrying

SteamRollers is a strategy board game designed by Mark Gerrits and published by Flatlined Games (in Belgium) and Stronghold Games (in the USA). It is for 1–5 players (the solitaire version has an ‘AI’ to play against), aged 10+ and takes 30–45 minutes to play (a couple of hours in my experience). Thanks to Stronghold Games for providing a review copy. A version of this review was published in issue 4 of *The Spirit*.

Reading Matter

My retro reading has taken me to Ursula Le Guin’s *A Wizard of Earthsea*. Lord knows how long ago I read this, but I opened it with some trepidation after my Eddings experience (see *TWJO* 203). I needn’t have worried. Le Guin’s prose sings right from the first page.

It was a delight to re-discover the story of the boy called Sparrowhawk and the wizard he becomes. I was surprised by how little of *Earthsea* (a world of many islands, but no continents) we see in this book. That’s probably because I’m remembering the sequels as well. However, it is still rich in incident and characters – all of whom have their own story.

I find it hard to imagine that many people haven’t read *A Wizard of Earthsea*, especially if they’re interested in science fiction or fantasy. However, if that’s you, read this book!

I can’t say the same about my next book though. I’ve also been catching up with Terry Pratchett’s *Discworld* series – I’ve missed a lot of these over the years. My latest was *The Fifth Elephant*. I’m still not sure what was going on here except that many of the Watch-related characters from *Ankh-Morpork* coincidentally follow various Maguffins across the *Discworld*. Oh look, they’ve all ended up in the same place.

This snowy land is populated by vampires, werewolves, Igors and ... dwarves. Or even dwarfs. Sam Vimes foils a crime/conspiracy/something and they all go home again. The Watch has been falling apart (a strange sub-plot that I found jarring) without its leaders, but the return of Vimes and Carrot sorts that out. Not vintage Pratchett. I chuckled a couple of times, but found it mostly tedious.

Games Events

Spiel is the latest event to be cancelled this year – though the organisers claim it’s just been “postponed” to 2021. However, there is talk of virtual events for both the UK Games Expo (21st-23rd August – see www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk) and Spiel (SPIEL.digital, 22nd-25th October – www.spiel-messe.com/en).

The following box concentrates on events I hope to attend.

Swiggers: games club that meets every Wednesday evening, ~~upstairs at The Shipwright's Arms, 88 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TF (next to London Bridge station)~~ to play online at various websites. For more info, see www.pevans.co.uk/Swiggers

Games Games Games Days: from noon(ish) on the second Saturday each month at the Leon in Spitalfields Market (London E1 6DW). It's brightly lit, has big tables and they don't mind us stopping all afternoon. Closest stations are Liverpool Street (Tube and rail) and Shoreditch High Street (Overground). ~~Please contact me if you're thinking of attending in case other things have got in the way.~~

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

Spiel: the board games event of the year. 22nd 25th October 2020, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. ~~Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany or see www.spiel-messe.com/en~~

MidCon: 13th-15th November 2020 at the Hallmark Hotel (and Hallmark Inn across the road) in Derby. **MidCon** is a friendly board games convention in a decent hotel. Expect mostly open gaming plus a few organised events, including a bring 'n' buy and quiz, plus a trade stand from Spirit Games. See www.midcon.org.uk.

For more extensive information on UK board games events, try The Queen's Lane Advertiser at www.boardgamers.org.uk/qla.php

Online Games

I'm playing a lot of board games online (by e-mail) and would like *TWJO* readers to join me. Let me know what games you'd like to play and I'll add you in.

I'm running low on *Agricola* games in progress. Who'd like to join me on Boîte à Jeux (www.boiteajeux.net)?

Brass games 89 and 90 (at www.brass.orderofthehammer.com) both went to Przemek Orwat. Maybe we shouldn't let him play? And I'm not going to mention my performance in either game. Game 91 is awaiting players.

I'm definitely pining for another game of *Pax Porfirianai* (at yucata.de) and how about some more *Rajas of the Ganges*, or even *Snowdonia*?

