

THE CELESTIAL DRAGON #16



Spring has sprung!

Featuring:

THE CELESTIAL STEAM LOCOMOTIVE #46

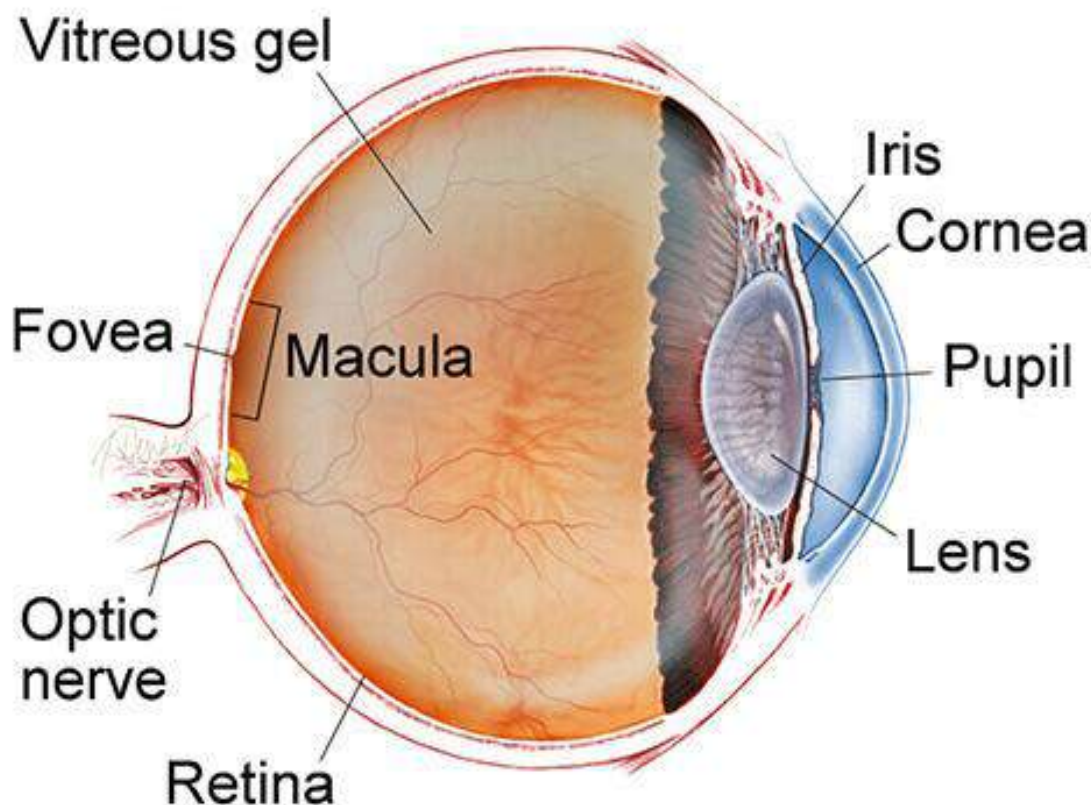
HERE BE DRAGONS #79 / HERE BE DRAGON #1

SUBPAR #16

THE TANGERINE TERROR #86 /

I AM THE KURIOUS KUMQUAT #16

DEADLINE: Friday 5th June 2026



THE CELESTIAL STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

Track no. 46

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12th April 2026

Just like last issue, let's start with the front cover picture. In previous issues of CSL I have reported horticultural failure such as the grape vine with teeny-weeny grapes, and the sweet pea seeds that produced one crappy little shoot. This time I bought a magnolia plant from the reduced section at B&Q. I planted what was barely more than a twig at the front of the house, and some rather unhealthy-looking leaves have appeared, so at least I know it's not dead. However, I think I probably need to hire King Charles to talk to it.

The picture above is the human eye, showing a *macular edema* wot I have just been diagnosed with. I may or may not get a hospital appointment before the zine goes out. The condition (a cyst at the back of the eyeball) can be caused by stress, diabetes or hereditary macular degeneration. It could be any of those three as my last few weeks at work have been quite stressful, being old and overweight means I'm susceptible to type 2 diabetes, and my 95-year-old mum has macular degeneration.

An aside: The human eye has been used as an argument both for and against Intelligent Design. How could such a complex thing exist without a designer? Why does a hawk have better vision than a mole? Why do humans get so many eye defects? Why were Google Glasses a flop?

OK, back to the story: I initially thought the minor vision impairment I was experiencing was just because I was overdue an eye test and some new specs. Whilst there was a change required to the prescription and I did need new frames, the cyst was spotted by the optician as part of the standard checks required by the NHS, gawd bless 'em. The new specs are quite stylish (better than Keir Starmer's) and I have a second pair with polaroid tinted lenses for when the sun comes out.

Update – I did get an appointment before zine release, and this is what happened...

After a brief one-eye-at-time vision test my eyes were squirted with drops to dilate the pupils (it stung a bit at first). Then after a 10-minute wait, my eyeballs were photographed two different ways (a blue cross and an orange flower). The results were then examined by two different experts and I was questioned about drugs (do you take steroids?).

My diagnosis was a *Central Serous Retinopathy* most likely caused by stress, in which case it should get better on its own. They noticed that the cyst had got smaller since the opticians visit, and that there was scarring indicative of a previous CSR, but, unlike the current one, it was nowhere near the fovea so I wouldn't have noticed much.

I have to go back for another examination in 6-8 weeks' time. If it's no better (or worse) I would then probably have laser surgery, and it might also point to hereditary macular degeneration.

Whilst I can still see, I've been taking in some telly and really enjoyed *The Capture*, the BBC's deep fake drama. The third series was the most exciting so far.

On the sci-fi front, having been underwhelmed by the *Star Trek Strange New Worlds* season 3 DVD, I'm still watching some old stuff on Amazon: *Andromeda*, *Babylon 5* and *Farscape*. All three are good at times but have cringey moments, and all three have rather wooden lead characters (Dylan Hunt, Commander Sinclair, John Crichton). *Babylon 5* definitely has the best quotes such as "*My shoes are too tight. But it doesn't matter, because I have forgotten how to dance.*" (Londo Mollari). Andy York is a fan of them.

I have received an update on my non-pension. I should now receive an *estimate* sometime in June (so most likely after I retire) but as yet no indication of how long after that I might actually get my pittance. So it looks like I will have to borrow a *big bag of sand* from Rachel Reeves after all.

Not much to say on the grandnephew apart from he is strong and healthy. I've decided I should (when he's a bit older) teach him something my dad taught me when I was little, and I thought of the "Train Chant" which you have to recite gradually faster and faster in order simulate a steam train accelerating:

Bread and butter, bread and butter, bread and butter, bread and butter
Cheese and biscuits, cheese and biscuits, cheese and biscuits, cheese and biscuits,
Fish and chips, fish and chips, fish and chips, fish and chips
SOUP! SOUP!

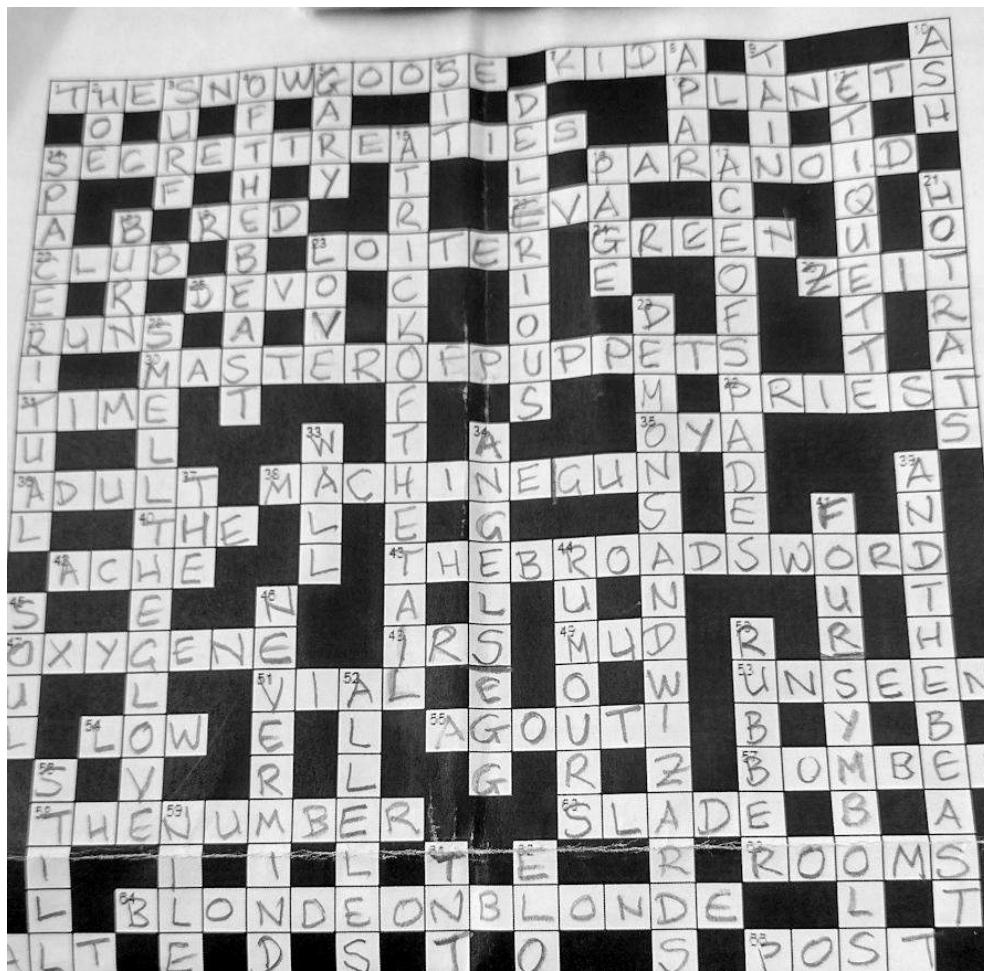
(the soup bit is of course the train whistle).

I rarely mention football in the zine, as being a Southampton fan it's all been doom and gloom for quite a while, but now there is a possibility of 3 trips to Wembley! The FA Cup semi-final hasn't been played yet as I write this, but will be before the zine goes out. Update: A creditable performance by the Saints who were 10 minutes away from the final, but it was not to be.

So, on to the games. Bob's *Wheel of Time* RR is now out and there is a game on offer in *Ode* as well and 1 (or 2 if demand) in CSL, but between them will test out the start options.

I am starting a new *House of Games* this issue. *By Wordley Demand* game 2 and *Choice Suppenkasper* game 3 will start next issue. My new, mystery RR map may or may not be ready by then but there's no rush. I have now shown it to Bob and Jim and received lots of useful feedback.

Some attempts at the album covers quiz, and kudos to Steve Guest for actually completing the whole thing! I was expecting people to get maybe 25 out of 35, though the (easy) non-album clues do help. It's up to the solver to decide if they want to use the internet to help, but Steve did mention that he thought using reverse image search was *a cheat too far*.



On the much easier Emoji spacefiller, Brendan Whyte got 5 albums and Chris Hibbert 4. *Pet Sounds* and *Brothers in Arms* not being guessed.

Richard

THE LETTERS BIT



MIKE POLLARD

Lovely pix of your cat - made me pine even more for our previous regular visitor Roly Poly.
I'm trying to avoid too many cat pictures, but there may be one below if space requires it... .. nope.

STEVE HAM

I'll just add now, as I might be pushed for time in the week, the Saints are looking impressive at the moment. I'm hoping you'll get the second automatic promotion place so those nasty Binmen lose out.
As I type this, Saints have just failed to beat Bristol Titties, so automatic is looking unlikely. A win on Tuesday 29th against your favourites would put the cat amongst the pigeons with four teams, including the much-unloved Millwall, all in with a shout.

KEVIN LEE

It's great being a Saints fan at the moment - shame we didn't get Leeds in the semi-final.

What a turnaround from rubbing shoulders with the fish molesters near the bottom of the table, to a cup semi-final and in the mix for the play-offs. Replacing Baz with Peretz, getting Bree back from loan and switching to a back 4 seems to have done the trick but there's definitely more to it than that.

BOB PITMAN

Loving your cat experiences! My FB feed is well populated with cat rescues, cat humour and cat adoptions due to my "liking" far too many cat videos. Stubbington RSPCA recently started getting in on it by feeding me cute cats who need rehoming, which is a shame as Noel recently dug out our cat supplies (input and output related) and we were going to donate it all to the Ark... but as she pointed out if we go there we are very likely to come back with a cat. So local cat owners benefitted instead.

I think you said before that you definitely weren't going to have another cat, but it sounds like you are being sorely tempted. Had Espeon / Raymond relations not improved I would have been looking for a new owner for a small, grey, gentle, silly tomcat.

I'm looking at more inter-railing as various friends have been to Italy, Vienna, Paris and Germany and I quite fancy the "volcano tour" from Rome, Naples, Stromboli, Palermo, Etna and Vesuvius and the ferries are included on the ticket.

Sounds impressive - do OAPs get a discount?

I've just finished "Dune Prophecy" and its pretty good. It helps to have read the prequel books but it's a decent story on its own.

I will probably check it out later when (hopefully) it becomes free on Amazon.

I have a run coming up near you, it's an open practice for the Purbrook Ladies 5 mile race... men are allowed to take part in the practice evenings and I did that a few years ago, I started early because the others from my group are quick and I hoped we would end at the same time so they wouldn't have to wait for me. It starts at the field of Purbrook heath then heads up Newlands Lane before Sheepwash and back via Belney- Pigeon House and Mill Lanes... in theory. I had studied the route beforehand but missed the turn onto Belney and wound up approaching the Forest Road near Denmead when I realised my error and realised I didn't have my glasses with me to read the map on my phone. I turned back but had managed to turn it into a somewhat longer run and was overtaken by my friends on the Pigeon House Lane hills.

