

That would be enough

This has been issue 266 of *To Win Just Once*, published 20th July 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 31st July 2026.

Orders for *LPBS* and By Popular Demand entries to Pevans by 7th August 2026.

(Probable next deadlines: 4th/11th September, 9th/16th October.)

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.engage.co.uk

Railway Rivals – Anyone want to start a waiting list for the next game? (Working map and rules provided).

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

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 266 was written and edited by Pevans with contributions from Mike Dommett. The *LPBS* masthead (page 20) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood as is the drawing on page 13. The illustration on page 21 is by Nik Luker and on page 23 are two by Tim Wiseman. 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*)



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(LPBS 404: October 1677)

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ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank, Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	ECPlayer
EIF	Sir Elroi le Flingue	13	35	Comfy	Lt.Colonel GDMD/Cav Div Adjutant	8	Lucy	Both	4 Daniel Racke
ID	Sir Ian Dediette	13	23	Comfy	Major QOC	4		Both	2 Nik Luker
MD	Maurice Danseur	13+ 54	Comfy	Major DG/HGds	Brigade Maj.	6	Madeline	Both	5 Andrew Whiteley
HS	Sir Hugo Serre	13+ 47	Withy	Major KM		7	Kathy	Both	3 Paul Murphy
AH	Arent Hayes	13+ 43	Poor	Lt.Colonel CPC/FMshl's Aide		6		Both	3 Mark Cowper
CPL	Baron Charles PiedLuminaire	12	29	Withy	B.Lt-General/2nd Div Commandr	9		Hunt	3 Nick Tyrrell
AA	Sir Armand Alsace	12+ 58	OK	Bdr-General/1 F Brigadier		14		Hunt	4 Sebastian Emde
CdF	Chemin de Fer	11+ 39	Comfy	Lt.Colonel RM		5	Henrietta	Hunt	3 Rod MacDonald
SBC	Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux	10+ 30	Poor	Colonel PM		2	Sue	Hunt	2 Peter Card
SDS	Steve De Sade	9+ 61	Comfy	Major GDMD		6	Laura	BG	5 Jon Dean
BT	Beau Taux	8+ 31	Poor	Lt.Colonel 53F		4	Angelina	BG	4 Paul Robbins
VdF	Vaux de Fon	8+ 26	OK	Captain CPC		2		BG	4 John Cooke
CE	Charles Effeavor	7	F	Comfy B.Bdr-General 13F		4		F&P	4 Andrew Kendall
DJA	Dee Jean Aise	7+ 29	Withy	B.Bdr-General PLLD		5		F&P	3 Jovan Bogdanovic
MAD	Marc-Antoine Descartes	7+ 26	Poor	Captain GDMD/LtGen's Aide (2nd		5		F&P	2 Chris Schotmann
BdV	Beaumes de Venise	7+ 24	OK	Private CG		6	Lois	F&P	6 Jeremy Tullett
LAL	Lance A Little	6	F	Comfy Lt.Colonel PM		1			4 Manoj Nair
JdG	Jean-Jules de Cant	6	RIP						Hunter Charest
HdB	Henri de Boudelle	6+ 23	OK	Major PLLD		6		RP	4 Eric Henderson
MdP	Maximilien de Piquemaire	5	5	Comfy Major GDMD		7		RP	2 Max Pieksma
PAM	Pierre Aux-Manique	5	F	Poor Major Gscn		6		RP	2 Peter McNamara
CBL	Claude B'Limey	5+ 24	Poor	Captain GDMD/BdGen's Aide (BLC)		6	Violet	RP	2 Peter Jenkins
AdO	Achille d'Orbigny	5+ 18	Poor	Subaltern CPC		4		RP	3 Oscar Stanley
DBT	Dwight B'Tard	4+ 19	Poor			4		RP	1 Gerry Sutcliffe
IP	Ignace Pardailon	3	1	Comfy Subaltern GDMD		5		RP	3 Grégory Meurant
PN	Pierre Newkirk	2	F	OK B.Captain PM		3			3 Wayne Clingman

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.

The Greasy Pole

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
GdB	Count Greg de Bécqueur	25	69	Withy	General/Field Army Commndr		13	Bette	Flr	5	Anthony Gilbert
BeV	Count Ben e'Volence	25+	82	Rich	Fld Marshal/Chancellor		11		Flr	3	Ash Casey
CdP	Viscount Camille de Pogniac	24+	89	OK	B.Bdr-General RFG/Fld Army QMG	8	Therèse		Flr	4	James McReynolds
TcD	Count Terence Cuckpowder	24+	83	Withy	B.Lt-General/1st Div Commandr	10			Flr	6	Mike Dommett
RS	Earl Rick Shaw	23	60	Rich	General/State Min.	3	Justine		Flr	6	Charles Burrows
FXC	Viscount Frank X Change	22+	75	Rich	B.Bdr-General CG/Min w/o Port	14	Edna		Flr	4	Nigel Monaghan
JiT	Count Justin Thyme	20	44	Rich	Colonel QOC	19	Guinevere		Flr	2	Gerald Udowiczenko
ZUT	Marquis Xavier Ulric Turenne	20	27	Withy	Lt-General	4			Flr	1	Bob Blanchett
JH	Marquis Jacques Hatt	20+	75	Withy	General/Min w/o Port	4	Cath		Flr	4	Joel Halpern
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	20+	62	Fthly	General	24				6	Ben Brown
ZvT	Baron Zeold von Tu	19	40	Withy	B.General	8	Morgane		Flr	3	Tim Macaire
CdN	Earl Claude de Nord	18	55	Rich	B.Bdr-General KM/CPS	5			Flr	4	Andrew Larder
LR	Marquis Louis Renault	18	44	Comfy	Lt-General/Insp.Gen.Cav	5	Maggie		Flr	4	Roy Bleasdale
CA	Viscount Come Asiouar	17+	66	Withy	Lt.Colonel CG/Justice Min.	10			Both	4	Jacob Andersson
NM	Baron Neville Moore	16	49	Rich	Major RFG	1	Vera		Hunt	2	Cameron Wood
BS	Viscount Balzac Slapdash	16	41	Rich	B.Lt-General	24			Both	5	Matthew Wale
TTT	Baron Tiny Thierry Toothpick	16	F	Withy	B.Bdr-General DG	9				1	Jason Fazackarley
TCdS	Sir Thibault Chanson de Skye	16+	51	Comfy	B.General	8	Katy		Flr	5	Bill Hay
MdG	Martin de Garnache	16+	48	Comfy	Lt.Colonel RFG/1st Div Adjutant	3	Chris		Both	4	Bill Howell
HF	Sir Hugo Furst	15+	67	Comfy	B.Lt-General/Adjutant Gen	6	Ella		Both	2	Graeme Morris
HWB	Baron Hector William Boone	15+	59	Withy	Major RFG	9			Both	5	Paul Wilson
CS	Sir Con Stantinople	15+	49	Withy	Lt.Colonel QOC/2nd Div Adjutant	6	Anne		Both	1	Pam Udowiczenko
FS	Baron Felipe Savant	14	42	Rich	Captain RFG/Capt.K's Esc	5	Fifi		Both	4	Brick Amundsen
BLC	Sir Botte Le Chimiste	14	39	Comfy	B.Bdr-General GDMD	2	Eve		Both	4	Tym Norris
HJ	Earl Hugh Jeneaux	14	35	Rich	B.Bdr-General ALC	12	Sal		Both	3	Bruno Giordan
PPuf	Baron Percival Puffington	14+	50	Comfy	B.Lt-General/Insp.Gen.Inf	9	Viv		Both	5	Tony Taylor
MHD	Sir Marcel Hatch Dupree	14+	45	Withy	Colonel RM	8			Hunt	4	Graeme Wilson
FdB	Sir François de Blanchefort	14+	43	Comfy	B.Bdr-General CPC	6	Freda		Both	4	Peter Farrell

Chatter

On a recent visit to Sainsbury’s I spotted what looked like a chocolate variety of the stroopwafels that have been on my biscuit menu for a while. Closer examination revealed that they’re billed as “brownie flavour”. Inspecting the list of ingredients revealed “chocolate flavour” but not a scrap of actual chocolate. Oh dear. I tried them anyway and it’s definitely chocolate ‘flavour’ – more like cocoa if you ask me. And the lovely taste of caramel from the centre is completely missing. Back to plain caramel next time.

Time for a photo and you know it’s summer when the Ickenham Cricket Club is in full swing. One of my walking routes goes past their pitches, giving me a good view of what’s happening, before arriving at the River (!) Pinn. Talking of which, it’s particularly languid at this time of year.



My re-watching of *Babylon 5* is nearing the end of season 2. As it’s passed, the over-arching plot has become more obvious: powerful, unidentified spaceships, then glimpses of the Shadows themselves, Londo becoming a darker character rather than the playboy he started as (something even the character notices) and another portentous line from Kosh: “If you go to Z’ha’dum, you will die”. (The “And so it begins” line that I thought was missing from the pilot episode turns out to be right at the end of season one.) And, finally, Kosh revealing itself!

I’ve also been spotting details I’d missed before. Sheridan and Garibaldi chatting side by side behind a chest-high partition. Then coming out from behind this and ‘washing’ their hands (no water involved, though – this is the 23rd century)! I don’t know: talking at the urinals?! Kosh’s angry outburst when a baffled Sheridan asks, “What do you want?”: “Never ask that question!” Kosh’s question is, of course, “Who are you?” I’m loving it all over again.

When not watching *Babylon 5*, I’ve spent a lot of time the last month or so re-building the Games from Pevans online shop. It’s over 20 years since I taught myself HTML (and CSS) and built the static pages the shop still uses. Then interfacing them with the rather clunky RomanCart shopping cart. Every now and then I’ve looked at more modern software to see if it’s worth moving on. There’s always been something or other that didn’t work the way I wanted.

Recently, I took another look at Wix and Shopify and found both would do much what I wanted. Trying them out, Shopify was easier to use. Not least because of the built-in AI – the first time I’ve really used one. It’s just what I’d expect of an expert system – it ‘understands’ the Shopify software (a finite subject, so one that can be thoroughly analysed). Hence, when I want to find out how to do something, I just ask rather than wading through pages of ‘help’ to find what I want.

