

That would be enough

This has been issue 262 of *To Win Just Once*, published 27th February 2026. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2026

Deadlines

Orders for *Railway Rivals* to Mike by Friday 13th March 2026.

Orders for *LPBS* and to Pevans by Friday 20th March 2026.

(Probable next deadlines: 17th/24th April, 22nd/29th May.)

Waiting lists

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

Railway Rivals – It seems we have five for a new game, so Mike is deciding on a map. There's room for one more alongside Anthony Gilbert, Mark Cowper and Gerald Udowiczenko, Rob Pinkerton and Chris Rudram. (Working map and rules provided).

Star Trader – The list for the next game starts with Pevans, Mark Cowper and Anthony Gilbert. At least two more needed – and room for up to eight. (Rules provided)

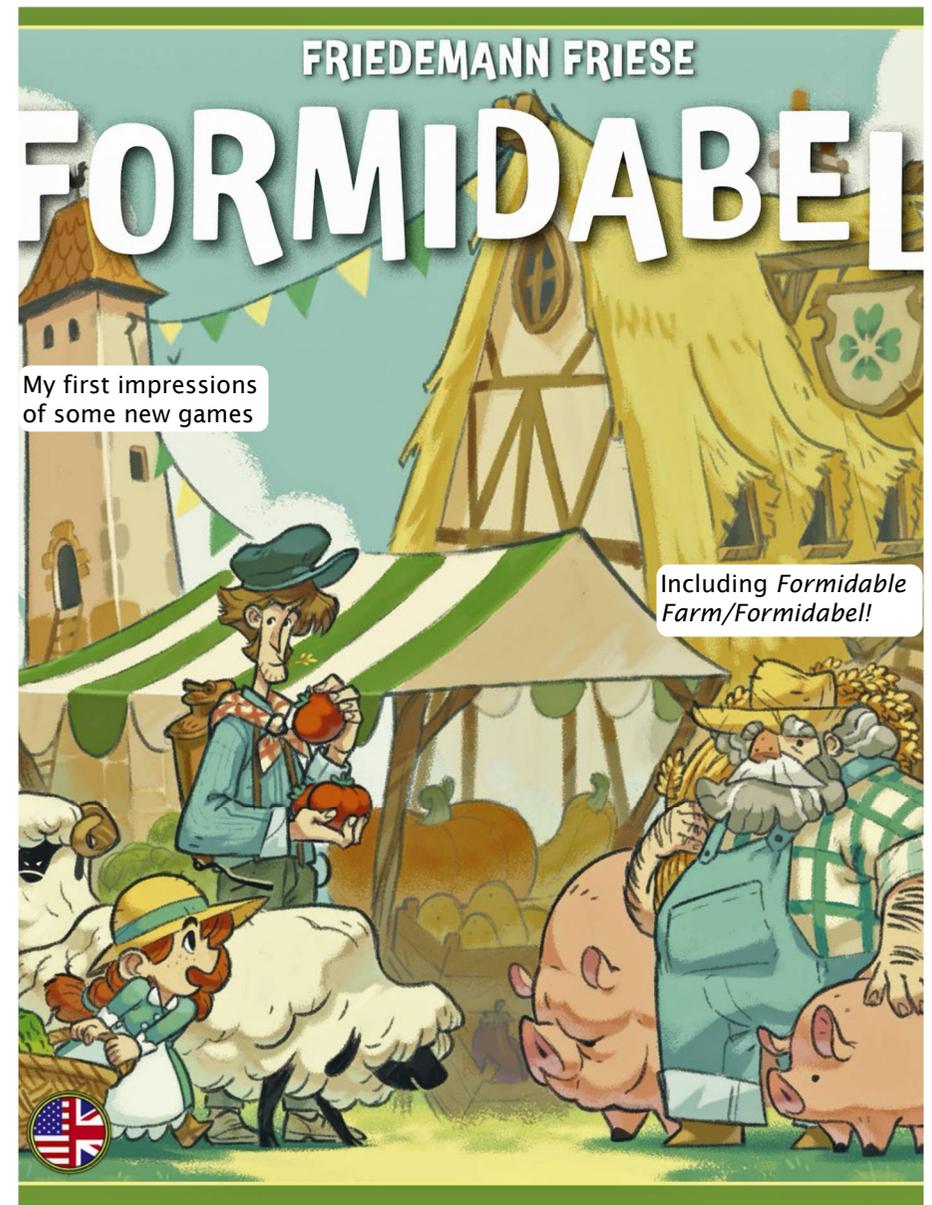
Credits

To Win Just Once issue 262 was written and edited by Pevans with contributions from Mike Dommett. The *LPBS* masthead (page 23) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, as are the drawings on pages 19 and 27. The illustration on page 26 is by Nik Luker. Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Pevans took the photos – except for the Cedar portrait, which was taken by the official photographer at Gateways – and played with Photoshop.

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To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)



My first impressions
of some new games

Including *Formidable
Farm/Formidabel!*

Issue 262: March 2026
(LPBS 399: May 1677)

£2.25 (where sold)
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ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank,	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
HF	Sir Hugo Furst	13	F	Comfy	B.Lt-General/2	F Brigadier	5		Both	2	Graeme Morris
MHD	Sir Marcel Hatch Dupree	13	F	Withy	Lt.Colonel	RM	7		Hunt	4	Graeme Wilson
HWB	Baron Hector William Boone	13	F	Rich	Major	RFG	9		Both	5	Paul Wilson
FdB	François de Blanchefort	12	27	Comfy	Colonel	CPC	5	Freda	Both	4	Peter Farrell
AH	Arent Hayes	12	20	Poor	Lt.Colonel	CPC	4		Hunt	3	Mark Cowper
PPuf	Sir Percival Puffington	12	F	Comfy	Bdr-General/1	F Brigadier	6		Hunt	5	Tony Taylor
MD	Maurice Danseur	12+	40	OK	Major	DG	6	Belle	Hunt	5	Andrew Whiteley
HS	Hugo Serre	11	F	Comfy	Captain	KM	6		Hunt	3	Paul Murphy
BC	Sir Barthélemy Chifflet	10	RIP								Hunter Charest
CPL	Sir Charles PiedLuminaire	10	F	Withy	B.Bdr-General	PLLD	8		F&P	3	Nick Tyrrell
AA	Armand Alsace	9	25	OK	Bdr-General		11		Hunt	4	Sebastian Emde
PDT	Pierre De Terre	9	F	OK	Major	GDMD/LtGen's Aide (2nd	8		BG	2	Manoj Nair
CdF	Chemin de Fer	9	F	Comfy	Major	RM/1 F Brigade Maj.	5			3	Rod MacDonald
JS	Justin Saad	8	RIP								Gerry Sutcliffe
CE	Charles Etfeevor	7	F	OK	Major	13F	3		F&P	4	Andrew Kendall
BT	Beau Taux	7	F	Poor	Major	53F	4		F&P	4	Paul Robbins
SDS	Steve De Sade	7	F	Comfy	Major	GDMD/BdGen's Aide (3 F	6			5	Jon Dean
VdF	Vaux de Fon	7+	22	Poor	Captain	CPC	1		F&P	4	John Cooke
SBC	Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux	6	F	Poor	Major	53F	1		RP	2	Peter Card
MdP	Maximilien de Piquemaire	5	F	Comfy	Captain	GDMD	6		RP	2	Max Pieksma
DJA	Dee Jean Aise	5	F	Withy	Lt.Colonel	PLLD/2nd Div Adjutant	5			3	Jovan Bogdanovic
BdV	Beaumes de Venise	5+	19	Poor	Subaltern	27M	6		RP	6	Jeremy Tullett
HDF	Henri De Flection	4	F	Poor	Major	13F	7		RP	4	Peter Jenkins
IP	Ignace Pardaillon	3	1	OK	Subaltern	GDMD	5		RP	3	Grégory Meurant

