

That would be enough

This has been issue 235 of *To Win Just Once*, published 26th June 2023. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2023

Deadlines

Orders for *Railway Rivals* to Mike by Friday 14th July 2023.

Orders for *LPBS*, By Popular Demand entries and any other contributions to Pevans by Friday 14th July 2023.

(Next deadlines: 18th August, 22nd Sept, 27th Oct, 1st Dec)

Waiting lists

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

Railway Rivals – Chris Rudram, Rob Pinkerton and Mike Dyer are in the queue for the next game. (Working map and rules provided).

Star Trader – Mike Dyer, Pevans and Przemek Orwat are up for a game. Who else? (Rules provided)

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 235 was written and edited by Pevans. The *LPBS* masthead (page 23) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, as is the drawing on pages 29. The illustrations on pages 24 and 26 are by Nik Luker. Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Pevans took the photos and played with Photoshop.

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To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)

MAGIC MAZE

Pevans tries this
co-operative
game



And triumphs
at Borodino

Kasper Lapp
Gyom

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ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank,	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
ZvT	Zeold von Tu	12	20	OK	Subaltern	CG/BdGen's Aide (BeV)	5		Both	3	Tim Macaire
CO	Sir Claude Oppere	12	F	OK	Lt.Colonel	DG	3			6	Paul Murphy
LSD	Louis Severin Descartes	12+40	Withy		Colonel	GDMD/FMshl's Aide	2	Sheila	Hunt	1	Chris Schotmann
FS	Sir Felipe Savant	11	22	Poor	Captain	RFG	5	Pet	BG	4	Brick Amundsen
AdE	Sir Antoine d'Eques	11	21	Poor	Major	13F/2 F Brigade Maj.	7		Hunt	2	Graeme Morris
BS	Sir Balzac Slapdash	11	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General	PLLD	13		Hunt	5	Matthew Wale
AC	Alexandre Capone	10	29	OK	Colonel	ALC	3	Ella	Hunt	5	Ray Vahey
MP	Maurice Pauvre	10	24	Comfy	Colonel	PM	3		Hunt	4	James Waters
HWB	Hector William Boone	10	24	Comfy	Captain	RFG	5		Hunt	5	Paul Wilson
TdL	Thomas de la Lune	10+30	OK		B.Bdr-General	4A	3	Violet	Hunt	5	Peter Card
RdH	Roger d'Horne	9	23	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	QOC	1	Henrietta	HGds	4	Steven Malecek
LV	Lascar Vivrebras	9	RIP								Olaf Schmidt
AiCh	Alvin Charles	9+	29	OK	Major	GDMD	5		F&P	2	Graeme Wilson
VdP	Vinne d'Pooh	8	18	Comfy	Major	RM/1 F Brigade Maj.	4		RP	2	Terry Crook
TS	Tristand Sault	8	16	OK	Lt.Colonel	GDMD/Drgn Brig. Maj.	4		BG	2	Mark Nightingale
KCC	Kitt Chevalier-Cavalier	7	21	OK	Subaltern	KM	4	Emma	BG	4	Mark Cowper
JCE	Jean-Claude Etienne	7+	25	Comfy	Major	RM	7	Viv	F&P	4	Tim Rattray
FXC	Frank X Change	6	F	Comfy	Major	CPC	4		F&P	4	Nigel Monaghan
FXF	François-Xavier Flamand	6	F	OK	Major	PLLD	2		F&P	3	Robert Strudwick
FLV	Fouche La Vache	6+	24	Poor	Captain	GDMD/LtGen's Aide (JH)	3	Eve	RP	2	Pauli Kidd
X2		5	RIP								Gerry Sutcliffe
RdS	Ray de Sofdelosdarc	5+	15	OK	Captain	27M	2		RP	4	Nik Luker
CA	Come Asiuar	5+	15	Poor	Captain	PM	3		RP	4	Jacob Andersson
X4		2	RIP								Jayson Elliot

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
LdH	Count Leonard de Hofstadt	29	F	Withy	General/Min w/o Port	8		Flr	5	Neil Packer
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	24	47	Fithy	Fld Marshal	24			6	Ben Brown
PC	Count Pierre Cardigan	24	42	Withy	Lt.Colonel ALC	10		Flr	5	Matt Shepherd
BRJS	Count Beau Reese Jean Seine	23- 17	Fithy	B.Bdr-General	RFG/State Min.	12	Chris	Flr	4	Bill Hay
JJ	Count Jean Jeanie	23	53	Fithy	General	32		Flr	3	Andrew Kendall
BeV	Earl Ben e'Volence	23	F	Withy	Colonel CPC/Min w/o Port	9		Flr	3	Ash Casey
BdLS	Count Bernard de Lur-Saluces	22	46	Fithy	Lt-General	18		Flr	3	Rob Pinkerton
CdB	Viscount Greg de Bécqueur	22+ 82	Rich		Bdr-General/Gds Brigadier	11	Bette	Flr	5	Anthony Gilbert
CdP	Marquis Camille de Polignac	21	49	Poor	Lt.Colonel RFG/Justice Min.	4	Angelina	Flr	4	James McReynolds
TC	Viscount Terence Cuckpowder	21	44	Comfy	Bdr-General/HGds Brigadier	6	Morgane	Flr	6	Mike Dormmett
Anon	Baron Les Anonyme	20	45	OK	Bdr-General/Min w/o Port	3	Carole	Flr	4	Bruno Giordan
HDS	Marquis Henri DuShite	18	38	Rich	B.Bdr-General RM	13	Justine	Both	4	Dave Marsden
RS	Baron Rick Shaw	17	43	Comfy	B.Lt-General/Adjutant Gen	2	Maggie	Both	6	Charles Burrows
XM	Baron Xavier Money	17	42	Withy	Bdr-General/Min w/o Port	7	Kathy	Flr	3	Pam Udowiczzenko
LS	Lou Scannon	17	40	Rich	Captain RFG/C.Prnce Aide	4	Bess	Both	2	John Cooke
EdL	Baron Eclair de Lame	17+ 58	Rich		Major RFG/Gds Brigade Maj.	12	Lucy	Both	3	Peter Farrell
ZUT	Baron Xavier Ulric Turenne	16	46	Withy	Lt-General/Min w/o Port	4	Laura	Flr	1	Bob Blanchett
JiT	Marquis Justin Thyme	16	29	Withy	B.Bdr-General QOC	11	Guinevere	Both	2	Gerald Udowiczzenko
GM	Sir Gaz Moutarde	15	30	Withy	Bdr-General	4	Anne	Both	2	Mike Clibborn-Dyer
TIH	Tarquin le Hatter	15	RIP							Jason Fazackarley
NM	Sir Neville Moore	14	31	Withy	Captain RFG/LtGen's Aide	1	Vera	Hunt	2	Cameron Wood
PFL	Sir Phillippe F'Loppe	14	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General DG	4		HGds	4	Phil Urquhart
LR	Sir Louis Renault	14+ 45	Withy	B.Lt-General		2	Katy	Both	4	Roy Bleasdale
JH	Sir Jacques Hatt	13	30	Comfy	B.Lt-General/Drgn Brigadier	4	Cath	Both	3	Joel Halpern
MdG	Martin de Garnache	13	29	Comfy	Major RFG/RFG Regt. Adjt.	3	Fifi	Both	4	Bill Howell
PaN	Pierre a'Noyer	13	26	OK	Captain RFG/Capt.K's Esc	3		Both	3	Tym Norris
CdN	Sir Claude de Nord	13+ 57	Comfy	Colonel KM/CPS		3	Madelaine	Hunt	4	Andrew Larder

Chatter

A few days of sunshine and no rain are all it takes to turn the squelchy tracks I've been walking along into hard surfaces. And they are quickly beginning to get dusty. The recent heavy showers have settled that, though.

In May I was walking through Ickenham Marsh and exploring paths on the other side of the railway lines (aka Ruislip). A couple of weeks ago I returned to my route to the river (river!) Pinn and was surprised by some changes. First off, for the last couple of years there has been construction work going on alongside the path. This was clearly labelled "not HS2", but was re-directing a sewer. Out of the way of HS2.

Anyway, this work has been completed and the land returned to the way it was. The allotments – where the main work site was – have been reinstated, complete with new sheds. The track cut through the woods to get there has been planted with saplings. And other areas (that had been covered in concrete) have been re-seeded. Hence the incongruous sight of a construction worker in full hi-vis get-up watering freshly planted ground.

A bit further on the path disappears and my walk is across an overgrown triangle of land to where the path returns, by the bridge over the river Pinn. This rough field is labelled "King George V playing fields" on some maps. I can't think what sport would work on such an odd-shaped, bumpy piece of land. (It's too small for orienteering!) The surprise here is that council (I assume) workers have dug shallow trenches along each side of the space and are packing them with hardcore to make new paths. At this rate I won't need my hiking boots as I'll have paths all the way. Here's the work in progress – the blue barriers in the distance are where the paths meet at the corner, the Pinn being just through the trees.