What’s different is the AI interface: natural language input and output and its ability to write code. In fact, so natural is the language that I find myself saying “please” and “thank you”. Fascinating. Hopefully the new shop will be live before the end of July.

Earworms

For several weeks, I’ve started humming “Is this the way to Amarillo” every time I go into the kitchen. And once it’s started, it won’t stop! Except, in the last few days it’s changed to “Hotel California”. Go figure.

Spiderwatch

Number of small spiders patrolling the top of my laptop before rappelling down the power lead: 1. The garden spiders are very active – I collect many strands of spider silk every time I walk out of the back door in the morning.

Online stats

TWJO 265 went out into the world on 11th June. The PDFs were downloaded 163 times in the rest of the month. June also saw a further 92 downloads for issue 264, making that 270 in two months. And TWJO 263 was downloaded a further 49 times in June for a total of 299 since publication.

Letters

First Jonathan Palfrey admits that he’s “never seen anything of *Babylon 5*” before revealing a deficiency in what he’s read.

I read a few books by Anne McCaffrey in the 1970s, not including Dragonflight, but didn’t become a fan, and don’t seem to have read anything by her since then.

Recently I read The Mote in God’s Eye (Niven & Pournelle, 1974) for the tenth time, and enjoyed it as much as ever. It has various flaws.

- *Pournelle rejected Niven’s future history as unbelievable, and insisted on using his own, which is even less believable.*
- *Most of the characters are stereotypes.*
- *All of the human characters are men, with the exception of Sally, who ends up marrying a man she’s had little chance to talk to throughout.*

Femmes Fatales

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

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

Regiments

	RFG	CG	KM	DG	OOC	ALC	CPC	RM	CDMDPM	13F	PLD	53F	27M	4A	69A	Gscn
Col	CdP	FXC	CdN	TTT	JiT	HJ	FdB	MHD	BLC	EIF	DJA	N5	N4	N5		
LCol	MdG	CA	N1		CS	N3	AH	CdF	SDS	LAL	N1	N3+	N5	N3		
Maj 1	HWB	N2	HS	MD+	ID	N6	N4	N6	MdP	N5	N2	N3	N5	N1	N3	
Maj 2	NM	N5	N1+	N3	N4	N6	VdF	N6	N3	N5	N2	N3	N5	N1	N3	
Capt 1	FS	N3	N2	N2	N4	N2	N6	N2	N1	N6	N1	N2	N4	N5	N2	
Capt 2	N2	N4	N5	N5	N2	N3	N4	N2	N6	N5	N1	N2	N2	N5	N1	
Capt 3	N1	N6	N4	N6	N2	N2*	N1*	N5*	N6	N5	N1*	N6*	N6*	N6*	N6*	
Capt 4	N4*	N2*	N6*	N6*	N3*	N2*	N1*	N5*	N6*	N5*	N1*	N6*	N6*	N6*	N6*	
Capt 5																
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.

Brigade Positions

Guards Brigade	__/_/_/N1	Current CO/Aide/Brigade Major of each Brigade; entries are ID for player characters, “N” (+ MA if needed) for NPC, __ for vacant
Horse Guards Brigade	N6/_/_/MD	
Heavy Brigade	N5/N/N6	
Dragoon Brigade	N3/N/N3	
First Foot Brigade	AA/N/_/_	
Second Foot Brigade	__/_/_/N3	
Third Foot Brigade	__/_/_/N3	
Fourth Foot Brigade	__/_/_/_	

Frontier Regiments

					(Siege for Sept-Nov)
	<u>F1</u>	<u>F2</u>	<u>F3</u>	<u>F4</u>	<u>RNHB</u>
Colonel	N2	N2	N5	N5	N9
Attached	1 Bn Gscn			1 Bn PM	
Also at the Front					
		Dragoon Guards 13th Fusiliers			

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

Battle Results

Dragoon Guards: 3	Frontier regiment 1: 3
	Frontier regiment 2: 3
13th Fusiliers: 2	Frontier regiment 3: 2
	Frontier regiment 4: 2
	RNHB regiment: 2

Other Appointments

King’s Escort: Ensign N	Captain FS
Cardinal’s Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Aides: to Crown Prince N	to Field Marshal AH
Provincial Military Governors: N/N/N/N/N	
City Military Governor N	Adjutant-General HF
Inspectors-General: of Cavalry LR	of Infantry PPuf
Commissioner of Public Safety CdN (until end August 1678)	
Chancellor of the Exchequer BeV (until end August 1678)	
Minister of Justice CA (until end May 1678)	
Minister of War __	
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

- *The Motie Mediators are highly talented linguists and communicators, although they’re the infertile offspring of Masters and Engineers, neither of which has any such talent.*

Despite all this, I find the story gripping and fascinating, every time. The Moties are probably Niven’s best alien species, although he got more use out of some of the others.

This is one of the books that I keep meaning to re-read. I remember it as being gripping as well, but I’d better read it again before commenting further.

Jonathan has a recent find to share with us as well.

Even more recently, I followed up a recommendation from Ken Bain and tried Jodi Taylor’s The Nothing Girl (2014), which I quite liked, although it’s really a mundane novel with a slight touch of fantasy to it.

I’ve read various books by Jodi Taylor before. Her books usually deal with time travel, and I must find something likeable about them because I’ve read more than one. But her stories have a distinctive chaos about them: in her world, everything is constantly going wrong, which I find uncomfortable and tiring.

The Nothing Girl is different in that there’s not a whiff of time travel about it, and yet the distinctive chaos remains: everything is constantly going wrong. Though at least she has the decency to provide a happy enough ending.

This is not a book I’d expect to like, and yet I liked it enough to finish it in one day, and to continue the series. Strange. Furthermore, I think I like it better than her time-travel stories, although it remains to be seen whether I’ll come back for rereads periodically.

I think I’m adding Jodi Taylor to my list of authors to try.

A Few Hours at the Expo

Pevans spends a day at the NEC

It’s been a few years since I made it to the UK Games Expo – 2019 was the last time (as reported in TWJOs 195 and 196). And this time it was just for an afternoon rather than a long weekend.

In fact, my visit was rather shorter than planned after my satnav decided I needed to visit some Warwickshire villages instead of the NEC (National Exhibition Centre). Having finally arrived, it was a 10-minute stroll from car park to the halls, the path getting busier as I went along. This was my introduction to what I’d experience for the rest of the afternoon: unable to walk at my normal pace because of the people shuffling along in front of me.

Next job: collecting my badge. Ticketing was not where it used to be and I couldn't get the floor plans to load on my phone. I checked the entrance to each hall and was eventually pointed to the empty hall 5. At least, it had looked empty when I stuck my head in earlier. Checking again, there were a couple of coffee/food places and a lot of railings. In the distance I could see a line of tables with a few people milling around. At which point I realised the railings were there to channel the queue. Bypassing them, the tables were, indeed, the place to pick up a badge. Phew! Now I could start.



Demo game of *Burgle Bros 3*

And Hall 4 seemed the place to start, given it was next door. I'd picked out a few exhibitors that I definitely wanted to visit and the first of those as I went into Hall 4 was Fowers Games. The man himself, Tim Fowers, was present and constantly busy, but I managed to say hello and take a look at *Burgle Bros 3*. The first thing I noticed is that it's a bigger box than *Burgle Bros 2*, which in turn is bigger than the original *Burgle Bros* game.

It remains a co-operative heist game (sneak in, steal something, get away – as a team). However, this one is rather more ambitious. For a start, the room tiles are double-sided and can flip, meaning the team has to cope with changing 'terrain'. As well as guards to avoid, their target is protected by software that has to be disabled. And there are staff present who have to be fooled – or used as decoys. So *BB3* is more complex and challenging – and runs a bit longer. I think it has to be worth a look, at least.

Trotting (sorry, shuffling) along a bit, I found Bernd Eisenstein of Irongames busy demonstrating his latest, *Papyria*. This was more colourful than I expected (though I don't know why this surprised me – maybe I should actually open my copy!). Anyway, the central board shows the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, along which players move their ships (on the water) and 'wanderers' (on land) to trigger actions.

Marc-Antoine Descartes (Sabre, Seconds CPL, 5 rests) has cause with Justin Thyme (Sabre, Seconds ZUT & RS, adv.) for insults.

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

Maximilien de Piquemaire (Sabre, 5 rests) has cause with Justin Thyme (Sabre, Seconds ZUT & RS, adv.) for insults.

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.

Steve De Sade (Sabre, 4 rests) has cause with Justin Thyme (Sabre, Seconds ZUT & RS, adv.) for insults.

New Characters

Wayne Clingman gets the Bastard son of a small Merchant: Init SL 2; Cash 23; MA 3; EC 3 (PN Pierre Newkirk).

Hunter Charest gets the Orphaned First son of a small Merchant: Init SL 4; Cash 128; MA 1; EC 5 (X1).

