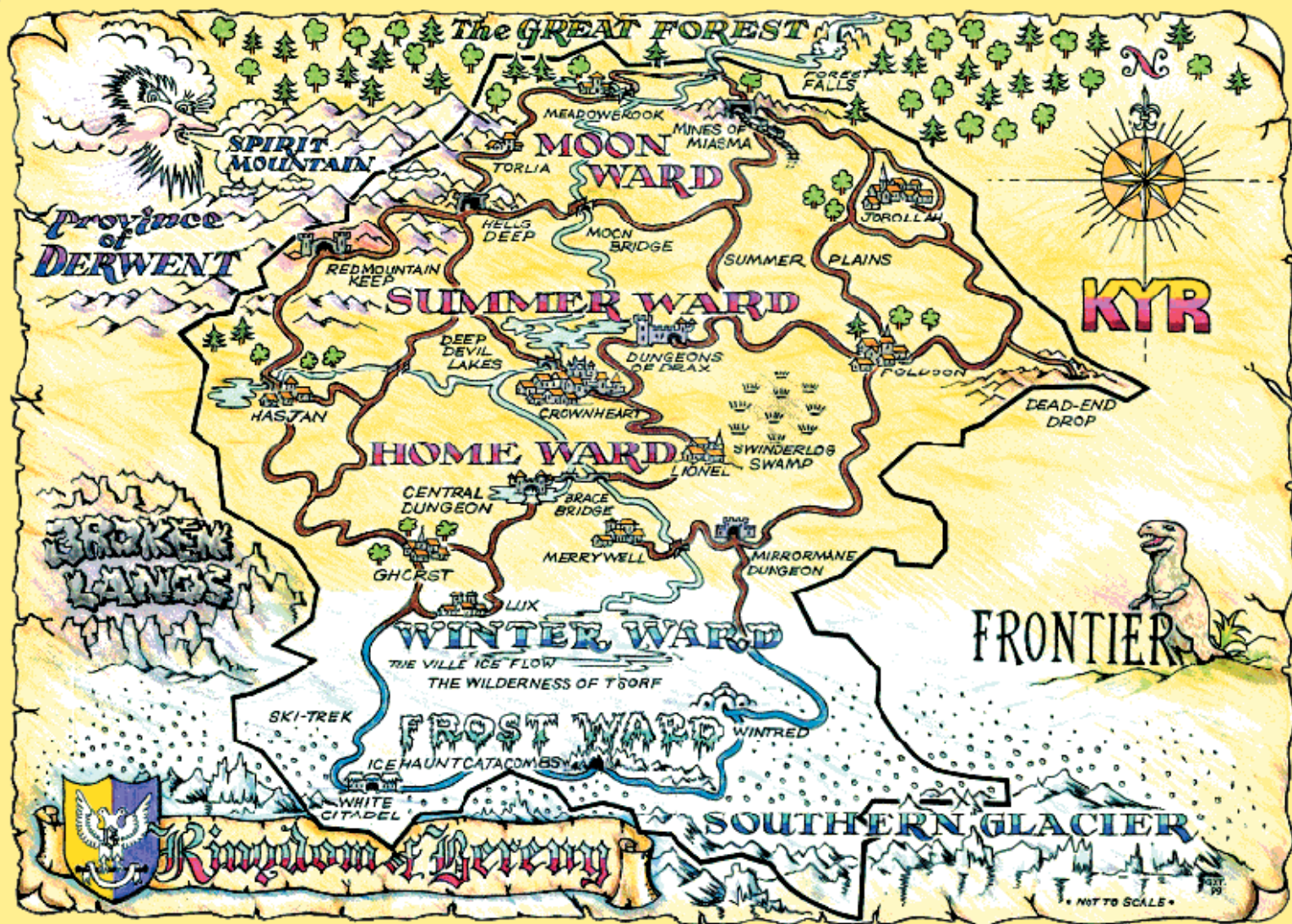


# FLASHSHIP

THE MAGAZINE FOR GAMERS



**Featuring:**

**Roleplaying, Boardgames, Conventions,  
MMORPGs, Play-by-Email, Computer Games ...**

***... and as Special Summer Feature,  
turn to page 40 for a free boardgame!***



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Lord of the Rings

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# REPORT FROM THE BRIDGE

## Talking about Games

HELLO AND welcome to *Flagship 108*. There's plenty here and we hope that you'll enjoy it all!

If you're a new reader, we hope that you'll be impressed both by our coverage and by the lively independence of our contributors. We value independence. *Flagship* started as the independent magazine of the Play-By-Mail (PBM) hobby, and just as PBM has expanded into Play By Email (PBeM), so it's become important for us to expand into other types of gaming.

Whether you're a new or a regular reader, do tell us about the games that you play. We welcome game diaries, beginners' guides, strategy tips, design articles and anything else that you think other players would like to read here. We can send you guidelines if you feel that you need them. We also welcome comments on the games that you play for our uncensored *Rumours from the Front* section.

Our contributors are players like you, who expect you to dispute anything controversial that they say. Do you disagree with anything that we print in this issue? Write to tell us so!

As your editorial team, we have strong (and often differing) views of our own, but it's your attitudes that we wish to reflect. We're trying some new ideas this issue, let us know what you think.

If there's any type of game-playing that you enjoy but which we haven't covered yet, then do write to us about it. Live Roleplaying, for instance, or live Wargaming? Tell us about it!

Finally, playing games isn't always presented as a 'healthy' activity. Recently, however, we've seen a report on the BBC news website that 'experts' have designed computer games that will helpfully boost their players' self-esteem by giving them positive rather than negative feedback. It's a project that's being worked on at McGill University in Quebec, Canada: smiling faces appear on screen to emphasise positive feedback. The researchers' measurements indicate that this really does work. Admittedly, none of the games described seems to involve competing against other players. However, even if the designers are experts in psychological assessment rather than in game design, it's nice to see games being used for a worth-while psychological purpose. Maybe these could be worth trying whenever we lose a game?

<http://www.selfesteemgames.mcgill.ca/>

*Carol*



# FLAGSHIP

#108 June / July '04

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Contributions welcomed for Flagship 109. By July 9th, please.



# NEWSDESK PBM



## FANTASY WARGAMES

**AGE Games** run the wargame **Medieval Warlords**, which Bob Bost reviewed for us last issue. They also run a play-by-email fantasy wargame called **Dragonlords**, set in the battle-torn land of Kharn. Here, you start as the ruler of one of its realms, with plans to carve out an empire for yourself, by conquering the provinces around you, and subduing any opponents. You have armies and fleets, commanders and beast-allies to send forth in this noble purpose. In time, you may be proclaimed the dragonlord.

The game is free to play, though a donation to the GM will bring you a few perks like the chance to choose your starting realm. There's a discussion group for the game, which will help novice players. Oh, and you need a PC with any version of Windows to be able to play.

<http://www.lordsofconquest.com/dragon/>

**ME Limited's** Clint Oldridge reports that they're now running 62 games of **Middle Earth** concurrently, with 25 players per game at game start - wow! They're continuing to bring out new programs for the game: 'two mapping programs, economic analysis programs, programs to look after-your-other-program programs - the list is endless.' They're also issuing a questionnaire, 'so that we can aim to develop the game in the manner the players want in the future.'

Clint confirms that they're happy to see the game develop along these lines. 'We're hoping that we'll continue this breakneck pace and even surpass future expectations. One day I'm hoping to take a more than two days off consecutively, but meeting the game programmers in June we're expecting even bigger things so that seems unlikely...'

[www.middleearthgames.com](http://www.middleearthgames.com)

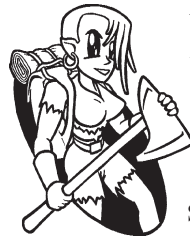
Sam Roads of **Harlequin Games** works with **Legends**, and he reports that the latest game of **Legends**, *North Island Campaign 28*, filled in record time. The next game will probably be a 10-14 day turnaround version of the vast *Crown of Chaos* module, starting in a couple of months. 'Does its 144 pages make it the biggest module in PBM?' asks Sam.

There's also a new website at [www.harlequingames.com](http://www.harlequingames.com). Following the takeover of *EpicMail*, Harlequin have merged the two websites, adding some of their

graphics but making sure the site is still fast to load. They've also included materials from the number one player-maintained Legends site, Aayko Eyma's Legends Corner.

There's a new web based forum too, for those who prefer to do their chatting online, but Harlequin will continue to support *Whispersofthepalantir*, the chat mailing list on Yahoo, in addition to [leghelp@yahoogroups.com](mailto:leghelp@yahoogroups.com) (the design list) and [legendsnews@yahoogroups.com](mailto:legendsnews@yahoogroups.com) (the news list).

They've installed a webmail server for all Legends players. This will allow you to send and receive your turns without using the internet, bypassing all the current problems with over-aggressive ISPs' anti-spam filters.



## ROLEPLAYING GAMES

Our thanks to 'Red' HaJo Schlosser, for some updates on some of the versions of the historical roleplaying game **En Garde!** which are currently available. HaJo himself is in the final stages of completing a new set of rules for the sea-faring game, **Briny En Garde!**, but points out that there's a variant set in a fictitious Papacy in the early 16th century called **Vatican En Garde** and a science fiction variant called **Star En Garde**, which is set in the not-too-near future.

More details of these three games from:  
[www.brinyengarde.co.uk](http://www.brinyengarde.co.uk)  
[www.vaticanengarde.com](http://www.vaticanengarde.com)  
[www.cooneysite.com](http://www.cooneysite.com)

**Agema Publications** are launching **Memoirs**, which replaces their historical roleplaying game **For God, King & Country**. Like the latter, now defunct, game, **Memoirs** allows players to participate as roleplayers in an 18th century world where the heads of state are actually players in another game (**La Gloire du Roi**), so that the events **Memoirs** players are caught up in are caused by players in another game! **Memoirs** is also cheaper than **For God, King & Country**, costing £3.50 per turn, with one turn per three weeks.

Agema will send the rules to *Flagship* readers for free, when you pay the first game turn fee of £3.50. Say you saw the offer here.

Simon Williams announces that he's adding the land of Alhar (to the east of Aphenhast) to the ever-expanding game world of his

fantasy roleplaying game **Chaos Trail**. He's also in the process of writing a guide to some of the places around the South Ocean Islands.

There'll be a web update fairly shortly at [www.chaostrail.com](http://www.chaostrail.com)



## POWER GAMES

We've news of the playtest of a new PBeM, designed by **Wil Richardson**, which is called **Sword & Spirit**. We've classed this provisionally as a power game, though it could turn out to be more of an historical roleplaying game. Anyway, it sounds interesting, and because it is only just about to start there's still time for *Flagship* readers to join the playtest. Be prepared for delays and revisions, but at present it's free to play.

In **Sword & Spirit**, you control a royal or noble family in a fictional version of Napoleonic Europe. The nations have been slightly adapted to make the game more playable. The technology is correct for the period, however, and Napoleonic era strategy and tactics will be important for military success. Yet military success is not the only element in the game: alliances, coalitions, intrigue, espionage and blackmail can all be significant.

You're not required to know a great deal of detail about the period to be able to play the game: if you don't give your countries or your forces orders, they will continue to function. 'It is important to recall most royals and nobles of this period were often more concerned with what parties they were going to than what kind of ship was what, what kind of soldier did what, and whether this company or that had a share in overseas trade...' The designer has obviously put a lot of care into creating the game environment: 'the world of **Sword & Spirit** is a living, breathing, dynamic world where economies thrive or fail, and societies develop in relation to each other. Decisions made by leaders and other players have a real effect on the characteristics of their nation and the World.'

Turns will be weekly, but cover three months of game time.

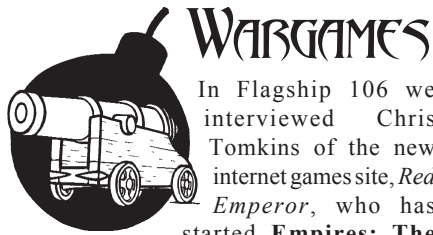
The website is <http://www.sonoranoise.com/wil/Index.html>, and Wil asks would-be playtesters to email him at:

[wil@steelchick.com](mailto:wil@steelchick.com)

# NEWSDESK PBM



Agema Publications are running a special offer for their historical powergame **La Gloire du Roi**. The rules as well as three supplements (the Companion, the Handbook and a book called Defoe's Illuminations) are on offer - all four for just £15, a saving of £9 on normal retail prices! To take up this special offer, players should mention *Flagship* and write to: *AGEMA, 3 Workshop Road, Sneinton, Nottingham NG3 2BA*.



In *Flagship 106* we interviewed Chris Tomkins of the new internet games site, *Red Emperor*, who has started **Empires: The Ancients** as its first game. Chris reports that he saw that some of our readers were pleased with his firm's stand on free games, which he'd said they were avoiding because free games usually have such a high dropout rate.

Of course, it's important for a firm to attract as many players as possible, and the chance of a free game does encourage anyone who's interested to try a site. For this reason, *Red Emperor* have now offered a free game, but they'll keep the number of turns short enough to prevent dropouts from affecting gameplay: the free trial game is about learning the interface, rather than starting interactive elements like diplomacy etc.

So if you'd like a trial game for free, contact:

[www.redemperor.com](http://www.redemperor.com)

*KJC Games* have nearly filled their latest game of **It's a Crime**, number 41, but there may still be time to join it if you contact them promptly. As mentioned last issue, *KJC* have made some revisions to the standard game, so that newcomers will have as good a chance as experienced players. This will help anyone trying this classic game for the first time, and it also means that the experienced players will have the excitement of re-thinking their play.

[www.kjcgames.com](http://www.kjcgames.com)

We announced *Agema Publications'* new game, **Crusades**, last issue. This has been successfully launched and is now under way, though there are still some places available for budding Crusaders and their opponents. What *Agema* especially need are some more Syrian players, and they're making a *Special Offer* to gain these. So *Flagship* readers who mention this offer and take on a Syrian position can play their initial five game turns at a reduced turn fee of £4 (usual price £6),

with one turn per three weeks.

Note that mentioning *Flagship* is necessary to qualify for the special offer!

A new firm, *Kosumi Inc*, have announced that their first game **Kosumi** will be released on September 15th, 2004. *Kosumi* is a winnable turn-based strategy game set in mythical mediaeval Japan. You'll be in charge of a traditional Japanese clan such as the Nobunaga, the Fujiwara or the Honinbo; a mythical position such as the Tengu, River Dragons or Mountain Dragons; or an invader like the Mongols or the Jesuits. Each position is unique, with its own special orders, strengths and weaknesses.

Players fight to become Shogun over all, using Armies, Magicians, Samurai, Ninjas and Emissaries. *Kosumi* is played with a graphical Java client. The client automates order entry making 'typo' mistakes literally impossible. The client also automatically stores and organizes every piece of information learned in the game, making it possible for players to remember everything they've ever known. Early days yet, of course, and we'll bring you more information as the launch date approaches. Meanwhile, for more information, email

[info@kosumi.com](mailto:info@kosumi.com)



## PBM FIRMS

*Madhouse* have announced that they'll be holding their usual summer Minicon. This year, it'll start at midday on Friday 6th August and continue into Sunday 8th August, and for the second year running, they're offering lots of room and facilities at a small country house near their base in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire. *Madhouse* announce that they 'would love to see new faces, or old faces who haven't been around for a while.' *Madhouse* and their players are a friendly and welcoming crowd, and this'll be a fun event for everyone who can make it.

For more information, or to arrange a booking, contact *Madhouse*:

[minicon@madcentral.com](mailto:minicon@madcentral.com)

In *Flagships* 104 and 105, *Harlequin Games'* Clint Oldridge asked for support from PBM firms and players to raise the profile of PBM. He's sent a letter to *Mighty Pen* reporting on progress, and adds, 'We're continuing to go to conventions (maybe you saw us at Salute?) and we'll be at EuroGencon later this year - come over and say hello. Even if you don't

play in one of the games, we're always happy to chat to PBM players and get to know you all. (We've probably played the same games as you!). We're looking to advertise in small magazines, so if you know of any gaming mags you can recommend then get in touch.'

[pbm@harlequingames.com](mailto:pbm@harlequingames.com)

*Harlequin* held a pubmeet in Reading on the 8th, with about twenty **Legends** enthusiasts eating drinking, plotting and bragging. After the meet about half of them retired to a player's house to play boardgames into the small hours of the night. 'We were glad to see the *Flagship* team handing out a few back copies.'

They send their best wishes for a new job to their Pittsburg-based Legends coder, Jim Buell, who has taken a job with his former *EpicMail* partner Ethan Evans at a Boston startup business. He will be easing down on the workload, but still coordinating the other coders.

Colin Payne, the creator of top Legends player aid 'the RunepowerLister' and several pieces of **Middle Earth** back end software, is now going to be working for both *Harlequin Games* and *ME Games Ltd*. He's moving from London to Devon to set up a Bed & Breakfast and wants to code PBM during the day. 'Given that long standing *Harlequin* GM John Davis recently moved there, and that the *Flagship* mothership is nearby, is there something about Devon and PBM we should know?' asks *Harlequin's* Sam Roads.

Cream teas and lots of coastline are the strongest attractions that we can think of, but hey, who'd want to live and work anywhere else?

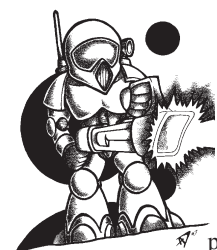
Mo Holkar has revived his games firm *Undying King Games*, and has launched two new games. Both are play-by-web, and both are free. Mo says that they're just mini-games, 'but it's a start at building an online community for UKG.'

In **The Gods Decide**, you are a Greek god or goddess, toying with the fates of petty mortals on the world below. You must decide which heroes to favour, and on which to stake your reputation—which will rise and fall according to the success the heroes encounter.

**Mighty Oaks** is all about being a tree! In spring you decide how much of your stored energy to put into growth and how much into leaves: then in autumn you decide how much fruit to grow, to get the best possible share of the victory points, and how much to store back in your roots for the year to come. There will be a series of these mini-games out during the course of the year.

[www.ukg.co.uk](http://www.ukg.co.uk) has all the details of this and the other stuff that UKG are up to.

# NEWSDESK MISC



## Sci Fi PBM

We've news of a promising turn-based play-by-web space game called **Andromeda Online**, which is now in beta-test. Andromeda originated in America as a text-driven email-based game, but it has long since evolved, while still managing to keep its PBEM heart.

Andromeda is the name of a planet at the centre of the conflict-riven galaxy in which you play. It's a planet that's rich in natural resources and that's been fought over many times. The aim of the game is to capture it and to hold it for long enough to beat your opponents.

You start off with the power to set up your own empire, so must build your fleet to do this (or choose a stock fleet) and then go head to head in the huge galaxy versus the other players. The player ladder allows you to measure how well you rate against them, and it's possible to battle with up to ten players at a time. There are lots of possibilities here for those of you who love science fiction combat games.

Players can contact each other and create their own new game, deciding on the rules, game length, and even the frequency of turns. Turns can be as long as a week or as short as a day, or even a few minutes for players who want faster paced action.

There's a free version, or a paying version at \$4 a month.

[www.andromedaonline.net](http://www.andromedaonline.net)



## SPORTS GAMES

If you'd like to join a football game with some of your friends, you'll be interested to hear that **KJC Games** have recently decided to allow groups of people to join **Extra Time** together and have their own league.

You'll need a group of ten to twenty players, one of whom is nominated to collect the turnfees and send in the turncards. KJC can arrange substantial group discounts, and it's a way to play that seems particularly suitable for schools, clubs and pubs.

[www.kjcgames.com](http://www.kjcgames.com)

## ADVENTURE PBM

*Madhouse* report that the main module of **Dungeonworld** has been in a state of chaos, as the King returned from the *Land of the Dead* module, rescued by the player champions over a year of play, only to be killed once again. But by whom? Was it the Raven Of Ghorst, the mysterious High Trader? Or, as others suggest, the regent Duke Dirk Steadfast and his allies?

As potential civil war hangs over the entire kingdom of Bereny, their ancient enemies from the Province of Derwent march in with armies of lobotomized dwarves and elvish pleasure maids to muddy the situation.

Meanwhile, the *Land of the Dead* module, on hold since the completion of its primary purpose, heads for a big restart with new angelic and devilish powers, and huge new areas for exploration.

The launch of *Madhouse's* newest game, **Abnormals**, was delayed by various technical problems, but these have now been surmounted. The beta-test is now imminent, and so the first turns in this game of superheroic adventure will be sent out 'in the next few weeks'.

## ONLINE GAMES

*NCsoft* have announced the release of **Lineage II: The Chaotic Chronicle** in the USA, with releases to follow soon in Europe. The game package includes a tutorial to help novices to master the basic controls, including fighting and character movement.

Lineage II is billed as the prequel to Lineage itself, which *NCsoft* claim to be the world's most popular massively multiplayer online role-playing game, or MMORPG. Lineage II is set in a mediaeval fantasy world called Aden, and it's claimed that the 'backgrounds and characters have a nearly perfect, life-like appearance, giving Lineage II a look and feel that separates it from its predecessor - and all other MMORPGs.'

You can create either fighter or mystic characters from the five races of Human, Elf, Dark Elf, Orc and Dwarf. Player vs player combat seems to be an essential element of the game, and you can play one-on-one or as part of a clan to fight an opposing clan's armies. However, it's interesting to note that there's a karma system for any characters who concentrate too long on wrong-doing, while the game has political, economic and social systems to allow for power shifts, alliances and power delegations. Oh, and a

sound track played by the Seattle Symphony Orchestra!

The US retail price of \$49.99 includes the first month of online game play. This is followed by a monthly subscription fee of \$14.95.

<http://www.lineage2.com/>

Also new from *NCsoft* comes a superhero MMORPG, **City of Heroes**, which is now available in the USA and will soon be released in Europe. The superhero setting of Paragon City is an interesting change from the usual mediaeval fantasy of most MMORPGs. Yes, in *City of Heroes* you choose a suitable costume for your superhero character, and use your superpowers to protect the city's citizens from evil supervillains! *NCsoft* say that the game system provides so many 'costume and power combinations, it is almost impossible to create a hero that isn't unique.'

You start by choosing from a set of five Origins for your character—Mutant, Science, Technology, Natural or Magic—and then pick an Archetype: Blaster, Controller, Defender, Tanker, or Scrapper. This determines what type of powers you can select. Then you opt for the size, style and colouring of your superhero character, with the chance to pick hats, headdresses and even tails and antennae. Your character starts by tackling petty crime, and thus gains in experience and learns new powers to combat darker forms of evil.

*City of Heroes* sounds as if it could become immensely popular. In the US, it's \$49.99, which includes the first month of online game play, after which there's a monthly subscription fee of \$14.95.

<http://www.cityofheroes.com>

*Sony Online Entertainment* have announced a new expansion for their popular MMORPG **Everquest**, which they're calling **Omens of War** and will be releasing towards the end of July. *Omens of War* is set in the land of Discord, which has been ravaged by war and contains areas like the South and West Battlegrounds, the Discordant Plateau and the Muramite Bloodfields. It'll be possible to play as a solo adventurer or as part of a group, and to join multiple player raids to complete Epic Quests and earn Epic weapons. There's a new task system to help novice players to gain experience, and there will be new character levels, items, spells and quests. There's a new graphics engine for current *Everquest* players, and the designers confidently expect that using this in *Omens of War* will make it look especially appealing to play.

*EverQuest: Omens of War* will cost \$29.99. Expect it in July!



# NEWSDESK ROLEPLAYING



Here's some of the material that's lining up for release in June and July this year. It's mostly sourcebooks, but none the worse for that.

From **Alderac Entertainment Group** comes **Way of the Open Hand**, the essential guide to unarmed combat in the **Legend of the Five Rings** and **Rokugan d20**. This'll cost \$24.95.

Also from Alderac, **Mastermind** is an aid to the crime-planning system **Spycraft**, with hundreds of new and expanded campaign options and all the information that you need to put these into your gaming. This one costs \$29.95.

**Atlas Games** are offering **Seven Serpents** as a d20 sourcebook for their **Penumbra** system. As its title indicates, this gives detailed background information about seven wily dragons and their lairs, at a price of \$22.95.



**DarkFuries Publishing** have a d20 sourcebook called **Masterwork Maps: Temples & Shrines**, which will include descriptions of over 300 buildings and areas to cover 30 fantasy

religious structures of different kinds, along with floor plans and useful background information, all for \$19.95.

**Fantasy Flight Games** offer a low-cost d20 mini-game called **Mechamorphosis**, in their **Horizon** series. It's a game of powerful robotic warriors which can disguise themselves as familiar machines. You, of course, play one of these robots. Some are bent on evil, some aim to defend the human race, all risk being attacked by the understandably alarmed military forces. The price is \$14.95.

Also from **Fantasy Flight Games**, **Under the Shadow** is part of the **Midnight** series and is a d20 sourcebook describing the port city of **Baden's Bluff**, which is one of the few remaining outposts of human life after the dark lord **Izrador's** conquests. There are maps and descriptions, along with new feats, charms and equipment. This costs \$14.95.

**Fantasy Productions** have **Shadowrun GM Screen & Critters Sourcebook**. Here, the title tells it all, and we just need to add

that it'll cost you \$19.99.

**Goodman Games** are offering **Dungeon Crawl Classics #8: Mysteries of the Drow** for the d20 system. In this campaign, drow-aligned characters have to journey through the Underdark to search for a mysterious weapon. This costs \$12.99.

Several productions from **Green Ronin Publishing** include **Modern Magic**, in which three d20 system designers have worked on ideas to cover the prospect of magic really working in the modern day. This seems likely to have a wide appeal because it sounds such fun to explore. **Modern Magic** costs \$17.95.



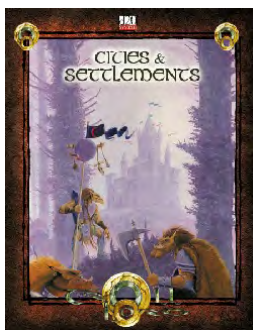
**Green Ronin's The Trojan War** extends their **Mythic Vistas** range, to deal with the places and period described in Homer's *Iliad*. This seems timely, given the new film, and we're relieved to see that as well the chance to fight either for the Greeks under Achilles' command or for the Trojans under Hector, there are the gods to worry about as well. This costs \$27.95.

**Green Ronin** also offer the **Advanced Player's Manual** for d20, with all sorts of new information and ideas about d20 fantasy play. It complements the earlier **Player's Handbook** and costs \$34.95.

Finally from **Green Ronin**, there's **The Cavalier's Handbook**, a d20 sourcebook dealing with chivalric knights and their abilities, at a price of \$19.95. Of course, these cavaliers aren't the ones that a British reader will connect with our own C17th Civil Wars: they're strictly mediaeval horsemen.

**Sword & Sorcery Studios** are extending their **EverQuest RPG** with a sourcebook called **Heroes of Norrath**. This deals with the possibilities of advancement for outstandingly gifted wizards and warriors, possibly even to god-like status, and it costs \$22.99.

**Troll Lord Games** are offering a d20 supplement called **Cities & Settlements**, with all the necessary maps and information to cover a wide range of fantasy settlements, for \$29.95.



**Wizards of the Coast** have a rules supplement to their **Forgotten Realms** series, which is called **Serpent Kingdoms** and includes details of all the serpent-related creatures to be found there. There's new information, too, about all the regions which these creatures inhabit. All for \$29.95.

New from **SteamPower Publishing** comes its d20 city sourcebook, **The Gates of Troy**. Yes, this covers the ancient city at the time of the siege of Troy, with rules for playing Trojan heroes, information about their character stats, details of various locations within the city and ideas for achievements and events. There's a new map of Troy, too.

[www.steampowerpublishing.co.uk](http://www.steampowerpublishing.co.uk)

The 45-page sourcebook is now available in pdf format from **RPGNow** for \$5.00:

[www.rpgnow.com](http://www.rpgnow.com)

Interesting news from **Madhouse** is that, in cooperation with the roleplaying publisher **RPG Objects**, they are proud to announce that they are beginning licensed development of the first PBM d20 Adventure game. This will be a recreation of the post-apocalyptic multi award-winning **Darwins World**. Early days yet, but with d20 as the most popular roleplaying system in the world, and Madhouse as a creative producer of new PBEM games, it'll be fascinating to watch the progress of **Darwins World**.

Madhouse describe **Darwins World** as 'an incredible creation in both depth and scope, giving an enormous amount of material upon whose foundations we hope to develop another huge game to add to our range.'

They're hoping for a beta-test release in late 2004.

[madcentral@aol.com](mailto:madcentral@aol.com)



We've tidings of a new roleplaying game magazine, **Polyancer**, which aims to cover every RPG genre. It'll come out monthly, and each issue will contain a complete adventure, ideas for adventures, reviews, tips for game masters and a range of columns on topics of interest to RPG players. American in origin, **Polyancer** comes from **Polyancer Studios Inc** and is independent of any one gaming system. It sounds as if it'll be of interest to many of our readers worldwide, and we wish it a successful launch and a long life.

[www.polyancerstudios.com](http://www.polyancerstudios.com)

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# NEWSDESK BOARDGAMES



## BOARDGAMES

*Rio Grande Games* deserves congratulations for receiving a Mensa Select(tm) award, when **Yinsh** took one of the five awards for 2004. Previously winners from *Rio Grande* were **Zertz**, **Dvonn**, and **Transamerica**.

In June, they will have copies of **5th Avenue** from *Wilko Manz* and English versions of three new *Phalanx* games: **Maharaja** (by Wolfgang Kramer & M Kiesling), **Who's the Ass?** (by Wolfgang Kramer), and **FBI** (by Wolfgang Kramer & Horst-Rainer Rösner).

**Maharaja** is a strategic boardgame for two to five players, in which you travel between different Indian cities to build palaces and houses for your maharajah. The first player to build seven palaces is the winner, and it's vital for you to earn enough money to achieve this. There's a basic game and two advanced versions in the rules booklet, and the game costs \$44.95.

**Who's the Ass?** is a card game where players need to get rid of their cards as quickly as possible, or risk scoring negative points. It costs \$12.95.

In the card game **FBI** you lead a team of agents, and must use them to catch as many criminals as you can, while winning requires you to collar the FBI's Most Wanted. Unfortunately, if you jail innocent bystanders by mistake, you lose points. This game costs \$12.95.

[www.riograndegames.com](http://www.riograndegames.com)

Our thanks to **Pevans** for the following news report:

'A piece of sad news is the death of venerable game designer *Alex Randolph*. Resident in Venice, he had been ill for some time and died in hospital on 28th April. We will remember him for his many fine games, including **TwixT**, **Inkognito** and **Ricochet Robot**. Plus many lighter games, like **Hol's der Geier** and, one of my favourites, **Die Heisse Schlacht**. I only got a real idea of just how many games he had designed in 2002 when the hosts of *Spiel* put on a retrospective of Randolph's work to mark his eightieth birthday. It was not just the volume that was impressive, but the artistry. He will be missed.

Mik Svellöf has made a 1988 interview with Randolph available on his website:

<http://www.brettboard.dk/lib/alex.htm>

Bruce Whitehill has an interview from 1999 on his site:

<http://www.thebiggamehunter.com>

And Randolph's collaborator in recent years, Leo Colovini, has set up an online Book of

Condolences at publisher Venice Connection:

<http://www.venice-connection.com/o/comunicazioni.php>

*SpielChamps UK*, the UK Board and Card Games Championship, was held in Birmingham on 2nd May as part of *Maycon*. As always, teams of four competed over four games, each team totting up the points for their 16 results. This year's winners were 'A Fistful of Dobbers' (Martin Abrahams, Kevin O'Donnell, Marlena O'Donnell and Rich Amos), who beat the ex-European Champions, 'The Uninspired', into second place. Third place went to 'Largest Army', one of whose members, **Michael Fisher**, was the best-performing individual with 18 points (three wins and a second place in his four games). The top teams will represent the UK at the European Championships in October.