On returning to Ickenham Marsh last week I was roped in as a temporary "cow wrangler" (their words). Three animals were being unloaded from a livestock trailer and I was asked to block the path by a gateway to help herd them into the field. There are notices along here warning of animals grazing, but I hadn't seen

any cows before now. Apparently, the guys didn't bring them here last year, so their last visit was in 2021, before I started exploring the marsh paths. Anyway, here they are, in among the long grass.



Spiderwatch

Yes, the eight-legged beasts are making their presence felt again. Number of large hairy spiders scampering back and forth across the living room carpet before being relocated to The Great Outdoors: one. Number of tiny spiders keeping watch on the kettle (I may be anthropomorphising here): one. Number of tiny spiders investigating the bathroom: one. Number of medium-sized spiders gamely abseiling (or is it rappelling?) down the stairs: one.

What's in a logo?

I had a press release from Friedhelm Merz Verlag, the organisers of the Spiel games fair, to introduce their brand new logo. "It is fresher, more modern and yet remains true to its origins" gushes the press release. And here it is:



Yes, they've tipped the old square logo onto one corner and added the words "Spiel" and "Essen". Plus a "Registered trademark" mark. I hope they didn't pay too much to "transport the SPIEL logo into the 21st century".

Femmes Fatales

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

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

Regiments

Col	RFC	CG	KM	DG	OO	ALC	CPC	RM	CDMD	13F	PLID	53F	27M	4A	69A	Gscn
LCol	BRJS	N6	CdN	PFL	JIT	AC	BeV	HDS	LSD	TS+	MP	N5	N7	TdIL		
Maj 1	EdL+		N1	CO	RdH	PC	N1+	VdP+	AdE+	AdE+	N6	N6	N5	N5+	N5+	N5
Maj 2	MdG		N4*		N5+		N1+	JCE	N5*	N6	N6*	N4	N1			
Capt 1	NM		N3				N6	N5	N2	N3	N3	N3	N1	N6	N6	N3
Capt 2	LS		N5				N3	N2	N2	N3	N3	N4	N4	N5	N4	N2
Capt 3	PaN		N4				N4	N4*	N2	N2	N3	N4	N4	N4	N3	N4
Capt 4	FS		N2*				N5		N6	N6	N4*	N4	N3*	N5*	N3	N4
Capt 5	HWB		N6						FLV	CA						
Capt 6																

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

Frontier Regiments

	F1	F2	F3	F4	(Siege for Dec-Feb) RNHB
Colonel	N5	N5	N3	N6	N8
Attached					LdH
Also at the Front		Dragoon Guards Crown Prince Cuirassiers Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons			

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

Battle Results

Dragoon Guards: 5	Frontier regiment 2: 3
Crown Prince Cuirassiers: 1	Frontier regiment 3: 3
Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons: 2	Frontier regiment 4: 5
Frontier regiment 1: 2	RNHB regiment: 1

Other Appointments

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

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

Online stats

I published *TWJO* 234 on 22nd May so the PDFs were only available for a week or so in May. They were downloaded 160 times in that time. The previous issue was downloaded 67 times in the month, making 201 in two months. And *TWJO* 232 attracted 29 May downloads for a total of 231 since publication.

Letters

Jonathan Palfrey has some comments on last time’s By Popular Demand.

I’m surprised that so many picked Mary Shelley; I wouldn’t expect many people these days even to think of her in connection with sf. I’ve heard of her but never read her; surely not my kind of thing.

I’ve never read Charles Stross, either, and didn’t happen to know that he’s British.

A little while ago, I discovered from my 1968 diary that I read Starship Troopers in that year; I probably read it again sometime in the 1970s; I doubt that I’ve read it since then.

I’m not surprised about Sarah Jane Smith; for a 20th century companion, she’s had plenty of attention in the 21st century, and her first and last names both begin with S. I’d have been exasperated if Susan Foreman had been popular, because ... her last name doesn’t begin with S, and you didn’t say this category was about first names. So I didn’t regard her as a candidate. Even if she were a candidate, she hasn’t had much exposure to the public since the 1960s.

Whereas my argument is that *Doctor Who* companions are generally known by their first names: Susan, Barbara, Ian, Jamie, Ace, Rose... Jonathan has also read *A Psalm for the Wild-Built*.

I have very variable reactions to Becky Chambers stories. I like The Galaxy, and the Ground Within a lot (though I’m not quite sure why), but A Psalm for the Wild-Built seemed to me amiable enough but disappointing. And its use of ‘they’ irritated me unbearably until I eventually persuaded myself that Dex suffered from a delusion of plurality. Which is unusual and strange, but well, this is SF.

And, as always, SF stories reflect society at the time they were written. Unlike me, Alex Bardy made it to the UK Games Expo this year.

I was there Thursday thru’ Sunday most of the time, although to be honest I’m increasingly feeling a tad ‘adrift’ from a lot of the action, mainly due to the sheer number of stalls and events going on.

I'd long given up on many of the 'events' over the last few years, but am wondering if the 'old man' inside of me is getting a tad fed up with all the gimmickry and pretence as well – there seemed to be a lot of flotsam and jetsam flying around on the stalls, none of which appealed to me, frankly. Oh dear...

If you're an old man, Alex, what am I? But you are right that there's just so much going on at these shows. I used to make a point of walking every aisle at Spiel – you never knew what fresh delight would be round the next corner. These days, there's just too much of it and everything's been announced on the internet beforehand. Yes, things aren't what they used to be. (And if you tell that to young people today...)

A-maze-ing Magic

Pevans tries *Magic Maze*

I was introduced to this a few weeks ago at the local games group. It's a co-operative game of getting four coloured pawns (apparently, they're fantasy role-playing characters robbing a shopping mall) to the objective of their colour and, once all four have arrived, to the exit space of their colour. There is no taking turns, players just move pawns as and when they spot an opportunity.

What makes this tricky is that the objectives and exits are on tiles that are not in play to start with. So, first, you have to get new tiles into play. This is done by getting pawns to their colour of doorway off a current tile. This adds a new tile, connecting to this doorway.

Okay, still seems straightforward. Except that each player has specific responsibilities. Thus, only one player can move pawns left. Another moves them right. Others move them 'up' and 'down' or use the escalators (it's a shopping mall) and so on. One player is also responsible for adding new tiles. And one can move a pawn directly to a 'vortex' symbol of its colour, which can be a very useful shortcut. How these roles are divvied up depends on the number playing, often meaning players have more than one action they are responsible for.

On top of this, players are not allowed to communicate by speech, noise or gesture. They are limited to "staring intensely" or



The end of our first game

New Characters

Olaf Schmidt gets the Second son of an Impoverished Gentleman: Init SL 4; Cash 40; MA 6; EC 1 (X1).

Jason Fazackarley gets the Bastard son of a well-to-do Knight: Init SL 5; Cash 225; MA 5; EC 1 (X2).

Neil Packer gets the Bastard son of a very wealthy Gentleman: Init SL 4; Cash 675; MA 3; EC 4 (X3).

Tables

Army Organisation and 1675's Summer Deployment

First Army (Defence)	--/--/N2/N
Cavalry Division (Defence)	N4/N/N2
Heavy Brigade (Defence) - ALC CPC	
Dragoon Brigade (Defence) - GDMD PLLD	
Frontier Division (Defence)	N1/N/N3
Frontier Regiments (Defence)	
Second Army (Siege)	--/--/N4/N
First Division (Assault)	N1/N/N4
Guards Brigade (Assault) - RFG CG KM	
1st Foot Brigade (Assault) - RM PM	
RNHB Regiment (Assault)	
Second Division (Siege)	N3/N/N2
2nd Foot Brigade (Siege) - 13F 53F	
3rd Foot Brigade (Siege) - 27M 4A	
4th Foot Brigade (Siege) - 69A Gscn	
Horse Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - DG QOC	

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

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

Brigade Positions

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

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

Grudges to settle next month

Beau Reese Jean Seine (Rapier, Seconds JJ, 5 rests) and Pierre Cardigan (Sabre, Seconds BRJS & AC, adv.) have mutual cause as neither stood down over Justine.

Alexandre Capone (Sabre, Seconds PC & RS, adv.) and Louis Severin Descartes (Sabre, Seconds JH & TS, 1 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Beau Reese Jean Seine (Rapier, Seconds JJ, 1 rests) and Rick Shaw (Sabre, Seconds JiT, adv.) have mutual cause as neither stood down over Therèse.