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
BeV	Count Ben e'Volence	24	67	Rich	B.General/2nd Army Commndr	11	Lotte	Flr	3	Ash Casey
GdB	Count Greg de Bécqueur	24	62	Withy	B.General/1st Army Commndr	13	Bette	Flr	5	Anthony Gilbert
HDS	Count Henri DuShite	24	6	Fithy	Bdr-General	17		Flr	4	Dave Marsden
RS	Earl Rick Shaw	23	68	Rich	General/State Min.	3		Flr	6	Charles Burrows
TC	Count Terence Cuckpowder	22	6	Rich	B.Lt-General/Gds Brigadier	7		Flr	6	Mike Dommett
CdP	Earl Camille de Polignac	22	6	Withy	B.Bdr-General RFG/War Minister	7		Flr	4	James McReynolds
BdLS	Count Bernard de Lur-Saluces	22	6	Fithy	Bdr-General/3 F Brigadier	20	Edna	Flr	3	Rob Pinkerton
LSD	Marq. Louis Severin Descartes	21	40	Rich	Bdr-General QOC	6		Flr	1	Chris Schotmann
JIT	Count Justin Thyme	20	35	Rich	B.Bdr-General QOC	18	Guinevere	Flr	2	Gerald Udowiczzenko
ZUT	Marquis Zavier Ulric Turenne	20	28	Withy	B.General	4		Flr	1	Bob Blanchett
FXC	Earl Frank X Change	20	6	Withy	B.Bdr-General CG/Min w/o Port	12		Flr	4	Nigel Monaghan
ZvT	Baron Zeold von Tu	19	46	Withy	B.Lt-General/1st Div Commndr	8		Flr	3	Tim Macaire
JH	Sir Jacques Hatt	18	43	Withy	B.General/3rd Army Commndr	4	Cath	Flr	3	Joel Halpern
LR	Marquis Louis Renault	18	40	Comfy	Lt-General/2nd Div Commndr	3	Maggie	Flr	4	Roy Bleasdale
CdN	Baron Claude de Nord	18	6	Rich	B.Bdr-General KM	5		Both	4	Andrew Larder
TTT	Sir Tiny Thierry Toothpick	16	6	Comfy	Lt.Colonel DG/CPS	7		Flr	1	Jason Fazackarley
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	15-	0	Fithy	Fld Marshal	24		6	Ben Brown	
BS	Earl Balzac Slapdash	15-	4	Rich	B.Bdr-General DG	21	Therèse	5	Matthew Wale	
NM	Baron Neville Moore	15	6	Rich	Major RFG/Capt.K's Esc	1		Hunt	2	Cameron Wood
MdG	Martin de Garnache	15	6	Withy	Lt.Colonel RFG/1st Div Adjutant	3		Both	4	Bill Howell
CA	Earl Come Asiouar	15	6	Withy	Lt.Colonel CG/FMshl's Aide	10		Both	4	Jacob Andersson
FS	Baron Felipe Savant	14	6	Rich	Captain RFG	5		Both	4	Brick Amundsen
TCds	Thibault Chanson de Skye	14	6	Comfy	B.Lt-General/4 F Brigadier	6		Both	5	Bill Hay
BLC	Botte Le Chimiste	13	27	OK	Colonel GDMD/Cav Div Adjutant	2	Eve	Both	4	Tym Norris
EIF	Sir Elroi le Flingue	13	25	OK	Lt.Colonel GDMD	7	Lucy	Both	4	Daniel Racke
CS	Con Stantinople	13	25	Withy	Lt.Colonel QOC/HGds Brigade Maj.	6	Anne	Hunt	1	Pam Udowiczzenko
ID	Sir Ian Dediette	13	24	Comfy	Major QOC	3		Both	2	Nik Luker
HJ	Marquis Hugh Jeneaux	13	6	Rich	B.Bdr-General ALC/Chancellor	9		Hunt	3	Bruno Giordan

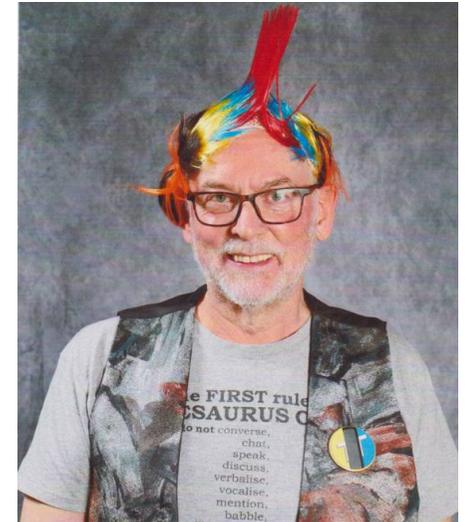
Chatter

As we near the end of February there are daffodils all around the place – the churchyard has a particularly fine crop. Our own daffodils are notoriously late bloomers, but we do have some good-looking snowdrops (they’ve been going for a month now) plus several crocuses (first time we’ve seen any for a few years) and just one hyacinth – though there are some other flowers with it.

There are still an awful lot of cranes and work at the local HS2 site, despite the boring work having finished some time ago. Checking up, I found out that they are busy installing noise barriers beside the tracks. I also discovered that Geraldine’s concern that we’d get sonic booms from the tunnel is justified. Apparently, the impact of a high-speed train hitting the stationary air at the tunnel entrance causes a sonic boom (despite being nowhere near the speed of sound). So the HS2 tunnels have extensions to the tunnel entrance with holes in to avoid this. Phew!

Gateways freeform game

It’s been a few years, but I spent a happy weekend earlier in February at this year’s long freeform game (role-playing, in costume – like LARP, but in a comfortable hotel rather than a muddy field and without bashing people with rubber swords). Gateways is a science fiction setting, so the gateways in question are for interstellar travel. It’s set on a space station (modified asteroid) that is a meeting place for the human colonies/habitats and aliens who travel through the gates (just a touch of *Babylon V* there).



My official portrait as Cedar (spot the feathers). A board with everybody’s portraits helped players find characters.

With over 70 players in the game, there were plots and sub-plots galore and, to quote G’Kar (my own *B5* reference), “no one here is entirely what they appear”. However, my character was pretty straightforward: Cedar (as the humans have named them) was chief of the clan of ‘Saurians’ resident on Threshold. The Saurians are a brilliant invention of the writing team. Intelligent humanoid aliens, though descended from feathered dinosaurs rather than apes, they live in symbiosis with ‘Groves’ – sentient tree-like beings.

The backstory is that the gates have been offline for a couple of centuries (my Saurian clan/Grove, known as Zenobia, was thus stranded on Threshold, where I

Frontier Regiments

	F1	F2	F3	F4	RNHB
Colonel	N1	N5	N6	N3	N7
Attached					
Also at the Front					

(On Campaign for June-Aug)

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

Battle Results in May

- | | |
|--|--|
| Guards Brigade: 3
Royal Foot Guards: 1
Cardinal's Guard: 3
King's Musketeers: 2 | 4th Foot Brigade: 3
69th Arquebusiers: 3
The Gascon Regiment: 4 |
| 1st Foot Brigade: 4
Royal Marines: 1
Picardy Musketeers: 2 | Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers: 1
Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons: 1 |
| 2nd Foot Brigade: 4
13th Fusiliers: 4
53rd Fusiliers: 5 | Frontier regiment 1: 4
Frontier regiment 2: 6
Frontier regiment 3: 3
Frontier regiment 4: 5
RNHB regiment: 2 |

Other Appointments

King's Escort: Ensign N	Captain NM
Cardinal's Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Aides: to Crown Prince N	to Field Marshal CA
Provincial Military Governors: __/N/N/N/N	
City Military Governor N	Adjutant-General __
Inspectors-General: of Cavalry N	of Infantry N
Commissioner of Public Safety TTT (until end June 1677)	
Chancellor of the Exchequer HJ (until end August 1677)	
Minister of Justice __	
Minister of War CdP (until end February 1678)	
Minister of State RS (until end February 1678)	

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

I think [Amongst Our Weapons] is one of the better ones in the series, although it seems odd to me that a mediæval Spanish wizard (a) had such super-powers at his disposal and (b) chose to give them to a servant woman instead of wielding them himself.

Possibly because of the personal cost of those powers? After discussing the novellas (I'm working through them), Jonathan adds:

Have you discovered the free Moments? They're short-short stories; some of them are quite fun. But some of them are rather hard to find.

I hadn't come across them, but the place to find them is follypedia.fandom.com. This links to 16, some of which are included in the short story collection *Tales from the Folly*. And now I'm going down the rabbit hole of Rivers of London fandom...

