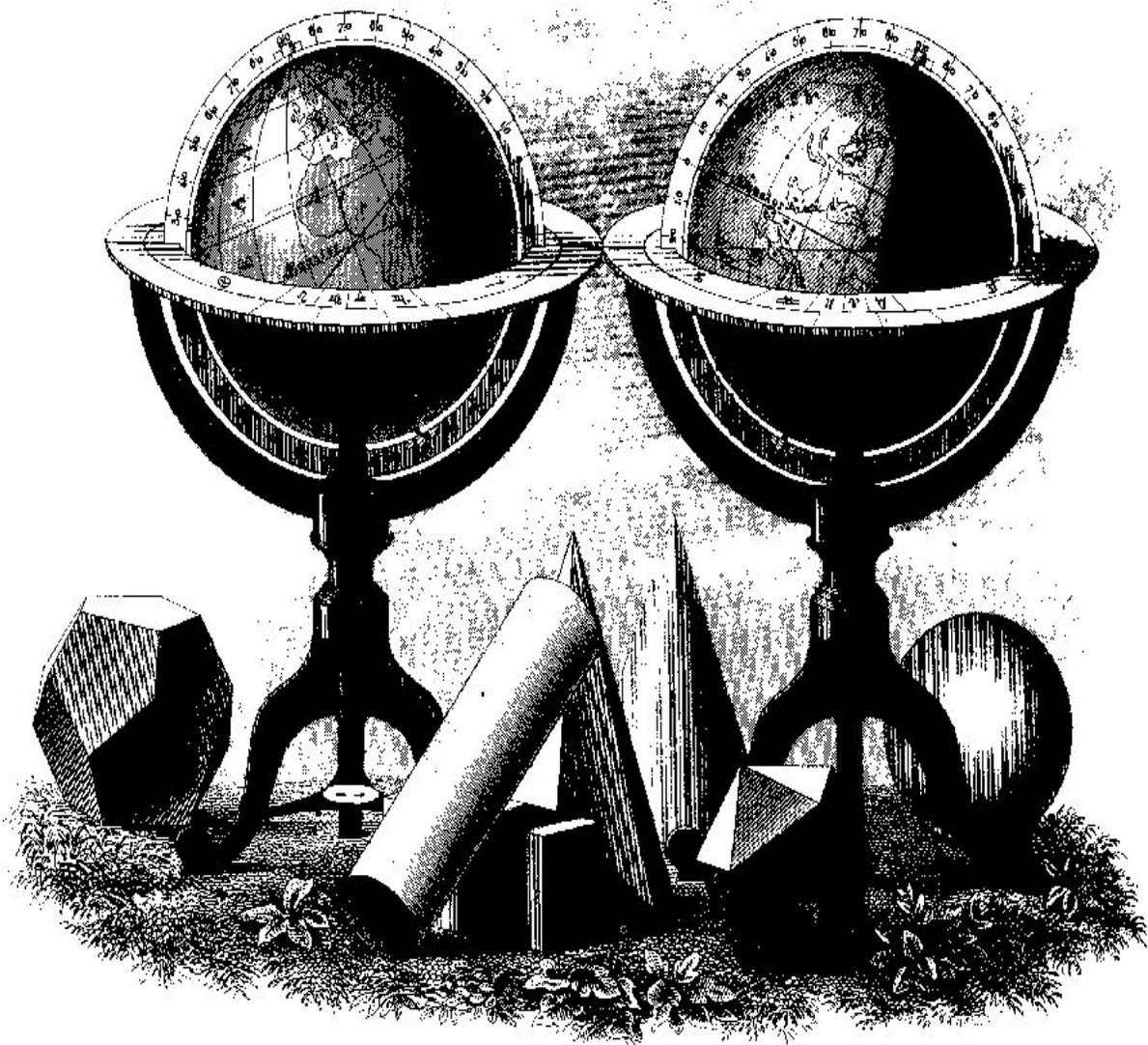


Diplomacy World

Issue 104 - Winter 2008

www.diplomacyworld.net



Worldwide Diplomacy Variants

Notes from the Editor

Welcome to the Winter 2008 issue, as another year has come and gone. At times it has been a minor struggle to keep Diplomacy World on track and filled with quality articles, but I think the contributors this past year (who can all be found below the Diplomacy World Staff section) deserve a round of applause and a pat on the back. While Jim Burgess, myself, and the rest of the staff do quite a bit of work ourselves, we all know that Diplomacy World would be nothing if it wasn't for the support we receive from the Diplomacy community. We'll do our best to continue full-strength into 2009 and beyond.

One of the sadder aspects of being a part of the community is losing friends. None of us are getting any younger (despite how hard we might try), and each year a few notable names are added to the list of departed comrades. The latest name we've heard about is that of Tom Tweedy. As announced on the dip2000.com website, Tom died on December 25th at home with his family present. His death is a sad loss for the hobby in general and for the Dip2000 community in particular.

Anyone who wishes to send a message to his family should email the message to memorial "of" dip2000.com, these will be printed and given to Tom's family. Please pass on this news to anyone in the hobby who may have known him. Over the years Tom has been a big part of the hobby and has crossed paths with many people. (See Page 15 for a brief article on Tom by Stephen Agar).

The Dip2000 site will continue to function as normal, after his illness some years ago Tom took steps to ensure that the site could function without him and in the past months since his illness last year the site was modified again to ensure it would continue after his death. It will carry on as was his wish as his lasting memorial.

I felt it was only appropriate to mention Tom's passing here, in respect to all the friends he made and all the work he did on the dip2000.com site (and within the hobby in general). I also wanted to draw attention to Tom's foresight in coordinating to have Dip2000 continue without him. When we take on a hobby project of importance, I think part of our responsibility is to organize how the project can be passed on to the next steward when we can no longer handle it (whether it is because of illness or any other reason). The last thing you want to do is burden your family with questions from hobby members about such things. Certainly they'd be happy to receive messages of support and condolence, but there is no reason to make it more difficult than it has to be. So plan ahead. Things happen, and change comes upon us in sudden and unexpected ways. I certainly wish that my original term as Lead Editor of

Diplomacy World in the late 1990's had ended smoothly, but I have learned from those experiences.

Okay, I'll step down from the soapbox, and move on to more pleasant matters. I want to take a minute to thank the staff of Diplomacy World for all their support during 2008. Whether it's a stream of ideas from Jack McHugh, some directional assistance from Jim Burgess, or simply the enthusiasm and dependability of Jim O'Kelley (plus the rest of the staff), knowing that I am not doing this on my own is a big help. Jim Burgess could tell you how often I have to email him for advice or to whine about one thing or another. Fortunately, he talks me down from the ledge and somehow we pull together for another issue every three months.

And I want to give a special thanks to Edi Birsan, specifically for all his hard work on saving some of the archive material Tim Haffey had. Only through Edi's efforts, and a number of wallets (including, unfortunately, his own) have we been able to preserve so many classic postal Diplomacy zines. Once I finish scanning and posting them to <http://www.whiningkentpigs.com/DW/> (a job not even close to half done) we will be able to breathe a sigh of relief, knowing that a record of what we love about this hobby will never be lost. It has been a labor of love for those of us involved. But if you are a Diplomacy fan, you owe it to yourself to spend some time looking through all the zines there. So much material on every imaginable subject...and personalities that will certainly enrich your life and hobby experience.

Incidentally, if you would like me to email you an electronic version of any map that appears in this issue, just drop me a line at diplomacyworld "of" yahoo.com and I'd be happy to do so. Especially when it comes to larger variants, it can be hard to make out all the little details on one page.

Looking forward, you can see that the theme for Diplomacy World #105 is "The Endgame." This refers to anything related to the endgame of Diplomacy or a Diplomacy variant: stalemates, how to know when to make that final stab, figuring out how to get those final dots, solo wins versus draws, or anything else that comes to mind. **And remember, we want articles on all topics, not just the theme.** Using this issue as an example, the theme only takes up a portion of the issue as a whole. So don't let the theme topic deter you from submitting something else entirely.

I'll close by reminding you the next deadline for Diplomacy World submissions is April 1st, 2009.

Remember, besides articles (which are always prized and appreciated), we LOVE to get letters, feedback, input, ideas, and suggestions too. So email me! See you in the Spring, and happy stabbing!

Diplomacy World Staff:

Managing Lead Editor: Douglas Kent, Email: diplomacyworld of yahoo.com
Co-Editor : Jim Burgess, Email: burgess of world.std.com
Strategy & Tactics Editor: Mark Zoffel, Email: zoffel of earthlink.net
Variant Editor: Jack McHugh, Email: jwmchughjr of gmail.com
Interview Editor: Jim Burgess, Email: burgess of world.std.com
Club and Tournament Editor: Jim O'Kelley, jimthegrey1013 of yahoo.com
Demo Game Editor: Rick Desper, Email: rick_desper of yahoo.com
Original Artwork Nemanja Simic, Email: nemanja.painter of gmail.com

Contributors in 2008: Stephen Agar, Chris Babcock, Nathan Barnes, Edi Birsan, Douglas Brown, Jim Burgess, Doug Burgoyne, Bill Coffin, David E. Cohen, Joshua Danker-Drake, Rick Desper, Gregory Duenow, Mat Dunnam, Chris Dziedzic, Andrew Goff, Siobhan Granvold, Tim Haffey, Toby Harris, Benjamin Hester, Nick Higgins, T. Chasworth Higgins, David Hood, Jason Koelewyn Jr., Jérémie Lefrançois, Robert Lesco, Lilith, "Game Master," David McCrumb, Jack McHugh, Steven McKinnon, Jamie McQuinn, Philip Murphy, Alfred Nicol, Frank Oosterom, Jim O'Kelley, Luca Pazzaglia, Michael Penner, Hugh Polley, Lewis Pulsipher, Chris Sham, Grant Steel, Mark Stretch, Matt Sundstrom, Tom Swider, Gerald Todd, Lars Topholm, Tubbs, Robert Vollman, Rod Walker, Richard Walkerdine, David Webster, Jonathan Woll, Conrad Woodring, Andy York, Mark Zoffel. **Add your name to the 2009 list by submitting something for the next issue!**

Contributions are welcomed and will earn you accolades and infinite thanks. Persons interested in the vacant staff positions may contact the managing editor for details or to submit their candidacy or both. The same goes for anyone interested in becoming a columnist or senior writer. Diplomacy is a game invented by Allan Calhamer. It is currently manufactured by Hasbro and the name is their trademark with all rights reserved.

Themes for Upcoming Diplomacy World Issues:



Diplomacy World #105: The Endgame
Deadline for #105 Submissions – April 1, 2009



Diplomacy World #106: Historical Diplomacy
Variants (pre-1900)
Deadline for #106 Submissions – July 1, 2009



Diplomacy World #107: Balance of Power
Deadline for #107 Submissions – October 1, 2009

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The Alpine Hedgehog

by Joshua Danker-Dake

Austria

Austria is typically the least popular country to play, and rightly so. A typical response to pulling Austria is either “Now what do I do?” or “Well, maybe next time.” To have any legitimate chance of success, Austria has to engage in some aggressive diplomacy and catch a few breaks in 1901 and 1902, and even so, he usually ends up the first one dead. How Austria decides to open greatly affects who’s going to be tramping through the edelweiss in 1903 – Italy, Turkey, Russia, or some combination of the three – but odds are it won’t be Austria.

Unlike every other country, Austria does not have one (or more than one) reliably viable opening: that is, an opening that is effective in most or all circumstances more or less regardless of negotiations (the Southern Hedgehog is probably closest). By necessity, then, the Austrian relies more heavily than any other nation on negotiations as he determines his opening orders.

Opening

An aggressive southbound opening, one in which Austria hopes to pick SER and make a play for GRE in 1901, is exciting, but often problematic, and not successful often enough to sing and dance about. Countless times, Austria bursts forth in all hopefulness in Spring 1901, only to send one or two units immediately home to cover a Russian or Italian attack in the Fall.

It has been thoroughly demonstrated just how completely devastating to Austria Italy’s Bohemian Crusher opening (A VEN-TYR, A ROM-VEN, F NAP-ION in Spring 1901, TYR-BOH, VEN-TYR, ION-TUN in Fall 1901, build A VEN) can be (now *that’s* a reliably viable opening for you). Austria’s Alpine Hedgehog opening (also called the Great Northern Hedgehog) blocks the Bohemian Crusher completely. By moving A VIE-TYR, F TRI-VEN, A BUD-GAL in Spring 1901, Austria purposely bounces two, perhaps three units. Here, Austria stays home on defense in the Spring, guarantees that the wolves will be kept at bay until 1902, and makes do with SER in the short-term. If it does nothing else, the Alpine Hedgehog absolutely guarantees that Austria will not lose any home centers in 1901 (for many Austrias, that’s a victory in and of itself.).

The more popular Southern Hedgehog opening (F TRI-VEN, A BUD-SER, A VIE-GAL) gets Austria into SER immediately, but lets Italy into TYR, from whence he can cause all kinds of trouble while remaining able to effect a delayed but full-fledged Bohemian Crusher, especially if he can build A VEN after 1901.

Like Richard Sharp pointed out, Austria’s number one priority is defense. Growth beyond four or five supply

centers must be a secondary concern. If he survives long enough to add just two supply centers, Austria can become quite feisty, and is often in good position to last a long time. Conversely, if Austria breaks out south and picks up SER and GRE only to lose home centers to Italy and Russia, there is little chance of recovery.

Diplomacy

Like most Austrian openings, whether or not the Alpine Hedgehog is appropriate to a specific game depends entirely on the diplomacy that has taken place before Spring 1901. Russia, Italy, and Turkey – which, if any, seem friendly? Which are quite clearly gunning for Austria immediately? A smart Italy is coming for Austria with the Bohemian Crusher. Competent Russias and Turkeys always want to kill Austria, obviously, but their first priority is one another.

The Alpine Hedgehog is fundamentally anti-Italy and pro-Turkey. Austria and Russia bounce so often in GAL that the Alpine Hedgehog, like any Austrian opening that moves to GAL (but not to RUM), is not inherently either pro- or anti-Russia.

The greatest strength of the Alpine Hedgehog is that it stops the Bohemian Crusher in its tracks. If for some reason Italy does not move VEN-TYR, Austria slips into TYR and can make a supported attack on VEN in the fall if so desired. In any case, the northward progress of any and all Italian armies can be checked in perpetuity as long as Austria is willing and able to commit the resources.

The Alpine Hedgehog’s greatest vulnerability is any Russian move other than WAR-GAL. In this case, the Austrian army ends up high and dry in GAL, leaving Austria utterly unable to pick up SER in the fall (Austria has little chance at getting into WAR in any event, and is ill-advised to try it). So Austria gets no builds (barring foolishness on Italy’s part). In such a case, it would not be surprising for Turkey to stroll into SER, at which point the Turk may decide to help himself to the rest of the Balkans.

A friendly Turkey is essential to Austrian well-being if the Alpine Hedgehog is to be profitable. Turkey will almost certainly be in position to bounce Austria out of SER in Fall 1901, and if this happens, Austria is back to square one while everyone else is getting a leg up. But Turkey has many other options, most notably involving GRE and RUM and keeping Italy and Russia, respectively, out, and so persuading the Turk to concede SER will not often be a great challenge. And, in the event of friendly and successful Austrian-Turkish relations, an alliance against Russia may be beneficial to both parties, at least

in the short-term. In any case, peace with Turkey allows Austria some flexibility to go after either Russia or Italy, although it typically means conceding GRE to Turkey (which is something that can and should be discussed from the beginning of the game).

Whether the Alpine Hedgehog is a good opening for your gunboat game is a total crapshoot, as it depends so much on diplomacy. The last time I tried it, Russia inexplicably ordered WAR H, Turkey got into SER, and things went downhill from there. Why *wouldn't* Russia go to GAL in a gunboat game? Just one of life's great mysteries (Italy eventually ended up with most of Austria and the Balkans there), but playing smart's not for everybody.

The Verdict

There you have the long and short of it. So, is the Alpine Hedgehog a good opening? Well...let's not get too excited. The Alpine Hedgehog is problematic, yes, but it can be an extremely useful opening in the right situation, as long as Austria is confident of a friendly Turkey and the Russian move WAR-GAL. And it's great for dealing with feisty Italians. In those cases, yes, it's a good opening.

[[Just remember, if we're in a game together and I am Austria and you are Italy, I am not going to attempt this strategy. You can trust me.]]

Ask the GM

An Advice Column for Diplomacy World

Dear GM,

Some players would suggest "Do not get personal when playing a Diplomacy game." Some others argue, "That's all bullshit. You get personal when you play a Diplomacy game or you just need to see a doctor. Diplomacy is a game where you can judge a person by his words and actions." Which do you think is more bullshit?

PS. Does GM stand for Geeky Mouth? ☺

Signed, Half the Earth Away

Dear Half Earth,

Clearly the core of the game of Diplomacy, and the Dip hobby in particular, is built upon Diplomacy's greatest resource: bullshit. Having said that, it is a matter of personal preference how personal you take your Dip game. I will say this: if you get upset over being screwed, Diplomacy, like changing light bulbs, is not the activity for you.

I also think you're probably a good Diplomacy player since you seem to be full of bullshit yourself.

Your Pal, The GM

P.S. First, P.S. comes after your signature, not before, you putz.

P.S.S. GM stands for Game Master although in this case it could also be Great Man

Dear GM,

In a game that I am currently playing in, one of the players has accused me of playing poorly and has quit the game.

He also has questioned my parentage and denounced me as a cross-gamer and a lover of *Magic: the Gathering* as well as having voted for George Bush in the last election. What should I do?

Signed, Hates Quitters

Dear Hates,

First of all anyone who quits a game because of the poor play of another player should go back to playing duplicate bridge where such behavior is acceptable and stop contaminating our nice Diplomacy hobby.

As for your parentage—who cares? This is Diplomacy not Find the Bastard—no one cares if you're legit or not. If it you must, have your parents call him from their trailer park late at night and explain how you were conceived—better yet, mail him the video they made of your conception

The aspersions (aspersions means insinuations Doug) about Magic and George Bush just show how desperate this guy is and he should go back to playing Candyland with his (illegitimate) children.

Your Pal, The GM

Got a question for Game Master? Send it to gamemaster "of" diplomacyworld.net and maybe it will appear in a future issue of Diplomacy World!

What Does a 75-Year-Old Incontinent Have That You Need?

By Greg Duenow

The answer? A diaper!

All too often in a game of Diplomacy, whether held in the bathroom of your local Burger King on the floor with a ketchup packet and a used condom; or played to 1924 in the mind of a Geisha in 24 seconds flat, I am constantly astonished at the number of bathroom breaks Diplomats take during this noble game.

Why risk leaving the room for 2 - 12 minutes, while your colleagues could be conspiring behind your back. I mean, without some high tech snooping apparatus, (bukake machine maybe?), your backside could be susceptible to stabbings of such devious nature as to cause loose bowels for months!

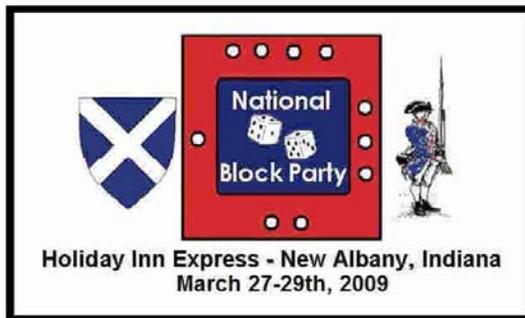
Let's look at a recent Harvard study to prove my point, ***Burger King Bathroom Diplomacy - a Second Look***, by Dr. Paul Pignotti. Dr. Pignotti states that 7 of 14 homeless men who entered a bathroom, would not talk to him. *Even though he had placed the ketchup packet the standard 14 inches from the sink!!!* He goes on

further to state that he had made \$7 in loose change after 4 hours.

We can go on and on with statistics, but we all agree that there are certain advantages to never letting our nemesis out of our sight. One must be prudent. One must be steadfast. One must wear an adult diaper.

Now I know some of you were not raised in a trailer park like me. Your threshold for filth is weak and shambly. But believe me, once you realize the potential advantage of never having to leave the epicenter of action, you will find the weight and sogginess of a good B.M. a curious reminder of your dedication to the top of the Grand Prix pile-on. You will cock your chin up, thrust your shoulders back, and hold your legs awkwardly together, as your troops march through Galicia, up to Bohemia, and finally into Yorkshire!

Gregory Wadsworth Duenow III is the Tournament Director for Bukkakon, and an avid Twixt enthusiast.



Diplomacy at the National Block Party
The Diplomacy Tournament is a part of the Central Shuffle. Diplomacy begins on Friday evening and is a timed event.

Diplomacy is a three round event. Players will keep their two best scores. There is a plaque for the winner and Best Country awards as well.

The Block Party features eleven tournaments and unlimited open gaming. Check out the website for more info:

<http://www.ohiovalleygamers.org/nationalblockparty.html>



Anjou Feu – Vth edition

Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd February 2009

SPONSORSHIPS :



<http://gardien-legende.forumactif.com/index.htm>
<http://www.laguilde.fr/>

LOCATION : usual premises of [Gardiens de la Légende](#) located at Ferme de la Chesnaie, Allée des Châtaigniers in Avrillé. (town right in the northwest from Angers).

Take bus lines at Place du Ralliement or Boulevard du Maréchal-Foch (5 minutes on foot from Angers' railway station Saint-Laud) :

- Saturday, line 3 (bus stop Champ des Martyrs, past Châtaigniers, tournament takes place at less than 5 minutes on foot from bus stop) ;
- Saturday evening, line 14 (bus stop Espace jeunesse, bus crosses bus stop Champ des Martyrs just before but doesn't stop there.) ;
- Sunday, line 23 (bus stop Champ des Martyrs).



Ferme de la Chesnaie stands opposite Allée Odile Beaugard, it's a big building with a car park in front of it. Bus stop Champ des Martyrs is Avenue Grandmont.

By car from Avrillé : take Avenue Pierre Mendès-France (N162) to Angers ; after 1800m, turn right in Chemin du Champ des Martyrs for 900m, then continue forward slightly left on Avenue Grandmont and turn right at end of that street.

By car from Château d'Angers : cross the bridge and drive to Avrillé, take trucks' by-pass to Avrillé as soon as signaled, drive forward on avenue Jean Lurçat (D122) for 2km, turn left to Avenue Grandmont then turn right at end of that street.

PROGRAMME :

A training to the game for whoever desire will take place half an hour before each round .

Attending training does not oblige to play in the tournament. Moreover, registrations are also allowed before second or third round, and registration to a game does not oblige to play the two others.

Other games will be organized at the same time than Diplomacy games, for both the two days of the tournament. **Saturday:**

- 13:30, reception and registration (for unpreregistered) until gamers' call at 14:25;
- 14:30, **1st round**, 1907 games;
- 18:30, free time and cold table;
- 20:00, **2nd round**, 1908 games;
- 0:30, free time, end of the first day before 3:00.

Sunday:

- 9:20, reception;
- 9:40, **3rd round**, 1909 games;
- lunch (day-before's left over and sandwiches) at the end of the game or during it;
- 15:10, results and prize-giving;

– Hall remains at disposal for whoever desires for the afternoon, and there is some way of visiting Angers
Anjou Feu Fifth Edition will not therefore take place in Angers, but in Avrillé. Anjou Feu will be hosted for the second time in the premises of Les Gardiens de la Légende, simulation games club of Avrillé I thank again.

If level of a tournament were assessed according to the names registered at its score, Anjou Feu would be without a doubt a renowned one, as show the following lines:

- **2005:** Lei Saarlainen, twenty-five years of victories;
- **2006:** Emmanuel du Pontavice, Grand Prix European winner in 2008 ;
- **2007:** Fabien Grellier, Europe champion 2007 some months after Anjou Feu;
- **2008:** Alexandre Pignon, eight tournaments four podiums between November 2007 and November 2008.

Francilians won both the two first editions and the fourth one, Breton Fabien Grellier won the third one, let's bet that "local" players, always come to places of honor, will wish to invert trends. They would deserve it: Angers is the town that saw the birth of Vopalic SF, fanzine dedicated to the game Diplomacy, which survived its counterparts for several years.

Interested in by the tournament? You only need to be there to be able to play it. Beginner? Trainings are planned before each game and no, you are not likely to be swept away or to throw off balance of games more than any other one. Beginner means unknown, unknown means unpredictable and surprise is a skill in this game where reputations play their role. Moreover, game's principles often encourage a vulture to brood a young bird. Once bigger, the young bird may become a vulture too, or an eagle. Anyway, contending with tough opponents is the better way to learn the game and to have fun.

« Which rewards ? »

Prizes and lots will be given at the end of the tournament:

- a bottle and a society game to the winner;
- certificates to the three first ones;
- certificates to the seven better major powers (one for each), relating to scores (before weighting factors) ;
- certificates in five categories of vote ;
- two special certificates ;
- Several dizains of Euros in coupons given by our sponsor [La Guilde des Joueurs](#) ;

« Do we vote moreover ? »

After the end of each game, and relating to it, you can vote in several categories :

- wine contest : Phylloxera Prize, to the Traitor ;
- poetry contest : Angevine mildness Prize, to the fairest player ;
- dressage contest : Prize of Saumur with its Cadre Noir, to the player the most rigorous in his tactics, strategy and negotiations.
- sport contest: Prize of Cholet with its basket-team to the player who performed the best revival.
- architecture contest: Prize of Angers and its castle, to the player who impresses the most by its positions of strength (both tactical or diplomatic).

Special prizes follow :

- Special prize Général Catroux: to the player having covered the largest distance to play in the tournament (decision by Mappy) ;
- Special horticultural prize: for the shoot (untranslatable joke with new talent), the best scored born in or after 1986.

Pace of a game :

More or less 17 minutes a session, including retreats and adjusts. Games stop after retreats of fall (planned end or earlier in case of an early solo of a player or unanimous surviving players' agreement –secret, vote under supervision of a referee- for

stopping the game before). Mentioned times are all inclusive. That is to say, that orders redaction, reading and resolutions, more retreats and possible retreats and adjusts are taken from time of negotiations. In order to give rhythm to this time management system, a chronometer will assess the unstoppable course of time and responsible players will announce time left before expirations without hesitation.

GAMES SCORING : Anjou Feu scoring scheme (100 points to a player performing a solo, from 50 to 75 to a lonely winner, from 25 to 50 to a shared victory, from 12,5 to 25 to an uneliminated player unsuffering a solo and 0 to an eliminated player or a player having suffered a solo), details indicated during the day of the tournament.

RANKING (overall ranking and votes) : 1st round games are weighted 7/9, these of 2nd round 8/9, these of 3rd round 1. Ranking system scores the 2 best results (after weighting factors) at 100% and the 3rd at 50%. Moreover, a bonus of 20% is implemented in case of two unplayed rounds or 10% in case of one round unplayed.

No settlement between different rankings in case of ex aequo, but in this case, the younger player will get rewards and prizes relative to his rating (For tournaments as for votes).

REGISTRATION : pre-registration possible on [le site 18centres](http://www.18centres.com/php/calendrier/liste_inscriptions.php?evenement=31) or by contacting organisator. Registration is also possible before each game.

In order to know pre-registered players, look at:

http://www.18centres.com/php/calendrier/liste_inscriptions.php?evenement=31.

CONTRIBUTION: as you wish (It will be spent in organization costs, The funds left will be shared between the club "Gardiens de la Légende" and funding for future tournaments of Diplomacy).

ACCOMODATIONS: if you want to sleep: ask for an accommodation which will be provided by a local player. If you live yourself in Angers or in its neighborhood, any proposal of accommodation will be welcomed.

TRANSPORTS: TGV-lines from numerous locations: Lille, Paris, Strasbourg, Lyon, Valence, Marseille, Nantes, Le Mans among others... (1h30 only from Paris). Airport in Nantes. Possible car sharing from Rennes, Nantes or Paris areas in particular (cf. la [liste de discussion de Diplomatie-Ouest](#) for asking car sharings).

CONTACT : [Gabriel Lecointre](mailto:Gabriel.Lecointre@18centres.com) or by phone on (33) 06 89 14 64 06.

IVth Coppa Garibaldi XXIIIrd Festival International des Jeux (Cannes) Friday 13rd (friendly games and training), Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th February 2009 (tournament)

Coppa Garibaldi Diplomacy meeting is organized in partnership with [GRAAL \(GRoupement Azuréen des Associations Ludiques\)](#) which will give a lot to each attendant.

LIEU : XXIIIrd [Festival International des Jeux](#) at Palais des Festivals et des Congrès of Cannes.

This tournament is the first step of two diplomacy circuits : Diplomacy France Tour and Mediterranean championship, winner of this tournament will then be the first « Maillot jaune » for both these contests.

PROGRAMME :

Fourth Coppa Garibaldi is part of the largest games festival in France (second in the world) and takes place in the famous Palais des Festivals et des Congrès de Cannes where you will be able to climb up the steps. Between two diplomacy games, you will be able to play thousands games proposed, in family or with friends among the several dizains of thousands gamers.

The Festival International des Jeux opens from Wednesday 11th to Sunday 15th for its 23rd edition.

Diplomacy stand, for its part, opens on Friday from 14h to 19h and Saturday from 9h until the tournament begins, in order to propose friendly games and training. Training to the game for whoever desire will take place half an hour before each round . Attending training does not oblige to play in the tournament. Moreover, registrations are also allowed before second or third round, and registration to a game does not oblige to play the two others. No friendly games are proposed during the tournament time.

The tournament : gamers' call five minutes before the beginning of each game. All games last seven years.

Saturday :

- 14:30-18:30, **1st round;**
- 20:00-midnight, **2nd round.**

Sunday:

- 9:30-13:30, **3rd round;**
- results and prize-giving as soon as tournament ends.

come and taste the mildness of Côte-d'Azur in this season of year and put an end to « maggist » supremacy, look it by yourselves :

- 2006 : Gwen Maggi ;
- 2007 : Gwen Maggi ;
- 2008 : Gwen Maggi.

But don't let yourselves be trapped by Emmanuel du Pontavice or Italians used to places of honor since 2006.

Interested in by the tournament? You only need to be there to be able to play it. Beginner? Trainings are planned before each game and no, you are not likely to be swept away or to throw off balance of games more than any other one. Beginner means unknown, unknown means unpredictable and surprise is a skill in this game where reputations play their role. Moreover, game's principles often encourage a vulture to brood a young bird. Once bigger, the young bird may become a vulture too, or an eagle. Anyway, contending with tough opponents is the better way to learn the game and to have fun.

« Which rewards ? »

Prizes and lots will be given:

- Garibaldi Cup to the winner;
- certificates to the three first ones;
- certificates to the members of the winning team
- certificates to the seven better major powers (one for each), relating to scores (before weighting factors) ;
- certificates in three categories of vote and to the "bright young thing" prize laureate ;
- football shirt marked Garibaldi for "Garibaldi prize" laureate ;
- figures given to all attendants by our sponsor GRAAL (GRoupement Azuréen des Associations Ludiques) ;

« Do we vote moreover ? »

After the end of each game, and relating to it, you can vote in several categories :

- « Backstab » prize: to the Traitor ;
- « I buy you a drink » prize : to the fairest player;
- « Silver screen » prize : to the most impressive player

Special prizes follow :

- « bright young thing » prize: to the best scored born in or after 1986.

- « Garibaldi » prize: Fabrice Essner own criteria;-)

« Is there a play by team too? »

If there is a guarantee that there will be three tables during the second round before the first round, then the second one will be taken into account for team ranking, else the first one would reward ,if there are three games or more, the best team of three players playing on three different games.

But if there are not at least three games on this first round, the round by team would be the second one with teams of two or three according the number of tables in this round.

If there is only one table, then the team prize would be cancelled.

Pace of a game :

More or less 17 minutes a season, including retreats and adjusts.

Games stop after retreats of fall (planned end or earlier in case of an early solo of a player or unanimous surviving players' agreement –secret, vote under supervision of a referee- for stopping the game before).

Mentioned times are all inclusive. That is to say, that orders redaction, reading and resolutions, more retreats and possible retreats and adjusts are taken from time of negotiations. In order to give rhythm to this time management system, a chronometer will assess the unstoppable course of time and responsible players will announce time left before expirations without hesitation.

GAMES POINTING : Nice.1.

INDIVIDUAL RANKING: Ranking system scores the 2 best results (after weighting factors) at 100% and the 3rd at 50%. Moreover, a bonus of 20% is implemented in case of two unplayed rounds or 10% in case of one round unplayed.

No settlement between different rankings in case of ex aequo, but in this case, the younger player will get rewards and prizes relative to his rating (For tournament as for votes).

TEAM RANKING : All results of the by team round are scored at 100 %. No settlement in case of ex aequo, but in that case, team with younger players will get rewards and prizes relative to its ranking.

REGISTRATION : pre-registration possible on [le site 18centres](http://www.18centres.com) or by contacting organisator. Registration is also possible before each game.

In order to know pre-registered players, look at:

http://www.18centres.com/php/calendrier/liste_inscriptions.php?evenement=32.

FORUM : [Groupe Yahoo! diplomatie_cotedazur](http://www.groupe.yahoo.com/diplomatie_cotedazur).

CONTRIBUTION : 2€/game in tournament (or 5€/whole tournament), friendly games are free.

CONTACT : Gabriel Lecointre [by e-mail](mailto:gabriel.lecointre@18centres.com) or phone to (+33) 06 89 14 64 06.

Burger King Bathroom Variant by Tubbs



I used to be a Diplomacy junkie. Knew all the Lepantos. Knew all the stalemates. I could talk a n00b into eviscerating himself with glee on my nemesis' blade. Those glory days were good. But these glory days are even better.

Find a used ketchup packet on the floor of your local Burger King. Get a pickle chip from somebody's hamburger when they aren't looking. Now find someone to go into the bathroom with you. This usually takes the most out of me. Using all the right phrases like, "It'll change your life", "Can't figure it out, mumble mumble",

and "fornicating platipi". But eventually someone will go in.

Now the game setup. Drop the used ketchup packet exactly 4 inches from the urinal. If there is more than one urinal, pick the smellier. Then take the pickle chip and fling it at the person's forehead. If it sticks and they don't notice, dance like a retarded bear. If they get mad, take a running start and head butt them in the chest, wrestle them to the ground, and dunk their head in the toilet. Stand up, pointing at the ketchup packet, and scream, "Platipi my ass! You've always been canned soup and burning sensation"! If they get confused and/or try to walk out, slowly mock them. Make the same movements they do, 4 feet behind them. If they use one of them pocket phones, make noises like, "beep, boop, beep bip, boop". If they say "the cops are coming", say, "da crops der brummink". Try to stay behind them. If they start going in the circles, try to make the puke come out. If the cops do show up say, "whew, I thought you'd never show up", and claim that you called them, and the other person is crazy.

If you go to jail, you lose. If the other person goes to jail, you win. If neither happens, start over. Probably in another Burger King

Spotting a Stab

By Alfred Nicol

A key feature of email Diplomacy is spotting a potential stab. One can't read a player's face, hear their tone of voice or spot them disappearing into the kitchen with Germany. Furthermore, in email Diplomacy the impersonal nature of the game can often lead to a greater degree of amorality, with players much more likely to stab a stranger through the web than a long-term gaming companion across the table. Consequently, one has to rely on more subtle methods of identifying potential stab risks and taking evasive action. I define a stab as any unexpected aggressive move by a nation that had previously been considered allied or neutral. This is not limited to the loss of supply centers; a loss of a key region can sometimes be just as devastating: e.g. the loss of the Black Sea to either Turkey or Russia, or any nation stealing into the North Sea other than England.

Early identification is surely the key to managing a well-organized defense, in order to avoid or at least counter the imminent stab. So here are eight *tell-tale warning signs* which may or may not indicate the increased probability, but not certainty, of a forthcoming stab. This is of course by no means exhaustive.

Opportunity

Stab probability is directly proportionate to opportunity. If there is no opportunity then there is no stab. This is obviously often difficult to avoid, as when one is involved in a combined attack one can find units of an allied force entangled. At times one has to proceed with the possibility of leaving one's self open. The obvious response is to keep the opportunities down to a minimum. Don't, as some players do, practically cover themselves with barbeque sauce and then wonder why someone has just stabbed them. i.e. don't leave vacant sc's adjacent to other units. It is important to realize that the game is a competitive one, and therefore one must consider all units on the board as potential enemies.

Benefit to Loss Balance

This, for me, is my crucial decision-making rule of thumb. What are the benefits of making the stab in terms of sc's and territorial advantage, compared to the potential loss of an ally or unexpected benefits to another player? *Put simply: has your opponent got more to gain from stabbing than being loyal?* For example, I have, on a number of occasions, refused to move on StP as England, as I knew that my fleet-based force would only ever get one center, while the stab would be of much greater benefit to either Turkey or Austria-Hungary, who would have far more to gain from the collapse of the Bear. Sometimes what looks like a good

stab is actually only good for a neighboring alliance. So consider the possible benefit to loss ratio of your neighbor. If it is high then the stab might be on the cards.

Game Context

Clearly *there are some periods of the game when the stab will be more or less likely.* The early stages such as Autumn 01 or Spring 02 often necessitate some form of skullduggery. Other periods less well-defined can also be revealing. If a nation, along with its ally, have just disposed of one nation, and they look solid together, then it is quite likely they will be on the prowl for new food. Once Austria-Hungary has destroyed Turkey with Russia's help, then Italy had better beware.

Past Behavior

This is definitely not an exact science, and I accept the inductive weaknesses of the argument. However, *people who have stabbed indiscriminately previously are perhaps more likely to stab again.*

Change in Behavior / E-mail Tone

This is perhaps the most obvious one to watch for, and it is surprising that some very competent tacticians forget this. *Immediately prior to the stab the mails dry up, or become brief and rather imprecise.* Should there be any change of tone, then beware. Of course it could be for any number of reasons due to life outside of Diplomacy (yes, that world does exist).

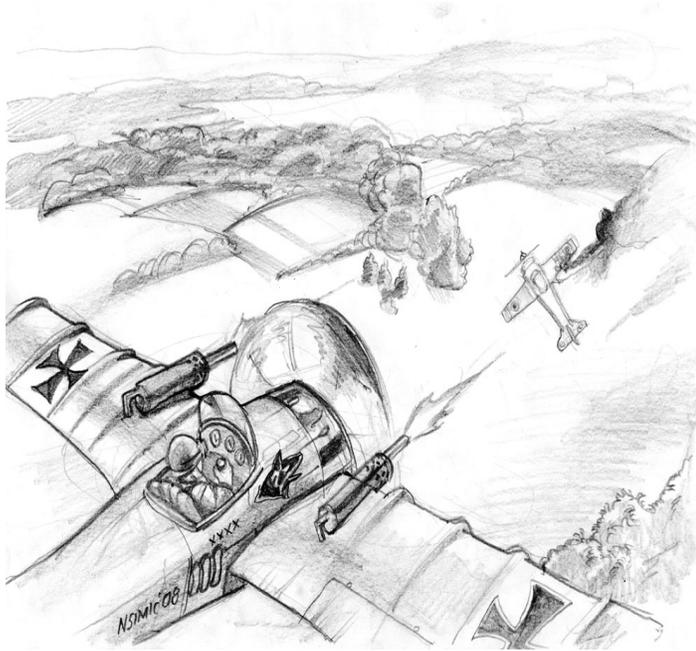
Lack of Specificity

This I think is at its most valuable in the early horse trading of 1901-02. I have consistently found that when negotiating with the other pair of nations in my western or eastern "triangle" *the nation that offers the most specific plan* with a detailed proposal for moves, supply centre divisions, and demilitarised zones, etc. is almost always the nation that *is most serious about the alliance, and thus less likely to perform an early stab.* Offers of "I think we should move against France" are usually either from inexperienced or insincere players.

Player Competence

This particular issue means all of the previous points are irrelevant as *the weaker players' behavior may be unpredictable.* Poor players sometimes don't stab, even when they have a golden opportunity and are being begged to left right and center, simply because they don't understand the game sufficiently well. Conversely

they also are prone to stabbing at just the wrong time, having been erroneously persuaded by someone else who is exploiting their inexperience. This has happened to me on a few occasions, with novices becoming the unwitting stooges of malicious players. I myself have, of course, never done this!



Persuasiveness of Potential Allies

Related to the previous point; silent or disillusioned victims of concerted attacks are unlikely to persuade anyone. However *watch out for those who are persuasive*; their powers will be actively at work. On one occasion I was playing England in an alliance with Germany against France. It wasn't long before I realized that France was a much better player than Germany. I almost wished I had worked with him instead, but once started it wasn't possible to change course, and I had broken the all important MAO. Things were just about to really start moving, as I ignored a flurry of very persuasive French emails, when suddenly Germany stabbed me in Belgium. His explanation was he had allowed France to talk him into it. I should have realized that, as a weaker player, he was vulnerable to France's persuasion. I was reduced to three units by 1905, but still managed to end up sharing in a three way draw taking most of Germany's centres. On another occasion I wouldn't have been so lucky.

Having identified this incomplete list of possible warning signs, what can one do about it? First it is a pet theory of mine that regardless of any standard openings and strategic advice, one must try to identify the two best players on the board; ensure you are allied with one, and that the other is isolated. By being allied with a competent player, their actions are ironically more

predictable and thus the stab is less of a threat. Secondly, make yourself invaluable to them. If you are needed to support their units or to suppress another's growth, then they are less likely to stab. An England who is using three units to block the Mediterranean and a rampant Italy's growth will be less likely to be stabbed by an ambitious Germany. Your units are the only thing stopping an Italian solo - yes they can happen! Third, don't use threats; use reasoning. Good players respond much better to this. By explaining the board and the consequences of a stab, then you will hopefully minimize its likelihood. Usually by pointing out that the benefits will not be to the stabber - but to some other nation - can often do the trick, e.g. "You may get Tri but Turkey and Russia will get Vie, Bud, Gre and Se. So don't pile into me."