I walked to the QA Hospital (bus back due to blurred vision) for my eye appointment using part of your route - Sheepwash Lane, Newlands Lane, Purbrook Heath Road, London Road. Just over 5 miles which is near the upper end of my range. I never did do the 9-miler I mentioned in the zine a while back.

Hope your pension stuff is working itself out! Regards a replacement home music centre, depending on your retirement bonus spend Winchester HiFi in Jewry Street Winchester is very traditional set up with a listening room and sofa for comfort!

Something I've not done for years.

MICHAEL PARGMAN

Congratulations on the new family member. My youngest nephew is graduating in a few weeks. I've seen him grow from a cute little boy to a mature, well, still a boy.

There's been a lot of chess lately. Last weekend there was a big chess festival in Stockholm with some 7000 players, two major school chess tournaments, and lots of famous players. The best of them all, Magnus Carlsen, was live from the US answering questions from children and his father was there telling the story of how Magnus started out. And tomorrow a Dutch chess club has come to Stockholm to play against my club. We've had a Dutch guy playing for our club for a few years and he has been helping in setting this up. Our team will consist of me and 15 other players who have been working actively for our club over the years.

The littlun is doing great and is giving everyone a smile in my mum's house (where most of the family live, but it has recently been extended). As I may have mentioned before, I've always thought I should be good at chess given my analytical brain (cells depleting now) but I'm crap at it - I once even lost to a 1K program on a ZX81!

ALBUM REVIEWS

Angine de Poitrine – Volume II (Amazon download) (2026)



Unless you live on the Planet Tharg you have probably heard of this band already as they are all over the internet at the moment. Space aliens called *Khn* (guitar, bass, loops) and *Khek* (drums) who landed in Quebec in 2019.

They always wear the same silly costumes (as shown on the album cover) and their “microtonal math rock” is delivered using powerful rhythms and looped bass and guitar, and just a few (alien) vocals delivered by voice synthesizer.

The album is only 36 minutes long with 6 tracks, which are all good albeit a little samey, so best listened to in shorter blasts. My favourites are *Mata Zyklek* and *Sarniezz*, live KEXP vids below:

Mata Zyklek <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Te1HkBx7rDw>

Sarniezz <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t70Ic-DBRXM>

Aldous Quim – The Dark Triad (Bandcamp download) (2026)



In a revelation destined to shake the foundations of progressive rock, Aldous Quim, the enigmatic composer born in 1936 and a defining influence on the prog and experimental scenes of the late 1960s, has done the impossible: returned from the dead to release a brand-new album, *The Dark Triad*, arriving April 1, 2026.

For those who remember his pioneering early works, Quim was never just a musician — he was a seeker. His self-imposed exile to Tibet in the 1970s, where he immersed himself in esoteric and alchemical practices, only deepened his mystique. Many believed his 2005 death closed the final chapter of his mythic journey. Instead, Quim’s story has entered its most extraordinary phase.

The above two paragraphs were written by *Andy Edwards*, who plays drums on the album, maybe more? The following are comments from Bandcamp, about the long-awaited prog masterpiece by the enigmatic and possibly dead Aldous Quim...

- 'perhaps the greatest prog album ever' *Andy Edwards*
- 'why bother now?' *Steven Wilson*
- 'better than Marillion!' *Jeremy Clarkson*
- 'I thoroughly enjoyed this wonderful listen' *HSTikkyTokky*
- 'my ears, my ears!' *Andrew Lloyd Webber*
- 'This is the greatest album I've ever heard in my life. All other music now seems worthless to me. I mean, what's the point with the rest of it?' *markjbandcamp*

Currently you can buy the download on Bandcamp, with CD and Vinyl editions to follow soon. <https://aldousquim.bandcamp.com/album/the-dark-triad> You can pay what you want for the download but anything under £50 would be theft!

BY WORDLEY DEMAND – ROUND 4 OF 5



New players are welcome and will start on the lowest score of the existing players (now 31).

Rules published in TCD 12 and on the VP website <https://variablepig.org/rules/bypop.html#Wordle>

Words must be valid according to this <https://scrabble.collinsdictionary.com/check/> and not plurals.

Clarification 1: If a word is a plural and also a verb conjugation ending in S, it is still not allowed.

Clarification 2: The game is not using Wordle's "hard mode" (so unlike *Don't Wordle* your submission does *not* have to be a possible solution based on previous rounds).

The theme for round 4 was **create your own music supergroup**. I did forget to specify if the same person could perform more than one role, in which case the answer has to be "yes" though I think I probably should have limited it to the singer also playing an instrument (e.g. Sting on bass and vocals).

I was not expecting huge BPD scores on this but no musician got more than 3 points. I think the keyboard players category suffered from some of the most famous ones having uncommon letters (e.g. Jean-Michel Jarre, Elton John, Rick Wakeman, Vangelis) – no picks for him but I've just been enjoying a classic track from Tim Blake <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4buh-xrvsigv>

- 1) Vocalist – Frank Sinatra (2)
- 2) Guitarist – Jimi Hendrix (3), The Edge (2)
- 3) Bass player - Jon Entwistle (2)
- 4) Keyboards player – Keith Emerson (2)
- 5) Drummer – Shiela E (2)

Scorecard

Player	Vocals	Guitar	Bass	Keyboards	Drums	Score	Tot
Bob Gingell	Frank S inatra [2,4]	Jimmy P age [1,2]	Eric A very [1,4]	Gregg R olie [1,0]	Sheila E scovado [2,4]	[7,14]	84
Mike Pollard	Frank S inatra [2,0]	Jimi H endrix [3,0]	Jon E ntwistle [2,2]	Keith E merson [2,2]	Buddy R ich [1,2]	[10,6]	81
Roger Trethewey	Phil C ollins [1,4]	George H arrison [1,4]	Dan A driano [1,4]	Lee S hapiro [1,4]	Bobby E lliott [1,4]	[5,20]	78
Chris Hibbert	C her [1,4]	John L ennon [1,4]	Mike O ldfield [1,4]	Ian S tewart [1,4]	Sheila E scovado [2,4]	[6,20]	75
Steve Ham	Mariah C arey [1,0]	Jimi H endrix [3,2]	Jon E ntwistle [2,0]	Rod A rgent [1,0]	Neil P eart [1,0]	[8,2]	64
Charles Raymond	Stevie W onder [1,0]	Keith R ichards [1,4]	Joe O sborn [1,0]	Art N eville [1,4]	Dave G rohl [1,4]	[5,12]	63
Steve Guest	Rod S tewart [1,0]	Jimi H endrix [3,0]	Greg L ake [1,2]	Keith E merson [2,0]	Carl P almer [1,0]	[8,2]	62
John Walker	Roger D altrey [1,4]	The E dge [2,4]	Dee Dee R amone [1,0]	Gary B rooker [1,2]	Adrian Y oung [1,0]	[6,10]	58
Bob Pitman	Siouxsie S iouxs [1,4]	Roland O rzabal [1,0]	Takeshi U eda [1,4]	Steve N ieve [1,2]	Micky D olenz [1,0]	[5,10]	55
Martin Walker	Elvis P resley [1,2]	The E dge [2,4]	Kevin A yers [1,0]	Billy C urrie [1,0]	Roger E arl [1,2]	[6,8]	48
Brendan Whyte	Maddy P rior [1,0]	Bjorn U lvaeus [1,0]	Mark B edford [1,0]	Russ I rwin [1,2]	Phil C ollins [1,0]	[5,2]	38
GM Picks (non-scoring)	Freddie M ercury	Tony I ommi	S ting	Keith E merson	Buddy R ich		

Notes on Scoring

Each answer is given two scores in the format [BPD, Wordle]. A Wordle score of 4 indicates the letter is in the player's answer and in the correct position. A score of 2 indicates the letter is in the answer in a different position. Note that all the answer words do not have repeat letters, but a player's submitted word may have repeat letters, in which case both will score if the repeated letter is in the answer word (2 and 2 or 4 and 2).

Status

So as we enter the final round, Roger and Chris both Wordle to move up the leaderboard. Bob Gingell noses ahead of Mike Pollard and appears to be the only one of the top four with a chance of Wordling a second time. The categories for R5 should allow players to prioritise BPD or Wordle points.

Categories for Round 5

The theme for round 5 is **countries**.

- The “short form” country name should always be used, and for wordling ignore “The”. So it’s “The Gambia” rather than “The Republic of The Gambia” and you get a “G”.
- As per Pointless, by “country” we mean a sovereign state that is a member of the UN in its own right, except for the World Cup question (the United Kingdom has never entered, let alone won, the World Cup)

- 1) A country with a large population
- 2) A country with a small population
- 3) A country that is considered authoritarian
- 4) A country that produces oil
- 5) A country that has won the men’s or women’s football World Cup

Game end statements are welcome with your R5 orders, or you can wait till next time if you wish. I am planning to run another game shortly with more rounds, perhaps 8. The only rule change will be to bin the plurals restriction, which with hindsight seems a bit unnecessary. I will also publish the grand totals of BPD and Wordle points to see how “balanced” it is with 11 players. I think I guessed at 12 when setting the score values to (hopefully) give a 50:50 split.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS KENDO NAGASAKI - DESTINATION X - ROUND 5

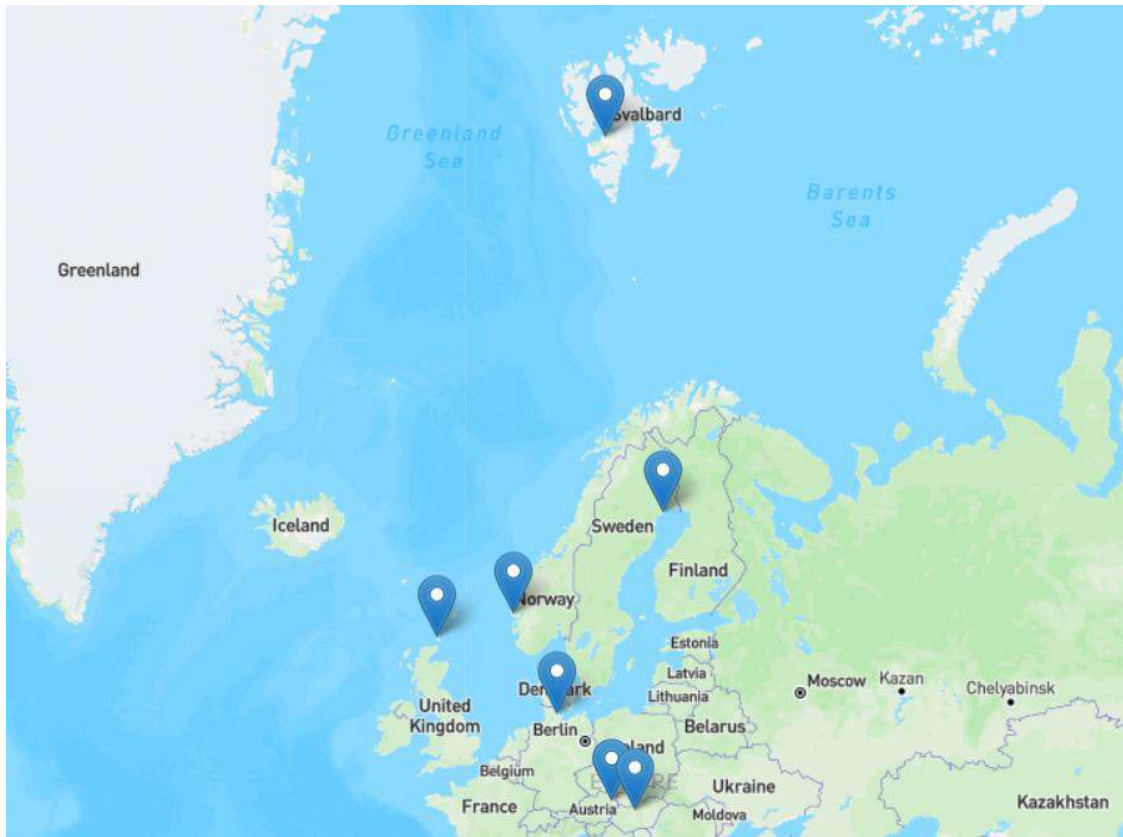


Destination X is available now on the BBC iPlayer (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0024pz8>).

The Kendo game is only loosely based on the TV show, with just the elimination element in play (no clues, not limited to Europe). At the end of rounds 1-3, nothing happens. At the end of rounds 4-6, whoever's transmitter is furthest from Kendo gets

their guess blanked out from the turn report, and they receive a *yellow card* (two yellows means elimination) from Rob Brydon the GM. At the end of rounds 7-9, it's the same except they now get a *red card* meaning elimination from the game.

This time Bob Gingell gets the yellow card and his guess is expunged from the report. He may have been furthest by a few km or his transmitter might be in Peru. Only he knows. So Bob and Chris both have to be careful next round but everyone else can go anywhere in the world.