First impressions

I've been playing some new games

Back in December, I had a first go at *Middle Earth: Fate of the Fellowship* with the Ruislip group. This was designed by Matt “Pandemic” Leacock and, as *Pandemic* aficionados, we could see how the bones of this game relates to the earlier one.

Yes, this is a co-operative game, with the players taking on the roles of *Lord of the Rings* characters. The goal is to enable Frodo to get to Mount Doom in the middle



The Fellowship forms in Rivendell (top) while Eowyn gathers troops in Edoras (middle of the photo), the Nazgûl flap around and the orcs (red pieces) spread across the land.

of Mordor (roll these 'r's) and destroy the One Ring. However, the team has to complete other objectives before they can do this. The main way of losing is for the 'Hope' track (Frodo's morale) to hit zero. This goes down when Sauron's forces succeed and up when the good guys win one.

There's a suggested set of Objectives when playing your first game. These involve creating the Fellowship (that is, go to Rivendell!), breaking Saruman's staff (go to Isengard – and ensure Rohan is free of orcs) and assembling a combined army to march on Mordor. In other words, key events from the books.

Players get several actions on their turn, which may require them to spend particular symbols. These come from playing card/s with the symbols – cards have several uses – or spending a token (some characters can generate particular tokens). They draw more cards and finish their turn by drawing 'Shadow' cards that move orcs and/or the Nazgûl. As with *Pandemic*, drawing certain cards means the discards are shuffled and put back on top of the deck, reinforcing what the bad guys are up to.

We followed the first time set-up with Veronica, "I play yellow", taking Frodo & Sam (hobbits come in pairs) and Legolas, Paul having Merry & Pippin and Eowyn, while I managed Aragorn and Arwen (oh, get a room...). I was amused that the first few turns saw the hobbits travel to Bree where they were met by Aragorn (presumably as Strider), who then escorted them to Rivendell. How appropriate.

Legolas joined the Fellowship as we accomplished our first objective, leaving just Eowyn on her own to recruit more Rohirrim troops. Eschewing the mines of Moria, the Fellowship went south to deal with that Saruman fellow and dodge the



The end of our first game: Frodo and Sam (the yellow piece centre-right) are on Mount Doom despite the massed Nazgûl; a big orc army faces off with free peoples left of this; but the orc armies top right have taken out the Dwarves, so the Hope track (left edge) should be -2!

New Characters

Hunter Charest gets the Bastard son of an Impoverished Viscount: Init SL 9; Cash 36; MA 3; EC 2 (X1).

Gerry Sutcliff gets the Second son of a very wealthy Merchant: Init SL 3; Cash 500; MA 1; EC 2 (X2).

Tables

Army Organisation and 1677's Summer Deployment

First Army (Field Ops)	GdB/N/N5/N
First Division (Field Ops)	ZvT/N/MdG
Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - RFG CG KM	
Dragoon Brigade (Field Ops) - GDMD PLLD	
Cavalry Division (Field Ops)	N1/N/BLC
Horse Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - DG QOC	
Heavy Brigade (Field Ops) - ALC CPC	
Second Army (Siege)	BeV/N/__/N
Frontier Division (Siege)	N1/N/N3
Frontier Regiments (Siege)	
Third Army (Defence)	JH/N/N3/N
Second Division (Defence)	LR/PDT/DJA
3rd Foot Brigade (Defence) - 27M 4A	
4th Foot Brigade (Defence) - 69A Gscn	
RNHB Regiment (Defence)	
Third Division (Defence)	N2/N/N3
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	TC/__/__
Horse Guards Brigade	N2/N/CS
Heavy Brigade	N3/N/N3
Dragoon Brigade	N6/N/__/
First Foot Brigade	PPuf/N/CdF
Second Foot Brigade	HF/__/__/
Third Foot Brigade	LSD/SDS/N4
Fourth Foot Brigade	TCdS/__/N3

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

Duels

Results of May's duels

Maurice Danseur (with LSD, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Justin Thyme (with RS).

Tiny Thierry Toothpick didn't turn up to fight Justin Thyme and lost SPs.

Maurice Danseur (with LSD, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Con Stantinople (with JS & TCdS).

Balzac Slapdash didn't turn up to fight Con Stantinople and lost SPs.

Justin Thyme declined to meet Balzac Slapdash as he was under half Endurance.

Balzac Slapdash didn't turn up to fight Ian Dediette and lost SPs.

Maurice Danseur (with LSD, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Ian Dediette (with GdB).

Tiny Thierry Toothpick didn't turn up to fight Ian Dediette and lost SPs.

Grudges to settle next month

Charles PiedLuminaire (Sabre, Seconds DJA & LSD, adv.) has cause with Henri De Flektion (Rapier, Seconds CE & HF, 3 rests) for pinching Violet.

Justin Thyme (Sabre, Seconds ZUT & RS, 1 rests) challenges Claude de Nord (Sabre, Seconds FXC & HS, adv.).

Terence Cuckpowder (Sabre, Seconds ZUT, adv.) challenges Tiny Thierry

Toothpick (Dagger, Seconds CdN & MD, 5 rests).

Camille de Polignac (Rapier, Seconds BdLS, 5 rests) has cause with Henri DuShite (Cutlass, adv.) for pinching Kathy.

Balzac Slapdash (Rapier, adv.) and Ian Dediette (Sabre, Seconds GdB & BT, 5 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Balzac Slapdash (Rapier, adv.) and Justin Thyme (Sabre, Seconds ZUT & RS, 5 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Ian Dediette (Sabre, Seconds GdB & BT, 3 rests) and Maurice Danseur (Sabre, Seconds PDT & LSD, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Justin Thyme (Sabre, Seconds ZUT & RS, adv.) and Maurice Danseur (Sabre, Seconds PDT & LSD) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

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

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

gathering Nazgûl (terrific models of the flying beasts on stands). This turned out to be more complicated than expected as an orc army (little red figures) had taken Helm's Deep. Aragorn, now armed with Anduril, helped make short work of the orcs, but restoring Helm's Deep and taking Isengard took a while (you just can't get the cards – for the needed symbols – these days).

By the time we completed our second objective, Aragorn, Arwen and Eowyn had marshalled the required army of Gondor, Rohirrim and Elves in Minas Tirith. The army marched to North Ithilien to complete objective three.

Pippin and Merry then played their trump card, persuading the eagles to fly Frodo (and Sam – they're inseparable) straight to Mount Doom. Frodo brushed off the consequent search and then survived another (though the Hope track went down to 4) to successfully hurl the One Ring into the volcano. Hurrah!

However, it was later pointed out to us that we'd allowed the orcs to take the dwarves' strongholds in the north. That's -6 Hope, pushing it below the zero point that means we lose the game. Dammit!

It was still great fun, though much of my enjoyment was lost on Paul and Veronica who – oh horror! – have never read the books, nor seen the movies. However, they are both *Pandemic* fans and enjoyed the game on that level. Not to mention being over-awed (I think that's the right word) by the over-the-top dice tower. Do I need it? No. But it certainly gives the game 'table presence'!

First impressions: Mr Leacock has done a brilliant job of adapting his *Pandemic* mechanisms to reflect the *Lord of the Rings* setting and story. The movement of the orcs across Middle Earth and searching Nazgûl are constant threats that the players can't afford to ignore (as we found out!). The game is beautifully produced and I'm impressed by the clever design that allows everything to pack back into the box.

We had a second go at *Fate of the Fellowship* later in January. Paul and I were joined by first-timer Sandra (who is a *LotR* fan), so we stuck to the initial set-up (and thus objectives). Once again, we knocked off the first three objectives relatively quickly. This left the biggie: getting Frodo to drop the ring into Mount



Look at that table presence! Though the Christmas tree may have the edge...

Doom. Now, this requires five (count 'em) ring symbols. We had three. Our selection of characters could produce other tokens, but not rings. And, eventually, we ran out of Hope (too many orcs to thwart them all). Checking the deck afterwards, we could have got the needed ring icons, but only by drawing the last card, which would have quickly ended the game. That's a provisional 9/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Earlier in January, I took *Origin Story* (designed by Jamey Stegmaier and Pete Wissinger), along to the Ruislip group. We started with the formal reading of the rules ritual. (Okay, I'd been through them beforehand, but needed to bring the others up to speed.) Since it's a trick-taking game, there was a discussion of everyone's experiences with Bridge... but I digress (we all did).

