

saropoly

To their great disgruntlement, a handful of distinguished record-company moguls have been inexplicably chauffeured for the day far from their soaring smoked-glass towers and knee-bound secretarial staff to the quaint west-country kingdom of Bristol (which up till then none of them had heard of).

There they have been presented with the keys to both the SARAH RECORDS office and the SARAH RECORDS garden-flat (the recent occupants of the latter having apparently just gone to Weymouth for the weekend for a well-deserved rest and a look at the boats). In addition, they have been given free use

of the SARAH MOBILE PHONE, a complimentary copy of Avon County Council's excellent Travel-Guide, and the home telephone numbers of a dozen or so surly and uncooperative pop-groups (which up till then none of them had heard of).

Their task for the day - to make a good old-fashioned SARAH 7" EP - complete with free poster, wraparound sleeve and plastic bag - and to sell it in quantity to young people.

Which up till then none of them had heard of.

And to leave the flat as they found it.

METHOD OF PLAY

1. Each player assumes the persona of the record-company mogul of his/her choice. 4 are provided, but you can adopt your own favourite instead!

2. Each player then has to collect, from their respective locations in the city of Bristol, the 8 items we've decided are the most vital ingredients involved in creating a great new pop sensation. He/she does this using the city's fine public transport network of buses, trains and ferries, not to mention taxis, record-company bicycle, and record-company feet when nothing else much hoves into view. When all 8 items have been collected, the first player to commandeer the SARAH OFFICE and start making important phone-calls wins the game.

START OF GAME

1. All players are placed at HOME. This is a great chance for everyone to get to know each other a little better over a nice non-competitive coffee, to discuss the state of the industry, bemoan the price of a decent pair of shades and so forth before the game starts in earnest. The music-business is full of people pretending to like each other; SARAH remains somewhat apart, refusing to like anybody much, and being generally petty.

2. 4 copies of each "ingredient", represented by the coloured tokens, are placed at these locations:

MASTER TAPES: at the PO BOX, to which they have been posted by the band. Hopefully they had the sense to make safety-copies - we all know what postmen are like! (One of us also knows in quite intimate detail what plumbers are like, but that's a different story. Large SAE for details.)

SLEEVES: at CLIFTONPRINT. Who'll also fold them for you for a small sum, but I'm afraid we don't approve of that; no, we prefer the "personal" touch. People often say to us, 'what are the things that really count?' 'Abacuses!' we cry, hugging each other tightly, laughing and pointing. I forget why.

POSTERS: at ECONOMIC PRINTING (E.P.C.). These being fairly unappealing to look at - a common drawback of too much artistic freedom - we decided quality printing was a waste of money. We're now a tad sadder and wiser but, hell, it makes the game more fun, as indeed it did our lives, for a while.

PLASTIC BAGS: at the OLD OFFICE. These actually come from Ripponden, near Halifax, where the plastic bag industry has replaced more

traditional forms of male-employment such as coal-mining, weaving, and sheep. Like a lot of things, the bags have been sent to the wrong address. Sigh. Doubtless they'll later also turn out to be merely 6½" square, in-line with the 10% variation allowed by the EC, but bugger all use for enclosing 7" pop records. Double-sigh with chopped nuts.

LABEL PHOTOS: at REDLAND STATION. Regular purchasers of SARAH product will not need telling that one of the most appealing features of the 7"s is the interesting picture of a notable Bristol landmark to be found on every label. For this game we've selected an old favourite - a view of Redland station, from under the footbridge, at dusk.

UNSLEEVED STOCK: at the REVOLVER WAREHOUSE. Best to ring for a taxi beforehand if you don't want to stand outside in the rain for half an hour wondering just how waterproof corrugated cardboard really is! And don't forget to move all your furniture out into the street before taking the records home - it's only a small flat and there's not room for everything!

PRESS RELEASES: at HATCHER'S TOBACCONIST SHOP. Charles has two excellent photocopiers at the back of the shop just beyond the sherbet dib-dobs.

T-SHIRTS: at TICK-TACK. How can you possibly promote a great pop record without sending the band off on a 32 date tour with skip-fuls of T-shirts to sell?! (As long as they don't have to go to Norwich again... or Southampton after last time... or take time off work... or be out after dark...)

RULES OF PLAY

1. Throw the dice once to see who has first turn; highest wins, or lowest if playing to Official UK Indie Rules. Play thereafter proceeds clockwise (N.Hemisphere) or anti-clockwise (S.Hemisphere). Equatorial players can maybe just go and lie in the sun for a bit - prove those shades are for real!

