

# THE CELESTIAL DRAGON #15



*The album covers issue*

Featuring:

**THE CELESTIAL STEAM LOCOMOTIVE #45**

**HERE BE DRAGONS #78**

**SUBPAR #15**

**THE TANGERINE TERROR #85**

**I AM THE KURIOUS KUMQUAT #15**

---

**DEADLINE: Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2026**



# THE CELESTIAL STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

Track no. 45

[richard530smith@btinternet.com](mailto:richard530smith@btinternet.com)

---

13<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Let's start with the front cover picture. A new member of my family is due to arrive shortly, to be named Reuben. Given the current hostility to representations of Winston Churchill, I have decided to use a classic album cover (a nod to this issue's puzzle) instead of a baby pic.

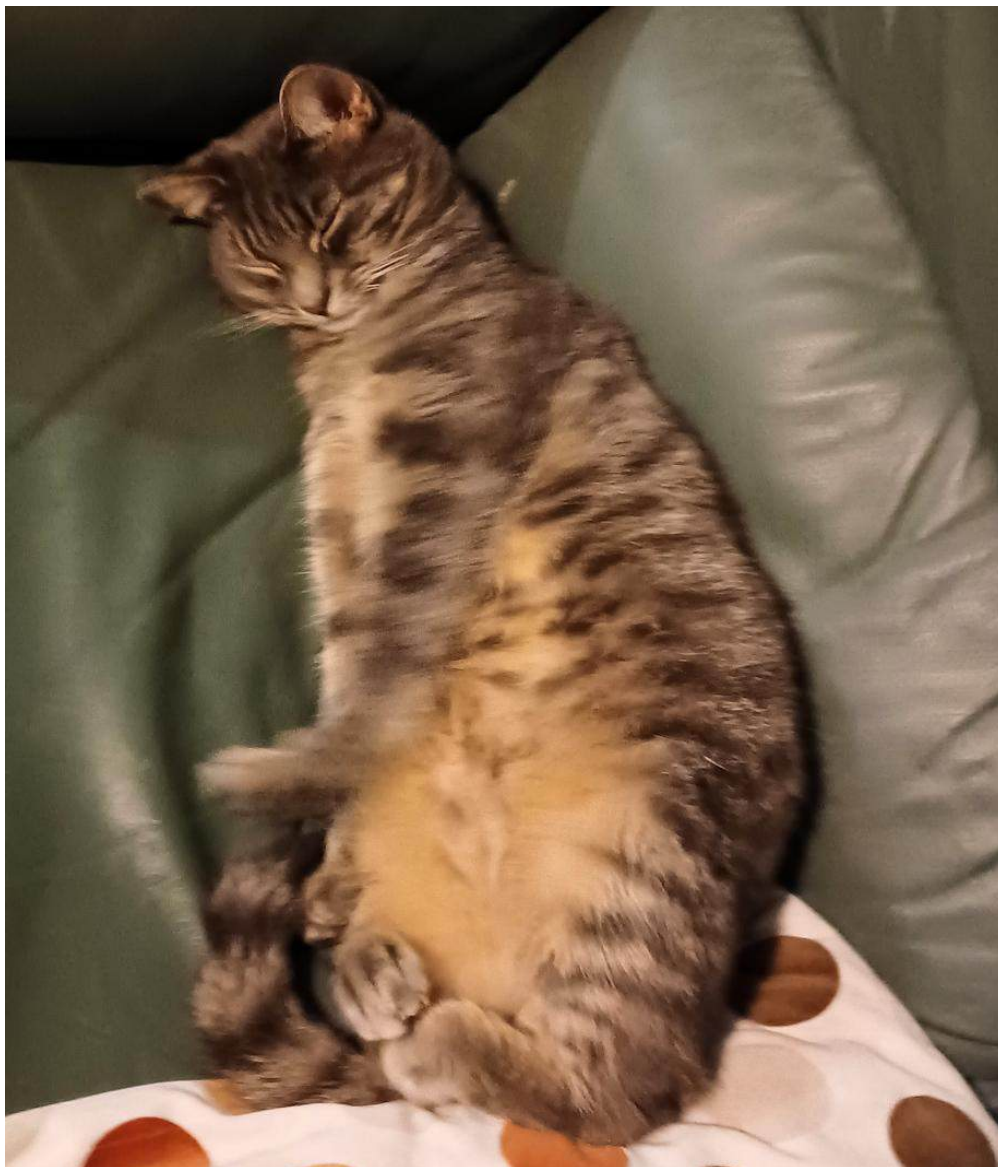
The photo above is my creaky old home entertainment system, which I may well spend some of my retirement money (assuming I will eventually get it) on upgrading. The Mission 770 speakers are the original model built in 1978, not the 2020s version. The Denon home cinema amp is 25 years old and the Pioneer CD player below it (not visible) is 30 years old. The Panasonic TV, Blu-ray player and PVR are a mere 10 years old.

See the album reviews section for more about the Hawkwind blu-ray that was playing when I took the picture. I have recently been watching season 3 of *Star Trek Strange New Worlds* on blu-ray – not quite got to the end yet but so far it has been marred by some really bad episodes – for example the Wedding Planner one (featuring a Q-like being) was execrable, and the Holodeck field trial one not much better. Visual effects are top notch throughout though (and I'm not saying that because I'd not long watched the remastered *Blake's 7* series 2).

My cat situation is still not fully resolved. Raymond still hates Espeon but they seem to be able to coexist without fighting now, so I guess the small grey one can stay. I don't know if you can do evening classes in cat psychology but they seem to want what the other "owns" a lot of the time. When Espeon first arrived he was segregated from the other cat and had his own feeding station and (small) litter tray. Once I decided to end the separation, Raymond started using Espeon's tray and eating his food. Espeon now uses the big tray or poops outside (er, somewhere).

Raymond also has partly claimed Espeon's favoured windowsill, whilst Espeon has stolen Raymond's favourite sleeping spot inside the clothes cupboard. In the garden, Espeon keeps trying to play with Raymond, rolling over in front of her in an inviting way, but the response is always growls and hisses. At least they share night-time cuddles with me without incident, and Raymond allows Espeon to go quite close on the bed, but not too close – he has attempted a nose kiss a couple of times with potentially disastrous results given the huge size of Raymond's claws.

Espeon has claimed the leather sofa (from me!) but hasn't dared set paw on Raymond's favourite cushion, so far, though he did recently drag a bowl of *Dreamies* away from Raymond's feeding area (before gobbling them up).



There is a new game in TTT on offer (Just One is starting next issue, room for 1 more) called *Ecosystem Savanna* rules will be on the [website](#) shortly. *Sprint Finish* is a new running game on offer in HBD – rules inside the zine and will also be on the website soon. *Snakes and Ladders* still needs at least one more as does *Choice*. I am considering running another *House of Games* given the news that Richard Osman is quitting after just 840 episodes – lightweight!

Stop Press! Baby Reuben born on the 19<sup>th</sup> March – weighing a mighty 10lbs 1oz (4.6kg) about the same as one Raymond or two Espeons!

*Richard*

# THE LETTERS BIT



## ANDY LISCHETT

Is your pension provider a government agency? In the U.S. we have Social Security which is arrogant and inept. A few years ago, after spending months trying to get them to correct a simple error I finally contacted my U.S. Representative in Washington and the problem was fixed the next day. Bureaucrats may not care about your problems, but elected politicians care about your vote.

*Capita are a private company, and they have already been fined for poor performance, and senior official Cat Little has sent an apology to all affected UK Government employees. In the UK, outsourcing things to the private sector has come in and out of fashion. In the 1970s the Labour government nationalised many services and in the 1980s the (Thatcher, boo, hiss!) Conservative government privatised everything. In the early 21st century the term "in-sourcing" was coined as public sector bodies realised they could "do it themselves" for a quarter of what they were paying private companies.*

*As for the US, we Brits think the American healthcare system totally sucks financially. \$300 for a box of insulin? \$4000 for an ambulance ride? Crazy.*

## MIKE POLLARD

I had Capita for my Civil Service pension, but thankfully they didn't mess anything up.

*There's hope for me then, though I have only just had acknowledgement from them of my retirement request, after three months.*

## STEVE HAM

I hope you're well. I really thought Norwich would be the final non-Premier League team in the FA Cup as the tie with Leeds kicked off at 4.30 - but Southampton and Port Vale blasted that theory. Up the Vale!

*It would have been good for the Crystal Ball game if Saints and Vale had been drawn against each other in the quarter finals, but most likely both will fall to superior Premier League opponents. Saints are playing the much-improved Narnch soon, and a Saints win should kill off the Canaries' outside chance of making the top 6 (currently 50-1 on oddschecker), but both teams are in-form so anything could happen.*

## BOB PITMAN

New computer has arrived (very quickly – ordered Friday, arrived Monday). It's a lovely little beast with a horrendous set of lighting options that I had to work through to get it to a stage where it didn't look like something from "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" as I used it. I have been slowly exploring it, not sure I like Win11's "start menu" set up and I got quite used to Win10's start popup "box" menu. The keyboard layout is slightly different but I think that's because it's essentially set up for gamers rather than normal folk.

*Hope the PC's price wasn't too inflated by the increased cost of RAM and other components. I blame it all on AI.*

It wasn't cheap but it is a quite good build. I would blame AI as well but I haven't been closely following RAM prices. It's an ASUS so from the home of chip manufacturing Taiwan, also noticed that the ASUS warranty is dated last November so hopefully not too inflated a price.

*It seems some PC manufacturers are downgrading their standard specs, whilst others are passing on up to a 20% price rise. Of course this is only one of the things that have given rise to anti-AI sentiment – the picture overleaf shows some draft "no AI" image designs.*



I have to find a picture for you... it might be applicable to both Destination X and the South Tirol games. It's from a school skiing trip in 1972 to Innsbruck and was taken on a day trip to Northern Italy. At the Brenner bridge the Italian army Alpine regiment was on duty for some reason and our coach driver had an altercation with them and decided to drive away across the border with a soldier hanging onto the driver through the little coach window while trying to hit the driver in the head.

*Sounds, er, interesting!*

### JIM READER

Back in Pennsylvania after a week in the Big Easy where I had a great time. I won the 2nd prize for the best paper award, so all my hard research over the last couple of months was worth it. The University of Southern Mississippi also held a special session to thank retirees that had contributed to the Waterborne Symposium for many years and I also included - very honored.

Still no sign of Hannah sprogging - she will get induced in 6 days if the baby doesn't arrive earlier. I'm flying out to Indy on Thursday.

*(the baby is now with us, see SubPAR)*

*My niece is also running a bit late, but the baby should be coming out before the zine, speaking of which: This time I have done the puzzle, reviews and most of the editorial in advance, so the zine should be done by the 22nd, though I am working every day next week (I am yet to set up my retirement clock).*

48 days to go for me now. I don't have a clock but it's easy enough to count the remaining days until May 1. My last long business trip will be to Chicago / Milwaukee on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March so I will try to get SubPAR finished this week. Hope everything goes well with Rueben's arrival.

## ALBUM REVIEWS

### David Bennett – Under An Empty Sky (Bandcamp download) (2026)



I have watched quite a few music theory videos on YouTube by *David Bennett Piano*. Quite often at the end of a vid he plays a little piece he'd written to illustrate the technique being discussed. Most of these were great and he has released a couple of EPs, and now his first full album.

The content is classy pop songs, with lovely playing, multiple talented vocalists and superb gimmick-free production. It is an enjoyable listen though as a prog fan I would have liked the tracks to be a bit more adventurous.

Currently you can buy the download on Bandcamp, with CD and Vinyl editions to follow in mid-April. <https://davidbennettpiano.bandcamp.com/album/under-an-empty-sky>

## Hawkwind – 1970 debut album boxed set (3CD+blu-ray) (2026)

Having been tempted, but not splashed out on, other recent Hawkwind boxed sets, why did I buy this? Well, I had this record on vinyl in the past but never bought the CD, it is a bit cheaper than others at £40, and it got a good review on YouTube, with the new Stephen W Talyor remix strongly praised.

I think this is probably the 70s Hawkwind album I've listened to the least. Two folky numbers and the rest late-60s style psychedelia. It wasn't until the second album, *X In Search of Space*, and the track *Master of the Universe* where they invented space rock. The extremely heavy *Doremi Fasol Latido* and the drug-powered live masterpiece *Space Ritual* fully defined the genre. *Hall of the Mountain Grill* had a more urban feel, then they went total prog with the Moorcock-themed *Warrior on the Edge of Time* (the album that first got me into the band).

Following the demise of Lemmy and the return of Bob Calvert they had a cleaner sound with *Astounding Sounds, Amazing Music*, and the "almost new wave" *Quark, Strangeness and Charm* which still sounds fresh today. *25 Years On*, released under the name *Hawklords* for contractual reasons was more of the same, with *Psi Power* being very new-wavey. *PXR5* was not a commercial hit though I've always liked it and *Robot* is an underrated gem. *Levitation* was a return to a more hard rock sound and featured Tim Blake, Ginger Baker and the return of Huw Lloyd-Langton, but now we've reached 1980.



The photo to the left is the shrink-wrapped box set front, with all the discs and booklets shown in the large image overleaf (there's also a poster).

