


ter,

You're welcome. I plan to make this into one big PDF for Westpark Gamers. They are the respository of the sum total of 1830 knowledge on the Web. The thread may be considered the Readers Digest version. The only thing this thread does better than the articles at West Park is it illustrates the techniques.

The Westpark articles are tough reading for a noob, but ultimately have much more depth. However, I do think this thread could help anyone who understands the basic mechanics.

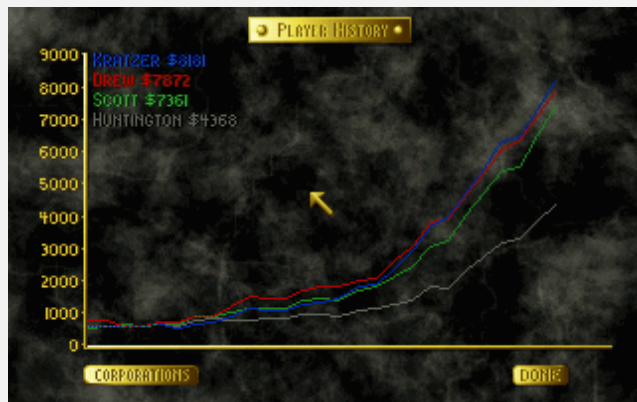
I know I need to close it one day, but actually I am having fun doing it and improving too.

 Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Monday, November 03, 2008 7:45 PM

Check out this game. This is one of few cases where I have seen the AI miscalculate the magnitude and slope of the Net Worth curves. One big advantage the AI has over the human player is its ability to calculate numbers perfectly, fast, and probe a few moves into the future (like a chess program). There is quite a bit of basic math in this game. No calculus; just the stuff you learn in grade school. I do some math for the most critical items like funding the purchase of trains, but of play is by intuition. Normally, you rarely ever blind side the AI. It only rarely happens in Operating Rounds if you can block with station tokens a major revenue stream which it had anticipated to take advantage of.

Now, look at this game's results. The AI had me, miscalculated. (We'll never really know why.)

Look at the Net Worth graph. You'll see that Drew and I were neck and neck the entire game. I had only the smallest of leads.



Now, look and see that I had three RRs: PRR, CanPac, and B&M.



Now, look back at the Net Worth Graph. You'll see that the characteristic Thrash&Trash of my stock portfolio is NOT there!

Now, look at those three stocks at the close of the game. You'll see that they could have easily had their share prices depressed. The AI simply missed its chance in the final Stock Round. I was playing for time looking for a dirty trick to pull, but the opportunity didn't materialize.



A very unexpected win. I got lucky. This should have been a loss!

Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, November 04, 2008 11:35 AM

You may have noticed that I don't end the game too often holding Diesels among my rolling stock. Why? Well, to have the RR treasury cash to buy a Diesel, you'll have to withhold dividends. For the most part, the gain from the Diesel run does not really offset the loss in share price relative to just having a 5-Train or a 6-Train. That is in the standard game. If you play with the extended game option enabled which adds an additional \$8,000 to the Bank, then running Diesels becomes a much more viable option. The Diesels will run more times in Operating Rounds and generate more total revenue.

And yet, you have seen me end the game with Diesels among my rolling stock. There are four general cases this arises given the way I play:

- (1) I seize someone else's RR which happens to have a Diesel.
- (2) You are running a RR with unhealthy stock and keeping it that way. Thus, you accumulate a lot of cash in the RR treasury. Well, when you have enough cash, then you might as well buy a Diesel.
- (3) You end up accumulating a lot of cash in the treasury of two RR (due to shares being in the Bank Pool; this means that a portion of dividends which are paid return to the RR's treasury). Thus, you can move one train from one RR to another while moving the cash in the other direction. Possibly there is enough cash for a Diesel.
- (4) Sometimes I withhold dividends to save money in the RR treasury to buy the first Diesel. This is done mainly to rust everyone else's 4-Trains and give them grief. A side effect of this is that the game will immediately be extended. Train purchases put money back in the Bank. Dividend payments (along with floating RRs) take money out of the Bank. So, the sale of Diesels should, at least, add another Stock Round and Operating Round. Meaning more opportunity for dirty tricks; the longer the game runs.

Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, November 04, 2008 11:46 AM

This thread is definitely pretty awesome! You've got loads of experience with 1830!

Have you ever put together a tutorial to play the game at the most basic levels?

This thread would teach the intermediate and advanced levels for sure!

Good job!

Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, November 04, 2008 12:10 PM

Braz24, thanks. Are you an 1830 player?

Well, I actually started it, since I rate 1830 as one of the best strategy games of all time due to the game system design and the quality of the PC port. So, I wanted mainly to showcase the game. However after a number of posts of capturing the ambience of the game, the thread morphed more into a tutorial.

If you have seen my HTRR and COTA Mini-Guides over at Matrix, they began with AAR/tutorial battles and then proceeded to a discussion of gaming techniques.

I think the 1830 manual is pretty good along with the in game help. Otherwise, the beginning player would do well to observe what the AI players do. This is especially a good technique to see some optimal track laying strategies during the Operating Round.


Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, November 04, 2008 12:55 PM

I have two copies each of the 1830 boardgame and pc games. I love railroading games and railroad empire building games. Unfortunately, I didn't get around to playing the pc version much ( I needed to read the rules but winged it instead. I got spanked severely as I recall in those games) and never found any opponents for the 1830 boardgames. I even bought a lot the other 18xx games from Mayfair and 3rd party expansions. Never got around to playing them either.

