

I am going to open an 1830 thread.

1830 is a game of business. However, unlike many business games where the player is associated with one or more businesses ... where the business and the player fates are deeply intertwined ... this is not 1830. In 1830, each the player's goal is to be the investor who finishes with the greatest net worth.

Your net worth is based on your stock portfolio. The portfolio defines your net worth first by the stock certificates you hold. Each certificate trades at a certain value and so there is the valuation of your portfolio. Additionally, each certificate represents an equity position in a public corporation. When the corporation pays dividends you are entitled to cash payments in proportion to your equity in the corporation. So, your net worth is the valuation of stocks in your portfolio along with any accumulated cash from dividend payments.

\* The corporations happen to be railroads here, but they could just as easily be anything.

You can win by making your portfolio have greater value than the other investors (anywhere from 2-6 players either AI or human). However, you can also win by sabotaging the other investors and causing the value of their portfolios to deflate. So, you can play purely positive or purely negative or both.

A big aspect of this game is Stock Rounds. In Stock Rounds, investors (players) buy and sell shares of stock. The handling of Stock Rounds is a major part of the game as you need to decide what to buy and what to sell. You need to identify those stocks which will yield the best return both in terms of capital growth (share price) and dividend payments. Some shares may even lose you money!!! If the RR does not pay a dividend, then the share price will decrease rather than increase and, of course, you will receive no cash. So, picking the right stocks and analyzing the game situation is critical.

Additionally, buying and selling stock is a means to gain or get rid of the Presidency of a RR. So, through the Stock Round you may seize control of a RR or you may dump a relatively worthless RR on another investor (making him President) before he has a chance to react.

As in real stock trading, timing is critical. Good timing will allow you to unload your stock for the maximum gain. Poor timing and you may be selling the same shares after they have hit bottom. As mentioned above, timing is also critical in terms of seizing control of a RR or dumping a worthless RR before it takes you down with it. Besides dumping and seizing RRs, proper timing of purchases and sales can also have very big impact on the worth of other investors' portfolios based on their stock holdings.


As mentioned, the corporations happen to be railroads. Besides simply being a passive investor in one or more RRs, you may in fact be the President (management) of one or more RRs. You will be management if you have more equity in the RR than any of the other share holders. So, another key aspect of the Stock Round besides seizing and dumping RRs is the floating of RRs. This means to take a paper corporation and fund its treasury such that it begins to actually operate. You float a RR by seeing that at least 60% of its shares are sold.

The game alternates back and forth between Stock Rounds and Operating Rounds. During Operating Rounds, the Presidents (management) of the RRs make business decisions. These decisions will have important consequences on the immediate transfer of revenues to share holders and also on both the short-term and long-term value of the stock. As President, you will decide how to evolve the rail network (lay tracks) and placing stations. Both of these actions can improve the RR's revenues and hurt or help the revenues of other RRs. Additionally, you will decide when and what capital expenditures to make such as the purchase of locomotives. You must balance the needs to keep up with technology against doing the best for the share holders (remembering that yourself usually will be holding at least 50% equity). Finally, you will decide whether to pay dividends putting money in the hands of share holders (including yourself) or hold dividends which puts money back into the RR's treasury. Paying dividends will also drive up the share price. Withholding dividends will drive down the share price.

Typically, investors (players) will operate one or more RRs and hold a minority position in quite a few others. Owning multiple RRs usually can be a great aid to the player. Funds can be transferred between RRs by various methods to make the two stronger as a result. Additionally, two or more RRs can work cooperatively to develop a lucrative track network.

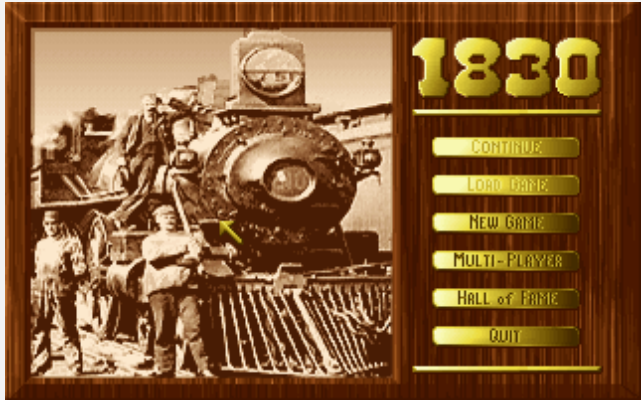
So, just like Stock Rounds, there is also much which can be done during Operating Rounds to benefit one's own portfolio or sabotage the portfolio of other investors.

As I have stated elsewhere, this may well be one of the best strategy games (originally a board game from Avalon Hill after five years it was ported to the PC).

 Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, August 24, 2008 5:29 PM

Now, for some initial screenshots.

The main screen.



The game comes with many rule set variations which totally alter the style and game play experience.



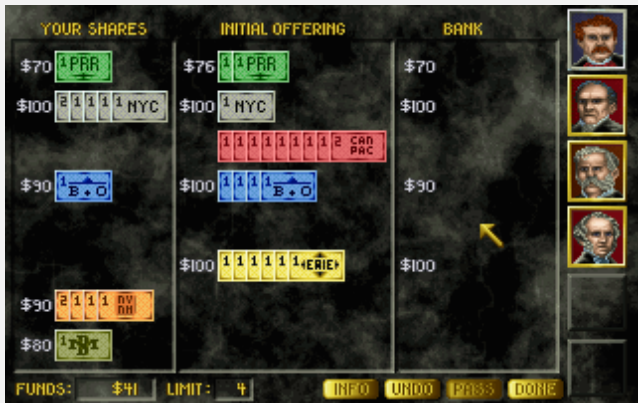
Meet the investors.



Setting the IPO share price for the NYNH (New York New Haven RR).



This is the Stock Round which is one of two main playing areas of the game. This is where everyone makes their trades.



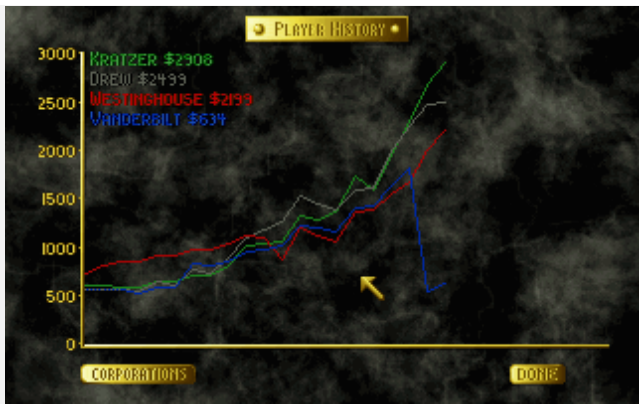
This is a quick look at the players' portfolios. You can see who is President of what RRs and the equity position each player has in every operational RR.



Here is a pop-up view showing each RRs' president, assets, and other information.



Here is a graph tracking net work over time.



Here is the stock market. We see each RRs taken on the stock market showing what the share price is. The little chart shows information like share price, treasury, revenues, ...



This is the Operating Round which is the other main area the game is played. On this map, the presidents make the critical decisions of running their corporations. You are looking at the North East of the USA in the year 1830. Each corporation is not equal. The RRs start in different locations with somewhat different parameters. Starting around the NYC area is very important and it is a very lucrative area for revenues (especially early game). Dominating this area is key. Additionally, there are only two access path in and out of this lucrative area. From the North, you can Albany and the South Baltimore. You will seek to control these to impact late game revenues.



Here is an end game portfolio which I won. You see each players' stock value and cash value from dividends.

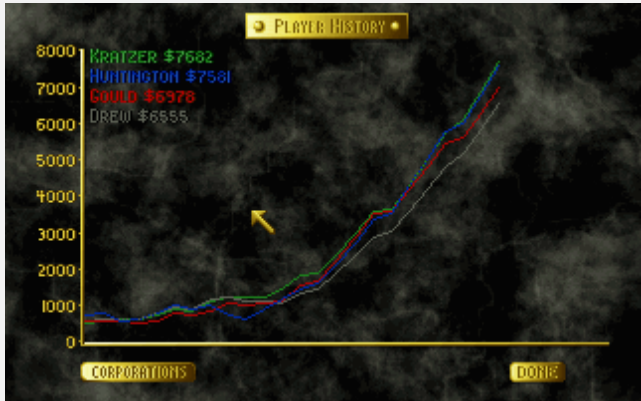
<b>WINNER!</b>  <b>KRATZER</b> CASH :\$4273 STOCK :\$4121 <b>TOTAL :\$8394</b>	 <b>WESTINGHOUSE</b> CASH :\$3775 STOCK :\$4176 <b>TOTAL :\$7951</b>
 <b>DREW</b> CASH :\$3066 STOCK :\$3188 <b>TOTAL :\$6254</b>	 <b>VANDERBILT</b> CASH :\$2062 STOCK :\$2795 <b>TOTAL :\$4857</b>

<MESSAGE EDITED BY MARKSHOT ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 24, 2008 5:30 PM>

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, August 24, 2008 5:54 PM

Here is a very close game that practically ended in a photo finish.