Alexandre Capone (Sabre, Seconds PC & RS, adv.) and Alvin Charles (Sabre, 1 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Ray de Sofdelosdarc (Rapier, 3 rests) has cause with Alexandre Capone (Sabre, Seconds PC & RS, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Alvin Charles (Sabre, 3 rests) has cause with Claude de Nord (Sabre, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Come Asiouar (Rapier, Seconds ZvT, 3 rests) and Thomas de la Lune (Rapier, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Kitt Chevalier-Cavalier (Rapier, 3 rests) has cause with Claude de Nord (Sabre, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Ray de Sofdelosdarc (Rapier, 4 rests) has cause with Claude de Nord (Sabre, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Kitt Chevalier-Cavalier (Rapier) has cause with Louis Severin Descartes (Sabre, Seconds JH & TS) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Ray de Sofdelosdarc (Rapier, 2 rests) has cause with Louis Severin Descartes (Sabre, Seconds JH & TS, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

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

Maurice Pauvre (Rapier, Seconds LR & ZUT, 2 rests) and Thomas de la Lune (Rapier, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

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

Henri DuShite (Cutlass, 5 rests) has cause with Pierre Cardigan (Sabre, Seconds BRJS & AC, adv.) for pinching Justine.

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

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

banging the 'do something!' pawn in front of another player. Oh, and all this happens against a three-minute sand timer.

The timer can be turned over if a pawn is moved to a 'flip timer' space – each of which can only be used once in the game. To confuse things further, every time the timer is turned over, the actions (move left, move right etc) are passed around the players. Now you've got to look for opportunities to make a different move.

The first, three-player, game petered out as none of us could see a way through the maze we'd made. The second game, with numbers up to five, quickly achieved all four objectives. But we ran out of time before we could find the last exit. It was, of course, on the last unplayed tile. The post mortem (below) pointed out where we needed to go to get that final tile (and exit) into play.



I have to say that the game did nothing for me. All the players have to solve the same puzzle in the same way and then move the pawns correctly. Our progress was made by concentrating on one pawn at a time, which simplified things, but probably took far too long. I just found it by turns baffling and trivial.

Magic Maze was designed by Kasper Lapp and is published by Sit Down! (www.sitdown-games.com). It's a co-operative game for up to eight players, aged 8+, and takes 15 minutes to play (our games were getting on for half an hour each).

Battle of Borodino

Pevans versus Evert

Evert is my regular sparring partner at *Commands & Colors: Napoleonic*, which we play remotely over Vassal (www.vassalengine.org) in the evenings. For a while now we have been working out way through the scenarios in the game's second expansion, *The Russian Army*. A lot of these are battles in Napoleon's 1812 invasion of Russia, culminating in the Battle of Borodino (which needs four scenarios itself) just outside Moscow.

The final Borodino scenario (number 213) is "Raevski Redoubt" and covers the climax of the battle. The previous scenarios are on the flanks of the two armies, while this is the central and final action. Here is the set-up (taken from www.CommandsAndColors.net).



The French (blue) are massed along the bottom of the board (with a few units advanced on the left) while the Russians (green) are scattered across the top half. Note that the French have the Old Guard (left of centre on the bottom row) and Guard Artillery. The Russians also have some Guards – Artillery, Grenadiers and Heavy cavalry (a six-block unit!) right of centre on the top row – and quite a few

Notes

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

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

Reminders: It is worth sending orders in even if they're late: I may be able to action the orders and should be

able to use any press. It also reassures me that you're still there.

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

Announcements

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

Ben e'Volence applies for Minister of State

Beau Reese Jean Seine applies for Minister of State

Louis Renault asks NPC Division Commander of First Division to resign

Louis Renault applies for Division Commander of First Division

Thomas de la Lune asks NPC Brigadier of 3rd Foot Brigade to resign

Zeold von Tu asks NPC Ensign, Cardinal's Escort to resign

Zeold von Tu applies for Ensign, Cardinal's Escort

Duels

Results of January's duels

Come Asiouar declined to meet Fouche La Vache as he was under half Endurance.

Pierre Cardigan (with BRJS, gains 1 Exp) beat Greg de Bécqueur.

Claude de Nord (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Zeold von Tu (with CA).

Beau Reese Jean Seine didn't turn up to fight Claude de Nord and lost SPs.

Thomas de la Lune (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Come Asiouar (with ZvT).

Phillipe F'Loppe (with BeV, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Roger d'Horne.

Beau Reese Jean Seine didn't turn up to fight Pierre Cardigan and lost SPs.

Poetry Corner

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

- 1 Alas, fair Eve Ningalle's heart
Escapes my grasp, like a fleeting dart.
Her beauty, a sunbeam in fields of
green.
- 2 With words of charm and gallant
stance
I courted her in a courtly dance.
Yet my endeavours were met with
naught.
- 3 But now, two duels await my fate,
With Thomas de la Lune and Fouche
La Vache.
My rapier unsheathed, my honour
claimed.
- 4 Thomas de la Lune, a formidable
foe,
His skills renowned, his strikes aglow.
But I shall not falter, nor fear his
might.

- 5 Fouche La Vache, a fierce
adversary,
A master of duels, a legend, a story.
Yet my blade, with valour, will clash
and sing.
- 6 In the morning sun, on the field so
wide,
Rapiers will cross, with destiny as our
guide.
The musketeer's heart, unyielding and
brave.
- 7 So, pray for me, as the duels await,
For victory or loss, the hand of fate.
But in love's embrace, I shall forever
stand.

† Côte Asiouar

Howl at the Moon
Silvering the snow
and burning my blood
New Year, New Glory

† TdLL

Points Arising

Next deadline is 14th July

The first order of business next month will be the execution of Leonard de Hofstadt for his ~~excessive Social Level~~ heinous crimes. Players are invited to embellish the occasion as they wish. (It's not unknown for daring escapes to take place – after all, the dastardly Roland di Vingt got away while en route to the gallows some years ago to taunt His Majesty from England.)

Gerry Sutcliff still plans to return to the game, but I've removed X2 and will create a new character when Gerry's back with us.

Similarly, I have removed Jayson Elliot's character (X4) as I can get no response from Jayson.

The NPC Minister of War's term of office expires at the end of next month. Applications for the post should be made with your February orders (to be actioned at the start of March).

Absent friends

I didn't receive orders from the following (No Move Received) and they suffered the consequences:
TS Tristand Sault (Mark Nightingale) has NMR'd. Total now 1

fieldworks in place. (I'm using left and right as in the pictures, rather than according to each army's viewpoint.)

The stream dividing the armies is only an obstacle for cavalry and artillery. Both sides gain a victory banner while they hold the town (Semenovka) in the centre of the board (the Russians start with this). And the French get a banner for each of the fieldworks positions that isn't held by the Russians – which I was immediately nervous about.

According to the historical background to the scenario, the French attacked on the right and massed their artillery to cause huge casualties to the Russians meeting that attack. However, Napoleon would not commit the Imperial Guard to finish the fight and Kutuzov ordered the battered Russians to retreat overnight, allowing Napoleon to occupy Moscow.

First play – the Russians

I played the Russians first and was encouraged by having those fieldworks to counter the massed French army – though keeping them occupied could be tricky.

The serious action started when Marshal Ney led a mixed force of infantry and artillery into the stream in front of the town. (Evert played a useful "Grande Manoeuvre" card to move units further than usual, but not fight.) This provoked a fierce fight as I moved Russian infantry forward, taking out a French Line infantry unit and forcing the others back. First blood to me and the score is 2:0 (as the Russians hold Semenovka town).

Introducing *Commands & Colors*

The games in the *Commands & Colors* family have several core elements. First off, the board is plain with a large hexagonal grid and divided into three sections (left, right and centre). Terrain features (hills, woods, rivers, towns and so on) come as hexagonal tiles, providing the flexibility to lay out innumerable battlefields, according to the specific scenario.

Second, troops are represented by plastic models or wooden blocks – a group for each unit. Each hit on a unit removes a piece and removing the last piece gives the opponent a victory banner/medal. There may be other ways to gain medals (holding objectives or getting units off the board, say) and the winner is the first to get a specific number.

Third, and key to the game, is the deck of 'Command' cards. Players can only move and/or attack with a limited number of units according to the Command card they play at the start of their turn. This 'fog of war' element is the clever feature that, in my eyes, makes these games so brilliant.

The sequence of a player's turn is that you play a card, decide which units to 'order', move any, all or none of them and then 'battle' with them before drawing a fresh card. Battling means rolling dice and 'hits' remove a piece from the targeted unit. The dice are the other luck element in the game, of course.

Playing the game involves choosing a scenario and setting out the terrain and units accordingly. Command cards are dealt out and the players take turns to move and battle until one achieves the scenario's goal. However, scenarios are not necessarily balanced, so players switch sides to re-play the scenario, aggregating their scores to find the overall winner.