Round 5:

Player	Who	Where	Lat	Lon
Bob Gingell		Yellow card – furthest away		
Steve Guest	Philip Pullman	Longyearbyen, Svalbard, Norway	78.22	15.65
Chris Hibbert	Monica Zetterlund	Bergen, Norway	60.389444	5.33
Dane Maslen	Jocelyn Bell Burnell	Luleå, Sweden	65.584444	22.153889
Bob Pitman	Angela Merkel	Vienna, Austria	48.2083	16.3725
Jim Reader	Suzanne Cory	Skara Brae, Orkney Islands	59.048714	-3.34175
Martin Walker	Debbie Harry	Kiel, Germany	54.323333	10.139444
Brendan Whyte	Maddy Prior	Budapest, Hungary	47.4925	19.051389

Public response to the player with the closest guess:

We were born less than a year apart, but in different years and on opposite sides of the equator. We have the same number of children, but little else in common.

Round 4:

Player	Who	Where	Lat	Lon
Bob Gingell	Al Pacino (1940-)	Palermo, Sicily	38.111111	13.351667
Steve Guest	Brian Eno (1948-)	St Petersburg, Russia	59.9375	30.308611
Chris Hibbert		Yellow card – furthest away		
Dane Maslen	Ursula von der Leyen (1958-)	Riga, Latvia	56.948889	24.106389
Bob Pitman	Mona Makram-Ebeid (1943-)	Dieveniškės, Lithuania	54.194444	25.625
Jim Reader	Betty Meehan (1933-)	Nordkapp Municipality, Norway	70.978056	25.974722
Martin Walker	Greta Garbo (1905-1990)	Stockholm, Sweden	59.329444	18.068611
Brendan Whyte	Paris Hilton (1981)	Valetta, Malta	35.898333	14.5125

Public response to the player with the closest guess:

We were born in the same country. You were born before me. Our occupations differ, but not if you use a "broad brush" to categorise us.

Round 3:

Player	Who	Where	Lat	Lon
Bob Gingell	Keith Richards (1943-)	Tripoli, Libya	32.887222	13.191389
Steve Guest	Madonna (1958-)	Madona, Latvia	56.8542	26.2206
Chris Hibbert	Johannes Kepler (1571-1630)	Vilnius, Lithuania	54.687222	25.28
Dane Maslen	Adolf Hitler (1889-1945)	Szczecin, Poland	53.4325	14.548056
Bob Pitman	Judi Dench (1934-)	Copenhagen, Denmark	55.676111	12.568333
Jim Reader	Julie Walters (1950-)	Jyvaskyla, Finland	62.241667	25.741667
Martin Walker	Patrick Moore (1923-2012)	Barcelona, Spain	41.383333	2.183333
Brendan Whyte	Diana Rigg (1938-2020)	Wake Island	19.295278	166.631111

Public response to the player with the closest guess:

We are the same sex, and reside on the same side of the Pearly Gates. Our occupations are unrelated, though I share a forename with a notable practitioner of your profession

Round 2:

Player	Who	Where	Lat	Lon
Bob Gingell	Nelson Mandela (1918-2013)	Beijing, China	39.9075	116.39723
Steve Guest	Richard III (1452-1485)	Cape York, Australia	-10.6667	142.5333
Chris Hibbert	Michael Caine (1933-)	Diego Garcia, Indian Ocean	-7.319500	72.422859
Dane Maslen	Shirley Bassey (1937-)	Beijing, China	39.9075	116.39723
Bob Pitman	Mary Tamm (1950-2012)	Odesa, Ukraine	46.485722	30.743444
Jim Reader	Yvonne Goolagong Cawley (1951-)	The Gabba, Brisbane, Australia	-27.484831	153.036166
Martin Walker	Robert De Niro (1943-)	Cairo, Egypt	30.06263	31.24967

Public response to the player with the closest guess:

We are the same sex, and whilst your transmitter is nearest to my hiding place, another's is sited close to my birthplace.

Round 1:

Player	Who	Where	Lat	Lon
Bob Gingell	Tony Blair (1953-)	Jerusalem	31.778889	35.225556
Steve Guest	Bob Marley (1945-1981)	Ganja, Azerbaijan	40.682778	46.360556
Chris Hibbert	Srinivasa Ramanujan (1887-1920)	Guatemala City	14.641667	-90.513333
Dane Maslen	Michel de Nostredame (1503-1566)	Worlds End, Hampshire	50.9	-1.0999
Bob Pitman	Peter Thornley (1941-)	Lewisham Town Hall	51.4452	-0.0208
Jim Reader	Patrick Andrade (1993)	Praia, Cape Verde Islands	14.918	-23.509
Martin Walker	Mother Theresa (1910-1997)	Agra, India	27.18	78.02

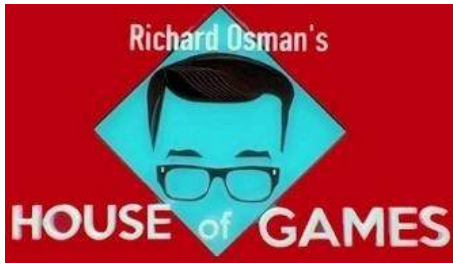
Public response to the player with the closest guess:

We were born less than 10 years apart.

Notes

Dane told me that he had met his Kendo candidate, which doesn't happen very often, and mentioned that if Kendo is hiding inside the Arctic Circle, then some circumpolar distances could come into play. I think I will choose "circumpolar" as my *Buzzword Challenge* word should I manage to slip in another game before retirement.

HOUSE OF GAMES - NO RESEARCH VERSION - ROUND 1 OF 5



A third (five-round) outing for the rather fun "guessing" version of (Richard Smith's) House of Games. All the games are ones where you have to take a punt, rather than resorting to Google or ChatGPT.

I have added in some new rounds from the TV show: *Half-arted* and *Password123*, whilst I have decided to let you off further torment from *You Spell Terrible*.

However, the games included in each round can vary so I might decide to (say) throw in a *Where is Kazakhstan?* There will be 18 questions per round (6x3) for a total of 90 in the game.

Note that whilst Richard Osman will not be hosting series 10, the BBC have not cancelled the TV show. It is possible they may replace him with multiple guest presenters, as with *Pointless*. I still haven't got to the end of series 9 on the iPlayer and there are some new games, albeit not postal-friendly ones.

R1 Questions:

R1: Distinctly Average

The player(s) closest to the correct answer get a point and the player(s) closest to the average of ALL players get a point. It is possible to get two points.

- 1) How many kilograms of moon rock were brought back to earth (in total) by the Apollo missions.
- 2) How many summer Olympics gold medals have the USA won in total?
- 3) How many vasectomies per year are performed in the UK (according to the 2024/25 statistics)?

R1: I'm Terrible at Dating

2 points if exact, otherwise 1 point for nearest player(s).

- 4) Cricket is due to return to the Olympics in 2028. In which year was it last in the games?
- 5) In which year did Attila the Hun invade Italy?
- 6) In which year was the classic video game *Spacewar!* released?

R1: And The Answer Isn't

1 point for choosing the correct answer.

- 7) Which Patti Smith song was covered by Penetration in 1978?
 - a) Because the Night
 - b) Dancing Barefoot
 - c) Free Money
 - d) Gloria
- 8) Who said: "Peace is not the absence of conflict, it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means"?
 - a) Ronald Reagan
 - b) Jimmy Carter
 - c) Dwight D Eisenhower
 - d) Harry S Truman

9) What was the name of the cat in Hong Kong Phooey?

- a) Henry
- b) Penry
- c) Cato
- d) Spot

R1: Password123

Your task is to deduce the famous person's internet password from two hints, the answers for which are concatenated together. In the TV show players get 3 guesses and after the first two are told if they have one or no parts correct. In the postal game you only get 1 guess (for 1 point) for each question.

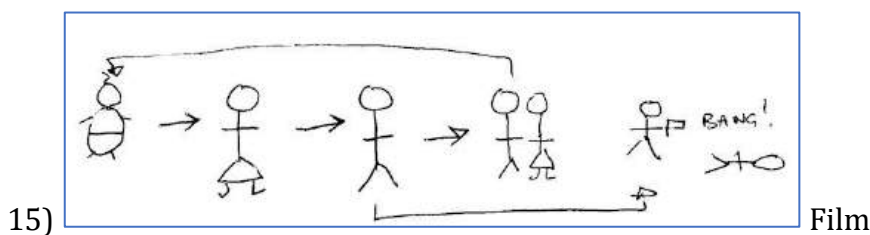
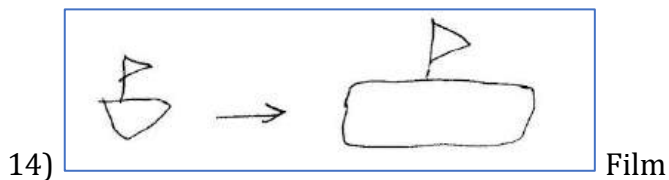
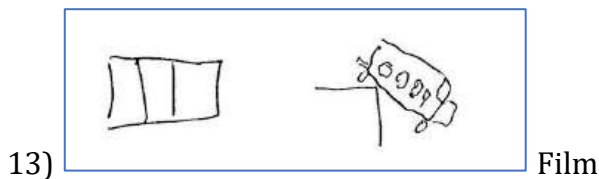
10) Lewis Hamilton: Town of birth + number of F1 drivers' championship wins

11) Tony Blair: Name of his constituency when an MP + year he helped Bush invade Iraq

12) Peter Capaldi: Surname of his character in The Thick of It + number of series with him as Dr. Who

R1: Half-arted

On the TV show three players all add to a picture which the fourth person has to guess what it is (usually a film, TV show, famous person etc.) For the postal game you just get one crappy image hand-drawn by the GM. 1 point each. 13 and 14 are very well-known, 15 a bit more "niche".



R1: Answer Smash

"Smash" the answers to the two clues together (so the end of the first is the start of the second, so "President of the USA / old-fashioned euphemism for sex" would be DONALD TRUMPY-PUMPY). 1 point for a correct answer, and unlike the TV show, you *don't* lose a point for a wrong guess.

16) Home of the Greek gods / controversial Russian all-female punk band

17) US model dubbed the "Queen of Pinups" in the 1950s / chemical herbicide and defoliant famously used by the US military in the Vietnam War

18) d12 shape / ghastly 1970s UK sitcom starring Reg Varney

CRYSTAL BALL 2026 – TRUMP OUT!



- The London Marathon was won by Sabastian Sawe (2 points to Steve and John) in under two hours (wearing special lightweight shoes) with no other picks in the top 20.
- US Masters: When I started putting together the initial zine on Saturday 11th April, McIlroy was 6 shots clear after two rounds. A 73 in round 3 has allowed the others to catch up, so I may have to change my provisional turn title of “McIlroy is Master Again”. Nope, he just squeaked it in the end, with Scheffler getting second. Rose was leading for a while but no-one picked him.
- I decided to change the title anyway due to Judd Trump (and all the other picks) getting knocked out of the snooker.
- Southampton crush Arsenal in the FA Cup quarter final, whilst Port Vale get rogered by Chelsea.
- Mercedes still on top in the F1 though Ferrari not far behind and McLaren improving. Verstappen frustrated with his Red Bull’s performance.

No	Sport	Event	Date	Richard Smith	Steve Ham	Martin Walker	Jim Reader	John Walker
1L	Tennis	Australian Open - Women's	Jan	Sabalenka [1]	Swiatek	Swiatek	Swiatek	Sabalenka [1]
2L	Winter Olympics	GB medals total	Feb	3	2	2	4 [1]	2 (JOKER)
3L	American Football	Super Bowl	Feb	Buffalo Bills	Eagles	Packers	Buccaneers	Buffalo Bills
4L	Rugby	6 Nations	Mar	England	Ireland [1]	France [2]	France [2]	France [2]
5L	Cricket	World T20	Mar	England	India [2]	India [2]	Australia (JOKER)	India [2]
6L	Athletics	London Marathon (men's)	Apr	Mutiso	Sawe [2]	Aseefa	Nageeye	Sawe [2]
7L	Golf	US Masters	Apr	Scheffler [1]	McIlroy [2]	De Chambeau	Fleetwood	Scheffler [1]
8L	Snooker	World Champion	May	Trump	Wilson	Trump	Williams	Trump
9L	Football	FA Cup: Highest placed non-Premier League team	May	Southampton (JOKER) [4]	Norwich*	Millwall	Ipswich	Coventry
10L	Football	World Cup winner	Jun	England	England	Spain	France	Spain
11L	Cycling	Tour De France	Jul	Pogacar	Pogacar (JOKER)	Pogacar (JOKER)	Pogacar	Pogacar
12L	Tennis	US Open (men)	Aug	Alcaraz	Sinner	Sinner	Sinner	Alcaraz
13	Golf	Solheim Cup	Sep	Europe	Europe	USA	Europe	USA
14	Baseball	World Series	Oct	LA Dodgers	Padres	Seattle	Cleveland	LA Dodgers
15	Formula 1	Champion Driver	Nov	Russell	Verstappen	Norris	Verstappen	Norris
TB	UK Politics	Reform opinion poll %	Dec	15%	26%	23%	22%	35%
SCORE				6	7	4	3	7

* free change

For medals 2 if exact, 1 if one off. For FA cup, there may be equals and the 3 points will be shared, so if two teams made the semi-finals, 1.5 points each, or if one made the semi-final and two the quarters, 2 points to the semi-final team and 0.5 to the two quarter-finalists.

BUS BOSS YNIS MON (BB423MON) ROUND 4

GM Bob Gingell

MARS now owns the Menai Bridge and will charge ROGER a toll to cross it. CACHU follows ROGER towards Holyhead while both also head towards the Britannia Bridge and the mainland.

MARS, orange (John Marsden): $76 - 12 = 64 - 12 = 52$.

Menai Bridge - Penrhosgarnedd; Llanfair PG - Brynsiencyn [$3+2$; $5+2 = 12$]

ROGER, green (Roger Trethewey): $78 - 12 = 66 - 12 = 54$.

