

## Pick Up & Deliver 774: Top of the Stack, Sept 2025

**Speaker** Welcome to Pickup 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.

Well, good morning, listeners. It's a beautiful day here in suburban Chicago and I'm out on a walk looking to enjoy myself as I talk to you about board games. Well, I've been away for a week or so between the beginning of school and a significant road trip. I haven't had time to post episodes. I've recorded some, so I'm actually like a week and a half ahead of episodes recorded. I just haven't had time to post them because despite the fact that it sounds like this is unedited, I do spend about a half an hour editing, half an hour to forty five minutes editing each episode. And so when I post an episode, it's not just the twenty minutes I spent walking, but also the editing time. So in that regard, I'm a little behind.

And apologies for the delay, but today is September second, which means that it's the beginning of the month, which means it's time to talk about top of the stack. Top of the stack is a regular episode feature in which I talk about the games that I played in the last month and the games I'm hoping to play in the next month. Let's jump into it. It's been a good month, so to start with, in August I had seventy three plays of forty seven different games. That's a nice uptick, bringing my total to five hundred and eighty one plays of two hundred and fifty six different games. Now that's August, so we're about two thirds of the way through the year. So on that pace, I'm probably going to hit seven hundred and fifty plays and maybe three hundred and fifty games. That's a pretty good pretty good run.

My shelf of opportunity this month did go up from sixty or from. Oh, it went down. I started the month at eighty four games and I went down to seventy seven. I took seven games off my shelf of opportunity this month. Pretty good about that. If I continue that for the next four months, I will actually get below where we started. We started the year at sixty four games on the shelf of opportunity. It'd be great to end the year with fewer than that. We'll see how we do. My collection size also went down. It was six hundred and thirty three at the beginning of the month. It went down to six hundred and fifteen, which is just one above six hundred and fourteen, what I started the year with. So at this moment, I'm only one game up from where I started the year, and if I have another aggressive couple months of culling, I may get below where I started. Huzzah!

My most played game this month was River Valley Glassworks, which I played five times on the table, and the Great Zimbabwe, which I played three times asynchronously. So top of the stack as as you know, top of the stack is the indication of the games I hope to play in the month. Generally, what I do is I pick out four games that I want to play this month, and if I get three of them played, I consider that a success. As a reminder, I stole the phrase top of the stack from the Podcast of Nonsensical Gamers, which was the podcast I was listening to with great relish when I started this podcast. They have since gone on permanent hiatus, I guess. I don't even know if they're still hosting their episodes anymore. Probably not. Um, and my podcast has run far longer than theirs did.

Nonetheless. Um, okay, so the four games that I had on the top of the stack in August were the mirroring of Mary King, fallen Angel endeavor, Deep Sea, and Dungeon Pets. I'm sad to say the only one I got played was the mirror was endeavor Deep Sea. So one for four there or one for three if you count the what I just said. So it's not not great success rate. I'm sad to say, but whatever. That is the way it is. August was a busy month, and I didn't have time to cultivate a lot of new game plays. I'm hoping to turn that around in September, but we will see.

I did have time to play a lot of new games. I just didn't have time to pick carefully which ones I played. So I ended up playing a lot of new games when I had the opportunity. And that means I did get to play a lot of new games. Here are the games I got to play. I tried Fountains, skyrockets, Festivals of Fire, three chapters. Ross, A Dance of Love, oh hell, first class letters, A place for all my books. Blast out. River Valley glassworks Apollo thirteen A Touch of Evil. Dark Gothic whale riders, Indiana Jones. Cryptic. Ready. Set. Bet, Go Nuts for donuts, endeavour, Deep Sea Vantage, Sea Salt and Paper and Masquerade. Second edition. Putting me from I started the month with eighty two new games played this year. I played twenty games or nineteen games this month, so one hundred and one new to me games tried this year. Huzzah! That was quite a delight if you ask me. If you don't, I still say quite a delight.

I did try some expansions as well. I tried the Exit the Game expansion Adventures on Catan, which was pretty good. I tried Kitchen Fire, delves scorns Stockade. That's the second of the three Kitchen Fire Delve games that I tried. I tried river, valley, glassworks, river glass and other sundries. I said I played River Valley Glassworks five times. We got the River glass expansion out with the second play. It's a very simple light game and so the river glass expansion helps with that. We played Arkham Horror, The card game. I tried both the Hemlock Vale campaign expansion and the investigator expansion that goes with it. Not surprising that we tried the new investigators that go with the new campaign, because I don't think that's surprising, but that's what we did. I'm up to eighteen expansions Tried this month. Doing five in the same month felt pretty good, and I feel like I'm on my way to a successful journey there.

