

THE CELESTIAL DRAGON #7



Featuring:

THE CELESTIAL STEAM LOCOMOTIVE #37

HERE BE DRAGONS #70

SUBPAR #7

THE TANGERINE TERROR #77

I AM THE KURIOUS KUMQUAT #7

DEADLINE: Friday 2nd May 2025



THE CELESTIAL STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

Track no. 37

richard530smith@btinternet.com

20th March 2025

This issue's main picture is not, as suggested in the deadline reminder email, a scenic spring scene. Instead it is a photo of the **enormous** DVD boxed set of The Americans I bought. See how it dwarfs the Blake's 7 set. Last time I reported I had got to episode 6 of the first season watching it on the Channel 4 streaming service (with ads). Having decided I probably was going to watch all 75 episodes I checked out the possibility of getting it on disc. I was pleasantly surprised to discover you can get the whole lot on region 2 DVD (from Portugal) for only £39. I've now watched most of the first 3 seasons, though I have recently been distracted by Wheel of Time season 3 on Amazon.

This issue's Dragon is Sir Keir Starmer, armed with a chainsaw with which to make public sector spending cuts, such as replacing me with an AI coding bot. Talking of AI, the picture was generated by Craiyon <https://www.craiyon.com> then tweaked slightly by me. AI-generated artwork and videos are nothing new, and neither are voice-controlled chat bots, but I was very impressed by this demo https://www.sesame.com/research/crossing_the_uncanny_valley_of_voice - apparently it uses "emotion tokens" to make it more like talking to a real human.

Not kitchen-related this time, but another "exciting" development at *chez moi* is I finally got smart meters fitted. And they don't work. Well actually they do work as regular meters but are currently not sending anything to British Gas. This is expected to be rectified soon, but for now I still have to brave the snails once a month - I think I did mention before that numerous snails have made my electricity meter cupboard their home.

At a recent "Crets" video drinks call I was reminded that now I am a permanent cat owner I should factor their costs into my retirement calculator - food, cat litter, vets bills, insurance etc. all adds up. Looking on the internet the average cost per cat appears to be around £1500 per year. I do of course have to factor in how many years the cats will live, with Riley being 13 and Raymond 8.

When I asked the vet about life expectancy he said that Riley, being so strong and healthy, could easily reach 20 provided his liver and kidneys hold out. He could of course die through misadventure, as he is stupidly brave with other animals (this may be how he *pwnd* the Labrador) although he is afraid of thunder and going to the vets. I think if he was human he would have the body of George Clooney and the mind of Paul Gascoigne. He does indeed look very handsome enjoying the spring sunshine in my back garden.



I had an interesting chat at work recently [*as everyone knows, public sector workers watch golf when working remotely and drink tea and natter when in the office*] about dreams. I rarely remember much of my dreams but have always been under the impression that there are repeat elements in them, such as train stations, shopping centres, bars, difficult walks and looking for toilets (perhaps coinciding with when I need a nocturnal tinkle?).

However, the mind is known to play tricks like *déjà vu* - how can I be sure a repeat has occurred unless I had been taking notes about my dreams when I wake up, as a number of authors have done such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Mary Shelly and H.P. Lovecraft. The only dream I have ever committed to print has never recurred. The part of the dream I remembered was riding a motorbike through Southampton city centre at night wearing only a pair of football shorts. I think someone said it indicated a deep-seated sense of insecurity.

Perhaps, when Dilemmas finishes I could replace it with a "Dream Doctor" game in which players analyse each others' dreams. Er, maybe not...

... on the games front, I'm still considering board game conversions to offer - last chance saloon for Dice Forge and Feudality. Fragments could be over in two more turns, though another game soon after (single subject again, but not books) might be a good idea now that people have sussed how it works. However, I have decided that my next all-reader game will be a new BPD variant, starting *this* issue: Details straight after the lettercol.

And finally, I don't think I've ever mentioned philately before (it's many years since I last philated (?)), but I think the new "mythical creatures" stamps, issued in March are great! See this link <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c0eg2evrq55o> for pics. Shame about the price though.

Richard

THE LETTERS BIT



STEVE HAM

Still reeling from Friday's news of Zelensky in the White House. I've no idea how it will turn out but I think it will be a long time before we forget those scenes. At least we have some lovely weather to focus on instead.

I was amazed at the video of that meeting. Vance seemed to be saying that Zelenskyy wasn't grovelling enough to deserve the help of the USA. Contrast that with the UK and France (whose armed forces were later dissed by Vance) who pledged unconditional support for Ukraine.

Lots of gardening done in the sunshine and I was tempted to liberate the barbecue from the garage.

MICHAEL PARGMAN

Early orders this time as I'm traveling to Bologna in two days. Unfortunately it looks like it's going to be cold weather there and not an early spring as I had hoped. I hope you are fine and that you found a washer that fitted your measures.

Temperatures in the UK were pretty much the same as Italy when you sent the orders.

My washing machine has been just fine so far apart from a somewhat disconcerting noise when it turns the water input on and off. Seems if I wanted a super-quiet machine I should have shelled out for a Bosch.

TOM HOWELL

As cats with multiple homes, I had a house once whose mortgage payments I delivered to an older woman who lived two houses up the street from mine. There was a big yellow cat I often saw when at her house to deliver the check. I also had another neighbor who lived behind me across the alley who I talked with occasionally. During one of our conversations, that big yellow cat wandered by, and this neighbor revealed that 'his' cat often came home smelling like 'old lady perfume'. I don't recall whether I revealed to him where 'his' cat spent some of it's time.

Hmm, I don't think I've used the term "yellow" to describe a cat, but having a quick look on the internet (e.g. <https://petcommunitydaily.com/cat/what-is-a-yellow-cat-called>) I see "yellow" and "orange" are blanket terms to describe various breeds and coat types. Riley (picture above) is the classic "ginger tom".

BOB PITMAN

I am looking for a new laptop as my current machine waited until our full fibre was installed before it finally gave up on running wifi. It's been a creeping problem for months but today I cannot resurrect the wifi module. For a while I have had lots of wifi dropouts that have usually been fixed with a disable/enable of the wifi adapter or running diagnostics on the adapter and letting it fix (by resetting) the adapter. I think the problem isn't the software, the laptop has dropped to the floor a few times and I think the board or possible the hardware module took some damage that an occasional software nudge would get past. This time nothing would bring wifi back, I even tried rolling back to a restore point and that didn't work. I have borrowed an ethernet cable and am plugged straight into the router now - and its working, or at least I have internet access via the laptop again.

I have two old desktops, an old laptop, and two new laptops in my house. The new laptops belong to "Uncle Keir" though, and are inexpensive models (Lenovo Thinkpad - reliable and good value).

The full fibre is great... And now I'm looking for something that can run the game I bought in 2016 when I bought this laptop only to discover the graphics card wasn't good enough!

A company called CityFibre are in my area installing superfast broadband, so I should get it soon.

In televisual news, we finished the latest series of "From". It's an intensely frustrating story that is so convoluted and weird that you really want to know what it's all about. It's by the makers of "Lost" but is much more scary!

I gave up with Lost after the first season, mainly due to the bizarre and rambling plot. I always had the feeling they were having a laugh at the expense of their viewers.

I've just had my second Shingles jab (party inspired by what happened to Bob Mortimer) and sad to say it's been aches and chills most of yesterday and today. Not fun.

It's never occurred to me to get a Shingles jab. I haven't even had a flu jab for a couple of years.

MARTIN WALKER

I don't know if you follow cycling but the Tour de France will start from Edinburgh in two years' time, I saw a bit of the World Champs eighteen months back and they make it look so effortless and at the end they're not even sweating, amazing.

A bit soft starting from Edinburgh, though, as it's downhill all the way to France!

BY MODERATELY POPULAR DEMAND - GAMESTART



Rules: In this variant the highest scoring answer(s) AND the lowest scoring answer(s) all score no points, so you want to be somewhere in the middle with your choice. To complicate matters each player has four tokens to play on each round. The tokens can be distributed however the player sees fit, even all four on the same category.

- Double Token - double the score of one (named) answer (in one category)
- Half Token - halve the score of one (named) answer (in one category), rounding up
- Destroy Token - eliminate one (named) answer (in one category)
- Shield Token - prevent the elimination of one (named) answer (in one category)

Conflicting Double and Half tokens cancel, so two Doubles and a Half on the same answer equates to one Double. However, a single Shield token protects an answer from elimination by any number of Destroys.

Example Orders: The first category is "US Presidents 1975 - 2025", you might order "Choose Jimmy Carter; Double Jimmy Carter; Destroy Donald Trump". This uses up 2 of your 4 tokens for the round.

Example Scoring: The category is "British Formula 1 Drivers" and there are 12 players. Before any tokens are played the scores are: Lando Norris (3) Lewis Hamilton (3) George Russell (2) Jenson Button (2) Nigel Mansell (1) and Damon Hill (1). Only Russell and Button score points. If someone were to double Hamilton (to 6), Norris would then score. If someone were to double Russell (to 4) he would no longer score and Norris and Hamilton would. Similarly if Russell was halved (to 1) he would no longer score. If Norris and Hamilton were both eliminated, nobody would score anything!

Categories for Round 1: The theme is "Things that are bad for you". There is no start letter.

- 1) A brand of cigarettes (past or present)
- 2) An alcoholic drink that is categorised as a "spirit"
- 3) A recreational drug other than alcohol or nicotine
- 4) The product name of a chocolate bar
- 5) A type of food you might get as a takeaway or delivery
- 6) A viral illness

The game will run for five rounds. I think it should be fun albeit a bit chaotic.

VIDEO REVIEWS

EBB Live at the 1865 (DVD) (2025)



This band has had a few mentions before in my zine and also Will This Wind.

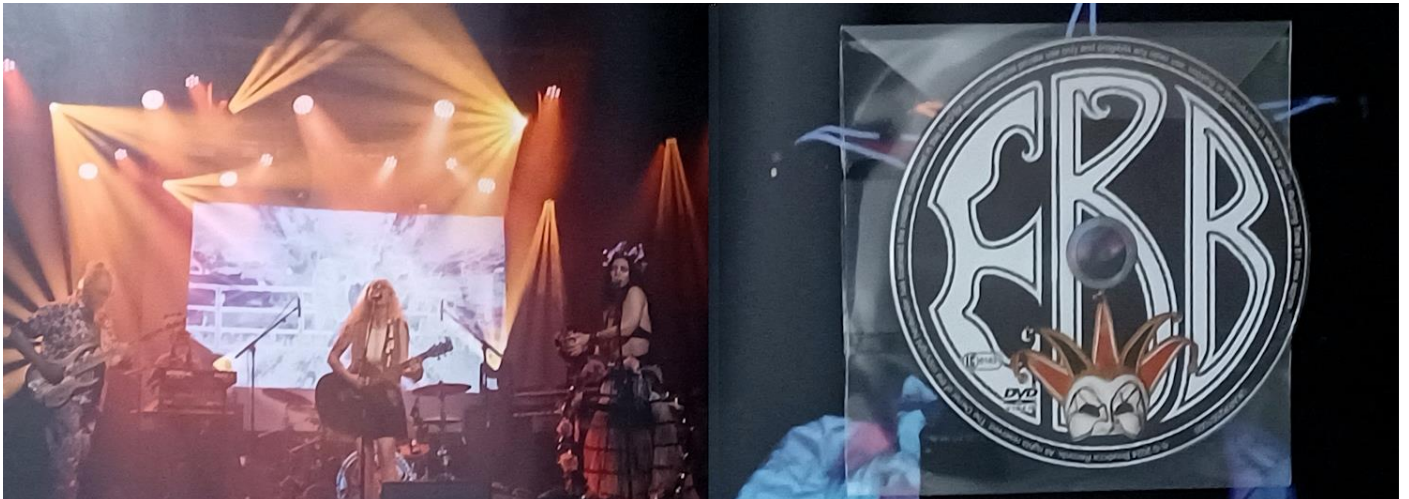
I first became interested in the group after stumbling over their cover version of Hawkwind's *The Demented Man* on YouTube. This was recorded live in a living room in Scotland.