The new game from *JKLM Games*, **Media Mogul** (designed by *Richard Huzzey*), was launched at *Maycon*. Feedback from the pre-production version used in the *SpielChamps* tournament was disappointing and led to changes in the final version of the game. First reports suggest this version works well and provides a much better game. It should be available in the shops by now at around £20. More details on the JKLM website

<http://www.jklmgames.co.uk/>

Exciting news is that a new game is on its way from the *Ragnar Brothers*, creators of **History of the World**, **Backpacks and Blisters** and others. Entitled **Viking Fury**, the *Ragnars* describe it as 'a game that spans the time of the Viking Sagas. The epic journeys that led Norsemen to raid, trade and settle over the known and unknown territories of the northern hemisphere. You will command your warriors and map out your strategy - only the strongest, most courageous and luckiest of you will triumph! So, do you feel lucky?' As always, the game will have a printed cloth 'board' and will be a very limited edition. More information on the website:

<http://www.ragnarbrothers.co.uk/>

The latest games from specialist US publisher *Hangman Games* are now out. **Tahuantinsuyu** has players as regional 'governors' competing to expand the Incan Empire. They build roads, cities and temples and station garrisons. And slow down their opponents! This is an old-style strategy game for three-four players that takes two-three hours to play. The second game is **Austin Poker**: several simultaneous hands of five-card Stud Poker. Winning hands gets you bonuses; enough bonuses and you win the game.

Pevans must declare an interest here: *Hangman Games* are now available in the UK through him. E-mail Pevans for details:

[games@pevans.co.uk](mailto:games@pevans.co.uk)

[www.pevans.co.uk/Games](http://www.pevans.co.uk/Games)

Pevans is negotiating with several other publishers to handle their games as well.'

## COMPUTER GAMES

*Microsoft Game Studios* and *Bungie Studios* have announced that **Halo 2** will be released on November 9th with an intensive publicity drive, in time for the winter and Christmas market. The new game is, of course, a sequel to **Halo: Combat Evolved**, and is designed for playing on the Xbox.

The story-line of *Halo 2* is only being hinted at, but apparently involves a super-soldier defending earth against aliens. Nothing obviously new there, perhaps, but it'll be the gameplay and graphics that ensure whether this sequel matches or even outstrips the earlier game.

Some of us will be fascinated by the approach shown in the publicity campaign.

An exciting development from *Madhouse!* Their first Multiplayer Computer Game, **Force Macabre**, is now ready as a test version. The game is available to *Flagship* readers almost completely free, as *Madhouse* ask only £3.00 to cover postage and copying the disk.

The game is a top-down mission-based action game, where players control a team of soldiers in a zombie-infested city. The game can be played both solo, or on a local network or over the internet with other players, and can be both competitive (against the other players) or cooperative (with players vs the computer). More updates and new game elements will be added as time goes on, of course.

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# Right of Kings

## Right for You?

**BOB McLAIN** plays this update of a classic wargame ...

HERE'S THE question: is it possible to recommend a game that I will never play again? Why, yes! I enjoyed some of the time I spent playing **Right of Kings**, the enhanced version of the classic play-by-post game **Feudal Lords**, but I won't play it again. I'll tell you why shortly. And I'll also tell you why I think it's a wonderful game - for someone else.

### Feudal Lords in the modern age

When Vlad Degen, the developer of **Right of Kings**, first played **Feudal Lords** back in the early 1980s, he liked the game so much that decades later he decided to reprogram it in Smalltalk as an e-mail game and make it the first release of his new company, *Last World Games*. One licensing agreement and several playtests later, **Right of Kings** made its commercial debut in March 2002.

Vlad told me that he hoped **Right of Kings** (and other games he has under development) 'would by this time be making me an amount comparable to what I can make as a professional programmer...'. According to Vlad, however, 'that has not proven true', and he blames the 'tough' PBM market for these economic doldrums. Is it really the market to blame? Or is it the game? Let's find out.

### Going medieval

**Feudal Lords** is a simple wargame set in medieval England. As one of 10-15 players, you begin with a fief and have a limited number of orders each turn to build your economy and send your army into battle.

When I first reviewed the game in 1984, I gave it high marks for succeeding with its limited mandate, although I did wish players were able to control their vassal fiefs, a key element missing from the game. (It's still missing.) To win, you must acquire, through conquest or fealty, enough vassal fiefs to put you on the throne. Since conquest is slow, you typically acquire them by convincing other players to swear fealty to you, and thus share in your victory.

So **Feudal Lords** really is more about diplomacy than conquest. **Right of Kings** is no different, except that it has many more players, many more fiefs, and many more turns. **Feudal Lords** lasts about 20 turns or less; **Right of Kings**, twice or even thrice as long. What makes **Feudal Lords** fun is not so much its simple structure and intense diplomacy as the various 'gotchas' built into the game which make it challenging even for veterans. In **Right of Kings**, the simple structure has been cluttered with new items and new orders, but the gotchas remain as rusting sentinels for a simpler game. Does the new game rest easy on the bones of the old? Let's look at those gotchas, first for **Feudal Lords**, then for **Right of Kings** in comparison.

### Feudal Lords: the gotchas make it good

The first gotcha is limited orders. You have 12 orders per turn. You always need more than 12 orders per turn. Especially when you have lots of gold, there's just too much to do.

You might, for example, spend gold on agricultural research so you can grow more food, and either sell the surplus or leave it with the

peasants to spark their reproductive juices (a well-fed peasant is a lusty, fecund peasant). More peasants grow yet more food which you can sell at market for yet more gold that you can use to do such things as build lumber mills, fishing villages, or warships, or bribe other fiefs for 'favors'. Favors give your army free passage through the bribed fief's territory or the right to borrow some of their knights to fight under your banner. Another source of gold is your townsmen, whom you can tax, and the 'scutage' given to you each turn by your vassal fiefs. As your feudal rank grows in proportion to the number of vassal fiefs under your control, your scutage increases, too. Each action in the game takes one of your precious orders. And I mean each action: if you want to build five lumber mills, it takes five orders.

When combat calls, your orders become even more precious, since you must train knights, hire mercenaries, and increase the defensive value of your castle. You can send your army on campaigns or raids into other fiefs, either under your own flag or in support of an ally, or you can defend your fief. A campaign takes two orders: one to move, one to fight. Since you can't always do it all, even when you have enough gold, peasants, or other resources, you have to make choices, and choices make it challenging.

The second gotcha is limited movement. Since you can only send your army into one battle per turn, you really don't have much flexibility or power, no matter how much of an economic colossus you have become. How frustrating it is to send your bristling big army into foreign battle on the same turn that a pissy little army skips into your economically jacked home fief and captures it. Given the limited economic and military options, wise players discovered that victory went not to the best economist nor the best militarist but rather to the best diplomat. If you convinced enough players to swear fealty to your fief, you would win the game.

The third gotcha is limited lethality. It's hard to eliminate other players, even very weak ones, since they can swear fealty to anyone in the game (even you!) and take over one of their new lord's fiefs if their own is conquered. Such a player is a medieval mosquito. Now this is a clever way for the moderator to keep people in the game (and paying for more turns), but it butts up against our second gotcha, limited movement, and makes it difficult, if not impossible, to pursue and eliminate a fief-hopping adversary. (I like closure. When I conquer you, stay dead.)

With a small number of players competing over a small number of fiefs, the game works quite well, and it has survived all these years. You can still play it through *Flying Buffalo*. Then Vlad Degen came along and decided to take a good thing and make it a better thing in classic American style - by making it bigger. Is bigger better?

### Right of Kings: the gotchas got to go

In this case, no, bigger is not better. The developer kept much of the original **Feudal Lords** system intact and plugged in many enhancements, most of which are great ideas, but they need their own underlying system, not an old system never meant to fuel such a long game, with so many players and so many fiefs.

In **Right of Kings**, the gotchas really do getcha. Take limited orders, our first gotcha. The developer realized that players, especially advanced players, need more than 12 orders per turn, and so his system lets players of higher rank (as determined by number of vassal fiefs) issue more orders. At one point, I think I had close to 30 orders available. Sometimes, I couldn't use them all. Even though I had more orders, I still had the same narrow palette of actions - build lumber mill, move army, improve castle (or church, one of the new items available in **Right of Kings**), and so on.

### *Right of Kings at a glance*

A medieval PBEM wargame based on *Flying Buffalo's* **Feudal Lords** and run by *Last World Games*. Setup is \$5 and subsequent turns \$1.  
[www.lastworldgames.com](http://www.lastworldgames.com)



And I was still limited in how many mills I could build, where I could move my single army, and how much I could improve my castle or church. Eventually, I reached my limits. The developer had relaxed a gotcha, but he hadn't made corresponding changes to the rest of the game to make the new gotcha meaningful.

The best solution would have been to let players directly control their (conquered) non-player vassal fiefs. Perhaps keep the 12 order limit and increase it by two or three orders for each such fief under the player's control. This approach would make the gotcha of limited orders even more challenging because players would be able to spread their orders among all their fiefs, sparking tricky decisions of where to 'spend' those limited orders, and putting emphasis on conquest.

The second and third gotchas have not changed. You still can't split your army and move it to multiple destinations, and conquered players can still survive by swearing fealty to others, although in a nice touch, you can now swear 'enmity' against a player and prevent him from swearing fealty to you. The concept of enmity is good, as far as it goes, but I haven't been impressed with it, since all the players must swear enmity against a target to really make it work, and since non-player fiefs (which may have vassals of their own) don't swear enmity, leaving them open as vacation homes for exiled players.

In a game as big as Right of Kings, the gotchas are relics of the earlier, simpler Feudal Lords, and they confound more than they challenge.

#### Verdict: feudal or futile?

Where I live, you don't meet many people named Vlad, so I liked Vlad Degen, the friendly, personable game developer and moderator, right away. I joined his playtest. Since my joy in any game is conquering (and, more important, holding) territory, I decided to make a private victory condition for myself: the conquest of Scotland. I achieved it.

And then I felt like smoking a cigarette...

I was awash in gold, peasants, and knights. I had a huge castle and a huge church. I couldn't build them any bigger. I had the biggest war fleet in the game. But I still couldn't order more than one campaign each turn. I couldn't control the resources of my vassal fiefs. And in a perverse twist, I had so many available orders that I often didn't use them all!

In Feudal Lords, I wouldn't have had time to smoke a cigarette. Before I amassed enough resources to be frustrated by my inability to use them, the game would have been over. In Right of Kings, a much longer game, I have time to amass oodles of resources, including many more fiefs obtained through conquest, but I still can't make full (or even effective) use of all those resources. It's like falling into a barrel of cashews without my dentures.

I did have one grand moment in Right of Kings. I had booted another player out of Scotland early in the game. He stayed alive because he kept swearing fealty to other players and moving into their vassal fiefs. Finally, in Portugal, I cornered him, and after feeding him misinformation through another player that made him cocky enough not to swear fealty on that turn (and so save himself some gold!), I launched a campaign from Scotland into Portugal and crushed him in the field, then crushed him in his castle, and then crushed him in the dirt. It was fun, yes, but it shouldn't have taken most of the game to accomplish.

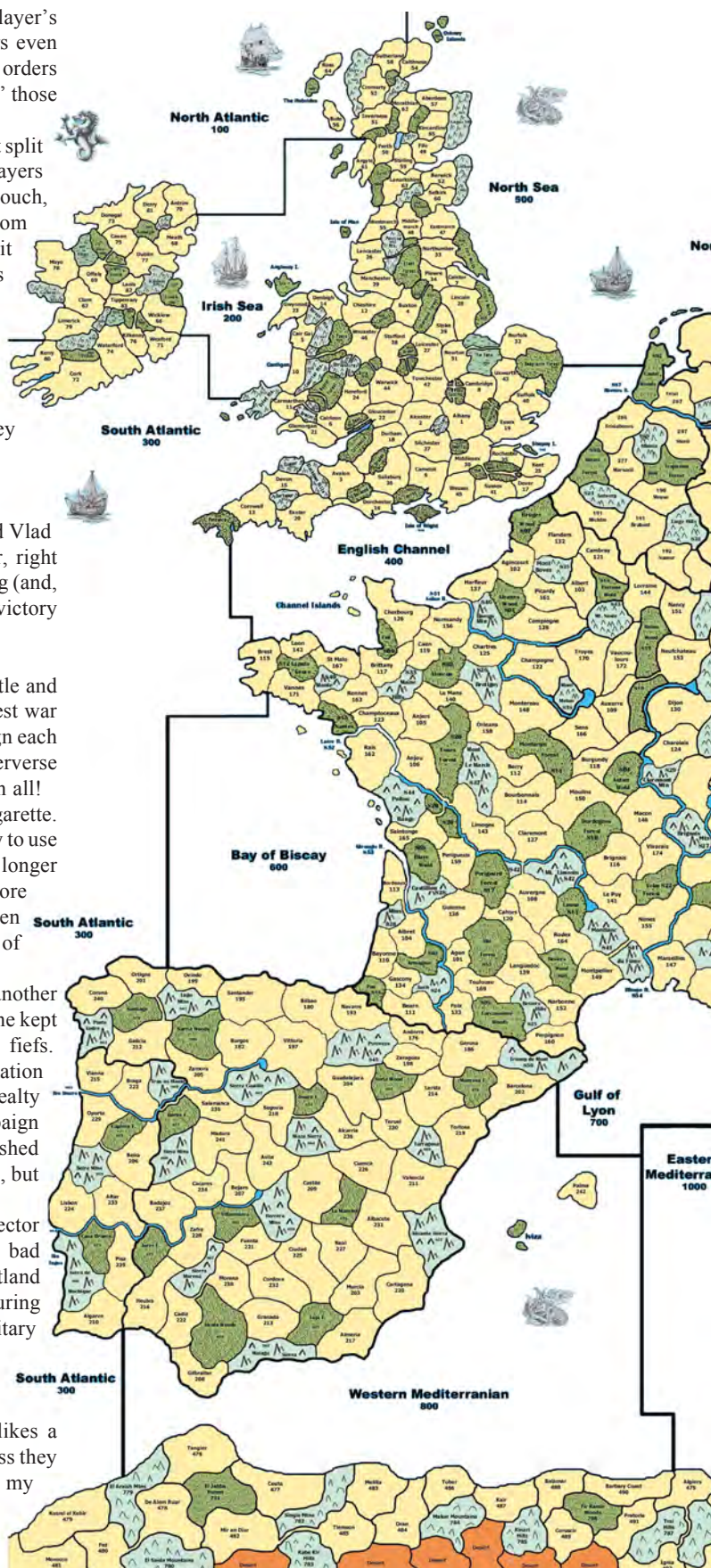
For me to fully enjoy a game, it must meet the late film director John Ford's definition of a good movie: three good scenes, no bad scenes. I had two good scenes in Right of Kings: conquering Scotland and my Portugal campaign. The bad scenes began to multiply during the mid- to later stages of the game, when my economic and military successes did not give me the flexibility I wanted to launch into empire overdrive. The gotchas were no longer challenging me; they were confining me.

Like I said, though, I'm a particular type of gamer who likes a particular type of action: empire-building. I don't like limits, unless they arise from my own lack of skill, or from the clever play of my opponents. Right of Kings isn't that kind of game.

But it is a good game, and a well-run game. If you don't mind the limits you'll face as you gain power or the necessity of working

within the structure of a team to win the game, then you'll like Right of Kings. It has just enough depth to keep you busy for an hour or so each turn, its simple rules can be learned quickly, and its GUI turn editor makes order entry a snap. At \$1.00 per turn, it's cheap, too. (There's also a \$5.00 set-up charge.)

All in all, I'm glad I conquered Scotland.





# Ahoy There!

**MARK GORDON** storms aboard, to look at *Piratical Gaming* ...

THE DAYS OF adventurers and pirates are just one of those many romanticised time periods that seem to have been poorly served by the gaming industry. Along with old time westerns, games about pirates rarely seem to be given the respect one would think they deserve. In the past pirate games have either been really good, as in the case with Sid Meier's classic *Pirates!*, or really bad, like *Space Pirates* or the abysmal *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Regular readers of *Flagship* may remember a few piratical play-by-mail games, but good or bad, these seem to have walked the plank long ago. But the times may be changing, and the era of skulls, crossbones, explorers and the pirates, may just be coming back for another try. This article will look at a few of the games out there ...



**Piratenbuch (Pirates' Cove)** is a simple boardgame of combat combined with what might be called resource management. Each player has a ship with ratings in four areas: guns and crew, which determine how many dice are rolled in combat; sails, which determine initiative or first roll; and hull, which determines how much treasure can be carried. As captain, you can

upgrade the rating for each area by spending gold in a port that has the appropriate facilities. In combat, you attempt to reduce the ratings of your opponent. The object is to acquire fame by defeating enemy ships, burying treasure on Treasure Island, and collecting Tall Tale cards, which serve as hidden victory points. The game is a sort of amalgam of the German and American styles: simple and very playable, with beautiful components, but with a lot of dice-rolling. There isn't a lot of strategy involved, other than in deciding how much emphasis you want to put on firepower as opposed to a capacious hold and enough sail to escape unscathed from nasty situations. There are a few interesting tactical choices: for example, do you aim for your opponent's hull, hoping to force him to jettison treasure, or do you try to reduce his crew, knowing that Blackbeard will be blockading the recruiting port next turn?

All in all this is a very attractive game, and can be a lot of fun for a group of people who don't mind a little aggressive role-playing and who aren't put off by the considerable element of chance involved.

**Pirates of the Burning Sea** may well be the first MMORPG pirate game ever created. But you don't have to be a pirate - here you can choose to be a greedy merchant or a noble naval officer for one of the three nations in the game: Spain, Britain and France. The game will be set in the Caribbean, beginning at about 1720. Technology and politics are pretty much as they were at that point in the real world, though the game



will take a few liberties here and there in the interests of ship and weapon diversity. But the game is far from being a historical simulation: obviously politics and history will diverge from the real world pretty quickly, as wars break out and national fortunes rise and fall on the basis of player actions. *Pirates of the Burning Sea* is all about being successful, and getting there any way you see fit. Step over bodies to get to the money pouch, or step over bodies to save your country. As a captain of your own ship you'll set your own course in an enormous online world where every man makes his own luck. You'll be able to hook up with other players to form trade routes, pirate gangs and fight against a common enemy - the opposing nations. As a player you build up your own reputation within a political system, and if you decide to live the life of a pirate, you can expect to see a lot of rum, sea salt and annoyed governors. Due out in the fourth quarter of 2004, the game will require a broadband connection, an interesting and brave choice which may well mean advanced graphics, but will restrict the player base enormously.

Personally I'm looking forward to seeing how the promised wind system will work. It could make for some very interesting sailing!

## Yohoho! Puzzle Pirates:

This is an odd one, and to be honest I'm not sure what to make of it. Yohoho! Puzzle Pirates (or Y!PP for short) seems on first sight to be a M M O R P G with a huge shot of humour.



That said, the game is a radical departure from the notion that multiplayer online RPGs need to be of the hack and slash variety, and as such should appeal to anyone tired of that particular formula. In Y!PP there are no monsters to fight, only one item really affects your stats and you can't really get anywhere unless you work as a team. As the Puzzle part of the name implies, just about everything there is to do in the game involves some type of puzzle and all are pretty varied. If you're the type of person who spends hours playing the free puzzle games available online I can guarantee Y!PP is right up your alley. While there are detailed instructions for everything, most puzzles can be picked up fairly quickly, even if they do take a long time to master. Periodically during your voyage you'll be graded on your performance.

As Y!PP is a puzzle game and not your standard fantasy hack-fest you'll quickly realize that the demographics of the world are pretty different from what you'd normally find online. I would guess the average player is somewhere around 30 years old and there's a surprisingly good male to female ratio. The only drawback to a game like this is that it can get repetitive. However, new puzzles do become available as you get promoted through the ranks of your crew.

This is a light-hearted game filled with fun for old and young alike with a friendly atmosphere and a great concept. It's a new twist on an old style and one that should appeal on some level to anyone who has become bored with the standard MMORPG conventions. Try a limited version of the game for free, or pay \$9.95/month for the full version.

[www.puzzlepirates.com](http://www.puzzlepirates.com)



**Armada** (published by EuroGames). Harrr! Ahoy! Avast! And many other pirate words! Get ready to put on your bandanna and eyepatch and take part in some swashbuckling strategy in this boardgame. Each player in Armada controls a band of pirates: the goal is either to take over the central unexplored island, or take over cities belonging to your opponents. On a turn, you spend 10 movement points

to move ships and pirates, load and unload pirates and gold, and attack other pirates or natives on the central island. As the central island is revealed, dice determine how many natives and how much gold are found. Dice also are used to resolve attacks. A deck of 51 optional cards adds many new elements to the basic game.

For two players, each controls two bands of pirates; for three players, one colour is a 'dummy' pirate. Armada involves enough strategy to engross you in the gameplay, but not so much that it drags on.

**Pirates!** It's a pirate's life for me! Hmm. Especially if the ratio of hot chick pirates to run of the mill thug pirates is the same in real life as it is in *Living Imagination's* d20 source book, *Pirates!* The front cover sports one of the most skimpy pirate costumes ever. It's not a case of 'arr!' but 'phorrr!' The truth is, of course, that what we may imagine a pirate's life to be is probably rather more glamorous than it is. Real life pirates, historic pirates, are one thing but most people flicking through *Pirates!* will want fantasy pirates with different races and magic too. This is dealt with in the introduction. *Pirates!* manages to get the mix of real facts and fun fantasy entirely right. There's just enough in the introduction to give your pirate RP a touch of reality and there's no risk of a dry history lesson. Food's a problem out on the waves. It rots. It gets infested with maggots. The book has a tip, leave a fresh fish on top of the hardtack biscuits, it'll attract the maggots and when the fish is covered in the creepy crawlies you can toss it over board and replace it with a new one. Fishy biscuits are better than maggot biscuits. The difference between a pirate and privateer - one has an allegiance and backing, the other doesn't - is explained as is the Code of Conduct. The bulk of the book is given over to Pirate Profiles. Once again the blend of game meal and crunch as well as fact and fantasy is exactly right. Classes like the Lookout and Slaver are ideal for a game with a more gritty feel, whereas Sail Riders, Salteaters and Eldritch Captains are just the thing for high fantasy on the high seas.

*Pirates!* really is rather good. You can use it to add to whatever you're currently doing for nautical adventures or you can use the book to inject a healthy dose of pirate action into a landlubber game. Arr!

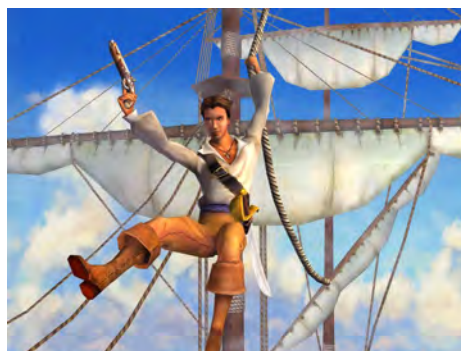
**Pirate Hunter** will see you acting oddly like a pirate, despite the title of this computer game. The game's dynamics are established when you ally with one of four nations, England, France, Spain or Holland. By allying with one, you can take assignments from governors from that country around the Caribbean and slowly build a reputation as well as your fleet. But allying with one nation also means the other nations' ships will not take kindly to crossing paths with you as the game



progresses, especially if the nations are at war. The high seas are not a friendly place with bickering buccaneers and pirates all over the place.

*Pirate Hunter* has 16 scenarios, with four historical periods to play in. Manoeuvring your ship in the birds-eye-view screen is a piece of cake. Just right-click on where you want to go. The high seas are busy, so from time to time, you'll cross paths with a ship in the busy ports. When you do you have the option of moving on or asking your fellow seamen for news. It's a nice touch that gives you a sense of a larger world. You'll hear about wars between nations, ports that require goods, and warnings about pirates. Fundamentally, *Pirate Hunter* is a very basic war/trade game. It gives the player a sense of an open world by providing a good number of wealth and fleet-building options. Once you get a grasp of the basics the game is a wide open experience. This is the primary reason I enjoyed myself. You can just wander around and trade, battle or jump into a mission.

*Pirate Hunter* is a mainstream game. The battle graphics are plain vanilla and could have been much better without too much effort. PH also lacks the depth to call it a great game. Everything from trading to battles is straight-forward and streamlined. However, there are enough simple elements gathered together into the game that you can get hours of enjoyment out of it. In other words, anyone can pick it up and just start playing.



*Meier* and *Firaxis Games* have finally brought forth *Sid Meier's Pirates!* for the PC. Set in the 17th century Caribbean seas, *Sid Meier's Pirates!* will have you assume the role of a young pirate captain out to make yourself infamous. This seafaring action game will encompass land battles, sea battles, treasure hunting and more, and it seems to be shaping up quite nicely.

Your goal in *Sid Meier's Pirates!* will be to take yourself--a pirate captain with grand aspirations--ever upwards in notoriety, and the game will give you a number of ways to make a name for yourself. You'll visit many diverse ports of call, and stopping in at a friendly tavern, you'll be able to take actions like recruiting men to add to your crew, and getting updates on what's happening in the rest of the world. You also might be able to buy a treasure map from a mysterious stranger, or take on tasks from the local governor that will allow you to do a little sanctioned plundering.

From what I have seen, *Sid Meier's Pirates!* looks good with clean, brightly coloured character models and some nice static artwork for certain scenes. The characters themselves were voiced, but they spoke in gibberish that the developers are calling 'Firaxlish' (a nod to *The Sims* 'simlish'). The rest of the sound effects sounded good, with lots of cutlasses clashing and cannons booming. *Pirate* lovers and fans of the original *Pirates!* will absolutely want to keep their eyes on the progress of *Sid Meier's Pirates!*. The game is currently scheduled for release at the end of this year.

Avast! Ye mean you bilge rats haven't heard that September 19th is International Talk Like A Pirate Day? Shivver me timbers! You landlubbers need to walk the plank to [www.talklikeapirate.com](http://www.talklikeapirate.com) and find out all about it.



# RAMPAGE

Battle for the Streets

*'s coming. You ready?*



# WWII: Open Warfare

*CHRISTOPHE SARAZIN describes a wargame that depends on cooperation ...*

AS ITS TITLE indicates, **WWII: Open Warfare** is a wargame set in the Second World War. The military side of this game will satisfy players who like cooperative games, who prefer to worry about the big picture rather than the small operational details, who won't miss a heavy set of rules and are ready to trust somebody who 'knows the business'.

One turn is a whole game-month and is played every four to five weeks. The battlefield is the world (currently, in July 1940) and every theatre is represented. The game started in August 1939 as turn 0 and is now coming to its 11th turn, or July 1940.

Although sometimes a bit too standardized, production and technology research rules are satisfactory, straightforward and encourage long-term thinking. The basic army unit is the division (although the corps is the preferred level of operation) while the wing is the basic air unit (it consists of around 150 aircrafts of a single airframe) and naval units represent squadrons of ships or one capital ship. But smaller specialist units also exist, such as Special Forces, radars or anything you might need to produce: it is up to you to be creative or copy the real WW2 formations.

Open Warfare offers a choice of positions available among the different belligerent and neutral nations, and all of them include some kind of military participation, the PL (Political Leader) being a nation's boss. Usually, 'who controls what' can be arranged during the game to accommodate the needs and talents of everyone; this is discussed between team members and the GM but needs a simple order for effect. Once your command structure has been decided, you will normally be in charge of a full arm and/or one or several geographic theatres that will most likely include different kinds of units (air, naval, ground). You may, for example, find yourself commander of the RAF but also in control of Free French units and a British Army Group in North Africa.

Order submission is a big thing in Open Warfare since you do this only once a month on average. It is certainly not just a matter of pushing pieces forward, as in a computer-moderated wargame, and it requires some preparation. If you have the option to produce short types of orders such as 'March to location XXX' or 'Frontal Assault on Budapest', you are allowed a limited number of 'field orders' in which you will need to put in careful words all the essential things you want to be done. Since the game does not rest on a rigid set of rules, it is up to you to be clear and concise in explaining what you want to achieve with 'operation Z'. Through Army Group HQs, you are basically sending written orders to generals who will execute them on a corps or divisional level as best as they (ie the Game Master, David Clay) understand them. For example, as US Commander, you would play General Marshall or Admiral King, not Patton or Spruance: those guys are on the field executing your plans and, ideally, your orders need to be unequivocal while leaving them some room for initiative.

If writing orders may be a bit tricky at first and bring poor results, success usually comes as you develop your 'command style' and learn from previous mistakes, the whole process being, to my taste, one of the best aspects of the game.



In the game, cooperation between team members is paramount, and by cooperation I mean complete discussion and planning of the coming turn, which requires a fair amount of emailing. As an Army commander, you'll want to make sure with the Navy that boats will be dispatched to collect your guys, wherever they are going. As a naval commander you may need land-based air cover over a task force or the help of the air force to hunt down enemy vessels. All this will need to be well thought-out with the appropriate players. In the case of 'operation Z' for example, discrepancies between the teams' sets of orders could have disastrous consequences. Of course collaboration does not only include one nation. As allies, the British and French communicated extensively during the battle of France and in some positions you could end up emailing five, six or more different players.

Also very important in the game is strategic planning. If it is OK with punctual and short-termed actions, in Open Warfare there is no point launching a large key attack without having issued a 'strategic order' for its preparation. These are different from the field orders since they give your staff homework for the sort of future offensives that Barbarossa or Overlord were. Strategic planning also works with much smaller operations, giving them some kind of bonus...

It is difficult to judge Open Warfare regarding the realism of its combat rules or general features, the whole game being based on free kriegsspiel which, as the 'rulebook v 6.0' states, 'unashamedly rests upon the whims and fancies of the umpire, unrestrained by any rules. To many people who need the crutches that rules provide, this is heresy... The mature wargamer who takes his history seriously, however, will realise that it is actually less realistic to write down probabilities for every conceivable situation, than to look at specific situations, in all their complexity, and give rulings upon them as unique events.'

Giving one's opinion about the game's worthiness ends up judging the game master's talent at avoiding freak combat results, stopping players from engaging in incredible adventures and not falling into favouring one side or another. So far, although the war has obviously taken a very different course than historically, the GM has done an excellent job: anything can happen at this point and the world situation looks credible.

The game is also challenging because not only do the players get better at it, but so does the GM. Finally, after 15 months (we started last year in February) of game play, the game is still hugely enjoyable. Most of the early players have stayed on and probably will until victory.

## WWII Open War at a glance

A web-based wargame run by David Clay. Turns are £4.50 each, with some discounts for block payment.

[www.wwiioopenwar.co.uk](http://www.wwiioopenwar.co.uk)

# The Ridley File

ERIC RIDLEY reviews *Snatch*, *Cargo*, *Phase 10*, *Spy* & *Wildlife* ...



IF YOU ARE a word game devotee or even if you just consider yourself a rival to the experts on *Countdown*, **Snatch** could be the game for you. The game derives its title from its premise; to 'snatch' as many letters as possible to form more, or lengthier, words than competitors.

Players take turns at turning over the 100 plastic letter squares (a la Scrabble) until some smart alec shouts out a word made up of the available letters. If your friends are quick enough, this happens once only a few letters are overturned. If all one hundred squares are turned and no one has thought up a word, give up and get back to that remedial English class to brush up on your word skills!

Snatch isn't a game for the quarrelsome as disputes can all too easily arise over the validity of words and 'who shouted out first'. To exacerbate matters, players can snatch a fellow player's words by using the letters available, merging them with another word and hey presto, a new, improved word is formed!

Don't be deceived into thinking that Snatch is an all-out word game however; it's akin to Boggle in this respect, as the fastest mind tends to prevail over the broadest vocabulary. Snatch differs from Boggle, though, when it comes to scoring. Longer words can mean more points. Three letter words are worth one point and every additional letter thereafter is worth an extra point. An eight-letter word would therefore be worth six points.

Snatch is fun, fairly interactive and challenging without being overly strategic. It comes in a handy travel size tube and is easy to learn. The only downside is its inflammatory nature: just watch out for those plastic squares flying across the room. If they hit you on the back of the head, it can really sting!