I won the game by \$87 or effectively about 1% variance in net worth.










How did I pull off this win? Kratzer v Huntington?

First, you see how close we are going into the end game. Our graph lines are overlaid. You see a tiny little slope line where I appear to break out and get in front of Huntington. What was that?

That was a victory seized during the Stock Round in trading.

Observe that Huntington is President of the NYNH RR (New York New Haven) [orange]. He hold 4 certificates for a total equity of 50%.

<b>WINNER!</b>  <b>KRATZER</b> \$3337<0> 	 <b>HUNTINGTON</b> \$4250<0> 
 <b>GOULD</b> \$4453<0> 	 <b>DREW</b> \$3177<0> 

I was at my certificate limit going into this Stock Round and had to get rid of one certificate. I had a number of certificates that in terms of the value of my portfolio were more or less equal. However, I looked at the net worth graph to see Huntington destined to win the game. Thus, I chose to sell my single share (10%) of NYNH. Whenever, you sell stock it drives the share price down. Generally, selling stock has the biggest impact of the RR's President who will usually be holding 50% or 60% of the corporation.

Here we see the stock market and the location of the NYNH token.



Share prices increase going up and to the right and decrease going down and to the bottom. Some very simple rules:

- (1) Pay a dividend and the stock token moves right (increases in value).
- (2) Withhold dividends and the stock token moves left (decreases in value).
- (3) No open interest shares (available to buy) and the stock token move up (increases in value).
- (4) Sell a share and the stock token moves down (decreases in value).

Also, you can see that resistance levels for stock prices are modeled.

So, my selling my single NYNH certificate drove the price down from \$140/share to \$120/share. For Huntington who was holding 50% of NYNH, this represented a loss of \$100 in the valuation of his stock portfolio. That's the small almost pixel shift you see that meant the difference between winning and losing for me.

Here you see the final break down of the end game net worth.

	<b>KRATZER</b> CASH :\$3337 STOCK :\$5150 <b>TOTAL :\$8487</b>		<b>HUNTINGTON</b> CASH :\$4250 STOCK :\$4150 <b>TOTAL :\$8400</b>
	<b>GOULD</b> CASH :\$4453 STOCK :\$3305 <b>TOTAL :\$7758</b>		<b>DREW</b> CASH :\$3177 STOCK :\$4070 <b>TOTAL :\$7247</b>

Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, August 24, 2008 6:22 PM

I decided to make this photo finish a little easier to see by blowing this up by 8X. So, you can see exactly where the Stock Round trading took place. You see Huntington (Blue) clearly having overtaken me (Green) and heading towards a win in the final Operating Round.

By the way, this technique is very commonly used by the AI in the end game to win. This is one agreea where the computer does not cheat, but does exploit at the hardest levels to win. How? Well, each of the AI players will buy and then dump shares in succession ... shares of the one or two corporations in which you are president. Thus, the AI will in the final stock round push your share price down and put pressure on your portfolio. There is little that you can do to avoid this.

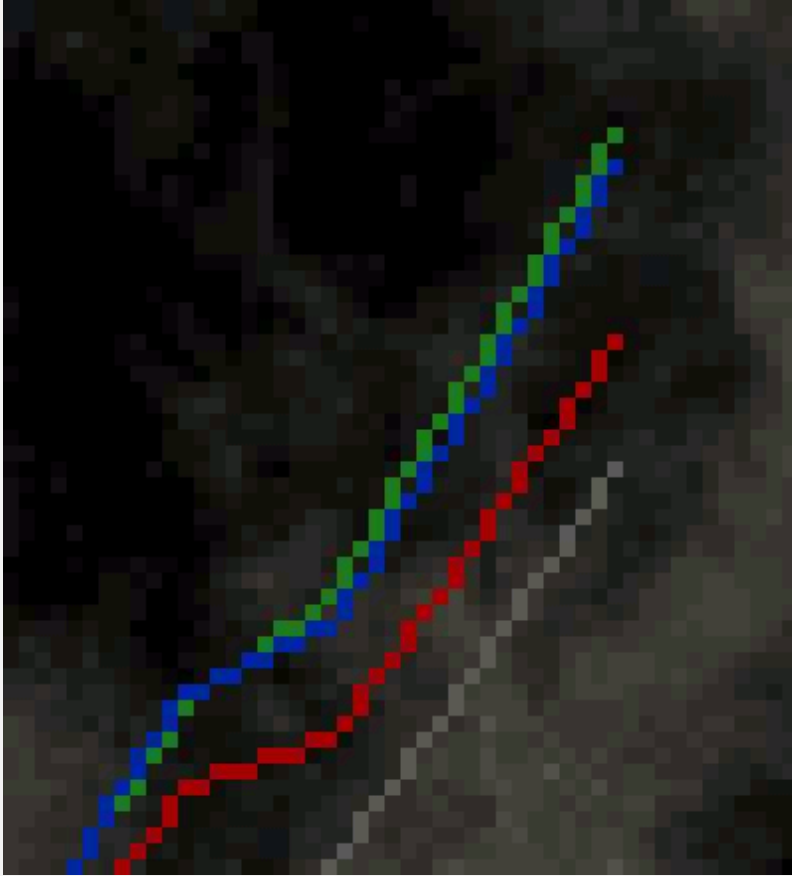
Of course, you could always win by being mainly vested in the RRs of other investors. However, this is easier said than done, since being heavily vested in non-own RRs is risky, since you have no control over their operation. It is not at all unlikely that the president may milk them dry for profit and then transfer their assets to another one of his RRs and dump the worthless empty shell on you his major share holder. So, it is quite dangerous to be too heavily invested like this.

Rather than taking the extreme measure above, you can:

- (1) Hold 50% equity as opposed to 60%, since the former is sufficient to maintain control of the presidency. This will usually allow to hold two more certificates of non-own RRs and be a little less vulnerable to this AI exploit.
- (2) You simply need to have a large enough winning margin that you are immune to this approach.

(3) The further right you have your stock token on the stock market, the less the price can be pushed down by dumping. Remember "support levels" as a stock concept are modeled. A "support level" is a price that a stock is unlikely to fall below. In the game, you get support basically by very consistently and regularly paying dividends which moves the token to the right raising the bottom of the stock pricing table. When a stock is sold and the token hits the bottom, then price will not drop any further.

The reason I call this a computer exploit is that in a human game of 1830, it is not that common or easy for player to play cooperatively. So, what the AI players do to one after another batter your portfolio is very unlikely to happen with humans. Also, you cannot really do the same to the a computer player, since you are buy one player. The computer can easily push a stock token down by 3-6 levels. You, at best, can push it down 1-2 levels.



 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, August 24, 2008 6:24 PM

Again, based on recommendations here (yours obviously), I installed this one last night via DOSBox and started tinkering around with it. The game looks simple to play but I soon found that I need to actually read the game manual to at least learn the rules. Looks to be fun though; and I know that 18xx has quite a following so there must be something there!

My girlfriend is an upper management business woman who loves stocks and market watching, etc. I'm just now getting her into boardgames (we purchased "Acquire" which we haven't had a chance to play yet but her son and her ex-husband did and said that they had quite a good time (don't ask for details here - long story!). So I'm thinking that 1830 might be something that she'd really like. She doesn't do computer games however, so I'd have to hunt down the boardgame version, and I understand that the game is long OOP and quite expensive to obtain. Is there a cheaper "variant" (one of the many 18xx games) that is fairly easy to obtain but just as fun?

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"Fat, drunk, and stupid is no way to go through life, son."