Tables

Army Organisation and 1678's Summer Deployment

Field Army (Field Ops)	GdB/N/N6/CdP
First Division (Field Ops)	TC/__/MdG
Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - RFG CG KM	
RNHB Regiment (Field Ops)	
Second Division (Field Ops)	CPL/MAD/CS
1st Foot Brigade (Field Ops) - RM PM	
2nd Foot Brigade (Field Ops) - 13F 53F	
Third Division (Field Ops)	__/_/_/N1
3rd Foot Brigade (Field Ops) - 27M 4A	
4th Foot Brigade (Field Ops) - 69A Gscn	
Cavalry Division (Field Ops)	__/_/_/EIF
Horse Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - DG QOC	
Heavy Brigade (Field Ops) - ALC CPC	
Frontier Division (Field Ops)	__/_/_/N1
Frontier Regiments (Field Ops)	
Dagoon Brigade (Field Ops) - GDMD PLLD	

Organisation and Deployment for the Campaign Season with Army and Division posts (Commander/Aide/Adjutant/QMG)
Entries are ID for player characters, “N” (+ MA if needed) for NPC, __ for vacant

Arent Hayes (Sabre, Seconds FdB, adv.) and Beau Taux (Rapier, Seconds ID, 1 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Marc-Antoine Descartes (Sabre, Seconds CPL & BLC, 4 rests) has cause with Arent Hayes (Sabre, Seconds FdB, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Botte Le Chimiste (Sabre, Seconds MAD & TCdS, adv.) and Hugh Jeneaux (Sabre) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Beau Taux (Rapier, Seconds ID, adv.) and Fran ois de Blanchefort (Sabre, Seconds AH) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Beau Taux (Rapier, Seconds ID, 3 rests) has cause with Maurice Danseur (Sabre, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Beau Taux (Rapier, Seconds ID) and Vaux de Fon (Sabre, Seconds HJ & HS, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Claude B'Limey (Sabre, Seconds AdO & SDS, 3 rests) and Hugh Jeneaux (Sabre, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Marc-Antoine Descartes (Sabre, Seconds CPL & BLC, 3 rests) has cause with Chemin de Fer (Cutlass, Seconds MHD, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Claude de Nord (Sabre, Seconds FXC & HS, adv.) and Frank X Change (Rapier, Seconds CA & GdB, 3 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Con Stantinople (Sabre, Seconds TCdS, 3 rests) and Maurice Danseur (Sabre, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Elroi le Flingue (Sabre, adv.) and Hugh Jeneaux (Sabre, 2 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Frank X Change (Rapier, Seconds CA & GdB, adv.) and Hugo Serre (Rapier, Seconds BeV, 3 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Hugh Jeneaux (Sabre, adv.) and Marc-Antoine Descartes (Sabre, Seconds CPL & BLC, 3 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Marc-Antoine Descartes (Sabre, Seconds CPL & BLC, 5 rests) has cause with Maurice Danseur (Sabre, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

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

Hugh Jeneaux (Sabre, adv.) and Steve De Sade (Sabre, Seconds CBL, 1 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Tiny Thierry Toothpick (Dagger, Seconds CdN & MD, 4 rests) has cause with Justin Thyme (Sabre, Seconds ZUT & RS, adv.) for insults.

Claude B'Limey (Sabre, Seconds SDS & AdO, 5 rests) has cause with Justin Thyme (Sabre, Seconds ZUT & RS, adv.) for insults.

Elroi le Flingue (Sabre, 1 rests) has cause with Justin Thyme (Sabre, Seconds ZUT & RS, adv.) for insults.

These will let you build up your own tableau of tiles (your own little civilisation), add cities, mines and temples and, most importantly, score points. For me it has echoes of *Peloponnes*, which means it's definitely something I want to try.

Moving into Hall 3a, I stopped at Midlam Miniatures to take a look at their latest, *Stalagbite!*. This is a game of cave (think dungeon) exploring to find treasures and avoid the nasty stalagbites. They will bite you. And they move around! Paul Scott talked me through the game, which starts with a single 'cavern' tile. There's an entrance, a stalagbite or two and things to explore. These last could turn out to contain treasures, exits, more caverns or more stalagbites.

As the stalagbites built up in our starting cavern, I left Paul to fight them off (it's not a co-operative game) and nipped into the second cavern I'd just found. This turned out to have some treasure (yay!) and an exit – important as there's a time pressure element to the game. A horde of goblins is on its



Here's Bernd presiding over a demo game of *Papyria*



I (yellow) am in the second cavern, leaving Paul to face three stalagbites.

way and players really want to get out before the goblins arrive. Though the longer they stay in the caverns, the better their treasures are. *Stalagbite!* is an entertaining game that feels different from your standard dungeon-bash.



Demo game of *Snowdonia: Grand Tour* using the original scenario

I found Naylor Games as I continued, with their new edition of *Snowdonia*, *Snowdonia: Grand Tour*, on display. Being used to the original game's board, it took me a couple of minutes to get my head round the new one. As the photo shows, the track now zig-zags up the mountain like the actual railway does. It looks gorgeous, as do the chunky wooden pieces. My only quibble is that game information could get a bit lost against the picturesque background during play.

The new edition includes a dozen scenarios (either new or updated to fit in with this edition) and a campaign mode that's played across several scenarios. The work-in-progress Demerara board was on another table. Personally, I have yet to try any of the *Snowdonia* scenarios as I'm still exploring the original base game.

Having played *Joyride* at the Gathering last month, I was amused to see several copies in play on the Rebellion Games stand as I went past and into Hall 3.

Here I found Peter Burley (and sons), aka Burley Games, with the latest edition of *Kamisado* in play, along with *Zambezi*. When I last saw Peter, at the 2019 Expo, he showed me the prototype of *Rolling Bears* (see TWJO 196 for more – bottom of page 7). And this year it's in production. We can expect *Rolling Hippers* to come and, maybe, *Rolling Lions*! Either as expansions for the existing game or as standalone games in their own right. We shall see.

I visited VR Distribution with my Games from Pevans hat on as the UK arm distributes, in particular, Amigo's games. While I was there, I tried out *Biddle*,

Announcements

Claude B'Limey asks NPC Captain 1 of Grand Duke Max's Dragoons to resign

Frank X Change applies for Minister of War

Hugh Jeneaux applies for Minister without Portfolio

Louis Renault asks NPC Brigadier of Dragoon Brigade to resign

Zeold von Tu applies for Minister without Portfolio

Duels

Results of October's duels

Claude de Nord (with FXC & HS, gains 1 Exp) beat his friend Martin de Garnache.

Charles PiedLuminaire (with DJA, gains 1 Exp) beat Marc-Antoine Descartes.

Jean Ettonique didn't turn up to fight Jean Ettonique and lost SPs.

Balzac Slapdash (gains 1 Exp) beat Camille de Polignac.

Terence Cuckpowder (gains 1 Exp) beat Zeold von Tu (with CA).

Botte Le Chimiste (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Hugh Jeneaux.

Arent Hayes (with FdB, gains 1 Exp) beat Jean-Jules de Gant.

Arent Hayes (with FdB, gains 1 Exp) beat Marc-Antoine Descartes.

Hugh Jeneaux (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Claude B'Limey.

Chemin de Fer (no Expertise) beat his enemy Jean-Jules de Gant (under half Endurance, losing 3 extra SPs).

Marc-Antoine Descartes didn't turn up to fight Chemin de Fer and lost SPs.

Claude de Nord didn't turn up to fight Frank X Change and lost SPs.

Henri de Boudeille (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Pierre Aux-Manique.

Hugh Jeneaux (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Marc-Antoine Descartes.

Steve De Sade (no Expertise) beat his enemy Hugh Jeneaux (under half Endurance, losing 7 extra SPs).

Marcel Hatch Dupree (with CdF & HWB, gains 1 Exp) killed his enemy Jean-Jules de Gant.

Maurice Danseur (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Justin Thyme (with RS) - voted cause 9:3.

Grudges to settle next month

Zavier Ulric Turenne (Rapier, Seconds LR, adv.) has cause with Steve De Sade (Sabre, Seconds CBL, 2 rests) for pinching Laura.

Achille d'Orbigny (Sabre, 1 rests) and Beau Taux (Rapier, Seconds ID, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

So naturally we crossed in flame.
 3 Then two proud common fellows
 rose,
 With muddy blood and lofty nose;
 And I, a knight's true son—almost—
 Could hardly let such creatures boast.
 4 But worst of all, by candlelight,
 Upon fair Agnes' step one night,

I met, to my profound despair,
 My own Lieutenant-General there.
 5 Yet though I rue each rash affair,
 I shall not yield to steel or stare;
 Next month I'll seek less blood, more
 sense—
 And keep from Agnes' residence.
 † Marc-Antoine Descartes

Points Arising

Next deadline is 7th August

As I informed players, I made a couple of mistakes last time: using the wrong orders for GdB and missing out some of HdB's. I re-adjudicated manually, corrected the online report and tables and sent the players revised character sheets. Again, my apologies to Anthony Gilbert and Eric Henderson.

A little reminder that the name of your host is the crucial thing when Toadying (or "attending a party"). You don't need to specify the venue (which may change if the host joins a new club at the start of the month).

A small tweak to the play-writing rules I published last time: I'll roll the dice for the success of the play at the start – giving me ammunition for writing the report – but won't publish it until it's time for the appropriate rewards.

And Justin Thyme's insult to Maurice Danseur in the press is deemed sufficient to cause a duel between them (though this is already happening) and between Justin and Maurice's colleagues and friends (House rule 13.9).

Welcome

Wayne Clingman joined us in time for this turn. He's played *En Garde!* "a lot [back] in the day". Welcome to LPBS, Wayne.

Absent friends

IP Gregory Meurant continues to be floated due to ill-health.

MdP No orders from Max Piekema - 1 turn missed.

ZUT Bob Blanchett continues to be floated due to ill-health.

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.

which is about betting on whether a player can make a specific set of dice values. A random card gives the objective. Say, one odd-value and five even from rolling a set of six dice. The start player marks how many rolls they think they'll need to achieve this. The others either bid lower or bet on failure. I didn't have my thinking cap on and opted for my opponent's failure each time. I only won one of these – six dice the same in 8 rolls. It wasn't particularly gripping as a two-player game, but I can see it getting raucous with more players – especially if there are some risk-takers involved!



Here's the main board of *Smallfolk* from my point of view during the game. A couple of players have moved and there aren't many VP chips in the central lake

I moved on to have a look at *Smallfolk* (as I've backed it on Kickstarter) on the Roc Nest Games stand and was lucky enough to make a fourth player for a game just starting. Essentially, you're either playing a card from hand, paying for it with other cards or resources you've collected, or continuing your journey and picking up resources. The cards give you actions in particular circumstances. For example,

when you move you can use a card's 'exhaust' action. There's also the lovely effect of making a set of your cards 'happy' (by meeting a condition) and gaining a reward.