Penrhos – Holyhead - Llaingoch; Rhostrehwfa - Pentre Berw [$2+2$, $1+2$; $3+2 = 12$]

CACHU, blue (Richard Smith): $74 - 12 = 62 - 12 = 50$.

Llanfachraeth - Valley (Y Falli) - Penrhos; Llangefni - Pentre Berw [$1+2$, $2+2$; $3+2 = 12$]

Bid order for Round 5: Roger, Richard, John

In-game map at <https://variablepig.org/maps/bb/ingame/BB423MON.jpg>



BUS BOSS YNIS MON (BB424MON) ROUND 4

GM Richard Smith

All three companies got their first-choice builds again. Only one company has made it Holyhead and none to the mainland as yet.

BAA Green Bob Gingell	Brynteg – Benllech - Pentraeth; Llanfachraeth - Bodedern ($2+3+1+2+2+2=12$) BANK: $64 - 12 = 52$ <i>BAA = Bob's Adventure Accelerates</i>
NYE Blue Brad Martin	Llangefni – Pentraeth; Dwyran - Brynsiencyn ($6+2+2+2=12$) BANK: $64 - 12 = 52$ <i>NYE = New, Yellow, Electric (Buses)</i>
TAFF Yellow Jim Reader	Rhostrehwfa - Pentre Berw; Llanfaethlu - Cemaes ($3+5+2+2=12$) BANK: $64 - 12 = 52$ <i>TAFF = Terrific All-round Ferries and Freight</i>

In-game map at <https://variablepig.org/maps/bb/ingame/BB424MON.jpg>

Bid order for Round 5: Jim, Brad, Bob

RAILWAY RIVALS DURHAM 1826 (RR2570DH) ROUND 2



PUFFING BILLY, LANCHESTER and GEAR all built straight lines north, though DIADEM can still claim Newcastle next round if they wish.

DIADEM also tried the tactic of building a little bit of fast track (shown as thicker line on the in-game map). This may or may not pay off, we shall see.

DIADEM also have more than a nose in front for towns to the west (the 10s and Barnard Castle).

As with previous rounds, little or no payments for line connectivity.

PUFFING BILLY
 Jim Reader
 Yellow
 2a. [5] (Q53) - - - - - Q48
 2b. [4] (Q48) - SEAHAM - - - Q44
 2c. [3] (Q44) --- Q43
 BANK: 20 +6 = 26

LANCHESTER
 Brendan Whyte
 Blue
 2a. [5] (E54) --- - - E51
 2b. [4] (E51) - - - - E47
 2c. [3] (E47) - - - E54
 BANK: 31 +-1[DIADEM, E52] +6 = 31

GEAR
 Kevin Lee
 Green
 2a. [5] (K55) - - - - - K50
 2b. [4] (K50) - - - - K46
 2c. [3] (K46) - K45; (O67) - Eaglescliffe; (N64) - O64
 BANK: 6

DIADEM
 Steve Ham
 Purple
 2a. [5] (F50) - F49 (upgraded); (F49) - - - F46 - G46
 2b. [4] (G46) - CHESTER LE STREET; (Chester le Street) - H44 (upgraded); (H44) - H43; (Y19) - WITTON LE WEAR
 2c. [3] (Z18) - Y18 (upgraded); (Y18) - - W17
 BANK: 12 +6 +6 -2 (upgrades) = 22

The in-game map is at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2570DH.jpg>

R3 Rolls are 3a) 6 3b) 3 3c) 6
 (see last issue for track upgrade rules)

RAILWAY RIVALS ZAMBIA (RR2540ZM) MORE GES

Jim Reader (BEMBA)

I thought this might be closer, but Bob's round 12 races were too good. Almost all the races were clearcut, so congratulations to Bob and thanks to Steve and Richard for the game. I thought I had made a horrible mistake not trying to connect through the DRC in round 1, but the payment costs for this were quite significant and nicely balanced the game. However, I think my delayed and limited presence in the Copperbelt was too much of a hurdle to overcome and maybe I should have tried to get another connection. Nice game.

RAILWAY RIVALS - SENEGAL & THE GAMBIA (RR2557SG) - ROUND 6



There were in fact 2 XOFs changing hands in R5 – I missed O9 (FAR to BEAR). A few more payments this time as companies try to connect the remaining specials, with LIONS and FAR not quite getting everything they wanted to being one over on the pip count.

Given the state of the map and its modest dimensions I am going with 10 points build for R7. A couple of retries required on the race generator to avoid short races (64-56 and 66 to 51).

The in-game map is available at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2557SG.jpg>

BEAR
Kevin Lee
Black

6a. [4] (U25) --- U26; (U25) - V25
6b. [6] (V25) - W26; (U26) --- - - U28
6c. [3] (Salde) --- E20 {Mauritania}
BANK: 73 -1[LIONS, U28] -1[LIONS, W26] +1(correction) = 72

LIONS
Jim Reader
Yellow

6a. [4] (U29) - SAINSOUBOU --- U31 {Mali}
6b. [6] (Mansa Konko) - V10 - - - - V5 {Zirconium};
6c. [3] (V6) – Banjul; (Dai'Aba) - Y21 {Guinea}; (Kolda) – X14 (only).
BANK: 59.5 +3 +1[BEAR, U28] +1[BEAR, W26] -1[FAR, V8] +1[FAR, V5] = 64.5

FAR
Brad Martin
Blue

6a. [4] (M10) - L10 - L11 - - Ndibene Dahra
6b. [6] (Ndibene Dahra) - - - G14 - - - Lagbar
6c. [3] (Banjul) - V5 {Zirconium}; (M10) - Touba; (Ziguinchor) - Z8 {Guinea-Bissau} (only)
BANK: 77.5 +1[LIONS, V8] -1[LIONS, V5] -1(correction) = 76.5

Races for Round 7:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Mauritania (Sp1) - Thies (26) | 2. Salde or Bakel (41) - Podor or Lagbar (13) |
| 3. Kaffrine (36) - Banjul (62) | 4. Tiebo (15) - Touba (34) |
| 5. Matam (42) - Town on Gambia River (Sp6) | 6. Kolda (53) - Dakar (22) |
| 7. Farafenni (64) - Bignonia or Dai'aba (52) | |

Enter up to 5 races and build up to 10 points of track (not 12)

RAILWAY RIVALS SYRIA (RR2566SY) ROUND 5



Going into the final build round, all the towns are now connected except for Al-Malikiya, out in the NE corner.

Quite a few foreign specials connected, but still a few to go next round.

SHIT managed to get just in front of BOOMS when heading for Deir-Es-Zor.

The in-game map is available at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2566SY.jpg>

BOB	5a. [2] (M7) - N6 - N5 {W Turkey}
Bob Gingell	5b. [5] (S6) --- - U5 - Kobani
Black	5c. [6] (Kobani) - V3 {E Turkey}; (U5) - - - - Z7
	BANK: 50 -1[SKR, U5] +1[ROGER, M12] +1[SHIT, K27] = 51
BOOMS	5a. [2] (Y20) - - A57
Jim Reader	5b. [5] (A57) - - - - F54
Orange	5c. [6] (F54) - - Deir-es-Zor --- I53; (Tartus) - F19
	BANK: 35 -1[ROGER, D55] +1[ROGER, N11] +1[SHIT, N24] -4[SHIT,G53-G54] = 32
SKR	5a. [2] (V8) - - V6
Brad Martin	5b. [5] (V6) - - V4 - <u>KOBANI</u> ; (V4) - V3 {E Turkey}; (X9) - Y10
Blue	5c. [6] (H52) - H47 - I47
	BANK: 48 +6 +1[BOB, U5] = 55
ROGER	5a. [2] (I20) - H20 {Lebanon}; (N11) - N10
Roger Trethewey	5b. [5] (N12) - M12; (J58) - - - <u>ABU KAMAL</u> - N60 {Iraq}
Green	5c. [6] (H52) - - - - H47 - I47
	BANK: 35 +6 +1[BOOMS, D55] -1[BOOMS, N11] -1[BOB, M12] +1[SHIT, E54] = 41
SHIT	5a. [2] (B52) - - D53
Michael Pargman	5b. [5] (D53) - - F54 - G54; (M21) - N21 - N22
Purple	5c. [6] (N22) - - - N25 - - - K27
	BANK: 40 -1[ROGER, E54] -1[BOOMS, N24] -1[BOB, K27] +4[BOOMS,G53-G54] = 41

Rolls for Round 6: 6a) 3 6b) 6 6c) 4

RAILWAY RIVALS BHUTAN (RR2551BT) ROUND 9

GM Bob Gingell

HAPPY scored highest and BOTI now shares second place with HEART. Totals are close so there is no obvious tallest poppy. No ties again in this Round despite one race with equal length, and all other races went to the shortest route. BOTI and HEART built some short cuts while HAPPY leapt into the south central region.

GM note: Second leapfrog!

Races for Round 9 (max 5 entries):

- R13. (66-11): HAPPY 20 -6b = 14; BOTI 6.
15. (16-#1 both G9): BOTI [8] 20 +2 = 22; HAPPY [9] 10 -2b = 8.
16. (26-42): HEART [11] 20 -2b = 18; BOTI [24] 10 +2 = 12.
17. (34-14): HAPPY [11] 20 -1ht = 19; HEART [11] 10 +1 = 11.
18. (43-62): HEART [17] 20 -6hy +1 = 15; BOTI [20] 10 -1ht = 9; HAPPY +6.
19. (53-33): HAPPY [14] 20 +3 = 23; BOTI [21] 10 -1ht -3hy = 6; HEART +1.
20. (64-52): HEART [16] 20 -6hy +1 = 15; HAPPY [21] 10 -1ht +6 = 15.
21. (#3-25): HEART [18 from T22] 20 -2b = 18; BOTI [31 from Y22] 10 +2 = 12.

Scores and builds (max 8):

- BOTI, red (Richard Smith): 181 +67 -11 = 237.
 (G40) - - G38 [-1ht]; K38 --- Trashigang; (J38) - - H37 [-1hy]; (Q11) - R11 [-1hy].
 [-8 -3 = -11]
- HEART, purple (Steve Ham): 167 +78 -8 = 237.
 (Dungkar) --- --- G29 {China}; (J39) - J40 [-1hy]; (G36) - G35. [-8 -1+1 = -8]
- HAPPY, blue (Brad Martin): 167 +85 -5 = 247.
 (P13) - - - - Daga [Leap to Damphu] - S19 - T19 - T20 - Sarpang. [-8 +3 = -5]

Leaps: HAPPY - 1 over BOTI, 1 over HEART.

Races for Round 10 (enter any 5):

22. 16 (Thimphu) – 32 (Wangdue Phodrang)
23. 22 (Tendu) – 66 (Jomotsangkha)
24. 35 (Jakar) – 55 (Samdrup Jongkhar).
25. 45 (Gelephu) – 21 (Ha)
26. 53 (Panbang) – 13 (Paro)
27. 62 (Mongar) – #4 (Disputed area)
28. #6 (Any Monastery) – 42 (Daga).

Round 10 build allowance: 6 points, excluding payments to other players.

The in-game map is at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2551BT.jpg>

RAILWAY RIVALS BHUTAN (RR2550BT) ROUND 9



A good round for BUTT sees them overtake YETI for first place. Just two uncontested races this time, with 16, 17 and 19 all desperately close. ROGER won one of the three, had he won them all then the scores would be pretty close between the three companies, but as it stands ROGER is a fair way behind going into the final three racing rounds.

Everything is now connected so all races are now possible. Note that I am still using the more generous rules for reoffers. In future games I will be using the one extra entry per two held over races rule.

	BUTT Bob Gingell Black	ROGER Roger Threthewey Green	YETI Jim Reader Yellow
R11. Lhuntse (52) - Sakteng (64)	10 [19] +8		20 [16] -8
15. Trashiyangtse (61) - Jakar (35)	20 [29]		
16. Samdrup Jongkhar (56) - Gasa (12)	20 [32] -5 +2	10 [33] -2 -1 +5	+1
17. Samdrup Jongkhar (55) - Wangdue Phodrang (32)	20 [25] +2	10 [26] -2 -1	+1
18. Laya (11) - Jomotsangkha (66)	Race not possible		
19. Ha (21) - Monasteries (S6)		20 [9] -3	10 [9] +3
20. Phuntsholing (26) - Gelephu (46)			20 [15] -2
21. Disputed Areas (S4) - Damphu (43)	10 [28] -5	20 [20] +5	

Last Turn	157	125	179
Points from Races	82	61	45
Builds	-8 +6 +2	-8 +1 -2 -1	-8 -1 +1
Points Total	239	178	216

Builds:

BUTT: (Q43) - R43 - JOMOTSANGKHA; (Y20) - - - - T17 - Damphu

ROGER: (Mongar) - - - J40; (K15) - - - K16; (Z12) - Z11 [-2 BUTT] [-1 YETI]

YETI: (F40) - - F38 - G38 - - - - Lhuntse [-1 ROGER]

Races for Round 10:

R18. Laya (11) - Jomotsangkha (66)

22. Aiports (S5) - Wangdue Phodrang (32)

23. Jomotsangkha (66) - Thimphu (15)

24. Damphu (43) - Jakar (35)

25. Nganglam (54) - Thimphu (16)

26. Disputed Areas (S4) - Lhuntse (52)

27. Gedu (24) - Gelephu (46)

28. Phuntsholing (25) - Trashiyangtse (61)

Enter up to 5 new races (plus the reoffer) and build up to 6 points of track.