Mike Reeves took the *Keyflower* game (at BoardGameArena.com) from me on the tie-breaker, darn it. I really must set up another one. And how about *Puerto Rico* while I'm there?

Game 28 of *Through the Ages: a New Story of Civilization* (at boardgaming-online.com) was won by a decent margin in the end, Al Tabor taking the honours. We need another player to get a full set for the next game – who's interested? And there's always the option of a Pacifist game.

Dear Baron,
Words (almost) fail me ... your generosity has astonished me, perhaps because the Coverlet family (like so many other) has fallen on such hard times & has left me little choice but to put pride aside and accept your extremely generous gift & offer of a commission. Rest assured that I will stand by your side on the field of battle & throughout my time in Paris, should I be spared. I should, in the interest of being completely honest with you, tell you that I have also sent a missive to the RFG with a similar request for a position. Given your prompt reply & exceedingly generous offer, I will be applying to France's premier cavalry regiment in the first instance.

Your servant, † Conrad

Brigadier-General Baron d'Ice,
I have seen your announcement regarding the vacancies within the Cardinal's Guard and I feel it is my duty to apply for a position with the regiment.

It is vital that the Cardinal's own guard is not under-manned at this critical time and certainly not for the summer when you will be out in the field fighting France's enemies. There have been too many plots by the so-called Reformists and Protestants from foreign lands. The Cardinal must be protected against these awful schemes. My father raised me to be a good Catholic and thus I feel I must offer my services for the protection of His Eminence.

Your most faithful servant,
† Thierry d'Actyl

M. d'Actyl,
You sound like an ideal candidate for the Cardinal's Guards and I am happy to approve your application. In addition, I can inform you that the Guards have a bursary scheme for applicants that find themselves short of funds and there is the sum of 300Cr available for your use. You are welcome to discuss matters further with me in my club in the first week of April. May God protect both His Eminence and the King!

† Brigadier-General Baron d'Ice

Personal

To: Lt. Col. Greg de Bécqueur, KM
From: Lt. Col. Sir Ben e'Volence, CPC
Monsieur de Bécqueur,

Huge thanks for Katy's and your support in my successful application, it's much appreciated. As for a strategic meeting, that would be great. The messengers of SKYPE and Zoom are great. I have also found success with Teams and Connect but they're not everyone's glass of cognac. As for the Generals not needing adjutants, I feel we are safe for now as there will always be need for someone on hand to serve their immediate needs.

Rest well, my friend, and good luck in the coming months (whatever they may throw at us).

I remain, etc. † Ben

To Lord Percy Percy
Why, thank you for such praise.

long queue to slap him across the cheek. Missing all of this, particularly the hospitality, are those who aren't allowed in as they didn't take part: Gilles Colbert, Lascar Vivrebras, Petit-Garson Riche, Rick Shaw and Serge Orri have to mix with the hoi polloi. And then there's Phillipe F'Loppe, whose regimental duties take preference to going racing.

Who cares

Out on France's borders, the Frontier regiments assault some Spanish fort or other with the assistance of the third battalion of the Royal Foot Guards. However, nobody of any note is there, so Paris doesn't pay any attention to the successes of the 2nd and 4th Frontier regiments. ❖

Press

Social

The Minister of War would like to invite all members of the military and their lady friends to a send-off for the troops at his club in week 4 of May.
 † Beau Reese Jean Seine

To celebrate the start of May, please join me and my good lady for a May Ball.
 Venue: my club.
 Date: Week 1, May 1672
 All ladies to dress as spring flowers.
 † XM

Military Missives

Officer Commanding DG, Baron Henri Dubois

Dear Sir,

I am minded to apply to join your fine regiment. What I may lack military acumen I will more than make up for in enthusiasm. Can you indicate if you would be willing to accept me to prevent me wasting my time traipsing around recruiting stations?

At this time I am unable to confirm what position (rank) I will be seeking as I am financially embarrassed & will have to seek funds from the moneylenders of Paris.

Thank you in advance.

Your servant, † Conrad de Coverlet
 PS please pass this request on to whomever is responsible for recruiting if your current position precludes you from doing so.

