

Winter 1992

Diplomacy **World**

No. 65

Who Really

Ran the First Postal

Dip Game **EVER** ■



Preparation of this issue of *DW* has been quite exasperating to say the least. As many of you know, I am a neophyte trial lawyer here in North Carolina. The caseload at my new job has really been tight during the winter and early spring, so my time for the hobby was cut significantly. In addition, I had a whole new technical snafu - many of the articles I typed into Microsoft Works would not transport properly into the Page-maker program I use to put this zine together. I know, Microsoft Word is better for that anyway, but my copy of that program has been malfunctioning for months!

At any rate, I hope to get this thing back on schedule by publishing again in late April or early May, then again in late July or early August, with the Fall 1992 issue coming right on schedule in about mid to late October. Thus, the deadline for next issue will be somewhat tight - April 15. That's right, send me an article to *DW* at the same time you send in your tax return! Just don't get the two mixed up, or there will be some strange goings on at your local IRS office. ("Hey, boss. Here's another threat to 'stab' us. Let's send the FBI out to see those folks.")

That much having been said, I think this issue has some really good articles, lots of hobby news, and a very interesting set of turns in the Demonstration Game. As always, we welcome any letters from the readership about how we are doing, or what we are doing wrong. Your input is greatly appreciated.

Most of the response to the change in paper quality and zine production has been positive. While I would prefer to have the zine open up like a conventional magazine, there is really no way to do that in the present page-size and paper quality. So, without major objection, the zine will continue as is until I find a better alternative, or y'all storm my house in Hickory with torches and smoke bombs...

With Diplomacy tournament season almost upon us again, let me enlist your aid in expanding the readership base. If you are planning to go to a tournament this summer, anywhere, let me know and I will send you some sample copies of *Diplomacy World* to pass out for free. The zine has picked up quite a few new readers that way, so we want to make sure this program is continued in 1992. I'll send you copies from both 1991 and 1992 just for the asking, but let me know soon so that those zines can get to your door before you leave.

The zine is taking applications to fill its Interview Editor position. Brad Wilson has just been too busy with his job and other hobby commitments to devote full time to this task. I believe interviews are an important part of this zine's mission, so if you are interested I would love to hear from you. The idea would be to publish an interview with a prominent hobbyist every other issue or so. As with all the other staff members, you would receive a complimentary subscription to this zine, along with my gratitude. Hey, what else could you want?

DipWorld

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Hobby News

The cause of international warfare and Diplomacy gaming was advanced significantly over the winter with the holding of World DipCon III in conjunction with CanCon, in balmy Canberra, Australia. By all accounts, this tournament was a blast, with a turnout of eighty or more from Australia, New Zealand, Europe, North America, and possibly other places I don't know about. There was only one attendee from the New World, to my knowledge, but much of that had to do with the timing, etc. rather than interest. The next World DipCon is slated to be held in 1994 at ManorCon in Birmingham, England, where a more permanent rotation schedule is likely to be figured out.

Here are the important results from the weekend event held in January:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Steve Gould
2. Eric Roche
3. Bruno Giraudon
4. Miguel Taliana
5. Craig Sedgwick | 6. Andrew England
7. Harry Kolotas
8. Mat Gibson
9. Adrian Appleyard
10. Bill Brown |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Team Winner: Southern Comfort (Jackson, Brown, Wessels, Sproat, Beck, Swinnerton, Shaw)

Best Under-21 Player: Miguel Taliana

Best Country Awards:

Austria	Bruno-Andre Graudon
England	Mat Gibson
France	Eric Roche
Germany	Shaun Derrick
Italy	Trevor Costello
Russia	Luke Clutterbuck
Turkey	Steven Bagshaw

Player's Choice: Mat Gibson

Various Con reports have already seen publication if you are interested in reading all the gory details. Try Don Del Grande's *Lemon Curry*, 142 Eliseo Dr, Greenbrae CA 94904, Brendan Whyte's *Damn the Consequences*, 96 Waiatarua Rd, Remuera, Auckland 5, New Zealand, or John Cain's *Victoriana*, PO Box 4317, Melbourne University, 3052, Australia.

Sort of gets the blood pumping for the upcoming Diplomacy Con Circuit, doesn't it? There are several events on tap this summer throughout North America and beyond, but let me mention some of them now. DixieCon will be held, as usual, over Memorial Day Weekend in Chapel Hill, NC. Contact David Hood for details. The first weekend in July will see two different Diplomacy events available, the first being

DipCon, the North American Championships, held this year in Kansas City, MO. See the flyer below for details. The same weekend will see the annual Diplomacy tournament at AtlantiCon, held this year in College Park, MD. Contact Robert Sacks, 4861 Broadway 5-V, New York NY 10034 for more details. Tournaments to come later in the summer include AvalonCon in Camp Hill, PA, MadCon in Sun Prairie, WI, CanCon in Toronto, Ontario, PacifiCon in San Mateo, CA, and Gateway in Los Angeles, CA. Details on these and other events will follow.

By the way, if you know of a local tournament or convention that includes a Diplomacy event, send in the details and *DW* will help to publicize it.

International tournaments range from national championships, like MidCon in England, and the French Championships in Paris, to smaller hobby meets like LinCon in Sweden and the Victorian Championships in Australia. Perhaps the best source of dates, contact persons, and other such info is Don Del Grande and his subzine *Top Knife*. Write him at the address above for more details.

It is also close to Poll season in North America. The Runestone Poll ballot for 1992 is enclosed in this issue of *DW* for your convenience. Another Poll of note is the Marco Poll, run by Pete Gaughan (1521 S. Novato Blvd #46, Novato CA 94947). In this Poll, you simply send Pete a list, in order, of

what you consider to be the top five zines in North America. Do the same for players you have played against. It is always interesting to see the different results in this Poll and the Runestone, in which you rate all zines you see on a one-to-ten scale.

Robert Sacks has asked me to announce that he is looking for volunteers to run two of his projects, *Known Game Openings* and the Orphan Games Project. KGO is essentially a listing of, you guessed it, game openings in the hobby which comes out bimonthly or so. It is similar in purpose to *Pontevedria*, published by Phil Reynolds. The OGP, on the other hand, is an alternative means of housing games which have been "orphaned" by the folding of their host zines. This is similar to what Eric Ozog does with the U.S. Orphan Service and what Cal White does through the Canadian Diplomacy Organization. If you are interested in helping Robert out with either of these two projects, write him at the address above.

By the time you get this, it will be too late to send in nominations to Ron Cameron for the annual Hobby Awards. The Diplomacy hobby each year recognizes hobbyists for outstanding contributions in four areas: Writing, Playing, Hobby Service and Quantity Participation. I encourage you all to send in your votes to Ron as soon as the ballots appear. This is a project worthy of your support.

SOMEWHERE UNDER THE RAINBOW

Announcing

DIPCON XXV

In Kansas City, Missouri!

July 3 through 6, 1992

(PoolCon IV follows, July 6 through 12, at Marshall, MO.)

DipCon Committee:

Chairman Vince Lutterbie, Committee Members Gary Behnen & Marc Peters

WHAT HAVE THE WIZARDS GOT IN STORE FOR YOU?

PRICE: \$25 if you pre-register by May 31st, 1992
\$30 for registrations from June 1st-July 2nd
\$35 at the door!

GAMES:

- North American Diplomacy Championship
- Team Diplomacy tournament (limited to the first 7 captains who register their teams)
- Titan tournament
- Even more yet to come!

Vince Lutterbie
1021 Stonehaven
Marshall MO 65340-2837
(816-886-7354)

PDORA Financial Committee Newsletter #3 1991

January 24, 1992

Greetings! This is my first PDORA newsletter, so I won't be able to duplicate Jawn's rambling, pointless blubbling yet. Maybe by sometime next year I'll have that perfected, but for now you'll just have to put up with me the way I am.

Thanks to all five committee members for getting your votes in. Things will hopefully run smoothly next time - delays were caused by John Fisher's lapse from the hobby and by a few other things. At least we got it wrapped up in time for the next auction (grin).

Below is a financial recap for this year: money collected, carried forward, the funding requests (including the amount asked for and the amount approved) and the remaining balance to be carried over to next year.

Collected this year (thus far)	\$525.03	(out of \$557.21 bid)
Carried over from last year	\$180.76	
Total Available for Services	\$705.79	

<u>Requests This Year</u>	<u>Amount Asked</u>	<u>Amount Approved</u>
BNC - Gary Behnen	\$270	\$270
MNC - Lee Kendter, Sr.	\$50	\$50
MNC(uc) - Brad Wilson	\$10	\$6.66
Orphan Service - Eric Ozog	\$100	\$100
Zine Register - Garret Schenck	\$400	Not Approved
NAVB - Lee Kendter, Jr.	\$30	\$30
Hobby Awards - Fred Davis (Treasurer)	\$100	\$43.41
Pontevedria - Phil Reynolds	\$40	\$35
Emergency Account - new proposal	\$???	Not Approved
Totals	\$1000	\$535.07

As you can see, the only requests that were denied and will receive no funding were the Zine Register and the proposed Emergency Account. Although I didn't voice my feelings before, I am glad to see the Emergency Account proposal shot down. In my opinion, it was a good idea, but one that would have had results.

I'll be sending the fund for approved services out early next week. When finished, the PDORA Fund will have \$170.72 to carry into the next auction. That's not bad at all, only slightly less than we had coming into 1991.

You should be hearing from me in late March to confirm that each of you wishes to remain on the committee. Bill Quinn has retired from the committee, so I will announce a replacement at that time. I look forward to working with you and making the next auction as big a success as John's were.

Douglas Kent 54 West Cherry St, #211 Rahway, NJ 07065

A Stabbing We Will Go

By General John McCausland

For most players, winning a game of Diplomacy is the ultimate accomplishment. They love nothing better than a nice, simple game where everybody performs as asked, and they sweep to an easy 18-center win in five or six game years. Fortunately, these games are rare, because they are the most boring waste of time for everybody concerned. Games that lack excitement lack a reason for playing.

The greatest excitement to be found in any Diplomacy game is "The Stab." Executing a successful and devastating stab gives a player a sense of unconquerable power, especially since his gains were at the expense of one of his opponents. Yet, even given the excitement and strength associated with this move, many players never use it to their full ability.