Since then, they have recorded one full album, one EP and now a live DVD. It comes as a photo booklet with the disc in a slipcase, so I'm not sure where to store it!

Despite the band winning awards such as Prog Magazine's Best New Band they remain very much an underground act. For example they released an excerpt from the DVD on YouTube (the impressive track Reason: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pb7pIiqGz8Y>) and it has only had 400 views.

The band members are mostly young and female, the exception being an old guy called *Mad Dog*. He is the bass player and they also have a drummer, a guitarist / lead vocalist, two keyboard players, and a backing vocalist / dancer. For the live concert shown on the DVD they also had an additional stage performer who wore a number of different costumes.

The colourful visuals are mostly quite retro and arty, adjectives which you could also use to describe the music. The songs and playing are actually quite straightforward for a prog band, this lack of intricacy perhaps means they are better labelled as art rock. In today's world of bland, overprocessed music it's refreshing to see and hear such an old-school organic band who play from the heart.



The concert is 80 minutes long, possibly limited as they were on a double bill with John Hackett that night. A shorter set is also appropriate as they are in the process of building up more material for their repertoire. This is the subject of the bonus material which shows them developing songs in the *cough* studio.

Will they make it big? Probably not but I hope they continue making music for me to enjoy.

As far as I know you can only get the DVD from the EBB website <https://ebbband.bandcamp.com/>

ALBUM REVIEWS

Riverside - Live ID (2025)

Formed in Warsaw in 2001, Riverside have released 8 studio albums and this is their fourth live album. They are generally labelled as "prog" but their music encompasses elements of ambient, electronic, heavy metal and pop. They suffered a terrible blow in 2016 when guitarist Piotr Grudziński died unexpectedly, but continued on as a three-piece, later recruiting a new guitarist in 2020.

The Live ID concert was recorded in 2024 and features most of their 2023 concept album ID.Entity which is all about the internet and social media. Some rock fans pooh-pooed the album for being "electro-pop" which it is to some extent, but still a damned good prog record.



I bought the 2CD/1Blu-ray edition. On the video the audio is mostly the same as on the CD except there is more crowd banter from Mariusz Duda (bass & lead vocal) in Polish with English subtitles, and you can have it in DTS.

Visually it's less spectacular than the Ayreon album I reviewed recently, but still enjoyable to watch. The sound quality and mixing are excellent, and the playing is faultless - almost too good for a live record though the band do manage to inject a bit more energy into the songs for the concert.

My favourite track is Big Tech Brother which starts with a rather creepy spoken work introduction:

Hello listener! If you want to hear the next song, you must first agree to terms and conditions. It won't hurt... Well, at least not now. Maybe later. Thank you for your cooperation.



As well as the tracks from ID.Eternity the concert features popular tracks such as *#Addicted* from Love, Fear and The Time Machine, *Panic Room* from Rapid Eye Movement, *Left Out* from Anno Domini High Definition, and a majestic rendition of power ballad *Conceiving You* from Second Life Syndrome to close the set.

Here's a sample YouTube track from the concert, it's Post-Truth, a powerful rocker with a poppish melody and great playing by all four men <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOmyaaHePbA>

Next issue: I will review the controversial new Steven Wilson album, *The Overview*.

CHOICE - SUPPENKASPER VARIANT - ROUNDS 13-15



<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

Note on Suppen-Kasper card: Unlike the previous game, you only make one round of 5, the rest of the numbers on the plate are fed to the dog. The round can be placed before or after any of the rounds, so this time it could be before R16, between R16 and R17 or after R17. You cannot use another special card on this round but you can engineer a finish. You can also choose not to play the card at all during the game.

Player	Round 13	Round 14	Round 15
Bob Gingell	(2+5)=7, (4+6)=10 w1	KUR w1	(3+5)=8, (4+4)=8 w3
Steve Ham	(1+5)=6, (2+4)=6 w6	-1	-2 decrement w2
Chris Hibbert	(1+5)=6, (4+6)=10 w2	(1+5)=6 (5+5)=10 w6	-2 decrement w6
Kevin Lee	(1+5)=6, (2+4)=6 Null	(1+5)=6 (5+5)=10 w6	(3+5)=8, (4+4)=8 w3
Dane Maslen	(1+6)=7, (2+5)=7 w4	(1+6)=7, (5+5)=10 d5	(3+4)=7, (3+4)=7 Null
Michael Pargman	(1+5)=6, (4+6)=10 w2	(1+5)=6, (5+5)=10 d6	-2 decrement w2
Roger Trethewey	(1+4)=5, (2+5)=7 w6	KUR w6	(3+5)=8, (4+4)=8 w3
John Walker	(1+6)=7, (2+4)=6 w5	(1+6)=7, (5+5)=10 w5	(3+3)=6, (4+4)=8 w5

Player	Score	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Würfels	Würfels	Würfels
Bob Gingell	200				<u>7</u>		3	<u>8</u>		<u>8</u>			11111--	22222--	33333--
Steve Ham	300					<u>10</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>					1111--	2-----	666666-
Chris Hibbert	20		3		4	<u>8</u>				<u>10</u>			2222---	333----	6666---
Kevin Lee	20				<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>		4			2222---	333----	6666---
Dane Maslen	550				<u>7</u>		<u>11</u>			<u>10</u>			222222-	333----	444----
Michael Pargman	200				<u>7</u>	3	<u>5</u>			<u>10</u>			2222---	333----	444----
Roger Trethewey	290				<u>8</u>		<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>		<u>5</u>			22222--	33333--	6666---
John Walker	40			2		<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>		<u>7</u>			1111---	33333--	55555--

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

New Rolls (dropping to 2 rounds per postal turn):
R16: 3,4,4,4,6 **R17:** 2,2,3,3,6

CRYSTAL BALL 2025 - FUNNY SHAPED BALLS

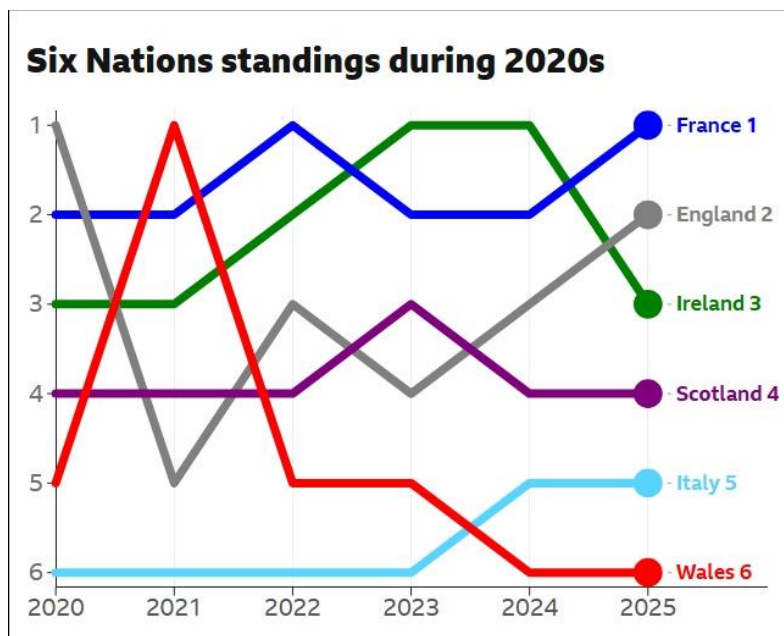


No	Sport	Event	Date	Richard Smith	Jim Reader	John Walker	Martin Walker	Steve Ham
1L	Tennis	Australian Open - Men's	Jan	Alcaraz	Sinner [2]	Alcaraz	Alcaraz	Sinner [2]
2L	American Football	Super Bowl	Feb	San Francisco	Kansas City [1]	San Francisco	Detroit Lions	Kansas City [1]
3L	Rugby	6 Nations	Mar	England [1]	France [2]	Ireland	Scotland	Ireland
4L	Athletics	World Indoor US medals	Mar	22	25	20	20	24
5L	Athletics	World Indoor GB medals	Mar	6 [1]	8	4 [2]	10	7
6L	Golf	US Masters	April	Scheffler	Schuaffele	Scheffler	McIlroy	Kepka
7L	Snooker	World Champion	May	Trump	Williams	Trump	O'Sullivan	Allen
8L	Football	English Premier League	May	Arsenal	Liverpool	Man City	Liverpool	Man City
9L	Football	Southampton EPL final position	May	20 th *	15 th	20 th *	20 th	19 th
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	Ast Martin
TB	UK economy	Base Interest Rate	Dec	2.5%	2.25%	4%	3.5%	3.75%
SCORE				2	5	2	0	3

* free change

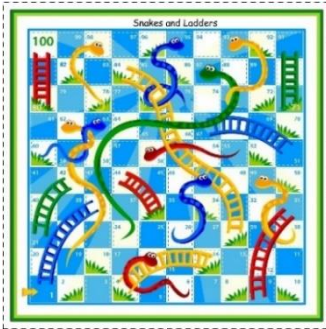
The Rugby Six Nations sees an exciting final day with Ireland scraping past Italy, and England spanking Wales to go top of the table, before the France v. Scotland game ...

... a brave effort by the Scots but France are the champions, England second place.



In the indoor athletics, both GB and US sent smaller than usual teams, so medal hauls were down on the previous champs: GB 4, US 16. It does get defending champion John Walker off the mark!

SNAKES AND LADDERS – BLUE-GREEN VARIANT - ROUND 5



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. Everyone gets two new keys and 6 new numbers for the start of R7

Martin finally gets snaked with the finish line in sight. Bob finds ladders on R5 and R6 on the green board and takes the lead! Chris continues to somehow find nothing. Meanwhile, on the blue board, Tom gets snaked and finds himself sharing a square with John.

Player	Start	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	Portal keys left
Bob Gingell	0	3	37	41	46	70	92	2
Chris Hibbert	0	0	1	6	10	16	19	2
Tom Howell	0	5	8	45	46	48	34	2
John Walker	0	0	1	37	24	28	34	2
Martin Walker	0	37	58	78	83	69	70	2

FRAGMENTS: BOOTIFUL BOOKS - ROUND 4



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 1-5 (so 12 in total), and there will be 8 rounds, or less if a player reaches 50 points before then.

So orders are, for each book, you can (do nothing or):

(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 more successful guesses this round, and two to add to the wrong 'un list:

- Book 1 is not *A Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess
- Book 3 is not *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- Book 3 is not *If Only They Could Talk* by James Herriot
- Book 8 is not *Deliverance* by James Dickey

On the scoreboard, Michael is off the mark and three players now have 3 in the hutch, almost halfway to the 50-point victory line. Book 4 is proving elusive so far (it is not quite as famous as the first three) but Howard has cracked it and blasted into the lead!