In addition, the less opportunity you give, the less likely it is to happen. Vacating sc's in vulnerable positions is often too much of a temptation, even to the most loyal ally. Finally - and this is sneaky, but surprisingly effective - personalize what is in effect an impersonal game by email. In order to do this, don't call yourself Russia or The Czar; use your real name. Tell the player something about yourself - within reason of course - such as your job, or anything that turns you into a person instead of a victim. Be likeable and personable and show an interest in another's welfare and concerns, both on and off the board. There will, of course, be ruthless Diplomacy psychopaths who couldn't care less if your Gran is in the hospital, but even in Diplomacy there are thoughtful people who will have much less of a psychological problem with stabbing the Kaiser than that nice guy Bob who's a teacher from the UK. It may be subconscious, but who cares?

The final point worth making is that the eight points above not only help one to predict potential stabs, but also to plan one's own more effectively. If you wish to stab, then ensure your communication is as detailed and frequent as ever. Acknowledge that whilst you could stab you won't, as it will only help Italy or Germany. Show real solidarity, and build up the threat posed by other players, so as to deflect attention and reassure them.

Success in Diplomacy rests on many complex factors, but the interpersonal skills - in particular those that allow someone to persuade or predict people's behavior - are surely the most important. By reflecting on the occasions when one has been stabbed, it might be possible to see that with hindsight, some of the signs were there. Next time, ensure foresight, and one might live to fight another day. By the way, I *never* stab, and only tell the truth!

[[Alfred continues to be a valuable contributor to Diplomacy World, I am happy to say!]]

2009 World DipCon
Hosted by 2009 Origins, Columbus Ohio, June 24-28
<http://www.originsgamefair.com/>

Come with us and celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the great game. Further it is with great pleasure that I would like to announce that our guest at the event will be none other than our game design creator:

ALLAN B. CALHAMER

Mr. Calhamer last attended the Baltimore 2001 event and this may be your only chance to meet him.

You can get hotel reservations reasonably through the Conventions website <https://www.originsgamefair.com/2009-origins/attend/hotels>. Note that hotels are already filling up (The Drury is sold out). Edi Birsan got a double room at the Crown Plaza which is connected to the convention center.

The Origins fee is currently \$50; it goes up to \$60 on January/12. Register online at: <http://www.originsgamefair.com>. The actual event fee for Diplomacy will be available in a few months, and there will be a special event ribbon for it (approximately \$16) that will cover all the Diplomacy rounds of regular and variant games as well as full access to the CADS storehouse of board games on the same floor.



Additionally Edi would like to introduce Chris Mazza, who is the local expert on playing at Origins. Chris has won the event more than anyone else, and is one of only three people to have ever won the North American DipCon twice. Chris will be attending from Connecticut and will gladly accept all donations of supply centers along his many travels to game tournament in America.

One of Edi's favorite restaurants to go to in Columbus is 4 blocks away from the hall: Ted's Montana Grill, which has the best Buffalo Meat Burgers he's ever had. Highly recommended.



VISITING COLUMBUS AND OHIO AREA

An excellent place to start would be the Origins 2009 Website: <http://www.originsgames.com/>. [Origins has a Children's Room/Day Care, and various Family/Spouse Games. They even schedule group trips to the Zoo, COSI, etc.,]

General website information:

Columbus Experience (Tourism Website)
<http://www.experiencecolumbus.com/>
Columbus Arts (Website for Future Events)
<http://www.artsinohio.com/>
Bruce Lee Legends of Martial Art Hall of Fame Museum
<http://www.wuma.com/>
Columbus Museum of Art
(<http://www.columbusmuseum.org/>)
COSI (Center of Science and Industry)
<http://www.cosi.org/>
Santa Maria (Ship Replica)
<http://www.santamaria.org/index.php>
Jack Nicklaus Museum
<http://www.nicklausmuseum.org/>
Columbus Zoo and Aquarium
<http://www.columbuszoo.org/>

Easily located or within short road trips:

Caverns:

<http://www.ohiocaverns.com/>
<http://www.olentangyindiancaverns.com/>
<http://www.senecacavernsohio.com/>

History

Motts Military Museum
Ohio Historical Center and Ohio Village
Thurber House
Eden Park Equestrian Complex

World Class Golf Courses

<http://www.thememorialtournament.com/site.htm>

Going Where No Dot Had Gone Before

By Larry Peery

I suppose I shouldn't have been surprised at the lack of references to the Diplomacy hobby's Golden Age "sci-fi days" in the last issue of *DW*. After all, a lot of Golden Age "old-timers" from both Diplomacy and sci-fi are gone.

In his memory-jarring work "A Brief History of the US Diplomacy Hobby (1963-1992)," Jim Meinel devoted only one paragraph of three pages to those days. But just re-reading that paragraph brought forty-plus-year-old memories back to me. Let me share some of those memories with you and, in doing so, add a few lines to Meinel's history. More importantly, let me point out a new path, as we head toward the hobby's half-century milestone.

Jim is certainly correct: the early Diplomacy hobby was a younger sibling of the far-larger sci-fi community, but not everyone involved in Diplomacy's early days was a sci-fi fan. Still, if you were a fanatic about the game in the mid-to late-1960s and living in southern California, you probably were touched by the sci-fi world, just as you were touched by the real world's fascination as it watched the US prepare to put a man on the Moon - a goal John Kennedy had made a national priority. It was hard to draw a line between what was happening in the real world, the sci-fi world, and the new world of Diplomacy.

For me, 1966 was a fairly typical year. I met Conrad von Metzke and Rod Walker in a international relations class at San Diego State. Rod was an Air Force officer doing a grad degree. Conrad was the perennial student in his own Don Quixote search of...., and I was a brand new college freshman crashing an upper-division class I didn't belong in. One day Conrad, who had the first copy of the GRI board game version of Diplomacy in California, brought the game in to class. It didn't take long and we were hooked. Our mutual involvement in a series of Model United Nations events over the next few years solidified our solidarity and friendships. My personal interest in Diplomacy the game (and real world diplomacy) extends back that far. Today, two generations later, I take pride in watching friends and former students who have made the jump from a Diplomacy hobby to a diplomacy career.

At some point during that time period, Rod and I went up to Los Angeles to attend some kind of sci-fi or gaming convention being held at the Roosevelt Hotel (Yes, the first home of the Oscars!). That was an important event for several reasons. Somehow I got matched up in a debate with a relatively new sci-fi writer named Harlan Ellison. The topic was "Is there enough science in science fiction writing?" or something to that effect. I found out after the debate that the reason I was on the

stage was because nobody who knew Harlan would debate him. I'm sure I lost the debate, but it was good practice for dealing with New York Dippers in later years.

Another important result of that event was my hosting a Diplomacy board game in my hotel suite. Yes, by some freaky accident, I had ended up with the penthouse suite in the hotel. It quickly became the informal game room for Dippers. During one of those casual games I met Jack Greene, Jr., of Quartermaster Games, who became my first real person contact with the Lafayette Tactics Association, a San Francisco Bay Area Dippers group. Within weeks I was commuting regularly, by air, to the Bay Area for FTF Diplomacy events. I, and the rest of the San Diegan Diplomacy group, were amazed to discover a similiar group existed in the Bay Area. If there was one, and then two, could there be more I wondered? One highlight of the event was a musical adaptation of a hot new TV series called Star Trek. Remember, this was Hollywood, and the production showed it. The crowd, including a number of the original Star Trek cast members, cheered at the end of the skit. I remember Nimoy, Nichols, and Takei were there. Shatner wasn't. And I have no idea about Roddenberry. Finally, on a personal note, it was at the Roosevelt Hotel that I had my first experience with a Sunday brunch and eggs benedict. I will never forget the sight of Zsa Zsa Gabor feeding her pet poodle(s) eggs benedict, and carefully wiping their faces with the hotel's linen napkins. Oh, and for years to come, I would always evaluate the food and beverage service when evaluating any DipCon I attended.

Rod Walker was much more of a sci-fi fan than I, and during one of our trips to LA, we stopped by for a visit with Jerry Pournelle, who was then facing a real dilemma: keep his academically secure position as a teacher at Pepperdine U, or give that up and devote himself full-time to his much more financially profitable career as a sci-fi writer. The Uni couldn't stand the idea of one of their academics moonlighting as a sci-fi writer. Bravo for Jerry, he made the decision to go for the bucks!

I didn't know Monte Zelazny well, although we did play in a postal game or two together, and I think we exchanged magazines for a while. By today's standards that would probably be a big deal, but in those days it was just a common courtesy among publishers to exchange magazines, etc.

I mentioned the LTA and the lively Dip scene in the San Francisco Bay Area. Most of the LTA members were students at Cal Berkeley. You have to realize that during this period there was a growing opposition to the Vietnam War, and much of that opposition was centered

at Berkeley. On the other hand, you have to realize that Cal, as it was known, was one of the nation's premier intellectual academic centers. Like the song said, "If you can make it at Cal, you can make it anywhere." Only at Cal Berkeley could you have had Alexander Kerensky (the last premier of the pre-communist Russian parliament) and Prince Yusupov (who murdered Rasputin) sharing offices in the same building for years without ever meeting (as best we can tell). The LTA Dippers weren't as into sci-fi as most Dippers, although they all seemed to have read it, knew the created worlds, and could come up with a sci-fi variant on demand.

One weekend while I was visiting Brian Bailey - one of the most active LTA members - I was informed we were going to put on a demonstration game for a couple of people who were interested in watching, but not playing, a game of Dip. I thought that was kind of strange, but why not? So a group of us including Bailey, Charles Turner, James Dygert, and others piled into Bailey's MG and Turner's Morris and drove up into the Berkeley Hills. I don't remember much about the people watching the game; they mostly stood back and just watched. I do remember the house we were playing in vividly. It was perched on the side of the hill with a balcony that drifted off into deep space high above the Bay. Since I was one of the first to be eliminated in the game (see, there are some constants in Diplomacy!), I got a chance to answer a few questions from our observers, sample the snacks, and wait for the house to slide off the hill. The game ended in a multi-way draw after a few hours, and we were on our way home. Only then did my friends tell me that among the observers were two named Isaac Asimov and Ray Bradbury. And no doubt they were wondering why I had never brought up the subject of sci-fi. Oh well....

All the activity wasn't in California, of course. There were lots of sci-fi fans elsewhere in the growing Diplomacy hobby. Lew Pulsipher was waiting in the wings to launch his long and illustrious career as a Dip variant designer,

many of them devoted to sci-fi themed games. Don Miller, that great collector and organizer of early hobby paper, was also a sci-fi fan who dabbled in creating a wide variety of games that pushed the variant design into new and uncharted realms.

I suppose, since I have to end somewhere at some point, I should do it in 1969, barely three years after the Diplomacy Golden Age's Sci-Fi birth. Three things happened in 1969 that would have a profound impact on the future of Diplomacy and of sci-fi. First, Neil Armstrong walked on the Moon. Second, Star Trek ended its short reign as a cult TV series. Reality had surpassed fiction! And third, Gary Gygax attended the 2nd GenCon. Another star was about to be born. On a more personal note, 1969 was memorable for me for two reasons: I had my first hard alcoholic drink and I lost my virginity (not at the same time). But we don't want to go there, do we?

The late 1960s were a great time for the Diplomacy hobby because we dared to dream and to act, just as was happening in the real world. Now, fifty years later, I hope another great time is ahead for the Diplomacy hobby. It is time for a new dream and new actions. The ways and means are there, new leaders stand at the podium. Now, who will sound the call to arms?

For eight long years our hobby has suffered in silence as the horrors of real world diplomacy engulfed us. But now, thanx to Doug Kent and his associates, we have created something truly wonderful, an online Diplomacy library that ancient Alexandria would have been proud of. It is time to put it to use. The new sci-fi made real technology has brought us a new opportunity. It's up to us how we will use it.

[[If you spend any time looking at prior issues of Diplomacy World, or the zines in the Postal Archive, you'll know a lot about Larry Peery. Go look it up for yourself, lazy bones!]]

Tom Tweedy, 1948 - 2008

by Stephen Agar

I first came into contact with Tom Tweedy soon after he joined the postal Diplomacy hobby in 1977 as he subscribed to my zine **Pigmy**. I can remember long telephone calls with Tom (usually with his wife Jan joining in on the sidelines) and we always seemed to have lots to talk about, despite the fact he was nearly 30 and I was a mere teenager. My overriding memory of him was of a thoughtful and pleasant guy with a good sense of humor. Tom was a mean Diplomacy player though and often featured near the top of the UK rankings. I left the Diplomacy hobby when I went to

college in late 1979 and so never subscribed to Tom's zine **Dib Dib Dib** which ran for some 75 issues between October 1980 and February 1988. Originally **Dib** was launched as a sub-zine within Chimaera to run games of postal Sopwith (the postal rules for which he had devised), but Tom soon got the editing bug and went independent at issue 7.

Surprisingly **Dib** never did that well in the annual Zine Poll - Tom's best position was 7th in 1982 - despite being a reliable zine with plenty to read including a truly

excellent letter column. Having read through all the back issues I think **Dib** probably had too low a profile to get high votes from editors and for much of the time **Dib** did everything except print reviews of other zines. Tom was an early adopter of technology, hooking up an Apple II computer to a daisywheel printer to cut stencils at a time when computers were beyond the reach or understanding of most. After 8 years Tom was understandably getting tired of zine production, but he organized a fold into a re-launched **Pyrrhic Victory** and kept up his high standards to the end. I came across Tom again when I started **Spring Offensive** in 1993 and after a while Tom was running games of Sopwith for me in the zine. When **SpOff** folded at issue 50, Tom restarted **Dib** as a players-only mini-zine to finish his games of Sopwith which he duly did by December 1998. At that point Tom's love of technology pushed him in a different direction and he launched the Dip2000 website for online Diplomacy which is still going strong today. Tom's health was not good, but he was not one to

complain.

In some way Tom was a private person and his private life was only revealed in snippets in the zine. From 1969 - 1973 Tom was a bomb disposal diver for the Army and it was at the end of his Army career that he ended up being confined to a wheelchair by a sniper (although he never mentioned his disability to me either privately or in his zine). I sincerely regret that although Tom was one of my lifelong Diplomacy friends (we were still exchanging emails up to a few weeks ago), I never met him. Understandably he did not attend cons and I can only curse myself for never finding the excuse to drive up and see him. Tom died at home on Christmas Day, surrounded by his family. He is survived by his wife Janet and son Stuart.

All surviving issues of **Dib Dib Dib** can be found at www.diplomacyzines.org.uk

The French NDC: These Bags Under My Eyes Are Heavy

By Toby Harris

The French NDC was held this December, and I decided to attend - both for fun and in order to serve as the official Diplomacy World reporter on the scene. I arrived for a couple of days early so I could catch up with a few of the French guys who no longer play Diplomacy. I do have to say the food was just a bit too 'fancy,' for want of a better word. Hey, I'm not disputing the quality, just that it's not my thing. I'm an English guy and that means I like English food ... such as curry! ☺

On the Dip front there was the opening welcome on Friday, where drinks were served...before going out for more drinks. One thing led to another and before I knew it, there was one English and one German still awake at 9am when the Dip was due to start. So we both trudged along with bags under the eyes to play the first round. My auto-pilot must have been slightly off-sync; usually these are the games I do the best in, but in this case I missed board top by a center. Straight after the game I hit the sack, missing not only the second round but the Saturday night social too.

Getting Turkey in the Sunday morning round, I faced a 1901 Russian build of F Sev by way of response (and compliment) to the already looming Lepanto. And so it went 4-3-2-1-0. They apologized like I was in some way devastated at the elimination, so I just explained that it wasn't the first time. It was in fact the third time I'd been duffed-in as Turkey by that killer F(Sev) build, let alone the countless other times and other ways.

I've tried to write this article without naming any names, but there's one that can't go without mention: Xavier

Blanchot. Xavier played all weekend, and was Germany in this Sunday game. He played a far 'less colorful' game than I remember from before his Diplomacy retirement in the 1990's, where historically numerous (normally pleasant and peaceful-minded) neighbors would find themselves a tad heated (like Shaun Derrick).

But I **did** enjoy the way he expressed dissatisfaction at Italy's attempt to open to Tyrolia ... which of course perfectly justified Xavier's pre-emptive E.S.P.-like reason for bouncing from Munich. Don't you just love it when a player's reason for making a move is "because I was responding to what I knew you were about to do" ... and when Xavier says it like this, it is still as justified and convincing as ever. ☺

So no top board for me at the French NDC! But this wasn't my reason for skipping the fourth round. Instead, I just didn't have the energy for another game in the afternoon.

The tournament had something like 15-20 foreign players (English, German, Italian and Dutch ... and the Belgians) and the need to speak French simply wasn't required. The winner was a new name to me: Marvin. Didn't catch his surname, but I did play him in the third round. He topped the board then too.

[[Toby Harris has been awarded the Purple Heart for injury in the line of duty as a Diplomacy World reporter: namely, staying up all night and still playing in the round the following morning. "Marvin" was Marvin Lefebvre.]]

TempleCon 2009

February 6-8, 2009

Providence, RI, USA

Diplomacy Rounds:

Friday 6PM, Saturday 9AM, Saturday 6PM, and Sunday Noon

Scoring System and Tournament Details:

Detour with an ante system (you start with 50 points just for entering the tournament and then ante 14 points for each game you play!), we will play with a Central Clock.

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Pre-Registration: \$30 for group registration through the TD by January 15.
\$25 for two rounds on Saturday, \$15 each for Friday/Sunday, payable on-site.
\$50 for weekend registration on site.

Awards for Best Country as well as Tournament Champion.

Contact and TD: Jim Burgess, jfburgess@gmail.com, or 401-351-0287

Let me know if you're coming so we can plan the boards. Updated information will be posted on the MADip-L yahoogroup. Join for all info on New England Dip gaming.

DEAR MR. KENT:

I REPRESENT MR. WALKER IN HIS ACTION TO ENJOIN YOU FROM CEASING PUBLICATION OF "DIPLOMACY WORLD" MERELY AS A DEVICE TO PREVENT FURTHER PUBLICATION OF HIS WRITING. THIS ESTOPPEL IS ESTOPPED BY RULE 12 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF LOCAL 666 OF THE UNIONE INTERNAZIONALE OF INTERNET WRITERS, ADULT SCHOOL TEACHERS, PEOPLE WHO CLAIM THEY CAN WIN AS ITALY, AND OTHER PHONIES. SAID RULE APPLIES UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF RULE 8698, A FURTHER ESTOPPEL WHICH STATES THAT EVERY RULE MUST BE OBSERVED WHICH HAS A NUMBER HIGHER THAN THE CURRENT DOW INDUSTRIAL AVERAGE. SAID ESTOPPEL IS FURTHER ESTOPPED BY THE REALLY, REALLY, ABSOLUTELY SUPREME COURT IN STATE OF WEST CAROLINA VS. ANYBODY WITH AN I.O. OVER 42 (1864, 1867-1895, 1902-1963, 1966-2007). MR. WALKER IS SEEKING THE SAID ESTOPPEL AND FURTHER ESTOPPELS WITH COMPENSATORY AND PUNITIVE DAMAGES. MOSTLY PUNITIVE (*hyork, hyork, we get 35%, hyork, hyork, snort!*). IN THE OPINION OF THIS FIRM, NOTHING COULD BE MORE DAMAGING THAN YOUR CONTINUING TO PUBLISH THIS ... THIS ... THIS ... WHATEVER IT IS.

SINCERELY IN ESTOPPEL,
(SO ESTOP IT)

BEARBUTZ BEN-PANCED, ESQ.
HINEYBOTTOM, HONEYBOTTOM, HOWDYBOTTOM, &
SEEDY-DERRIER,
Esquire, Esquire, Esquire, & Exquisite,
ATTORNEYS AT LARGE
E Pluribus Estoppum

The Adventures of Fatman and Frottage: The Case of Lady Windbottom's Fan ©2009 Rod Walker

Snit the Fourth: Enter Klarkth VaKent
(or "Whoosh-whoosh, whoosh-whoosh, whoosh-whoosh....")
(or "Have you gotten the point that I have no idea where this is going?")

I. Winter 1905

Fatman and his companions were still in Pope Innocent's audience chamber when the season changed. The sudden, disconcerting change of seasons had begun in late 1900. Also, in consequence, the retreating Italian army that had been defending Rome completely disappeared. It was replaced by an Austrian army marching in double-time from Venice. His Holiness began to get very nervous, as if he expected to vanish along with his generals.

Pope Innocent was even more nervous when they all heard the clip-clop of horse hooves entering the High Holy Palace. The great doors of the audience chamber were flung open by Swiss Guards on whose uniforms had been hastily re sewn the arms of the Empress of Austria: red triple cross on greenback green (Borgia) quartered with a black heraldic eagle with a huge (huge!) lower beak (Hapsburg). Behind them rode the Empress herself, a vision of terrible beauty clad in purest frilly black samite on a white faux unicorn. His Holiness gasped. "Lucy!!"

Lucrezia cackled and shrieked in triumph – a sort of

laugh disconcerting in one so young. "Well, father; trapped at last. You have tried every military and diplomatic force in an attempt to defeat Us, but as We have observed before, Diplomacy is no game for Innocents." She motioned to the Swiss Guards. "Take him away. We shall find a nice little island for your exile, father, once We have replaced you." They took him away.

Empress Lucrezia dismounted. "Ah," she said, "you four must be the interfering little gaggle that's hunting the Fan. We know where it is, and We want it. We shall reward you with your fondest desires if you bring it to Us. It is presently in the power of the Wicked Witch of the East. Go ye into the fleshpots of the Old Empire's capital and there ye shall find the Witch."

There was some hesitation. The Empress persisted: "Go! Go now! We and Our brother Cesare must change into frilly bedclothes, for We and he must meet with the College of Cardinals. Today We shall become Pope!" To emphasize this terrible possibility, she donned the Black Forest Tiara, which chose that moment to announce the hour ... "Cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo..." and so on. Fatman and his companions gasped.

A preternaturally good-looking young man, about 16, came in. "Ah Cesare!" the Empress exclaimed. "Hurry and change. We both must meet with the Cardinals and there are only a few hours before the conclave."

I can handle them myself, Lucy," Cesare insisted.

"Silly boy. No doubt you could; they're Cardinals, dear – but you know, tastes vary. We might be able to take a third of them off your ... um, your hands. Now look ... We shall go in first and"

At this point our friends found it the better part of valor to make for the docks on the Tiber.

II. Spring 1904

The Season changed again just as they approached Constantinople – which was of course Byzantium, capital of the Old Empire – in a well-attended passenger launch. Ice and snow melted, the temperature rose 10 or 15 degrees, and trees and flowers burst into bloom. Soon blossoms would turn into tiny green fruits that would slowly grow and then spontaneously ripen with the advent of Fall.

The city sparkled in the sun, having been hit by a very sudden Spring rain. It could have been the great prow of a monstrous ship that was the mountain behind it. It could have been, but of course it wasn't. It was just your ordinary fairly flat, nice Byzantine city that had been minaretted to death by the Trolls who had ruled it since 1453 or whatever. The latest Troll Szaltine, Szitson-al-Bum VIII, had already lost most of his empire to Austro-Italian attacks aided by Russia. Frantic to save his capital, the Szaltine was making desperate war plans in company with his extensive harem of fat, squatty, sweaty Troll women and his equally extensive harem of blond, lithe, obliging teenage boy Elves.

"I take it," said Lady Windbottom – known far and wide even in these exotic parts as Pirate Jenny. Well, actually, Damn Pirate Jenny, considering the number of Trollish treasure triremes she had plundered in her time. "I take it that these Trolls are not good Christians," she said hopefully.

"Not Christians at all," observed Robin, whilst rubbing up against a nearby very friendly eunuch. "Trolls are Muslims, so-called because of the sheets they wear at religious rituals – and a lot of the rest of the time because they believe that the draping disguises their squatness. They have a sacred book written by the sage Muhummus, which tells them how to weight dice, cheat at cards, pick up non-Trollish women, claim phony relatives on the income tax, worship properly, worship improperly, and worship really disgustingly, with handy quotations from Moses, Satan, the Talmud, ancient Graeco-Roman erotic literature, Hasidic erotic literature,

apocalyptic erotic literature, Hindu super-erotic literature, and so on, plus a Bible code ring."

The eunuch sighed regretfully and moved away as Frottage continued, "All Muslims worship a black stone that they keep hidden in Meccha-Picchu in Arabia. The nature of this stone has divided the Muslims into various sects. It is said that the Stone represents one of the supernumerary teats of the fertility goddess Frottima. The sect of the Naughtyies believe this is the left teat, which gives to the faithful milk, honey, and peppermint schnapps. The sect of the Nicies believe this is the right teat, which gives lowfat lactose-free milk, clover honey from free-range bees, and non-alcoholic plain schnapps."

Fatman managed a pained smile. "That was very...."

"Oh the other hand," Frottage continued, "the Doublers insist that the Stone is only half of the original Stone, which resembled both of Frottima's supernumerary teats. They believe that the lost half will reappear to announce yet another prophet who will write yet another book, lead yet another jihihadit or race-extinction war, and deflower countless Christian virgins of any available gender. They call this lost stone 'The Expected One' or, in their language, the Muhddi. Then, of course, another sept of the Doublers, the Itzi-Bitzi, say that"

"Frottage!" exclaimed Fatman. "Exactly how many of these sects and septs are there?"

"About 157 at last count, one less than the Christians have and a whole lot more than the less fractious Buddhists and Daoists. In fact...."

A deep but fundamentally asthmatic voice saved the little fellowship from further elucidation of Trollish religious squirrelness. "Don't trouble yourself with the heathen crazies (whoosh-whoosh)." They had been approached by one of the other passengers, a tall, imposing person in black robes and wearing over his head something like a black coal scuttle with a bit of garden hose leading into it from under the robes. "You will forgive me (whoosh-whoosh), but as we were all traveling from Italy (whoosh-whoosh), I came to understand from your hushed conversations (whoosh-whoosh) that you seek the Wicked Witch of the East (whoooooosh)."

"Well, ..." Lord Windbottom began."

"Don't (whoosh-whoosh) bother to deny it, sir (whoosh-whoosh). I have excellent hearing (w.-w.). As it happens, I know her (w.-w.) personally. She is Empress of All Trolldom (w.-w) and lives in a great secret palace in a deserted portion of the heathen East (w.-w.), to which I, the great (w.-w.) Klarkth Va-Kent, shall guide you (w.-w.). By the way, which of you took His Holiness up on his offer of a fresh new brain (w.-w.-w.)?"

We shall – again – pass over the embarrassing show of hands.

“Hehhehhehwhooshwhooshwhooshwhooshwhoosh!!”

Next: *Fit the Fifth, “Passage to the East”, or “Here today, whoooooosh!!” [I have yet to determine the meaning of the subtitle.]*

Well, I guess we can go on to our bit of trivia from the last chapter ... namely divining Mary Shelley’s monster’s actual name. We have as usual a stunning one (count it, 1) reply – this time from Chris Brand. He writes, “Frankenstein’s monster, because he was put together by Doctor Frankenstein.” And so runs the normal wisdom, a modern reaction to those who refer to the monster unthinkingly as “Frankenstein”. And yet that is also the thinking person’s answer and the correct one. We must remember that Dr. von Frankenstein is the creature’s father and he is therefore entitled to the family name. It can be quibbled over as to whether he gets the “von”

It’s actually a good thing you don’t get the prize. It’s hungry.

OK, let’s have another go. What is the next number in this series: 1, 3, 7, 12, 18, 27, 39, 50, ... ? I just love mathematics, don’t you? I may hold the world’s record for incorrectly computed tax returns ... 10 in a row before I finally went to a tax preparer last year. (And I don’t itemize deductions. On the other hand, have you ever tried to figure out what portion of your Social Security is taxable? You take half of this and 2 cups of that, and multiply by $\frac{1}{2}$ if the moon is full and $\frac{3}{4}$ if it isn’t and $\frac{2}{3}$ if it isn’t and a Democrat won the last Preakness, and....) As usual, send your answer to catu11us@pacbell.net and the winner(s) may or may not get a prize if the current prize has multiplied sufficiently.

[[Rod Walker continues to bring me closer and closer to being a defendant in a legal action.]]

Dots of the Dead: A Zombie Apocalypse Variant

By Chris Sham

I was very intrigued by Tom Swider's exploration of the possibilities of a zombie horror variant, in [DW#103](#), and this is my attempt to turn that into a distinct and (fairly) well-balanced variant. Of all the horror monsters that have been thought up, zombies fascinate me the most. They're slow, stupid and mostly rotting to pieces, and yet they can accomplish more through sheer numbers than any single vampire, werewolf or other powerful monster ever seems to manage. And while most monsters want to do nothing worse than kill you, the un-stated goal of the zombies is the destruction of all human civilization; not just the people in it, but the very principles that we consider vital for civilization. After all, when's the last time you saw anyone in a zombie movie respecting the law, once things turn bad? And how many people in zombie movies are suddenly willing to let their slower, weaker peers die, just so they can escape? The zombie apocalypse scenario, going right back to *Night of the Living Dead*, has always been about revealing the inherent anarchy hidden behind the facade of human social niceness. And if ever there was a game that reveals that same little human horror, it is Diplomacy. Surely a marriage between the two should be easy?

The first concern I have, though, is that the Diplomacy rules assume that everyone on the battlefield is essentially an identical human clone, only different in their loyalties. But zombies behave quite differently to normal humans: They don't carry weapons, they don't plan ahead and they just act on rather cloudy instinct. It is also traditionally assumed that zombies move very slowly, since they're dead and falling to pieces. Obviously, we can't force the human player controlling

the zombie army to become a mindless flesh-eater (although it shouldn't be too hard to find a Dip player who fits that description), so some rules adjustments are unavoidable (despite my own condemnation of rules variants in the last issue). I propose the following:

1. Zombie armies move at a rate of one normal move per year, rather than one per season. This can either be in the Spring or Fall orders, but not both. This represents the zombies' poor speed and general disorganization. (Good record-keeping will be essential to make sure the zombies don't cheat this rule.
2. Zombies never retreat. Defeated zombie armies are always destroyed.
3. Zombies turn their defeated opponents into more zombies. When a zombie army wins an attack (but not a defense), it does not move, and instead the defeated army is replaced by a new zombie army. Apart from that, zombies are subject to all the normal combat, build and disband rules.
4. There are no zombie fleets. Operating complex sea-going vessels is the preserve of normal, healthy humans.

In theory, these basic rules modifications should be suitable for any Diplomacy variant map, but to save confusion and effort, I'll apply them here to the normal 1901 Europe map. But I see no reason why we can't

suppose that a zombie apocalypse could pop up at any point in history. And so we come to the setup rules:

1. After setting up a normal game, pick 1 active power at random. This power becomes "Patient Zero", the source of the zombies. All of this power's units are zombies (exchange any fleets for armies), while everyone else keeps their normal human units.
2. If any human power ever successfully supports or is successfully supported by Patient Zero (or any other zombie power), then they've clearly been subverted by the zombies, and will be totally consumed by them soon enough. This power becomes another zombie power at the end of the current year, subject to all the zombie rules. All coastal fleets are converted into zombie armies and all sea borne fleets are lost. (They sail away to live on a tropical island, where el Chupacabra eats them all.)

The last remaining human power cannot be turned into a zombie power in this way. There is always one last desperate pocket of resistance.



Zombie powers may or may not work together, but they cannot ever attack each other. Zombies don't find each other edible, and thus aren't interested in each other.

Easy, no? In summary, zombie powers work differently, and they can either attempt to conquer their human neighbors, or convert them into more semi-allied zombies. The only significant change I'd then add is a tweak to the normal victory conditions:

1. All human powers are subject to the normal 18SC solo victory condition, regardless of what happens to the zombie players.
2. The surviving human powers may only declare a mutually agreed draw if there are no surviving zombie players.
3. The surviving zombie powers may only share a win by completely destroying all human powers. (For tournament purposes, I'd say that Patient Zero wins this slightly more than the other zombies.)
4. If the game ends under any other conditions, nobody wins.

The human and zombie players may engage each other diplomatically as normal, but there's not much long-term gain in it, since the humans can't easily win if there are zombies lurching around, and the zombies, by definition, can only win if they hungrily devour every last human. And that's why I haven't specifically created any rules to restrict that; it shouldn't really be necessary, given the indirect effects of all the other rules.

Diplomacy Haiku by Jonathan Woll

Seven nations fight
Promise, stab, lie and betray
Only one can win.

I think that'll produce a result close enough to the classic zombie movie, albeit adapted for power-on-power battles. It certainly favors a zombie victory (although their slow movement means that a cunning human can easily outmaneuver large numbers of zombies), but I don't think it's too

unbalanced. Probably, I should make it very clear that I haven't actually had a chance to play test this yet. I'd like to, obviously, but it'll be quite a while before I can get a game together, and I thought it would be better to share the rules first, so that as many people as possible can share in the initial play testing. I'll submit my own test results and any appropriate rules changes when they're ready, and I'd like to include any test results that you all make available to me. So, if you'd like to give *Dots of the Dead* a try, why not record the moves and player opinions from your game, and either send them to [Diplomacy World](http://DiplomacyWorld.com) (who can decide whether they want to publish your report, on its own or just forward it to me), or send it to me directly at fastestwaytonewyork@hotmail.com, and then hopefully I'll have some valuable feedback for you in [DW](#) 105 or 106.

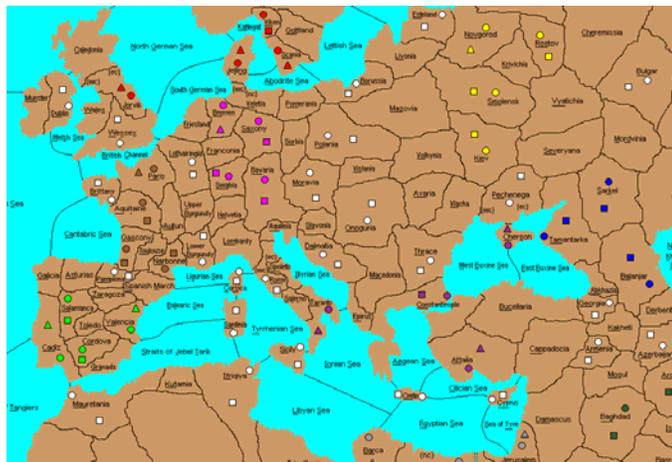
**[[Chris wants to eat your brain....brains,
mmmmmm. Brainy....]]**

The Development of Known World 901

by David E. Cohen

I hope that the variant will speak for itself, but for those of you who would like a little background, this should fill you in. My previous variants had, for the most part, dealt with areas outside Europe. I had figured that there were already tons of European variants around. But Europe had always had a lure for me. It was popular subject matter, due to the vast majority of players either being European or of European origin. Further, the geography of Europe is highly varied, and thus lends itself to creative variant map making. Upon some historical review and review of the variants out there, I decided that going backward exactly one millennium was a good idea, and Western World 901 (WW901) was born.

Once I did that, I kept thinking that the eastern and southern borders of the map were artificial. The world didn't end in a straight line--the Powers there certainly had relations with other nations further to the south and east. I had also always wanted to do a really big variant, and at that time you couldn't get any bigger than the known world, so WW901 became a "subvariant"--a building block, for the larger Known World 901 (KW901). For those interested, I am presently developing another subvariant. The eastern portion of the map will be another stand-alone variant--Eastern World 901, and I am in the beginning stages of conceptualizing a subvariant that will encompass Africa, the southernmost parts of Europe, and southwest Asia.



The first playtest of KW901 had 16 Powers and over three times the Supply Centers of Standard, truly a very large variant by any standard (no pun intended). While any really large variant will, in my opinion, tend to be draw-prone (Powers have more time to recover after being stabbed, since even a very successful stab may well not reach into the heart of the victim's territories, and with so many dots, Powers have a tendency to hold some builds in reserve, once they reach a certain size, since individual units tend to be less important), I tried to minimize that tendency by using some of the traits I have

developed in other variants. These include not having any impassable areas, having Chaos-style builds, and having a less densely dotted map, including a ring of non-Supply Center provinces around the edge of the board. The first playtest, however, did end in a draw.

Map Key:

● Abbasid Caliphate (Arabia) - A	● Khaganate of Khazaria (Khazaria) - K	
● Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantium) - B	○ Neutral States - N	
● Tang Empire (China) - C	● Principality of Kiev (Russia) - R	
● Kingdom of Denmark (Denmark) - D	● Umayyad Emirate (Spain) - S	
● Tulunid Emirate (Egypt) - E	● Samanid Emirate (Turan) - T	
● West Frankish Kingdom (France) - F	● Kingdom of Sri Wijaya (Srivijaya) - V	
● East Frankish Kingdom (Germany) - G	● Kingdom of Ilagadu (Ilagadu) - W	
● Pratihara Kingdom (India) - I	● Kingdom of Axum (Axum) - X	
■ Armies	▲ Fleets	● Supply Centers

Armies and Fleets may also be designated by a two letter abbreviation consisting of nationality and unit type (A or F). The official three letter abbreviations for each province are shown as underlining beneath the name of each province.

Variant Rules

All rules are as in Standard Diplomacy except as follows:

1. Play starts in Spring 901.
2. Neutral States all have armies which hold and may be supported to hold. If dislodged they are disbanded, but will be rebuilt if the relevant Home Supply Center is vacant and unowned in Winter.
3. Victory consists of ownership of 54 Supply Centers (a majority of the 107 Supply Centers).
4. Powers may build in any vacant Supply Center they own.
5. Pharaonic Canal: A player owning the Supply Center of Alexandria may, during any Adjustment Turn in which the player is eligible to build, choose to reopen the Nile-Red Sea Canal instead of building a unit which the player would otherwise be entitled to build. This "cost" must be paid each year to maintain the Canal. If not paid, the Canal is no longer usable. Any player having a unit in Alexandria after a Spring or Fall Turn (including Retreats) may choose to fill in the Canal, which must then be reopened. While the Canal is in existence, Alexandria only has one coast. If the Canal is not maintained or is filled in, Alexandria once more has two coasts, and a player having a fleet in Alexandria must immediately specify on which coast the Fleet is located.

I redrew the map, based on my observations and the commentary on the playtest, as well as with some of the games of WW901. Those observations were quite valuable, as the WW901 map is really similar to the equivalent area in KW901--it just has some changes around the edge for playability. One change removed Italy as a Power. Some players had complained that this area of the map was too dense, hindering diplomatic flexibility, and that France was too weak, though France is close to a solo in the last playtest of the previous version of WW901, which is finishing up in the Russian-language Diplomail forum. It can be viewed at <http://games.diplomail.ru/variant.php?game=wes01>. Historically, this change was not bad, as the Frankish Kingdom of Italy was a complete mess at the time. I also moved the northern edge of the map further north, so that Scandinavia was no longer cut off by land, which made Denmark a little more vulnerable defensively. This vulnerability was also increased by giving Russia a coast and a fleet at the beginning of the game. I added more edge provinces, to lower the density of the map further, which tends to make maintaining stalemate lines more difficult and adds to freedom of maneuver, and a couple more island dots, to increase the importance of fleets in general. Version 2.0 of this still very large variant is the map about to be played here as a demonstration game.

[[Known World 901 will be the basis of the next Diplomacy World Demonstration Game, which will start appearing in either DW #105 or #106.]]