The action then shifted to the right where the French pushed forward, eliminating a Russian Line and an artillery to empty two of the fieldworks (thanks to some luck with the dice). Re-occupying one with Russian Grenadiers just led to their loss as well – though they did take down a French Line unit. A second French Line fell to the Russian Light cavalry before that unit was blown away by French musketry. Phew! This takes the score to 4:6 in favour of the French.



(Apart from the initial set-up, the pictures are screenshots from our game on Vassal. If you're not familiar with Vassal, units outlined in green check are ordered, the lines show units' movements, yellow rosettes show who's attacking, red the latest target and blue those that have already attacked – or can't. French victory banners are on the bottom edge of the picture, Russian ones along the top.)

By now Evert had his artillery massed in the centre – as happened historically – while I hadn't got much use from my guns – also historical. The guns finished off a Russian Light infantry on the right, making the score 4:7 and leaving me with just the Guard Heavy cavalry on the right. With 10 banners needed for the win, things were looking bad.

Then there was some action on the left as the Russian guns finally fired, killing a French Line infantry. This was followed by a "Cavalry Charge". The Russian Cuirassiers hurtled into the river to destroy the French Light infantry in the woods on the extreme left (my turn for some luck with the dice) while the Guard Heavies

King and Country, a man who has previous mentions and has also given great service as Deputy Commissioner of Public Safety. Poor Count Seine has had to delay appointing me* as full Public Safety Commissioner until this whole damned mess is sorted out – the security of France remains in jeopardy because of this conspiracy against me. All it would take is an official letter from Your Majesty, saying what a fine soldier and gentleman I am and that I be allowed to return to Paris and re-join the Musketeers.

I'll leave this in Your Majesty's more than capable hands and, if it's not too much trouble, could a coach be sent for me so that I can get back in time for February and Valentine's Day?

Your most loyal, yet persecuted servant,

† Tarquin le Hatter

Deputy Commissioner of Public Safety
Former Lieutenant Colonel King's

Musketeers

P.S This is another instance of injustice: some damned desk clerk keeps saying I don't meet the criteria to actually become CPS. Something about requiring a Knighthood or to be a Colonel. Ridiculous! I'm clearly the best man for the job, so if you could also add to your letter ordering my return to Paris that I am also elevated to a Knight that will shut the bureaucrats up!

Mon Cher Count Cardigan,

I am afraid I perceive a conflict of interest in acting as both your opponent and second in a duel. As such, I must recuse myself from both duties.

† Count Beau Reese Jean Seine

Ask any horse racer. Any real horse racer. It doesn't matter if you win by an inch or a mile. Winning's winning.

† Louis Severin Descartes

Dear Brigadier-General Thyme

I understand you are looking for an aide. Well, your wait is over: I am ready to serve. Maybe we can discuss my duties at your club some time in February?

† Subaltern Chevalier-Cavalier

Dear Count Beau Reese Jean Seine,

I feel that I must make a grovelling apology.

A man of your mature years must understand that love knows no restrictions and is not bound by convention or class.

When I was approached by dear Madelaine I of course rejected her advances and said "No, the Count is a fine upstanding man of impeccable virtue, I could never steal you away from his embrace."

Yet she was persistent and unrelenting in her pursuit of me, to the point of embarrassing scenes at the patisserie, fromagerie and my club.

I had no idea she belonged to another and I feel ashamed. Yet... yet, love is blind and, at the risk of this poor woman taking her own life, I have decided to humour her for the time being.

Again, I am totally sorry.

Would a 100 coins donation to your favourite charity in some small way help to ease your pain?

Once again, my sincere apologies.

God Save the King!

† Claude De Nord

Please note that it is my intention to make use of the seasonal rain in April and May 1675 to use the Royal Marines in support of our brave lads at the front. For those that wish to volunteer alongside us I would be happy to help finance the exams for your entry into our regiment. May the glory and shining light of His Majesty never dim.

**** Aide Required ****

I am looking for a competent aide. Please contact me with your credentials.

† (Brevet) Bdr-General Marquis Thyme

Social

All Gentlemen (social level 9+) are welcome to join Louis Renault during week 3 for some sparring followed by drinks with our ladies at my club. Thomas de la Lune and other men of the 4th Arquebusiers will not be welcome.

LCol Camille de Polignac, RFG, will host a party at Fleur during week 1 of Feb 1675. Officers serving in the Guards Brigade and any Gentlemen of SL 18+ are welcome to attend with their ladies. Refreshments provided.

***** St Valentine's Day Party *****
Ladies and Gentlemen of Paris, you are invited to celebrate romance and join me at a St Valentine's Day Party, Week 2, February 1675. All Gentlemen social level 9+ welcome. Costs paid.
† XM

Personal

To: Colonel Maurice Pauvre
Dear Maurice,

I hope you feel better after your little altercation with that Thomas de la Lune fellow. I barely had enough bandages to cope with all the gaps and holes he left in you. But, a very courageous effort when all is said and done.

I have recently purchased a copy of Pedro De Heredia's works. Maybe we could arrange to practice some of his lessons together and have dinner with Katy and me afterwards? Feel free to bring any friends along.

† Louis

To: His Majesty, King Pevans 'the Just & Fair'
Sire,

There's been a most terrible injustice committed against me by numerous nefarious individuals and, I feel, it is only you who can right these gross wrongs.

You see, I keep being accused of cowardice and other such ludicrous trumped-up charges, leaving me in the precarious position of now being ordered to remain at the Front until such time as I am Mentioned in Despatches. If this wasn't bad enough, they've reduced me to the rank of a lowly Private in one of those death-trap Frontier Regiments. It's all simply outrageous and something must be done. I mean I used to be a Lieutenant Colonel in your Musketeers and I was destined to be a Field Marshal.

That's why I thought I should write to you as you know I'm a loyal servant of

hit the French on the right and removed the Heavy cavalry there. That's 7:7 and all to play for.

A second "Cavalry Charge" saw the Russian Cuirassiers and Light cavalry eliminate a French Line on the left while the Guard Heavies continued to lay into the French cavalry on the right, killing Marshal Murat. (Yes, I got lucky to kill a leader, while Evert's luck had deserted him and his troops were not damaging my horsemen as much as they should – it's 9:7.)

The coup de grâce was my third (!) "Cavalry Charge" that saw the battered Guard Heavies finish off the French Light cavalry previously commanded by Murat.



From 4:7 to 10:7 is quite a comeback. I'd been wanting to get the Guard Heavy cavalry into action from the start and having three "Cavalry Charge" cards allowed me to let rip with them (and the Cuirassiers). My nervousness about the banners the French can get for emptying the fieldworks was unfounded in the end – it looks like the Russians can afford to lose a few of these, as long as they're causing casualties amongst the French. Evert's massed artillery in the centre was quite effective initially (he had a "Bombard"), but then fell silent as he ran out of centre cards. And he was disappointed not to have got the French Cuirassiers – his favourite – into the action.

Part the second – the French

Switching sides (and a week later), it was my turn to play the French. All those fieldworks were discouraging – though only having to get the Russians out might be an advantage. Initial skirmishing was followed by a French attack on the left, crossing the river to attack the Russians on the hills. This didn't work out well: I lost a Light infantry and a Line infantry while the almost-dead Russian Light cavalry retreated out of harm's way. That means the score is 0:3 as Evert has a banner for the town.

However, I got lucky with my next card, an "Elan". On the right side of the battlefield French artillery eliminated a Russian artillery unit, leaving a fieldworks empty. (Evert was not happy that my three dice all came up on the 'artillery' side – a 1/216 chance!) This makes the score 1:3 and 2:3 when Evert chose not to re-occupy the fieldworks.

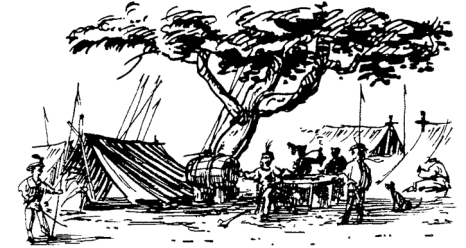
I continued to push forward on the left, throwing the Cuirassiers into the fray and taking out a Light infantry and another artillery. That's another fieldworks vacant – though Evert re-occupied this one – and takes the score to 4:3.

My next move was a "Bombard" card to bring three French artillery units together centre-right. The fourth one opened up on Semenovka, driving out the Russian Light infantry. However, the Russian artillery was more effective, eliminating a



most of the Dragoon Guards would prefer to be back in Paris and don't do well. Regardless, Colonel Phillipe F'Loppe is brevetted to Brigadier-General. Oppere is Mentioned in Despatches for setting a good example to the rest of the regiment ("He knows what he's doing") and is Knighted as a result.

The Crown Prince Cuirassiers show how it should be done, plundering their way through an Imperial camp. Major Frank X Change picks up well over a thousand crowns worth of booty and is Mentioned ("That's the way to do it!"). There's a Mention in Despatches ("What, no money?") for Colonel Ben e'Volence, too, but he doesn't find any loot.



