

Untitled - July 2, 2025

Speaker Welcome to pick up and Deliver, the podcast where I pick up my audio recorder as I head out for a walk and deliver an episode to you while I stroll around. I'm Brendan Riley. Well, good morning friends. It's a beautiful day here in suburban Chicago. It's very warm, but not quite the brutal heat that we had last week. We expect it to be pretty warm today. It is early July and that means it's time for a top of the stack episode. Beep beep beep beep beep beep beep. Top of the stack is a play update episode in which I talk about games that I've played recently, particularly games that I played in the last month. I give you some stats and we talk about how things went. Generally, what I do is I talk about the goals that I set for myself last month and how I've done, how I'm updating, how I'm doing, as I'm updating those goals to reflect plays throughout the year and make some plans for where I'm going in July. So join me, won't you? All right. To start with a few stats. I had 65 plays last month of 52 different games. As usual, my plays reflect both online and in-person plays. I do log my board game, arena and yukata plays, and that generally involves about half of the plays that I do. So far this year, I've had 417 plays of 194 different games. My shelf of opportunity. My goal is always to reduce the size of it, but I'm hampered by the fact that I like acquiring games so often, as fast as I'm acquiring or finding new games at goodwill or whatever, and sometimes buying them new or trading for them. I'm taking them off. So I don't generally do that well in reducing the size of the shelf of opportunity, but I'm always thinking about it. This month, I went from 77 games on the shelf to 76, so a reduction for sure. My collection size I'm supposed to be reducing it. That said, it was 614 at the beginning of the month and it was 616 at the end of the month. So it did go up. My most played games. I played hardback twice on the table. So my most played in-person game I played twice. My most played online game was Seven Wonders, which I played four times online and one time on the table. So my top of the stack for June I had four games listed aeroplanes, Aviation Ascendant in the year of the Dragon, Xeno shift, Redmire, and Ghost Stories. As a reminder, I consider it a success if I get three of those four played well, I knocked it out of the park. I got four out of four played, so I actually had a success and an overage. So victory for me. I did play aeroplanes. I did play in the year of the Dragon, I did play Xeno Shift Redmire and I did play Ghost Story. So this year total so far, if I'm a success, would have been to play 18 of the designated games I've played 15. So if I can do three more months where I play four out of three, then I'll be back on track to have a perfect score for the year. These are convoluted, self-imposed guidelines, but so be it. I did get to try a lot of new games this month. In fact, I tried 15 new games. It's kind of a record. Not really, but that's a lot. At the beginning of the month, I had tried 50 new games, so over the first five months I was averaging ten new games a month, and this month I played 15. So that's great. The 15 new games that I played were Project Elite, Molly House, Hollywood 1947, Dredd, Meyer aeroplanes, aviation. Ascendant. Valeria. Card, kingdoms. In the year of the Dragon Parade. Evenfall. Arcs. Evidence. Hush. Money. Sorcerer city, feed the Kraken fresco and Sir Ocelot's cave. Um. About half. About a third of those I've talked about already on the podcast. Or I have recorded the episode in which I talk about them and the rest will. I will discuss in future episodes. Another goal I have is to play every game in my top 50. At some point in the two years between when I made my last top 50 and when I make my next one. It's good to get a review of the game, have it fresh in my mind. I did get three of those games played this month