- Map Key:**
- Ancient Capitals (in bold)
 - Modern States
 - Imperial Capitals
 - ▲ Major Centers
 - Major Ports
 - Major Cities
 - Major Seaports
 - Major Trade Centers
 - Major Manufacturing Centers
 - Major Cultural Centers
 - Major Religious Centers
 - Major Educational Centers
 - Major Scientific Centers
 - Major Artistic Centers
 - Major Literary Centers
 - Major Philosophical Centers
 - Major Historical Centers
 - Major Political Centers
 - Major Military Centers
 - Major Economic Centers
 - Major Social Centers
 - Major Cultural Centers
 - Major Religious Centers
 - Major Educational Centers
 - Major Scientific Centers
 - Major Artistic Centers
 - Major Literary Centers
 - Major Philosophical Centers
 - Major Historical Centers
 - Major Political Centers
 - Major Military Centers
 - Major Economic Centers
 - Major Social Centers

Variant Rules

1. Polytheism is a required feature of all states.

2. Polytheism is a required feature of all states.

3. Polytheism is a required feature of all states.

4. Polytheism is a required feature of all states.

5. Polytheism is a required feature of all states.

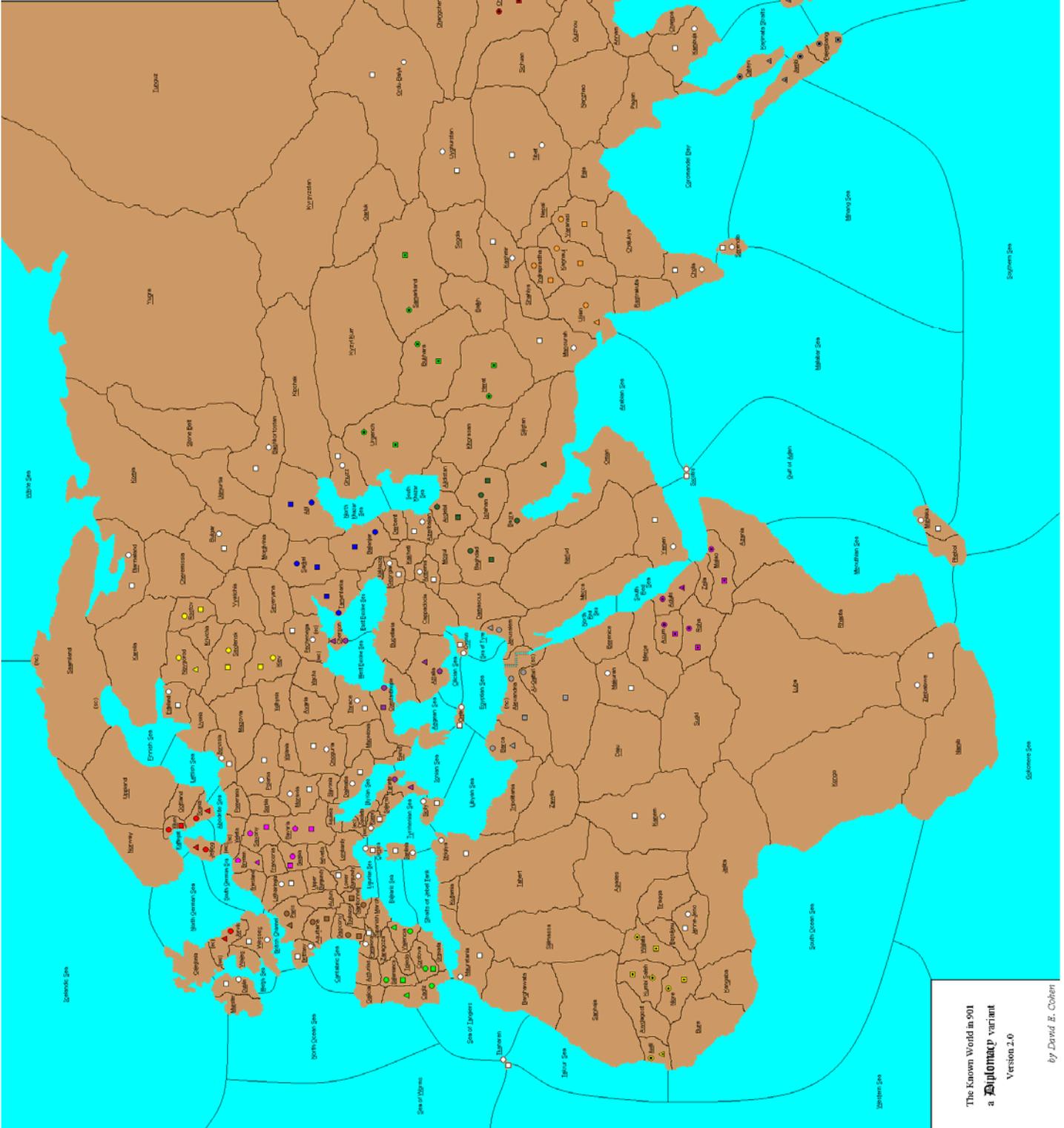
6. Polytheism is a required feature of all states.

7. Polytheism is a required feature of all states.

8. Polytheism is a required feature of all states.

9. Polytheism is a required feature of all states.

10. Polytheism is a required feature of all states.



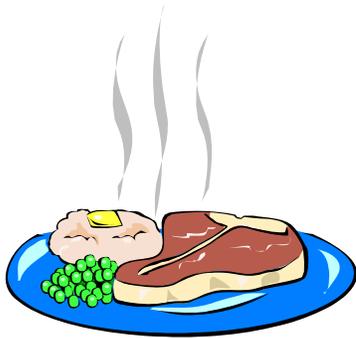
The Known World in 901
 a Diplomacy variant
 Version 2.0
 by David E. Cohen

The Origins of Diplomacy

by T. Chasworth Higgins, III

The game of Diplomacy, as we all know, was invented by Alvin B Clarkwanker. In creating his humble game, he wanted to inspire people to practice to become Diplomats to foreign countries. Like Spain and Canada.

Now to set forth this noble idea he travelled to Chestwester, MA., and met with a small group of semi-retired think-tankers, the Allegiance of Diplomacy Consultants. He wanted to discuss his idea with the creme de la creme, (cream of the cream), in U.S. foreign policy. These hardballs shook the palaces of Central American dictators every time they farted their steamy steak farts.



To get his psyche into shape, these brilliant Machiavellians filled him with self important lingo, and then brought him to his knees with a painful, biting retort. They laughed with him one minute, promising him the world, only to cackle in his face with insane glee at the preposterous self importance he felt. Up and down his heart would slide, until he felt like it would shatter. He knew their evil genius at last. But in the end he knew it was not evil. They had simmered human existence down to its core. The faces and friendly guises could, at an instant, turn into a scornful demon ready to feed upon its helpless prey.

He stayed another day. They fleshed out the game's mechanics. One suggested he base this game around the Algerian uprisings, French vs. Native. Another, Stalin's cleansing revolution trying to smash an entire civilization. Yet another said that the truest game of Diplomacy would be 7 starving people fighting over a medium rare steak, with no knife. Historic and psychic fantasies were tossed around by these mini Caesars with such abandon, Alvin thought he had stepped into a mad house. Finally cooler heads prevailed, and 1900 Europe was agreed upon. It represented the hopes of the Western World; a step from the purely nostalgic Industrial Revolution to the Carcass strewn plains where the dead still haunt us.

These political scholars knew they had nailed this whore.

He stayed yet another day, and the seven men engaged in the first ever game of Diplomacy in May of 1927. Some of the borders were different, (Galicia touched only Warsaw, Budapest and Ukraine), and some provinces were named different, (Brest was named Boobies, St. Petersburg was named Land of Penises). But the game was essentially the same. Ulysses Q. Cransworth Jr., a Constitutional Aggravator from the Crimson Tide, won the first game as the French. His wicked stab of Austria-Hungry in 1917 left the victim slightly horny.

They played another game that evening, where the "Piedmont Maneuver" was first coined, (essentially a left-handed hand job). At one point a .357 was drawn and a shot rang through the game board. After a feverish discussion, there was the longest of pauses. All the men looked around at each other nervously. Paint peeled from the walls. An eye twitched. Sand formed into glass. A yak was born. Suddenly a Yank from New Hampshire started chuckling. Soon they all were having a great laugh. This game shook everyone to the core so much they felt their spirit gushing forth. They loved it!



They finished the game late in the night, game year 1986, in a 7 way draw. The pieces exactly back in the original position. As sun rose, a last toast over Cutty Sark, one gentleman keenly stated, "We've held this lad's hand to the gates of hell. He opened them boldly and gave the devil a good swift kick in the balls!"

From Cambridge, T. Chasworth Higgins, III, LL.D., Yale '95

[[This isn't exactly the way I remember Diplomacy being invented, but as I wasn't there, who am I to argue?]]

Tournament Tales: In Search of Common Ground at the Corner Bar

by Jim O'Kelley

**Buckeye Game Fest, Columbus, Ohio,
October 3 to 5, 2008**

Friday night's first round at the Buckeye Game Fest's inaugural Diplomacy tournament was pretty typical for me.

I topped the board, as I would do in five of six first rounds in 2008. The tournament went downhill from there, also basically true in five of six. And it was over quickly, as is typically the case when I play under the Carnage system.

After four years and a crisp three and a half hours, we voted to end the game with my Germany at nine centers. Fellow Weasel and eventual tournament champion Christian MacDonald was second with eight as France. Local Jason Siefert's Austria tied for third with seven. I was actually prepared to share the draw with them after 1903, but one of them vetoed, and as a result, I topped by myself. That'll teach them.

Anyway, it was Friday night and I was free to explore Columbus, so I gathered comrade in beer Graham Woodring, and we left the posh Fraternal Order of Police Lodge, which housed the event, in search of a bar. The search was over fairly quickly. Within half a mile, we had found a stand-alone bar in the corner of a largely vacant strip mall. If memory serves, it was called Buckeye's Corner Lounge. Or maybe it was Jimmy's Corner Lounge. Or maybe that's just wishful thinking.

The small establishment surprisingly was packed with people and pulsating to Aerosmith. The big attraction was a birthday party for one of the bartenders. She was young and good looking, as were many of her friends. We grabbed some beer, and fought toward the pool table in the back.

I put some money in the juke box and played five songs. Counting Crows, Matchbox 20, stuff like that. As we waited to hear my music, Andy "Buffalo" Bartalone and fellow Weasel Dan Burgess joined us, and we played pool, me and Graham against them.

All three were better players than me, which isn't saying much. I play once a year, at an annual business trip in Springfield, Massachusetts. Each night there, I hang out in the hotel bar with co-workers, shooting pool. As the night wears on, our numbers swell with members of the organization that employs me. As each one joins the game, without fail, he says, "Ah, I haven't played since last year." When I say it, it's actually true.

So, they won the first game, and we were into the second, when the juke box changed abruptly from classic rock to dance music—Doojsh, doojsh, doojsh. Then an older guy walked up to the pool table, swept all the balls aside with his right arm, and began helping women onto the pool table.

Each one was better looking than the last. There were five in all, and they danced as if they were working for tips. Doojsh, doojsh, doojsh.

I turned to Burgess. "So, I guess we won that game."

"No," he said.

The song ended, and the opportunistic Buffalo joined the birthday girl's brother and resident muscle head in helping the women off the pool table.

About this time, "Anna Begins" began to play. "Finally," I thought to myself, but midway through the first verse, the song skipped.

Then it was "3 a.m." "She says it's cold outside and she hands..." Skipped again.

The muscle head looked at me. "We gotta get the girls back on the table," he said, and then, biting his lip, "Doojsh, doojsh, doojsh."

Third song. Skipped.

"We need dance music," he said.

Fourth song. Skipped.

"Maybe you ought to play something," I said. "I'll pay."

"Nah," he said. "You're fine, but doojsh, doojsh, doojsh."

Fifth song. Skipped.

He glared at me, and at that point, I noticed the large tattoo on his neck. Italia.

"You're Italian," I said. "Me, too."

"Yah," he said. "My pop was a pimp."

"Oh," I said. "Mine was an engineer."

[[Jim O'Kelley is our Club and Tournament Editor]]

The Three Day War: My First Diplomacy Tournament

By Matt Dunnam

(Note: this is an account on my experience in the weekend, unfortunately I didn't get to pay much attention to the rest of the tournament. Perhaps there will be a more analytical write-up elsewhere. Enjoy!)

Friday November 2nd I packed into a passenger truck with some of the most famous generals of the Great War and took a 5 hour drive to Vermont to join the battle at Carnage 2008. It was my first Diplomacy tournament, and I was about to learn more about the hobby in three days than I had in 10 years.

The road was long and we got a late start, but on the way I was told some of the ins and outs of the hobby: who to watch out for, who I can count on, who I can count on to not count on, and the best drinks to buy to convince people to give you Munich (if just for a turn to get into France). We pulled in around six o'clock with just enough time to buy a little dinner and settle our sleeping arrangements before the first boards were called. This is where things got a little scary.

My first board was an interesting one, to say the least. The famous generals I mentioned that drove me up there were the whole Woodring family – Conrad, Graham, and their father Don, all of whom were apparently pretty good players. Now here they were sitting at a table with me, and more interestingly: with each other...a whole family on one board. The rest of the board had some pretty big names too, apparently: Thomas Haver, Jon Hill . . . I was intimidated from the get-go.

To my surprise, it wasn't long before Graham (as Austria) was squashed between the might of Conrad (Italy) and Don (Russia). As France, I was picking out drapes for my new London townhouse, much to Adam's (England) chagrin. Jon (Germany) was just fuming at my lack of foresight. Nine hours later, Conrad was topping the board, and I was learning something about not being too fickle with my alliances.

Somewhere around 5 am, Don was sleeping at the table and our 7th – Jon, a walk in – called it one hour until he would let his Turkey fall into civil unrest. We replaced the two sleepers with a pair of unfortunate passers-by, and two hours later we voted a draw with Conrad topping the board, just so we could get some sleep. I was only a two hour nap away from my second game. So I laid my head down to dreams of diplomatic overtures.

The next morning came after my short, short nap, and I barely crawled out of bed in time to start my game. A

quick shower and a homemade breakfast (the food at the resort was excellent), and I was ready to go.

Thing was, everyone else was as groggy as I, and Bob (directing this tournament) was still rounding up the regulars, while looking for enough players to get three boards going. Meanwhile I got to take my first look at the resort. The Lake Morey Resort just so happens to be named because it's actually *on a lake!* Since we had arrived after dark, and there tend not to be any lights on water, I didn't get to see anything but black out the window. But it turns out the resort is on a beautiful lake with a backdrop of rolling hills and morning fog. It's like getting to heaven and deciding the first thing you want to do when you get there is play board games. Shamelessly, I sat down to my first board of the day.



This time I was playing against Dave Maletsky, a well known player, as Russia. Jon Hill was France, I was Austria, Evan Ellis was Italy, Jeff McDonald was Germany, Graham Woodring was playing Turkey, and a walkup, Kevin Colosa, was playing as England.

In this game I decided to do something a little differently. Since waffling on my allegiances early and often got me almost nowhere in my last game, I decided to saddle up with Turkey and go full tilt westward. I put the full force of my ineptitude toward Italy. A few hours later, I'd gotten nowhere and I had Graham doing my dirty work while getting position on me. A simple and ill advised betrayal later and with the help of Russia, Turkey was almost no more. So with no small help from me, Dave Maletsky ran the board for a 20 center solo to (as we learn later) move up a tier and win the tourney. My bad.

I wanted to see the rest of the con after that game, but two hours of sleep in-between two long games of

Diplomacy took its toll, and I decided to take a nap between the games instead. It looked my weekend was shaping up to be play, sleep, play, sleep, repeat. All that I saw were visions of Diplomacy boards and little wooden blocks. I've been a fencer for years, and never has a weekend of the sport tired my brain as much as this game had.



Randy Lawrence-Hurt, the author Matt Dunnam, and Melissa Call

My third game read like a who's who in the Diplomacy hobby: Dave Maletsky – again – was on my board, this time as France. Tom Haver was sitting in as Turkey, Andy Bartalone as Russia, Melissa Call as England, Carl Ellis was playing Austria, and Dan Renfrow was Italy. I got to be Germany for the first time in my Diplomacy career.

So naturally, I'd spent all weekend learning a series of lessons about how to play (and how not to play) Diplomacy. I learned in my second game that blind devotion to a particular course of action was perhaps not the best strategy, so I decided to try out a whole new slew of mistakes this round. I was determined to do nothing. I didn't commit to any course of action. England seemed to move against Russia, I did nothing. France petitioned me about England. I said maybe. I got Belgium, consolidated my six armies and waited for someone to give me a direction.

That's where the trouble started....Dave and Melissa (France and England) lined up against each other without making a move, Andy started gobbling up property in Austria and Tom was positioning himself to swallow Italy. When faced with a Russia / Turkey alliance with Russia topping the board by a good four centers, I did what any sensible person would do. I attacked France.

I could hear Jon Hill laughing from the next table over. He wasn't the only one shaking his head at my amateur logic. I thought if I could end the standoff, I would be able to turn some people against Russia. Maybe if I had

done it in 1902, it would have worked. By 1905 I was just upsetting the guy that stayed neutral for most of the game while leaving unchecked hostility in the East.



Dave Maletsky, Jon Hill, and Melissa Call

Dave was upset, it seemed. He didn't cast a single stone, and here I was knocking on his door. For the rest of the game he decided to follow me around and prevent me from doing any Diplomacy that he wasn't a part of. We got a little heady and had some words before I decided to just let Melissa do my Diplomacy for me – after all, I was fully in league with her at this point, or I was just a roadblock for Russia. It got to the point where Dave and I were taking walks around the resort on Diplomacy phases. Turns out he's a pretty cool guy. If you have a chance to talk to him about the hobby, or just buy him a drink at a con, you should. It's worth the conversation.

I can't remember much more about my board. I was all but eliminated at that point – Andy was done with Turkey and had moved on to me. And I helped Melissa take care of France for him. It wasn't long before I was downstairs watching Graham fight it out for second place in a Rock Band tournament. When I got back to check up on things, Tom had made Russia regret ever trusting Turkey, topping the board and securing Best Turkey. On the other board, Conrad was ramping up for his own solo as Russia, but as the hour got late, he got so tired that he accidentally (allegedly) voted to draw the game and settle for second place in the tournament.

All in all, I had a ton of fun and didn't fare as poorly as I thought I would. I played some decent Diplomacy, but most importantly I learned a lot and I met a lot of great people. Thanks to Dave Maletsky – the winner of the tournament – I now have my first Diplomacy board. Next game's at my house, and I'll see you all in Providence in February.

[[I am happy to welcome Matt Dunnam to the list of new contributors to Diplomacy World!]]

Worldwide Diplomacy - Birth of a Variant

by Michael Penner

Once upon a time, in a very cold November in Winnipeg, three roommates were introduced to the game of Diplomacy. The game went as many do: Austria got squeezed out, France was eliminated, Russia had to extract the knife from his back and the game ended in a stalemate between EG and IT. After the board was put away and everyone else had gone home, the three roommates were left to consider the greatness of the new game they had just learned. By the next day, all three had come to the same conclusion: there's no point in winning a war if you can't take over the whole world. Thus began the process of creating a worldwide map for Diplomacy.

We were all students at the University of Winnipeg. Simon (history and politics), Jonny (business computing) and I (education with math and history) had lived in a house together for just over three months when the project started, but the combination of minds proved to be perfect for the task at hand.

The first decision we had to make was whether we would go for historical accuracy or fair game play. With two history students in the mix, our original plan was to try to recreate some historical era. We scoured the internet for maps of the world from various time periods, but none of them really stood out. In the process we came across a few global variants that others had made, but most of them seemed randomly created or had too many players for our liking. So, we changed our strategy and decided to go with the current time period, and try to make a game that was both realistic and playable. Our goal was to make a map that provided a manageable number of players with many options for allies, where stalemate would be the result of one-on-one battles, and trust was absolutely necessary.

So it was that Simon brought his world map out from his room, Jonny got the pencil crayons from his, and I sat down at my laptop with an atlas to make a spreadsheet of possible powers and their provinces. For the next few days, we carried mini world maps around with us at university, drawing possible borders for powers and supply centres while tracing the world map whenever we were home. We quickly settled on having ten powers: North America, Mexico, South America, Europe, Russia, West Africa, South Africa, Persia, China and Oceania. After making that decision, we set to combining some countries and splitting others up so that we had twelve provinces attributed to each power. We then assigned supply centres based on population and economic considerations for each power, and with that we had our first map. Two months after we started we were ready for our first test run, using coloured paper clips as units and bingo chips for flags.

Our first test was very successful. We didn't get very close to finishing the game at all, but we played until two or three had been eliminated and called it a day. All in all, we were feeling pretty happy with the map.

At this point, Jonny thought it would be great if we could actually print up a well-made map that was artistically pleasing. Simon and I also had a desire to see a map big enough that our living room could look like a war room, with people moving pieces around with long sticks, etc. We found an outline map online that was approximately 4 feet by 6 feet, and started to work creating the final product on the GIMP.

We set a date for the unveiling of our new map, and had ten teams of two set to go for a very large game of Diplomacy using it. The game was a great experience, and we taught a number of our friends how to play. But we found that our map was not as good as we had originally thought. A few of our observations were:

1. It took too long for a fleet to cross the ocean and convoys were very difficult to complete, so we needed to limit the number of sea spaces on the map.
2. There were powers that started with sc's adjacent to each other (Spain, Virginia, Poland and Ukraine were all sc's) which led to automatic warfare.
3. In addition, if he wanted, China was able to force his way into Siam, and there was nothing Oceania could do about it.

So we set to work re-drawing the map. We moved borders around, eliminated sea spaces, and moved sc's to different provinces. In order to test our new configuration, the three of us held a simulated game to see if it sped things up at all. We found that it still took too long to cross sea spaces. We also found that fleets were very powerful, and armies almost useless. So we came up with a new rule: straits.

What we tried to do with the new rule was make it so that armies could cross spaces where two land masses came close together. Places like the Strait of Gibraltar or the English Channel became crossable by armies. Then, we decided that armies should be somewhat capable of controlling the straits they look over. Therefore, we came across the need for permission. The permission rule let armies restrict the movement of fleets through the places they could cross. The effect was that it gave armies a chance at defending themselves if attacked by a number of fleets while also making it easier and faster to move around without a

convoy. It sped up the game considerably and greatly increased the ability of Oceania to defend its territories.

As we worked we made further adjustments to help game play. We fudged some borders so they would be clearer or fairer. However, we had learned our lesson, and instead of rushing out to print our new map, we held some test games online using MS Paint and a few weblogs. Through these tests we found some more problems that required our attention. New problems we encountered included certain centres that were impossible to get past, sea spaces that could easily be dominated by one power, and a complete inability by one of our friends to find an ally (not the map's fault, but it's the first time we noticed it).

Adjustments were made once again. We looked at each individual sea space that could be contested at the beginning of the game, and made sure each power had an equal number of sc's bordering that space. We eliminated as many multiple-coast centres as we could. Finally, instead of predetermining where a power would build his original units, we gave that option to the player, while increasing the starting number of units from three to five. We felt that predetermining the starting centres was too limiting. So, another version was completed.

Three years after we started, the final product is being

tested by much more seasoned players than my friends and I. Some things that remain on the list of possible future revisions:

1. So far Russia has been very successful in all but one game. This may be due to skill, but it may also be a fault of the map.
2. China only has one non-sc facing the Pacific, making a convoy invasion difficult.
3. Mexico and Oceania remain very spread out and difficult to defend. This may be a necessary evil simply based on the geography of the areas, but I'll still take a look at it.

All in all, however, I think our goal has been met. The main predictor of success has been the ability of a player to work well with his allies, but still to know when to surprise them, and that's what Diplomacy should be about!

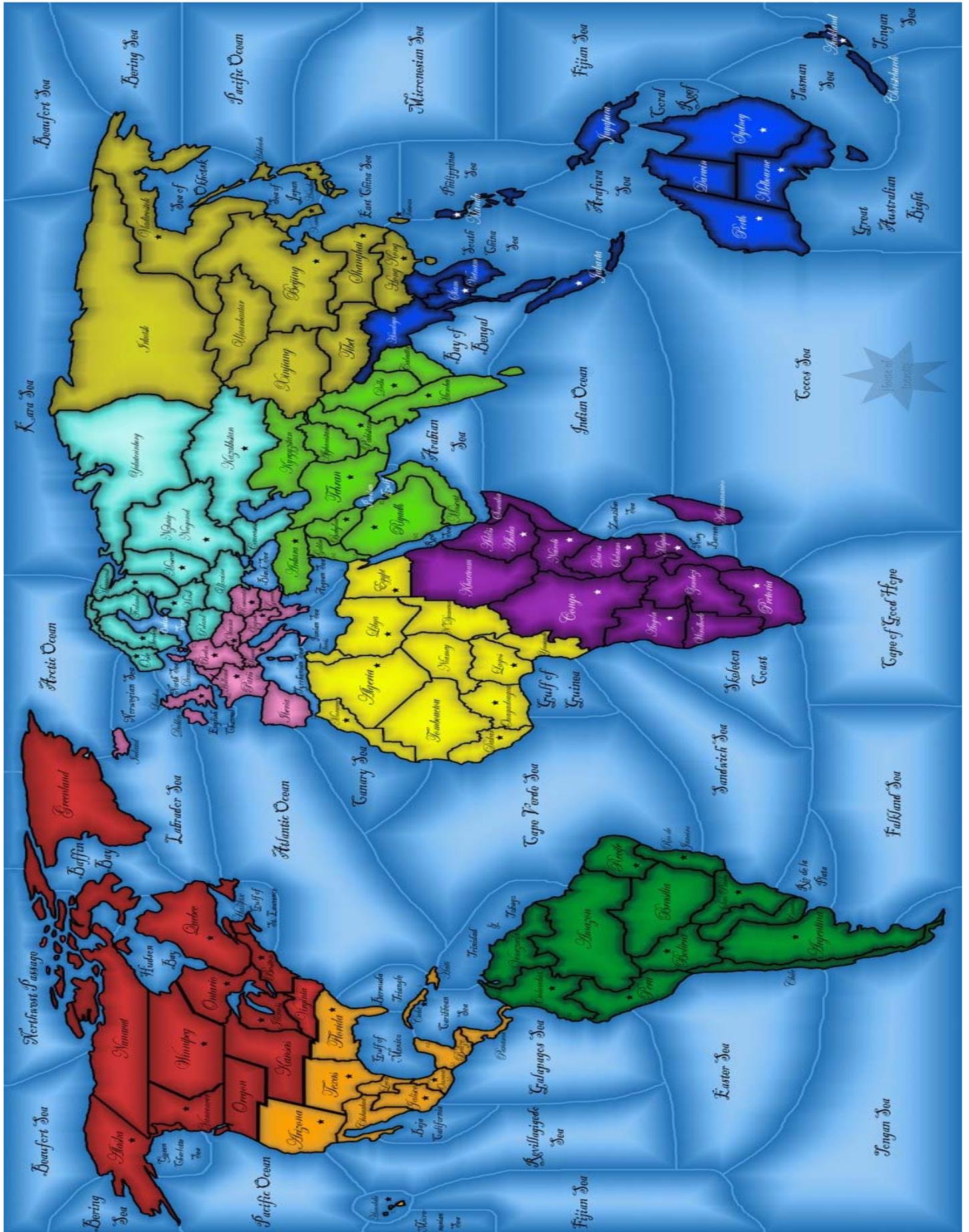
[[I am sure Michael would love to hear any suggestions you have for the next version of Worldwide Diplomacy. Send in a Letter to the Editor, or if you've got enough ideas, write up an article yourself!]]

Worldwide Diplomacy Rules

1. Rules are the same as standard Diplomacy except as follows:
2. The game starts in Winter 2000. Each player selects 5 of the 7 SC's in his color to be his home centers. Then each player builds 5 units of his choice. The two SC's not selected become neutral SC's.
3. 'S' denotes a strait. Artilleries (armies) may cross straits without a convoy. In addition, if both centers on either side of a strait are occupied, a fleet wishing to go through the strait must have permission of one of the occupying units (A Ethiopia Permit F Red Sea - Arabian Sea). A unit is considered to occupy a center if it stays in or moves to that center. Permission does not constitute an order (so the same unit can support another unit or even be moving to the center in question).
4. There are 70 SC's indicated by colored provinces on the map. Victory condition is 35 SC's.

Powers

North America (red)
Mexico (orange)
South America (dk green)
Europe (pink)
Russia (grey)
West Africa (yellow)
South Africa (purple)
Persia (lt green)
China (gold)
Australia (blue)



German Hit Parade: I'm Two SCs for '01; Wrong, Said Robert

by Robert Lesco

Everything... was a great source of examples of completed games, whose stories and meanings can be pondered, and used to test any received knowledge or pet theories. One such contentious point is the matter of whether Germany should go for three builds in 1901. In getting the jump on the others are you drawing unwanted attention and presenting yourself as a threat?

For this article I used Everything... issues #89 through #97 which were the most recent issues I had available. I included both postal games and e-games, but I left out the face to face matches from Origins and AvalonCon owing to the restrictions placed by convention organisers on game length, etc.

My results appear below:

Germany builds 3 in W'01 (sample size=38)

	pbm	pbem	overall
% Wins	9.52	11.76	10.52
% 2-ways	4.76	11.76	7.89
% 3-ways	0	5.88	2.63
% 4-ways	14.29	5.88	10.52
% 5-ways	0	0	0
% 6-ways	0	0	0
Survivals	47.62	41.18	44.73
Eliminations	23.91	23.52	23.68

Germany builds 2 in W'01 (sample size=226)

	pbm	pbem	overall
% Wins	5.74	4.81	5.31
% 2-ways	6.56	11.54	8.85
% 3-ways	4.92	3.82	3.98
% 4-ways	6.56	1.92	4.42
% 5-ways	2.46	0	1.33
% 6-ways	0.82	0	0.44
Survivals	31.97	37.50	34.51
Eliminations	40.98	40.38	40.71

An interesting aside before I pursue my main point: Without regard to how Germany opens, I found that wins, eliminations and survivals are relatively even when comparing pbm with pbem, but there are more of the more inclusive draws in pbm as opposed to pbem (where the draws tend to include fewer players).

As to the question of whether or not to go for that third build (i.e. Belgium) while of course it depends on who you are playing with and how they are likely to react, the numbers cause me to recall the words of Joseph P.

Kennedy the first: "If there's cake on the table, eat it!" When Germany takes that third build in 1901 the chances of a win nearly double, and the percentage of eliminations is almost halved. Survivals are up almost a third when Germany ends 1901 at six centres as opposed to five. Good Things, defined as a draw or win, are up 25%. That being said, it is worth noting that even though outright wins are more frequent when Germany builds 3 in 1901, the better draws, i.e. 2-way or 3-way, are more likely when Germany is limited to 2 builds in 1901, so you may wish to consider what style of player you are.

Eliminations included, the average number of centres held at the end of the game are 5.66 when 3 centres are gained in 1901 compared to 4.52 for a two build Germany. One oddity the numbers reveal is that if you are going to take only two centres you are better off in a pbm game than a pbem game. For every result, except of course eliminations, the average number of centres held at the end of the game is higher for pbm than pbem.

What the numbers cannot reveal is why this is so. Perhaps a third build is indicative of a situation where England and France are going to go at it and the third SC is the price of Germany's favour. It could be that a strong Russia helps Germany's cause. Usually, Germany does not bounce at Sweden when Belgium is on the menu. No doubt there are other plausible explanations.

In researching this article I found a couple of things worth noting, just to demonstrate that the haircut's not over until the scissors have been up your nose. I spotted an instance of a German player who ended 1901 at a mere three centres who clawed his way to a 2-way draw and a similar situation ending in a 3-way. I also came across a game where a German player who ended 1932 (!) at 16 centres was reduced to zero by 1939, the last year of a game that ended with a 17/17 A/T. Clearly, nothing is certain when human beings are at work.

Very much aside, another odd thing I stumbled across was that I could not find a single example of a two-way E/R draw. Is Norway that much of an irritant? That sounds like a topic worth considering in a separate article. Any readers willing to take the bait and write one?

Douglas has been kind enough to reference a couple of earlier articles for me. "Winter 1901: The Three Build Opening" by Scott Morris concludes that Germany gains

nothing by taking three builds, but I will hide behind the fact that his sample size was 56 games as opposed to the 264 that were available to me.

“The Too Great German Empire Or how to get three builds in 1901 without getting bumped off in 1902” by Thomas van Dam (which originally appeared in Diplomacy World #88) compliments my article nicely. While he foregoes the statistics, he provides a thorough

overview of every other aspect of the situation.

[[Robert Lesco is the publisher of Northern Flame Volume 2, one of the old guard of postal zines which still remain afloat. A prior version of this article originally appeared in Northern Flame Volume 2, Number 78. The title was a lot funnier back then, depending on what radio station you listened to.]]

Luck in Diplomacy

By Robert Vollman

Some of you may find it strange that I would select luck as the topic of my first article for Diplomacy World. After all, Diplomacy is reportedly a game without random chance. Read some reviews of Diplomacy and you'll find quotes like these:

“Luck plays no part in Diplomacy.”

“There are no dice and there is no luck,”

“You don't have dice or a luck factor.”

Even the game description itself promotes the absence of fortune.

“In Diplomacy, your success hinges not on the luck of the dice, but your cunning and cleverness.”

While Diplomacy may not use dice, and while random chance may have no bearing on the outcome of conflicts, is it really accurate to say that luck plays no factor in Diplomacy? No!



The game begins with arguably the most important factor in any player's success: the initial draw for countries. And guess how they determine which player controls each country? By random chance.

For example, let's say you participated in two tournaments. In the first one, you drew Germany, Italy (twice) and Turkey. In the other you drew France, England, Austria and Russia. An experienced, skilled

player can win a tournament with either draw by incorporating the various strengths and weaknesses into his negotiation and strategy. But in general, can you guess which one of these “hypothetical” tournaments I won, and which one I finished middle of the pack?

More important than the country you draw are your neighbors. It's one thing to find yourself playing a weak central power, it's quite another to get stuck next to a dreaded arch enemy. Once again, skilled negotiators players can salvage almost any starting position, but it doesn't really matter how experienced you are; if you're in the first round of a World DipCon, draw Austria-Hungary, and both the Russian and Turkish players approach you saying that they're best friends and have allied together countless times, that's *bad luck*. By contrast, if you draw England and discover that France and Germany are arch enemies more interested in causing each other to fail than to succeed themselves, that's probably *good luck*.

In our local club there is a player named James who swears by fleets. He always builds fleets, regardless of which country he is playing or which alliances he's formed. A player is only as good as his options, and how many options would you have if you draw England while James drew Germany? We have another player named Steve who has played dozens of games and his longest-running alliance ever is 2 years. How would you like it if he drew France?

Even once you get past the initial draw, your game hasn't entirely overcome the influence of fortune. Even combat can be affected by luck. How many times have you found yourself guessing with one of your orders? Guess right and you've swung a key supply centre to your favor and broken the back of an opposing alliance. Guess wrong and you might lose your shot at a stalemate position. Use all the experience and intuition at your disposal if you wish, but sometimes it just comes down to a lucky guess.

I'd argue that luck touches almost every facet of the

game. Why? Because it involves real people with real lives, both of which present lots of opportunities for the gods of fortune to reveal themselves. What if your key ally has to leave suddenly due to a family emergency, and is replaced by a novice? Would you attribute that to anything other than luck? Are skilled, experienced players somehow more capable of avoiding or anticipating that?

If so, tell that to Rob Stephenson, who had to use precious negotiating time freeing a trapped bird during the 2007 World Dipcon in Vancouver, Canada. He finished 9th, mere decimal points away from the chance to compete in the final board. Would a more skilled or experienced Diplomat have freed the bird more quickly and gone on to win the world championship?

So we've established that luck plays a considerable role in Diplomacy, but so what? Does that make Diplomacy less realistic? Luck played a huge factor in the historical periods being simulated in a game of Diplomacy. A mistranslation could break apart an alliance, and bad weather could delay a critical communication. Napoleon himself was known to prefer lucky generals over those blessed with skill and talent.

Should luck's broad impact on the game detract from our enjoyment of Diplomacy? I don't think so at all. I think luck can make the game less predictable, and therefore far more enjoyable to play repeatedly.

Learn to take advantage of the fickle nature of luck. Here are my (lucky seven) tips on how to adjust your game to surf the tides of fortune.

1. Position yourself very flexibly, both militarily and

diplomatically, so you can react quickly to the tides of fortune.

2. Trust your instincts, and don't be afraid to write orders that carry a high reward should someone be subjected to a key distraction or miswritten order.

3. Talk to everyone regardless of the likelihood of them having valuable information. Be prepared to react to any news of a lucky break.

4. Don't put all your eggs in one basket, lest they all get scrambled. Spread yourself out so no single break can ruin you.

5. Keep your strategies and negotiations as simple as possible. Involving several people in an elaborate series of moves just exposes you to a greater chance of a really bad break.

6. Keep playing a hopeless position, leaving you open to take advantage of the great break that will come your way and turn things around.

7. Don't be discouraged when bad luck deprives you of any chance of surviving. Accept the role luck plays and enjoy the challenge of your predicament.

Diplomacy may not have dice, but it involves just as much luck as the board games that do. Adjust your mindset accordingly and remember that in Diplomacy, as with most board games, fortune favors the bold!

[[If you want to know how luck played a role in this article...well, I was lucky enough to have Robert submit it to Diplomacy World!]]

Vampire Recruiting

By Edi Birsan

The hobby needs to be always fed with new blood. The sitting back and waiting for new people to trickle in does not enhance your own diplomatic skills, and is rather boring. I prefer Vampire Recruiting, where you jump in there and grab the recruits by the throat and...well, I am getting a little off the vein of the approach that I was describing. Allow me to explain.

As a player, you should be able to walk up to a total stranger anyplace anywhere at any time and talk about the hobby, the game itself, and do so while projecting an enthusiasm strong enough to pull someone into the hobby. One of the funnier episodes of this was a game that we organized in a park in the San Francisco Bay Area. We found ourselves one player short. So I went around the park and asked every single person along the pathway if they were interested in playing. I managed to get 4 people to come up, including three

youngsters from Tonga who gave up playing soccer to play, and an Indian who was visiting his sister. I'll never forget my failed attempt to get a homeless person to play with us; he refused, because he had to go sell the bike he had stolen.

When a game is waiting, the key things to get across to the infusionees are:

1. It takes only 5 minutes to learn Diplomacy ((actually it takes 7 minutes, but after all this is Diplomacy, and they will soon learn that **everyone** lies)).
2. There are 6 people who are depending on them ((guilt trips are so successful that they are a permanent part of the genetic make-up of all mothers)).

3. It is a lot of fun to play Diplomacy playing WITH six others, where the emphasis is on the interaction of the players not so much the pieces.
4. The game has been around for 50 years and thousands of players are playing it right now. If the person is under 30, mention that it is played on the net. If they are over 50, say it was the creator of multi-player postal game play. If they are between 31 and 49, make something up that you think will persuade him based on clues from his attire, hand jewelry, or state of sobriety.

At game conventions, Vampire Recruiting is much more effective, because the audience is already steeped in gamers. So the chances of a good bite ... errr good contact is that much higher. There you will find that there are more players that have had some contact with Diplomacy, and have two classic crosses against the game. Here are those two objections (and one less common one at game convdentions), and their counters:

1. The game takes too long to play: We play with a timer, and each turn is 10 minutes or so. We complete a game in less than 4 hours usually. This is actually true in the Bay Area, which is shocking to most. Or if they come back and say they only have 2 hours then tell them "Hey, try it for a little while and then if you need to go we can get a replacement." Typically a player who does well will stay regardless, and weak players that screw up horribly and are hopeless will be dead in two hours anyway.
2. We can never find 7 players: Why this remains a common response when you are recruiting someone **to be the 7th player** I do not know, but it does. The answer is obvious: this is your lucky moment, as we are all here waiting for YOU. Ohm and by the way, I will teach a quick variant called Escalation that solves the less than 7 player problem.
3. I have heard of Diplomacy but I do not know how to play: See the first part of the article for the general population culling!

By Email, the recruiting is a little different. What you are trying to do here is work on existing web sites where players are testing the waters of the game already. Otherwise you are trying to pull people in from other game sites. To bring someone into the face-to-face hobby from the email side takes a two fang approach: "Where are you?", and "Who are you?" This is not as simple as it sounds. Back in July I took a pledge to work for one year in the email hobby's two biggest sites, in an attempt to bring people to the mainstream with a goal of

supporting the upcoming World DipCon Championship in Columbus Ohio (June 25 – 27, 2008). What I ran into is:

1. People do not want to use their own names online, and
2. People are seriously worried about Face-to-Face contacts. Youngsters have been so steeped in the idea of all these predators on-line, lurking after their bodies in a sexual context, that it makes it hard to get across that all you **really** want is their blood.

You have to be prepared to work every day in the Forums, looking for openings in posted comments that may allow you to go after people, and then direct them to local contacts. You need to have a bunch of local contacts around the world, and be able to have a list of world-wide events handy. You need to be able to address the two big crosses that the hobby carries as its burden: "Not enough time" and "Not enough players" (Remember the responses here? "How disappointing, play with a timer" and "Escalation for less than 7").



For people who want to form their own group, or for those that you contact on other game sites, the easy way to get people to learn the game from a web perspective is to direct them to the Diplomacy Teach videos already on You Tube (just put it in on their internal search engine). Alternately you could send the recruiter the basics of the teaching script, and a single page summary of the rules which is now available from me in English (shock and awe), French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Czech, and Chinese.

You may have to search your own contacts in the hobby to follow-up with people, as a lot of people do not live in a known area of social gamers. However, until the NADF/DAANZ/EDA get their acts together enough to respond quickly, **you** will have to take the position of the Master, pushing people in order to bring new recruits into the mainstream.

[[Edi Birsan has been a hobby member for centuries (so it seems), and he remains the driving force behind much of the hobby's recruitment and game education.]]

Some Notes on Worldwide Variant Designs

by Jack McHugh

Worldwide variants are a popular staple among Diplomacy variant designers. While different variants fall in and out of favor with each passing year, among the most popular worldwide variants at the moment are Imperial and World War IV (wwiv). They give players that overall sense of power that only conquering the world can give you. This is what makes a game like Risk so successful. Your boss maybe a jerk, and you may feel powerless in your everyday life, but there is nothing like having control of every large land mass on the planet to make you feel like you are in charge.

What makes for a successful worldwide variant? First, you have to keep it simple, since your players will generally be in charge of large numbers of units, usually 25 to 75. You do not want to bog your players down with lots of complicated rules. It is hard enough to keep track of 50 units without having to worry about a lot of special rules as well.

As I mentioned, one popular worldwide variant is Imperial. There are several versions starting at various points in history, usually in the 19th century, representing the height of European worldwide colonial dominance. Imperial is also unusual in that it departs from the usual "all powers are equal" set up of most Diplomacy variants. Here, certain powers clearly start out with many more units than others. Great Britain, for example, representing the height of Victorian England's worldwide empire, starts with 14 units. France has 9 units, Russia has 11 units, but Austria and Japan only have 4 units each.

Imperial has 13 players scattered over most of the globe with powers in Asia, North and South America. Only Africa doesn't have an indigenous power, but it makes up for that with lots of colonial holdings throughout the continent.

The number of players in a worldwide variant is an issue as well; how many is too many? I think that depends on the size of the map, and the number of centers. The number of centers is the most important item to be addressed, since that is what can make a game too large. In reality, however, that is limited to the tastes of the players and the GM. My personal opinion is that a map should not be larger than one hundred centers, so that one would only need about 50 to win.

A good variant in regard to size of the map and number of players which many current Diplomacy players seem unaware of is Colonia VII-B. This variant delivers a design that was developed by the late Fred Hyatt and John Cain. Fred ran Colonia in his well known postal zine The Home Office for many years, as well as hosting face-to-face gaming in his northern New Jersey home.

Colonia VII-B represents several years of play testing by Fred and other GMs, as Colonia (in its prior and current versions) was run in many postal zines in the 1970's and 1980's.