The simplest type of stab is the Open Dot Stab. This blatant attack is very prevalent among new players who fail to see its limited scope, though some experienced players who should have known better have been observed trying it as well. Basically, this stab entails capturing an ally's open supply center, usually just because the center was there. This stab will rarely help the stabber very much, and just as rarely will it hurt the stabbee significantly. One thing that it is guaranteed to do is destroy an alliance, regardless of how close the allies were before the stab. This type of stab should only be performed when you are sure that you can follow it up with a devastating invasion.

The Build Stab is the most widely used tactic among players of all calibres. All this entails is building units in a

different location, or building units of a different type than was told to the ally. Frequently, the build is then used against the ally. This is an effective tactic and can catch others off guard. However, it will usually have only limited effect on an ally who is always looking out for trouble. Its best use is in play-by-mail games where there is less contact between players. This is particularly true when using the North American system of doing Winter adjustments and Spring moves on the same turn. It does have potential in European style and face-to-face games, but that takes more careful planning.

It is always possible to tell when a player is maturing by their ability to execute a Planned Stab. As the name indicates, this stab is developed over two or three seasons. Units are jockeyed into position, often with the permission of the eventual victim. Cooperation is very close until the fateful attack occurs. In fact, it is not uncommon for the victim to actually support units of his assailant that season. The planning involved, and the requisite secrecy on the matter, are very critical. It must strike at the heart of your ally, yet be a complete surprise.

Stabbing is perhaps the best reason for playing Diplomacy. Forming a good working relationship can be a rewarding experience, but the feeling of euphoria and power that the planning and execution of successful stab cannot be beat.

➤John McCausland is the pseudonym for one of the top postal and tournament Diplomacy players in North America.

Putting Dreikaiserbund into Practice

by Mark Fassio

For those of you who were academic nerdballs in school (and here I include myself), you probably remember the "Three Emperor's League", formed in 1881 between Russia, Austria and Germany. This alliance, a Bismarck creation, was designed to safeguard Germany's borders while keeping all the "big name" monarchs from becoming too chummy with France. The alliance lasted until 1887, when differences in politics led to the lapse of the treaty. (That's another strategy and tactics article for later...)

By now, most of you non-nerdballs are saying, "So what's your point, Faz?" Well, gentle reader, here's the deal:

You, the sly Archduke or Kaiser or Tsar can lead your country to diplomatic and military greatness using the same treaty - without wasting six years like the real guys did!

Let's face it: every Dip game has the "basic alliances" which pop up, due primarily to geography. This is a natural occurrence, mirroring real-life. The spice of the game is in managing to come up with snazzy openings, unique alliances, and other such machinations that catch the Average Joe unawares. The Dreikaiserbund can be such a beast. And for all you "solo-win" zealots who think this is some sort of "three-way forever" draw idea, guess again. The DK (let's

shorten the name for simplicity) should be used as a quick set-up, say three or four game-years, to maximize each Emperor's gains in the early game while allowing for, ahem, flexibility later.

A typical opening move might show:

Germany: A Mun-Tyl, A Ber-Kie, F Kie-Den
 Austria: A Vie-Tri (or support German A Mun-Tyl), F Tri-Alb, A Bud-Ser
 Russia: F Sev-Bla, A War-Ukr, A Mos-Stp, F Stp-Bot

To anyone with an IQ higher than toast (about 50% of the current US population), this opening move should cause some disquiet, given the implications. Germany, after all, usually doesn't mess with Italian gambits (especially with possible Austrian support); Russia normally blocks any Austrian move via Galicia rather than the less careful move to Ukraine; and the anti-English opening to St Pete is obvious. Only Austria maintains any illusion of non-involvement (especially if A Mun-Tyl is left to fend for itself.)

Obviously, the effectiveness of these opening moves will vary depending on what permutations the other four powers did for their opening moves. So rather than second-guess everyone's options, let's assume some "normal" opening moves for the others:

Turkey: F Ank-Bla, A Con-Bul, A Smy-Con
 Italy: A Ven-Tyl, A Rom-Ven, F Nap-Ion
 England: F Lon-Nth, F Edi-Nwg, A Lpl-Yor
 France: A Mar H, A Par-Pic, F Bre-Mid

In Fall 1901, we could conceivably see something like:

Germany: F Den H, A Kie-Hol, A Tyl S Austrian A Tri-Ven (or to Pie for the daring)
 Austria: A Tri-Ven, F Alb-Gre, A Ser S F Alb-Gre
 Russia: F Sev-Rum, A Ukr S F Sev-Rum, A Stp-Nwy (or Fin), F Bot-Swe

If the Goddess of Victory is smiling down on the three emperors, then each will probably gain two in the fall (Austria perhaps three, Russia maybe one; but we're all equal here, right?)

In Winter 1901 you build according to the threat. Russia could build either a fleet or an army Stp (to maximize the capture of Nwy in '02) or a fleet Sev to gain control of Bla (while sending Ukr-Sev in Spring '02 and then to Armenia in the Fall). Austria should build a fleet if A Tri actually took Ven; if not, the armies split up: Bud heads south to Italy. Germany, who has the most to lose in the initial stages from

such a dispersed strategy, will simply have to "go with the flow". His two builds should probably be a 1-and-1 mixture (F Kie, A Mun). Then he should team up in joint actions with the Tsar around Swe/Den while holding his gains (and shooting for Bel) in 1902. (Here's where the "daring" idea of Tyl-Pie comes into play. If Italy thinks there will be a squeeze play on Ven in Fall '01, then likely Rom will support Ven to prevent its loss. The German thus slides down to Pie while Austria sends Tri-Tyl, freeing Tri for a fleet build in '02. You then have three vs. Ven in Spring 1902, or Austria has two vs. it, while Germany can use Pie to help raise cain vs. France. The possibilities are endless.

The advantages of the alliance are obvious: Turkey is muzzled right off the bat. Depending on the German's moves, Italy is also in the same situation. And each nation can help the other two with supports in 1901 (if need be) and beyond, albeit necessitating some changes in advance for the armies.

In 1902 you merely continue your advances from the previous year: Bla should fall, as well as Bul, with the Turkish heartland threatened in 1903. Italy builds from Tun, but after that, zippo. And if the west reacts with a united front, France must sail through his ally Italy to get at you with fleets. Norway becomes Russian (allowing for F StP[nc] later), and Germany has a good shot at helping subdue England and isolating France.

The dangers to a DK area also are obvious: Germany is the one who risks the most, as an E/F can cause some serious grief to him early on if they get wise or can coordinate (hence the stress on an "early game" advance for the three emperors, before the board gels upon perception of the threat). In mid-game Russia faces a strong Austrian with lots of Balkan armies, which will cause some tension, although some can be



funneled vs. Italy and northward to help Germany defend (if need be) from Boh and Tyl. And the Austrian may also find himself "surrounded by friends" later in the game, with narrow advance frontages through Italy (hence the recommendation for fleets, to let steam off for all concerned). Again however, these are worries, and the whole idea is two-fold:

1) Isolate France by weakening any of her potential allies (and this is done with the neutering of Italy, Turkey, and England); 2) Do a quick blitz on a couple of countries (Turkey and Italy), thus growing quickly and allowing for maximum concentration against the remaining E/F (and you'll probably see a strong France with a weak England as a flank guard).

Who benefits in a DK? In the long run, probably Russia and/ or Austria most of all. Those two countries see their natural foes (T and I) neutralized and will probably get killed off early, thus allowing them a growth potential. Germany is probably by now beset upon by a hostile western partnership, and the aforementioned growing (greedy) "pals" in his rear. A good German player, however, can probably plan for short-term gain, then seek out Russian help in turning on Austria (or vice versa) while offering an olive branch to England in the hopes of forming some mid-game insurance later on. (Remember, few of Germany's moves in the opening sequence need to be anti-England, although the potential is there). Victory (solo or otherwise) will go to the biggest schemer and the quickest gainer, methinks; the glory is accessible to any and all. Whoever plays Germany should have massive doses of testosterone and a calculating eye for politics; Don Knotts look-alikes need not apply.

What must be done for the DK to succeed? Immediate smokescreening of the enemy is priority one. The German should invoke another 19th century treaty (the "Triple Alliance" of A/G/I) and try to snooker Italy into going to Pie in 1901 "in conjunction with his attack into Bur". (This doesn't make getting into Ven any easier, but it creates unnecessary friction between F& I.) Germany can thus pretend to be the champion of France while he "invades Tyl" to help the beleaguered Frenchman—all the more so if the Kaiser negotiates a DMZ treaty with France and doesn't fear a Bur move. In fact, the whole anti-French thing doesn't manifest itself until the German wants it to - after all, in 1901, well...that opens up easier pickings on Nor in '01 and lets E/F fight themselves while Germany gets courted by both sides. He gets his early gains, the partnership of R/A, and doesn't tip his hand until 1902 or later! So there's some consolations for being the gambling German under a Dreikaiserbund.

In closing, you may be wondering if I ever tried such a scheme; truth is, I can't remember. I do know that I had a bodaciously good (game winning) G/R at one time, and that Austria was around (early on) working with Russia. But, you can't look for past successes and failures; each game (and the people in them) are different. This option could bring smashing successes or utter ruin, depending on the game. And isn't that what the game is all about?

>Mark Fassio (CAD-B, Unit 26708 Box 5265, APO AE 09235) is an Air Force Detachment Commander in Berlin, Germany, and has been playing Diplomacy since 1976, mostly in the zines *Terran* and *Europa Express*.

A Grain of Salt...

by Joel Klein

Don't get the wrong idea from these DW Demo Games. I mean, they aren't reality. How often can you get a game where the best actually beat the best? Most of us shoot ourselves in the foot and the player with the fewest holes wins. That's why I call these games fantasy — there are so many strong players that people are actually forced to win the game rather than just avoid losing it.

So think in terms of not losing the game earlier, and saving heroics for when you have muscle. This particularly applies to Austria and Germany. I rather enjoy these positions, because if I do poorly I'm through early. But, if I can keep healthy into 1904 or so, I'm now a real good bet to win or draw, considering my central position and the ability to influence virtually all of the other players directly. So I see my goal as staying healthy into the Midgame.