[www.portobellogames.com](http://www.portobellogames.com)

## Cargo

*Tom Jolly* is well known as the designer of a number of Cheapass Games. You know the type: the £5 paper component games that come packaged in an envelope. Bucking the trend, however, is **Cargo**, a full colour, boxed game from *Wingnut*, based on the Boston Tea Party.

The idea is that you must load all your crates of tea onto your ship, or push your opponent's tea overboard. The board is an 8 by 8 grid with a coloured ship on each edge. Each player is assigned one ship.

You start the game with a number of workers to control, ranging from deck hands to donkeys (I find this inappropriate, as everyone I work with is a donkey!). Each type of worker has a different number of spaces and amount of crates they can move, listed on the piece. The players have the task of pushing the randomly placed crates either onto their ship or off the pier until one player has run out of tea.

It's a simple concept, with enough strategy to avoid becoming totally dull. The problem with this game is that it could easily have been made cheaply. All its components are full colour cardboard but that doesn't alter the fact. It just seems a little pricey and under-developed for a full-price boxed game. It is clearly an American game. Reading between the lines (for the slower among you), this



means that it is simply not as good as its German counterparts.

All in all, the game is OK. It can be enjoyable, but also has a tendency to grow dull if you are not in the mood. If it were a cheapo game, I would have few qualms about recommending it. As it stands I would warn you that at £14.99 it is over-priced and over produced for what it actually is.

<http://wingnutgames.com/>

## Phase 10

Another card game from *Winning Moves*. In **Phase 10** you must compete to become the first player to complete all ten phases of the game. A phase is a group of cards, for instance a run of four and a set of two. Sets are number cards that are all the same; a run is, for example, 6,7,8,9 numbered cards.

Each phase (of which, fairly surprisingly, there are ten) is different from the last. If you complete a phase, you move onto the next while leaving your opponents behind. Just as my explanation has been, the rules are slightly confusing and take a few readings to nail down. It is, however, a clever system that is slightly different from so many other set-collecting games.

The card art is more than just a little drab, as in there is none. There is also a problem with the six and nine cards in that they are very difficult to tell apart. Other than that the game is fun, but not blown-away brilliant. But what more do you want for a fiver?

[www.fundexgames.com](http://www.fundexgames.com)



## Spy

Upon first play of this game of espionage I was not taken by it. I thought it was dull and disappointing, especially for a game from Knizia.

The premise is that you are the head of a top-secret organisation, and sensitive papers have fallen into your hands telling of other secret documents hidden around the world. It is your job to send spies to investigate these different continents and items.

To win this game you must be the first player to play all of their spies onto 'Target' cards. There are twelve Target cards that are laid out at the start of the game, six items and six continents, each with a spy already on it. You start the game with three cards in your hand, each of which has two symbols on it, one item and one continent. On your turn you play a card in front of you (preparing a mission) then you may attempt a mission, by discarding from your hand and prepared mission area, cards of the same suit (be it continent or item). If the number of cards you played is more than the number of spies on the target card you place the difference from your spy pool on to that card. You start the game with 18 spies in a two-player game and less in a three or four player encounter.

It is basically a suit-collecting game, and you just draw cards until you get what you want: that's why I found the game fairly so-so to start with. Another reason is you can only spy on continents and things like





bowler hats and pocket watches, whereas I always maintained that the biggest threat to national security was student girls' bedrooms and beaches in summertime. Are these not the types of things we should really be spying on? Regardless, the more I played the game the more I came to appreciate it. The game does have its strategies and subtleties. The game is best with two players, when you have one opponent and you can concentrate on trying to screw her over: every time she looks as if she is about to complete a mission you pip her to it with one of your own of the same type. With three and four players the strategy is diminished, as there are too many things going on for you to be able to really have an effect on your opponents intentionally.

There is not a huge amount of interaction but there is strategy, simple though it may be. The art is nice and clear, though sparse, and the components are of high quality. I think you would be forgiven if you thought that this game was a little dull, but at the same time it could be that you need to 'get it' to enjoy it. I personally like it. But if you were to play one demo game at a convention you probably wouldn't buy it. It's a game you get into gradually. I play it as a quick warm-up game before a longer more complex one.

Now with the review written, I am able to 'spy' on my girlfriend's underwear drawer. Panty raid!

[www.uberplay.com](http://www.uberplay.com)

### Wildlife

*[This game was reviewed in #105, but we're always happy to hear other opinions.]*

Millions of years ago a struggle for our planet was taking place. The most adaptable animals fought for dominance and food. Waged over all the terrain earth had to offer, the battle between Mammoth, Snake, Man, Bear, Eagle and Crocodile continued for millennia. Luckily, with the benefit of hindsight, I know which animal won the battle for control of the planet, so I guess there is no historical reason I would play this game.

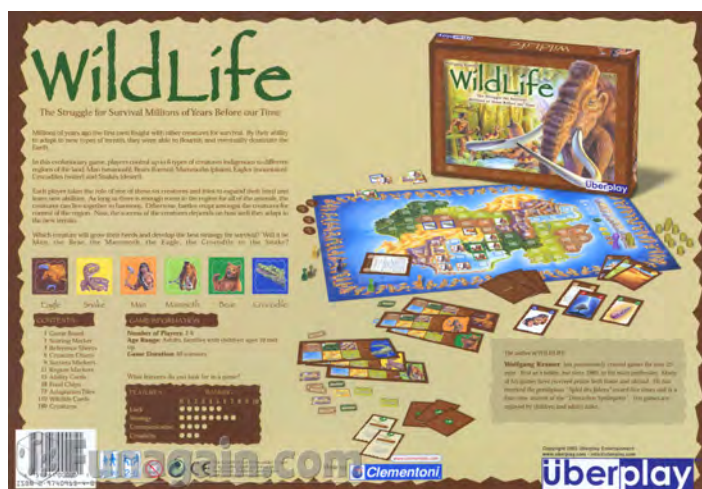
If you did play it, though, it would go something like this. **Wildlife** is a boardgame, and on a grand scale. There are lots of components and elements to it and the object is to have the most victory points by the end of the game. To do that, you have to control the board. The board shows a huge continent, which is split into terrain types. Each type has a certain number of squares available for you to place your creatures across the continent, establishing a foothold before the game starts.

Each animal has four terrain types it can be placed in and two it can't: for instance, man can't go into water or desert spaces (you can become adapted to move into those spaces later in the game).

Once this is done, the game proper starts. Each player has a hand of ten cards and must play three per turn. They have various effects, allowing you to carry out migrations, or to expand into different terrains, to make you more adapted to different regions or to allow you to take ability tiles. Ability tiles are of huge importance. Each tile has a different effect, allowing you to play more cards per turn or to give you two Victory Points at the start of every turn, etc. Each type of tile is limited in number, so competition for them can be come fierce, nay, buck wild between players. However you can steal ability cards off other players once they have them, changing the game constantly.

The idea is to fill up each region with your pieces. You score points for doing so: this is called a minor scoring and there are a total of twelve available. A major scoring is much more important, and is really what you are aiming to do well in: this is where most of the games points come from. A major scoring takes into account everything: amount of ability cards, biggest overall herd across the board, how much of each region you control and even how many adaptations you have. What this means is that nothing in the game can be overlooked: every aspect is important, some more than others, though. The game is played like this until one player has placed all his pieces or until the third major scoring occurs.

Without wanting to bore you with more of the rules and mechanics (though I fear I may have already run that risk) this game has a huge amount of elements to deal with, and that's what makes it brilliant. On the downside, it takes ages to set up because of the amount of pieces. The auction section is a little fuzzy in a two-player game and it takes at least one practice game before you really get into it. The game is for two to six



players and the biggest real problem arises with just the two of you. There are more spaces on the board than you and your opponent can fill with your 30 tokens each. This leads to a lack of interaction and a bit of a dull game. I had to make up my own rule about placing drone tokens at the start of the game to fix it.

This is a minor problem, however, and it can be overcome (though it would have been better if the designer could have done it rather than leaving it up to the spods that buy it). The pieces and game board are of high quality and the art is good, especially the box art. The game is incredibly refreshing: I really rate it and so do all but one of the people I have played it with. If you only buy one game this quarter make it Wildlife. It is by far the most absorbing game I have played in a long time.

[www.uberplay.com](http://www.uberplay.com)

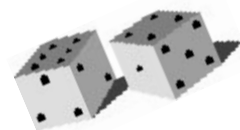
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# Turning Digital

*COLIN FORBES begins a series looking at turn-based games on the internet ...*

REGULAR readers of *Flagship* may recall that I spent about six months raving about the merits of a fun little game called Beer Mogul. Sadly this game went to the great Game Graveyard in the Sky some while back. However I have now found a game which looks almost identical in concept, though with a few extra twiddly bits: **Beer Tycoon!** Set up a pub and sell beer of suspect quality to an unsuspecting public! I had a lot of fun with this game's predecessor and with extra drinks and features now available, I'm looking forward to reporting on my progress in this game. Turns are daily but since the game is free and the turns don't take long to do, why not give it a try? Check it out at: [www.beertycoon.ne](http://www.beertycoon.ne). And if you join the game, I'm Asgornius, owner of the Blood Eagle Tavern (named after my character and guild in Dark Age of Camelot in case anyone wonders).

This brings me on to the general subject of turn-based games available for play over the internet. *Flagship* often receives letters from readers complaining that there aren't many new turn-based games out there. While it is true that the established PBM companies have largely consolidated and concentrated on producing high quality games, you would be amazed at the number of games that are available on the internet. Some will charge you a set-up fee for the software, while others are entirely free and of remarkably high quality. The rest of this article will feature a brief overview of some of these games. Readers should note that I have not personally played all of these games, though those covered do have a good reputation and seem reliable in terms of turnaround and so forth. It's just not possible to do more than scratch the surface of the games available in just one article, so I'll be continuing my coverage of these games (as well as my progress in Beer Tycoon) in future issues of *Flagship*.



## Advanced Strategic Command

[www.asc-hq.org](http://www.asc-hq.org)  
ASC is a free strategy game available for play on Windows or Linux operating systems. It is designed in the tradition of the Battle Isle series from Bluebyte.

The source code for the game is available for free. The game is regularly updated and bugs ironed out as they occur or are found. The recent version (released in April) comes with an updated and extended campaign and features a completely rewritten system for in-game events, an updated and extended campaign and many other improvements.

*Cost: Free.*

## BattleTrolls

<http://www.battletrolls.com>

An unusual mixture of card game and online game in which you can collect more than 80 digital Trading Cards and add them to your own Troll Army, which can then be used to compete against other players from all around the world in realtime, online, interactive battles.

*Cost: 14 day free trial available. Thereafter several membership levels are available.*

## Bounced

<http://www.dipbounced.com/>

Bounced was constructed in 1999 to allow play of **Diplomacy** purely over the web. Although similar to PBEM (play by e-mail) systems, all of the software was written from scratch and all information about a game (maps, history, judging, and press) is displayed. A large number of Diplomacy variants are available. Games sometimes take a while to fill up, but thereafter run smoothly.

*Cost: Free.*

## Campaign of Nyctea

<http://www.gemynd.com/Nyctea/Campaign/default.asp>

The Nyctean Campaign is a turn-based, play by web (email) role-playing game in a medieval fantasy setting. A game of swords and sorcery, castles and dragons. Note that this is not a free-form role-playing game.

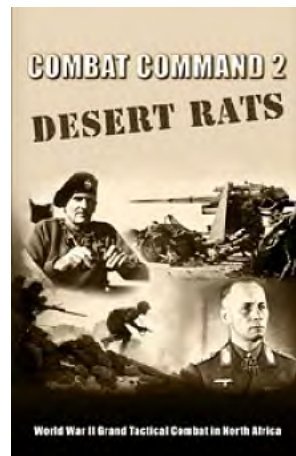
*Cost: A free trial is available, the software is free, but there is a yearly subscription fee of \$25.*

## Combat Command 2: Desert Rats

[http://www.shrapnelgames.com/boku/cc2\\_dr/](http://www.shrapnelgames.com/boku/cc2_dr/)

The second in the Combat Command 2 series, Desert Rats thrusts players into the campaigns waged in North Africa during the Second World War. Underneath the broiling sun, and amidst the sandstorms and trackless dunes, legendary commanders like Montgomery and Rommel duelled in the manoeuvre warfare that often characterized this period. Grand tactical in nature, the Combat Command 2 series focuses on unique, rarely gamed battles.

*Cost: Free demo version available. The full software costs \$39.95.*



## Cybots

<http://www.tasman-studios.com>

Cybots is set in a future where combat is carried out by Cybernetic Battle Droids (known as Cybots). Players assume the role of Cybot 'Controller' managing all aspects of their robotic battle squads. Using a set amount of starting game cash, Controllers purchase and then configure their bots using six different chassis, and more than two hundred different weapons, power reactors, shield generators and support modules. When squads are ready for battle, Controllers can lead them into various adventure Outlands; compete in one of the many player vs player battle arenas for cash prizes; or work together in Clans battling for control of mining bases.

*Cost: Free.*

## Cypher

<http://66.187.41.147/cypher/index.php>

In Cypher you are a newbie hacker trying to gain the exalted title of Elite hacker by signing up for both single-player and multi-player hacking missions. Complete single-player missions to increase your experience and gain access to better software. At the time of writing, one round had come to an end and the site was down for a few days while some new features are implemented and tested. A new round (in PBM terms, a new game) will then start.

*Cost: Free.*

**DBA Online**

<http://www.dbaol.com/>

A computerized version of famous De Bellis Antiquitatis ruleset and the DBA Online Internet Club. DBA Online gives you an opportunity to play ancient & medieval battles with hundreds of live opponents all over the world. Tournaments and many other features are run in what amounts to an online club.

Cost: A restricted play free trial version is available. The full game can be downloaded for free, or purchased on CD for \$19.95. Subscription is \$9.95 per month.

**Delta Quadrant: Empires**

<http://www.dqempires.com/>

Delta Quadrant: Empires is a turn-based web space strategy game designed for simultaneous playing by several thousand people. Four races available. The game is currently in beta test, but is open for general play.

Cost: Free

**Desert Fox**

<http://www.desert-fox.uk.com/>

You start with a small army, on a mission to conquer Earth. With a wide range of units to build, buildings to construct and technologies to research, you must pick the right combination to rise in the rankings and be the best! Then devise your war plan ...

Cost: Free

**Dominion**

<http://www.kamikazegames.com/dominion>

Set in a medieval world, choose between a number of different races to conquer the world. Work with your Realm, plan a good construction strategy, and manage your resources to build your military to be the strongest you can. Stat based game which rewards forward planning and

teamwork.

Cost: Free, though a premium account (costing \$7) is also available. Premium accounts remove the annoying pop up adverts and also give access to useful assistance programs.

But what of Beer Tycoon I hear you ask? Well, having signed up for the game I found myself given a cool one million Beer Dollars. First things first, I wouldn't be much of a pub landlord without a pub would I? I decided to buy an Irish-style pub (for no other reason than it was suggested by the beginner's guide to the game) and named it the Blood Eagle. Not wishing to be the Pub With No Beer berated in so many Irish folk songs, I went to the Beer Market and pondered what beers to buy. There are brews of varying quality and price, some available as one-off deals, whilst others involve a long term contract. These latter were cheaper but at this stage I'm reluctant to overcommit my meagre resources, so I settled for two thousand bottles of Shady's Ale, a high quality produce that looked as though I might make a profit (again, according to the beginner's guide).

Having splurged out on some whisky and wine, I decided that buying champagne this early on might be a little hubristic, and set off to hire a pub manager for an exorbitant fee. I've set the bar prices at the level suggested by the guide and will now sit back in the hope of not making too big a loss on my first day. Hopefully I'll get some messages telling me what sort of drinks the customers want, not to mention other services such as a Widescreen TV or a Pinball machine (all of which cost money, though may bring in more customers).

We shall see how things go ... though to be honest I wouldn't be surprised if I am bankrupt within the week!

If anyone would like to review any of these games for *Flagship*, then by all means contact Carol ([carol@pbmgames.com](mailto:carol@pbmgames.com)) and get playing! As usual there are free copies of *Flagship* available in return.

*(To be continued)*

# PRINTERS AD

# The Diary of a Genocide, part 3

*The conclusion of BEN LYNCH's diary of Lords of the Earth, game 1 ...*

*[Lord Peregrine thought that he'd conquered India for the Hussites, but has just received news that the Iranian player is sending forces down the Khyber Pass...]*

I AWAITED the turn results anxiously, expecting to read news of my doom. And so it was. Since all of this is complicated, I will give an 'annotation' to the turn entry: *'Hussite shipping into Arnor was plagued by Javan and Persian privateers pillaging Albanian merchantmen and seizing many rich prizes... a storm seemed to gather, as fate turned against Hussite India...'* (ie the AEIC had infiltrators of a nefarious sort shipping shrunken cats heads and what not, giving the local 'good guys' a reason to smack him.)

Down in the lowlands, Maximillian Schiller (with the Duke in tow) gathered his forces at Gwalior and then marched on Jaunpur. Upon entering the Chandellan province, however, he found that his advance parties were attacked by angry natives. (The Chandellans, not detailing a leader to oversee the migration, left their people to face my advance.) 'Treachery,' the general sighed, having expected no less. He looked to Duke Peregrin. 'Sir?' 'Kill them all!'

(The GM decides to enact a regional genocide. This will take 10 AP, which was not planned, and prove to have many consequences.) As a result, the Arnori army pitched into Jaunpur with a vengeance, hanging whole villages, burning mosques by the dozen and generally attempting to methodically and coolly exterminate an entire class of society. Despite frenzied attacks by the natives, the Hussite artillery and airships slaughtered those few men left able to fight and then the infantry regiments fixed bayonets and began wading in blood.

Within three months, an involuntary tide of refugees was choking the roads south and east into Chandellan territory and an equal crowd of Hussite settlers was spilling in from the north-east. Casualties were rather heavy for the Arnori, including Prince David - killed by a native woman with a cleaver who caught him unawares at the latrines. Still, after about six months of fighting, the province was subdued. Settlement had begun in earnest when the Duke received stunning news from home. The Persians had invaded.

## The Shahdom of Iran

Al'Qadir, Shah of Iran, Overlord of India, Light of the Aryans, 'The Stalwart'. After lengthy negotiations on the disputed frontier between Iran and the remains of the Safavid state - assisted by representatives from Sweden and the Islamic Union - Al'Qadir and the Great Vizier managed to reach an accommodation. While portions of the south would remain in Iranian hands, they would abandon much of the central plateau and allow the Safavids to reclaim something of their previous domain. As part of the settlement, Prince Bukharm moved the Iranian court (and all its attendant business, vendors, hangers-on, pretty boys and girls, etc)

to the bustling port of Al-Harkam in Carmania, where the clerks and scribes and ministers would be closer to the lands Al'Qadir hoped to rule. The Iranian fleet was immediately unleashed to ravage shipping in the Gulf of Oman. Somewhat to their surprise, their depredations were soon joined by a squadron of Javan trimarans flying jaunty skull-flags. As there were no Hussite men-of-war or frigates on patrol in the area, the losses in merchantmen were heavy.

Having decided that coming to the 'aid' of his fellow Moslems in India was preferable to fighting a protracted civil war in Iran against the Safavids and their allies, Al'Qadir launched his armies into the valley of the Indus in a two-pronged attack. First, Subir al-Jawzi led nine thousand lancers up through the wilderness of Baluch to pounce on the lowland towns of Sukkur. At much the same time, Giv Gudarz (Al'Qadir's general of armies) marched across the harsh Carmanian plains and through the desolation on the border of Edrosia. They expected to encounter heavy Hussite resistance, for the martial spirit of the Arnor was well known, and the vast ramparts of Schwarzkastel, legendary throughout Asia.

The Iranian armies swept to the walls of Schwarzkastel in November of 1753. Much to their surprise, they encountered little or no resistance. The Ducal armies were still mired in suppressing the resistance of the Jaunpur to the Hussite migration. Gudarz stared at the sprawling, smoke-shrouded suburbs of Sschwarzkastel and turned to his emperor, 'My lord? Isn't this city supposed to be girdled by some of the most stupendous fortifications devised by man? The rival of distant Malta, or the Long Shong Gate in golden Judea?'

(During the past few years of 'calm', the walls had been removed to facilitate the growth of S Kastel. When I took the position, no walls existed, and at the time, I didn't see the point in building more. Funny, eh?)

Al'Qadir nodded, as puzzled as the general. It was quite clear the city - thriving as it was - had no walls, no garrison, no means of stopping the Iranians from seizing the capital of Arnor and everything within, lock, stock and barrel.

(This means he has seized my government assets: BL, Infra, Intel, etc. Very unpleasant.)

What garrison had been in the city fled across the ferry to Surashtra beyond Kutch Island. Further north, al-Jawzi's cavalry army had conquered Sahis and Sukkur, including the city of Lahore (also without so much as an angry goat in defense), isolated Multan and were preparing to advance into the Punjab.

Finally, with nearly a year of campaigning past, Duke Peregrin and his armies hustled up the road from Jaunpur in enormous haste. Al-Jawzi abandoned Sahis and his abortive raid into the Punjab, scattering south like a cloud. Peregrin and his Arnori regulars pursued cautiously - they'd had enough of tricky surprises from the Chandellans!

A hundred kilometers south of Lahore, the might of Hussite India (including the recently constituted Hussite Legion) came within a hair of colliding with Giv Gudarz, the shah and the entire Iranian army on a dusty plain near the town of Bohjapur. The 21,000 Hussites made a wary advance into near-contact with 25,000 Iranians, then backpedaled upon realizing they were outnumbered. Schiller, commanding the Arnori force, used his two light zeppelins to best effect, keeping a distant eye on the Iranians as he withdrew. (Peregrin's conditional not to fight superior

## Lords of the Earth at a glance

A commercial PBEM powergame that exists in several separate games covering different historical periods. Game 1 is run by LotE's designer, Thomas Harlan. For available places in all LotE games check: <http://www.throneworld.com/lords>



forces comes into effect here...)

Now the Iranians pressed the advance, plowing up the highway towards Lahore and Schiller, and the Duke had to decide exactly what the devil they were going to do: the Afghans had returned to the mountains, the treacherous Chandellans were at their backside and the entire apparatus of government, as well as their only lifeline to Hussite Europe and aid, was now in the hands of the Iranian dogs.

'We must fight,' an ashen-faced Peregrin announced to his generals, 'and we must win. Without Schwarzkastel, the Duchy is lost and every Hussite woman and child in India will perish, shrieking, on a Moslem lance.'

'Not so...' Schiller rose, favoring his lamed leg, a glint in his eye. 'We must retake the capital, then force them to dig us out of a fortified position...' The lean old German turned to a cunningly drawn map spread across the camp-table, '...but we must move swiftly.'

(The imperative to defend the homeland and capital is in force here, so we're going to try and go around the enemy army, which I hadn't really thought about when writing orders.)

Under cover of darkness, the Ducal army abandoned its baggage train and servants, then sprinted south into the desert of Ajmer, essaying to force-march through the wilderness in a wide-ranging curve around the Iranians. Six hundred miles later, with the two zeppelins circling warily above, the Ducal army staggered out of the desert and into the fertile plains of Sind. With a ragged cheer, the infantry broke ranks and rushed to the banks of the first canal they found, empty canteens in hand...

A massive, basso roar answered their feeble cries of joy. The orchard on the far bank was suddenly alive with motion - an entire Iranian infantry regiment leveled their rifles - and far to the north and side, the wings of Gudarz' army deployed en masse. Half-delirious from heat and dehydration, Schiller gawped in horror as a long rolling boom-boom-boom rippled across the fields. Clouds of white smoke puffed above the cotton trees. Flights of rockets soared up, hissing and sparking, angry claws reaching for the zeppelins circling in the pure blue sky.

'The falcon has keen vision,' Al-Jawzi chuckled, raising a spyglass to his good eye, 'but the mouse can see him from a great distance... and who can see a mouse in the thicket?'

(Since I was a babe drawn from the more common medieval campaigns, I had no idea that the zeppelins would betray my armies' position and set up an ambush. More experienced players will put zeppelin units under a separate commander to prevent this sort of unfortunate occurrence.)

The first day was brutal. The Arnori tried to claw their way out of the trap and Gudarz hammered them mercilessly. Schiller failed to break away, but did manage to fall back to a low set of hills three miles from the canal. Cursing, Duke Peregrin was forced aboard the surviving zeppelin and sped away to the south. The battered remnants of the Hussite army labored through the night to dig in on the hilltops.

The second and third days, Gudarz had his artillery shell the living daylight out of the Arnori positions. The fourth day, as the Hussite troopers were drinking their own urine, the Iranian pushtighbahn stormed up the low, rolling slopes under a barrage of rockets and explosive shell and made bloody work among the revetments and shallow trenches. Again, the Iranians bled, but the exhausted Hussites were slaughtered to the last.

(And this is literally true: When I got my turn sheet, I had no army. I, who had once commanded 40,000. This was a catastrophic defeat. Lords battles can be very decisive!)

From a distance, Al'Qadir watched with narrowed eyes. The battle was won, but such things meant nothing in the crucible of India. He looked south, to the fading daylight sky, wondering where the last airship had gone. The shah had little time to ponder such things, for - while marching with his army back south to Schwarzkastel - he was nearly murdered by thuggee who attacked him in his tent along the road. Though sorely wounded, the shah managed to fight them off.

By the end of the turn, Iranians had conquered and garrisoned the provinces of Edrosia, Sind, Sukkur, Punjab, Und, Sahis, Tarain and Uttar Pradesh. The cities of Peshawar, Multana and New Dehli continued to hold out, held by garrisons of old men, Danish matrons and children.

When this came out, a lot of laughter was directed my way, even if

the Yasarid Shahs finally bit it as the Chandellan, Southern League, and Thai offensives eliminated my opponent. It seemed the same fate awaited me. The Iranian player, subjected to an immediate barrage of angry Hussite letters, took quite the callow tone with me, quoting Khrushchev's 'We will bury you' speech. I said I'd see him in hell.

The Asians were ecstatically amused at Arnor's sudden downfall, for news of my hat trick had gotten out, and this was quite annoying for them to watch. The European Hussite players drew up plans for a liberation operation, dubbed 'Fists of Curry': forces from Carthage and the Frankish Commonwealth formed the backbone of the expedition while the Afghani army would issue forth once again from Kabul. Things looked rather promising, considering the overall grimness of my situation.

Then I posted a note on the letter accusing certain parties of treachery and cowardice, and the Persian player denounced me in return as a treacherous beast well worth a beating and pleaded with the Danish player for a phone call to prevent me, the Butcher of Jaunpur, from igniting a global conflict. (At that particular moment the Persian player had family in the hospital, so he was quite edgy.) The prospect of European intervention riled the Asians, who went from being amused to very concerned. Angry words were exchanged all 'round.

Tension builds. The Afghani player rarely makes his views known: speculation abounds that they have decided to betray Arnor to the Iranians. Every one is stressed out: the Carthaginian player writes threats to the Iranians while drunk and the Chinese pretend to be friendly even as they upbraid the Europeans in regard to my treachery, being very intent to take my head.

Meanwhile, the Chandellans, unaware that the Thai were long ago granted legal standing by Arnor for the N Western Yasarid territories, balked at the news and threatened war about two hours after promising to return my former territories regardless of the conflict with Iran's outcome. The Chandellans, my allies and I surmised, didn't know what they agreed to, so more people were upset. Being a bit too overwhelmed by the situation, I really couldn't do much but wring my hands.

Meanwhile, I'm not very impressed with the European Hussites' view of things and attempt to straighten things out my way, and soon Hussites are calling each other rather unkind names because no one agrees on anything. Some think the Asians are sincere in their willingness for world war while others think Asia, or more specifically, the Chinese, are 'full of it'.

Rumors arrive that the Judeans, Ming China's silent but very powerful ally, intend to commit to the intervention if European forces strike Iran. The conflict over this grows bitter, and I am put on house arrest and forced to be incommunicado under fate of dire consequences. No one except me wants a World War, especially the European Hussites, who have had more than their fair share of global warfare in the past thirty to fifty years.

Some won't back down. Everyone agrees that I am to pay the piper on this one, and the European Hussites negotiate a treaty with the Asian alliance. Iran keeps everything except the province of Uttar Pradesh. In return, I surrender Chitor. This, my friends, sucked most righteously. I felt a lot like Willem Dafoe abandoned to the Viet Cong on his knees begging for the helicopters to return while Samuel Barber's Adagio for Strings swells over the carnage, as I sent the email agreeing to the Iran-Arnor Treaty, a travesty of justice by which I ceded all my rightful conquests to my gloating foes.

Various parties, including the secret empire, attempted to ignite insurrection the following turn against the occupying Asian forces and Iranians, but everyone exercised a great deal of restraint. The story of the abortive uprising involved late night phone calls and great paranoia, as we knew we weren't be caught attempting to destroy the peace. As the Arnori player, I seriously didn't care a farthing for the opinion of others at this time and only hoped everything would come crashing down in rack and ruin. However, it didn't, and Arnor was partitioned, crushed by the will of the Great Powers.

Within five years, however, Iran would be annihilated in the Great Revolt, and Arnor would soon assert control over Tarain and Chitor again, clawing itself up out of the ashes. But that's another story for another day.

# The Federation Folds!

## StarFleet Warlord diary concludes

*In his final entry, ROBIN ORMAN succeeds initially, but then ...*

**Star Fleet Warlord** is a PBM wargame based on the *Star Trek* universe - specifically the **Star Fleet Battles** tabletop game - and is run in the UK by Pagoda Games. It has several scenario types, one of which is a team game where the Alliance (Federation, Gorn, Kzinti and Hydrans) compete with the Coalition (Klingons, Lyrans and Romulans). EH7 is a re-match pitting the US Alliance versus the UK Coalition - previously the UK had been victorious as the Alliance. The Americans requested the re-match and, anticipating another enjoyable game, our team accepted the challenge.

### State of Play

The endgame is here, and the map has been completely re-written. While things look to be going in the Coalition's favour, the detail balances matters a little more delicately. Whilst the combined might of the West Lyrans (L1) and West Klingons (K1) have eliminated the Hydrans and neutral LDR to secure the west side of the arena, their fleets are now well-behind the new front line with the Federation. This leaves the Eastern Lyrans (L2) locked in a stalemate with the Northern Federation (F1) fleet at the old Kzinti homeworld in sector 30, whilst the East Klingons are frantically trying to build up their defences against the huge Southern Federation fleet that is moving inexorably towards their homeworld in sector 32.

Over to the east, on my side of space, half the Romulan Empire has been devastated by a 'last gasp' attack from the remnants of the Western Gorn (G1) fleet. The remaining Romulans have been racing to beat the Eastern Gorn to eradicate their homeworld, and are about to strike against the apparently flimsy defences.

The Coalition has territory, whilst the Alliance has position: the clock is ticking and the final round begins...

### Y184 - Going... going... Gorn

As anticipated, my fleet moved confidently to eliminate the small base at the Eastern Gorn homeworld. There wasn't even a single enemy ship to fight - presumably because they'd all been sent south to move against my own home sector. The Gorn fleet crossed the border into sector 82 this turn, but with only a single turn of movement and no knowledge of my homeworld's location they're not a danger...

...and I've got 18 ships (all cloaked), 114 fighters and a battlestation

to meet them, just in case. I am not going to lose another homeworld from underestimating my opponent!

Just to show the Western Gorn that I haven't forgotten about them, a couple of raiders that I'd sneaked into sector 72 moved around grabbing major sites, and depriving them of the sector bonus. This lack of income will hurt a little more than it should at this stage, since the Western Gorn must still be rebuilding after the destruction of their main fleet.

Elsewhere, the news is not so good: the Southern Federation fleet have invaded and conquered the East Klingon homeworld in sector 32. Our boys gave a good accounting of themselves though, and the majority of the Federation fleet must now be badly damaged after the defenders managed to 'kling-on' tenaciously. Aha. Yes.