It turns out that I will be heading back home tomorrow (Midwest) for week before turning right around and heading to points west. I may be able to find my pc 1830 games and take them with me. I could always "pick your brain" if I have any problems with installing the game (XP Pro) or learning to play as well as the finer points of play.

I should look for your COTA mini-guides as I do own a copy of that game...I don't have it with me in my travels now though.

If I can find the pc 1830 games (in storage), I'll let you know how I do!

 Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, November 04, 2008 1:08 PM

Braz24,

With regards to running 1830(PC), I have tried three ways to run it:

- (1) DOSBOX (DOS emulator for XP) {only needs CP check once}
- (2) XP VDM (built-in virtual machine) {I think it runs, but likely to need CP check each game}
- (3) Microsoft Virtual PC 2007 (general OS free emulator) {slow and clumsy}

By far, DOSBOX is the best. The XP VDM will work, but it will also be full screen and likely grainy and ugly. With DOSBOX you can run in a Window. It won't be postage stamp size. You can set SCALER=NORMAL3X and that should make it playable in a Window. I use a second CRT (20") running at low res in a Window that makes it like fully screen on multi-sync.

Go to:

[www.dosbox.com](http://www.dosbox.com) to get what you need. PM me if you have technical issues. Good luck.

My DOSBOX (v 0.72) conf file for 1830 follows:

```
[sdl]
# fullscreen -- Start dosbox directly in fullscreen.
# fulldouble -- Use double buffering in fullscreen.
# fullresolution -- What resolution to use for fullscreen: original or fixed size (e.g. 1024x768).
# windowresolution -- Scale the window to this size IF the output device supports hardware scaling.
# output -- What to use for output: surface,overlay,opengl,openglfb,ddraw.
# autolock -- Mouse will automatically lock, if you click on the screen.
# sensitivity -- Mouse sensitivity.
# waitonerror -- Wait before closing the console if dosbox has an error.
# priority -- Priority levels for dosbox: lowest,lower,normal,higher,highest.
# Second entry behind the comma is for when dosbox is not focused/minimized.
# mapperfile -- File used to load/save the key/event mappings from.
# usescancodes -- Avoid usage of symkeys, might not work on all operating systems.
```

```
fullscreen=false
fulldouble=false
fullresolution=original
windowresolution=original
output=surface
autolock=true
sensitivity=68
waitonerror=true
priority=highest,lowest
mapperfile=mapper.txt
usescancodes=true
```

```
[dosbox]
# language -- Select another language file.
# memsize -- Amount of memory dosbox has in megabytes.
# machine -- The type of machine tries to emulate: hercules,cga,tandy,pcjr,vga.
# captures -- Directory where things like wave,midi,screenshot get captured.
```

```
language=
```

```
machine=vga
captures=e:\games\1830\capture
memsize=16
```

#### [render]

```
# frameskip -- How many frames dosbox skips before drawing one.
# aspect -- Do aspect correction, if your output method doesn't support scaling this can slow things
down!.
# scaler -- Scaler used to enlarge/enhance low resolution modes.
# Supported are
none,normal2x,normal3x,advname2x,advname3x,advinterp2x,advinterp3x,tv2x,tv3x,rgb2x,rgb3x,scan2x,scan3x.
```

```
frameskip=0
aspect=false
scaler=normal2x
```

#### [cpu]

```
# core -- CPU Core used in emulation: simple,normal,full,dynamic.
# cycles -- Amount of instructions dosbox tries to emulate each millisecond.
# Setting this higher than your machine can handle is bad!
# You can also let DOSBox guess the correct value by setting it to auto.
# Please note that this guessing feature is still experimental.
# cycleup -- Amount of cycles to increase/decrease with keycombo.
# cycledown Setting it lower than 100 will be a percentage.
```

```
core=auto
cycles=max
cycleup=10000
cycledown=10000
```

#### [mixer]

```
# nosound -- Enable silent mode, sound is still emulated though.
# rate -- Mixer sample rate, setting any devices higher than this will
# probably lower their sound quality.
# blocksize -- Mixer block size, larger blocks might help sound stuttering
# but sound will also be more lagged.
# prebuffer -- How many milliseconds of data to keep on top of the blocksize.
```

```
nosound=false
rate=22050
blocksize=2048
prebuffer=10
```

#### [midi]

```
# mpu401 -- Type of MPU-401 to emulate: none, uart or intelligent.
# device -- Device that will receive the MIDI data from MPU-401.
# This can be default,alsa,oss,win32,coreaudio,none.
# config -- Special configuration options for the device. In Windows put
# the id of the device you want to use. See README for details.
```

```
mpu401=intelligent
device=default
config=
```

#### [sbblaster]

```
# sbtype -- Type of sbblaster to emulate: none,sb1,sb2,sbpro1,sbpro2,sb16.
# sbbase,irq,dma,hdma -- The IO/IRQ/DMA/High DMA address of the soundblaster.
# mixer -- Allow the soundblaster mixer to modify the dosbox mixer.
# oplmode -- Type of OPL emulation: auto,cms,opl2,dualopl2,opl3.
# On auto the mode is determined by sbblaster type.
# All OPL modes are 'Adlib', except for CMS.
# oplrate -- Sample rate of OPL music emulation.
```

```
sbtype=sb16
sbbase=220
irq=7
dma=1
hdma=5
mixer=true
oplmode=auto
oplrte=22050
```