I think the percentage opening for both countries is to play "slow." By this I mean what is mistaken for pedestrian play. I mean, play for long-term position and relationship, slower to break one's word, perhaps less color; slow but sure. The reverse of this would be to play "fast", by which I mean aggressive play; for short-term gain, little attention to long-term alliance, and a relaxed view to a "reliable" or "trustworthy" image. Que sera, sera.

The Austrian or German player does not want to "bust up" the game early. Even with dramatic early success, he's often left with the same kind of problems he starts with: too many borders and too many neighbors still capable of worrying him. By slowing down the game, you provide some protection for yourself and buy time to blunt the threatening corner powers (Turkey, France and England) who have more to gain

with aggressive, risky moves.

An excellent thesis on "fast" play came in the last issue of *DW*, with Mark Fassio's article on Turkey. He and I only first "met" over a game in *Terran*. He played Turkey (fast) while I played Austria (slow). He used his ideas on me, via a stab. By the time you read this, my country will probably be overrun by Turkish swine... I only wish his article had been published the preceding issue.

But I digress. Here are the 1901 moves, with Austria working under the mistaken assumption of a Turkish alliance:

Spring 1901: *Russia* A War-Gal, F Sev-Rum. *Turkey* F Ank-Bla, A Con-Bul, A Smy-Con. *Austria* A Vie-Gal, A Bud-Ser, F Tri-Alb. *Italy* A Ven H, A Rom-Apu, F Nap-Ion.

Fall 1901: *Russia* NMR. F Rum H(d.ann). *Turkey* A Bul-Rum, F Bla S A Bul-Rum, A Con-Bul. *Austria* A Vie-Tri, A Ser S Turk A Bul-Rum, F Alb-Gre. *Italy* A Ven-Tus, A Apu-Ven, F Ion-Tun.

Winter 1901: Builds A Sev, F Smy, A Ank, A Bud, A Vie, F Nap.

At this point I thought I had a firm Turkish alliance. I didn't recognize the possible meaning of a French attack in progress against Italy, or of the Russian build A Sev. I thought the Russian player was erratic and headed for a quick exit. Then came Spring 1902:

Russia A War-Gal, A Sev-Rum. *Turkey* F Bla C A Ank-Rum, A Ank-Rum, A Rum-Ser, A Bul S A Rum-Ser, F Smy-Aeg. *Austria* A Vie-Tyl, A Tri S A Vie-Tyl, A Bud-Gal, A Ser H(r.gre), F Gre-Alb. *Italy* A Ven-Pie, A Tus S A Ven-Pie, F Tun-Tyn, F Nap-Ion.

I was stuck. But wait, the Italian player resigned this turn, so I've got a chance of rapprochement with the new player against the Russo-Turkish attack! Nope, didn't work. The new Italian player attacked me in concert with Turkey. Into oblivion I head. (The Russian player was eventually replaced by a player hostile to Turkey. Unfortunately, this came too late for me.)

C'est la guerre. Yet the "slow" moves I made in Spring 1902 gave me a fighting chance. Which moves? A Ser H and F Gre-Alb. Faz was pressuring for F Gre-Ion and A Tri-Ven, or maybe A Tri-Tyl, A Vie S A Tri-Tyl, A Ser-Tri. I didn't go for it. Why? Insurance, that's why! See the Italian fleet in the Ionian Sea? It allowed the possibility of combined action against Greece. Sure, had Turkey not stabbed I would have had a less powerful attack on Italy. Had I interfered with that fleet, or had I lunged at Italy, I would have had no chance for diplomacy to bail me out.

Sure, it failed this time — but failure does not necessarily mean error. I still had a chance following the stab that



completely surprised me. By taking a cautious course, and by sacrificing some of the force of my attack, I afforded myself some protection against an attack that I didn't even see coming. I don't see how I could have planned for a better chance.

Discipline yourself to realistic expectations. Without the pressure of a strong field of players, it's just a poor bet to try to speed around with high-risk openings. Turkey, and often France, will generally get the best of it. Plus, those countries can more easily weather errors that would kill you off early. Austria and Germany, your job is to survive early and get security, not to break up the game.

In the latest Demonstration Game 1901 results, reported in *DW* #64, Russo-Turkey opened with a Turkish try at Rumania, foiled by a clairvoyant Austrian attack, along with Russian build A Sev. These dudes are really speeding! Well, I told you not to look at the Demo Game! It won't corroborate my opinion. I say, take that game with a grain of salt. After all, how many times have you encountered a board selected for the lack of weak backsides?

➤ Joel Klein (326 N. Cuyler, Oak Park IL 60302) published the article "Letters Yes, Postcards No" in *DW* #63.

Towards A More Idealized Board

by Ron Newmaster

Diplomacy World #64 carried an article and Diplomacy map by Fritz Juhnke and Eric Westphal. Juhnke and Westphal described the physics paradigm and mathematics they used to ideally position the 74 Diplomacy spaces. The new map certainly removed several of the "can I move from here to there" questions sometimes asked by new recruits. I did not, however, like the extreme angularity of their map's province boundaries. The provinces lacked geometric nicety. For example, eight-sided Munich should look like an octagon, not a sixteen-pointed star. Four-sided provinces like London, Paris and Ankara should look like squares.

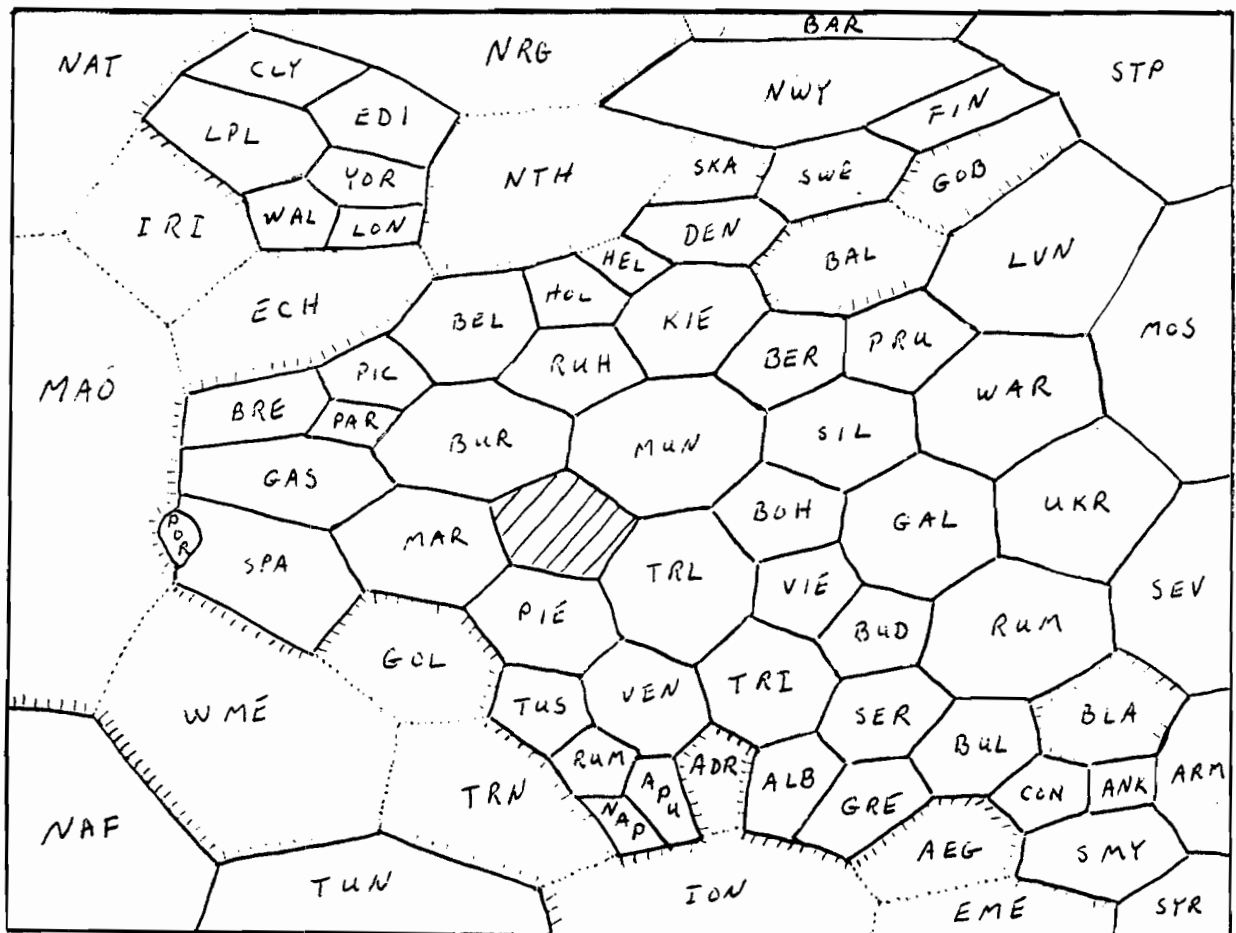
Using the Juhnke / Westphal model as a valid representation of each space's center of gravity, I redrew the map. Halving the number of lines on the map leads to a leaner, less cluttered appearance. Portugal remains a two-sided enigma, but at least has a playable representation.

Both idealized maps highlight some of the obvious truths of Diplomacy. It is readily evident that it is a long way overland from Syria to Denmark, or that eleven-sided North Sea and eight-sided Munich are major crossroads.

Unfortunately, by dropping the Straits of Bosphorus and Kiel Canal from our idealized map it may be difficult to explain why F Bal-Den-Nth, F Ber-Kie-Aeg, and F Bot-Swe-Nwy are legal move sequences while F Bla-Bul-Aeg and F Rum-Bul-Aeg and illegal move sequences.

I leave it to the next commentator to solve that representational problem or maybe further regularize the map by fully shoehorning it into the ubiquitous hexagonal grid.

➤ Ron Newmaster (37 George Circle, Mechanicsburg PA 17055) recently made his first tournament Diplomacy appearance at AtlanCon / Origins 1991 in Baltimore.



Eurasian Diplomacy

by Randy Davis

Yes, you can see one of my passions - drawing and creating maps. I am no artist or cartographer, but with the aid of an atlas, Phil Reynolds' Asian and African Dip maps, and a few of my own ideas, I drew this Eurasian Dip map. (Well, most of Eurasia anyway, and a little more.) This variant is a modification / extension of Asian Diplomacy, by S. La-tourette and K. Robison, and Asian Diplomacy II, designed by Phil Reynolds.