### Y185 - Preparation

This was a quieter turn than I expected, since the Eastern Gorn ships didn't appear to want to move on their final turn. Apparently the player controlling them gave up early - which is fine by me.

The remaining Western Gorn did their bit by sending some ships into sector 80 and snatching the sector bonus away from me. A pair of their destroyers also crossed the 72/82 border - presumably they're going to get a scan before moving onto raiding duties.

A starbase scan of the remaining Gorn homeworld reveals a little more preparation than the other had: a reinforced starbase (800 points of fortifications), but only a single ship. I am now faced with two options: to combine my

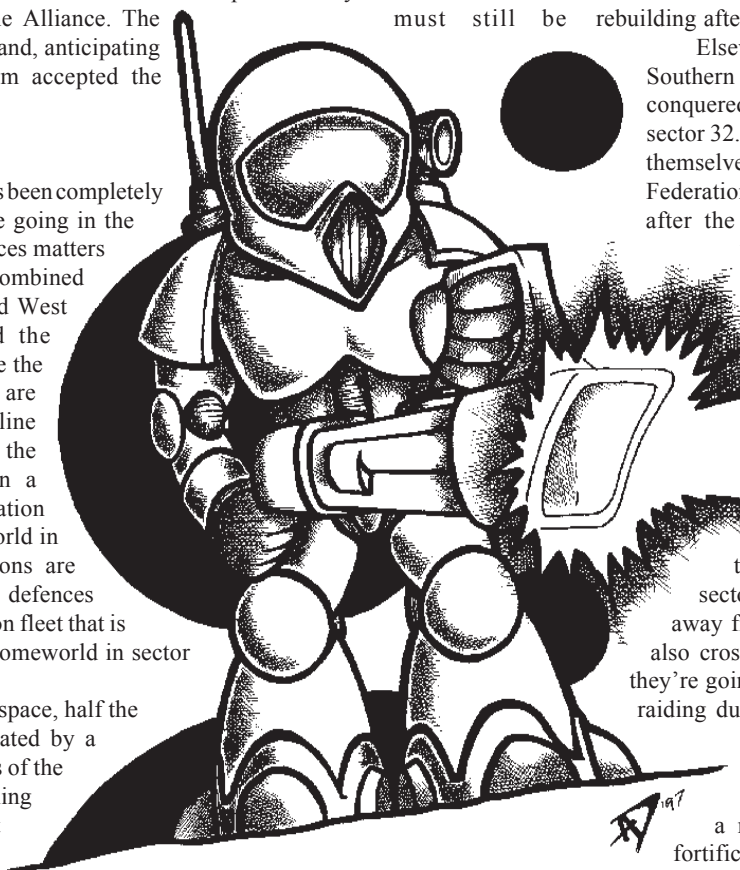
forces in sector 80 and send them speeding west for an attack on the homeworld in two turns, or to move in more cautiously with my Warp Gate so that I can continue to bring in reinforcements.

Given the aggressive tactics of this player earlier in the game, I'm betting that he won't want to switch many resources to homeworld defence, so I'm going to try the fast strike. Just to be safe though, the Warp Gate will follow along behind at its own pace, and my Lyran allies will procure an extended sector scan of the region for me, in case there are any Gorn ships flying around that I don't know about.

### Y186 - Infiltration

All continues running smoothly for the Romulans. The Lyrans' scan of the Gorn sector shows no significant clusters of ships; my own detailed scan of the homeworld shows that the starbase has been improved to a fortified warbase, but with only four ships to support it. With my own 46-ship fleet in range to attack, the Gorn are about to become extinct...

The Gorn seem to have their priorities a little skewed (possibly by the aggressive tendencies I mentioned earlier): a 14-ship fleet travelled across the 70/80 border during this turn, presumably to retake the sector. All of the enemy ships were happily oblivious as they sailed past the two elements of my own fleet that were heading the other way, sniggering.



### StarFleet Warlord at a glance

Run by Pagoda Games, this s/f wargame with an authorised *Star Trek* theme has several variants:  
[www.pagodagames.co.uk](http://www.pagodagames.co.uk)



00	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
<b>L1</b>	<b>L2</b>	<b>L2</b>	(Z)	F1	<b>F1</b>	G1	<b>G1</b>	<b>G2</b>	ISC
01	11	21	31	41	51	61	71	81	91
<b>L1</b>	<b>L1 (LDR)</b>	<b>K1 (WYN)</b>		F2	<b>F2</b>	F2			ISC
02	12	22	32	42	52	62	72	82	92
<b>L1 (H)</b>	<b>K1</b>	<b>K1</b>	<b>K2</b>	<b>K2</b>	<b>Tholians</b>		(R1)	<b>R2</b>	<b>R2</b>

*A map of sector ownership at the start of Y184.*

*Larger text denotes home sectors (those in brackets have been conquered), whilst light grey squares are neutral or contested.*

The two destroyers in my home sector finally got the terrain scan of the region, and will have presumably moved on to collect some sites. I'm really not too worried about these fellows - with the player's homeworld about to fall, they're not going to be active much longer, and with several sectors under my control I can afford a minor dip in income.

My only worry now is the Southern Federation Warp Gate and fleet spotted five or six turns back in sector 62. I'll run a careful scan of the old West Romulan sector to see if they've continued east.

#### Y187 - Elimination

The Gorn were busy this turn, grabbing sites with what ships they had across sectors 80, 81 and 82. Unfortunately for them, this had no effect on my invasion fleet, which dispersed their homeworld's defences with minimal effort. The Western Gorn fleet that had crossed into sector 80 even entertained itself by re-capturing the former East Gorn homeworld - much good will it now be to them.

The scan of sector 72 revealed no sign of any South Federation ships, so either they moved into sector 71 or withdrew after the West Romulans

fell, presuming that two Gorn players would be enough to finish me off. Hah - not in this game!

On the western side of the map, the Lyrans are still involved in a stand-off with the Northern Feds, whilst the South Federation fleet - having been slowed by the need to repair itself - has only just entered the remaining Klingon home sector. The West Klingons are far more prepared than their unfortunate cousins, and their defences should be bolstered further by the return of the fleet they had fielded against the Hydrans earlier in the game.

#### Aftermath

With both west and east sides of the map firmly under Coalition control, we decided it was time to request the surrender of the Alliance team. The remaining two Federation players accepted quickly, and the United Kingdom can now chalk up the score to 4-1 for cross-Atlantic games (or 2-0 for games involving these two particular teams).

Of course, the Americans don't know when they're beat, so EH8 is currently in progress...



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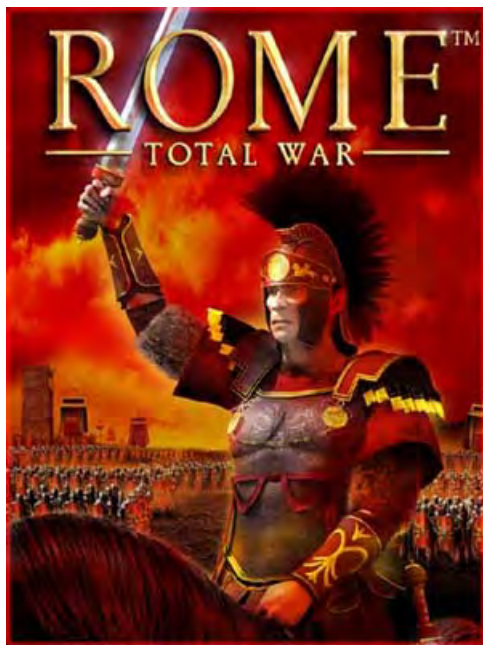
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**VALKYRIE**

# Rome: Total War - a preview

*GLOBETROTTER whets your appetite for this forthcoming computer wargame ...*



LET'S PRETEND for a moment that you're the Emperor of Rome... that's nice, isn't it? Basking in the adoration of the people, wrapping the senate around your finger, building roads to all corners of the known world, leading armoured legions in epic battles of conquest against the uncivilized barbarians, being fed grapes by hot women in flimsy togas... It's a good life.

Here's the deal: everything above and more is in **Rome: Total War**. Well, except for the part about the grapes. Maybe in an expansion. The *Total War* series of games started turning heads back in 2000 with the original *Shogun: Total War*, really found its legs with the stellar *Medieval: Total War* in 2002, and now ups the ante with a game of Roman conquest slated for release by the end of this year. With simpler gameplay but deeper strategy and a graphics engine capable of cranking out *Lord of the Rings*-style epic battle sequences, history is about to be made all over again.

## Grand strategy and field tactics

A hallmark of the *Total War* series is how the game combines thoughtful turn-based strategic decisions on a grand scale with on-the-field real-time combat. It's like two sides of a very tasty coin. The big-picture decisions you make on the campaign map directly impact the battles you fight, and those battles are given extra importance because their outcome alters the course of the main game.

The rise of the Roman empire is a perfect backdrop for such a game of political posturing, strategic deployment, and brutal combat. However, previously in the series the strategic mode and the tactical mode felt like two separate games. The big 2D board-game style map gave way—through a long loading screen—to a 3D game that bore only a passing resemblance. Not so in *Rome: Total War*. The strategic map is now done in 3D, and it really comes to life with rolling terrain, animated roads (you

can see caravans chugging along your trade routes, or soldiers are blocking their way) and flowing rivers. Troops can be moved around the map and positioned exactly where you need them. Station them to block a mountain pass, obstruct a trade route, or hold the high ground. When it comes time to do battle, you zoom right into the action—the terrain layout for the tactical map will be the same, with the armies positioned accordingly. The developers have even worked to shorten the loading screen between the two parts of the game.

The two game modes are unified more than just graphically. When you choose which buildings to build in your city, they'll actually appear on the tactical map as part of the gameplay. If the barbarians burn your barracks during a battle, you'll lose that building in the strategic game. A whole new level of strategy is in place. The *Total War* games have also been known for massive, epic battles featuring thousands of individual soldiers fighting in real-time. Previously the developers 'faked it', using 2D sprites of soldiers on the 3D battlefield. But that wasn't good enough for *Rome: Total War*: now, every single individual soldier is rendered in 3D. From a distance it looks much more convincing, but the real joy is being able to zoom in on the action and seeing actual combat instead of blocky little men. The level of detail on soldiers—such as the historically accurate armour worn by the Roman legions—is astonishing given that there are still thousands of soldiers on the screen at any given time.

From a gameplay perspective, the graphics give you a much better idea of how a battle is going. You'll see guys stumble and fall or try to run away. Cavalry charges are way more impressive: you can now see men getting knocked aside by horses or thrown in the air. You can even see horses refuse a charge (such as into a prepared wall of spears), sometimes throwing the rider into a crowd of enraged foes. Then you can watch them turn to beat the horseless rider into the dirt. Fun.

A game about the rise of Rome also means some good old fashioned Punic Wars, which means war elephants. Graphically spectacular, there's nothing like seeing a tight formation of elephants rampage into enemy lines. Mind you, War Elephants are dangerous... but they're dangerous to everybody. In my brief time playing the game I had some of my elephants run amok and start squashing my own troops. They're like a wrecking ball that swings both ways. Developers are apparently still tweaking the awesome damage of cavalry charges.

Equally spectacular are the city battles, which are much more dynamic than in *Medieval: Total War*. You can now set up troops along the tops of city walls, where archers can rain death amongst the troops below. (Defensively, you can now shelter your men up under their shields in what was called the 'testudo' (Turtle) formation. Soldiers in the game group together just as their historical counterparts did.) Siege weapons can be used to knock down individual sections of walls, or troops carrying ladders can clamber up the sides. Siege towers are also available, populated by men who can run up and across onto the walls. It's strategically cool and graphically stunning.

## Battles with tactical depth

Terrain plays as important a role as ever, so holding the high ground or hiding in forests are still valid tactics. There are some new twists for *Rome*, however. Roads now appear on the maps, which speed the movement of some troops. And certain lightly-armoured soldiers can now camouflage themselves in tall grass for vicious surprise attacks.

## *Rome: Total War at a glance*

From the designers of *Medieval: Total War*, *Rome: TW* will be released in the autumn. Price to be announced.

[www.totalwar.com/community/rome.htm](http://www.totalwar.com/community/rome.htm)



There are 102 types of units in the game, including dogs, flaming pigs (useful for scaring elephants), and even screeching women or naked barbarians (all these unusual units were actually a historical part of real battles.) Unit formations can also be linked up, so if you want several units of spearmen to maintain an unbroken battle line as they move, you don't have to tediously point and click each one. Units can also disengage from combat easier, so (unlike previous games in the series) battles don't dissolve into a blob of combatants with a foregone conclusion. Troops are now much more manoeuvrable, so that careful strategy can turn a battle in your favour.

In general, combat moves much quicker. Cities in particular are far more tactically diverse than in the previous games. Each is designed to have interesting features—bottlenecks and dead-ends. When you want to conquer a city, you'll have to move your troops in and then hold the town square against a counterattack for a certain period of time. Cities also come into play if there's a revolt among your citizens: most can be put down easily with the right troops. But if your gladiators revolt, look out! They'll pour out of the coliseum... and those teeny-tiny Russell Crowes don't go down easy.

#### Deep strategy for Mediterranean domination

Medieval: Total War was an incredible title, but at times there were so many pieces on the big map that it got insane. The developers at Creative Assembly have streamlined the map some, so that only essential units are depicted. It's a lot easier to see the whole situation now: which roads are free, where the troops are stationed, what the terrain is like, and where the spies are.

Although the map is simpler, there are more strategic options now because of the ability to place units anywhere on the terrain. The Naval game is now more interesting—although there are no real-time battles at sea, you now have to physically move your land units by boat to get them from place to place instead of 'teleporting' them through sea lines as in



Medieval. Rome: Total War begins shortly after Rome has unified the Italian peninsula. From there, you take control of one of the three main Roman groups vying for power. Turns are done on a bi-yearly basis, meaning that seasons affect gameplay (don't try to cross the Alps in the winter.)

Early on the Roman Senate will start giving you 'missions' that will increase your prestige and power—these little goals, such as conquering a city or building a particular trade route—help give the early game some focus.

The problem with most strategy games is that the end game is a foregone conclusion once you conquer your last major opponent—usually the climactic battle happens in the middle of the game and to get to a satisfying conclusion you have to mop up the rest of the map. Not so with Rome: Total War, which gives a historical precedent for much cooler gameplay. Once you've conquered most of the known world, the Senate

itself gets wary of your power, and a civil war is triggered. How do you win? By turning your armies inward, crossing the Rubicon, and attacking Rome itself!

Your greatest challenge and biggest battle is saved for the climax of the game, after which—if you follow in Caesar's footsteps—you will be crowned the Emperor of all of Rome. We've established that that's a good thing. Especially the part with the grapes.

Apparently Rome: Total War is 'more moddable than any other game we made before'. That means that, on top of the half-dozen historical campaigns in the game, and on top of the different playable cultures you can unlock by beating it (the Britons, the Egyptians, the Gauls, etc), the Internet community will be able to create their own units and their own scenarios. The result is a deep, visually incredible strategy game that'll provide months, even years of delicious gameplay online or off.

I can't wait for this one. The toga party will start sometime near the end of this year.







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*"There's a lot of good new stuff in this latest build. Well done to RE on significantly improving the interface to what is already a really fun and involving game."*

*"In what I have seen, the designers have strived to balance out playability with functionality and historical perspective."*

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# The Ottoman Empire

*TheAusterlitz series continues as DENNIS JONES describes this potentially great power ...*

TURKEY IS a position of strange contrasts; a large country with a weak tax rate, a normally large but essentially weak army, long coastlines but a weak navy, a country with a finger in many pies but rarely able to profit from any of them. Turkey can get involved in many situations, but will be hard-pressed to make her voice heard loud in the councils of Europe. Yet Turkey sits in a defensively strong 'corner' of the map and with steady leadership can rise to greatness.

## For a good start

The first considerations for any government must be economic. Without cash and a healthy economy, you cannot build armies or fleets. Without armies and fleets you will not make your way in the world of **Austerlitz**. Turkey has a low tax rate but the advantage of a relatively large population. This should be increased as fast as possible by absorbing the neutral co-ordinates of the Middle-East and by raising population density at home whenever possible. Turkey should make a play for Egypt and the trade city Cairo, and is probably the best situated to back up her claim. Likely rivals will be Naples, Morocco and France.

Troops should be loaded onboard ships and transported across to Egypt. The race for Cairo is one against time and the efficiency of your rivals. You should not be afraid to bargain over the city, as other states will often accept a small concession in return for giving you a free hand. They are operating far from home while you could be supported from Palestine, so they may be nervous. A determined Sultan can make his weight felt in this theatre. If not, you are in for a difficult game!

In parallel with the Egyptian moves, you should have columns moving into Palestine. Your objectives are initially the two ore mines at 67/65 and 74/56, but eventually you want to control all the territory round into Egypt. There are nearly 400,000 neutral citizens in this area, who are worth 20 million Louisdore per year to your treasury. They will also produce 80,000-100,000 new citizens for you per year.

One result of your conquest of Egypt will be the opportunity to move into the Indies via the Red Sea jump-off points. This short communication line allows you to put a lot of troops into the Indies, without sailing the hazardous waters of the Atlantic. Colonial wars, where you have some strategic advantages, can be a good arena to deploy some of your European troops. At least against other countries' colonials, you will have a quality advantage!

The final area to watch in the opening months is the Caucasus. This is less interesting for Turkey but you cannot afford to have Russia establish her borders too close to your homeland. It is probably best to secure an agreement with the Tsar to agree a border, perhaps around the 34/35 line.



*The Ottoman Empire c1800. (Map not from game)*

It is possible for Turkey to establish a flourishing economy. This is a key objective for you. Build your farms below the '35' line for maximum efficiency. With three ore mines you can operate six factories. Build up the lumbercamps, sheep farms, quarries etc to serve a big economy. Note that Turkey, like Russia, is large enough to be able to disperse her main production centres against enemy attack.

## The Turkish army

Turkey should not have any illusions about her armed forces. The army is mainly poor quality, naval morale is among the lowest in the game. Turkey will only be able to fight successful wars if her armies and navies are larger than her enemies. It is here that a large population and a big economy are vital. You need lots of new recruits each month and the money/eqpts to build eight brigades each turn. If you have the citizens but not the finances, you must build poor quality cheap troops. If you have the finances but not the citizens, build better quality/expensive troops.

Once you have established the economy you should aim to build only your best units. The bulk of your infantry should be Palace Guard. These are a poor substitute for Grenadiers but they are the best you have. You will need some Light Infantry for skirmishing. These guys are not too bad. Avoid Warriors and Janitshars as much as possible, except for garrison duty.

In the cavalry arm, you should try to concentrate on Sipahis as much as possible. They are the only cavalry in your stable that are reasonably good. You will need some Hussars for skirmishing duty, Uhlans for use against infantry and the Mamelukes are good value for money.

Only in artillery are the Turks well provided. Consequently, a Turkish army should have proportionately more artillery than other nations. In one famous Austerlitz battle, the Turks were able to smash a Russian army for no losses, simply through the deployment of massive artillery firepower.

All this will be expensive for Turkey, hence the need for six factories

## Austerlitz at a glance

Detailed PBM Napoleonic wargame from Supersonic Games Ltd in the UK ([www.austerlitzpbem.com](http://www.austerlitzpbem.com)), Quirxel games (the designers) in Germany ([www.quirxel.de](http://www.quirxel.de)), SSV in Austria (<http://members.aon.at/postspiel/>) and Austerlitz-Pbem ([www.austerlitz.biz](http://www.austerlitz.biz)) on the web. Charges may vary between companies.

and a rich economy. However, once Turkey starts to be successful, it gains from one or two other factors. All conquered territory is taxed at the same rate as the home population, so conquest and increasing population is beneficial to Turkey. Turkey's economy and large population can better replace losses. Turkey will probably be better placed than her rivals to operate multiple columns in wars of conquest. Finally, numbers can be more important than quality in mathematical battles.

### The surrounding powers

Turkey has three real neighbours: Morocco, Austria and Russia. Morocco is attractive as an opponent because it has an even poorer army. A war over Egypt and Libya is an interesting proposition providing it doesn't become too long drawn out. It will be difficult to conquer Morocco merely because of its size. However, a successful campaign with some bonus EF raises for the troops could be very productive, especially if you then make peace with Morocco or leave it embroiled in a war with Naples.

Russia and/or Austria can be real dangers to Turkey, as history constantly shows. Only geography and smooth diplomacy can help you here. Neither nation can march its armies into your country for long without the risk of other powers intervening. Austria must watch Prussia, the Rhine and Italy; Russia must watch Sweden, Warsaw and Austria. This should really show you that in any defensive war, you should play for time and seek allies on the other side of your enemy.

Opportunities in the early years may often depend on other developments. Russian failure against Sweden or Warsaw is a great opportunity to take southern Russia. You should simultaneously march through the Caucasus and Ukraine, and make amphibious landings in the Crimea area. Likewise, you may get an opportunity to gobble up half of Austria. But these campaigns are risky if initiated by you, rather they should be your reaction to events elsewhere. This is a very passive policy but is probably the best if you want to be successful coming into 1810.

### Historical fact-file

*The Ottoman Empire was founded by Osman I (in Arabic Uthma-n, hence the name Ottoman Empire). As sultan Mehmed II conquered Constantinople (Istanbul) in 1453, the state grew into a mighty empire. The Empire reached its apex under Suleiman the Magnificent in the 16th century when it stretched from the Persian Gulf in the east to Hungary in the northwest; and from Egypt in the south to the Caucasus in the north. After its defeat at the Battle of Vienna in 1683, however, the empire began a slow decline, culminating in the defeat of the empire by the Allies in World War I.*

*In the late 13th century the Seljuq empire had collapsed and Anatolia was divided into hundreds of small states. One of these states was Söğüt, a small tribe settled in river valley of Sakarya. The founder and bey (chief) of the tribe was Ertogrül, the father of Osman I. When Ertogrül died in 1281, Osman became the leader of the tribe and became the founder of a great empire that would exist for more than six centuries.*

*The Ottoman Empire failed to keep up technologically with its European rivals, especially Russia. It suffered a huge naval loss at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. After its defeat at the Battle of Vienna in 1683, the Ottoman Empire began a long period of decline. After the great defeat of the Ottomans at Vienna, Prince Eugene of Savoy led Austrian forces to further victories. By 1699, the whole of Hungary had been conquered from the Ottomans by the Austrians.*

*Western military advisors were imported in an attempt to revive the military power of the Empire, but their abilities to enact change were limited. A parade of French officers were brought in, one of whom was set to be a young artillery officer by the name of Napoleon Bonaparte. However just days before he was to embark for the Near East, the young Bonaparte proved himself useful to the Directory by putting down a Parisian mob and was kept in France.*

*This long decline culminated in the defeat of the empire by the Allies in World War I.*

Information is widely available, but you could try:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottoman\\_Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottoman_Empire)

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# Prisms from Other Galaxies

*DAVE PANCHYK brings things back round to PBM ...*

I'VE BEEN a little distressed recently about my contribution to what I've seen as a preponderance of non-PBM-related articles in *Flagship*, specifically about MMORPGs. I think broadening one's horizons is a good thing, to learn about other kinds of game so that we can amuse ourselves, interact with each other, and miss article deadlines in a number of different ways.

More importantly, though, other styles of game can lend us experiences and different ways of thinking that we can then bring back to enrich our preferred type of game. (There are those who feel such broadening could come from activities in Real Life, but I feel that's going rather too far.) It's like Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*: the hero leaves his or her home, the place of safety and comfort and the known, and goes forth into the world. After many trials, the Hero returns home with the Boon, which can transform the lives of everyone there. Certainly, thinking of myself as 'wandering Hero' is more flattering than 'fat geek who barely budes from the computer'.

For some of us, play-by-mail games fill a hole within us, an escapist impulse to find the Everhome, an idyllic place far from the gnostic-style world of dirt and filth (and jobs and deadlines). This is the search that creates the questing Hero within us. Online worlds quickly became popular for their ability to let players 'live' in them; there was nothing preventing people from spending all their time in an alternate world. These games' broad player base represented a large portion of the genus *gamer*.

If the people who flocked to online games were mostly representative of all people with the gamer's impulse, this makes a paper examining the types of player in such games, written by the man considered the father of the genre, valuable to all of us who play, design and think about games. The Boon of this quest is Dr Richard Bartle's 'Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, Spades: Players Who Suit MUDs', a prism through which we can view our PBM hobby.

The article sets out a taxonomy of the four broad types of player of Multi-User Dungeons (MUDs), the text-based progenitors of today's massively-multiplayer online roleplaying games (MMORPGs). The four types are the achiever, explorer, socializer, and killer.

*Achievers* are those who want to acquire levels, wealth, magical weapons and armor, power within a guild, or all of the above. You may say, 'Sure, everyone wants those things,' but only the achiever goes to great lengths to get them, and thinks about the most effective ways to do so. The tedious cycle of killing monsters, getting their loot, and becoming able to kill bigger monsters is often called the 'levelling treadmill'. You and I might get on an RL treadmill because we need to for health reasons; the achiever is like one of those weird, driven people who train to run marathons.

*Explorers* are driven by a need to discover things: this goes from the cartography of the world, to 'secrets' of the game setting, to the nuts and bolts of the game system itself. This last makes the explorer someone to watch more closely the greater the level of automation of the system.

*Socializers* are, well, socializers. They may be dedicated roleplayers; they may just view the game as a giant chat room with interesting stuff to do. When they participate in activities, the more social, the better: hunting monsters in a group, or crafting items dependent on the contributions of other people.

*Killers* are interested in people, too, but only as the most dangerous game. The challenge of a thinking quarry, the imposition of one's will on

another—these are the things more deeply satisfying to a killer.

It seems that most players who enjoy causing misery for others—the omnipresent 'grief' players, or 'griefers'—are killers. Perhaps it's because player-versus-player (PvP) conflict is at the heart of what they like; I admit to a bias, though, because I dislike them so. Ask any woman who's been sexually harassed in such games if a socializer can be a griever. These divisions aren't impermeable, of course: each player is of a particular bent, but can (or feel they must) engage in other types of behaviour. Usually, though, this is to further their main orientation: achievers may socialize to tell each other about good hunting spots, for instance.

So how are these types relevant to PBM? They help us understand the motivations of fellow players, and bring a new dimension to consider when designing or running a game. Different kinds of game will appeal to different types of players. It seems logical that a wargame will have mostly killers. But which other aspects could a wargame designer encourage?

An in-game system for communication, or out-of-game system like an online forum, facilitates diplomacy and/or trash talk. Have a hall of fame for past game winners? Achievers will like that. And large portions of undiscovered territory, or 'deep' systems requiring much playing-with to uncover their secrets, will keep explorers happy with your game. The Bartle article provides an almost ecological view of how to encourage different player types and keep them in balance.

The fantasy RPG PBM I'm designing will not have much opportunity for players to get together: keep those scrotty killers out by having nothing to interest them. This will also stymie those achievers who like to form groups in the style of a dungeon-crawl game. The system will be mostly transparent to players, so explorers have to focus on game-world exploration rather than metagame fiddling. In-game communication will be limited, but present and easy. (Socializers in this hand-moderated game will have mostly just the world, through the GM, to interact with.)

As an example of an existing game system, *Madhouse's* Nexus-powered games have in-game communication that postal-only players can use as well as online players. However, most of the socializing and thus the bulk of the roleplaying takes place in the out-of-game forum. In *Aspects of Might* (a Nexus game from *Silver Dreamer*, external to *Madhouse*), the forum is cleverly brought in-game, presented as a kind of psychic network that links all Gifted individuals.

I consider *Madhouse's* *DungeonWorld* to be balanced, on the whole. With socializing made possible, roleplaying is possible (if a touch difficult). Its relatively straightforward achievement orientation, and the breadth of the game world, make it a rich playground for achievers and explorers. And to judge by several testy in-game messages concerning missing henchmen, I'd say killers have been able to find gratifying activities as well.

This four player types model is a useful prism to use as both a player and a designer. It encourages us to ask, first, what type of player we are, and what kind of player we like to be around or encourage in a game. The prism lets us see an entire spectrum of human experience out of something we might have once thought was transparent.

## Links

The original article: [www.mud.co.uk/richard/hcds.htm](http://www.mud.co.uk/richard/hcds.htm)

The author of this article: [mandrake@mandrakegames.com](mailto:mandrake@mandrakegames.com)

# On Screen

*GLOBETROTTER expresses both distaste (so what do you think?) and praise ...*

ENOUGH WITH the World War II games. Please. Somebody think of the children. I just found out they're making a sequel to **Mortyr**, of all things. Surely, that's just what the world needs: yet another single-player title attempting to re-create the same time period that's already been done before in approximately nine hundred million games. If I see one more Nazi, I'm probably going to tear my own eyeballs out and feast upon them like grapes. This also goes for tactical military sims. What's with this huge focus on 'realism' in games? What ever happened to, you know—having fun? I want guns that shoot giant footballs made out of lasers, and when they hit people the people catch on fire, run around screaming, and then explode in showers of toxic goo! I'm not really interested in knowing that the path of the bullet that someone shot at me from across the map was accurately modelled on a real-life assault rifle.

Speaking of which, a friend of mine recently emailed me about the PC game **Battlefield Vietnam**: 'Given the circumstances and consequences of the Vietnam conflict, is it right to be making games based on the "war"? ... I can't remember seeing a single pro-Vietnam War film, and given gaming's infancy as an art form, is it really sensible to tackle one of the most morally debatable events of the last century? And using a slogan such as "Death From Above!" to advertise a 'Nam game seems dangerously ignorant to me. Okay, fine, glamorise killing Demons or Rollerskating Zombie Robots all you want, but this is a little short-sighted, surely?'

## Is making War seem 'cool' dangerous?

Fictionalized game accounts of real world history—whether it's **Battlefield Vietnam** or **Dynasty Warriors**—tend to trivialize and, as games are made today, inevitably divorce the content from its meaning. This is a troubling trend. The politics of making a game like **Battlefield Vietnam** are a sticky issue that our industry is just starting to tackle. I can think of very few games that espouse any significant, overt political content—**Deus Ex: Invisible War** and **Conflict: Desert Storm** spring to mind—but it's clear that this issue is becoming increasingly relevant if not increasingly addressed by game makers and journalists as we go through these growing pains as an industry.

I'll-considered games like **Battlefield Vietnam** add to those pains. The bloodless—both literally and figuratively—abstraction of this conflict serves nobody's purpose but marketers. Check this quote from EA's official site: 'Go to war as a Viet Cong, Green Beret, or other soldier types, each with multiple character skins.' To read something so emotionless and analytical about something so profound is chilling. To turn such a desperate conflict into a T-rated joyride is disturbing.

As anyone who's paying attention to the world today knows, the politics of war are complex and painful. Vietnam was a wildly controversial war which dragged on for years, polarizing people's opinions. Whether or not you fall on the pro or con side of the discussion, it's clear that Vietnam is a wildly complex and difficult issue; a highly simplified entertainment-oriented representation of it completely misses out on all that, reducing it to a low-grade fantasy.

And the content itself can do little more than open old wounds when it's treated as such. Imagine being a Vietnam veteran and walking into Best Buy. You see a sprawling shelf of embossed, full-colour covers that invite the current crop of gamers—most of which weren't even born during the Vietnam era—to take part in a glorified, cartoony, abstracted version of the war. I can't even imagine what this would feel like, let alone the hellish reality that the soldiers faced during that conflict. To say that it makes me feel uneasy is an understatement.

And finally I'd posit that nostalgia is dangerous—at least when it comes to situations like Vietnam. Romanticizing the war, adding in top chart hits from the popular artists of the time, and wrapping it in an

attractive visual presentation will draw people in and make the whole thing seem, well, cool, and that's questionable.