-Dean Vernon Wormer

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 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, August 24, 2008 6:30 PM


If you are just joining us, then you should know that 1830 is a PC port of one of the best business board games ever made. It is a very faithful port. It has been recognized for superb AI. Unlike most board games, there is almost zero change elements. Only the initial seating order is random. Everything else follows from what the players do.

Here is an article by Bruce Shelly, famous game designer and partner of Sid Meier, on the 1830 PC project:

<http://www.westpark-gamers.de/1830dev.html>

And here is an excellent article that introduces the beauty of the game:

<http://www.henning-kantner.de/061004Guide%20to%201830.pdf>

 Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, August 24, 2008 6:37 PM

GJK,

I strongly recommend the PC variant for you and your CFO-other. Why?

(1) Much cheaper/easier to obtain.

(2) The board game is the same, but much slower, since you must do all the book keeping manually. Like work out all the potential revenue combinations. The board game will take 5X as long to play with not added value.

(3) The PC game has a hot seat mode. The game is totally open and transparent. So, there are no problems playing in hot seat mode.

(4) The best game balance is generally regarded as the 4 person game. (Most of the guides and West Park discuss the 4 player game ... totally different with more or less players.) With the PC game, you can play with her and still play 4 players; two AI.

(5) PC game easily offers all the popular 1830 variants like the a 9th. Reading RR.

(6) Only PC game offers a random map option. However, I understand that the AI does not do as well with that as the standard map. Obviously the game logic is hardcoded towards the subtleties of the North East map.

You can PM if you need more info about getting started with the PC game/DOSBOX. You can still always go out and buy the board game (expensive) later.

 Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, August 24, 2008 9:34 PM

GJK,

I own Acquire and I had good fun with it, although, to be fair - it is a bit more math oriented than most of my friends cared for. The board play is very bizarre, and really adds to the random aspect of the game, as well as the cutthroat corporate aspect.

I immediately thought of Acquire when I saw the screens, and I think that 1830 must have been the predecessor for Acquire (which was recently remade, but is now back out of print, I think).

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[img]<http://www.wargamer.com/forums/upfiles/5866/3683F2E0B4A04C0985464FB44C3130E2.jpg>[/img]

 Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, August 24, 2008 10:00 PM

Acquire seemed readily available; we had seen it at a few "game" stores around town, those that sell mostly "Euro-games" and so we picked it up. I remember owning the old 3M version of Acquire. This version is an updated version - I don't know the publisher, she has the game at her place.

**MarkShot:** I'm going to get comfortable with the PC version of 1830 and then see if she'll watch me play a bit on the computer. She's very much not a computer gamer type though - if I have any chance at introducing her to the game, it will need to be on her dining room table. I'll have to keep my eye open for a lucky sell of the game (or one of its variants). Thus my question, I recently saw someone on CSW Marketplace selling an 18xx game (forget the exact name); do they all play the same but with subtle differences, or is each a completely different animal altogether? Looking at BGG, I see that there are quite a few variations of this game!

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"Fat, drunk, and stupid is no way to go through life, son."

-Dean Vernon Wormer

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 Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, August 24, 2008 10:42 PM

There is a whole collection of 18XX board games. I wish I could help you out, but I am not a board gamer or really an 18XX gamer. I just know

1830. I found it while exploring the genre of RR, Tycoon, and business games.

The Westpark Gamers site I think would be a good place to start. I seem to recall it looks at the various games in the series.

Different games focus on different aspects of RR and locales. However, I understood that 1830 was perhaps the most business focused game.

I think the only criticism I have with the 1830 rule set is that bankruptcies result in an instant end of game with whoever has the greatest net worth at the moment winning. What tends to irritate most about this particular rule is that 1830 is a game with an opening, middle, and end. You play the game to win in the end. You get nothing for being ahead in the opening or the middle. Thus, it is almost a certainty to be winning in the end game that you will be losing in the open and the middle. Winning in the end game usually involves a transition that happens towards the end of the middle game:

(1) Either a gradual overtaking of the lead due to a better dividend rate.

(2) Or abrupt taking of the lead due to the fact that chaos in the stock market/technology forces the other investors to dig into their own pockets to keep their RRs operational. The rules say that if a RR has no rolling stock and does not have money in the treasury to pay for it, then the president must pay out of his own pocket. That pretty much cements losing the game. Or sometimes a president to avoid that withholds dividends to build up the treasury which also costs him/her dearly.

Going back to bankruptcies, they throw off the whole careful packing aspect by bring the game to an abrupt end prior to the player making his or her move for the win. That's my one single criticism with this rule set.

I understand what you are saying about PCs although I find it odd that anyone who is a senior manager is not completely intimate with PCs as productivity and analytical tools. Really consider the PC ... it beats being a book keeper. You're not really playing a PC game if you hot seat, you are just using it as a calculator and score board.

Good luck.

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Monday, August 25, 2008 1:55 AM

In a previous post, I spoke of two strategies of winning in the end game. First, there was gradually over taking the competition with superior revenues and stock appreciation. Second, there was creating total chaos and turmoil in the operational and stock spheres.

Here is how turmoil is accomplished.

I previously held the B&O RR. The B&O was under capitalized (it was floated with a very low par value {IPO} meaning not too much money in the treasury). This would clearly present problems down the road for me the President of the B&O, since the company would not be able to keep up with technology advancement and buy additional rolling stock. This would leave me with two options:

(1) Withhold B&O dividends to build up the treasury so that the B&O would be ready when its existing rolling stock obsolesced. The main problem with this approach is that I would receive no dividends to increase my net worth and it would depress the value of my B&O shares making me even poorer.

(2) Later pay out of pocket to purchase rolling stock for the B&O.

Generally, #1 is more attractive than #2. At least, with #1 all share holders of B&O share the pain. With #2, only the President of B&O would feel the pain and the other share holders invested in 40% would get bailed out by the President, me.

But the above were not the only options. As it turned out, since it was early in the game and other investors low on cash were looking to ride on my coat tail having floated the B&O, they also bought stock in the B&O. (If an investor holds 20% or more a RR, then the presidency of the RR can be dumped on that investor.) Given that one investor was foolish enough to buy a 20% or more stake in B&O, this gave me another option. I totally ignored the treasury and depleted buying "make a quick buck" rolling stock to up the dividend payments. Most of that dividend would go into my pocket as President. Then, when we got back to the Stock Trading round, I dumped the B&O with soon to be obsolete rolling stock and no treasury the stupid investor.

The above allowed me to get me out of B&O and dump the stock at top dollar. I then took the cash and floated another company with a fresh and healthy treasury. Thus, I screwed one fellow investor and also would accelerate the pace of the game with the extra cash I received which would cause more problems for the others too!

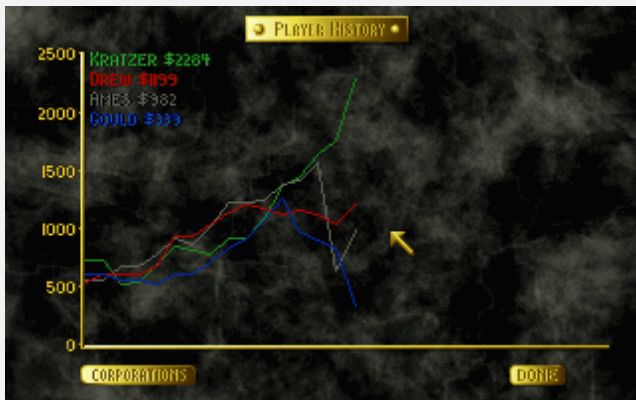
So, I said I would tell you how I created stock and operational chaos. First, you must understand that technology (trains) goes obsolete in this game. Unlike many games where there is a calendar or clock, 1830 has no such mechanism. The sale of particular more advanced trains

causes the obsolescence of earlier models. So, you can cause problems for other RRs and their presidents by purchasing advanced technology before they are in a position to deal with the situation. This is exactly what I did.



Look at my train holdings here the Erie and the B&M. These trains forced everyone else's rolling stock to go obsolete. I did this with the money I made in the stock market above by dumping the B&O. Here you see, Ames (#2 from the top) has purchased rolling stock for his RRs which they could not afford. So, he had to pay out of his pocket. How can you see that? You will see that the treasury of his two RRs, the B&O (the one I dumped) and the NYNH, are at \$0. This means the treasury was wiped out to buy rolling stock and Ames made up the rest from his own pocket! :)

Now, look at Drew and Gould (the next two investors). They will be in exactly the same position. They don't have rolling stock. The rules say that a RR must have rolling stock and if the RR cannot pay for it, then the President must. First, he will use his cash on hand. Second, he will sell stock if necessary to raise additional cash. Third, if he still doesn't have enough, he will go bankrupt, and the game will end immediately.