Much of my inspiration came from playing Asian Dip II in Phil's zine *Dipadeedoodah!* That variant is excellent, but I wanted to go for something a little more wide open. Most of the eastern half of Eurasian is drawn the same as Asian, while the western half is almost completely different. The addition of Saudi Arabia and Turkey with the removal of Indochina and Persia greatly changes the game from what it is in Asian Diplomacy. Also, there are fifty centers rather than thirty-eight, nearly two more centers per Power. The balance of the game has certainly changed, but I feel it is still well-balanced. The players involved in any given game would make all the difference.

I am hoping that perhaps some publisher out there may like to run a game? I am looking forward to trying it, and am considering running a game myself through a flyer. Let me know what you think. Here is a brief synopsis of the seven Great Powers.

China. This Power looks to be very strong, starting with four units. However, it is also surrounded by four Powers. Without a formulated attack on her by at least two Powers, China will be difficult to stop. There are eight neutrals within two spaces of a home center, and seven more centers within three spaces, so China need not go far to make many gains. Her position appears to be better than in Asian, due to the removal of Indochina as a Power, although some of her neighbors benefit from this as well. She should feel more freedom in the opening year, and is likely to take three builds, possibly four (though this would attract attention.)

India. I feel that India's position is much improved over Asian, largely due to the removal of Indochina as a Power. Also, the Saudis are a bit further off than the Persians (who also have another Power, Turkey, on their northern flank.) Russia is more of a threat without the impassable zone that exists in Asian Dip. India begins with two fleets instead of two armies, as the fleets have much more potential for the opening year. Short of a stab by Russia in Delhi, she can be assured of three builds the first year, but may only take two in order to position a fleet versus the Saudis or Indonesians. India is also in the center, like China, though perhaps she a

just a bit more room than China. India looks to me to be the Italy of Eurasian Dip.

Indonesia. The People of the Islands will enjoy being the English of Eurasian Dip. In Asian Dip, I felt Indonesia was a very interesting position to play, although it seemed rather difficult to get past five or six centers. Here, she is able to get only two builds the first year, but the prospects for two or three more fairly easy builds are there. In fact, without at least one of her three nearest neighbors applying pressure, Indonesia would likely become King of the Seas. Getting armies on the mainland should not be nearly as difficult as in Asian Dip due to the removal of Indochina as a Power. A China/Japan alliance would be the biggest worry for Indonesia, but otherwise her position looks very promising.

Japan. Sadly, Japan's position has not really improved from Asian Dip. The addition of Guam does give her another possible center. Two builds is the most she can hope for in the opening year, and after that she'd likely have to battle for more. Good diplomacy will, of course, do her well here. She certainly needs a good alliance more than does Turkey or Saudi Arabia. She would love to see a China/Indonesia war, where she can join sides with one versus the other. Getting armies to the Mainland may be difficult, as she'd certainly be intruding. At least she has a reasonable defensive position, since her offensive capabilities are probably the worst. She's actually only three game years away from the Red Sea, which could make for interesting convoys later into the game.

Russia. The Russian is the monster of Eurasian Dip, with five starting units, and it is actually possible for her to gain five the first year! But, she has a huge expanse to defend, as all but Indonesia is within range of early forays into Russia. Another possible disadvantage is the numerous array of opening choices. Getting four or five builds the first year would likely turn everyone against her, so her early game diplomacy and tactics must be sharp. Located on the northern board edge gives Russia a strong defensive position, but there are few dots that she can consider easy pickings in the early game. Turkey is probably her single biggest threat, so Russia must not let the Turks get an early jump. All in all, Russia appears to be the most interesting position to play.

Saudi Arabia. The Saudi position is stronger than it may first look. She's guaranteed three builds the first year if she wants them. I think the rest of the world will be quite interested to see which way the Saudis go in the second year, as she is in the swing position. Will the Saudis go north or east? One good ally between India/Russia/Turkey is probably all she needs to do well, but even without such an ally the

Saudis may do okay. She could become a land Power or naval Power, similar to the French in regular Dip. The Spring opening is rather dull and obvious, but the Fall opening could say a lot. The area around Arabia is neutral-rich, so if Saudi Arabia is left alone then she will become very powerful.

Turkey. The Turkish position is quite different from regular Dip, as her southern flank has been opened up. Her main early worries concern just two Powers, Russia and the Saudis. An alliance with one while attacking the other is almost certain to be her plan. She can take three builds the first year if she wants to, but probably will take two. If the Saudis are the target (trusting Russia) it may be smart to take Greece with the fleet in order to take the East Med in the spring of the second year. A Russian attack may prove slow-moving unless they are taken by surprise. One would likely encourage as many of the others to attack Russia at the same time to ensure success.

I would be pleased and optimistic about playing any of the seven Great Powers, including Japan, but playtesting will really prove whether the game has balance. As in regular Diplomacy, the direction of the game should depend upon the skill of the players, not the game board itself. With just over half of the game's centers being neutral, the players should have a little more game-time to make a decisive statement with their orders. This should also enable a Power a little more time to react to a stab, as each Power should have a couple more units to work with. I hope to be able to try it face-to-face soon to see how it goes.

Starting Positions

China A Chunking, A Pek, F Canton, F Shang
India A Delhi, F Bombay, F Calcutta

* AdS Adaman Sea	* For Formosa Strait
* Ada Adana	* Gre Greece
* Aeg Aegean Sea	* Gua Guam
* Afg Afghanistan	* GoS Gulf of Siam
* Ank Ankara	* GoT Gulf of Tonkin
* AnN An Nafud	* Him Himalayas
* Abs Arabian Sea	* Inn Inner Mongolia
* Afs Arafura Sea	* Ira Iraq
* Arm Armenia	* Ick Irkutsk
* Ast Astrakhan	* Isr Israel
* Aus Australia	* Ist Istanbul
* Bal Bali	* Jak Jakarta
* BOB Bay of Bengal	* Jav Java Sea
* Bla Black Sea	* Kam Kamchatka
* Bom Bombay	* Kar Karakoram Strait
* Bor Borneo	* Ken Kenya
* Bul Bulgaria	* Kit Kitakyushu
* Bur Burma	* Kor Korean Strait
* Cal Calcutta	* Kur Kurdistan
* Can Canton	* Kyo Kyoto
* Ceb Celebes	* Lar Laristan
* Ces Celebes Sea	* Lha Lhasa
* CPO Central Pacific Ocean	* Lib Libya
* Cey Ceylon	* Mdg Madagascar
* Chu Chungking	* Mdr Madras
* Cor Coral Sea	* Mal Malaysia
* Dac Dacca	* Man Manchuria
* Del Delhi	* Mec Mecca
* Dha Dhahran	* MIO Mid-Indian Ocean
* ECS East China Sea	* Mod Modyha Pradesh
* EIO East Indian Ocean	* Mon Mongolia
* EHS East Med Sea	* Mos Moscow
* ESi Eastern Siberia	* Nep Nepal
* Egy Egypt	* New New Guinea
* Eth Ethiopia	* NPO North Pacific Ocean

Indonesia	A Jakarta, F Borneo, F New Guinea
Japan	A Tokyo, F Osaka, F Sapporo
Russia	A Novosibirsk, A Moscow, A Tashkent, F Sevastopol, F Vladivostok
Saudi Arabia	A Dhahran, A Riyadh, F Mecca
Turkey	A Adana, A Istanbul, F Ankara

Special Notes of Interest

*The normal rules of Diplomacy apply except where noted below.

*The victory condition is control of 26 of the 50 total supply centers.

*The Caspian Sea and Hokkaido are impassable.

*Bridges connect several islands in Japan and Indonesia. Armies and fleets may move directly from one island to another via a bridge. Fleets may pass through bridges from one sea to another, as if the bridges simply demarcated sea zones. Thus, all of the following are legal orders: A Jak-Bor, F Sap-Kyo, F Jav-Tim, F CPO-Kor.

*There is a special area in Mid-Russia called the Four Corners. The provinces Tashkent, Novosibirsk, Urals and Turkman all come together at a point. Movement from any one of the provinces is legal to any other.

*The following provinces have two coasts, so that coastal designations must be used when necessary: Egypt, Israel, Manchuria, Pyongyang and Songkhla.

*Istanbul is played just like Constantinople in regular Dip, and Suez is treated in the same fashion.

>Randy Davis (3019 Bertram Ct, Concord CA 94520) is a variant games enthusiast. This is his second design to appear in *Diplomacy World*.

* NVi North Vietnam	* Tim Timor Sea
* Nov Novosibirsk	* Tok Tokyo
* Osa Osaka	* Tsi Tsinghai
* Pak Pakistan	* Tur Turkmen
* Pek Peking	* Ukr Ukraine
* PIP Philippines	* Ura Urals
* PPS Philippine Sea	* Via Vladivostok
* Pyo Pyongyang	* WIO West Indian Ocean
* Red Red Sea	* WSi Western Siberia
* Riy Riyadh	* Yel Yellow Sea
* Rom Romania	* YAO Yemen and Oman
* Sap Sapporo	* Yun Yunan
* SoJ Sea of Japan	
* SoO Sea of Okhotsk	
* Sec Seoul	
* Sev Sevastopol	
* Sha Shanghai	
* Sin Sinkiang	
* Som Somalia	
* Son Songkhla	
* SCS South China Sea	
* SVI South Vietnam	
* Sud Sudan	
* Suez Suez	
* Sum Sumatra	
* Syr Syria	
* Tai Taiwan	
* Tan Tanzania	
* Tas Tashkent	
* Tat Tatar Strait	
* Teh Tehran	
* TPT Territory of the Pacific Trust	
* Tha Thailand	
* Tib Tibet	

Total Spaces	117
Home Centers	24
Neutral Centers	26
Non-supply prvc	36
Sea Zones	31
Centers f/victory	26

Armistice Day Revisited

by Larry Cronin

Stan Johnson expressed his disdain for draws in his article "A Draw is Not a Win" which appeared in issue 63 of *DW*. I had banned draws in my games out of a similar sentiment, but now I am having second thoughts. We should remember that World War I had some steadfast allies and ended in a stalemate of sorts. An armistice, I believe it was called.

