

THE CELESTIAL DRAGON #5



Featuring:

THE CELESTIAL STEAM LOCOMOTIVE #35

HERE BE DRAGONS #68

SUBPAR #5

THE TANGERINE TERROR #75

I AM THE KURIOUS KUMQUAT #5

DEADLINE: Friday 7th February 2025



THE CELESTIAL STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

Track no. 35

richard530smith@btinternet.com

28th December 2024

No cat pics this time. Instead, behold my Chrimbo present, a new shiny super-duper air fryer! All that tech just to cook a potato waffle? Well, you can cook larger items by removing the central partition. I think air fryers are great! The food is beautifully cooked with little or no added oil and around 40% of the electricity of a conventional electric oven.

The map I was keeping quiet about is Bhutan (not far from Goa) and is now complete thanks to great input from Bob and Jim, and we are planning to offer 3 games.

I have now uploaded the map to the website <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/bhutanrr.html>. Due to the shape I decided to have 3 sections for the A4 printer sellotape version.

I was dubious that this one would work. There are currently no passenger railways in Bhutan due to there being lots of mountains and not many people. I have cheated by treating lesser mountainous hexes as open, this allowing space for 3 companies only to compete for the new franchise. Because Bhutan is popular with tourists, connections to airports and temples / monasteries are important, and the government is anticipating an end to the border squabbles with China.

It looks like I made the wrong call on Christmas deadline for this issue. I really wanted the orders in before I abandoned my computer (on 23rd December) for a few days for Christmas festivities, and so would not be able to answer queries or be the *Kendo Genie*.

With the zine going out on the 26th November a 22nd December deadline would still have been *almost* 4 weeks for players to do orders. Instead I stuck with the "*first Friday that is at least 4 weeks*" formula and set the 27th, with a note asking for earlier orders if possible, assuming people would not want to do their orders during seasonal festivities. (*Family Fortunes failure noise*)

So with 2025 about to start, am I optimistic about the future? Well not really. Quite a few of the [20 Ways the World Could End](#) are looking more and more likely to happen. I rather "like" the *Terminatoresque* idea of AI deciding that the best way to ensure the survival of the planet and its ecosystem is to wipe out the cause of most of the trouble, the human race.

And finally, a word about Southampton FC:
Bollocks.

THE LETTERS BIT



STEVE HAM

If you are after a recommendation of some TV to binge on I can very much recommend *The Americans*, which was made 2013 to 2018. It's about two Russian spies living near Washington DC and their FBI neighbour/friend. There are 6 seasons, the first five is 13 episodes, the final season is 10 - so 75 episodes in total.

The first season is OTT on nudity, adult themes and gore, but once that eases off from season 2 the show focuses on strong plot lines for both work and family issues (they have two teenage kids) which span the seasons, and is better for it. You're on the side of the Russians, but you know they'll lose eventually.

We managed to binge watch the whole lot in the month of November, which didn't include much going out as a result. I don't know why I didn't hear of it when it came out but you can catch all episodes on All 4.

I intend to give The Americans a try. I don't like to watch more than one episode a day of anything so it may take some time to watch them all (if I like the show enough to do so).

MICHAEL PARGMAN

I hope you had a nice Christmas and wish you a Happy New Year. I spent Christmas with my brother and his family and also his birthday, the day after. Right now they and some friends have rented a house on the land of a castle some one and a half hours drive from Stockholm. I will go there and visit for New Year.

This year I spent Christmas at the newly refurbished Smith HQ in Dibden Purlieu. The last two Christmases with my family had been in a rented holiday home (in the New Forest) due to building work. I found this quite enjoyable though rather expensive, as only two of us chipped in for the rent.

BOB PITMAN

Hi Richard, I liked *House of the Dragon* s2 overall. I thought the intrigues and shifting alliances were on a par with *GoT*. The aftermath of the battle over the castle of Rook's Rest was the key bit of the series for me... and the final episode with various armies on the march was a little bit rushed and muddled. I am looking forward to s3 though!

“Showtrial (s2)” was excellent, we had missed s1 but have gone back and watched it since. Both very good watches... I thought Sherwood was good but not as good as s1! I managed to finish “Black Sails” which was an excellent series, big production values, great storyline, superbly acted and it left us with a clear lead into “Treasure Island” which is exactly what a prequel is supposed to do.

I also really enjoyed “The Penguin”. I had watched the new “Batman” movie beforehand (and “Joker” but that's not so directly relevant). I have to say that Colin Farrell (who isn't a great actor IMHO) is absolutely amazing in it, as are the rest of the cast, it's Batman without the gadgets or kooky villains, much more like the gritty Christian Bale Batman universe than Adam West's wonderful entertainment.

Currently working through s2 of “Lord of the Rings The Rings of Power” which is living up to expectations. I hated “Nightsleeper” there were so many plot holes and the acting was very weak, worst bit of TV of the year so far... closely followed by the woeful “Day of the Jackal” which is rescued only by the strength of Eddie Redmayne's performance, the woman in it kills the drama for me - “snipers are my patch” but she knows nothing about British army snipers which you would have thought was the easy bit of MI6 “sniper” WIKI to get hold of and then she screws up everything else she goes near while maintaining her wrong-headed “better than everyone else” persona.

The actress also appeared as the new 007 in “No Time to Die” and in “Captain Marvel” and “Doctor Strange and the Multiverse of Madness” where she seems to play the same character as in “Jackal”. As far as I can tell the only part of her talent that is growing is her caboose, which is huge in “Jackal”, but maybe she's a hood actress and is just getting crap characters to portray?!

We enjoyed “Outer Range (s2)”, “Fargo (s5)” “Sweetpea (s1)”, “The Last of Us (s1)”, “Fallout (s1)” and “The Devil's Hour”, all worth a look. But the awful “Nightsleeper” stands head and shoulders above its nearest rival for crap drama of the year!

I have reviewed House of the Dragon (s2) in this issue. I've not seen many of the shows you list apart from Fargo which I've been a fan of for some time.

I read your bit about the cats moving to a dog house... are you moving house Richard or just your cats? Since we lost our cat early this year we have been adopted by a neighbour's cat who now makes itself at home here and, as far as we can tell, goes home for food only.

Raymond and Riley are my sister's cats, in my care for an extended period due to the building work. They were due to be returned over Christmas, but there is a problem and it looks like I may well end up having to keep them permanently (to be confirmed next issue).

As for your adopted cat, whilst cats often have more than one home, it sounds like it could be distressing for the owner: "Tiddles doesn't love me anymore, I give him his Kit-e-Kat then he disappears for hours!"

Musical find of the year for us is Michael Kiwanuka, we first caught him on the BBC's Glastonbury coverage. I shall send my “Best buys” of 2024 later but I have slowly moved back to mostly buying vinyl since the record shop opened in Fareham a few years back.

I do sometimes regret giving away my vinyl collection when I moved house, but given the size of my current property, storage for 700 LPs would be a problem - my 2000 CDs take up a whole wall!

BRAD MARTIN

Nice cat photos!

I do feel a bit guilty about overusing cat pictures, as they (and videos of course) are somewhat ubiquitous on the internet, but I thought as the cats were about to go I would use them one last time in the zine. This issue's cover image is actually Raymond on a cushion but put through Paint Shop Pro's Kaleidoscope filter. So not really a cat picture. The air fryer picture is my second to feature in CSL, after the first one Brendan Whyte said he thought the pizza halves looked like diseased lungs!

VIDEO REVIEWS

Blake's 7 - The Collection Series 1 (blu-ray) (2024)



For those of you who were on the Planet Tharg in 1978, Blake's 7 is sometimes referred to as "The Subversive Star Trek". Instead of being a beacon of morality and virtue, the Federation is an oppressive and cruel regime that tortures, drugs and brainwashes its people.

Roj Blake is a rebel leader who the Federation calculated it was better not to execute, so they reprogrammed his brain instead. When this failed he was framed for crimes and sent to the penal planet Cygnus Alpha.

On the way he meets up with the cold, calculating Avon, the cowardly Vila, the resourceful Jenna and the burly Gan. They escape and capture the Liberator (an advanced alien ship) and the rest is history...

Great story, great characters, terrible special effects. This new enhanced version is only the first series so far, and they've done a cracking job on improving the picture and sound, and replacing some of the crappy effects. On the

main menu you can toggle the new effects on and off to see the difference!

Huge amounts of extras which will be loved by aficionados of the show, but they do mean the boxed set is 6 discs and £40. I think that was what I paid for the regular DVD set of all four series a while back.

Note that the cover picture shows seven people, but the short-haired woman in the centre is one of the baddies - the magnificently evil Servalan. No.7 in the rebel crew is the computer, Zen (top right).

House of the Dragon Season 2 (blu-ray) (2024)

The second instalment of the Game of Thrones prequel took a while to appear on blu-ray, but was worth the wait.

The sets and costumes are absolutely superb and the acting is first rate too. The dragons are brilliantly animated and interact with the humans seamlessly.

My only gripe is the first two episodes are rather slow with very little action. I understand the show is meant to be a bit more cerebral than GoT, so viewers shouldn't expect grisly deaths and sex scenes all the time, but I was getting a bit bored.

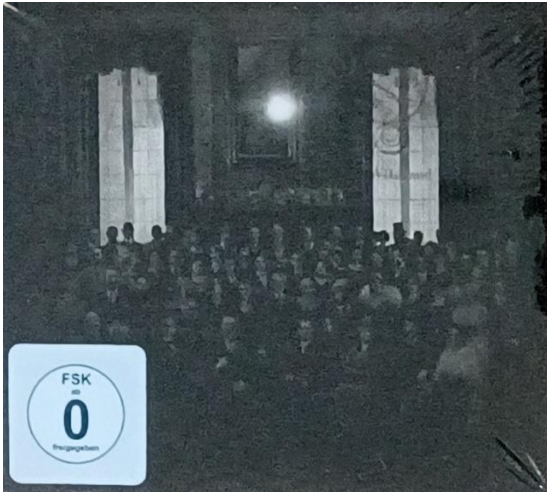
In the fourth episode we finally get a dragon fight (three beasts involved) and in later episodes some humans get roasted, some in battle and others trying to become dragon riders.

The plot expertly builds for the impending war, with the ending of the final episode pretty much guaranteeing you will want to buy season 3, but this may not be out until 2026.



ALBUM REVIEWS

Opeth - The Last Will and Testament (2024)



The cookie monster is back! The last Opeth album to feature "death" vocals was *Watershed* in 2008. However, the band have not rolled back the clock to repeat *Blackwater Park*, *Deliverance* or *Ghost Reveries*, rather the music combines the more playful, proggy feel of more recent albums like *Sorceress* and *In Cauda Venenum*, with some of the classic Opeth sound in a fresh and vibrant way.

The tracks are very nerdily entitled §1 to §7, these making up the sections of the will document, with *A Story Never Told* as a sort of postscript. In Swedish the word for the symbol is *paragraf* (rather than *section*) and the tracks are referred to as *Paragraph x* rather than *Section x*...

*"As part of paragraph seven I bestow upon you
Both a number of artifacts of immense personal value to me
Wearing the family crest
I hope they can serve as a reminder of the fragility of heritage"*

(spoken word parts performed by Ian Anderson who also gets his flute out)

Lyrically, it takes a bit of effort to follow at first, repeat listens being rewarded. No tracks are obvious favourites for me as they all have lots going on such as the blazing guitar solos in §6. The opening track <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bwDrIelXirY> is quite indicative of the whole record.

I think album is Opeth's best for a while and puts them "back on the map".

Weather Systems - Ocean Without a Shore (2024)

The last Anathema album to come out was *The Optimist* in 2017, with the band folding two years later. Five years on Daniel Cavanagh is back with a new band named after one of Anathema's albums.

The CD is presented in two parts: *First Steps* is very similar to earlier work, and there are even continuations of much-loved tracks *Untouchable* and *Are You There?* Part two is *Learning to Fly* where the music takes on a new direction, albeit not a major divergence from the Anathema sound.

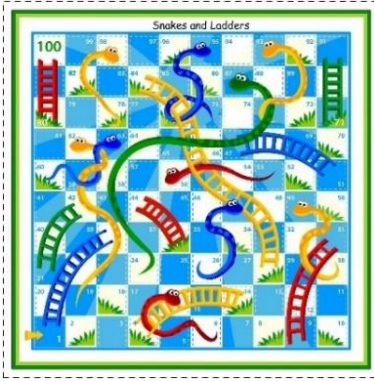
The tracks are filled with great vocals, some heavy guitars plus orchestral arrangements, all done in an atmospheric style.



