

Welcome to Pick Up and Deliver, the podcast where I pick up my audio recorder as I step out for a walk and deliver an episode to you while I stroll around.

I'm Brendan Riley.

While greetings listeners, it's May 2nd and I'm having a lovely walk here in suburban Chicago.

It's Friday and we've got the weekend ahead.

Looking forward to it, but I have some grading to do so I'm not, I'm not foot loose and fancy free.

I'm however very, very excited tomorrow is the Chicago area no ship math trade in which I am going to be giving away something like 20 games and getting something like 20 games in return.

Very exciting to have the prospect of new games on the horizon.

Can't wait for that.

It is currently May 2nd and it's the first chance I've had since the new month rolled around to do an episode for you since it's only the second day of the new month.

That's right, it's the new month and it's time for a report that means it's time for a top of the stack.

If you need the podcast, top of the stack is a monthly segment that I do at the first episode of each month in which I talk about the game plays I've had since last time.

I did this.

Once a month I check in, I share some stats, talk a little bit about what games I've been playing, what games I want to play next and go from there.

So let's jump right in.

April 2025 or 2025.

First final monthly stats.

I played 59 plays of 38 games for a total of 286 plays of 137 different games so far this year, which is good, but not on pace for a thousand plays.

I like to have a thousand plays in a year, not on pace for that.

That's okay.

My shelf of opportunity started the year at 64 games.

I have whittled that down.

I've been consciously chunking or chipping away at it.

I'm down to 62 games.

I was at 63 at the beginning of the month.

I played one game, so I went down to 62 and now I'm going to totally screw that up by getting a bunch of new games tomorrow.

My collection size has not changed.

It was 620 games before I started at the beginning of the month and it was 620 games at the end of the month.

Pretty good.

Not getting any new games.

My most played game was bomb busters.

We played four plays of that on the table and my most played asynchronous game was through the ages with three plays.

Top of the stack report.

As a reminder, top of the stack is not only the name of the segment, but also the name of the games that I want to play in the next month.

If you think about all the games I might play, being in a metaphorical stack, I pick out four games and put them at the top of that stack with the goals playing at least three of them in the month.

If I play at least three of them, it's considered a success.

I have to tell you that because I certainly didn't achieve it this month.

This month I achieved one of the four.

The one that I did play was Ponzi Scheme.

The three I did not play were Hollywood 1947, Space Freaks and Glory to Rome.

Hollywood 1947 is the biggest whiff because I certainly was in a space where people were playing it.

I wanted to let other people play if they had a chance at the table filled up.

That's the perils of being the faculty advisor at a college board game club is that you might not get to play a game.

That's okay.

So they had a fun time, but I didn't get to play it.

So Hollywood 1947 not played Space Freaks.

This is a game that shows up on my top of the stack about once a year.

I've had it for a long time.

Never gotten to play it.

About maybe my son would play it with me sometime this month, but he decided not to.

And Glory to Rome, that one fell by the wayside as we took up a project at board game club, which I'm so glad we did.

We labeled all of the games in our cabinets and we organized them so that they're easier

to find in approximately 70 to other games that are like them.

It's much easier to search our cabinets now.

They feel organized.

It's great.

But we basically spent two weeks doing that and played hardly any games except for the game of organized the cabinets.

So it was a good thing to get done, but I did not get as many plays at board game club as I normally would.

Oh, well, such is life.

It was still a good time.

First place this month.

Coming into the month, I had 31 new to me games played so far and I got to try a few more.

I tried The Gang.

Actually I got to play this in two different settings.

So I played it several times.

The game is a cooperative trick-taking game that's all the rage that's nominated for for cooperative game of the year on board game geek awards this year.

I don't know how it's going to win, but I know it's nominated.

Next is Knarr. K-N-A-R-R.

This is a really clever little set collection game where you are accumulating cards and trying to build up your ship and game points that way.

I thought it was really good.

I'm certainly looking forward to playing it some more.

It's a great half hour game.

I think if you have time.

I played Civolution.

I think I talked about these either.

I definitely recorded the episode where I talked about Knarr and Civolution.

I'm not going to talk about them in two great of depth except the evolution is the big box Stefan Feld game.

Chalk a block full of different options and possibilities about which I think I feel more nostalgic positivity than I felt in the moment.

And I played Blood on the Clock Tower, which is a large scale social deduction game kind of in the neighborhood of Werewolf, but a bit more elaborate.