Colonia uses the feature of colonies to keep the number of players to only nine, yet still cover most of a worldwide map. There is only one new non-European player on the map - China - and three new European players: Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands. All of the new European powers have extensive colony holdings. Although the game was nominally based on the Seven Years' War in Europe, the designers were not above going beyond history for play balance. For example, the Ottoman's were given a fleet in Hawaii to start off, and Austria had an army in Surinam and fleet in That. None of these can be justified historically, but it allowed all of the European powers to have a non-European colonial empire holding.

The reasons for such changes were for play balance, as well as to encourage the various powers to communicate. A good worldwide design should not simply cut the world into blocs; it needs to give players a reason to talk to players from all over the map. One of the flaws I find in many worldwide Diplomacy designs is that it limits your discussion with anyone who is not a neighboring country. A good worldwide design will give you a reason to talk to someone who is not an immediate neighbor.

In a good worldwide variant, the stalemate lines should be hard to construct. So make sure there aren't too many small provinces that don't have many borders. In my opinion, this tends to be a problem with ocean zones. Once you've set up several large sea zones that border each other from north to south, they can be hard to break. Currently I am seeing this in my World War IV (WWIV) game start in Diplomaticcorp.com. I'm the UK, and the USA player and I face each other over the Atlantic; it is tough breaking through. We may end up waiting for another player to attack one of us from behind.

Another thing I cannot stress too much to new variant designers is play test, play test, play test...and when you think you're done, play test some more. It is difficult to be able to tell a good variant without significant play testing. The larger the map or the more complex the rules, the more this mantra is true.

A designer should not be afraid to tinker with his design, or hesitant to allow play testers to tinker themselves. Often the play testers have excellent ideas about the design, since they become intimately familiar with how the game unfolds and can offer the best feedback.

Any rules you do add should be limited to a few lines, and easily understood and interpreted. For example, the "wings" variant can be used easily, since it is straightforward; you can build wings in addition to armies and fleets. Wings can't take a center (although they can blockade it, to deny it to other players) and they can move on land and water. The "wings" rule is excellent for worldwide variants because it is a simple rule, and because it helps prevent stalemate lines. It gives players strategic options without weighing them down with lots of additional chrome.

I don't like chrome. Chrome are rules that make a game look or feel historical, without effecting play enough to justify their existence. An example of chrome is the rule for pillaging in my current game of Viking Dip on diplomacticorp.com (it isn't a worldwide variant, but I'm just using it as an example). The rule allows players to pillage supply centers, but gives them nothing in return for it. The unit that pillages gains nothing, the players gets nothing...all it does is reduce the number of centers on the map needed to win, and theoretically it denies an opposing player a build if you were about to lose the dot anyway.



So what's my issue with this rule? It adds nothing to the game beyond a rule. The gain one gets for pillaging the center, reducing the number of dots needed to win in exchange for removing a potential build for someone, simply isn't worth the effort. If you can afford to stop and pillage — since it does take a turn where your unit is tied up and can do nothing — you probably don't need to reduce the number of supply centers. Secondly, since you're holding the supply center when you pillage, you're losing a center when you do it (unless you were expecting to lose it in the near future), so, again, it's probably not worth it.

I like rule changes that give players additional powers. A good example of this is the current game of Haven on Diplomacticorp.com. There are 19 civilizations, and each has a special power. This spreads the rules among the players...each player only needs to know his personal rule, and the rule of the powers he's dealing

with.

For those readers that like a big rule and map variant, I recommend Final Conflict III: Tom Swider's World War III variant of worldwide conflict and nuclear war. It can be found in Diplomacy World #37, with a Demo Game in the issues that follow. Final Conflict features planes, economics and nuclear weapons. The map isn't terribly large: 91 land and 30 sea spaces, with 46 supply centers. It is a seven player game, and Tom says in his designer's notes the game should not take any longer to play than normal Diplomacy despite the increase in size.



I think the new rules, especially the economic and nuclear weapons rules, encourage interaction among the players. The economic rules allow players to save and trade money, although you are limited to \$3 per total worth of transactions per Winter turn (the only time you can transfer money).

Another good worldwide variant which gets overlooked is Small World II-R. This is another one of Fred C. Davis, Junior's variants. Small World rules are almost all map clarifications and special rules for the game, e.g. no one may attack India in 01, and whoever owns India may build in it as a home center. The game has 7 or 8 powers (depending on how you want to play it), with 27 home and 21 neutral centers, and requires only 24 to win. So it's an easy variant to play, letting you conquer the world without a planet-sized headache trying to keep all your units straight.

I suppose the moral of the story is that when it comes to Diplomacy variants, bigger is not necessarily better. Worldwide variants can be tremendously entertaining, and a great change of pace from the regular Diplomacy game. But they also offer potential pitfalls, and often you won't realize a worldwide variant is unbalanced or poorly designed until it's too late. So examine the variant carefully, and if you've got the time to spare, go ahead and give it a try. And don't be afraid to research some of the older, tried-and-true worldwide variants. Remember, new does not always mean improved!

[[Jack McHugh is the Diplomacy World variant editor.]]

Grand Prix Watch: ...And It's Haver by a Couple of Lengths

by Jim O'Kelley

Thomas Haver of Ohio ran down Andy "Buffalo" Bartalone of Maryland while winning the World Boardgaming Council in Lancaster, Penn., in August. He extended his lead by placing second a week later at GenCon in Indianapolis and never looked back.

Buffalo narrowed the gap with strong performances at the Buckeye Game Fest in Columbus, Ohio (fourth); the Tempest DipCon in D.C. (seventh); and Carnage in Fairlee, Vt. (third). He trailed by 62 points going into Weasel Moot, the final event held in Chicago in November. His comeback died there, however, as he finished 14th at the Moot to Haver's third.

Haver, who competed in 10 events, finished with a final score of 649.27. In addition to the WBC, he also won DixieCon in Chapel Hill, N.C., and placed second at the National Block Party in Louisville, Ky. He placed on the top boards at Origins in Columbus, Ohio, (seventh) and Carnage (fourth).

Buffalo competed in nine events, winning PrezCon in Charlottesville, Va., and placing second at Dixie and fourth at the Boston Massacre. His final score was 523.6 points.

The Grand Prix Announces Rules Changes for 2009

The rules have changed for the 2009 Grand Prix year. You can read all the rules online at diplom.org/~seattle/grandprix/gprules.htm. The most significant changes are:

Event Eligibility:

- 1) Tournaments must announce their intent to participate in the 2009 Grand Prix by December 31, 2008. (There will be a three-week grace period.) Tournaments may announce their intent by emailing Grand Prix Administrator Jim O'Kelley at jimthegrey1013 (at) yahoo (dot) com.
- 2) First-time tournaments will not be considered for the 2009 Grand Prix, nor will tournaments that have not been held within the past two years.

Event Qualification:

- 1) The event must feature a total of at least six boards over the three largest rounds.

Scoring:

- 1) Each player's cumulative score will consist of his or her highest scores from up to four qualifying tournaments.
- 2) Tournament Directors who play in their own tournaments will not receive any Grand Prix points.

Graham Woodring of New York led through the first five steps of the Grand Prix after finishing 14th at the BADAss Whipping in San Francisco. But he coughed up his lead with an 11th-place finish at Dixie followed by 12th at the Massacre.

Woodring rallied with a third-place finish at GenCon, but his slump continued through his next three events (Buckeye, Tempest and Carnage). He was already out of contention at Weasel Moot, his 10th event. He finished seventh there, for a final score of 389.85.

Carnage champion Dave Maletsky of D.C. finished fourth with a score of 357.99. Maletsky played in eight events. By Weasel Moot, his straw hat was badly battered. He'll need a new one for 2009.

Rounding out the top five was Adam Sigal of New York with a score of 349.8 in only four events. Sigal racked up huge scores with a second-place finish at HuskyCon in Long Island, N.Y., and third place at the Tempest DipCon. He could be the player to watch in 2009.

A total of 275 players competed in the 15 qualifying events. You can check out all their scores at Laurent Joly's excellent World Diplomacy Database website:

http://eurodip.nuxit.net/php/rencontre/affiche_circuit.php?id_circuit=82&lang=Anlg

Intimate Diplomacy Ia Rules

by Adrien Baird and Steve Doubleday



Introduction (By Steve Doubleday): Unlike most variants, this game has been widely played, even having had its own tournament with a cash prize. It is widely acclaimed as far superior to the two player game described in the official rules. It is, however, not suitable for players who are just getting to know Diplomacy, and two people wishing to learn the rules by playing should stick to the official version.

ID (Intimate Diplomacy) is a two-player variant. Each player controls one country (his "Home" country) for the entire game. The remaining five countries are known as "mercenaries".

The official rules of Diplomacy apply except where amended below.

- 1) To determine home countries, each player submits a preference list of seven countries. If their first choices are different, both players get their first choice. If their first choices are the same, but their second choices are different, then both players get their second choice. If the second choices are identical then each gets their third choice etc. If both preference lists are identical then the players draw lots with the winner getting their first choice and the loser their second choice.
- 2) Control of the five mercenary countries is determined each game year by bids. The bidding seasons occur before Spring 1901, and thereafter between each Winter and Spring season. Bids are written down and both players reveal them simultaneously. The highest bidder for each country has the size of their bid deducted from their reserve and gains control of that country for the following year --- including the winter adjustments.
- 3) Credits used for bidding are awarded following each Fall season. Each player is given one credit for each SC owned by his home country. (E.g., If your home country controls 10 SCs, 10 credits are added to your credit balance.) At the start of the game, countries have the following credit levels: E, F, R & T are given 20 credits, G

22, A & I 24. The difference in starting credits is to even out the relative strengths of the countries.

- 4) Players are permitted to bid more than their credit will cover. However, if a player's successfully bids more credits than they hold, they lose all their reserve and their opponent then gains control of all countries they bid for at half price, rounded up.
- 5) When bids for a country are equal, neither player controls it, and it is treated as if in Anarchy for the year.
- 6) Play is carried out exactly as in regular Diplomacy with each player submitting orders and retreats for the countries which they control. In the winter season, all builds due to neutral countries must be taken where they are possible. The sequence of play during one game-year is Bids, Spring moves and retreats, Autumn moves and retreats, Winter builds and disbandments.
- 7) Mercenary Builds: If the player controlling a Mercenary country fails to order builds which that country is due, the GM will build armies alphabetically in home centres (fleets for England).
- 8) Victory Criterion: The game ends when one player occupies one of their opponents home centres with one of their home country's units in any season. If this happens to both players simultaneously, then the player occupying the most home SCs of his opponent wins, with the exception that occupying 4 Russian home centres counts as no better than owning 3. If a tie remains, the game is won by the player with the largest credit balance (counting credits won during the season in which the home centres were invaded). If a tie still remains, the game continues until the next Fall, when all of the above are reconsidered.
- 9) A game may develop into a stalemate situation once all neutral countries have been eliminated with neither player being able to break through a defensive line to meet the standard victory conditions. In this case the winner is the player with the most supply centres. Note that unlike Diplomacy, a game does not end just because one country reaches 18 Supply centres.

Intimate Dip: A Series Replay *Rematch*

By Douglas Kent (*Bold Italics*) and Jack McHugh (Normal Font)

This is now my second time playing this variant, the first being for the Series Replay in Diplomacy World #101 against our Variant Editor, Jack McHugh. I learned a lot in that game, and despite winning it I know a big chunk of that was pure luck. Jack made one terrible move in Spring 1902 which allowed me to take Munich in the Fall and win the game. If he hadn't, while I believe I was better situated for an ultimate victory, anything could have happened.

So, after whining and moaning and begging and promising to be my toady for life (which he already was anyway), I agreed to let Jack give it another try. The variant requires you to consider a lot more than in normal Diplomacy, and I figure we both played like typical beginners. Against a seasoned Intimate Dip player, I doubt Jack or myself could have won. But I'm learning!

This time I will be a bit more guarded in my bidding. I overbid last game constantly. I may also spend 1 point here or there on secondary countries which I ignored before. Then again, Jack overbid too, so the odds are he'll try to manage his funds better...which suggests that I might be able to sneak in with a fast victory again, depending on who I play.

The other thing I need to do is learn to look ahead to the idea of who will control a country next. By that I mean it is dangerous to leave "neutral" units hanging around me when I control them, because if I lose control the following year those units can suddenly be turned against me! I think Jack mentioned learning that lesson in his end-game comments last game too. So we're both gaining experience, and our strategy will be that much better this time around.

First, though, we need to submit our preference lists. In Game One we both wound up with central powers: Jack had Germany, and I had Austria. This game, perhaps I would do better to take France or Turkey. That will be my plan...with Russia 3rd and Germany 4th.

My strategy in this game will be to not be as aggressive as the last game. So my preference list will be slanted toward countries on the edge of the board, notably Russia and France. Although these countries get lower points, only 20 rather than the 22 Germany or 24 that Italy and Austria receive, France and Russia still have good access to the board without the risks a central power runs. Here is my preference list: RFETGAI. I don't think I'll have to worry about not getting my first two choices, since I think Doug will stick with taking a center power as he did last game (since he won it in 1902).

Preference Lists:

Jack RFETGAI
Doug FTRGAIE

So this time it's France versus Russia. Interesting.

Obviously Germany is a primary concern for me, both because through Germany is the fastest way for me to get a French unit in Russia and because of all the potential border conflicts between Germany and either France or Russia. England too, for that matter, although I don't see her as quite the 1901 dynamo in this game.

Last game we both bid very high, so this time I think I will try and play it a bit more conservative. If I get Germany and/or Austria I can cause Jack some growth problems in the first year, helping to limit his finances. I'm also going to toss in a few mercy bids on Turkey, England, and Italy, You never know! My overall strategy is simply to get Iberia and, if possible, Belgium or Munich. I also want to bother Jack, and set things up for 1902.

I got France and Doug got Russia which means we both have 20 points to bid with so neither of us has the advantage there. This will be an interesting game as neither of us is near the other so we're going to have to count on a longer war. This means I will be much more conservative bidding to try and save points for later turns.

Russia has one extra unit but a lot more neighbors—everyone but Italy can get to Russia. On the other hand only Germany and Britain can do serious damage to France. Italy will need time to develop for Italy to threaten France.

I bid as follows: England: 4, Germany: 4, Italy: 1, Austria: 2, Turkey: 2

I have only bid a possible 13 of my 20 points if I win all five bids, which I think is highly unlikely. I expect to get England or Germany and Italy but not Austria or Turkey.

My theory with regards to the amounts on Germany and England can hurt either of us so they are worth more to both of us and will require more points to win.

Austria and Turkey can only hurt the Russian, so I bid a bit less to save points. I also am counting on Doug having to bid more for them, so let him win them and burn his points; then later I can pick them up on the cheap when he is out of points to bid.

On Italy I am basically assuming Doug won't bid or bid very low since Italy can only hurt me. As I stated before, Italy's poor position vis-à-vis France and the need to conserve points for more important countries should let me pick up Italy on the cheap.

Bids:

Doug – Old balance = 20. Germany 4, Austria 3, England 1, Turkey 1, Italy 1. Controls Austria, spends 3, new balance 17.

Jack – Old Balance = 20. England 4, Germany 4, Austria 2, Turkey 2, Italy 1. Controls England and Turkey, spends 6. New balance 14.

Very interesting results, as both Germany and Italy remain in Anarchy for this turn (when players bid equally, nobody wins control of them for that year). Jack gets Turkey and England, while I get Austria. England won't be a problem: I can just order my army Paris – Picardy and then decide where to go from there, as I expect him to move to the Channel. I think it serves me best to take Spain with my fleet. Or maybe not? Perhaps I'd do better to bounce him in the Channel twice, in order to avoid any problems going forward if he controls England next year too? I can always take Spain and Portugal with my armies.

Austria will, of course, move on Russia immediately, ordering to Rum and Gal with the armies, and Albania with the fleet. Actually, on second thought, I think it might be better if I support myself into Gal. Jack is going to open to Rum, Ukr, and Gal without question, and I am better served if his unit in Rum is his fleet. Then in the Fall Austria gets either Ser or Gre, as Turkey can't block me out of both in the same year.

This looks like fun.

Wow, Doug bids more aggressively than I anticipated but I still manage to get two of the four countries, England (2) and Turkey (4) and Doug gets Austria (5). Surprisingly, we bounce over Italy (1) and Germany (4). Doug bid more aggressive than I anticipated on Germany and Austria but about what I expected everywhere else.

The good news for me is that I control one of the countries that border on France and the other two are in anarchy. This means that I can play very aggressively against France and force Doug to protect his home dots.

On my side of the board, I also control one of the three countries that border on Russia and the other is in anarchy. If Doug had gotten control of Germany that would have been a lot worse for me although by getting

England I helped offset that possibility.

Doug controls Austria which borders on Russia. I was planning to neutralizing Austria with Germany or vice-versa, but I didn't get Germany. Doug bid a bit higher on A/G than I anticipated. I never thought he would go as high as 4 on both countries, but he did.

I'd know what I would do if I were Doug—I'd get French units into Germany ASAP to remove the threat from Germany and pick up dots for France. The question is how can I best use England to distract Doug from Germany and make his life miserable?

Spring 1901 Results:

Austria: A Budapest Supports A Vienna – Galicia, F Trieste – Albania, A Vienna - Galicia.

England: F Edinburgh - North Sea, A Liverpool – Wales, F London - English Channel (*Bounce*).

France: F Brest - English Channel (*Bounce*), A Marseilles – Spain, A Paris - Gascony.

Germany: A Berlin, no move received, F Kiel, no move received, A Munich, no move received.

Italy: F Naples, no move received, A Rome, no move received, A Venice, no move received.

Russia: A Moscow – Sevastopol, F Sevastopol - Black Sea, F St Petersburg(sc) - Gulf of Bothnia, A Warsaw - Galicia (*Fails*).

Turkey: F Ankara Hold, A Constantinople – Bulgaria, A Smyrna - Constantinople.

Okay, I'm rather at a loss on what my strategy should be here, but I took Galicia so that's something. I almost expect Jack to support England into the Channel in the Fall. If he is going to do that, why shouldn't I just move to Mid and leave it open for a build? Spain and Portugal are done deals obviously. My placement of my fleet is all that matters.

Looking forward to next year, if I control England I can use any F Ech to convoy units across into England proper. That'll come in handy! And since Jack was kind enough to move the English army to Wales, I do not need to fear any amphibious invasion of Belgium in the Fall. They can take it with a Fleet, but nothing else.

On the western front, I'll be moving to Greece and Serbia. Turkey can only bounce Austria out of one of those. And I think I'll try to sneak into Ukraine instead of the direct attack on Warsaw. There's really no shot of stopping Rumania unless Jack chooses to bounce Sev and War in Ukr and move

into Rum unsupported (as the Turkish A Bul will presumably be on the move). Not a lot of options at this point. It seems like bidding properly next year will be the most important thing. It just worked out that I have no controlled units near my homeland to worry about, since Germany and Italy are in anarchy this year. That saves me one headache!

My moves were not as successful as I had hoped. I moved English A Yor-Wal which does move it out of harms way. I don't want it convoying to Nwy if Doug gets control of England but it also means I have no useful place to move it as Doug bounced me out of Eng. I did get F Edi-Nth and might move F Nth-Bel and F Lon-Eng. I don't expect this last move to work but it will keep Doug from opening Bre for a build. This will keep all English units as far west as possible.

Turkey's move was boring, just moved her armies up to Con and Bul while F Ank held to allow Russia to take Bla. This turn I will move F Ank-Bon and A Con-Smy while A Bul s A Sev-Rum.

Russia will move A War (which was bounced by Austria's move to Gal with Bud's support) to Gal, A Sev-Rum (with Turkish A Bul support), F Bla-Ank, and F Gob-Swe. This will give Russia 3 builds no matter what Doug does, as I will get Ank, Swe & Rum.

I see France as picking up two builds in Spa and Por but hopefully he'll go for Eng and won't be able to build any fleets.

Overall I'd say I'm pleased with my first year.

Fall 1901 Results:

Austria: F Albania – Greece, A Budapest – Serbia, A Galicia - Ukraine.

England: F London Supports F North Sea - English Channel, F North Sea - English Channel, A Wales Hold.

France: F Brest - Mid-Atlantic Ocean, A Gascony – Spain, A Spain - Portugal.

Germany: A Berlin, no move received, F Kiel, no move received, A Munich, no move received.

Italy: F Naples, no move received, A Rome, no move received, A Venice, no move received.

Russia: F Black Sea – Ankara, F Gulf of Bothnia – Sweden, A Sevastopol – Rumania, A Warsaw - Galicia.

Turkey: F Ankara – Constantinople, A Bulgaria Supports A Sevastopol – Rumania, A Constantinople - Smyrna.

Ownership of supply centers:

Austria: Budapest, Greece, Serbia, Trieste, Vienna = 5, Build 2
England: Edinburgh, Liverpool, London = 3, Even
France: Brest, Marseilles, Paris, Portugal, Spain = 5, Build 2
Germany: Berlin, Kiel, Munich = 3, Even
Italy: Naples, Rome, Venice = 3, Even
Russia: Ankara, Moscow, Rumania, Sevastopol, St Petersburg, Sweden, Warsaw = 7, Build 3
Turkey: Bulgaria, Constantinople, Smyrna = 3, Even
Unowned: Belgium, Denmark, Holland, Norway, Tunis.

Things turned out as expected. I get my two builds, and I have a fleet in Mid for next year which can move in either direction, depending on who control the English.

Jack made a good move taking Ankara. But if I can gain Turkey next year, he won't be holding it for long. Austria will have two more armies facing his units, but again whether those move east or west depends entirely on who controls Austria.

My big dilemma for the winter is whether it is necessary to build a fleet in Brest. That's really going to slow me down moving towards Jack, tying up two units to defend my coastal centers. But if I control England, the unit is somewhat worthless. Then again, if Jack gets Germany, I'll need the extra army. I think the needs of my land campaign outweigh any naval needs. I'll build armies in Par and Mar, and then after the bids I'll just direct forces as necessary.

I built three armies in War, Mos and Sev. My short term goal is to surround the Austrian A Ukr and then move on to a proper destruction of Germany & Austria. Without these two countries my position is much more secure assuming Russia can pick up those centers. It will remove countries that can be recruited against me as well as allow me to get over the stalemate line of Nwy-Ska-Den-Kie-Mun-Tyr-Tri.

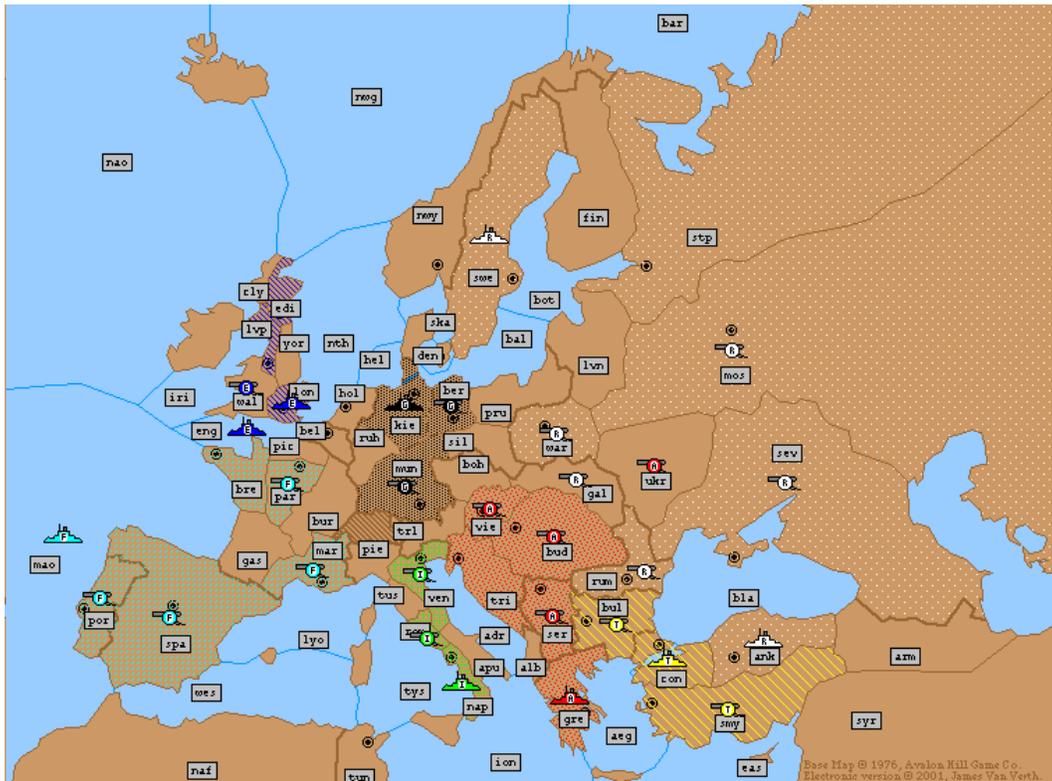
Winter 1901 Results:

Austria: Build A Budapest, Build A Vienna.

France: Build A Paris, Build A Marseilles.

Russia: Build A Warsaw, Build A Moscow, Build A Sevastopol.

France gets 5 points, giving him a new balance of 22
Russia gets seven points, giving him a new balance of 21



The Map After Winter 1901

Okay, I've got 22 points to spend, Austria marching toward Jack, and England bugging the hell out of me. What to do?

I need Germany and Austria this turn, and Italy would be good too. I think it's time to spend a bit more. My bids therefore will be more aggressive.

I bid as follows: Germany 5 points, Austria: 3 points, England: 2 points, Italy: 2 points, Turkey: 1 point

My reasoning is as follows; Germany is still useful to both of us so we both should bid high for it. Against a bolder bidder I would probably bid 6 or 7 for Germany but so far Doug has shown that he is a cautious bidder so I expect he won't bid higher than 4 or 5.

Austria isn't nearly as useful to me now that her units were moved out of position by Doug last year. I also think I have the Austrians under control. The only real danger here is that Doug gets Austria and Germany—that would be bad for me. Not catastrophic because Germany was in civil disorder (CD) last turn so Germany's units need a couple of moves to get to Russia.

England is still useful but she is less valuable without Germany as Doug will make it difficult for me to get the English A Wales onto the continent. The English fleets are out of position to do much more than convoy the English army. Given all that, I'm not sure Doug will bid much so I'm hoping my low bid will of 2 points will get

me England.

Italy's bid is mostly a token bid. I expect Doug to bid 4 on Italy but I could be wrong and I don't want to overbid on Italy. I also don't find Italy terribly useful right now. I think would want Italy later once I crush Austria and Turkey and then I will want Italy to move out of my way so I can get to France.

I don't think Doug will bid much for Turkey so I will gamble and bid low. I don't think Turkey can hurt me that much so now that I am in Ank so I'm willing to risk losing it.

Doug's Bids: Germany 5, Austria 5, England 2, Italy 3, Turkey 1. Jack's Bids: Germany 5, Austria 3, England 2, Italy 2, Turkey 1.

France (Doug) controls Austria and Italy, spends 8, now has 14 credits.

Russia (Jack) controls nothing, keeps 21 credits. Germany, England, and Turkey are all in anarchy.

Wow, it's almost crazy the way we seem to be bidding alike this time. Last game we were all over the map, either overbidding or underbidding. I can see that we're both correcting for those mistakes, and wind up right in the middle of everything.

My French moves are simple: swing south to pick up Tun with my fleet, march into Belgium in the Fall,

and take Venice from my new friends the Italians. I was tempted to consider convoying an army to North Africa and taking Tunis with that, but I need units in position to attack Italy again next year, or to defend against it if Jack bids for it.

Italy will simply move out of the way, going to Apu, Tus, and Ion. I wish I could take two Italian home centers, but there is simply no way to reach them.

Austria is left with a bit of a crapshoot. I was going to try and take Rumania in the Spring, but I think I need to hold the line and take Bulgaria first. Too many ways for things to go wrong. The Austrian A Ukr won't be around much longer, so I need to move while I can.

Jack only has Russia to worry about. Hmm, you know what? On second thought, Italy will move to Tyrolia, in case I decide to take Munich in the Fall. If Jack moves on Germany, I can support Munich from Tyrolia, or if he doesn't, I can support myself INTO Munich and leave Bel and Hol for another time.

Doug bid a bit higher than I expected on Austria but not Germany. I never thought Doug would bid as high as five for Austria. I thought he might tie me or even beat me for Germany. I thought he would go for Germany big and Austria less so given that Germany is France's (Doug's) neighbor and Austria is Russia (my) neighbor

I'm also shocked he bid at all on Turkey and beat me on Italy. I thought he would bid zero on Turkey and one for Italy since I didn't think Turkey was of any use to him given where I put its units at the end of last year. I also thought he would let me have Italy since the country isn't much use to either of us at this point.

Spring 1902 Results:

Austria: A Budapest Supports A Vienna – Galicia, F Greece - Bulgaria(sc), A Serbia Supports F Greece - Bulgaria(sc), ~~A Ukraine – Rumania~~ (*Disbanded*), A Vienna - Galicia.

England: F English Channel, F London, A Wales, no move received.

France: A Marseilles – Piedmont, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean - Western Mediterranean, A Paris – Burgundy, A Portugal – Spain, A Spain - Marseilles.

Germany: A Berlin, F Kiel, A Munich, no move received.

Italy: F Naples - Ionian Sea, A Rome – Naples, A Venice - Tyrolia.

Russia: F Ankara - Black Sea, A Galicia – Ukraine, A Moscow Supports A Galicia – Ukraine, A Rumania Supports A Galicia – Ukraine, A Sevastopol Supports A

Galicia – Ukraine, F Sweden, no move received, A Warsaw Supports A Galicia - Ukraine.

Turkey: ~~A Bulgaria, no move received~~ (*Disbanded*), F Constantinople, A Smyrna, no move received.

The Spring went about as expected. Since Jack didn't move on Germany, I'll support myself into Munich, and take Tunis and Venice. The bigger France gets, the better. I wish there was something I could do about Jack grabbing dots, like Den or Norway, but there isn't. And Austria can't take any of Jack's centers in Russia. So this whole year is somewhat of a disappointment.

This year I'm playing defense. I want to pick up centers on the edge, in Scandinavia and against the Turkey while holding the line against Austria/Italy in the middle.

Fall 1902 Results:

Austria: A Budapest Supports A Galicia – Rumania, F Bulgaria(sc) Supports A Galicia - Rumania (*Fails*), A Galicia - Rumania (*Bounce*), A Serbia Supports F Bulgaria(sc).

England: F English Channel, F London, A Wales, no move received.

France: A Burgundy – Munich, A Marseilles – Piedmont, A Piedmont – Venice, A Spain – Gascony, F Western Mediterranean - Tunis.

Germany: A Berlin, F Kiel, no move received, ~~A Munich~~ no move received (*Disbanded*).

Italy: F Ionian Sea - Aegean Sea, A Naples – Apulia, A Tyrolia Supports A Burgundy - Munich.

Russia: F Black Sea Supports A Rumania – Bulgaria, A Moscow – Warsaw, A Rumania - Bulgaria (*Fails*), A Sevastopol - Rumania (*Bounce*), F Sweden – Norway, A Ukraine Supports A Sevastopol – Rumania, A Warsaw - Silesia.

Turkey: F Constantinople, A Smyrna, no move received.

Ownership of supply centers:

Austria: Budapest, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, Trieste, Vienna = 6, Build 2

England: Edinburgh, Liverpool, London = 3, Even

France: Brest, Marseilles, Munich, Paris, Portugal, Spain, Tunis, Venice = 8, Build 3

Germany: Berlin, Kiel = 2, Even

Italy: Naples, Rome = 2, Remove 1

Russia: Ankara, Moscow, Norway, Rumania, Sevastopol, St Petersburg, Sweden, Warsaw. = 8, Build 1

Turkey: Constantinople, Smyrna = 2, Even

Unowned: Belgium, Denmark, Holland.

My problem for now is that Jack has 7 more points than me to spend in this coming year. Hopefully I can keep him off my back. In the meantime, for

Winter, I'll build F Bre and F Mar to go along with my A Par. This will give me a solid line of defense against a potentially hostile England. Austria will build 2 armies, and will likely get my major point allocation. Italy will remove A Apulia...if I am lucky I can keep Italy too, grab those extra dots in Rome or Naples, and still use A Tyr to my advantage. Unless I get incredibly lucky, Germany is going to be Jack's next year, so my little Munich excursion cannot survive the spring unless I control Italy and Austria.

We'll see. I'm happy with the progress I've made, but I do not feel overly optimistic about how this game is going to turn out.

The goal here is to simply get the toadies out of Russia and set up a nice defense line. I figure I can build a fleet

in St P(nc) and try and go after France that way.

The move basically worked but I think I need to get Austria next turn just to move all those armies away from me and get some dots for Russia.

Winter 1902 Results:

Austria: Build A Vienna, Build A Trieste.

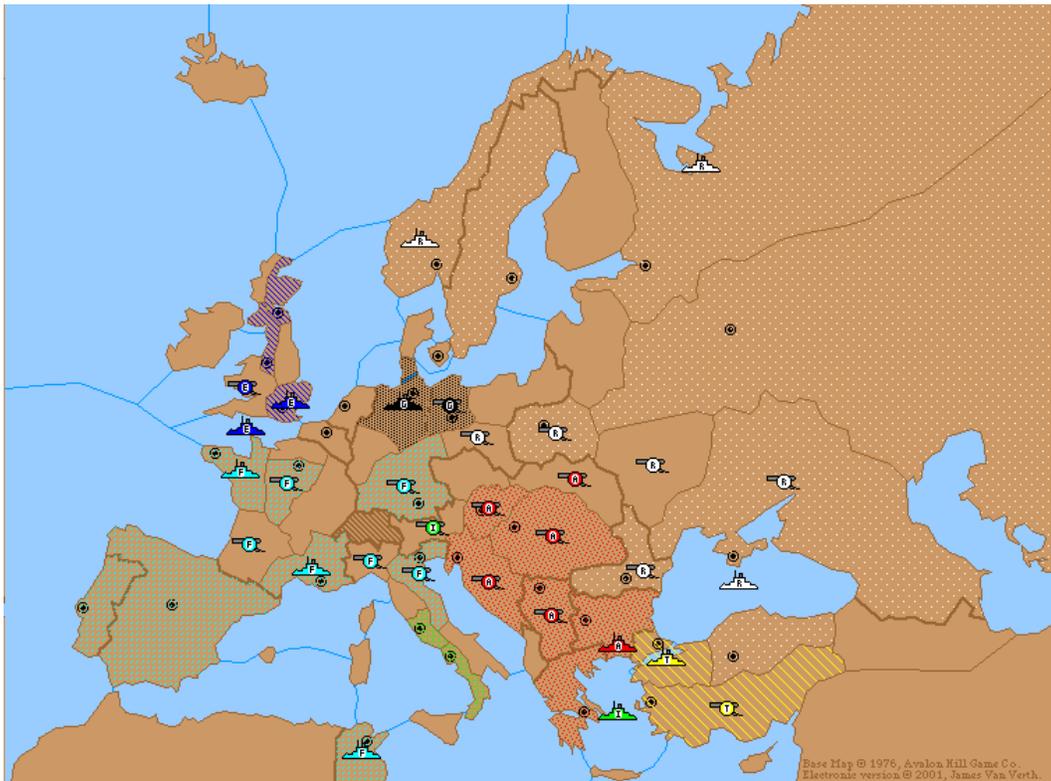
France: Build F Brest, Build F Marseilles, Build A Paris.

Italy: Remove A Apulia.

Russia: Build F St Petersburg(nc).

France gets 8 points, giving him 22.

Russia gets 8 points, giving him 29.



Map After Winter 1902

Here is where the hard part really starts. I think I can sneak in and control Italy with a low bid of 2 or 3. Turkey does nothing for me, but maybe I should bid 2 there anyway. Austria is the real necessity if I am going to bug Jack this year. He can have England; I'm hoping he bids high, figuring I'll try to stop him, but in case he doesn't I'll bid 2 or 3 there too. Germany? Not much there, but I'll bid low.

My logic is that Doug usually bids low on countries unless he thinks I'm bidding on them and then bids higher. His bidding pattern is that he is usually afraid to bid too much on any one country and likes to bid no more than half his points.

France bids 3 for Italy, 2 for Turkey, 2 for Germany, 3 for England, and 6 for Austria. Russia bids 4 for Italy, 3 for Turkey, 3 for Germany, 2 for England, and 6 for Austria.

France controls England, and is left with 19.

Russia controls Italy, Turkey, and Germany, and is left with 19.

Austria is in anarchy.

Damn, this sucks. I get England, so maybe I can cause Jack some trouble there, but without Austria

to move around he is going to screw everything up. Munich is now officially a lost cause.

I'm going to try and get into the North Sea from London, take Belgium from the Channel so I can move there from Brest, and see what else I can do. Jack can grab Turkey's centers if he's smart. At least I should be able to take one or two of Italy's dots so France will get some kind of growth. I'll be interested to see how much time Jack spends attacking Austria, and how much he spends ignoring Austria.

Here it pays off as I get Italy, Turkey and Germany and we tie on Austria and he gets England. I thought he might bid higher on England but I wanted to save the points for Germany and Italy.

My goal here is to simply get my Russian armies as close to France as possible while keeping German centers out of French hands as long as possible. I'm also just trying to get Turkey out of Russia's way as she takes more dots and slow down anyone else like Italy from moving East.

Spring 1903 Results:

Austria: A Budapest, F Bulgaria(sc), A Serbia, A Trieste, A Vienna, no move received, A-Galicia, no move received (*Disbanded*).

England: F English Channel – Belgium, F London - North Sea (*Bounce*), A Wales - Liverpool.

France: F Brest - English Channel, A Gascony – Burgundy, F Marseilles – Piedmont, A Munich – Kiel, A Paris – Picardy, A Piedmont – Venice, F Tunis - Ionian Sea, A Venice - Rome.

Germany: A Berlin Supports A Silesia – Munich, F Kiel - Holland.

Italy: F Aegean Sea – Greece, A Tyrolia Supports A Silesia - Munich.

Russia: F Black Sea Convoys A Sevastopol – Constantinople, F Norway - North Sea (*Bounce*), A Rumania Supports A Ukraine – Galicia, A Sevastopol – Constantinople, A Silesia – Munich, F St Petersburg(nc), no move received, A Ukraine – Galicia, A Warsaw - Silesia.

Turkey: F Constantinople - Aegean Sea, A Smyrna - Armenia.

Okay, well I lost Munich, but fortunately Jack left Kiel open. In fact, by trying to move to the North Sea instead of Sweden, I can now also move to Denmark if I choose. Or, I can support myself into Holland. Lots of choices there. If I take Kiel, I can support myself into Belgium and gain even more centers.

On the southern front, Rome is mine, and I can guarantee Naples too. The question is whether to grab the dot from land – leaving Venice unguarded – or from the sea, leaving the Ionian empty. It's likely that Jack will coordinate support between the Italian and Turkish fleets to take the Ionian anyway, but one or both of those nations could be gone by the end of this year. So I think I'll take Naples with the fleet. That means I can move Ven-Tyr, either cutting support or slipping in. There's still a chance I can control Munich.

I'm growing, but only as fast as Jack. Next year I NEED Austria!

Not a bad turn for the bear, as I manage to get into Gal and Sil. In south I manage to convoy my army into Con where it can keep any other fleets from entering the Bla.

My moves here are fairly conventional—I am just trying to keep the Russian steamroller moving. My allies are simply supporting that. The Italians are trying to hold everyone else out of the Ion/Aeg area and the Germans are hanging on to Hol while helping me into Mun/Ber.

Fall 1903 Results:

Austria: A Budapest, no move received (*Disbanded*), F Bulgaria(sc) no move received (*Disbanded*), A Serbia, A Trieste, A Vienna, no move received.

England: F Belgium – Holland (*Disbanded*), A Liverpool – Clyde, F London - North Sea (*Bounce*).

France: A Burgundy - Munich (*Bounce*), F English Channel Supports A Picardy – Belgium, F Ionian Sea – Naples, A Kiel – Denmark, A Picardy – Belgium, F Piedmont - Gulf of Lyon, A Rome Hold, A Venice - Tyrolia (*Fails*).

Germany: A Berlin Supports A Munich – Kiel, F Holland Supports A Munich - Kiel (*Cut*).

Italy: F Greece Supports F Aegean Sea - Ionian Sea, A Tyrolia Supports A Silesia - Munich (*Cut*).

Russia: F Black Sea Supports A Constantinople – Bulgaria, A Constantinople – Bulgaria, A Galicia Supports A Rumania – Budapest, A Munich – Kiel, F Norway - North Sea (*Bounce*), A Rumania – Budapest, A Silesia - Munich (*Bounce*), F St Petersburg(nc) - Barents Sea.

Turkey: F Aegean Sea - Ionian Sea, A Armenia - Syria.

Ownership of supply centers:

Austria: Serbia, Trieste, Vienna = 3, Even

England: Edinburgh, Liverpool, London = 3, Build 1

France: Belgium, Brest, Denmark, Marseilles, Munich, Naples, Paris, Portugal, Rome, Spain, Tunis, Venice = 12, Build 3

Germany: Berlin, Holland = 2, Even

Italy: Greece = 1, Remove 1
Russia: Ankara, Budapest, Bulgaria, Kiel, Moscow,
Norway, Rumania, Sevastopol, St Petersburg,
Sweden, Warsaw = 11, Build 3
Turkey: Constantinople, Smyrna = 2, Even

England: Build F Edinburgh.

France: Build A Paris, Build F Marseilles, Build F Brest.