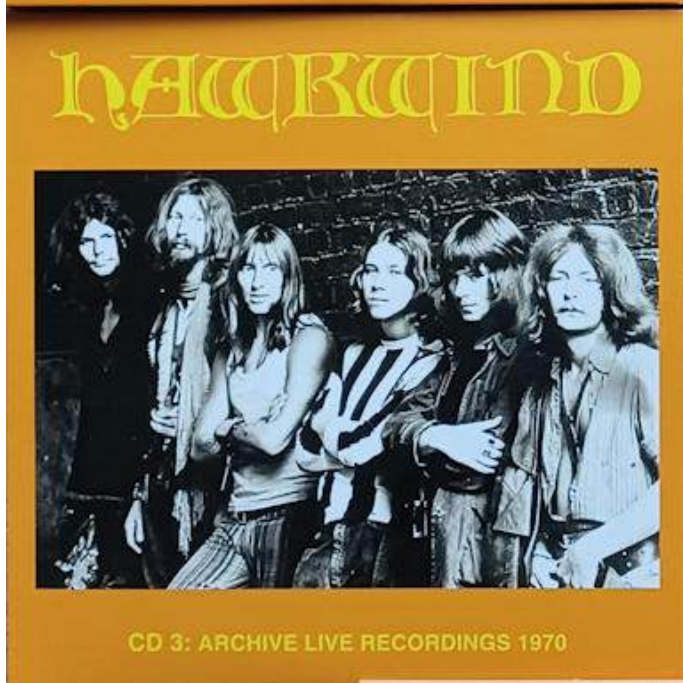
You get the original album plus some decent bonus tracks, the Stephen W Talyer remix, some rather ropey-sounding live tracks, and a blu-ray which has both a stereo and a (rather scary) surround mix.

The remix is quite startling, and reminds me a bit of the Stephen Wilson *Warrior on the Edge of Time* mix that lifted the veil from the Hawkwind "wall of noise" to reveal previously hidden details in the tracks. There is a lot going on in the psychedelic tracks which according to the booklet were mostly recorded "studio live" rather than one instrument at a time.

I already had some of the bonus tracks via a download of *Dawn of Hawkwind* – a collection of early tracks that included covers of the Sonny boy Williamson / Led Zeppelin blues classic *Bring It On Home* and Pink Floyd's *Cymbaline*. The (rather good) *Kiss of the Velvet Whip* is also on the 2011 *Parallel Universe* compilation album.

I doubt if I will be returning to the live disc. Not as bad-sounding as the *Bring Me the Head of Yuri Gagarin* album, and *We Do It* and *Came Home* are not on the main album. The disc ends with a spoken word version of *Mirror of Illusion* – interesting!

So overall, a good package for the money, the Stephen W Talyer remix and the surround mix are both impressive, the bonus tracks decent, and the live recordings a bit ropey. I did enjoy revisiting this album but have to admit it's still some way behind other 1970s offerings from the band. Some groups have brilliant, iconic debut albums, but this one is merely "a promising start" so not really an essential purchase.



Dave Brock Vocals, six and two  
 John A. Harrison Bass guitar  
 Huw Lloyd Langton Lead guitar  
 Terry Ollis Drums  
 Nik Turner Alto sax, vocals and  
 Dik Mik Electronics

Produced by Dick Taylor and Hawkwind  
 Recorded live during March and April  
 Engineer: Barry Ainsworth

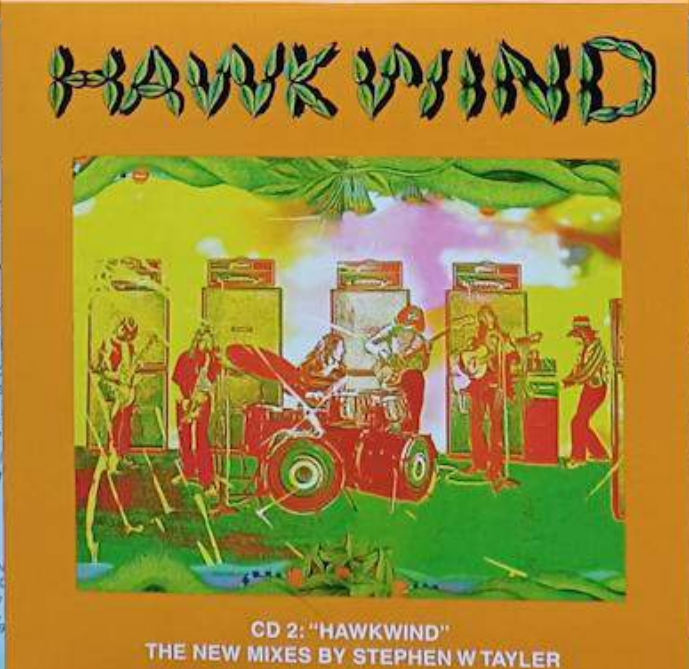
Mixed by Stephen W Taylor at Chimera  
 All compositions written by Dave Brock

All tracks © 2006 Parlophone Records Ltd., a Warner

**HAWKWIND: "HAWKWIND" DELUXE**  
 Release conceived, researched & coordinated  
 Additional coordination by Vicky Powell  
 Remastered from the original master  
 by Ben Wiseman at Broadlake Studio  
 New stereo & 5.1 Surround Sound mixes  
 Chimera Arts, Real World, Box, Wiltshire

Package design by Hugh Gilmour  
 Blu-ray authoring: Type 40

**GP SR** Edel Music & Entertainment GmbH, N  
 Tonpool Medien GmbH, Im Klint 12, D  
 Suburban Records, Donkerve Spaarne  
 Audioglobe S.r.l. Via Volga 47 50019,  
 Sociadisc, rue Pasteur, BP 30035, 91179



# BY WORDLEY DEMAND - ROUND 3 OF 5



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

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

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

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

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

The R3 theme was **visual art**. I specified "no the" for the paintings and sculptures, but didn't say for the board games so decided to accept either for the letter. Three more Worldings this time, with the Wordlers climbing the table – as Mike commented, this round was probably one where the Wordle score is likely to be bigger than the BPD score.

- 1) A famous sculpture – The Thinker (2), Burghers of Calais (2)
- 2) A famous painting – The Last Supper (3)
- 3) A primary, secondary or tertiary colour name – Amber (3)
- 4) A board game that has something to do with art – Modern Art (3)
- 5) A computer program used for graphics editing (past or present) – Photoshop (2)

## Scorecard

Player	Sculpture	Painting	Colour	Board Game	Program	Score	Tot
Mike Pollard	Unique Forms of Continuity in Space [1,4]	Return of the Prodigal Son [1,4]	Blue [1,4]	Azul [1,4]	Nvidia [1,4]	[5,20]	65
Bob Gingell	Christ the Redeemer [1,0]	Last Supper [3,0]	Amber [3,4]	Modern Art [3,0]	Photoshop [2,2]	[12,6]	63
Steve Ham	Great Sphinx of Giza [1,4]	Last Supper [3,4]	Orange [1,4]	Bob Ross: Art of Chill Game [1,4]	Eye of Gnome [1,4]	[7,20]	54
Roger Trethewey	Burghers of Calais [2,0]	Last Supper [3,0]	Amber [3,4]	Show Me the Monet [1,4]	TurboCadr [1,0]	[10,8]	53
Steve Guest	Eros Stringing his Bow [1,4]	American Gothic [1,4]	Red [1,4]	The Art Game [1,4]	Houdini [1,4]	[5,20]	52
Chris Hibbert	Burghers of Calais [2,0]	Liberty Leading the People [1,4]	Amber [3,0]	Sunset over Water [1,4]	Electric Image Animation System [1,4]	[8,12]	49
Charles Raymond	Buddha [1,4]	Laughing Cavalier [1,0]	Indigo [2,4]	Masterpiece [2,0]	Photoshop [2,0]	[8,8]	46
John Walker	David [1,4]	Ecstasy of Saint Teresa [1,4]	Indigo [2,0]	The Gallerist [1,0]	Neopaint [1,0]	[6,8]	42
Bob Pitman	Statue of Liberty [1,4]	Tahitian Women on the Beach [1,0]	Ultramarine [1,4]	Masterpiece [2,0]	Paint [1,0]	[6,8]	40
Martin Walker	Thinker [2,2]	Hay Wain [1,2]	Yellow [1,0]	Modern Art [3,0]	Envato Elements [1,2]	[8,6]	34
Brendan Whyte	Thinker [2,2]	Head of a Man [1,0]	Umbur [1,0]	Modern Art [3,0]	Basic [1,0]	[8,2]	31
GM Picks (non-scoring)	Thinker	Hay Wain	Indigo	Canvas	Krita		

## Notes on Scoring

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

## Categories for Round 4

The theme for round 4 is **create your own music supergroup**.

- Band members can be alive or dead (but must be human) and can be practitioners of any musical genre.
- The surname is always used for Wordling, except where the performer is known by a single name (e.g. "Prince") or has a stage name that is not in the forename-surname format, (e.g. "Meat Loaf") in which case the first word is used.

- 1) Vocalist
- 2) Guitarist
- 3) Bass player
- 4) Keyboards player
- 5) Drummer

## WHERE IN THE WORLD IS KENDO NAGASAKI - DESTINATION X - ROUND 4



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

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

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

Chris Hibbert's guess was furthest away, and only he knows the location, which is a small consolation for getting the yellow card. I decided (after discussing with Dane) that NMRs should also result in a yellow card. Once again we have several live but creaky Kendos chosen, plus one youngish candidate, and one no longer with us.

### Round 4:

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

Public response to the player with the closest guess:

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

### Round 3:

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

Public response to the player with the closest guess:

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

### Round 2:

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

Public response to the player with the closest guess:

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

### Round 1:

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

Public response to the player with the closest guess:

*We were born less than 10 years apart.*

For round 5, Chris has to avoid a second yellow card. In round 6, anyone with a "clean slate" could deliberately try to be furthest away, if they think it will help!

# CRYSTAL BALL 2026 – WINTER BLUES



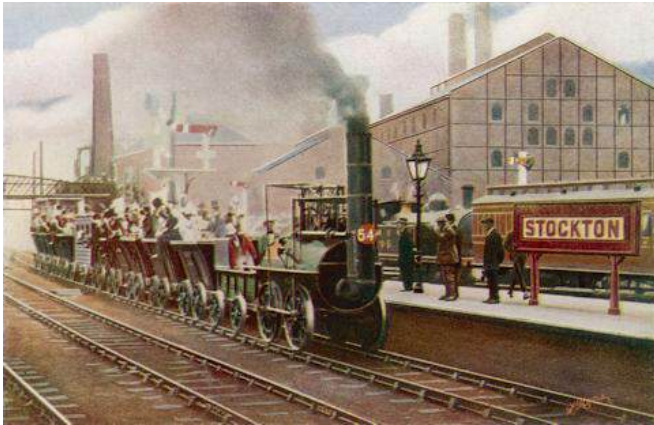
- Team GB got 5 medals at the Winter Olympics and it could have been more with some near misses. Much better than the usual 2.
- England crapped out at the 6 nations, with their last-gasp defeat to France handing the title to *Les Blues* over Ireland.
- England make the T20 semis albeit with some narrow wins. They came up just short chasing India's big total in the semi-final. New Zealand got to the final only to be thrashed by India.
- Southampton and Port Vale are the only non-premier teams still in the FA Cup. Both have tough draws in the quarter-final.
- Mercedes are making the early running in the F1 but Ferrari and Red Bull also look strong. McLaren a little off the pace. I'm rather hoping Cadillac will do well but will a 7-litre barge cut the mustard on a twisty racetrack?

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

\* free change

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

# RAILWAY RIVALS DURHAM 1826 (RR2570DH) ROUND 1



A clean start with no payments. LANCHESTER win the race to Sedgefield to meet Tony Blair, and DIADEM are first to Durham city.

Whilst all companies will obviously be heading north (as they all start in the south), some have more options to consider. A (purple) has options to the west with B (blue) potentially nosing ahead if given the opportunity. D (yellow) pretty much has to bomb up the east coast, but C (green) seems to be second-best everywhere suggesting a “percentage” line strategy.

No company has built any fast track yet, and given the complexities of GMing it I’m beginning to regret including the custom rule. Nevertheless I have repeated the rules tweak note at the end of the report.

PUFFING BILLY  
Jim Reader  
Yellow  
1a. [6] (Stockton) - Q64 - - - - Q59  
1b. [2] (Q59) - - Q57  
1c. [5] (Q57) - - - Q54 - CASTLE EDEN; (Q54) - Q53  
BANK: 14 +6 = 20

LANCHESTER  
Brendan Whyte  
Blue  
1a. [6] (F62) - AYECLIFFE - - - - SEDFIELD  
1b. [2] (E61) - - E59  
1c. [5] (E59) - - - - E54  
BANK: 20 +6 +6 = 32

GEAR  
Kevin Lee  
Green  
1a. [6] (N66) - - N64 - - L63 - - L61  
1b. [2] (L61) - - Sedgefield  
1c. [5] (Sedgefield) - - - - L55 - K55  
BANK: 6

DIADEM  
Steve Ham  
Purple  
(1 token)  
1a. [6] (Y21) - - - Y19 - - A54  
1b. [2] (A54) - - C53  
1c. [5] (C53) - - - - DURHAM; (F51) - F50  
BANK: 6 +6 = 12

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

R2 Rolls are 2a) 5 2b) 4 2c) 3

## Upgrades Rules Tweak (reminder)

(for this game only so far, the map legend may or may not be updated later)

Upgrades must be applied to track as it is built in rounds 1-8, but in rounds 9-11, thanks to technological improvements, companies can upgrade existing track (unlimited).