Now, look at the net worth graph following this Operating Round. Notice the sharp drop in everyone's net worth, but my own. That's the result of me leaving them all high and dry in the operational round unprepared for the pace at which I introduced new technology into the game. So, it hit them in their wallets hard. You can just see them beginning to make money again. However, it is already too late. They have all taken a hit that will be beyond their ability to recover from this game.

Unlike many financial games, 1830 is not a game of slow careful building. It can be, but it definitely doesn't have to be. It's a game of brutal trading maneuvers in the stock market and disruptive practices in operations that would make Rockefeller or Bill Gates proud. So, although 1830 is technically a "business game" for a "business game" is in quite a few respects has the attributes of a fine war game as you see.

Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Monday, August 25, 2008 2:04 AM

I had previously spoken about how the computer players at the higher levels of difficulty exploit the practice of churning your RRs' stocks to depress the value of your portfolio. I said that one way to counter that is to be winning with another of a margin that this practice only does you minimal harm.

My above example of creating chaos should give me a enough of a lead over the other investors that I should be safe. However, note that I am playing this game on level 3 of 4 difficulty levels. So, they probably will not churn my shares too seriously at the end.

I am just coming back to the game after a break and giving myself so time to get my skills sharpened before I got into the water with the sharks at their best! :)

Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Monday, August 25, 2008 2:08 AM

GJK,

Maybe you should give Ms CFO this thread to read to see if the game interests her or you can print out Kantner's Guide for her. I think that will clearly highlight the elegance of the game.

The rules and mechanics are pretty simple, but it is tremendously well balanced which leads to amazing variety and richness of play and techniques.

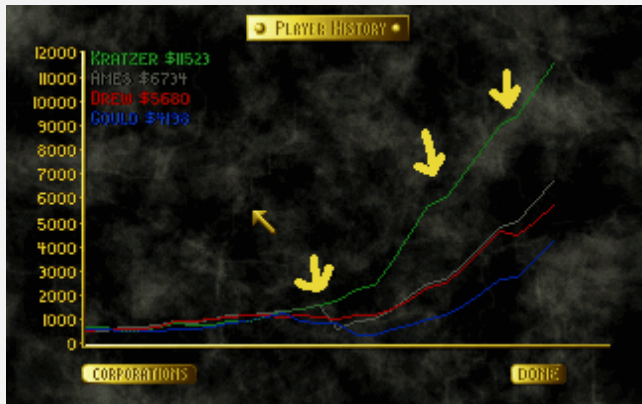
The cliché of "easy to learn, but hard to master" is actually true of 1830.

Okay, I got to wrap up my current game and get some sleep!

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Monday, August 25, 2008 2:38 AM

I have just finished that game.

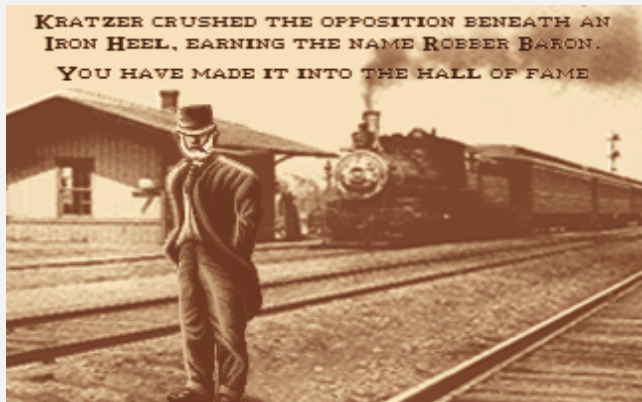
I highlighted three spots on this graph. Where I created chaos and where the AI attempted to "churn" my stock and depress my portfolio. You can see that it had little affect given the size of my lead.



Here are the final portfolios.

 <b>WINNER!</b>	<b>KRATZER</b> CASH :\$7675 STOCK :\$4780 TOTAL :\$12455		<b>AMES</b> CASH :\$4012 STOCK :\$3570 TOTAL :\$7582
	<b>DREW</b> CASH :\$4257 STOCK :\$2185 TOTAL :\$6442		<b>GOULD</b> CASH :\$2126 STOCK :\$2960 TOTAL :\$5086

Beside competing against the other investors, this game like other Tycoon games rates the human players play independent of the relative score. This was truly a superb game in the ruthless column for me. I receive the following accolade which I have only received about 3 times in 1.5 years of playing this game (approximately 600 playings)!



Good night!

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Monday, August 25, 2008 8:57 AM

*MarkShot*

*The board game will take 5X as long to play with not added value.*

I disagree...the social aspect is an important element of all multi-player board games and represents the missing element in computer conversions. Not one of them is nearly as fun and rewarding to play...although they can certainly be played more efficiently. I could burn through games of this or History of the World in under 30 minutes when a board game would take 6 hours or more. But there was little sense of accomplishment; games designed solely for computer play tend to be less abstract and put more onus on the player's abilities.

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Monday, August 25, 2008 10:14 AM

I have 1830 in both the board and pc versions. I never got around to finding any opponents for ftf play of the boardgame, but I did get to play a little on the pc version. As far as that goes, I have many other boardgames like 1830; 1870 and even have some 3rd party expansions for other parts of the US.

This thread really has gotten me interested in playing the pc version again. But alas, I'm on an extended travel agenda and didn't think to bring my copy of 1830 with me. Oh well, may be soon.

Pretty cool thread guys!

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Monday, August 25, 2008 11:59 AM

Has anybody played 18xx via VASSAL? I see people are online playing it there all the time. I think that there's another Java app for online play specific to 18xx as well.

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-Dean Vernon Wormer

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 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Monday, August 25, 2008 12:10 PM

The best strategy game is hard for me to pin down. Capitalism II was pretty good. Railroads tycoon and the tycoon II but Railroads was for braindeads. There's an awful lot of strategy titles out there. Too many to list and I can't of a sole one that reigns supreme. The original Civ probably had more impact on me than any other but that series has been drastically dumbed down.

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Monday, August 25, 2008 12:40 PM

Well, this thread isn't really the "What's the best Strategy Game thread". Rather I've already stated my premise, but thought I would give people a look at the game, since I think only a small niche of board gamers or RR fanatics are aware of this game. Unlike the original RT or RTD, 1830 doesn't have a big name like Sid Meier associated with it. Of course, Bruce Shelly isn't a total unknown, but he never achieved Sid's stature in the industry.

If I were to quickly compare some games:

RT1/RTD v 1830: 1830 is much better balanced, less chance oriented, and more heavily focused on business. Although of the Tycoon genre, RTD is one of the best.

CAP1/CAPP/CAP2 v 1830: All the ingredients for a very rich business game are in CAP2. Sadly, the AI is weak and the game is not very well balanced. A few simple techniques such as as vertical integration and R&D patenting high-end electronics will win CAP2 every time.

1830: Does not lend itself to a set strategy that can be applied repeatedly. The game is much more fluid than that. Despite a small rule set and short game the variety of situations which are generated is impressive. The player must take each situation as unique and cannot simply play by rote. Balancing is superb. As small edge in one area will often lead to a vulnerability in another, there is none of the usual snowballing momentum to victory commonly found in resource/economic oriented games.