But Diplomacy is more than a rehash of World War I. It is also a reasonably realistic model for actual politics and diplomacy. This is a major reason I play; not because I am unable to find something better to do, but rather because I want to know how people accrue power and realize their fantasies, and how others stop them.

Thus, to introduce more Realpolitik, I propose we drop the word "draw" and use "armistice." The armistice is a product of diplomatic work, not just a default or accident. It is not a "draw" or a "tie." It is part surrender, part survival. Just as the dictionary says, it is "a (temporary) suspension of hostilities." This is why I so strenuously object to some Gamesmasters' policy of No Vote Received (on a draw proposal) equals Yes.

My idea requires a zero sum score for the game so that points can be allotted to each surviving player based on agreement worked out between the players. This avoids a fixed scoring system which can prematurely skew player motivation, such as occurs at some tournaments. It also captures the real-life aspect of "war reparations." For example, let's agree

the game has a zero sum of 34 points, one for each supply center. (It could just as easily be 68, 100, or 1000 - the actual number is not important.) An outright 18-center win would net all 34 points. Any finish other than a win would be the result of consent to an armistice proposal by all remaining players.

As currently happens with "draw proposals," where players propose A/E/F or A/E/F/I, now a player could propose an armistice such as A8/E12/F8/G2/I3/R1/T0. (Any armistice would require unanimity among surviving players to pass.) The numbers may correlate to the number of supply centers, but not necessarily. Rather, the numbers should reflect the strength of the diplomatic and tactical position of each player. I can imagine coming away with a 20 or 30 point armistice and yet not have had an outright win.

This idea could be tried at a convention. To rank players, the total number of game points accrued could be divided by the number of games to yield an average. I am offering such a game in my zine. Players will get one dollar for each point they net on Armistice Day. The game fee is five dollars and subscriptions must be maintained at the rate of ten dollars per year. Please write if you are interested.

>Larry Cronin (PO Box 40090, Tucson AZ 85717) publishes the zine *Perestroika*, which focuses mainly on running games of the variant of the same name, the rules of which were published in *DW* #62.

Variants: Default by Design?

by Richard Egan

I've always been wary of writing an article on "how to design a variant." Most of all, I doubt my own credentials, but I also know only too well how the motives and goals of one variant designer can be very different from those of another. The standard game itself represents a compromise between historical accuracy (where is Montenegro?) and simplicity (a special rule for the Kiel canal) which it is hard to imagine that a different designer from Calhamer would have come up with exactly the same game. The readiness of variant designers to "improve" on the basic game, with the likes of Milan Diplomacy and Abstraction, confirm this hypothesis.

Given that "Calhamer's Compromise" is the foundation of every single variant designed, it strikes me as most unlikely that any two writers will concur on how to go about producing any agreed scenario. Thus, we have several versions of a worldwide variant (Mercator, World Domination, World Diplomacy), two or three Tolkien-based designs (Middle Earth, Downfall), and so on. Most of those I've

already named have two or three versions, representing different interpretations of the original variant design.

Recently, Lee Kendter, Jr. published a series of articles in his zine *Get Them Dots Now!* entitled "What Makes a Good Variant" and "What is Chrome." It speaks volumes that I found myself disagreeing with much of what even such an eminent authority on variants had to say. For example, his suggestion that a designer could avoid names like "Gulf of Siam", preferring instead "Siam Gulf", not only differs from the example of the standard game, but can also compromise the atmosphere of a game. If the Gulf of Lyons is called the Gulf of Lyons, I feel it should be called such on a Diplomacy map. I've never seen or heard of it referred to as the "Lyons Gulf."

Others obviously feel differently, but I confess my regard for a variant has been undermined on occasion by what I regard as contrived names. I know I wasn't the only one to laugh at a province called "Iguana Town" in a medieval

English variant called something like "The Men Who Would be King." Whilst this may not seem to be overly important, it nevertheless demonstrates that there is not a lot of consensus on what makes a good design: if even the names of the provinces can be subject for disagreement, what hope is there for the rules themselves?

I, for example, prefer to design "by default." I try to avoid repeating the rules of the standard game where they are to be unchanged. Where I leave something unsaid, I expect the players or GM to refer back to that enduring phrase featured at the start of nearly every variant - along the lines of "the rules of the basic game apply except where noted below."

Recently, I received an inquiry from a GM running one of my variants. It is a design that uses units other than armies and fleets, and also includes a rule which allows players to choose, in the first turn, whether to start with "an army or a fleet" in each of their home supply centers. I was surprised when the GM asked if this meant players could also choose to start with one of the other types of unit. To me, the answer was clearly "no", and yet he felt that, since the rules did not specifically say so to the contrary, it should be allowed.

My philosophy has usually been to keep rules to what I regard as a manageable minimum. Not only do I expect points to be lost in a mass of conditions and repetitions, but there is also a danger of boring the reader out of any interest in the game. Keeping the rules as simple as can be consistent with eliminating loopholes and ambiguities is one of my priorities. But if the example above is anything to go by, this is not everyone's idea of what makes a good set of rules.

Even so, I've broken my own guidelines. I am currently running a variant called "Africa", again one of my own designs, but which is so complex that, even as a five-player game, it takes about as long to adjudicate as two or three standard *Diplomacy* games. Some people would say that such a design was unwieldy, but such people would clearly not buy Avalon Hill games - there are no hard and fast rules on either complexity or chrome, and I receive more requests to open a waiting list for another "Africa" game than anything else. With complexity and chrome, it seems, it's yet another case of different strokes for different blokes.

Having thus established that it's never more than one man's preference that decides what is a good variant, it's time I made some attempt to fulfill my original brief. For there are common points worth bearing in mind when putting a design together, and I shall endeavor to highlight some of them:

1. Objective. Before you start, give some thought to whether your idea is likely to make a good variant, how many players you expect it to support, and what sort of variant you want it to be. How important is accuracy? Do you want a complex variant, or a simple one?

2. Consistency. Strive for consistency when preparing the rules: avoid getting bogged down in chrome in one area whilst leaving another underdeveloped. If you achieve his-

toric or literary accuracy with one part, but ignore it elsewhere, players will soon question why. Better to be simple or complex throughout (example: writing Saruman's Crows into a Tolkien variant while leaving out the Ring.)

3. Plain English. When you come to writing the rules, try to write them as simply and plainly as possible. Rules are "technical writing", and should be presented with a minimum of effect.

4. Ambiguities. This is what it's all about. Quite distinct from the matter of rules written in a confusing fashion (see above) is the matter of rules that conflict with each other, or are open to different interpretations. Above all, avoid these. All rules should be thoroughly checked for this before publication. Approach them with the attitude of a player looking for loopholes he can exploit.

5. Province Names. If the variant needs a map (and most do), take the trouble over the likely three-letter names you give the provinces. Ideally they should all be different, though some prominent designs feature a list of abbreviations which all players are expected to use. Alternatively, label the map with the abbreviations and publish a list of the full names elsewhere - this is by far the simplest way to avoid any confusion. However, you must still take care to check you haven't duplicated any abbreviations.

6. Borders. If the variant needs a map, take care that the borders are drawn so as to leave no doubt about which provinces neighbor each other. For example, borders should never form an "X", which makes it ambiguous whether all four provinces adjoin each other.

7. Structure. Try to present the rules in an orderly fashion, split into sections if possible or necessary, to facilitate understanding and quick reference. Ideally, every point should be given a distinct number or code, or named, so that if a query is raised, a player or GM can point to "Rule XII.a" or "The Moses Crossing Rule".

8. Names. Any designer worth his salt should take the trouble to check that he isn't naming the variant after one already in existence. For preference, ask the UKVB or NAVB Custodian. Or better still, send a draft copy of the rules. The Custodian can, on request, proofread rules to check for ambiguities and loopholes for you.

9. Information. Always include the designer's name and a date when the variant was published or written. The latter is most important in the event of confusion over which mark number came first (especially given the thoroughly infuriating and deplorable habit of the NAVB in issuing ARDA numbers without reference to chronology.)

10. Variant Bank It! Once finished, ensure that you send a copy to the Variant Bank Custodian in your country.

>Richard Egan (23 Cleeve Rd, Knowle, Bristol BS4 2JR, England) is the former editor of the variant zine *Moonlighting*, which first ran a version of this article in its pages.

Keeping an Open Mind

by David Hood

I have talked to lots of new Diplomacy players over the years, and have been hearing the same song from most of them. If they began playing face-to-face, then they hate postal games. If they began by playing postal Diplomacy, then face-to-face games are not as much fun. Throw in electronic mail games and their advocates, and you have lots of warring camps who believe that theirs is the only way to play The Game.

Obviously, all camps cannot be right. Indeed, none of them is right. Diplomacy is a game which can be an interesting and enjoyable event regardless of the venue in which it is played. Novices should take care to avoid any notion that postal is "better" or "worse" than playing face-to-face or in tournaments.

The key is to keep an open mind, which is pretty good advice in the Real World as well. For example, one of the biggest beefs that face-to-face players have with conventional postal Diplomacy is that the turns take entirely too long. For someone used to strict fifteen minute negotiations and order-writing periods, the month-long wait for that crucial Fall or Spring turn can seem like an absolute eternity. Given that postal games can take many months, even years of real time to play to completion, many face-to-face players just say why bother.

However, if you ask many postal players what they enjoy most about playing Diplomacy by mail, the most common answer will be that they enjoy the more leisurely pace. Month long turns may seem long to some people, but for those of us with time-consuming jobs or other leisure-time commitments, the deadlines can come too quick even at that rate. By the time one contacts each player by mail and gets a response, the month may be just about up.

The answer to the problem lays somewhere in the middle, as you might suspect. Players who eschew the long deadlines are relegated to playing Diplomacy only when they can assemble enough players for a face-to-face game, or even worse, only when they can attend a Diplomacy tournament. Instead of letting one's Diplomatic skills go to pot, as it were, it may be a better idea to join several Diplomacy games at once, preferably all with different deadlines within one month's time. I can tell you from experience that one can get his Diplomacy "fix" by mail if he joins, say, five games at once and faithfully negotiates with everyone in those games every month. At that rate, you should have thirty minutes or so of Dip to do just about every night, often much more for complicated Endgame positions or pre-1901 negotiations. This can be even more fun if you throw in a variant game or two.