#### [gus]

```
# gus -- Enable the Gravis Ultrasound emulation.
# gusbases,irq1,irq2,dma1,dma2 -- The IO/IRQ/DMA addresses of the
# Gravis Ultrasound. (Same IRQ's and DMA's are OK.)
# gusrate -- Sample rate of Ultrasound emulation.
# ultradir -- Path to Ultrasound directory. In this directory
# there should be a MIDI directory that contains
```

```
# the patch files for GUS playback. Patch sets used
# with Timidity should work fine.
```

```
gus=false
gusrate=22050
gusbases=240
irq1=5
irq2=5
dma1=3
dma2=3
ultradir=C:\ULTRASND
```

```
[speaker]
# pcspeaker -- Enable PC-Speaker emulation.
# pcrate -- Sample rate of the PC-Speaker sound generation.
# tandy -- Enable Tandy Sound System emulation (off,on,auto).
# For auto Tandy sound emulation is present only if machine is set to tandy.
# tandyrates -- Sample rate of the Tandy 3-Voice generation.
# disney -- Enable Disney Sound Source emulation.
```

```
pcspeaker=true
pcrate=22050
tandy=auto
tandyrates=22050
disney=true
```

```
[bios]
# joysticktype -- Type of joystick to emulate: none, 2axis, 4axis,
# fcs (Thrustmaster) ,ch (CH Flightstick).
# none disables joystick emulation.
# 2axis is the default and supports two joysticks.
```

```
joysticktype=2axis
```

```
[serial]
# serial1-4 -- set type of device connected to com port.
# Can be disabled, dummy, modem, directserial.
# Additional parameters must be in the same line in the form of
# parameter:value. Parameters for all types are irq, startbps, bytesize,
# stopbits, parity (all optional).
# for directserial: realport (required).
# for modem: listenport (optional).
# Example: serial1=modem listenport:5000
```

```
serial1=dummy
serial2=dummy
serial3=disabled
serial4=disabled
```

```
[dos]
# xms -- Enable XMS support.
# ems -- Enable EMS support.
# umb -- Enable UMB support (false,true,max).
```

```
xms=true
ems=true
umb=true
```


```
[ipx]
# ipx -- Enable ipx over UDP/IP emulation.
```

```
ipx=false
```

```
[autoexec]
# Lines in this section will be run at startup.
```

```
mount c e:\games\1830
c:
#turned off midi music and just kept sound effects
#sound
1830
exit
```


My HTTR & COTA Mini-Guides are stickied at the top of the respective Matrix forums. They are also available in a downloadable PDF form (about 300 pages including screens).

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, November 04, 2008 1:16 PM

Thanks Markshot!

I have DOSBox on my laptop already and have used it for AH pc version of 5th Fleet and a few other old titles. (I'll have to see if DOSBox will work with pc Third Reich and a few other Avalon Hill pc titles when I get home!)

I'll definitely get in touch with you if I have any problems. Thanks again!

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, November 04, 2008 1:35 PM

Braz24


I also like RTD (Railroad Tycoon Deluxe; similar to RT1, the original Sid Meier game, but VGA graphics). It plays just fine under DOSBOX. It is still the best I believe of RT2, RT3, RAS, and SMR. It's only short coming was the the F4 Detail View was known to crawl on the 80486s of its day. However, these days on modern hardware that view should be a non-problem.

With the release of SMR, Take2 made RTD a free download. If you run their installer, it will preconfigure and install the game for DOSBOX. Pretty easy.

I wish I could play RTD on the Tycoon level with all the difficulty options maxed. However, the "cut throat competition" does me in almost every time. I've been working on the 1830 North East USA map. It's not so much buy outs or being bounced by the share holders. I keep getting killed by rate wars!

Now, I bought two used strategy guides for RT1. I know all about how to win rate wars, but it is still really hard. I love that game as well. I think RT3 could have been a great game with the economic model, but alas the AI pretty much lacked any "I". SMR was a big dissappointment; an eye candy game mainly rolled out to capitalize on the Sid Meier brand name.

RT1/RTD is still the best. I have RT1 as well, but prefer RTD's VGA graphics.

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, November 04, 2008 1:54 PM

I used to have Railroad Tycoon Deluxe, still have RT2 and RT3.


I went through the tutorials for RT2 (plus the expansions) and played a few games too. Like you said, the AI was pretty cuthroat and didn't make many mistakes either. Like most games I play, I need to spend more time on them than I do to get good at them.

RT3 was great ice candy and I used the sandbox mode some too. It didn't strike me to be as fun or immersive as RT2 did.

SMR got pretty bad reviews and pretty much soured me on buying it. I think in retrospect, that was a good decision to avoid a purchase of it. Seems like Sid has kind of blown it on several game remakes these last few years...I don't know about Colonization of Civ IV though...I don't own them.

I even bought the Eagle Games boardgame version of Railroad Tycoon. Once again, no players and the fact I worked weird hours back then too.

I like RT2 plus the expansions the best with RTD a close second. Remember the days of those cool manuals that Microprose used to put out? RTD's manual was no exception!

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, November 04, 2008 2:05 PM

Braz24,

Yep, MPS' manuals were the stuff of legends. Sierra/Dynamix also and Spectrum Holobyte. I am not sure when Marissa "No19" Ong ended up head of documentation at MPS (maybe after they bought SH). She really did some very fine work. Gee, I haven't spoken to her in years. (Also, I miss Buzz Hoffman from the early Thrustmaster days. He passed many years ago already.)

