

Pick Up & Deliver 835: Top of the Stack, June 2026

Transcript

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.

[intro music]

Well, greetings listeners, it is June first, 2026. That means it's time for top of the stack.

Top of the stack is a episode in which I review what I played last month and talk about what I'm going to play next month. It's kind of a roundup episode. There's a lot of stats, a lot of like listing. It's pretty great. Maybe if you like that sort of thing. It's the closest I get to a broad scale "What have I been playing" rather than a narrow scale "What have I been playing?" And I'm looking forward to talking to you about it.

If you'd like to share what you've been playing, the best place to do that is over on BoardGameGeek in our guild number three two six nine. You can find a link in the show notes or if you Google pick up and deliver boardGameGeek Guild, that's probably the fastest way to find it. Often people there start a thread and talk about what they've been playing. That thread is usually called top of the stack.

So let's jump into it, starting with some stats. In May of 2026, I played fifty four plays of forty four different games. My total year is up to three hundred and eighty one plays of one hundred and sixty three games. My shelf of opportunity, which started the year at eighty six, is currently at ninety four. Although at the beginning of May it was at ninety eight, so I made some progress there. My ideal, my ideal shelf of opportunity would be, I think, around fifty. So I'm way over where I want to be. But such as? Such is how it is. My collection size went from six hundred and twenty five to six hundred and twenty nine in May, so it went up a little bit and I, I mean, I could point to most played games, but I'm not going to because I didn't play any games more than two times in May. But I played a bunch of games twice in May. So it would be a long list. So I'm not gonna bother. If you really want to find it, you can look at Board Game Geek. When I log my plays using BGG stats, it also logs them on board Game Geek, so you can see how many plays I've done of what games.

The top of the stack itself, the. So the whole episode I call top of the stack. But then we have a narrower version which is specifically focused on the idea of the games I've chosen specifically to try to play in May. The games I picked this month were **Ahoy**, **Lost Ruins of Arnak**, **Teotihuacan: City of Gods**, I think is the subtitle on that one. And **Level 7 Escape**.

I consider it a successful month if I play three of the four games I pick. Unfortunately, I only played two, so it was an unsuccessful month. That is, I've only had one successful month thus far this year. That was January. In February I got two March one, April two, and now May two. Meaning I'm at eleven out of fifteen plays needed for successful play this month or this year. I did get to play some new games this month. I had forty one new to me games coming into the month and leaving. I have forty eight, so I played seven new games.

Here they are:

- King of the dice.
- Level seven escape,
- Gold Ahoy,
- Helton Palace,
- Groundhog Day, The Game
- Drop trivia,
- and mystery rummy Jack the Ripper.

I will talk about those games in a little bit more detail when I get a chance to return to them in the board game espresso triple shot episodes.

I did not try any new expansions this month, so that's still at zero. Well, it's only four for the year and expansions. I probably should get on that.

I did, however, revisit a bunch of games with my out of the dust list. A game gets dusty if I have not played it for a year or more. And so a game is considered to be out of the dust if I return to it. And it's been more than a year, so I have several games.

- Heat pedal to the metal. It had been one year, two months, and twenty two days since I played that.
- We have Last Will one year, one month, and eleven days.
- Forrest shuffle one year, nine months and six days
- Lost Ruins of Arnak one year. Eleven days
- Village Green, four years, ten months and nine days.
- Lost cities the board game one year, three months, four days and
- Dog Park two years, four months. Dusty.

So lots of interesting games there. I'll be talking about some of those in the board game espresso episode as well.

And then generally I like to return to those at some point in a segment I sometimes do called Emptying the Dustbin, where I talk about games that I returned to but I didn't have time to talk about in the board game espresso episode. This is all very complicated and you don't don't feel like you have to keep track of when and how I do which episodes. Just know that's what I'm doing.

Well, they are looking at building a new house in my neighborhood. It looks like there's some serious construction work going on, big holes being dug with a big Komatsu earth digger thing. Very exciting.

One of the goals I have established pretty consistently is I want to try to play my top fifty games every two years. So each every other year I do a new top fifty list. And then I try to play all of those games before the next time I make a top fifty list. I'm doing I'm on the second year of that and I'm doing okay, but I still have a ways to go. Coming into this month, I had thirty two of my top fifty games played. I'm now at thirty three. I've played Lost Ruins of Arnak, and I only count physical plays on the table for this list. I do not count plays on digital platforms. I don't think I reviewed last month which games I have left to play, so I'll buzz through those quickly. I have left to play going in in order. I'll also tell you the rank of them in my top fifty because why not?