Note that players and the GM need to be careful with numbering, for example, ***** (20) ***** indicates that the asterisk to the left of the 20-marker is #20 and the one to the right is #21. **I got this wrong on book 5 - the n at the end has been "moved" to #101 from #100.**

A few notes about letter revelations. All are public but the turn report does not state how the letters came to be revealed. If you select a letter by position you might have something in mind that maybe others don't, so it could benefit you more. If you select by letter of the alphabet, one that scores more in Scrabble might not be in the clue at all, so only you benefit. You are, of course, allowed to pass a book.

Player	Book1	Book2	Book3	Book4	Book5	Book6	Book7	Book8	Total
Howard Bishop	8	8	8	8	-	-	-	-	32
Bob Gingell	8	7	9	-	-	-	-	-	24
Andy Lischett	8	8	8	-	-	-	-	-	24
Brendan Whyte	8	7	8	-	-	-	-	-	23
John Walker	8	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
Bob Pitman	8	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	15
Chris Hibbert	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Michael Pargman	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7

I have applied the letter revelation requests to books 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 plus a random 10% of the remaining unknown letters, whilst books 9 and 10 join the train (two more to go)

Books 1 and 2 are now worth 7 points if guessed correctly, and 3 and 4 are worth 8, 5 and 6 worth 9 with the newly added 7 and 8 worth 10.

Book 1: W*ns* o*S** t*]*** *****a (20) s***** tyu** er*h* ***al (40) c***** *lo** t*ta* *****i (60) ***e* ***le **y** **mn* (80) pr*** *tB*g *r**h ** [97 letters, 6 points]

Book 2: A*ayi *t**] **eof *dver (20) ti*** **a** smanL e***** (40) dB*oo **nD* b*in [54 letters, 6 points]

Book 3: Se**n t*eYo **s** **m*o (20) *****e st**y **v** ***a* (40) *u*dt h***m **ex* **a** (60) ***** **e*w ***** **e** (80) *eE*r *****w a***** **pt (100) **o** *a**a l**d* e***** (120) l**f [124 letters, 7 points]

Book 4: *h**o ***s* **ed* ft*r* (20) n**** i**** s*c** m**i* (40) gc**t *****d *t*** **st (60) *****f *o*T* ***Gr ***** (80) **s** e***** tot** Ea**o (100) f*roa n [106 letters, 7 points]

Book 5: *yo** *s**d *n**n **rv* (20) *****n e***** **cb **l** (40) **i** ***f* **s** ***l* (60) **a** ***** i*t** *****d (80) *m*** nc*** **ub* *s*** (100) n [101 letters, 8 points]

Book 6: Th*f* *****o ***i* **eS* (20) **o** ar*h* *****s byM** (40) h**lC o*ey [49 letters, 8 points]

Book 7: ***i* Ru*s* ***** **po (20) ****i ***** ***** *k**f (40) a**** *o*** *****x t**** (60) ***o* g**** **ing [75 letters, 9 points]

Book 8: ***sp **u** ***** **n* (20) *l*** ****t ****G a***y (40) ***** **h** i**** **i* (60) ***** **v** ***** **a (80) ***** **d* **i*h r**i* (100) ***** ye*** ** [112 letters, 9 points]

Book 9: ***i* ****t ***a* ***** (20) ***** **e ***** n**** (40) ***p* ***** ***** *g*** (60) ***** ***** d**** (80) ***** **l ***** ***** (100) *****f ***** *s*** ***** (120) ***u* [125 letters, 10 points]

Book 10: *y*** ***** n*i** ***** (20) ***** **q ***** ***** (40) ***c* ***** ***** u**** (60) ***** ***** **f** ***** (80) ***n* [85 letters, 10 points]

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS KENDO NAGASAKI - ROUND 4



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.

All 8 transmitters are placed in Europe. Could it be Colonel Mustard in Dijon?



Round 4:

Player	Who	Where	Lat	Lon
Bob Gingell	Queen Victoria (1819-1901)	Cowes, Isle of Wight	50.7595	-1.3002
Steve Guest	Gustave Eiffel (1832-1923)	Paris, France	48.856667	2.352222
Chris Hibbert	Maximilian III of Austria (1558-1618)	Hamburg, Germany	53.55	10.00
Tom Howell	Ferdinand Porsche (1875-1951)	Stuttgart, Germany	48.7775	9.18
Dane Maslen	Jean-Baptiste Jourdan (1762-1833)	Limoges, France	45.8353	1.2625
Jim Reader	Pierluigi Collina (1960-)	Bologna, Italy	44.493889	11.342778
Martin Walker	Franz Beckenbauer (1945-2024)	Plzen, Czechia	49.7475	13.3775
Brendan Whyte	Kanye West (1977-)	Luxembourg City	49.611667	6.131944

Public response to the player with the closest guess: *We were both the subject of 1990s movies but yours was much more popular than mine. We were both associated with an illness ending in "a".*

Round 3:

Player	Who	Where	Lat	Lon
Bob Gingell	Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)	Copenhagen, Denmark	55.676111	12.568333
Steve Guest	Johannes Kepler (1571-1630)	ESOC, Darmstadt, Germany	49.871111	8.622778
Chris Hibbert*	Marcel Marceau (1923-2007)	Mediterranean Sea+	35.0	18.0
Tom Howell	Albert Einstein (1879-1955)	Berlin, Germany	52.52	13.405
Dane Maslen	André Michelin (1853–1931)	Clermont-Ferrand, France	45.7831	3.0824
Jim Reader	Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)	Jyvaskyla, Finland	62.241667	25.741667
Martin Walker	Benito Mussolini (1883-1945)	Rome, Italy	41.9	12.483333

* Used a wish this round

+ Wikipedia does give a lat lon for what appears to the centroid

Public response to the player with the closest guess: *We share a nationality but have different occupations, and our lifetimes do not overlap.*

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.*

Not many wishes used so far. Will the Kendo Genie earn his corn next time? If not, he could be for the chop from DOGE (Department Of Genie Efficiency).

DILEMMAS - ROUND 2



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). New players start on the lowest score (15).

Likes for Q1 Answers: Chris H 1 Bob P 1

Likes for Q2 Answers: Bob G 2

Only four likes dished out for the first two questions. Not that the score is desperately important in this game!

Scoreboard:

Player	Pre	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	TOTAL
Bob Gingell	2	5	5	3	2		2					19
Steve Ham	2	6	4	3	3							18
Chris Hibbert	2	5	3	4	3							17
Bob Pitman	2	3	3	3	4							15

Q3. Would you rather win an Olympic gold medal, or a Nobel Prize? (Chris H)

VOTES: Medal 1 Prize 3

Bob G: Nobel Prize. Brains or Brawn - I suppose it has to be brains. Who remembers Olympic medallists with only one medal (although most Nobel Prize winners seem to fade into obscurity too).

Steve H: I would much rather win an Olympic Gold medal, because drug-taking aside, you have objectively won the medal by being the best at that sport at that particular time. The awards of Nobel prizes are exercises in PR, opaque and often dependant on money spent on publicity. I probably shouldn't put a link to a podcast in my answer by Adam Rutherford has strong views on this <https://uk-podcasts.co.uk/podcast/past-present-future/the-history-of-bad-ideas-nobel-prizes-2024-11-17>

Chris H: A Nobel Prize. Though science prizes are usually awarded late in life, the people who earn them get a lifetime of respect. Gold medals are impressive, but people don't remember as long.

Bob P: A Nobel Prize. It can make a difference if its application could affect a large number of people eventually and it's open to all ages. A gold Olympics medal is a personal achievement not to be sniffed at but it's not going to improve many lives (I suppose it could inspire people to get fitter). Nobel feels like it's a lifetime's work.

Q4. A distant relative who had no immediate family sadly passes away and to your surprise leaves you the UK farm (estate valuation £5 million) he had worked all of his life. Your career has taken you into specialising as a tax accountant so you have no interest in farming it. You are probably going to sell it. Do you use your professional knowledge to avoid the inheritance tax (and you think you can get away with it with minimal risk) or do you just pay the inheritance tax demand? (Bob P)

VOTES: Avoid 2 Pay 2 -> 3

Bob G: Avoid the tax and I think the others will do that too. In principle I favour taxes being paid (especially by the super-rich and including inheritance taxes) since this pays for all the essential services that a community needs, and resistance to paying tax is largely because of a refusal to accept that everyone else is part of the same community. But minimal risk of being caught cheating is too tempting... Bad Bob!

Steve H: Avoid the tax. I'm not sure how you propose to avoid the tax (are you advocating lying?) but if you can pay someone to farm the land for a couple of years before selling it and so avoiding tax then I'd look to do that. As someone who gets paid by the government I'm not keen on some of the ways people avoid paying tax (especially Personal Service Companies) but I accept that it is the government's role to write the laws that determine what is acceptable and what isn't and citizens have the right to test those laws. Tax evasion is a different case.

Chris H: I'll mentally translate to American taxation rules, since I don't know the difference. I'll pay the tax. I think the audience will split on this one.

Bob P: This is really about the recent inheritance tax being applied to farmer families. To my mind they do a job they chose, they have loads of tax breaks (red diesel. Road tax, VAT recovery) so getting taxed like everyone else on inherited land and money is tough. If they are in business then they are in business, if farms are charities then the aspect of them being handed down through families should go. Pay the tax.

GM casting vote: The question touches on both the fairness of the inheritance tax rule change for farms in the UK (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/what-are-the-changes-to-agricultural-property-relief>), and the ethics of tax avoidance and tax evasion. In the question's scenario, the farm is not being left to a spouse, child, or grandchild and so is liable to the full rate of tax, which probably can't be avoided through legal means. I have sympathy with farmers struggling to keep afloat whilst putting food on my table, but such a consideration could not possibly justify bending the rules in this case. I would sell the farm to Jeremy Clarkson, pay the tax and enjoy the rest of the money with a clear conscience.

ORDERS:

You have up to 2 "likes" to assign (can be 0) *+1pt for liker and likee*. If 2, you can like two answers to the same question or one like for each question. You cannot like your own answer.

The next two questions are both a bit weird...

Q5. Is there anyone, ten or more years older than you that you would swap bodies with (your consciousness takes over their body and life and vice versa)? (GM)

Q6. You have a choice of future diet that is solely bananas or solely peanuts: which do you choose? (Bob G)

ORDERS:

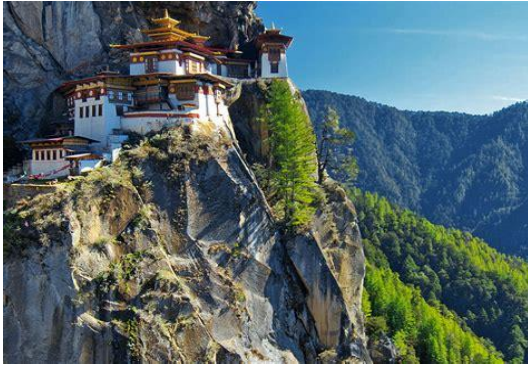
For each question (5&6) you need to

a) choose which option you prefer *+1pt*

b) predict the result of the vote (your choice will be taken as prediction by default) *+1pt if correct*

c) (optionally) provide a written answer. Note that this does not have to support your choice *+1pt*

RAILWAY RIVALS BHUTAN (RR2550BT) ROUND 0



The map is available on the Pig website at the following URL:
<https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/bhutanrr.html>

Results from the equitable start generator below:

Roger gets Gelephu
 Jim gets Phuntsholing
 Bob gets Samdrup Jongkhar
 Score = 8

Jim and Bob both specified the same start town preferences, so the equitable start generator also achieved a maximum score of 8 with Roger getting Gelephu and the other two either way round.