These days people slap together games and release them. If the games are decent, then they hope the player community will generate the manuals. A certain grand strategy game developer/publisher has been fairly effective with this approach.




I am proud to say that COTA was released with about 500 pages of documentation. Although we did not beat out Sonalysts' Dangerous Waters (700 pages), we had a much smaller operation. :)

Well, let me know how your 1830 playing goes. It might be cool to actually answer some questions in this thread. :)


Disclosure: Member of Panther Games Beta Team (RDOA/HTTR/COTA/BFTB) since 2001

<MESSAGE EDITED BY MARKSHOT ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 04, 2008 2:06 PM>

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, November 04, 2008 7:43 PM

I am happy to report that I am slumping again. I've come in #2 in my last three games. I even shut off my mail and closed the election coverage during the last game. I still lost by a 2.5% margin. The AI maneuvered me into a corner. The no dirty tricks corner. Can you believe that? It actually expected me to put up a fair fight! The absolute nerve! Fair fights have never been my forte. It looks like this game can still knock me around pretty good after two years. NOTE: The game doesn't cheat ... a little collusion yes, but cheat no.


Now, it's got my blood pressure up. It's time for some serious wheeling and dealing! :)

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Tuesday, November 04, 2008 9:20 PM

It's been a humbling night. Yes, 5 consecutive losses. Time to pack it in.

Once I built a rail road ... Hey, Brother, can you spare a dime?



 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Thursday, November 06, 2008 1:50 PM

Dow below 9,000! Is that serious? Nah, I'll tell you what is serious, I have now posted 6 consecutive losses. That is enough to destroy consumer confidence and then some.

Only one thing to do in such a case, get someone to stake me with \$600 and get back in with both hands. Time to get out of this slump; today; now!

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Friday, November 07, 2008 5:36 PM

You know, five out of six of 1830's privates convey some special privilege to the holding investor or RR. This is in addition to dividend payments and or the possibility of raiding your RR's treasury at twice face value.

However, the M&H private has confused me for years. Its special ability is that the player can exchange it for a share of the public NYC RR. But given its face value of \$110 which permits a raiding of the your RR's treasury for \$220 and that you usually have to bid about \$150 for it, I cannot see the point in redeeming it for a share NYC.

NYC usually is floated as a second RR. So, its share price is never going to beat \$220/share before the privates get closed when the first 5-Train is bought.

The only thing I see with redeeming the M&H private for a share of NYC is perhaps seizing the presidency from a president who only holds like 20% equity. In which case, if you started the Stock Round with one share of NYC already, redeemed M&H, and purchased an additional share (you would have to have the Priority Bid), then you could in theory seize control of the NYC RR. But I've never seen a minority equity president in the early game.

So, this special feature of the M&H private has definitely got me baffled. The only thing I can think of is that it comes in much more handy in non-four player games. Well, if anyone sees how to exploit this feature, then please do tell!

Well, after seven consecutive losses a win. My smallest win ever. By \$13 or 1/10% of Net Worth. But I am not proud.

I'll take it! I am back!

Furthermore, I think I may have come up with a new strategy. Previously, we have discussed the end game situation where you and only one other player are close to winning. In such a situation, stripping one of your two RRs clean and dumping it on your close competitor works very well. Unfortunately, there are still more preconditions that those I have just cited. You'll have to trade before the close competitor and that competitor will have to be holding at least 20% the RR with greatest share price (operates first).

Those are some pretty specific requirements. Now, consider the following situation. Close game with one or more competitors. At least, 2 or 3 competitors have essential (necessary) 4-Trains, but none are interested in seeing them rust. Well, one obvious thing which you could do is save \$1100 by withholding dividends, buy a Diesel, forcing the rusting of the 4-Trains. This is a decent approach if one of your RRs already has excess cash and an impressive dividend.

However, if the line above does not hold, then the AI will see this coming. The AI will also withhold dividends and get the cheaper diesel by trading a 4-Train in for \$800. Then, at least, one AI player will have gotten the Diesel for a good price. (A better price than you!)

Now, consider this. Suppose, on the Second Rotation of the Operating Round, RR #2 strips the rolling stock from RR#1. Thus, your RR#1 is forced to buy a Diesel meaning you are forced out of your own pocket. This puts your competitors into a position of having to buy Diesels, since their 4-Trains have rusted. (Now, you could use RR#1 to strip RR#2 in the Second Rotation of the Operating Round if RR#1 won't be operating early enough.) The reason for this timing is that you want to make sure that no one gets out of the Operating Round without being forced to buy Diesels. Otherwise, opponents with RRs with no rolling stock might try to dump them in the upcoming stock round.

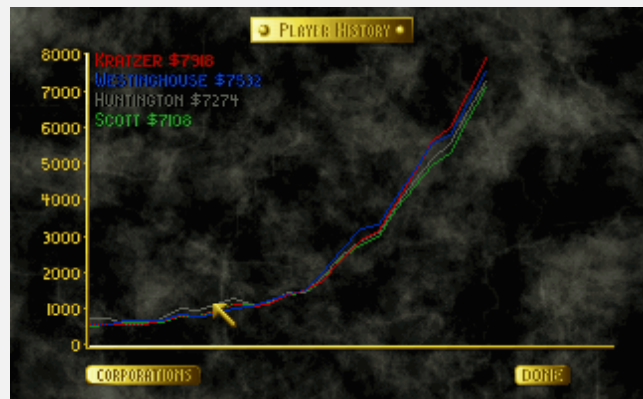
So, since you are doing damage to your own Net Worth as well as everyone else's, why should this technique have even a glimmer of hope of working? Well, suppose you float RRs with potential for decent Diesel runs and then you lay the track for it. First, everyone buying Diesels will put money back in the bank. Thus, extending the game to make the Diesel runs worthwhile. Second, you will take what had been a close game and put yourself in position to win on superior revenues.