Very enjoyable apart from my usual gripe about overloud production. Even on YouTube (where the sound tends to be less compressed), the otherwise excellent track *Do Angels Sing Like Rain?* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4Hh5u5X3I4> is painful to the ears (on headphones) for large parts.

Next issue: *Absolute Elsewhere* by Blood Incantation and *Ship to Shore* by Richard Thompson.

SNAKES AND LADDERS – BLUE-GREEN VARIANT - ROUND 3



<https://variablepig.org/rules/snakes.html>

The rules were also printed in Variable Pig 208.

For each round you *must* choose a number from 1 to 6 (that you have not already used) and you *may* also open a portal at a square number of your choice. You can open up to two portals per set of 6 dice, and you can open two portals on the same turn if you wish. Portals will transport players on the blue board to the same number on green board and *vice-versa*. Portals are resolved before snakes and ladders.

All players started on the blue board at square zero, which is tacked on the bottom of squares 1-100 which are the regular 10x10 arrangement.

Note that I'm not sending reminders of remaining numbers, it's not hard to keep track yourself. However I will tell you what numbers you have used (by email) on request.

The *Roborallyesque* order of events is:

- 1) Players move the dice number chosen on their current board
- 2) Portals open (potentially moving players to the other board), then close
- 3) Snakes and Ladders become active

No portals opened this round.

John shins up the nearly worn-out ladder to green 37, and Tom finds a fresh ladder on blue. This leaves Chris the only player still on the bottom row. Is Martin going to get snaked? Not yet as he finds his third ladder out of three rolls. Does he know the "rules" or is it luck?

Player	Start	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	Portal keys left
Bob Gingell	0	3	37	41				1
Chris Hibbert	0	0	1	6				1
Tom Howell	0	5	8	45				2
John Walker	0	0	1	37				1
Martin Walker	0	37	58	78				1

FRAGMENTS: BOOIFUL BOOKS - ROUND 2



This is the Categories Variant <https://variablepig.org/rules/fragments.html> and it's the one-category sub-variant: All the answers are books, and the additional specials are to reveal the book's genre or the quarter century (e.g. 1975-99) it was first published. Any number can play and joining in late is a not a great disadvantage.

Two more books will be added at the end of rounds 1-6, and there will be 8 rounds in total, or less if a player reaches 50 points before then.

So orders are, for each book, you can:

(guess at the answer) OR (ask for a letter to be revealed by position (e.g. no. 7) OR letter (e.g. an S) OR

(use a special which can be to ask for the clue's word breakdown [number of words and number of letters in each word] OR the quarter century OR the genre). You may only play a special on one book.

Example orders:

Book 1) Reveal a z (if there is no z, nothing is revealed, if more than one z, GM dices)

Book 2) Give me the quarter-century of publication (e.g. 1900-1924, 1925-1949 etc. - sent privately)

Book 3) Guess at "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance" by Robert M Pirsig (x points if correct)

Book 4) Reveal character 42 (done before random 10% determined)

There were no successful guesses this round, and one wrong 'un:

- Book 1 is not *A Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess

Books 1 and 2 are now worth 8 points if guessed correctly, and 3 and 4 are worth 9 with the newly added 5 and 6 worth 10. Note that I will reveal incorrect guesses (the guesser will not be exposed and is not "out" of that book) but not what players asked for in terms of letters to be revealed or "specials". Not getting a requested letter for a book can be useful for elimination purposes, but asking for a character number that is already revealed (the letters are grouped in fives with milestones every 20 to aid positioning) has no effect.

Note that this exact variant has not been played before (despite Allan Stagg's game being over 30 years old) so it's not obvious which of the "specials" is best - the word breakdown is helpful with all variants but for this one, the genre or quarter-century of publication could be a big help when you have more than one book in mind.

Player	Book 1	Book 2	Book 3	Book 4	Total
Howard Bishop	-	-	-	-	0
Bob Gingell	-	-	-	-	0
Chris Hibbert	-	-	-	-	0
Andy Lischett	-	-	-	-	0
Michael Pargman	-	-	-	-	0
Bob Pitman	-	-	-	-	0
John Walker	-	-	-	-	0
Brendan Whyte	-	-	-	-	0

I have applied the letter revelation requests to books 1, 2, 3 and 4, plus a random 10% of the remaining unknown letters, whilst books 5 and 6 join the train. I think 1 and 2 are now looking quite gettable, but of course I know the answers...

Book 1: W*ns* o**** t*]*** *****a (20) ***** tyu** e**h* ***al (40) c**** *lo** t*ta* ****i (60)
e* ***le **y** *mn* (80) p* *t*** *r**h ** [97 letters, 8 points]

Book 2: A*ayi ***** **eof *d*er (20) ti**** **a** sman* ***** (40) *B*o* **nD* **in [54 letters, 8 points]

Book 3: Se**n ***Yo **s** **m** (20) ***** st*** ***** **a* (40) ***dt h**** **ex* **a** (60)
***** **e*w ***** **e** (80) ****r ***** a***** (100) **o** *a**a l**d* ***** (120) **** [124 letters, 9 points]

Book 4: *h** o ***s* ***** **r* (20) n**** i**** ***** **i* (40) g***** ***** *t*** ***** (60) *****
***** **Gr ***** (80) **s** e**** tot** *a*** (100) **r*a n [106 letters, 9 points]

Book 5: *y*** ***** ***** **v* (20) ***** ***** ***** **]* (40) ***** **f* **s** ***** (60) **a**
***** i*t** ***** (80) ***** n**** ***** *s*** (100) * [101 letters, 10 points]

Book 6: T**** ***** **i* ***** (20) **o** ***h* ***** ***** (40) ***** **e* [49 letters, 10 points]

CHOICE - SUPPENKASPER VARIANT - ROUNDS 7-9



<https://variablepig.org/rules/choice.html>

As per the standard game, except that only **7 Würfels** are allowed, and each player has 6 special cards that can be played once per game:

- FdH: Remove any two numbers from the five, leaving one pair plus 1 possible Würfel
- Null: Do not take a Würfel this round
- KUR: Take a Würfel but no numbers this round
- -1: Refuse all the numbers this round
- -2: Refuse all the numbers and decrement the count of one of your Würfels
- Suppen-Kasper: Create an extra round from your leftovers plate

Player	Round 7	Round 8	Round 9
Bob Gingell	FdH remove 1,5 (1+4)=5 w1	(3+5)=8, (4+4)=8 w2	(2+6)=8, (4+4)=8 w3
Steve Ham	KUR w1	(3+5)=8, (4+4)=8 w2	(2+4)=6, (3+4)=7 w6
Chris Hibbert	(1+4)=5, (1+5)=6 Null	-1	(2+4)=6, (4+6)=10 w3
Kevin Lee	(1+4)=5, (1+5)=6 d1	(2+5)=7, (4+4)=8 w3	(2+4)=6, (3+4)=7 w6
Dane Maslen	-1	(2+5)=7, (3+4)=7 w4	(2+3)=5, (4+6)=10 w4
Michael Pargman	-1	FdH remove 4,5 (2+3)=5 w4	(2+3)=5, (4+6)=10 w4
Roger Trethewey	FdH remove 1,5 (1+4)=5 d1	(2+5)=7, (2+3)=7 w4	(2+6)=8, (4+4)=8 w3
John Walker	KUR w5	(2+5)=7, (4+4)=8 w3	(2+6)=8, (4+4)=8 w3

Player	Score	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Würfels	Würfels	Würfels
Bob Gingell	-200				5		2	5		5			11-----	2222---	333----
Steve Ham	-160					4	5	6					1111--	22-----	666----
Chris Hibbert	-360		2		3	6				5			22-----	33-----	666----
Kevin Lee	-740				4	2	7	4		1			222----	3-----	66----
Dane Maslen	+60				5		5			6			2222---	33-----	44-----
Michael Pargman	-90				6		3			6			2222---	33-----	44-----
Roger Trethewey	-200				5		5	5		2			222----	333----	66-----
John Walker	-1000			2		3	2	4		4			11-----	3333---	55-----

Player	FdH	Null	Kur	-1	-2	Sup	Leftovers Plate
Bob Gingell	x						1,5
Steve Ham	x		x			enabled	4,6,1,1,4,5
Chris Hibbert		x		x		enabled	1,2,3,4,4,5
Kevin Lee							
Dane Maslen				x		enabled	1,1,1,4,5
Michael Pargman	x			x		enabled	1,1,1,4,5,4,5
Roger Trethewey	x						1,5
John Walker	x		x			enabled	1,4,1,1,1,4

New Rolls:

R10: 1,2,5,5,6

R11: 1,2,4,5,5

R12: 2,3,3,4,6

As expected, R7's dodgy rolls were dodged with the -1 card and others this time. Dane is the first to go positive whilst John still has work to do on *minus a grand*. Will anyone start nines?

CRYSTAL BALL 2025 - 49ERS FALL



No	Sport	Event	Date	Richard Smith	Jim Reader	John Walker	Martin Walker	Steve Ham
1	Tennis	Australian Open - Men's singles	Jan	Alcaraz	Sinner	Alcaraz	Alcaraz	Sinner
2	American Football	Super Bowl	Feb	San Francisco	Kansas City	San Francisco	Detroit Lions	Kansas City
3	Rugby	6 Nations	Mar	England	France	Ireland	Scotland	Ireland
4	Athletics	World Indoor US medals	Mar	22	25	20	20	24
5	Athletics	World Indoor GB medals	Mar	6	8	4	10	7
6	Golf	US Masters	April	Scheffler	Schuaffele	Scheffler	McIlroy	Kepka
7	Snooker	World Champion	May	Trump	Williams	Trump	O'Sullivan	Allen
8	Football	English Premier League	May	Arsenal	Liverpool	Man City	Liverpool	Man City
9	Football	Southampton EPL final position	May	17th	15th	20th	18th	19th
10	Basketball	NBA Champs	June	Boston Celtics	Philadelphia	Boston Celtics	Boston Celtics	Denver Nuggets
11	Cycling	Tour De France	July	Pogacar	Hirschi	Pogacar	Pogacar	Vingegaard
12	Golf	Ryder Cup	Sept	Europe	USA	USA	USA	USA
13	Baseball	World Series	Oct	LA Dodgers	Cleveland	LA Dodgers	NY Yankees	NY Yankees
14	Formula 1	Winning Constructor	Nov	McLaren	McLaren	McLaren	McLaren	Aston Martin
TB	UK economy	Base Interest Rate	Dec	2.5%	2.25%	4%	3.5%	3.75%
SCORE				0	0	0	0	0

HOUSE OF GAMES - NO RESEARCH VERSION - GAME END STATEMENTS

GM: The TV show is enjoyable because it has a mixture of different games, some of them are designed for buzzer contests, so are not likely to work postally. The slower rounds like *Where is Kazakhstan, I'm Terrible at Dating* and *Distinctly Average* which generally involve some guesswork are ideal postal fodder, provided research is not allowed. The pairs and other interactive rounds could perhaps be simulated postally with some mechanism. Of the new games for series 8, I think *Half-arted* might work but perhaps as a game in its own right, using a mechanism similar to Name of the Game but instead of a fresh picture, the existing drawing is expanded to make it easier to guess.

BOB PITMAN: Thanks for the running the game, Richard. I must admit to spending more time than is healthy staring at the questions you pose in this game. I don't know why but when you set "answer smash" type mind game questions sitting and staring until the cosmos reaches into your head and whispers an answer seems to work for me ;-) the same slow brain blank technique also works on your Sound Charades game! I am pleased to have won as I find some of the games pretty challenging! Thanks all.

JIM READER: A fun game, although maybe a little tough for non-UK residents. I was surprised to get third place given the lack of research so I guess my wild guesses weren't too bad.

JOHN WALKER: As always a really enjoyable test. Thanks for the effort this takes to construct.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS KENDO NAGASAKI - ROUND 2



This time it's the Three Wishes variant, with one of the wishes changed from last time - see <https://variablepig.org/rules/kendo.html>.