When a 5 is rolled:

if *all* of the track that will be used is upgraded, it stays as a 5

If *some* of the track that will be used is upgraded, it goes down to a 4

If *none* of the track that will be used is upgraded, it goes down to a 2

# BUS BOSS YNIS MON (BB423MON) ROUND 3

## GM Bob Gingell

CACHU and ROGER focus on the West while MARS heads North.

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

Bodadern - Llanfachraeth - Llanfaethlu - Church Bay [ $1+2, 3+2, 2+2 = 12$ ]

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

Benllech - Moelfre - Penysarn (western route) [ $3+2, 5+2 = 12$ ]

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

Bryngwran - Valley - Penrhos; Valley - Llanfachraeth [ $3+2, 2+2; 1+2 = 12$ ]

Bid order for Round 4: John, Roger, Richard

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



# BUS BOSS YNIS MON (BB424MON) ROUND 3

## GM Richard Smith

All three companies got their first-choice builds, and the routes are coming together nicely, albeit with BAA and NYE both getting blocked at Llanfachraeth.

<b>BAA</b> Green Bob Gingell	Cemaes - Llanfaethlu - Llanfachraeth ( $5+3+2+2=12$ ) BANK: $76 - 12 = 64$ <i>BAA = Bob's Adventure Accelerates</i>
<b>NYE</b> Blue Brad Martin	Bryngwran – y Falli – Llanfachraeth; Llangaffe - Dwyran ( $3+1+2+2+2+2=12$ ) BANK: $76 - 12 = 64$ <i>NYE = New, Yellow, Electric (Buses)</i>
<b>TAFF</b> Yellow Jim Reader	Gwalchmai - Rhostrehwfa – Llangefni; Caergybi - Llaingoch ( $3+2+1+2+2+2=12$ ) BANK: $76 - 12 = 64$ <i>TAFF = Terrific All-round Ferries and Freight</i>

In-game map at <https://variablepig.org/maps/bb/ingame/BB424MON.jpg> (note small change where I filled in the wrong one of the two lines between Penysarn and Moelfre).

Bid order for Round 4: Bob, Jim, Brad

# RAILWAY RIVALS ZAMBIA (RR2540ZM) ROUND 12



No three-way races this time so it was all about twenties and tens. BAMBI won 4 out of 5, BEMBA 3 wins from 5, and MOSI four second places (from 4).

The result of the above was a clear win for BAMBI (Bob). Only one of the players has actually been to Zambia, and he had a disappointing final round.

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

	<b>BAMBI</b> Bob Gingell Black	<b>MOSI OA TUNYA</b> Steve Ham Red	<b>BEMBA</b> Jim Reader Blue
36. Pitauke (25) - Kataba (52)		10 [22] -2	20 [23] +2
37. Chipata (26) - DR Congo (Sp1)	10 [17] +9		20 [17] -9
38. Mbala (12) - Chingola (31)	20 [17] -3 -3(DRC) +1	+2	10 [33] +3 -2 -1
39. Kasempa (45) - Choma (61)	20 [17] -2 -5 +4	10 [28] +5 -4	+2
40. Mwinilunga or Zambezi (41) - Livingstone (53)	20 [28]	10 [36]	
41. Chinsali (16) - Lusaka (66)	+1	10 [24] -1 -3(DRC)	20 [23]
42. Mozambique or Malawi (Sp4) - Mufulira (32)	20 [17] +3		10 [24] -3
Last Turn	338	345	340
Points from Races	95	37	72
Points Total	433	382	412

## CONGRATULATIONS TO BOB GINGELL!

**Game End Statements** (statement from Jim and any additional comments welcome for next issue)

**Bob Gingell:** Looks like a good set of races for me but the scores are so close that the dice could make it go any way. I was happy with my network although my links were not so good to Lusaka and the other 60s. The real drag was the DRC toll, although Jim's track avoiding the pedicle road did not seem to gain him enough of an advantage. Thanks for Richard for running the game and the map. The border crossings might do with a re-think - L32 and L56 are superfluous unless the border towns were to be disallowed as destinations for the foreign country (though L56 still seems bad).

**Steve Ham:** So only 4 races this round. It looks like Bob will win by some margin. I must admit that in round 7 I thought that Jim's track from the North to Livingstone was so good he'd win by miles, but somehow it wasn't to be. Thanks for drawing this map and running the game. In terms of map improvements - it's a beautiful map but play it a hundred games and I don't think anyone would build to Lundazi. Also, I wonder whether the Mozambique border post could be moved a little to the West? I thought the orange hex played well, the toll was enough of a disincentive to deter some race entries, so did its job. I'm less sure about the rainy season rules, certainly I should have been able to build across the Bangweulu swamps in the rainy season without penalty. I hope to have a look at the other race on this map soon.

# RAILWAY RIVALS ZAMBIA (RR2541ZM) ROUND 12

## GM: Bob Gingell

As expected, WILBURSMITH coasted to a win. Second place was seized by ZITS due to an appalling round for ROGER. ZITS excelled in Race 36 with stunning dice rolls of four 5s for a race length of 27, leaving the shorter route of WILBURSMITH in the dust with its four 2s. There were three races with only one entrant, and ROGER only entered three races, one of which did not happen because ZITS had better things to do than enter a Joint Run. Surprisingly in Race 38, where there was a shorter route to Livingstone and the other companies used WILBURSMITH's short cut into Zimbabwe, ROGER paid to shorten its lengthy route and then used the controversial rail line into Botswana with minus points resulting. ToZ scored highest this Round, but not enough to escape last place.

GM Note: Sorry about the mis-numbering of the races – my computer did this automatically in last Round's report and I should have noticed. Races have been correctly numbered for this report although all players submitted orders based on the Round 11 race numbers.

Races for Round 12 (max 4 entries):

36. [29] (15–63): ZITS [27]  $20 - 2w + 2 = 20$ ; TOZ [27]  $10 - 1r - 3w - 3d = 3$ ;  
WILBURSMITH [25]  $0 - 2z + 5 = 3$ ; ROGER +1; DRC +3.
37. [30] (26–46): WILBURSMITH  $20 - 1z = 19$ ; ZITS +1.
38. [31] (33–#3): TOZ [13 to Z27]  $20 - 1w - 3z + 5 = 21$ ;  
WILBURSMITH [14 to Z27]  $10 + 1 = 11$ ; ZITS [14 to Z27]  $0 + 3 = 3$ ;  
ROGER [21 to L32]  $0 - 5t = -5$ .
39. [32] (41–56): ZITS  $20 - 1r - 1w = 18$ ; ROGER +1; WILBURSMITH +1.
40. [33] (51–32): TOZ [23]  $20 - 3w = 17$ ; ROGER [29]  $10 - 1w = 9$ ; WILBURSMITH +4.
41. [34] (66–25): WILBURSMITH 20.
42. [35] (#4–14 [both to Isoka]): ZITS [8]  $10 - 5t + 3 = 8$ ; TOZ [8]  $20 - 3z + 5 = 22$ .

Scores and builds (max 4):

WILBURSMITH (Brendan Whyte), black:	$313 + 58 = 371$ .	1st
ROGER (Roger Trethewey), green:	$264 + 6 = 270$ .	3rd
ZITS (Richard Smith), blue:	$239 + 50 = 289$ .	2nd
ToZ (Michael Pargman), orange:	$195 + 63 = 254$ .	4th

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC):  $54 + 3 = 57$ .

CONGRATULATIONS TO BRENDAN!

## End Game Statements:

**Brendan Whyte (WILBURSMITH, 1st):** When Roger and Michael built through Y15, and Richard via Serenje, I thought they had locked me out of the 10s and 20s, and my game was over. I'm not sure my desperate late-game build up to Isoka paid for itself, but my connections into all the 40s sure did. It's a much better and more balanced map than I initially thought. The penultimate round was good for me, and the ultimate one even better, but I think my anticipated win is no indication of imbalance, more luck of the city draws, and the fierce competition between yellow and green for the same cities (esp in the NE). A good game, thanks to Bob for running, and for the competition from the others, I really did not expect to win this one.

**Richard Smith (ZITS, 2nd):** Steve Ham was originally concerned that Zambia might not work too well as an RR map due to the shape of the country and the clump of towns in the Copperbelt, but it is interesting to play with lots of different options to consider. The Pedicle Road toll is just about worth it IMHO. The Chipata start does present you with a dilemma to choose between Copperbelt, Lusaka and the north-east. I went for the Copperbelt but I think I should have built Petuake to Lusaka later in the game (e.g. G55 to Y25) for race efficiency. Mongu is probably not the best start but other options such as Kasempa or Kaoma would have been too close to the "Copperbelt Clump". My ghastly round and Brendan's stonker in R11 means he is the (almost) certain winner so I will congratulate him now.

**Roger Trethewey (ROGER, 3rd):** Congratulations to Brendan on a well laid out map, without going through DR Congo. I thought it was best to go through the orange. We play and learn. Thanks to Bob as gm.

**Michael Pargman (ToZ, 4th):** I think Brendan will win this game easily. But looking at the map, to me Richard has the best track system.

As for myself, the game was practically lost already by round 2. For the northeast, I was further away than the others and knew I would have built parallel to others. Maybe I should have tried to build more according to Roger's Southern track to the northeast instead. My only chance would have to be lucky with the races, but by round 8 I knew there was no chance catching up.

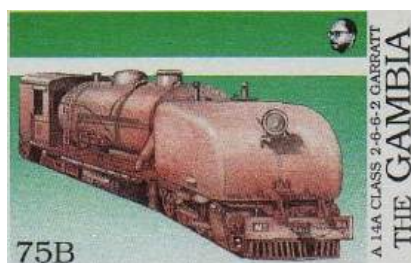
Thanks everyone for the game and Bob for GM-ing.

**Bob Gingell (GM):** The final placings repeated positions at the ends of both Round 6 and Round 9, so maybe access to city bonuses at early stages of the game reflected the strength of the start towns. Interesting also that both the first and the second placed companies avoided the Pedicle Road through the DRC, and the DRC did pretty well from the toll payments. Overall the map does seem fairly balanced although not as forgiving of early misjudgements as some other maps. Brendan's network was direct and efficient, with the straightest route from Lusaka to the Copperbelt, and the dice delivered the needed results often enough. Richard had two separate lines to the West and Roger had two to the East, both of which were expensive compared to a single trunk line. Michael's network was more central than Brendan's in the West and by the end it looked as if it should have provided better results than it did. Lusaka seemed to be a more significant location in practice than the Copperbelt. For future consideration I would favour requiring all special runs to cross the border instead of allowing those races to end at Zambian towns. Livingstone is excessively valuable with a border crossing and an airport giving it four race destinations.

Thanks to all for playing and congratulations again to Brendan for a decisive victory.

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

## RAILWAY RIVALS - SENEGAL & THE GAMBIA (RR2557SG) - ROUND 5



Shock horror! One XOF has been paid from LIONS to FAR.

All three networks look like one more build round should achieve most of what's needed with some top-ups in the racing stage. As it's quite a small map, I will probably go for an allowance of 10 in R7.

4s are back for R6, but only one.

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

**BEAR** 5a. [3] (R18) - - TAMBACOUNDA - R21  
Kevin Lee 5b. [5] (R21) - R22 - - GOUDIN; (R22) - - T23  
Black 5c. [2] (T23) - U24 - U25 (only, due to 5a build reduction and knock-on)  
BANK: 64 (corrected) +6 +3 = 73

**LIONS** 5a. [3] (L7) - - Tiebo - I7  
Jim Reader 5b. [5] (I7) - - - - - E9  
Yellow 5c. [2] (E9) - D9 - Richard Toll  
BANK: 60.5 -1[FAR, G8] = 59.5

**FAR** 5a. [3] (Kaolack) - M10  
Brad Martin 5b. [5] (W16) - Velingara - X19 - Dai'aba  
Blue 5c. [2] (W17) - Bassa Santa Su  
BANK: 76.5 +1[LIONS, G8] = 77.5

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

## RAILWAY RIVALS SYRIA (RR2566SY) ROUND 4



As expected, BOB and SKR shared the spoils in As-Suwayda and Daraa.

ROGER made some useful connections in the west and built a long straight track through the desert to the war-torn but quite populous city of Abu Kamal.

BOOMS also decided to build across the desert, whilst SHIT laid a possibly highly profitable express line connecting the major towns in the northeast to Aleppo.