The main issue I see with this approach working is that you have to be floating and building with good Diesel runs in mind at a pretty early stage in the game. So, early that you might have been planning a completely different strategy.

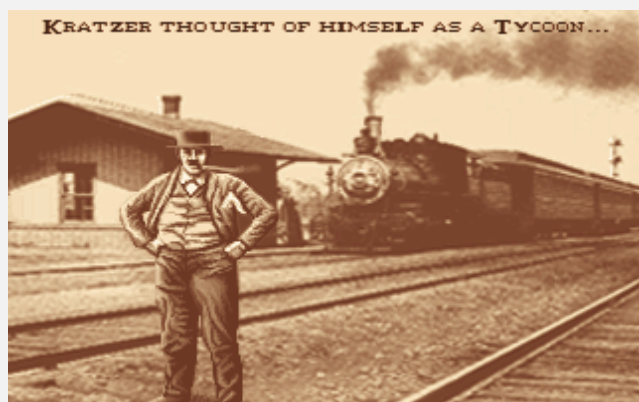
But still I think the above has merit as yet just one more 1830 dirty trick you can pull! :)

Okay, this is more like it! Another game illustrating that you can play a whole game and not see a 6-Train. So, it was. Once again an old fashioned win without a single dirty trick, just steady driving up the stock price and bringing home the big dividends.

A key feature of my victory was: I owned the PRR, CanPac, and B&M in that order. I had PRR set up some good track. Then, I made sure that both CanPac and B&M were able to break free of the North East (often they get locked in) so that they produced some good revenues.







Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Saturday, November 08, 2008 6:34 PM


By the way, if it isn't obvious yet. Stacking your RRs with extra trains has two different two contrasting impacts.

On the plus side, if you have the track to run it will boost your revenue and the dividends which you pocket.

On the negative side, it precludes most dirty tricks, since most tricks are based on dumping a stripped RR on some sucker. When you don't have those extra slots for locomotives, then you cannot shuffle things in order to strip an RR clean.


Furthermore, you cannot force trains to rust, because you have no slot open to purchase a train from the Bank. And previously, we talked about

stripping a RR clean and forcing yourself to buy a train, but that cannot be done either.

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Saturday, November 08, 2008 7:26 PM

He he he ... believe or not! This is the very first time, I've been forced into bankruptcy. Seen a lot of AI bankruptcies, but never been there myself. It was due to a very flawed strategy. I picked up B&O private without adequate cash left to do it justice. Ideally, the player buying the B&O private should hold no other privates and pick up the B&O private for face value only of \$220. Well, I learned that the hard way! :)




 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, November 09, 2008 6:49 PM

Well, I decided to revisit the delayed start strategy. Meaning that rather than floating an RR early, you invest heavily for best ROI/capital gains, then cash in at the right time and mid-game float two RRs in one Stock Round each with a PAR of \$100/share.

Now, I've tried this twice after getting the B&O private and sitting on the presidency instead of immediately floating. Now, a while back I had mentioned that I would abandon this strategy after I saw a nice proof that wasting 20% unfloated equity in the B&O could not be economically justified. Be that as it may, these are my results in a few games:

- (1) Getting to load up on the best stocks and getting out at the right time, puts you into the middle game leading the pack.
- (2) Entering the middle game with two fully capitalized RRs (\$1000 treasury) when the permanent trains are right around the corner is very strong position. Most other RRs if they are lucky can just scrape enough cash together for 5-Trains.
- (3) Entering the game with so much purchasing power accelerates the pace of technology (trains rusting & introduction), there is a very good chance of driving one of your AI opponents into bankruptcy. (Usually this will take control out of your hands whether you win or lose.)
- (4) The AI really doesn't see the delayed start strategy coming like it should. If it did, it would possibly hold dividends to build up cash reserves in RR #1. Remember that such action will hurt the human delayed starter pretty bad, since you are fully vested in AI managed RRs. Also, the AI would then make sure to float RR #2 at a PAR of \$100/share. Particularly, if the AI did the former, it would strengthen its RRs while delaying you from floating, since you would realize no dividends or capital gains (so, you would be doubly scr\*w\*d).
- (5) It seems that the AI only responds to the pace of the game speeding up when it sees RRs with cash and open slots in the Operating Round. The AI does not perceive a planned acceleration of the game when it is not building in the Operating Rounds, but rather being set up through the Stock Market.
- (6) So, delayed starting does seem to have a place against the AI, but I think humans would trip you up pretty good if they saw this.


 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Friday, November 14, 2008 6:03 PM

Was reading about an interesting way of playing 1830 today ... if you ever get bored that is. This was from Mike Carlton's guide of 1995.

The idea is that you play in hot seat mode and take two investor positions. Then, you try to have the two play as a team and come in first and second. Supposedly, this is extremely hard to do, since 1830 is not really a game which lends itself to cooperative play.