Balzac Slapdash leads the Princess Louisa Light Dragoons to similar success, but is rather more cautious. He is censured for not prosecuting the attack with sufficient vigour. Major François-Xavier Flamand is right behind him, but escapes criticism. He is Mentioned in Despatches ("Where was he?").

The Frontier regiments are less successful as they continue to besiege Dutch positions. Faced with an artillery barrage, Tarquin le Hatter heads for the rear, but discovers he can't outrun a cannonball. RIP.

Lascar Vivrebras has transferred to the Royal North Highlanders where he finds out why they're an elite unit. They fight hard and they party hard! Determined to show them he's got what it takes, Vivrebras leads an attack on a Dutch redoubt and is first to fall to their muskets. RIP.

And the RNHB is surprised to receive a delegation from Paris. Members of the King's Escort have a warrant for the arrest of Leonard de Hofstadt and the military authorities oblige by handing him over. A fast coach whisks Hofstadt back to Paris so His Majesty's carefully selected tribunal can find him guilty of *lèse-majesté*. The only question is the sentence and Hofstadt accepts execution with equanimity. ❖

Press

Announcements

The Picardy Musketeers are looking for fine young men, especially those with the qualities that would make them good Officers.

Financial assistance available to those Officers that need it.

** Join the QOC **

Gentleman of Paris, if you are new to the city or are looking for a new Regiment, then you can do no better than join the Queen's Own Carabiniers. Please contact me for more details, and some financial help is available.

† Marquis Thyme

Which brings us to the Fleur de Lys. This is where to find Camille de Polignac and Angelina di Griz. All month. It's also where to find Greg de Bécqueur and Bette – when they're not at Louis's party. Les Anonyme starts January in the Fleur with Carole Singeurs. Having just joined the Fleur ("I'm a Minister, dammit!"), Xavier Ulric Turenne brings Laura to host Louis Renault and Katy the following week. Xavier nonchalantly places three 200-crown bets and, even more nonchalantly, loses all three. Then it's Xavier and Laura's turn to Toady, their hosts being Terence Cuckpowder and Morgane Le Fay. Xavier Money and Kathy drop in for weeks 2 and 4.

Week 2 is amusing as there are half a dozen socialites outside insisting it's Valentine's Day and Xavier should admit them. That's Antoine d'Eques, Claude de Nord, Justin Thyme, Jean Jeanie, Hector William Boone and Pierre a'Noyer. Last man to arrive is Beau Reese Jean Seine, appearing right at the end of the month with Chris Pacquette on his arm. Beau has had a busy month. First, he bumped into Pierre Cardigan on a certain lady's doorstep and refused to give way. Second was a different doorstep where he encountered Rick Shaw. And third was Mlle Pacquette, who was seduced by his attention. Or was it the allure of the Fleur?

Pierre Cardigan's absence from society is because he's also been charming the ladies. Or trying to, anyway. As already noted, he bumps into Beau Reese Jean Seine. Then discovers the object of his affections is out on the town with her current beau. Edna Bucquette finds out about this and gives him the heave-ho. And then, right at the end of the month, success!

No luck for Antoine d'Eques, though, so he concludes January in a bawdyhouse. As does Alvin Charles. And Come Asiouar. Plus Hector William Boone.

Stuck in the gyms all month are Bernard de Lur-Saluces, who's decided to take up knife-play and is practising with his daggers, and Jacques de Gain with his rapier, as always. Les Anonyme forsakes Carole to put in three weeks with his rapier. For Felipe Savant, it's three weeks with his sabre – for which he has to pay as that's not the weapon of a Foot Guard. Jean-Claude Etienne sticks to his regimental weapon. As that's a cutlass, it's a hard three-week slog for him. Jacques Hatt manages three weeks with his sabre. Pierre a'Noyer is in the Foot Guards gym with his rapier for three weeks. It's sabre for Terence Cuckpowder, also for three weeks. Kitt Chevalier-Cavalier and Neville Moore work out on rapier for two weeks in their regiments' facilities. Jean Jeanie goes commercial for his rapier fortnight. And Fouché La Vache fits in two sabre sessions, courtesy of the GDMD.

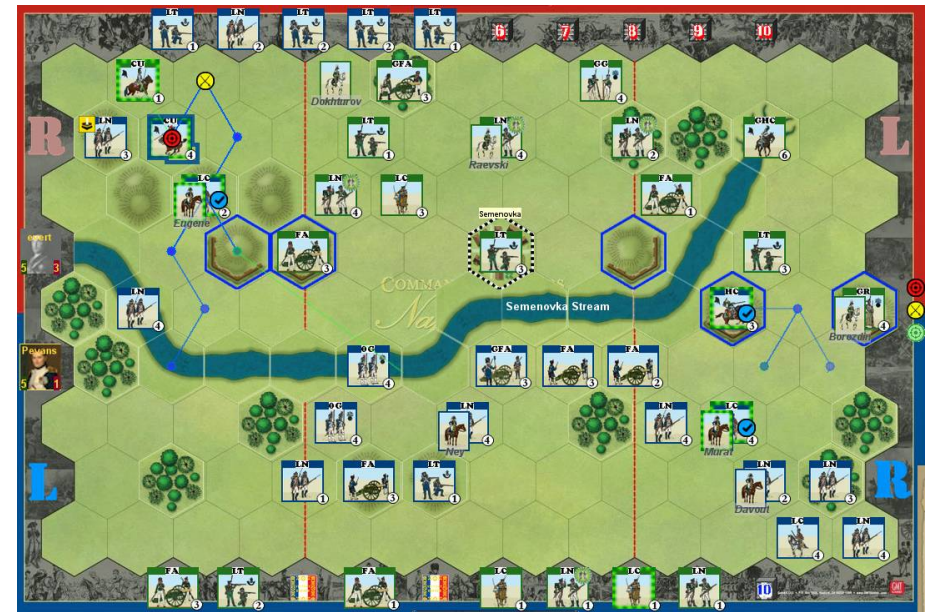
Showing them who's boss

Despite the proper onset of winter, the French forces continue to exert pressure on the Imperial forces in Alsace. The arrival of three cavalry regiments lets them overrun the Imperials' winter quarters. Lieutenant-Colonel Claude Oppere is pleased to find the rest of his regiment arriving to add to his squadron. However,

French Light infantry centre-left while muskets took out another on the right edge. And that's 4:4 as Evert's no longer holding the town.

With attention focused in the centre, a French Line infantry had been working its way along the left edge of the battlefield (you can see it above) and now finished off the battered Light cavalry hiding there: 6:4 as there is a second empty fieldworks. Evert promptly sent his Cuirassiers to force the infantry into square (cunningly depriving me of my other left section card).

Time for some action on the right with the fieldworks on the right edge changing hands a couple of times: the French lost a Light infantry, the Russians a Line – 7:5. A rash attack by the Russian cavalry was beaten off and I responded with a "Cavalry Charge", taking out Russian Light cavalry on the right and a Line infantry from the fieldworks on the left: 9:5.



In a final flurry, Evert came back with a "Counter-attack", re-taking Semenovka and one of the fieldworks and eliminating the Old Guard (oops!) but losing a Line infantry in exchange: 9:7. I pushed the Russians back out of the town and a fieldworks. Evert couldn't re-take either fieldworks, so another banner came my way at the start of the next French turn: 10:7.

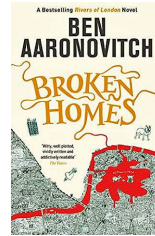
This game took much the same time as our previous one and was only one turn shorter. Looking at the final positions, both armies still look in good order – except that the French have all but destroyed the Russian troops on the left. This is the

big difference from the first game. Though the final position there has the Russian Guard cavalry causing havoc among the French horsemen bottom right.

The scoreline looks decisive, but I found both games a much harder fight than this would suggest. And achieving the same score as the French that I managed as the Russians made the aggregate score 20:14 to me.

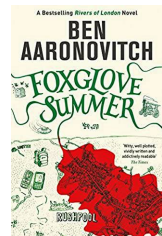
Reading matter

I'm trying not to read Ben Aaronovitch's "Rivers of London" series too quickly – there aren't that many of them and I don't want the experience to end any time soon. But I did move on to number four: *Broken Homes*. To recap the set-up, our hero, Peter Grant, is a probationary constable in the Metropolitan Police. And the Met's trainee wizard. In a department that's now ~~two~~ three strong. After the development at the end of *Moon over Soho*, Peter's friend Lesley is now part of the team – though still recovering from her horrible injuries in the original *Rivers of London* book (see my review in TWJO 228).