2. Move along whichever road you wish by the number of squares indicated by one throw of the dice. At junctions, you're free to turn whichever way you want - except on the City-Centre one-way system, where you must follow the black arrows! The whole value of each throw MUST be used - except at Blue Circles (see rule 8).

3. You must NOT change your direction of movement along a road AT ANY TIME except:

- a) At a dead-end, where obviously you have to.
- b) After a bus-ride (see rule 4).
- c) After leaving a Blue Circle (see rule 8).

4. **CATCHING A BUS.** If you land on a bus-stop - squares marked with the familiar Badgerline badger - you may, if you wish, move IMMEDIATELY to the next stop in the same direction of travel. Choose whichever direction you like at any junctions passed, but remember to observe the one-way system! On your next throw, when resuming your normal mode of progress, you can reverse your direction of travel if you wish. (N.B. the BUS STATION itself is a regular bus-stop - but see Rule 5 too!)

5. If you land on the BUS STATION, marked by the slightly less familiar City Badger, you may move immediately to ANY bus-stop on the board. (This rule is sponsored by Avon County Council.)

6. **CATCHING A TRAIN.** Trains can be caught when your mogul comes to rest on any station square, marked by the sadly familiar BR symbol.

a) To catch a train, you must first announce your intention of so doing (e.g. "I, Alan McGee, hereby declare my intention of catching a train."), and then throw the dice. If an even number is thrown (indicating that a train has arrived) you may move one stop along the line in either direction, i.e. to the next BR symbol. If an odd number is thrown, you must try again next turn.

b) Once a train has been caught, you move on one station at a time each subsequent turn - there is no need to throw the dice.

c) Disembark at whichever station you wish, by throwing the dice once more, and resuming the normal method of movement along the roads, in whichever direction you wish.

d) If, on landing on a station, you do not announce your attention of catching a train, you must continue moving WITHOUT CHANGE OF DIRECTION as in Rule 2. (But, if you throw an even number, you are allowed to still catch a train if you so wish.)

e) When you have decided to disembark, you MUST move in accordance with the number thrown, as at c). But if it's an even number, you may change your mind and board a new train instead.

f) If you wish to change direction while travelling by train, you must first announce your intention of doing so, and then throw the dice again until an even number is thrown. (This doesn't apply at the two termini, where the same train will take you back the other way.)

g) IMPORTANT: the Severn Beach line does not operate on Sundays, Public Holidays, or after 9pm weekdays. St. Andrews Road station is also closed on Saturday afternoons. Further information from your local staffed BR station, or from the Severn Beach Line Passengers' Association in Shirehampton.

7. **CATCHING A FERRY.** Exactly the same rules apply as for catching a train except that it is now necessary to land on one of the squares marked with a blue boat. Movement is from one boat symbol to the next, as directed by the line of tin cans.

8. **BLUE CIRCLES.** Certain places are not actually squares on the board, but appear as BLUE CIRCLES to the side of the road and are entered via a gap in the neighbouring square. It is not necessary to throw any exact number to enter the circles - any number that would take you one square beyond the square-of-entry will do, and the rest of that throw is lost (as you put your feet up for a few minutes, have a spot of tea, check out the score in the Test Match or possibly even get down briefly with some funky babes). Your next throw takes you back out into the hurly burly, and you need not proceed in your previous direction of movement.

IMPORTANT: Although all the pick-up points are Blue Circles, they must only be entered by each player ONCE in the course of the game, i.e. when he/she is actually picking-up one of the 8 items; at all other times they are out-of-bounds (because it annoys the staff, basically). All other Blue Circles may be entered as many times as you wish.

9. **COLLECTING INGREDIENTS.** This is done simply by entering the relevant BLUE CIRCLE as in Rule 8, removing the coloured token that matches your colour mogul, and keeping it safely. In real-life, of course, the items would have to be collected in a sensible order. In SAROPOLY, however, you are allowed to acquire them in whatever order you like. Basically, real-life is a lot more tedious and badly structured than we like to mostly pretend; you honestly wouldn't enjoy it.

10. **BLUE STARS.** Many of the squares contain blue stars, with instructions written alongside.

a) If you come to rest on a star you MUST obey the instructions. If instructed to visit another part of the city you MUST do so before picking up any further items. If in so doing you're allotted further tasks, these must also be completed.

b) Tasks may be completed in any order but ALL must be completed before making further pick-ups.

c) It is not necessary to land exactly on the square(s) to which you have been sent - to pass through is enough. But bus-journeys taking you past the square DO NOT count!

d) Any squares to which you are sent must be treated as regular squares, i.e. you mustn't change direction on arrival, and, if starred, you must obey the instructions if you land exactly on them.