Players start with a board depicting their nascent superhero and an initial ability. There's then space for five cards, each of which will add another ability. They also get two superhero cards with a scoring ability – they will choose one in the final round (for that fifth space). For the time being, these go face down as the back is a player aid. However, it's worth keeping in mind what your potential scoring opportunities will be at the end, so that you can work towards them.

The actual playing cards are a deck of 52 cards in four suits/colours. However, these are not the suits of ordinary playing cards and each suit is just numbered 1-13. Players are dealt a hand of eight each round. Hence, they play through eight tricks in a round. Play must follow suit, if possible, with yellow/hearts as trumps, and players keep track of the tricks they have won.

However, the first thing players do in a round is add another ability ('story' card) to their board (draw three, play one). These represent another stage in the development of their hero. In the fifth and final round, players choose one of their superhero cards and place it on their board to make that ability usable. Players



Here I am at the end of round 5, my superhero identity revealed: Mei-Lin has become Riptide! I've won a whole two tricks (bottom left), taking my score to 18, as shown on my hero board (top left) – I'd've needed twice as many to win!

Absent friends

IP Grégory Meurant asked to be floated. Grégory reports it's "probably a little too soon ... to start again", so IP will be floated until he's ready.

ZUT Bob Blanchett asked to be floated as he's back in hospital. Best wishes, Bob.

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.

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.

Charles PiedLuminaire asks NPC Brigadier of Dragoon Brigade to resign

Charles PiedLuminaire applies for Brigadier of Dragoon Brigade

Dee Jean Aise re-applies for Division Adjutant of Second Division

Henri De Flection asks NPC Major 1 of 13th Fusiliers to resign

Henri De Flection applies for Aide to Lt. General

Thibault Chanson de Skye asks NPC Division Commander of Third Division to resign

Thibault Chanson de Skye asks NPC Division Commander of Cavalry Division to resign

Thibault Chanson de Skye asks NPC Division Commander of Frontier Division to resign

Thibault Chanson de Skye applies for Division Commander of Third Division

Thibault Chanson de Skye applies for Division Commander of Cavalry Division

Thibault Chanson de Skye applies for Division Commander of Frontier Division

others. My Tangerines Team are adept at such, so rest assured that none of the criminals will escape the clutches of the law!

I'm nipping off to the Front this month – well, you know me, loyal patriot, brave and keen to lead my troopers against the enemies of King and Country. Will be back soon, hopefully as a Baron!

† Lt Colonel Thierry Toothpick
 Dragoon Guards
 Commissioner of Public Safety

Poetry Corner

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

Another month at the front again,
 Fighting all those orange men,
 Crushing all our enemies.
 It seems a strange irony,
 With recent history: you might think
 we
 Were still back home in gay Paris.
 I look forward to a time when
 I spend an evening near the Seine.
 † FXC

Points Arising

Next deadline is 20th March

June is the start of a new season. **All characters start the month in Paris and all duels must be fought before anyone goes to the front.** Any vacant appointments not taken by player characters will be filled by NPCs – unless a post is appointed by a player character, who may order that it is left vacant (if you have an appointment or rank that allows you to appoint any posts, don't forget to check this).

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

As over 80% of characters will be on active service for the next three months, I will run June and July back-

to-back. Please **send orders for June and July this deadline.** Orders for July may be conditional on what happens in June – if there is a major impact on any character in June, I will give the affected player a brief opportunity to modify their July orders. Replacements for anyone who dies in June will start in August and any duels caused in June will be held over until at least August.

Next turn is the last month characters can make investments for this campaign. The return on investments will be paid at the start of September.

To what I suspect is the relief of many characters, TTT's term as Commissioner of Public Safety finishes at the end of June. Anyone who wants to apply for the job should do so with their June orders – though the appointment will be made by Minister of State Rick Shaw.

also gain a 'stamina' token and 'charge' their abilities with their tokens. Only charged abilities can be used – throughout the round or by spending the stamina.

Players then choose whether to play this hand as a hero or a villain, turning their 'alignment' dial to the appropriate side. The former gains a point for every trick won, the latter gets four points if they don't win any tricks.

So, five rounds of eight tricks with scoring each round (recorded on the dials in each player's hero/villain board – note that some assembly is required when you first get the game) and a big score in the final one. The idea is that, at the end of the game, each player's board shows who they were to begin with and the events, gadgets and people that have turned them into a particular superhero.



My experience of playing the game was that the first round is pretty much standard trick-taking. At this stage, players only have two abilities and just a few stamina to power them. However, by the final round playing tricks is largely a vehicle for triggering abilities – everybody's up to six, though usage is still constrained by the stamina available. Which means it's anyone's guess who wins a particular trick.

It was also noticeable in our game that everybody chose to be a hero almost every round. Winning a few tricks seems more likely than losing all of them. Marilyn was the exception, choosing villain a couple of times. This caused much amusement when the one random 'event' of the game meant we all had to play the opposite side from the previous round. This left three villains trying hard to lose tricks, which the sole hero, Marilyn, won happily.

In fact, Marilyn was scoring well all through the game – generating extra points from her abilities every round. None of my abilities gave me a way of scoring extra points and it was no surprise that I finished in last place with Marilyn the runaway winner. I suspect I needed to make better use of the abilities I had.

Origin Story is an intriguing combination of trick-taking and special abilities, but it felt a bit random on our first play. I'm sure we'll play it again to get a better grasp on what we're doing, but for the moment it gets a provisional 6/10 on my highly subjective scale.

We followed this with one of Friedemann Friese's 2025 games, *Formidable Farm*. The aim of this is to be the first to get rid of the deck of 'trade' cards you start with. You do this by playing a card from hand and supplying the (farm-related) goods needed – shown on the top half of the card. The bottom half has what you gain as a result. Taking this is actually optional, but I couldn't think of a circumstance in which you wouldn't. Not least because some of the results are actions – such as drawing a card (and you don't get cards automatically) – rather than gaining goods.



The central board in *Formidable Farm*. Blue has paid to go to the same space as purple and I've laid out the pieces gained from each segment - the missing one is "draw a card". I still think the green things are gherkins rather than cucumbers.

It's immediately clear that you're looking for synergy: playing a card to produce the goods needed for another card to produce the goods needed for another card and so on. To help you do this, there's also a 'market' of face-up cards which you can use as part of your sequence of card plays. To slow you down, you can play a maximum of three cards in your turn. The other thing you do each turn is move your dobber on the central board and take goods that match the space you're on. This gives players a bit of pump-priming for their card play.

We started this with no real idea of what we were doing. For most turns, everybody took some goods and played a card. The tricky bit was getting more cards from our decks into our hands - one of the spaces on the board lets you draw one. Luckily, one wrinkle I haven't mentioned is that you retain the trade cards you've played, turning them upside down to become coins. On your turn, you can spend coins to "break the rules" in certain ways. And drawing a card is one of these.

I'm not sure we had a better idea of the game once we'd finished. We didn't notice any subtleties or tactical ploys and it was only occasionally that anybody was able to play more than one card in a turn. It was a close game, however, with Paul, Veronica and me neck and neck as we neared the end (Marilyn was definitely floundering). Veronica was first to play her final cards and take the win.

Aide wanted.
Capable Gentlemen please contact me.
† Bdr-General A. Alsace

Despatches from the Front

How can I get promoted? Anon

Matters of Honour

Sir Toothpick,
I appreciate your honourable conduct in answering my challenge last month. For me, this concludes all enmity between us, and I shall bear no more grudge against you. Let me wish you all the best for the Summer Campaign with your new regiment.
† Marquis Louis Severin Descartes

Personal

For the attention of Brig Gen Charles PiedLuminare

Sir,
With reference to your missive regarding the fair Mille Bott, I am at a loss to understand how this conflict has arisen. I at no time was informed by the dear lady that she had an attachment with another gentleman in Paris, nor did I see any indication of an attachment from my enquiries. Could it be your extended absence from Paris has cooled her affections? Naturally should you feel it necessary to resolve this unfortunate occurrence, I will of course oblige you at the earliest convenience - subject only to the requirements of our military service. Although I would suggest it might not be in the best interest of the

state in advance of the campaigning season to have either of us recovering from injury and potentially not at our peak efficiency.

Justin Saad,
The time-honoured way for a man seeking a regiment is to apply to such regiment.

You may try this and be surprised by how easy it can be.