Of course, for those who want the convenience of a

postal game at the speed of a face-to-face game, then you can try Email, where the turns can be as quick as a day or two. The combination of these two features is what has made the PBEM hobby the fastest growing subset of the Diplomacy hobby over the past three-four years or so. Indeed, I have known many players who retreated back to conventional mail games because the Email games are run too quickly!

Now, postal players are capable of the same tunnel-vision when it comes to playing in tournaments. One of the most important things that postal games lack is the exhilaration that comes from the time pressures and excitements that exist only in the face-to-face game. Part of being successful at tournaments is the ability to think on one's feet, to quickly analyze a tactical situation, and to convincingly pull aside your intended target and convince them in thirty seconds or less to leave their back wide open. Postal players who avoid this part of the game are really missing out. Diplomacy is really a people game, not a tactical one. If one wants to simply order units around a map, there are any number of Hellish Hitleresque Hexgames to choose from that are better for that purpose.

Postal players ought to take a more active role in promoting Diplomacy events in their local areas. And face-to-face players ought to give postal or Email games a try. Only by recognizing the importance of all media for Diplomacy play can we begin to attract more players to our hobby.

North American Hobby Services

Boardman Number Custodian (BNC): Records Dip gamestarts and finishes. Gary Behnen, 13101 S. Trenton, Olathe KS 66062.

Miller Number Custodian (MNC): Records Variant gamestarts and finishes. Lee Kendter, Jr. 376A Willowbrook Dr, Jeffersonville PA 19403. or Brad Wilson, PO Box 126, Wayne PA 19087.

Canadian Diplomacy Organization (CDO): Cal White, 1 Turnberry Ave, Toronto Ontario M6N 1P6.

Zine Register/Zine Bank: Sends sample zines or list of zines. Garret Schenck, 40 3rd Pl, Basement Apt, Brooklyn NY 11231.

Novice Packet: Tom Mainardi, 45 Zummo Way, Norristown PA 19401 or Bruce Reiff, 2207 Smokey View Blvd, Powell OH 43065.

North American Variant Bank (NAVB): Keeps a catalogue of variants available for sale. Lee Kendter, Jr. 376A Willowbrook Dr, Jeffersonville PA 19403.

Pontevedria: A list of game openings. Phil Reynolds, USF #4286, 4202 Fowler Ave, Tampa FL 33620

February 29, 1992

Dear Publisher/GM,

It's Runestone Poll time! This year's ballot is printed on the back of this letter. The Poll started rating Diplomacy-related zines in 1977 and has since expanded to cover GMs and subzines. I'd like you to help by distributing copies of the ballot to your players and readers—I won't be contacting them all directly.

Anyone *may* obtain a ballot by writing to me at the address below. Please let your readers know this if you don't want to distribute ballots yourself. You can even vote without using a ballot—just include your name and signature, indicate one way in which you participate in the North American Diplomacy hobby (sub to zine XXX, play in game YYY, etc.), and list the zines, subzines, and GMs you wish to vote for. Rate each from 0 (the worst) to 10 (the best)—no fractions, please. Do not rate yourself or your publication.

You may *only* vote for GMs under whom you've played a postal or e-mail game since July 1, 1991, and whose competence you can rate fairly. This year any game qualifies, not just Diplomacy or its variants. To vote for a zine you don't have to subscribe, but you must be able to rate it fairly. This means you've seen (or should have seen if not for delays) *at least* two issues since July 1, 1991.

Don't take the Poll too seriously. This is a hobby, and our goal is to have fun. But *do* vote carefully, not out of spite, or for zines you haven't seen. On the other hand, even if you've seen only one zine you're welcome to rate it as long as you've seen enough of it to rate it fairly. I want input from everyone, not just a select few.

The Poll publication includes a list of voters. If you vote, but you don't want to be listed as a voter, please tell me by marking the spot indicated on the ballot.

I will tally the results on June 30; any ballots received after that will not count. To order the results, check where indicated on the ballot (let me know whether you prefer results in alphabetical order or order of finish) and send the corresponding fee. If you want only the pages of the Poll publication that deal with you, your zine, or your subzine, send me a SASE and let me know that's what you want.

Some of you may not want to take part in the Poll. If so, I respect your decision and I apologize for sending you a ballot. I thought it would be better to send a ballot and let you decide than to run the risk of omitting someone who wanted to take part.

If you have any questions, please let me know! Thanks in advance for all your help—I couldn't do it without you.

Sincerely,



Eric Brosius
41 Hayward St.
Milford, MA 01757 USA

Zines

The 1992 Runestone Poll

ZINE POLL

You may rate any amateur postal or e-mail zinc that you've read enough of to rate fairly. This means you've seen (or would have seen if not for delays) at *least* two issues since July 1, 1991. Only North American zincs are eligible, but anyone may vote. Rate each zinc from 0 (the worst) to 10 (the best)—no fractions, please. Do not rate your own zinc. Blanks are for zincs I forgot to list.

Absolute!	Disease City	Pilot Light
The Abyssinian Prince	Disoriented Express	Pirate
Acropolis	DOGS of War	Pontevedria
Against the Odds	Down at the Mouth	The Prince
Alpha & Omega	Electric Trains	Protocol
Angst United	Electronic Protocol	Protozoan
The Appalachian General	Empire	Quest for Power
ark	The Encounter	Rails by Mail
The Armchair Diplomat	Excelsior	Rambling Way
The Assassin's Blade	Eyewitness News	Ramblings by Moonlight
Autumn Madness	fast laxx	Rebel
Batville Gazette	Frueh's Folly	So I Lied!
Benzene	The Gamer's Zine	Son of Flip
Blade Wars	Get Them Dots Now!	The Spindle
Blind Ambition	jGOLI	Starwood
Boast	Gonzo Rails	Suicide Squeeze
Buckeye Rail Gazette	Graustark	The Tactful Assassin
The Canadian Diplomat	Heroes of Olympus	Ter-ran
Canyon	The Home Office	36 Miles of Trouble
Carolina Cmd & Cmnlry	Hoodwink	This Train...
Caveat Emptor	Kathy's Korner	Touché
Cheesecake	Kempelen's Turk	Twains
The Coach Express	Lemon Curry	Upstart
Comrades in Arms	Loco Motives	Vertigo
Concordia	Lord of Hosts	War Fair
The Continual Crisis	Mad Dog	Wall, Martha...
Costaguana	Maelstrom	Where's Kevin Tighoe?
Countermeasures	Maniac's Paradise	White House Mania
Crimson Sky	The Metadiplomat	Why Me?
The Curator	Niccolo	World Diplomacy
Dipadeedoodah!	Northern Flame	Your Zine of Zines
Diplodocus	Orphan Son	The Zine Register
Diplomacy Digest	...Pedro...	
Diplomacy Downs	Penguin Dip	
Diplomacy World	Pennant Madness	
Diplomag	Perelandra	
Dippy	Perestroika	

ADVERTISEMENT

For the main lists (zines, subzines, and CMs) send 50 cents, two 29 cent U.S. stamps, or an issue of your zine in which you publish a ballot. Check here ☐ for lists in order of finish or here ☐ for lists in alphabetical order. For the Poll publication, send \$5.00 or more and check here ☐. Last year's publication was 101 pages long. It contained main lists, articles, statistical analysis, and lots more! Thanks for your donations; they really help.

SUBZINE POLL

A subzine is a regular section of a zine which is (a) edited by someone other than the zine editor(s), or (b) edited by the zine editor(s), but devoted to a specific hobby service. Any subzine of a North American zine is eligible. The other instructions are the same as those for the Zine Poll.

analysis	It's Me Again	Sports Beat
Astorian	Metropolis	Standard Deviation
Baseball Mania	No Fac Number	Subwithnoname
The Blind Wars	Notes from the Bunker	The Unabashed Bo(t
CDO News	Poll Talk	The Unzine Voice
Close Your Eyes . . .	The Popular Front	Water on the Knee
DIDOES	Reginald Maudling's Elbow	You're the One
The Eccentric Diplomat	Ring Finger in Rear	
The First Negotiator	Seriously Folks	
Fred's Column	Slappy's Sports Section	
It's Good to be Right	Sorcerers and Strategists	

GM POLL

You may rate any GM under whom you played any postal or e-mail game since July 1, 1991 for long enough to judge him or her fairly. Only North American GMs are eligible, but anyone may vote. List GMs alphabetically by name (not zine). Rate each GM from 0 (the worst) to 10 (the best)—no fractions, please. GMs may not rate themselves.

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Send this ballot to Eric Brosius, 41 Hayward St., Milford, MA 01757.

Your ballot must arrive by June 30, 1992. Please vote early if you can.

Indicate one way in which you take part in the North American postal or e-mail gaming hobby (sub to zine XXX, play in game 1992YY, etc.) —

Signature _____

Print your name neatly _____

(If I can't tell who you are or your ballot isn't signed, it may not be counted!)

Check here ☐ if you do not want your name on the list of voters.

RUNESTONE POLL CONTEST

Guess the Zine Poll winner—the prize is a travel Diplomacy board with magnetic pieces. To be eligible you must vote in the Poll and correctly guess the winning zine; I will pick the contest winner at random from the set of eligible entrants. The names of the winner and any other eligible entrants will be published in the Poll publication.

To enter, _____

The zinc you think will win: _____

print your
address
neatly:

A Matter of Honor II

by Mark Nelson

In *Diplomacy World* 64, I published three vignettes concerning GMing and publishing ethics issues. This is the second part of a two-part series on such issues. While many of my specific examples come from British zines, the ideas here are of international application to postal play.

In the UK novice zine *Springboard*, issue 46, Michelle Morris made the following points about the use of standby or replacement players when the original player drops out. (Michelle was the GM of recently finished game 1988BD.)

"The game was, alas, marred by the large number of dropouts. Danny is a supporter of using standbys, but I am not. This game illustrates at least two of the reasons why I think the use of standbys is flawed. The intended purpose of using standbys is to prevent the game from being spoiled by dropouts... each time a standby was brought in, the game was significantly disturbed and not necessarily for the better. Secondly... when Andrew was brought into the game he was jumped on heavily and rapidly eliminated despite what I am sure were his best efforts. Even Stuart [Eves], an excellent player, was only able to negotiate survival as a standby, not growth. The notion of standbys ignores the fact that players have made plans, formed alliances and built up real-world relationships within a game."