Play continues until the pool of victory point tokens (in the central lake on the board) runs out. Most points wins, of course, counting points from cards played and tokens collected. However, you've also written a story in the cards you've played. Our demo game only had a few tokens in the lake, so didn't run very long. It was a delight to play, aided by the lovely illustrations on the cards, and my more valuable cards helped me to a win by one point. I'm looking forward to getting my copy – hopefully before Christmas.



And here's my winning (!) tableau, including a couple of happy cards



Publisher's display of *Dyorle*

In the opposite corner of the hall was Moaideas Game Design whose new game appears to be called *Dyorle* (it's not on BGG yet, nor on their website). If I understood correctly, players put workers and ships onto either the central board or their personal board to get the materials needed to build cities on the map of tiles. I'm sure there's a lot more to it and I'll certainly take a closer look when I can.

Tucked away in Hall 2 were Charlie and Alan Paull and their imprint, Surprised Stare Games. A quick chat led to my only purchase of the day: the *Solo expansion* for *The Cousins' War*. Hence this terrific game should be back on the table soon.

Expo main man Richard Denning is also a game designer and I stopped by the Medusa Games stand in Hall 2 to see what was new (no surprise that Richard was busy elsewhere). The answer is *The Great Fire of Chicago 1871*, due to be published next year. This is, of course, a development from Richard's excellent *The Great Fire*

but I can promise that you will be supporting the Art and Culture of Paris.

I will present a brief synopsis of the play for you to decide if you wish to invest.

Carry on Canoodling "continuez à vous bécoter" gives a new meaning to "Bed and Bawd"!

The Importance of being Ernest

Plot:

Major Ernest Mainweather of the King's Own Dragoons is happily married and successful. But he has a secret: Ernest has an identical twin brother, Thomas, the black sheep of the family. Thomas is also in the armed forces, but as a lowly private. Both are currently at the front. Ernest is unhorsed and his brother finds his body. Believing Ernest to be dead, Thomas conceives the plan of hijacking Ernest's life. And quickly changes clothes with him, and returns to Paris as Ernest Mainweather. Ernest's wife at first suspects nothing, but is pleased by "Ernest's" renewed attentiveness. However, back at the front Ernest did not die. He was rescued and nursed back to health by a young, widowed, farmer's wife. Returning to Paris he confronts his brother and challenges him to a duel. Ernest is by far the superior fencer, but allows his brother to score a hit on his face that will leave a noticeable scar. Soon after this he performs a superb double disengagement attack, disarming his brother and, while holding the point of his rapier at his brother's throat, he announces that he yields, surrendering the field to his brother. He then walks away, returning to the farmer's widow

remarking that "at least nobody will confuse the two of us now!"

Umm, I'm confused.

† Le Roi

Poetry Corner

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

Ode to Love

Love is dead!

The poet has said.

She who looks like an Angel,

Oft times will be the Devil

In disguise!

So I turn from Love

And seek to prove

A more manly virtue on the field of

Mars.

May honour be served and

Victory arise!

† HdB

1 Love is fickle, love is fleeting,
Love will hurt you in the end
Why do we willingly take a beating?
To enter the lists of Love?

2 Because the maids of France are fair

We do but see them to fall in love
If we are spurned – then should we care?

No! Next time we are sure to win!

† Maurice Danseur, ever optimist in love.

Marc-Antoine's Lament

1 I came to Paris freshly dressed,
With polish on my boot and breast;
Yet scarcely had I crossed the square,
Four gentlemen were waiting there.
2 First came that cursed cuirassier,
Of Leopold's most hated sphere;
An enemy by coat and name,

Synopsis: Boy comes home one day to find his parents dead from the plague. Goes to live with his uncle, a retired musketeer. Uncle has no children of his own, so at a loose end as to how to amuse the boy. Teaches him how to fight with a sword. When the boy is eighteen his uncle is dying of old age. His deathbed instructions are to go to Paris and join the regiment. He hands him a letter of introduction. Second half of play is the young man's adventures in Paris: spurned by the recruiting officer, fighting off the tangerine menace and finally finding his place in the... Watch the play to discover which regiment he joins! The play is called D'Artagnan and is by Rick Shaw.

Oo, is it the Gascons? Is it? Please let it be the Gascons... † Le Roi

PANDAEMONIUM, or A PLAGUE OF LAWYERS: A Comedy in Five Acts by Elroi le Flingue

Setting: the Roman Forum, during the reign of Emperor Trajan.

A fast-talking stranger dressed in an orange toga appears in Rome, promising to solve all the problems of the Empire's citizens by deploying battalions of lawyers. A series of increasingly farcical trials are held, accusing prominent Roman figures of such crimes as "breathing in an offensive manner" or "defeating the emperor's enemies in a suspicious way." At last, the stranger, known only as "The Litigant", presumes to lay a lawsuit against Emperor Trajan himself, on the charge of "failing to provide properly for lawyers." In the final act, the Emperor publicly

castigates the Litigant and announces a bounty on the head of any lawyers remaining in Rome by sundown. Hilarity ensues.

I'm laughing already. † Le Roi

A new play by Arent Hayes, *Le Diable et l'eau sombre** – "A rollicking tale of devils, lepers and witchfinders"

Synopsis:

It is 1634 and the world's greatest Detective, Samuel Phipps, is being transported to Paris for a crime, he may or may not have committed. But, no sooner has he set out to sea, than the devil rises and threatens the voyage. Strange symbols blight the ship. Livestock is slaughtered. Ominous whispers are heard. Murder is committed. Can Sammy solve the mystery from his prison cell before the ship descends into anarchy?

[* any similarity to the novel "The Devil and the Dark Water" by Stuart Turton is purely deliberate.]

No, no: stay in the cell, Sammy!

† Le Roi

It is with great pleasure that I am able to announce a new investment opportunity for the cultural elite of Paris. I am soon to canvas backers for the production of a play, (written by myself), this will be a bawdy comedy with the tentative title of "continuez à vous bécoter".

I will be spending all month polishing my play to ensure it shines brighter than the rather dowdy offerings of the current season.

Obviously I cannot guarantee that you will make money on your investment,

of *London 1666* from 2010. Given it's set a couple of centuries later, I expect the fire-fighting technology portrayed in this game will be better. I look forward to trying it.

All that took me to 6 pm when the trade halls closed. I'd missed out on a few things I'd intended to look at, but it was an interesting afternoon, all the same. Next year's event is scheduled for 4th-6th June (a few days later than usual) and you'll find details on the website: www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk

This report was first published on my BCG blog: boardgamegeek.com/blogpost/187084



Great Fire of Chicago prototype

Reading Matter

And from one terrific female author (Anne McCaffrey in last issue) to another: Ursula LeGuin and the second book of her (first) Earthsea trilogy, *The Tombs of Atuan*. We are, of course, expecting Ged, the hero of *A Wizard of Earthsea* (see *TWJO* 205 for my comments on re-reading this), to reappear. And so he does. Eventually. In other hands, this book would be the story of Ged's quest to retrieve the second half of the ring of Erret-Akbe and restore its powerful magic. Trekking across the desert to the isolated Tombs, fighting off guards and powerful magic to wrest the ring from its mighty guardian. This is not that story.

Instead we have a little girl, Tenar, taken from her parents because she was born at the instant the old High Priestess died. To the Tombs she must go, to be indoctrinated and trained in the rites and rituals she has to perform in the service of the dark Gods. Years go by and she is now Arja, the Nameless one. Her realm is the underground labyrinth where neither light nor any man may intrude. Though her faithful eunuch is permitted in some parts. As High Priestess, she is nominally above the rest of the priestesses, but these are the older women who trained her.



However, they have not managed to completely curb her rebellious streak. Thus, when a man penetrates her underground domain (and brings light!), this Arja does not do what she knows she should and kill him. Instead, she keeps him (just about) alive to tell her about the outside world. The climax of the story, then, is Tenar renouncing her role as High Priestess to reclaim her name, enable Ged (yes, of course it's him) to restore the ring-that-was-broken and flee with him.

It's a surprisingly dark tale. The gods Arja serves are not a nice bunch and the unlit caverns below the temples are a world away from the sunlit open seas and islands of the first book. The claustrophobia just oozes off the page, from both Arja's physical domain below ground and the self-contained, circumscribed society of priestesses and eunuchs that traps her.

It is also definitely Tenar/Arja's story. Ged does not ride in and rescue her, it is her will and determination that saves them both. (With a bit of help from Ged's magic.) I found it a really intense read, sucking me into the pointlessness of Arja's life. And then the glory (?) of her escape and rebirth as Tenar. Just brilliant.

Games Events

Just time to mention Manorcon again: 24th-27th July at the University of Northampton. See manorcon.org.uk for details.

A few weeks later it's the August HandyCon: 13th-16th August at the Delta Hotel in Milton Keynes. This is mostly open gaming (with an "ever-growing games library"), but there are publishers (just a few – the organisers deliberately limit this) exhibiting, designers playtesting, the odd tournament and, of course, a Bring 'n' Buy. For full details, visit www.handycon.co.uk

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: the biggest UK event is 4th-6th June 2027 (a few days later than usual) at the National Exhibition Centre. It has huge trade halls, lots of tournaments (continuing into the night), organised events, demos and plenty of space for open gaming. www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk is where to find out more.

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

Dear Maurice Danseur,
Congratulations on writing such a long letter all by yourself, or did you have help from Mummy?

I find it preposterous* that you think yourself worthy of speaking on behalf of the Royal Foot Guards, the King's Musketeers, and the Cardinal's Guard. If any of those fine regiments have an issue with what I have said, then they can come and speak with me directly. As to yourself, I am more than happy to meet you at dawn, please ensure that Mummy gets you up in time.

Yours, † Count Thyme,
Colonel of Queen's Own Carabiniers
* just in case this is too big a word for you, it means something completely unreasonable, ridiculous, or contrary to common sense.

How rude! † Le Roi

Arent Hayes greeted Sammy Phipps with a bow.

"We made it," he says.
Sammy replied, "You did well. Time to forget the horrors of war and focus on with the next phase of your work supporting the Field Marshal."

"Yes, though I cannot help but worry that the DOMINION continue to rise. The Norseman Du Nord was given a key role – I wonder why?"

"He is cleverer than I thought. Watch him. But focus on your new role."