I wish you all the best,
† Marquis Louis Severin Descartes

Paris,
It appears clear that Monsieur Toothpick, with his orange face cream and swollen ankles, has had a seizure and is no longer making sense.
† A concerned citizen

Lord Percy Percy says, as fashion is tending towards the incomprehensible, Toothpick is incredibly fashionable.

To: MoS, Earl Shaw
So, Your Grace, it's that time of year coming up again when bureaucracy requires the old signature on the appointment scroll, or in this instance the RE-APPOINTMENT scroll.

I shall, of course, do my part by filing my application to continue in post, I'm sure that His Majesty is really looking forward to our partnership in tackling the crime afflicting Paris and how we shall rid the streets of numerous traitors. It goes to say that you will receive my unwavering loyalty. Once we've gotten Cuckpowder out of the way, permanently this time, along with that witch woman Le Fey, it'll be time to crack on rounding up the

over two thousand for Lt-Colonel Dee Jean Aise. A Mention in Despatches comes Dee's way as well ("A new name at the top of the table").

Frontier regiment 1 doesn't seem to gain any benefit from having three cavalry squadrons attached. However, "Tiny" Thierry Toothpick gets a MiD for leading his Dragoon Guards ("CPS in action!"), as do Major Pierre De Terre, commanding second squadron of the GDMD, and Major Steve De Sade, in charge of third squadron. Captain Maximilien de Piquemaire, 2nd GDMD, survives a close encounter with an Imperial sabre.

Brigadier-General Henri DuShite shows what he's made of by leading a battalion of the RNHB to a fine victory. A Mention in Despatches records his achievement as he piles up nearly twenty-five hundred crowns' worth of loot.

Lieutenant-General Bernard de Lur-Saluces demonstrates what he's made of – and it's not the stern stuff required for the RNHB. He dawdles at the back of his battalion and ducks away from certain death. He is promptly cashiered and stripped of his rank, losing his appointment as Provincial Military Governor as well. ❖

Press

Announcements

**** 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.

† Count Thyme

**** Aide Required ****

I am looking for a competent aide.

Please contact me with your credentials.

† (Brevet) Bdr-General Count Thyme

B. Gen le Marquis Camille de Polignac requires an aide. Volunteers are requested to send their applications so that the chosen candidate can be hired by May.

Poste Vacante

The commander of the 2nd Foot Brigade (i.e. Hugo Furst, i.e. myself) finds himself (i.e. myself) in need of a suitable Aide to aid him (me). Must be capable of composing a coherent sentence.

Applications in writing or over the aether (or whatever) to me (i.e. Brigadier Furst).

All the best, † Hugo.

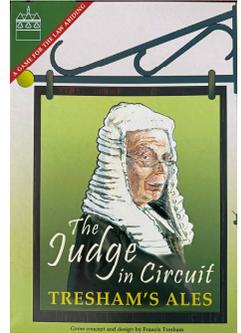
P.S. Did that make sense?

To all members of the QOC: a reminder that we will be deployed for Field Operations during the upcoming summer campaign. Prepare accordingly, and don't forget to give your Mistresses a long kiss goodbye – Vive la France!

† (Brevet) Bdr-General QOC Count Thyme

I really don't know what to make of *Formidable Farm*. Based on this play, there's nothing much to it and it went on rather too long. And I don't think it's appealing enough that we'll play it again and find out if we've missed anything. So a disappointing provisional rating of 4/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Come February and we had a go at *The Judge in Circuit* – playing at Paul and Veronica's due to babysitting duties. This is the very last game from Francis Tresham. When Francis died in 2019, he left behind a pile of game-related stuff which the family passed on to Keith Thomasson. Amongst this, Keith found components for a completely new game that Francis had designed and (mostly) produced (in 2018), but not actually made available. So Keith (et al) put the finishing touches to what is the only posthumously-published game I know of (I've since had several others pointed out). (The full story is on Keith's website: www.fwtwr.com/JIC)



As noted in its BGG listing, this game is "completely unlike any of [Francis's] other games." And there's a definite retro feel to it (which I'm sure is deliberate): from the artwork (Francis features as the judge on the cover) to the central mechanism (roll and move) and the inclusion of 'Luck' cards.

An opening quote from "Norman Stanley Fletcher" in the rules sets the scene nicely. For Brits of a certain age (like me), anyway. The idea is that the players are all "habitual criminals" who brag about the prisons they've done time in. Hence, the goal of the game is to be banged up in as many prisons as possible – four is suggested, or three with more than four players (all five makes for a longer game).

In their turn players roll the die and move their own criminal (pawn) or a police pawn around the tracks on the board. Or move Judge/s around the circular track that is their circuit. If they're in prison, players are progressing through their



The left-hand part of the track is "in prison", while the round spaces are the circuit for the judges (translucent discs).

Who was where – round and about

Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Practising	FdB - Sabre BS - Rapier VdF - Sabre BLC - Sabre JdG - Rapier CS - Sabre LR - Rapier	ZVT - Rapier AH - Sabre JdG - Rapier BeV - Sabre	FdB - Sabre BS - Rapier JIT - Sabre ZVT - Rapier AH - Sabre BLC - Sabre JdG - Rapier EIF - Sabre RS - Sabre LSD - Sabre BeV - Sabre GdB - Rapier ID - Sabre MD - Sabre JH - Sabre LR - Rapier	FdB - Sabre BS - Rapier VdF - Sabre AH - Sabre BLC - Sabre JdG - Rapier EIF - Sabre BeV - Sabre GdB - Sabre ID - Sabre MD - Sabre JH - Sabre
Regimental Duties				BdV IP
Busy doing nothing		CS -Toady to ????		RS
Inspecting his command	LSD			

Shows everybody else: Weapon = Weapon practised with; For those doing nothing: -club = not a member of a club; -Cash = insufficient funds; -SL = insufficient Social Level; ???? = Toadying to unknown host.

It was quickly clear that I'm just not a criminal, finding it tricky to get arrested and sentenced appropriately. Hence I only had two rings as the others all reached three. Veronica was at the head of the queue in the Cells and, despite our best efforts, got a Judge who sent her to her fourth prison. On the surface, *The Judge in Circuit* is a bit of entertaining retro nonsense. However, getting tried by the right Judge takes quite a bit of thought – and some luck. That's a provisional 8/10 on my highly subjective scale.

As that wasn't a long game, we had time for something else. And that something was *Fearless* (*Furchtlos* in German), the 2025 card game from Friedemann Friese. This is another trick-taking game. However, here the cards in each of the four suits are numbered -6 to +6, with the zero cards wild. Extra cards provide a track running from -30 to +30 with a starting position, the 'scary ruin', next to the zero. Players have neat little 'ghost' meeples – one goes on the scary ruin, the other is a reminder of which colour everybody's playing.



So, it's shuffle the deck, deal 13 cards to each player and start playing tricks. Players must follow suit (though the zeroes are effectively in all suits) and there are no trumps: highest card of the suit led wins the trick. The winner then takes the net value of the trick (add up all those pluses and minuses) and moves their ghost along the track accordingly. At the end of the round/hand, players score the absolute value of their ghost's track position. Thus +15 and -15 are both worth 15 -- as is being on the scary ruin (that is, not having won any tricks). These are penalty points (indicating how frightened you are!), so after as many rounds as players, whoever has the lowest score is the winner.

This sounds simple, but the plus and minus values mess with your head. And then there's the question of what playing a card does to the net value of the trick and thus to the winner's position. Depending on who wins the trick -- being last to play on a trick is useful. So this is actually a really tricky game to play. However, we



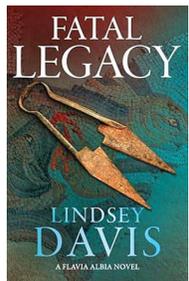
The +5 card is highest and wins the trick. So whoever played it gets a net +1. Which is an extra penalty point if they're already in positive points, but reduces their penalties if they're negative.

found it went on longer than we wanted with 13 tricks to play in each round. That's a provisional 6/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Paul and I played *Fearless* again a week later, with Christi making a third player. This went better, despite Christi being new to it. The card values really did make it tricky to evaluate what cards to play (would it be as awkward if the cards were just 1-13?). So I'll raise to 7/10 on my highly subjective scale.