"It is very hard for any standby to overcome the momentum of the game and turn it into his advantage. Frequently, standbys have too few units to survive long enough to have any real chance of success. Quite simply, it is unfair on the standby and on the existing players."

I do not intend to write on why standbys are a good thing, but I think it is worth spending some time pointing out the flaws in this argument against them.

One of the aims of the prison sentences is to prevent life from being disturbed by crime, yet each time a trial is held life is disturbed. Are we to conclude then that because prison sentences do not prevent a disturbance from occurring that we should ignore criminals? No, of course not.

The argument that Michelle concentrates on is that standbys come into a game which already has alliance structures set up. In addition, the standby's position may be very small and precarious. Hence, the question becomes whether it is really worth the standby's time and effort given that the likely return on such an investment is not promising? This is not an argument against using standbys, but is instead an argument against being a standby. The difference is subtle, but important.

Yes, standby positions may be small, and they may be

caught between preexisting alliances which cannot be broken through by diplomacy. However, surely it is up to the potential standby player to decide whether he wants to take on such a position. The GM should not be deciding whether it is worth asking for a standby.

Personally, I am quite happy to take any standby position, even if it is a two-center power that will be quickly eliminated. The standby has not made a substantial investment of time to begin with, so the rate of return is less important. In addition, I contend that there is always a return for taking over such positions, particularly for novices. One of the main reasons I take on standby spots is that I haven't played in all that many *Diplomacy* games, so I welcome the opportunity to study new situations.

I also do not think that the use of standby players ignores the fact that players have made plans and already formed alliances. A standby player takes over a position in a game where negotiations have already occurred, that's true. But wouldn't the original player be in the exact same position had he stayed in the game?

Finally, I must comment that *Springboard's* position on the use of standby players is very strange. In the same issue of the zine, a nine-center Russia is put into Civil Disorder leaving Austria (10), England (1), France (10) and Italy (4). The GM comments that "I do not feel that the Russian position is such that it is possible to call a standby player - Russia owns only one home center, and the rest of you are all heading his way, so it wouldn't really be fair to throw a strange player into this situation. Hope this doesn't upset anyone too much."

Whilst it would certainly upset me if I were playing in this game, I wonder if the GM of this game really understands why GMs should call standby players (as opposed to why players want to be standbys.) This is a very strange decision.

It is not improbable that a GM will make at least one unpopular decision which someone objects to, particularly in the field of variants and complex boardgames run by mail. How should a GM respond to this objection? Well, a GM should not be cross with the objection, since a GM does not have a God-given right to be correct all the time. A GM should treat his players as he would expect to be treated as a player by another GM.

A GM needs to be particularly careful when printing a player's comments on the adjudication. After all, the typist always gets the final say, so restraint should be exercised. I feel that a GM who runs a warehouse, games-oriented zine

needs to be especially careful.

Paul Willey, in the late British zine *Eclipsor*, made a series of comments that I think went too far in annoying the players. Perhaps he didn't want the concerned players to play in his zine again. Fair enough, but he should have also considered what effects his comments would have on potential players reading them.

In a series of disagreements about how to adjudicate a Vain Rats variant game, Paul refers to the "ubiquitous and argumentative Mr. Conlin." At the start of a player's Endgame Statement, which just happened to be critical of Paul the GM, Paul comments "Edited to try and get his meaning across in correct English" and at a later stage injects "What the Hell is that sentence supposed to mean? I'm getting

fed up with trying to understand and rewrite his appalling English - and the use of the term English is an inexactitude!" When the same player comments that if a player had played more aggressively he might have won, Paul adds "He did, in a three-way draw."

All in all, only very minor comments, but they are all very petty and do add up. I don't believe that a GM should treat players in the way that Paul did. It certainly doesn't encourage me as a reader to either play in *Eclipsor* again or comment adversely on a rule-change or GMing question.

➤ Mark Nelson (21 Cecil Mount, Armley, Leeds, W. Riding, LS12 2AP, England) publishes the zine *The Mouth of Sauron* and serves as DW International Editor.

History

Who Really Ran the First Postal Game?

by Jim Meinel

My recent trip to the Hoosier Archives in Lebanon, Indiana provided a unique opportunity to view the beginnings of the postal Diplomacy hobby first-hand from original zines published at the time. Walter Buchanan has stashed away in a fireproof safe his copies of the postal Diplomacy zines from the pre-1966 era. I thought I'd share my findings with you.

As we all have come to know, John Boardman founded the postal Diplomacy hobby in 1963. Prior to his step into history, he published a fanzine called *Knowable*, which dealt with science fiction and other subjects. Issue #3 was published in March 1963. No mention of Diplomacy was made in the entire issue, except for a small paragraph near the bottom of page fifteen. Here, Boardman casually mentions the possibility of playing a game of Diplomacy by mail and his willingness to "umpire" such a game.

The results of this announcement were seen in May 1963 in a new publication of Boardman's entitled *Graustark*. Postmarked May 12, 1963, it was a one-page flyer explaining the concept of postal play and listed the people who were interested in playing. Most of the response came from the East Paterson Diplomacy Club which, according to Allan Calhamer, was the first formally organized face-to-face Diplomacy club ever. Club members interested in a game were: Tom Bulmer, Ray Eggermont, Richard Frobose, James Goldman, Stuart Kershner, Fred Lerner, Keith Marchese, Edward Rocklin and Dan Vandermaast. Out-of-town people listed in issue 1 were Dave McDaniel of San Diego, CA, and

Derek Nelson of Scarborough, Ontario.

By issue 2 a gamestart was underway. The people who actually played the game were Dave McDaniel, Derek Nelson, James Goldman, Stuart Kershner and Fred Lerner. This historic game is generally accepted as the first postal Diplomacy game started and finished in the hobby. (The distinction of "started and finished" is necessary as in 1962 Conrad von Metzke attempted to start a postal Diplomacy game, but it was abandoned after Spring 1901 was published.)

But what has been lost in the mists of history is that this first game in actually a variant! You'll note that only five players were listed! For whatever reason, Boardman chose to run a five-man game. Turkey and Russia, plus the provinces of Bulgaria and Rumania, were closed, and the game was played with 25 centers. The Rulebook provides for games smaller than seven people. But modern-day BNC's and ratingsmasters would have little choice but to label this game a variant.

So the first postal game was a variant!

Many other postal "firsts" came from this game. The hobby had its first NMR in issue #5, where Fred Lerner missed his moves as France and set an unhappy trend that continues to this day. (We should consider a Lerner Award or some such silliness at DipCon every year.) We see another wrinkle of history unfold here in how the first NMR was handled. Lerner's moves were received by the "umpire" after the deadline; all the players' units held and the turn was replayed in. The first player elimination came in issue #8

(surprise, Austria), Boardman formally named the game 1963A in issue #11, and Derek Nelson won the first game as Italy in issue #15. So closes that chapter of the first Diplomacy variant ever played.

So, where can we look for the first regular Diplomacy game played. Remember Dave McDaniel, a player from 1963A? He founded the second postal Diplomacy zine ever, *Ruritania*, on September 13, 1963, exactly four months after first issue, and soon thereafter Boardman plugged the zine in *Graustark* #7 on August 16, 1963. By this time, Dave was in South Pasadena. His first game was ultimately labeled 1963B, and had as players Dian Pelz, Fred Lerner, Jack Root, Allan Calhmer, Tom Bulmer, Bruce Pelz and John Boardman. The game appears at first glance to win the honor of the first regular Diplomacy game played and finished by mail.

But the game does not bear up to the scrutiny that the modern day standards of "regularity" demand. For starters, notice the two players with the last name "Pelz"? Bruce and Dian were a married couple, which immediately throws the game out as far as being regular. (If there was any doubt as to the effect on the game, Bruce got an 18 center win as Russia in 1918. Wife Dian settled for a strong second, finishing with 16 centers. All in the family, I guess.)

A second, minor point was that Boardman resigned his position as Turkey during the game, then picked up our first orphaned game ever when *Ruritania* was transferred to Boardman with issue #27. Playing in and gamesmastering the same game is considered a no-no by the BNC, who decides whether games are regular. Boardman ran the zine until its fold with issue #40 in March 1966.

Still in search of a regular Dip game, we now look at Contestant Number Three, the third game ever, 1964A. This was John Boardman's second game in *Graustark* and started in issue #15 on December 11, 1963. This game had the requisite seven players, no married couples, and while two people hailed from Scarborough and two from East Patterson, it still meets the modern-day definition of a regular game and thus is actually the first postal Diplomacy game started and finished. The players were: James Goldman, Derek Nelson, Stuart Kershner, William E. Christian, Fred Lerner, Richard Schultz and James MacKensie. The game ended in a Turkish win for James MacKensie in Fall 1911 in *Graustark* #48 on March 14, 1965.

By that date, the postal hobby had ten zines:

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. Graustark | John Boardman |
| May 12, 1963 | |
| 2. Ruritania | Dave McDaniel |
| September 13, 1963 | |

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| 3. WorldDip | Bruce Pelz |
| November 14, 1963 | |
| 4. WitDip | Bruce Pelz |
| January 9, 1964 | |
| 5. Freedonia | John Boardman |
| May 2, 1964 | |
| 6. Brobdingnag | Richard Schultz |
| May 9, 1964 | |
| 7. Trantor | John Smythe |
| August 26, 1964 | |
| 8. Wild 'n Woolly | Dan Brannan |
| October 16, 1964 | |
| 9. The Gamesletter | Don Miller |
| February 1965 | |
| 10. Nostrilla Notes | Dan Alderson |
| March 8, 1965 | |

And by the end of 1965 the following zines had started up :

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 11. Costaguana | Conrad von Metzke |
| April 1, 1965 | |
| 12. Massif | John Koning |
| April 1965 | |
| 13. Barad-Dur | Jack Chalker |
| July 1965 | |
| 14. Lusitania | Bernie Kling |
| July 1965 | |
| 15. Orthanc | Ron Bounds |
| Mid 1965 | |
| 16. Marsovia | Bob Ward |
| September 1, 1965 | |
| 17. Lonely Mountain | Charles Wells |
| September 1965 | |
| 18. sTab | John Koning |
| October 9, 1965 | |

So, I guess my little investigative reporting didn't turn up any terribly earthshattering facts. Dr. Boardman still ran the first zine and the first Diplomacy game. It's just the historic game was six months later. In all fairness to these postal pioneers, they were blazing a trail for playing and gamesmastering by mail that no one had done before. It was a new and exciting time for them, and I'm sure the participants had no idea the game would be so popular (and their actions subject to so much scrutiny) almost thirty years later.