You can ask the *Kendo Genie* to help you three times in the game. Each wish can only be used once, and only one wish can be granted per round. Anyone using a wish is emailed the result promptly so it can be used for the current orders (so you need to do it *before* the deadline!)

You can ask the genie for the "bonus clue" (to Kendo's identity) for the round, who was the closest person in the previous round, or how close you were last time (e.g. 3rd nearest). When a wish is used, the turn report will mention that player x used a wish, but not which one.

Any number can play, just send in a guess for the name and location of Kendo. As before, both the person and the place must have a Wikipedia entry. The person can be alive or dead but must not be fictitious or non-human.

Round 2:

Player	Who	Where	Lat	Lon
Bob Gingell	Simón Bolívar (1783-1830)	Medellín, Columbia	6.230833	-75.590556
Steve Guest*	Alexei Sayle (1952-)	Barnsley, UK	53.5547	-1.4791
Chris Hibbert	Pol Pot (1925-1998)	Phnom Penh	11.569444	104.921111
Tom Howell	Carl Friedrich Gauss (1777-1855)	Dakhla, Western Sahara	23.708056	-15.945556
Dane Maslen	Edward Jenner (1749-1823)	Stockholm, Sweden	59.329444	18.068611
Jim Reader	Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821)	Ulsan, South Korea	35.55	129.316667
Martin Walker	Adam Smith (economist) (1723-1790)	Darwin, Australia	-12.438056	130.841111
Brendan Whyte	Empress Dowager Cixi (1835-1908)	Kinshasa, Congo	-4.321944	15.311944

* Used a wish this round

Public response to the player with the closest guess: *We were born more than 500 but less than 1000 miles apart (as the crow flies).*

Round 1:

Player	Who	Where	Lat	Lon
Bob Gingell	Lewis Carroll (1832-1898)	Alice Springs, Australia	-23.7	133.87
Steve Guest	Hanna Diyab (1688-1763)*	Ottoman, Syria	34.0	37.0
Chris Hibbert	Karch Kiraly (1960-)	Sevastopol, Ukraine	44.605	33.5225
Tom Howell	Robert F. Kennedy Jr. (1954-)	Cape Cod, USA	41.68	-70.2
Dane Maslen	Donald Trump (1946-)	Hell, Norway	63.4444	10.9227
Jim Reader	Lee Harvey Oswald (1939-1963)	Tristan da Cunha	-37.115	-12.285
Martin Walker	Lindsay Buckingham (1949-)	Athens, Greece	37.984167	23.728056
Brendan Whyte	Diana Rigg (1938-2020)	Nagasaki, Japan	32.744722	129.873611

* Exact birth and death dates are not known, for game purposes I'm using DOB=1st January 1688 and DOD=31st December 1763

Public response to the player with the closest guess: *We were born on different continents and in different centuries.*

DILEMMAS - PRELIMS OVER - TIME FOR QUESTIONS



Dilemmas is back! But this time with two changes to the rules, see <https://variablepig.org/rules/dilemmas.html>

Answers will not be anonymous for this game, you will know who supplied which answer (yes this may result in some tactical voting towards the end).

I have received 8 questions, two of which are nearly the same so I have added 3 to make 10 and both submitters of the similar questions will score points.

Q1. Would you rather have an artificial arm or an artificial leg? (Bob G / Steve H)

Q2. Would you rather it was the case that the Earth is the only planet in the universe with intelligent life, or that there are loads of aliens out there for us to interact with? (GM)

Player	Pre	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	TOTAL
Bob Gingell	2	2										4
Steve Ham	2	2										4
Chris Hibbert	2											2
Bob Pitman	2											2

(more players can join, but it's now too late to submit questions)

For each question, you need to

- choose which option you prefer +1pt
- predict the result of the vote (your choice will be taken as prediction by default) +1pt if correct
- (optionally) provide a written answer. Note that this does not have to support your choice +1pt

BY POPULAR OPINION - GAME END STATEMENTS

GM: The game does have a few inherent problems. Whatever the subject: Music, TV, movies, sport etc. there will be some readers who have little interest in it. For some questions there are too many good candidates (e.g. best guitarist) so low scoring is inevitable. I think the best round was the leaders one, which certainly gave rise to some interesting comments!

Note that for sport, I went with GOATs but considered something broader with questions like "best commentary" (I would vote for Børge Lillelien in 1981 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqZTP8-8wls>) and even "best sports headline" (my favourite being "Gay Wins Straight 200m", though "Super Cally Go Ballistic Celtic Were Atrocious" is much more well-known).

NICK KINZETT: Thanks for running the game (and well done Jim), apologies for being reticent (by my standards) in the final round. My main choices there being largely influenced by thinking, *Most of us are of an, ah, certain age-group* (though not in the Greg Wallace sense). But the comments in general made it fun. The only problem sometimes with these 'word' games is that participants too accustomed to cagey-type board games are often reluctant to say anything at all, lest it "reveal too much" of their thinking. I reckon we should do things the other way around -- play more board games in the potentially chatty style of word games! Again, play more with than against...

JIM READER: Woohoo, I won! A little surprised as I hadn't realized the importance of submitting two answers in the early rounds. However, having run multiple BPD games and variants, I may have an advantage of knowing how some of my opponents might play.

BUS BOSS - DENMEAD AND WATERLOOVILLE (BB416DEN) ROUND 8



WEAR's preferred buys were all taken and they had to settle for building the less useful A3M. Those not living in Hampshire may not know the difference between the M3 and the A3M. The M3 motorway runs from Eastleigh to Sunbury-on-Thames (basically Southampton to London), whilst the A3M is a section of the Portsmouth to London A3, upgraded to motorway status, see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A3_road#A3\(M\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A3_road#A3(M))

A strong round for BOB sees them roar into the lead, DAWN dropping back a bit due to not getting a 30-quidder.

	BOB Bob Gingell Black	DAWN Michael Pargman Green	WEAR Kevin Lee Red	CRETS Jim Reader Yellow
6) ♦3 Cosham - ♣4 Stakes	30 [8]			
10) ♠K Alton / Winchester - ♦Q Southampton		10 [19]		20 [12]
11) ♠10 Boarhunt - ♥K Clanfield		+9	30 [19+1] -9	
12) ♠3 Wood End - ♣5 Waterlooville		9 [20] +4	16 [15+1] +2 -4	5 [30+1] -2
13) ♥3 Worlds End - ♦5 Port Solent	20 [15+1] -3		10 [20] +3	
14) ♥2 Southwick - ♣8 Farlington				30 [9]
15) ♦6 Paulsgrove - ♣6 Waterlooville	16 [10+1] -2	5 [20]	9 [15] +2	
16) ♦8 Fareham - ♦4 Cosham	5 [8+1] -1	12 [7] +1 -5		13 [7] +5
17) ♣3 Purbrook - ♣J Havant	20 [6] +3			10 [11+1] -3
18) ♠4 Soberton Heath - ♥9 Cowplain	+4	10 [22] +2	20 [17+2] -2 -4	

Last Turn	77	82	87	64
Points from Races	92	57	73	78
Builds	-12	-	-15	-10
Points Total	157	139	145	132

BOB Black Fareham Common - Wickham - Misingford
Bob Gingell COST: 12

DAWN Green No build
Michael Pargman COST: 0

WEAR Red Farlington - Clanfield (the A3M)
Kevin Lee COST: 15

CRETS Yellow Southwick - Denmead; Langstone - Chichester
Jim Reader COST: 10

The third set of races, no reoffers this time (enter any 5) are:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 19) ♠9 Hundred Acres - ♦A Portsmouth | 20) ♠Q Wickham - ♥7 Furzeley |
| 21) ♠7 Newtown - ♣A Drayton | 22) ♥Q Catherington - ♦5 Port Solent |
| 23) ♥5 Denmead - ♣7 Wecock Farm | 24) ♦9 Fareham - ♣10 Havant |
| 25) ♠A Alton / Winchester - ♦2 QA Hospital | 26) ♥4 Anthill Common - ♣K Chichester |

The build order for round 9 is Jim, Michael, Kevin, Bob.

The in-game map is available on the Variable Pig / Celestial Dragon website at <https://variablepig.org/maps/bb/ingame/BB416DEN.jpg>

BUS BOSS - DENMEAD AND WATERLOOVILLE (BB417DEN) ROUND 8

GM: Bob Gingell

After last Round's poor showing for CARTOON, this Round sees a top score and a rise to 3rd place. However, WHCW and B2150 remain well ahead for now. A lot of races of similar length gives a lot of ties. Only two companies are able to buy into Langstone.

GM note: The numbers on the junctions are to make it easier for players to order changes to another route and to calculate the route lengths; they separate routes into sections. Junction 1 is between Fareham and Boarhunt while junctions 2, 3 and 4 are on the motorway between Farlington and Clanfield. Players must buy whole routes and cannot purchase sections.

Races for Round 8 (max 5 entries, ties = *):

- 6R. (3H-4C): WHCW [9+1 = 10] 15* -3b +2 = 14; ROGER [9+2 = 11] 15* -3b-2w = 10; B2150 +6.
10. (6S-JD): CARTOON [14+2 = 16] 20 -2b-4r +1 = 15; B2150 [16+1 = 17] 10 -1c +2 = 11; ROGER +4.
11. (5C-7H): ROGER [6+1 = 7] 15* -2b = 13; B2150 [6+1 = 7] 15* -2w +2 = 15; WHCW +2.
12. 4D (Cosham) – QC (Langstone) [not possible - reoffer]
13. (9H-8S): WHCW [14+1 = 15] 12* -6c +6 = 12; ROGER [17+1 = 18] 13* -4w = 9; CARTOON [28+1 = 29] 5 -2w +6 = 9.
14. (AH-5D): CARTOON [21+1 = 22] 20 -1b = 19; WHCW [21+1 = 22] 10; B2150 +1.
15. (6C-7S): B2150 [11+1 = 12] 20 -4r = 16; ROGER [17] 10 + 4 = 14.
16. (TD-9D): WHCW [3] 15*; CARTOON [3] 15*.
17. (2S-9S): CARTOON [6] 20 +2 = 22; B2150 [6+1 = 7] 10 -2c = 8.
18. (4H-JH): B2150 [11+2 = 13] 15* -4w = 11; WHCW [14] 15* +4 = 19.

Scores and builds:

- CARTOON, Purple (Steve Ham): 59 +80 -11 = 128.
Farlington - Langstone - Havant; Langstone - Chichester [3+2, 1+2; 1+2 = 11]
ROGER, Orange (Roger Trethewey): 76.5 +50 -12 = 114.5.
Farlington - Langstone; Havant - Chichester; Wecock Farm - Cowplain
[3+2; 1+2; 2+2 = 12]
B2150, Green (Richard Smith): 87 +68 -9 = 146.
Worlds End - Hambledon; Soberton Heath - Alton & Winchester [3+2; 2+2 = 9]
WHCW, Bungo Blue (Brendan Whyte): 88.5 +72 -9 = 151.5.
Cosham - Drayton - Farlington [2+2, 3+2 = 9]

Purchase order for Round 9: Roger, Steve, Richard, Brendan

Races for Round 9 (enter any 5):

- 12R. 4D (Cosham) – QC (Langstone)
19. 2H (Southwick) – KC (Chichester)
20. 2D (QA Hospital) – 4S (Soberton Heath)
21. JS (Wickham) – 8C (Farlington)
22. 9C (Bedhampton) – AD (Portsmouth)
23. QS (Wickham) – 8H (Anmore)
24. 8D (Fareham) – QH (Catherington)
25. 3D (Cosham) – QD (Southampton)
26. 7C (Wecock Farm) – JC (Havant)

The map is available at <https://variablepig.org/maps/bb/ingame/BB417DEN.jpg>

RAILWAY RIVALS AZERBAIJAN (RR2535AZ) ROUND 5



Take me to Quba! GANJA and OILS both sought to sneak in and claim the north-eastern towns whilst BOB was busy connecting to Nakhchivan. To their dismay, BOB's build crew got their first to claim the 12 Manats. No parallel payments though.

ROGER, meanwhile, connected to Shirvan, Armenia and Iran all in the same round. All four companies have multiple options for the R6 build.