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Thursday, August 28, 2008 5:49 PM

A quote I just found at IGN about 1830:

*SimTex was a group of guys in Austin who burst onto the scene in 1993 with a game called Master of Orion, published by Microprose. Their second game was a port of an Avalon Hill board game called 1830, an abstract railroad game set in the era of robber barons. Their port was published by Avalon Hill themselves and it features the single best representation of a stock market in any computer game and a heart-breakingly good AI.*

<http://pc.ign.com/articles/085/085828p1.html>

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Thursday, August 28, 2008 6:00 PM

More from an 1830 review (Tom Chick):

*Most computer games are clothed in inscrutable mechanics, stuff running under the hood, algorithms and secret rules. When something happens, the computer tells you it happened and you trust it. Even board games hide things in a die roll or a shuffled deck of event cards. Games so often rely on the unknown, the hidden, that darkened corner out of your control where randomness and bad AI hide.*

*This is perhaps what I love most about 1830. It is laid bare before me, without dark corners or under-the-hood machinery. I always know who has how much of what and where they have it. At any time, I can check virtually anything about the game. The only variable -- but what a variable it is! -- is what the other players will do with those things. I'm talking, of course, about SimTex's 1993 port of Avalon Hill's board game of railroads and robber barons. It's one of the handful of faithful board game ports you'll find among travesties like Hasbro's Squad Leader. There are really good ports of Civilization and History of the World. Eden Studios' port of Iron Dragons [<http://www.irondragon.org/>] is particularly impressive considering it was basically cobbled together in a virtual garage.*

*But none of these games is as truly naked as 1830: Railroads & Robber Barons, since they rely on random drawings from a deck of cards (Civilization and Iron Dragons) or die rolls (History of the World). And more importantly, none of these games is as well played by the computer as 1830, which features a stunning AI, made all the more remarkable because there are no hidden advantages or cheats it could be given. I recall one fan of History of the World swearing that the computer AI cheated by skewing the die rolls in its own favor, something the developers at Colorado Creations denied. But there could be no such accusations leveled at 1830, because it plays out in full view, with the computer AI following the same rules and mechanics as any human player. When you lose to the computer, which you will do often, you can see just what it did to beat you. Because it plays so smart and provides such a challenge, 1830 is a timeless classic in the annals of gaming, particularly now that bad AI is such a commonplace shortcut in the design process, hidden behind muddled mechanics or randomness.*

*Before you go running to download an abandonware copy of 1830, be forewarned that it is not a game about trains in the conventional sense. For love of railroads, you're better off revisiting Sid Meier's Railroad Tycoon or Phil Steinmeyer's superb follow-up, Railroad Tycoon II. 1830 is not about consists or routes or what type of engine you're going to buy. It is a game played on a level higher than mere day-to-day operations. Railroads are almost incidental in 1830, which is more about the robber barons than their companies. The point is to increase your personal worth, whether it's by nurturing a railroad company to increase its stock value or by gutting it and running with the money. The vicious buying and trading and speculating on the stock market is where 1830 is often won or lost.*

Each day new games are announced, but few if any will come close to this classics elegance with:

- (1) Perfectly balanced rules.
- (2) Game play that counters the snow balling affect of a slight advantage gain.
- (3) AI code/programming based built on proven five years of board gaming strategies by one of the very designers of the game himself, Bruce Shelly.

I am off to trade again. C U

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Friday, August 29, 2008 7:29 PM

One thing that should be said about the AI for 1830 is it is you vs 5 others and they play as a team instead of individually when it comes to

reacting to whatever you do. For instance when you play on the higher difficulties none of the other AI's will help you float your railroad. So, if you intend to get a railroad out there you better darn sure have enough money to buy all six shares to float it. Now, once you've floated it then they will ruthlessly buy up the rest and then dump it to make the price go down as many times as they can and guess what? Most of the time they all get to go before you do and the top ai will buy one share and the others will follow then on the very next round they will sell those shares and let the other ai's that didn't get one of the shares buy those up and then they will sell those shares so your opening share price gets to fall like rain down the price range till it's worthless sometimes. It's pretty easy to see this gangup by the computer ai as you play a few games and watch how they always help each other or puff up at least one of the others so far ahead of you you'll never catch up and wallop your stocks every chance they get. Notice also they will buy and sell to each other the last train of a given set for \$1 and do you think they would ever help you or sell to you a train for \$1? hell no. lol

The better name for this railroad game would have been Cut-Throat Tycoon cause that is what it does to you every chance it gets. Even with the ai as lopsided as it is and plays as a team effort against you it is still a fun and challenging game though. Just thought I would warn you of what to expect. Espeically floating your railroads. Now on normal and easy difficulties they will help you float and of course buy up as much of your rr stock as they can, but they won't sell it off so fast like they do in the hardest settings. Also, beware of trains that are obsolete the ai will burn you pretty badly if you get caught with some of those or have stock in a rr with trains due to become obsolete.

My favorite economic strategy game is still Transport Tycoon Deluxe the AI in the deluxe version is much better than the original version and you get more activity building the rails and road lines and boats and planes and watchin all of it function. As long as you don't use the laying of railroad track over regular AI roads and then delete them exploit it's a very challenging fun time.

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Friday, August 29, 2008 7:59 PM

I think in this thread I did cover the AI's stock churning and how generally you need to get enough of a lead that you can take the hit.

I would say the most common is the 4 player game. It is the one most described in the various guides floating around the Net. Of course, one of the nice things about 1830 is how radically the game changes depending on the number of players.

I did find with six players even at the higher levels of difficulty, the AI would help you float (never in a four player game). I think the reason you see it in a six player game is that cash is in much greater demand.

Well, I must say it is really nice to come across someone who is actually familiar with the game.

I've looked at Transport Tycoon and Open Transport Tycoon, but haven't played them. I like playing RTD. I must admit that the AI still knocks cr\*p out of me with rate wars.


Yes, 1830 is really a game of trading (the RRs are incidental). I think RT3 would have been a great RR game if only the AI has some "I". RT3's AI presents no challenge. The only challenge are the objectives themselves. Of course, many people don't like RT3, since you can do quite well by just buying up businesses on the leading edge of track expansion and not really focus RRing at all.

Nice chatting about 1830!

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Saturday, August 30, 2008 6:09 AM

1830 definitely in the top running for a good challenging strategy game to play. One reason I like Transport Tycoon Deluxe model though is because they improved the ai in the deluxe version to give you a run for your money to win an efficient running business. In the older versions all you had to do was just race and get as many trains and boats and planes out there as you could and just by sheer numbers you could pass all the computer ai's in that department, but, now you have to run a more efficient business overall in sales and deliveries and cargo hauled by distance etc. The ai of course can do an exact science of that while unless you're a mathematician of the highest order you really have to work hard to beat it in efficiency. It is really good at stealing your services if you aren't watching for it and it's hard to watch over the entire map.

I also agree RRTII and III weren't very good and neither was Sid Meiers Railroads that came out a couple of years ago. To this day the original RRT he made is the best in that catagory and the ai will beat you silly in the early game buying your stocks and getting the best rr's started up. The only fun of RRTIII was riding the trains around the maps but that got pretty boring quickly.


 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, September 02, 2008 4:08 PM

A quote I like by Steve Jones:

*In contrast, 1830 concentrates more on manipulating share prices and less on running the railroad companies; indeed, the opportunities for swindle and sharp practices are many and various for the unscrupulous investor. It is not an easy game to play. While its mechanics are fairly straightforward, there are many elements involved during play, and the interplay between them is both complex and subtle. If one were searching for an appropriate single sentence to describe 1830, it would be "This is a*

Another nice collection of 1830 links:


<http://home.earthlink.net/~gamecorner/lgc1830.html>

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, September 02, 2008 6:02 PM

Just out of curiosiity-was this game *made* in 1830? Cause it sure looks like it :)

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[image][http://www.bmts.com/%7Ebsparling/cgi-bin/dancing\\_jun.gif](http://www.bmts.com/%7Ebsparling/cgi-bin/dancing_jun.gif)[/image]

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, September 02, 2008 6:45 PM

:)

I think that 1830 uses CGA graphics which would be 320x200 resolution with 16 colors (4 bit).

If you use DOSBOX 0.72, you can specify SCALE=NORMAL3X to expand its window for rendering on a modern LCD.

I actually run all my DOSBOX games on a second display 21" CRT. I run my LCD & CRT in Dual View mode. I then place the low resolution DOSBOX window on the CRT running a relatively low resolution like 648x480 or slightly higher. The end result is the DOSBOX window practically fills the CRT making the game almost appear to be running full screen. This is a nice combination and avoids the possible postage stamp affect of playing old games on a high resolution LCD. For all of this, I use a utility called [www.ultramon.com](http://www.ultramon.com) which does a very nice job managing multi-display systems.

The graphics for 1830 are fine. Yes, VGA would have been a little crisper, but you get all the information you need while playing. It is the rule set and the AI that makes this game what it is.