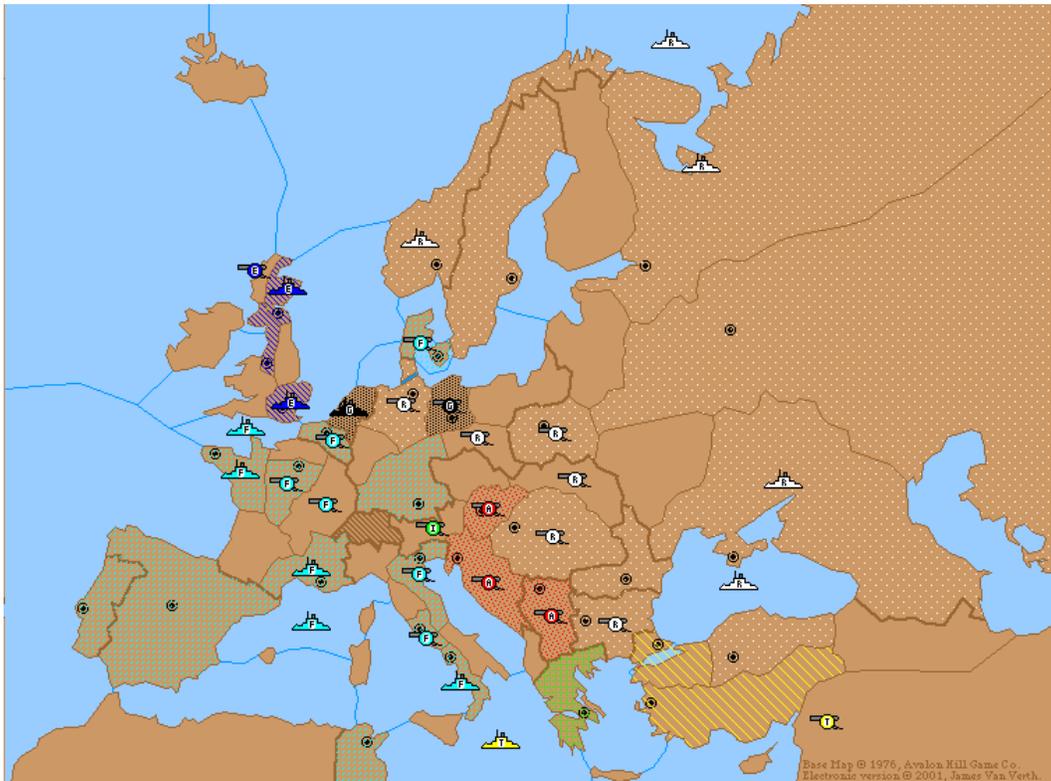
Italy: Remove F Greece.

Russia: Build F St Petersburg(nc), Build F Sevastopol,
Build A Warsaw.

France gets 12 points, now has 31

Russia gets 11 points, now has 30

Winter 1903 Results:



The Map After Winter 1903

I think it is time to start spending again. I'm going to bid for everybody and see what happens. Germany would come in handy, and so would Italy. If I had Turkey then Jack wouldn't get any quick builds from the Sultan. And of course Austria and England are needed to push Jack backwards. I need to get a decent hold on German territory, so I can find a way to get into Warsaw soon.

At this point Russia (me) is at 11 centers and Doug (France) is at 12 and we've reduced all the other powers to 2 or 3 centers, except Italy who is down to one. What was crucial this winter was that England got to build a F Edi which made England a lot more valuable to France than to me (Russia).

Doug has 31 points to bid with and I have 30 points so we're almost even here.

France bids 2 for Italy, 2 for Turkey, 3 for Germany, 7 for England, and 9 for Austria. Russia bids 1 for Italy, 2 for Turkey, 3 for Germany, 6 for England, and 6 for Austria

Russia controls nobody, has 30.

France controls Italy, England, and Austria, spends 18, has 13.

Okay, time for some fun. I'll support myself into Munich, try to swing into the North Sea, get ready to take the Ionian in the Fall, attack Budapest, and march into Trieste. I need to decide what to do with my unit in Denmark. Moving to Kiel would be a way to cut support, while if I move to Sweden I have a chance to attack Norway in the Fall. I spent too much, so I need to grab every dot I can, because Jack is going to be able to outspend me with ease

next year. Grab dots, grow, and position myself (and the neutrals). That has to be my focus.

I didn't expect Doug to bid on Turkey or Italy at all and I thought the big fight would be over England and Austria. I didn't expect Doug to bid on Germany since he had a fleet in Hol and an army in Ber. Based on his past bidding I thought Doug would cede Germany to me to concentrate his points on Austria and England.

I was wrong on two counts, one Doug did bid more on Austria and England than I anticipated and he also bid on Germany, a lot more than the one or two points I thought he would. This was an example of good bidding by Doug and bad bidding by me.

Since points in Intimate Dip are a depreciating asset and the longer the game goes on the less they are worth. Thus the bidding becomes inflationary rather quickly even as the countries get smaller and control fewer units. This means Doug correctly estimated the value of his points while I did not.

Why is this? There are two main reasons. The first is that as each player is capturing more and more centers she is gaining more and more points, thus each point becomes worth less and less since there are a fixed number of assets, e.g. the countries in the game, being bid on by an increasing number of points.

Second, the points are worth nothing at the end of the game so it doesn't pay to have points in reserve as the game comes to a close. Of course, the trick here is to know when the game is coming to a close so that you're not caught with too few points.

Spring 1904 Results:

Austria: A Serbia Supports A Trieste – Budapest, A Trieste – Budapest, A Vienna Supports A Trieste - Budapest.

England: A Clyde Hold, F Edinburgh - Norwegian Sea (*Bounce*), F London Supports F English Channel - North Sea.

France: A Belgium – Ruhr, F Brest - English Channel, A Burgundy – Munich, A Denmark – Sweden, F English Channel - North Sea, F Gulf of Lyon - Tyrrhenian Sea, F Marseilles - Gulf of Lyon, F Naples Hold, A Paris – Burgundy, A Rome – Venice, A Venice - Trieste.

Germany: A Berlin, no move received (*Disbanded*), F Holland, no move received.

Italy: A Tyrolia Supports A Burgundy - Munich.

Russia: F Barents Sea - Norwegian Sea (*Bounce*), F Black Sea – Constantinople, A Budapest, no move received (*Disbanded*), A Bulgaria – Rumania, A Galicia – Bohemia, A Kiel – Berlin, F Norway – Skagerrak, F

Sevastopol, no move received, A Silesia Supports A Kiel – Berlin, F St Petersburg(nc) – Norway, A Warsaw - Galicia.

Turkey: F Ionian Sea, A Syria, no move received.

Jack played his moves around Norway rather well, so I'm going to have to decide what is my best strategy here. Unfortunately I cannot take Holland from Germany – that will have to wait until next year. There's simply no way to do it.

It is very tempting for me to give up the North Sea and sail into Edi, taking the English center before it likely becomes Jack's puppet next year. I've already decided to do so from Ech to London. But I think it is more important to keep both Denmark and Sweden. The more Russian dots I can grab this year, the better. With Jack's monetary dominance after my spending spree, all I can hope to do is close that gap by making as much of the map French as possible.

A lot of the southern action is a guessing game this season. Whether I should move to Rum or Bul or Gre; do I support Munich with Tyrolia or march on Bohemia; should I support an attack on Gal...so many guesses. It is probably best to leave Bulgaria alone, as Jack might bounce himself there. Or he may move Con-Bul which would mean if I don't advance on Bul, Jack doesn't keep Con after all. Then again, a lot of it depends on the second-guessing aspect; what does Jack think I'm going to do based on what I think he's going to do?

At least I'll have the Ionian Sea, and the Turkish fleet will be out of the way.

I am just playing for position at this point. Since I have lost the bidding badly I am just trying to hand on through the year. Losing England was what killed me. With that F Edi build, I should have bid 12 points on England at least so that I could redeploy it to Cly and then Iri.

Fall 1904 Results:

Austria: A Budapest Supports A Vienna (*Cut*), A Serbia – Greece, A Vienna Supports A Tyrolia - Bohemia.

England: A Clyde Hold, F Edinburgh - Norwegian Sea, F London - Yorkshire.

France: A Burgundy Supports A Munich, F English Channel – London, F Gulf of Lyon - Tyrrhenian Sea, A Munich, no move received, F Naples Supports F Tyrrhenian Sea - Ionian Sea, F North Sea – Norway, A Ruhr - Kiel (*Bounce*), A Sweden Supports F North Sea – Norway, A Trieste Supports A Budapest, F Tyrrhenian Sea - Ionian Sea, A Venice - Tyrolia.

Germany: F Holland, no move received.

Italy: A Tyrolia - Bohemia.

Russia: F Barents Sea - St Petersburg(nc), A Berlin - Kiel (*Bounce*), A Bohemia - Vienna (*Disbanded*), F Constantinople - Bulgaria(sc), A Galicia - Budapest (*Fails*), F Norway Supports F Skagerrak - North Sea (*Dislodged*, retreats to Skagerrak), A Rumania Supports A Galicia - Budapest, F Sevastopol - Black Sea, A Silesia - Munich (*Fails*), F Skagerrak - North Sea.

Turkey: ~~F Ionian Sea~~, no move received (*Disbanded*), A Syria, no move received.

Ownership of supply centers:

Austria: Budapest, Greece, Serbia, Vienna = 3, Even

England: Edinburgh, Liverpool = 2, Remove 1

France: Belgium, Brest, Denmark, London, Marseilles, Munich, Naples, Norway, Paris, Portugal, Rome, Spain, Sweden, Trieste, Tunis, Venice = 16, Build 3

Germany: Holland = 1, Even

Italy: 0 Centers, Eliminated

Russia: Ankara, Berlin, Bulgaria, Kiel, Moscow, Rumania, Sevastopol, St Petersburg, Warsaw = 9, Even

Turkey: Constantinople, Smyrna = 2, Build 1

Okay, Turkey will remain one short since nobody controls him. Jack gets no builds at all. I get to do

all the others: removals for England and Italy, and builds for my home country France. Not too difficult. Then the real hard work starts: figuring out what to bid. Jack is going to have 39 points to spend, while I will have 29. Those ten points could be a decided advantage for him!

Here again I am doing fine in the south but the fact that my fleets are outnumbered up north combined with the French army in Norway spells trouble for Russia. I can't hold him off with just two fleets against the two English fleets and the one French fleet and army. I should have deployed another army up north.

All of the other powers are now at two or less except for Austria at 4 as the Austrians benefit from always being controlled by one of us. The Italians are now eliminated as the Austrians take their last center.

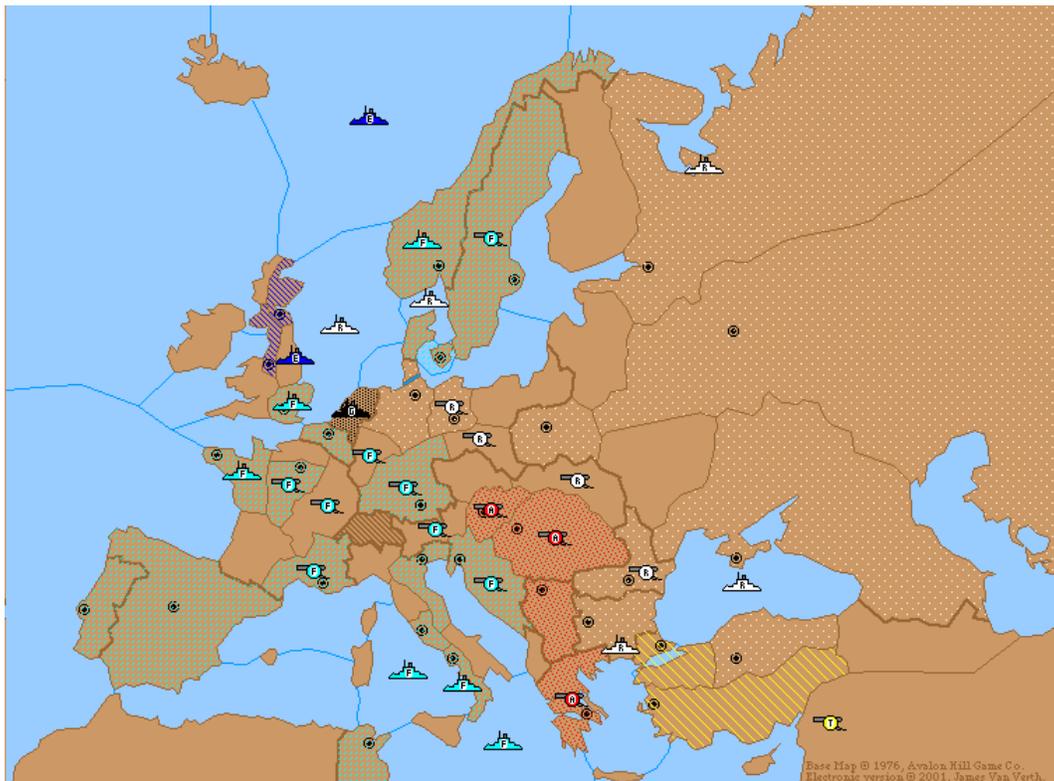
Winter 1904 Results:

England: Remove A Clyde.

France: Build F Brest, Build A Paris, Build A Marseilles.

Italy: Remove A Bohemia.

Russia has 39 points, France has 29



Map After Winter 1904

Oh my goodness, I just looked at the map and realized something: I can win THIS YEAR! All I need to do is take St. Petersburg with one of my French

units! It isn't guaranteed...I need to move to Finland without losing Norway in the Spring, and without Jack taking Sweden. This would allow me to take St.

Pete with one of my French units.

Okay, so I NEED to control England if I'm going to roll the dice on this one. The English Fleet in the Norwegian Sea is critical to this plan. Jack has 39 points, I have 29. I'm going to blow 20 on England and hope he doesn't outbid me – that way if he DOES, he spends massively and I will get an advantage next year. I'll bid the other 9 on Austria, just to cause trouble. It's win or lose now.

I'm reduced to 9 centers and France is at 16. There is not much more to do but play it out. I have 30 points but Doug's extra centers push him back up 29 points.

France bids 20 on England, 9 on Austria, 0 on Turkey, 0 on Germany. Russia bids 7 on England, 15 on Austria, 1 on Turkey, 1 on Germany

France controls England, spends 20, has a balance of 9

Russia controls Austria, Germany, and Turkey, spends 17, has a balance of 22. Spring 1905 moves are due next

Okay, here we go...it's St. Petersburg or bust this year!

I figured I had to have Austria since my southern flank was open but England was the real key. Again I missed that fact that I needed to have England. I took Turkey and Germany just to avoid the nuisance of having France controlling them—especially if he got Austria.

It is about this time I'm realizing I've made a terrible mistake. I can see now that I can't hold StP without English help and I don't control England. At this point I realize Doug can take St Pete in the Fall and there is

nothing I can do to stop him so I conceded the game.

At this point, Jack submitted moves but conceded before they were adjudicated. I know I successfully moved to Finland and to Barents Sea, so I was sure to successfully take St. Pete in the Fall and win the game.

I think I learned even more this time than last time. The most important lesson, as this was the first game I'd played which went beyond 1902, is the diminishing value of points. As the neutral powers slowly get smaller and less important, you can stop hoarding points and spend more freely. Also you need to remember to look at the whole board, all the time. Actually, if we'd played this game on a faster schedule or with some more focus, I doubt Jack would have left St. Pete vulnerable (nor would I have missed how vulnerable it was). But, admittedly, we were each doing a ton of other things for Diplomacy World while this game was going on, so it often was pushed to the back-burner.

Overall I think I played much better this game and this is the first game of Idip I've played where the two powers were so far apart. Russia was definitely not a good power for this since so many different countries can get to it.

I thought Doug did much better bidding as he clearly adjusted to the points during the game faster than I did which is why he deservedly won the game.

The most important thing, of course, is that I am undefeated in Diplomacy World Intimate Dip Series Replays! Woo hoo!

Selected Upcoming Conventions

Find Conventions All Over the World at <http://diplom.org/Face/cons/index.php>

WACcon 2009 – Friday January 23rd, 2009 to Sunday January 25th, 2009 – Seattle, Washington - <http://diplom.org/~seattle>

Australian Diplomacy Championships – Saturday January 24th, 2009 to Monday January 26th, 2009 – Sydney, Australia – email to thorinmonro@hotmail.com

TempleCon 2009 – Friday February 6th, 2009 to Sunday February 8th, 2009 – Biltmore Hotel, Providence, Rhode Island – <http://www.templecon.org/09>

National Block Party – Friday March 27th, 2009 to Sunday March 29th, 2009 – New Albany, Indiana (a suburb of Louisville, Kentucky) - <http://www.ohiovalleygamers.org/nationalblockparty.html>

The Whipping in San Francisco – Friday April 17th, 2009 to Sunday April 19th, 2009 – San Francisco, California – email edibirsan@astound.net

World DipCon Championship at Origins 2009 - Wednesday June 24th, 2009 to Sunday June 28th, 2009 – Columbus, Ohio – <http://www.originsgamefair.com>

Publish or Perish – Why I Decided to Start My Own Zine

by Philip Murphy; Editor, Office Boy and Tea Lady of Th' Edge of Th' Abyss

Those who helped shape the long history of our hobby will recall the now distant days' delights of receiving, every so often, a package in the mail. Within that packet, a Diplomacy zine, perhaps Graustark or Ethyl the Frog. The postal zine was then, as it is sadly not now, the cornerstone of the Diplomacy scene. For thousands of players, the postal zine was a way of pitting their wits against the minds of opponents throughout the world. Many found that zines were the first, best, and sometimes only way to enter this community. Stabs were delivered, friendships (and some enmities!) were forged, fun was had, legends were made, and the hobby flourished.



Sadly, all things decline. The postal hobby lost its original and best use with the advent of Email and the Internet. Postal zines have lingered for some years and a few still remain, including the venerable but still excellent zine The Abyssinian Prince. But few now have the patience or the inclination to play in a postal game when the game can be more speedily adjudicated by email judges and web server applications.

And yet... what have we lost? The tales, the creativity, the ribbing and the in-jokes (even the feuds!) – where now will they find expression? Who now will spend hours lovingly crafting articles and stories on that subject which they love – though they often never admit as much? Who will even know of our hobby's fruitful history if no new custodians are found to pass it onto? What of the sound advice to diplomats of all walks of life contained within the mimeographed pages of ancient zines?

I was not even born when most of these zines were at their zenith; I did not witness the history of this hobby being written. I only became aware of the Diplomacy scene of late, and purely through chance. It has ensnared another fan, fated to play Diplomacy till his last breath comes. And I decided that I at least would try and rekindle the old spirit of Diplomacy by doing that very thing that is all too rare nowadays. I decided to attempt to publish a zine.

Perhaps it is vain and prideful to do this – but happily, even if the need to run games through zines is now almost past – the technologies which have weakened the postal hobby have also brought about the means to publish and to promote, through the internet. I felt that there is a deep need for more resources for players to communicate, to discuss diplomacy, to learn the craft, to publicise not just the old strategies and variants, but to spur the creation of new ones entirely.

I don't want to take this task on all by myself, but I felt that if I of all people was prepared to do it, then hope remains for others to take on the mantle and bring this wonderful hobby into the next century, sound and in good health. Diplomacy is timeless and still retains its lustre while other games have come and gone. That is why this community must survive, endure and prosper. And that is why I try to do my part in creating my zine Th' Edge of Th' Abyss. Others have made better efforts in the past, and do better now than I can manage, but better to have tried and failed gloriously than to have never bothered at all.

And, when all is said and done, I wanted to do it. And that is the best, most persuasive reason of all!

I want to thank Doug Kent of Diplomacy World for offering to host the zine on his web space – without his offer this project would not have come about so soon. Thanks also to all those who have seen the first issue (lacking though it was in Diplomacy content) and have spoken kind words about it.

I plan to publish the next issue in early January. Those of you who want to take a look at the first issue can download it at:

<http://www.whiningkentpigs.com/DW/abyss.htm>

or if you want to be informed when the next issue is out, email me at [trekkybj](mailto:trekkybj@gmail.com) (of) gmail.com and I will see that you are added to the mailing list.

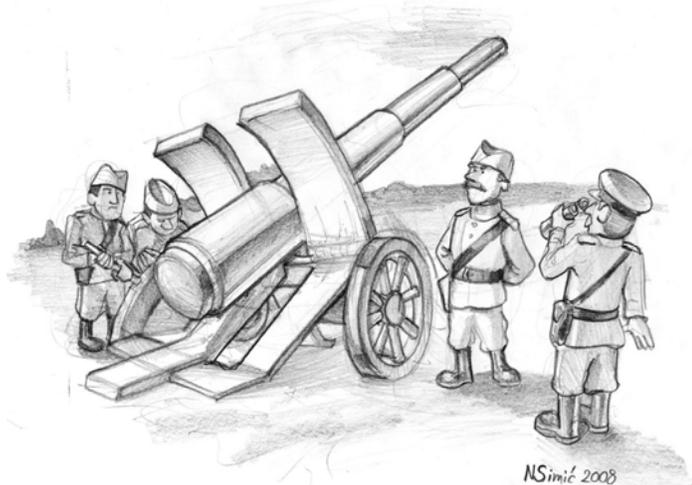
[[Incidentally, if anyone else is considering starting a Diplomacy zine, I would be happy to make space available within my website for your section as well. Remember, the www.diplomacyworld.net website is exclusively for Diplomacy World material; the rest of my Diplomacy projects, by zine/subzine Eternal Sunshine, the Postal Diplomacy Zine Archive, and now Philip's zine are all to be found at

Thoughts on Gunboat Openings

by Joshua Danker-Dake

Gunboat Diplomacy

Since gunboat Diplomacy removes press, a fundamental element of the traditional game, it should go without saying that good gunboat opening strategy is fundamentally different from traditional opening strategy. While it is possible to communicate in gunboat (that topic has been thoroughly covered elsewhere), the lack of press makes it difficult for enemy powers to mount a coordinated, combined attack, and it makes it tough to make a deal. Often, two fundamental principles will keep you in the game and can help you get the upper hand: aggression and defense (these may sound contradictory; they aren't).



Aggression

Fortes fortuna adiuvat

Because of the severely limited communication in gunboat, it's very difficult for neighboring nations to combine for a coordinated attack against you. Therefore Early Leader Syndrome is somewhat less of a problem. And since heart-to-heart chats are out, superior positioning is vital.

Therefore, the aggressive opening is typically best. France and England should go to the Channel. Turkey and Russia should try to take the Black Sea. Germany should go to Burgundy. Italy should order the Bohemian Crusher. Austria should – well, Austria should go and die in the manner that seems best to him.

“Aggressive” does not mean “risky”. These moves are tactically sound – aggressive, yes; hostile, yes; but sound. They are moves designed to get the drop on your neighbors, or to keep your neighbors from getting the

drop on you. They aren't go-for-broke, roll-the-dice openings.



Defense

Again, because of the limited communication in gunboat, it's particularly difficult to recover if you get caught with your pants down. So if you try an aggressive and fundamentally sound opening but it hasn't gotten you the higher ground, that's okay, because at least nobody's gotten the drop on you. In this case, patience is often a virtue.

In gunboat, again, attacks against you may be numerous, but they are likely to be relatively uncoordinated. Thusly it is often possible to hold out against forces that would be unstoppable in standard Diplomacy. For example, it is very possible for a five-center France to fend off simultaneous attacks from England, Germany and Italy indefinitely as long as they aren't coordinating.

The advantages of locking down the borders are multiple. By going defensive for a time, you are not an aggressor against anyone, and will likely be viewed as less threatening. If your enemy is consistently getting nowhere against you, he may turn his attention to greener pastures. And if you wait long enough, one or more of your oppressors is bound to get attacked, which is even better. If you can hold your borders, you'll usually catch a break and get an opening eventually.

[[Joshua is another one of the latest group of Diplomacy World All-Stars. Emails from him make my blood pressure go down.]]

Sounds Like We Made It

With a Chortle Here and a Gasp There, the Chicago Hobby Came of Age at Weasel Moot II
by Jim O'Kelley

Go to a Diplomacy tournament, and you'll occasionally hear people chortle during a board call. Or even gasp.

Sometimes it's local players sharing an inside joke. Often, it's reputation, or the rivalries among the players, that inspires the reaction.

I was on a "gasping" board in the final round of the 2006 PrezCon, which hosted the North American Diplomacy Championship that year.

"Austria, Andy Bartalone. ... Italy, Jake Mannix. Russia, Edi Birsan. Turkey, Jim O'Kelley." The East was a crucible in that game.

More often, I've been one of the guys chortling or gasping.



Bad Photo, Great Subject: Diplomacy Creator Allan Calhamer Signs One of the New Diplomacy Sets While at Weasel Moot II in Chicago

In Chicago, I didn't hear those sounds during the board calls at any of our first three tournaments—the 2007 and 2008 CODCon Open and Weasel Moot I. But I heard them loud and clear at Weasel Moot II, played November 14-15 at the Day's Inn Chicago. I heard them during the call of the first board of the first round, no less. And the chortles and gasps were coming from local and national players alike.

That's when I knew our club had made it.

"Austria," announced Tournament Director Jeremiah Peterson, "Eric Brown."

Eric is a founding father of the Windy City Weasels. He was our 2006-07 Weasel of the Year, and he played in

our inaugural Weasel Royale club championship in September. Everyone likes playing with Eric because he's a good player, a great communicator, and whether winning or losing (but usually winning), he's always fun to be around.

"England, Greg Duenow."

No one, not even me, has played in more Weasel games than Greg. He has traveled to WAC, Whipping, GenCon and twice to DixieCon. His best finish abroad was 14th at the 2006 Whipping, and he's quick to tell you that he's not a good player. But locally, at least, I think his results have been colored by an uncanny ability to draw the central blocks. The central powers generally are ill suited for his style of play, which best can be described as reckless, chaotic and maniacal.

"France, Graham Woodring."

Everyone knows Graham. He's been traveling regularly since 2002, has played in 38 tournaments, won Carnage back to back in 2006 and 2007, and contended for the 2008 Grand Prix for much of the year until three straight disappointing performances at the Buckeye Game Fest, Tempest and Carnage. He's a great player and, as my readers should know, my comrade in beer.

"Germany, Thom Comstock."

Now, the chortling started. Thom is another of our club's stalwarts. He has traveled to Origins twice, Buckeye, Dixie and Tempest, where he placed third in 2007.

Thom joined our club the same day as Greg, in our third game back in January 2006, and the two have become good friends. But any Weasel who has shared a board with them, or read the reports from one of their games, knows they are incapable of working together.

The national players were also aware of this fact, and from them, the call elicited more of a gasp. They quickly surmised that Graham would choose his ally and dominate the West. The game hadn't even started, and Graham already was a solo threat.

"Italy, Christian MacDonald."

Christian joined the Weasels last June and has become one of our most active players. He's now a member of our board, called the Sneak. Buckeye was his first tournament, and he promptly won it. Now, he wanted to prove himself locally, but he'd have to start adjacent to an Austria in Eric who had forced him to vote himself out

of a two-way draw at our season-ending gala that August (hosted by Eric, by the way).

They were keenly aware of that fact, as were others in attendance. More chortles.

"Russia, Edi Birsan."

Edi elicits gasps just because, and usually from the other players on the board. He's been playing the game for five decades and even authored the Lepanto Opening, for Pete's sake. Sitting down with Edi is always an opportunity to learn. You just hope the lesson doesn't come at your expense.

"Turkey, Jim O'Kelley."

Locally, I'm the club's founder and Prime Weasel. This was also my first Chicago tournament, as a player—I ran the other three. Most of the Chicago guys knew all that, and many also knew that while I usually get on well with Eric, the two of us had cut our own throats as Russia and Turkey in the Royale. And here we were in the East again.

In a national thread, I had infamously melted down while playing against Edi at the 2007 World Diplomacy Championship in Vancouver. When he heard my name called after Edi's, Dave Maletsky turned to a neighbor and said, "Smyrna goes to Armenia." He was right.

The game was fun. Predictably, Greg and Thom fought in the West, and Graham cleaned up. Predictably I launched myself at Edi. Unpredictably, Christian and Eric patched up after a 1901 Italian foray into Trieste, and attacked me, taking Smyrna in Fall 1902 with a clever bilateral convoy that I never saw coming.

In fact, I was headed for an early exit until Thom sent just about everything he had at Christian. That saved me but effectively killed Christian and Thom.

I was able to patch things up with Edi to control Eric. Then Eric and I worked with the devil Edi to stop Graham from soloing, while at the same time thwarting Edi just enough to stay relevant. We were playing a dangerous game, and the endgame was intense and fun, but that's not the story I'm telling here.

This story is about seven players who sat down at a table, bringing tangled back stories and actual reputations to a game of Diplomacy. Tournament games like this one will make you laugh and gasp before they even start. They are a whole other level of fascinating.

It's a level that previously had been missing from Chicago Diplomacy.

Not any more.

[[Jim O'Kelley wears the title "Head Weasel" with pride.]]

Should Obama Have Won?

by Mark Zoffel



When one sits down and introduces themselves to other 6 at the table, decisive and valuable information should already be flowing through ones brains. This article is for those moderate to high level players who don't take correct advantage of this time to lay out their strategies

from the get go, and don't incorporate that into helpful information, especially when dealing with the above average player. When I sit down, I try and get a first impression of everyone's personality at the table, as that will translate often into their playing style. For those I know, it is easy, for those I don't I try and just ask a few general questions to understand their mindset or motivation for being at the table or tournament.

Questions such as, "Do you understand this scoring system?", or "what do you want to get out of this game?" will give you a heads up about that player and his potential play. From there ask if they have played with the others before and then take this information and formulate an opening plan of attack. Who to talk with first and what order from there? Once you have the initial info to start with, realize what you say and do from there affects everyone at the table. As England, if you ask once the timer starts, "France I want to talk with you", what does this tell Germany, and is it what you want as his and the rest of the boards first impression to be. Many at the table won't give a rat's ass-about this, but, there are always those who will, so why take the

chance? Sometimes you want that early tension, so it is valid, but having a plan from the first moment will help you improve your game.

Ok, now back to the title. Many of the hobby's biggest names have earned them, by repeatedly showing themselves as the best of the best. When playing with them, good luck. (I'll cover that in my next article) For those other top players who have been around the block and are very good, use it against them.

These players are often loud, in your face type players, and generally very talkative. They love control. (Yes I know, if I had a mirror right now.....) Zero in on them and use their names and styles to your own benefit. Many times in games or tournaments players who have been playing for a long time put off an aura that tells the rest of the board, I am the best player here. They may be, but their over confidence, can be their undoing. The standard, "lets band together and go after the best player "is often a result of this, but I am talking more to the point of having the puppet strings that he believes he has attached to you, actually attached secretly back to him. If he feels you are his pawn, and you let him do most of the talking during the "time to discuss" period, you will actually be the driving force. What to do.

Promise him what he asks to the point of being no more the 2 units ahead. When he asks for more than that, tell him it put the alliance at risk. He will back down. Often he will come with a grand plan of opening moves.

Say no to it, but ask if he has a neutral opening that can be discussed. You don't want to be the first out, and these type players often are aggressive and will look to see if they can kill off someone quick. If you say no to his grand plan, you will have taken yourself off the early exit list, and if you ask him for a neutral opening move, he will feel good about you as a ally, as you are not the sucker, and have shown that you want to work with him on moves. He still feels in control, which is what you want. Before you meet with him, have a plan that works for you. Suggest something that he can formulate your ideas into. These type players want that control, and if you give them the stuff to input, whatever he spits out will be something that you can at least discuss seriously.

Work with them always from the get go? Not always, but as the saying goes, "Keep your friends close, and your enemies closer". If the board is out to get this person, ask yourself, does it help me enough to not forge a cautious alliance with him, as this person will have good

ideas throughout the game, and if he is gone, what who fills his vacuum? Many times when everyone comes for him, it makes sense to jump in and get your share while eliminating the best mind at the table. Other times, when you are not sure if you have any surefire allies, or if you can sense other sure fire allies across the board (re-read the opening paragraph about before the game starts) it may not. Think about what the board will look like if what everyone says will happen, happens. Are you better off with this? If not, then it is often best to either tell the person what is happening so that his defensive moves in year one look like he hired the Oracle, and move in neutral moves, or just tell the others that you may look to join in after you open neutrally to start. Either way you will have kept your options open, and not burned any bridges, which the better players will always look to do. If you are going to kill someone, make sure they are dead before you start.

Ok, the game has started and you have played second fiddle to this person for a few years. Now what? Re-evaluate where you are and what can you get from all of the options being offered. Sometimes it is better to take a minute or two to figure out ones options instead of going to talk with all the players all of the time.

Communication is important, but if you don't have a plan thought-out and ever changing ,prior to each discussion period, talking will not help you enough to give you the winning hand. The person at this point will try and get you to get out over your skies. Say no to it unless he is willing to do the same. Often, they will use

time, or a stalemate line as reasons that it is now or never. Don't buy it, as there is always time...and if there isn't, you putting only your neck out there generally wouldn't have made a difference.

Why the title? The answer to it is it doesn't matter, he did. When playing some who all at the table view as the player to beat, think from the start more than just, "let's kill him", it may be the right thing to do, but give yourself options, and you may find the game more enjoyable if you do, especially if you can use him for all he is worth, and in the end have him talking with gimme-nee cricket instead of you.

Next time: "Beating the Best of the Best"

[[Mark Zoffel is the current DW Strategy & Tactics Editor.]]

Diplomacy Haiku by Jonathan Woll

Who threatens me now?
Back-stabbing, treacherous foe,
An ally no more.

Logical Fallacies for the Diplomacy Player

By Chris Sham

The skeptical movement and the average Diplomacy player have a lot in common. Both are interested in cutting through the bullshit that people spread for their own nefarious purposes, in order to get to the real truth. The big difference is the subject matter that each group surveys: Skeptics debunk myths like homeopathy and ghost stories, while Diplomacy players are more interested in finding out if France is *really* going to support F(ENG)>Bel as she's promised. But in both cases, evidence and logic are the tools to rely on.

Never heard of the skeptics' movement? You probably have, without realising it. Shows like *Mythbusters* and *Penn & Teller's: Bullshit!* are perfect examples of skeptics in action: They take popular claims and beliefs, and see if they stand up to testing (albeit the very limited kind of testing that you can fit into a 40-minute TV show). Carl Sagan, the astronomer, author and all-round smart guy, was a huge proponent of skepticism, as are many of his students, including Bill Nye the Science Guy. Some, like James "the Amazing" Randi, have devoted themselves full-time to the skeptical movement, while others are involved only informally, during their spare time.

There is certainly plenty for Diplomacy players to learn from skeptics, and the basic "skeptic's toolkit" (or Baloney Detector, as Sagan called it) includes some surprisingly simple but very useful mental tricks for parting the factual wheat from the fallacious chaff – exactly what every Diplomacy player needs to help make well-informed decisions. To demonstrate this, I've just taken one specific skeptical tool (the basic logical fallacies) and shown how to apply it to the kinds of claims that Diplomacy players commonly make to each other. There are several different ways of grouping and dividing the logical fallacies, and I've adapted this specific list from Dr Steven Novella's excellent (and more detailed) article here:

<http://www.theness.com/articles.asp?id=38>

Argument from Ignorance

An argument that something is true because we don't know that it *isn't* true.

- Example: "France could be planning to attack us both right now, so we'd better attack him first, just in case."

You might want to make those pre-emptive strikes, just in case, but never forget that you and the claimant will

usually have no idea what France really had in mind. This one is especially easy to fall into in Diplomacy, since so much of the game really is unknown to each player. In fact, I've moved it to the top of the list because it's so important in understanding most of the other logical fallacies that follow below. Not knowing is simply that: unknown. Unless you've got positive evidence that clearly shows that something is definitely true, you'll always have to accept and work with some degree of uncertainty. (In fact, that's half the fun of the game.)

Confusing Absence of Evidence for Evidence of Absence

Pretty much what it sounds like. An argument that says something cannot exist, because it hasn't been proven to exist yet.

- Example: "Germany has never supported Austria before, so we can be sure it won't happen now."

Unless, of course, Germany suddenly starts doing so now. Just because something hasn't happened yet, doesn't mean it never can happen, within the game rules.

Argument from Personal Incredulity

The argument that something cannot be, because the claimant can't believe that it could be so.

- Example: "Italy would never betray me."

Unless, of course, Italy suddenly does. Just because you don't think it could happen, doesn't mean it can't, so long as the game rules allow it. Whether it will actually happen or not is another question.

Non-Sequitur (Does Not Follow)

This is an argument where one thing is said to prove or lead to another, even though there is no logical link between them.

- Example: "If you help me invade Munich, then Russia will become weaker."

This is only true if Russia currently owns Munich, or possibly if there is an usually strong alliance between Russia and whoever does own Munich. Otherwise, the two parts of that claim don't link up and the argument doesn't make much sense.

Diplomacy Haiku by Jonathan Woll

Trusting diplomat,
Stabbed in the back yet again;
Defeat is bitter.

Argument from Authority

This is an argument based on the reputation of the person who said it, and not on the actual logical merits of the argument itself.

- Example: "Allan Calhamer himself said that France and Russia should always ally early on, so you and I should too."

Mr Calhamer could have been wrong (a lot has been learned about the game since he last gave advice on it), or he could have been talking about a very specific circumstance, or the person quoting him could have misquoted him (intentionally or not). The point is, just because someone said it, does not automatically make it true. You need better evidence than that.

Appeal to Sincerity

Veteran Diplomacy players should already be scoffing at this one: An argument based on the claim that the claimant honestly believes what he's telling you.

- Example: "I promise that England's not going to attack you this year, on my word as a boy scout, with both hands on my heart, hope to die if I'm lying, etc."

Even if the claimant really does believe what he's saying, that doesn't necessarily mean that he really knows what a third party (England) is going to do. Only England knows for sure what England is planning. Sincerity is not good evidence.

Argument from Conspiracy

Also very common in this game. An argument that whatever somebody says, the opposite is always true.

- Example: "Austria says she's moving north, so obviously she's really going for Italy."

This is a dead-end argument in Diplomacy. Nobody lies all the time, unless they're an idiot. It just makes you vulnerable to exactly this sort of thing, where everyone knows what you really mean, every time you open your mouth. In life and in Diplomacy, any half-intelligent person only lies some of the time (some more often than others), and so we can't rely on something this simplistic to distinguish truth from fiction.

Appeal to Emotion

An argument based on some emotional claim, rather than a factual one.

- Example: "Italy loves you, there's no way he'll attack you. If you don't want to upset him, you should leave him alone too."

Perhaps Italy won't attack, but if he's got any sense at all, he'll do so for better reasons than that. Similarly, insisting that it's wrong to piss people off is a bit of a weak argument in any game, usually made by sore losers, and unless there's a better reason to ignore

Italy's potential attack, I'd still keep an eye (and some troops) on that border.

Argument from Final Consequences

An argument that reverses cause and effect, suggesting that something is caused by its outcome.

- Example: "Austria's attack on you failed, so she must not really have intended for it to succeed."

If Austria attacked you, then she damn well attacked you. Rationalising her intentions after the fact will probably lead to a false conclusion, and is also something of an Appeal to Emotion.

Argument from Benefit

A subtype of the Argument from Final Consequences, this assumes that whoever benefited must have planned it that way.

- Example: "Russia invaded Norway while Germany was fighting England, so Russia and England must be working together."

Or Russia just got lucky, and had actually expected Germany to fight for Norway. In fact, never ever ignore the possibility of dumb luck interfering in this game.



Appeal to Fear

I abuse this one all the time. An argument that failure to accept a claim will automatically lead to very bad things.

- Example: "If you try to fight me in the North Atlantic, then Russia will take Norway. And then he'll almost certainly get Denmark too. And he's already on 8 supply centers!"

Caution certainly has its place in Diplomacy, as it does in life. But there are reasonable risks and then there is panic mongering. Could Russia really take Norway if you ignore him? Yes? Then that's a reasonable concern, though not necessarily you're biggest, most urgent

concern. If not, then somebody's probably just trying to deflect your attention onto the Russians, instead of themselves.

Appeal to Pity

The argument that you owe something to someone in a weaker position.

- Example: "Hey, don't attack me! I'm only 2 SCs big, and I've been helping you all along."

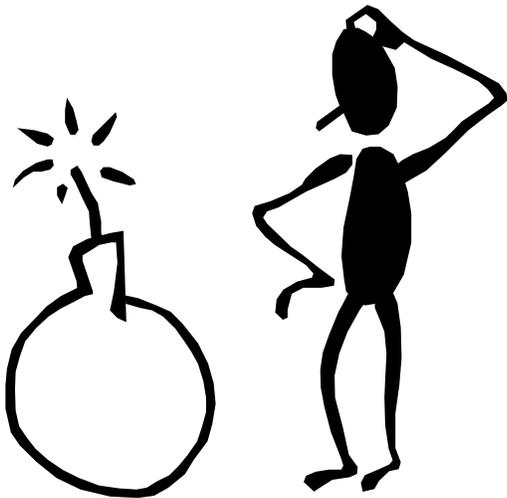
There are valid reasons for not immediately stomping on smaller powers. For example, you can sometimes convince them to work for you while you're busy dealing with someone else (until you can change direction and stomp away). But the simple fact that they're small is not a good argument for keeping them alive.

Post-hoc ergo Propter Hoc (After This, Therefore Because of This)

The argument that A preceded B, therefore A caused B.

- Example: "France lied about supporting you, and then Germany attacked you. Germany must have convinced France to leave you defenseless."

That's one possible interpretation, but certainly not the only one. Perhaps France and Germany didn't talk at all. Perhaps France genuinely meant to support you, but messed up. Perhaps France didn't support you, because he intended to attack you himself, but change his mind. The point is, you can't assume they're linked, just because they happened in chronological order.



Confusing Correlation and Causation

A more general version of the Post-hoc ergo Propter Hoc fallacy. This is any argument that assumes that any two things that can be shown to have occurred together must also have caused each other in some way.