This is an expanded version of the notes I published on my BGG blog: boardgamegeek.com/blog/8392

Reading Matter



I'm up to book eleven, *Fatal Legacy*, in Lindsey Davis's "Flavia Albia" series. The legacy in question involves a squabbling family and turns on whether some of them are freedmen or still slaves, according to their deceased master's will. An initial encounter sucks in Albia in her role as an 'informer' (essentially a private investigator). As usual, she follows the suspects, unearths evidence and generally digs into things. Which lets us see more aspects of first century Roman life and, in particular, Albia's interesting family.

I've come to the conclusion that it's Davis's depiction of life in ancient Rome that keeps me reading these books. And this one tells us a lot more about slavery in ancient Rome. Slaves have been present in the previous stories, of course, but Davis has not said much about their position before. They're there as the lowest class of society – servants and scapegoats (someone's been murdered? Torture the slaves!) – but very much in the background. The plot even makes Albia question her own relationship with the slaves in her household. Interesting stuff and I guess anyone coming new to the books would find Albia's investigations more exciting than I did.

I recently picked up an e-book edition of Neal Stephenson's *Snow Crash*. My abiding memory of this book is that our hero is a computer programmer/hacker and a master swordsman in the virtual reality system that he helped build. That's right, he can't be beaten in a swordfight because that's what he wrote into the code! However, I didn't find this explicit in the book when I read it this time. In fact, very little of the book was familiar! Did I actually read it in the Nineties, or am I getting confused with another of Stephenson's books?



Anyway, we start with our hero, the protagonist, whose name is Hiro Protagonist. I think we get it, Mr Stephenson. The opening reads like a computer game: Hiro is The Deliverator, driving a souped-up car kitted out like a vehicle from a James Bond movie with extra gadgets, to ensure he can get pizzas

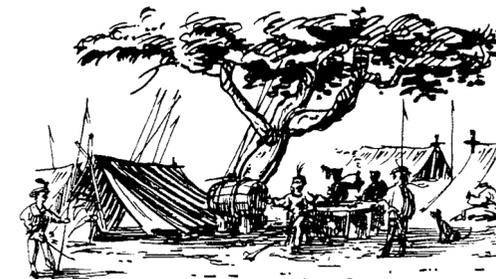
Louis's bash coincides with Jacques Hatt's gathering for those serving with Third Army – to co-ordinate vital details for the campaign. With First, Second and Fourth Foot already fighting in the Netherlands, there's only Third Foot in Paris to co-ordinate with itself. Still, Brigadier Louis Severin Descartes attends – after inspecting both regiments in his command the week before – and co-ordinates with Beaumes de Venise of the 27th Musketeers. That's Private Beaumes de Venise... A man whose courting succeeded the week before, but who doesn't bring his new escort to the party! Louis is particularly pleased to catch up with Jacques as he was commander of the GDMD when Louis started his career there. "Good old times," is Louis's toast.

It's possible Con Stantinople intends to join one of these parties, but he can't remember his host's name. Jacques or Louis? Louis or Jacques? It's so confusing...

There's only one other man courting this month: congratulations, Rick Shaw. Shame he didn't know what to do with himself at the end of the month.

Lots of loot

And so to the action in the Netherlands, where this month's particular objective is Saint-Omer. The fresh troops of Fourth Foot Brigade are first into the assault, but find the defenders equal to their onslaught. Still, Brigadier Thibault Chanson de Skye finds himself promoted to (brevet) Lieutenant-General – something that's even Mentioned in Despatches ("Skye was promoted"). Somehow he finds almost two thousand crowns worth of loot along the way.



Second Foot is also rebuffed. The 53rd Fusiliers take the worst beating as their approach has been mined. The explosion catches Captain Justin Saad (and many others) in the front of the attack and spreads their remains over a wide area. RIP. The rest of the regiment retires in confusion with Major Sebastian Blanc-Chevaux (himself almost caught in the blast) earning a Mention in Despatches for rallying what's left of his battalion. Captain Beau Taux also survives to gain promotion to Major. He has sufficient funds to buy the two horses he needs for his new rank.

While not caught in the explosion, the 13th Fusiliers are still affected. Major Charles Etfeevor leads the withdrawal from the area. It's a very rapid withdrawal and this behaviour leads to a certain loss of face – not to mention a stiff reprimand. Contrarily, Captain Henri De Flektion earns promotion to Major for stemming the flow from the battlefield – a feat that brings a pat on the back from His Majesty.

Who was where – with the ladies				
Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Edna		Out		LSD at home
Justine	RS fails	RS succeeds		
Lois	BdV succeeds			
Morgane	ZVT at home			

Shows who was with a mistress or on a doorstep: Out = Mistress with current lover; I = Indiscreet (+ mistress name); ex-ID = Pinched from former lover; st.down = stood down to rivals.

Who was where – in the bawdyhouses				
Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Bawdy houses	AH AA + FC ID + FC		VdF + FC	

Shows who went to the red light district: FC = Female Companionship; Mug n = Mugged & amount lost; (C) = Gambled.

And Lieutenant-General Bernard de Lur-Saluces and Brigadier-General Henri DuShite volunteer themselves for a month's service with the Royal North Highland Borderers.

Clashing parties

As so many socialites are on active service this month, Paris is pretty quiet. And it will be worse next month once the army has departed for the summer.

Still, Louis Renault manages to throw his May Ball (with Maggie Nifisent as hostess) and get a decent turnout. This includes members of the Dragoon Guards and Queen's Own Carabiniers, to refresh their regimental rivalry – though Maurice was hoping to “dance the night away” with Belle Epoque. For the former regiment, it's CO Balzac Slapdash and Major Maurice Danseur. Squaring up to them (again) are QOC commander Justin Thyme and Major Ian Dediette. Who will win the duels, I wonder.



to customers within 30 minutes. Because delivering pizzas on time is one of the few things America is actually good at, it says here. So he breaks speed limits, ignores one-way restrictions, takes short cuts across gardens and generally does what's necessary to deliver. Not least because he's working for Cosa Nostra Pizza, Inc. Yes, the Mafia's business is take-away pizzas! And you really, really don't want to upset the boss by delivering a pizza late.

Surprisingly, it's not a computer game, it's the real world! One ruled by corporations, governed by self-interest and where breaking the law can be settled in cash. However, there is a virtual reality (the Metaverse) as well and Hiro is indeed one of the guys who got involved in its early days. He was part of the team who programmed a club (The Black Sun – a hang-out for hackers), including writing the sword-fighting routines. In real life, Hiro carries (and uses) a Japanese katana, something his father brought back from the war.

We also meet teenager YT (not “whitey”, she tells people), who quickly becomes a second viewpoint character after getting a tow from Hiro's car (much to his annoyance). When not being a good girl for her mother, she's a courier, riding a futuristic skateboard that has even more gadgets than the Deliverator's vehicle. In many ways she's savvy and streetwise – more so than Hiro – but quite innocent in others.

The eponymous Snow Crash is a computer virus (infected machines crash leaving a screen of snowflakes) that also affects humans (infected people start talking in tongues). This leads us on to the pursuit of the primordial language that all humans spoke (before the Tower of Babel) and which allows humans to be programmed like computers. Sort of. I think I got the gist of this, but there are a lot of tedious discussions/explanations in the book. (I once read that the danger with authors doing a research for a book is that they feel they have to regurgitate it all for their readers. I suspect Stephenson may have suffered from this.)

Around this, the action plot involves competing corporations, Russian special forces and a preposterous showdown – more computer game stuff. The last takes place in a ramshackle collection of ships that serves as a raft circulating the Pacific to bring refugees from impoverished Asia to jobs in prosperous California. Yep, they're illegal immigrants who turn into exploited workers (the survivors, anyway – they don't get a warm welcome).

There's a lot of interesting stuff in *Snow Crash*, particularly Stephenson's vision of a 'metaverse' and the dystopian future he depicts. However, the action sequences are completely over the top (which may be the point – more like computer games than reality) and there's a lot of exposition that I just skimmed (it's a long book). It wasn't at all what I expected, given my vague memories of reading it in the past (I suspect I skimmed it then, too), so I ended up rather disappointed. And wondering whether I should risk re-reading any more of Stephenson's books.