Reminder: This game is not using leapfrog, but the other one (previous page) is. So far it seems the map has just about enough non-mountain hexes to make it not absolutely essential. I think modifying the legend to say leapfrog is “optional” rather than “recommended” is the only change required for a new version of the map, if there is one.

The in-game map is available at: <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2550BT.jpg>

RAILWAY RIVALS SOUTH TYROL (RR2572ST) ROUND 5

GM: Bob Gingell

STYLE and WIERER reached two cities each but NIR only reached one. The bordering provinces attracted railways: NIR headed into Belluno while STYLE started building into NordTirol in Austria. WIERER built through the mountains to Corvara and positioned itself ready to build into Trentino. A large build allowance in Round 6 should see almost all destinations connected.

GM note: There is no point bonus for reaching a special destination.

Round 5 build allowances: 4, 5, 4.

NIR, blue (Brad Martin): 54 +6 = 60.

5a. (Y22) - - - - SARNTHEIN

5b. (S51) - - - S54 - R54 - Cortina d'Ampezzo

5c. (Franzensfeste) - - D46 - D45 - C45

STYLE, red (Richard Smith): 68 +12 = 80.

5a. (Sterzing) - - C43 - - BRENNER

5b. (Brenner) - - - C38; (X26) - - X28

5c. (X28) - X29 - - - SALURN

WIERER, purple (Steve Ham): 70 +12 = 82.

5a. (Kaltern) - V27; (I55) - - - J55;

5b. (J55) - - - K55 - CORVARA; (V27) - V28;

5c. (Q46) - - ANTHOLZ; (Sand in Taufers) - N42 - O42

Round 6 build allowances: 6, 5, 6.

The in-game map is available at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2572ST.jpg>

RAILWAY RIVALS SOUTH TYROL (RR2565ST) ROUND 5



All the towns are now connected, just some specials to go. Landeck may or may not be economically viable.

STINK once again collects a parallel payment, but BUST get most of the money back for connecting Prettau.

STIFY chip away at ROGER's monopoly in the west, whilst STINK still laud it in the east.

BUST
Bob Gingell
Black

5a. [4] (L46) - Bruneck; (M44) - - M42 - N41
5b. [4] (N41) - - - PRETTAU; (T20) - T19
5c. [6] (X26) - - - X29 - - - SALURN
BANK: 47 +6 +6 -7[STINK,N41-P40] +1[STINK,T19] = 53

STIFY
Bob Pitman
Red

5a. [4] (L46) - Bruneck; (R17) - - - O19
5b. [4] (O19) - N19 - Latsch; (F46) - - D45
5c. [6] (D45) - C45 - C44 - B43; (Q18) --- Naturns
BANK: 25 -1[STINK,B43] +1[STINK,S18] = 25

STINK
Michael Pargman
Purple

5a. [4] (Sand in Taufers) - - N41 - - P40
5b. [4] (W21) - --- U20
5c. [6] (U20) - T19 - T18 - S18; (T50) - TOBLACH; (S50) - - S52
BANK: 104 +6 -1[ROGER,V20] -1[STIFY,S18] +1[STIFY,B43] -1[BUST,T19] +7[BUST,N41-P40] +1[ROGER,A46] = 126

ROGER
Roger Trethewey
Green

5a. [4] (V14) - - X13; (E15) - - E13
5b. [4] (X13) --- Y13; (E13) - D12
5c. [6] (Y13) --- - - B45 - C46
BANK: 68 +1[STINK,V20] -1[STINK,A46] = 68

Rolls for Round 6: 6a) 5 6b) 3 6c) 3

The in-game map is available at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2565ST.jpg>

BAG OF DUNGEON - RULES QUESTIONS

Bob G: My reading of the rules say that you can be tagged to help and that uses your next moves which may be in the following round. Your report and our earlier thinking was that it had to be later in the same round. Which is it?

GM: *I have been playing later in the same postal round (and will continue to do so for the rest of this game) but there is a case to allow it to carry over.*

Bob G: I have just realised that it costs 1AP to tag another adventurer, so Torvok would be unable to tag Sirrus if he spent 3AP to reach the monster. Another frustration from being unable to forgo an exploration action.

GM: *I chose the 2APs auto-discover rule for simplicity. An alternative would be characters start with a full allocation of APs then automatically use any leftover APs for discovery (that will be shown on the next dungeon map). There would probably have to be a range and/or line of site limit on this though. A bit more complex would be to allow move-discover-move-discover, perhaps with the first discovery not being usable until the next round to avoid potentially problematic conditionals.*

One advantage of the second game not filling up is the rules can be tweaked before it starts.

BAG OF DUNGEON - ROUND 6



Game rules were printed in TCD8 and are available at <https://variablepig.org/rules/bagofdungeon.html>

All of the dungeon has now been discovered, and the exit, guarded by the Dragon revealed. The Ring is now in play (guarded by a fresh monster). Adventurers no longer have to lose APs for discovery, and are now permitted to attack each other.

See also F2F rules PDF for more about what happens now, and also the rules for the “old spikey” trap that is blocking the way to the exit https://variablepig.org/rules/bod/bodrules_v3.pdf

Report for Round 6:

Turn order: Sirrus, Torvok, Alendra,

Sirrus collects the Imp’s Teeth then moves one square to the south with his remaining move.

Torvok was considering going back towards the Teeth, but with a full backpack and Sirrus having already collected the item, it was time for another fight. He runs round the corner, waving his weapon in the air, pausing only to wait for the GM to draw the monster for M6...

... it’s a Skeleton Health 12 attack 2D6+1. No other characters in tag range.

Torvok Roll	Skeleton Roll	Torvok Health	Skeleton Health	Notes
12	12	10	12	
11	9	10	10	
15	5	10	0	Skeleton “dies”

After a couple of light tippy-taps Torvok smashes the skeleton to smithereens with a single mighty blow. This reveals that the skeleton was carrying a bomb (which doesn’t go off) and a poison darts trap which does, giving Torvok 2 damage. Torvok can choose to collect the bomb and discard the fireball spell or the strength potion at the start of the next round.

Alendra goes to the healing pool, and ends her turn there in order to get healed back to full health.

Press: I pledge to continue cooperating to the end.

(but will Torvok and Sirrus?)

Round 6 Actions:

Turn order: Torvok, Alendra, Sirrus,

Discovery: No further discovery is required, so all characters have a full set of APs to use for movement, activating items, running away etc. Note that map has been rotated!

Inventory: Characters may rearrange items (no AP) cost, and characters can also swap items and this requires conditional orders from both, unless they are on the same square at the start of the turn.

Move, Collect Items, Use Items, Combat: Characters can use some or all of their remaining APs moving to known tiles. Collecting items does not cost an AP, but using items usually does (cost on tile). Combat is always the last action but remaining APs can be used to deploy items and / or escape.

The Ring is now in play. GM rolls 2D6... it’s a 4. The m4 tile now has a fresh monster guarding the Ring. All three characters are not a long way from it (though it is not a very big dungeon!)

The Red Dragon has 20 health, has a 4D6 attack, and is immune to arrows. Adventurers killed by the dragon return to their Start (unless all lives lost) but items go to the Healing Pool.

Player: Jim Reader

Character: Torvok the Barbarian

Barbarian

Your barbarian is a savage, mighty-thewed, and masterless warrior.

Actions: 5
Combat: 3 D6

Special: +1 to combat roll for every 3 points below maximum health (+1 at 7, +2 at 4, +3 at 1).

Lives: 1 Solo, 2, 3 (circled), Lives

Health:

6	7	8 (circled)	9	10
1	2	3	4	5

Monster health:

Dead!	1	2	3	4	5	6*	7	8	9	10**	11	12	13
-------	---	---	---	---	---	----	---	---	---	------	----	----	----

Torvok

aps: 5 (circled), 4, 3, 2, 1

Items: Magic Sword (+2 to CRT roll, View adjacent monster*), Fireball (2 aps, Range 1-5, 3 dice damage to all on tile), Strength Potion (1 ap, 1 use, +1 dice to CRT for one fight)

Monsters: Ogre (10 health, 2 dice +3), Skeleton (12 health, 2 dice +1)

Notes: *Take one item on kill, **Take two items on kill

Player: Chris Hibbert

Character: Alendra the Elf

Alendra the Elf

Alendra is fleet-footed and a skilled archer. She is a former Calen Taur watch commander.

Combat: 2 dice +1

Special: Dead-eye. Inflict an instant kill when you roll a 6 on a bow attack.

Lives: 1 Solo, 2, 3 (circled), Lives

Health:

6	7	8	9 (circled)	
1	2	3	4	5

Monster health:

Dead!	1	2	3	4	5	6*	7	8	9	10**	11	12	13
-------	---	---	---	---	---	----	---	---	---	------	----	----	----

Alendra

aps: 6, 5, 4 (circled), 3, 2, 1, 0

Items: Magic Shield (-2 damage), Elven Bow (2 aps, Range 1-4, 1 dice damage), Magic Boots (+1 move, Take no damage when escaping*)

Monsters: Manunny (7 health, 1 dice +4), Monk (8 health, 2 dice +4)

Notes: *Take one item on kill, **Take two items on kill

Player: Bob Gingell

Character: SIRRUS the Fighter

SIRRUS the fighter

Sirrus is a skilled warrior and renowned blademaker, brave and capable in battle.

Combat: 2 dice +2

Special: Lethal Blow. Once per game you may double your combat roll result.

Lives: 1 Solo, 2, 3 (circled), Lives

Health:

6	7	8	9	10 (circled)
1	2	3	4	5

Monster health:

Dead!	1	2	3	4	5	6*	7	8	9	10**	11	12	13
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Sirrus

aps: 5, 4, 3 (circled), 2, 1, 0

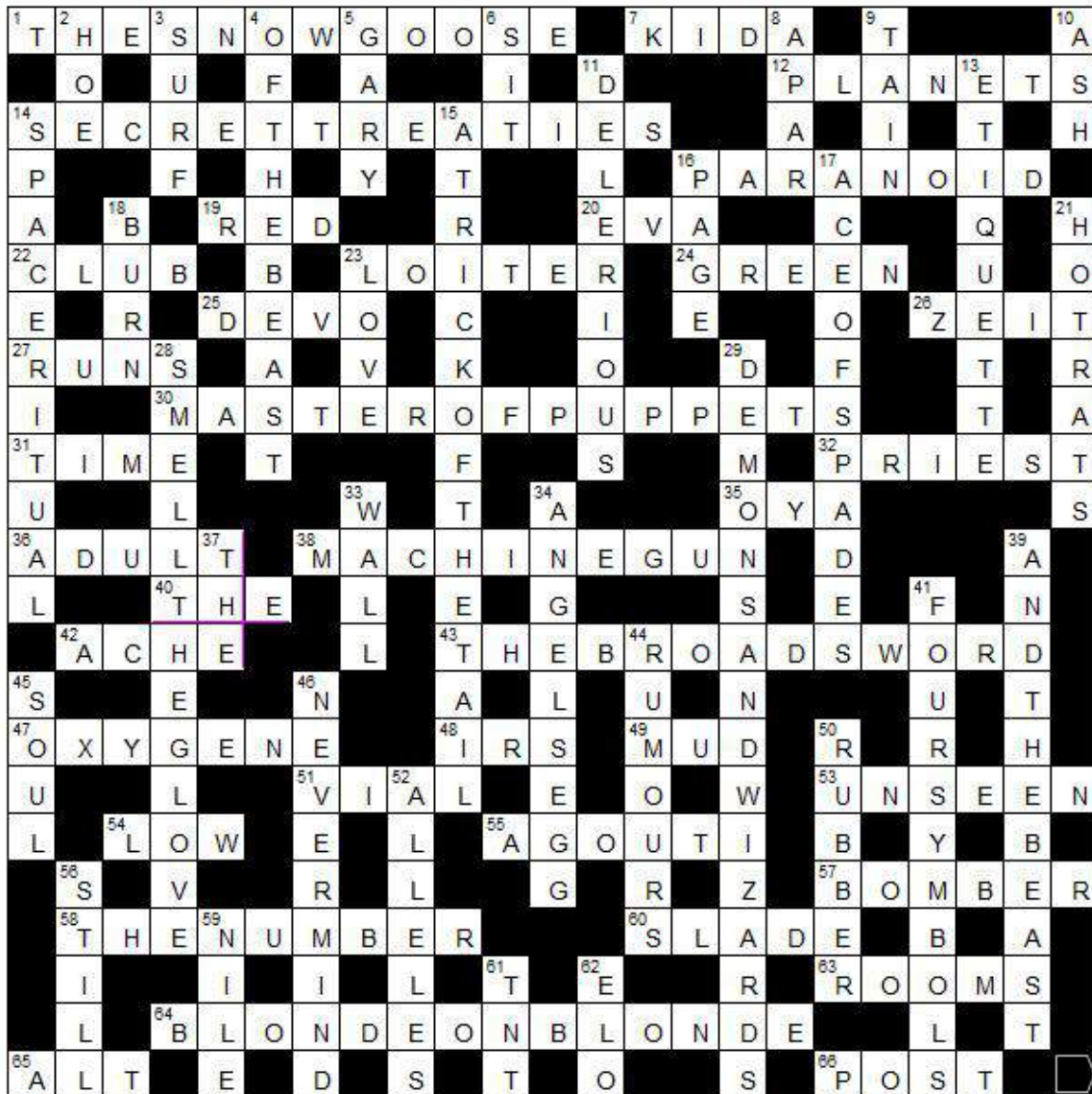
Items: Morning Star (+2 to CRT roll), Steel Armour (-1 damage), Vampire Teeth (2 aps, Drain and gain 5 health from any adventurer*), Imp's Teeth (1 ap, Swap places with another adventurer)

Monsters: Ogre (9 health, 2 dice +2), Troll (10 health, 2 dice +4)

Notes: *Take one item on kill, **Take two items on kill

ALBUM COVERS - ANSWERS

When the remaining tiles have been discovered (not many left, rest of dungeon on the other side of the trap), heroes will not have 2APs deducted.