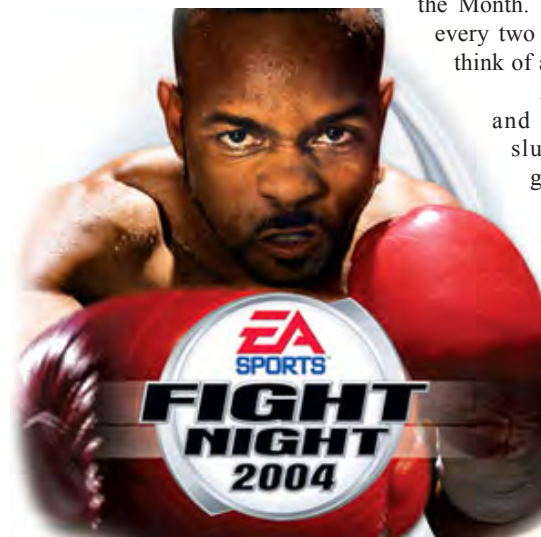
While I don't think that video games necessarily lead to violent acts, I also have met too many gamers who've developed a clinical fascination with automatic weaponry. Extrapolating this across a historical conflict with so much that we still need to question to fully understand, I worry that the meaning will be lost on the audience entirely because the game's design is too simplistic to present it. We're left with analytical, emotionless appreciation for the game and its elements on one hand, and shallow enjoyment of the war and its superficial trappings on the other.

Where does the reality of the situation fit? It doesn't, and far too few gamers seem to be concerned about it. Until the medium's social consciousness grows up at an even pace with the themes it tries to express, games like **Battlefield Vietnam** are problematic at best. It's not art that deals with an issue; it's a product and it ignores the issue.

Note: The author is aware that he is expressing only one side of the argument. Want to put the opposite side? Then contact the editor!

## Game of the Month: Fight Night 2004 (Xbox/PS2)

Finally, for this month, henceforth I'm going to be featuring a Game of the Month. Yes, I know it's every two months, but you think of a better name!



Although April and May were a sluggish time for game releases, a couple of titles really stood out. While I've really enjoyed **Painkiller**, when it comes time to choose a Game of the Month, I think a more innovative approach deserves to win.

With that in mind, the choice became clear. It may not be for everyone, but **Fight Night 2004** pushes the envelope where few games have tread. Plus, it's just plain fun.

For sports games, the norm is to introduce incremental upgrades every year. Every now and then a significant change is made in a series. Very rarely does a title do something so innovative that it makes a quantum leap in the genre. Yet that's exactly what we have here in **Fight Night 2004**. Born from the ashes of EA Sports' **Knockout Kings**, the game eschews the common face-button controls of its predecessor boxing games and introduces the most novel control scheme ever devised for a boxing game. Its 'Total Control Punching' and 'Total Control Defence' make inventive use of the PlayStation 2's and Xbox's analogue sticks to offer the most lifelike control system on the market.

**Fight Night** is more than just a fancy control scheme. The gameplay is outstanding, its online play (PS2 only) is fabulous, its unlockable features are copious, and the character models look just like the real thing. EA Sports has taken its boxing franchise in a whole new direction with **Fight Night**, and it looks like the long and prosperous start of a championship run.

<http://www.easports.com/games/fightnight2004/home.jsp>

# Roleplaying in The Maybe

*LISA FORDHAM looks at Continuum, a game of time-travel ...*

FROM THE stories of H G Wells to the wormholes of Quantum Mechanics, people have been fascinated by time travel. The interesting article in *Flagship #107* by Chris Morris on the problems posed by time in gaming, had me rummaging in a pile of roleplaying stuff for a new game that recently arrived in the post.

**Continuum** (shades of 'Q' here) takes the ability to travel through time as a given for some people and ponders what ramifications this would have to their society. How would you prevent paradox (the focus of bad science fiction stories everywhere), what would you do with your time, and how would you interact with others of your time?

## Invitation to Dance (Maxim #4)

In Continuum, Spanners (those who can time travel) are selected from among Levellers (who can't) by circumstance and mindset. Those who witness a 'span' *may* have their memory altered *or* they may get an 'invitation to dance', where time travel is demonstrated to them and reactions noted. If they can accept the idea, they may become Spanners, able to travel through time and space at will, but with limitations.

As a Spanner, you quickly learn that paradox is painful to you and to society as a whole. Any action that causes paradox causes 'frag'. Frag is the breaking of the spanner into multiple possibilities. It's very painful, leading those who are fragged and those who know them to try and fix the problem as quickly as possible. If frag builds up, the affected spanner may eventually become little more than a ghost. This is a bad thing. So, any attempt to cause paradox is met by 'overwhelming sentient force' by players and NPCs alike, leading to time combat where you try to stop your opponent before he can even start.

This idea leads to the Maxims of Time Travel being behavioural, rather than physical. The Society of Spanners acts according to certain rules to prevent problems, rather than because it is physically required.

## Information is All (Maxim #1)

As one learns more about the continuum (Information Is All) one can advance in ability to span, gaining both distance and time exponentially. Beginning spanners are limited to one year of travel Up and Down the timeline per day, and one mile of 'Level' travel per span. More advanced Spanners multiply these limits by 10 each time they advance.

Novices are overseen by a more experienced mentor, who shows them the ropes and helps them integrate into the Continuum. They learn of the different Fraternities who serve necessary functions for the Societies as a whole, and may be joined by Spanners if they have a calling and the right skills. They may also be helped by their 'Elders' who can pop in as a Gemini incident and provide guidance (and sometimes outright orders). It is essential at this stage that Spanners (and their players) learn to record all Spans and incidents so as to prevent later Frag when their Yet is not yet fulfilled.



Advanced Spanners may mentor others, or participate in the 'Great Game' where they guide Societies towards the future of the 'Inheritors' where Spanners are considered inadequate.

## Measure Twice, Cut Once (Maxim #3)

Once a player decides on a background and history for the Spanner, character creation is fairly simple. Three Attributes (Body, Mind and Quick), Skills, and rare 'Benefits' are purchased with character points. Negative 'limits' may be randomly rolled to obtain additional character points if needed.

To use a skill, dice are rolled and subtracted from the character's Attributes and Skills. Negative totals fail, Positive or zero totals succeed. Specific rolls may be automatic successes or failures. If skills are contested, highest total wins. A person who has significantly more skill in an action will always win over lesser skill through Superiority rules.

Of course, given the nature of the game, a character can always learn or improve a skill during play merely by spending the time and spanning

## *Continuum at a glance*

Time travel based roleplaying game from Atherco. £12.99  
[www.aetherco.com](http://www.aetherco.com)



back to where they are. But this does age the character and may lead to a situation where an opponent can catch the character unawares and frag them. But all actions have consequences.

Span level can be increased after sufficient in-game (and real-world) time, if appropriate requirements (including no accumulated frag) are met. Higher levels mean more ability and more responsibility. And of course, more involvement in Society.

#### Respect Your Elders. They Know More Than You (Maxim #2)

The Keanu Reeves 'Bill and Ted' movies, although somewhat lacking in plot, are excellent guides to the principles of Time Travel. At one point, they go back in time to instruct their junior selves as to what to do, in what Continuum calls a Gemini incident. It is essential that they later actually go back and do the instructing. They manage to escape from jail by remembering to later on place the equipment that they need within reach of their past selves.

Finally, in the second movie, they learn the musical skills that they need by spending the year needed to learn them elsewhere and spanning back to where they were supposed to be. The consequences of this are shown by their increased hair growth, and by the babies that they have fathered in that time.

Of course, it is necessary that you keep track of your Yet to be and make sure that what is done is actually done, to prevent Frag from accumulating. The possibilities of your future coming to haunt your present give you a plethora of roleplaying opportunities.

All this is taught to your characters before play (In-Between) and during play as they integrate in a 'Corner' of spacetime with a skilled mentor. It is always good to have an NPC guide when you start a new system.

#### Never Fight For a Lost Cause (Maxim #5)

Unfortunately, not every Spanner is willing to play by the rules. Narcissists are Spanners who have decided that what they want for the timeline should supersede the general history. These are the ones who cause Paradox, fragging much of the continuum. And when this occurs, 'Overwhelming Sentient Force' must be applied to thwart them and restore the status quo.

Time Combat is the process by which characters interact with those who Frag them or their compatriots. Actions in Time Combat may take days, or even weeks, as characters learn the best places to interfere with each other and prevent changes from occurring. Time Combat may involve large scale battle, or small changes that cause (or undo) Paradox. It only ends when one side escapes, is physically beaten, or Fragged into non-existence. It is likely that low level characters will experience at least one time combat before they advance, as it provides much roleplaying opportunity, as well as a chance to really wrap your mind around the possibilities (and dangers) of time travel.

#### Mastering the Maxims

Although the concepts are complex, the system is relatively easy to follow. And to help you, there is an extensive game-mastering section that includes play hints, extra information about each stage of the game, and scenario ideas for the players.

Also included to help warp your mind around Space-Time are a series of stories which illustrate the Continuum through the eyes of a particular character as she advances from Novice up through the ranks. We see her learning the basics, interacting with her Fraternity and the various other Fraternities, mentoring new Spanners and playing the Great Game, with a Time Combat along the way for good measure. The stories are interesting on their own, but perfect for illustrating the roleplaying opportunities that the game mechanics provide.

In the end, the roleplaying opportunities of this game are just too spectacular to turn down. Although it requires a mildly warped and somewhat imaginative Gamemaster, I find that most good ones meet this description on their own. And once the basics are mastered, I am sure that you will meet with success finding your Yet to Be.

I highly recommend Continuum, and look forward to the upcoming Narcissist.

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# Convention Reports

*BrightCon, Cymru Con, BayCon, Beer & Pretzels weekend - our spies were there ...*

## BRIGHTCON - Mark Stretch

The Brighton Boardgames Group is a small group of enthusiastic games players who meet every week in Brighton. In addition they run occasional tournaments for members and a number of non-members who travel down for the day. Over the last few years the most popular new boardgame has been **Puerto Rico**. The first few Puerto Rico tournaments in the UK have started to spring up. The Brighton board gamers decided to run a tournament and hence on 28 March 2004 a number of games players made the trip down to sunny Brighton to play Puerto Rico.

Conventions and tournaments vary greatly. At one end of the scale is an event like the Mind Sports Olympiad which has many thousands of entrants from around the world. BrightCon is at the smaller end of the scale, with around a dozen players at each of the tournaments run by the club. The size means that you soon get to know everyone and there's a friendly feel to all of the games as a result.

Firm favourite before the start of the competition was Markus Welbourne from Essex, who is an acknowledged master at the game. He spends much of his time playing the game online against the Germans and learning from them. The luck of the draw meant that I got the pleasure of Markus in the first game. True to form he dominated the game and nobody else got close. There was one advantage to being on the receiving end of the lesson, in that it meant we were able to start early on the magnificent lunch spread. Two more games followed, which by virtue of not playing against Markus I managed to win. Thus I was in the top five and therefore made the cut for the final. This meant another game against Markus, who by that stage had won all three games. We were joined by Chris Dawe from Surrey and two locals (Howard Goble and Martin Devereux). Despite the best efforts of the rest of us, we barely managed to slow Markus down. Markus kept his 100% record, winning the final by the same country mile that he had won every other game, with Chris a distant second.

After prize-giving there was the chance to play a few more games before the drive home. We ended up playing a quick game of **Media Mogul**, the brand new release from *JKLM Games*. This is due to be one of the games in the Spielchamps competition so it seemed a good idea to see how it worked. The object is to control a global media empire of TV, radio and newspaper interests to attract viewers. Once you have viewers you can then make loads of money by advertising to them, though inevitably that bores a number of them. Of course there is only a limited number of people and fights ensue to ensure that they watch your programmes rather than the other channels. It sounds straightforward but things aren't as easy as they seem. After that it was time to brave the motorway home.

Further events are planned by the group later in the year. Details will be on their website when finalised.

[www.brighton-boardgames.org.uk](http://www.brighton-boardgames.org.uk)

## CYMRU CON - John Cunningham

About 15 minutes from central Cardiff (or about 11 quid as the taxi flies) is the small village of Taffs Well where *Cardiff Games* hold their annual Cymru Con gamesfair. This year it ran from Friday, 19th March through to the evening of Sunday the 21st. This was my first Cymru Con - despite having lived now in Cardiff for four years, the fates had always conspired against me, so I was glad that I was finally getting to go.

Overall, the event seemed to be an even mix of boardgames, role-playing and card games, with a few bits of miscellany such as PBM thrown in. One of the most popular oddities (probably helped by its role as a easy time-filler) was an updated version of shove ha'penny called **Pitch Car**, where one flicks disks around a track whilst trying to avoid

falling through the gaps in the crash barriers.

*MiddleEarth/Harlequin* had a stand to promote their **Middle-Earth PBM** game - and a new computer program that allows players to share their data (presumably amongst allies rather than sending maps stating 'I am here, love Frodo' to the Nazgul). As well as chatting with them to discuss their games and stand (which I was mightily impressed by - all very professional looking for a relatively small gamesfair), I was also eager to have a pick of their brains about PBM in general. I've been writing a PBM myself and am all ears for any advice on how to turn my fledgling work of genius into a product that would keep me in a lifestyle to which I'd like to become accustomed. I sought out the hard-nosed, ruthless business types on the stand (well, Sam and Ed actually, a rather cheerful and friendly pair) and settled in for a session of wisdom reception.

Unfortunately, in lesson one I learn that the best advice in attempting to make a PBM into a money spinner is not to start from here. This, coupled with the fact that lesson two is not to start at all begins to form a pattern in my mind. After a useful lesson in recent PBM history, the pattern is beginning to form letters in my mind and they're of the 'Turn back now, fool' variety, though in 72 point and with more expletives. Thankfully, I've never found that living in a fantasy world has restrained me and suddenly a Dagger of the Naive (+3 against undead and negative financial projections) appears in my hand - I use it to flip the lid of my coffee and once again I'm back trying to steal people's rings. Samwise's advice was certainly well-intentioned but for the moment at least, I'll mortgage a little more of my soul.

Back in the show, I'm invited into a tournament of **Game of Thrones**. It seems like a very well known game, but for those of you who are as uninitiated in specialist card games as me, this is based on the Epic fantasy series of the same name by George R R Martin (one of the truly great ones, up there with *Riftwar* and *Covenant* - if you like your fantasy well-written, political and thoroughly plausible, have a read). The game philosophy is based on each player having a deck of cards, all belonging to one of the great houses in the books, with the various houses of course each having different attributes and powers. I won't go into a full review of the game, suffice it to say that I had several games of *Game of Thrones* whilst there - an absorbing game and many of the players present had obviously played many times. Hearing 'Ah, Khal Drogo!' on a couple of occasions, I realised that this was the name of a character in the books, and not merely a smoker's cough. The players themselves were an exceedingly pleasant bunch and despite the fact that we were playing an official tournament, were only too tolerant of my reading the cards at a snail's pace. They would also gently point out when I was about to do foolish moves, for which I was very grateful. Much fun.

Other card games that I saw played included the ubiquitous **Magic: the Gathering** and a popular one based on American wrestling called **WWF: Raw Deal**. Not my subject matter, I suspect - I bet Khal Drogo with bloodrider attachment would whip them good. See? I was paying attention.

There were a number of boardgames being played - including **Lord of the Rings: Labyrinth**, **Ormuli De** and **Alhambra**, though unfortunately my timing was such that I wasn't present when **Settlers of the Stone Age** kicked off - I've bought a number of the other variants so wouldn't have minded having a play. Next time I'll try to pay a little more attention.

Next time? Yep, I've found where Taffs Well is and, importantly, where the local coffee shop is. See you there next year.

*[Cardiff Games are in Duke Street Arcade, Cardiff - see our Game Shop listing on page 47 for more details]*

**BEER & PRETZELS game weekend - Eric Ridley**

The Beer & Pretzels game weekend took place on the 15th and 16th of May in Burton on Trent in Staffordshire. It was primarily a board games convention but also had a healthy amount of CCGs and Wargames. There were three 'trade stands', one bring and buy, one board games booth and a table that had a lot of miniatures and the like to sell. There were also some Demo Tables, Looney labs, Steve Jackson Games, HeroClix and a new release stand of a game called Dragon & Pearl for which the designer was on hand. The real star of the show was the awesome games library that was presented and could be used for free by all visitors. There were hundreds of games ranging from Bewitched to Sunken City and all of which got a good playing.

The con was most certainly enjoyable, people were friendly, the atmosphere was good and there were lots to do. I would be very surprised if anyone who attended had anything negative to say about the con.

**BAYCON - Mark Stretch**

It may seem strange given the name, but BayCon isn't situated on the coast. Many years ago when Baycon first started it was held in Torquay, which gave rise to the name. The venue has now moved inland to a motel in Kennford near Exeter, but the name has stayed the same. BayCon sees around 150 people turn up in Devon in the weekend after Easter to play games. It is a social con, and the primary purpose is to have fun. Many families come down and if some of the family don't want to play games all the time there is plenty to keep them occupied nearby in Devon (Exeter town, Dartmoor, Torquay, England's highest waterfall and numerous other attractions). Meanwhile those who want to play games can, staying up all night if the desire takes them in the conference rooms at the hotel. The bar onsite and nearby country pubs provide refreshment, or there is the option of heading further afield if you wish.

There is a wide variety of games played at BayCon. There is a huge games library there for everyone to use. To give you a feel, the games that I played this year were: **Age of Steam, Alhambra, Alles im Eimer, Amun Re, Carcassonne, Industria, Magna Grecia, Medici, Medina, Metro, Princes of the Renaissance, Puerto Rico, Ra, San Juan, Tigris & Euphrates, Tikal and Tongiaki.**

The convention is held in the convention rooms of the motel, which gives everyone plenty of space. If things do get full then there is space in the bar for anyone who can't find a table elsewhere (or is desperate for a drink). The 18xx players, of which there are many, tend to occupy one of the rooms whilst the others are in the main games room. The hotel bar will provide food and drink whilst on site, with food delivered to your table if you want to keep your gaming time to a maximum. Many people tend to pop out to one of the pubs in the village during the evening to get a change of scenery.

If you wish you could spend your entire weekend in the hotel playing games. Not everyone likes to do this though. Exeter is nearby for shopping and a bit of culture. Dartmoor is available for those who would rather escape the rat race. As a result of this, Baycon is a friendly family convention as there are alternatives available for everyone.

One of the main events of the convention is the Victor Ludorem. All the results of games played go into a big computer. At the end of the convention the computer churns out a ranking list of everyone there based on how many games they have all won. Rather like Formula 1, and despite everyone's best efforts Markus Welbourne usually wins. There are usually a couple of other competitions for the latest releases. This year there were competitions for **Carcassonne Die Burg** and **Blue Moon**.

*Leisure Games* usually come down to take over a corner of the rooms to set up a stall to sell games. Just make sure that you get in quick if there is a popular new game out. I remember that when **Puerto Rico** was released they had sold out of it before they had finished unpacking the van.

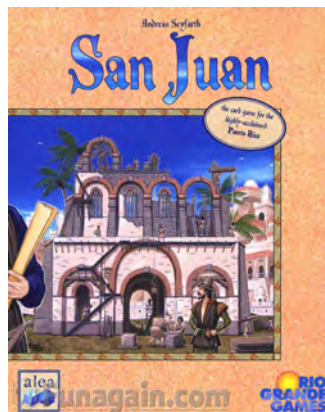
One feature of BayCon is that a number of games designers are there. So you can have breakfast with Reiner Knizia if you wish before play testing his latest design. These playtests may not always work but it does mean that you will get to see the games in their original version and potentially get credited in the rules.





# Pevans' Perspective

*PEVANS looks at some of the latest board and card games coming soon ...*



I'VE BEEN TO a few games conventions in recent weeks, which has been great fun. Apart from anything else, I got to play the first of this year's crop of new games. So I thought I'd give you some pointers from the games I've tried.

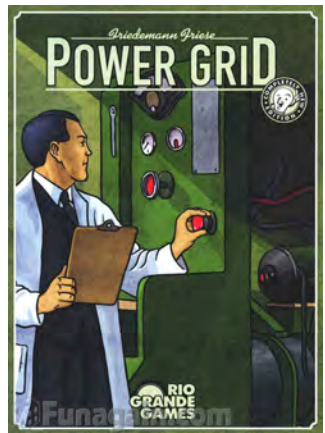
**San Juan** is already making waves. This is the card game version of **Puerto Rico** that was previewed at Spiel last year. I found it a bit strange on first playing, but soon got the hang of it. Once you know what you're doing, the game plays pretty quickly. So it's being played a lot. What makes

it strange is that the cards are everything in the game. Each card is a building, but it can also be a good, a payment, a penalty or a discard.

So, you start **San Juan** with a hand of cards. When you get the chance to play one in front of you as a building, you have to pay the appropriate number of cards. It doesn't matter what they are, they just go onto the discard pile. First decision: what do I want to build, what am I prepared to throw away? Every building does something. A lot of them produce goods - which is shown by a face-down card from the deck. Goods can be 'sold' (ie discarded) for other cards, which go into your hand. It took me a while to get used to this - you never even see what cards those goods are! The rest of the buildings give you special privileges - usually extra cards or discounts in a variety of amusing ways. This is the heart of the game. Some of the building combinations are quite powerful. But you'll only learn this by playing the game. And there are lots of different strategies to try out - assuming you get the cards for them.

As with **Puerto Rico**, the game is controlled by players choosing a role each turn. Everybody gets to do something (sell goods, play a building), but the first player has some privilege. The game ends when somebody gets their twelfth building and you tot up victory points. Some expensive buildings give very useful bonuses in the final count.

**San Juan** is quick, fun and challenging and supports diverse strategies. And thus plays differently every time, depending on what the other players are up to. Recommended (though I have to say that I still prefer the longer challenge of **Puerto Rico**). Designed by *Andreas Seyfarth*, **San Juan** is published by *Rio Grande Games* (in English) and *alea* (in German). Shop price is around £15 (\$25 in the US).



I was rather taken with **Power Grid**. Hands up: who knows **Funkenschlag**? I thought so: some, but not many. **Funkenschlag** is one of *Friedemann Friese's* clever games, published in 2001 (by 2F Spiele), but only in a limited edition. The object of the game is to supply power to the most cities. Players bid for power plants, pay to build power lines (drawing them on the map), pay for fuel and then gain income by supplying electricity. As you can see, the mechanics fit together nicely.

Friedemann has now developed a new version of the game, which *Rio*

*Grande* is publishing in English as **Power Grid**. The big difference is the board: it's a proper, mounted board, with a map of Germany on one side and the US on the other. Cities and connections are already on the board.

You pay for a specific link, rather than paying as you draw connections. This has been cleverly done so that you have pretty much the same opportunities as you did in the original game.

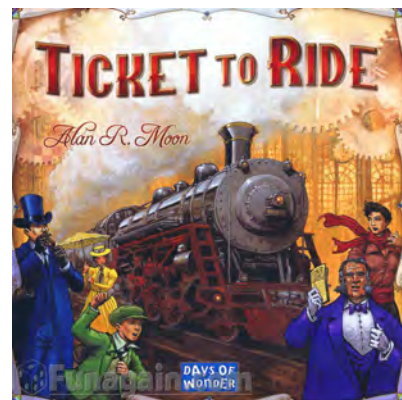
Other than that, the game hasn't changed much. First thing is: which power plants do you want - and how much can you pay?! Take a look at what fuel you need and what other people are going for. The price of fuel goes up as people buy more. So a coal-fired station can be cheap to run if everybody else is burning oil. You also need big enough power stations to supply all your cities (or you won't get as much money). And you can only have a limited number of stations. At some point you'll have to junk smaller stations and buy bigger ones. That gives you a bit of a feel for the game.

Your overall aim is to build up. You need money to do this. So you've got to buy fuel and power stations to generate the electricity to give you the money to expand further. Add in lots of little tactical niceties (turn order can be important when buying fuel, for example) and you've got a cracking game.

Highly recommended. Shop price is about £30 (\$45 in the US).

Do we need another train game? Well, we've got another good one.

The game is **Ticket to Ride**, the latest from designer *Alan Moon*. If you're a fan of railway games, you'll have real déjà vu with this one. I immediately thought of **Union Pacific** when I saw the game. There are train pieces for each player and lots of routes between American cities to place them on. But **Ticket to Ride** is immediately different. You collect cards so that you can play a set of the same colour and fill in a route of that colour. You get points for this - more for longer routes. **Ticket to Ride** ends when one person runs out of pieces, so the board is pretty full by then. And players get bonus (or penalty!) points.



The big points are for connecting two cities with your colour. You start with some target routes and can pick up more during the game. This means you've got an incentive for building a network, rather than just plonking down pieces on the long connections. Especially as the points count against you if you haven't got the route! There are lots of points available from these 'tickets', so it's well worth going for them. Each turn you either pick up cards or you play cards. If there's a card you need, you grab it. Unless you need to make sure of a route (you really don't want to be blocked out of a city you have a ticket for). But keep an eye on how many trains everybody else has got. It's bad news if you've still got cards and pieces left over at the end. And keep track of the cities you need to connect for your tickets!

Play is pretty quick as the decisions are usually straightforward. So **Ticket to Ride** is a medium-strength strategy game. It's easy to get in to, harder to do well. With experienced players, scores can be high (twice round the 80 point scoring track!), which makes it very competitive. Recommended. It's published by *Days of Wonder* (in the US). Shop price is around £30 (\$40 in the US). The publishers are planning to release a Europe board later this year.

The immediate appeal of **Memoir '44** is the playing pieces: model soldiers, tanks and guns in grey and green. It takes me back! I tried out the Arnhem scenario. Tiles laid on the board give us Arnhem town, the

Rhine and the bridge. The British are in the town; the Germans have some infantry behind the town, but their main force is on the other side of the river.

Playing the Germans, my strategy was obvious: get those tanks across the bridge and throw those pesky British out of the town. The first obstacle is that the game system restricts my options. Each turn I play a card, allowing me to move and fight with some of my troops. Most of the cards are for a specific part of the battlefield: left flank, right or centre. So, I need some right flank cards to move up the tanks. Then centre cards to get them across the bridge. Ah, the bridge! The rules are that you can't deviate from the path across the bridge. So any units forced to retreat (one of the results on the special dice you roll when you attack) won't be able to and will take casualties instead. And then I find out just how powerful artillery is in this game. The British forces have two artillery units sitting in the centre of the board. My tanks are heading straight at their gun muzzles. Not that it matters: artillery doesn't need a line of sight and its effects are not reduced by distance or shelter. So Pete, my opponent, just has to draw enough centre cards to keep firing his guns.

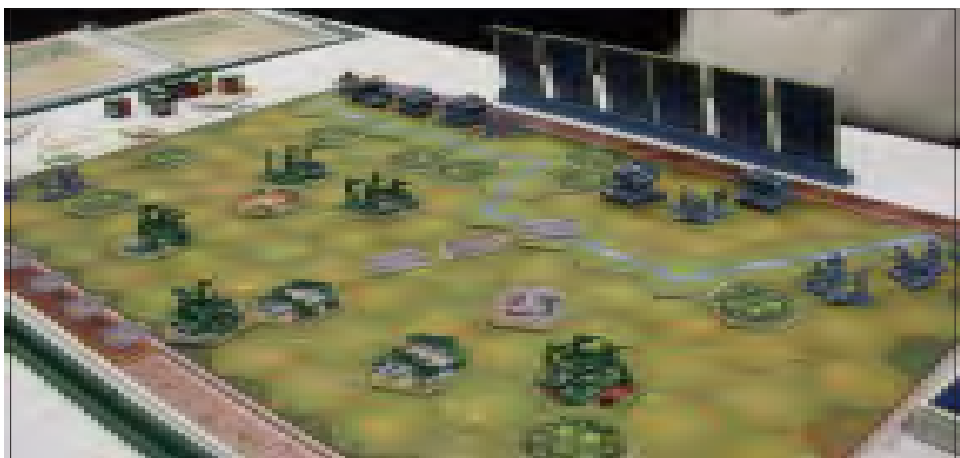
Predictably, the game ends with wreckage all over the bridge (and in the river) and a win for the British. Turning the tables, we play the scenario the other way round (as recommended in the rules). Pete manages to get a couple of tanks across the bridge, but the end result is the same. It's good to get revenge!

If you've come across **Battle Cry**, you'll recognise that Memoir '44 is the same game system. Designer *Richard Borg* has adapted it for the Western Front of World War Two. The Arnhem scenario, he tells me later, is the toughest! I was playing a pre-production version of the game, which is due out in June. Published by *Days of Wonder*, the game will have some fifteen scenarios. These cover the war from the Normandy landings onwards. I am told that there is also an 'Overlord' scenario, allowing up to eight players to recreate the whole of the D-Day landings. I'm a fan of **Battle Cry** and **Memoir '44** looks just as good. It's not everybody's cup of tea, but I recommend it. Retail price in the USA is set to be \$50; I expect it to be over £40 in the UK.

I was intrigued by **Dos Rios**, too. What are these strips of blue cardboard for? Well, they form the two rivers of the title, 'flowing' across the board. *Franz-Benno Delonge* has come up with another very abstract game about placing bits on the board. Here you are marching your people across the board and placing dams to divert the rivers. Then one or other type of field will produce - and earn money for anyone with a dobber in an irrigated field.

So that's what the dams are for: making sure your fields pay out and other people's don't. There are careful rules for how the rivers flow. This should allow you to predict what will happen, but you can still get it wrong. I ended up virtually channelling one river to get it just where I wanted. The money you accumulate is used to build houses on the board and these are what you need to win. So, move dobbers to manipulate rivers to gain income to build houses to win. Plus you can scare off other players' pieces, taking useful real estate for yourself.

It should be subtle stuff. The game I played turned out rather less so. My turn was quite fun. I've got to work out what I can do with my limited points. Decide on the best option and carry it out. All the while aiming towards my overall strategy. Clever stuff. The issue is that the situation



*Memoir 44 in progress (photograph by Pevans)*

on the board changes radically while I'm waiting for my next turn. The other players divert the rivers and remove my dobbers. So next turn I'm pretty much starting from scratch again. I can't plan between turns. And there's nothing to do while I'm waiting. This is not an uncommon situation, but I felt I was waiting too long in **Dos Rios**. Having said that, the game has been well received by other people. Perhaps I need to play it with different people. And I expect it will play much faster with players who know the game. So, one to try again and, I suggest, one for you to try for yourselves. It costs about £35 in the shops (\$50 in the US).

I think I've mentioned before that I have a real dichotomy when it comes to *Michael Schacht's* games. Some are absolutely brilliant. Others I find ghastly. So, we come to **Hansa** (published in English by *Uberplay* and in



German by *Abacusspiele*). Now, I'm a sucker for games about trading, so the Hanseatic League connection has me interested from the start. What I found was a clean game system that challenges players to make better decisions than their opponents. Sounds like a winner!

Starting at the end: we're trying to collect trade goods - counters showing barrels in various colours. To turn them in to victory points, I have to sacrifice one of my trading posts at a city. The trading posts cost trade goods to set up, but are also worth points at the end of the game. I buy trade goods at a city, spending the cash I get each turn - having the most trading posts at a city means I get the cash when players buy things there. The cities are spread around the Baltic Sea - though I don't know whether they were all in the Hanseatic League. My turn is regulated by moving a wooden ship between the cities on the board. I can only do one thing at each city and have to pay to move the ship. And I can only move the ship along the arrows available. So each turn, I'm working out my options with the money available to me. Doing nothing isn't usually an option because I can only keep so much cash. And there's a risk in holding trade goods: if someone else converts that colour to victory points, I'll lose my counter.

Decisions, decisions. But nothing too difficult and all things that can be resolved quickly. So, why do I like **Hansa** and not **Dos Rios**? First off, I can do some planning between turns in **Hansa**. Or at least assess the options. Plus the game plays quickly and smoothly, so the waiting time is short. And the game is more interesting. I am quite taken with **Hansa**. It reminds me a bit of **Web of Power** (aka **Cardinal & König**), my favourite *Schacht* game, though it's not quite in the same league. So, another game I recommend. Shop price is \$30 in the US, so I expect it'll be over £20 in the UK.