The plot this time centres on Skygarden, a fictional housing estate in Elephant and Castle created by architect and wizard Erik Stromberg. This requires Peter and Lesley to go undercover as residents as they try to work out what is going on – Peter's 'Moriarty', The Faceless Man, is up to something, it seems. However, it's a while before we get to this as the trail our police officers follow is rather convoluted. Oh, and the odd river of London gets involved as well.

Broken Homes is, again, a cracking read – real can't-put-it-down stuff. A particular feature is Peter's interaction with his colleagues in the Met, both the senior ones and his fellow constables, and with police procedures. It all feels very real. Anyway, the plot leads to a terrific climax on the top of Skygarden where Peter does some clever stuff. (Another feature of the books is Peter applying science to magic, experimenting to understand how it works, much to the disdain of his boss, Nightingale.) And then there is an almighty twist that I would never have expected. Wow!



Of course, this left me wanting more. So, despite myself, I just had to read the fifth book, *Foxglove Summer*, right away to see what Aaronovitch did with this twist. And the answer is almost nothing! We start with a highly entertaining set-piece involving both Father and Mother Thames and various tributaries.

And then Peter leaves London (!) and helps in the search for two missing girls in rural Herefordshire. Well, he happened to be in the area checking up on a retired wizard and "you can't walk away, can you? Not when it's kids."

has Justine on his arm. Hector William Boone still has no companion. Jean-Claude Etienne has brought Viv Ayschus and they listen, rapt, to Mlle Rochois. Justin Thyme brings Guinevere. Kitt Chevalier-Cavalier arrives with Emma Roides and, like Alvin, is offended by Claude's presence. That's another challenge.

On Louis Severin Descartes's arm is Sheila and in his hand is a glove with which to slap Alexandre as he's another of Alexandre's enemies. He's also the object of another challenge from Kitt. There's relief for Fifi as her beau, Martin de Garnache, gains entrance to this party. Following a trip to the red light district, Maurice Pauvre arrives alone and joins his regimental colleague, Come. Neville Moore is with Vera.

His courting having failed, Ray de Sofdelosdarc has no companion (but has made a visit to a bawdyhouse). This is probably an advantage as he runs round the party challenging those he considers should be his inferiors: Alexandre, Claude, Louis and Maurice. Thomas de la Lune and Violet Bott are the next arrivals. The party quickly gets frantic for Thomas as he spies two regimental enemies, Come and Maurice, and is then added to Ray's list of challenges. Xavier Money and Kathy are the last guests.

Clubbing round-up

Outside the parties, there are plenty of members visiting their clubs throughout January. Let's start with Red Phillips. This is where Fouche La Vache starts his month with Eve. It's also where Ray de Sofdelosdarc concludes January.

The Frog & Peach and Blue Gables remain unpatronised, but the Horse Guards club does have a visitor. Roger d'Horne rolls up with Henrietta Carrotte in week 2 for a profitable session on the tables. He places six wagers, staking 250 crowns a time. After winning the first two, Roger cuts the next. A loss is neutralised by another win before he cuts the last.

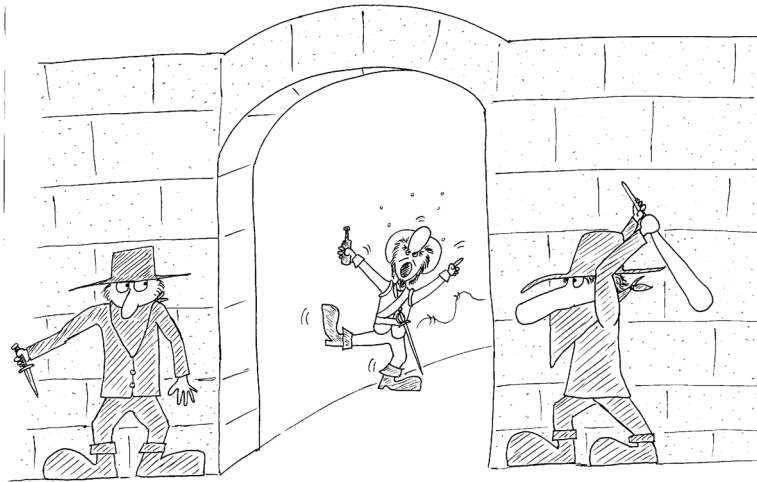
Hunter's features new member Thomas de la Lune boozing with Violet for the first half of the month. Come Asiouar turns up at the start of January to Toady to Thomas, but Thomas is not expecting this and Come is stuck outside. Claude de Nord and Madelaine are the others here, bookending their January with a drink in Claude's club.

Apart from the parties, Bothwell's has the presence of Lou Scannon and Bess Ottede for most of the month. They hit the Fleur for one week to Toady to Lou's boss, the Crown Prince. Lou expects Phillipe F'Loppe to join them, but he's been unexpectedly sent into action. Their party out of the way, Eclair de Lame and Lucy stay in Bothwell's for the rest of the month. Henri DuShite and Justine are there for one week. So are Gaz Moutarde, Louis Renault and Katy and Rick Shaw and Maggie at the end of January (good job Maggie hasn't heard what Rick's been up to this month – though his duel with Beau Reese Jean Seine is a bit of a hint). Gaz sticks 300 crowns on the gaming table and loses it.

Cruz is with Neville Moore. Rick Shaw is unaccompanied. Xavier Money has Kathy Pacific. Zavier Ulric Turenne brings Laura de Land.

Next up are Jacques Hatt and Cath de Thousands hosting the Dragoons in Bothwell's. The guest list is truncated a bit by the departure of Princess Louisa's from Paris. First of Grand Duke Max's to join them is Alvin Charles. Fouche La Vache is second and has Eve Ningalle on his arm. Louis Severin Descartes and Sheila Kiwi are the last. Grumbling outside the club are Cuirassier Alexandre Capone and Foot Guard Martin de Garnache. They clearly didn't read the invitation closely enough.

The same can be said of Zeold von Tu who joins them outside Bothwell's. He's a week early for Louis Renault's get-together! Still, that's better than Vinne d'Pooh, who was hanging around looking for Louis the week before. Vinne heads off to the bawdyhouses for the rest of January. He attracts the attentions of the footpads not once, but twice! This may well be because he's got a few crowns left over for them.



Katy Did hosts the final party with Louis and they have a good turnout to hear up-and-coming young soprano Marie Le Rochois. Alexandre Capone gets this one right and Ella is relieved. However, they are followed in by Alvin Charles, who's in Alexandre's enemy regiment. Words are exchanged. Come Asiouar slips in without anybody noticing – much the same happened when he went courting. Maybe it's because he's still a Captain – he couldn't afford the upgrade to Major.

The argument between Alvin and Alexandre is interrupted when Claude de Nord arrives with Madelaine de Proust. Alvin is outraged to see someone without any Nobility yet superior social standing. He proffers another challenge. Greg de Bécqueur escorts Bette Noire. Gaz Moutarde accompanies Anne. Henri DuShite

As usual, we have the interesting relationship between Peter and his colleagues, who are sceptical about what he does and how useful it will be. And, of course, Peter determines that there is some magical stuff going on and gets stuck in. To avoid spoilers, let me just say that this may or may not involve: changelings, the Faerie Queen, heavily armed fairies, ley lines, UFOs, parallel universes, absent river gods and unicorns.

At least one river god is present, however: Peter's old friend Beverley Brook (yes, one of the Rivers of London). As he dives into things he doesn't understand, Beverley's help is crucial to Peter's investigation (not to mention his sex life). And what Beverley's up to is another thing he doesn't understand. Amongst all this, Aaronovitch gives readers snippets to expand on the twist from *Broken Homes*.

Foxglove Summer is another terrific read and I had to restrain myself from diving straight in to the sixth book, *The Hanging Tree*. I can't recommend the "Rivers of London" series enough, but you really must start with the first book, *Rivers of London*. I'm already thinking of re-reading the series from the start...

Games Events

Griffcon is a new one on me and seems to be aimed more at wargamers. On the website it's billed as "A Community Table Top Painting and Gaming Convention." It takes place at Latton Bush Centre in Harlow (Essex) on 8th July and is run by Griffin Gaming. Tickets are available from the website – www.griffcon.uk – where there's lots of information about what's happening.

And then it's time for Manorcon. It's Manorcon XXXIX and happens at Leicester University, specifically The Village Hub (formerly Stamford House) and a few other buildings, from 21st-24th July. This is essentially an open gaming event, but expect a few tournaments, trade stall and second hand games sale. There's lots more on the website, including booking details: manorcon.org.uk

The following box concentrates on events I used to attend.

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

Games Games Games Days: from noon(-ish) on the second Saturday most months 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 things have got in the way.