- Example: "France and England were chatting in that corner, and now England is attacking Russia. France must have convinced England to do that."

As before, that's one possible interpretation, but not the only one. You certainly shouldn't assume it.

Special Pleading

An argument that just makes up some new reason to support itself.

- Example: "Turkey didn't attack you, as I said she would, but that must be because she saw us talking in private."

You can come up with plenty of excuses for why something failed to happen. The bottom line is, the claim about Turkey's attack was false. Subsequent similar claims should be treated as suspicious, though not automatically ruled out altogether. Once again, you need more solid evidence to judge these things properly.

Tu Quoque (You Too)

An argument that excuses its own failings, on the grounds that you've also screwed up.

- Example: "Yes, the intelligence I gave you about Austria was wrong, but you didn't move as you said you would either."

Two wrongs do not make a right, unless they get you up to 18 SCs. Your backstab is not related to his false information, so don't let your opponent use it as an excuse to cheat you or mislead you.

Ad Hominem (Personal) Attacks

An argument that tries to justify itself by attacking the person it opposes, and not the facts they present.

- Example: "England shouldn't even be playing with us, she's a bitch and she said you've got bad hair. So don't ally with her, ally with me instead."

England may well be a bitch, but that in itself is not a valid reason to turn down her alliance. Her personality flaws (and your bad hair) don't have an effect on how the armies and fleets are going to move across the board.

False Dichotomy

An argument that presents only 2 possibilities, even when other possibilities exist.

- Example: "Either you're with Turkey, or you're with me."

That ignores, at the very least, the option of going solo. And then there could be other powers you could work with too. Generally speaking, if somebody presents you with a false dichotomy, it's because they're trying to herd you into a particular (bad) decision.

False Continuum

An argument that suggests that distinguishing between 2

extremes is not valid or relevant, because there is a fuzzy boundary where they do meet.

- Example: "You can't really talk about enemies and allies in this game, because they'll all treat you pretty much the same way. So don't expect France to help you."

Yes, allies and enemies are a little hard to clearly define in this game. But so long as France is not attacking you and is supporting you, it's fair to say that France is *currently* not an active enemy. Just because things aren't black and white doesn't mean that there aren't any meaningful distinctions to make.

Moving Goalposts

Arbitrarily changing the standards for proof once something has already been proved.

- Example: 1901: "I'll only support you against Italy if you support me first."
1902: "You may have supported me last year, but I'll only believe you're not going to turn on me if you let me have Munich first."

To put it simply, this is an argument used by people who are using you. If you fall for it, they'll just keep using you until they don't need you anymore, and you won't get much (if anything) out of it.



Slippery Slope Argument

The argument that a step in one direction will inevitably lead to the very extreme of that direction.

- Example: "If you let Russia into Berlin, he'll take the whole Germany and then all of northern Europe."

There may be valid reasons for letting Russia take Berlin, and so long as you have an appropriate containment plan prepared, it is not necessarily inevitable that Russia will unstopably take everything else as a result.

Straw Man Argument

An argument that attacks a dumb position that clearly

nobody holds, simply to get your opponent to concede something (or to appear to concede it, for the sake of an audience).

- Example: "You want France to win? Then you'd better help me."

Obviously nobody wants France to win, other than France herself. But that doesn't necessarily mean that helping the claimant is going to help prevent that. The two are presented as being linked, but they may not be. (That's also a bit of a Non Sequitur.)

Tautology

An argument that states that $A = B$, therefore $A = B$.

- Example: "Turkey is a danger to us, therefore we have to be careful of him."

Of course you have to be careful of that which is dangerous; that's pretty much what dangerous means. People say things like that simply to get an emotional response out of you (in this case, an Appeal to Fear), in order to manipulate you. Other than that, the statement doesn't really mean anything.

A lot of those examples may seem stupidly obvious. But I'm intentionally trying to make them easy to understand, while a good Diplomacy player will try to conceal them in subtle language, and in the heat of a complicated game, it may be even more difficult to focus on exactly what you're being told. But once you've mastered the basics of spotting logical fallacies, it'll become increasingly easy to spot them both in the claims that your Diplomacy opponents make to you, and in claims you hear in the real world.

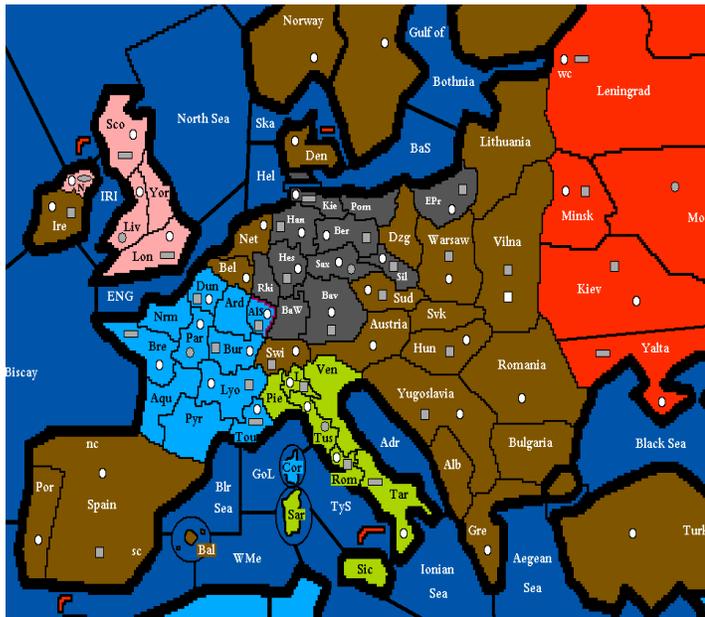
And what do you do once you've spotted a logical fallacy? Step 1: Don't automatically believe or disbelieve it. As I've pointed out in a few of the examples above, a statement can be factually true, despite being logically false, but dodgy logic should still be a major warning sign that you could be being lied to. If somebody makes a claim that relies on fallacious logic, then press them for more details. If they still can't provide a good, logical reason to believe them, backed by solid, testable evidence, then there's a very good chance that they're simply feeding you bull. How you respond to that is entirely up to you.

[[If Diplomacy World had paying positions, I'd probably offer Chris one. But our positions actually entail spending time and money, not receiving it. So instead, I'll just offer him thanks for another terrific article.]]

An Introduction to My World War 2 Variant

By Nick Higgins

In this article, I would like to introduce my new World War 2 variant, which is still being developed but which is about to enter playtest mode. The variant takes place in 1931, the year that the Japanese invaded Manchuria. There are 8 players: Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the Soviet Union, China, Japan, and the United States. The variant is unbalanced, in that it reflects the relative strengths and positions of these powers in the 1930s. For example, this means that the British are a predominantly naval power with fourteen units scattered around the world, while the Chinese are relatively weak and have only five units (with four armies) in China.

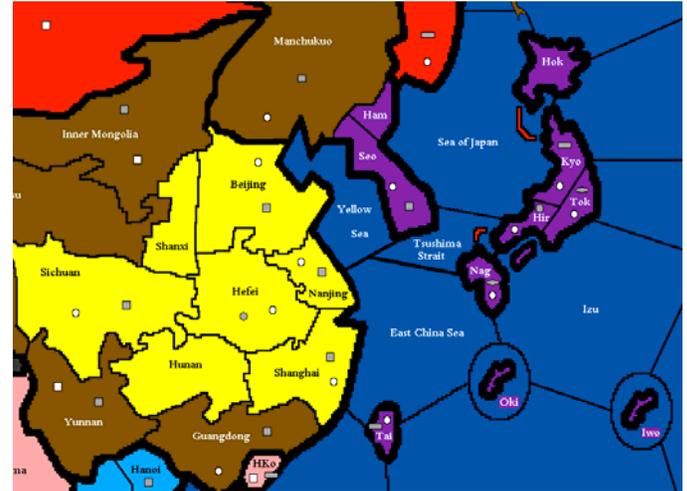


A Close-Up of Europe

The variant has a major twist: the addition of aerial units, including planes and aircraft carriers. Aerial units have the ability to provide support over a two tempi range, instead of the standard one tempi range (i.e. adjacent spaces). All actions (including movement and support) by an aerial unit have a strength of 2/3, compared to the usual strength of 1 for armies and fleets. Plane units operate on land similar to armies, and aircraft carriers operate at sea and on coasts, similar to fleets. Besides better reflecting the actual warfare of the period and adding an interesting new element to the game, my hope is that aerial units will be “stalemate busters” and help to keep the game flowing.

There are two other minor twists: modified chaos builds, and the Maginot Line. Armies can be built in any open supply center owned by the player. Because fleets and aerial units require special technology to be built, these units can only be built in designated SCs, essentially the non-colonial home SCs of the players. For example, the British cannot build an aircraft carrier in Sudan, even

though it is a starting home SC for the British, while they could build an aircraft carrier in Kiel if they capture that SC from the Germans. The Maginot Line (purple on the map) provides additional support (strength of 1) to any stationary unit in Alsace-Lorraine defending against a land attack from the German spaces opposite the Maginot Line (Rhineland or Baden-Wurtemberg).



The China/Japan Region

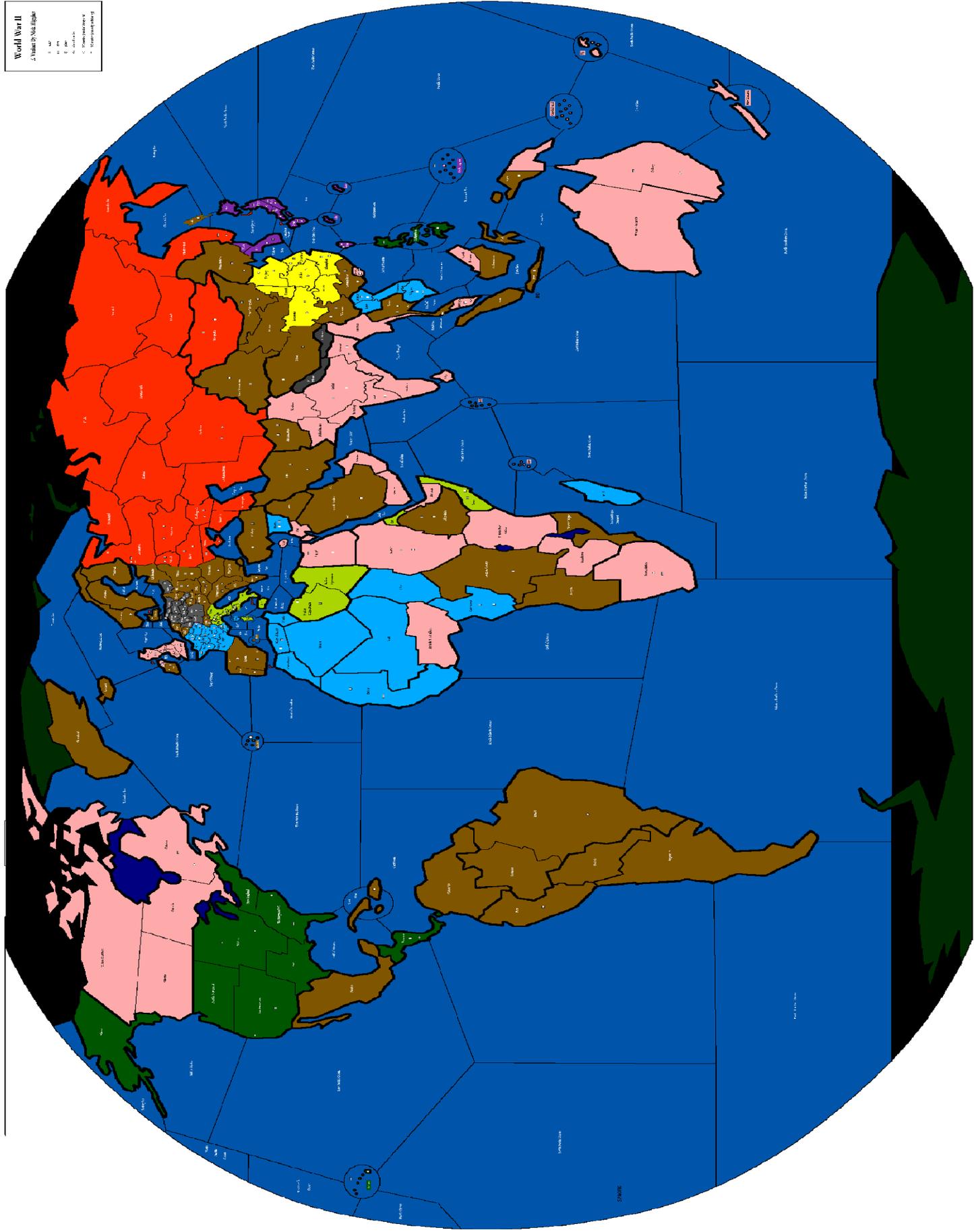
This variant has spent many years in gestation. “World War II” was my original idea for a variant, but I was a bit overwhelmed by the difficulty of creating such a complex variant, and so I decided to build my Congress of Vienna variant (<http://1814congressofvienna.tripod.com>) as an “easy practice run”. Four years, four iterations, and ten game-tests later, I finally feel fairly satisfied with the Congress of Vienna variant, and I am ready to complete the WW2 variant. As you can see from the map, it is still a work-in-progress, but I anticipate that I will be ready to run the first game-test in February 2009. While I’ve generally settled on the special rules I’ve described and the supply center/home center selections, I am still officially finalizing the variant rules themselves (hence that is why only the map will appear with this article). If somebody has feedback or ideas or suggested changes, I would love to hear them! Finally, I would like to thank Michael Roberts for allowing me to adapt his Twentieth Century variant map. If you’d like an electronic copy of my map so you can view it closer and in more detail, email Doug at [diplomacyworld “of” yahoo.com](mailto:diplomacyworld@of.yahoo.com) and he would be happy to send it your way.

[[Nick Higgins is the designer of the Congress of Vienna variant, and has published articles recently in The Diplomatic Pouch on the topic of strategy in the Ambition & Empire variant. He can be reached at congressofvienna1814 “of” yahoo.com.]]

World War II

A Nation in Six Angles

- 1. Axis
- 2. Allies
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Non-Aligned
- 5. Unaligned
- 6. Unaligned



Join the Club

By Conrad Woodring

I used to play face-to-face diplomacy tournaments a lot; in recent years though, not so much. When I attended Carnage XI in Vermont, it had been nearly two years since I played a tournament (except for HuskyCon which I help run). I had been living outside of the country, which geographically removed me from any American hobby events.



Carnage is a tournament characterized by a laid back atmosphere, small numbers and an intermediate level of competition. It is supported by the nearby Boston hobby due largely to Melissa Nicholson's efforts. There are a few travelers who come with hopes of gaining grand prix points. There are a few locals and of course a few new players get roped in each year. Other than that, it's a quiet event. My experience this year reminded me of what it was like when I was first learned the game, back in the summer of 2000.

In my second game I drew Russia with two inexperienced players in Austria and Turkey. Alex Amann from Boston was Italy. After the first 15 minutes of diplomacy, it was quite clear to Alex and I that Austria had to go. He proposed moving full out against Germany in order to break from the standard openings that everyone has tried to push on him. Such a loose cannon either needed to be killed or controlled. The Turkish player, although equally new, was reasonable, flexible, easy to talk to and tactically sound. I did not view him the same way as my Austrian neighbor. I worked with Turkey and Italy, playing both of them off of each other, waiting for an opportunity to present itself. When Alex

and I saw the possibility to take EAS, ARM and BLA with only one Turkish unit between his three home centers, of course we took it. Turkey immediately began proclaiming that Alex and I were long time friends and had arranged this alliance ahead of time, which I assure you was not the case. I would never accuse Alex of being my friend.

It is true Alex and I have known and played each other a lot and we get along very well together. I have worked with him numerous times because I know he's a good sound player whom I can rely on as an ally and very importantly has good board vision. Turkey proved to me he did not have all those characteristics. When you consider that the French were knocking on Alex's back door in the TyS, Alex was the perfect choice to work with because he would soon be in need of a savior.

I tried to explain to Turkey that it was not the case, that we had no prearranged alliance, but with no success. I had talked to him the night earlier and he made the same claims about his first game. When I was on his board in the third game, as Germany to Alex's France, he left me alone, but attacked the Russia-Turkey (Peter McNamara and Jon Hill) alliance that was killing his Austria, accusing them of being prearranged allies. They were both from Boston so they had talked about it even before they got to Vermont is what he told me. I went on that game to eliminate Alex – much to his surprise – but Peter and Jon were inseparable. He later asked me why I didn't work with Alex again and instead worked with someone I had never met. I teasingly answered his question with another question: "I still won didn't I?"

Where I mean to go with this story is to address the issues that new players have building successful alliances. I remember when I first started teaching friends from Long Island how to play the game, and they too were frustrated by this. One friend said to me that although he could play well, and understood most aspects of the game, he always felt there was one more hump to cross. He said to me that he thought the face-to-face hobby was like a "club," that once you were in, you could get alliances, you could make things happen and you could win. I thought about my early experience with the game and I agreed with him. Seeing Turkey's crushed and hopeless attitude, I was reminded of this.

The clearest part of the club like nature of the hobby is when tempers fly. If a well-established face-to-face player and a less known face team up to work against another familiar tournament face, I have seen egos come into play. Too often I have seen someone who thinks highly of their abilities make an example out of the outsider attacking them by jumping into the role of king maker, and helping the more experienced of the two

attackers. This attitude that “if I can’t be the king I can at least be the king maker” is part of the game. But I have often seen a ‘good’ player bring down his fiery vengeance on some inexperienced player in order to punish what he perceives as bad play. I remember from my early days, it was a huge turn-off getting grilled and ripped apart by a player who had lost interest in preserving his score in the game, and was more interested in proving that he was right, thus protecting his ego. I had a list of players I really didn’t want to play with ever again during my first two years.

When I sit down to play a game, I look at whose on the board and who I know. I then try to figure out who knows who on the board and how they know each other. If I can, I pretend to have never played with someone I know. Part of the game is doing what’s best for you. Unfortunately some of the time what’s best for me is working with the guy I know. If I know how another player plays, I can remove a lot of the surprises out of my game and plan much better. Together we can make a plan without talking to much, knowing full well what positions will be tempting for a stab, and making sure we don’t end up in those positions. In my first game with Alex, I think we hardly talked more than 30 seconds per turn if at all. I spent at least half of my time with the Turkish player trying to convince him we needed to attack Austria or do some other move. The conversation with Alex about attacking Austria lasted 10 seconds. Although I did not discuss with Alex ahead of time, knowing each other does make it easier to work together. In a 50/50 toss-up, where as far as I can tell I will do equally well with either player, I am sure most people would go with the guy they know and are comfortable with.

We have all heard the arguments when we were coming up in the hobby, or maybe we are hearing them right now. Experienced players love to lecture new players about what parts of their game are missing. You need to be a reliable ally, you need to show sound tactical sense, you need to have and demonstrate long-term vision, and you have to take action (I have attacked a new player I wanted to work with simply because as Austria he didn’t want to attack any of his three neighbors, one of whom was me). I am sure the list of advice is huge and I am sure many articles have appeared in these pages on what beginners are doing wrong.

When push comes to shove, it is like a club, and you have to join first. There is no formal process, or guidelines on how to join. You only need one thing to join: respect. I got eliminated game after game when I first started. A three-way draw and two eliminations was a good tournament for me. In Tempest02, luck threw me a solo and I won the tournament. I shot up in the ratings

and from that day on, my results significantly improved over the following year. It was easier to get alliances, it was easier to talk people into things and it was easier to win. Nothing changed about my play over that weekend. In fact the very next tournament I got my ass handed to me in what still is my most disorder-dense tournament. Someone even proposed saving the moves of one of my boards because the other players and I had misordered so many times. What had changed was that I had earned people’s respect. I was on the radar. I was a name. After trying for nearly two years, I had finally crossed that last hump. Experience teaches you many important skills and will give you more tools to work with in your face-to-face games. However, until you earn people’s respect and can do so either by having your reputation preceding you, or by dazzling them in the first moves of the game, it’s not going to be easy. It’s a small hobby so all of us travelers see a lot of each other.



The purpose of this article is to say to the Turkish player (who shall remain nameless, but he knows who he is): you are kind of right. I went through what you are going through. It’s not the blatant pre-arranged alliances that you think were happening in Carnage, but there is something there. You and all the other guys in your situation should do their best to hang in there and try and learn a few lessons every time you play. Diplomacy is a game that has no limits to what can come into play. Listen to what the more experienced players say (after the game) and do your best. If need be, try arranging an alliance before the game starts with someone else in your situation. But don’t try it with me, because I don’t play that way.

[[I promise to attack Conrad if I ever play in a tournament with him. Really! Would I lie? Trust me!]]

Running a Diplomacy Tournament in a Gaming Convention: Whys, Hows, and Wherefores

By Jim-Bob Burgess

I go back in the Diplomacy hobby into the 1970s, and I went to my first Diplomacy tournament in that long past halcyon decade of the hobby. In fact, I helped to organize the four day general gaming convention that housed that tournament, called SimCon (<http://www.simcon.org>). This was organized out of the Simulation Gaming Association that I also helped to form while an undergraduate at the University of Rochester. SimCon XXX was held in March 2008, and though I've not been back in decades, it is fun to see something you helped still going strong after that many years. Much more recently, a couple of years ago, I hooked up with some people here in Providence who run an annual gaming convention called TempleCon (<http://www.templecon.org>), and I started running a Diplomacy tournament there. I've had a great time, but I've also struggled to get it actually running as a decent sized tournament. This year, TempleCon is coming right up in a month, on February 6-8 (see the advertisement elsewhere in this issue) and it is NOT too late for you to come. Contact me directly and let's talk! The article below is aimed both to try to get novices and veterans alike to get out to more FTF tournaments, and to try to help people learn about how to run and promote their own tournaments, all in the context of general gaming conventions.

Let's start with the pros and cons of operating a Diplomacy tournament at a general gaming convention. General gaming conventions these days usually have five main classes of gaming: Collectible Card Games, Miniatures Wargaming, Role Playing Games, Video Gaming, and Board Gaming, where Diplomacy obviously is a board game. You might think that it would be easy to just attract gamers at these conventions to play a round or two of Diplomacy, but there are at least three problems with this. First, Diplomacy takes a long time, so lots of these gamers are unwilling to start a Diplomacy game that will push them out of other events, since there is a LOT going on. Second, you should be aware that Diplomacy has a "reputation" among gamers; the most popular board games tend to be games like Puerto Rico and Settlers of Catan that are more self-contained. Diplomacy is a different animal. Third, you can't wait for them to come to you, you have to be outgoing and willing to go talk to people and entice them in to play! In theory, this helps you fill out boards of seven, since there are a lot of people around, but in practice this can be quite difficult, be prepared to sell Diplomacy at a general gaming convention. How do you do this? First, be prepared to teach the game. Edi Birsan's two page game introduction is MUCH preferable to handing someone the rule book or trying to explain

the game off the cuff. Make some copies of it, bring them, and leave them lying around so the gamers peeking in can pick them up! But then also walk around and hand them out.

One of the biggest headaches of running a gaming convention is working out the venue details and possibly hotel rooms. A general gaming convention committee will do that for you, all you need to do is be REALLY nice to them since they do all this hard work. You do need to educate gaming convention organizers as to the needs of Diplomacy; ideally they already will have a clue about this, but don't count on it. TempleCon has been in three different spaces in the time I have been running the Diplomacy tournament there. The first time, everything was in ONE big room, that was not ideal (which is why they moved), but they did put us in a corner, next to the hallway, where people could duck out to negotiate. We also have had our own separate room, which also is good, if they are willing to give it to you. But don't take potluck; ask for what you want and you might get it.



With the hotel rooms there are numerous issues and potential problems. If a gaming convention is being held in a large city hotel (and this is one of the headaches you really want to avoid if you're running a tournament yourself, the biggest problems can be with organization, insurance, etc. that a gaming convention is handling for you, I've negotiated with hotels myself before and have not had any luck getting them to work with me as an individual, others have had more success, but it is difficult), then it can be expensive. The large city can be good for transportation (train, bus and air), but the hotel rooms can be quite expensive. On the other hand, many big gaming conventions, such as Origins where World DipCon is being held this year, go to smaller cities like Columbus, Ohio, where they can get cheaper hotel rates. In general, regardless of the city size, the trend

for gaming conventions has been to work with so-called "suite hotels" that have two room suites with two king beds and a pullout couch in the other room. Even if the rooms are expensive, cramming a large group in each room (and gamers are willing to do this) can be a way to keep the costs down a bit. But you as the organizer have to help with this. For TempleCon, I ponied up a crash suite room myself (currently I think four people are staying in it, but there is room for more, if you want floor space cheap!!) and am letting people "pay what you want". If you want people to come, you have to entice them.

Ah, so **HOW** do you entice people. This also takes a lot of hard work, and it seems to be a bottomless sinkhole of time. One thing you want to do is to find the E-Mail Diplomacy players in the area where your tournament is. This seemingly simple task actually is surprisingly difficult. For Judge players, the floc.net site currently is not very up-to-date; the JDPR data is only current through the end of 2005. This is quite unfortunate, since one easy way to find college players in your area is to look up the domains (e.g. brown.edu, uri.edu, ric.edu, etc.) in floc.net to get some E-mail addresses to promote your tournament. But once it is four years out of date, most of these people have graduated and their E-Mails were disconnected (as I found when I attempted it). Some colleges let you keep bouncing your college E-Mail address to your current address (e.g. I know MIT does this) so this approach might work. You also need to use your local yahoogroup; here in New England it is MADip, but there are at least a dozen of these groups in the US and more in other countries, to troll for players. Then, you also can look at http://eurodip.nuxit.net/php/rencontre/affiche_rencontres.php?lang=Ang, the worldwide Tournament player listing and find players in tournaments or house games near you, but that database does not have E-Mail addresses. So, once you identify players you might want to invite, you will have to search for their contact information. So far, for this year's TempleCon, I have not located any person who I didn't already know and manage to convince them to come. But I have not given up yet. As soon as we release *DW* this week, I will redouble my efforts on this front.

Lastly, what about the tournament itself? How do you work out scoring and organization? There are other articles out there discussing these questions. You can run a central clock with David Norman's DipTimer that has the famous voice of David's sister announcing times to deadline. The easiest place to download that is via Brian Shelden's website where he has linked it up with InstallShield (<http://www.shelden-associates.com/download/>). A number of people are

trying to perfect tournament management software programs to help you manage tournaments on-site, keeping score and choosing countries, stay tuned for updates on this soon. You also have to choose a scoring system, but remember that there IS no perfect scoring system, so choose one that you like and that you can defend, but attempt as much as possible to minimize discussion of the scoring system. The more people talk about it in practice, the worse it is. I like the model of Detour that was originally invented in New Zealand, so that's what I use. I also have four rounds, but since it is at a general gaming convention and I want to encourage play in some rounds, but not necessarily all, I am using an ante system, where you start with 50 points (to avoid negative scores), then as you enter each game you ante up 14 points, about the average score for a game. This allows people to play as many rounds as they want.



Oh yes, so what happened at that first Diplomacy tournament that I started and entered? In something that I think correctly is seen today as "not kosher", I won the tournament. I've not even come close to winning a Diplomacy tournament since, but it doesn't much matter. It really is all about the people, the friends, who I've met through the hobby. Whether to a tournament or just a house gaming get-together, do all of us organizers and yourself a favor. Hie thyself to a Diplomacy FTF game someplace soon and have even more fun than you're currently having in the Diplomacy hobby. You won't regret it. And if you want RUN a Diplomacy tournament at a general gaming convention, go find one near you, approach the organizers, and they'll be happy to have you do it! And if you live anywhere near Rochester, NY, SimCon stopped running Diplomacy tournaments long, long ago, but I'd be proud if you re-started a Diplomacy tournament there, think about it, and tell them Jim-Bob sent you.... I'm happy to offer any advice or counsel to anyone trying to start their own tournament affiliating with a gaming convention near them, just ask!!

The Central Powers System

By David Webster

In the mid-1990's I began a quest to design a Diplomacy opening that would serve three purposes: alter the play balance of the seven countries, increase the number of solo victories, and give a large advantage to the players who had extensive experience with the new opening. The resulting system, the Central Powers System, accomplishes all three objectives. The system has frequently been played in Maine, but never in a NADF environment. To those familiar with the system, it was no surprise that the first time that it appeared in NADF play, at Dipcon 41 in Bangor, the result was a solo victory for the player most familiar with the system. The system was so dominant that a NADF player alleged that the game was fixed. As a result, I'm writing this piece for *Diplomacy World* to provide the basic information for the most common variation of the system.

Altering Play Balance

As a general rule, players are less pleased to draw Italy, Austria and Germany than England, France, Russia and Turkey. Part of the reason is that England and France can form an easy alliance, divided by the English Channel, on the western edge of the board. Likewise, Russia and Turkey, divided by the Black Sea, can form an eastern alliance. The RT alliance is often considered to be the most powerful alliance on the board. The solution is simple; Italy, Austria and Germany can ally and form a powerful central powers bloc. A more difficult task is to find a series of opening moves that have appeal to all three allies. The immediate barriers are that Italy can simply attack Austria and produce good opening results. Germany and Austria can employ simpler, more conventional openings, and achieve equal or better supply center counts and better defensive positions. Unfortunately, conventional approaches provide common end of game results, which certainly do not favor Italy, Austria, and Germany, as compared to England, France, Russia, and Turkey.

Increased number of Solo victories

The number of solo's achieved by Italy, Austria, Germany and England and France are much higher in games played under the standard form of the Central Powers System. The system pulverizes Russia and Turkey, leaving Italy, Austria, Germany, and England stretched out in horizontal bands across the board in four layers, as if stacked north to south with Italy on the bottom, then Austria on top of Italy, Germany on top of Austria, and ultimately England on the northernmost layer. Each of these four countries control supply centers that touch the easternmost border of the board. After the elimination of Russia and Turkey a very open style of play ensues. Each of the four countries has multiple offensive possibilities and defense headaches. The fifth power, France, is allowed to develop without

conflict in the initial stage with the understanding that outside of the free conquest of Spain, Portugal, Belgium and Holland, no offensive positioning is tolerated without all of the other four turning on France. The number of solo victories are magnified because the players with the most experience with the system are able to evaluate board positions that arise much better than other players. In fact, many experienced players will completely misread what is really happening on the board (as happened at Dipcon 41 in Bangor.)

Large Advantage for Experience

In Chess, top players often have one or two or three favorite opening systems out of hundreds of openings. In these favored systems they are dominant against players of similar ability; yet, in other openings they are not dominant against the very same players. How can this be explained? Players understand, through the experience of playing and studying opening systems, certain openings well-enough that they grasp whether they are winning and losing the game and adjust accordingly. Good players recognize the smallest of advantages. A good player may already see a path to victory, when the opponent, examining the same board, thinks that the game is even. Sometimes groups of players cannot determine where the winning advantage was gained, even long after the game is over. The Central Powers System reshuffles the deck so that players using conventional approaches see the board differently than players with experience playing the system. Just like novice Diplomacy players, novice CPS players must learn by making mistakes and improving their performance in their next game. In Chess terms again, it may be as if bishops were limited to moving one square diagonally. Imagine a group of players with a decade experience playing with these rules competing with equally talented players who are introduced to the rule change minutes before play began. Much of what the new players understood about chess openings and positioning would be worthless.

Negotiating the CPS alliance

With experienced CPS players, Italy, Austria and Germany have usually decided yes or no before the game begins. When boards are assigned, inevitably there is a period of a few minutes before the game clock officially starts. Players are introducing themselves and their countries to one another. During these few minutes, without speaking to one another, Italy, Austria and Germany decide whether they want the CPS or not. As soon as the official time begins, they signal each other, even with the other players standing with them (common methods involve hand or verbal signals.) The whole process takes ten seconds tops. Actual verbal negotiation in privates ensues with Austria speaking with

Russia.

Austria wants Russia to move to Galicia because Russia's best defense against the CPS requires that he move Warsaw to Silesia or Prussia on the first move. Often Russia will not want to "waste" the move bouncing in Galicia. Austria reiterates to the Russian that he is moving to Galicia.

As this Austrian – Russian meeting takes place, Germany invites England into the CPS. England and Germany split Scandinavia and England lands an army in St. Petersburg. Both countries know that Russia and Turkey will soon be off the board with a strong France remaining in the west.

The third meeting, all three occurring concurrently, is between Italy and France. France joins the pact with the stipulations that France receives the usual Spain, Portugal, and common Belgium. In addition, France is granted Holland without a fight. In exchange, France stays out of Germany, the Med and the English Channel until Russia and Turkey are conquered. Because France can invade Germany with ease in the opening moves of the CPS, France is given Holland as a bone that he would take without a serious fight. France accepts the deal because England, Germany and Italy will unite against France if France does not accept the deal.

Presumably, Russia and Turkey form a RT alliance during negotiations. The variation covered in this article assumes that Turkey is allowed to go to the Black Sea with Russia's permission. A bounce in the Black Sea would be even worse for the RT. An opening with Turkey heading out to the Aegean in the fall of the first year changes little overall for the RT, but tends to help Austria develop faster and Italy more slowly. For this reason, Italy may tell Turkey that Italy will stab Austria, if Turkey doesn't send the fleet out to the Aegean. Italy will move into Austria on the opening move in what will appear to be an attack. The move has been agreed upon in advance.

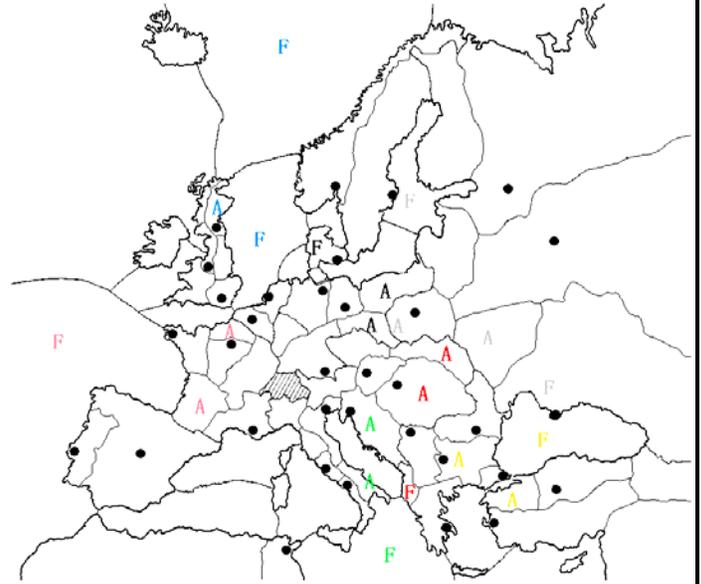
For Spring 1901, for this article, I am assuming that Russia and Turkey have agreed not to waste a move by bouncing in the Black Sea and pretending not to be allied. Moscow has moved to the Ukraine in anticipation of moving to Rumania in the fall with the support of Sevastopol and the Turkish fleet that would be in the Black Sea. Russia and Turkey make this plan because a Russian army in Rumania is a stronger threat against Austria than a somewhat limited Russian fleet in Rumania.

Spring 1901

France: 1) Paris to Picardy 2) Marseilles to Gascony 3) Brest to Mid Atlantic

England: 1) London to North Sea 2) Yorkshire to

Edinburgh 3) Edinburgh to Norwegian Sea
Germany: 1) Kiel to Denmark 2) Berlin to Prussia 3) Munich to Silesia



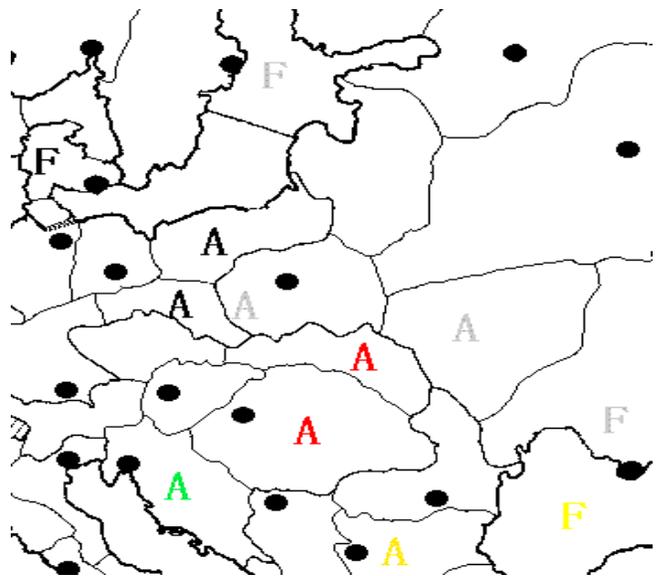
Russia: 1) St. Petersburg south coast to Gulf of Bothnia 2) Warsaw to Galicia 3) Moscow to Ukraine 4) Sevastopol holds

Turkey: 1) Constantinople to Bulgaria 2) Smyrna to Constantinople 3) Ankara to Black Sea

Austria: 1) Vienna to Galicia 2) Budapest supports Vienna to Galicia 3) Trieste to Albania

Italy: 1) Venice to Trieste 2) Rome to Apulia 3) Naples to Ionian Sea

The Noose



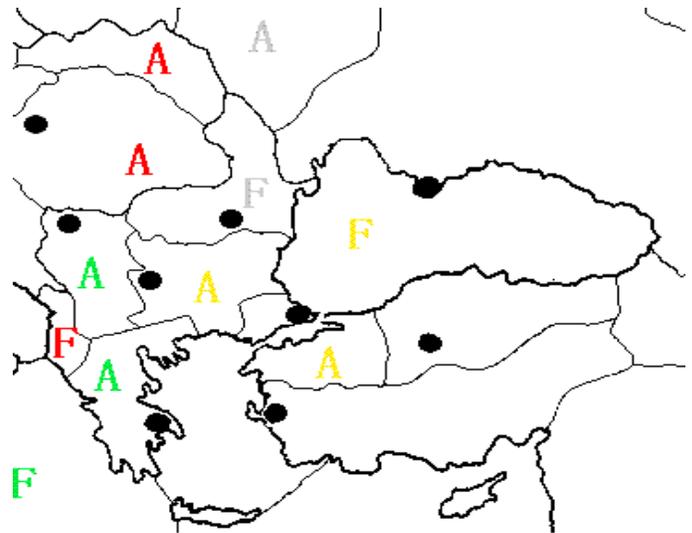
The combination of Germany moving units into Silesia and Prussia with the unexpected Austrian supported move to Galicia creates an unstoppable attack upon

Warsaw. Galicia simply moves to the Ukraine cutting the Ukraine's support of Warsaw. Germany will bounce Russia's move to Sweden. Many good Russian players will instinctively anticipate the bounce in Sweden and want to move to the Baltic Sea; the problem for Russia is that Germany will build two units and will easily be able to cover attacks from the Baltic Sea by self-bouncing himself. An additional factor is that England will be moving its fleet to the Barents Sea and convoying an army to Norway in the Fall of 1901. In 1902 England will be attacking St. Petersburg, and the Russian fleet is needed for the defense of St. Petersburg.

The wildcard in this position is the Italian army in Trieste. This arranged move gives Russia and Turkey false hope. Trieste is moving in the Fall of 1901 to Serbia with the support of the Austrian in Budapest. Turkey may decide to take Rumania with support from the Black Sea. This cannibalization of Russia's needed build is probably the Turk's best play. Austria, who has moved away from Turkey toward Russia, will want to convince Turkey that he is going to have Galicia take Rumania with support from Budapest under the guise that he needs the build. If Turkey believes this he will move Bulgaria to Serbia, which will be unsuccessful.

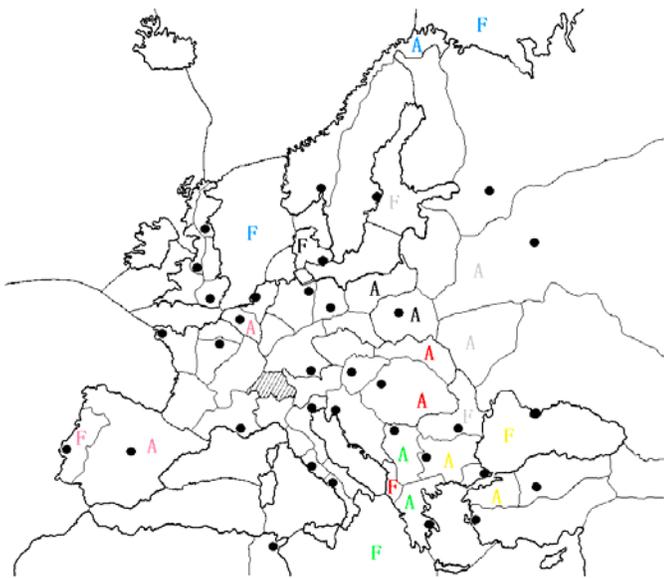
Sea convoys Apulia to Greece

The Wall



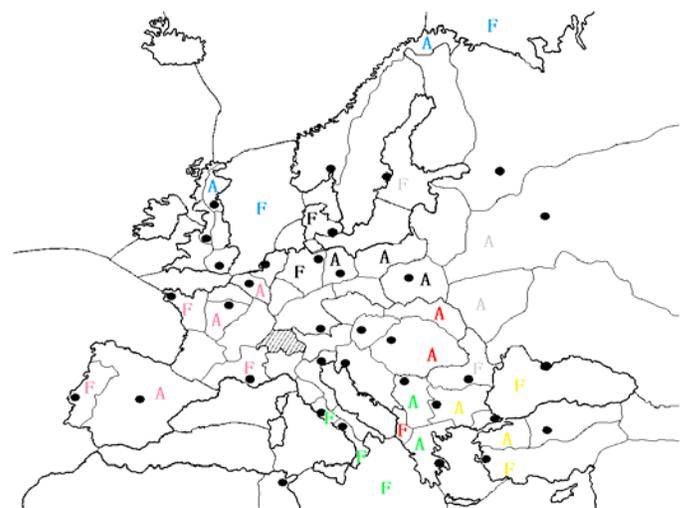
Italy and Austria will be looking to advance their positions. Italy with two builds will be sending a new fleet to unoccupied Tunis for yet another build in 1902. The other new fleet (in Naples), in conjunction with the current fleet in the Ionian, will look to work their way into the Aegean and East Med over time. In the current configuration, Serbia, Budapest and Galicia are safe without support. In the unlikely event that Turkey had two fleets in the Aegean and East Med, Greece is still safely Italian because Serbia would support Greece. The Ionian Sea would be supported by the Austrian fleet in Albania. *The Wall can contain Turkey until England, Germany and Austria collapse Russian and then moved through Sevastopol to Armenia.*¹

Fall 1901



- France:** 1) Picardy to Belgium 2) Gascony to Spain 3) Mid Atlantic to Portugal
- England:** 1) North Sea convoys Edinburgh to Norway 2) Edinburgh to Norway 3) Norwegian Sea to Barents Sea
- Germany:** 1) Denmark to Sweden 2) Prussia supports Silesia to Warsaw 3) Silesia to Warsaw
- Russia:** 1) Gulf of Bothnia to Sweden 2) Warsaw holds 3) Ukraine supports Warsaw 4) Sevastopol to Rumania
- Turkey:** 1) Bulgaria to Serbia 2) Constantinople to Bulgaria 3) Black Sea supports Sevastopol to Rumania
- Austria:** 1) Galicia to Ukraine 2) Budapest supports Trieste to Serbia 3) Albania supports Apulia to Greece
- Italy:** 1) Trieste to Serbia 2) Apulia to Greece 3) Ionian

Buids 1901



¹ If Turkey had taken Rumania and Bulgaria in the Fall of 1901, the Wall would be maintained by linked support and the Italian fleet built in Naples would need to support the Italian fleet in the Ionian Sea. Ultimately, Turkey will face a land invasion from the north.