"Noted."

To: Earl Claude de Nord, Interim CPS (serving upon my behalf)
Well done, de Nord, in duping that imbecile Shaw into appointing you to

the post. That was always going to be our Plan B and merely a 'holding tactic' until I can get the King to see sense and make me joint MoS/CPS.

Now, what you need to remember is, make sure you get warrants drawn up for both Cuckpowder, Shaw and that dreadful Le Fay woman as a matter of urgency. We can work out who to serve the other two upon later. If you appoint a couple of my lads as Ferrets then they'll ensure all 3 of those villains are arrested post haste and thrown into the Bastille where they belong, before then being dragged before the Court to be sentenced and executed.

I'll be leading the Dragoon Guards out here at the Front for another month but then back in Paris whereupon I can resume the Commissioner role and get justice back on track. You'll be rewarded, of course, remember: Thierry Toothpick looks after those who serve loyally.

† Baron (needs to be Count) Thierry Toothpick
PS How in the blazes did you get made an Earl?! I should be one of those, then a Count!

The Play What I Wrote

"M. Forgeron va à Paris" by Felipe Savant

A tale of an idealistic and naive young Minister who goes to work in the royal court and faces the challenges of a corrupt system that is subverting the honour of France and the will of the King for their own gains.

I'm shocked already. † Le Roi

can rest assured I'll look after your interests, sire; anyone you want brought before the Court for the old 'Chop-Chop', you just let me know and I'll have them picked up by my Tangerine lads.

One last thing, I really feel that I ought to be elevated to something better than a simple Baron. To be honest, Count Toothpick sounds so much better and it'll save a load of paperwork if I'm made up straight to that without having to go through the other titles first. I've got a new robe already sorted out and some fancy shoes ready!

Loyal regards,

† Baron (needs to be Count) Thierry
Toothpick

Louis unfolded the bill and read it aloud: "Barrels of claret, feuillette of cider, barrel of beer, replacement of glassware and china, window repairs?" As memories of the party returned, he chuckled to himself. That boot of the young subaltern of the 69th did a magnificent job of doubling over Colonel Dupree, which is no doubt why the two Marines chose to evict him via the window. A plucky young lad, mind you. Fortunately, only his jacket and ego suffered a little. His recollections of the party were interrupted by his valet announcing the arrival of his mistress, Maggie.

"I wasn't expecting you this morning – marvellous party the other night. Just received the bill," said Louis, holding it up.

"No doubt. But I came for a reason. Father had one of his old cronies round last night, a retired Colonel. You were quite the topic – you and these three."

Maggie retrieved a note from her purse and read out three names.

Louis frowned. "I don't recognise them. I haven't appointed anyone yet." He rifled through his papers. "I have the applicants here – Camille de Polignac, Charles PiedLuminaire, Botte Le Chimiste... and your fellows are not among them."

"The Ministry of War appears more efficient than you. They're already appointed."

"Mmm. That doesn't sound good."

"According to the Colonel, one has got no nearer the front line than the rear of the baggage train, one is an infantry chap who doesn't know a thing about horses, and the last is a fine cavalry officer but spends his days in The Horse Guards reminiscing about his famous cavalry charge to anyone who will buy him a drink. According to Father, the Inspector General should resign."

"Or replace them with more reliable brigadiers?"

"Certainly," answered Maggie as she kissed him goodbye.

Louis sat at the table with parchment and ink and began to write. 'Dear Brigadier...'

To Major L'iability

Dear Frank,

I cannot help but notice that the last 3 months have impacted on your health – your hearing and nerves have been literally shot to pieces. Time to take a break and reflect on a stellar career within the CPC.

† Arent

Barringer Crater (*Railway Rivals* game 20 – RR2584C)

Turn 2

WUSS built in front of WOA in the middle of the board, gaining points as a result, while FAKENEWS has a potential for similar costs with TACO. Only BALLROOM had peace and quiet.

Builds and Points

Freight And Key Engineered Nuclear Energy Waste Services

(FAKENEWS), Mark Cowper – Blue

Starts: New Orleans

Builds:

a)(D31) – D27

b)(D27) – D24

c)(D24) – D21 – C21 – C20

Points: 32 = 32

Western US Steam (WUSS),

Anthony Gilbert – Orange

Starts: Chicago

Builds:

a)(D69) – A68 – A67

b)(A67) – A64

c)(A64) – Denver – A60 (+6);
(Chicago) – I78

Points: 32 +6 +14 = 52

Bow Along Light Lines Rail Over On Milwaukee (BALLROOM), Rob

Pinkerton – Red

Starts: Milwaukee

Builds:

a)(J67) – J63

b)(J63) – J60

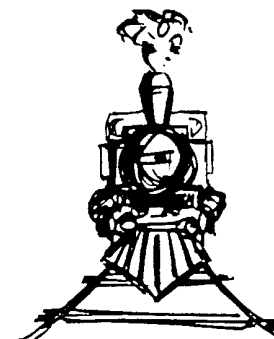
c)(J60) – Billings – J55 (+6)

Points: 32 +6 = 38

GM Notes

Next turn's die rolls: 6, 3, 6

Orders to Mike Dommett, 12 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ
or by e-mail to mike_dommett@yahoo.co.uk
by 31st July 2026



By Popular Demand

Turn 5 answers

Apparently board games was a hard topic – several people mentioned this. A couple said “tough”. One added “Too niche for me”. And several noted that their answers were from “internet search engines.” Well, yes, isn’t that what everyone does? It’s certainly how I pick the categories! Maybe I should compare the score of those who said this against the rest...

Anyway, board games is the topic and *Carcassonne* is a clear winner amongst *Spiel des Jahres* winners. Thinking about it, I’m surprised there weren’t more opting for *(Settlers of) Catan* while *Cascadia* is a game I don’t know. Eddy Richards notes that *Carcassonne* is “a favourite game that we often play” while Jonathan Palfrey says, “a game I’ve actually played (computer version)!” I, too, have the app version. Interestingly, if we play this, Geraldine usually wins, while I normally win the physical version.

Golden Geek winner	
Captain Flip	1
Carnegie	3
Cascadia	2
Castle Combo	2
Castles of Burgundy	1
Caylus	5
Codenames	6

games in their portfolio. There were some obscure answers here as well (I had to look up Catch Up Games and Cotswold).

US publisher	
Capstone	2
Catan Studio	2
Chaosium	3
Cheapass	3
Chip Theory	2
CMON	3
Columbia	4
Cryptozoic	1

A bit more variety for BoardGameGeek’s Golden Geek winners. And a couple more I don’t know (*Captain Flip* and *Castle Combo*) while party/deduction game *Codenames* just beats the heavyweight strategy of *Caylus* (BGG’s complexity ratings for these two are 1.25/5 and 3.79/5, respectively).

Another clear win here and it goes to CGE, the original *Codenames* publisher – they have quite a few terrific

A wider spread of answers when we move to the States and I’m intrigued that it’s a veteran wargame publisher that ends up top dog. Though with several others snapping at its heels. Cheapass was my vote – the others just aren’t on my radar.

And Czech designer Vlaada “Codenames” Chvátil is a resounding first in the European designer category. Along with three that meant nothing to me. Though Conrad’s oeuvre includes *Medieval Merchant*, which I remember, and Raimbault is the man behind two really clever games: *Colt Express* and

SdJ winner	
Carcassonne	16
Cascadia	2
Catan	1
Codenames	1

European publisher	
Cartamundi	1
Catch Up	1
Cotswold	1
Cranio Creations	1
Cwali	1
Czech Games Edition	15

The social scene seems a little empty this autumn, so I shall be hosting a soiree for the better sort of gentlemen about Paris [SL 13+] in Week 3 of November.

† ZvT

Gentlemen of Paris (SL 8+ and members of CPC)

In week 1 of November, I invite you and your ladies to my club to celebrate the French Victory at the Battle of Blanquefort 1450, so all costs covered – please dress in medieval garb. 50-crown prize to best dressed couple.

Kind regards,

† Sir François de Blanchefort

Military Missives

Achille D’Orbigny

I am happy to accept you into the Crown Prince’s Cuirassiers.

Please note there are vacancies at captain at present if your funds and status permit.

Kind Regards,

† Sir François de Blanchefort

Personal

I would like to thank Earl Rick Shaw for my appointment as CPS.

I am honoured and flattered to be appointment.

If you are a God fearing, law abiding loyal subject to our dear King. You have nothing to fear.

Otherwise I will hunt you down like dogs and make you suffer.

I am looking for those wishing to assist me and pay reasonable rates.

Applications open for Ferrets.

† CDN

Suffering from your old duelling injuries?

Feeling uncomfortable after that long cavalry charge?

Fear no more, Botte Le Chimiste is pleased to announce that his patented “Tincture of Opium” is back in stock, only 10Cr per bottle.

Guaranteed to relieve stress, aches and pains.

Also available in half-bottles for the small of stature.

M. Pierre Newkirk, a young gentleman newly arrived in Paris and eager to improve himself, seeks the acquaintance and patronage of his betters. He would be honoured to accompany any gentleman of quality to his club, and promises flattery of the most sincere and enthusiastic kind. Interested parties may reach him through this journal.

To: His Royal Majesty, King Pevans Sire,

It’s terrible, that blackguard and Cuckpowder ally Shaw, yes, him, the louse that you were deceived into appointing as Minister of State, well he’s denying me my rightful post as Commissioner of Public Safety AND refusing to speak out against Cuckpowder’s continued challenges upon my person.

Something simply must be done; in fact, I already have a plan! All you need do is sign a couple of death warrants for the pair of them, revoke Shaw’s appointment as MoS and block Cuckpowder from every office in the realm and then declare me as joint Minister of State and Commissioner of Public Safety. Do this for me and you

Gentlemen of Paris, Soldiers of France, Heroes of the Fatherland! The burden has been placed upon me (as Adjutant General) of moulding the senior leadership of our great army for the forthcoming trial of arms. I therefore call upon all of you of sufficient military rank, ability and (may I say) generosity to apply for the opportunity – indeed for the honour – to serve as DIVISIONAL COMMANDERS in His Majesty’s Army.
(Oh, and I also need an Aide.)
RSVP,
† Lt-Gen Hugo Furst Adj. Gen.