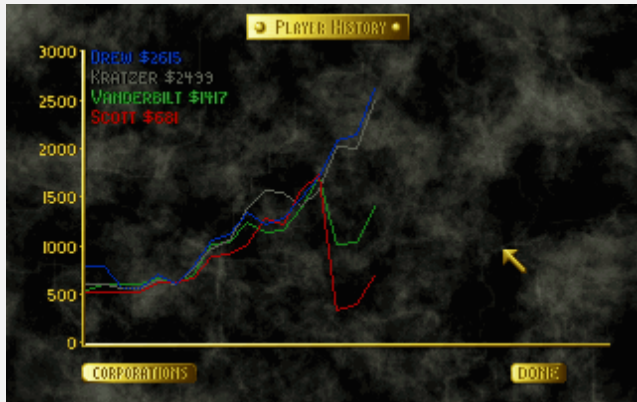
BTW, I have never tried this.

Already 1830 is interesting, since you only have frail attachment to the underlying engines of the economy, the RRs. They are tools as opposed to being like CIVs or nations in most strategy games we play. So, doing the hot seat thing would further put another layer of distance between you the ultimate player and your results. Could be quite an intellectual exercise. Certainly, the lack of strong affinity between the player and his economic engines is one of things that gives 1830 its special flavor. I mean did you ever play HOI where Hitler would dump Germany on Stalin and simply seize control of France away from DeGaulle? :)

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, November 16, 2008 7:36 PM

An exceptionally good move by the AI wins the game for Drew!

Vanderbilt and Scott are knocked out by being forced to buy Diesels out of pocket. It's between me and Drew now. We go into the next Stock Round. Drew buys two shares (20%) in my NYNH. I am president of the NYNH and Erie. Drew is president of the B&O and NYC. Drew has Diesel and 5-Train in them respectively. We exit the Stock Round and I have the Priority Bid. I now have Drew right where I want him. I'll be dumping NYNH on him. That should knock him out.



But no, Drew is too smart for that. He withholds dividends with the B&O for two Operating Round Rotations. As I own 40% of his B&O, this does not do me any good. Then, having pumped cash into the B&O's treasury, he buys a second Diesel with B&O. My scheme is totally dashed to pieces! Why? Drew now has 3 trains in two RRs. If I dump and stick him with a third RR, he will recover smoothly by simply moving a train to NYNH which I dumped on him. It won't come out of his pocket. In fact, 30% of the cost of that Diesel came out my pocket (dividends I never received).

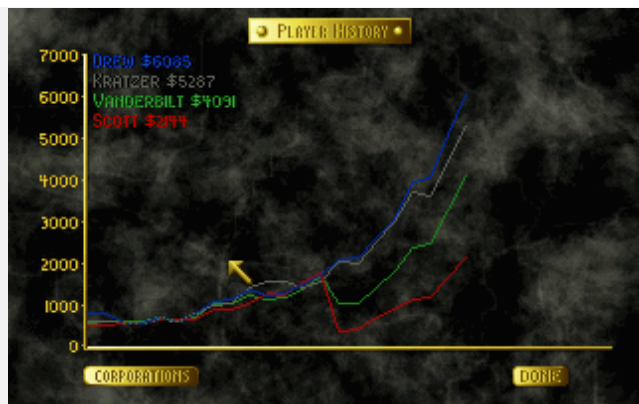
If that wasn't bad enough! Drew then moves the new Diesel to NYC to hold one 5-Train and a Diesel. He does this, since I own 40% of B&O, but only 10% of NYC. He doesn't plan to put any big dividends into my pocket!







RR	Price	Owned	Available
PRR	\$72	0	5
C&O	\$72	0	0
ERIE	\$390	2	5
NYNH	\$143	1	6
CAN PAC	\$100	5	6
B&M	\$180	0	0
NYC	\$44	5	0
B&O	\$205	0	0

Once again, my crafty mind has been out maneuvered by a simple machine doing nothing more than IF ... THEN .. ELSE; LOOP; CASE; GOTO ... Aargh!!! How utterly infuriating!!! (and yes, I was fully awake and alert when Drew did this)






<b>WINNER!</b> 	<b>DREW</b> \$4569(0) 2 NY 1 AV 1 B.O 1 PRR		<b>KRATZER</b> \$3354(0) 2 NY 1 NYC 2 ERI 1 PRR 1 B.O
	<b>VANDERBILT</b> \$2570(0) 2 S 1 NYC 1 B.O 1 PRR 1 NY 1 ERI 1 AV		<b>SCOTT</b> \$1348(3) 2 NY 1 NYC 2 C&O PAC 1 S

<b>WINNER!</b> 	<b>DREW</b> CASH :\$4569 STOCK :\$2520 TOTAL :\$7089		<b>KRATZER</b> CASH :\$3354 STOCK :\$2738 TOTAL :\$6092
	<b>VANDERBILT</b> CASH :\$2570 STOCK :\$2332 TOTAL :\$4902		<b>SCOTT</b> CASH :\$1348 STOCK :\$1360 TOTAL :\$2708

Me and this AI are going to have some words!

 Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Saturday, November 22, 2008 3:46 PM

Ah, I just finished one Tycoon of a game.

First, let me set the stage. I get the B&O private and go for a delayed start. So, I buy up 50% of the NYNH. Despite buying 10% of the PRR only to realize that NYC was paying a much better dividend (better ROI), I come back into the Stock Round well positioned. I dump my NYNH holdings (paid good dividends with good share price gain) and everything else. This leaves me with enough cash to float the B&O (I have the presidency already) and C&O (I claim the presidency) both at a lovely PAR (IPO) of \$100/share. My plan is to use these two RRs; the C&O in the West and the B&O in the East to gain control of the main NYC<->Chicago trunk.