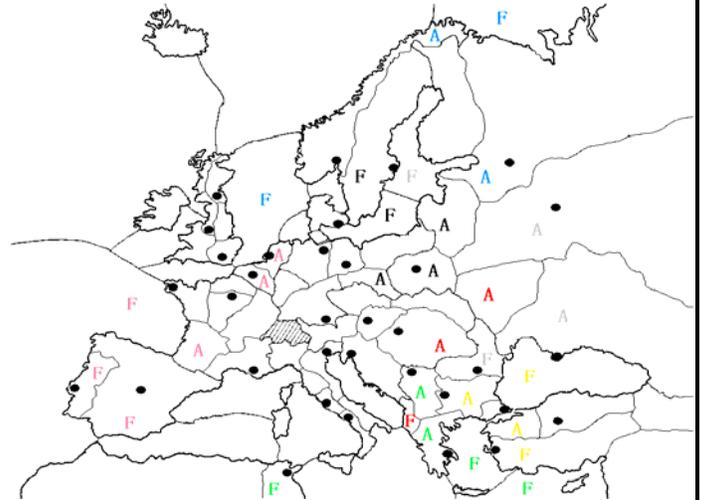
England, Germany and Austria are better served by playing patiently for position. Galicia supports Warsaw, allowing Germany to move Prussia to Livonia and Berlin to Silesia. Silesia can support Warsaw; if the French act aggressively Silesia can cover Munich, or be in Kiel in two moves. England moves Norway to Finland, with the newly built army in Edinburgh being convoyed to Norway. This combination guarantees that St. Petersburg falls to the English in the Fall of 1902.

The Italians will want to advance the Ionian fleet to the East Med. Naples will move up to the Ionian. In the Fall of 1902, the East Med will support the new occupant of the Ionian to the Aegean. A good Turk should see this combination and may move to the East Med instead; most players will not risk losing the Aegean and make the weaker play out of following the norm and a lack of creativity. The Ionian-Aegean-East Med triangle is a guessing game that Turkey will eventually lose.

France will receive Holland as a gift in 1902. France avoids doing anything that can be interpreted as setting up for an attack on anyone.

holds

Fall 1902



France: 1) Picardy to Belgium 2) Belgium to Holland

England: 1) Finland to St. Petersburg 2) Norway supports Finland to St. Petersburg 3) Barents Sea supports Finland to St. Petersburg

Germany: 1) Warsaw supports Galicia to Ukraine 2) Livonia to Moscow 3) Silesia supports Warsaw

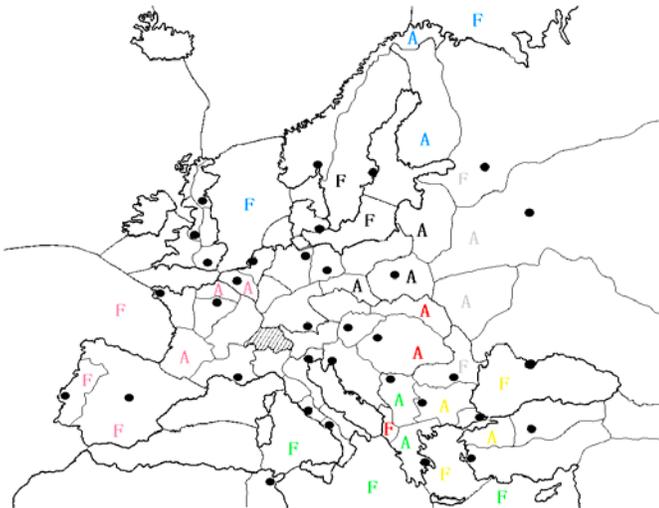
Russia: 1) St. Petersburg holds 2) Moscow supports St. Petersburg 3) Ukraine supports Moscow 4) Rumania holds

Turkey: 1) Bulgaria supports Rumania 2) Constantinople supports Bulgaria 3) Black Sea supports Rumania 4) Aegean Sea to Greece

Austria: 1) Galicia to Ukraine 2) Budapest to Rumania 3) Albania supports Greece

Italy: 1) Ionian Sea to Aegean Sea 2) East Med supports Ionian Sea to Aegean Sea 3) Tyrrhenian Sea to Tunis 4) Serbia supports Budapest to Rumania 5) Greece holds

Spring 1902



France: 1) Paris to Picardy 2) Belgium holds 3) Brest to Mid Atlantic 4) Marseilles to Spain sc 5) Portugal holds 6) Spain to Gascony

England: 1) North Sea convoys Edinburgh to Norway 2) Edinburgh to Norway 3) Norway to Finland

Germany: 1) Denmark to Sweden 2) Kiel to Baltic Sea 3) Prussia to Livonia 4) Berlin to Silesia 5) Warsaw holds

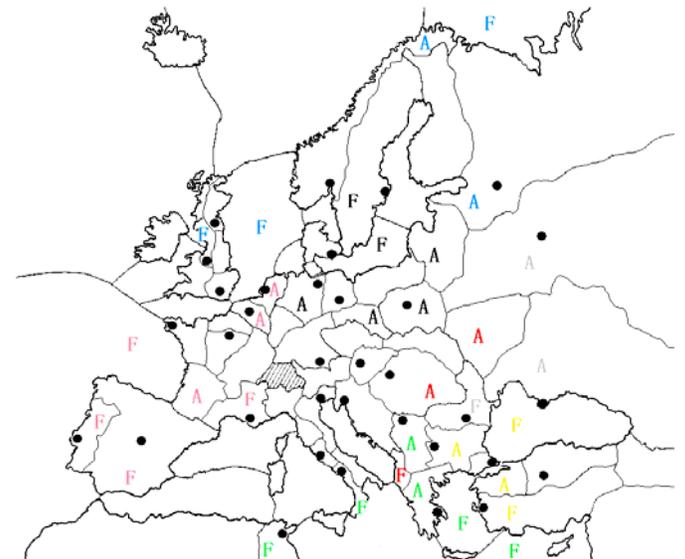
Russia: 1) Gulf of Bothnia to St. Petersburg 2) Moscow supports Gulf of Bothnia to St. Petersburg 3) Ukraine supports Rumania 4) Rumania holds

Turkey: 1) Bulgaria supports Rumania 2) Constantinople supports Bulgaria 3) Black Sea supports Rumania 4) Smyrna to Aegean Sea

Austria: 1) Galicia supports Warsaw 2) Budapest holds 3) Albania holds

Italy: 1) Ionian Sea to East Med 2) Naples to Ionian Sea 3) Rome to Tyrrhenian Sea 4) Serbia holds 5) Greece

Builds 1902



At the beginning of the game the agreement provided for the following distribution of supply centers:

France: Spain, Portugal, Belgium and Holland

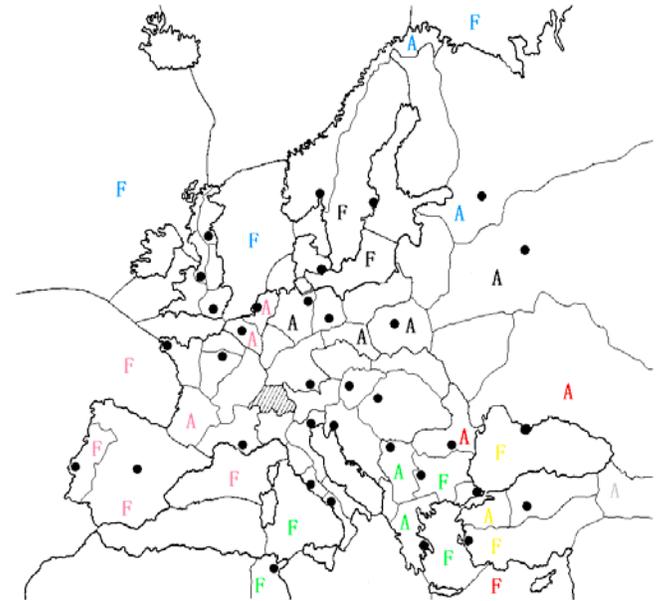
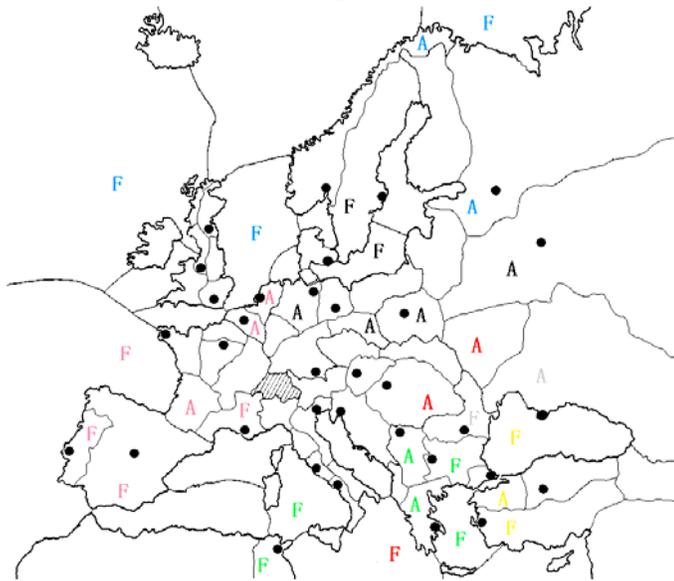
England: Norway and St. Petersburg

Germany: Denmark, Sweden, Warsaw and Moscow

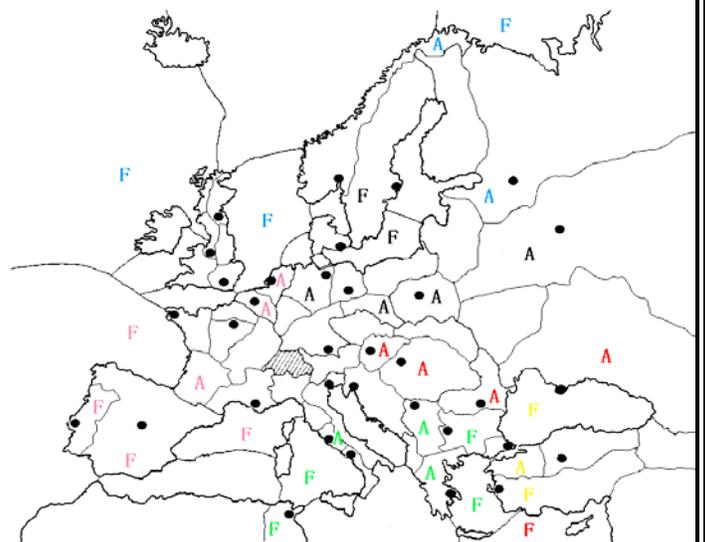
Austria: Sevastopol, Rumania, Bulgaria, Serbia

Italy: Tunis, Greece, Constantinople, Smyrna, Ankara

Spring 1903



Builds 1903



France: all hold

England: 1) Liverpool to North Atlantic 2) St. Petersburg supports Livonia to Moscow

Germany: 1) Warsaw supports Livonia to Moscow 2) Livonia to Moscow 3) Silesia supports Warsaw

Russia: 1) Moscow holds 2) Sevastopol supports Rumania 3) Rumania supports Bulgaria

Turkey: 1) Bulgaria supports Rumania 2) Constantinople supports Smyrna 3) Black Sea supports Bulgaria 4) Smyrna holds

Austria: 1) Ukraine supports Budapest to Rumania 2) Budapest to Rumania 3) Albania to Ionian Sea

Italy: 1) Aegean Sea to Bulgaria sc 2) East Med to Aegean Sea 3) Serbia supports Aegean Sea to Bulgaria sc 4) Greece supports Aegean Sea to Bulgaria sc

Fall 1903

France: 1) Marseilles to Gulf of Lyon

England: all hold

Germany: 1) Moscow supports Ukraine to Sevastopol

Russia: 1) Sevastopol supports Rumania 2) Rumania supports Sevastopol

Turkey: 1) Constantinople supports Smyrna 2) Black Sea supports Constantinople 3) Smyrna holds

Austria: 1) Ukraine to Sevastopol 2) Budapest to Rumania 3) Ionian Sea to East Med

Italy: 1) Aegean Sea supports Bulgaria sc 2) Serbia supports Budapest to Rumania 3) Greece supports Bulgaria sc 4) Bulgaria sc holds

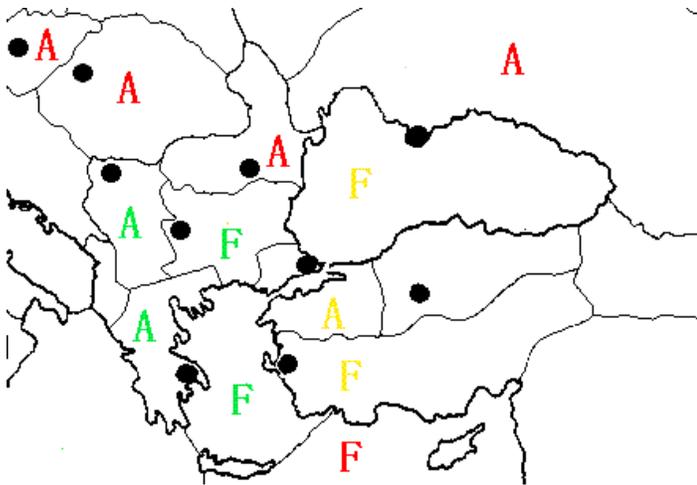
I haven't placed Germany's build because at this point one of two things occurs. Germany builds and discloses what his intentions are; a fleet built in Berlin is anti-England. An army in Munich is likely anti-French.² It is common for German to pass on the build, waiting for France and England to reveal their intentions by the moves that they make. Germany can then make the selection of fleet or army more appropriate to the threat at hand.

From here, the game often splits into two spheres. The first is France, England and Germany in the west, with Italy and France beginning to take positions in the Med.

² It could be a signal that he will be moving into Tyrolia; if so, he probably would have ceased assisting Austria and Italy before the build.

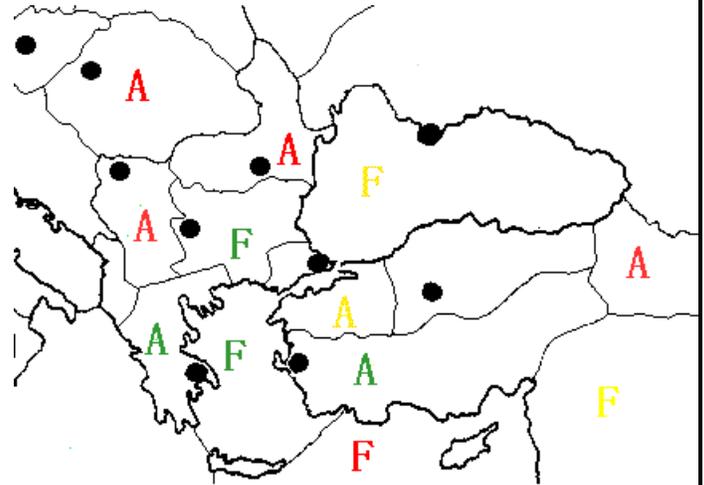
The second is Austria and Italy wrapping-up the assault on Turkey. Austria has enough units to prevent a German assault on the Austrian homeland. As units become unnecessary in the fight against Turkey, they are deployed toward the western frontiers. A sample of moves used to complete the invasion of Turkey is next.

The Takedown Spring 1904



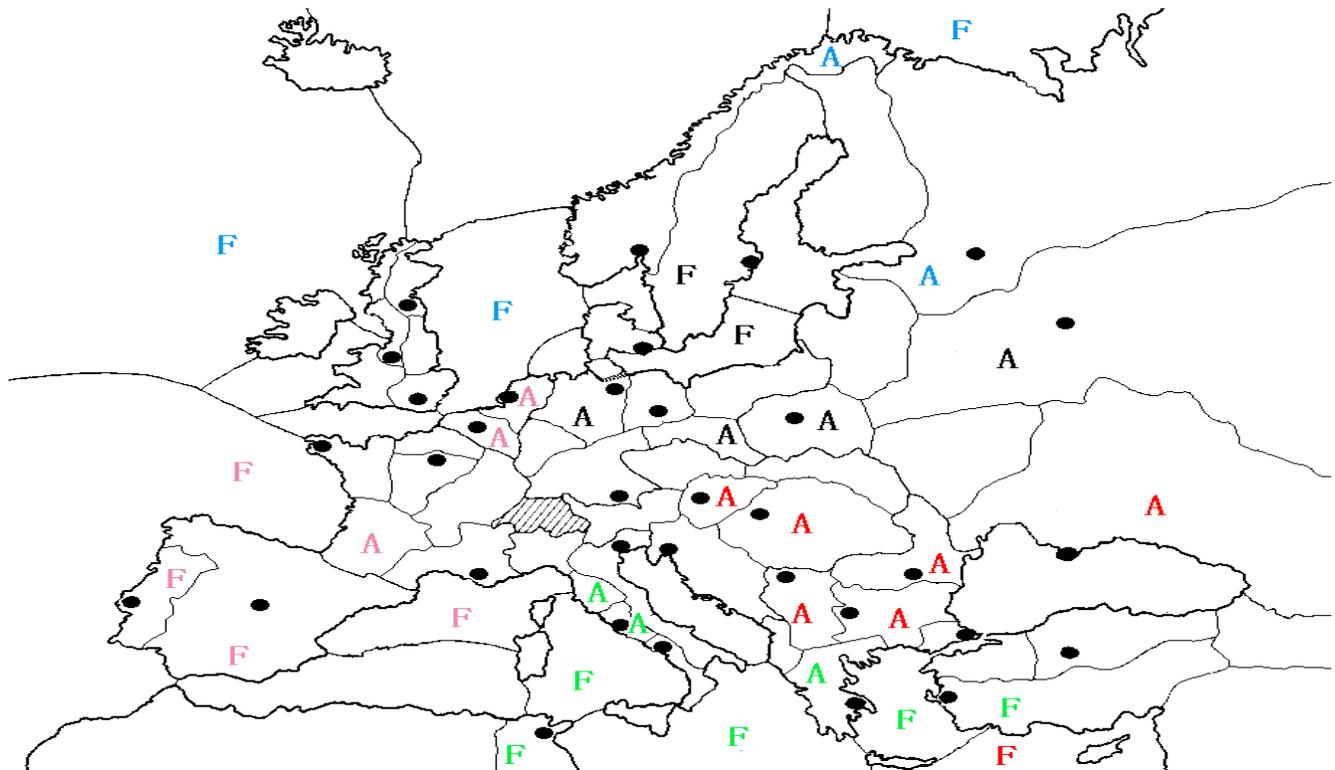
- Turkey:** 1) Smyrna holds 2) Constantinople supports Smyrna 3) Black Sea supports Constantinople
Austria: 1) Vienna to Budapest 2) Budapest to Serbia 3) Sevastopol to Armenia
Italy: 1) Aegean Sea convoys Greece to Smyrna 2) Greece to Smyrna 3) Serbia to Greece 4) Bulgaria sc to Constantinople

Result of Spring 1904 moves



This idealized position probably is not the actual position that would work out from the moves in 1904. Very often, the western powers begin battling in 2004, less often in the Fall of 2003. Russia and Turkey play better or worse defense; the variations lend advantages to one of the surviving five nations. Germany can take Moscow with Warsaw in many cases; thus leaving an army in Livonia that threatens the English in St. Petersburg. Frequently players squabble over positioning and worries, imaginary and real. Some players don't always observe the tenet of not building on an ally's border. Perhaps the player does or does not know the custom. It's Diplomacy; part of the entertainment is determining what is bluff, ignorance or malice.

Idealized Start of Phase II



The idealized map untangles the countries in every way imaginable. All the lines of attack have been dulled. Obviously Austria had periods of being very exposed; Italy less so, but it must complete the conquest of Turkey and scramble to make orderly lines with Austria without France blasting into the Med. Germany can be subjected to an assortment of problems if England does not support him to Moscow. France had a cakewalk for the first three years but now faces three strong neighbors. France walks a tightrope in that it cannot move to soon or face the wrath of all the scorned allies; however, to wait for the idealized map to form invites England, Germany and Italy to select the easiest choice: mass units on a shared front with France, creating one front for England, Germany and Italy each and three for France.

By-Products

In a league where the CPS is played frequently, the influence of the CPS is felt even when it is not played in the game. The standard defense to the CPS involves Russia opening Warsaw to Silesia or Warsaw to Prussia. This move delays The Noose, and Russia survives 1901 with Warsaw in hand. Warsaw moving into Germany to defend against a possible CPS has become commonplace in Maine play.

When Russia opens Warsaw to Silesia or Prussia, Germany is forced to cover the attack. The potential for challenging for Belgium or Holland combined with capturing Denmark is lost. I need to remind myself, when I play outside of Maine, that Belgium is not considered automatically French. A French opening to Burgundy, while not especially tragic for Germany in most environments is brutal when Russia is also moving into Germany. When Germany omits Kiel to Denmark, England will snipe at Denmark in the Fall of 1901; likewise, the English take potshots at Holland if it is open in the Fall of 1901.

Absent Russia's pointless Warsaw to Galicia, Austria suddenly becomes more playable. Austria is far more likely to cover Trieste with Vienna in the Spring of 1901, or to move to Tyrolia. Austria is offered alliances by Russia and Turkey much more frequently in an effort to dissuade Austria from employing the CPS. Turkey commonly offers Italy support to Greece in the Fall of 1901, for a convoy from Apulia. Again, this is a Turkish bribe to avoid the CPS in the first place.

Conclusion

This article is intended to serve as an introduction to the main line of the CPS, with players in Russia and Turkey *not* deploying the Standard Defense. The CPS has a few major variations and is more flexible than might meet the eye from only reading this article. At a minimum, I hope that I communicated enough of the system to demonstrate that the allegations made at Bangor Dipcon 41 were grossly unjustified. In no way

are the Spring 1901 moves of Germany and England a basis to conclude that they are throwing the game for France. Secondly, if a group of players play the CPS and gain experience with it, they will find that opportunities will arise in tournaments to use the CPS against players less familiar with it, and the chances of soloing are strong. In a multiple round tournament, the version of the CPS in this article, or one of its cousins, will be played at some point, provided people know the system. You drew Austria, Italy or Germany? Don't despair you really do have a chance; it's the poor slob who drew Russia and Turkey, giddy about a RT, who are going to take a beating. They just don't know it yet.

When the vote was held in Vancouver to play Dipcon 41 in Bangor, Maine it was extremely likely that the winner of that tournament would be a player from Bangor. It wasn't cheating; it was pre-planning, years in the making. Even after it was over, my critics couldn't explain the solo that beat them. It's like the Lepanto or Sealion on steroids, but no one outside of a closed group of players, Maine Diplomacy Circuit, had ever heard about it.

If you have a small group of players who play on a regular basis, play the main line from this article with fast time limits to become familiar with it.³ If you have six players, give Turkey and Russia to one player. For five players, give Turkey and Russia to one player, and Italy and Austria to another player. After eight to ten games, your advantage playing the system should be tremendous. Remember, it's not just about knocking Russia and Turkey out. The goal is to play aggressively, creating unusual positions that allow your experience to lead you to solo wins.

[[I'd love to get some response to this article and the strategy it uses. Do you agree with the conclusions, or do you see flaws or weaknesses? Let's see some letters and articles!]]



³ I recommend 15 minutes negotiation for Spring 1901; 5 minutes for each turn for Fall 1901 through Fall 1903; and then 10 minutes for each turn up through 1908. You should be able to get through a game in under 2 1/2 hours.

Diplomacy World Demo Game

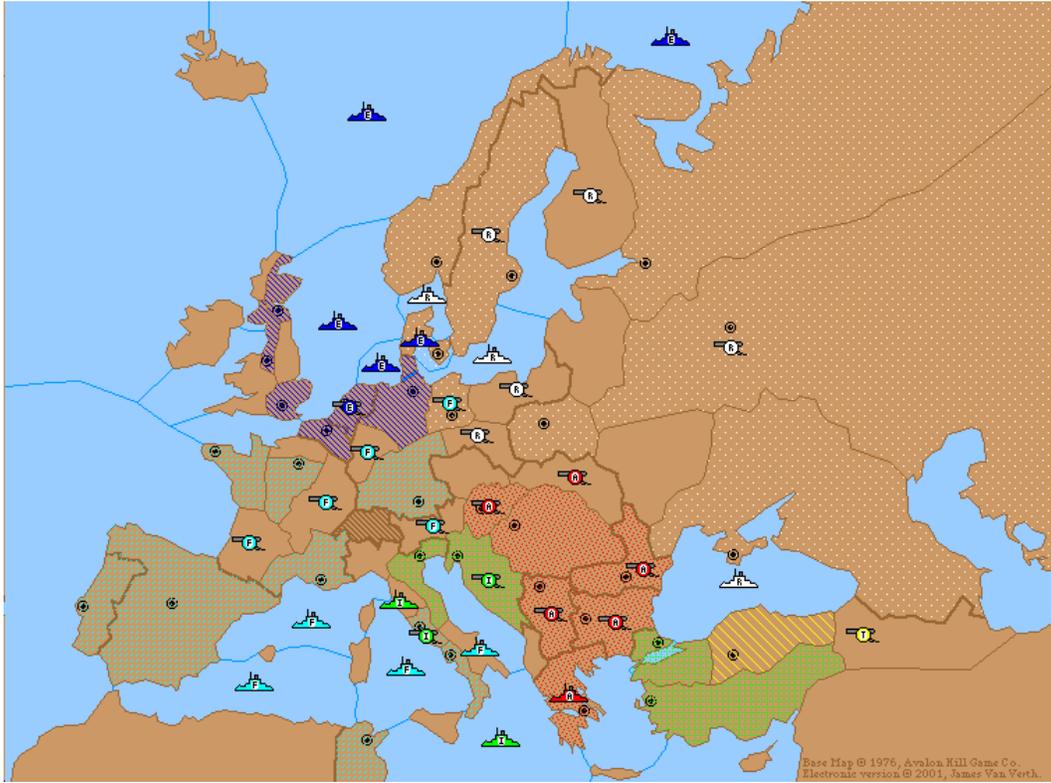
Regular Diplomacy – “After the Rapture”

Cast of Characters:

GM: Rick Desper
Austria: Adam Silverman
England: Dan Lester
France: Jake Mannix
Germany: Mike Hall
Italy: Doug Moore

Russia: Mark Zoffel
Turkey: Andy Marshall

Commentators: **Jim Burgess** (**Bold**),
Eric Hunter (*Italics*)



Spring 1907 Results:

Austria: A Budapest – Galicia, A Bulgaria Supports A Rumania, F Greece Supports F Aegean Sea - Ionian Sea, A Rumania Supports A Budapest – Galicia, A Serbia - Trieste (*Fails*), A Vienna - Tyrolia (*Fails*)

England: F Barents Sea - Norway (*Bounce*), F Edinburgh - Norwegian Sea, A Yorkshire - Holland
F Helgoland Bight Supports F Kiel – Denmark, F Kiel – Denmark, F North Sea Convoys A Yorkshire – Holland

France: A Brest – Gascony, F Marseilles - Gulf of Lyon, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean - Western Mediterranean,
A Munich – Berlin, F Naples – Apulia, A Paris – Burgundy, F Rome - Tyrrhenian Sea,
A Ruhr Supports F Kiel (*Ordered to Move*), A Tyrolia - Venice (*Bounce*)

Italy: F Aegean Sea - Ionian Sea, A Trieste - Venice (*Bounce*), F Tuscany Supports A Venice – Rome,
A Venice - Rome

Russia: F Berlin - Baltic Sea, F Black Sea - Ankara (*Bounce*), A Denmark - Norway (*Dislodged*),
A Galicia – Silesia, A Norway – Finland, A Sevastopol – Moscow, A Silesia – Prussia,
F Skagerrak Convoys A Denmark - Norway

Turkey: A Armenia - Ankara (*Bounce*)

Spring 1907 Commentary:

Commentators: Jim Burgess (**Bold**), Eric Hunter (*Italics*)

Austria: Adam decides, OK, if Mark has to remove, let's take advantage. He has a number of options. Mark moved as if he thought that Adam would go the other way, it is possible that this is a stab by Adam. Mark could protect Sev and War, but if he does, then he risks Ber (which he could take back) or Stp. This is in the direction of what I was expecting last year, Adam will grow into the main power in the east as this consolidates toward AEF. Adam is likely to take some chances now and make some better tactical moves than he's been making lately in my view. He also looks like he may be backing Doug up a bit, Doug doesn't look like he's going to lose as many centers as Eric seemed to think in last year's commentary (not intending to criticize Eric, we've both been making these kinds of predictions).

I'm not so sure Adam is attacking Mark. Bud-Gal is necessary to secure the Austrian border, assuming Mark doesn't retreat voluntarily. If he was attacking Mark, I would have expected Vie S Bud to Gal to force the move. I think we could easily see Gal Hold this Fall.

These moves impress me as strongly pro-Italian, which means they are anti-French, so someone in the East has convinced the others of the seriousness of the EF threat. I didn't EXPECT Doug to be eliminated this year, but the danger was there. Given these moves, Doug could actually build one this year. (Tri-Ven, Ion-Apu, Vie-Tyl, Rom-Nap, Tus-Rom)

Agreed. So Adam could just hold in Gal.

Actually, Gal-Boh has real potential in AIR vs. EF.

Oh yes, very good point, much better than holding. Great idea, I hope he does it.

England: Does Dan move A Hol-Kie and are Jake's Berlin retreat options going to be cut off? Probably. Denmark can be supported, but there are guesses to be made in what to support and what to attack. If I were Dan, I risk Denmark and try to take Norway.

My first glance instinct is to try to destroy F Ska, and allow Mos-StP to succeed. I think Jake may have ordered Mun-Ber to cut Ber S Den-Kie, since EF really doesn't want a French Army in Berlin. If I was going to risk Den to take Nwy, I'd also consider Hol S Hel-Kie to set up a supported attack on the Russian Baltic Fleet.

That's right. I definitely think I would allow Mos-Stp to succeed. And you're right, Hol S Hel-Kie is stronger.

France: A major commitment to the Italian Campaign, but I'm not sure I understand Rom-TyS unless Jake was expecting Tus-TyS, Aeg-Ion and a supported attack on

Tunis or Naples in the Fall.

This slows Jake's progress just a little bit. Noting above, it seems that Jake didn't really intend to get into Berlin, but there he be. One possibility here is to move back to Munich, even though that is "going backwards". And his potential moves against Italy are not that strong. Still, there is no denying Jake's strength in the game here. Sometimes moving a bit slowly at this point prevents the formation of the anti-leader alliance that stagnates you. He is clearly still working with England, though Ruhr didn't seem to know that F Kie-Den was happening. This contributed to getting trapped in Berlin without support.

I'd bet we'll see Ruh S Hel/Hol-Kie, Ber S Bur-Mun, Gas-Spa. If Ber gets destroyed, and Jake doesn't take Ven, then the popped Army leaves him even. If he takes Ven, and Ber gets destroyed he rebuilds in Mar.

Italy: Can Doug rely on Andy and Mark to continue to pointlessly bounce in Ank, or will they bounce in Sev this time? Bla-Con, Arm-Smy would be devastating, but I don't know if Mark and Andy can manage to pull that off.

Finally, a STRONG RT move option presents itself. No, I don't think it will happen either, but the temptation will be there.

Russia: Okay, Mark, I apologize. I didn't expect Sev-Mos, Gal-Sil, Sil-Pru. I light of these moves, Ukr was the proper disband. I'm a fan of a diplomatic defense, but Mark is taking a huge risk, here. Still, given Adam's moves, I'd say he has laid the groundwork, and it may pay off.

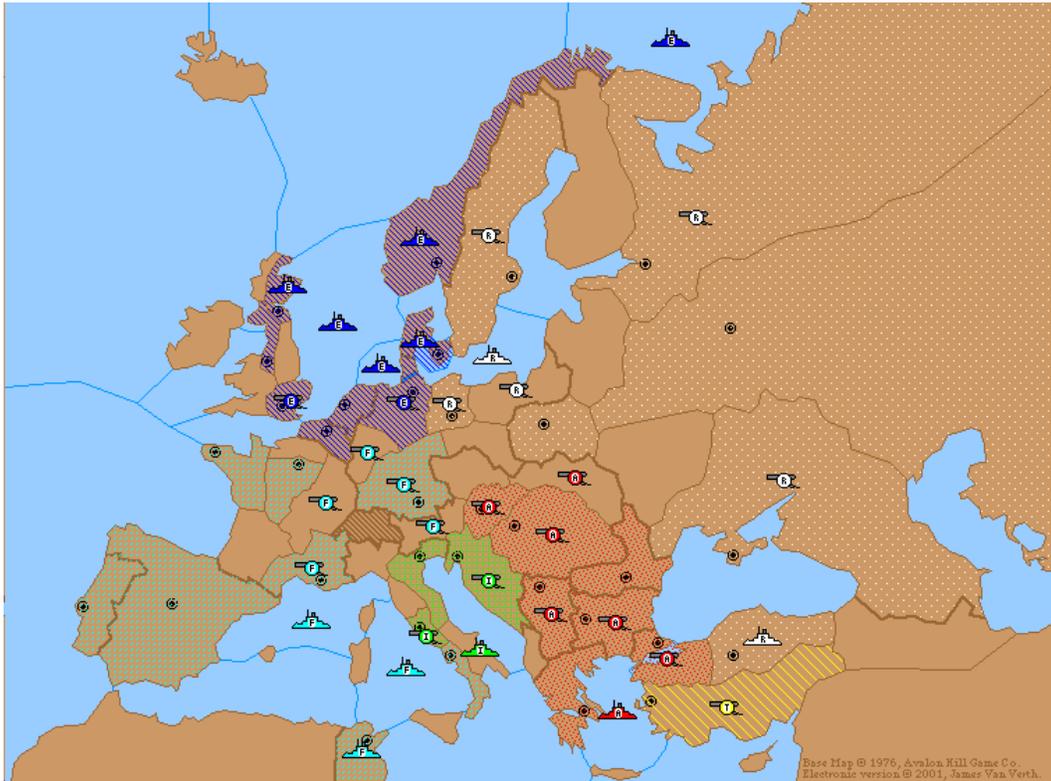
The diplomacy now requires that Mark communicate well with Adam though. We'll see if he can make that happen.

The Russian moves strongly suggest that AIR has already formed, Gal-Boh will confirm it.

Much better, I think that's the most likely option.

Turkey: Andy, Andy, Andy... Offer Mark support to Con and then Bul, or give him Ank as you take Smy, and get him to support you to Con next year for a build.

Andy may or may not really be playing, just making orders. There is the chance to do something real this turn, but we don't expect it.



Fall 1907 Results:

Austria: A Bulgaria – Constantinople, A Galicia - Bohemia (*Bounce*), F Greece - Aegean Sea, A Rumania – Bulgaria, A Serbia - Trieste (*Fails*), A Vienna - Tyrolia (*Fails*)

England: F Barents Sea Supports F Norwegian Sea – Norway, F Denmark Supports A Holland - Kiel (*Cut*), F Helgoland Bight Supports F Denmark, A Holland – Kiel, F North Sea Supports F Denmark, F Norwegian Sea - Norway

France: F Apulia – Naples, A Berlin – Munich, A Burgundy Supports A Berlin – Munich, A Gascony – Marseilles, F Gulf of Lyon - Tuscany (*Fails*), A Ruhr Supports A Berlin – Munich, A Tyrolia - Bohemia (*Bounce*), F Tyrrhenian Sea - Rome (*Fails*), F Western Mediterranean - Tunis

Italy: F Ionian Sea – Apulia, A Rome - Venice (*Bounce*), A Trieste - Venice (*Bounce*), F Tuscany - Tyrrhenian Sea (*Fails*)

Russia: F Baltic Sea Supports F Skagerrak – Denmark, F Black Sea – Ankara, A Finland - St Petersburg, A Moscow – Sevastopol, A Prussia Supports A Silesia – Berlin, A Silesia – Berlin, F Skagerrak - Denmark (*Fails*), A Sweden Supports F Skagerrak - Denmark

Turkey: A Armenia - Smyrna

Ownership:

Austria:	Budapest, Bulgaria, Constantinople, Greece, Rumania, Serbia, Vienna.
England:	Belgium, Denmark, Edinburgh, Holland, Kiel, Liverpool, London, Norway.
France:	Brest, Marseilles, Munich, Naples, Paris, Portugal, Spain, Tunis.
Italy:	Rome, Trieste, Venice.
Russia:	Ankara, Berlin, Moscow, Sevastopol, St Petersburg, Sweden, Warsaw.
Turkey:	Smyrna.

Adjustments:

Austria:	Supp 7 Unit 6 Build 1
England:	Supp 8 Unit 6 Build 2

France: Supp 8 Unit 9 Remove 1
Germany: Supp 0 Unit 0 Build 0
Italy: Supp 3 Unit 4 Remove 1
Russia: Supp 7 Unit 8 Remove 1
Turkey: Supp 1 Unit 1 Build 0

Fall 1907 Commentary:

Commentators: Jim Burgess (**Bold**), Eric Hunter (*Italics*)

GM Rick Desper: Western powers continue to roll.
Eastern powers continue to squabble.

I'm not sure I agree with Rick's assessment of the Eastern Powers' behavior. Bul-Con is questionable, but AR is clearly back on track, and we're likely to see them eliminate Turkey next year.

Agreed with Eric, and Austria DID do the move to Bohemia, which undoubtedly was the plan all along with going to Galicia. I'll give my detailed comments later, but I will be assessing what happens in a RAI vs. EF bounce up against the lines, since that's where we're headed with Turkey contained. I don't see how they actually put him out with Bla-Ank and Bul-Con. Cooler would have been F Bla C A Bul-Ank, then fleet to Con in the spring with support, eliminate Turkey in the fall, but of course that would have unbalanced the center count.

Gre move to Aeg, as well, so Bul S Aeg-Smy, or Ank S Sev-Arm, followed by Con S Arm-Smy will eliminate Turkey with either Austria or Russia gaining the Center.

Austria: It would seem that Adam and Mark have decided to make it AR vs. EF. The problem with this idea is the lack of Eastern Fleets.

In fact, it is such a limitation not to have the fleets that one has to see it as a prelude to trying to break up the EF, this would be working on Dan to stab France, I would think. If they keep pounding as AR vs. EF it is difficult to see where the line ends up that AR can defend.

England: Dan should build Armies to ramp up the pressure on Mark.

And that's why I'll comment more after the builds. The armies hold to the EF, ANY fleet build does not.

France: Jake loses Rome, and will have to disband one. Probably A Ruhr, or F GoL. With Italy disbanding one, Jake is almost certain to take Rome and Venice next year, though.

This actually could almost be planned by Jake and Dan so that EF stay a bit more even. It also presents an opportunity to break the deal, should Dan be interested.

Italy: Doug chose to defend against Jake, but couldn't get Adam, Mark, and Andy to give him the time to do it effectively.

Classic Italy caught in the middle problem. And Doug doesn't have much of a way out.

Russia: Mark loses two in Scandinavia, and gains one in Turkey. He should probably disband A Sev, though doing so makes defending StP dicey.

Russia faces the classic problem with defending St. Pete. He can try, but it can be taken. The point for Russia is trying to slow Dan enough to think about ganging up on France.

Turkey: Andy finally picks up a Center, but loses Ankara in the process. It seems likely that AR will finally eliminate him next year.

I would say so, There isn't much for Andy to do from here.

Winter 1907 Results:

Austria: Build A Budapest

England: Build F Edinburgh, A London

France: Remove F Naples

Italy: Remove F Tuscany

Russia: Remove F Skagerrak

Turkey: No activity.

Winter 1907 Commentary:

Commentators: Jim Burgess (**Bold**), Eric Hunter (*Italics*)

Austria: Forced, so uninformative.