Will any Bhutanese readers complain about the reduction in the number of mountains to make the map playable? Bhutan actually has 98.8% mountain coverage (compared to local rival Nepal's puny 80.7%). Bhutan is also the only country in the world that is carbon negative, and its populace are rated as the world's happiest.

<p>Roger Trethewey Company: Railways Of Gelephu Early Running (ROGER) Colour: Green Start: Gelephu</p>	<p>Bob Gingell Bob's Utterly Terrific Trains (BUTT) Colour: Black Start: Samdrup Jongkhar</p>	<p>Jim Reader Yellow Engines and Trains Institute (YETI) Colour: Yellow Start: Phuntsholing</p>
---	---	--

Rolls for Round 1: 1a) 5 1b) 4 1c) 4

RAILWAY RIVALS BHUTAN (RR2551BT) ROUND 0

GM Bob Gingell

The companies get ready to climb some mountains, but get a slow start.

Press: Richard Smith (BOTI):

I'm regretting setting the 21st as the deadline instead of the 14th - seems like aaaaages! I think the starts are fairly even, but could be wrong ...

Richard Smith: Bhutani Overground Train Infrastructure (BOTI), Colour - Red;
 Start: Phuntsholing.

Steve Ham: Ham's Engines Advance over Rugged Terrain (HEART), Colour - Purple;
 Start: Gelephu.

Brad Martin: Himalayan Alpine Passes Punish Yokels (HAPPY), Colour - Blue;
 Start: Samdrup Jongkhar.

Round 1 build allowance: 2, 6, 3

BUS BOSS - DENMEAD AND WATERLOOVILLE (BB416DEN) ROUND 10



BOB's run of raking in the Brass Margarets came to an end with a middling round, much the same for DAWN. CRETS closed up a little but the big winner was WEAR with £91 banked.

The one race they lost out on, #31, was a real low roller, with CRETS just about getting over the line on the fifth dice, their rivals needing 6.

No further routes purchased (not much left), but it may be worth a final splash of cash based on the remaining destinations for rounds 11 and 12.

The in-game map is available at <https://variablepig.org/maps/bb/ingame/BB416DEN.jpg>

	BOB Bob Gingell Black	DAWN Michael Pargman Green	WEAR Kevin Lee Red	CRETS Jim Reader Yellow
27) ♠5 Hambledon - ♦4 Cosham	10 [15] +5 -4	20 [16] -5 -1 +4		+1
28) ♠4 Soberton Heath - ♥Q Catherington		10 [20] -7 +2	20 [17] +7 -2	
29) ♠Q Wickham - ♣Q Langstone	15 [22] -6		15 [22] -4 +6	+4
30) ♥3 Worlds End - ♦2 QA Hospital	20 [14] -3		+3 +3	10 [15] -3
31) ♥ J Horndean - ♣K Chichester	7 [17] +2 +2		7 [16] -2	16 [16] -2
32) ♦9 Fareham - ♣8 Farlington		+1	15 [14] -1	15 [12]
33) ♠10 Boarhunt - ♠ K Alton / Winchester	5 [17] -2 -3	12 [14] +5 +2		13 [15] -5 +3
34) ♥5 Denmead - ♥K Clanfield	+2	10 [16] -2 -4	20 [9] +4	
35) ♣6 Waterlooville - ♦7 Portchester	+5	10 [18]		20 [12] -5

Last Turn	224	201	184	170
Points from Races	53	57	91	67
Builds	-	-	-	-
Points Total	277	258	275	237

BOB Black
Bob Gingell
No routes purchased
COST: 0

DAWN Green
Michael Pargman
No routes purchased
COST: 0

WEAR Red
Kevin Lee
No routes purchased
COST: 0

CRETS Yellow
Jim Reader
No routes purchased
COST: 0

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

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 36) ♠A Alton / Winchester - ♦A Portsmouth | 37) ♠J Wickham - ♥9 Cowplain |
| 38) ♠2 Mislingford - ♣5 Waterlooville | 39) ♥8 Anmore - ♦J Southampton |
| 40) ♥6 Denmead - ♣9 Bedhampton | 41) ♦5 Port Solent - ♣3 Purbrook |
| 42) ♦8 Fareham - ♦6 Paulsgrove | 43) ♣4 Stakes - ♣J Havant |
| 44) ♠7 Newtown - ♥4 Anthill Common | |

The build order for round 11 is Jim, Michael, Kevin, Bob.

BUS BOSS - DENMEAD AND WATERLOOVILLE (BB417DEN) ROUND 10

GM: Bob Gingell

The scores close up as WHCW suffers from a failed Joint Run with no fallback and B2150 benefits from a sole entry. A lot of similar length races results in a lot of ties. CARTOON wins and avoids a tie in Race 31 and also gains a tie in Race 33 but is still in last place.

Races for Round 10 (max 5 entries, ties = *):

- (AH-2S): B2150 [22] 20; CARTOON [39] 10.
- (TC-8D): WHCW [15+1 = 16] 15* -3r = 12; ROGER [16] 15* +3 = 18.
- (6D-6H): WHCW [14+1 = 15] 15* -2r = 13; ROGER [15] 15* +2 = 17.
- (7H-4C): B2150 [8+1 = 9] 15* -4w +2 = 13; WHCW [8+1 = 9] 15* -2b +4 = 17.
- (8S-3C): CARTOON [12+1 = 13] 16 -6b +6 = 16; B2150 [12+1 = 13] 7* -6c +6 = 7;
ROGER [12+1 = 13] 7* -3w = 4; WHCW +3.
- (JD-4S): B2150 30 -1c = 29; CARTOON +1.
- (7C-KC): ROGER [10] 15* +4 = 19; CARTOON [12+1 = 13] 15* -4r = 11.
- (QS-7S): CARTOON [6] 15*; B2150 [9] 15*.
- (KD-9D): WHCW [6] 10* +1 = 11; CARTOON [7] 10*; ROGER [6+1 = 7] 10* -1w = 9.

Scores and builds:

- CARTOON, Purple (Steve Ham): 174 +63 -0 = 237.
No purchases [-0].
- B2150, Green (Richard Smith): 185 +84 -9 = 260.
Fareham Common - Port Solent [7+2 = 9].
- WHCW, Bungo Blue (Brendan Whyte): 199.5 +56 -0 = 255.5.
No purchases [-0].
- ROGER, Orange (Roger Trethewey): 203.5 +67 -7 = 263.5.
Havant - Langstone; QA Hospital - Widley [1+2; 2+2 = 7].

Races for Round 11 (enter any 5):

- TS (Boarhunt) – JC (Havant)
- KH (Clanfield) – 2C (Widley)
- 5S (Hambledon) – 7D (Portchester)
- 5D (Port Solent) – 3H (World's End)
- QC (Langstone) – TD (Fareham Common)
- 5H (Denmead) – 3S (Wood End)
- 6C (Waterlooville) – 8C (Farlington)
- TH (Lovedean) – 9H (Cowplain)
- 6S (Hoe Gate) – KS (Alton & Winchester)

Purchase order for Round 11: Steve, Brendan, Richard, Roger.

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

RAILWAY RIVALS AZERBAIJAN (RR2535AZ) ROUND 7



The races couldn't really have come out (of the generator page) any worse for ROGER, and to rub it in they got no points in race 4 despite having the (joint) shortest run.

OILS and BOB break into Nakhchivan, whilst GANJA connect the southeast and ROGER the northeast.

Scores are currently remarkably close - 3 Manats between all the companies.

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

	BOB Bob Gingell Black	ROGER Roger Threthewy Green	GANJA Kevin Lee Red	OILS Brad Martin Blue
1) Ganja (34) - Quba (22)	20 [26] -1		10 [32]	0 [44] +1
2) Khachmaz (21) - Georgia (Sp4)	20 [39] -9	+9		
3) Sumgait (14) - Shamakhi (43)	20 [8]		10 [15]	
4) Stepanakert (64) - Shirvan (46)		0 [19] -4 -2	10 [19] +4 +4	20 [20] -4 +2
5) Baku (13) - Aghdam (63)	0 [30]		20 [22] +1	10 [26] -1
6) Mingachevir (36) - Astara (56)		20 [28]		10 [28]
7) Lankaran (55) - Turkey (Sp2)	race not possible			

Last Turn	53.5	75	36	47
Points from Races	50	23	59	38
Builds	-12 -1 -4 -4.5 +2	-12 -3 -2 +1	-12 -3 -2 +3 +4	-12 -3 +6 +6
Points Total	84	82	85	82

BUILDS:

BOB: (Shamkir) - I12 - - G11; (G50) - Shirvan; (N23) - - L23 - K23 - --- I24; (P12) - Q13 [-1 ROGER, -4 GANJA, -4.5 Armenia]

ROGER: (F50) - - - - - F41; (K47) - K46 [-3 GANJA, -2 BOB]

GANJA: (G52) - F52 - - - - F56 - Jalilabad; (F56) - - F58 - G59; (F54) - - - C56 [-3 ROGER, -2 OILS]

OILS: (P25) - - - P28 - O29 - N28 - M29 - L28 - ORDUBAD - J28 - - - - NAKHCHIVAN [-3 Armenia]

Races for Round 8:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| R7. Lankaran (55) - Turkey (Sp2) (still not possible) | 8. Ganja (33) - Aghjabadi (62) |
| 9. Mingachevir (35) - Baku (12) | 10. Russia (Sp5) - Sabirabad (44) |
| 11. Nakhchivan (65) - Armenia (Sp3) | 12. Imishli (51) - Alat (16) |
| 13. Shaki (25) - Goychay (42) | 14. Lankaran (54) - Ismayilli (26) |

Enter up to 4 new races and build up to 10 points of track.

RAILWAY RIVALS AZERBAIJAN (RR2536AZ) - ROUND 6

GM: Bob Gingell

No new city connections this Round as the companies strengthen their networks.

GM note: A fifth race entry is only allowed if two or more races are carried forward, so players should not count on an 'extra' entry in Round 8.

Round 6 build allowance: 5, 6, 5

BAD, green (Michael Pargman): $78 - 3 = 75$.

6a. (A44) - - C45 - Shamakhi; (F57) - - F59

6b. (A44) - Ismayilli; (F59) - G60 [-1a]; (C53) - - - F51 - G52 [-1m]

6c. (S12) - - - - Shaki [-1a]; (P25) - O26 {Armenia}

AZERI, indigo (Jim Reader): $57 - 2 + 2 = 57$.

6a. (H45) - G45 - - - - G41 [-1m]

6b. (G41) - G40 - Siyazan; (G40) - - - - Quba

6c. (E39) - E38 [-1m]; (T15) - Barda - R16 - - Aghdam.

MARS, orange (John Marsden): $66 + 3 = 69$.