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

BOB  
Bob Gingell  
Black  
4a. [2] (I33) - AS-SUWAYDA - H34  
4b. [4] (H34) - - DARAA; (M9) - - O8  
4c. [6] (M12) - L11; (O8) - - - - S6; (R6) - Manbij  
BANK: 44 +3 +3 -1[BOOMS, L11] +1[SHIT, M16] = 50

BOOMS  
Jim Reader  
Orange  
4a. [2] (M25) - - O24  
4b. [4] (O24) - - - - S22  
4c. [6] (S22) - - Palmyra - V21 - - - Y20  
BANK: 33 +1[BOB, F16] +1[SHIT, L15] = 35

SKR  
Brad Martin  
Blue  
4a. [2] (I33) - AS-SUWAYDA - H34  
4b. [4] (H34) - - DARAA; (L17) - Salamiyah; (Manbij) - T7  
4c. [6] (T7) - - - - - X9  
BANK: 41+3 +3 -+1[SHIT, K15] = 48

ROGER  
Roger Trethewey  
Green  
4a. [2] (G16) - - G14 (historic tourism site)  
4b. [4] (G14) - - - G11 (Turkey W); (C55) - D55  
4c. [6] (D55) - - - - - J58  
BANK: 36 -1[SKR, G13] = 35

SHIT  
Michael Pargman  
Purple  
4a. [2] (N16) - - L15  
4b. [4] (L15) - K15; (U13) - - - R11  
4c. [6] (R11) - - - - Aleppo; (Z13) - - B52  
BANK: 43 -1[BOB, M16] -1[BOOMS, L15] -1[SKR, K15] = 40

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

## RAILWAY RIVALS BHUTAN (RR2550BT) ROUND 8



BUTT didn't quite have enough build points to connect all three remaining towns, so we have one not possible race in R9. ROGER spends his build points in the west, YETI in the east.

Three races that were gimmes for YETI meant there was limited competition this time. ROGER found themselves shut out of all bar one race – might they get too many to choose from later in the game? I do wonder if this map is one where the way the races come out is a potential Kingmaker?

	<b>BUTT</b> Bob Gingell Black	<b>ROGER</b> Roger Threthewey Green	<b>YETI</b> Jim Reader Yellow
8. Phuntsholing (25) - Punakha (31)	+2		20 [16] -2
9. Mongar (62) - Gelephu (45)	20 [12]		10 [14]
10. Daga (42) - Thimphu (14)			20 [20]
11. Lhuntse (52) - Sakteng (64)	Race not possible		
12. Airports (Sp5) - Zhemgang (36)	10 [12] +4	20 [7] -4	
13. Thimphu (15) - Tendu (22)			20 [20]
14. West Bengal or Arunachal Pradesh (Sp2) - Dungkar (51)	20 [20]		

Last Turn	97	120	122
Points from Races	56	16	68
Buils	-10 +6 +6 +2	-10 -1	-10 -2 +1
Points Total	157	125	179

### Buils:

BUTT: (M38) - - - P36 - SAKTENG; (N43) - - P42 - Q43; (M36) - L35 - L34 - TRASHIYANGTSE

ROGER: (K13) - J13 - I13 [-1 YETI]; (H10) - - - - - F11 (disputed area)

YETI: (Mongar) - - - - - O36 - P36 [-2 BUTT]

*During the final checking of the zine Bob spotted a problem with ROGER's build - the mountain-to-mountain costs 5. So I have adjusted the orders to remove the 1-pip efficiency build and shorten the build to Ha.*

### Races for Round 9:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| R11. Lhuntse (52) - Sakteng (64)       | 15. Trashiyangtse (61) - Jakar (35)               |
| 16. Samdrup Jongkhar (56) - Gasa (12)  | 17. Samdrup Jongkhar (55) - Wangdue Phodrang (32) |
| 18. Laya (11) - Jomotsangkha (66) (NP) | 19. Ha (21) - Monasteries (S6)                    |
| 20. Phuntsholing (26) - Gelephu (46)   | 21. Disputed Areas (S4) - Damphu (43)             |

Enter up to 5 new races (plus the reoffer) and build up to 8 points of track.

Reminder: This game is not using leapfrog, but the other one (next page) is. So far it seems the map has just about enough non-mountain hexes to make it not absolutely essential.

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

## RAILWAY RIVALS BHUTAN (RR2551BT) ROUND 8

### GM Bob Gingell

HAPPY has the most success, catching up with HEART so that both have a surprising level score. However, BOTI stays in the lead. No ties this Round despite two races with all companies having equal length routes, and HEART's fuel ran low over flat terrain in Race 12. BOTI built a railway through a hilltop monastery to the dismay of the monks, while HAPPY with priestly approval leapt over BOTI to connect to Gasa. HEART paid for parallel builds to get into Thimphu but HAPPY reimbursed some of that to build through a narrow pass.

GM note: First leapfrog!

Races for Round 8 (max 5 entries):

- R6. (65-#4 [all to E30]): HEART [17] 20 -3hy+5 = 22; HAPPY [18] 10 -5ht+3 = 8.  
8. (13-22): BOTI 20.  
9. (21-63): HAPPY [36] 20 +1 = 21; BOTI [40] 10 -2ht-1hy = 7; HEART +2.  
10. (31-44): BOTI [13] 20 -5ht+4 = 19; HEART [13] 10 -4b+5 = 11.  
11. (45-55): HEART [13] 20 -1hy+1 = 20; HAPPY [13] 10 -5b-1ht+3 = 7;  
BOTI [13] 0 -2hy+5 = 3.  
12. (54-#5): HAPPY [11 to Trashigang] 20; BOTI [11 to Gelephu] 10;  
HEART [10 to Gelephu] 0.  
13. 66 (Jomotsangkha) – 11 (Laya): *No entries – reoffer.*  
14. (#2-36): HAPPY 20.

Scores and builds:

- BOTI, red (Richard Smith): 127 +59 -5 = 181.  
(G14) ----- F14 {Disputed area}; (R16) --- - Daga; (U18) - U19 [-1ht].  
[-10-1+6 = -5].  
HEART, purple (Steve Ham): 124 +55 -12 = 167.  
(P13) - P12 - - N11 - Thimphu [-3hy-3b];  
(Nubding) - - R12 - Wangdue Phodrang --- P12. [-10 -6+4 = -12]  
HAPPY, blue (Brad Martin): 104 +76 -13 = 167.  
(O12) - P12; (O12) - O11 [Leap to N8] - M8 - M7 - Gasa [-2b]; (P12) - P13 [-3ht];  
(K14) - --- K16 [-1b]. [-10-6+3 = -13]

Races for Round 9 (enter any 5):

- R13. 66 (Jomotsangkha) – 11 (Laya)  
15. 16 (Thimphu) – #1 (China).  
16. 26 (Phuntsholing) – 42 (Daga).  
17. 34 (Trongsa) – 14 (Thimphu).  
18. 43 (Damphu) – 62 (Mongar).  
19. 53 (Panbang) – 33 (Nubding).  
20. 64 (Sakteng) – 52 (Lhuntse).  
21. #3 (Assam) -25 (Phuntsholing).

Round 9 build allowance: 8 points, excluding payments to other players.

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

## RAILWAY RIVALS SOUTH TYROL (RR2572ST) ROUND 4

**GM: Bob Gingell**

NIR beats WIERER to Welsberg and on to Toblach in the North East but has to pay WIERER for its build north of Bozen. STYLE builds through the mountains to Sterzing and picks up nearby towns in the West.

GM note: Sorry, no leapfrog in this game.

Press: Steve – The Winter Olympics are over. Ski Mountaineering may have disappointed but, in my mind opinion the Biathlon events were very exciting. Dorothea Wierer bowed out with only the one silver medal in her home Olympics, in the first event the Mixed Relay, and was outshone by her team mate (and fierce rival) Lisa Vittozi who won gold in the Women's Pursuit. She managed 5th in her final race, the Women's Mass Start and immediately retired.

Round 4 build allowances: 6, 4, 5.

NIR, blue (Brad Martin):  $50 + 3 - 7 = 46 + 12 - 7 + 3 = 54$ .

4a. (Bruneck) - N46 - - P47 - P48 - WELSBERG - R49 [-1w]

4b. (R49) - - T50 - TOBLACH; (S50) - S51

4c. (A57) - - - - X21 [-6w].

STYLE, red (Richard Smith):  $44 + 6 = 50 + 18 = 68$ .

4a. (M16) - M15; (St. Leonhard) - W13 - W12 - - X11

4b. (X11) - - - - Z10

4c. (Z10) - STERZING; (M15) - SCHNALS; (L19) - - SCHLANDERS; (Liefers) - X26.

WIERER, purple (Steve Ham):  $38 + 15 + 7 = 60 + 6 - 3 + 7 = 70$ .

4a. (O47) - - Q46; (Z22) - - - - V20

4b. (V20) - - - - T19

4c. (T19) - Lana; (O47) - - Q48 - Welsberg [-3n]; (M44) - SAND IN TAUFERS.

Round 5 build allowances: 4, 5, 4.

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

## RAILWAY RIVALS SOUTH TYROL (RR2565ST) ROUND 4



Plenty of towns connected this time with STINK bagging three, ROGER two, BUST one, and STIFY none having been pipped to SARNTHEIN by STINK.

As well as the 18 town points, STINK also managed to extract sizeable payments from BUST and STIFY, giving them a balance in excess of 100 Euros. STIFY by contrast now have barely enough for a bar of chocolate.

BUST

Bob Gingell

Black

4a. [2] (G50) - H49 - H48

4b. [6] (H48) - - KIENS; (A56) - - Y21

4c. [8] (Kiens) - - - - M46 - - M44; (Leifers) - X26

BANK:  $46 + 6 - 1[\text{STINK}, \text{Z21}] - 1[\text{STINK}, \text{K47}] - 7[\text{STINK}, \text{M44-M46}] + 4[\text{STIFY}, \text{K47-L46}] = 47$

STIFY

Bob Pitman

Red

4a. [2] (X22) - X21 - X20

4b. [6] (X20) - Y20 - - Sarnthien; (Franzenfeste) - F46 - G46 - H45

4c. [4] (H45) - Vintl - J46 - K47 - L46

BANK:  $43 - 1[\text{STINK}, \text{X21}] - 5[\text{STINK}, \text{Y20-Y19}] - 4[\text{BUST}, \text{K47-L46}] - 8[\text{STINK}, \text{J46-K47}] = 25$

STINK

Michael Pargman

Purple

4a. [2] (Y22) - - Y20

4b. [6] (Y20) - - SARNTHEIN; (Bruneck) - - - M44 - SAND IN TAUFERS

4c. [4] (Q46) - - ANTHOLZ; (R49) - - T50

BANK:  $63 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 1[\text{STIFY}, \text{X21}] + 5[\text{STIFY}, \text{Y19-Y20}] + 8[\text{STIFY}, \text{J46-K47}] + 1[\text{BUST}, \text{Z21}] + 1[\text{BUST}, \text{K47}] + 7[\text{BUST}, \text{M44-M46}] = 104$

ROGER

Roger Trethewey

Green

4a. [2] (M16) - M15 - SCHNALS

4b. [6] (W25) - - - Leifers; (T21) - S21 - Lana; (Mals) - E15

4c. [4] (H18) - TRAFOL

BANK:  $56 + 6 + 6 = 68$

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

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

# BAG OF DUNGEON - ROUND 5



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

Note that if a monster survives battle against one or more adventurers, it recharges hit points.

Also remember that in the postal game the discovery is done at the start of the round, so later in the round characters should position themselves where they want to discover and may express preferences for equidistant tiles.

The range attack rules are item 8 in the F2F rules PDF <https://variablepig.org/rules/bod/bodrules v3.pdf>

## Report for Round 5:

**Turn order:** Alendra, Sirrus, Torvok.

**Alendra** spends 2 APs to fire her bow at the unknown monster M4, who takes 4 damage, and turns out to be an angry monk (8 health) who attacks (2D6 +4) her with his deadly hands and feet. Bob and I had a chat about changing weapons rules, and it transpires you *can* switch around at any time, so Alendra is able to stash the bow and grab her magic shield before the monk engages with her.

Alendra Roll	Monk Roll	Alendra Health	Monk Health	Notes
10	12	9	4	shield absorbs 2
10	12	9	4	shield absorbs 2
10	8	9	2	
12	11	9	1	
7	12	6	1	shield absorbs 2
9	7	6	0	

The monk Karate chops Alendra's shield a couple of times, and the pain allowed Alendra to score a couple of sword hits on him. In desperation he pulls out the arrow from his chest and stabs Alendra with it, who responds by dispatching him. The monk appears not to be carrying any goodies but Alendra spots that his boots have mystic runes on them. Might they be magic? Yes, confirmed when they change size to fit her perfectly when donned.

**Sirrus** heads west towards Alendra, but as she went before him in the round, he was too far away to be tagged, which she might have needed against the monk.

**Torvok** spends 1 AP to consume his health potion (GM rolls 3,6, Torvok restored to full health) and puts the Fireball spell (which he cannot use but could give to another character) in the vacated backpack space. The Imp's teeth remain on the tile. He uses his remaining APs to move west and north.

## Round 6 Actions:

**Turn order:** Sirrus, Torvok, Alendra.

**Discovery:** All characters automatically discover the two nearest unknown tiles (-2AP) - note that preference can be specified for use where there is a tie, otherwise random. The discovered tiles are shown on the current map.