The in-game map is available at: <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2535AZ.jpg>

BOB Bob Gingell Black	5a. [5] (S9) - - - P7; (F40) - F39 - E39 5b. [3] (E39) - - QUBA; (E39) - E38 5c. [3] (E38) - - KHACHMAZ; (Q18) - Aghdam BANK: 39.5 +6 +6 +1[OILS,E38] = 52.5
GANJA Kevin Lee Red	5a. [5] (C43) - --- C41; (B42) - Imayilli 5b. [3] (C41) ---- - - Quba 5c. [3] (Quba) - C37 - - Khachmaz BANK: 40
ROGER	5a. [5] (B53) - - - - F51; (Qazax) - D10 (build slightly modified at the request of the Armenian government)
Roger Trethewey Green	5b. [3] (F51) --- Shirvan 5c. [3] (C54) - - C56 (Connection for Iran); (D10) - D11 (connection for Armenia) BANK: 78 -1[OILS, C53] = 77
OILS Brad Martin Blue	5a. [5] (Sumgait) - H41 - H40 5b. [3] (H40) - Siyazan - - F38 5c. [3] (F38) - - D37 - Quba BANK: 47 -1[BOB,E38] +1[OILS, C53] = 47

Rolls for R6: 6a) 4 6b) 6 6c) 5

RAILWAY RIVALS AZERBAIJAN (RR2536AZ) - ROUND 4

GM: Bob Gingell

No junctions this round as BAD heads into Nakhchivan and MARS into Russia. AZERI builds to the South East.

Round 4 build allowance: 6, 4, 5

BAD, green (Michael Pargman): $45 + 12 + 5 = 62 + 12 - 3 = 71$.

4a. (Y19) - IMISHLI --- - - C53

4b. (S12) - - - V13 - W13

4c. (Q20) - STEPANAKERT; (P28) - O29 - N28 - M29 - L28 [-3 to Armenia]

AZERI, indigo (Jim Reader): $44 + 12 - 5 = 51 + 0 = 51$.

4a. (H45) - - - - - H50 - Shirvan

4b. (H50) - - H52; (H48) - - J49

4c. (H52) --- Salyan - - H55

MARS, orange (John Marsden): $43 + 12 = 55 + 12 = 67$.

4a. (Sabirabad) --- - - A51; (Siyazan) - G39

4b. (G39) - - - D37 - QUBA

4c. (E38) - - KHACHMAZ - - - B34 {Russia}.

Round 5 build allowance: 6, 4, 4

The in-game map is available at: <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2536AZ.jpg>

RAILWAY RIVALS ZAMBIA (RR2540ZM) ROUND 2



The in-game map is available on the VP / TCD website at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2540ZM.jpg>

BAMBI vacuum up the Copperbelt towns whilst BEMBA prioritise line efficiency over town-grabbing.

MOSI OA TUNYA reach the Copperbelt towns via the capital Lusaka and have Livingstone, Choma and Mazabuka safely reserved (for now), so looking good despite being one hex behind BOB on the Pedicle crossing.

Reminder: Don't forget the special rules about the rainy season (rounds 3, 6 and 9) when it costs 4 to build over a river.

BAMBI
Bob Gingell
Black
2a. [3] (C53) - - SERENJE; (A53) - Z18
2b. [5] (Z18) - - - KITWE; (X17) - - MUFULIRA
2c. [4] (Y18) - NDOLA; (X16) - - CHINGOLA; (Mufulira) - Y15
BANK: $26 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 1[\text{BEMBA, D53}] + 1[\text{MOSI, W16}] = 58$

BEMBA
Jim Reader
Blue
2a. [3] (F49) - E50 - - Serenje
2b. [5] (Serenje) - E53 - - - - A55,
2c. [4] (A55) --- - Y22
BANK: $32 - 1[\text{BAMBI, D53}] = 33$

MOSI OA TUNYA
Steve Ham
Red
2a. [3] (X26) - LUSAKA - - X23;
2b. [5] (X23) - KABWE - - - - X18
2c. [4] (X18) - W18 - Kitwe - W16 - Mufulira
BANK: $26 + 6 + 6 - 1[\text{BAMBI, W16}] = 37$

Rolls for Round 3: 3a) 5 3b) 6 3c) 2

RAILWAY RIVALS ZAMBIA (RR2541ZM) ROUND 2

GM: Bob Gingell

WilburSmith arrives from Lusaka late in the Copperbelt to find that the Pedicle Road across the DRC has been occupied by two competitors, potentially pricing out his railway. ROGER gains most from the Copperbelt cities although not as much as it had hoped, but the assets of ToZ are now below its starting capital as it aims for long-term rather than short-term advantage. ZITS reaches the Copperbelt cities but then decides to consolidate in the East.

GM notes: Remember that in Round 3 building across a river will cost 4 points not 3.

Press: Richard (ZITS) - With Roger having to cross a river at Z14, it looks like he will bag Mufilira then he can tie with me for Ndola or tie with Michael for Kitwe. *GM – And ROGER, hoping that the river is dry (it isn't) goes for Kitwe having told his shareholders that he can also bag a bonus for Ndola. The shareholders are happier with the balance sheet when the company pockets parallel build payments from ToZ and a bonus from Kasama.*

Round 2 build allowance: 4, 5, 3

WilburSmith (Brendan Whyte), black: $38 + 12 - 1 = 49$

2a. (W27) --- X26 - LUSAKA

2b. (Lusaka) - - - KABWE - - X20

2c. X20 - - - X17 [-1z]

ToZ (Michael Pargman), orange: $20 + 3 - 5 = 18$

2a. (S21) - - - - W19

2b. (W19) - - Kitwe - W16 - Mufilira - Y15 [-2r]

2c. (Y15) --- Z14 [-3r]

ROGER (Roger Trethewey): green: $29 + 15 - 2 + 5 = 47$

2a. (Z14) --- - MUFULIRA

2b. (Mufilira) - X16 - Kitwe; (X16) - Ndola - Y18 [-2z]; (F41) - G42

2c. (G42) - KASAMA; (H40) - - J41

ZITS (Richard Smith), blue: $32 + 6 + 3 = 41$

2a. (B15) --- - Z18

2b. (Z18) - Y18 - NDOLA; Y18 - - Kitwe; (Serenje) - E51

2c. (E51) - E50 - - G49

Build allowance for Round 3: 6, 6, 2

The in-game map is available at: <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2541ZM.jpg>

RAILWAY RIVALS - WESTEROS (RR2517WR) - ROUND 12

GM: Bob Gingell

Boring dragon action as all either defended or went to sleep.

A rare tie in a long race as STARKLINE and DRAGON shared a win and BEAR made a loss on the run, but the overall rankings remained just as they were in the previous Round (and in fact the same as at the end of Round 6) with a very clear win for Mike's STARKLINE.

Races for Round 12 (max 5 entries, ties = *)

Dragons: STARKLINE defend Race 39; BEAR defend Race 40; DRAGON defend Race 42; STARK zzz.

36. (12–46): STARK $-4sl\ 20-2 = 18$; STARKLINE $+2$.

37. (24–56): STARKLINE $[40]\ 15^* +9 = 24$; DRAGON $[40+1 = 41]\ 15^* -5sl = 10$;
BEAR $[41]\ 0 -4sl = -4$.

38. (32–23): BEAR $[30+1 = 31]\ 20-6s +10 = 24$; STARK $[29+1 = 30]\ 10 -10b +6 = 6$.

39. (41–#6): DRAGON $[12+2 = 14]\ 20 -2sl = 18$; STARKLINE $[12+2 = 14]\ 10 +2 = 12$. d

40. (51–15): BEAR $[39]\ 20 -3sl +4 = 21$ d; STARKLINE $[40]\ 10 -4b +3 = 9$.

41. (61–35): DRAGON $[22]\ 20 -4b = 16$; BEAR $[24]\ 10 -1sl +6 = 15$;
STARKLINE $[29]\ 0 -2b +1 = -1$.

42. (#4–65): DRAGON $[9+2 = 11$ to Lys] d 20; STARK $[30+3 = 33$ to Tyrosh] 10.

Round 12 final scores:

STARKLINE (Mike Townsend), Green: $371 +46 = 417$. 1st

DRAGON (Richard Smith), Blue: $257 +64 = 321$. 2nd

STARK (Jim Reader), Yellow: $249 +34 = 283$. 3rd

BEAR (Kevin Lee), Black: $171 +56 = 227$. 4th

Ships owned: STARKLINE – King’s Landing, Lannisport; DRAGON – King’s Landing, Lannisport, Oldtown, Sunspear; STARK – Gulltown, Storm’s End; BEAR – Flint’s Finger, Oldtown.

The in-game map can be found at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2517WR.jpg>

CONGRATULATIONS TO MIKE TOWNSEND (STARKLINE).

Game End Statements

Mike Townsend (STARKLINE, 1st): Interesting variants on the rules with Ships and Dragons. In theory the Dragons could be a balancing factor but in this game they seemed to have limited impact, however, being a bit of a purist I'm ok with that! Ships, I think, are a bit more interesting and fit pretty well to the mythos whilst adding another dimension to the game.

- I was a bit concerned about being one of two starting in Westeros. Fortunately, Jim took a very different route to me which gave us both the space we needed to make reasonable lines. It really helped me to grab some early points from getting first to towns and subsequent monopolies, but still be able to break through to the main areas of the board. Early on I decided that the south eastern corner of the map would be a write off for me. Thanks to everyone for a good game and special thanks to Bob for being an excellent (and very patient) GM.

Richard Smith (DRAGON, 2nd and map designer): All must bend the knee to Mike who takes his rightful place on the Iron Throne after a crushing victory against the rival houses!

- I'm unsure if the 2/2 start option is significantly better than the 1/1/1/1 option, albeit the latter does seem to over-favour Winterfell. The suggestion to allow ships to be used in any race, not just specials is being trialled in Minstrel. It might make ships too important rather than perhaps a bit under-important in the current rules.

- I am pretty sure though that the simple attack / defend system for dragons is best, rather than, say, giving them hit points. However there was a three-way dragon fight in episode 4 of *House of the Dragon* season 2, the result of which was influenced by creature size. For the Rivals game we are of course assuming all companies have equally powerful beasts. In the other game, some grumbled about the remote locations on the east and west coasts, but I feel they add interest (and authenticity). I think the decision to widen The Neck a little but not too much was right.

Jim Reader (STARK, 3rd): Congratulations to Mike and thanks to Bob for the game. I got it wrong.

Bob Gingell (GM): Not at all a close finish with Mike way ahead of the rest. Congratulations to Mike and also to the other players who built good networks even if they did not win.

- The Westeros start seems to give some advantage but not too much of one with two companies starting there, so two starts in Winterfell could be a good rule for future games. Both STARKLINE and BEAR connected Oldtown to The Wall, yet one came first and the other last so that did not seem to be a dominant route. As expected no-one thought it worthwhile building to Shadow Tower, while Gulltown stayed unconnected for a long time with STARK eventually building an unused ship there. Some parts of the map are expensive to reach: STARKLINE benefitted from STARK's links to The Eyrie and Gulltown while sensibly deciding not to join the other players in the narrow South-Eastern peninsula, so avoided some of the necessary high spending.

- Dragons were mostly used cautiously in this game and made no effective impact on play, but there were a few successful attacks in the game Richard ran. The key concern is whether to attack or defend – combined attacks are needed against a defending leader with dragons of equal strength, but the players never arranged any such co-ordination. I agree that dragons should not gain strength (e.g. from defeating enemy dragons) which could create a runaway leader problem, but I am not keen on the power to destroy and force rebuilding of single ships (which I see as representing a fleet of ships).

- The idea has been raised to allow ships to sail from port to port (at a cost and maybe only along the same coastline so split between East and West coast ports), possibly in building rounds as well as race rounds so functioning even more like ferries. Would it improve the map? It would be interesting to try out to see how it might change things and counteract advantages of start position, bottlenecks and remote towns. It could well usefully disadvantage the strong Winterfell start since that is the only start location that is not a port, so the Winterfell start (and other players too) should not be allowed to use a dragon to attack ships ferrying rail links during the build rounds! The map itself works well and I would not suggest any geographic changes.

RAILWAY RIVALS PARTNERSHIP BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA (RR2522BH) ROUND 9



BLAG 'n' BUM and POOR 'n' HBBRT manage to tweak their runs to avoid JRs (see comments below) whilst ROGER 'n' JOHN had two successful JRs in the last two races (but little else to shout about).