**** 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

Social

I will be hosting and funding a month-long party at the Fleur de Lys. All welcome. No theme, no fancy dress, just the good people of Paris... regardless of social standing... enjoy the finest fare the city can offer. Come for a week, stay for two or commit the whole month. Bring your dear lady or come alone. The choice is yours.

I find the predictable monotony of my current social calendar needs some variety. If your soul, like mine, recoils at the prospect of yet another unimaginative evening of getting

plastered on common wine until the senses are entirely numbed, then I offer you a remedy.
During week two, I plan to avail myself of the pleasures of the new coffee shop and contemplate the “Plurality of Worlds”. We shall indulge in a pot of their finest brew to sharpen our wits and thus initiate an exchange of ideas before retiring to my club, where I will provide sufficient glasses of excellent eau-de-vie to enable us to address the question: “Are we alone beneath the heavens, or has the Almighty populated the spheres of Mars and Venus with rational souls of their own?”
Ladies are most welcome to join the discussion, or, if they prefer, play some rounds of whist.
I will cover the cost of refreshments for all who attend.
Bring your sharpest logic and your finest heresies.
This does not apply to Officers of the Royal Marines, who seem to struggle with the decorum needed for such polite discussions and seem to insist on jumping upon young Arquebusiers.
† Marquis Louis Renault

***** Party November Week 1 *****
Gentlemen of Paris,
Please bring your ladies to a party at my club in November Week 1, where we will drink a tribute to that noble gentleman Guido Fawkes, who sadly failed in his attempt to overthrow the English throne.
† Lt Colonel Con Stantinople
(Open to own and friendly regiments. Social levels 10 and above. Costs paid.)

Sandwich. Anthony Gilbert confesses, “My son enjoys beating me at *7 Wonders Duel*; he seems to have memorised the cards in each level.”

American designer	
Allan B Calhamer	7
Frank Chadwick	4
Isaac Childres	3
Carl Chudyk	2
Clark	1
Greg Costikyan	1
Chris Haney	1
Cole Wehrle	1

I can’t believe this category goes to the man who created *Diplomacy*! On the other hand, it does make a kind of sense. As Graeme Morris puts it, “*Diplomacy*, now I’ve heard of that!” and Eddy Richards has “gotta go for the creator of *Diplomacy* really!” Frank Chadwick is, of course, co-designer of *En Garde*! amongst other things. Jonathan Palfrey chose him as, “I was tempted to pick Allan B. Calhamer, but he’s known for one game that’s as old as I am.” Oops! While John Watson says, “Has to be” Chadwick. Looks like there’s only one other fan of Carl “*Glory to Rome/Innovation*” Chudyk apart from me.

The scores

Graeme Morris is top scorer this round by just a few points. While Mark Cowper’s score gets his nose in front of Richard Salmon.

What’s this about?

I have cribbed the 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 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.

European designer	
Christophe Boelinger	1
Bruno Cathala	3
Vlaada Chvatil	10
Leo Colovini	4
Christwart Conrad	1
Christophe Raimbault	1

The scores	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Roy Bleasdale	78	85	20	32	52	267
Colin Bruce	51	83	45	56	50	285
Charles Burrows	69	64	7	51	51	242
Mark Cowper	67	87	46	67	49	316
Mike Dommett	63	87	19	57	37	263
Paul Evans	70	75	48	40	52	291
Anthony Gilbert	74	33	39	43	45	234
William Hay	56	33	47	32	24	192
Peter Jenkins	79	77	31	53	29	269
Andrew Kendall	71	75	43	49	30	268
Andrew Larder	57	49	25	35	39	205
Nik Luker	52	82	23	50	33	240
Tim Macaire	59	68	34	36	-	197
Brad Martin	36	89	38	44	40	247
Nigel Monaghan	37	80	43	51	49	260
Graeme Morris	67	78	44	43	56	288
Jonathan Palfrey	52	91	25	57	34	259
Mike Pollard	66	85	48	59	38	296
Eddy Richards	74	87	37	49	43	290
Richard Salmon	78	80	48	61	43	310
Pam Udowiczenko	45	73	-	52	-	170
John Watson	57	89	42	49	44	281

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.

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 6 categories

I was re-visiting the topics I used last time and was rather taken with the theatrical one. So this list of categories may look familiar:

- 1 A play by William Shakespeare
- 2 A British playwright active in the 20th century
- 3 A play by a British playwright active in the 20th century
- 4 A living British theatre actor
- 5 A living British theatre actress
- 6 A winner of the Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Play (different from 3)

All beginning with C this time. (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 7th August 2026.

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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	£40.00	£57.00	£5.00

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No woman, some loot

While the Frontier regiments and volunteer infantry continue to lay siege to remaining Spanish outposts, the Dragoon Guards actually get involved in a fight. They take on a Spanish relief column and batter them enough to be able to make off with a couple of the wagons. “Tiny” Thierry Toothpick shows some personal bravery in leading the attack and is lucky when an enemy sabre passes over his head. His personal share of the booty comes to over a thousand crowns, but he refuses the promotion he’s offered. And he still finds time to send a missive home telling Madelaine she’s dumped. (“Be gone woman, I’ve far more important things to occupy my mind and time with than some annoying harlot!” is how he puts it.)

The 13th Fusiliers are successful in their siege with Charles Etfeevor pocketing some thousand crowns’ worth of loot.

Attached to Frontier regiment 1, Pierre Aux-Manique leads his Battalion of Gascons without distinction.

Lance A Little’s Picardy Musketeer Battalion is with Frontier regiment 4, which makes sufficient progress against the Spanish defences to bring Lance some plunder. Nearly fifteen hundred crowns’ worth. Newly minted Subaltern Pierre Newkirk becomes newly minted Captain Pierre Newkirk, his finances easily stretching to the purchase of the required horse.

Press

Announcements

The Gascons seek ambitious men for frontier service: No gloves; No powder; No peacocks. Only hard marching, dangerous enemies and opportunities to fill one’s purse. Those wishing to make their fortunes are welcome among the Gascons!

Majors of the King’s armies:

While I am confident all of you would like to serve as Brigade Majors, and would do a fine job in that role, I am also sure that we don’t have enough Brigades for that. As such, I would like to remind you that I am still looking for an aide.

Thank you,
† Marquis General Jacques Hatt

** Aide Required **

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

† Count Thyme

To all members of the GDMG, I will be taking the regiment to the Front in November. Anyone wishing to remain in Paris should contact me beforehand.

† (bvt) Bdr-Gen Sir LeChimiste

The senior Captain of the GDMD should resign as I have repeatedly seen him falling off his poor horse due to failure to hold his drink, thus besmirching the honour of the regiment.

† A concerned colleague

Who was where – round and about				
Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Bawdy houses	MHD + FC HWB + FC: Mug 0 AH + FC DBT + FC: Mug 0 AA + FC ID + FC		VdF + FC	CA + FC HdB(G 40) + FC DJA + FC
Practising	NM - Rapier TC - Sabre ZvT - Rapier BT - Rapier JdG - Rapier BeV - Sabre CA - Rapier HdB - Sabre DJA - Sabre LR - Rapier	TC - Sabre JiT - Sabre JdG - Rapier BeV - Sabre ID - Sabre CA - Rapier	BdV - Rapier SBC - Rapier BT - Rapier CBL - Sabre JdG - Rapier DBT - Rapier CdF - Cutlass BeV - Sabre ID - Sabre CA - Rapier JH - Sabre SDS - Sabre HdB - Sabre AdO - Sabre	NM - Rapier HS - Rapier VdF - Sabre SBC - Rapier BT - Rapier CBL - Sabre JdG - Rapier MdG - Rapier CdF - Cutlass BeV - Sabre GdB - Sabre ID - Sabre JH - Sabre LR - Rapier
Regimental Duties				BdV IP AdO
Busy doing nothing		BdV -Toady to ????	AH	ZvT
Scribbling furiously	FS EIF CPL	RS CPL	FS EIF RS CPL	FS AH EIF RS CPL
Shows everybody else: FC = Female Companionship; Mug n = Mugged & amount lost; (G) = Gambled; 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.				

Brat’s Hill (Railway Rivals game 19 – RR2559LD)

Turn 12 and GES

The races weren’t kind to Welsh Interstate Train Service (3rd) who not only failed to catch Seaside Railways (1st) (who did have some nice races), but was also overtaken by Cart and Barrow coming up fast (2nd). Locomotive Observation Steam Train Company entered several races but didn’t score well overall and finished last (4th).

Race results

Race	From		To		WITS	SR	LOST	CAB
36	12	Carlisle	53	Kendall		20+4	10-4	
37	51	Scotland	51	Penrith	20	10		
38	22	Cockermouth	46	Grange-over-Sands			10+5-1	20-5+1
39	62	Morecambe	14	Wigton		15+1	15-3	+2
40	64	Lancaster	31	Distington		+2	10-4	20-2+2
41	34	Ravenglass	55	The South				20
42	41	Barrow	21	Maryport	+3			20-3
TOTAL					23	52	38	75
JR = Joint Run; ERP = Exchange of Running Powers								

Final Points

WELSH INTERSTATE TRAIN SERVICE (WITS), Mark Cowper – Red
Points: 285 +23 = **308 (3rd)**

SEASIDE RAILWAYS (SR), Rob Pinkerton – Blue
Points: 325 +52 = **377 (1st)**

LOCOMOTIVE OBSERVATION STEAM TRAIN COMPANY (LOST), Gerald Udowiczenko – Black
Points: 239 +38 = **277 (4th)**

CART AND BARROW RAIL (CAB), Chris Rudram – Green
Points: 254 +75 = **329 (2nd)**

Game End Statements

Mark Cowper (WITS – 3rd)

Easy win for Seaside Railways as they got their Network spot on – Running N to S along the West Coast. WITS had a lot of builds going from E to W that meant that they had the best coverage here, but no-one wanted to travel that way. In the last set of races all went N to S, and WITS had no network coverage.