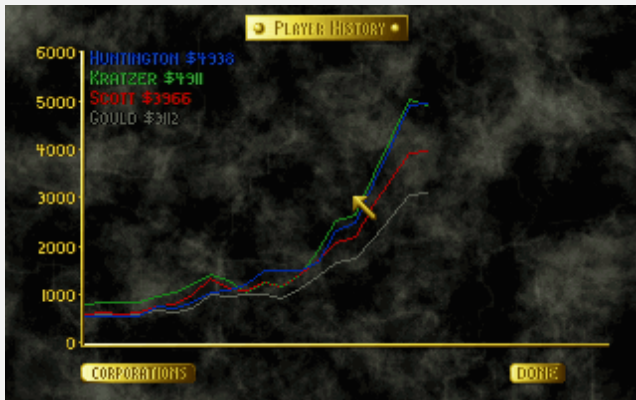
This game illustrates two very important themes:

(1) The value of using two RRs to control the main revenue generating trunk.

(2) A nasty little move which scr\*ws the otherwise winner at the 11th. hour, and extends the game which fully allows me to exploit the work invested in #1.

Film at 11pm.

Key, realization here. The game is on the verge of ending (since the bank is about to break; signaling the final Operating Round); just \$492 left in the very first Rotation. Look at the Net Worth curves. Huntington is little bit ahead of me coming out the Stock Round, but he will over take with better dividends if don't do something immediately to trip him up.



Now, look at the trains (me - top; Huntington - bottom). He plans to buy the second 6-Train and beat me with it.



Now, look at the operation sequence. My C&O is having its turn now. Two more turns later, my B&O will have its turn. The Bank will not break before my next turn, the B&O. (RRs operate in order of the stock price.)

CORP	PRICE	PAR	REV	TREAS
C&O	170	100	240	263
NYC	142	71	360	670
B&M	125	67	260	820
B&O	120	100	400	352
PRR	100	71	190	92
CAN	100	67	190	118
ERIE	90	67	160	170
NYH	58	76	180	105

So, my plan is to have the C&O transfer its funds to the B&O while buying the B&O's 5-Train. This will force the B&O to buy a Diesel which will cost me some cash out of pocket. But this will set a chain of events in motion which will scr\*w Huntington and put money back into the Bank. Trains are always bought from the Bank. When the Diesels arrive, the Bank sees a surge of funds and this usually means about two more Operating Rounds. That gives me, at least, 6 more turns (or 1830 gaming parlance runs) where I will generate some really good dividends.

Well, let's watch this maneuver.







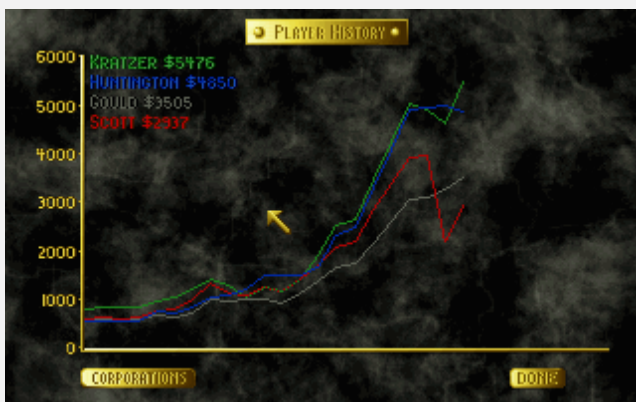
Now, let's admire my extreme domination of the map from end to end. You see that I have fully locked up South NYC with station tokens. I have used tile promotions (brown tiles) to close any access around Philadelphia. I have taken control of a key juncture, Pittsburg, with station tokens. I have used tile promotions again to block access around Cleveland. (I case you wondering how I named these cities so well, I have a reference grid map and cross reference grid|city chart.)



Here, you can see how the trains all shook out and you see a sample of the big revenues I am bringing in.

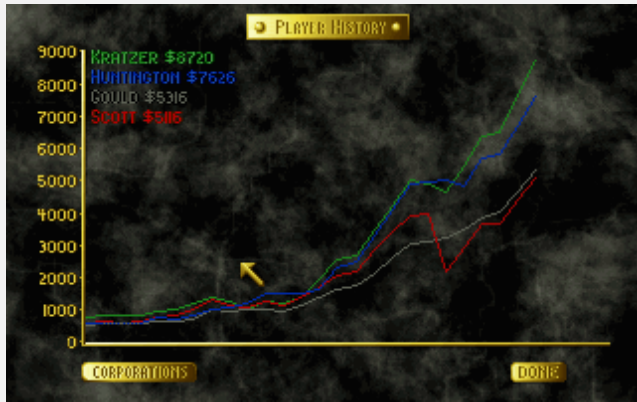


You see the immediate impact on Huntington.