I did get to dust off a number of games this month. We started with fifty five games dusted off at the beginning. We dusted off the crew quest for planet nine. One year, one month, nine days. Dusty Arkham Horror, The Card Game one year, seven months twenty five days. Dusty Indigo seven years, four months. One day. Dusty. That is a runner game which is now called Butterfly Garden. If you look it up, if you search for Indigo, you'll find it. It'll just take you to Butterfly Gardens, so don't be confused by that. Dice miner, which is one year, two months and seventeen days. Dusty Victoriana three years, fourteen days. Dusty tapestry two years, twenty seven days. Dusty happens. Happy salmon one year, eight months, twenty seven days dusty. Despite the fact that we play Happy Salmon quite regularly at my board game club, I never played it at my board game club this year or last year a love letter. I was one year, five months dusty on that and hearts. I was six years, one month and twenty four days dusty on that one. That brings me to sixty four games dusted off this year. I've been doing a good job of returning back to games we've played before.

As you know, every year, every other year I do a top fifty and I'm trying to get all fifty of the games from my top fifty played again before the next time I play. And that includes Arkham Horror, The Card Game, which we have now played. That was that's my number three game and has now been played.

My painting challenge is still ongoing. I haven't been doing painting much. I did get a couple game, a couple things painted in, uh, June, but I haven't that didn't get the ball rolling again to painting on. The regular part of it is I don't have a good painting space. If I paint, I have to get all my paints out and get them arranged. I can't just sit down and paint for a little bit. It takes fifteen, Ten or fifteen or twenty minutes to get the painting set up. And that part is kind of inevitable, given the nature of when and where I paint. And we just don't have a lot of space in our house for that. But, uh, there it is.

And my expansion shelf. I like to keep track of the expansions I own, which ones I have played, and so on. So my expansion shelf stayed even. Uh, I purchased and played kin, Fire Dove, Scorns Stockade, and the River Valley Glassworks expansion. We also I also acquired high rise more tenants and kin fire delve vainglorious grotto. So I have increased by two. Um, I've increased by two. The number of expansions we have. But then, as I said, we played Arkham Horror. Those two. So ends up Even-steven eighty five unplayed expansions. Eighty five unplayed expansions.

We are making progress on our top our ten by ten list. Things we added this month. We added Ross Dance of Love, which takes place in Asia. So we've now got three games from the Five Continents category. We played Dorfromantik a couple more times, which brings us to five plays of that game. We've really been enjoying it. I said, we play this puts five times on the table. I think it was two times last time they visited and three times when they visited this time, or vice versa, because we generally play it like once a day when they're here trying to get the last couple achievements done. It's a really interesting game that makes for a very meditative process, and it results in a very fun time. So if you get a chance to play Dorfromantik the board game, I recommend. And as I said, I played River Valley Glassworks five times, so that one is now on the list as well. Those two put us up to nine completed five times on the table games, so we're very close to finishing that. And finally, the game three chapters fulfills one of the four number games and gets us really close to finishing the whole thing. As you know, I'm trying to manage the collection size, trying to keep it in check. And as I said at the beginning, I did a good job with that this month. I did acquire nine games, ninety two millilitres regicide, the mirroring of Mary King, Salt Fjord, Kin Fire, Dovestones, scorn stockade, high rise River. Valley. Glassworks. Kin. Fire, delve. Vainglory. Got grotto. Those are the nine games I acquired. But I also managed to get rid of twenty four games. Those include tiny towns, wormholes. Blood and fortune. Zeus on the loose. Loot. Chrononauts. Master of rules. Kitten in a blender. Tacti. Badass. Zombie killers Tessen. Rainbow Knights Agatha Christie. Death on the cards, Porta nigra, Pelican Bay, Chardy. Party. Council of Verona.

Miskatonic school for boys. That's a question. The Game of Wolf, Quick Link and Disney. villainous also donated donuts to donuts to my wife's, um, middle school board game club and Indigo to my college board game club, bringing my current collection size to six hundred and fifteen, which is down fifteen from last month. Finally, I will point to the top of the stack for September. The games I'm planning to play next month that will be saltfjorden as my new game. And then I've kept the previous three on there again. Fallen Angel, the mirroring of Mary King, and Dungeon Pets. I'm hoping that those three I will be able to get them played now occurs to me. That's a lot of talk about games I played without much commentary on them. So I will say August was a really interesting month from a gameplay perspective, because we had just a really fulfilling set of opportunities to play games.

August was the GenCon I had one day at GenCon outside of August and a couple days there. My in-laws came and visited us, visited us, and as I've mentioned a number of times, I get along really well with my mother in law and we play a lot of games. I also got to go to my game club a number of nights, and my college game club started up as well, so I've had lots of game playing opportunities that have given me the flexibility to tick some of these boxes off. So all in all, as I go into the school year, I'm pretty excited for the new slate of games. See what I get to get to play in the next four months?

Well, that's about it for me today. What games did you get to play in August? Head over to BoardGameGeek. Yield three two six nine and share your experiences there. I'd love to know what games you were playing, what games you got played, what games you're planning to play in September. We don't have a ton of activity on the board game Geek Guild, but the one place, the one kind of activity we do tend to have is a monthly post where people report on their games played. So I'd love to hear both regular listeners and you, you new listener or regular listener who doesn't post on the Guild head over there post. Let us know you're here. Let us know what you've been playing. I'm glad to be back after my couple week or my week. Week and a half gone, and I'm looking forward to starting to post the episodes again as we truck along toward the end of the year. Well, that's about it for me 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.