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

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

Player: Jim Reader

Character: Torvok the Barbarian

### Barbarian

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

**Actions:** 5  
**Combat:** 3 D6

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

**Lives:** 1, 2, 3 (3 is circled)

**Health:** 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 (10 is circled)

**Monster Health:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6\*, 7, 8, 9, 10\*\*, 11, 12, 13

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

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

**aps bar:** 10, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14

**Notes:** Cannot use (Shield OR Wheel), \*take one item on kill, \*\*take two items on kill

Player: Chris Hibbert

Character: Alendra the Elf

### Alendra the Elf

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

**Combat:** 2 dice +1

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

**Lives:** 1, 2, 3 (3 is circled)

**Health:** 6 (6 is circled), 7, 8, 9

**Monster Health:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6\*, 7, 8, 9, 10\*\*, 11, 12, 13

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

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

**aps bar:** 17, 16, 15, 14

**Notes:** \*take one item on kill, \*\*take two items on kill

Player: Bob Gingell

Character: SIRRUS the Fighter

### SIRRUS the fighter

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

**Combat:** 2 dice +2

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

**Lives:** 1, 2, 3 (3 is circled)

**Health:** 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 (10 is circled)

**Monster Health:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6\*, 7, 8, 9, 10\*\*, 11, 12, 13

**Items:** Morning Star (+2 to CBG roll), Steel Armour (-1 damage), Vampire teeth (2 aps, Drain and gain 5 health from any adventurer\*)

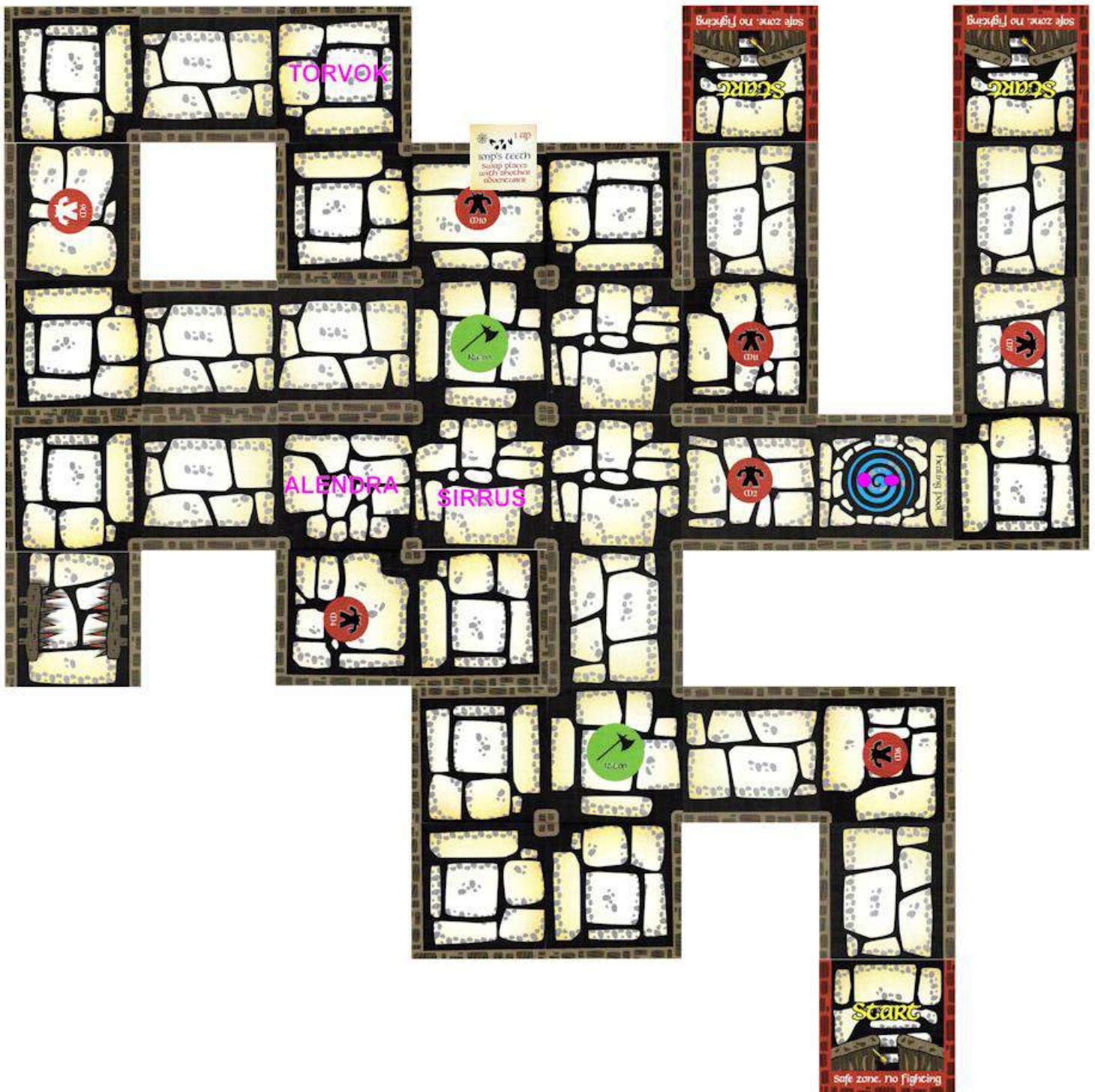
**aps:** 5, 4, 3 (3 is circled), 2, 1, 0

**aps bar:** 17, 16, 15, 14

**Notes:** \*take one item on kill, \*\*take two items on kill

## Dungeon Map:

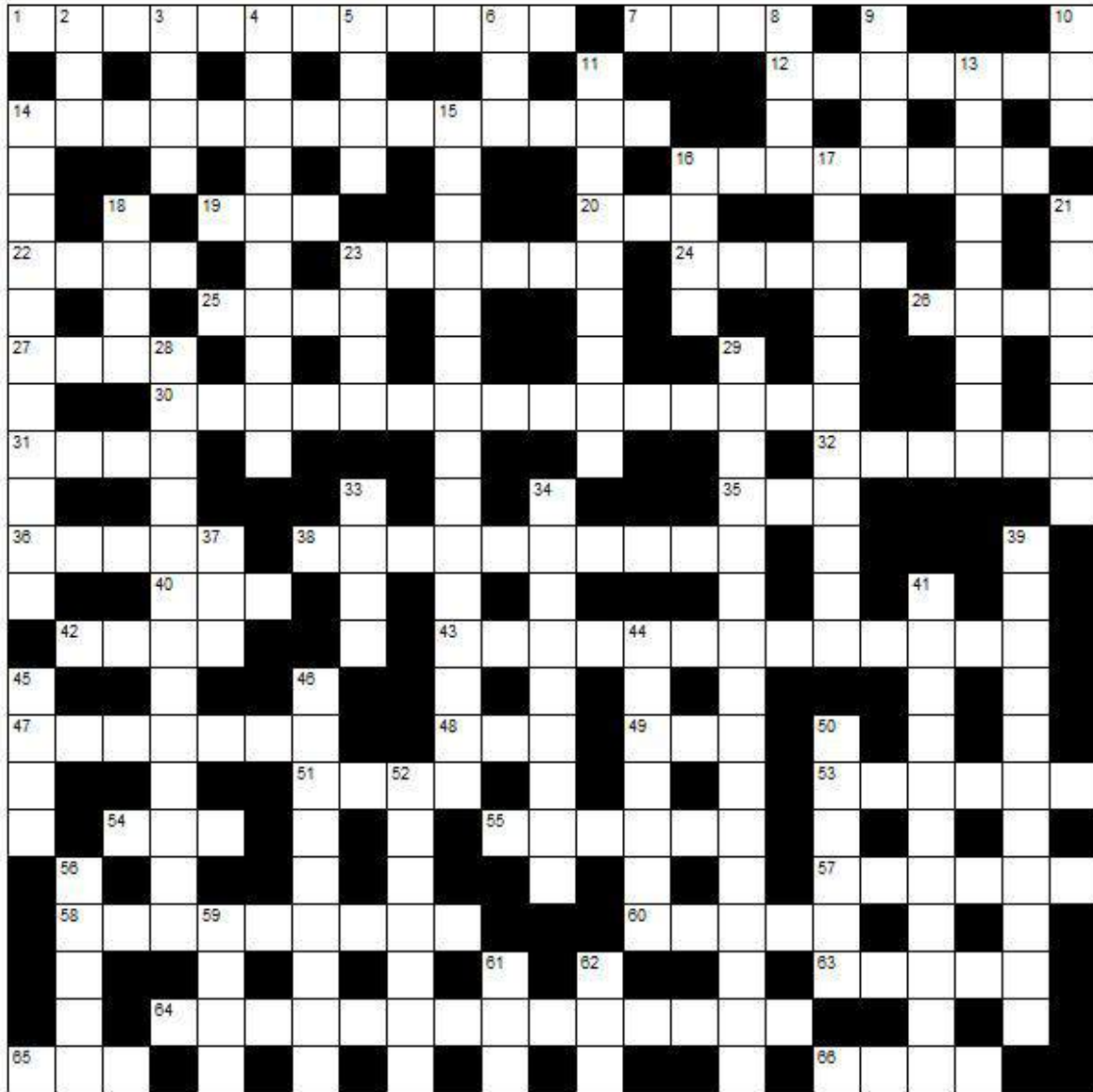
Only monsters and items with white text are active



Note that spells and potions can only be used once and need APs to activate.

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

# ALBUM COVERS CROSSWORD



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

## Across

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

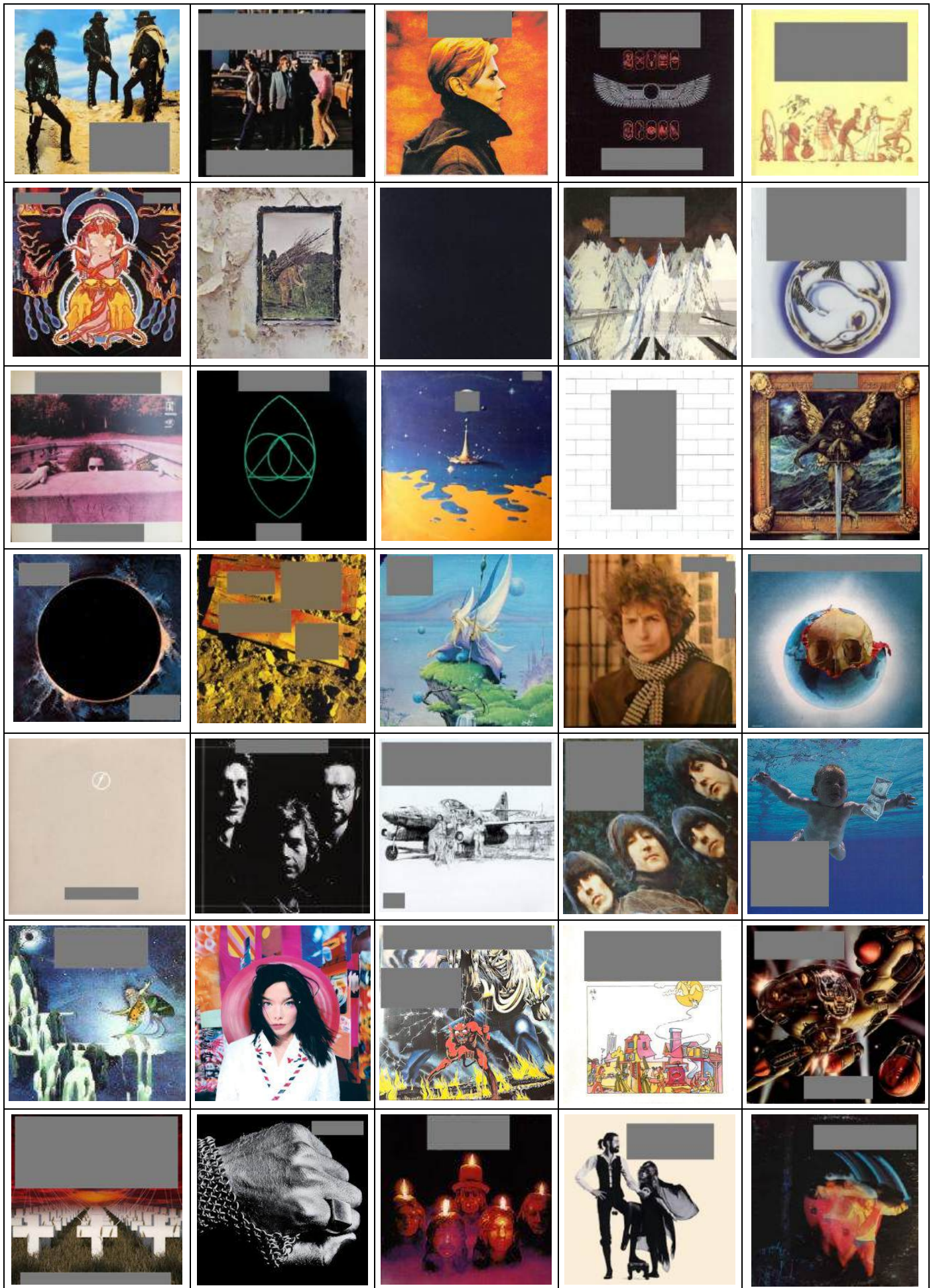
49. British pop band with tiger feet (3)
51. Bottle that's disgusting on the radio (4)
53. \_ University, Discworld (6)
54. album 15 (3)
55. Central American rodent (6)
57. album 16 (6)
- 58 & 4d. album 17 (3,6,2,3,5)
60. British glam rock band who felt the noise in 1973 (5)
63. Empty \_ by Gary Moore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

## Down

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

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

The album covers – in random order...