(Since you may find yourself having to call at half a dozen or so places en route to your next pick-up, you might find it helpful to jot their names down and tick them off as you proceed. Some form of jotter would be suitable for this.)

Note that some tasks require you to visit ANY supermarket, ANY Prestoprint, or ANY branch of JCR NEWS. To help you locate these, all **SUPERMARKET locations are marked "FOOD,"** all **PRESTOPRINTS "FAX,"** (for simplicity we're using the word "Prestoprint" generically, to cover all fax/copy bureaux - Prontoprint, Kall-Kwik etc.) and all **JCR NEWS "JCR."** Just like real-life.

11. PARCEL TAPE. The thing that most often threatens to trigger our untimely and explosive demise is parcel-tape. The way it always runs out just when you're in the middle of packing up a vital parcel which Air Express are going to be wanting to put on a plane to Rome or Sydney in, gosh, about 10 minutes' time. The fact that local shops sell only titchy little rolls at ludicrous prices containing hardly enough tape to wrap a box of chocolates for an unloved aunt or silence a decent sized kitten. And thus you pass helplessly into an as-yet ill-understood state characterised chiefly by blind panic and irrational fury, and from this point on the whole day falls rapidly apart about your ears - coffee mugs leap unprovoked from the arms of settees, felt-tip pens slouch off discretely en masse to sulk down the backs of gas-fires, and loved-ones metamorphose into unyielding blobs you trip over on your way to the phone. This general turmoil is symbolised in SAROPOLY by the **PARCEL TAPE SQUARES, indicated by BLUE EXCLAMATION MARKS.** On landing on one of these, you must add a visit to any branch of JCR NEWS to your list of tasks, since they generally have rolls on sale at something like affordable prices. It's pretty cheap and nasty and tends to tear quite easily, but the good-quality Sellotape stuff would bankrupt us within a fortnight. Henleaze post-office often tends to have some cheap stuff too, but it's off the top of the board. I'm not boring you, am I?

12. GETTING RUN OVER. The other thing that most often threatens to trigger our untimely and explosive demise is getting run-over.

a) If one player lands directly on top of another, he/she can run the latter over. The run-over player is sent **IMMEDIATELY** to the Bristol Royal Infirmary, and misses his/her next 2 throws.

b) The first player can also "swerve" if he/she wishes; both players then remain in place on the square in question, and no throws are missed.

c) A player landing on a square already occupied by more than one other player may hit as many as he/she wishes, and swerve to avoid the rest. The music-industry is unashamedly nasty and brutish, I'm afraid; SAROPOLY merely reflects what we see going on around us every day. Look at Rough Trade. No, I can't see them either...

d) The above **DOES NOT** apply to travel by train or boat. Also, a player cannot catch/get-off a bus and run someone over at the same time; he/she can do one or the other, but not both, unless he/she is a full-time employee of Badgerline Ltd.

d) Players landing directly on top of one another in any more general context to that detailed above should refer to local bye-laws and/or Rules of the House, especially if others in the room are trying to watch television.

13. END OF GAME. Once a player has collected all 8 tokens, he/she must go to the SARAH office. Any further instructions received en route **MUST** still be obeyed - it might be all over bar the shouting but, frankly, the shouting's usually the best bit. **First one to the office wins!** The rest must resort to bribery, trickery, thuggery - and, of course, the usual assortment of plain-paper packages and/or sexual favours offered discretely under the table in north London pubs. And will probably win in the long run - but, hey folks, that's showbiz!

VARIATIONS

"TAKEOVER BID": Players play as "teams", aiming to collect the 8 items between them; one common play is for one of the team to collect, while the other adopts the role of "hard-man", attempting to hospitalise the opposing team at every opportunity. To make the game more lifelike, players need not inform the other side of their little arrangement.

MONOPOLY: As above, but with ALL players working as a team. Rather boring, but increasingly lifelike.

STRIP SAROPOLY (Over 18's only): If one player throws exactly the same number as the previous player, the first person to call out "STRIP!" picks up all the cards currently on the table and puts them to the bottom of his or her own pile.

SCRABBLE: Players score points by arranging letter-tiles on the board in a basic crossword pattern.

SCRIBBLE: Similar to Scrabble but you're allowed to spell the words wrong, ho! (details in SARAH 14).