BUM raked in the KMs, whilst their partner BLAG had an unprofitable round, missing out on the blanket finish for race 10,

POOR and HBBRT both did quite well but POOR suffered some crap rolls on race 20 to dent their profits.

Going Solo? No "stabs" as yet, but companies are now allowed to dissolve the partnership and do not have to give notice. The split is permanent and is declared at the start of orders for a round so all races and builds in that round are done as separate companies. Players cannot use conditional orders for this happening so an unexpected termination could result in costly payments, or a race entry disallowed for more than 10 hexes payment.

Comments from Dane Maslen: I think it would be wrong to allow partners to enter separately on identical routes. It would make it too easy! There are a couple of races this round that would be automatic double entries for Chris and me if we could use the same route, but we've had to do some head scratching to work out whether doing double entries via different routes is viable.

At some stage you commented on having contemplated doing away with the partnership-dissolution option and instead simply adding the partners' scores for the final result. If you were to do so, I think it would be better for a partnership's final score to be something like the higher of their two scores plus half the lower of the two. That would set partnerships the 'interesting' challenge of balancing the two partners' earnings as far as possible. Just adding the two scores together would make the game too similar to having half the number of players with each player getting a building allowance in two places, though of course there would still be the difference that partnerships can have two entries in a race.

(GM) Definitely quite a few options to consider, I expect more discussion at game end.

	ROGER Roger Trethewey Green	JOHN John Walker Black	BLAG Bob Gingell Purple	BUM Jim Reader Yellow	POOR Dane Maslen Red	HBBRT Chris Hibbert Blue
15. Brcko (31) - Jajce (41)		0 [20] -1 -1 +1	0 [19] +1 +1 -5	20 [18] +1 +1 +1 -5 -3	0 [18] +1 -1 -1 - 1 +5 +5	10 [19] -1 -1 +3
16. Sanski Most (15) - Livno (51)				20 [25] -3		+3
17. Tuzla (34) - Prnjavor or Gradacac (26)			15 [8] +2			15 [7] -2
18. Sarajevo (63) - The Coast (Sp6)	0 [22]			10 [16] +4 -4	20 [16] -4 +4	
19. Mostar (54) - Montenegro (Sp1)	0 [20] +5 -2			10 [16]	20 [16] -5 +2	
20. Gorazde (65) - Bihac (13)	10 JR [48]	10 JR [48]			0 [46]	10 [46]
21. Zenica (44) - Banja Luka (24)	10 JR [13]	10 JR [13]				10 [16]

Last Turn	49	144	125	99	129	48
Points from Races	23	19	14	52	45	47
Builds	-7 -5 +2	+1	-8 -1 -1 +5	-8 -1 -1 -2	+1 +1	+1
Points Total	62	164	134	139	176	96

BUILDS:

ROGER: (G53) - G54 - H54 - Zivinice - - - - M56 [-5 BLAG]

JOHN: No build

BLAG: (Brcko) -- J47 [-1 red]; (M56) - - - - Zivinike; (Cazin) - C5 - C4 [-1 black] [-1 POOR] [-1 JOHN]

BUM: (H66) - H67 - - J68 - Foca; (W12) - Z13; (Y26) - X26 [-1 POOR] [-2 ROGER] [-1 HBBRT]

POOR: No build

HBBRT: No build

The in-game map is here <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2522BH.jpg>

Races for Round 10:

22. Serbia South (Sp2) - Velika Kladusa (11)

23. Doboje (25) - Bogojno (42)

24. Visoko (46) - Foca (66)

25. Serbia North (Sp3) - Sarajevo (62)

26. Banja Luka (24) - Zvornik (35)

27. Konjic (52) - Zivinice or Gracanica (33)

28. Cazin or Prijedor (12) - Mostar (54)

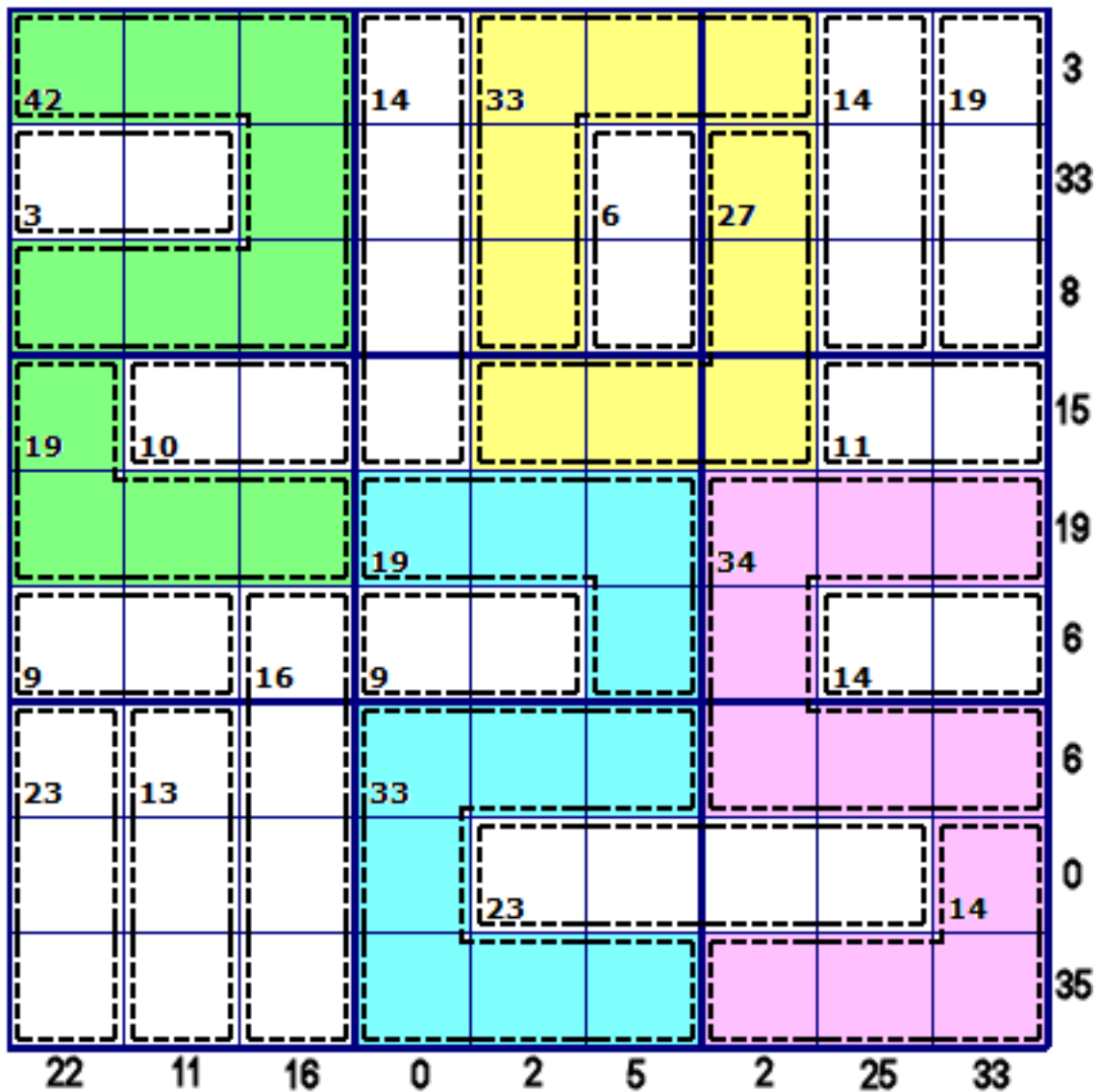
Enter up to 4 races and build up to 6 points of track.

KILLER SANDWICH HYBRID SUDOKU

This puzzle has a new year theme with the year 2025 depicted using 2 large "killer" cages per number. This would result in the puzzle not having a unique solution but for the added "sandwich" numbers. Combining the two makes the puzzle not too hard (a "medium" in my book) as well as disambiguating the solution.

KILLER RULES: The numbers in each cell add up to the indicated cage total. The same number cannot be repeated in a cage.

SANDWICH RULES: The number allocated to each row and column is the total of all the digits that are placed between the 1 and the 9. A total of 0 means the 1 and 9 are adjacent, and a total of 35 means they are at the far ends with all the other numbers inside.



CLASSIC KIDS TV CROSSWORD ANSWERS

Definitions underlined for filler clues - not for TV shows as they don't have formal definitions

Across

- 2. [1968] Inspiration for The Spice Girls? (3,5) **THE HERBS**
- 5. see 12
- 8. Painful wild rose (4) **SORE**

- 12, 5 and 35. [1984] Hot teardrop dribbled - oh globbits! (3,4,4) **THE TRAP DOOR**
13. Company at home makes money (4) COIN
15. [1978] 31 series? Flippin' 'eck! (6,4) **GRANGE HILL**
16. [1964] Gin satyr drunk in submarine (8) **STINGRAY**
17. Aboriginal club in expat underworld (4) PATU
19. Performs copyright theft - makes mp3s, none very loud (4,3) RIPS OFF
20. Tricky snooker pot or pot dweller (5) PLANT
21. [1954] Donkey found in East End pork pie, that's a bitch! (6) **LASSIE**
22. Captain Scarlet's Roger (1,1,1) SIG
23. Allocates Leo perhaps in bottom (7) ASSIGNS
26. [1973] Jaunty teens who never do their game orders on time? (3,8,6) **THE TOMORROW PEOPLE**
28. Small carnivore munched toast (6) STOAT
30. [2004] Banned in China for having too many Ps? (6,3) **PEPPA PIG**
32. Just lonely without the French (4) ONLY
33. Cry when Washington meets Illinois (4) WAIL
35. see 12
36. [1997] Blue tie best when tipsy? No, Dipsy! (11) **TELETUBBIES**
39. Unhappy when the German returns (3) SAD
42. Tape noise of snake (4) HISS
44. Ingest muscles and sphere (6) ABSORB
46. [1975] Badly drawn titular character found in abode (3) **BOD**
48. [1969] Gentle crash mishap on a planet with dustbin lids (3,8) **THE CLANGERS**
51. Musician who earned a cent for every copy of Windows 95 (3) ENO
52. [1940] Violent, racist cartoon - I must have watched them all 10 times (3,3,5) **TOM AND JERRY**
53. [1971] Rabbit out of a hat, perhaps? (6,5) **ANIMAL MAGIC**

Down

1. [1981] Lives in a post box - unusual modern usage (6,5) **DANGER MOUSE**
3. [1974] Is it Richard, the mild-mannered zine editor? No! (4,4,6) **HONG KONG PHOOEY**
4. Servants from Country House in set Blur played (7) BUTLERS
6. [1980] Flightless bird found aboard ship in Guyana (5) **PINGU**
7. [1969] Watch this if you like big birds (6,6) **SESAME STREET**
8. [1968] Heroic marsupial or faulty LP? (6) **SKIPPY**
9. [1991] Toddlers' tall tales (7) **RUGRATS**
10. [1974] Emily's magic cat made from infected fluid held in sacks (7) **BAGPUSS**
11. [1960] Tennis shot felt wrong in past set (3,11) **THE FLINTSTONES**
- 13: [1957] No Seaman Staines, honest! (7,7) **CAPTAIN PUGWASH**
- 14: Former editor of WIMM? (3) OYA
18. [1965] Lots of Tracys but no Sharons (12) **THUNDERBIRDS**
24. [1966] Dysprosium extracted from an old American greeting to give an even older American greeting (3) **HOW**
- 25 and 43. [1976] The full title of this one includes the word multicoloured but that doesn't fit in the grid (4,4) **SWAP SHOP**
29. [1958] Depressed celestial gatekeeper? (4,5) **BLUE PETER**
31. [1969] Shaggy's dog (6-3) **SCOOBY-DOO**
37. Endlessly bar group of countries (4) BLOC
38. Bird as a result of US legal amendment (7) SEAGULL
40. Makes you ill - beers we hear (4) AILS
41. [1971] Middle-aged man, likes dressing up and fantasy (2,4) **MR BENN**
43. see 25
45. Spy with chemical attraction? (4) BOND
47. Perform heartless Judo in training centre (4) DOJO
49. Irish singer from African country losing head (4) ENYA
50. Decompose a list (4) ROTA



Issue 68

Puerto Rico – Jim takes the **Settler**. Takes: Jim Coffee, John Indigo, Kev Tobacco, Chris passes.