**Parkrun 4** (4 of 4) - Chris catches his breath after his big effort. He is unaware of the carnage behind him until he takes a quick peek, which gives him quite a boost when he sees no danger. Bob P and Richard both decide to make a surge and are pleasantly surprised how easily they move through the field. Bob G and Tom in the chasing pack lose a bit of ground as they concentrate on their immediate threats, rather than the run. Andy catches the chasing pack. Roger keeps up a steady pace in the middle of the field.

Park Runner	Play	Turn SP	Overtake	Lead/Tail	Prev SP - turn SP - overtake +/1 lead/-tail	Time after 4k
Chris	Relax	17.7		5	23.28-17.7+5=10.58	14:02.6+4:24.6=18.27.2
Bob P	28	28		3	53.13-28+3=28.13	14.36+4:32=19:08
Richard	25	25		1	45.13-25+1=21.13	14.36+4.35=19.11
Dane	5-Track Richard	12.5			36-12.5	14.37+4.35=19.12
Bob G	Track Howard	0	4		57.81-4=53.81	14.12+5.00=19.12
Howard	6-fail	0	4		46.5-4=42.5	14.12+5.00=19.12
Andy	Target Bob G	0	3		44.13-3=41.13	14.18+4.54=19.12
Tom	Track Bob G	0	4		51.63-4=47.63	14.16+5.00=19.16
Steve H	Track Tom	0	3		21-3=18	14.18+5.00=19.18
Brad	4 - Relax	3			43.5-3=40.5	14.42+4.42=19.24
Roger	6	6			38.18-6=32.18	14.42+4.54=19.38
Paul	6-Target Martin	5			47.18-5=42.18	14.49+4.52=19.41
Martin	3 -5	5	4		55.81-5-4=46.81	14.36+5.05=19.41
Mike	6-Target Martin	5	3		46.13-5-3=38.13	14.37+5.04=19.41
John H	5-Track Mike	2.5	3		51.31-2.5-3=45.81	14.38+5.04=19.42
Jim	5 – Track Paul	2.5			46.18-2.5=43.68	14.50+4.52=19.42
Kevin	3 - 3	3	3	1	49.18-3-3-1=42.18	14.42+5.03=19.45
Steve G	6-Target Kevin	3		1	50.18-3-1=46.18	14.54+4.51=19.45
Allan	6-Target Kevin	3		1	35.18-3-1=31.18	14.56+4.49=19.45
Michael	2-11	11		1	48.18-11-1=36.18	14.56+4.49=19.45
John M	2-5	5	3	5	27-5-3-5=14	14.52+4.55=19.47

**Parkrun Results** As expected Chris had amassed an unassailable lead, although must have got a little worried when he saw Bob G storming up behind. Tom's excellent race management left him enough in the tank to outspurt his rivals to come in third. Howard and Andy battled it out for fourth place, with Howard coming out on top. Sixth placed Bob P didn't have much left and couldn't respond to the people sprinting past. Things didn't go to plan for Richard but still got a top half finish. Roger didn't have a good run but enjoyed the banter and Camaraderie of his fellow park runners.

Park Runner	Turn SP	Time for final k	Finish Time
Chris	10.58	4:49.42	18:27.2+ 4.49.42=23:16.62
Bob G	53.81	4:06.19	19:12+ 4:06.19=23:18.19
Tom	47.63	4:12.37	19:16+ 4:12.37=23:28.37
Howard	42.5	4:17.5	19:12+ 4:17.5=23:29.5
Andy	41.13	4:18.87	19:12+ 4:18.87=23:30.87
Bob P	28.13	4:31.87	19:08+ 4:31.87=23:39.87
Brad	40.5	4:19.5	19:24+ 4:19.5=23:43.5
Richard	21.13	4:38.87	19:11+ 4:38.87=23:49.87
Martin	46.81	4:13.19	19:41+ 4:13.19=23:54.19
John H	45.81	4:14.19	19:42+ 4:14.19=23:56.19
Jim	43.68	4:16.32	19:42+ 4:16.32=23:58.32
Steve G	46.18	4:13.82	19:45+ 4:13.82=23:58.82

Paul	42.18	4:17.82	19:41+ 4:17.82=23:58.82
Dane	12.5	4:47.5	19:12+ 4:47.5=23:59.5
Steve H	18	4:42	19:18+ 4:42=24:00
Kevin	42.18	4:17.82	19:45+ 4:17.82=24:02.82
Mike	38.13	4:21.87	19:41+ 4:21.87=24:02.87
Roger	32.18	4:27.82	19:38+ 4:27.82=24:05.82
Michael	36.18	4:23.82	19:45+ 4:23.82=24:08.82
Allan	31.18	4:28.82	19:45+ 4:28.82=24:13.82
John M	14	4:46	19:47+ 4:46=24:33
Tail walker			24.34

### Serpents Gambit – GM roll = 3

Query - if 2 players both challenge a sale value and it is false, do both gain 3 gold or is it total 3 split between them?  
*GM Both players get the 3 gold and the player selling the false item would pay each player 3 gold.*

**Richard and Bob both gain a skill. Chris puts some Dragons Blood resin up for sale for 2 gold.**

**Players need to pick one of the three options below. In addition, they may challenge Chris' sale item.**

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

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

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

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

Order: "**SELL for x**"

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

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

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

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

**3 Gain Skill Card:**

Order: "**Gain Skill.**"

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

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

Winning the game

The first player to accumulate 25 or more gold wins the game. Each player currently has 10 gold.

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

**Lyrics 4 of 5 – There was a slight problem with lyric 5, see comments.**

1 Study oceanography / Sign up for the big band / Or sit in the grandstand / When your team and others meet (1979)

**In the Navy – The Village People** (John Hopkins (song only), Richard Smith, Steve Guest)

2 She smiled at me on the subway / She was with another man (2005) **You're Beautiful – James Blunt** (Martin Walker)

3 As the tears roll from my eyes / I feel the hurt inside (As I reach) / As I reach out to you / Saying I'm so confused (2005) **Trapped – Colonel Abrams**

4 Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh / Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh / Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh / Oh, oh, oh, oh— / Stop, Hammer time! (1990) **U can't touch this – MC Hammer** (Jim Reader, Richard Smith, Brendan Whyte (singer only), Martin Walker (singer only), Steve Guest, Bob Pitman, Paul Evans (singer only))

5 Take off your hat / Kick off your shoes, / I know you ain't going anywhere. / Run 'round the town (1972) **Wishing Well – Free** (Jim Reader, Steve Guest, Bob Pitman, Paul Evans)

6 If I made you feel second best / Girl, I'm so sorry I was blind (1972) **Always on my mind – Elvis** (Jim Reader, (John Hopkins (singer only), Brendan Whyte, Dane Maslen (song only), Bob Pitman, Paul Evans (song only))

7 Darling, so it goes / Some things, you know, are meant to be / / Take my hand / Take my whole life too (1961) **Can't Help Falling in Love - Elvis** (Jim Reader (song only), John Hopkins, Richard Smith, Brendan Whyte, Steve Guest, Dane Maslen, Paul Evans)

8 Well, my daddy left home when I was three / Didn't leave very much to my mom and me / Except this old guitar and an empty bottle of booze (1969) **A Man named Sue – Johnny Cash** (John Hopkins, Steve Guest)

9 Took a look in the mirror said what's up / Yeah I'm gettin money (ooh) [x2] (2008) **Turn my Swag on – Soulija Boy**

10 I've information vegetable, animal, and mineral, / I know the kings of England, and I quote the fights historical (1879) **Major General's Song – Gilbert and Sullivan** (Jim Reader, John Hopkins, Richard Smith, Brendan Whyte, Steve Guest, Dane Maslen (singer only), Bob Pitman, Paul Evans)

**Theme** – The Armed Forces (Richard Smith, Steve Guest)

Richard Smith 28+9=37

Steve Guest 25+11=36

Bob Pitman 27+8=35

John Hopkins 26 + 8=34

Jim Reader 20+9=29

Paul Evans 21+8=29

Martin Walker 20+3=23

Brendan Whyte 12+8=20

Dane Maslen 13+4=17

Chris Hibbert 3+0=3

Tom Howell 1

Jim - 1 2 3 8 9 no idea

5 Wishing Well by Free

7 Falling In Love With You by the Everly Brothers?

10 Modern Major General sang the Major General and written by Gilbert and Sullivan in the operetta Pirates of Penzance.

No way song 5 is from 1987 unless its a much later cover. I like the Blackfoot version but the original was by Free – *GM Well that was a major cock up on my part, I intended to put in lyrics for the Terrence Trent D'Arby song so it would fit in with the theme*

I was in a school production of the Pirates of Penzance as part of the pirate ensemble.

John - "In the Navy", sung by ??

6 Heartbreak Hotel", sung by the King

7 Can't help Falling in Love with You, sung by Elvis Presley

8 A boy named Sue, sung by Johnny Cash

10 "I am the Very Model of a Modern Major General", sung by the D'Oyley Carte Opera Company  
But the theme? No idea.

Brendan - 4. MC Hammer. Hammertime

6. you were always on my mind. Pet shop boys.

7. I cant help falling in love with you. Elvis Presley

10. I am the very model of a modern major general - composers: Gilbert & sullivan. you want a singer? Richard Berg the game designer once played this part in a local production.

Martin - Theme - terms of endearment?

Steve G - To follow an idea relating to the theme, I had to assume that you made a mistake on (5). The lyric is most certainly Wishing Well by Free [1972], but I am guessing you meant it to be Wishing Well by Terence Trent D'Arby [1987]. *GM Correct on all counts.*

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

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

2 Crimson dress that clings so tight / She's out of reach and out of sight / When she walks by she brightens up the neighborhood (1966)

- 3 Well I'm a-standin' on the corner in Winslow, Arizona / With such a fine sight to see / It's a girl, my lord, in a flatbed  
 ford / Slowin' down to take a look at me (1972)
- 4 How can you just leave me standing / Alone in a world that's so cold? (So cold) / Maybe I'm just too demanding /  
 Maybe I'm just like my father, too bold (1984)
- 5 But I got smarter, I got harder in the nick of time / Honey, I rose up from the dead, I do it all the time / I got a list of  
 names, and yours is in red, underlined / I check it once, then I check it twice, oh (2017)
- 6 Grew up in a town that is famous as a place of movie scenes / Noise is always loud, there are sirens all around and  
 the streets are mean / If I can make it here, I can make it anywhere, that's what they say (2009)
- 7 Go on and close the curtains / 'Cause all we need is candlelight / You and me, and a bottle of wine (1997)
- 8 My weariness amazes me, I'm branded on my feet / I have no one to meet / And the ancient empty street's too  
 dead for dreaming (1965)
- 9 If I leave here tomorrow / Would you still remember me? / For I must be traveling on, now / 'Cause there's too  
 many places I've got to see (1973)
- 10 You're beautiful and that's for sure / You'll never ever fade / You're lovely, but it's not for sure / And I won't ever  
 change (2000)

**Fragments – Prominent People (53/50)** – Chris reached the winning mark by solving fragment 10, despite my best efforts to confuse things. Here are the full fragments and final table.

Person 1 He was the command module pilot on the Apollo eleven space mission which meant he did not walk on the moon = Michael Collins (not Charlie Chaplin, Neil Armstrong, Mark Twain, Buzz Aldrin, Liz Truss)

Person 2 Invented probably the world's most famous equation  $E = mc^2$  = Albert Einstein (not Jack the Ripper, Ken Jennings)

Person 3 A big fish in the PBM pond who edits the Celestial Dragon = Richard Smith

Person 4 The sixteenth president of the United States who appears on the five dollar bill = Abraham Lincoln (not Pocahontas)

Person 5 I'll be back = Arnold Schwarzenegger (not Donald Trump, Mohamud Ali)

Person 6 Invented probably the world's second most famous equation  $A^2 + B^2 = C^2$  where C is the hypotenuse of a right angled triangle = Pythagoras

Person 7 Famous footballer who appears in the rules section of this game. David Beckham

Person 8 Austrian bodybuilder actor and politician who said he would be back = Arnold Schwarzenegger

Person 9 An American actress who appeared in the television show *Suits* and is now known as the Duchess of Sussex Meghan Markle

Person 10 The first African to become secretary general of the United Nations = Boutros Boutros-Ghali

Person 11 Artist who had a blue and rose period = Picasso

Person 12 Global media tycoon whose first name is Keith = Rupert Murdoch

Fragment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Chris	6	7	7	7	8	9				9			53
Richard	7	8	8	7	9	7							47
Bob P	8	8	7	7		8		8					46
Bob G	6	6	7	8	9								36

**Postscript** – With Parkrun concluding this issue, I thought I'd offer a different race challenge for you. I've designed a middle-distance race game, that works equally well for either event. Rather than the normal number-based games, this one is played by using cards. Here are the initial rules, which may change after the game has been played.

### Sprint Finish

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

#### Rules

The players will randomly be allocated a lane.

On the first turn players select up to 10 of the following cards.