Games Events

March is, of course, Airecon in Harrogate: 12th-15th March at the Harrogate Convention Centre and Hilton Majestic. This has become a big event over the years and gets favourable comparisons with the UK Games Expo from some, but I've still never been. Expect a trade hall, organised events, playtest and demo games and open gaming backed by an extensive games library. There's a lot of information on the website: www.airecon.co.uk

A couple of weeks later there's the spring Shake, Battle & Roll: 27th-29th March at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Southampton. This is a "Board Games and general geekery Weekend" where "people play Board Games, Role Playing Games, CCGs, LCGs, Social/Party Games and all other related silliness." That is, it's an open gaming weekend with "a large library of games". This is another event I've not attended, so take a look at www.shakebattleandroll.com for more information.

Swiggers: games club that meets on Wednesday evenings (co-ordinated on WhatsApp) upstairs at The Shipwright's Arms, 88 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TF (next to London Bridge station) – though without me these days. For more info, see www.pevans.co.uk/Swiggers or the BGG Guild at boardgamegeek.com/guild/1672

UK Games Expo: 29th-31st May 2026 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 space. For details see www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk

Spiel: *the* board games event of the year. 22nd-25th October 2026, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen, Germany. Publishers from around the world show off their latest games and, importantly, let people play them. And buy them. See www.spiel-essen.de/en

MidCon: 6th-8th November 2026 at a new venue: the Holiday Inn in Kenilworth (Warwickshire). **MidCon** is a friendly board games convention. It's largely open gaming, but the new website allows games to be scheduled in advance – useful if you want lots of players for something. There's also a Bring 'n' Buy and a quiz on Saturday night. See midcon.org.uk

Who was where – in (or outside) the clubs

Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Fleur de Lys	JIT + Guinevere Bev + Lotte CdB + Bette JH + Cath	JH + Cath · Bdv · LSD + Edna · LR + Maggie · FdB + Freda · BS + Thérèse · JIT + Guinevere · VdF · BLC + Eve · AA · EIF + Lucy · CdB + Bette · ID · MD + Belle	JH + Cath	JIT + Guinevere ZvT LR + Maggie
Bothwell's	EIF			
Hunter's	MD + Belle		AA CS + Anne	AA CS + Anne
Red Phillips			Bdv	

Shows who was in or outside a club: . = Toadying to character above; (G) = Gambled; CP = Crown Prince; (id) = expected host; **bold** = first visit to new club; underline = first time mistress seen in public with this beau.

stronger. What's more, he has the greater expertise this time. Con slashes, Maurice slashes, Con surrenders.

This means Con has a reasonable excuse not to meet Thierry – thus avoiding his tangerine terrors – and instead treats his seconds to a “full Scottish Breakfast”. (It's like a “full English” but with added haggis.) Is this a left-over from the Auld Alliance?

Ian Dediette is not so lucky. He (and Greg de Bécqueur in seconding mode) roll up for his duel with Thierry and get the rotten fruit plus scroll treatment from the tangerine types. Cheered on by the urchins taunting the orange ones, the two lay into the luminescent louts who leave like lightning.

Slightly ‘fragrant’ from the fruit, Ian moves on to square up to Maurice. Again, all the advantages are with Maurice. The duellists exchange slashes and Ian surrenders. That's three from three for the Dragoon Guard versus the Queen's Own and gives Major Danseur sufficient incentive to remain in Paris, apparently.

Ian should have a final rendezvous with Balzac, but he's still resting up.

A lack of influence

The Brigadier of the Dragoons laughs off Charles PiedLuminaire's request that he resign, so Charles's ambition to become Brigadier goes nowhere. If only someone felt like using their influence to support him.

Sebastian Blanc-Chevaux does call in a favour to remove the senior Major in his regiment, the 53rd Fusiliers, but it's not enough to get the job done. Mind you, there's already a vacancy at Major that Sebastian is able to buy his way into.

The 53rd get a new recruit as well. Justin Saad is accepted into the regiment and buys the rank of Captain. And then marches to join the regiment in battle.

Second Division commander Louis Renault makes PLLD Lt-Colonel Dee Jean Aise the Division's Adjutant.

Beaumes de Venise buys promotion to Subaltern in the 27th Musketeers but does not expect Thibault Chanson de Skye's offer to become his Aide. The appointment remains vacant for this month. Since Beaumes did not anticipate being in action, this may be a blessing: Thibault mobilises Fourth Foot Brigade for the last month of Spring. That's once he's rescheduled his debts.

His promotion last month leaves Steve De Sade in charge of third squadron of the Grand Duke Max's and he promptly orders his new command to join him at the front.

Having carefully avoided being ordered to the Low Countries at the start of the Spring, “Tiny” Thierry Toothpick now marches off with the first squadron of the Dragoon Guards.

Games from Pevans

Mail order board and card games in the UK



7 Empires

Seven 16th-17th century empires compete to dominate Europe. However, players only control an empire while they have the most ‘influence’ in it and what an empire can do is cunningly limited. This provokes some head-scratching...

For 2-6 players, aged 13+, 90-150 mins to play: **£50.00**



Food Chain Magnate

Latest reprint of this brilliant game of diners, demand and distribution in the 1950s USA. There are staff to recruit and train, burgers and pizzas to produce and advertising to position to build up demand. All with the aim of making money!

For 2-5 players, aged 14+, playing time 2-4 hours: **£90.00**



Indonesia (3rd ed)

The Splotter guys' clever game of cut-throat capitalism in the Far East has had a thorough physical revamp, but is still the same huge challenge. Build up your companies, make profits and merge with others. Carefully! Biggest mogul wins.

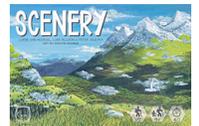
For 2-5 players, aged 14+, playing time 3-4 hours: **£115.00**



Scenery

Another tricky tile-laying game from the Cwali team. This time you're constructing hiking routes and establishing views over the scenic elements on the tiles. It's a little brain-melting...

For 1-5 players, aged 9+, playing time 20-50 minutes: **£30.00**



Wir sind das Volk! (Combined Edition)

The original is a two-player game of the rivalry between East and West Germany after World War 2. Players foment demonstrations, build industry and improve living standards. The Combined Edition adds two more players: the USA and the USSR.

For 2/4 players, aged 12+, playing time 1-3 hours: **£38.00**



Online at www.pevans.co.uk/Games

Brat's Hill (Railway Rivals game 19 - RR2559LD)

Turn 8

Welsh Interstate Train Service and Seaside Railways are neck and neck. Locomotive Observation Steam Train Company entered lots of races but paid large amounts to the other teams. Cart and Barrow closed the gap a little more with the two leaders.

Race results

Race	From	To	WITS	SR	LOST	CAB
6	65 Ingleton	56 Hawes		20		
8	11 Carlisle	62 Morecambe	JR 0	20 +3	10 -7	JR 0 +4
9	15 Aspatria	25 Harrington	20		10 -2	2
10	21 Maryport	51 Penrith	20	10 -4	+4	
11	33 Egremont	44 Lakeside			10 -7	20 +7
12	32 Ullock	66 Settle		+2		20 -2
13	S3 Any Port	53 Kendal		20 +4	10 -4	
14	S1 Scotland	42 Ulverston	JR 5		20 -6	JR 5 +6
TOTAL			45	75	38	62

JR = Joint Run; ERP = Exchange of Running Powers

Builds and Points

WELSH INTERSTATE TRAIN SERVICE (WITS), Mark Cowper - Red

Starts: Whitehaven

Builds:

(Boot) - F19 - G20

Points: 140 -9 +45 = 176

SEASIDE RAILWAYS (SR), Rob

Pinkerton - Blue

Starts: Carlisle

Builds:

(H9) - H10 - G11 - Ullock

Points: 108 -7 +75 = 176

LOCOMOTIVE OBSERVATION STEAM TRAIN COMPANY (LOST),

Gerald Udowiczzenko - Black

Starts: Port Carlisle

Builds:

(A67) - A69 - Carnforth

(A66) - M27 (1 to CAB)

Points: 39 -6 -1 +38 = 70

CART AND BARROW RAIL (CAB),

Chris Rudram - Green

Starts: Barrow in Furness

Builds:

None

Points: 77 +1 +62 = 140

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

**Orders for June 1677 to Pevans at
180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE
UB10 8UF, UK or
lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk
by 20th March 2026**



May 1677 (399)

May day celebrations over, it's time to turn to the task of slicing up people with sharp steel. Or affairs of honour, as they're known. Taking to the field (okay, it's a secluded courtyard) first are Justin Thyme and "Tiny" Thierry Toothpick. Or they would be if Thierry could be bothered to turn up. Instead, Justin and Rick Shaw, his second, find a gang of orange-clad miscreants who fire rotten fruit at them along with a scroll entitled "Arrest-in-waiting". The gist of the document is that Justin is to report to the Bastille next month once Thierry "has been reinstated as CPS". Strangely, the Tangerines are themselves being harassed by a group of urchins mocking their strange colouring (and chucking the odd stone).