John takes the **Mayor (+1)** Placements: John Large Market, Large Indigo Plant, Indigo plantation. Kev Wharf, Tobacco Storage. Chris Small Warehouse Corn plantation. Jim Corn plantation.

Kev takes the **Prospector (+2)** Kev gains 3 doubloons

Chris takes the **Trader**. Trades: Chris Coffee, he gains 4 doubloons for the coffee plus 2 for the large market. Nobody else can trade as the trading house is now full, which is emptied at the end of the turn.

Player	Doubloons	Goods	VPs	Buildings	Plantations
Jim Reader	1	Indigo	3	7 of 12 Small market (v) Small Indigo Plant (v) Large Sugar Mill (x) Office (x) Tobacco Storage (vvx) Coffee Roaster (x) Factory (v)	10 of 12 Quarry (v) Quarry (v) Quarry (v) Quarry (v) Corn (v) Indigo (v) Indigo (v) Sugar (x) Tobacco (v) Coffee (x)
John Marsden	3	Corn , Corn , Indigo, Indigo 2 corn and 2 indigo are stored in the large warehouse	7	7 of 12 Construction Hut (v) Small Indigo plant (v) Small Sugar Mill (v) Large Indigo Plant (vv x) Large Market (v) Large Warehouse (v) Coffee Roaster (vv)	10 of 12 Quarry (v) Quarry (v) Corn (v) Corn (v) Indigo (v) Indigo (v) Indigo (v) Indigo (x) Sugar (v) Coffee (v)
Kev Lee	3	Indigo	10	6 of 12 Small market (v) Small Indigo Plant (v) Small sugar mill (v) Tobacco Storage (vvv) Wharf (v) Guild Hall (v)	10 of 12 Corn (v) Corn (v) Corn (v) Corn (x) Indigo (v) Tobacco (v) Tobacco (x) Tobacco (x) Coffee (x) Coffee (x)
Chris Hibbert 1 col in San Juan	11		11	5 of 12 Small Warehouse (v) Small sugar mill (v) Coffee Roaster (vv) Large Market (v) Office (v)	8 of 12 Quarry (v) Corn (v) Corn (v) Sugar (v) Sugar (v) Sugar (v) Coffee (v) Coffee (v)

Building	Cost	VP	Available	Tiles	Available
Small Indigo Plant	1	1	1	Quarry	1
Small Sugar Mill	2	1	1	Corn	1(0)
Small Market	1	1	0	Indigo	4 (0)
Hacienda	2	1	2	Sugar	5 (1)

Construction Hut	2	1	1	Tobacco	4 (1)
Small Warehouse	3	1	1	Coffee	2 (0)
Large Indigo Plant	3	2	1		
Large Sugar Mill	4	2	1	Goods	
Hospice	4	2	2	Corn	8
Office	5	2	0	Indigo	7
Large Market	5	2	0	Sugar	8
Large Warehouse	6	2	1	Tobacco	6
Tobacco Storage	5	3	1	Coffee	9
Coffee Roaster	6	3	0		
Factory	7	3	1	Colonists	11
University	8	3	2		
Harbour	8	3	2	Victory Points	69
Wharf	9	3	1		
Guild Hall	10	4	0		
Fortress	10	4	1		
Residence	10	4	1		
Customs House	10	4	1		
City Hall	10	4	1		

Doubloon bonuses held on role cards: Craftsman (+2), Captain (+1), Builder (+1).

The trading house holds is empty. The 5 ship is empty. The 6 ship contains 3 Sugar. The 7 ship contains 3 Tobacco. Plantations available are: Indigo, Indigo, Tobacco, Tobacco, Coffee. 6 colonists board the colonist ship. The play order for the next turn is: John, Kev, Chris then Jim. Tiles shown in ()s are in the upturned stack.

Lyric Quiz - 4 of 5 1 point scored for the singer, 1 for the song and 1 for the theme. Two points will be awarded for the song only, for number 10

- 1 - Hey baby, thought you were the one who tried to run away / Ohh, baby, wasn't I the one who made you want to stay? / Please don't bet that you'll ever escape me / Once I get my sights on you (1989) License to Kill – Gladys Knight
- 2 - Gazing at people / Some hand in hand/Just what I'm going through / They can't understand (1967) Nights in White Satin – Moody Blues (John Hopkins, Richard Smith, Jim Reader, Bob Pitman, Paul Evans)
- 3 - I see a line of cars / And they're all painted black / With flowers and my love / Both never to come back (1966) Paint it Black – Rolling Stones (John Hopkins, Richard Smith, Brendan Whyte, Jim Reader, Bob Pitman, Steve Guest)
- 4 - If the sky that we look upon / Should tumble and fall / Or the mountain should crumble to the sea / I won't cry, I won't cry (1962) Stand by Me – Ben E King (John Hopkins, Jim Reader, Bob Pitman-song only, Dane Maslen-song only, Steve Guest)
- 5 - Hey little sister, who's your Superman? / Hey little sister, who's the one I want? / Hey little sister, shotgun (1982) White Wedding – Billy Idol (Richard Smith, Brendan Whyte, Jim Reader, Martin Walker, Steve Guest, Chris Hibbert – song only)
- 6 - Caviar and cigarettes / Well versed in etiquette / Extraordinarily nice (1974) Killer Queen - Queen Richard Smith, (John Hopkins, Brendan Whyte, Bob Pitman, Dane Maslen, Martin Walker, Steve Guest, Paul Evans)
- 7- I know there's only, only one like you / There's no way they could have made two / You're, you're all I'm living for, your love I'll keep forevermore (1974) You're my first my last my everything – Barry White
- 8 - It used to be so easy living here with you / You were light and breezy and I knew just what to do/Now you look so unhappy, and I feel like a fool (1971) It's too late – Carol King (John Hopkins, Jim Reader)
- 9 - Don't be told what you need / There's no future / No future / No future for you (1977) God save the Queen – Sex Pistols (Richard Smith, Brendan Whyte, Bob Pitman, Dane Maslen, Martin Walker, Steve Guest)
- 10 - O'er his thine arm extend, /For Britain's sake defend, / Our father, prince, and friend, (c1600-1779) God Save the King/Queen (John Hopkins, Richard Smith, Brendan Whyte, Jim Reader, Dane Maslen, Martin Walker, Steve Guest, Paul Evans)

Theme – Chess (Richard Smith) Congratulations to Richard being the only one to get this, all the other guesses were quite reasonably royalty of something similar.

Jim Reader 49 + 12 = 61
Steve Guest 43 + 12 = 55
Richard Smith 31 + 13 = 44
Bob Pitman 31 + 9 = 40
John Hopkins 24 + 12 = 36
Martin Walker 25 + 8 = 33
Brendan Whyte 18 + 10 = 28
Dane Maslen 19 + 7 = 26
Paul Evans = 13 + 6 = 19
Tom Howell 8
Chris Hibbert 3 + 1 = 4

John Hopkins - 10 "God Save the King" (When I moved to Scotland, where I lived for a quarter of a century, I made a point of learning the normally censored verse 6 by heart, viz. God grant that General Wade, Shall by Thy mighty aid, Victory Bring, May he sedition crush, And like a torrent rush, Rebellious Scots to Crush, God Save the King)

Richard - Um, is there a theme this time? Could it be "chess pieces"? White & Black and King & Queen, and the *soundcharadesque* "Nights"? *GM – Or maybe the White?*

Brendan Whyte - God save the Queen. -- all of us at every school assembly....
theme: I am guessing royalty from answers 6,9 & 10...

Bob - 7. Tavares – Heaven must be missing an angel ??? Total guess!!

Dane - 4 - I feel I should know this one (the third line is what's ringing a bell), but maybe I'm confusing the lyrics with another song. Well, eventually I came to the conclusion that this is STAND BY ME, but I've no idea who the artist or group was, and I doubt that that song was from 1962, so either I've misidentified the song, or what I remember is a cover of an earlier version. Based on what I think the theme is, I might as well have a random guess at NAT KING COLE.

7- This one I recognise, especially the second line, but I'm doubtful of unearthing the answer.

9 - At last one that I not only recognise but know. Er, well, just so long as I can remember which of two SEX PISTOLS songs it is. I thought I might be reduced to playing the compilation CD that has them on, but I'm now pretty sure it's GOD SAVE THE QUEEN (do I detect a theme?).

10 - O'er his thine arm extend / For Britain's sake defend / Our father, prince, and friend, (c1600-1779)
Well, I've just tried singing these words to an obvious possible tune, and they fit, so one of the later verses of GOD SAVE THE KING/QUEEN it must be.

I'll opt for the theme being royalty (though I suppose it could be the wider one of nobility), which explains my wild punt on number 4. I wonder if any of the songs I've failed to recognise are by Prince.

Martin Walker - Theme-Monarchs mentioned in the songs either as artist or song

Steve Guest - I know you haven't mentioned a theme, though seeing all those monarchs indicates one. (3) and (5) don't fit though. *GM 1 point for theme mentioned in the preamble.*

Lyrics 5 of 5

- I'll probably be taking a break from running the next game as I don't know what position I'll be in regarding my house move. Anyone interested in running the next game or at least one turn please let Richard know.

1 - I've been taking on a new direction / But I have to say / I've been thinking about my own protection / It scares me to feel this way (1984)

2 - Give me time to realize my crime / Let me love and steal / I have danced inside your eyes / How can I be real? (1982)

3 - I fall in love whenever we meet / I'm asking you 'cause you know about these things (1985)

4 - Brother, brother, brother / There's far too many of you dying / You know we've got to find a way / To bring some lovin' here today, yeah (1975)

5 - What an amazing time / What a family / How did the years go by? / Now it's only me / Tick-tock / Tick-tock (2004)

6 - Isn't she pretty / Truly the angel's best / Boy, I'm so happy / We have been heaven blessed (1976)

7 - But we still got terrorists here livin' / In the USA, the big CIA / The Bloods and The Crips and the KKK / But if you only have love for your own race (2003)

8 - And you come to me on a summer breeze / Keep me warm in your love, then you softly leave / And it's me you need to show (1977)

9 - It's always tease, tease, tease / You're happy when I'm on my knees / One day it's fine and next it's black / So if you want me off your back (1982)

10 - Still I can't close my eyes / I'm seeing a tunnel at the end of all of these lights / Sunny days, where have you gone? / I get the strangest feeling you belong (1999)

6 Nimmit! Hands A and B contain the standard 104 cards. Hand C each player receives 1 card for each 10-digit set i.e. 1 from 1to10, 1 from 11 to 20and so on. Hand D only 54 cards are in play, so there are no unused cards.

Hand A						Score	
A	30	33	38	79		10	
B	69					1	Kev takes 1 2 7 15 26 (6 pts)
C	104					1	Bob takes 40 43 96 99 100 (13 pts)
D	10					2	Dane takes 102 (1 pt)

Cards played 1 2 7 10 15 26 30 33 34 38 40 43 69 79 96 99 100 102 104

Hand B						Score
A	23	30	33	82		10
B	39	42	86	87		4
C	67	71	91	94	95	6
D	6	17	18	19	22	9

Cards played 6 17 18 19 22 23 30 33 39 42 67 71 86 87 91 94 95 100 104

Hand C						Score
A	25	35	40	46	71	9
B	47	48	56	87	89	5
C	1	2	4	6	11	9
D	70	98	99			9

Cards played 1 2 4 6 11 25 35 40 46 47 48 53 56 70 71 87 89 98 99

Hand D						Score
A	9	10	14	16	17	7
B	15	19	31	33		9
C	3	4	6	7		4
D	29	47	50	51	53	7

Cards played 3 4 6 7 9 10 14 15 16 17 19 26 29 31 33 47 50 51 53

Points taken

Dane 1

Kev 7

Bob 16

THE TANGERINE TERROR / I AM THE KURIOUS KUMQUAT

ISSUE 75 / ISSUE 5

The "It's The End Of The Year As We Know It" Issue

Idiotorial

Snow on the ground. Easter Eggs in M&S. No sprouts in Sainsbury's. What's going on?

DEAD LETTER OFFICE

Richard Smith (on issues downstairs)

Good to see your organ is growing.

Allan Stagg (on more issues downstairs)

I hope your water problems are fixed now.

Auntie Tangerine

Yes, there's definitely still life in the old Kumquat.