Identify the 35 classic albums from their (redacted) covers with the grid to help. Filler words do not have to be solved but may help.

Across

1. album 1 (3,4,5)
7. album 2 (3,1)
12. album 3 (7)
14. album 4 (6,8)
16. album 5 (8)
19. album 6 (3)
20. _ Cassidy, songbird singer (3)
22. Culture _ , ghastrly pop band (4)
23. Hang around (6)
24. album 7 (5)
25. Band who like to whip it (4)
26. album 8 (4)
27. Fast sequences of guitar notes (4)
30. album 9 (6,2,7)
31. album 10 (4)
32. Judas _ , heavy metal band (6)
35. Zineland's Stereolab fan (3)
36. _ Oriented Rock (5)
- 38 & 13d. album 11 (7,3,9)
- 40 & 33d. album 12 (3,4)
42. It's a heart_ , Bonnie sang (4)
- 43 & 39d. album 13 (3,10,3,3,5)
47. album 14 (7)
48. American record label run by tax collectors? (1,1,1)

49. British pop band with tiger feet (3)
51. Bottle that's disgusting on the radio (4)
53. _ University, Discworld (6)
54. album 15 (3)
55. Central American rodent (6)
57. album 16 (6)
- 58 & 4d. album 17 (3,6,2,3,5)
60. British glam rock band who felt the noise in 1973 (5)
63. Empty _ by Gary Moore (5)
64. album 18 (6,2,6) (6)
65. _-J, indie rock band (3)
66. album 19 (4)

Down

2. Garden tool (3)
3. _ City, song by Jan & Dean (4)
4. see 58a
5. _ Numan, famous for cars (4)
6. _ Down, sung by James (3)
8. South American armadillo (4)
9. see 37d
10. Girl from Mars band (3)
11. Very happy 1983 hit for Prince (9)
13. see 38a

14. album 20 (5,6)
15. album 21 (1,5,2,3,4)
16. Jimmy _ , guitar legend (4)
17. album 22 (3,2,6)
18. album 23 (4)
21. album 24 (3,4)
23. album 25 (4)
28. album 26 (5,1,5)
29. album 27 (6,3,7)
33. see 40a
34. album 28 (6,3)
- 37 & 9d. album 29 (3,4)
39. see 43a
41. album 30 (4,7)
44. album 31 (7)
45. see 50d
46. album 32 (5)
- 50 & 45d. album 33 (6,4)
52. Variant genes that are found in all eels, slightly modified (7)
56. album 34 (5)
59. The Blue _ , band who took a walk across the rooftops (4)
61. album 35 (1,1,1)
62. Band who recorded 31a (1,1,1)

The album covers – in random order...

<p>Ace of Spades (Motorhead)</p>	<p>Machine Gun Etiquette (The Damned)</p>	<p>Low (David Bowie)</p>	<p>Love (The Cult)</p>	<p>A Trick of the Tail (Genesis)</p>
<p>Space Ritual (Hawkwind)</p>	<p>Four Symbols (a.k.a. Led Zeppelin IV)</p>	<p>Smell the Glove (Spinal Tap)</p>	<p>Kid A (Radiohead)</p>	<p>The Snow Goose (Camel)</p>
<p>Hot Rats (Frank Zappa)</p>	<p>Green (Steve Hillage)</p>	<p>Time (ELO)</p>	<p>The Wall (Pink Floyd)</p>	<p>The Broadsword and the Beast (Jethro Tull)</p>
<p>Zeit (Tangerine Dream)</p>	<p>TNT (AC/DC)</p>	<p>Planets (Eloy)</p>	<p>Blonde On Blonde (Bob Dylan)</p>	<p>Oxygene (Jean-Michel Jarre)</p>
<p>Still (Joy Division)</p>	<p>Red (King Crimson)</p>	<p>Secret Treaties (Blue Oyster Cult)</p>	<p>Rubber Soul (The Beatles)</p>	<p>Nevermind (Nirvana)</p>
<p>Demons and Wizards (Uriah Heep)</p>	<p>Post (Bjork)</p>	<p>The Number of the Beast (Iron Maiden)</p>	<p>Angels Egg (Gong)</p>	<p>Bomber (Motorhead)</p>
<p>Master of Puppets (Metallica)</p>	<p>The Tain (Horslips)</p>	<p>Burn (Deep Purple)</p>	<p>Rumours (Fleetwood Mac)</p>	<p>Paranoid (Black Sabbath)</p>



HERE BE DRAGON

Issue 79

Serpents Gambit – GM roll = 4

Richard and Bob both attempt to buy items. Chris sells some Dragons Blood resin for 2 gold and gains a skill.

Players need to pick one of the three options below.

1 Acquire: You attempt to acquire a common or rare, good.

Example Order: "**ACQUIRE Common.**"

GM Action: The GM draws a new card for you, which will be sent to you if its value is equal or less than the GM dice roll.

2 Sell Goods: You attempt to sell one or more cards from your inventory.

Order: "**SELL for x**"

You must choose one card to sell. You can choose to bluff and say the card's value is higher than it is. The GM announces your intention to the other players, revealing only the bluff value.

Bluffing: Other players can challenge your value. If no one challenges you, you get your declared gold. If you are challenged, the GM reveals the card's real value. Challenges do not count as an order.

If your value was false: You get nothing for the sale and pay a penalty of 3 gold to the challenging player.

If your value was true: You receive the full value, and the challenging player pays you a penalty of 3 gold.

3 Gain Skill Card:

Order: "**Gain Skill.**"

If the GM roll is 2 or higher, you gain the skill card, which will be sent to you.

Some skill cards will be revealed once they have been used.

Winning the game

The first player to accumulate 25 or more gold wins the game. Richard and Bob currently have 10 gold, Chris has 12.

If 2 or more players achieve this on the same turn any player with the most gold will win.

Lyrics 5 of 5 – 1 point will be added, to your singer and song points, should you get the theme.

1 Baby, I like your style / Grips on your waist, front way, back way / You know that I don't play / Streets not safe, but I never run away (2016) **One Dance - Drake**

2 Crimson dress that clings so tight / She's out of reach and out of sight / When she walks by she brightens up the neighborhood (1966) **Pretty Flamingo – Manfred Mann** (John Hopkins, Bob Pitman, Steve Guest)

3 Well I'm a-standin' on the corner in Winslow, Arizona / With such a fine sight to see / It's a girl, my lord, in a flatbed ford / Slowin' down to take a look at me (1972) **Take it Easy – The Eagles** (John Hopkins, Richard Smith, Jim Reader, Bob Pitman, Brendan Whyte (singer only), Martin Walker, Steve Guest)

4 How can you just leave me standing / Alone in a world that's so cold? (So cold) / Maybe I'm just too demanding / Maybe I'm just like my father, too bold (1984) **When Doves Cry – Prince** (Jim Reader, Bob Pitman, Chris Hibbert (singer only), Brendan Whyte, Martin Walker, Steve Guest)

5 But I got smarter, I got harder in the nick of time / Honey, I rose up from the dead, I do it all the time / I got a list of names, and yours is in red, underlined / I check it once, then I check it twice, oh (2017) **Look what you made me do – Taylor Swift**

6 Grew up in a town that is famous as a place of movie scenes / Noise is always loud, there are sirens all around and the streets are mean / If I can make it here, I can make it anywhere, that's what they say (2009) **Empire State of Mind – Jay Z ft Alicia Keys** (Bob Pitman, Martin Walker (singer only))

- 7 Go on and close the curtains / 'Cause all we need is candlelight / You and me, and a bottle of wine (1997) **Save Tonight – Eagle Eye Cherry** (Bob Pitman)
- 8 My weariness amazes me, I'm branded on my feet / I have no one to meet / And the ancient empty street's too dead for dreaming (1965) **Mr Tambourine Man – The Byrds** (John Hopkins, Bob Pitman, Steve Guest)
- 9 If I leave here tomorrow / Would you still remember me? / For I must be traveling on, now / 'Cause there's too many places I've got to see (1973) **Free Bird – Lynyrd Skynyrd** (Richard Smith, Jim Reader, Steve Guest)
- 10 You're beautiful and that's for sure / You'll never ever fade / You're lovely, but it's not for sure / And I won't ever change (2000) **I'm Like a Bird – Nellie Furtado** (Bob Pitman, Steve Guest)

Theme – Birds (John Hopkins, Richard Smith, Jim Reader, Bob Pitman, Brendan Whyte, Steve Guest)

WINNER Bob Pitman 35+15=50

Steve Guest 36 +13=49

Richard Smith 37+5=42

John Hopkins 34+7=41

Jim Reader 29+7=36

Paul Evans 29

Martin Walker 23+5=28

Brendan Whyte 20+4=24

Dane Maslen 17+0=17

Chris Hibbert 3+1=4

Tom Howell 1

Jim - 6 "New York New York" by Frank Sinatra

Chris - 3. I recognize it, but I can't name it.

4. This is sung by Prince. Is it Purple Rain?

Richard - Theme: I only recognised two this time, but on that basis it could be "birds". Might that help me guess some more? Hmm, I just thought of Rockin' Robin (tweet, twiddly-dee) and The Birdie Song (tweet, tweet, tweet, tweet), oh dear.

Brendan - 3. Know the song, no idea what the title is. The Eagles

4. when doves cry/ Prince 9. vaguely familiar

Martin - 2. Waterloo sunset - kinks 3. Take it easy - eagles 4. When doves cry - prince 6. Alicia keys? 9. Bread?

Dane - This looks like being nul points again. Five of them are too recent for me, and I don't recognise any of the ones that aren't too recent. ☹️ Indeed only one of them rings even the vaguest of bells.

4 It's just possible that this is ringing very vague bells, but alas without suggesting a tune.

Lyrics 1 of 5 – 1 point will be added, to your singer and song points, there will be no theme for this batch of five

1 They asked me how I knew my true love was true / Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh, I, of course replied (1959)

2 I can't hide / I can't hide / I can't hide (1964)

3 Pour a little sugar on it honey / Pour a little sugar on it baby (1969)

4 Together we've climbed hills and trees / Learned of love and ABCs / Skinned our hearts and skinned our knees (1974)

5 When I was young, it seemed that life was so wonderful / A miracle, oh, it was beautiful, magical (1979)

6 No April rain, no flowers bloom / No wedding Saturday within the month of June / But what it is, it's something true / Made up of these three words that I must say to you (1984)

7 I'm down on my knees, I wanna take you there / In the midnight hour, I can feel your power (1989)

8 When it's love you give / I'll be your man of good faith / Then in love you live / I'll make a stand, I won't break (1994)

9 She never drinks the water / Makes you order French Champagne / Once you've had a taste of her / You'll never be the same (1999)

10 Beauty queen of only eighteen / She had some trouble with herself (2004)

Parkrun 4 GES

Richard: Alas, Bob P and I targeting each other was fatal!

Chris - That was a surprise. On turn 3, I thought for sure I wouldn't be the only one to sprint all out, so the bonus for first was a surprise. At that point, I had enough stamina left to just follow the plan through.

Fragments GES

Richard - My strategy was to use the "What am I famous for" special all the time and resist the lure of the Word Breakdown. Not sure it worked, but it seems Chris's inspired guess for Boutros Boutros-Ghali (what a great name) won him the game. I was fooled by the second coming of Arnie in #8, and having deciphered "Austrian-born" assumed it couldn't be Arnie again and went for a banker (bank instead of back). For #7 I guessed at "famous art teacher" instead of the much more likely "famous footballer". I did also get misdirected on #1 with the Apollo astronauts. I do like this game and think the single-subject variant works well. I reckon it should appeal to fans of Hangman, By Definition. GM As warned by Richard, this game was a lot harder to GM than you might suppose. I'll probably give it another go at some stage but prepare a bit better.

Bob P - Good game, enjoyed it... except for person 5!! When I read "l'*be*a**" I read it as L'l so kept trying to find a L'Liberte or similar!

Good win for Chris!

Postscript – Sprint Finish was off to a snails start with 3 sign-ups. I think the game would be better with players choosing their cards, but still like the idea of everyone starting on a level playing field in the first game. Let's see how it goes. I'll be starting the game next issue, so anyone who wants to play will need to let me know how many cards they wish to start with. They will receive that number starting with Overtake 3 and all cards up to the number they choose. It will be an open game, so everyone will see what cards everyone has.

Sprint Finish

Overview – An 800 or 1500 metre race played over 8 turns, for 3 to 8 players.

Rules

The players will randomly be allocated a lane.

Cards

1. Overtake 3 (can only be played on turns 2 to 5)
2. Overtake 2 (cannot be played on the last turn)
3. Overtake 1
4. Save Energy (add one to next card e.g. Overtake 2 becomes Overtake 3)
5. Hold line (cannot be played on last turn)
6. Increase pace (Must be in the lead, tied or otherwise). Players need one extra to overtake. Does not affect move alongside)
7. Move alongside
8. Refresh Card
9. Dip (Played on any turn but used on the last turn. Will win any ties on the last turn. If two dips used the winner will be the player on the inside. If a joker dip is used along with a card dip, this will out dip a single dip)
10. Joker (Can be played as any card)

On the first turn, the GM places the players in a random lane position. The player(s) selecting the fewest cards will lead the race. Players selecting the same number of cards will be placed next to each other, with the lower initial lane on the inside.