UK Games Expo: 31st May - 2nd June 2024 at the NEC. This is a public event that showcases games of all sorts with a huge trade hall plus demonstration and

participation games and guests. For gamers there are lots of tournaments and open gaming. For details see www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk

Spiel: *the* board games event of the year. 5th-8th October 2023, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany or see www.spiel-messe.com/en

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

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

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Having been rejected by the Cardinal's Guard last month, Kitt Chevalier-Cavalier applies to the King's Musketeers this month. Claude de Nord is quick to accept him and Chevalier-Cavalier purchases the rank of Subaltern.

It's the final month of Beau Reese Jean Seine's tenure as Minister of State and he finally appoints a Commissioner of Public Safety. The job goes to KM Colonel Claude de Nord and brings him a Knighthood as well.

There's still no Chancellor of the Exchequer, though, as Seine leaves it vacant.

Jacques de Gain declines the applications from Leonard de Hofstadt to command an Army. Hofstadt is clearly in bad odour at the Louvre, so this may be a canny move by the Field Marshal.

Is Ben e'Volence bored of life in Paris? He's certainly taking his leave of the city as he mobilises his regiment, the Crown Prince Cuirassiers, for active service. Newly-purchased Major Frank X Change is keen to get going and already has his squadron kitted up and mounted.

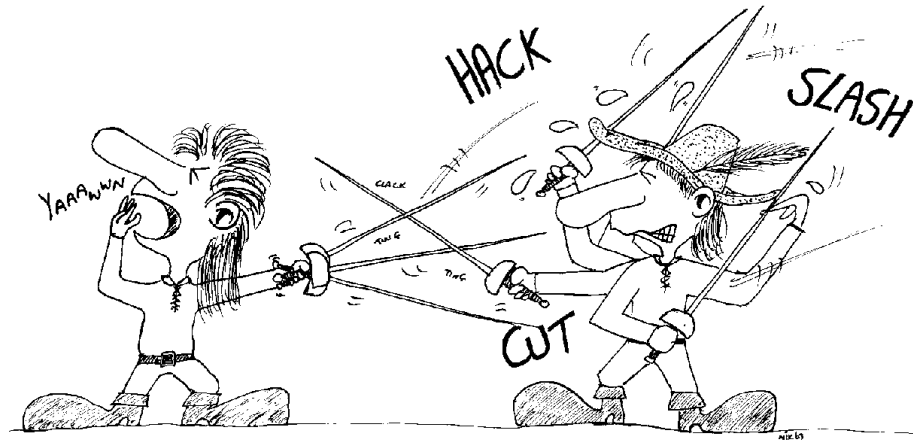
Princess Louisa's Light Dragoons are on the march as well on the orders of their CO, Balzac Slapdash. This comes as something of a surprise to Major François-Xavier Flamand, who was expecting a month of merrymaking.

Horse Guards Brigadier Terence Cuckpowder does not wish to go and fight for the rest of this season. But he thinks the Dragoon Guards should. It's news to the regiment's Colonel, but Phillipe F'Loppe is duty-bound to set off for the action.

Not February yet

This month looks good for party-goers as they can hop from one to another for most of the month. First stop is Bothwell's for Eclair de Lame's New Year Party. Then to the Fleur de Lys where Xavier Money is holding a Valentine's Day party. Oh. Hang on. That's in **February**! Well, Dragoon Brigade members can hit Bothwell's at the invitation of Jacques Hatt instead. And back to Bothwell's for the "renowned singer" who Louis Renault has hired to entertain his guests. Then everybody's left to their own devices for the end of the month.

We start, then, in Bothwell's where Baron Eclair de Lame and Lucy Fur welcome a fine selection of guests. Alexandre Capone brings Ella Fant. Antoine d'Eques comes alone. Felipe Savant escorts Pet Ulante. Gaz Moutarde ventures out in public again, accompanied by Anne Tique (don't worry, he's back at her place the following week). Henri DuShite has Justine Caisse on his arm (to the disappointment of some other gentlemen). Hector William Boone has no companion. Justin Thyme brings Guinevere d'Arthur. Jean Jeanie is solo – even though the man is known to have a mistress. As is Louis Renault. And Louis Severin Descartes, despite having a companion he could bring. He enlivens proceedings by spotting Alexandre and exchanging words with his regimental enemy. Martin de Garnache escorts Fifi. There's no-one with Maurice Pauvre. Vera



THE BENEFITS OF SUPERIOR EXPERTISE.

Again, the man with the rapier goes for a furious lunge, the one with the sabre is slashing furiously. As expected, Tu takes more damage before the two pause to recover their balance. Then they both slash and that's enough for Tu. He concedes the fight.

Nord cleans his sword and awaits Beau Reese Jean Seine. Seine does not return to the fray, however.

Finally, we have a clash of sabres between Dragoon Guard Phillippe F'Loppe and Carabinier Roger d'Horne. This looks like an even fight, though F'Loppe is more skilled and has a second: Ben e'Volence. Despite the blade he's using, Horne opens with a lunge. This does less damage than F'Loppe's slash in return. Horne slashes, which hits F'Loppe noticeably harder, and then receives another slash (his attempted parry is useless). He lunges, F'Loppe slashes and Horne surrenders.

Nobody quits

Louis Renault and Rick Shaw are working together to get Renault command of First Division. Their efforts fall at the first hurdle when their combined influence fails to persuade the incumbent to retire.

From his precarious position in the United Provinces Tarquin le Hatter calls in a favour to make sure the Lieutenant-Colonel of the 13th Fusiliers stays in post. Since no-one was influencing him – nor the Colonel – to go, this wasn't going to happen anyway.

The 27th Musketeers is the regiment for Ray de Sofdelosdarc and he is welcomed with open arms. He buys a Captaincy, along with the requisite mount.

Seahill (Railway Rivals game 17 - RR2509I(N))

Turn 10

The IRISH RAILWAY ASSOCIATION is fighting it out with RUBBER BANDIT RAILWAY as we pass the halfway point in the races, though BIEN came back with the best total of the round. Maybe they haven't been dropped at all! The other three are not out of the races yet and may come back – though the gap is widening.

This turn's races

Race results				Scores						
				IRA	RBR	BASH	CR	AGO	BIEN	
22	S4	Ferry to GB	24	Carndonagh/ Coleraine	10	0-5				20+5
23	12	Belfast	53	Cavan/Oldcastle	20-1	10		+1		
24	16	Newcastle/ Greenore	35	Killybegs/ Burton Port		20-5			+5	
25	46	Athlone	61	Dublin	+2		20		0-2	10
26	S3	Ferry to GB	33	Drumshambo/ Collooney	15-1					15+1
27	54	Carrickma- cross/Kings court	64	Dublin	0	10				20
28	22	Derry	44	Ballinrobe/ Castlebar					20	
TOTAL					45	30	20	1	23	71

JR = Joint Run; ERP = Exchange of Running Powers

Builds and Points

IRISH RAILWAY ASSOCIATION

(IRA), Anthony Gilbert – Green

Builds:

None

Points: 182 +45 = 227

RUBBER BANDIT RAILWAYS

(RBR), Mike Dyer – Black

Builds:

(A46) – Derry

(A57) – Clunes

Points: 187 -4 +30 = 213

BALLINOKE ARMAGH STRAB- ANE HAULAGE (BASH), Bob

Blanchett – Red

Builds: None
Points: 87 +20 = **107**

CANTERBURY RAILS (CR), Rob
 Pinkerton – Blue

Builds: None
Points: 131 +1 = **132**

AW GO ON (AGO), Gerald
 Udowiczenko – Orange

Builds:

GM Notes

Maximum payment to another player is 15 in any turn.

You may enter up to five races in each turn (plus any held over from a previous turn – shown *in italics*.) Joint runs and exchanges of running powers are welcome.

After the races you may build up to 4 points worth, including known payments to others. (This allowance decreases by 2 each turn.)

Order layouts: Your Name, Company Name, Company Colour.

Town Names for preference please.

Next turn's races

Race	From	To
29	S6 Big City Shopping	41 Ballina/Westport
30	14 Bangor/Antrim	45 Athenry/Clara
31	11 Belfast	62 Dublin
32	26 Portrush/Ballycastle	34 Ballyshannon/Sligo
33	51 Longford/Roscommon	21 Derry
34	65 Mullingar/Drogheda	36 Glenties/Letterkenny
35	52 Newry/Clunes	S2 Southern Ireland

**Orders to Mike Dommert, 12 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ
 or by e-mail to mike_dommert@yahoo.co.uk
 by Friday 14th July 2023**

Points: 118 +23 = **141**
BIEN'S INTERNATIONAL EXPRESS NETWORK (BIEN),
 Christian Bien – Purple
Builds: None
Points: 48 +71 = **119**

Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses

Being a correspondence game of *En Garde!* run by Pevans since April 1986 and now published as part of *To Win Just Once*.

New players are always welcome. If you'd like to play, you'll need to subscribe to *TWJO* (see page 16). You will also need (access to) a copy of the published rules to *En Garde!* (see www.engarde.co.uk).