# Virtual Worlds: Real-life Money

*COLIN FORBES discusses the pros and cons of trading in-game advantages ...*

JUST A GAME? Not for a **Star Wars Galaxies** player who recently sold his account on Ebay for a little over \$4000. Look around a little and you'll find that this sort of thing isn't unusual, far from it in fact. The virtual worlds of internet gaming are generating substantial sums of real life cash. For instance, take the case of Julian Dibbell, an accomplished and well-respected journalist. And while he usually works in relative anonymity, his website\* reveals something rather startling:

'On April 15, 2004, I will truthfully report to the IRS that my primary source of income is the sale of imaginary goods, and that I earn more from it, on a monthly basis, than I have ever earned as a professional writer.'

Dibbell is a trafficker in the currency and items of the MMORPG **Ultima Online**, players of which often pay two or three hundred pounds out of game for a pair of in-game magic gloves. But Dibbell's share of the market in Ultima Online goods is small beer: at any given moment, there may be more than \$150,000 worth of such items for sale on eBay alone, where sellers justify their asking prices with statements like, 'You are paying for time taken to acquire this item.'

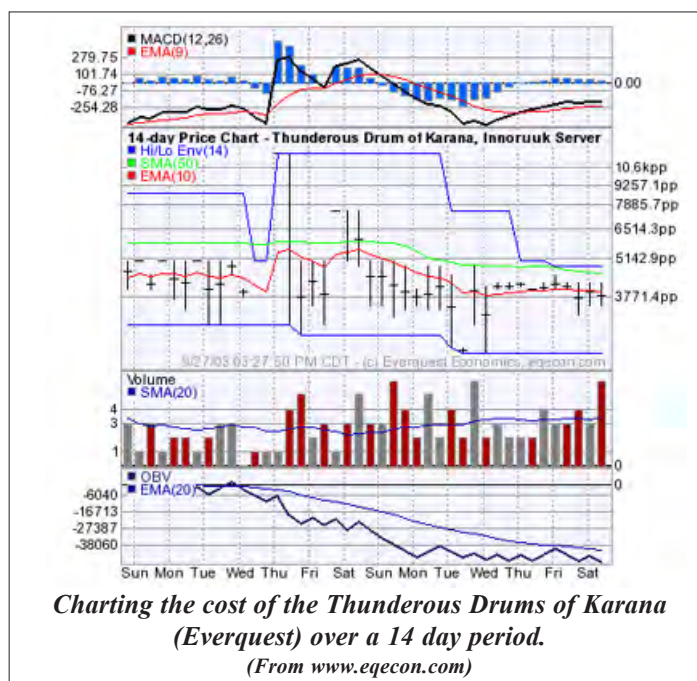
Ultima Online is hardly the only game that fosters large-scale secondary-market trading. Similar markets exist for games such as **Dark Age of Camelot**, **Everquest**, **GemStone**, **Second Life** and others, and there is even an online virtual currency exchange.

In fact, in economic terms, online worlds used for gaming are becoming indistinguishable from real-world markets. For instance, let's say you have just bought a new MMORPG. Well, you can go to a website and, for a sum of Earth money, you can obtain a sum of game credits ready for you to collect from a player trader once you load up the game. It's not unlike going to the post office or travel agent to exchange currencies before going on holiday.

In *Flagship #106*, Robert Shapiro mentioned the incredible economic powerhouse that is the world of Norrath in the online game Everquest. Norrath is the world's 77th richest country in terms of GDP and its currency is worth considerably more than the Japanese yen. And anyone can have a slice of this cyber-generated wealth. Just sit in front of your computer and play games. That's what a company called Black Snow did in Mexico last year. They rented offices, installed several computers and employed shifts of cheaply hired labourers to come in and play MMORPGs around the clock. Some while later, Black Snow was able to sell mature, high-level characters and any number of rare items, and all for a very tidy profit indeed!

The most impressive trading website I've seen is [www.eqecon.com](http://www.eqecon.com). This provides up to the minute pricing data on items in Everquest. You name it, it's here - and I'm not just talking about a list of items, oh no, this is serious economic data. You want to know what a Boellinger Band is? Well this could be the place for you. (Gordon Brown would tell you that Boellinger Bands are used to determine how much variation there is in a range of prices and for identifying unusually low prices. Using the statistical concept of Standard Deviation, Boellinger Bands measure the distribution of prices within a period's High/Low/Average range.)

This sort of buying and selling of virtual goods clearly straddles a philosophical fence. Many players feel it's unfair for those with money to be able to buy whatever they want while others have to put in endless hours in front of their computers to acquire goods. Personally I feel that it changes the nature of the experience for those involved if something that is intended as a challenge or accomplishment, is able to be



purchased. In games, the whole point is in the nature of the challenges and solving them. However, to a great many games players, time is money, and people have differing amounts of each commodity.

The game developers would of course like to make this market illegal. In fact the terms of service of many games specifically proscribe trafficking in their goods in secondary markets, claiming that they own all intellectual property related to the game and thus in-game items remain their property, regardless of the time spent acquiring them by the players.

Should this sort of trade be illegal? Well as a player in Dark Age of Camelot, it takes me about four-six months of play to get a new character up to 50th level, and endless hours of play to gather money and rare items. Why shouldn't I be able to dispose of these items as I see fit? It would be like renting a house and filling it with your personal possessions, only to be told by the landlord that he was claiming ownership of that sofa you spent six months saving to buy.

Despite the terms of use that manufacturers attach to games, I don't see any way of completely cracking down on this sort of trade. After all, how do you police the whole internet, email, IRC, instant messaging, cash-in-hand agreements down the pub or at your local games club? In all, it is estimated that, worldwide, MMORPG players spend £250,000,000 of real cash for in-game items.

Still think it's just a game?

\* <http://www.juliandibbell.com/playmoney/index.html>

## Some MMORPG trader sites

[www.belrion.com](http://www.belrion.com)  
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# What Women Want

*Games for girls? LISA FORDHAM tells it like it is ...*

THERE IS always a lot of talk and speculation about what female gamers want in a game. I've read articles and *USENET* posts from male gamers on what they think women want, and I've read articles from male developers on what they think women want. Well, I'm here to set the record straight once and for all.

Some people are of the belief that what women want are brain games. Games such as **Trivial Pursuit**, **You Don't Know Jack**, and others of that ilk. They believe that women are interested primarily in having their brains stimulated whenever they sit down at their computers. These people aren't completely off-base.

Then there are those who believe that women are only interested in role-playing and adventure games. Games with character development and social interaction, even if it's just with computer AI characters. They aren't totally wrong either.

And then you have those who believe that while a few women may like action games such as **Quake** and **Doom** (very few do), those who do are most likely closet lesbians with too much testosterone running through their veins. I've met any number of men who assume that because I like gaming, I must be a lesbian. To call such people the names they deserve would just be a waste of invective.

The problem as I see it (and the reason why men have such a hard time figuring out what women want), is that they look at gaming in the wrong sort of light, as though it's something completely alien to anything else in life. It's not. It's the same as everything else. Playing games is no different than reading books, watching television or enjoying movies. Some women love romance novels, but they make me want toretch. I'll take a good fantasy or science fiction novel any day. Some women like the TV show *Friends*, while I prefer *Dharma & Greg* or *Will and Grace*. Some women love 'chick flicks' while many of us prefer a side-slapping comedy.

Our preferences for games are no different. Some of us like action, some like brain games, some like role-playing/adventures, and some like brainless games. Then there are those of us who prefer all of them, depending on our moods. When I've had a particularly stressful day, nothing makes me feel better than throwing **Crusader: No Regret** into my CD-ROM, kicking it into God Mode, and blowing the hell out of everything. Quake-style first person fast-action games make me physically ill. I'm the kind of person they put epilepsy warnings on packages for. Otherwise, I'm sure I'd be out there trying to whomp on **Thresh**. When I want to relax, nothing beats a good game of **Mahjongg**. And my primary

method of just having fun is a good role-playing or adventure game.

The bottom line is that females are no different than males when it comes to gaming. Women are interested in just as many gaming genres as men. Developers should stop worrying so much about what women want and simply work on building a great game.

If the game developers really want to bring more women into the world of gaming, they should start leaning their marketing people to start marketing games as something females would be interested in playing, and not something that's primarily for a boy--other than **Fashion Barbie**, that is. I suggest placing ads in magazines and commercials on TV showing girls playing **Wing Commander: Prophecy**, **Quake 2**, **Tomb Raider 2**, **Ultima Online**, etc, to encourage more women to try them. Then open another bank account and watch the money start rolling in.

**Carol Mulholland adds:** I think Lisa's views hit the nail on the head. Publicity for games can be aimed at women as well as men, but the games themselves should be designed for players.

I've met a fair number of women in gaming, if not as many as I would like to see in an ideal world. I have always been tickled to notice how little we fall into any of the standard (as defined by men) female stereotypes.

Bridge for example is a competitive and merciless game that is enjoyed by both men and women: it has plenty of female players.

It is also interesting to note that many online games have a much higher proportion of women gamers than traditional paper or board based games.

However, I'm adding this footnote as an excuse to tell an anecdote: Years ago, I watched a schoolboy installing a new computer game on his BBC Micro. Creating his character, he was asked whether he was male or female. 'Aha,' he thought in the standard sexist way that youngsters thought then, 'I'll say that I'm a girl, and get an easier version to play.'

Fat chance, of course! All he got was a character with a pretty blonde pigtail. And quite right, too.



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# Ghoulash

*FLAGSHIP proudly presents you with a free game designed by Mike Suchcicki ...*

## Object of the Game

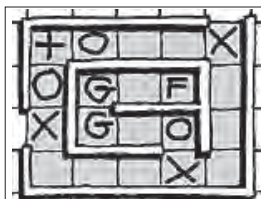
You win the game if:

1. You are the first to achieve the goal of the scenario (indicated in the scenario Briefing), or ...
2. Your opponent receives 15 wounds before finding a First-Aid Kit.

## Preparation

Each player takes a Scenario Chart (make sure both players are using the same scenario) and enters the icons for items, obstacles and Ghouls in the Obstacle Grid, as indicated in the Briefing. To enter an icon, simply draw it in the square using pen or pencil. Some icons have restrictions; for instance, Ghouls can only be placed in building (shaded) squares, and only a certain number per building. Some scenarios will require that certain exits be blocked. To block an exit, simply fill in the doorway with a bold line. Be sure to keep the Obstacle Grid hidden from your opponent at all times.

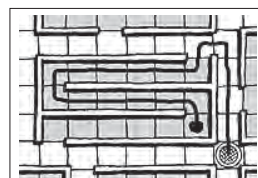
Select a player to move first (flip a coin, paper-rock-scissors, whatever).



*Examples of icons entered into squares, including Ghouls (G), holes (O), debris (X), First-Aid Kits (+) and food (F).*

## Movement

Use the Movement Grid on the Scenario Chart to plot your moves. Movement is always vertical or horizontal, never diagonal. Draw a line indicating your path as you move.



*Player, represented by dot, traces route from starting point to first encounter.*

On your turn, simply describe your movement to your opponent: "I'm moving north out of the shelter, heading up the street and then turning right into the first building. I then follow the corridor through the building ...". As you move, your opponent will follow your course on his or her Obstacle Grid, and tell you what items, obstacles or Ghouls you encounter: "As you turn that last corner, you fall into a hole." A compass rose is provided at the top of the charts for easy reference. Also, use the coordinate markers on the sides of each grid: "I'm moving south, into square 10-J." "At 12-O, there's a First-Aid Kit." Your move continues until you have an encounter with an item, obstacle or Ghoul, at which time your movement stops and you resolve the encounter. After the resolution of the encounter, your turn is over. Your opponent then describes his or her movement as you follow along on the Obstacle Grid.

## Encounters

**Items** - Items are non-hazardous things hidden within the grid, and usually are the object of your search in that scenario - food, treasure, other humans, etc. To acquire an item, simply end your movement in the square and announce that you have acquired it. Special items in every scenario are First-Aid Kits. Encountering a First-Aid Kit allows you to "heal" any wounds received to that point. Simply cross through the active Wound Meter and begin afresh on the next one. If you wish, you can leave a First-Aid Kit where it is, unused, and return to it later (you must still end your turn in the square). You cannot "pick it up" and take it with you. Once used, however, a kit cannot be reused. **Obstacles** - For the most part, there are two main obstacles in the game of GHOULASH™:

**Holes** are cavities hidden by a thin crust of earth; the only way to find one is to step on it. If you encounter a hole, you lose your next turn. On the turn thereafter you can exit and move as usual.

**Debris** indicates chunks of plaster and concrete that can fall on you at a

moment's notice. If you encounter a debris square, you receive one wound. Note that obstacles remain intact throughout the game. If you should re-enter an obstacle square voluntarily, you still suffer the effects of that obstacle (wound or loss of turn). Note also that items can be placed in obstacle squares.

**Ghouls** - Each scenario has a specific number of Ghouls that are scattered throughout the buildings or rooms before the game. When you encounter a Ghoul, you must fight it. Here's how:

1. When you enter a Ghoul square, your opponent announces "Ghoul Attack!"

2. Your opponent secretly selects the Ghoul's "weak spot" by circling a numbered area on one of the Ghoul Battle Boxes on the Scenario Chart.

3. You begin "firing" at the Ghoul by guessing a number, 1 through 6. If you "hit" the Ghoul's "weak spot," you have destroyed the Ghoul and the encounter is over. If you miss, however, you are then wounded by the Ghoul, and you indicate the wound by marking the next space on your current Wound Meter.

4. Continue "firing" at the Ghoul, taking a wound for each miss, until you have destroyed it. On your next turn, you can move as before.

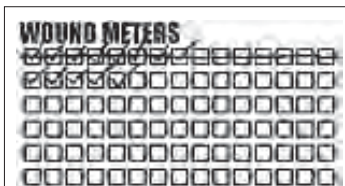
Once a Ghoul has been defeated, that square is safe for the remainder of the game. Note that Ghouls can be placed in squares containing items and obstacles.

**Timing** - In cases where items and/or obstacles and/or Ghouls are placed in the same squares, encounters are resolved in this order:

1. Items. You pick up the item first. In scenarios where the victory condition is merely finding an item, then the game is over at this point. If you must return the item to a starting point, you must resolve the other encounters in the square before proceeding.
2. Ghouls. Battle the Ghoul and take all wounds. If you reach 15 wounds on your Wound Meter at this point, the game is over.
3. Obstacles. Resolve the effects of the obstacle (lose a turn; receive a wound).

## Wounds

In the lower right corner of the scenario chart are your Wound Meters. Every time you receive a wound, through Ghoul battles, debris or other means (other scenarios may contain obstacles not mentioned in these rules; these will be explained in the Briefing), indicate the wound by marking a space on the current Wound Meter. If you receive all 15 wounds on a Wound Meter before finding a First-Aid Kit, then the game is over and your opponent has won. If you encounter a First-Aid Kit before you receive 15 wounds, however, then you are "healed"; simply cross out the current Wound Meter and move onto the next one.

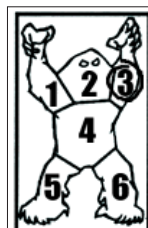


*This player encountered a First-Aid Kit after receiving eight wounds. He crossed out the first Wound Meter and moved to the next, where he has five wounds.*

## Scenarios

These rules cover the Basic Game of GHOULASH™. Some scenarios will have special conditions, items or obstacles not covered in these rules; these will be explained in the Briefing. In these cases, the Briefing supercedes the rules where appropriate. On the opposite page we present *Scenario 1: Ghoulash Anyone?*

For further scenarios and more Ghoulish stuff, go to [www.ghoulash.com](http://www.ghoulash.com).



*This ghoul's weak spot is its left arm, area No. 3.*



# GHOULASH™

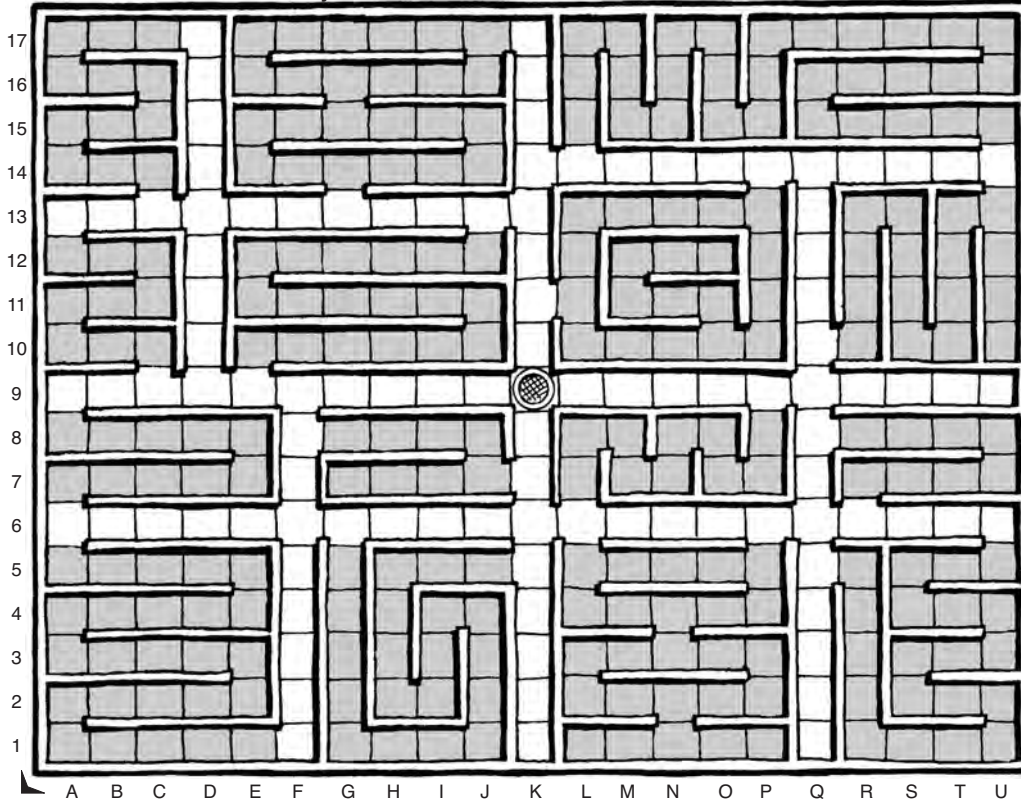
THE  
LAST  
GAME  
ON  
EARTH

## Scenario 1 GHOULASH,™ ANYONE?

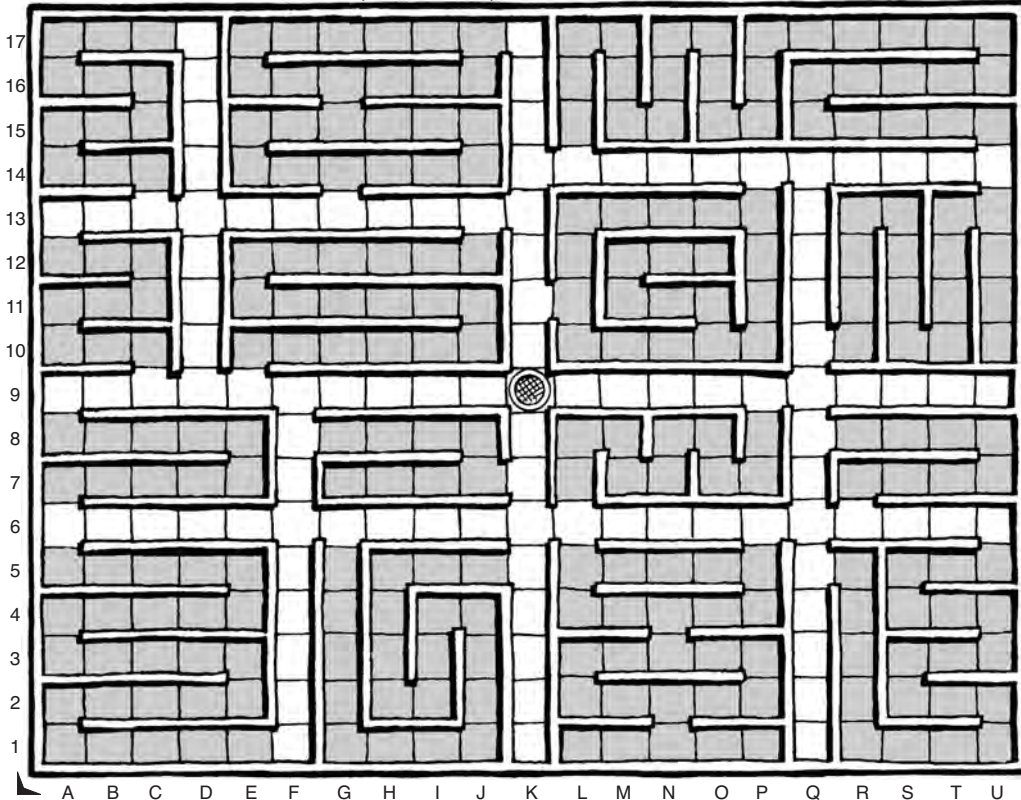


Read a detailed Briefing on this scenario, and download additional scenarios, rules and player tips at [www.ghoulash.com](http://www.ghoulash.com)

### MOVEMENT GRID track your moves below



### OBSTACLE GRID hide items, obstacles, Ghouls below



### BRIEFING

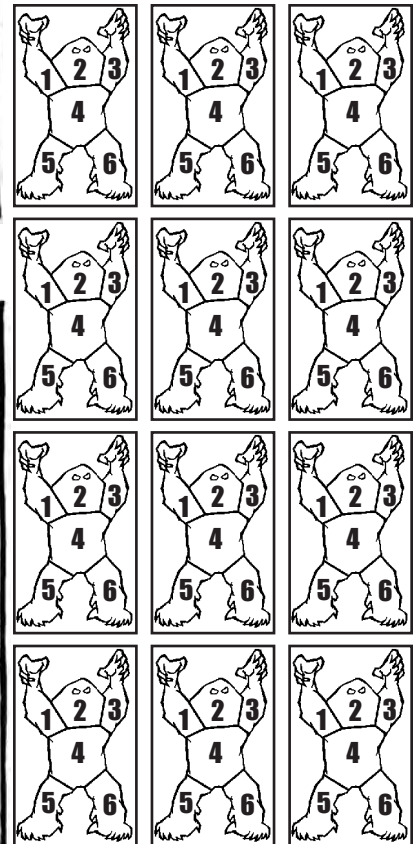
On the Obstacle Grid, place the following:

- **12 Ghouls (G)**, in buildings (shaded squares) only, no more than 3 Ghouls per building.
- **5 First-Aid Kits (+)**, in shaded squares only, one per building.
- **10 Holes (O)**, anywhere.
- **4 Debris Zones (X)**, anywhere.
- **1 cache of food (F)**.

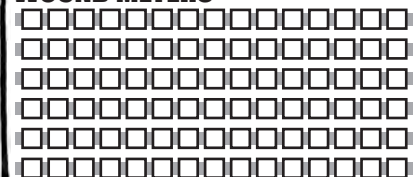
**Start:** In Shelter (center square).

**Goal:** To be the first to find the cache of food and return to the Shelter.

### GHOUL BATTLE BOXES



### WOUND METERS





# THE MIGHTY PEN



## Whatever happened to Vorcon Wars?

*[We saw this query on a newsgroup from someone returning to PBM after several years. We wrote to Vorcon's GM, John Nicholson, thinking that he'd like to know that he's still remembered and that many Flagship readers would remember his game...]*

Believe it or not we (Nicola the wife and I) were still playing until about 1995 when our last few games petered out, but as the games could take up to two years it was well before that that, with a declining market, we decided to wind up **Vorcon Wars**, **Super Vorcon Wars** and our other games.

Why? well, as you probably know, life takes its turns. Throughout the life of the game I got married, new job, two children, technology moves on etc etc, and although no one particular event was major lifechanging, combined they just resulted in less and less time to devote to PBM gaming and many other pursuits.

But we all move on, get new interests, hobbies and goals and all that life throws at you. True! but enough of all this philosophical cr@p, let's get down to answering some of your questions.

### \* Has anyone the rights to play Vorcon Wars?

Not really. I used to have games playing from Europe, Canada and Australia and we used to play over the modem (If course you realise this was well before internet days, amazing that it worked for so long!). There was a contact in the USA who negotiated the purchase: if I remember rightly he paid the first down payment and he was going to rewrite it for the PC. I duly sent off the first program and code (there were four in the suite) but he never sent the second payment so there it stopped.

### \* Was it run on the BBC machines?

Yes, at our peak we had three BBC micros running. In fact, we started with the old BBC B machines but moved on to the advanced version when we started SVW, but I can't remember it's name (see, losing my memory now as well!). One was for input, one for processing and printing all of which had to be swapped using the 5 1/4" floppies. (Do you remember them?) We used to run three disc sets, 1 writing to 2, 2 to 3 etc in a cycle, and we could get two games on a disc so we held the last six runs as backups before they were overwritten. It worked, and at our peak we must have had 40 odd games running, each with its own game folder: it was quite an enterprise.

### \* Code?

As for that, well, it's still there in the attic somewhere and the program on disc, listing along with my notes and artwork etc. We come across it occasionally as we rummage. No use, though: a few years ago we gave our last machines and printers to a chap who had a museum of old PCs and things.

### \* Could it be resurrected?

Well, I leave that question up to you. Two possibilities. The coding wasn't difficult but if I did a straight translation then I could get it up and running on a PC, but things like the printing would be different as we no

longer have dot matrix printers here. So major parts would have to be re-written. The other possibility is to start again. A great deal of the program size was used to get it squeezed into the minute memory you had on the BBC, 8k extended to 32k, and the program had to be in that as well! We used to have about 30 parameters/flags for every location on the planet but they were squeezed into 16bits (2 bytes): it was quite a feat in its day. These days GBytes are pence, slap a massive array into the program. A total rewrite would also allow better graphics, automatic input, clearer printouts, faster turnaround and possibly improve on some of the game aspects (although why change a winning formula?).

But who would play? I am totally out of touch with the gaming world so have no idea of the size of the market etc and as I am swotting for my 14-year old's SATS and 17-year old's A levels it will all have to wait until tomorrow I'm afraid.

I hope this little insight into our world of gaming from decades past has been informative and wish you all happy gaming in the future.

**John Nicholson**

## Problems with the internet

Here's a general warning; it's just my opinion.

The internet has got dramatically worse in the last two months, probably as a result of many ISPs increasing their security in order to keep their servers running against a backdrop of increased spam and viruses such as Netsky and Slammer.

As I mentioned in another comment to Flagship, AOL and Compuserve were the first to start blacklisting based on activity which looks like spamming or virus distribution. It seems as if other ISPs have followed suit. At Harlequin we've seen a dramatic slow down in email transmission speeds and an increasing number of turns gone missing.

Last year I'd suggest that 1 in 100 emails got delayed, now I'd say it's closer to 1 in 5. This is clearly a problem for all PBM firms, but most especially for the smaller PBM business. We've dealt with the problem through buying a dedicated server to host our own communication system, bypassing the internet. This is probably going to be beyond the pocket of smaller firms.

I wish I knew a cheap solution: maybe Flagship readers can give advice. If any GM needs networking advice from me, they're welcome to contact:

[sam@harlequingames.com](mailto:sam@harlequingames.com)

**Sam Roads (Harlequin Games)**

Postal games seem expensive, though looking again they aren't really, but in a way I can't define, they look it. I'd like to be in a game I could play for a couple of years, but that involves a large commitment of cash over time. [Internet games are often cheaper, but ...] I find using email and web for playing games increasingly hateful. It either doesn't work properly or the amount of security I feel happy with is just ludicrous and doesn't work 100% even then. I'm trying not to develop a phobia about it but (as is obvious here) failing.

**Paul Appleby**

## Raising the Profile of PBM, 3

*[Clint asked for ideas from PBM firms and players in issues 104 and 105.]*

We've taken out a year's adverts in **Polyancer** magazine and agreed to have a one page article on items relating to PBM in that magazine. Hopefully this should raise public awareness, albeit in a small way.

Thanks to everyone who got in touch. In the end we went with just a small group of firms, to test the water. If it seems to work, maybe we can expand into getting more companies involved. Ideas for the future include a PBM Guild, conventions and the like which, as time allows, I'll follow up.

**Clint Oldridge (Harlequin Games)**

*[Polyancer magazine is not tied to any single RPG system or to the products of any single RPG company. Articles are written in a system independent and multi-generic manner. Details at:*

[www.polyancerstudios.com/j](http://www.polyancerstudios.com/j)

## Competition Corner

From books to pictures ... This issue we offer our first Caption Competition. Have a look at the picture below, and send in your suggestions for a caption. We'll publish the best in the next issue and a winner decided upon by the Flagship team. Your caption does not have to be game related, but extra kudos if it is! As usual, the winner will receive **4 free issues of Flagship**.



### Issue 107 Competition Results

In the last issue we asked you to send in titles and authors of any books you knew where game playing is important. We received a broad spectrum of suggestions, though some of you couldn't remember the actual title. None of these titles is necessarily recommended as reading material, but perhaps this will jog your memory - we welcome any further titles you can think of.

**Alice Through the Looking Glass**, *Lewis Carroll* (Dover Publications)  
Alice's journey is across a chess board.

**Arcade**, *Robert Maxxe* (Doubleday)

Novel of video games manipulated by sinister alien forces.

**Casino Royale**, *Ian Fleming*, (Penguin)

James Bond uses a game to suss out his opponent psychologically.

**The Caverns of Socrates**, *Dennis L. McKiernan* (Penguin 1995)

Fantasy gamers test an artificial intelligence's new virtual reality.

**The City and the Stars**, *A C Clarke*, (Aspect)

A game like a computer RPG wearing Virtual Reality helmets.

**The Flanders Panel**, *Arturo Perez-Reverte* (Bantam)

A murder mystery, where the clues are moves turns in a game of chess.

**A Red File for Callan**, *James Mitchell* (Simon & Shuster).

A wargamer (Callan) takes on his adversary in a game of the Battle of Gettysburg where his life is at stake.

**The Queen of Spades**, *Aleksandr Sergeevich Pushkin* (Oxford Press)

Pushkin explores the nature of obsession, in this case gambling.

And the winner is **Derek Clarkson** - who receives a free 4 issue subscription to *Flagship*!

## Feedback on Issue 107

YOU RATED issue 107 at 7.7. **Trevor Lunt** sighed that there were 'not many game types I like!', but **Pete Barnes** gasps, 'so many, many games - let's bring in the three-day weekend!'

Newsdesk was your favourite section, followed by praise for the article on Total Conquest ('Very enjoyable. I do like reading about players' experiences with games. And I was sorely tempted to try this one when the special offer came up. Sadly I know my time limits and knew the rule reading and digesting would demand hours I don't have' - **Michael Grant**), and the Star Fleet Warlord diary. Some of you praised Chris Morris's article about game design ('very thoughtful indeed' - **Paul Appleby**). Most of you enjoyed the roleplaying coverage, especially 'It's a Beautiful World', though of course this doesn't appeal to the wargamers among you. Not all of you read the articles about PC games and online gaming, though 'I enjoy the style of your columnists, even when I don't really expect to play the games they write about,' says **Barry Giles**. And some of you found nothing boring at all.

Question 4 asked about what type of games you'd like us cover: (a) online games, (b) board and card games, (c) tabletop roleplaying, (d) PBM games, (e) anything else? Of these, (a), (c) and (d) were your favourite options, though **Michael Grant** would 'like to see books and films covered, too - but perhaps that would be spreading the magazine a bit thin?' A substantial 53% don't want to read about games you don't play, like **Trevor Lunt**, who wants 'selfishly, more about games I play or may play!' Fair enough, of course, but since what you readers do play varies a lot, this won't be easy to follow. 'No more about a-d,' says **Chris Morris**, 'but no less!'