6a. (Aghdam) - - - O17 - - M18

6b. (P17) - - - P14 - - - Ganja

6c. (M18) - L18 - - J17 {Armenia}; (E49) - - G50.

Round 7 Races (enter any 4):

1. 11 (Baku) – 66 (Ordubad)
2. 25 (Shaki) – #3 (Armenia)
3. 31 (Qazax) – 13 (Baku) [*Not possible*]
4. 43 (Shamakhi) – 23 (Siyazan)
5. 52 (Salyan) – 32 (Shamkir)
6. 63 (Aghdam) – 42 (Goychay)
7. #5 (Russia) – 56 (Astara)

Round 7 build allowance: up to 12 points (excluding payments to others).

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

RAILWAY RIVALS ZAMBIA (RR2540ZM) ROUND 4



Plenty of towns connected this round, with all three companies heading west.

BAMBI also continued to develop track in the north, with BEMBA also pushing into the northeast corner. MOSA OA TUNYA finally connected Livingstone and also *ate the frog* to get over the Pedicle Road in the Luapula region.

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 4a. [4] (Z13) -- SAMFYA; (Z10) -- B43
Bob Gingell 4b. [5] (B43) -- LUWINGU; (Chingola) -- T14 - S15
Black 4c. [3] (S15) --- R14
BANK: 70 +3 +3 = 76

BEMBA 4a. [4] (I44) -- CHINSALI - L43 - L42
Jim Reader 4b. [5] (R26) --- Q28 -- KATABA
Blue 4c. [3] (O28) --- O31
BANK: 25 +6 +6 -1[MOSI, O31] = 36

MOSI OA TUNYA 4a. [4] (P23) ---- O24 - N23
Steve Ham 4b. [5] (O31) -- LIVINGSTONE; (N23) -- KAOMA - K22
Red 4c. [3] (Y15) - Z14
BANK: 62 +6 +6 -5[BAMBI, Y15-Z14] = 69

Rolls for Round 5: 5a) 4 5b) 3 5c) 6

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

RAILWAY RIVALS ZAMBIA (RR2541ZM) ROUND 4

GM: Bob Gingell

WilburSmith earns points from its competitors and also picks up some town bonuses to cement a strong lead.

GM note: Clarification - the aircraft symbols identify the cities where there are airports, so the hexes outside of the cities where the symbols appear are just empty terrain.

Round 4 build allowance: 5, 6, 5

WilburSmith (Brendan Whyte), black: 62 +12 -2+9 = 81.

4a. (X17) - Kitwe [-2z]; (O29) --- LIVINGSTONE
4b. (L20) - M20; (I21) --- I20 -- G19
4c. (I20) - KABOMPO; (G19) - ZAMBEZI - F17 -- D16 {Angola}

ToZ (Michael Pargman), orange: 31 -2 = 29.

4a. (Mumbwa) --- S27
4b. (Z14) - A48 --- A45 -- C44 [-1r]
4c. (C44) --- H41 [-1r]

ROGER (Roger Trethewey): green: 46 -9+2 = 39.

4a. (Mumbwa) --- S27
4b. (S27) - S28 --- O30 - O31 [-5w]
4c. (O31) -- Livingstone [-4w]; (Z10) --- Z7*

ZITS (Richard Smith), blue: 56 +9 -3+2 = 64.

4a. (Lusaka) --- X27 - W28 [-3w]
4b. (W28) --- Choma; (Kitwe) - V16; (J44) - CHINSALI
4c. (Chinsali) -- M43 - ISOKA -- Nakonde

Build allowance for Round 5: 3, 4, 4

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

RAILWAY RIVALS PARTNERSHIP BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA (RR2522BH) RND 11



In race 29, JOHN was hoping for a solo run but their route was identical to ROGER's so it was an auto-JR. POOR and HBBRT wanted a JR and got one, though a small difference was available if solos were desired.

For race 30, JOHN and ROGER *did* select different routes. Four companies with almost the same length run resulted in a blanket finish, ROGER just pipping HBBRT. ROGER's shareholders being given a small bone to chew on.

Race 31 was another tight 4-way affair, and another win for ROGER! Race 32 was a 2-horse race and thanks to the "crap roll of the round" (4-2-2-2) it was comfortably won by BUM, who otherwise had a disappointing round.

In race 33, the ROGER Revival came to an end as the extra pips to reach Samac instead of Brcko proved costly, with BLAG taking their first win of the round. Race 34 was the shortest run so far, with BLAG's 5-hex advantage proving decisive - another 20 Convertible Marks in the bank.

And finally, in race 35, JOHN had a much longer route than their rivals and suffered another blank to cap off a dreadful round. A profit as measly as 1 is pretty rare in RR! BLAG, POOR and HBBRT all had 26-hex runs and the scores ended 28-28-27 - this cemented BLAG or POOR as the front-runners going into the final round, and left HBBRT languishing in 5th.

	ROGER Roger Trethewey Green	JOHN John Walker Black	BLAG Bob Gingell Purple	BUM Jim Reader Yellow	POOR Dane Maslen Red	HBBRT Chris Hibbert Blue
29. Jajce (41) - Montenegro (Sp1)	JR 0 [30] +1 +1	JR 0 [30] -1		15 [29] +1 -2 -1 +4	JR 7 [32] +2 -2 -1	JR 8 [32] -4 +2 -2
30. Zavidovici or Lukavak (45) - Drvar or Novi Grad (16)	20 [24] -1	0 [22] -2 +3		0 [22] -2 -2	+2 +1 +2	10 [23] +2 -3
31. Trebinje (56) - Prnjavor or Gradacac (26)	20 [40]	0 [43]	10 [42]	0 [41] -1		+1
32. Derventa or Teslic (22) - Livno (51)	+3			20 [20] -3		10 [19] +3 -3
33. Sarajevo (63) - Croatia North (Sp4)	0 [23] +1		20 [17] -1		10 [21]	
34. Sarajevo (61) - Tuzla (34)	+1		20 [12] -1		10 [17]	
35. Sanski Most (15) - Orasje or Bijeljina (32)		20 [43] +1	15 [26] +1 +1 -7		15 [26] -1 -1 +7	0 [26] -1

Last Turn	77	196	180	173	198	144
Points from Races	46	1	58	31	51	23
Buils	-	-	-	-	-	-
Points Total	123	197	238	204	249	167

BUILDS:

BLAG, BUM, ROGER, JOHN, POOR, HBBRT: No builds

Going Solo? No "stabs" as yet, but companies are (as of the end of round 9) 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.

Corrections: Race 23 points should have been ROGER 3, JOHN 2, BUM 5, and one junction was missed BUM -1 / BLAG +1. So overall score tweaks (applied to carried forward totals) are ROGER -1, JOHN -1, BUM +1, BLAG +1.

Erratum: I manually fixed some illegal races in the ones that came out of the generator page, and ended up with a duplicate sector to sector, but as it was spotted quite late, I've allowed it to stand.

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

Races for Round 12:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 36. The Coast (Sp6) - Gorazde (65) | 37. Pale (64) - Bosanka Krupa or Kozarska Dubica (14) |
| 38. Bihac (13) - Croatia West (Sp5) | 39. Siroki Brijeg or Stolac (53) - Gradiska (21) |
| 40. Visegrad or Srebrenica (36) - Zenica (44) | 41. Banja Luka (23) - Brcko (31) |
| 42. Travnik or Gornji Vakuf (43) - Capljina (55) | |

Enter up to 4 races, no further builds. Due to the possibility of "stabs", game end comments next time please!

CLERHEWS ANSWERS

Scores: Steve Guest got all 5, no other entrants (was it too easy?)

1) RACHEL REEVES

Has money up her sleeves
But growth is proving tricky
And her résumé is dicky

2) JD VANCE

Wears star-stripe underpants
He doesn't like cat ladies
Or others without babies

3) ELON MUSK

Has hair that's like a tusk
For cuts he's resolute
And he does a mean salute

4) LUKE LITTLER

Doesn't look like Hitler
Instead he's young and chubby
And his darts are not too shabby

5) ROBERT OPPENHEIMER

A scientist old timer
He's the subject of a movie
And his bombs were fab and groovy

THEME CODEWORD SOLUTION

The names in the puzzle are the 26 islands in the classic early 90s computer game Mega-lo-Mania. The revealed three letters being G, O and D being a little clue (as it's one of the first "god" games).

Roger Trethewey solved it and said "It was quite easy once you realise that 24 is A not E. I don't do many codewords, but I have just bought a book of "Extreme Codewords" - no letters provided. Absorbing".

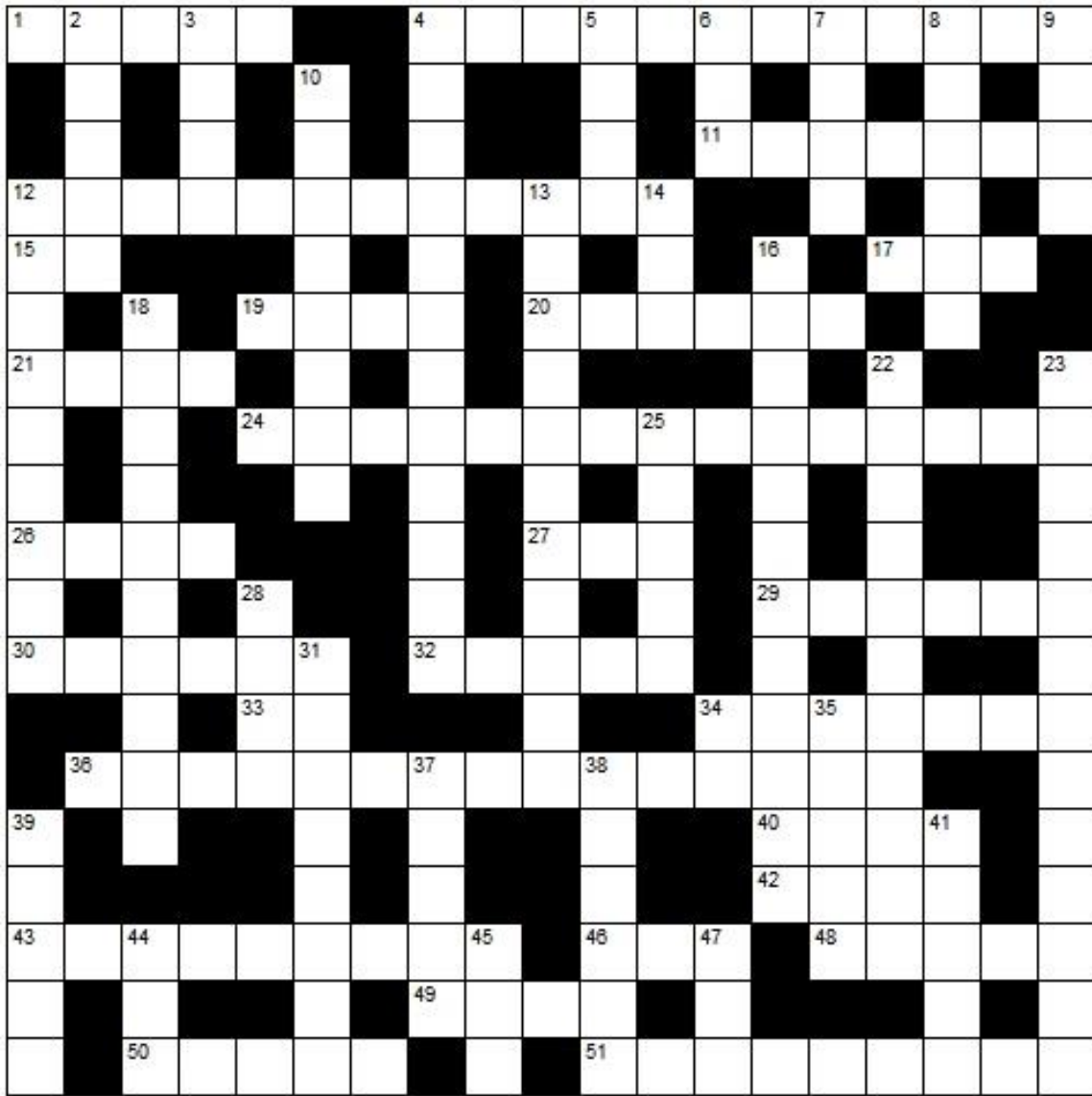
I've never attempted an "Extreme" codeword. It must take a fair bit of analysis to get going, based on frequencies and patterns. I guess a (known) theme might help, Probably not swear words though.