Ghost Stories, Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective, and Concordia, which means that as of the end of this month, I have played 20 of the 50 games in my top 50, which is great because as I whittle that number down, they get harder and harder to play. So really, I think if I get to 35 out of 50 played by the end of this year, I'll have a good shot at getting the rest played next year. I will say Sherlock Holmes consulting detective is a very hard one to play, because I have played all of the published content for that game, and you can't really replay it because you've solved the mystery already. But what I've done is there are some very well-developed fan expansions for the game where people have made cases using the material from the game, but made their own updates, so I'm counting those. If I play one of those, I count that as playing Sherlock Holmes consulting detective because I am playing it. It's just the fan, a fan addition to it. So you can quibble, but I'm not going to. I did try two expansions this month. I tried Concordia Venus for the first time and Elder Sign Grave Consequences. That one was particularly interesting because I acquired that in 2016. I think it was the last thing I purchased for Elder Sign. I would every time we play that, I do think I like that. I wish I had a complete set, so I may keep an eye on the used market for the two elder sign expansions that I don't have. There's one that takes place in the desert and one that takes place underwater, and I don't have either of those, but it would be fun to have them, so I may keep an eye out for those. I did manage to get several games out of the dust. As a reminder, a dusty game is one where I've played it before, but it's been a year or more since I've played it. My dustiest game that I played was Let's See above and Below, which I had played last eight years, two months and 26 days ago. So it's been a long time, almost to the extent of I just started like that's pushing back to the beginning of my blogging, my plays before that. It's sort of a mystery when I played the games. Sometimes I can just say before 2015 is the best I can do, but other games are nearer. So we've got hardback four years, 23 days, dusty smiles, six years, five months, 26 days. Concordia one year, 11 months, one year, two months. Century Golem edition one year, two months. There's some days in here too, but I'm just for expediency. Nucleome one year, four months. Boy, that's a good game. That's really good. Game of Thrones. Westeros intrigue seven years, nine months. Welcome to the moon. One year, seven months and Cloud City four years. One month. I would say Game of Thrones Westeros intrigue, uh, was an interesting it's an interesting little puzzle game. It is very light in terms of, uh, what it does. The rules take about two minutes to explain, but it's an amusing, amusing bit of play. I had one notable play I wanted to make sure to mention. This month I played a game of Arcana with Gabriel Edge, a proof pad in a board game arena or weird laugh. I think in Board Game Geek he is a member of our forums and a regular listener. Hi Gabriel, um, and I play a lot of online games with him, and he and I had a game of Arcana where we were playing with the pearls, so you had to get to 13 points to win instead of seven or instead of ten. And I got an engine going that gave me just a ton of, uh, read resources. It was, you know, your standard, um, dragon's teeth and then something that can, uh, pull the pull, the then something that can pull the, the resources off so you can run it multiple times. And I got just a huge number of resources. And so I ended up doing a big exchange in the last round and ended up with 20 points, which was a real delight. Uh, that was my highest score ever in Arcana. so it's nice to get that combo now. Honestly, that's just sort of luck if that happens, but it was quite enjoyable. I'm making a lot of progress on my ten for ten. As a reminder, the way I'm doing my ten for ten this year is I've picked ten categories, and I have to play games that fit these categories ten times. Coming into the