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Another trend besides the tendency of newer games to be all graphics sizzle and no AI is for strategy games to try to cram as much information on the screen on possible. You end up with an amazing amount of text spread over a 21" or larger display with tiny fonts that are only single pixel in width. Besides being a strain on the eyes of aging games, one has to begin to wonder what is the optimum number of data elements to display to a gamer in a display. 50, 200, 750? Many of today's games seem to be suffering from information overload. We used to want more information displayed to drill down into key aspects of the game. Now, I find myself longing for information reduction which summarizes the myriad of data being displayed. Just give me a freaking meter, bar, or graph that simply tells me what is going on. Too many of today's games look like realtime trading platforms of professional brokers, they are so information dense. Dense to the point that the fun goes out of it. Or maybe ... just maybe, I am the one that's dense! :)

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Wednesday, September 03, 2008 12:37 AM

I've played this game many times over the years and never got very good at it....guess my mind isnt sharp enough. I remember way back when reading a review from a very good boardgame player...he played around 150 games and still wasnt winning much more than he was losing....that's what I love about this game.

I remember I learned to play bridge from some computer game like Omar Shariff.....my first 100 games or so I was pretty sucky but then I really started learning the subtleties of bidding and I began to start to win a few, then really started to play well and was winning quite regularly on whatever setting I was playing on. I can imagine If I just spent more time playing 1830, I would start to see some good progress in my playing skill.....hmmmm....ok, off to get the game!

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Wednesday, September 03, 2008 3:24 PM

Ah! A good game of fast moves in the stock market causing chaos for other RR presidents leaving me with a substantial lead which even stock trading collusion could not save the AI.

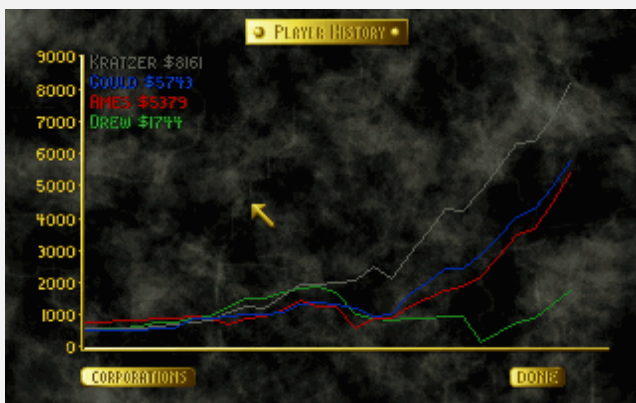
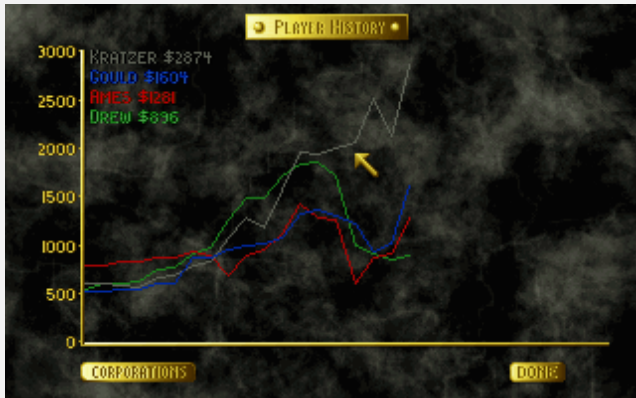
Technique:

(1) Running the NYNH for nice profits while draining down the treasury. At the right time, dumping it.

(2) In the meantime, the B&M was actually dumped on me!

(3) Not a problem, I was able to assemble enough of a cash position to float another two companies at high par values (IPO: with \$1000 in the treasury); CanPac and Erie. Combined with two treasuries of \$2,000 and the B&M holding revenues for a single run allowed the purchase of all high quality rolling stock for each RR while at the same time putting all other investors in a troubled position. The other investors had floated all their companies for low par values with relatively underfunded treasuries. They were not prepared for the sudden competitive jump in rolling stock technology which I unveiled! :)

The net worth graphs tell the who story. I knocked everyone back big time (playing at hardest difficulty level). You see each Stock Round where they attempted to depress my portfolio. It did them little good!



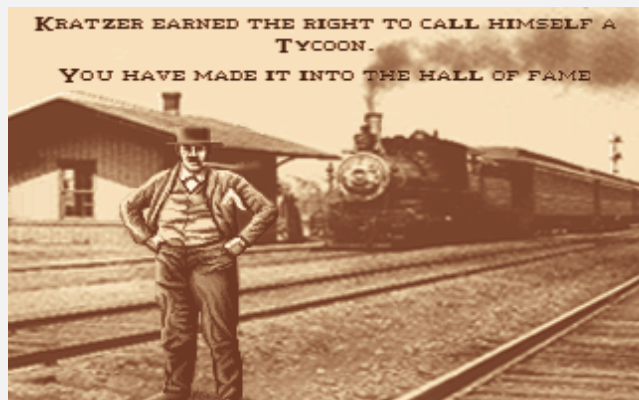
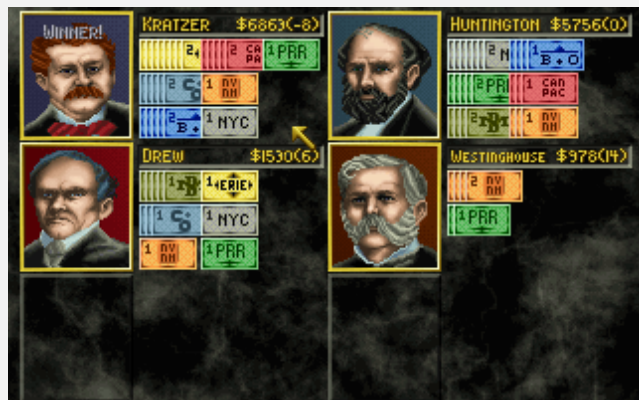
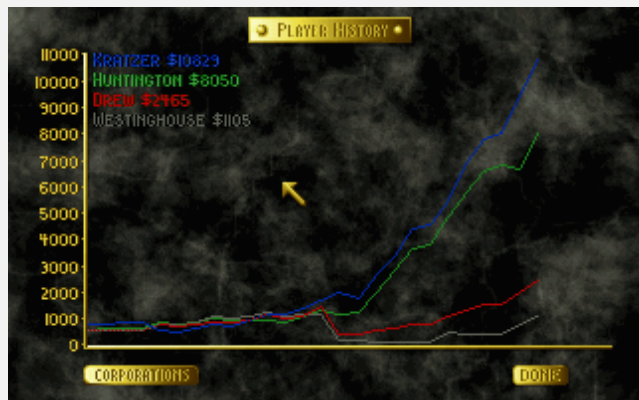
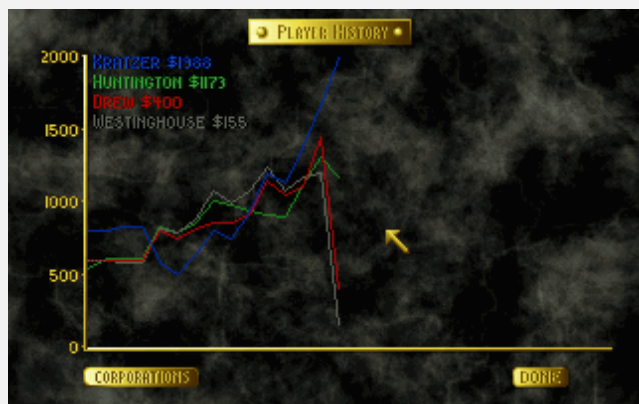
Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Wednesday, September 03, 2008 8:10 PM

Yes, I admit I am showing off here. :)

Another game of some really aggressive trading. Besides shaking up the markets blasting a few opponents' portfolios to dust, I seized control of two competitors RRs after they paid out of their pocket restore solvency! That made me president of yes 4 RRs; half of the total available. It's as close as once can come to a monopoly in a 4 player/8 RR game. Ah, the sweet pleasures of the stock market! :)

Finally, you'll notice on the final net worth curve that Huntington looked like he might overtake me (the slope of his curve). How did I nail him to make sure he would not upstage me? Well, with so many tokens (station markers) of 4 RRs, I used them to block an extremely lucrative \$700 run of the PRR to cut down upon his revenues. Thus, once again the slope of my net worth curve exceeded his.

Notice, that I also pulled off a Tycoon rating for this game.



Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Friday, September 05, 2008 2:52 AM

Well, after three consecutive victories, here is a loss at the hardest level.