It was pretty fun.

And I played Ponzi Scheme, which was okay.

I mean I could see some interesting options there, but two of the four people playing it didn't like it at all.

And so it wasn't going to work for us to enjoy it.

So that one didn't go over very well and I can't imagine that I'm probably going to play it very many more times or ever again, even just because it was fine, but not that compelling.

So those were the new games I played this month, five of them putting me at 36 new to be games tried this year.

I did not try any expansions in April.

So that category has zero.

I came in with 10, left the month with 10 out of the dust games.

A game gets dusty metaphorically if it's been a year or more since I played it.

So a game that I've brought out of the dust is one that I've played before, but it's been a year or more since I played it.

If I get it out, I dusted it off.

It goes on this list.

Coming in, I had played 21 dusty games so far this year.

I added five more this month.

Escape Curse of the Temple was two years 11 days dusty.

This is an excellent real-time cooperative game in which you are trying to get out of a temple by rolling dice really fast, finding gems, making your way out of the temple.

It's high-tension speed game with lots of shouting, lots of noise.

It's a lot of fun.

Escape Curse of the Temple.

Love that one.

Next up was last year, two years 19 days Last Will, Last Will, two years 19 days dusty.

This classic Vladimir Suchy game has just a delightful premise.

It's Brewster's Millions.

You're trying to spend all your money.

I did talk about this one recently.

I recorded it recently.

I don't remember if it's come out yet.

Or it's coming out soon.

I want to talk about more detail, but it holds up.

So pretty good.

We played Globetrotting.

This is from our friends at R2I Games.

I say our friends because literally I am friendly with the designers.

I got to play an early prototype of this at our game club and I've known those guys for a long time.

Globetrotting is an interesting light game with a very elaborate physical presence.

You are literally drawing lines on a globe as you plan vacations.

It's pretty interesting, but it's definitely the kind of game where like if somebody has it and they're like, "Hey let's play this.

Sure I'll play it."

But it's very light.

It's a very light sort of balance in game.

It reminds me of Trek 21.

If you're familiar with that game, that's probably the closest I can think of although the gameplay is not really that similar, but it's a similar weight like you're resolving some things and it takes about 20 to 30 minutes and at the end you've collected some points.

It's honestly in weight, it's a lot like Canvas as well.

That was their niche.

They have done a really good job releasing a slightly heavier game with Frommage which has gotten a lot of buzz lately.

I don't know.

I haven't had a chance to play that one yet, but Globetrotting was interesting.

It's been two years, ten months and eleven days since I played that one.

And finally Quacks of Quedlinberg or if you were going to go buy a new copy right now, it's just called Quacks.

This is a Wolfgang Warsh game from about eight years ago I think and in it you play potion masters brewing up potions and trying to score points by brewing up the best potions.

It's a pushy luck game and a bag builder so as the game goes along you're able to buy these chips that go into your bag and then when you're brewing your potions you're adding more ingredients to the potions and trying not to bust.

It's a cute little game, lots of fun.

I really like the art.

I don't know.

I guess when you refresh a game you want to make it look like a new game so changing the title I guess makes people like it more.

I think the original title was hilarious and delightful but whatever.

No one asked me.

But we had a good time dressing off.

That was two years, seven months, and three days dusty Quacks of Quedlinberg.

And finally I did want to call out I had one notable play this month.

A notable play is a play of a game that I have some reason for calling your attention to.

In this case I played a game of Fantasy Realms which was three hundred and forty five days dusty so it was twenty days shy of being a year so it wasn't dusty yet but it was almost dusty and I thought I'd point it out.

Fantasy Realms always a good one.

One of the goals I have this year is to try to play, well this year and next year between the two years since last time I updated my top fifty list is to try to play every one of the games in my top fifty on the table.

This is an ongoing challenge and I think if I'm going to say a game is in my top fifty games of all time I should be making an effort to play it in that time.

So that's what's going on there.

I did manage to play thus far I played thirteen of my fifty of my top fifty games on the table and I managed to, I played Orleans again which doesn't do anything for my list but I like to mention when I, you know, some of my top fifty games get played more often.

And then the Castles of Burgundy is another one that I really enjoy but haven't had a ton of opportunity to play on the table but I did get an opportunity to play it recently.

So my wife and I played it, we had a good time and I think she won which was frustrating because this is the first play we've had where she had played and I played so we were going to box top it which means that she has the first win in our box top.