month, I was at 50 plays and I have added one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, 11 plays to the list. So I'm up to in the 60s now, so that's great. Uh, here are the things I added. I played Sherlock Holmes consulting detective, which the cover of that game is brown, so that fulfills my Brown cover game. I played Ghost Stories, Spirit Island, even Fall and Sorcerer City. Uh, those are all games that involve magic as part of the game. And I'm up to seven magic games. I played Evidence Hush Money, which is a one play mystery game. So playing that puts me at seven mystery games played. We played aeroplanes aviation ascendant. That was a game that I've had on my shelf of opportunity since before 2021, which puts me at four games in that category. That is going to be the hardest category to complete, I think because the games that have been on there that long are generally not all that appealing to play. And so I have to just wield my I want to play this while you guys play it with me energy to get those games played, but I'm chinking away at it, uh, like a lumberjack at a tree. In my pre 2024 games, I'm doing better. In the year of the Dragon was a game I had before 2024, but after 2021, obviously. And that puts me at eight of those games. Molly House was the last of the K through T alphabet games, so I have now completed that section. That's a full ten and Valeria card kingdoms and Xeno shift Redmire Xeno shift despite the Z sound starts with an X uh, and that is four games there. That one is always hard to complete as well. So I'm making very good progress on my ten for ten. Which is good because the more progress I make, the harder the resolution is to do. My collection size has changed a fair amount. My expansion shelf went from my. So I have an expand your shelf. It's called, which is like my shelf of opportunity. But for expansions I played one expansion, Elder Sign Grave Consequences, and I acquired three. I got Fresco Expansion seven, which actually I got in May, but I forgot to mark it. And same with Valeria card. Kingdoms, Flame and Frost. I didn't know that was in the box. So that was a second one. And then I with my birthday money, I got unconscious mind and I got the unconscious mind nightmares expansion as well. So I took one off and added two, meaning I went from 79 to 81. My collection size changed dramatically over the month. I'll just hit it very quickly. I started at 614. I added three games because I went through and updated where everything was on the collection shelf, and there were three games that I owned that I had not marked owned. Dang it. There were three games that I had finished and given away, but I hadn't marked them previously owned, so that took those away. There are two games I donated to the college game club that I had not marked previously owned, and there were two games that I just had given away because I didn't like them anymore, or I gave them to somebody, or this one game I took apart for parts. So those games are not owned anymore. I acquired even fallen unconscious mind. We did. I did correct myself. I found that we had a copy of clue, but I had marked not marked it that we owned it. I also acquired not a not a lone indigo hunt, a killer murder at the hotel escape room, the cursed dollhouse. Go nuts for donuts. Lord of the rings the Duel. Uh, all of those at goodwill. So relatively modest pricing to acquire those games, but they all now go on the shelf of opportunity. The one game that I'm a little hesitant to put on the shelf of opportunity is Indigo, because this is a game that I've played a lot. I haven't played it since I got rid of the copy, but basically, like my son was taking it to his high school board game club and they were having fun with it. So I'm like, you can just keep it there. That's fine. Uh, but I found another copy at goodwill, and I'm happy to have it for three bucks. I may bring it and donate to my college board game club, but for now, it's in my collection. Listen, uh, you can listen in in September to see if it leaves my collection again. Uh,

I also sold in the year of the Dragon. Alien artifacts, dice, settlers, zombie 15, and spirits of the Rice Paddy. Well, I'm marking them sold now because it's easier since they're out of the house, but technically, I haven't sold them yet. The local board game shop takes games on consignment, and I put those games up on consignment. I priced them to move. So if they don't sell, something's wrong. I acquired two more games with the last of my birthday money. I got kin, fire delve, calluses, lab and wondrous creatures kin fire delve. The guy at the board game store is all about that game. And then I ended up getting it in part because, uh, regular listener Chris, who has the occasional podcast, Shuffle Buddies, posted a really interesting review of Kin Fire Delve that made me think, oh, I should check that out. And Wondrous Creatures has a very good rating and just looked beautiful, so I'm excited to share that. So the final update I started at 614. I ended at 616. So the last bit of our update is the top of the stack for July. These are games I hope to play or plan to play in July, and I'm looking forward to talking about them with you next month. Um, the games that I'm wanting to play are wondrous creatures. Fallen Angel, that is my shelf clearer. That's an older game that I'm looking to get played. Kin, fire, delve, Callas's Grotto, and top 50 choice. I haven't played Dungeon Pets in a long time, and in fact, Dungeon Pets has an expansion. I'm going to try to get that expansion out as well. So both Dungeon Pets and the expansion. So that's it for me today. What games did you play in June? Head over to board Game Geek Guild 3269. One of our most reliable forum features is a discussion of the. One of our most reliable forum features is the discussion of the top of the stack, so I suspect that may even have started before I published this episode. If not, it will probably start soon. So head over to BoardGameGeek Guild 3269 and join the conversation there. Well, that's about it for me today. I hope that you had a lovely June playing games, and I hope you enjoyed your walk with me today. Thanks for joining me and I'll talk to you next time. Here's hoping your next walk is as pleasant as mine was. Bye bye. Brought to you by Rattlebox Games.