Dear Conrad De Coverlet,

The Coverlet name is an esteemed name. The Dragoon Guards would be honoured to have you serve with us. The moneylenders of Paris do provide a needed service, but generosity of others has given me more than I need. If you would allow me to give you 1,000 crowns then you will be free to join the regiment of your choice. I believe that, as acting CO of Dragoon Guards, I can approve your application. If Le Roi decides otherwise, then you can still join another regiment and won't have wasted a month.

Sincerely, † Baron Henri Dubois
 Major Dragoon Guards

Trophy Hunter

Turn 7

This turn's shots

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

Bob Blanchett nearly misses out: "pew nearly forgot again, left my gun at home." However, Bob also seems to have forgotten that he's **not** supposed to shoot the Gorillas.

Graeme Morris has already gone down that road. "[If] I'm damned as a gorilla murderer, I might as well become an ivory hunter as well." Yes, he's one of the many finishing off the Elephant that was spotted last time. Though Graeme only has to share with Matt Wale – there are five hitting the other square.

Scores

Player	Shots	This turn	Total
Alex Bardy			10.22
Chris Baylis	E7	5	5.00
Bob Blanchett	B6, C5	-4	-4.00
Colin Bruce	B15	1	7.06
Charles Burrows	B15	1	5.06
Mark Cowper	A17, B15	1	9.56
Mike Dommett	H19, J19	0	10.00
Anthony Gilbert	E20, F20	0	4.33
William Hay			-1.44
Andrew Kendall	J2, J3	0	-4.00
Nik Luker	S13, T12	0	4.00
Tim Macaire	B15	1	9.89
Graeme Morris	A15	2.5	6.06
Rob Pinkerton	J19, I18	2	9.50
Gerald Udowiczenko	B17, B15	1	7.56
Pam Udowiczenko	D7, E13	0	4.00
Matt Wale	A17, A15	2.5	20.00
Graeme Wilson	J19, L12	0	6.00
Paul Wilson	A17, I18	2	21.22

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

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

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

An animal is dead when all its squares have been hit. No more points can be scored for this animal. However, animals worth minus points are patched up between turns and thus each hit scores (negative) points.

The Antelope is the other target with Rob Pinkerton and Matt Wale sharing the points. And Mike Dommett missing completely – while Chris Baylis finds a Snake.

Andy Kendall notes “I want Rob Pinkerton’s skill – aiming at I19 (apparently) and hitting an Antelope in J19.” Yes, my apologies for that. The Antelope was in I19, but I put it in J19 on the grid. I checked shots with players and adjusted for the correct position as needed.

What’s this all about

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

behind the second one. However, he’s not last as there are some stragglers behind him: Alex Cramant, Augustin Fourier (despite Pet Ulante’s shouts of encouragement), Les Anonyme, Camille de Polignac (who’s bought a horse for the race) and Thierry d’Actyl.

The horses jostle round the first bend and then spread out as they charge down the back straight. Both Chris and Georges struggle to get any speed out of their mounts, while William charges past both of them to enter the second corner in the lead. Georges is right behind him, though, with Chris still on his tail. However, Chris has been caught by other hard chargers: Ben e’Volence (his support coming from Fifi), Balzac Slapdash, Ivor Edward Defrane, Jacques Hatt (whose entry fee has been paid by Augustin Fourier) and Lars Kristmass (another horse-buyer). All of these have passed Gaz, who now has Zavier Ulric Turenne alongside him (provoking cheering from Lois de Lô in the grandstand). The rest of the field is more spread out, but last place clearly belongs to Norman de Bastille as he’s a couple of lengths adrift of everybody else (well, Conrad de Coverlet and Jerome Fortmayne, who would otherwise be at the back). This sight sends Anna Rexique to the bar for some liquid support.

As the stream of horses rounds the bend, each rider in turn gives his horse its head and they sprint for the finishing line. Chris finally gets some speed from his mount, passing the fading Georges and gradually catching the tiring William. On the line it’s Chris who takes the race by a nose from William. Of the next group, only Jacques can maintain his pace to stay on Chris’s tail, but he is caught by Gaz, whose horse has got its second wind, to share third place.