So I'll be seeking a rematch soon but that means I've now played fourteen of my top fifty games.

If I play one a month I'm doing pretty well.

Particularly now since we're in April and I've already played fourteen of them if I play one a month is enough.

I need to play two a month.

So by the end of April ideally I would have played eight so I'm a little ahead of the curve but gotta stay on that.

The other challenge I've set for myself is a ten for ten lists.

Of course I do mine a little weird.

I have ten categories and I'm trying to achieve each category very well.

I've achieved forty six of my hundred plays which is pretty good.

I would like to be a little further ahead than that because as the test time goes on it gets harder and harder to achieve those last few so I really want to try to get those done early nonetheless.

The only two that I move forward this month, bomb busters became the second game or the third game that I've played five times on the table.

This is a special category where normally a play cannot go into my ten for ten and count for more than one category so like I have magic games and I have colorful games so if I play a magical game that is has a mostly red box I can't count both unless I play it twice but the five plays on the table one those are those plays can count again.

So if I play a game five times on the table and it still meets other requirements for my ten for ten that's okay because I'm meeting the five on anyway.

Bomb busters we played three times on February twenty third and like I said four more times on the eighteenth of April which puts me over the five.

Meeting bomb busters is the third game that I've played five times on the table.

One of the categories is trying to play games that have been on my shelf of opportunity since before twenty twenty one.

Ponzi Scheme is one of those games and so by playing it I'm now up to three games out of the ones that were on there that early.

Next up is my painting challenge.

I have not touched a paintbrush in a while for my board game minis which means my painting challenge has not changed.

I want to paint my my goal still is to paint my my unlocked frost haven minis to paint my cerebra minis and then where I to finish all that then finish the Nazis that came with the Hellboy game but there's a long way to go on those things.

My shelf of opportunity log my shelf of opportunity as I mentioned before is not improving dramatically because I keep getting new games but that's all right so it's at sixty three plays.

The one game that I got off of my shelf of opportunity this time around was Ponzi scheme.

So overall a good month of game playing.

I'm looking forward to playing more games soon.

Okay so but generally it's been a pretty entertaining month.

So the last thing to talk about is what I am planning to play in the coming months.

So the next month is May and I picked one game that I am getting and three games I'm getting right or three other games.

So the one game I'm getting one of the games I'm getting is called Sorcerer City.

This looks pretty cool.

That's one of the most games I'm most excited about trying of the games that I'm getting.

So excited to try that.

I have a game called Badass Zombie Killers that I've been trying to get rid of and I would like to try before I get rid of it.

It looks like it'd be pretty easy and simple to play.

I'm hoping my son will play it with me sometime soon.

I have a game called Fallen Angel that's been on my shelf for a while.

It looks pretty neat.

It's well rated.

It's dice worker placement.

I think if I learned the rules, I could probably get a play of that in and it would be pretty interesting.

So Fallen Angel.

And then I always like to put one of my top 50 games on my list.

So I put Pulsar 2849, the Vladimir Suchy game that I haven't played in a while, but is a delight.

So I'd love to get that to the table.

So those are my goals for the coming month.

I'm looking forward to getting all of the new games I'm going to get from the math trade and checking them out and figuring out where they're going to go on my shelf.

I'm looking forward to reorganizing my game shelf, which I'll probably do in June because

I'm getting 20 new games in and I also got rid of 20 games.

So there's a lot of space and things that need to be moved around a bit to make them fit.

And generally, I'm just looking forward to shifting into summer mode.

I've got two weeks left in the semester.

A ton of grading to do between now and then, but I think it will be a delightful month.

So what?

Did you play in April?

I had over to Board Game Geek Guild 3269.

The most consistent place, kind of conversation we have over on the guild is when we talk about what we've been playing.

So I hope that you'll join us over there.

Let us know what you plan to play next month, what you played last month, and so on.

If you'd like to reach out to me, the most reliable way is to send me a geek mail message on Board Game Geek.

wombat929

I also have an email, Brendan at rattleboxgames.com, which I do check just not as consistently.

So either of those would be a fine way to reach out.

I'd also love to play a game asynchronously with you on Board Game Arena or yucada.de.

In both of those places, my username is also, "Wombat929."

So head over to one of those and drop me a line.

Well, that's about it for my walk today.

Thanks for joining me on my walk.

I hope that your next walk is as pleasant as mine was.

Bye-bye.

Brought to you by rattlebox games.

[Music]