Richard Smith (on life in the old Kumquat)

Early days yet but I guess if you really do get the zine ed mojo working again you might want to declare independence from the Pig/Dragon collective. Tom Howell left the sty some time ago and his back-of-the-envelope general games zine is now well established.

Auntie Tangerine

As you say, early days yet, and I'm still too good at missing deadlines

Allan Stagg (on missing deadlines)

As it turned out my laptop took so long to open we missed the Quordle deadline. The slow opening continued through the weekend, and the laptop is currently in the repair shop, awaiting the prognosis

Auntie Tangerine

These tech issues are never cheap. Prepare yourself to deal with a disappointment

Chris Hibbert (on dealing with disappointments)

My contribution to the discussion of sporting disappointments: I have season tickets for the San Jose Sharks, but you don't have to follow hockey to understand these ups and downs. The Sharks are a fairly new team, only 33 seasons. For the first half-dozen years they sucked; the rules for expansion teams drafting from other teams were really restrictive. (Las Vegas won the conference pennant their first year, in 2017, and the Stanley Cup in 2023, in contrast.)

Then they made the playoffs (but never won the cup) for all but 2 of the next 20 seasons. They've missed the playoffs the last 5 years.

They overpaid for a few long-term contracts before they stopped winning, and they still have some contractual obligations cutting into their salary cap. But last year they won only 19 games (out of an 82 game season), came in last, and won the draft lottery. They picked up a phenomenal player, Macklin Celebrini, who may eventually be a superstar.

Auntie Tangerine

Macklin Celebrini is a great name for a superstar, although it does sound like something that might be generated by an AI chatbot. Doesn't matter as long as he does the business on the ice and can provide entertainment.

Chris Hibbert (on the Sharks providing entertainment)

It's actually fun to watch them this season, though they're not expected to make the playoffs.

Auntie Tangerine

Chris, I'm afraid I made the mistake of checking the current standings in the Western Pacific division. They'll have to go some to make the playoffs. Even Oldham have a better chance of being in the end of season shake-up, but they are already sliding slowly out of contention for the automatic promotion spot. A combination of games called off when we were on a winning streak and Stones going back to Wigan, and thence to York City who are (yes, you guessed it) currently in possession of the automatic promotion spot. Red Sox and Patriots also failed to get even close to the play-offs, but Jimmy Anderson has agreed to play for Lancs next season, so perhaps a tilt at promotion might be possible.

Well, it didn't take long for me to screw things up ... thanks Bob for pointing out the error. Word 3 in round 2 was wrong (there's a T in TOTTY, but the T in BLURT wasn't yellow). Sadly, this means that Mike's TOTTY was illegal. I've now gone back and adjudicated the previous rounds and spotted a few other illegal words. There are some illegal guesses in round 3 too. The full list of "bad words" is below. Hopefully you can check and confirm my suspicions:

Round 2 Word 3

Brendan *CRAPS* - Includes R, but R eliminated as a possible letter in BLURT (scores 1 pt and out)
 Mike *TOTTY* - Includes T, but T eliminated as a possible letter in BLURT (scores 1 pt and out)

Round 2 Word 7

Richard *LEMON* - Includes O, but O eliminated as a possible letter in POPPY (scores 1 pt and out)

Round 2 Word 8

Chris *BRAIN* - Includes R, but R eliminated as a possible letter in FORUM (scores 1 pt and out)

Round 3 Word 2

Brendan *UNCLE* - Includes N, but N eliminated as a possible letter in FRANK (scores 2 pts and out)
 Mike *BLUFF* - Includes F, but F eliminated as a possible letter in FRANK (scores 2 pts and out)
 Roger *BUTCH* - U in position 2, but U was yellow in position 2 in MUMMY (scores 2 pts and out)
 Bob *BLUFF* - Includes F, but F eliminated as a possible letter in FRANK (scores 2 pts and out)

Round 3 Word 4

Chris *PROUD* - Includes R, but R eliminated as a possible letter in GRAFT (scores 2 pts and out)

Round 3 Word 5

Roger *LINER* - I in position 2, but I was yellow in position 2 in DIDDY (scores 2 pts and out)
 Chris *FINKS* - I in position 2, but I was yellow in position 2 in DIDDY (scores 2 pts and out)

Round 3 Word 6

Brendan *WHORL* - Includes R, but R eliminated as a possible letter in BRAVE (scores 2 pts and out)

<p>Word 1</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Round 1</td><td>B</td><td>R</td><td>I</td><td>C</td><td>K</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 2</td><td>M</td><td>U</td><td>M</td><td>M</td><td>Y</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 3</td><td>U</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>E</td><td>D</td></tr> </table>	Round 1	B	R	I	C	K	Round 2	M	U	M	M	Y	Round 3	U	P	P	E	D	<p>Word 5</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Round 1</td><td>G</td><td>A</td><td>M</td><td>M</td><td>A</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 2</td><td>D</td><td>I</td><td>D</td><td>D</td><td>Y</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 3</td><td>C</td><td>H</td><td>I</td><td>C</td><td>K</td></tr> </table>	Round 1	G	A	M	M	A	Round 2	D	I	D	D	Y	Round 3	C	H	I	C	K
Round 1	B	R	I	C	K																																
Round 2	M	U	M	M	Y																																
Round 3	U	P	P	E	D																																
Round 1	G	A	M	M	A																																
Round 2	D	I	D	D	Y																																
Round 3	C	H	I	C	K																																
<p>Word 2</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Round 1</td><td>F</td><td>R</td><td>A</td><td>N</td><td>K</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 2</td><td>M</td><td>U</td><td>M</td><td>M</td><td>Y</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 3</td><td>B</td><td>L</td><td>U</td><td>E</td><td>S</td></tr> </table>	Round 1	F	R	A	N	K	Round 2	M	U	M	M	Y	Round 3	B	L	U	E	S	<p>Word 6</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Round 1</td><td>B</td><td>R</td><td>A</td><td>V</td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 2</td><td>Q</td><td>U</td><td>I</td><td>C</td><td>K</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 3</td><td>G</td><td>L</td><td>O</td><td>O</td><td>M</td></tr> </table>	Round 1	B	R	A	V	E	Round 2	Q	U	I	C	K	Round 3	G	L	O	O	M
Round 1	F	R	A	N	K																																
Round 2	M	U	M	M	Y																																
Round 3	B	L	U	E	S																																
Round 1	B	R	A	V	E																																
Round 2	Q	U	I	C	K																																
Round 3	G	L	O	O	M																																
<p>Word 3</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Round 1</td><td>B</td><td>L</td><td>U</td><td>R</td><td>T</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 2</td><td>C</td><td>H</td><td>I</td><td>E</td><td>F</td></tr> </table>	Round 1	B	L	U	R	T	Round 2	C	H	I	E	F	<p>Word 7</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Round 1</td><td>P</td><td>O</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>Y</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 2</td><td>F</td><td>L</td><td>U</td><td>F</td><td>F</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 3</td><td>M</td><td>A</td><td>M</td><td>M</td><td>A</td></tr> </table>	Round 1	P	O	P	P	Y	Round 2	F	L	U	F	F	Round 3	M	A	M	M	A						
Round 1	B	L	U	R	T																																
Round 2	C	H	I	E	F																																
Round 1	P	O	P	P	Y																																
Round 2	F	L	U	F	F																																
Round 3	M	A	M	M	A																																
<p>Word 4</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Round 1</td><td>Y</td><td>U</td><td>M</td><td>M</td><td>Y</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 2</td><td>G</td><td>R</td><td>A</td><td>F</td><td>T</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 3</td><td>S</td><td>N</td><td>O</td><td>O</td><td>P</td></tr> </table>	Round 1	Y	U	M	M	Y	Round 2	G	R	A	F	T	Round 3	S	N	O	O	P	<p>Word 8</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Round 1</td><td>F</td><td>O</td><td>R</td><td>U</td><td>M</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 2</td><td>P</td><td>I</td><td>N</td><td>N</td><td>Y</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 3</td><td>L</td><td>E</td><td>V</td><td>E</td><td>L</td></tr> </table>	Round 1	F	O	R	U	M	Round 2	P	I	N	N	Y	Round 3	L	E	V	E	L
Round 1	Y	U	M	M	Y																																
Round 2	G	R	A	F	T																																
Round 3	S	N	O	O	P																																
Round 1	F	O	R	U	M																																
Round 2	P	I	N	N	Y																																
Round 3	L	E	V	E	L																																

- 5 Points : Brendan (alive in 5 words), Chris (alive in 5 words)
- 4 Points : Roger (alive in 6 words)
- 3 Points : Mike (alive in 6 words)
- 2 Points : Bob (alive in 7 words)
- 1 Point : Richard (alive in 7 words)
- 0 Points : Allan (alive in 8 words)

FUTURE SHOCK

We have two takers for **Origins Of World War 2**.

John Marsden has a boxed copy of the game, and Brendan Whyte is always keen to get involved in any old school wargaming action.

What's In Howard's Record Collection? seemed to generate a fair bit of interest and I have orders on file from 4 players (3 of you forgot to specify your joker, so you might want to check and resubmit). I could have gone for a Gamestart, but I'm sure there are others in the Tangerine multiverse who like to help me track down those toons from yesteryear and thiseryear so it's held over. Condensed rules are here ...

RULES FOR WHAT'S IN HOWARD'S RECORD COLLECTION

In each round, players suggest titles of 6 albums (CD or vinyl only) that may exist in Howard's house. Each of the 6 must be by a different recording artist and can't be by a recording artist that anyone has used in a previous round. They can also play a joker in each round by nominating one of their 6 as a potential double point score. No Greatest Hits, Various Artists, Film Soundtracks or anything by Kings Of Leon. Also, it must be clear who the recording artist is, which effectively excludes Classical records. For each title suggested, Howard will search the house for a copy of said record. If he finds one it scores points as shown in the table below, shared by any players who suggested it, i.e. if you're the only person to guess it in round 1, you get 6 points; if two players guess it, they score 3 points each, etc. If you played your joker your score is doubled. After any jokers are applied, all fractions are rounded down. In the game report, the GM will provide a cumulative list of all the recording artists used to that point.

Round	Base Score
1-4	6
5	8
6	10

NG Mvoto THE NAME OF THE GAME ROUND 1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Total
Brendan Whyte	3	2	0	3																	8
Paul Evans	2	3	3	0																	8
Allan Stagg	2	0	3	0																	5
Richard Smith	0	2	0	0																	2
Tom Howell	0	0	0	0																	0
Steve Guest	0	0	0	0																	0

- #1 : Not League Of 6, Bright Future, League of Dungeoneers, Sechs Nimmt, Outpost, Buck Rogers
- #2 : Not Century Spice Road (although it was a good guess from 3 of you), Test Match
- #3 : Not Nine Men's Morris
- #4 : Not Isle Of Skye, Bus Boss, Elder Sign

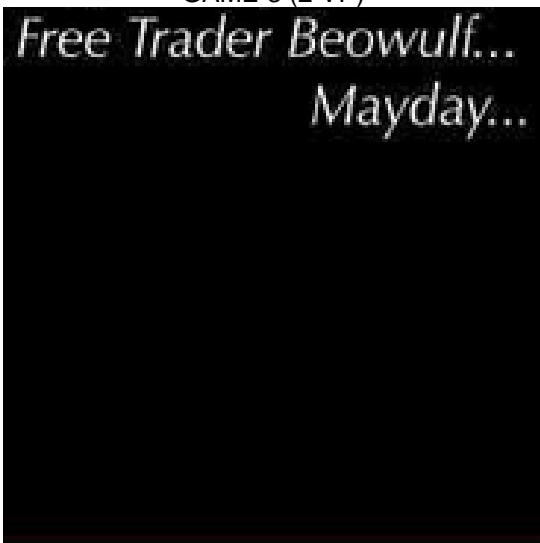
GAME 1 (1 VP)



GAME 2 (1 VP)



GAME 3 (2 VP)



GAME 4 (2 VP)



GAME 5 (3 VP)



GAME 6 (3 VP)



JO Lochhead

JUST ONE

ROUND 1

I have sent out the clues for Round 1 and the categories for Round 2.
 Remember you can either Guess or Pass.
 A successful Guess is 1 point. A failed Guess is -1 point. A Pass is 0 points.