7	V	15	E	25	S	18	P	24	A			17	G	24	A	22	Z	22	Z	24	A		10	W	21	H	23	Y			
						16	U			24	A									6	L						11	O			
		21	H			14	M	24	A	25	S	3	C	24	A	20	R	24	A		11	O	10	W	26	I	19	N	17	G	
		15	E			18	P			9	T			16	U					21	H			13	B			24	A		
9	T	20	R	15	E	4	K			2	F	11	O	20	R	14	M	28	I	3	C	24	A		26	I					
		19	N			26	I			20	R			13	B									22	Z	24	A	8	X		
		26	I			19	N			22	Z			13	B	24	A	22	Z	11	O	11	O	4	K	24	A		9	T	
19	N	24	A	16	U	25	S	15	24	A			13	B			3	C					24	A				20	R		
				19	N					18	P	23	Y	5	J	24	A	14	M	24	A			20	R			24	A		
12	Q			1	D					18	P			16	U					20	R			14	M		1	D			
16	U	9	T	11	O	18	P	26	I	24	A			19	N			25	S	26	I	19	N	24	A	9	T	20	R	24	A
11	O					15	E					9	T							19	N					24	A				
9	T			3	C	26	I	6	L	6	L	24	A			9	T	24	A	18	P	26	I	11	O	3	C	24	A		
24	A	13	B	16	U	9	T			24	A			9	T					24	A						16	U			
		11	O			26	I			1	D	11	O	22	Z	15	E					17	G				6	L			
		10	W	11	O	19	N	4	K	24	A					15	E	9	T	3	C	15	E	9	T	20	R	24	A		

Mega-lo-Mania was released in 1991 on the Amiga, and was later ported to many other platforms. I have the Genesis version on my PC running via an emulator. You can also play online. Although it's strictly a one-player game (you are competing with rival gods for dominance of the 26 islands), many years ago I did play it a lot with a couple of friends on the Atari ST, and we tried to beat each other's records for the least number of starting men at each island.

The game takes you through the development of human weapons and defences over time, starting with rocks and boiling oil all the way through to nukes and SDIs. At the start of each island, you have a single tower and some men. You can mine resources, invent things and build things. Any men not working are allowed to procreate and increase the size of your force. Each island is divided into several sectors and you can learn which resources are available in which sector over time. Very addictive!

KEYBOARD KINGS CROSSWORD



Clues starting with a T: are the theme answers and won't have a proper definition. There are 23 to get, 1 point for each. Filler words do not have to be solved but may help.

Across

1. Tanya Donnelly's band or pork cut (5)
4. T: Nice man in threesome romp with king (5,7)
11. See 39 down
12. T: Dreamer rends sound: Jar shattered (6,6)
15. Article by Alfred Nobel initially (2)
- 17 & 3d. T: King of the toilet? (3,4)
19. 90s LA rockers - slippery customers (4)
20. Girl emasculate armed soldier (6)
21. Surname of humble character associated with 18d (4)
24. T: Hairier bird crab made in Japan (7,8)
26. See 27
- 27 & 26. T: Mole ran desperately from sparks (3,4)
29. New Zealand tree nearly up in small ford (6)
30. Filmed scene again in Ypres hotel (6)
32. Public _____, US hip-hop giants (5)
33. Greeting from Long Beach island (2)
34. Clapton, according to bridge graffiti (4,3)
36. T: Enrich jamjar Lee played with oxygene maker (4,6,5)

40. Goals a short time after ChatGPT, perhaps (4)
42. Enthusiasm found in the heart of Kiwi country (4)
43. T: Nasty knob twiddled (4,5)
46. Headless procurer - little devil! (3)
48. Small eel from short laugh (5)
49. Carelessly lose part of foot (4)
- 50 & 38d. T: Nil ale - renal trouble! (5,6)
51. T: Errant dog running amok (3,6)

Down

- 2 & 28. T: Rocket man who completed a 330-day mission in 2023 (5,4)
3. See 17a
4. T: Worked with 13d, Timewind was one of his 60+ albums (5,7)
5. Body feature that pulls, we hear (4)
6. Mostly female Scottish band held in Debbie's heart (3)
7. Corns peppered arse (4)
8. Damage Presley's shoes: No pets harmed (4,2)
9. Bouquet from oregano sepal (4)
10. T: My big fat Greek Oscar-winner (8)
12. T: Mr. Jean Ham composed Miami Vice theme (3,6)

13. T: Tangerine forger eased off (5,6)
- 14 & 34. T: Solar jazzman from Saturn (3,2)
16. T: I story writer abused camp razor kit (7,5)
18. T: Hens keenly played the organ (3,7)
22. T: Mr Wink: A cake baked (4,7)
23. T: Famously played a Gm chord for 2 minutes 20 seconds in 1975 (7,6)
25. T: Usually known by his first name only, he plays with B, A and A (5)
28. See 2d
31. T: Beat milk - shaken to give former CSL Kendo (3,5)
34. See 14
35. Silent _____ and Mighty Echoes, 1979 Eloy album (5)
37. Too many of these spoil broth (5)
38. See 50a
39. T: Camel tickler (5,7)
41. Goo miles away (5)
44. Legendary hip-hop group, not wearing anything at first (1,1,1)
45. Blast lump of turf (3)
47. Father and daughter in flat (3)



Issue 70

Puerto Rico (Final turn) - After the Mayor was taken, there were not enough colonists to fill the colonist ship, so we have entered the endgame. I suppose technically it should have started from Chris' turn, but that would seem a little unfair on Chris, so you all have one final set of orders to maximise your scores.

Kev takes the Craftsman. Goods produced: Kev: Corn, Corn, Corn, Indigo, Tobacco. Chris: Sugar, Coffee, Coffee. Jim: Indigo, Tobacco (+1 doubloon for factory). John: Indigo, Indigo, Indigo, Sugar, Coffee.

Chris takes the Captain Loads: Chris: 2 corn to the 5 ship 1 sugar to 6 ship. Jim: 1 corn to the 5 ship, 1 tobacco to 7 ship. John: 2 corn to the 5 ship, 1 sugar to 6 ship, 1 corn returned to supply. Kev 1 tobacco to 7 ship, 1 indigo to wharf, 2 corn returned to supply. The 5 and 6 ships sell their goods and return to port empty.

Jim takes the Mayor (+1) Colonists places: Jim coffee plantation, coffee roaster, sugar plantation. John Indigo plantation, Large Indigo plant. Kev Corn plantation. Chris Fortress.

John takes the Settler (+1) Tiles taken: John Coffee, Kev Indigo, Chris Indigo, Jim Tobacco.

Player	Doubl oons	Goods	VPs	Buildings	Plantations
Jim Reader	5	Indigo	8	8 of 12 Small market (v) Hacienda (x) Small Indigo Plant (v) Large Sugar Mill (xxx) Office (x) Tobacco Storage (vvx) Coffee Roaster (vx) Factory (v)	11 of 12 Quarry (v) Quarry (v) Quarry (v) Quarry (v) Corn (v) Indigo (v) Indigo (v) Sugar (v) Tobacco (v) Tobacco (x) Coffee (v)
John Marsden	1	Corn, Indigo, Indigo, Indigo, Indigo, Indigo, Indigo, Indigo, Indigo, Coffee, Coffee 2 coffee and 8 indigo are stored in the large warehouse	11	8 of 12 Construction Hut (v) Small Indigo plant (v) Small Sugar Mill (v) Large Indigo Plant (vvv) Large Market (v) Large Warehouse (v) Coffee Roaster (vv) Factory (x)	11 of 12 Quarry (v) Quarry (v) Corn (v) Corn (v) Indigo (v) Indigo (v) Indigo (v) Indigo (v) Sugar (v) Coffee (v) Coffee (x)
Kev Lee	1	Corn	19	8 of 12 Small market (v) Small Indigo Plant (v) Small sugar mill (v) Large Indigo Plant (xxx) Tobacco Storage (vvv) Wharf (v) Guild Hall (v)	11 of 12 Corn (v) Corn (v) Corn (v) Corn (v) Indigo (v) Indigo (x) Tobacco (v) Tobacco (x) Tobacco (x) Coffee (x) Coffee (x)
Chris Hibbert 1 col in San Juan	4	Coffee, Coffee, 2 coffee stored in the small warehouse	16	7 of 12 Small Warehouse (v) Small sugar mill (v) Coffee Roaster (vv) Large Market (v) Office (v) Fortress (v)	9 of 12 Quarry (v) Corn (v) Corn (v) Indigo (x) 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	0(0)
Small Market	1	1	0	Indigo	2 (0)
Hacienda	2	1	1	Sugar	3 (1)
Construction Hut	2	1	1	Tobacco	1 (2)
Small Warehouse	3	1	1	Coffee	1 (0)
Large Indigo Plant	3	2	0		
Large Sugar Mill	4	2	1	Goods	
Hospice	4	2	2	Corn	8
Office	5	2	0	Indigo	2
Large Market	5	2	0	Sugar	11
Large Warehouse	6	2	1	Tobacco	3
Tobacco Storage	5	3	1	Coffee	5
Coffee Roaster	6	3	0		
Factory	7	3	0	Colonists	0
University	8	3	2		
Harbour	8	3	2	Victory Points	46
Wharf	9	3	1		
Guild Hall	10	4	0		
Fortress	10	4	0		
Residence	10	4	1		
Customs House	10	4	1		
City Hall	10	4	1		

Doubleloon bonuses held on role cards: Builder (+1) Prospector (+2) Trader (+2).

The trading house is empty. The 5 ship is empty. The 6 ship is empty. The 7 ship contains 6 Tobacco. Plantations available are: Corn, Sugar, Sugar, Indigo, Tobacco. 11 colonists board the colonist ship. The play order for the next turn is: Chris, Jim, John then Kev. Tiles shown in ()s are in the upturned stack.

Lyric Quiz 2 of 5 What I thought would be an easy theme to produce, proved almost impossible to accommodate with our international readership. Rather than waste the work, I've made the game consist of two themes, one a bit easier than the other. So, 2 theme points will be on offer. 1 for songs 1 to 5 and the other for songs 6 to 10. As per normal 1 point will be scored for the artist and 1 for song title.