Just out of the prizes, Ben crosses the finish as joint fifth with Henri Dubois and Zavier. Georges can only manage joint eighth, alongside Balzac and a very speedy Camille de Polignac. He’s come all the way from the back of the pack at the start. Lars Kristmass is a couple of lengths down on this in 11th place. 12th place, just behind him, is shared by Alex Cramant (another who started at the back), Eclair de Lame (with Freda de Ath whooping in the stand), Ivor Edward Defrane (whose horse is blown), Thierry d’Actyl and Xavier Money (Betty Kant is looking disappointed – Xavier claims his horse, Pharlapp, “runs like lightning” [sic]). Augustin Fourier and Pierre de Terre share 17th with Greg de Bécqueur just behind in 19th on his own. Les Anonyme, Hercule D’Engin, Jerome Fortmayne and Uther Xavier-Beauregard (cheered on by Henrietta) are 20th together, but Uther’s horse has gone lame. 24th place is shared by Rob d’Masses and Terence Cuckpowder (Madelaine has gone to the bar). And, right at the back, Conrad de Coverlet, Norman de Bastille and Tarquin le Hatter (much to Leia’s disappointment) insist none of them is last as they finish together: joint 26th.

Brushing off (most of) the mud, the riders relax in the bar, enjoying the Dauphin’s hospitality. Apart from Uther, who has to despatch his injured horse. But then regimental rivalries surface and the challenges start. On top of this, many of the nobles take exception to Greg de Bécqueur’s presence and there’s a

doorstep. Neither will stand down, so that's cause for a duel. The following week, Lars tries again. This time he meets Camille de Polignac and does stand down, allowing Camille the privilege of being turned down by Mary. William has moved on to press his suit with Marie Antoinette. However, Alex Craimant is already here (trying again after his rejection the week before) and that's another duel.

Guinevere d'Arthur is even more popular. Conrad de Coverlet, Georges Hommemince and Robert d'Lancier meet on her doorstep in week one. Conrad would be happy to give way to Georges, but not Robert, and the other two won't budge at all. Next week Conrad and Georges are back and Conrad steps down for Georges to fail in courting Guinevere. So they're both back the week after only for Robert to turn up again and repeat the stalemate. The others whose wooing doesn't work are Cyrano de Lancet, Lascar Vivrebras, Marc de Zorro, Phillipe F'Loppe (despite the offer of escorting his intended to the horse race) and Rick Shaw (twice). Duncan d'Euaneurts is successful at the second attempt – as Bastian de LaGarde is well aware (that's another duel). Jerome Fortmayne also wins a heart at his second try, only to lose it again as Duncan moves on to his next target. The one unequivocal success is Edouard Jogue, though even he doesn't ask his conquest to accompany him anywhere. Though you could also count Gaz Moutarde, who spends a couple of weeks at home with his lady.

Horse racing is back

This brings us to Jacques As Memorial Stakes – the Crown Prince's annual horse race in memory of the late Minister. The large number of entries may have something to do with the Dauphin limiting those who can Toady to him to participants. Though not everybody seems to have spotted this. In fact, the entry fees mean Priny recoups nearly half the prize fund he offered. The Prix d'Or's usual clients are corralled away from the Prince and his entourage and the grandstand reeks of fresh paint.

The racing cognoscenti like the look of cavalryman Chris Knight. Or possibly it's his horse that they rate. However, the tanned Georges Hommemince has the build of a jockey (yes, he's pretty small) and is the favourite before the start. A total of 28 horses and riders line up for the race, including Henri Dubois. "I've been drinking all month," he tells everyone, "What could possibly go wrong?" Despite the hiccups, he actually looks fairly sober as the riders jockey (ho, ho) for position on the line. Then Priny drops his handkerchief and they're off.