Rob Pinkerton (SR – 1st)

This has been an incredibly fun game and the dice were with me on the routes during the operating phase. I got very lucky with my builds in the east, being able to take the direct route for that side of the map.

Gerald Udowiczenko (LOST – 4th)

Congratulations to Rob on what is probably the best North/South network in the game. In the end, I think that's what probably secured the win for him (as I assume he'll win), especially as he had very few mountains to contend with

I decided to try a different tactic and build through as many mountains as possible, hoping it would result in good North/South network. Unfortunately, the additional costs really added up, and I wasn't able to extend my route all the way South, which in the end proved a little costly as I couldn't run a number of those races.

I also think my more direct route meant I missed out on quite a few bonuses on getting to a Town first. Those extra points might have narrowed the gap and made things a little more competitive. That said, I expect to finish around 60 points off the top spot, so even claiming a few more bonuses wouldn't have been enough to bridge the gap.

Lastly, I'm a little surprised by the lack of Joint Runs and Exchange of Running Rights in this this game, although I suppose the dice simply didn't fall that way. The battle for second and third place could still be very tight, but unless I get particularly lucky, I think fourth place is where I'll end up.

Well played, everyone. And if I don't see another mountain-heavy map for a while, I certainly won't miss it!

(A feeling about mountains there which explains his starting position in Barringer Crater. Mike)

Chris Rudram (CAB – 2nd)

Well, I got myself isolated on the west coast. At times that was useful, but overall, I think I failed to get into other people's networks at enough spots to really help my cause - there were some turns where my race options were severely limited. I think Seaside Railways getting the Tebay-Carlisle valley mostly uncontested was a big advantage for them. I think I was often too concerned about avoiding the expensive, slow hills at the cost of the overall network; and also (wrongly) assumed I'd have solo rights to some of the destinations up in the hills. I think the skill here was knowing when to pay the extra, and when to shoot down the valleys to get more reach.

Well done to whoever wins!

Who was where – with the ladies				
Who	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Belle	VdF fails			
Belle's doorstep	HJ st.down AdO st.down			
Bess			MAD fails	MAD fails
Bette	Out Cdn fails	Out	Out	
Frances				TC succeeds AA st.down
Frances's doorstep				
Kathy	HS succeeds	Out	Out	
Laura	SDS succeeds ex-ZUT	Out		Out
Lucy		Out		
Madeline	MD succeeds	Out	Out	Out
Pet			DJA fails	
Sal			HJ succeeds	Out
Therèse	Out BS fails	Out	Out BS fails	Out BS fails

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's been prominent in leading the toasts to Pierre De Terre), Chemin de Fer and Maurice Danseur as riff-raff.

As a Dragoon Guard, Maurice swaps challenges with Queen's Own Con Stantinople. Not to be left out, King's Musketeers Claude de Nord and Felipe Savant leave Louis's table to call out Cardinal's Guardsman Frank X Change who was minding his own business (with Edna Bucquette) in another part of the club. An orange-painted coach is waiting outside the club when Claude departs. "The Boss says it's ok for you to use the Commissioner's coach if you want to," say the orange-clad driver and postillion.

After this Thibault continues hosting for the rest of the month. He has a bit of competition from Terence Cuckpowder's more exclusive get-together, which brings in Justin Thyme to assist Con in repeating his challenge to Maurice. The appearance of Steve De Sade as Camille de Polignac's guest at the end of October prompts one more glove-slapping – between Steve and Hugh Jeneaux (who's also getting the treatment from Botte again).

Roll them bones

Steve De Sade was notable earlier in the month for getting in a few wagers while showing off his new conquest, Laura de Land, at Blue Gables. He places four hundred-crown bets and luck is with him as he wins all except the one he cuts when he sess the house's roll. This leaves him well in profit for the week.

It turns out the only other gambler in Paris is Henri de Boudeille who tries his luck while visiting the bawdyhouses. Mind you, he's only prepared to risk 10 crowns at a time. He feels flush after winning his first two bets, but then loses three on the trot to end up out of pocket. Luckily for him, the footpads decide he's not worth it – just like the two they mugged earlier in the month.

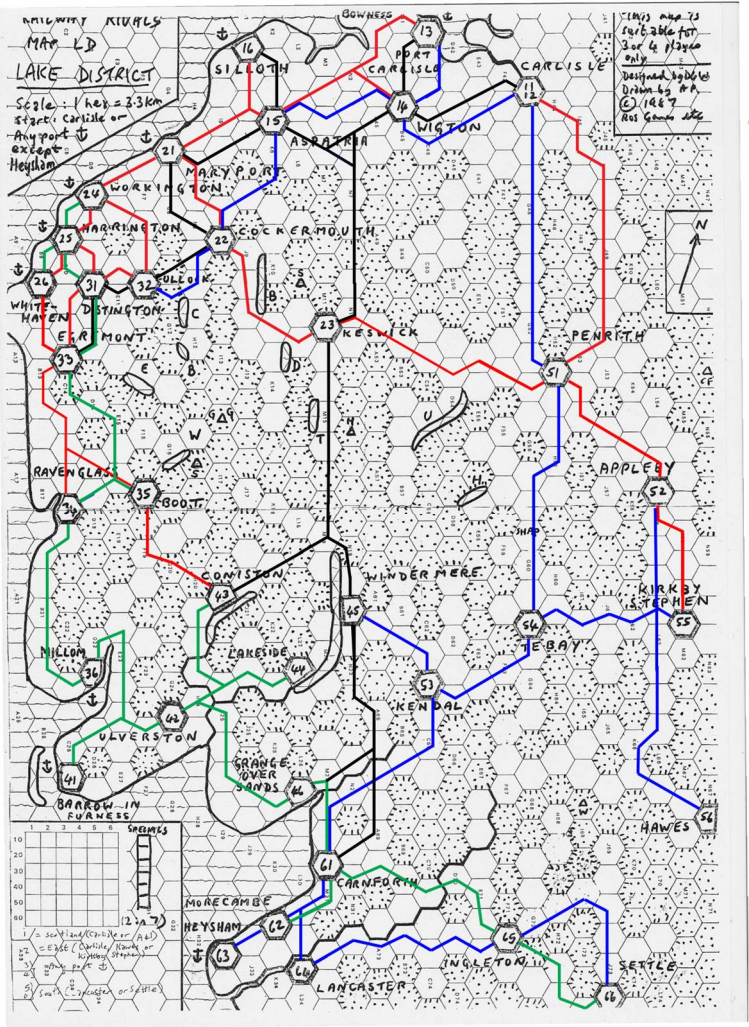
Hugo Serre is probably the most ostentatious suitor in Paris. His approach to Kathy involves "gifts of an emerald necklace, the finest chocolates, and exotic flowers ... be presented by matched servants wearing livery in the colours of the King's Musketeers." How could a girl say no?

Least ostentatious are probably Hugh Jeneaux and Achille d'Orbigny. They meet on Belle Epoque's doorstep, along with Vaux de Fon, but are quick to back down. Each gives precedence to the others, gradually retreating as they bow until they are at opposite ends of the street. Belle is unable to take Vaux's suit seriously after that display.

Armand Alsace's retreat from courting later in the month is very understandable: that's Terence Cuckpowder he's come up against. Maurice Danseur is lucky enough to visit Madelaine de Proust just after she's received Thierry Toothpick's letter dumping her. She's grateful for the chance to move on. While Balzac Slapdash doesn't move on. He keeps trying to visit Therèse Le Vert while she's clearly out with her current beau.

GM Mike

A difficult map, because it's the west coast or the Penrith Gap (the M6 route?) for a north south route, though LOST did eventually build a route south over the mountains without much benefit. As Gerald said, "he paid lots to other people to come second." The chance of the races probably did affect the result as well. Your early decisions on building can end up limiting your reach as others have taken the gaps. I expected more joint runs. Thank you to all the players and I hope you will play again.



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 November 1677 to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF, UK or lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk by 7th August 2026

October 1677 (404)

Paris in October echoes to the sound of steel on steel as affairs of honour are settled. All sparked by last month's partying after the troops returned to the city from the summer campaign. The rivalry between the Cardinal's Guard and King's Musketeers has sparked several of these, but we start with a Musketeer fighting a Royal Foot Guard despite their regiments' mutual friendship. KM CO Claude de Nord takes on RFG Lieutenant-Colonel Martin de Garnache. Claude is unusual, for an infantryman, in using a sabre and is rather more skilled with this than Martin is with his rapier. Frank X Change and Hugo Serre accompany Claude (and he is followed by several orange-painted fellows), but Martin is without a second.

Belying his apparent expertise, Claude starts with a defensive block. This is no barrier to Martin's lunge, which pierces straight through to draw first blood. This attack is actually a furious lunge and his second blow, a cut, coincides with Claude's slash for damage on both sides. Claude's skill now comes into play as Martin has no defence against either blow in his furious slash. Martin surrenders. Frank, who is in the Cardinal's Guard, now expects to fight Claude, but the Musketeer just wanders off.

Next up, then, is Charles PiedLuminaire who is fighting his Aide, Marc-Antoine Descartes. ("It is of course highly unfortunate that [we] had the same taste in ladies," notes Marc-Antoine.) Both use sabres with Charles having the greater skill. And both have nominated each other as their second! Charles does have his second second, Dee Jean Aise, with him. Trying to catch out his opponent, Marc-Antoine starts with a lunge – a clumsy strike with a sabre. Charles seems to expect



Party, party, challenge, party...

Parisian social life starts slowly this month with just Frank X Change and Thibault Chanson de Skye hosting unannounced parties in the Fleur. This may explain why there's so much courting going on. Or is it the other way round? Hugo Furst is one of those to join Thibault, showing off his latest, very tasteful couture. "Even my mother approves," he says. And nobody sniggers.

Things get going with a bang (and a raft of regimental rows) when Louis Renault and Maggie Nifisent hold their memorial dinner for Pierre De Terre the following week. Louis is resplendent in his newly-commissioned full dress uniform as Inspector-General. Just about everybody who is anybody is there. Apart from Justin Thyme who was there the week before. And Beaumes de Venise who insists he's on Pierre De Terre's guest list only to be nonplussed when the doorman points out that his supposed host is noticeably dead.