On the following turns players may select one of their remaining cards. The revised track position is then reported by the GM.

Hold Line cards played first then the cards are processed from back to front, inside to outside.

If the game does not get eight players, the remainder of the runners will be made up of NPCs, who will select a random number of initial cards from 7 to 10, then will randomly play one of their cards each turn.

Anyone attempting to overtake someone who has played hold line would need an extra overtake i.e. if they played overtake one, instead of moving ahead they would move alongside.

THE TANGERINE TERROR #86/I AM THE KURIOUS KUMQUAT #16

The "Howard Bishop's House Of No Games" Issue

Idiotorial

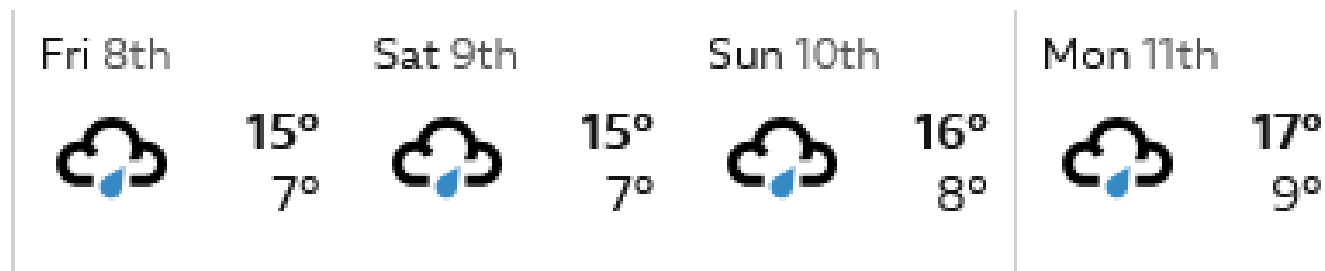
Booked into the hotel at Old Trafford for days 2-4 of the Lancs-Middlesex game next weekend.

Email from hotel : The lobby and restaurant will be closed for renovation during your stay.

Presentation from BBC weather : The warm dry spell is due to come to an end. Unsettled in the north.

Advice from GP : I think you should try to avoid alcohol altogether for 1-2 months.

Alert from Lancashire CCC : Ajeet Singh Dale (requires hamstring surgery), Luke Wells (dislocated shoulder), Arav Shetty (fractured thumb).



I say old chap, that's just not cricket.

At least we have rooms with a view of the pitch. Watching the groundsmen ambling around waiting for a break in the weather, fiddling and nurdling various bits of equipment is quietly engaging, although probably not for three days. Will take books and games and a jigsaw puzzle for Freddie to eat.

In terms of what games to take, I'm slightly limited by the audience, the fact that we're going up on the train and a smaller pool of games to choose from than I had this time last week. I availed myself of the Tabletop Rescue game rehoming service and converted 22 boxes of gaming items into hard cash. Obviously not what I would have got for them if I'd flogged them myself on eBay, but at least I managed to avoid 170 trips to the post office. Basically it was all stuff that will likely never get played, or things that other people have, or games that play better on BGA. There were several "what was I even thinking when I bought this" items. I just need to do the same thing with books, CDs, and records.

DEAD LETTER OFFICE

Postal strike. No deliveries this issue.

NG Mvoto

NAME OF THE GAME

GAME END STATEMENTS

Richard Smith

It was an enjoyable, close game with a good mix of different types of clue - some literal, some cryptic, some artwork recognition. I'm up for another go - 12 games instead of 20 sounds good. I think you should perhaps be specific that it is "no research" which I assumed it to be. In some cases you only have to remember the existence of a game rather than any details. For example, I instantly recognised the UFO album cover (not in my crossword, alas) and I knew there was a game called Obsession, despite having never played it. I'd also never played Root, but had heard of it, so that was my second guess after initially being lured into guessing Century Spice Road by the picture of Joe Root being congratulated.

The Kumquat King

I'd like to have more cryptic clues, but some of the games don't lend themselves too well to that. I think the "no research" rule works fine if there's a reasonable chance that people have at least heard of the title of the game.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
<Your name here>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

GAME 1 (3 VP)



GAME 2 (3 VP)



Here we go again. Only 12 pictures this time, but all the other rules apply. No internet research please!

Five more fools enter the Just One arena of doom. The current high score to beat is 17 (out of a possible 30 maximum). Chris, Allan, Jim, Bob, and Richard, start your engines.

At around the same time that Richard publishes the current issue of Celestial Dragon, you should each receive the words that each of your 4 other team members will need to guess. Provide a single word clue for each target word, as per the standard Just One rules. Be careful, I am an unforgiving GM; in the last game I banned BRATWURST as a clue for SAUSAGE as it's too close to a straight translation. Best to ask before you submit. A fickle finger of fudge is just enough to give your kids a tweak, etc.

FUTURE SHOCK

The Name Of The Game Mvoto is done. New Gamestart (Ogle) in this issue.

Just One is all set. Gamestart in this issue.

Also offering Ecosystem: Savanna from Genius Games. There's a waiting list open (it'll take 3-6 players). Rules are included at the end of the 'zine.

Other future possibilities are ...

L'Oaf : Conversion of the card game of trying hard not to make bread

Against Time And Death : A duet storytelling game about a forbidden relationship between two elite operatives on opposite sides of a multiversal time war. The game is based on the novella *This Is How You Lose the Time War* by Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone.

What's In Howard's Bookcase : A variation on other Howard's living space games

Around The World In 80 Days : Another (very loose) board game conversion

RULES FOR ECOSYSTEM SAVANNA

Version 1.0

PBM by Howard Bishop 2026 Copyright Genius Games 2022

These rules are for PBM only. There is no attempt to infringe the copyright and the actual rules are on BGG

OVERVIEW

Players will be drafting and placing cards over 10 turns, in order to create two (4 x 5) grids representing wildlife parks of animals and landforms to score points. Each park is scored separately and then in combination. There are 3 types of **Landform cards** and 8 types of **Animal**. Some cards will Flip others (Hunting), enabling other cards to Scavenge.

GAME SET-UP

Each player will receive two hands of 11 cards for Wildlife Park West and Wildlife Park East respectively.

ORDERS

Each player looks at their hands in turn, selecting one card to keep for each park. They then place that card in the associated grid following the placement rules (see below). The remaining cards are then passed clockwise (Park West) and anticlockwise (Park East) for the next turn.

Each park is a grid of cards 4 high and 5 wide. The first card can be placed anywhere. Subsequent cards can be placed anywhere, as long as the new card is orthogonally adjacent to an existing card and a 4 x 5 grid is maintained. At the end of the game, players will have 2 unused cards which are discarded. The parks are then scored and totalled.

SCORING (WITHIN PARK)

Ecosystem: Savanna features 3 types of **Landform** cards and 8 types of **Animal** cards. Animals and landforms are scored in the following sequence:

- **Watering Holes:** Score **2 points** for each different type of **Animal** card adjacent to the card.
- **Grasslands:** Score in groups based on the number of adjacently connected **Grassland** cards: **1/4/9/16 points** for 1/2/3/4+ **Grassland** cards. A player may score multiple groups of Grasslands, but each single continuous group of **Grassland** cards scores a maximum of 16 points.
- **Trees:** Count **2 points** for each row and column that has at least **one Tree** in it.
- **Gazelles:** Score **2 points** each. Additionally, the player with the most **Gazelles** scores **5 extra points**, and second most scores **2 extra points**. Tied players score the full points, but if there is a tie for first, second scores nothing.
- **Zebra:** Score **3 points** for each adjacent **Grassland**.
- **Giraffes:** Score **5 points** if they are adjacent to at least **one Tree**.
- **Cheetahs:** Score **3 points** for **each Gazelle** on the same diagonal (in any direction). Once the **Cheetahs** are scored, flip facedown any **Gazelles** that were used to score by at least one **Cheetah**.
- **Lions:** For each **Lion** that is adjacent to a **Grassland**, flip facedown **one** face-up **Gazelle** or **Zebra** and score **4 points**.
- **Elephants:** Score **6 points**. Lose **2 points** for each adjacent **Animal** (except other **Elephants** and flipped cards).
- **Hyenas:** Score **3 points** for each flipped card within one space either orthogonally or diagonally.
- **Vultures:** Score 4 points for each flipped card lower within the same column.



Example -

Esther's Watering Holes each score 6 points for having 3 unique adjacent Animals. She scores 9 and 1 for her Grassland groups. She has Trees in 2 different rows and 2 different columns, and scores 8. Esther earns 6 points for having 3 Gazelles, and an additional 5 points because this was the most Gazelles among ecosystems.

She scores 9 total points for her 2 Zebras, which "share" some of the Grasslands. Her Giraffes are both next to a Tree, and score 5 points each.

During Cheetah scoring, Esther scores 6 points and Flips 2 of her Gazelles face down (this does not affect Gazelle scoring).

Her Lion is next to a Grassland, so she Flips a Zebra and scores 4 points.

Esther scores 6 points from the Elephant in the corner, and 4 points from her other Elephant: she lost 2 points for the adjacent Cheetah (the Flipped Gazelle does not count against her). Her Hyena scores 6 points for the 2 Flipped cards it can reach. Esther has no Vultures.

Adding up her points, Esther has 86 points

SCORING (ACROSS PARKS)

There is an imaginary track between the two halves (parks). The players score points based on what the tourists see to the left and right as they drive north along that track. Each row of 10 cards (5 cards from Park West and 5 cards from Park East) is scored separately. Points are scored based on the number of unique cards on each row (Flipped cards don't score).

Unique cards	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Points	0	0	0	1	3	6	10	15	21	28

SubPAR 16

Pennsylvania Ramblings



We Are the Champions We finally won our bowling league. I think we have made the end of season roll-offs twice, but this is the first time we won. The final game was a roll-off against the winners of the first half of the season. Jacqueline and I were away, so we both pre-bowled (rather than getting in ringers as subs). My prebowl was average, but Jacqueline had two great games and we took the series 3-1.

White Wedding Jacqueline and I went back to England earlier in April for our niece Jemima's wedding. We took advantage of my remaining PTO (paid time off for non-Americans) to enjoy the week before visiting friends and family, including a rare Crets reunion with some of our ladies present. I also got to enjoy an Aldershot game for the first time in ages. The wedding was very nice and Jemima and Charlie looked great, despite some family shenanigans.

Fade Away and Radiate These are the last few days of my working career. I have spent much of the last year training (talented) junior chemists, mentoring my successor and updating many of our product selection charts. My last business event was a dinner seminar in Cleveland where I revisited my surprisingly popular paper about "Wine, Whisky and Coffee and their Role in Additive Selection". Hopefully, some of my legacy will continue for a while.

Old Friends Our old friend (and former Pig subber) Murray Egan has now retired and has started hiking the Appalachian trail. We caught up with him and his wife Sue near the Delaware Water Gap as he was crossing into New Jersey. It was great to see them again and Murray looked very well for someone that had already hiked over 800 miles.

Centerfield It's finally started to warm up a little and for once our opening game at the Iron Pigs wasn't freezing and even our free Phillies game was pleasant. So far, the Pigs are doing well and topping their division.

Railway Rivals (Zambia) - RR2545ZM

Game End Statements

Steve Guest (MOSI), 2nd Very close for most of the game, then Brad pulled away a bit at the end. I still mostly like the look of my line, though the extension to Mpika/Serenje turned out a waste of time and money. Those tolls to DRC add up to more than I might have realised, I think. Anyway, congratulations to Brad.

Brad Martin (ACR), 1st Thanks everyone for the game and to Jim for his GMing. I like the "rainy season" rule as it adds a little bit of variation to the standard RR track-laying experience, and nice to see that control of the "Pedicule Road" didn't sway the outcome much.

Jim Reader (GM)

Congratulations once again to Brad and commiserations to Steve and Kev and my thanks to everyone for playing. I agree with Steve that the DRC costs are significant and I think Richard got this right for the map. Brad's line along the East and Southern edge of the maps with spurs to Copper belt and Northwest is quite distinct relative to his opponents and this may have given him less competition in some races. A good game.

Railway Rivals (Estonia) - RR2542EE2

Round Eleven

	ARVO Richard <i>Blue</i>	BENDY Bob <i>Black</i>	ROGER Roger <i>Green</i>	MARS John <i>Orange</i>	ET Michael <i>Red</i>
29. Polva or Rapina (35) - Lihula or Rummu (52)	+ 4		+ 3	20 - 4 - 3	
30. Finland (Sp3) - Tapa or Tamasalu (23)	10 - 2	20 - 1 + 3		+ 1	0 + 2 + 1 - 3 - 1
31. Kunda or Narva- Joesuu (21) - Parnu (54)		+ 2	+ 2	20 - 2 - 2	
32. Paide (41) - Narva (12)	10 - 6	+ 1	+ 6		20 - 1
33. Tartu (32) - Maardu (66)	0 + 1 + 1 - 2 + 2	0 - 1 - 1 - 1	20 - 1 + 1 - 3		10 - 2 + 2 + 1 + 3
34. Killingi-Nomme or Torva (43) - Tallinn (62)	+ 3		0 - 3 + 1	20	10 - 1
35. Sweden (Sp2) - Kohtla-Jarve (16)	10 - 3	20 + 3 + 2		0 - 2	

Points from last round	175	281	130	171	104
Points from races	28	47	26	48	41
Build Costs	- 4 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1	+ 1	+ 1	+ 1	- 1 + 1
Corrections	None reported this round				
Total	195	329	157	220	145

ARVO: (X41) - X40: (Q65) - Q66 - Q67: (J55) - Tabivere.