Georges lives up to his status as favourite by taking the lead on the initial straight. Chris is only a length behind, though, with Gaz Moutarde (cheered on from the grandstand by Anne Tique) on his tail. William de Beast is next, a good start on his new horse keeping him ahead of the main mass of racers – 13 of them. They are in two groups, with Greg de Bécqueur just

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

Key

Animals	Symbol	Size (squares)	Number on grid	Points Value
Bush	B	1	12	0
Monkey	M	1	12	4
Antelope	A	2	9	8
Snake	S	2	?	10
Gorilla	G	3	6	-12
Lion	L	3	3	15
Elephant	E	4	2	20
Other symbols				
	X	Missed shot		
UPPER CASE = this turn, lower case = last turn, Strikeout = dead animal				

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

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

Send your shots to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF or to TWJO@pevans.co.uk by 3rd July 2020.

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April 1672 (338)

Spring finally arrives in Paris as Minister of State Duncan d'Euaneurts sets out to the first of the several duels he is due to fight this month. Despite his rank in the King's Musketeers, Euaneurts carries a cavalry sabre and is accompanied by his second and regimental colleague, Greg de Bécqueur. His first opponent is the diminutive Horace Bury, who brings just his regimental rapier and is a far less skilled duellist. Bury opens with a furious lunge, but Euaneurts is expecting this. He parries and ripostes to score first blood. The sabre tip doesn't do much damage and Bury continues, his cut inflicting the first wound on his adversary. Bury's lack of expertise means he has no answer to the slash and furious slash that Euaneurts then inflicts on him. He's in a pretty bad way after the two slash attacks, but won't give in. Then the cut takes his head off. RIP.

Euaneurts, still accompanied by Bécqueur, moves on to his second appointment. This is with RFG Captain Ruman Coake. Coake's medium build still looks small against Euaneurts' beefiness and his rapier skills are even worse than the late Horace Bury's. Perhaps if the two duels had taken place in the same location, he might have been more cautious. As it is, he squares up to Euaneurts valiantly. Euaneurts employs the same strategy as before. This time, however, his adversary goes for a normal lunge, which slips straight past his block to score first blood. However, Coake's poor skills allow Euaneurts to hit him with two slashes as he clumsily recovers his guard. Coake is clearly considering things, but decides on a final attack. He swings his boot just as Euaneurts swings his sabre

Blue Gables has a few visitors before the race. Justin Thyme is there for the whole three weeks, studying "Duel pour Debutants" before he gets into any more duels. After their Toadying, Tarquin le Hatter and Leia stay for two weeks. And Balzac Slapdash pops in with Alison Wunderlandt for the third week. Hercule D'Engin visits the Frog & Peach for two weeks. He finds Petit-Garson Riche is also there, with Emma Roides, in week one. Ivor Edward Defrane visits the club in week two. There is a series of visitors to Red Phillips, each in their own week. Cyrano de Lancet is the first. Then Jacques Hatt and Ada Andabettoir. The third week is empty, but Edouard Jogue avoids the horses in week four by heading to his club.

Practising... and failing

The gymnasiums are definitely busy this month. This month's iron man title goes to Bernard de Lur-Saluces, who pips Jacques de Gain's customary four weeks with rapier by practising sabre all month. Quite a few put in a three-week workout, some even avoiding the horse race to do so. For Bastian de LaGarde, Beau Reese Jean Seine, Eclair de Lame, Greg de Bécqueur and Xavier Ulric Turenne it's rapier practice. Practising twice are Augustin Fourier (sabre), Balzac Slapdash (rapier), Gilles Colbert (rapier), Jean d'Ice (rapier), Jean Jeanie (rapier), Norman de Bastille (sabre), Petit-Garson Riche (rapier), Serge Orri (sabre), Terence Cuckpowder (sabre) and Uther Xavier-Beauregard (sabre). Chris Knight confuses things by spending one week practising rapier and a second with a sabre. Xavier Money wants to improve his skill with his regimental weapon ("I'm Tarquin le Hatter's second," he points out). However, he doesn't actually belong to a regiment any more.