Let's start the shenanigans with poor old Beau Taux. The lone 53rd Fusilier, he is set upon by several Crown Prince Cuirassiers. Starting with newbie Achille d'Orbigny then boss man François de Blanchefort, Lt-Col Arent Hayes and Captain Vaux de Fon. Archduke Leopold's commander Hugh Jeneaux takes flak from the Grand Duke Max's representatives: Botte Le Chimiste, Claude B'Limey and Elroi le Flingue. The three even rope in their colleague Marc-Antoine Descartes, who's having a quiet week enjoying the Fleur as the guest of Jacques Hatt and Cath de Thousands. Marc-Antoine quickly realises that there are people at Louis's bash that are his social inferiors. He calls out Arent Hayes

Who was where – in the other clubs				
Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Bothwell's	FdB + Freda Ppuf + Viv MdG + Chris	HF + Ella Ppuf + Viv	FdB + Freda Ppuf + Viv MdG + Chris	FdB + Freda Ppuf + Viv
Hunter's	SBC + Sue CdF + Henrietta			
Blue Gables		SDS(G) + <u>Laura</u>		
Frog & Peach		DJA		
Red Phillips	CBL + Violet			DBT

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.

Who was where – in the Fleur

Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Fleur de Lys	TCdS + Katy . HF + Ella . BLC + Eve . CS + Anne FXC + Edna . Bdv + Lois . MAD RS + Justine GdB + Bette CdP + Thérèse JH + Cath	ZvT + Morgane FXC + Edna CdP + Thérèse JH + Cath . MAD LR + Maggie . FdB + Freda . NM + Vera . BS . HJ . FS + Fifi TCdS + Katy . HS + Kathy VdF . MHD HWB SBC + Sue . BT + Angelina . AH CBL + Violet . BLC + Eve DBT . AA . EIF + Lucy . MdG + Chris CdF + Henrietta GdB + Bette CS + Anne . CdN MD + Madeline . HdB . AdO	TC . NM + Vera . JI + Guinevere . ZvT . GdB + Bette . CdN . LR + Maggie TCdS + Katy . HF + Ella . HS + Kathy . MHD . HWB . BLC + Eve . AA . CS + Anne . MD + Madeline FXC + Edna CdP + Thérèse	TCdS + Katy . HJ + Sal . HF + Ella . MHD . HWB . BLC + Eve . CS + Anne . MD + Madeline JI + Guinevere FXC + Edna CdN CdP + Thérèse . SDS + Laura

Outside Fleur de Lys JI (LR)

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.

this as he parries the attack and ripostes to scratch Marc-Antoine. That’s enough for honour to be satisfied and Marc-Antoine gratefully concedes the duel.

This is only the start of Marc-Antoine’s encounters this month. Next, he faces Arent Hayes and does so on his own as his second doesn’t show up. Ah, that’s Charles of course, who’s not best pleased with his Aide. Arent has François de Blanchefort backing him and is a more proficient swordsman than his adversary. Still grumbling about the CPC “putting a peasant in charge of their first Squadron,” Marc-Antoine starts defensively, blocking Arent’s initial slash and dodging the following cut. He then attacks with a slash which Arent shrugs off before finally hitting Marc-Antoine with a slash of his own. That’s enough to win the duel.

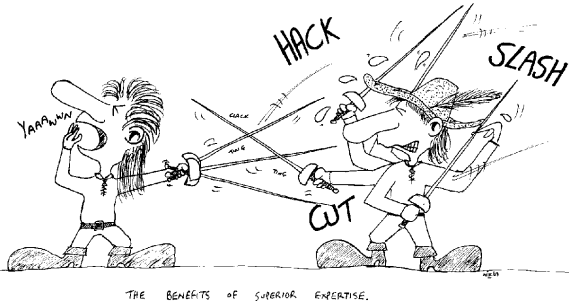
Marc-Antoine’s next rendezvous is with Chemin de Fer, but will have to wait as Chemin wants to fight Jean-Jules de Gant first, while Jean-Jules chooses Arent as his first opponent. Jean-Jules wields a rapier against Arent’s sabre and has no second. He’s also of slighter build and less skill. Oh dear. A lunge from Jean-Jules is partially deflected by Arent’s slash who follows up with a cut that prompts Jean-Jules to surrender.

Despite the battering he’s received, Jean-Jules squares up to Chemin. Then he sees his still-dripping blood... Expecting a lunge, Chemin parries, but Jean-Jules just surrenders.

Thus it’s time for Marc-Antoine to face Chemin’s blade. He looks at Chemin’s Cutlass. He looks at his own rapier. He looks back at the Cutlass and considers how many bandages he’s wearing. He declines to fight.

Meanwhile, Jean-Jules has been bandaged up and moved on to cross swords with Marcel Hatch Dupree, despite Marcel being another Royal Marine and thus duelling with a cutlass. Chemin arrives to second Marcel, along with Hector William Boone. Jean-Jules considers things and opts to fight. However, his choice of parrying as a defence betrays his lack of skill. Marcel simply thumps him with a slash. RIP

Elsewhere, Marc-Antoine is ready for his last duel of the month. This one is with Cuirassier Hugh Jeneaux, so is again sabre on sabre. And again, his opponent is more skilled. Marc-Antoine is hoping Hugh has been “overwhelmed” by “the sheer number of the GDMD”. Unfortunately, Hugh has chosen Marc-Antoine for his **first** duel. Both duellists are unaccompanied and start their contest defensively. There



is a flurry of blocks and jumping before they decide to attack, their slashes landing simultaneously. Unsurprisingly, it is the already-injured Marc-Antoine who concedes the duel.

Hugh moves on to meet Claude B'Limey, another sabre-wielder with less skill. His defensive approach continues, with Claude also blocking and dodging to begin with. Then come the synchronised slashes. They take the hit and continue fighting, but Hugh's is a furious attack and his cut triggers a surrender from Claude.

Botte Le Chimiste is next on Hugh's list. It's sabre versus sabre with no seconds, but this time it's Hugh who's on the wrong end of the skill difference. The two launch into slashes and Hugh surrenders, his wounds catching up with him.

These injuries give him a valid reason not to attend his final duel but, after the application of a few bandages, he crosses sabres with Steve De Sade (no seconds for him either). Only then does Hugh seem to realise how beefy his opponent is. He surrenders immediately, saving himself from further injury – though not from the scorn of others.

In another part of town there is some rapier action as Balzac Slapdash takes on Camille de Polignac. It's an even fight apart from Balzac's superior skill and, once more, neither has a second. Balzac's attempt to block his opponent's sword is pointless as Balzac's lunge simply runs through the defence and Camille. Camille jumps aside, but Balzac follows up to land an unexpected slash. An exchange of lunges finally scores a hit on Balzac, but the latest wound is enough for Camille and he surrenders.

It's a brave man that takes on Terence Cuckpowder in a duel. That man is Zeold von Tu, bringing his rapier – and second Come Asiouar – to meet Terence's sabre. Xavier Ulric Turenne remains indisposed, so there's no second for Terence. Intriguingly, his first moves are to parry, block and sidestep. This lets Zeold hit him with a lunge and a cut before Terence finally attacks. Two slashes leave Zeold just conscious enough to be able to surrender.

Henri de Boudeille brings his sabre to meet Pierre Aux-Manique and his rapier. There are no seconds, but Henri looks to have a size advantage. Henri parries, Pierre blocks. Henri backs off, Pierre blocks. Henri winds up for an attack as Pierre jumps aside. However, Henri's slash strikes home and Pierre is happy to concede at first blood.

This brings us to Maurice Danseur's challenge to Justin Thyme, which Paris has whole-heartedly endorsed (9 votes to 3). It's the big sabre-wielding Maurice versus the slender sabre-wielding Justin, backed up by Rick Shaw. The duellists slash, both striking home and Justin surrenders. Maurice has brought "another breakfast hamper of cold Chablis, Chicken and baguettes to share with [his] opponent and seconds. [The three] discuss the recent campaign and congratulate [Justin] on his exploits."

The name's Bond, Fleur Bond

Finances seem to be on everybody's mind this month as the availability of a few Fleur Bonds sees numerous people investing. Several take the opportunity to increase their investments in Arms as well. Not least Camille de Polignac, the Field Army's Quartermaster-General. Steve De Sade is pleased that Camille offers him the job as his Aide. However, that's a position for a Subaltern and Steve is already a Major.

Buoyed up by some hefty gifts, the new face in Paris, Pierre Newkirk, applies to the Picardy Musketeers. Colonel Sebastian Blanc-Chevaux signs him up immediately and Pierre is happy with the rank of Subaltern to start with. Of course, this means he is assigned to first Battalion, commanded by Lance A Little and currently in action. No sooner has Pierre been issued with his uniform than he's packing up for the journey to the frontier.

François de Blanchefort accepts Achille d'Orbigny into his regiment, the Crown Prince Cuirassiers and he, too, becomes a Subaltern. As he's a brevet Brigadier-General, François asks Achille to be his Aide, too. Just one problem: the post is already taken!

Quitting the 27th Musketeers, it's the Cardinal's Guard for Beaumes de Venise, admitted by Frank X Change, but he's just a Private.

"Tiny" Thierry Toothpick flexes his influence (aka money) to ensure that the Lt-Colonel of the King's Musketeers does not resign as Hugo Serre has requested.

Adjutant-General Hugo Furst adds another Divisional commander, appointing Charles PiedLuminaire to lead Second Division.

Terence Cuckpowder is already in charge of First Division and he brings in Martin de Garnache as Divisional Adjutant.

And the Minister of State, Rick Shaw, declines to grant Hugh Jeneaux's wish to join the government as a Minister without Portfolio.

Inspector-General of Infantry Percival Puffington has no problem with Major Pierre Aux-Manique volunteering his Battalion of the Gascons for active service. Once he's resigned as Brigade Major of Fourth Foot, of course.