ET: (N41) - Kivoli.

No-one else built. The sixth set and final set of races is

36. Valga (46) - Elva / Otepaa (36): 37. Parnu (55) - Western Islands (Sp1)

38. Kivoli or Mustvee (26) - Keila (64): 39. Vijandi (44) - Haapsalu (51)

40. Kohtla-Jarve (15) - Jogevea (25): 41. Sillame (13) - Tartu (31)

42. Russia (Sp4) - Tallinn (63)

Enter up to 4 races. Please send game end statements with your orders for next round.

In-game map at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2542EE2.png>

Railway Rivals (Senegal and Gambia) - RR2556SG

Round Eight

COUER (Q12) - P12 - O13 - N13 - M14 - L14 - K15 - Linguere: (Q12) - R12 - R13:

(S11) - Farafenni: (S8) - Kerewan.

SETI (Richard Toll) - - - D11 - D12 - D13 - D14 - PODOR:

(Kaffrine) - O15 - O16 - P16 - Koumpentoum.

ROGER (Kaffrine) - O15 - O16 - O17 - O18 - N18 - M19 - L19 - K20 - J20 - I21:

(Basse Santa Su) - V18: (P7) - Q7.

BOGGER: (U24) - V24 - W25 - X25 - Y26 - Kedougou: (Q15) - R15 - S15 - - - - T14.

	COUER Steve Ham <i>Purple</i>	SETI Richard Smith <i>Blue</i>	ROGER Roger <i>Black</i>	BOGGER Bob Gingell <i>Brown</i>
8. Town on Gambia River (Sp6) - Richard Toll (12)	15	0	+ 2	15 - 2
9. Koumpentoum or Velingara (51) - Dakar (22)	0 + 2	0 + 4	20 - 4 - 1	10 - 2 + 1
10. Mali (Sp2) - Janjanbureh (65)			20	
11. Thies (25) - Touba (35)		20		
12. Bassa Santa Su (66) - Saint Louis (11)			20 - 2	+ 2
13. Joal Fadiout or M'bour (31) - Tambacounda (44)	0 + 2 - 5		10 - 2 - 3	20 + 3 + 5
14. Kerewan or Mensa Konko (56) - Salde or Bakel (41)	15	0		15

Points from Last Round	85	107	62	114
Points from Races	29	24	60	67
Builds	- 11 - 2 + 2 - 1 + 1	- 11 + 3 + 2 - 5 + 2	- 12 - 2 + 5 - 2 - 2 + 1	- 12 + 1 - 1 + 2 - 1
Correction	None reported this round			
Total	103	122	110	170

The third set of races is

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 15. Kedougou (46) - Dakar (21): | 16. Touba (34) - Guinea-Bissau (Sp4) |
| 17. Foundiougne (32) - Tiebo (15): | 18. Ndibdene Dhara or Linguere (16) - Matam (42) |
| 19. Ziguinchor (55) - Banjul (62): | 20. Minerals (Sp5) - Kolda (53) |
| 21. Thies (26) - Banjul (61) | |

Enter up to 4 races and build up to 10 points of track, not including payment costs to other rivals.

In-game map at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2556SG.png>

Railway Rivals (Bhutan) - RR2552BT

Round 4

ROGER
Roger Trethewey
Black
4a) 4. (Jakar) – B33 - C33 - D33: (I12) - I11,
4b) 4. (D33) - - - E33: (I11) – H10,
4c) 4. (E33) - - - F32 - Lhuntse.
BANK: 67

BUDDHA
John Walker
Red
4a) 4. (Gasa) - N5 - N4 – LAYA: (W19) - X19,
4b) 4. (Phutsholing) - - - H20 - G21,
4c) 4. (G21) – SAMTSE: (X19) - Gelephu. (Samtse) - F19 - E19.
BANK: 51 + 6 + 6 = 63

Dzong
Chris Hibbert
Yellow
4a) 4. (Z14) – Y14 - X13 – Trongsa: (J39) - K39,
4b) 4. (Trongsa) *leap ROGER* U12 - T12 - S12 - R12 - Wangdru Phodrang,
4c) 4. (K39) – TRASHIGANG: (J39) – J40 – PEMAGATSHEL: (Lhuntse) - F32.
BANK: 50 + 6 + 6 = 62

The fifth-round die rolls are 5a) 6, 5b) 3, and 5c) 4. There has been 1 leap so far – Dzong over ROGER.

In-game map at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2552BT.png>

Railway Rivals (Durham 1826) - RR2571DH

Round Three

COP Brad Martin	3a) 6. (W22) – V22 – U23 – T23 – S24 – R24 - Q25, <i>all track upgraded</i> 3b) 5. (Q25) – <u>BARNARD CASTLE</u> : (E49) – D48 – C48 – B47 - <u>LANCHESTER</u> , <i>all track upgraded</i>
Blue / Light Blue	3c) 2. (Aycliffe) – I51. <i>All track upgraded</i> Bank: 20 + 6 + 6 – 1 (ROGER) – 6.5 (upgrades) = 25.5
DUST Richard Smith	3a) 6. (Q44) – <u>SUNDERLAND</u> : (Q44) --- Q43 - Q42 - P41, 3b) 5. (P41) - O41 - - - South Shields; O41 - N40
Red / Pink	3a) 2. (N40) - M41 - L40 Bank: 20.5 + 6 – 6.5 (upgrades) = 20
HAB Bob Gingell	3a) 6. (I43) – I42 – I41 – I40 – <u>GATESHEAD</u> <i>upgraded</i> : (I41) – J40 [upgraded]; (Z18) – Y18
Green / Light Green	3b) 5. (Gateshead) - - - <u>NEWCASTLE</u> <i>upgraded</i> : (Y18) – X17 – W17, 3a) 2. (W17) – V16 – <u>WOLSINGHAM</u> . Bank: 27.5 + 6 + 6 + 6 – 4 (upgrades) = 41.5
ROGER Roger Trethewey	3a) 6. (K44) - Washington – K42 – K41 - K40 – L39 - M39, 3b) 5. (M39) – N38 – <u>SOUTH SHIELD</u> : (K40) – J39 – Gateshead: (I59) - J59, 3a) 2. (J59) - K60 – <u>SEDGEFIELD</u> .
Black / Grey	Bank: 9 + 6 + 6 + 1 (COP) = 22.

Reminder - track can be upgraded to fast track at a cost of 10/- (or 0.5) per half hex. The first color listed for a player is for their track that has not been upgraded. The second color listed is their upgraded track. During races, a roll of 5 will be treated as a 4 on regular, not upgraded track. The minimum race length is 5 hexes. Note, Richard has changed the rules for fast track in his game, but I have chosen to leave them as originally stated for this game as the game had started.

The build allowances for the fourth round are – 4a) 3, 4b) 6, and 4c) 3.

In-game map at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2571DH.png>

Railway Rivals (Togo and Benin) - RR2575TB

Game Start

The cost for crossing the border between Togo and Benin is 4 in rounds 1 –3 (pre-WW I), 2 in rounds 4 –6 (post war rail expansion) and 1 in rounds 7 –9 (post WW II). These are paid from the player's bank. There is also a 1 pip administration cost that applies throughout the game. The bank costs apply to both racing and building in rounds 7, 8 and 9.

TOBE Bob Gingell Black	1a) 6. (Djougou) – M19 – M20 – M21 – L21 - - K22, 1b) 5. (K22) – K23 - - - J23 – <u>SOKODE</u> , 1c) 4 (Sokode) – I25 – H25: (L21) – L22 - <u>BASSILA</u> BANK: 20 – 4 (border) + 6 + 3 = 25
TB Richard Smith Blue	1a) 6. (Cotonou) - Q41 – Q40 – Q39 – Q38 - Q37 – <u>BOHICON</u> , 1b) 5. (Bohicon) - <u>ABOMEY</u> - N35 - N34 – N33 - N32, 1c) 4 (Cotonou) - A91 - - - <u>PORTO NOVO</u> . BANK: 20 + 3 + 3 + 6 = 32
ROGER Roger Trethewey Green	1a) 6. (Cotonou) – Q41 - P40 – P39 – P38 – P37 – <u>BOHICON</u> , 1b) 5. (Bohicon) - <u>ABOMEY</u> - O35 - N34 - M34 - M33, 1c) 4 (M33) – M32 – M31 – M30 - M29. BANK: 20 + 3 + 3 = 26

FLAG 1a) 6. (Lome) - - - J41 – TSEVIE - J39 - J38,
 Steve Guest 1b) 5. (J38) - J37 - J36 - I36 - I35 – ATAKPAME,
 Orange 1c) 4 (Atakpame) - I33 - - - I32.
 BANK: 20 + 3 + 6 = 29

The build allowance for round 2 is 2a) 6, 2b) 6, and 2c) 5.

In-game map at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2575TB.png>

Bus Boss (Farnham and Aldershot) - BB422FAL

Round Seven – Holdover

I made a major mistake with the races and I did not have time to send out a correction. This started with race 1 that should have been to Upper Hale (JH) and not Waverley Abbey (JC) as listed, but the error carried through and would have affected other rounds. I have recreated the round 1 (and subsequent rounds) races.

The revised first set of races is

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Farnham Town Center (4H) – Tilford (9C) | 2. Ash (KD) – Shepherd and Flock Roundabout (10S) |
| 3. Ash Vale (5S) – William Cobbett Pub (AH) | 4. Tweseldown Race Course (4D) – Rowledge (2C) |
| 5. Folly Hill (9H) – North Camp (10D) | 6. Aldershot Town Center (2S) – Wrecclesham (3C) |
| 7. Hogs Back Brewery (7S) – The Sands (8S) | 8. Farnborough (JD) – Farnham 6 th Form College (2H) |
| 9. The Bourne (7C) – Dollis Hill (9D) | |

Enter up to 5 races. The build order for round 7 is Brad, Richard, Bob, Roger and Kevin. I have players build orders on file, although these can be changed. I am very sorry for the inconvenience.

In-game map at <https://variablepig.org/maps/bb/ingame/BB422FAL.png>

Spacefiller: The Return of Totes Emoji (albums, of course!) - Answers

- 1   (60s) Pet Sounds (The Beach Boys)
- 2   (60s) Abbey Road (The Beatles)
- 3  (70s) Dark Side of the Moon (Pink Floyd)
- 4    (70s) Bat out of Hell (Meat Loaf)
- 5    (80s) Brothers in Arms (Dire Straits)
- 6   (80s) No Jacket Required (Phil Collins)
- 7   (80s) Purple Rain (Prince)
- 8    (90s) Jagged Little Pill (Alanis Morissette)

THE CELESTIAL DRAGON #16



Deadline for all games: Friday 5th June 2026

Website: Still using the Variable Pig URL: <https://variablepig.org>

The Celestial Steam Locomotive	#46	Richard Smith	richard530smith@btinternet.com
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Waiting List / Notes:

BAG OF DUNGEON - game 2: John Walker, John Hopkins 1 or 2 more wanted
 KENDO NAGASAKI (Destination X Variant) - round 5 inside, more can join
 RAILWAY RIVALS - Togo & Benin RR2576TB - Jim Reader, Brad Martin, 1 to 3 more wanted (GM will be Bob or Richard who are both playing in the game in SubPAR).
 CHOICE Suppenkasper Variant – Kevin Lee, Chris Hibbert, Steve Ham, John Walker, Michael Pargman – room for more – gamestart next issue.
 GOLDEN STRIDER Tarnished Variant 3-5 required (6-10 runners, 2 per team) – Steve Ham, John Walker
 NEW! HOUSE OF GAMES (no research) – third outing for the fun all-reader game 4-12 wanted
 NEW! RAILWAY RIVALS Westlands – Wheel of Time fantasy map, 4-5 wanted (will run 2 games if demand).

Here Be Dragons	#79	John Walker	hbdragons@btinternet.com
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Waiting List / Notes:

NEARLY THE BEST GAME IN THE WORLD – Chris Hibbert, Richard Smith, 3 more wanted
 LYRIC QUIZ – game continues – anyone can play except Mr. Google.
 WORLD RECORD 9.762 - Richard Smith, Chris Hibbert, Steve Ham – 2-5 more wanted
 SNAKES AND LADDERS - Richard Smith, Bob Gingell, Chris Hibbert, Martin Walker – at least one more wanted.
 SPRINT FINISH – New running game – Chris Hibbert, Bob Gingell, Richard Smith - 0 to 5 more wanted (will start next issue)

The Tangerine Terror	#86	Howard Bishop	laticsexile@outlook.com
I Am The Kurious Kumquat	#16		

Waiting List / Notes:

ORIGINS OF WW2 - Brendan Whyte, John Marsden - 3 more wanted
 DOS DE MAYO – 2 wanted
 JUST ONE – Game Start - Richard Smith, Allan Stagg, Jim Reader, Chris Hibbert, Bob Gingell
 NEW! ECOSYSTEM SAVANNA – rules in the zine - Richard Smith, 3-6 wanted
 NEW! NAME OF THE GAME – it's back! Any number can enter.

SubPAR	#16	Jim Reader	jim_reader@hotmail.com
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Waiting List / Notes:

BUS BOSS - Shikoku (BB418SHI) - Roger Trethewey, Brad Martin, Kevin Lee, Michael Pargman 0-2 more wanted
 BREAKING AWAY – Richard Smith, Chris Hibbert, Allan Stagg - 3 more wanted.
 BB Pays Cathar (BB4256PAY) – Brad Martin, John Marsden, Michale Pargman - 1 or 2 more wanted