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| 5. Trickerion: Legends of Illusion | 27. Mottainai |
| 8. Terraforming Mars | 28. Cerebria: The Inside World |
| 9. Through the Ages: A New Story of Civilization | 30. Anachrony |
| 13. Glory to Rome | 33. Mosaic: A Story of Civilization |
| 14. Vampire: The Eternal Struggle | 35. Twilight Imperium: Fourth Edition |
| 15. Star Wars: Rebellion | 36. Dungeon Petz |
| 19. Pandemic Legacy: Season 1 | 43. Messina 1347 |
| 25. Agricola | 44. Anno 1800: The Board Game |
| | 49. Evacuation |

That's my top fifty list that I need to return to.

As you know, each year I do a ten for ten list. The classic ten for ten list is pick ten games, play them ten times. Uh, I don't do that one. Instead, what I do is I pick ten categories and I try to meet the requirements of that category. It's gotten very complicated and I'm not going to go through them all this month. I do that sometimes but can't do it every month. I played three games this month that helped with my top fifty or with my ten for ten.

The first one is I played level seven escape this fit category for Shelf of Opportunity pre 2025. One of my goals this year was to play ten games that have been on my shelf opportunity since before 2025 began, and level seven escape was one of those.

I wanted to play ten Vladimir Suchy games on the table. One of the rules is I could not repeat games, which makes it very hard. Uh. I got one played this month that was last.

We also have village green. Uh, this is a game that I am marking as the V game. I did realize as I was going through this. I also could have marked verdant last month in the V category. So making progress.

I did not get any painting done this month, so I'm still stalled out trying to finish the characters from the game Cerebra. And then I have a bunch of unpainted frosthaven minis and a bunch of Nazis from Hellboy to paint.

My shelf of opportunity is, of course, the list of games that I own that I haven't played, although it's also or that I haven't played since I bought them. I have a few games on my shelf of opportunity that are games that I've played before. Then I found a copy at a good price. I bought it, but if I haven't played it since, I don't count it. Like I said, my list went from ninety eight games down to ninety four, so I'm making progress there.

My expansion shelf I did not make progress on. I have seventy nine unplayed expansions and I still have seventy nine unplayed expansions. I always like to keep track of what is making my expansion grow or shrink.

And so I have a collection size update. Here are the changes to my collection size this month. Like I said, it went up by four. It's entirely through acquisitions only. I acquired **Druids of Adora**. That's the new Stefan Feld game that came out at Essen last fall. I got **Dog Park** and **Cover Your Assets** and **Groundhog Day** at goodwill, each of them at a very modest price. The dog park was a really, really great find. Cover your assets. I'm excited about grandpa Beck's games are always at least interesting, and this one looks less like other games I've played than some of the other games. And Groundhog Day is an amusing co-op, which I will talk about as a game I've played because I did play it in May.

Well, the last thing I always talk about in the top of the stack episode is what I'm planning to play next month. I have picked out four games. **Struggle of Empires** is a Martin Wallace game where you play colonizing powers in the Age of Sail. It's a grim. It's a grim theme, but it's supposed to be a very, very good game. I'm excited to try it. I have the Eagle Gryphon Deluxe edition that I got as a gift a long time ago, and I feel bad that I haven't played it, so I'm excited to give that a try. That will also fit into the category of Martin Wallace games.

My top fifty game this month is going to be **Glory to Rome**. I've been bringing this to toggle gaming regularly. I think I'm going to try to get it played sometime this month, which will be hard. I am going to miss some toggle because I'm traveling, but hopefully I won't miss too much.

I call this one a game I've been meaning to play. This is **Tekhenu: Obelisk of the Sun**. This is a fairly complex game about Egypt, I believe, and I don't. It might be Egypt. I think it's Egypt, but I'm going. I'm hoping to play this and maybe play it with my wife. I think she would enjoy it.

And finally **Bury Me in the Rift** is a solo game that I have but have not played yet. It feels like. Especially in the summer, now that I'm working from home, I can always take a half an hour or an hour and maybe play a solo game, because that's what I can try to do.

Well, that brings me to the end of my reflection. So far, this year has been a pretty good gaming year. This month was really interesting. I ended up playing forty one games on the table, so a lot fewer online games that I have been playing, which is a bummer. I need to get some of those going again. I've gotten into a bit of a rut, so maybe joining some, but I don't like playing with strangers anyway. Getting some more online games going wouldn't hurt. I have really been enjoying trying out different games in my collection, trying to get those played and enjoyed. But my ambition for gameplay is wider than the amount of time I have to play games, alas. But perhaps as we move, as we progress, I will find time to play these games. Coming soon.

Like I said at the top, if you'd like to share what you've been playing, I would love to hear it. You can share those ideas over on Boardgamegeek in guild 3269. We usually start a thread there to chat about what we've been playing. We'd love to hear from you if you'd like to contact me in another way, you can send me a direct message on board game Geek wombat929 is my username, or you can email me:

Brendan@rattleboxgames.com, where I will eventually see your email. I'm not super attentive to that email box, So apologies if there's a delay there. The best way really, is board game geek.

Well, that's about it for me today. I want to say thank you for joining me on my walk, and I hope that your next walk is as pleasant as mine was. Bye bye.

[exit music]

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