The bawdyhouses see this month's peak in activity in week three as those who've been unlucky in love seek solace before it's time for the race. The footpads take pot luck, but their chosen target, Thierry d'Actyl, has carefully spent his cash. Lars Kristmass is the odd one out, spending his week without any female company. Only one socialite visits the red-light district in the final week of April: Justin Thyme. He arrives just as the madam is closing the doors due to the lack of trade, but jingling his cash gains him admittance. Augustin Fourier chooses to spend the week before the race sussing out the Prix d'Or. He finds it occupied by various 'salt of the earth' types betting furiously on the nags circulating the oval racecourse. And drinking heavily – something they insist that he joins in with.

The unlucky in love are actually very active this month. And still unlucky, by and large. For example, Lars Kristmass and William de Beast meet on Maru Huana's



he and Maggie Nifisent visit the Fleur de Lys at the start of the month. Their guest is Jean Jeanie. That's all. Other members in the club that week are Leonard de Hofstadt, with Frances Forrin, Pierre Cardigan, plus Edna Bucquette, Terence Cuckpowder, escorting Madelaine de Proust, and Uther Xavier-Beauregard, accompanied by Henrietta Carrotte.

Jean Jeanie returns the following week on his own membership and brings Jacky Tinne. Leonard and Pierre, plus their respective ladies, stay in the Fleur for the rest of the month. Leonard springs a surprise in the last week by marching to the gaming tables and making a very large wager. Which he loses. "It's only money," he tells Frances (though his face has gone a strange colour). Much kudos to him and it looks like there'll be a big dividend for the club's bondholders at the end of the quarter.

Jean d'Ice is host in Bothwell's, receiving Camille de Polignac and Thierry d'Actyl as his Toadies. Thierry is keen to discuss tactics for this summer's campaign. The club is fairly well populated with Alonzo Fonde-Lapatrie spending the week there with Ella Fant, Les Anonyme arriving with Carole Singeurs and Bastian de LaGarde showing Lotte Bottle a good time. Alonzo and Ella settle in for the month. Les and Carole are there until it's time for the race. Gaz Moutarde and Henri Dubois show up, separately, for the second week, with Henri hanging around for two weeks.

Hunter's is the venue for two groups in week one. The larger one is the "Young France" meeting hosted by Marc de Zorro and Deb Estaround. They are joined by Gilles Colbert, Jacques Hatt, Pierre de Terre and Tarquin le Hatter. Led by their host, they all toast the Crown Prince. The only accompanied man is Tarquin, who has Leia Orgasma on his arm. The smaller party sees Ben e'Volence and Fifi welcoming Norman de Bastille and Anna Rexique. Henri DuShite also visits Hunter's, a treat for Katy Did and drinks for both. However, Tarquin cannot believe that an oik like Henri has been admitted and challenges him for his impudence. Xavier Money and Betty Kant are the last present this week.

Ben and Fifi continue their hosting into the second week. This time their guests are Phillippe F'Loppe and Thierry d'Actyl. A gift from Ben allows Phillippe to re-schedule his loans. With no stropmy young noble getting in his face, Henri DuShite can have a quiet week with Katy. And some more drinks. Xavier and Betty return as well. Then in strides Robert d'Lancier, closely followed by Bess Ottede, with a clinking bag in each hand. He heads for the gaming tables and starts placing his bets: 200 crowns a time. He loses the first. He loses the second. He loses the third. And then the house rolls high: Robert cuts three more bets before giving up and leaving rather poorer than when he entered. Hunter's remains the venue for Henri and Katy (plus a few bottles of wine) for the rest of the month with Ben and Fifi managing one more week and Marc and Deb re-appearing at the end of the month to raise a glass to the memory of Jacques As.

in a cut. The sharp blade takes Coake's protruding leg off at the thigh and he's dead in seconds. RIP.

Meanwhile elsewhere in Paris, Ben e'Volence of the Crown Prince Cuirassiers and Rick Shaw of the Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers are settling their differences over a young lady. As cavalrymen both carry sabres, but Shaw's bulk makes the average-sized e'Volence appear petite. In e'Volence's favour are his superior expertise and his second, Phillippe F'Loppe. Volence starts the duel defensively, but his block is no protection against a surprise lunge from Shaw. First blood, though not very much of it, to the big man. E'Volence prepares an attack, but is then hit by the cut part of Shaw's furious lunge. He quickly surrenders instead. Unscratched, Shaw looks round eagerly for his next opponent. But of young Ruman Coake there is no sign...