- 1 - 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3 drink / 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3 drink (2014)
- 2 - Do you hear what I'm saying / Gotta say how I feel / I can't believe you're here / But I know that you're real (1993)
- 3 - Everybody wants her, everybody loves her / Everybody wants to take your baby home (1979)
- 4 - She's up all night 'til the sun / I'm up all night to get some (2013)
- 5 - You look like you're havin' fun / Open up your lovin' arms / Watch out, here I come (1984)
- 6 - She got a body like an hourglass / But I can give it to you all the time / She got a booty like a Cadillac / But I can send you into overdrive, oh (2014)
- 7 - Hot tramp, I love you so! / Don't ya? / You've got your mother in a whirl / 'Cause she's not sure if you're a boy or a girl (1974)
- 8 - Oh, honey, honey / You are my candy girl / And you got me wanting you (1969)
- 9 - Every other day, every other day, / Every other day of the week is fine, yeah (1966)
- 10 - So fine, so fine / It's all mine, well I feel all right / I said yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah (1969)

Lyrics 1 of 5

1 And down the waterfall, wherever it may take me / I know that life won't break me (1997) **Angels – Robbie Williams** (Richard Smith, Bob Pitman, Jim Reader, Dane Maslen, Steve Guest, Paul Evans)

2 But you see, it's not me, / It's not my family, / In your head, in your head, / They are fighting. (1994) **Zombie – Cranberries** (Richard Smith, Jim Reader, Steve Guest, Martin Walker)

3 I've had nothing but bad luck / Since the day I saw the cat at my door / So I came into you sweet lady / Answering your mystical call (1976) **Devil Woman – Cliff Richard** (John Hopkins, Richard Smith, Jim Reader, Steve Guest, Martin Walker)

4 I keep going to the river to pray / 'Cause I need something that can wash out the pain / And at most I'm sleeping all these demons away (2014) **Ghost – Ella Henderson**

5 He's the hairy-handed gent who ran amok in Kent / Lately he's been overheard in Mayfair / You better stay away from him, / he'll rip your lungs out, Jim / Huh, I'd like to meet his tailor (1978) **Werewolves of London – Warren Zevon** (Bob Pitman, Steve Guest (song only), Martin Walker)

6 And he sat beside the telly (oah) / With his tiny hands on his tummy / Chuckling away, laughing all day (laughter) (1973) **Laughing Gnome – David Bowie** (Richard Smith, Bob Pitman, Jim Reader, Dane Maslen, Steve Guest, Martin Walker, Paul Evans)

7 Stuck around St. Petersburg / When I saw it was a time for a change / Killed the Tsar and his ministers / Anastasia screamed in vain (1968) **Sympathy for the Devil – Rolling Stones** (Bob Pitman, Steve Guest, Martin Walker, Paul Evans)

8 Sing for me Sing, my Angel of Music Sing for me (1986) **Phantom of the Opera – Sarah Brightman** (Brendan Whyte, Steve Guest)

9 And frolicked in the autumn mist, in a land called Honah Lee (1963) **Puff the magic Dragon – Peter Paul and Mary** (John Hopkins, Brendan Whyte, Richard Smith, Bob Pitman (song only), Jim Reader, Tom Howell, Dane Maslen, Steve Guest (song only), Martin Walker (singer only), Paul Evans)

10 I'll take you back again / No more excuses, no, no / 'Cause I've heard them all before / A hundred times or more (1990) **Better the Devil you know – Kylie Minogue** (Steve Guest)

Theme Mythical Beings (John Hopkins, Richard Smith, Jim Reader, Dane Maslen, Steve Guest, Martin Walker, Paul Evans)

Steve Guest 17

Martin Walker 12

Jim Reader 11

Richard Smith 11

Bob Pitman 9

Paul Evans 9

Dane Maslen 7

Brendan Whyte 4

John Hopkins 5

Tom Howell 2

Brendan - 6. Laughing policeman

Tom - None of the other rang even the teensyist bell. Is game 3 DnD? *GM No*

Steve - Got quite a few this time. Spotting the theme definitely helps.

Paul - (At various times in my life, I have worked with someone called Peter, but only once was there a Mary as well - though "where's Mary?" was the question people asked. *GM What was your normal response?*

Dane - Astonishingly this is a 'modern' (i.e. post 1985!) song that I recognise. Well, enough to know that I have it on a CD. I thought all I had to do was play two tracks to identify the song, but it transpired that it was the track after those two, so it's ANGELS by ROBBIE WILLIAMS.

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 C has been held over due to an error that I tried to get away with but was spotted by Kev. Row D has been shown as starting with a 70, whereas it should have been 72. I have therefore held over this hand, which will be out of sync with the other 3, as this may have affected some of your orders.

Hand A						Score	
A	30	33	38	79		10	
B	69	70	72			5	
C	21	50	54	55		12	Jim takes 104 for 1
D	10	36	62	64	66	11	

Cards played 1 2 7 10 15 21 26 30 33 34 36 38 40 43 50 54 55 62 64 66 69 70 72 79 96 99 100 102 104

Hand B						Score	
A	84					1	
B	41					1	Dane takes 8 11 13 15 37 for 10
C	67	71	91	94	95	6	
D	68	77				6	

Cards played 6 8 11 13 15 17 18 19 22 23 30 33 37 39 42 65 67 68 71 77 82 83 84 86 87 91 94 95 104

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	72	98	99			7	

Cards played 1 2 4 6 11 25 35 40 46 47 48 53 56 62 68 69 70 71 72 87 89 90 98 99

Hand D						Score	
A	2					1	Dane takes 25 48 for 3
B	49					1	Kev takes 15 19 31 33 35 for 11
C	1	8	11	12	22	13	
D	29	47	50	51	53	7	

Cards played 1 2 3 4 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 14 15 16 17 19 22 25 26 29 31 33 35 47 48 49 50 51 53

Points taken

Kev 34

Dane 27

Jim 20

Bob 16

Postscript – Sorry for the slight delay, it's been a bit of a do organising, after moving from Kent to Somerset. To be fair, I took as much stress out of the experience as possible, so it's not been too bad. As this issue was a little rushed so I'm bracing myself for a few error queries. Fair warning to the non-UK chart savvy players, now I'm in the West Country you may find songs by the Wurzels entering my consciousness and finding their way into the lyrics. Hopefully I'll be settled soon and have more time on my hands, so if anyone wants any games resurrected let me know.

THE TANGERINE TERROR / I AM THE KURIOUS KUMQUAT

ISSUE 77 / ISSUE 7

The “Waiting patiently for my invitation to a Signal group to discuss secret war plans” Issue

Idiotorial

Not putting any bets on whether we get to Issue 8 of IATKK before the world explodes.

DEAD LETTER OFFICE

Chris Hibbert and Bob Gingell (on deadline busting orders) Lanzarote on Friday.

A bit late apologies/Sorry for last minute stuff

Auntie Tangerine

If it's any consolation you'd be equally disappointed with my adjudication efforts if you'd submitted earlier.

Pevans (on not being disappointed with H's adjudication efforts)

I look forward to smacking my head when the next pictures appear.

Auntie Tangerine

The Tangerine Terror, a new 'zine for masochists.

JO Lochhead

JUST ONE

ROUND 2 RESULTS

A good effort this time. Brendan was hampered by a Double Oz situation, which is ironic considering where he lives. He had a plucky guess but went with a water-based rather than air-based answer. Some cracking clues; Elise for Fur was inspired Mr Walker! I won't spoil the surprise for the next round, but if Bob guesses his word, I'll be hotfooting it down to the SFO.

	Category	Richard	Allan	Brendan	Bob	John	Guess	Score
Richard Smith	SPARTACUS		KUBRIK	SLAVE	REBELLION	KIRK	SPARTACUS	1
Allan Stagg	FUR	ERMINE		SEAL	PELT	ELISE	FUR	1
Brendan Whyte	TORNADO	JET	FUNNEL		ØZ	ØZ	FOUNTAIN	-1
Bob Gingell	PYRAMID	TETRAHEDRON	APEX	SCHEME		GEOMETRIC	PYRAMID	1
John Walker	ALLIANCE	UNION	MARRIAGE	REBEL	TREATY		ALLIANCE	1
							Total	3

NG Mvoto

THE NAME OF THE GAME

ROUND 4

	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	1	3	2	0	0	0													11
Paul Evans	2	3	3	1	2	0	0	0													11
Allan Stagg	0	0	3	1	2	0	0	3													9
Richard Smith	0	2	2	0	2	0	3	0													9
Brad Martin	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0													4
Tom Howell	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0													0
Steve Guest	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0													0

Brad joins the party with a very respectable 4 points. Two inspired guesses from Richard and Allan means that the pack closes up at the top.

- #3 : Was Traveller
- #4 : Was Spirit Island
- #5 : Not Arena Of Death, Death Angel, Pandemic
- #6 : Not Hey That's My Fish, Flounder, King's Breakfast
- #7 : Not Atomium
- #8 : Not They Died With Their Boots On, Backpacks & Blisters

GAME 5 (1 VP)



GAME 6 (1 VP)



GAME 7 (2 VP)



GAME 8 (2 VP)



GAME 9 (3 VP)

**WIEC
HP EL**

GAME 10 (3 VP)



FUTURE SHOCK

What's In Howard's Record Collection and The Name Of The Game are both available to join. Origins Of World War 2 and Dos De Mayo are simmering in the background. Looking to reprise Communal Don't Wordle with maybe one or two rule tweaks.

HR Nardiello WHAT'S IN H'S RECORD COLLECTION ROUND 2

Guesses

Player	Artist	Album	Joker	Score
Jim Reader	Aqua	Aquarium	No	0
Allan Stagg	Billy Bragg	Talking With The Taxman About Poetry	Yes	12
Richard Smith	Black Sabbath	Paranoid	No	6
Brendan Whyte	Bruniferd	Bruniferd	No	0
Jim Reader	Carole King	Tapestry	No	0
Jim Reader	Deep Purple	Made In Japan	No	6
Allan Stagg	Harry Chapin	Heads And Tales	No	0
Jim Reader	Hawkwind	Levitation	No	6
Richard Smith	Incredible String Band	The Hangman's Beautiful Daughter	No	6
Brendan Whyte	Jean Michel Jarre	Oxygene	No	0
Richard Smith	Jethro Tull	Songs From The Wood	No	0
Allan Stagg	Joe Satriani	Surfing With The Alien	No	0
Richard Smith	Joy Division	Still	No	0
Allan Stagg	k.d. lang	Ingenuue	No	0
Jim Reader	Neil Young	Harvest	No	0
Brendan Whyte	NMR	NMR	No	0
Brendan Whyte	NMR	NMR	No	0
Brendan Whyte	Plastic Bertrand	AN 1	No	0
Jim Reader	Richard & Linda Thompson	I Want to See the Bright Lights Tonight	Yes	12
Allan Stagg	Scott Walker	Scott Walker Sings Jacques Brel	No	0
Brendan Whyte	Telex	Looking For Saint Tropez	Yes	0
Allan Stagg	The Beatles	The White Album	No	6
Richard Smith	The Pogues	Rum, Sodomy, And The Lash	No	6
Richard Smith	UFO	Obsession	Yes	12

Scores

Richard Smith	30
Allan Stagg	18
Jim Reader	24
Brendan Whyte	0

Dead artists

Abba	Deep Purple	Jethro Tull	Queen	The Jam
Aqua	Dire Straits	Joe Satriani	Richard & Linda Thompson	The Pogues
Belle & Sebastian	Fairport Convention	Joy Division	Scott Walker	The Rolling Stones
Bellowhead	Harry Chapin	k.d. lang	Steeleye Span	The Who
Billy Bragg	Hawkwind	Kasabian	Telex	Thomas Dolby
Black Sabbath	Here And Now	Neil Young	The Beatles	TV Personalities
Bruniferd	Ian Dury	Nirvana	The Clash	UFO
Carole King	Incredible String Band	Patti Smith	The Coral	
David Bowie	Jean Michel Jarre	Plastic Bertrand	The Damned	

The fallout from Howard's f**k-up is almost tidied up.