Question 5 asked how far you share the aspirations of your fellow players: because, (a) we need to work out a joint strategy, (b) they may be ready to offer assistance if I have a problem, (c) it's not always clear what a game design requires, so we need to check this together, or (d) they're out to get me, and I'm out to get them! 57% chose (a), 44% chose (b), and no-one chose (c) or (d), though maybe these are sometimes appropriate. 'It depends so much on the game being played,' says **Michael Grant**, 'Many require carefully planned joint strategies to get anywhere while others demand hostility from the very beginning. The trick is knowing which is which!'

Question 6 asked whether you feel that you've much in common with players who don't enjoy your kind of game: (a) there's room for all types of taste in the gaming hobby (b) I try to be patient, in hopes of converting others, (c) nah, they're clearly weird no-hopers. Everyone voted for (a)! 'Maybe I don't have much in common with them,' says **J Combes**, 'but I've even less in common with people who don't play games at all.'

Many thanks to all who wrote in.

### Feedback on Issue 108

[Choose more than one option if you wish, and feel free to comment.]

1 - Please rate this issue from 1 (messy) to 10 (magnificent).

2 - Which articles/sections did you most enjoy, and why?

3 - Which bored you, and why?

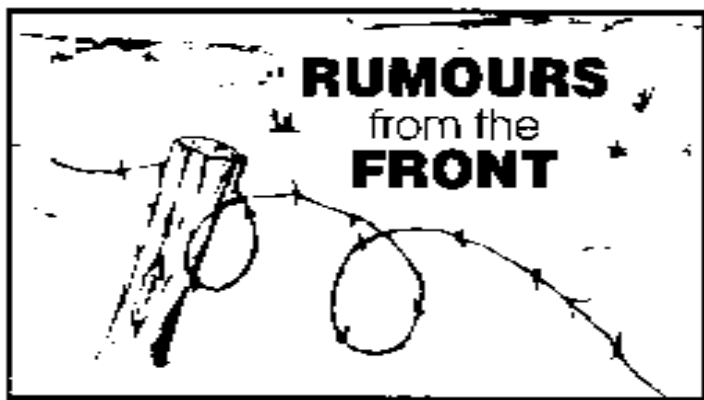
4 - Do you prefer news about the latest game releases, or about games that you already play? (a) I like to look forward to new games, (b) I enjoy hearing about old favourites, (c) I prefer indepth reviews to brief news.

5 - Game diaries: some of you love them, some of you loathe them: (a) a diary gives an insight into how a game plays, (b) personal diaries are more fun to read than an unbiased review, (c) diaries are too hard to follow over several issues, (d) I'd only read a diary for a game that I'm already interested in.

6 - Globetrotter complains that there are too many modern wargames: do you agree? (a) yes, I dislike reliving modern history, (b) graphic wargames are bad publicity for gaming, (c) real events are always more exciting to play than fantasy, (d) I enjoy the chance to change history.

[Replies welcomed by surface mail to the UK office, or by email to [carol@pbmgames.com](mailto:carol@pbmgames.com). By July 9th, please.]





*[This column attempts to simulate a crowded bar full of players swapping experiences. It contains readers' uncensored comments, with no attempt to maintain fairness and balance; editing is only done for grammar, clarity, brevity and (occasionally) libel avoidance! In general, it's unwise to put too much weight on a single report, whether rave or curse. Readers are asked only to comment on games of which they have recent personal experience and to mention specifically if they are giving a first impression. Unattributed comments, usually in [], are by the editor.]*

Comments received from March 20th

Christine Biancheria, Colin Boxall, Andrew Chadwick, Jay Christensen, John Danes, Tom Fyfe, Michael Grant, Mike Harrison, Julian Hirst, Maria Hofner, Matt Jones, Dave Mason, Carol Mulholland, Eric Nicholas, Johan Persson, James Rowan, Scott Tepper, Robert Treadwell, Immanuel Van Meirhaeghe, Brian Wilde

## PLAY BY MAIL / PLAY BY EMAIL

### ASPECTS OF MIGHT (*Silver Dreamer*)

**Michael Grant** - 'Malachai Sicklemoon's time at the Lion Field is at an end due to running out of precious Ducats, and sadly the officials are very strict about credit! Improvements through both the arduous training and contemplative meditation have produced some pleasant results. But now it is time to move on. Someone has just announced the creation of a new Scholars Primer and the offer to share it with any in need. This will allow me to improve my Lore quite a bit. Good news indeed, as this is one of the most useful stats.'

### DUNGEONWORLD (*Madhouse*)

**Robert Treadwell** - 'The Way of the Five Paths is the new guild that has taken over the old Drax Nightmare Alliance - a guild whose leader was a demon, Drax. (The plot in Dungeonworld was that if the demon had won, then all the guild members who sold their souls to Drax would have been powered up - but he lost.)

It was taken over by Ron, and at the last convention I got talked into becoming a deputy leader (following one of the new guild rules to make guilds work for their members and to add a bit more roleplaying into the Dungeonworld game). This also might have been because I was one of the four main players of the 24-hours session of Settlers of Catan. (Yes, we played for 24 hrs, game after game - the main one with six people and two sets to make a large island - the morning was greeted by the shouts of sheep, brick, wood - and beer!)

If you don't play Dungeonworld, I would recommend it to anyone as you get to be made to feel one of the gang.'

**Michael Grant** - 'Grishnak Axehand, my stalwart Dwarven Warrior, stands upon the corpse of a recently vanquished Cave Squeem looking proud as the day of his first goblin kill. Four mighty blows and the beast was slain. The battle axe+5 of his dreams should be purchased very soon once the old backpack is cleared of battle loot. Might even have enough gold spare for a helmet+5! Melee Combat skill has just kicked in, giving a +2 attack bonus. Still waiting for Adventuring 1, Berserking and Real Grit skills to go active.'

### Dungeonworld: BrokenLands

**Michael Grant** - 'Finally the Helmet+5 is all mine, along with a few other useful pieces of equipment like cloak, gloves and boots. And the plan now I hear you all ask? *Gulp!* Talk seems to be leaning towards us all taking on an *Elemental!* I've not fought these before but have heard from other experienced players that they are real badass party-slaying monsters. Worse than that, my Monk has volunteered to be one of the frontline melee attackers armed with a puny dagger+5. What the heck was I thinking? I'm sure there will be tears on my next turn...'

### Dungeonworld :Frontier

**Michael Grant** - 'A few of us have spilt off from the main force to journey to the water room to refill our precious supply of water skins. This is now done and so the race is on to catch up with everyone going deeper into the ruin.

### Dungeonworld:Kyr

**Michael Grant** - 'Some spiteful beast called an Ojweij just took a chunk out of Al-Qatil my Dervish! He wasn't happy I can, tell ya, and so slew the creature with two swift scimitar strokes. A Dromedani Archer and a Fresh Ghul have fallen to my friend's blades before I had a chance to get involved. Thanks a lot, Russell! Stealing my kills! Should be a law against it! Hehehe.

Now we have the chance to go after something called a Twisted Scorpallus that looks like a giant Scorpion. Absolutely no idea how tough an encounter this will be, so we'll either have a grand tale of success next turn or we'll be weeping as the RIP symbols appear. Either way, it's all good fun.'

### EINSTEIN'S LOT (*Ulaidh Games*)

**Carol Mulholland** - 'It looked as if my character was about to have a peaceful time at last, simply gathering information about some archaeological excavations which are a comfortable distance away. The invisible serpent has gone, so has the female vampire, and the police investigating her tutor's murder seem to be leaving her alone. But oh dear, on the way back from the library, as darkness gathers, a strange young woman stops beside her, to ask her if she's an enemy of the serpent god, Apophis: why?'

### MONSTER ISLAND(*KJC Games*)

**Michael Grant** - 'A new *Message In A Bottle* newsletter editor has volunteered for duty. Lawrence has been very helpful and I'm sure all the players will wish him good luck with the job.

And finally young Haliok the Norman held aloft a mighty Tuvian Shovel and announced to the entire island "Let the looting and vandalising begin!" And it sure has. Hitting a nearby graveyard with four lots of looting and vandalising resulted in lots of battles, loot and combat improvements. Will I ever be able to tear him away from this battle paradise?

Fellow Eternal Void members have been helpful as ever with advice, discussion and the generous offer of Teleporting the odd piece of equipment over.'

### POSTAL AMERICAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE(*Cleopatra Games*)

**Chad (Andrew Chadwick)** - 'Just to let you know that a few months ago, completely out of the blue, Chris started running PAFL again! Obviously I am delighted. It looks as though most of the players he had before the long hiatus are still active. Leagues 1, 4 and 5 are up and running. League 5 has just reached Superbowl stage. I am not sure what is going to happen about the draft and starting a new season as Chris is hinting that there may not be enough active players in that league to run it. I think the reason he hasn't re-started leagues 2 and 3 is the same (not enough players). League 1 is just entering the play-offs. This one seems to be completely full, so hopefully will run smoothly through in to a new season. League 4 is early in the regular season. Unfortunately about one-third of the teams are uncoached.

Chris has been talking to other game companies about selling PAFL, but nothing much seems to be happening.

Anyway, as no-one else seems to have contacted you about the game being up and running again, I decided I would. Hopefully a mention in Flagship might attract some more players and induce Chris to get all five leagues running (I enjoy the game so much that I would take a team in every league!!).'

*[We're delighted to hear that PAFL is running again, and have restored it to Galactic View. Check under Cleopatra Games for contact details.]*

### PHOENIX (*KJC Games*)

**Michael Grant** - 'Having successfully completed a few trade missions on behalf of my guild leader, I can certainly see the attraction of this space game. The rules are quite complicated and demand plenty of time and patience, but fellow players are always on hand to help if you get stuck. Sometimes it can feel like you've hit a brick wall with attempting a particular action resulting in a *Turn Stopped:* message. Then it's time to read/re-read the rules on the subject, try different tactics, and if that doesn't help your guild leader should be contacted.'

### QUEST (*KJC Games*)

**Michael Grant** - 'News that the games longstanding GM, Richard Brewster (Bat), has left KJC shocked the Quest community. Lots of players, including myself, are left in delicate positions awaiting moderation. The new GM, David, has been trying to get up to speed on both the game mechanics and moderation. Perhaps he will bring a breath of fresh air to the game and I've certainly enjoyed the moderated actions he's had a hand in so far.

*Game 31 Naralia:* The land is filled with false rumours lately. Last month's comments were incorrect, as the party continuing to cause trouble for the formidable Holy Ghosts is not actually part of the new Darkling alliance in Athabaska but have just joined evil Fleyshurian Anarchy's Mantle in Denvilera.

Another new alliance has recently formed within the city of Wymark (11). The Chaos Vipers is founded by an experienced ex-Cataclysm/ex-Anarchy's Mantle

member.

[http://geocities.com/sir\\_yanice/Index.html](http://geocities.com/sir_yanice/Index.html)

One of my groups is through to the next round of the Nalaria arena tournament: managed to win both battles 0-0 and 2-0. My other remaining group lost their first battle 3-0 but managed to claw a 3-3 win in the second fight. Sadly, they go out on kill difference.'

### XOTTE GRANDE (*Antony Dunks*)

**Carol Mulholland** - 'Prince Julien has been turned from a shapely female back into a young man again, thanks to Princess Persia's kiss. He's thankful for this, but it only solves part of the problem for the team of adventurers who've been summoned to help him. We've heard that Julien's brother has been murdered, we've discovered the hard way that there are still nasty creatures leaping out at us, and we don't know who put the spell on Julien in the first place.

Suspicion for all this wrong-doing has fallen on Julien's sister, Mia. She's been holed up with a sinister religious cult, so efforts to speak to her have failed. However, one of our number has enough teleport magic to be able to fetch her out of her cult's headquarters. Even if she arrives here in one piece, there are bound to be more difficulties before we can go home to hang up our adventuring gear. Do we face a great battle?

My character, Ingerjald, has met a rather nice Illusionist, but vows to complete the quest before thinking of romance with him. It's the honourable decision to make, but will she survive?'

## ONLINE GAMES

### DARK AGE OF CAMELOT(*Mythic Entertainment / GOA*)

**Tom Fyfe** - 'DAoC is the only MMORPG I've played, so have little or no experience of the others out there. I started up in DAoC for two reasons: (1) a friend was in the game and persuaded me to join, and (2) I'm a hardened face-to-face roleplayer ... having put hours and hours into it ... I have in recent times found it harder and harder to find people to game with.

So DAoC to me was a godsend, something that I could put my roleplaying energies into, that had similar goals to that of face to face roleplaying. I started straight into DAoC: Shrouded Isles (SI), so have not experienced the "newness" of SI. The first extension to the game that had that "newness" experience for me was Trials of Atlantis. I had heard all the flack that the expansion had been getting Stateside and was getting prepared for the worst.

It arrived, and ... I was pleasantly surprised to say the least. Thinking about it honestly, I don't really think that ToA has detracted from the game: in fact, for me, it has added much. I don't believe Artefacts and Master Levels will affect gameplay that much. The people that get them first and quickest are the people that already have the most "uber" characters anyway. Also, if I'm honest, not having MLs will not mean that the game or the Realm versus Realm (RvR) aspect of the game will be any less. Yes Master Levels affect RvR the most, but I don't really think that they are there as the be all and end all of RvR. I think RvR will be still possible without them, as most of them affect large groups of people anyway ... so in some respects you will only need a few people to have the abilities for the larger number to benefit.

Let's take as an example my last session in RvR...

"Shavek, the Kobold Shadowblade, headed off to the Frontier just coz I'd been a annoyed with the way Player vs Environment (PvE) had been going ... I got to the Albion Mile Gate where I found around 3-4 full groups (fgs) of mids, so ... I joined in ... the Mids were on one side of the Mile Gate, on the other were albs. It was a kind of stalemate situation, occasionally the Albs would zerge through the Milegate and take a beating back behind it again. Both sides had some high Realm Rank people, and some high Master Level people around. There were a couple of Healing Fields laid down on the Midgard side of the mile gate, so you get injured you head back to a healing field... and there was the same on the Albion side ... Then what happened? Yes 2-4 fgs of Hibernians came pilling up from behind... the Mids who were too busy with the albs didn't notice them until they had killed a couple of Mids. And at this point the Albs zerged through the Mile gate again. It was great..."

This shows one of the problems with some of the Master Level abilities and RvR, certainly some of the Healer / Shammy ones. Fields are static and don't move with the caster ... so using them which is beneficial will tend to lead to static combats, or retreat emplacements ... they will be useful for taking keeps and in all likelihood the new Frontiers Expansion. There were other abilities used during the brief session described that benefited Shavek, who was ungrouped and only has ML1. I can see that RvR Groups will say that they are looking for people with specific abilities, but they do that now with the Flavour of the Month (FOTM) Groups, so ML = FOTM, for now.

I am also looking forward to the new Frontiers Expansion. I keep an eye regularly on the US Class Boards, as well as the expansion forum boards. The US boards are full of people moaning about this and that, and I think that the fact that they are complaining and not quitting in droves is a good indication that any changes are not bad. I can see that complaining about the game is part of the community, when people stop complaining about the game, or the latest patch that is when people will have to start worrying about the long term prospects of the game.

I have also looked at people's comments (on American and European) discussion

forums, saying that DAoC is still the best MMORPG that they have played. So far there is not a MMORPG that has the same scope in terms of RvR and PvE combat facilities, according to most DAoC Players that have played other games.

So to conclude, I think the day that people stop complaining about the game is the day the game is dying. Let us hope that day does not arrive!

(*Shavek the Shadowblade, Midgard/Excalibur*)'

**Immanuel Van Meirhaeghe** - 'DAoC, and all MMORPGs in fact, is a great concept. It made the D&D-generation more popular and less stigmatised as being the concern only of a-social, a-pathic etc... people.

But I have the feeling that the game has strayed from its original path. RPG was known to be a game to be played "over time" (a campaign isn't finished in a sec, heehee) and in which players had to be patient, adventurous, explorative... I miss this in DAoC. Players want to become "uber", "L33T" ASAP. They use walkthroughs, cheats (radars) etc to not "waste time" on talking to NPCs or other players. I don't want to generalize here: of course there are still players who go "all-the-way" in the game and take their time to learn the DAoC world, but I think they are rather sparse.

An example: DAoC has a class-based story-line, in which players obtain a personal quest from their class-trainer, known as "the Epic Quest". This starts at level 10 and continues till the end at level 50. The goal of the Epic quest is the fabulous Epic Armor. But what I see mostly in game, is people buying the gear at level 40+, from those who took the time to obtain it. Nothing wrong with this, of course, but I fear that at this rate, the Epic Armor/Quest will simply disappear...

Something else I miss in game: more NPC interaction in quests and non-linear story-lines. I think that here's the reason why not many players enjoy the RPG factor of the game. The quests are simply too "boring", rather static. A quest mostly consists of getting on horses over the whole realm, retrieving an item from a mob or an NPC, and returning it.

Of course, it's hard to "digitalize" what I mean with how quests could become more interesting, but if the game could "random-spawn" some roaming NPCs that actually go to a player to trigger a quest (I'm thinking eg about the well-known Little Kobbie Beggar in Jordheim), or make the game-world more "interactive" (jump in a well to find yourself in a uncharted newly spawned small dungeon...), or use the "faction-grade" ingame to trigger NPC quests (eg you and your comrades have been fighting Bandits for a long time, but now the Bandits are after revenge and start to send assassins to get you, or put a bounty on your head...), and some other thoughts, but I'll stop here.

So, to summarize, DAoC is a marvellous game, with many things to explore, but the RPG factor of the game should be worked on. It is a (MMO)RPG after all, isn't it?

(*Jolandaisysson The Blamed One, Midgard/Excalibur*).'

**Johan Persson** - 'I like the game. Hell, I've been playing it since April last year, not spending more than a fraction of my time in any other game or real life for that matter.

I thought *Trials of Atlantis* (ToA) was a bad idea from the start, as with all new things. When ToA was released I thought it was great for the first few weeks, but at the moment I'm sick of it. Don't get me wrong, hunting for artifacts and even scrolls (aka farming single type of mob till your eyes bleed) is great: I love the Indiana Jones feel to it. The new Master Levels (MLs) have left a foul taste in my mouth, though (yes, I do put my CDs in my mouth at times).

The fact that most MLs are preferably done with as many people as possible at once, and hoping at least half of them are at their keyboard is crap: I hate it, it makes me sick. And recently it has destroyed the great experience that once was Dark Age of Camelot: Shrouded Isles. If it could be done by a full group of friends I'd love it, but apparently it's less about adventure and more about getting "teh skeels" and "pwning the albs/hibs". Since the MLs will have a tremendous impact on RvR it has also destroyed my absolutely favourite aspect of the game for me. At times I wish I had no Real Life (RL) at all so I could get all "teh skeels" and go "pwn" someone, but then again, RL has blessed me with the insight that the Master Levels are the biggest piece of crap I've ever had the chance to play (or try to get, if you so will).

As to other MMORPGs, well... I tried my hands on the **Lineage 2 beta**. With little to no chance of customizing your character, and even less your class I feel that I won't even finish the free beta month that's currently going on. Don't get me wrong, the game looks fantastic (even the orc girls!) But it's utterly boring levelling so you can "join the crowd" instead of playing your class in a different way. I wouldn't try EverCamp (sorry, **EverQuest**) at gunpoint. **Horizons** is a good idea gone bad. **Asheron's Call 2** had the living environments of a picture of a desert...

(*Banelord Ragnsteinn Styrvinnr, Bonedancer level 50 (Spellcrafter 500+), Midgard / Excalibur*)'

## BOARD GAMES

### CARCASSONNE (*Rio Grande*)

**Maria Hofner** - 'Carcassonne recreates the interesting landscapes of the southern French city, founded on an important trade route between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Each turn the area becomes larger as the players expand and add roads, fields, cities, and churches. The players may also place their followers as thieves, farmers, knights, and monks to control and score points for the roads, farms, cities, and churches. As the players have only a few followers, the wise player will plan his



moves carefully. Carcassonne is a simple, clever tile laying game that brings new challenges with every turn.'

**Dave Mason** - 'A wonderful tile-laying game that I have seen win over every person who has tried it. I have played this game with over a dozen different people, and every single one has been impressed.'

I would have to say that while the expansions aren't required, they surely add amazing depth to the game, not to mention several accessories (such as a bag to draw the tiles from). The expansions are also exceptionally cheap, making them a good buy if you like the game.

If you play Settlers or Puerto Rico, then I would say that if you haven't already played this game, you need to give it a shot. If you don't, play it any way.'

**John Danes** - 'I do not like this game, although some of my generally non-gaming friends who have tried it disagree. I bought this game because of the hype of recommendation. However, I was disappointed. The game depends largely on luck (70%-80%) and little on strategy. During the second game I played with my friend, he got all the valuable castle tiles while I got none. As a result, he won. Some reviews mentioned that the game can involve plentiful strategies which can be discovered after long period of gameplay, but this game just cannot motivate me to play it long enough to see its merits. In sum, the gameplay is rather mechanical and boring. The game is clearly devoid of theme: why can credit be given to the church surrounded by other tiles? The Ultimate question: what does it mean by the points earned? Does high points represents better city-building? The answer is *no*.'

**Colin Boxall** - 'The basic mechanics are simple, but the actual winning of the game is fairly complex, much like chess. One complaint I've seen is the lack of strategy possible due to the random nature of the tile draw. The solution that works for me is to have each player start with a "hand" of four tiles. Each turn, they draw a tile into their "hand" and play one of the five they then have. When the supply of tiles run out, players deplete what they have left in their hand until everyone is out.'

**Matt Jones** - 'I bought this game to have something more to do than dinner and a movie. My wife and I both love it. It is very simple, yet fun. There is plenty of strategy if you know how to play and it doesn't take very long. The game is always different and everyone we have played it with likes it. It's great for two players and just as good for a group of four or five. Highly recommended.'

#### INDUSTRIA (Queen Games) [Reviewed by Pevans, last issue.]

**Jay Christensen** - 'The maximum of four players tried the game and found it unusual. It requires some book-keeping, but the game grows on you.'

You are faced with three sections of a multi-pictured board. I was given the courage award in our group for trying to master the rules and explain the game. It took our group a little while to figure out the bricklaying plant from the stone works. The board is divided into factories, epochs, and technologies. The scoring track is also shown on the board.

The game started easily, with each person receiving four dollars and entitled to one dollar more each phase or turn. All five epochs were to be played with four players, and the players knew they had to ration their cash.

That rationing should have worked, but it didn't. Players bought heavily the factories and epochs, expecting to connect the many white roads and make money. The auctioning part of the phase (part 2) proved the most entertaining during the game.

As the one experienced player in the game taught, we must turn over four tiles (four players) each turn. The English rules are not too clear on this point. You may as the starting player (rotates every turn) take one of the tiles or offer that tile for bid. Only one bid or pass is allowed each turn. Naturally, players grabbed technologies because of their cash value in the game. The auctioning continues until the auctioneer finally chooses a tile for himself or herself. If no one bids on the tile, the auctioneer is forced to take the tile.

All of us thought we were so smart to accumulate all these good factories and technologies. However, the piper comes due. To place the tile on one of the three sections, you must pay the construction cost (part 4 of phase) printed on the tile. That is not all. You must have the resource tiles listed on the construction tile, such as cement and steel, to finish the construction.

Hopelessly, I looked at six tiles in front of me that could not be built because of the construction costs. The money does not flow that easily in the game. Money can be gained from the auctions. The experienced player made money from all of us three and waited for just the right factories, resources, technologies, and epochs.

Resources for different epochs were not easily accumulated. Suddenly, I needed computers and telecommunications, and none were available. Resource tiles can be exchanged for one dollar each, but you may want to hang on to wood, bricks, and cement, for examples.

I built a measly two and three on the technology section; then, another player blocked me from further road connection on the technologies track by building an automobile and rocket for five victory points each. I wanted to build an oil derrick on the factories track, but I woefully lacked the iron and ceramics resource tiles.

Surprisingly, the players' victory points weren't too bad at the end: 21 (two players), 16, and 13.

Definitely, the game requires a replay. The nuances of bidding for what can actually be built remain the highlight of the game. Those connecting roads on the

board from one epoch to another have to be watched carefully for the maximum number of the points.'

**Julian Hirst** - 'Played this for the first time last night and initial impressions are "instant classic": we'll have to see how it stands the test of time. Sort of (but not quite) a cross between Modern Art, Taj Mahal and Ra with superb art work on the board and components.'

Played two sessions in one sitting ... which says something. Made the usual mistakes in the first game, some rules omissions too that made some bits a little puzzling, but still had no problems convincing folks to play again. Top notch.'

#### LEGEND OF LANDLOCK (Gamewright)

[Reviewed by Eric Ridley, last issue.]

**Scott Tepper** - 'I took a gamble on this one. I usually don't buy a game till it gets consistent good reviews. All I knew about Legend of Landlock was that it was selected as one of the best new games by Mensa. Strangely enough, I couldn't even find information about the game on the manufacturer's website. But I thought, for \$9.95, what could I lose?'

Turns out, it was a good gamble. The game consists of 40 tiles that depict streams and paths. One player plays as the paths, the other as the streams. During the game, you take turns picking a tile from the facedown pile(s), and placing it next to a tile that has already been played. The game is played until a 6 x 6 square of tiles has been created.

There are four types of tiles: ones that favor paths, ones that favor streams, three that equally depict paths and streams (bridges), and three that equally hinder both paths and streams (Tussocks). The object of the game is to score the most points by creating continuous paths or streams that connect the four sides of the finished square. You also get bonus points for closing off (making ponds or islands) your opponent's streams or paths.

Sounds simple? It is. *But*, it's much more strategic than the whimsical depictions of the tiles suggest. When you draw tiles, you'll draw tiles that will both help and hurt you and your opponent, so as the board develops, you end up with some turn angst.

The 6 x 6 board limitation is clever, because as the board grows, careful placement of tiles will possibly cut off your opponent from connecting to one or more sides. In addition, since there are 40 tiles, but you only use 36, you can't be sure which tiles will be the last ones to complete the board (which would be very helpful to know).

I have to admit, when I first opened the box, and saw the gnomes, and fairies on the tiles, I thought, "Uh oh. I just bought a kid's game." But I was wrong. While the box says for ages 8 and up, the friend I played Legend of Landlock with, and I, are in our 30s and we both enjoyed it immensely. We ended up playing it five times in two days.

The rules are quickly learned, and the game itself plays quickly, about 15 or 20 minutes. The artwork, is cute, done in colors that are easy on the eyes. The tiles are thick, well-made cardboard. The manufacturer even includes a blank pad of paper and a pencil so that you can keep score (I thought that was cute. Was that in case I didn't have some form of paper or a writing utensil of my own at home?).

It's obvious that not only was care put into the development of this game, care was put into the production it as well. If you like Carcassonne, or Ta Yu, and you want a quicker (but not necessarily lighter) game to be played by two people, get Legend of Landlock. It's a great deal.'

#### METRO (Uberplay)

**Mike Harrison** - 'Well, I was looking for a game my wife and I could play with our 5-year-old, and this certainly falls into that category. As for strategy, there are some that work, but in the end winning may be beyond your control (which is actually a good thing when you're playing with small children and want them to have a chance to win)... the placement of tiles by other players really can't be strategized against (unlike in Carcassonne). Another weakness is the end game.... some players may have had all their routes finished, and are basically behind the other players. So what do they do? The rules don't say.'

On the other hand, there is something very mathematical and pretty about the game...no route will ever go unfinished, based on the way the tiles are laid out, and two starting (or end) points can never be connected. Those facts, combined with the visual appeal, make this worth playing if you're not really high-strung about strategies and winning.'

**Brian Wilde** - 'I learned how to play Metro from someone who was already a huge fan of these gorgeous games. The sturdy board and tiles, the wooden pieces and clean graphics really lend charm to playing.'

While there is certainly an element of the "luck o' the draw" with this game, there is also a high screw-your-neighbor factor. This is what made the first game I played so engaging. Players can plan just far enough ahead to block someone else's train, or they can work to keep their own options open as each tile comes into play.

This is a fun game for non-gamer types or for devotees of great board games. It is easy to learn and has a high replay value, on the same level as any puzzle/memory type of game.'

**MUTINY** (*Fantasy Flight Games*)

**James Rowan** - 'A historian friend of mine is always amused by people's romantic fascination with pirates, like my own. I love pirate movies, pirate games (except Blackbeard), etc - but in reality the life of a pirate was not nearly as glamorous. I don't really care about the historical inaccuracies of games and movies, however, because realism rarely makes for a fun game.'

Thus, when I heard that Fantasy Flight games was releasing a new game in their recently christened Silver Line about pirates, I was interested in it. And what is the verdict on Mutiny (Fantasy Flight Games, 2003 - Kevin Wilson)? The theme of the game is great (something Wilson seems adept at), but you are only going to like this game if you like blind bidding games, and even then you may not enjoy it that much. Now, I enjoyed the game, but most of the other playing did not - and it takes a game to be a real stinker for me to actively dislike it. I'm a big fan of blind bidding games, but often, during the course of the game, I kept thinking how Fist of Dragonstones did it so much better.'

**TICKET TO RIDE** (*Days of Wonder*)

**Eric Nicholas** - 'Ticket to Ride once again has destination tickets of cities you'd like to connect like Santa Fe and Trans America. The card set-up is very similar to Union Pacific. The drawing mechanism is reminiscent of Get the Goods. But that's where the similarities end. Alan Moon keeps doing it until he gets it right.'

Here, you never seem to have enough time to do everything you want. On your turn, you may either draw two cards (only one if you choose a face up wild card), play a set of cards to claim a route, or draw three destination tickets, keeping at least one

of them. You are already limited with only 45 trains at the start of the game. You'll find yourself wondering if you should claim a route now or draw a card you need to make a set, or if you should get some more destination tickets now and build with them in mind as well. Do you take the wild card on the board, or draw from the top of the pile and hope to get lucky? All the while, every other player's actions affect your own, and defensive play can happen most accidentally.

You score points as you go by claiming routes, where bigger routes earn more points but also use up more of your trains. You earn points at the end of the game for every destination ticket you own that you personally connect up, and lose points for every destination ticket that you fail to make work. Lastly, the player with the longest contiguous track earns 10 bonus points (like the longest road in Settlers of Catan). That's all there is to it. It takes no time to learn, but it's fun and challenging at the same time.

We played it three times in the same night, and I can't wait to play it again. You can even download new boards and play online at the company's website, to keep the game fresh should it grow stale. The best of the bunch by far, this is worth the purchase price even if you already have any (or all) of the similar Alan Moon games...just don't expect to want to play them afterwards!'

**Christine Biancheria** - 'I have enjoyed each of the many games I've played so far, with any number of players. Importantly, I've introduced a number of people to the game, and it has received rave reviews from each. It's accessible with simple-to-learn rules, it looks great, it's full of tension and difficult decisions, and it usually takes less than an hour to play. It's just fantastic. In my crystal ball, I can see the awards piling up now. Highly recommended!'