**Orders for February 1675 to Pevans
 at 180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE
 UB10 8UF, UK or
lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk
 by Friday 14th July 2023**



January 1675 (371)

The New Year begins with a distinct nip in the air. It's a frosty morning as Parisian socialites make their way – cautiously – to their clandestine meetings, swords close at hand. For his first meeting, Picardy Musketeer Captain Come Asiouar chooses his regimental enemy, Thomas de la Lune, commander of the Fourth Arquebusiers. It is thus a rapier duel, but Asiouar is the smaller and less skilled of the two, both of which put him at a disadvantage. He does have a second, however: Zeold von Tu. Asiouar gets tangled up a bit at the start of the duel, allowing la Lune to hit him with two lunges. He gets his act together and slashes. Apart from wounding his opponent, this hit also reduces the effect of la Lune's third lunge. Asiouar's attack is actually the start of a furious slash and the cut is a heavier blow. However, la Lune is also in furious mode and his cut prompts Asiouar to concede. Asiouar's now too battered to face Fouche La Vache, his other scheduled opponent.

Old hands Greg de Bécqueur and Pierre Cardigan have the matter of Bette to 'discuss'. Infantryman Bécqueur carries a rapier, but has much less skill than Cardigan has with his cavalryman's sabre. Otherwise it would be a close match. Beau Reese Jean Seine is there to second Cardigan. And to fight him next! Bécqueur starts with a furious lunge, Cardigan a furious slash. The lunge hits first with the slash right behind. Then both men cut and the heavier weapon does more damage, particularly with Cardigan's strength behind it. Bécqueur surrenders. And Cardigan legs it rather than face Seine.

After his own duel Asiouar is still fit enough to swap places with Zeold von Tu, seconding the Cardinal's man as he meets Claude de Nord of the Musketeers. Nord has the heavier build, greater expertise and uses a sabre against Tu's rapier.

Mike Pollard was one of those to score over 100 this round and stretches his lead a little. It's close behind him, though – even I'm up there.

What's this about?

I have cribbed these rules from the *Variable Pig* website. You can find the originals (with lots of variants) at: variablepig.org/rules/bypop.html

Each turn the GM lists six categories and an initial letter. All players have to do is find something that fits the category and begins with the initial letter; they score points equal to the number of people who offer the same answer. The winner is the person with the most points at the end (after a pre-determined number of turns).

Example: The initial letter is A and the category is cities in Holland. 13 people give Amsterdam as their answer and score 13 points each, 6 people suggest Alkmaar and score 6 points each, 3 suggest Arnhem and score 3 points each.

I suspect I've got the hardest job: deciding on the categories! Anyway, we'll run this for 10 turns and see what happens.

Turn 10 categories

To finish with, a topic I don't know much about: sport. Please give me:

- 1 A football team in the English Premier League.
- 2 A British first-class cricket team.
- 3 A Formula One driver.
- 4 A Major League Baseball team.
- 5 A British rugby club.
- 6 A Wimbledon winner.

All beginning with the letter W please.

My answers have already been recorded.

Send your list to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF or to TWJO@pevans.co.uk by 14th July 2023.

By Popular Demand

Turn 9 results and scores

Name	Greco-Persian	Roses	Independence
Alex Bardy	Thermopylae 23	Towton 12	Trenton 15
Colin Bruce	Thermopylae 23	Towton 12	Trenton 15
Charles Burrows	Thermopylae 23	Towton 12	Trenton 15
Mike Clibborn-Dyer	Thermopylae 23	Towton 12	Trenton 15
Mark Cowper	Thermopylae 23	Tewkesbury 11	Ticonderoga 6
Terry Crook	Thermopylae 23	Tewkesbury 11	Ticonderoga 6
Mike Dommett	Thermopylae 23	Towton 12	Ticonderoga 6
Paul Evans	Thermopylae 23	Tewkesbury 11	Ticonderoga 6
Anthony Gilbert	Thermopylae 23	Towton 12	Trenton 15
Russell Harris	Thermopylae 23	Tewkesbury 11	Ticonderoga 6
William Hay	Thermopylae 23	Towton 12	Trenton 15
Andrew Kendall	Thermopylae 23	Towton 12	Trenton 15
Andrew Larder	Thermopylae 23	Tewkesbury 11	Turtle Bay 1
Nik Luker	Thermopylae 23	Towton 12	Trenton 15
Tim Macaire	Thermopylae 23	Towton 12	Trenton 15
Brad Martin	Thermopylae 23	Towton 12	Trenton 15
Nigel Monaghan	Thermopylae 23	Tewkesbury 11	Trenton 15
Graeme Morris	Thermopylae 23	Tewkesbury 11	Trenton 15
Mike Pollard	Thermopylae 23	Tewkesbury 11	Trenton 15
Chris Rudram	Thermopylae 23	Towton 12	Trois-Rivières 1
Richard Salmon	Thermopylae 23	Tewkesbury 11	Ticonderoga 6
Pam Udowiczenko	Thermopylae 23	Tewkesbury 11	Trenton 15
John Watson	Thermopylae 23	Tewkesbury 11	Trenton 15

Name	Napoleonic		WW1		WW2		Σ
Alex Bardy	Toulouse	1	Tannenberg	22	Tarawa	2	75
Colin Bruce	Talavera	2	Tannenberg	22	Tarawa	2	76
Charles Burrows	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Tassafaronga	1	93
Mike Clibborn-Dyer	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Tobruk	11	103
Mark Cowper	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Tobruk	11	93
Terry Crook	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Taranto	5	87
Mike Dommett	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Torch	2	85
Paul Evans	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Tobruk	11	93
Anthony Gilbert	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Tobruk	11	103
Russell Harris	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Tobruk	11	93
William Hay	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Taranto	5	97
Andrew Kendall	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Tobruk	11	103
Andrew Larder	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Torch	2	79
Nik Luker	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Tripoli	1	93
Tim Macaire	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Tunis	1	93
Brad Martin	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Taranto	5	97
Nigel Monaghan	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Tobruk	11	102
Graeme Morris	Talavera	2	Tannenberg	22	Tobruk	11	84
Mike Pollard	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Tobruk	11	102
Chris Rudram	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Taranto	5	83
Richard Salmon	Trafalgar	20	Tsingtao	1	Tobruk	11	72
Pam Udowiczenko	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Taranto	5	96
John Watson	Trafalgar	20	Tannenberg	22	Tobruk	11	102

Wow! Several scores of over 100 there. I thought Thermopylae, Trafalgar and Tannenberg would come out on top. The others were chancier – though I hoped people would go for Tobruk (the reason I asked for battles *or sieges*).

Anthony Gilbert had a comment for every answer, notably “300 points for this?” This being Thermopylae. Ho, ho. He then damns the Yorkists for Towton, the rebel

Yanks for Trenton and Rock Hudson and George Peppard (rebel Yanks again!) for leading the British army at Tobruk (presumably in a film).

Graeme Morris notes that he visited Trenton once, “but it was too late – the battle had already ended.” Oh dear. And Chris Rudram had “to choose that one [Trafalgar], it was my Dad's birthday.” What, 1805?

Scores

Player	Turn 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Martin Abrahams	33			37	67					137
Alex Bardy	48	37	68	53	86	43		46	75	456
Chris Baylis RIP		50	38	49	95					232
Colin Bruce	54	55	77	47	92	51	50	48	76	550
Charles Burrows	57	60	84	69	99	61	52	19	93	594
Mike Clibborn-Dyer	46	57	61	63	81	64	52	52	103	579
Mark Cowper		58	78	78	97	62	52	41	93	559
Terry Crook		26	45	51	65	63	33	34	87	404
Mike Dommett	48	44	70	62	97	45	51	48	85	550
Paul Evans	53	46	67	78	100	68	52	29	93	586
Anthony Gilbert	51	50	77	60	79	67	53	45	103	585
Russell Harris						73			93	166
William Hay		57	59	47		49	49	25	97	383
Andrew Kendall	57	41	80	33	97	47	54	39	103	551
Andrew Larder	47	37			42			50	79	255
Nik Luker		40	73	36	92	56		29	93	419
Tim Macaire	57	46	90	65	86	70	39	43	93	589
Brad Martin	51	46	73	59	87	65	51	48	97	577
Nigel Monaghan	7	57	58	54	93	73	57	46	102	547
Graeme Morris	43	28	90	69	99	73	46	46	84	578
Mike Pollard	58	67	77	77	99	65	43	53	102	641
Chris Rudram	52	57	75	41	81	47		51	83	487
Richard Salmon	58	59	64	55	84	64	54	50	72	560
Pam Udowiczenko	31	30	55	52	97		32	20	96	413
Matthew Wale	30	30	63	21	62	46	40	45		337
John Watson					97	54	54	49	102	356