Words 2 (ETUDE) and 3 (SMACK) are finished.
 Six words left. Mike is still batting in 5 of them. He might be difficult to beat unless he messes up.
 Roger is still hanging on in word 8.

Round 5 Word 1
 Brendan and Richard WORDLED! (score 5 points and out)

Round 5 Word 2 - ETUDE
 Chris and Richard WORDLED! (score 5 points and out)
 Allan *TOUPE* - Invalid word (scores 4 pts and out, Toupee has two e's)

Round 5 Word 3 - SMACK
 Chris and Richard WORDLED! (score 4 points and out)

Round 5 Word 4
 Bob and Brendan WORDLED! (score 5 points and out)

Round 5 Word 6
 Bob WORDLED! (scores 5 points and out)

Round 5 Word 8
 Mike, Richard and Bob WORDLED! (score 5 points 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> <tr><td>Round 4</td><td>V</td><td>A</td><td>G</td><td>U</td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 5</td><td>F</td><td>L</td><td>U</td><td>T</td><td>E</td></tr> </table>	Round 1	B	R	I	C	K	Round 2	M	U	M	M	Y	Round 3	U	P	P	E	D	Round 4	V	A	G	U	E	Round 5	F	L	U	T	E	<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> <tr><td>Round 4</td><td>Q</td><td>U</td><td>I</td><td>L</td><td>L</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 5</td><td>O</td><td>V</td><td>I</td><td>N</td><td>E</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 4	Q	U	I	L	L	Round 5	O	V	I	N	E	<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> <tr><td>Round 4</td><td>B</td><td>A</td><td>T</td><td>C</td><td>H</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 5</td><td>S</td><td>A</td><td>R</td><td>I</td><td>N</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 4	B	A	T	C	H	Round 5	S	A	R	I	N
Round 1	B	R	I	C	K																																																																																							
Round 2	M	U	M	M	Y																																																																																							
Round 3	U	P	P	E	D																																																																																							
Round 4	V	A	G	U	E																																																																																							
Round 5	F	L	U	T	E																																																																																							
Round 1	G	A	M	M	A																																																																																							
Round 2	D	I	D	D	Y																																																																																							
Round 3	C	H	I	C	K																																																																																							
Round 4	Q	U	I	L	L																																																																																							
Round 5	O	V	I	N	E																																																																																							
Round 1	P	O	P	P	Y																																																																																							
Round 2	F	L	U	F	F																																																																																							
Round 3	M	A	M	M	A																																																																																							
Round 4	B	A	T	C	H																																																																																							
Round 5	S	A	R	I	N																																																																																							
<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> <tr><td>Round 4</td><td>C</td><td>L</td><td>I</td><td>N</td><td>K</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 5</td><td>N</td><td>I</td><td>C</td><td>H</td><td>E</td></tr> </table>	Round 1	Y	U	M	M	Y	Round 2	G	R	A	F	T	Round 3	S	N	O	O	P	Round 4	C	L	I	N	K	Round 5	N	I	C	H	E	<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> <tr><td>Round 4</td><td>H</td><td>O</td><td>W</td><td>L</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 5</td><td>D</td><td>O</td><td>Y</td><td>L</td><td>Y</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 4	H	O	W	L	S	Round 5	D	O	Y	L	Y	<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> <tr><td>Round 4</td><td>S</td><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>C</td><td>K</td></tr> <tr><td>Round 5</td><td>A</td><td>W</td><td>A</td><td>S</td><td>H</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 4	S	T	A	C	K	Round 5	A	W	A	S	H
Round 1	Y	U	M	M	Y																																																																																							
Round 2	G	R	A	F	T																																																																																							
Round 3	S	N	O	O	P																																																																																							
Round 4	C	L	I	N	K																																																																																							
Round 5	N	I	C	H	E																																																																																							
Round 1	B	R	A	V	E																																																																																							
Round 2	Q	U	I	C	K																																																																																							
Round 3	G	L	O	O	M																																																																																							
Round 4	H	O	W	L	S																																																																																							
Round 5	D	O	Y	L	Y																																																																																							
Round 1	F	O	R	U	M																																																																																							
Round 2	P	I	N	N	Y																																																																																							
Round 3	L	E	V	E	L																																																																																							
Round 4	S	T	A	C	K																																																																																							
Round 5	A	W	A	S	H																																																																																							

	Word 1	Word 2	Word 3	Word 4	Word 5	Word 6	Word 7	Word 8	Total	Alive
Richard	5	5	4		3		1	5	23	2
Bob		2	3	5		5		5	20	3
Roger	3	2	2	3	2	3	3		18	1
Brendan	5	2	1	5		2			15	3
Chris		5	4	2	2			1	14	3
Allan		4	2	3				3	12	4
Mike		2	1					5	8	5

SubPAR 7

Pennsylvania Ramblings

Our first grand-daughter, Asterin Ivy Abel, was born prematurely on the 15th of February this year. She lived for less than an hour. Sadly, Hannah developed pre-eclampsia during her pregnancy and this led to foetal growth deficiency and despite the best efforts of the Doctors and Nurses in Indiana, Asterin was too small to survive. It is alarming and frustrating to me how little is known and understood about pre-eclampsia, which is still quite common and dangerous both to the mother and unborn. We are all grieving, but Hannah is physically healthy and will be able to try again when she and Michael are ready.

Railway Rivals (Zambia) - RR2545ZM

Round Four

There was a small mistake in PEAR's round 3 builds last turn. The build R17 - to Q18 should have cost 4 and not 3 as charged due to the special rainy season rules. His corrected builds are as follows -

PEAR 3a) 4. (Chingola) – U16 – T16 – S17 - R17,
Kev Lee 3b) 5. (R17) - - - - Q18 – P18,
Purple 3c) 3. (P18) - KASEMPA) - N19 - M20.
BANK: 41 + 6 = 47

These were sent out by email, but I had to adjust Kev's builds this round as he ordered from L21.

ACR 3a) 4. (Kitwe) - V16 - Chingola – U15 - T14,
Brad Martin 3b) 4. (T14) - S14 - - - R14,
Blue 3c) 2. (R14) - Solwezi; (S29) – Choma.
BANK: 59 + 6 + 6 (PEAR) + 1 – 2 (MOSI) = 70

PEAR 3a) 4. (M20) - L20 – L21 – K22 – J22,
Kev Lee 3b) 4. (J22) – I23 – H23 – G24 - MONGU,
Purple 3c) 2. (E51) – F50 – G50.
BANK: 47 + 6 – 6 (ACR) = 47

MOSI 3a) 4. (S25) - - - S26 - S27,
Steve Guest 3b) 4. (S27) - S28 - S29 – CHOMA - R30.
Orange 3c) 2. (R30) - Q31 - P31.
BANK: 62 + 6 – 1 + 2 (ACR) = 69

The fifth-round die rolls are 5a) 6, 5b) 6, and 5c) 2.

Railway Rivals (Estonia) - RR2542EE2

Round Two

ARVO 2a) 4. (J57) – J56 – J55 – J54 - J53,
Richard Smith 2b) 3. (J53) – J52 – J51 – J50,
Blue 2c) 2. (J50) – K50 - MUSTVEE.
BANK: 29 + 3 = 32

BENDY
 Bob Gingell
 Black
 2a) 4. (B43) - A43 - Z7 - Y8 - X7,
 2b) 3. (X8) - KEHRA - V6 - U6,
 2c) 2. (U6) - T5 - S5
 BANK: 35 + 3 = 38

ROGER
 Roger Trethewey
 Green
 2a) 4. (Paide) – A51 – B51 – C52 - D52,
 2b) 3. (D52) – E53 – F53 - G54,
 2c) 2. (G54) – G55 - G56.
 BANK: 23

MARS
 John Marsden
 Orange
 2a) 4. (Parnu) – N22 – N21 - N20 - TOOTSI
 2b) 3. (Tootsi) - O19 – O18 – O17,
 2c) 2. (O17) - P16 - P15.
 BANK: 29 + 3 = 32

ET
 Michael Pargman
 Red
 2a) 4. (S7) – S6 – S5 - MARDU: (S12) - R12,
 2b) 3. (R12) – RAPLA: (S10) – R9 - Q9,
 2c) 2. (Q9) – P8 - O8.
 BANK: 23 + 6 + 6 = 35

The third-round die rolls are 3a) 5, 3b) 4, and 3c) 6.

Railway Rivals (Senegal & The Gambia) - RR2556SG

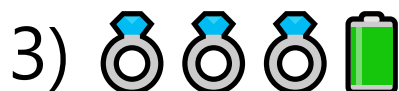
Gamestart:

This is a 4-player game (Roger Trethewey, Steven Ham, Bob Gingell and Richard Smith). Please send your start preferences, colour preferences and company name / acronym to Jim by the deadline.

The map image is available at <https://variablepig.org/maps/rr/senegalgambiarr.html>

SPACEFILLER QUIZ (TOTES EMOJI)

Identify the TV shows from the emojis (just like on House of Games). Answers to Richard



THE CELESTIAL DRAGON #7



Deadline for all games: Friday 2nd May 2025

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

The Celestial Steam Locomotive	#37	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, anyone can join in.
 DICE FORGE - Board game conversion, requires exactly 4.
 FEUDALITY - Board game conversion, improved rules, Bob Gingell 3 more wanted.
 NEW! RAILWAY RIVALS RR Senegal & The Gambia (RR2557SG) - Brad Martin, Jim Reader – 1 or 2 more wanted.
 NEW! BY MODERATELY POPULAR DEMAND - all reader game starts inside.

Here Be Dragons	#70	John Walker	hbdragons@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 starts this issue – anyone can play except Mr. Google.

The Tangerine Terror	#77	Howard Bishop	latixexile@outlook.com
I Am The Kurious Kumquat	#7		

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? – All reader game continues, more welcome
 DOS DE MAYO – 2 wanted

SubPAR	#7	Jim Reader	jim_reader@hotmail.com
---------------	-----------	-------------------	--

Waiting List / Notes:

BUS BOSS - Shikoku (BB418SHI) - Roger Trethewey, Brad Martin 2-4 more wanted
 BUS BOSS - Farnham and Aldershot (TBA) Bob Gingell, Roger Trethewey, Kevin Lee – 2-3 more wanted
 BREAKING AWAY - Richard Smith - 5 more wanted
 RAILWAY RIVALS - new Bhutan map RR2552BT – Roger Trethewey 2 more wanted
 NEW! RAILWAY RIVALS RR Senegal & The Gambia (RR2556SG) - Roger Trethewey, Bob Gingell, Steve Ham and Richard Smith – game start inside.