*[Comments on all types of games are welcomed by surface mail to the UK office or by email to [carol@pbmgames.com](mailto:carol@pbmgames.com). By July 9th, please.]*

# Games Shops

**Bishop Games Ltd**, 32 City Arcade,  
Coventry, Warwickshire, CV1 3HW.

**Cardiff Games**, Duke Street Arcade,  
Cardiff, CV1  
029 2034 3818

**Funagain Games**  
[www.funagain.com](http://www.funagain.com)

**Gamezone Models**, 32 Rolle Street,  
Exmouth, Devon  
01395-267733

**Krackers Games Shop**, 1-5 The Fore  
Street Centre, Fore Street, Exeter, Devon

**Leisure Games**, 100 Ballards Lane,  
Finchley, London, N3 2DN  
020-8346-2327  
[shop@leisuregames.com](mailto:shop@leisuregames.com)  
[www.leisuregames.com](http://www.leisuregames.com)

**Orcs Nest**, 6 Earlham Street, London,  
WC2H 9RY  
0207-379-4254  
[www.orcsnest.com](http://www.orcsnest.com)

**Spirit Games** 98+114 Station Street,  
Burton on Trent. Staffs, DE14 1BT  
Opening Hours:  
10-6 Tuesday - Friday, 10-5 Saturday  
... or email at any time.  
*Tel/Fax/Ansaphone: +44 (0)1283 511293*  
*email: [salphil@spiritgames.co.uk](mailto:salphil@spiritgames.co.uk)*  
*Web address: [www.spiritgames.co.uk](http://www.spiritgames.co.uk)*

**White Knight Games**, 8 Cheapside,  
Reading, RG1 7AG  
0118 950 7337

**2nd Games Galore**, 23 Reynes Drive, Oakley,  
Bedford, Bedfordshire, MK43 7SD

**Bookstop Bookshop**, 28 Mayfield Grove,  
Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG1 5HB.

**Dream Dealers**, 94b Barker Butts Lane,  
Coventry, Warwickshire.

**Games & Puzzles**, 6 Green Street, Cambridge,  
Cambridgeshire, CB2 3JU

**Gameskeeper**, 105 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4  
1HU  
01865-721348  
[shop@gameskeeper.co.uk](mailto:shop@gameskeeper.co.uk)  
[www.gameskeeper.co.uk](http://www.gameskeeper.co.uk)

**Games Legion**, Ashlar House, 15 Mason Close,  
Great Sutton, Cheshire, L66 2GU

**The Games Store**, The Manor House, Eagle,  
Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN6 9DG

**Gaming Crypt**, 50 Castleton Road, Great Barr,  
Birmingham, B42 2RR

**The Hidden Fortress**, 51 East Street,  
Southampton, SO14 3HX  
02380-710550  
[enquiries@hidden-fortress.com](mailto:enquiries@hidden-fortress.com)  
[www.hidden-fortress.com](http://www.hidden-fortress.com)

**Krackers Games Shop**, 5 Bath Place, Taunton,  
Somerset, TA1 4ER

**Not Just Stamps**, 17 Crendon Street, High  
Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP13 6LJ

**Ottakar's**, 102 Curzon Mall, Queensmere  
Centre, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 1DQ

**Playin' Games**, 33 Museum Street, London,  
WC1A 1LH

**Roaring Ogre Games**, 53 Staple Hill Road,  
Fishponds, Bristol, Avon, BS16 5AB

**Wayland's Forge**, 37 Auchinlek Square,  
Fiveways Shopping Centre, Edgebaston, B15  
1DV  
0121-687-0105  
[games@waylandsforge.co.uk](mailto:games@waylandsforge.co.uk)  
[www.waylandsforge.co.uk](http://www.waylandsforge.co.uk)

**Westgate Games**, 20 The Borough, Canterbury,  
Kent, CT1 2DR  
01227-457257  
[andrew@westgategames.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:andrew@westgategames.fsnet.co.uk)

*If you know of any games shop we don't list, please contact us and we'll be delighted to include them*



# Meets & Conventions

**GAMES GAMES GAMES DAYS:** Monthly games days hosted by SFC Press at *The Duke of York, 35 New Cavendish St, London W1* from 12.30 onwards. Admission is free. Contact SFC Press, Old Dover Road, London SE3 8SJ; email [events@sfcpress.co.uk](mailto:events@sfcpress.co.uk).

## JUNE

**DICECON:** Sunday 6th June at the *Quality Hotel, Glasgow*. A day of playing games, with tournaments for Settlers of Catan, Galloping Pigs, maybe Carcassonne, Up Front and whatever else can be sorted. There will be all the usual free play options. Charges TBC.

[ellis.simpson@golds.co.uk](mailto:ellis.simpson@golds.co.uk)  
[webmaster@dicecon.com](mailto:webmaster@dicecon.com)

**FIASCO:** 19th June (TBC). *Armley Sports Centre, Carr Crofts, three miles from Leeds city centre*.

**ORIGINS:** 24th-27th June in *Columbus, Ohio, USA*. The biggest US games convention!

[www.originsgames.com](http://www.originsgames.com)

## JULY

**MANORCON:** 2pm Friday 16th-2pm Monday 19th July. *Chamberlain Hall, University of Birmingham*. A large boardgames convention which has been running since 1983. This year Manorcon will be hosting World DipCon XIV. Trophies are also promised for champions at Settlers of Catan, Puerto Rico, 18XX, Outpost, Acquire and 'that well known board game' Croquet. The 200-250 attendees stay and play in a University Hall of Residence with bar and canteen facilities and ample room for both tournament and open gaming. There is free car parking available and the site is also within easy reach of public transport and the city centre of Birmingham with its pubs, restaurants and night life. Details: Kath Collman, 14 Westover Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1JG.

[manorcon@diplom.org](mailto:manorcon@diplom.org)  
<http://devel.diplom.org/manorcon>

**CONTINUUM 2004:** 23rd-26th July at *Digby Hall, Leicester University*. Continuum is the successor to the fondly remembered Convulsion. It is a convention featuring, but not exclusive to, games and worlds created by Issaries Inc and Chaosium. Held across a weekend, attendees can participate in traditional table-top roleplaying games, boardgames, cardgames, freeform games (large and small), discussion panels 'and all manner of general silliness'.

Accommodation is available for Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights, at a cost of £25 per night, bed and breakfast.

## AUGUST

**MADHOUSE MINI-CON:** Midday Friday 6th August-Sunday 8th August in *Walpole St Peter, near Wisbech*. The event will include board and card games, organised RPG events, the first-ever live-roleplay DungeonWorld event ('not for the faint-hearted'), a horror movie marathon, an appearance for Sir Roger in the Destiny setting, network computer gaming, a murder mystery live event and a water pistol assassin competition. Madhouse have taken over a little country house and grounds for the event, including large gaming areas, a heated swimming pool, B&B accommodation and camping space. 'Players and non-players alike are welcome to visit and join in the extensive gaming, eating, drinking and tomfoolery.' It all sounds fun! Full details on:

[minicon@madcentral.com](http://minicon@madcentral.com)

**MIND SPORTS OLYMPIAD:** 21st-30th August 2004 (yes, it's long), *UMIST, Manchester*. All sorts of board and card games, with some of the world's best players. For the really serious, there are things like Chess, Bridge, Othello, but for the rest of us, the final long weekend (Friday to Monday) is

stuffed full of hobby games contests (Acquire, Settlers, Puerto Rico, Lost Cities etc etc), for the princely sum of £15 for the lot. All tournaments have cash prizes and medals, which is nice), although tournaments such as Poker are extra. No fees at all if you want to spectate/play casual games.

Mind Sports Olympiad, 51 Borough Way, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 3HA, UK.  
[entries@msoworld.com](mailto:entries@msoworld.com)

<http://www.msoworld.com/2004/schedule.html>

(Hobby games enquiries to [martinburroughs@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:martinburroughs@tiscali.co.uk))

## SEPTEMBER

**GAME STARS LIVE:** 1st-5th September, *ExCel Exhibition Facility, Docklands, London*. The UK's largest videogames consumer show, which this year will include the European Online Gaming Championships.

[www.gamestars.co.uk](http://www.gamestars.co.uk)

**BATTELMASTERS:** 3rd-5th September, *Digby Hall, Leicester University*. More details to be confirmed, but expect 16 PC LAN, D&D, UK Cthulu Nationals, Heroquest.

[Chris@eurolog.org](mailto:Chris@eurolog.org)  
[www.eurolog.org](http://www.eurolog.org)

## OCTOBER

**PSYCHOCON 2004:** 8th to 10th October at *The Brooklands Hotel, Esplanade Gardens, South Cliff, Scarborough*, a boardgames convention open to Psycopath and non-Psycopath players. Games are likely to include: Diplomacy & Variants (Ard Ri, Hundred, Classical), Settlers of Catan, Puerto Rico, Kill Doctor Lucky, Save Doctor Lucky, Formula De, Devil Bunny needs a Ham, Kingmaker, Axis and Allies, Risk, The Great Dalmuti, Samurai, Apocalypse, Get Out!, Stratego, Spooks and Machiavelli. 'A great time to meet old adversaries and meet new people over new games, or simply have a few beers in the bar!'

Attendance: £4 per day, or £8 for the weekend if booked before 30th June; £6 per day, or £12 for the weekend after 30th June; £8 per day if paying on the door.

Hotel charge: £28 per person, per night B&B

Contact: Mike Dean, PSYCHOCON 2004, The Red House, Osbourne Lodge, Riggs Head, Scarborough, N Yorks, YO12 5TG.

<http://www.psychozine.co.uk/psychocon>

**GENCON Europe:** Thursday October 14th-Sunday October 17th at *Butlin's Holiday Centre, Minehead, Somerset*.

The extensive programme includes industry guests, roleplay games, cardgame tournaments, boardgames, computer games, an art show and a huge trade hall. Celebrations will be held to mark the 30th Anniversary of Dungeons and Dragons. With the majority of Butlin's Holiday Centre's facilities being available for use, this seems an ideal games convention for families. Attendees will have a range of accommodation options, including self-catering and half-board, and free carparking.

GenCon UK has been scheduled in the week prior to the Essen Spiel games fair, to help US and other non-EU manufacturers combine both events in a single trip. To pre-register for an information pack, contact Horsemen Events:

[contact@horsemenevents.com](mailto:contact@horsemenevents.com)  
[www.horsemenevents.com](http://www.horsemenevents.com)

**SPIEL with COMIC ACTION:** 21st-24th October, *Messe Essen, Germany*. With 150,000 visitors and 621 exhibitors from 21 nations, showing all kinds of games - from family, adult, children and parlour games to strategy, mail, adventure, fantasy and science fiction games, an increasing number of CD-ROMs and electronic games and a wide range of traditional boardgames - this is an important event in the gaming calendar.

[www.merle-verlag.com/spiel](http://www.merle-verlag.com/spiel)

*Flagship welcomes news of any games-related convention, pubmeet etc.*

# Galactic View

WE'VE BEEN busy checking all the games and firms that we list in *Galactic View*, so we're fairly confident that all the firms listed were active at time of going to press. If we've dropped a firm or game that you know exists, ask the GM to get in touch with us.

There is no cost of (mostly) European PBM/PBeM firms known by FLAGSHIP to be operating at the time this issue was published. There is no cost to the GMs for this listing, which we publish as a service to our readers. GMs listed below are cross-indexed by a code to the game register on the following pages. GMs to whom payment should be made by name are listed by name rather than firm.

**UK, EUROPEAN & WEB-BASED GMs**  
**AD Info Games**, PO Box 605, Bromley, Kent BR2 0YQ  
WEB: [www.jbmssports.com](http://www.jbmssports.com)  
EM: [danny.mccormell@virgin.net](mailto:danny.mccormell@virgin.net)  
TEL: 020 8325 2448

**Adams, David**  
WEB: [www.throneworld.com/lords/late04/index.html](http://www.throneworld.com/lords/late04/index.html)  
WEB: [www.throneworld.com/lords/late10/index.html](http://www.throneworld.com/lords/late10/index.html)  
EM: [davester@oz.net](mailto:davester@oz.net)

**Advanced Gaming Enterprises**, POB 214949, Sacramento, CA 95821, USA

**Agema Publications**, 3 Work Sop Rd, Off Carlton Rd, Sneyton, Nottingham NG3 2BA  
WEB: [www.ageforfun.com](http://www.ageforfun.com)  
WEB: [go.to/agema](http://go.to/agema)  
EM: [agema@linccone.net](mailto:agema@linccone.net)  
Andrews, Colin, 26 Brown Edge Road, Hols, Oldham, OL4 5QG  
Arnott, Steven,  
WEB: [www.sjaysystems.co.uk/](http://www.sjaysystems.co.uk/)  
EM: [gt3@notreally.co.uk](mailto:gt3@notreally.co.uk)

**Austerlitz PBeM**

WEB: <http://austerlitz.brivnar.co.uk>  
EM: [austerlitz@brivnar.co.uk](mailto:austerlitz@brivnar.co.uk)

**Baird, Phil**, 930 NE 63d Ave, Portland, OR 97213, USA,  
WEB: [www.throneworld.com/lords/late1/index.html](http://www.throneworld.com/lords/late1/index.html)

EM: [philipbaird@primtmail.com](mailto:philipbaird@primtmail.com)  
**Briny En Garde (Terry Crook)**, 11 Laurel Close, Burniston, Scarborough, N Yorks, YO13 0JQ  
WEB: [www.brinyengarde.co.uk](http://www.brinyengarde.co.uk)

EM: [horseguards@brinyengarde.co.uk](mailto:horseguards@brinyengarde.co.uk)

**Burrows, Pete, Buzznack PBM**, 8 Magnolia Court, Beeston, Nottingham, NG9 3LG  
WEB: [www.buzznackpbm.freemove.co.uk](http://www.buzznackpbm.freemove.co.uk)  
EM: [pate@buzznackpbm.freemove.co.uk](mailto:pate@buzznackpbm.freemove.co.uk)

TEL/FAX: 0115 9224901 (pre 10pm)

**Central de Jocs SL**, C/Numancia no. 112-116, 08029 - Barcelona, Spain  
WEB: [www.centraldejocs.com](http://www.centraldejocs.com)

EM: [torncamps@menta.net](mailto:torncamps@menta.net)

WEB: [www.chaotrail.com](http://www.chaotrail.com)

EM: [Simon.Williams@e@chaotrail.com](mailto:Simon.Williams@e@chaotrail.com)

**Clay, David**, 20 Malden Close, Crumlington, Northumberland, NE23 6AY  
WEB: [www.vivlopermar.co.uk](http://www.vivlopermar.co.uk)

EM: [dave@vivlopermar.co.uk](mailto:dave@vivlopermar.co.uk)

**Cleopatra Games**, 82 Faringdon Avenue, Bromley, Kent, BR2 8BU  
TEL: 02082 890515

WEB: [www.crasworld.com](http://www.crasworld.com)  
EM: [andy@crasworld.com](mailto:andy@crasworld.com)

**CSPP**, Alfred-Bucherstr. 63, 53115 Bonn, Germany  
WEB: [http://home.t-online.de/home/ashes\\_of\\_empire/ashes2.htm](http://home.t-online.de/home/ashes_of_empire/ashes2.htm) (English)

EM: [h.tap@cspp.com](mailto:h.tap@cspp.com)

**Dark Wolf Games**, BCM Darkwolf, London, WC1N 3XX  
WEB: [www.darwolf.ie](http://www.darwolf.ie)

EM: [pbm@darwolf.ie](mailto:pbm@darwolf.ie)

**Draes Games**, 21 Chipperfield Drive, Kingswood, Bristol BS15 4DP  
WEB: [www.draesgames.co.uk](http://www.draesgames.co.uk)

EM: [derek@draesgames.co.uk](mailto:derek@draesgames.co.uk)

TEL: (Derek Rainey): 0117 9607173 (9am-6pm Mon-Fri)

**Dreamworld Games**

WEB: [www.logickadventure.com/www.realityracing.com](http://www.logickadventure.com/www.realityracing.com)  
TEL: 01380 811522

**Dunks, Antony**, For Horizon, Sark, Guernsey, GY9 0SE  
WEB: [www.sark.net/~sark](http://www.sark.net/~sark)

EM: [xat@ark.net](mailto:xat@ark.net)

**EMG** EMG

WEB: [www.islandnet.com/~dgcwain/eng.htm](http://www.islandnet.com/~dgcwain/eng.htm)

**Entertainment Plus More Games**, PO Box 2578, Appleton, WI 54912, USA  
WEB: [www.epmgames.com](http://www.epmgames.com)

EM: [ag@epmgames.com](mailto:ag@epmgames.com)

**Evans, Paul**, 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF  
EM: [paul@pevans.co.uk](mailto:paul@pevans.co.uk)

**Faraway Games**, 3 Maslem Rd, St Albans, Herts AL4 0GS  
EM: [jghbons@faraway.co.uk](mailto:jghbons@faraway.co.uk)

WEB: <http://www.faraway.co.uk>

**Flying Buffalo**

WEB: <http://www.flyingbuffalo.com>  
EM: [rick@flyingbuffalo.com](mailto:rick@flyingbuffalo.com)

**Games by Mail**, Bridge Street, Neston, S Wirral CH64 9UJ  
WEB: [GamesMail.co.uk](mailto:GamesMail.co.uk)

EM: [colin@gamesbymail.co.uk](mailto:colin@gamesbymail.co.uk)  
TEL: (Colin, Yvonne, Trog): 0151 3361412  
FAX: 0151 3361009

**Glover, Adrian**, 4 Stevane Court, Leesness Park, Belvedere, Kent, DA17 5BG  
TEL: 020 2091 3359 (9-4.30 weekdays) - Middle Earth only

**Harlin, Thomas**, 3210 East 23rd Street, Tucson, AR 85713, USA  
WEB: [www.throneworld.com/lords](http://www.throneworld.com/lords)

EM: [thomash@throneworld.com](mailto:thomash@throneworld.com)

**Harlequin Games**, 340 North Road, Cardiff CF11 3BP  
WEB: [www.harlequingames.com](http://www.harlequingames.com) AND [www.middleearthgames.com](http://www.middleearthgames.com)

EM: [pbm@harlequingames.com](mailto:pbm@harlequingames.com)  
TEL: 020 2091 3359 (9-4.30 weekdays) - Middle Earth only

TEL: 0750 658383  
FAX: 0750 658384  
FAX: 029 2062 5665 (9-6.30 weekdays)

**Haynes, Nic**, 33 Chatsworth Road, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 7XD  
EM: [onlyfifty@btinternet.com](mailto:onlyfifty@btinternet.com)

**Incubus Designs**, POB 263, Loughborough LE11 1ZG  
WEB: [www.incubusdesigns.co.uk](http://www.incubusdesigns.co.uk)  
EM: [inbus@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:inbus@globalnet.co.uk)

TEL: 01509 217957

**Interesting Times**, 10 Belmont Avenue, Barnet, London, EN4 9LJ  
FAX: 01509 558788

WEB: [www.interesting-times.co.uk](http://www.interesting-times.co.uk)  
EM: [startup@interesting-times.co.uk](mailto:startup@interesting-times.co.uk)

TEL: 0750 658383  
FAX: 0750 658384

**Jade Enterprises**, 127 Queen Adelaide Court, Penge, London, SE20 7EB  
EM: [jade.ent@btinternet.com](mailto:jade.ent@btinternet.com)

TEL: 020 83256507

**Kamikaze Games**

WEB: [www.kamikazegames.com](http://www.kamikazegames.com)  
EM: [freepost@thornton-cleveys.co.uk](mailto:freepost@thornton-cleveys.co.uk)

**KJC Games**, FREEPOST, Thornton-Cleveys, Lancs FY5 3UL  
WEB: [www.kjcgames.com](http://www.kjcgames.com)

EM: [enquir@kjcgames.com](mailto:enquir@kjcgames.com)  
TEL: 01253 866345

**Lloyd, Rich**, 79 Farmersville Road, Califon, NJ 07830, USA  
EM: [lord84@throneworld.com](mailto:lord84@throneworld.com)

TEL: (908) 832-3176

**Madhouse**, 6 Alexandra Road, Wisbech, PE13 1HQ  
WEB: [www.madcentral.com](http://www.madcentral.com)

EM: [madcentral@aol.com](mailto:madcentral@aol.com)  
TEL: 01945 583811

**Mindless Games**, 5 Basford Road, Nottingham, NG6 0JP  
WEB: [www.mindlessworld.net](http://www.mindlessworld.net)

EM: [andy.mindless@btworld.com](mailto:andy.mindless@btworld.com)  
TEL: (Andy Simmonds): 0115 979 0797 (9.30 - 6.30 weekdays only)

**Neutral Zone**, 33 Rockall Close, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 0LU  
WEB: [www.neutral-zone-football-phem.co.uk](http://www.neutral-zone-football-phem.co.uk)

EM: [info@neutral-zone-football-phem.co.uk](mailto:info@neutral-zone-football-phem.co.uk)  
TEL: 01440 713124 (7pm - 9pm)

**Oates, Jason**, 6 St Georges Rd, Doochester, Dorset DT1 1PA  
WEB: <http://freespace.virgin.net/jason.oates>

EM: [jason.oates@virgin.net](mailto:jason.oates@virgin.net)  
TEL/FAX: 01305 251451

**Olympia Games**, 6 Sandy Lane, Bramcote, Nottingham, NG9 3GS  
EM: [pbm.dexter@talk21.com](mailto:pbm.dexter@talk21.com)

TEL/FAX: (Trevor Dexter) 0115 9436197

**Pagoda Games**, PO Box 5155, Tamworth, Staffs B77 4QQ  
WEB: [www.pagodagames.co.uk](http://www.pagodagames.co.uk)

EM: [orders@pagodagames.co.uk](mailto:orders@pagodagames.co.uk)  
TEL/FAX: (Keith Burnham): 01827 703251

**Mark Tatin**, Clansmen, 5 Burford, Brookside, Telford, Shropshire, TF3 1LQ  
EM: [mp04@8903@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:mp04@8903@blueyonder.co.uk)

**Pinder, Mark**, 139 Nelson Way, Laceyby Acres, Grimsby, S Humberside DN34 5UJ  
WEB: <http://groups.msn.com/eharia>

EM: [Markpinder@aol.com](mailto:Markpinder@aol.com)  
TEL: 01472 753430

**Play-by-Electron Games**

WEB: [www.pbegames.com](http://www.pbegames.com)  
EM: [maderator@pbegames.com](mailto:maderator@pbegames.com)

**Quirled Games**, Quirsel Games Gbr, Am Pannofen 7, 47608 Geldern, Germany  
EM: [quirselgames@t-online.de](mailto:quirselgames@t-online.de)

**Rebus Games**, 20 Greenfield Crescent, Brighton, BN1 8HJ  
EM: [downton@zoom.co.uk](mailto:downton@zoom.co.uk)

**Received Wisdom**, 9 Oundle Road, Alwalton, Peterborough PE7 3UP  
WEB: [www.receivedwisdom.org](http://www.receivedwisdom.org)

**Rolling Thunder Games Inc.**, PO Box 310, Eastlake, CO 80614-0310, USA  
WEB: [www.rollingthunder.com](http://www.rollingthunder.com)  
EM: [nas@rollingthunder.com](mailto:nas@rollingthunder.com)  
FORUM: [www.rollingthunderforums.com](http://www.rollingthunderforums.com)

**Rzechorzak, Peter**

WEB: [www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/1161/tribenet.htm](http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/1161/tribenet.htm)  
EM: [tribenet@netpace.net.au](mailto:tribenet@netpace.net.au)

**SSV Klipp-Bachler OEG**, Postfach 1205, A-8021, Graz, Austria  
WEB: <http://members.aon.at/postspiel/>

EM: [ssv-graz@aon.at](mailto:ssv-graz@aon.at)

**Servien, David**, 15 Alkdale Grove, Garforth, Leeds, LS25 1DJ  
SEVENSTAR GAMES, 57 Olympia Gardens, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 1JQ

WEB: [www.sark.net/~sark/greensun.html](http://www.sark.net/~sark/greensun.html)  
EM: [greensun@nickelglobalnet.co.uk](mailto:greensun@nickelglobalnet.co.uk)

**Silver Dreamer**, 174 Charles St, Greenhithe, Dartford, Kent DA9 9AJ  
WEB: [www.silverdreamer.com](http://www.silverdreamer.com)

EM: [silverdream@aol.com](mailto:silverdream@aol.com)  
TEL: (Justin Parsley): 01322 387195 (Mon-Fri, 11-4)

**Software Simulations**, PO Box 2758, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2XH  
WEB: [www.jbmssports.com](http://www.jbmssports.com)

EM: [peter@jbmssports.com](mailto:peter@jbmssports.com)

**Spellbinder Games**, 51 Athelstan Rd, Cliftonville, Margate, Kent CT9 2BE  
EM: [Chris.spellbinder@btinternet.com](mailto:Chris.spellbinder@btinternet.com)

TEL: (Chris Dempsey): 01843 291558

**Spencer, Jerry**, 51 Elm Vale, Liverpool L6 8NY  
EM: [jerry.spencer@liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:jerry.spencer@liverpool.gov.uk)

**Sporting Dreams**, PO Box 5423, Derby, DE21 2ZB  
WEB: [www.sportingdreams.com](http://www.sportingdreams.com)  
EM: [info@sportingdreams.com](mailto:info@sportingdreams.com)

and [info@greyhoundrainer.com](mailto:info@greyhoundrainer.com)  
TEL: 01332 726376

**Star En Garde**

WEB: [www.cooneyzie.com](http://www.cooneyzie.com)

**Supersonic Games**, PO Box 1812, Galston, KA4 8WA  
EM: [sam@australitiz.co.uk](mailto:sam@australitiz.co.uk)

TEL: (Scott, Sam, Chris): 01563 821022, fax 01563 821006

**Tempus Fugit PBM Productions**, 96 Bishopswood Road, Tadley, Hants RG26 4HG  
WEB: <http://tempusfugitpbm.co.uk>

EM: [enquiries@tempusfugitpbm.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@tempusfugitpbm.co.uk)

**Torre de Jeux**, 88 Avenue de Jussieu, 91600 Savigny sur Orge, France  
EM: [issed@club-internet.fr](mailto:issed@club-internet.fr)

**Time Patterns**, 14 The Hollows, Exmouth, Devon EX8 1QT  
WEB: [www.timepatterns.co.uk](http://www.timepatterns.co.uk)

EM: [carol@timepatterns.co.uk](mailto:carol@timepatterns.co.uk)  
TEL/FAX: 01395 276632

**Total Conquest**

WEB: [www.total-conquest.com](http://www.total-conquest.com)  
EM: [support@total-conquest.com](mailto:support@total-conquest.com)

**Ulaidh Games**, 62 Beechgrove Avenue, Belfast BT6 0NF  
EM: [christian.morris@virgin.net](mailto:christian.morris@virgin.net)

**Vatican En Garde**

WEB: [www.vaticanengarde.com](http://www.vaticanengarde.com)

**White, Stephen**, 14 Wiltshire Avenue, Burnley, Lancs. BB12 6AD  
WOW GAMES,

WEB: <http://www.wow-phemgame.com/>

**Xanthis, Constantine**, 7080 NW 75th Street, Pompano Beach, Florida 33067, USA  
EM: [cveren@vcos.com](mailto:cveren@vcos.com)

## Zine Listings

This list only contains details of Zines and Zine Editors who have been in contact with Flagship.

**Abyssinian Prince**, Jim Burgess, 664 Smith Street, Providence, RI 02908-4327, USA (Email: [burgess@world.att.com](mailto:burgess@world.att.com))  
**Carnel Robert/Rees**, Top Floor Flat, 22 Victoria Square, Clifton, Bristol BS8 4ES. EM: [carne@talk21.com](mailto:carne@talk21.com) ([www.geocities.com/shudderfx/carne/](http://www.geocities.com/shudderfx/carne/))

**Devolution**, Tony Robbins, Lincoln House, Creaton Rd, Hollowell, Northlams, NN6 8RP (Email: [tony@hollowell.plus.com](mailto:tony@hollowell.plus.com))

**Diplomacy**, 2000, [www.lancedad.demon.co.uk/dip2000/](http://www.lancedad.demon.co.uk/dip2000/)  
Flights of Fancy, Philip Honeybone. Email: [phil@medly98.freemove.co.uk](mailto:phil@medly98.freemove.co.uk)

**For Whom The Die Rolls**, 14 Stepnells, Marsworth, Nr Tring, Herts., HP23 4NQ (Email: [Keith@Thomasson.com](mailto:Keith@Thomasson.com))

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**Ode, John Marsden**, 91 Westwood Avenue, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR33 9RS (Email: [John@ode.online.net](mailto:John@ode.online.net))  
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**Strangitude**, John Webley, Toplereine 4, 38259 Salzgerter, Germany (Email: [jwebley@aol.com](mailto:jwebley@aol.com))

**Stronghold**, Paul Sands, Flat 2, 432 Birmingham Rd, Wyde Green, Sutton Coldfield, B72 1YJ (Email: [strongzine@linccone.net](mailto:strongzine@linccone.net))

**To Win Just Once**, Paul Evans, 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge, UB10 8UF (Email: [twjo@pevans.co.uk](mailto:twjo@pevans.co.uk))  
**Variable Pig**, Jim Reader, Vredeanststraat 20, 3633 EC, Vreeland, NETHERLANDS (Email: [lj.reader@wanadoo.nl](mailto:lj.reader@wanadoo.nl))





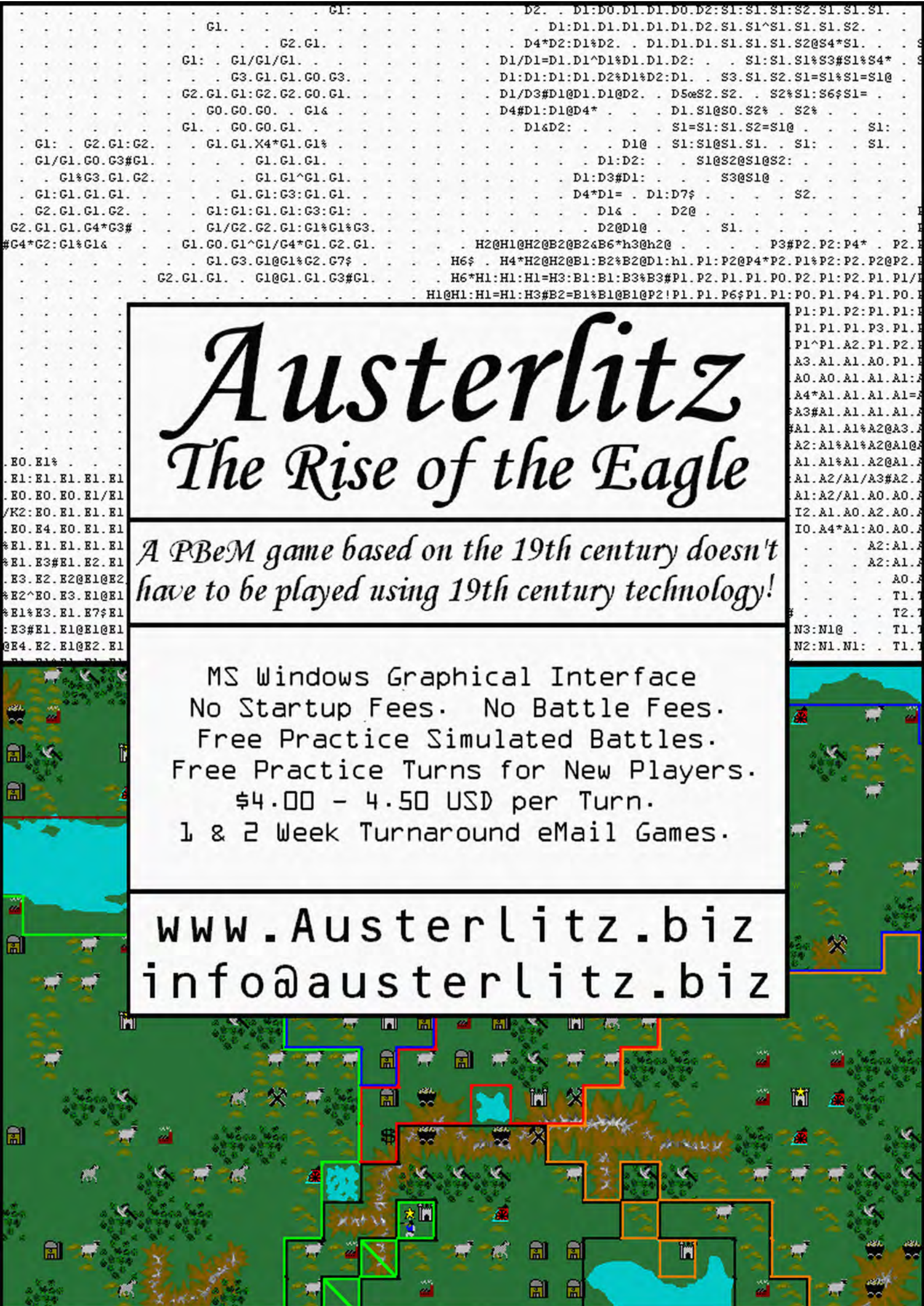
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