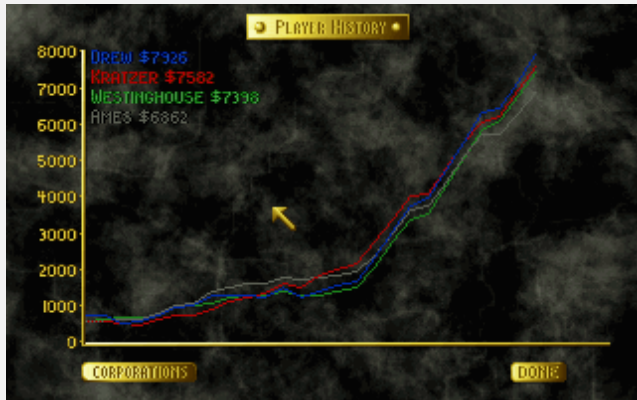
I can tell you what I think the key factor is. To win playing on the hardest level, your playing style must be non-linear. You have to be thinking outside of the box.

If you just let your RRs grow through track expansion and sequential rolling stock acquisition while depending a steady progression of net worth increase due to receiving dividends and capital appreciation, then you will lose. You have to shake up and disrupt operations and the stock market via a combination of tools:

(1) Accelerating game pace and causing opponents' trains to rust before they are ready to deal with it. This means aggressive purchasing of rolling stock, shifting funds between first RRs and second RRs to seize permanent trains. Even better, seizing more permanent trains than you need like two or three 5-trains along with a 6-train into two companies. Forcing other RRs to purchase a diesel; rusting 4-trains; cascading rolling stock purchases among everyone else.

(2) Shake up the stock market by squeezing the final revenues out of one of your RRs after draining the treasury dry and then dumping it on someone else; reinvesting that money into a well funded second or third RR. Carefully, controlling the priority deal and being in a position to possibly seize a worthwhile RR as well as dumping a worthless one.

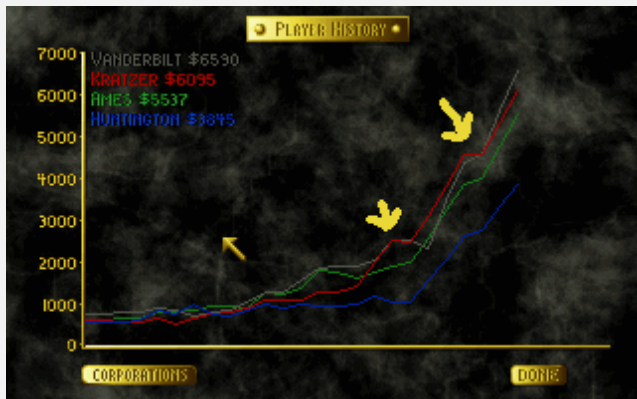
The above techniques will create the erratic and volatile net worth graphs that I have often displayed as opposed to this fairly docile one in which I lost in a rather predictable fashion.




	<b>DREW</b> CASH :\$5193 STOCK :\$3550 TOTAL :\$8743		<b>KRATZER</b> CASH :\$3317 STOCK :\$4930 TOTAL :\$8247
			
	<b>WESTINGHOUSE</b> CASH :\$4549 STOCK :\$3545 TOTAL :\$8094		<b>AMES</b> CASH :\$4410 STOCK :\$3110 TOTAL :\$7520

Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Friday, September 05, 2008 6:37 PM

Just another example where AI collusion in hammering my portfolio costs me the game. Without a large lead going into the end game play at HARDEST, it pretty much impossible to come out in first place.



	<b>VANDERBILT</b> CASH :\$3832 STOCK :\$3724 TOTAL :\$7556		<b>KRATZER</b> CASH :\$3646 STOCK :\$3212 TOTAL :\$6858
	<b>AMES</b> CASH :\$3508 STOCK :\$2810 TOTAL :\$6318		<b>HUNTINGTON</b> CASH :\$2374 STOCK :\$2004 TOTAL :\$4378

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Saturday, September 06, 2008 6:42 PM

Now, I have demonstrated victories that were primarily achieved through swift moves in the stock market.

Here is a defeat turned into a victory not through stock trading and the Stock Round, but instead through RR management and the Operating Round.

This may have been one of my closest games ever! The victory was achieved by only a 0.4% margin of net worth over the next closest investor.

In this game you buy trains called: 2-Trains, 3-Trains, 4-Trains, 5-Trains, 6-Trains, and Diesels. The number indicates the number of stations which the train may connect. Each station has a revenue figure which it will provide. Note: Diesels may connect an unlimited number of stations. Every RR has a fixed number of tokens (station markers). When a token is laid on a station, the owners trains may use (pass thru) that station and other RRs may not. Additionally, it cost \$40 to place the first token and \$100 to place each additional token; paid for out of the RR's treasury. The proper utilization of tokens is to do one of two things:

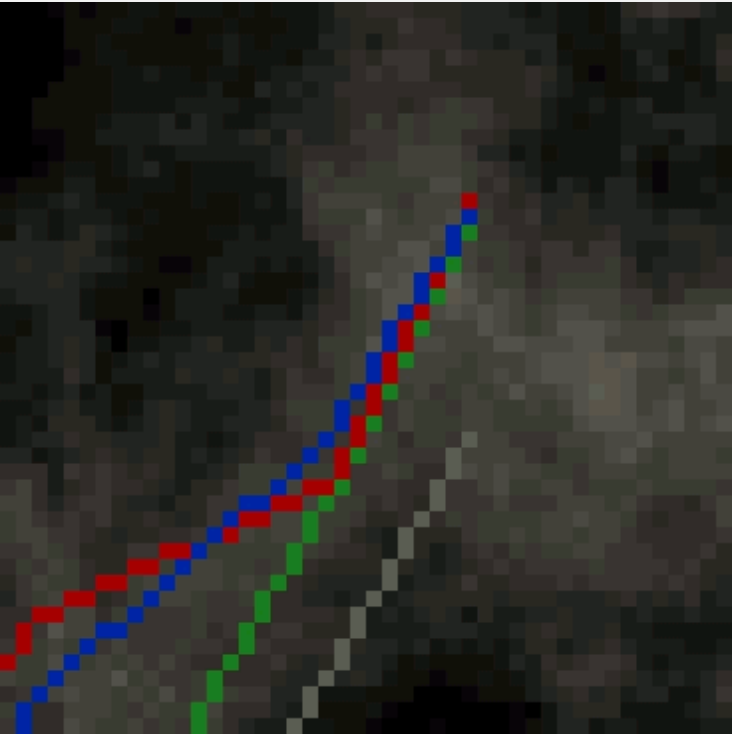
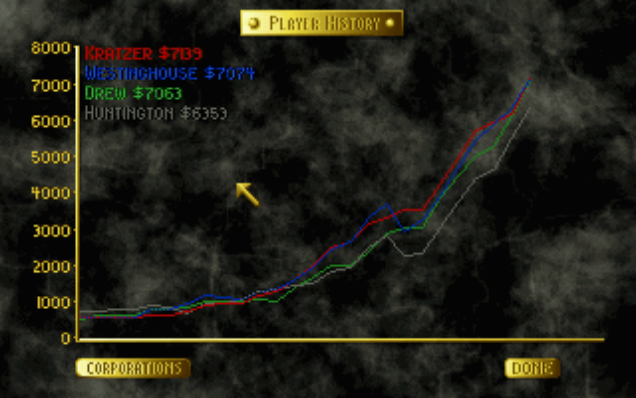
- (1) Ensure your access to a good track network which will provide your RR with good revenue runs.
- (2) Block other RRs from access to good track networks thus diminishing their revenue runs.

A late game good revenue run, can be as much as \$700 with a diesel or about \$70/share. Where as a poor run which is the result of a crippled network can be as little as \$100 or \$10/share. The final Operating Round has three turns (as opposed to the opening game which only has one). So, good RR operations in the end game can have a significant impact on net worth. Although for the standard four player game stock value/appreciation usually plays the bigger role when compared to revenues.

Here you have a game where I was destined to lose by a small margin. My opponents' RR have some very profitable diesel runs. How do I turn this game around:

- (1) I place tokens (red for CanPac and green for PRR) along a key route to break up the profitable diesel runs. This cuts my opponents revenues by at least 50%. I even risk holding one turn of dividends to the cash to pay for this.
- (2) I shift trains around between companies to consolidate cash (again losing a dividend) so that I purchase a 6-Train which another player has returned to the bank. This boosted my revenues on the Erie considerably.
- (3) The above was all done playing by gut rather than working through the numbers. This is one area where the computer has big advantage, since it can always work through the numbers fast and accurate.