Agreed. But does Austria see the handwriting on the wall and use this army to attack Russia also? Austria has the possibility of abandoning the defense against the FIE and trying to set up a redefinition of alliances elsewhere, in particular finally getting everyone to team up on Jake in France.

I'm not sure attacking Russia is the way to get everyone to attack France, and I expect that abandoning the defense against FIE would just result in France over-running Austria.

Agreed, but Adam has to think creatively to find a way to change the dynamic, you do agree that the current dynamic has him getting eliminated, probably the next one to be eliminated, don't you?

I'm not as confident as you are that Dan won't stab Jake, and, at least in my experience, Mark can be a surprisingly loyal ally.

England: As Jim says, Dan has split the difference. This sets up Edi-Nrg, followed by Nwy S Lon-StP, but it also sets up Nth-Eng, followed by Lon-Bre. Which will we see? Stay tuned.

OK, I want to say more about this. He did indeed split the difference. Sometimes, sitting on the fence can be good, gives you some flexibility to go either way and then when/if you get a build next year you can augment your fleet/army power in the direction you want to move. It also, is always a bit of a dilemma heading into the diplomacy. If Dan had built either both fleets or both armies, he would have signaled to the smart players in Russia and France what was coming next for sure. Let's talk in theory first. It also was a tough choice, who should he attack now? Could he have made a choice that was stronger? As always, we never will know for sure what would have happened if he played differently, but I think in the longest run, how Dan finishes the game, it was not correct. I think now was the time to jump on France. A case could have been made for either jump, but this balanced build weakens his moves in either direction. Eric identifies what those moves are. The strongest move is the attack on Russia. The attack on France with the fleet Edi is quite weak this year, with two fleets it could have been quite strong. So, I am expecting the attack on Russia, no surprise, and we see what happens.

The problem with building two Fleets is that it is what I call a "Build Stab". It announces to everyone, including your target, what you are going to do next year. In

response, Jake could, and probably should, shift forces west to deal with the threat. Here, if Jake believes Dan is going after Russia, Dan could get three free turns (Jake moves further east in the Spring, expecting Dan to attack Russia, Dan stab, Jake has to move back to where he is now in the Fall, and can not shift west until next Spring), to launch his attack, and have Armies in France before Jake is in position to defend.

Absolutely, you have to think very carefully about doing the build stab. Given Mark's removal, I do think that Dan told him he WOULD do the fleet build stab. Then he didn't. In theory, your tempo argument is correct, but here, building that Fleet Edinburgh is not well set up to go around the back side and come to bear on Mid-Atlantic very quickly.

Nth-Eng, Edi-Nth, followed by Eng-Bre, Nth-Eng would give Dan two on MAO next Spring, which is only a turn behind Lvp-Iri, Iri-MAO. I think he'd lose more than one turn of tempo by telegraphing the stab with his builds, and having to fight through the French defense.

France and Italy: This clearly suggests that the AIR has been let out of the East vs. West Alliance, and that we may well see the fee FIE foe fum giant go on a rampage.

For sure, that is what is going to happen. Austria has a challenge put to him by all this. He loses to FIE, so does he turn on Russia instead? We'll see.

Con-Smy, Ank-Con to get RF Ank out to the Med seems more likely to me. Can Mark get a build this year, and would he be willing to build F Sev to shore up Adam's defenses?

If Mark does succeed at removing the northern fleet, and then building a southern fleet next year, and getting Dan to turn on Jake, that would be brilliant Diplomacy by Mark. Certainly possible, but not what I would call likely right now. That's why I think Adam is in trouble.

You could easily be correct, but we both know that Mark doesn't always stab when we, or his opponents, expect him to.

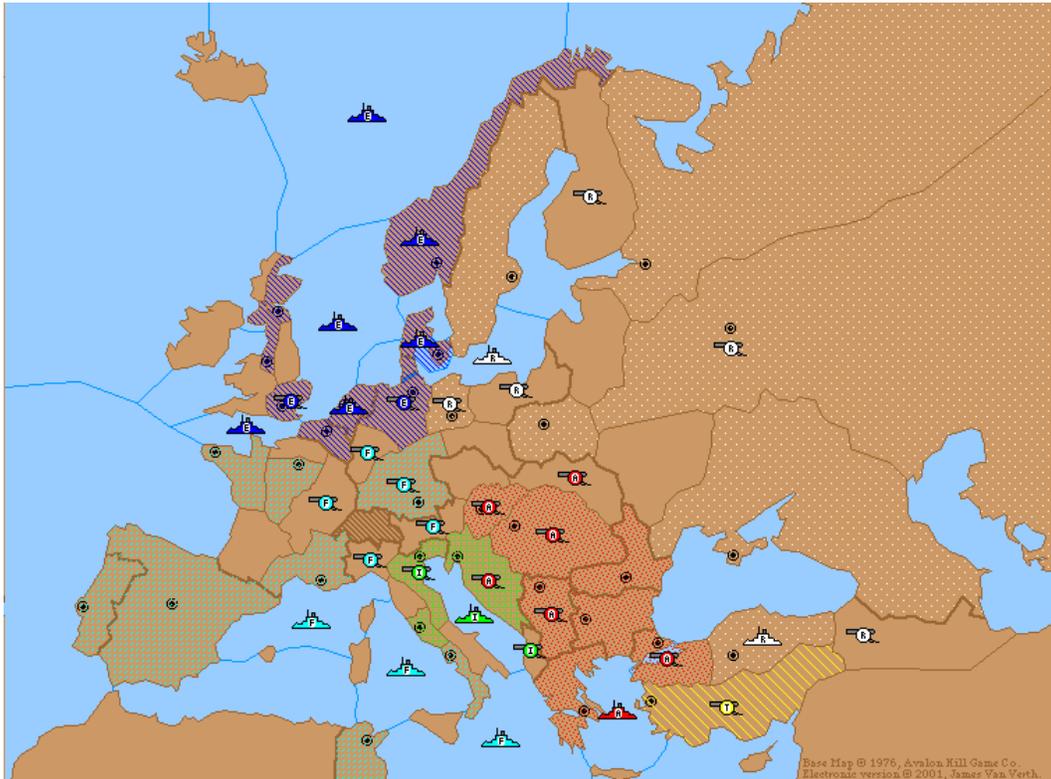
Russia: This makes me think Dan may be attacking Jake. While F Ska was in danger of getting popped, its presence created all manner of difficulty for Dan. So, I suspect that Mark may have offered Dan a "let's both head south" deal.

While you are technically correct, that is NOT reflected in the English builds. It is possible Dan TOLD Mark this to get him to make that removal, now I can't see how Dan doesn't attack him.

If Jake believes that Dan is attacking Russia, Nth-Eng, followed by Lon-Bre is a virtual force, giving Dan another build, and good chances for more in the year after. Had Dan built two Fleets, I'm sure Jake would have committed some, and perhaps a lot of, force to defense. Remember Sun Tzu, "All warfare is based on deception." A weak but subtle attack often has a greater chance of success than a strong but obvious one.

See my comment above. While you certainly are correct about the Sun Tzu deception argument, I honestly do not think that is what Dan is doing. If he is, then see above..... brilliant diplomacy by Mark.

Dan can go either way, for sure. My sense of the "shape of the board" suggests that if he wants to win, or even to be the dominant player in the west, he needs to stab Jake now, so I think he will.



Spring 1908 Results:

Austria: F Aegean Sea - Ionian Sea (*Fails*), A Budapest Supports A Vienna, A Bulgaria – Serbia, A Constantinople - Smyrna (*Fails*), A Galicia - Bohemia (*Bounce*), A Serbia – Trieste, A Vienna Supports A Serbia - Trieste

England: F Barents Sea - Norwegian Sea, F Denmark - Sweden (*Bounce*), F Edinburgh - North Sea, F Helgoland Bight – Holland, A Kiel - Ruhr (*Fails*), A London Hold, F North Sea - English Channel, F Norway - Sweden (*Bounce*)

France: A Burgundy Supports A Ruhr - Munich (*Fails*), F Gulf of Lyon Hold, A Marseilles – Piedmont, A Munich - Bohemia (*Bounce*), A Ruhr - Munich (*Fails*), F Tunis - Ionian Sea, A Tyrolia Supports A Trieste – Vienna, F Tyrrhenian Sea Supports F Tunis - Ionian Sea

Italy: F Apulia - Adriatic Sea, A Rome – Venice, A-Trieste – Vienna (*Dislodged*)

Russia: F Ankara - Constantinople (*Fails*), F Baltic Sea - Sweden (*Bounce*), A Berlin Supports A Kiel - Munich (*Void*), A Prussia Supports A Berlin, A Sevastopol – Armenia, A St Petersburg – Moscow, A Sweden - Finland

Turkey: A Smyrna Hold

Spring 1908 Commentary:

Commentators: Jim Burgess (**Bold**), Eric Hunter (*Italics*)

Austria: An interesting turn here. Let's look at what Adam did. Starting with his fleet, the move to the Ionian was worthless, France had the support, he used it, the move accomplished nothing. As Eric said last time, this was the time to realize that he NEEDED that Russian fleet out to help him, thus this was the time to support Con-Smy and take out Andy. Mark tried to move to Con, but it failed. I don't see how this is anything but an error.

Adam and Mark may have thought that Andy would order Smy-Ank, so the rotation, followed by Smy S Arm-Ank would give Mark the build. They can still eliminate Andy this Fall, but Aeg S Con-Smy would have been better. Adam is extremely lucky Andy didn't order Smy S Ank-Con, though. Adam's Army would have been popped.

Remember I said that one thing Adam could have done is to give up and attack Russia, he didn't do that, maneuvered to get back into Trieste, but he's stuck. It is possible of course that he knew Dan was going to stab thus perhaps he just thought he needed to hang on. But remember that Jake always has the choice of keeping going, hoping to catch up enough centers to build back home before he loses home centers. Adam now faces the guess over Greece vs. Trieste, and the problem that even if he guesses right and picks up a center, he won't be able to build. Obviously there is a Russian A Arm now, so I suppose RA can take out Andy now, those are the obvious moves (A Con-Smy, A Arm S A Con-Smy, F Ank-Con), but it is a turn late. They could have tried F Aeg-Gre with support of A Ser, F Con-Aeg and that might have worked.

And Andy would retreat to Ank. Con S Arm-Smy, Ank Hold, B F Sev, followed by Ank-Con, Sev-Bla, and then F Gre S F Con-Aeg, A Smy S Bla-Con, is probably their best bet.

Last turn, if they did it, this time they pop Ank using Armenia. This turn, also A Arm-Ank. I think it is better to get the fleet moving now. Of course it matters how Jake plans to react, which should be at least somewhat discernable from the Diplomacy.

England: There goes the pundit again. I took a position on this, Eric showed the reverse Sun Tzu logic. I was dead wrong. What did you think as you looked at what we said above?

Is this a question for our gentle readers, or some other "you"? Perhaps I should explain what I meant by the "shape of the board", or is it obvious?

That is a rhetorical question for the readers..... yea,

dear gentle readers, what did you think?

I'll get to this more in a minute, but F Gulf of Lyon hold for France was a big mistake. IF already have three fleets east, even if England DID do as they were supposed to do, F GOL-Spa(SC) was not threatening, it lost no real tempo, it was the clear move to make and I'm pretty shocked Jake didn't make it.

I suspect that the agreement he had with Dan called for both of them pushing everything they had as far east as possible. That's obviously to Dan's advantage, though.

Dan couldn't legitimately have complained if Jake came back to Spain, that's still 1.5 game years from an English home center.

But back to Dan. The really important thing that so many players forget is how to plan a disengagement. Dan and Mark really know how to do it. So, what was the deal? Mark moves back to Finland, three way bounce over Sweden.

We may even see Fin-StP as Mark brings pressure on Munich and Italy.

Oh yes, that's certainly possible. More possible if they are "clearing out" instead of arranging complicated bounces.

That was reasonably safe for each side, though not perfectly safe. Russia could have dislodged Denmark, England could have taken Sweden. Next they can start bouncing from where they are or try to disengage further. Here now is what I worried about by not "telegraphing" by Dan. He has a bit of a bottleneck of fleets. He can correct it pretty quickly, but he does have it.

**nod*, but Hol S Nth-Bel, Ber S Den-Kie, Kie-Ruh, Lon-Bre, Nrg-NAO, B F Lvp give Jake a world of trouble.*

That's why I thought I might try A Ruh-Bel, A Bur S A Ruh-Bel to bounce that if I were Jake. Not sure, it gives up going to Gascony or Paris.

Jake can bounce Dan's attempt to move a fleet into Belgium so Norway or Denmark can move to North Sea. Nwg can go into NAO now of course, so England has two fleets on Mid next spring. I would have backed to Spain if I were Jake, then he could have moved into Mid in the fall, while (instead of bouncing Belgium which might be his best move now) I would have come back to Gascony. Then there are choices around Brest. Here, France will only have one unit on Brest, and Dan can freely

support himself into Mid. So, in sum, given Jake's fleet blunder, Dan's stab looks successful. Let's move on to France.

France: Jake gave Dan the extra build, and what happens? Dan stabs him. Gee, how can that happen? Well, welcome to life in the big city. The blunder in not backing F GOL-Spa(SC) just to make sure could be nearly fatal for Jake. OK, so what does he do now? Panic and steal Rome? Try to make up with Adam and turn EVERYTHING around? Possibly both of those at once, since that would leave Doug with just Venice. Or, does he press on forward and try to just stay ahead of Dan's advances? Jake's only chance to think about how to motivate the next big stab. What is it, which one does he want? Well, most likely for France always his is strongest long term ally, Russia. Russia can make Dan's stab lots less successful by immediately stabbing Dan again. How does that happen? Remember I said a minute ago how hard it can be to work out the negotiated disengagement? Well, one way for Dan to keep Mark from stabbing him is to work out the supported bounce over Sweden. Denmark-Sweden with support of Norway means that if Russia bounces him, he can't also take Kiel. And if he let's Dan into Sweden and takes Denmark, that is just a trade. BUT, Dan may want to move one of the fleets back (recall my question above about whether Jake is going to allow F Nth-Bel?), that makes such a "safe" withdrawal not possible. Mark can then stab for TWO English centers. Jake needs to make that happen. And it might. Jake's only other choice is to get Adam to stab Mark, arguing for a southern vs. northern alliance structure. FR is always stronger, but AFI's biggest problem is Doug's lack of space. So probably it would have to be AF with them working together to finish off Doug. Rome is pretty easy to steal and France and Austria can take the other centers, that ACTUALLY

gives Jake a build. So Jake has two decent options, and he could try to make both happen at once and pick up the pieces later. So this is a very exciting season for France. Many, many too many players would give up at this point and throw in the towel. Balderdash, you made an error (missing F GOL-Spa(SC)), but the game is not over.

Yup. When you get stabbed, it is time to start writing more, not less.

Italy: Tough for Doug not to shrink. Technically there is a guessing game over Greece vs. Trieste for Austria. But see all the other diplomatic issues going on. Can Doug trust Jake not to steal Rome? Possibly not. Doug can try to make things happen for himself but I don't see how anything works, do you, Eric?

This will be determined by the relationships between Jake and Doug, and Jake and Adam. My gut says Doug and Andy both get eliminated this year, but I'm nowhere near as sure of that as I was that Dan was stabbing Jake.

Since a retreat off the board would be the equivalent of saying, "Kill me, now", Doug will almost certainly retreat to Albania.

Russia: Ooooo, Mark's removal now makes perfect sense, doesn't it? Mark is back in the diplomatic driver's seat in the game. Patience, patience, now....

Yes, and combined with the split build from Dan, Jake should have seen the danger.

Turkey: Andy is probably now out.

Almost certainly. Smy S Ank-Con would have been such fun, though.

Summer 1908 Results:

Italy: Retreat A Trieste – Albania.

Fall 1908 Results:

Austria: F Aegean Sea – Greece, A Budapest – Rumania, A Constantinople - Ankara (*Fails*), A Galicia - Warsaw (*Bounce*), A Serbia Supports A Trieste, A Trieste Supports A Tyrolia – Venice, A Vienna Supports A Trieste

England: F Denmark Supports A Kiel, F English Channel – Brest, F Holland Supports A London – Belgium, A Kiel Supports A Berlin – Munich, A London – Belgium, F North Sea Convoys A London – Belgium, F Norway Supports A Finland - St Petersburg, F Norwegian Sea - North Atlantic Ocean

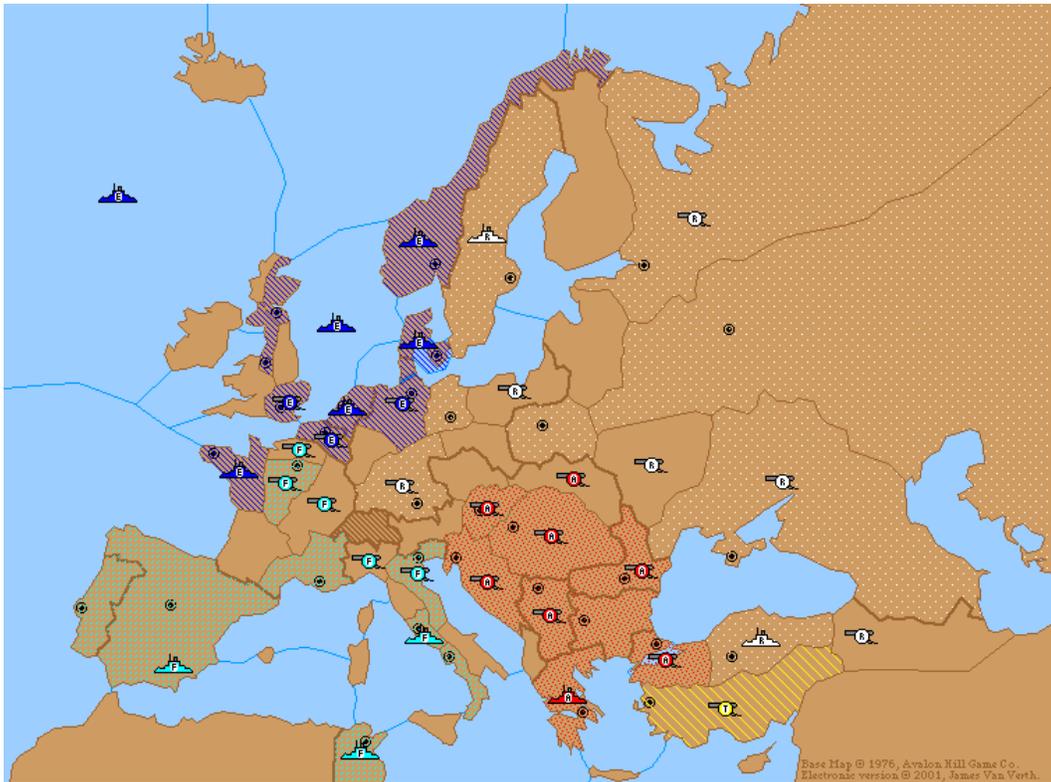
France: A Burgundy – Picardy, F Gulf of Lyon - Spain(sc), F Ionian Sea – Tunis, ~~A Munich Supports A Berlin – Kiel~~ (*Dislodged*, retreat to Ruhr, Silesia, Bohemia, Tyrolia, or OTB), A Piedmont Supports A Tyrolia – Venice, A Ruhr – Burgundy, A Tyrolia – Venice,

F Tyrrhenian Sea - Rome

Italy: F Adriatic Sea Supports A Venice – Trieste, A Albania Supports A Venice – Trieste,
~~A Venice – Trieste~~ (*Dislodged*, retreat to Tuscany, Apulia, or OTB)

Russia: F Ankara Hold, A Armenia - Smyrna (*Fails*), F Baltic Sea – Sweden, A Berlin – Munich,
A Finland - St Petersburg, A Moscow – Ukraine, A Prussia - Warsaw (*Bounce*)

Turkey: A Smyrna - Constantinople (*Fails*)



Ownership:

Austria: Budapest, Bulgaria, Constantinople, Greece, Rumania, Serbia, Trieste, Vienna.
England: Belgium, Brest, Denmark, Edinburgh, Holland, Kiel, Liverpool, London, Norway.
France: Marseilles, Naples, Paris, Portugal, Rome, Spain, Tunis, Venice.
Russia: Ankara, Berlin, Moscow, Munich, Sevastopol, St Petersburg, Sweden, Warsaw.
Turkey: Smyrna.

Adjustments:

Austria: Supp 8 Unit 7 Build 1
England: Supp 9 Unit 8 Build 1
France: Supp 8 Unit 7 or 8 Even or Build 1 (if A Mun disband)
Germany: Supp 0 Unit 0 Build 0
Italy: Supp 0 Unit 2 Remove 2
Russia: Supp 8 Unit 7 Build 1
Turkey: Supp 1 Unit 1 Build 0

Fall 1908 Commentary:

Commentators: Jim Burgess (**Bold**), Eric Hunter (*Italics*)

GM Rick Desper: OK, well we are down to five and I'm a bit surprised and who is still with us and who isn't. Well, this will at least cause some head-scratching for the

casual onlookers. Thanks for playing, Doug.

Clearly Adam went ahead in time, read Jim-Bob's

commentary, and decided he wasn't going to be the next one out. ☺ In the big picture, we've shifted from EF vs. AR to ER vs. AF, with T still on the sidelines in a cast.

Headbang accepted.

It was actually more of a compliment to Adam, who, unlike Jake, saw what was probably coming, and "stabbed" first.

Still, this was predicated on EF staying together, once they didn't I did note that Italy was highly likely to be eliminated.

**nod* I saw Adam having more trouble if ER turned south together, but this presumptive strike and Italy's elimination changes that dynamic.*

What I find interesting to note is that Doug was arguably the early game leader, certainly playing a really interesting Italy in that way I like to see (no move to Piedmont and Venice and support to hold moves there!). But he wasn't able to turn it into anything long lasting. Why? Jake and Adam of course. In the end Doug did not ensure that those two powers suffered enough for him to gain, and build the armies that Italy needs to win. Lesson to the peanut gallery, you can never, never sit still in this game thinking you're set to sail. The wind can always change, and the better the players the more they control the winds.

I suspect that "Real Life" played a big role in Doug's failure to thrive, as well.

Austria: Adam allies with Jake, and stabs Mark. Why? It may be as simple as Adam recognizing that with Dan attacking, Jake has to move west, and with Mark moving south, Adam is Mark's next obvious target. Most of these orders were forced on Adam to eliminate Doug, but next year he'll have much more freedom to maneuver. Does Adam build an Army in Budapest, or does he waive the build, hoping to build a Fleet next year? If Adam wants a place in the endgame, he'll need Fleets, I think. Adam will probably not waive his build.

I think this is prescient play by Adam. On BOTH fronts it makes sense. Adam has not the fleets to advance in the Med, he gets Jake cleared out. And what is Mark going to do? Mark was coming after him anyway, so get on the stick first. Eliminating Doug immediately creates a huge opening and shifts units quickly. Building is the problem, and you correctly identify the problem, this may well be a place for a waived build, as he will CERTAINLY be able to open Trieste up for a fleet next year with ease. Adam is in a really good place right now (more often than you would think this happens after ALMOST being in a really BAD place) since no one

can mount an attack to take him out, even if everyone decided to make that the #1 priority right now. The challenge? To take advantage of it, and sometimes patience is a good idea. I would go with waiving the build if I were him, but I know Adam and he likely is not going to do that. More fun if he does waive, agree he won't.

England: I considered the Convoy to Belgium, but dismissed it since it worsens Dan's Fleet bottle-neck. Still, Dan will build F Lvp and take MAO next Fall, unless Jake disbands A Mun to B F Mar. Build F Lvp seems obvious.

I think the convoy was a mistake also. It would have been an even worst mistake if Jake had made what I think was the proper move and bounced it. Dan's interesting choice now is whether to stab Mark back to gain even more centers. Mark can't retaliate. In the way this game tends to go, England and Austria were on the ropes, but now they are both in great positions. Like Adam, Dan is not threatened, not even being close to being threatened, but must play well to move forward. Nothing else works but Bld F Lvp.

France: I'm not impressed with this set of orders from Jake. He had three Armies adjacent to Munich to ER's two, but still he lost it, he didn't bounce the obvious English move to Belgium, and he moved out of Ruhr. Now, does Jake disband A Mun to build F Mar, or retreat to Ruhr? I lean toward B F Mar, but it is not clearly superior.

This is two straight seasons of what look like hurried moves from Jake. Eric concisely explains it exactly right. The only "thought out part" is that I think Jake actually decided that he wanted to be dislodged from Munich to retreat it off the board and rebuild F Mar. But to me, the whole point to doing that would be that you simultaneously were keeping England out of Belgium. Still, England probably doesn't overwhelm France unless he stabs his Russian ally to get some more centers. Jake made the "all in" retreat deal with Adam. It takes a while to get those fleets back, but he will get them back in time to save his line. The longer term is foggier as England and Austria now have the better long term positions. As for the build, I agree about F Mar, yeah, but I think Jake is thinking "bottle it up".

I don't think that Jake should have moved out of Ruhr. It is one of those key provinces like Gascony or Ukraine that is an instant headache when it is occupied by an enemy. Retreating to it now seems a little silly, though. I'd probably disband and build a Fleet.

I think the only way the French moves make any sense is that is what he was planning. I think where Jake went wrong is not thinking more deeply about

the other aspects of the position. He just decided, OK, I take out Italy, then even if I lose Munich, I can retreat it off the board and rebuild the fleet I need.

Italy: Farewell, Doug, enjoy your new baby. Army Venice is going Off The Board, so there is no reason to retreat.

Yes, congratulations. Doug should have realized they were taking him out, Jake probably lied to him outright (always acceptable on the last turn to most players), but still, the handwriting was on the wall. Not that he could do much, he could have saved Rome.

Russia: Mark is trusting Dan a great deal here. It is probably safe, but Dan could turn around and grab Berlin and Sweden next year to build more forces to invade France. Building F Sev would be interesting, and Mark really has enough Armies, but it wouldn't surprise me to see him build another.

Agreed, Dan can pull a massive stab next year, while still orienting against France. If I were Dan, that's probably what my plan would be.

Agreed. It puts Dan in command in the West, with an almost sure 17, and the strongest Power in the east (Austria) has no Fleet strength, so grabbing Tunis for the win should not be difficult.

Mark is taking risks, but he wants to try to maneuver back into a dominant position. In my view, working with France is the only way to do that. France pulled almost completely off the Austrian borders, not good. And is stopping England so that England may want another build to move forward, also not good. But you can't just play it safe all the time. The question is what to build? He really should build F Sev, but could be a number of things. Also it matters if he's going to try to counter Dan to make sure Dan doesn't stab him again.

Turkey: Andy, Andy, Andy... Are you talking to Mark or Adam? You should be talking to both of them, but there is no suggestion here of that happening.

Andy is just playing out the string, two bad moves in a row. Boo, hiss. I'm sure he's busy.

Autumn 1908 Results:

Germany: Disband A Munich.

Italy: Disband A Venice.

Winter 1908 Results:

Austria: Build A Budapest

England: Build A London

France: Build A Paris

Italy: Remove F Adriatic Sea, Remove A Albania

Russia: Build A Sevastopol

Turkey: No activity.

Autumn and Winter 1908 Commentary:

Commentators: Jim Burgess (**Bold**), Eric Hunter (*Italics*)

I think I want to comment on the Autumn/Winter on an overall basis. Jake sees with the successful convoy to Belgium that rather than being in Ruhr, he wanted to keep the army, but skip it to Paris. He is allowed to do that since he does have some more time to get fleets back, and he is moving them all back. But he isn't advancing that way, only defending. We wait on Dan to see if he stabs Mark right now, or waits. The Army build suggests that he wants to push more convoys and both Jake and Dan understand that eventually this will be a line, OR

could they have a deal? No, I don't think so, I think they're just going to push the armies in the center first and then lock up the corner. Mark builds the army instead of the fleet in Sevastopol. I think the fleet would have been more fun.

I'm a little surprised to see the Army Build from Dan. It makes sense in one way, since he had six Fleets, and only two Armies, but a Fleet build would have made securing MAO more straightforward.

Knives and Daggers

The Diplomacy World Letter Column



Brian Shelden – David Webster says in his article about his tournament in Maine:

“Brian Shelden is trying to justify [throwing a round 3 solo to Chris Martin] by saying that St. Pete can't be held from the south. Brian didn't see me take the photo, and he's continuing with his jive about not being able to defend. At least he's embarrassed that he threw the game.”

I'm not embarrassed that I threw the game. Because I didn't. What I **am** annoyed to be beaten by Chris. Again.

Anyone who thinks that St. Pete can be defended from the South should not be hosting Diplomacy tournaments. Especially important ones.

If David has this alleged photo, please, publish it. Maybe it can be a brainteaser? "Now that you've lost the TyS, and therefore Tunis, how can you stop the solo?" Answer: you can't.



Philip Murphy – As a novice Diplomacy player, I read with much interest and not a little concern the articles in DW 103 about Dipcon 41 and the aftermath. I don't want to get into the situation itself as plenty of people are more than willing to do this, I am sure. I also don't want to take sides one way or another. It's enough to say that things didn't go as they should have for many and various reasons and that certain issues which previously didn't come to light now need to be examined.

From a neutral perspective, it seems to me that DipCon as a tournament might benefit from the following.

1. It should be a straightforward, black-letter rule for future DipCon events that the Tournament organizers should not be counted in scoring when deciding the winner. By all means if a board is short players the TD should take part but the other players should get first pick in those circumstances because they are playing to win.

2. The scoring system should be set, or at least required to be one of a number of clearly identified and standardized methods of scoring which are recognized hobby-wide and clearly available to any attendees before the con is hosted.

In UK archery, for instance, there are many types of

shoots, Portsmouth round, FITA and so on, which determine the number of rounds of shooting and at what distances. The governing body, GNAS, recognizes specific systems of scoring for the purposes of ranking.

Therefore, while the tournament director should be free to use any scoring system that is recognized by the hobby as a standard, it must be set by the organizing committee at the time the convention is awarded, and then publicized as being a 'Barbarossa Score' or a 'London Score'. (If you have problems naming the standards, just name them after openings. ☺)

3. House rules concerning metagaming, throwing games in favor of an opponent, and other issues should be set before the convention starts. This would lead to fewer clarifications by a tournament director 'on the wing' and would lead to greater consistency in adjudicating results.

It would also protect the Tournament director in that he or she would have an authoritative set of house rules sanctioned by the NADA or whoever would take on that role which he or she must follow.

4. All of the above could be neatly contained in a guidebook for the con which would act as a bible for future con directors. Not just for DipCon, but those who would like a standardized rule set for running a Diplomacy convention.

I hope this humble contribution may lead to useful debate on the future direction of face to face Diplomacy at conventions and in game clubs everywhere.



Larry Peery – Since I don't have my collection at hand, and no doubt I've missed a few issues over the last few years I can't say with certainty that this is the best issue of DW ever (as the Olympic bureaucrats like to say), but I can say that is the best I've seen in a long, long time. You were lucky with some superb material, some excellent contributors, etc. but the bottom line is YOU did it! So, a tip of the hat to you.

About the sci-fi connection and Diplomacy. I didn't see any reference to a couple of things that happened in the early days of the hobby. Perhaps I missed them or haven't come across them yet. Was there any mention made of Jerry Pournelle and his role in the early hobby? Was there any mention made of that demo game in the Bay Area that the LTA people put on for Bradbury and Asimov? If not, perhaps I should fill in that missing gap.

[[Larry does, in his article on Page 14.]]

Pontevedia #87

compiled by
W Andrew York
POB 201117; Austin TX 78720
wandrew88@gmail.com

Pontevedia historically was produced by the Diplomacy hobby's Boardman Number Custodian, or their designee, and listed the currently available 'zines and game openings within the hobby. Over time, it expanded beyond traditional games of Diplomacy, and its many variants, to include similar multi-player games offered within Dip 'zines and the postal hobby. *Pont* was last published and mailed in the late 1990's as the hobby moved more and more into the electronic realm. This resurrects the purpose of *Pont* as a column within *DW* and provide a one-stop place to find GMs, 'zines (in whatever form) and game openings that are part of the non-professional, human monitored/moderated gaming hobby.

This isn't the place to find solely computer moderated games, commercial enterprises, on-line gaming or interactive/real-time gaming. This is the place for folks to find openings in traditional face-to-face or beer-and-pretzels multi-player board games overseen by a human game master and which encourage player to player contact and interaction (even though some games are "Gunboat" style).

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GM's Wanted

If there is a game you would like to play and it needs a GM, send in the request. All current requests will be listed in each issue and, if possible, matched with a GM. If you are a GM that might be willing to respond to a particular request, sign up for an early notification or look for requests. All requests will be verified each quarter to ensure that the requester(s) is still interested in playing that game.

No Current Game Requests

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Disclaimer: Information listed is the most current available at time of publication and is verified quarterly with the listed publisher, game master or responsible party. No listing should be accepted as assured or guaranteed; but, rather, should be confirmed with the indicated contact person prior to exchanging funds or making any arrangements/commitments/agreements.

Updated and additional information is solicited and very welcome, presuming that it fits within the guidelines of the column's purpose, and all appropriate submissions will be included. In general, a GM/publisher has to agree with inclusion in this column before they are listed.

The publisher and compiler have no financial stake in any of the listings and make no promises or guarantees regarding the entry's accuracy nor of future publication schedules, game mastering or any efforts by the listed individuals.

=====

Zine Listings

The Abyssinian Prince

Publisher/Country - Jim Burgess/USA
Contact Information - 664 Smith Street; Providence RI 02908; burgess of world.std.com or jfburgess of gmail.com; www.diplom.org/DipPouch/Postal/Zines/TAP/index.html
Frequency of Publication - every three weeks, when timely
Date of First Publication/Date of Last Publication - Feb 83/Dec 08
Subscription Costs - Free via email; \$1.50 per issue by mail
Game Openings - Diplomacy, Spy Diplomacy, Devil Take the Hindmost, Modern Diplomacy
Other Games Currently Underway - Breaking Away
SubZines Which Appear - By the WAY, Eternal Sunshine, Tinamou
Notes/Comments - Note that the subzines have most of the game openings

Boris the Spider

Publisher/Country - Paul R. Bolduc/USA
Contact Information - 203 Devon Ct, Ft Walton Beach FL 32457-3110, prbolduc@aol.com;
http://members.cox.net/boris_spider/BorisHome.html
Frequency of Publication - monthly
Date of First Publication/Date of Last Publication - Mar 85 / Dec 08
Subscription Costs - \$12.75/yr (12 issues) for hardcopy; \$1/yr for e-version (waived if overseas player; seldom collected if Stateside)
Game Openings - Diplomacy, Wizard's Quest, Colonial Diplomacy, Balkan Wars VI
Other Games Currently Underway - Diplomacy, Machiavelli, Kingmaker, Gunslinger, History of the World, Kremlin, Dune, Circus Maximus, 1870, Blackbeard, Russian Civil War
Potential Future Offerings - 18xx, Age of Renaissance, Magic Realm, Puerto Rico, Rail Baron

By the WAY

Publisher/Country - W Andrew York/USA
Contact Information - POB 201117; Austin TX 78720-1117 or wandrew88@gmail.com
Frequency of Publication - included in each **The Abyssinian Prince**
Date of Last Publication - December 2008 (Issue #20)
Subscription Costs - Free
Game Openings - Metropolis, Tombouctou, Hangman: By Definition
Zine in Which Subzine Appears - **The Abyssinian Prince**

Cheesecake

Publisher/Country - Andy Lischett/USA
Contact Information - 2402 Ridgeland Ave; Berwyn IL 60402
Frequency of Publication - Every Six Weeks
Date of Last Publication - December 7, 2008 (Issue #284)
Subscription Costs - Free
Game Openings - Diplomacy

Damn the Consequences

Publisher/Country - Brendan Whyte/Thailand
Contact Information - obiwonfive@hotmail.com
Frequency of Publication - c. 6-weekly
Date of First Publication/Date of Last Publication - Began 1987/Latest issue #146, October 2008
Subscription Costs - 35Baht to Asia, 45 to Europe/Australasia, 50 to the Americas/Africa
(US\$1=32baht)
Game Openings - Railway Rivals, Origins of WWI, Tactical Sumo, Diplomacy, Britannia, Maharaja, Sopwith, Snakes & Ladders, Machiavelli, Mornington Cres NOMIC, World Record, Dream Mile
Other Games Currently Underway - Railway Rivals, Bus Boss, Diplomacy, Wooden Ship and Iron Men, Sopwith, Banbury Merton St, By Popular Demand, Where in the World is Kendo Nagasaki, Robo Rally, Maneater

Eternal Sunshine

Publisher/Country - Douglas Kent/USA
Contact Information - 11111 Woodmeadow Pkwy #2327, Dallas, TX 75228;
dougray30@yahoo.com, <http://www.whiningkentpigs.com/DW/>
Frequency of Publication - Monthly
Date of First Publication/Date of Last Publication - Feb 2007/Jan 2009
Subscription Costs/Special Requirements to Receive - Free, available in pdf and html or appearing in **The Abyssinian Prince**
Game Openings - Diplomacy, Deviant Diplomacy II, 1898, Diplomacy Bourse
Other Games Currently Underway - Diplomacy, Gunboat 7x7 Tourney, By Popular Demand
Potential Future Offerings - Youngstown, Diplomacy, Gunboat 7x7 Tourney, Cannibalism
Zine in Which Subzine Appears - **The Abyssinian Prince**
Notes/Comments - Andy York loves cats, especially mine, and he hopes to visit them again very soon.
He has asked me to sell them to him many times, but I refuse. But I am glad Andy loves them so much. Meow. (sic)

Minstrel

Publisher/Country - Rob Thomasson/UK
Contact Information - rob.thomasson@virgin.net; rob.thomasson.com
Frequency of Publication - Monthly
Subscription Costs - none for electronic version
Game Openings - 1829, 1830, 1835, 1856, 1870, 18EU, Railway Rivals, Outpost
Other Games Currently Underway - St. Petersburg

Northern Flame Volume 2

Publisher/Country - Robert Lesco/Canada
Contact Information - 49 Parkside Drive; Brampton, Ontario, Canada L6Y 2H1
rlesco@yahoo.com
Frequency of Publication - I try for every two months but in practice it's quarterly at best.

Date of First Publication/Date of Last Publication - Originally December 1987;

I took over in September of 1994 and I am assembling the newest issue just now.

Subscription Costs - \$1.00 per issue

Game Openings - none at this time

Potential Future Offerings - I always hope to be able to run a variant other than gunboat

off-the-shelf (currently on hiatus)

Publisher/Country - Tom Howell/U.S. of A.

Contact Information - 365 Storm King Road, Port Angeles, WA 98363;

Error! Reference source not found.; www.olympus.net/personal/thowell/o-t-s

Frequency of Publication - traditionally six weekly

Date of First Publication/Date of Last Publication - 18 Oct 1992/ 31 Mar 2007

Subscription Costs/Special Requirements to Receive - postal: US\$1 per issue/free play on web site

Game Openings - none at present

Other Games Currently Underway – Diplomacy, Woolworth Diplomacy II-A, Fog of War
Diplomacy, Breaking Away!, By Popular Demand, Downfall

Out of the WAY

Publisher/Country - W Andrew York/USA

Contact Information - POB 201117; Austin TX 78720-1117 or wandrew88@gmail.com

Frequency of Publication - included in each **Eternal Sunshine**

Date of Last Publication - December 2008 (Issue #03)

Subscription Costs - Free

Game Openings - Facts in Five

Zines in Which Subzine Appears - **Eternal Sunshine**

S.O.B.

Publisher/Country - Chris Hassler/USA

Contact Information - 2000 S. Armour Ct.; La Habra, CA 90631;

hompages.roadrunner.com/sobhome; chassler@roadrunner.com

Frequency of Publication - Every 6 weeks

Date of First Publication/Date of Last Publication - April 1993/December 2008

Subscription Costs - Paper: \$2.00/issue (inside U.S.), \$3.00/issue (outside U.S.); Web: Free

Game Openings - Machiavelli, Gunboat Machiavelli, Gunslinger, Merchant of Venus, History of the
World, Industrial Waste, Outpost, Power Grid

Other Games Currently Underway - Kremlin, Silverton, Seafarers of Catan, New World, Dune,
Puerto Rico, Age of Renaissance, Republic of Rome

Potential Future Offerings - I'm open to suggestion...

Notes/Comments - The zine is mostly about the games, but it also hosts a regular column about
science.

Variable Pig

Publisher/Country - Jim Reader/USA and Richard Smith/UK

Contact Information - jim_reader@hotmail.com

Frequency of Publication: Target is 6 issues per year but actual frequency varies

Date of First Publication/Date of Last Publication: 1987/December 2008

Subscription Costs/Special Requirements to Receive: No costs although donations of stamps or
money to cover postage costs encouraged. Only requirement to receive the zine is to be
playing in a game (or sending mail and maintaining contact)

Game Openings: It's A Raid, Snowball Fighting, Railway Rivals, Bus Boss, Teadance, RoboRally
and 6 Nimmt. Lyric Quiz and By Popular Demand game can be joined at any time.

Other Games Currently Underway: Awful Green Things From Outer Space, Lyric Quiz, By
Popular Demand, Railway Rivals (7 games), Bus Boss, Der Fuhrer, Breaking Away, Cafe
International, Hare and Tortoise, Fair means or Foul, Teadance, Where on the Tokyo
Metro is Kendo Nagasaki, Work Rest and Play, Fearsome Floors, Golden Strider,
Sternenhimmel, RoboRally, Maneater, Pitagoras, Shanghai Trader and Puerto Rico

Potential Future Offerings: Always more Bus Boss and Railway Rivals, Rail Baron

Subzines: VP comprises "Polar Pig" and "The Universe is a Pink Blancmange Called Simon"