1. Overtake 3 (can only be played on turns 2 to 5)
2. Overtake 2 (cannot be played on the last turn)
3. Overtake 1
4. Save Energy (add one to next card e.g. Overtake 2 becomes Overtake 3)

5. Hold line (cannot be played on last turn)
6. Increase pace (Must be in the lead, tied or otherwise). Players need one extra to overtake. Does not affect move alongside)
7. Move alongside
8. Refresh Card
9. Dip (Played on any turn but used on the last turn. Will win any ties on the last turn. If two dips used the winner will be the player on the inside)
10. Joker (Can be played as any card)

The GM places the players in their track position after 100 metres. The player(s) selecting the fewest cards will lead the race. Players selecting the same number of cards will be placed next to each other, with the lower initial lane on the inside.

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

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

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

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

Here is an example turn

<u>Cards Selected</u>	<u>Track Position</u>
6	John
7	Seb, Crammy, Steve
8	Jacob Cole
9	Josh
10	Hicham

<u>Player</u>	<u>Card Played</u>
John	Hold Line
Steve	Save Energy
Crammy	Overtake 2
Seb	Overtake 1
Cole	Move Alongside
Jacob	Overtake 3
Josh	Move Alongside
Hicham	Overtake 1

### Results

Hicham overtakes Josh. Josh moves alongside Hicham. Jacob is boxed and cannot overtake. Cole moves alongside Steve. Seb is boxed. Crammy overtakes John. Steve saves energy. John stays put.

The new track positions are:

Crammy  
 John  
 Seb Steve Cole  
 Jacob  
 Hicham Josh

The game is designed for players to pick their cards secretly, however as this is the first game I propose to run an open game, where everyone can see which cards each player has. To make it easier, on this first game, players just need to tell me how many cards they want to select. So, if a player wants 5 cards, they will get all the cards up to Hold Line.

I've decided to run a 1500 game. The first turn covers 100 metres; the next 7 cover 200 metres. An 800-metre race would be 8 turns of 100 metres each.

If the game proves popular, I can alternate this game with Parkrun.

**THE TANGERINE TERROR #85/I AM THE KURIOS KUMQUAT #15**  
**The "Wafer Thin Citrus Fruit" Issue**

Idiotorial

It's easier to pass through the eye of a needle than the Straits Of Hormuz.

**DEAD LETTER OFFICE**

**Chris Hibbert (on starting as you mean to go on)**

I'll play JUST ONE. I couldn't find a description of DOS DE MAYO, so I'm not signing up yet.

*Auntie Tangerine*

*I'll hopefully have a full description of all the Tangerine game hopefuls in the next issue. Still trying to recreate TTT good old days with those unplayable Winter Olympics games*

**Richard Smith (on unplayable Winter Olympics games from TTT good old days)**

Watching the Winter Olympics reminded me of your suite of games in TTT many years ago. I don't think they had "Big Air" or "Ski Mountaineering" back then, but if I remember rightly I was the 2026 host, Italy. I unexpectedly thought of PBM orders when watching the ice skating: "Double salchow, ponce about, ponce about, triple toe-loop, etc."

*Auntie Tangerine*

*It was a shame to have missed out on that. Will try to do something for the World Cup. I think a previous Tangerine Terror had a free World Cup board game in it. I'm in two minds about the World Cup. In 2034, 4 of the previous events will have been held in places with twats for leaders or where freedom of speech/expression is denied. I'm kind of cooling on the competition as a whole. Too many games, too much diving, too many prima donnas, too much advertising. The internet has stripped back a lot of the magic. We're familiar with so many of the players already. Bring back Ruud Krol and Vasily Rats*

**Dane Maslen (on having Rats)**

About a year after I moved into this house it became apparent that rats had got into the cavity walls and the voids between ceiling and floorboards. The way in turned out to be a break in the drain that led out of the house. Once that was fixed and the rats eliminated, the problem was solved. Alas 12 years later the damage they (are presumed to have) caused to cables back then has finally resulted in one of my lighting circuits failing.

*Auntie Tangerine*

*Everyone seems to have a good rodent infestation story. Us and the next door neighbour have had a robust mechanical and chemical eradication regime for a few months, and it's gone quiet on the rodent front. <to the tune of Iron Maiden's Running Free>"I'm vermin free yeah, I'm vermin free".*

NG Mvoto	THE NAME OF THE GAME	FINAL
----------	----------------------	-------

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Total
Paul Evans	2	3	3	1	2	0	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	1	3	2	2	3	2	2	<b>40</b>
Allan Stagg	0	0	3	1	2	1	2	3	2	1	3	2	3	2	3	1	2	3	2	2	<b>38</b>
Richard Smith	0	2	2	0	2	0	3	2	3	2	1	1	3	3	2	2	3	3	0	2	<b>36</b>
Brendan Whyte	3	2	1	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>18</b>
Brad Martin	0	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>6</b>

#19 : Was **Forbidden Island**

#20 : Was **Blood Bowl**

No further addition to the scores, so the final table is unchanged. Well played Paul. Turned out to be a very close game. Game End Statements please. If everyone's up for another game, I'm also game. Might run it over a shorter period (smaller number of games).

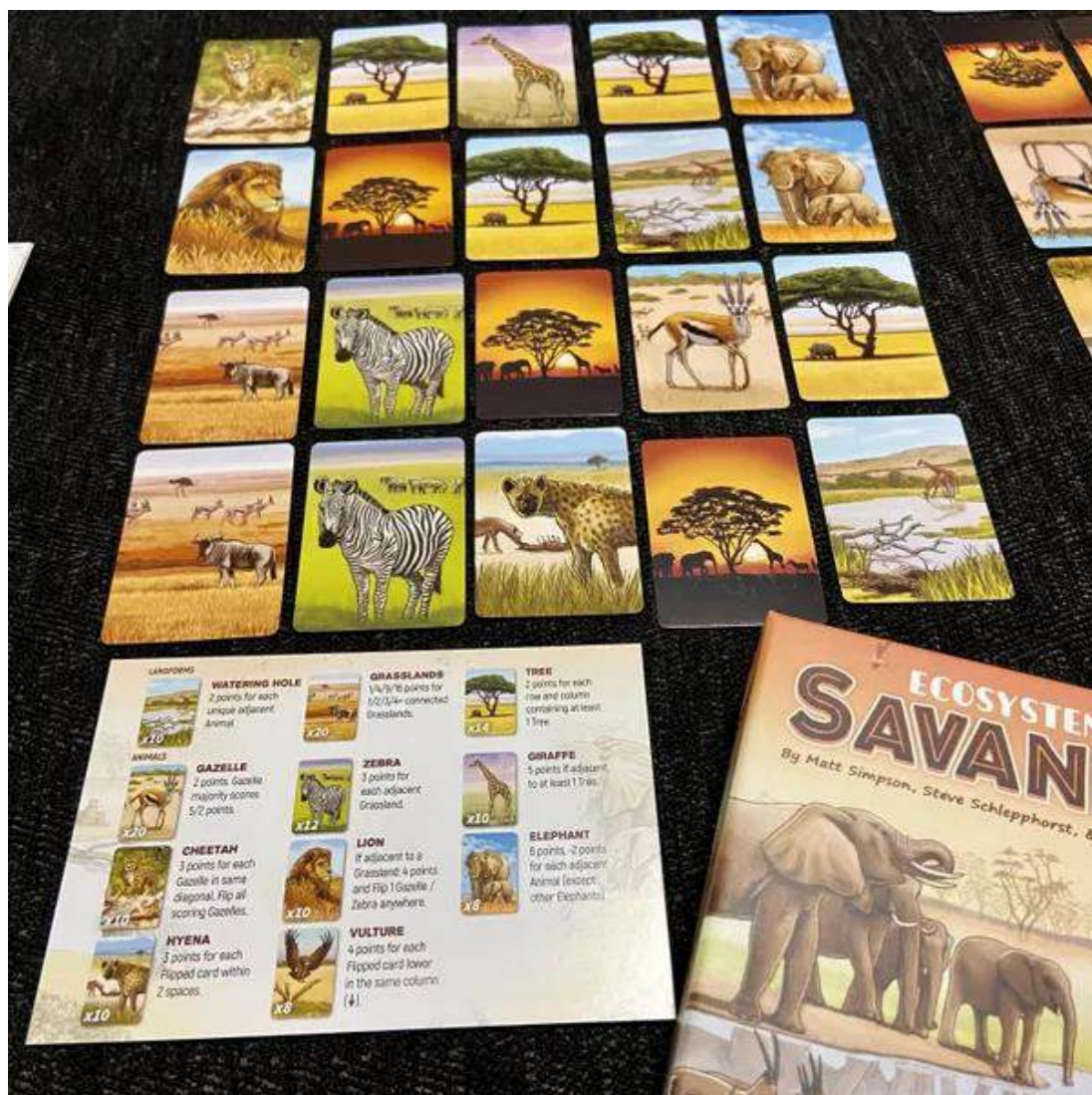
## FUTURE SHOCK

**The Name Of The Game** is done. Gamestart in the next issue. Probably 12 games rather than 20. **Just One** is a go. Bob and Chris have tossed their hats into the ring so we have a full set.

Gamestart next time.

Also offering **Ecosystem: Savanna** from Genius Games.

It's a Serengeti-inspired card-drafting and card placement game. The PBM rules should be up on the CD website soon (<https://variablepig.org/#rules>). Waiting list is open.



The other current favourites to be added to the waiting list are ...

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

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

**Route-Finder Intercontinental** : Conversion of the boardgame where you play as intrepid 1920's pilots trying to prove routes between cities.

**What's In Howard's bookcase**

All of these need work and I'd like to come up with a totally new homegrown design.

# SubPAR 15

## Pennsylvania Ramblings



**Baby Love** Three weeks ago, Hannah gave birth to a baby girl, Phoenix. Mum and baby are both doing well and Phoenix is a real cutie. Sadly, I just missed the birth as I had to catch my flight back home before the blizzard, but I was able to see Hannah and Phoenix just afterwards by Facetime. Jacqueline stayed in Indianapolis for a few weeks before and after the birth to help out. I did get to meet my new Granddaughter the following weekend.

**Working Man** At the time of writing, I have only 47 more days before I retire. It's been a very hectic last few weeks as I start to hand over my customer responsibilities to my successor. This has meant business trips to New Orleans, Cleveland and Detroit, with another trip to Chicago and Milwaukee planned.

**The Prize** My paper about Superspreading Surfactants in Coatings won the Best Paper Award for Technical Excellence at the Waterborne Symposium. I am thrilled to win as this a highly respected conference (in the coatings industry) with over 50 papers presented from both academia and industry. Of course, I did also enjoy some wonderful food and music again in the Big Easy.

**Hazy Shade of Winter** The cold weather continued through February; just as the snow was starting to melt and we could see the yellow-green grass again, a blizzard hit the east coast dumping another 30cm+ of snow and shutting down most flights from New York, Boston and Philadelphia. Getting to Cleveland was an adventure.

**Ain't No Stopping Us Now** Our bowling team is still five games ahead of our nearest rivals with about five more weeks to play. Kelsey has lost a little form lately, but our team has pulled together. I bowled my second ever 600 series two weeks ago and a 251-game last week. Jacqueline has also been bowling well.

## Railway Rivals (Bhutan) - RR2552BT

### Round 3

ROGER  
Roger Trethewey  
Black  
3a) 5. (P11) - - - O11 - N11 - Thimphu,  
3b) 4. (Thimphu) - - - L12 - K13,  
3c) 4. (K13) - Paro - I12: (K13) - J13: (Q14) - Q15  
BANK: 67

BUDDHA  
John Walker  
Red  
3a) 5. (N8) - N7 - GASA: (Paro) - I13 - H13 - HA,  
3b) 4. (Wangdue Phodrang) \*leap ROGER\* R14 - R15 - R16 - R17 - Damphu,  
3c) 4. (Damphu) - T17 - U18 - V18 - W19.  
BANK: 39 + 6 + 6 = 51

Dzong 3a) 5. (G39) – G38 – G37 – G36 – G35 - G34,  
Chris Hibbert 3b) 4. (G34) – LHUNTSE: (G40) - - - MONGAR,  
Yellow 3c) 4. (Mongar) - I40 --- J39  
BANK: 38 + 6 + 6 = 50

The fourth-round die rolls are 4a) 4, 4b) 4, and 4c) 4.