Below, you two views of the net worth graph. The macro view where you can see how close. The micro view where you can see that I win by a single pixel. Also, you see my three companies and trains. You see the rail network with my red and green tokens blocking the profitable runs around NYC. Finally, you see my net worth break down where I win by only \$32! :)



GAME INFO HISTORY STOCK TRAINS

NYC	\$74	\$260	5
NYMH	\$139	\$360	0
B&O	\$0	\$270	0
C&O	\$181	\$220	0
PRR	\$3	\$220	5
CAN PAC	\$29	\$280	6
ERIE	\$171	\$490	5
B&M	\$0	\$240	0

PRR \$173

5

BUY 100  
LAY TRACK  
STATION  
COLLECT \$  
BUY TRAIN

GAME INFO HISTORY STOCK TRAINS


NYC	\$74	\$260	5
NYMH	\$139	\$360	0
B&O	\$0	\$270	0
C&O	\$181	\$220	0
PRR	\$3	\$220	5
CAN PAC	\$29	\$280	6
ERIE	\$171	\$490	5
B&M	\$0	\$240	0

CANADIAN PACIFIC ROUTE \$57

6

BUY 100  
LAY TRACK  
STATION  
END TURN  
BUY TRAIN




 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, September 07, 2008 12:51 PM

Just curious ... anyone following my showcasing of 1830 as one the business games ever released?

(debating whether to continue to add to it from time to time or just wrap it up)


Thanks.

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, September 07, 2008 2:22 PM

I'm reading. I find it very interesting. It's a game I passed up when it first came out-

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"The nations of the world will have to unite, for the next war will be an interplanetary war. The nations of the earth must someday make a common front against attack by people from other planets." ---General Douglas MacArthur- Oct. 8, 1955

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, September 07, 2008 2:33 PM

You've had 1700+ hits. It is being read.

How about an AAR?

*MarkShot*

*Just curious ... anyone following my showcasing of 1830 as one the business games ever released?*

*(debating whether to continue to add to it from time to time or just wrap it up)*

*Thanks.*

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[i]Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it.[/i]

George Santayana

Reason In Common Sense

[i]I'd rather be right than be President.[/i]

Henry Clay

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, September 07, 2008 2:58 PM

Okay, I will continue adding to it when new facets of the game appear to me during my games.

I've captured much of the basics, but there are various subtle techniques that pop up.

For example, here is one I haven't really addressed yet. The PRIORITY DEAL concept.

The game alternates between Stock Rounds and Operating Rounds. Operating Rounds may have one, two, or three turns based on what phase the game is in:

Start: Operating Round has one turn

After first 3-Train is sold: Next Operating Round has two turns.

After first 5-Train is sold: Next Operating Round has three turns.

The sequence of RRs operating (sequence of presidents taking action) is based on the share price. Highest goes first. This may well have a significant impact on the game as in all turn oriented games, there can be benefits of going sooner or later. Generally, this comes down being able to purchase trains at exactly the right moment.

Stock Rounds have an unlimited number of turns for the investors (players). A Stock Round ends when each player chooses to pass instead of trade. The PRIORITY DEAL is the player who will be given the very first trade for the next Stock Round. In essence the PRIORITY DEAL is the player who would have had the next turn if not for the fact everyone just passed. So, the way to secure the PRIORITY DEAL is to make sure that you pass and while everyone else at least trades one more time. The general rule is that it is bad to sit on cash as cash never makes money; there is no interest paid in 1830; only being invested do you make money. However, the one exception is that at times gaining the PRIORITY DEAL for the next Stock Round may well be worth sitting on a little cash.

Here is an example of how the player might exploit the PRIORITY DEAL. As mentioned already, a RR must have rolling stock. If the RR cannot pay for the rolling stock from the treasury, then the president must pay from his pocket. If the president does not have enough cash, then he must sell stock in order to obtain the cash. (the stock is sold during the Operating Round; although no other trading/stock transaction are allowed)

Now, you may have noticed that the stock market has different colored squares: white, yellow, orange, and brown. There are some rules controlling how much stock a player may hold. Stock which is in distress; priced at anything other than white squares on the stock market sees an easing of such rules. The normal rules are basically that the player has a certificate limit they may purchase; the player may not hold more than 60% of a single RR; and the player may not buy more than a single certificate per turn (although any number may be sold). These are eased for distress stocks.

So, here is the PRIORITY DEAL play:

(1) I make sure that I exit the Stock Round obtaining the PRIORITY DEAL.


(2) During the Operating Round, I make sure that one of my RRs buys the first diesel. This makes all 4-trains rust (obsolete - disappear). This will often put quite a few RRs in a dire situation if they don't have a permanent train like a 5-train or 6-train or \$1100 in the treasury.

(3) If done properly quite a few presidents are going to have to pay out of their pocket to buy diesels for their RRs without any rolling stock. In many cases, they'll have to dump quite a number of shares to get the cash which will push the stock into distress.

(4) In some cases, stock may be so distressed that it goes into the brown portion of the market (penny stocks; junk). Stock that is brown has the following restrictions waived: you may buy beyond your certificate limit; you may buy more than a single share per turn; and you may buy more than 60% of a company.

(5) Thus after such an Operating Round, there may well be brown distress stock to be had (dumped to get cash to buy rolling stock). With the PRIORITY DEAL and the chaos I created, when I go first in the Stock Round I can completely scoop up another company (seize control and grab up to 100%) in a single turn. At this point, the company would be safe having had diesel bought for it by some luckless president. Of course, the share value of the company will be very poor, but an established company with diesel could generating some very nice dividends for very little investment on my part.

And that, friends, is just one example of how to make a killing with the PRIORITY DEAL.

 Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, September 07, 2008 3:05 PM

Here we see the components of that example.

Note: rolling stock Westinghouse (#4) is in very bad shape. He is just moving one train around to avoid bankruptcy.



Here is the Stock Market and you can see NYC and C&O RRs with their stock in severe distress.

STOCK MARKET

CORP	PRICE	PAR	REV	TREAS
ERIE	100	100	120	7
PRR	90	71	230	91
CAN	82	100	0	0
B+O	80	100	0	1
B+M	69	82	0	0
NYD	67	67	0	0
C+O	30	100	240	58
NYC	30	67	0	164

Finally, here are the investors portfolios. Additionally, you see that I will come out of the current Operating Round with the PRIORITY DEAL to exercise.

INVESTOR	PORTFOLIO	TOTAL VALUE
PRIORITY	1 ERIE, 1 PRR	\$232(10)
KRATZER	1 ERIE, 1 PRR	\$232(10)
WESTINGHOUSE	1 ERIE, 1 PRR	\$232(10)
GOULD	1 ERIE, 1 PRR	\$48(9)
DREW	1 ERIE, 1 PRR, 1 CAN, 1 B+O, 1 NYD, 1 C+O, 1 NYC	\$305(4)

Furthermore, you see that both Westinghouse's and Gould's portfolios have been decimated by having to come up with cash for rolling stock to avoid bankruptcy. Their former shares of stock are just sitting on the market waiting for me to scoop them up.

On final thing to notice is that I can even afford to scoop up a RR with no rolling stock if I get the chance. Why? Well, observe that I have one extra train at the moment. Of course, I have to make sure that doing that will help me more than the player I relieve of the presidency. However, it may be an opportunity for me to improve my revenues in the Operating Round.

<MESSAGE EDITED BY MARKSHOT ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 07, 2008 3:09 PM>

Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, September 07, 2008 3:10 PM

Bump added some stuff.

Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, September 07, 2008 3:23 PM

Actually, I think this thread is some ways is better than an AAR.

In this thread, I am hitting all the major components of the game. Beyond that I am highlighting all the little strategic gems that make this game special without getting caught up in any of the turn by turn bookkeeping. So, it is just the excitement without any of the drudgery. (As a

board game, 1830 has reputation of being slow and very labor intensive/rule management ... the PC is entirely different - board games run for 4-6 hours.)

However, the beauty of 1830 on the PC is that there is very little drudgery. An entire intense game can be completed in about one hour. For a strategy game, 1830 has the instant action and quick play of shooter, but the depth and strategy of a fine 4X which runs days to a couple of weeks. And each time out is usually quite different!