Eauneurts and Bécqueur are about to head off to Bécqueur's own duel when the titchy Justin Thyme finally arrives for his fight with Eauneurts. He's clutching a copy of "Duel pour Debutants" and looks with trepidation at the blood-soaked ground. As he has not taken up a military career, Thyme's weapon is a foil. It's not something he has much skill with. Still, he reads the first pages of the book and gamely crosses swords with his adversary. Eauneurts starts with his usual parry and block while Thyme skims the next few pages. Then Eauneurts hits him with a slash and Thyme concedes the duel, moving on to the chapter about bandaging techniques.

Waiting for Greg de Bécqueur is Royal Marine Henri DuShite. He carries a cutlass, of course. As well as Duncan d'Eauneurts, Hercule D'Engin arrives as Bécqueur's second second. DuShite starts the duel by stepping back to give room for his hefty sword. Bécqueur blocks the anticipated slash – there's not much else you can do with a cutlass. Then he attacks with his own slash. However, DuShite's initial move means both men slash at the same time. Guess which blade does more damage? Bécqueur surrenders, retiring behind his two seconds.

Bécqueur then returns to his seconding duties, accompanying Hercule D'Engin to his meeting with Camille de Polignac. Engin looks only half the size of Polignac. Because he is. Both use their regimental rapier and Eclair de Lame attends as Polignac's second. Polignac starts with a furious lunge. Engin parries the initial lunge and ripostes for first blood. His own lunge hits at the same time as Polignac's cut and so does only as much damage as the riposte. Polignac attempts a parry, but mis-times it as Engin runs him through again. Looking confused, Polignac stands there as Engin hits him with repeated lunges before making his own attack. This lunge meets another from Engin and Polignac surrenders.

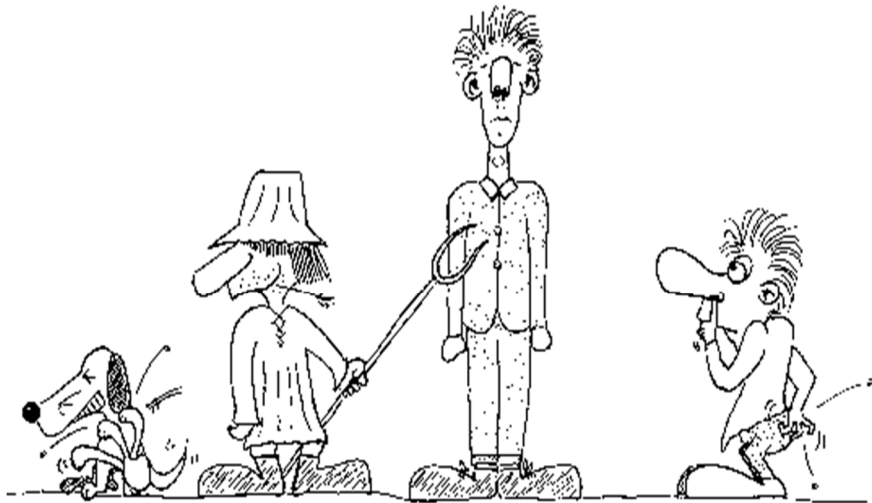
Alex Craimant and Gilles Colbert are in enemy regiments and, having bumped into each other last month, have a duel to prove it. Cavalryman Craimant is beefier and uses a sabre against infantryman Colbert's rapier. Colbert anticipates a furious slash from his opponent and counters this with a block and a jump. However, Craimant sticks to a plain slash which thumps home. As

Colbert recovers his balance, Craimant prods him with a lunge that is just enough to trigger a surrender from the smaller man.