After a change of clothes, Justin and Rick repair to their meeting with Maurice Danseur, approaching it with some trepidation. However, Maurice is there, accompanied only by his second, Louis Severin Descartes. This is sabre versus sabre with Justin's advantage being skill and Maurice's size. Justin's expertise means he is first to draw blood, but a lunge with a sabre is hardly a killing blow. Then he discovers just how strong Maurice's arm is when he's on the receiving end of a slash. His own slash in response isn't nearly so powerful. The two men trade slashes again and Justin throws in the towel.

Justin's third duel should be against Balzac Slapdash, but he's too damaged to be able to fight again. Not that Balzac turns up - he's nursing his own, minor wounds.

Hence there's no sign of Balzac when Con Stantinople arrives for their clash. So Con takes his sabre and two seconds (Justin Saad and Thibault Chanson de Skye) to face Maurice (and Louis). Despite his fresh wounds, Maurice is still bigger and

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! So I'll cheat and use some of the same ones as last time. We'll run for 10 turns and see what happens.

Turn 2 categories

I had a thought: how about battles as a category? Then I realised that I did this last time. Oh well... Give me battles or sieges starting with C from the following

- 1 The Punic wars (Rome vs Carthage);
- 2 The English civil war;
- 3 The Peninsular war;
- 4 The American civil war;
- 5 World War One, Western front and
- 6 World War Two in the Pacific.

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 20th March 2026.

Subscribing to TWJO

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

The table shows the subscription rates for the paper edition, including postage, and the games only sub.

	UK	Rest of World	Games only
10-issue (1 year) subscription	£39.00	£54.00	£5.00

To subscribe, send your name, address and payment to *To Win Just Once*, 180

Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF, UK or TWJO@pevans.co.uk. You can pay by bank transfer (contact me for the account details), by UK cheque (payable to Margam Evans Ltd) or by PayPal to Games@pevans.co.uk. Or subscribe online at www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO, where you can pay by credit card or PayPal.

Next turn's races

Race	From	To
15	12 Carlisle	43 Coniston
16	16 Silloth	S6 The South
17	23 Cockermouth	64 Lancaster
18	24 Workington	S2 The East
19	54 Tebay	36 Millom
20	55 Kirkby Stephen	45 Windermere
21	S4 Any Port	52 Appleby

GM Notes

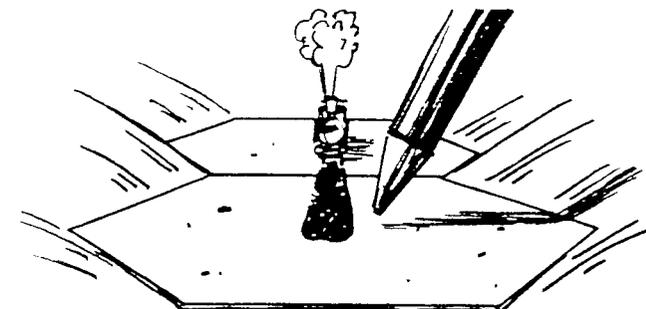
Players can enter up to five races each round – plus any held over from a previous turn (shown in italics above). Make it clear if you're using Joint Running, or Exchange of Running Powers in your orders.

You may spend up to 8 points building after the races (including payments to other companies – so you could pay a lot more if building parallel).

Remember it costs three points to build into a mountain, three to build out and five to build mountain to mountain.

You cannot build over bodies of water, only rivers.

Orders to Mike Dommett, 12 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ or by e-mail to mike_dommett@yahoo.co.uk by 13th March 2026



By Popular Demand

Turn 1 answers

We had 22 entries for the first round, where I asked for various geographical features beginning with H.

First was a British mountain and it's a clean sweep for Helvellyn: 22 points all round. Maybe it's the only British mountain starting with H...

Graeme Morris notes that it's "home of the magnificent Striding Edge, straight out of Middle-Earth".

Second was a British river and there was a bit more variety here. Nigel Monaghan quibbles that, "The Humber is not strictly a river but just a tidal estuary." Graeme counters "Google says it's a river, even if it is all estuary."

British river	
Hamble	5
Hodder	1
Hogsmill	1
Hull	1
Humber	14

Tim Macaire "thought about Hamble, but nobody now remembers *Howards' Way*", before plumping for the Humber. Well, some people clearly remember the Hamble, Tim, even if not the TV programme.

English county	
Hampshire	14
Herefordshire	7
Hertfordshire	1

Third category was a traditional English county. I immediately thought "In Hertford, Hereford and Hampshire, hurricanes hardly ever happen" before going for Hampshire. It looks like Anthony Gilbert is the only other *My Fair Lady* fan out there. (And another Hampshire voter.)

There was a wide range of towns in the fourth category, a couple of which I hadn't heard of. Charles Burrows reckoned this was the hardest category to find a good answer – he went for Harrogate.

Nigel was "tempted to go for my birthplace of Halifax", which would have done better for him than Huddersfield.

While Graeme claims that his choice (Halifax) was made "under duress from my Yorkshire-bred other half, and with fond memories of the Parkin Pigs (look them up!) they used to sell in the Piece Hall."

Capital city	
Hanoi	3
Harare	1
Havana	2
Helsinki	14
Hereford	1

Number five: a capital city and it looks like someone (naming no names to protect the guilty) may have misread this as **county** capital. Graeme chose Havana, noting

English town	
Hadfield	1
Hadleigh	1
Halifax	6
Harrogate	5
Hastings	4
Hertford	1
High Wycombe	2
Hitchin	1
Huddersfield	1

"We used to have 'a man' there." Well, Graham Greene certainly thought so. Vacuum cleaner salesman, wasn't he? Our man, that is.

And finally, for this round, a selection of islands starting with H. A wide selection, too. Hispaniola always reminds me of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, as it's the name of the ship Squire Trelawney charts to seek the treasure.

Poo-pooing the top choice, Anthony says "I nearly went with Hebrides, but that's an archipelago, as is my second choice, Hawaii; still, other people may have made the same mistake..." Ah, according to my research, Hawai'i is the name of both the archipelago and the largest island.

Graeme can't help adding "Book 'im, Danno – murder one!" to his answer of Hawaii. I'm hearing the theme tune now...

Island	
Haiti	1
Hawaii	9
Hayling Island	1
Heligoland	1
Herm	1
Hispaniola	1
Hokkaido	1
Holy Island	1
Hong Kong	1
Honshu	4
Hoy	1

The scores	
Roy Bleasdale	78
Colin Bruce	51
Charles Burrows	69
Mark Cowper	67
Mike Dommett	63
Paul Evans	70
Anthony Gilbert	74
William Hay	56
Peter Jenkins	79
Andrew Kendall	71
Andrew Larder	57
Nik Luker	52
Tim Macaire	59
Brad Martin	36
Nigel Monaghan	37
Graeme Morris	67
Jonathan Palfrey	52
Mike Pollard	66
Eddy Richards	74
Richard Salmon	78
Pam Udowiczenko	45
John Watson	57

And John Watson recommends "a visit [to Herm], if you haven't been there", his Channel Island answer.

The scores

Some high scoring there with Peter Jenkins coming out on top. By just one point! Roy Bleasdale and Richard Salmon are the two right behind him and there are another five within 10 points. Brad Martin is at the back – possibly handicapped as an Aussie – but it's nip and tuck at this stage.

What's this about?

Time for a return to this all-reader game. I have cribbed the rules from the *Variable Pig* website. You can find the originals (with lots of variants) at: <http://variablepig.org/rules/bypop.html>

Each turn the GM lists six categories and a letter. For each category, players name something that fits it and begins with the initial letter. They score points equal to the number of people who give the same answer. Most points at the end wins.

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