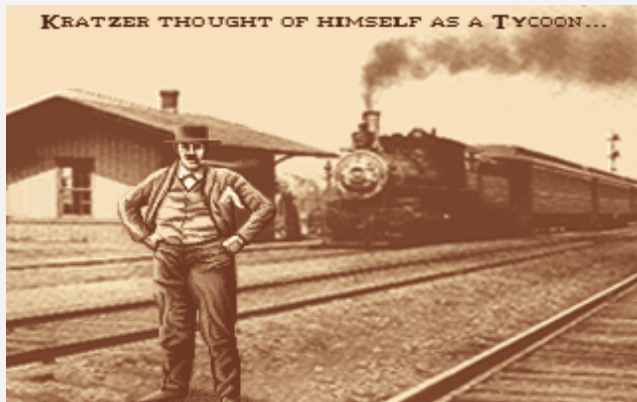
Finally, the final Net Worth graph. I zoom by Huntington by virtue of a dirty trick, a well laid out track network, and extending the game so that I

profit. Better capital gains; better dividends!




<b>WINNER!</b> 	<b>KRATZER</b> CASH :\$5748 STOCK :\$4010 TOTAL :\$9758		<b>HUNTINGTON</b> CASH :\$4821 STOCK :\$3735 TOTAL :\$8556
	<b>GOULD</b> CASH :\$3154 STOCK :\$2825 TOTAL :\$5979		<b>SCOTT</b> CASH :\$3390 STOCK :\$2510 TOTAL :\$5900

As I said, this was a Tycoon level game. From the first trade (delayed start to float two well capitalized RRs) until the last management decisions (continued to extend and expand revenues on the main trunk around Chicago), there was careful planning and, of course, ruthless ambition. :)




Ding, ding, ding, ding ... CLOSING BELL.

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Saturday, November 22, 2008 5:15 PM


Slight correction.

The 1830 term "Run" refers to a turn for a single RR. So, it would have been correct to say that I just bought myself an additional 12 Runs, since I was president of both the C&O and B&O.


 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Saturday, November 22, 2008 5:21 PM

One other thing. Here two sample Runs from the C&O (late game) and B&O (almost fina) that illustrate the actual network in use and how the main trunk was making a difference. Look for the blue/green highlights along the rails. I don't think I have ever posted such a screenshot. This allows you in the game to see how your revenue is being calculated (or someone else's RR).



 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Saturday, November 22, 2008 5:24 PM

You can also see above how expanded the network around Chicago to keep driving up my revenue. Remember everyone else is complete locked out of the main trunk. So, it is only the my RRs, C&O and B&O, which benefit. I hold 60% of both RRs. Thus, I benefit more than any other share holders as well.

 Re:1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, November 23, 2008 7:23 AM

I played another game last night that began in a similar fashion: a delayed start with the B&O and to float two PAR \$100 RRs. However, this time I came in indisputably second place with the B&O and CanPac.


This led me to want to voice some general thoughts on RR network building:

- (1) The most powerful thing you can do is own and correctly manipulate complementary pairs: PRR + B&O, NYC+NYNH, NYNH+B&M, C&O+B&O, C&O+PRR ... (some much better than others) All have the potential for cooperative track laying and token placement. I don't really see CanPAC in there unless maybe paired with Erie doing a Northern trunk. But since the NYC<->Chicago trunk is the really lucrative one, if you do a Northern trunk, NYC<->Chicago will be left wide open.
- (2) Each RR has its own starting location. This is perhaps the most key aspect of how it is going to impact the game.
- (3) #2 can be partially negated by a RR getting an early start. The earlier the start, the more track you can lay and the sooner you can move to claim strategic locations.
- (4) Station tokens vary from 2-4 depending on RR. They are important in the late game where trains get larger and networks are more mature. They can be used to claim strategic routes or to cut an opponent's strategic route or both. Two RRs with four tokens each can have a very powerful impact on the end game.
- (5) To really take advantage of #4, you need RRs that are decently capitalized. This is usually the result of the initial float, having shares in open interest (paying dividends back to the treasury), transferring funds via an engine sale, or unhealthy stock being so manipulated by withholding dividends. However, it rarely ever pays to simply withhold (healthy stock) to be able to place tokens.
- (6) To take advantage of large end game networks, you need either two trains or a Diesel. Two trains are better for less than contiguous networks where as Diesels excel at long winding contiguous networks.
- (7) Regarding #6, long contiguous networks are vulnerable to cutting. Be warned. This will drive revenues with a single Diesel to look more like a 5-Train or 6-Train run.

(8) When making your network, don't forget the power of track laying (tiles). Generally, most hexes allow three tile promotions. You are not only laying track to get somewhere. You are also laying track to prevent someone else from getting somewhere. Good track laying can leave a competitor cornered with no options. Bad track laying let's him ride your rails; maybe even seize them via station tokens. (Of course, I am talking figuratively, since there is no track ownership concept in 1830; only station ownership.)

 Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, November 23, 2008 7:29 AM

BTW, point of interest: I heard Malcolm Gladwell author of the "Outliers: The Story of Success" say in an interview the other day that the greatest period for massive wealth creation in a few thousand years of recorded history took place in the USA during the 1830s. So, I guess this game is very appropriately set. :)

 Re: 1830 - Best Strategy Game - Sunday, November 23, 2008 10:18 AM

**ANNOUNCEMENT: This is it. I am closing this thread.**

I just found the perfect tool to generate my PDFs and turn this into a permanent guide. The end result will be 5 x 1Mb PDFs reflecting "MarkShot's 1830 Showcase & Guide v1". (Non-significant posts will be removed.)

It's Sunday, I am going to finally get this done. I hope to have this up at Westpark Gamers by Christmas. Thank you to all my readers for pushing this over thread over 10,000 page views.

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

Thanks to everyone once again!

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<http://www.printwhatyoulike.com/>

Perfect for editing threads (saw it in PC Mag) and it converts right to PDFs.