We finish with an evenly matched fight between two cavalymen: DG Subaltern Phillipe F'Loppe versus QOC Major Norman de Bastille. Ben e'Volence returns the favour by seconding F'Loppe, while Bastille is backed by Marc de Zorro and Leonard de Hofstadt. F'Loppe has the slight advantage of superior expertise and starts with a lunge in the hope of taking his opponent by surprise. Surprisingly, Bastille parries this. Then he pokes F'Loppe with a lunge of his own. Although he's barely been scratched, F'Loppe surrenders.

Joining up

Picardy Musketeer Major Zavier Ulric Turenne is eager for advancement. That's why he's trying to persuade the regiment's Lieutenant-Colonel to retire. RFG Major Sir Bastian de LaGarde gets involved, paying a visit to the gentleman in question to back up Major Turenne's suggestion. Having completed his mission at the PM's barracks, he bumps into KM Major Tarquin le Hatter. "Ha!" exclaims the Guardsman, "Looking for a job, Hatter?" "Oh no," replies the other with a conspiratorial twinkle, "I'm looking for the Colonel here to persuade him to stay at his post, whatever that Turenne fellow recommends." "Umm, that could be tricky," responds his regimental friend, "There's no Colonel at the moment." LaGarde's influence does the trick and the Lt-Colonel packs his bags. Major Turenne quickly becomes... no, he's still Major Turenne. Though the senior Major now has command of the regiment.



THE NEW RECRUITS

The Picardy Musketeers is clearly the place to be. Private Lascar Vivrebras takes a loan and buys himself into the officer class by becoming a Subaltern. The acting CO then signs up Cyrano de Lancet and Edouard Jogue for the regiment and they both take the rank of Subaltern as well. There are only two vacancies for Captains, lads.

Despite being a fresh face in Paris, Serge Orri has friends in high places. Well, he knows Henri DuShite, Lt-Col of the Royal Marines, anyway. And, it seems, Lieutenant-General Terence Cuckpowder. Having received a gift from Cuckpowder, Orri touches up DuShite for a loan and applies to join his regiment. However, the regiment's commander, Colonel Robert d'Lancier, has other ideas. It's not so much that he rejects Orri's application as ignores it until it goes away. Perhaps it's the pain of his brevet rank (as Brigadier-General) running out.

The latest Rob d'Masses to arrive in Paris applies to the Crown Prince Cuirassiers, where CO Chris Knight is happy to accept him. Despite taking a loan, Masses' finances only let him get as far as trooper. Well, he does have to buy a horse, too.

In an interesting development, General Pierre Cardigan resigns his commission and applies to join Archduke Leopold's Cuirassiers. He is, of course, immediately accepted. However, his progress up the ranks halts at Captain as the regiment already has two Majors. Time for at least one of them to retire, then.

The CO of the Queen's Own Carabiniers, Lt-Col Marc de Zorro, doesn't spend much time on paperwork. As a result, Pierre de Terre's application to join the regiment languishes in his in-basket without being resolved (and the cash Pierre borrowed remains unspent). Zorro does buy himself the rank of Colonel, however.

In an altruistic gesture, Dragoon Guards Major Henri Dubois donates a thousand crowns to a penniless new arrival in Paris: Conrad de Coverlet (he does come from a good family, though). Surprise, surprise, Coverlet applies to join the Dragoon Guards and is accepted by its senior officer, the now Lt-Colonel Dubois. (Well, if you're throwing money around, why not spend a bit on yourself?) Coverlet buys his way to the now vacant spot at Major.

Jean d'Ice admits Jerome Fortmayne and Thierry d'Actyl to his regiment, the Cardinal's Guard. That's the extent of his largesse. Fortmayne has borrowed to the hilt, though, and splurges the money on buying himself the rank of ... Subaltern. That's barely an officer. He doesn't even need a horse. Meanwhile, Actyl borrows what he needs to propel himself all the way to Major. This puts him just one promotion away from becoming second-in-command.

Waiting for the race

The Crown Prince-sponsored horse race scheduled at the end of April sucks up most of the city's social life this month, it seems. However, there are a few small gatherings at various times. Beau Reese Jean Seine starts the ball rolling when