SubPAR 5

Pennsylvania Ramblings

Happy Holidays: I hope everyone had an enjoyable and relaxing Christmas and our best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year.

Road Trip: We enjoyed Christmas at home with Thomas and Kelsey before driving out to Indiana for a few days with Hannah and Michael. It's a 600 mile drive to Indianapolis so we broke up the drive with stops at Wheeling WV (outbound) and Bentleyville PA on the way home. Sadly, there is nothing but flat farmland between Wheeling and Columbus in central Ohio, so we couldn't find a good stop halfway.

Falling Water: One of the attractions of SW Pennsylvania is Falling Water, a house designed and built over a waterfall on the Bull Run Creek, by Frank Lloyd Wright for the Kaufman family of Pittsburgh. The house was built in the 1930s and retains much of its Art Deco charm and art. We particularly enjoyed the prints from Hokusai and Hiroshige. The house is currently being repaired so once again we also go to enjoy scaffolding.

New Game Maps: The Farnham and Aldershot Bus Boss map has finally been finished and is now online at <https://variablepig.org/maps/bb/bb-fal.pdf>. This became a bit of a chore to finish as I foolishly created the map in Word, not PowerPoint, and it was a bugger to make corrections. In addition, I have finished the first draft of a new Railway Rivals map of Senegal and The Gambia and, with the help of Bob and Richard, this should hopefully be ready for play next time.



Railway Rivals (Zambia) - RR2545ZM

Round Two

Correction: ACR's 1c was (R29) – S29 – T28 - MONZE - W27 – V27 – MAZABUKA and not (R29) – S29 – T28 - MONZE - W27 – MAZABUKA: (S29) – CHOMA. Players were notified by email and the online report corrected.

Question: I assume that's a river between Z14 and Y15.

Yes – the border runs along the river.

ACR 2a) 5. (W27) - - - X26 – LUSAKA - X24,
Brad Martin 2b) 2. (X24) – X23 - KABWE,
Blue 2c) 6. (Kabwe) – X21 – X20 – X19 – X18 - X17 – Ndola.
BANK: 38 + 6 + 6 = 50

PEAR 2a) 5. (C54) – B53 - - - A52 - Z18,
Kev Lee 2b) 2. (Z18) – Y18 - NDOLA,
Purple 2c) 6. (Ndola) - X16 - Mufulira - W16 – CHINGOLA: (X16) - Kitwe; (Serenje) - E51
BANK: 32 + 6 + 6 – 3 (MOSI) = 41

MOSI 2a) 5. (Z13) - Z14 - - - Y15 - MUFULIRA,
Steve Guest 2b) 2. (Mufulira) - X16 - X17,
Orange 2c) 6. (X17) - KITWE: (X17) - X18 - X19 - X20 - X21: (X17) - Ndola.
BANK: 32 + 6 + 6 + 3 (PEAR) = 47

I think MOSI and ACR's payments to each other in 2c cancel each other out.

The in-game map is available at: <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/ingame/RR2545ZM.png>

The third-round die rolls are 3a) 4, 3b) 5, and 3c) 3.

Railway Rivals (Estonia) – RR2542EE2

Game Start

The map was finally finished and emailed out to all the players, so we have another game start. The companies are

Richard Smith	Company Name: Advanced Rail Ventures Overland (ARVO) Colour: Blue Start: Tartu (1 st)
Bob Gingell	Company Name: Baltics Endure Needlessly Dangerous Yards (BENDY) Colour: Black Start: Kohtla-Jarva (1 st)
Roger Trethewey	Company Name: Routes Over Good Estonian Rails (ROGER) Colour: Green Start: Tallinn (1 st)
John Marsden	Company Name: Mightily Anti-Russian Services (MARS) Colour: Orange Start: Parnu (no choices given)
Michael Pargman	Company Name: Estonian Trains (ET) Colour: Red Start: Tallinn (3 rd)

The first-round die rolls are 1a) 6, 1b) 3, and 1c) 6.

Breaking Away 12

Round Eleven

The game draws closer to the end and the final placings should be obvious next round. **Cherry** breaks away from the pack, to further emphasize her comfortable lead.

Square	Replacement	Riders
120+	-	Cherry (1 st),
120	-	
119	-	
118	3	Ash, Amounts
117	5	The Universe
116	-	
115	3	Birch, Moore, Calder
114	6	Arthur Braine
113	7	Col. Steve Zodiac, Miro, Rodin, Dogwood
112	11	Emma Roydz, Dr. Venus, Robert the Robot, Arrow
111	-	
110	3	Samurai, Prof. Matt Matic, Sue Pertitz,
109	6	Killer
108	-	
107	-	
106	3	Regression

Rooted In Place (Tom Howell) 31 points

Manager: Elm

- A. Ash 3, **3**, 3, 3
- B. Birch (9) 4, 7, **3**
- C. Cherry (20) First Place
- D. Dogwood (2) 7, 3, 3

Probable Infinites (John Walker) 17 points

- A. Regression (8) **3**, 3, 4, 3
- B. Amounts (8) 14, **3**, 3
- C. Time dropped
- D. The Universe (1) **5**, 7, 4

Fireball XL5 Jetmobiles (Bob Pitman) 1 pt

Manager: Zoonie the Lazoon

- A. Col. Steve Zodiac 4, **7**, 3, 5
- B. Doctor Venus (1) **11**, 3, 3
- C. Robert the Robot 6, 4, **11**
- D. Prof. Matt Matic 3, **3**, 4

Sudoku Scorchers (Richard Smith) 14 points

Manager: Simon Anthony

- A. Killer (7) 3, **6**, 4, 4
- B. Samurai (3) **3**, 5, 3
- C. Arrow (4) **11**, 4, 3
- D. Thermo Dropped

What Have You Got (Allan Stagg) 20 points

- A. Arthur Braine (10) **6**, 7, 13, 1
- B. Emma Roydz (6) **11**, 5, 4
- C. Hugh Jaas dropped
- D. Sue Pertitz (4) 4, **3**, 1

Artists (Chris Hibbert) 15 points

- A. Miro (5) 4, 4, **7**
- B. Rodin (10) 3, 3, **7**
- C. Moore **3**, 9, 7
- D. Calder 6, **3**, 5

Final Scoring

At this point, the final placings can be determined. Ash will come in second (16 points), Amounts in third (12 points), The Universe in fourth (10 points), Birch in fifth (8 points), Moore in sixth (6 points), Calder in seventh (4 points) and Arthur Braine will get the eighth and final scoring place for 2 points. The final team scores are

1 st	Rooted In Place (Tom Howell)	55 points
2 nd	Probable Infinites (John Walker)	39 points
3 rd	Artists (Chris Hibbert)	25 points
4 th	What Have You Got (Allan Stagg)	22 points
5 th	Sudoku Scorchers (Richard Smith)	14 points
6 th	Fireball XL5 Jetmobiles (Bob Pitman)	1 point

Congratulations to Rooted In Place (Tom Howell)

Game End Statements welcome

Press

Sudoku Scorchers: Simon is worried about Killer's mental state and fears that he will murder 1,3 or 7 people.

The **What Have You Got** riders share their thoughts in the post-race interviews:

Arthur: Our team manager was useless. I have half a mind to sack him!

Emma: I agree - he was a real pain in the A***

Hugh: Yeah - nowhere to be seen when I had a blow-out.

Sue: He gave more thought to our silly names than he did to our orders.

Rules Clarification

Tom asked how I adjudicate which riders moves first from a shared space. I have always followed rule 7.2.1 from the website, but then used arrival order for the next determination (7.2.5) as this fits with how I GM the game. For example, if two A riders are on the same space, then the A rider that arrived first would move first the next round. The way the table is laid out shows this with riders moving off the space in left to right order.

I realize that this is not consistent with the rules shown on our website, but this has been applied consistently. The rules state

7.2 In the event of two or more cyclists occupying the same square, the order of movement is determined by a succession of checks, detailed below.

7.2.1 Grade A cyclists move before grade B cyclists, who move before grade C cyclists, who move before grade D cyclists.

7.2.2 If cyclists of the same grade occupy the same square, priority movement is given to the cyclist playing the highest card that turn.

7.2.3 In the event of rule 7.2.2 failing to resolve the tie, priority movement will be given to the cyclist with the highest card available for play in his hand.

7.2.4 If rule 7.2.3 fails to resolve the tie, the referee refers to the second highest card available for play (and if that fails the third highest and, if applicable, the fourth highest).

7.2.5 If the tie is still not resolved, priority will be given to the cyclist who arrived on the square first. (On rare occasions, a cyclist will have occupied the same square on every turn as another cyclist, in which case it will not be possible to determine which cyclist arrived on the square first. In these situations the cyclists move simultaneously and any points gained by them on a turn are shared between them.)

Rules 7.2.2 - 7.2.4 make it harder for reporting and for the GM, as you cannot include the move order in the report, especially 7.2.2. The original rules (per John Harrington) were that the riders moved in a first in, first out order, which would be a lot simpler and I'm not sure why or when these were changed.

Richard - please can you update the rules to go back to John Harrington's original FIFO rules. I think Tom has it right, although I will finish the current game using the rules I describe below. Richard has now updated the website rules to reflect this and I may revert to the arrival first option for future games.

EDINBURGH FRINGE SPACEFILLER

1. I was going to sail around the globe in the world's smallest ship but I bottled it. - *Mark Simmons*

2. I've been taking salsa lessons for months, but I just don't feel like I'm progressing. It's just one step forward... two steps back. - *Alec Snook*

3. I love the Olympics. My friend and I invented a new type of relay baton: well, he came up with the idea, I ran with it. - *Mark Simmons*

5. My partner told me that she'd never seen the film Gaslight. I told her that she definitely had - *Zoë Coombs Marr*

6. The conspiracy theory about the moon being made of cheese was started by the Hallouminati. - *Olaf Falafel*

7. I'm an extremely emotionally needy non-binary person: my pronouns are 'there there'. - *Sarah Keyworth*

THE CELESTIAL DRAGON #5



Deadline for all games: Friday 7th February 2025

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

The Celestial Steam Locomotive	#35	Richard Smith	richard530smith@btinternet.com
---------------------------------------	------------	----------------------	--

Waiting List / Notes:

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS KENDO NAGASAKI (Three Wishes Variant) – anyone can join in.
FRAGMENTS - Bootiful Books – all-reader game continues, anyone can join in.
DILEMMAS - Silly all-reader game, first round proper inside, anyone can join in.
DICE FORGE - Board game conversion, requires exactly 4.
FEUDALITY - Board game conversion, improved rules, also needs 4.
NEW! RAILWAY RIVALS - new Bhutan map RR2550BT, RR2551BT, RR2552BT - Bob Gingell, Jim Reader, Roger Trethewey, Richard Smith, Steve Ham - 4 more wanted (one game in SubPAR)

Here Be Dragons	#68	John Walker	hbdragons"of"btinternet.com
------------------------	------------	--------------------	-----------------------------

Waiting List / Notes:

NEARLY THE BEST GAME IN THE WORLD – Chris Hibbert*, Richard Smith*, 3 more wanted
[*=willing to GM next game]
LYRIC QUIZ – another 5-round blast, concludes this issue, anyone can play.

The Tangerine Terror I Am The Kurious Kumquat	#75 #5	Howard Bishop	latixexile@outlook.com
--	-------------------------	----------------------	--

Waiting List / Notes:

THE NAME OF THE GAME - All reader game continues, anyone can join
ORIGINS OF WW2 - Brendan Whyte, John Marsden 3 more wanted
WHAT'S IN HOWARD'S RECORD COLLECTION? - Richard Smith, Allan Stagg, Jim Reader, Brendan Whyte, room for more, game will start in earnest next issue.
DOS DE MAYO – 2 wanted

SubPAR	#5	Jim Reader	jim_reader"of"hotmail.com
---------------	-----------	-------------------	---------------------------

Waiting List / Notes:

RAILWAY RIVALS - Estonia (RR2542EE) – John Marsden, Michael Pargman, Richard Smith, Roger Trethewey, Bob Gingell - game start inside
BUS BOSS - Shikoku (BB418SHI) - Roger Trethewey, Brad Martin 2-4 more wanted
BUS BOSS - Farnham and Aldershot (TBA) Bob Gingell – 4-5 more wanted
BREAKING AWAY - Richard Smith - 5 more wanted
RR Senegal & The Gambia – design in progress!