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

## Railway Rivals (Senegal and Gambia) - RR2556SG

### Round Seven

	<b>COUER</b> Steve Ham <i>Purple</i>	<b>SETI</b> Richard Smith <i>Blue</i>	<b>ROGER</b> Roger <i>Black</i>	<b>BOGGER</b> Bob Gingell <i>Brown</i>
1. Kaffrine (36) - Bignonia or Dai'aba (52)	20 - 7 - 2	+ 5	0 + 7 - 5	10 + 2
2. Dakar (23) - Podor or Lagbar (13)	20 + 6	10 - 6		
3. Guinea (Sp3) - Sainsoubou or Saraya (45)			20	
4. Louga (14) - Sedhiou (54)	5 + 3 - 3	20 - 3 + 3	5 - 5	+ 5
5. Goudin or Kidira (43) - Farafenni (64)		+ 4		20 - 4
6. Mauritania (Sp1) - Dakar (24)	10	20		
7. Banjul (63) - Kaolack (33)		20	10	

Points from Last Round	41	49	54	83
Points from Races	52	73	32	33
Buils	- 14 - 3 + 9 - 1 + 1	- 14 - 2 + 1	- 13 + 3 + 3 - 9 - 9 + 1	- 14 + 3 + 1 - 1 + 2 - 1 + 9 - 1
Correction	None reported this round			
Total	85	107	62	114

COUER (Louga) – G9 – F9 – E10 - Richard Toll: (R11) - Q12 – P11 - O11:  
(V20) – V21 – V22 - - - V23 – V24 - V25.  
SETI (L12) – L13 – L14 – L15 – L16 – L17 – L18 – L19 – L20 – L21 – L22 – L23 – L24 -  
Bakel - M26.  
ROGER (Saraya) – V29 - SAINSOUBOU - - - T30 / Mali: (H9) – Louga:  
(H9) - G9 – F9 – E10 - Richard Toll: (X8) - - - Bignona.  
BOGGER (Louga) - G9 - F9 - E10 - Richard Toll: (Q8) - R8 - S9 – KEREWAN:  
(N14) - M15 - L15 - K16 – Linguere: (T21) - T22 - T23 - U24.

The second set of races is

8. Town on Gambia River (SP6) - Richard Toll (12): 9. Koumpentoum or Velingara (51) - Dakar (22)  
10. Mali (SP2) - Janjanbureh (65): 11. Thies (25) - Touba (35)  
12. Bassa Santa Su (66) - Saint Louis (11): 13. Joal Fadiout or M'bour (31) - Tambacounda (44)  
14. Kerewan or Mensa Konko (56) - Salde or Bakel (41)

Enter up to 4 races and build up to 12 points of track, not including payment costs to other rivals.

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

# Railway Rivals (Zambia) - RR2545ZM

## Round Eleven

	<b>ACR</b> <i>Brad Martin</i> Blue	<b>PEAR</b> <i>Kev Lee</i> Purple	<b>MOSI</b> <i>Steve Guest</i> Orange
36. Kasempa (45) - DR Congo (Sp1)		20 + 5	10 - 5
37. Angola or Namibia (Sp2) - Mumbwa (55)	+ 2		20 - 2
38. Mazabuka (63) - Ndola (35)	20 + 3	10 - 3	
39. Mongu (43) - Luwingu or Isoka (14)	0 - 6 + 1	20 + 6 + 6	10 - 1 - 6 - 3 (DRC)
40. Kataba (52) - Pitauke (25)	20	5 JR	5 JR
41. Monze (62) - Serenje (24)	15 - 5 + 4	15 + 5 - 4	
42. Mbala (12) - Ndola (36)		*	20 - 3 (DRC)

Points from Last Round	420	287	389
Points from Races	54	85	45
Total	474	372	434

\* Kev, you ordered to accept the JR with Steve, but this gave you 6 races, so I cancelled this race for you

## Congratulations to ACR (Brad Martin)

*Game end statements are welcome*

# Railway Rivals (Durham 1826) - RR2571DH

## Round One

COP Brad Martin Blue	2a) 4. (Shildon) – C59 – B58 – <u>BISHOP AUCKLAND</u> : (B58) - A58, 2b) 3. (Durham) – F50 - E50 - E49, 2c) 4. (A58) – Z21 - Y21 – X21 - W22. Bank: 15 + 6 – 1 (HAB) = 20
DUST Richard Smith Red / Pink	2a) 4. (Q54) – <u>CASTLE EDEN</u> : Q54 – Q53 – Q52 - Q51, <i>All track upgraded</i> 2b) 3. (Q51) – <u>Q50 – Q49 - Q48</u> , <i>All track upgraded</i> 2c) 4. (Q48) - <u>SEAHAM</u> – Q46 – Q45 - Q44. <i>All track upgraded</i> Bank: 10 + 6 + 6 – 5.5 (upgrades) = 20.5
HAB Bob Gingell Green / Light Green	2a) 4. (F50) - F49 - F48 - F47 - F46, <i>All track upgraded</i> 2b) 3. (F46) - G46 - <u>CHESTER-LE-STREET</u> - H44, <i>All track upgraded</i> 2c) 4. (H44) - I44 - J43 – <u>WASHINGTON</u> : (I44) - I43. <i>All track upgraded</i> Bank: 20 + 6 + 6 + 1 (COP) – 5.5 (upgrades) = 27.5
ROGER Roger Trethewey Black / Grey	2a) 4. (I52) – I51 - I50 – J49 - K49, 2b) 3. (K49) – K48 – K47 - K46, 2c) 4. (K46) – K45 - - - K44. Bank: 9

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

The build allowances for the third round are – 3a) 6, 3b) 5, and 3c) 2.

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

## Railway Rivals (Estonia) - RR2542EE2

### Round Ten

Another 5-player race for the records.

	<b>ARVO</b> Richard <i>Blue</i>	<b>BENDY</b> Bob <i>Black</i>	<b>ROGER</b> Roger <i>Green</i>	<b>MARS</b> John <i>Orange</i>	<b>ET</b> Michael <i>Red</i>
22. Tabivere or Antsala (33) - Loksa or Kehra (22)	10 - 3	20	+ 3		
23. Rakvere (24) - Turi or Poitsamaa (42)	0	20 - 1 + 2 + 2	0 + 1 - 2 + 1	10 - 2 - 1	0
24. Rapla (53) - Johvi (14)			10 - 2		20 + 2
25. Latvia (Sp5) – Voru (34)				20	
26. Lake Resort (Sp6) - Moisakula (45)	20 + 7 + 4	0 - 4 - 1	+ 3	10 - 7 + 1 - 3	
27. Paldiski or Saue (65) - Narva (11)	20 - 4	10 + 4 + 1			0 - 1
28. Tootsi or Sindi (56) - Tallinn (61)			10 - 3	20	0 + 3

Points from last round	124	233	114	128	87
Points from races	54	53	21	48	24
Build Costs	- 6 + 2 + 1	- 5 - 2 + 1 + 1	- 6 - 1 + 1 + 1	- 6 - 1	- 4 - 1 - 1 - 1
Corrections	None reported this round				
Total	175	281	130	171	104

**ARVO:** (J47) – J48 – J49 - J50: (Q43) – Q44 – Q45 - Q46  
**BENDY:** (I61) - J61: (H61) - G62 - F62 - E63.  
**ROGER:** (R19) – R20 - R21 – Q22 - Sindi: (H38) – H39 - H40  
**MARS:** (H43) - H42 – I42 - J41 – K41 - L40 – Kivoli  
**ET:** (H53) – H54 - H55 – I56 - J56.

The fifth set of races is

29. Polva or Rapina (35) - Lihula or Rummu (52):	30. Finland (Sp3) - Tapa or Tamasalu (23)
31. Kunda or Narva-Joesuu (21) - Parnu (54):	32. Paide (41) - Narva (12)
33. Tartu (32) - Maardu (66):	34. Kilingi-Nomme or Torva (43) - Tallinn (62)
35. Sweden (Sp2) - Kohtla-Jarve (16)	

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

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

# Railway Rivals (Togo and Benin) - RR2575TB

## Game Start

The rivals for our latest railway building expedition in Africa are

<b>Bob Gingell</b>	Company Name: Tremendously Ordinary Branch Engines (TOBE) Colour: Black Start: Djougou (1 <sup>st</sup> choice)
<b>Richard Smith</b>	Company Name: Togo Boldly (TB) Colour: Blue Start: Cotonou (3 <sup>rd</sup> choice)
<b>Roger Trethewey</b>	Company Name: Rule Out Ghana Each Round (ROGER) Colour: Green Start: Cotonou (1 <sup>st</sup> choice)
<b>Steve Guest</b>	Company Name: Failing Lines Are Guaranteed (FLAG) Colour: Orange Start: Lome (1 <sup>st</sup> choice)

Richard draws the short straw for start town selection. The first set of die rolls are 1a) 6, 1b) 5 and 1c) 4.

## Questions

Could you confirm there's no river between Djougou and M19/N18. It looks like there would normally be, but I can't see it.

*The answer, oddly, is no - there are no rivers between Djougou and M19 and N18. They are two separate rivers that start near Djougou - the Kara heading West to Ghana and the Oueme. I agree that it looks like there could be, so thanks for checking.*

The cost to build into/through a Koutammakou Hill is the same as for the other hills. The Koutammakou Hill hexes are I15, J14, K14 & K15. Special 6 Koutammakou Region is to reach any yellow Koutammakou hex and any Koutammakou Hill hex. The hill hexes can also be used for this special as the World Heritage Site includes the hill country.

The cost to cross the Togo/Benin border sections that are a thin gray line in a river (such as between F11 & G11) includes both border and river costs. The cost to cross national borders separated by a river marked with a thin gray line (such as between A21 & B20) are the river costs only.

# Bus Boss (Farnham and Aldershot) - BB422FAL

## Round Six

FAB Richard Smith Colour: Blue	Ewshot - Beacon Hill - Church Crookham 62 - 11 = 51
FEAR Kev Lee Colour: Red	Farnham Town Centre - Dippenhall; Tilford - Rural Life Museum 62 - 12 = 50
BANG Bob Gingell Colour: Black	Aldershot FC - Aldershot Town Centre; Farnham Station - Waverley Abbey 62 - 12 = 50

ROGER  
Roger Trethewey  
Colour: Green

Runcorn – Bentley: Tongham - Hogs Back Brewery - Guildford  
62 – 12 = 50

CHAMPS  
Brad Martin  
Colour: Brown

Badshot Lea – Lido; Farnham Town Centre – William Cobbett – The Bourne  
60 – 12 = 48

The first set of races is

1. Aldershot Town FC (4S) – Waverley Abbey (JH)
2. Beacon Hill (2D) – Tilford (9C)
3. Badshot Lea (JS) – Farnborough (JD)
4. Hogs Back Brewery (7S) – Bentley (4C)
5. Farnham Town Centre (4H) – Shortfield (6C)
6. Sandy Hill (10H) – Dollis Hill (9D)
7. Farnham Station (3H) – Ewshot (AD)
8. Church Crookham (3D) – Tongham (6S)
9. Rowledge (2C) – The Bourne (7C)

Enter up to 5 races. The build order for round 7 is Brad, Roger, Bob, Kevin and Richard.

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

---

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

Eight famous albums to guess – none of which is in the album covers crossword. I think they're quite easy, but I know the answers!

- 1   (60s)
- 2   (60s)
- 3  (70s)
- 4    (70s)
- 5    (80s)
- 6   (80s)
- 7   (80s)
- 8    (90s)

## THE CELESTIAL DRAGON #15



**Deadline for all games: Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

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

<b>The Celestial Steam Locomotive</b>	<b>#45</b>	<b>Richard Smith</b>	<a href="mailto:richard530smith@btinternet.com">richard530smith@btinternet.com</a>
---------------------------------------	------------	----------------------	--

Waiting List / Notes:

BAG OF DUNGEON - game 2: John Walker, John Hopkins 1 or 2 more wanted  
 KENDO NAGASAKI (Destination X Variant) - round 4 inside, more can join  
 BY WORDLEY DEMAND - all reader game underway, anyone can join  
 RAILWAY RIVALS - Togo & Benin RR2576TB - Jim Reader, Brad Martin, 1 to 3 more wanted  
 (GM will be Bob or Richard who are both playing in the game in SubPAR).  
 CHOICE Suppenkasper Variant - Kevin Lee, Chris Hibbert, Steve Ham at least 1 more required  
 (the more the merrier)  
 GOLDEN STRIDER Tarnished Variant 3-5 required (6-10 runners, 2 per team) - Steve Ham

<b>Here Be Dragons</b>	<b>#78</b>	<b>John Walker</b>	<a href="mailto:hbdragons@btinternet.com">hbdragons@btinternet.com</a>
------------------------	------------	--------------------	--

Waiting List / Notes:

NEARLY THE BEST GAME IN THE WORLD - Chris Hibbert, Richard Smith, 3 more wanted  
 LYRIC QUIZ - game continues - anyone can play except Mr. Google.  
 WORLD RECORD 9.762 - Richard Smith, Chris Hibbert, Steve Ham - 2-5 more wanted  
 SNAKES AND LADDERS - Richard Smith, Bob Gingell, Chris Hibbert, Martin Walker - at least  
 one more wanted.  
 NEW! SPRINT FINISH - New running game - Richard Smith - 2 to 7 more wanted

<b>The Tangerine Terror</b>	<b>#85</b>	<b>Howard Bishop</b>	<a href="mailto:laticsexile@outlook.com">laticsexile@outlook.com</a>
<b>I Am The Kurious Kumquat</b>	<b>#15</b>		

Waiting List / Notes:

ORIGINS OF WW2 - Brendan Whyte, John Marsden - 3 more wanted  
 DOS DE MAYO - 2 wanted  
 JUST ONE - Game Start next issue - Richard Smith, Allan Stagg, Jim Reader, Chris Hibbert,  
 Bob Gingell - room for 1 more to join (can be played with 5 or 6)  
 NEW! ECOSYSTEM SAVANNA - rules and number of players required coming soon.

<b>SubPAR</b>	<b>#15</b>	<b>Jim Reader</b>	<a href="mailto:jim_reader@hotmail.com">jim_reader@hotmail.com</a>
---------------	------------	-------------------	--

Waiting List / Notes:

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