>Jim Meinel (2801 Pelican Drive, Anchorage AK 99515) is the editor of the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of Zines*, which will categorize and list all Diplomacy zines ever published in North America. This publication is due out in the summer. Jim also publishes the games zine *The Prince*.

The Stupendous DW Letter Column

This is the fifth installment of the *DW* letter column, a forum for the discussion of the zine and its contents. Please feel free to write in with your comments, particularly of the negative variety, as such criticism is the best way for the *DW* staff to improve and grow. The editor will not comment on the letters unless asked a specific question, so you can be sure we won't try to get the last word in. So, tell us what is on your mind.

Hobby News

Ron Cameron (14790 Amorose, Lake Elsinore CA 92530): I see that *DW* has mentioned that Northern California must be a lock for DipCon XXVI in 1993. NO WAY. I will bid for Anaheim or combine forces with Steve Cooley, etc. for Los Angeles. There is still a fairly sizeable Diplomacy group in Irvine/Anaheim meeting monthly for face-to-face Dip. Their support, along with the attraction of facilities/tourist amusement parks, makes the site at least very competitive with the bid by Pete Gaughan / Don Del Grande. Oh, well, time will tell.

Juhnke and Westphal's Idealized Diplomacy Board

Bret Pettichord (22 Reed St #3, Cambridge MA 02140): I really liked the mathematically-generated Dip map.

Eric Klien Interview / Electronic mail Diplomacy

Ron Artigues (933 D Ave, Coronado CA 92118): I would like to hear Rich Campbell elaborate on his statement in the *DW* #62 letter column that "I do question whether PBEM will bring more players into the Hobby." I offer my story as countervailing evidence. After a ten year layoff from Diplomacy, I started playing on a local BBS. From there I joined a game on GENie, and last month played in the Diplomacy tournament at Orcon 15 in Los Angeles. Somebody at Orcon brought a stack of *Diplomacy Worlds* to the tourney and started passing them out. Now I am a *DW* subscriber. I must admit that I have never seen the interview with Eric Klien that led Mr. Campbell to write. However, nobody who has followed Diplomacy on GENie can question the vitality of electronic mail Diplomacy.

Demonstration Game and Commentary

Bret Pettichord: I would like to read other game commentaries, and was wondering if you could give me some references.

Perhaps back issues of *Diplomacy World*? I'd like to follow a game from start to finish.

Editor: Actually, there is a source of complete demo games plus commentary that is much better than looking through back issues of this magazine. Larry Peery (address elsewhere in this lettercol) has compiled a series of Anthologies which excerpt certain categories of articles from past issues of *DW*. One of those Anthologies is a complete reprint of the first ten or so Demo Games start to finish with commentary. I believe Larry charges \$15.00 for each Anthology. Write him for a complete listing of Anthologies and other publications. If you do want to order *DW* back issues, I will send you a list of those available.

The Contents in General

Mark Fassio (CAD-B, Unit 26708 Box 5265, APO AE 09235): Please don't take to heart any of my comments last issue about past *DWs* and their editors being blowhards and turning people (me) off. Rest assured I find the current iteration of the magazine to be GREAT, and you shall keep me as a subscriber for as long as the feds print money, pal. I like letter columns, and yours is good. The whole zine is balanced (contests, game openings, hobby news, articles, etc.) and is about the right length. Remember, the readership probably doesn't want a massive "flagship" (like the Yamamoto) to fire broadsides and look impressive. Instead, the hobby wants some "cargo ships" to "convoy" ideas and Dip news around. Flagships get torpedoed because they're big, noisy and attract unwanted attention; cargo ships spread the "good news" to all corners of the globe... but I wax philosophic (sophomoric?) now, so I'll stop. Suffice it to say that I love the zine and think you are a boffo editor!

Editor: Boffo? Thanks, I think.

Bruce McIntyre (6636 Dow Ave #203, Burnaby B.C. V5H 3CY, Canada): I was impressed by *DW* #63, which is the first *DW* I have seen since I got some three-year old Rod Walker issues that showed real progress when I entered the hobby. Good to see people writing about go-for-broke Dip; I wonder if the North American "draws unlimited" style that seems to have developed during the 1980's is a result of *DW*'s problems? Well, I'm sure that'll soon be fixed.

Editor: I don't see how *DW* can really influence the playing style of the entire hobby. I see the cause of too many draws to be the lack

of commitment to play an entire game to its conclusion, both in postal play and tournaments. When I first started playing Diplomacy we played under "draws include all survivors" rules, and had many face-to-face games that would last eight or ten hours at a time. There are not many players out there today willing to make that sacrifice to play the game correctly, not even me I am sorry to say.

Larry Peery (PO Box 620399, San Diego CA 92162): To be honest I thought the content last issue was weak, probably the weakest since your first issue. I don't blame you for that. Where is the stuff from Lowrey, McHugh and McCrumb? To be blunt I don't care much for your writers. It still ticks me off when I see people writing in *DW* about how bad it was when I was doing it and how great it is now — and they never offered to contribute a thing to the zine.

Editor: I think everyone is entitled to their opinion, particularly you, Larry, given your experience in zine editing and publishing. However, I disagree with your assessment of the writing talent in these pages. And the three staffers you mention have been doing their job as far as I am concerned. Much of what McCrumb and Lowrey do, for example, is behind the scenes. I have discovered that it is difficult to appeal to all segments of the hobby population with the articles here, as everyone has their own idea of what they want to read. Some readers write and tell me they love the strategy articles and demo game reports, while others write and swear that my zine would be a lot less "dry" if I would drop both types of content. It could just be that the material in the last issue wasn't the content you were looking for. Still, I would be the first to admit that there is always room for improvement.

The Zine in General

Bret Pettichord: I also like to read articles on strategy and tactics. The articles in issue 64 spoke to my interest, but I would like to see something with a little more analysis or substance. Maybe there could be more examples from real, or even hypothetical, games. I'm used to reading Go commentary, but I suppose Dip isn't really that advanced in comparison.

Editor: Don't be so sure. There are many articles out there on Dip which focus on replays of real games, particularly tournament games. Also, see the article by Joel Klein in this issue for some strategy and tactics analysis based on a real situation.

Andy York (Po Box 2307, Universal City TX 78148): Just a quick note — I enjoyed the latest *Diplomacy World*, lots of great info. Keep up the GREAT job you do!

Mark Nelson (21 Cecil Mount, Armley, Leeds, W. Riding

LS12 2AP, England): I don't intend to reprint my earlier criticisms of *DW*, but anyone who sends me an International Reply Coupon can have a copy of the six-page article I ran in the February 1991 issue of *Mouth of Sauron*. (Are you listening, Stan Johnson?)

Larry Peery: I like the new paper, although I don't much care for the stapled-in-the-corner format. To me that doesn't look like a magazine. And now you know why I always used first-class mail to begin with. I thought issue 64 was a bit thin, but it did look very good. You've obviously mastered the Mac, or whatever it is you use.

Jim Meinel (2801 Pelican Drive, Anchorage AK 99515): Oh, I like *DW* with first-class mailing and regular paper. Keep up the good work!

Mark Fassio: Here is a short trivia quiz for the readership. Does anyone know the origins of the following three words? 1) "Boffo", 2) "Posh", and 3) "Wop" (as in the derogatory name for a person of Italian descent.)

Editor: And if you can answer all three questions by next issue, I will add an extra issue to your subscription.

Join Us For Canada's National Diplomacy Convention!

CANCON



Where: CanCon V will again be held at the University of Toronto's Scarborough campus.
When: July 30 to August 2, 1992.

We will be offering our usual exciting Diplomacy Tournament, but this year we will be restricting play to one game per day, so as to leave lots of time for socializing.

There will also be a GunBoat tourney as well as our popular Facts In Five tournament. Other games will also be available for your enjoyment.

The entry fee is \$20, and rooms are available on site for \$30 (Canadian) per night. The rooms come complete with kitchen and are available from July 29 to August 6, 1992.

For more information, contact either:

Cal White
1 Turnberry Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
M6N 1P6

or Doug Acheson
Unit 5, Suite 330
320 Yonge St
Barrie, Ont L4N 4C8

1902 Surprises in the Demo Game!

Last issue we presented the moves and commentary for the newest *Diplomacy World* demonstration game. Now we continue with the moves and analysis for the year 1902. By the way, comments on the game from the readership would be entirely appropriate, and will be published. Let's hear from y'all about the moves that were made, of those you think should have been made. Newcomers have uniformly stated that this feature is the most educational for them to help teach the game and its intricacies. So, let's make this as informative as possible, shall we?

Spring 1902

91AH

Russians Surprise Turks, but German Surprise All

Austria (Bill Quinn): A Tri-Alb, A Vie-Gal, A Bud-Gal, A Ser-Bul, F Gre-Aeg

England (Mike Ward): F Nth-Ska, F Eng-Nth, A Yor H

France (Mark Berch): A Por-Spa, F Mid-Eng, A Par S A Bur, A Bur H

Germany (Mike Gonsalves): A Mun-Sil, A Ber-Pru, A Kie-Den, F Hol-Hel, A Bel-Ruh

Italy (Randolph Smyth): F Ion-Eas, F Nap-Ion, A Tun H, A Apu-Ven

Russia (Kevin Kozlowski): A Sev-Arm, F Bla-Rum, A War-Gal, A Stp-Nwy, F Swe S A Stp-Nwy

Turkey (Dave McCrumb): A Bul S Russian F Bla-Rum, A Con S A Bul, F Ank-Bla, F Smy-Eas

Press:

Smyrna: Responding to threats from the enemy of Mohammed, the 2nd Turkish Fleet has fought and repulsed the heretics in the first Battle of the Eastern Med.

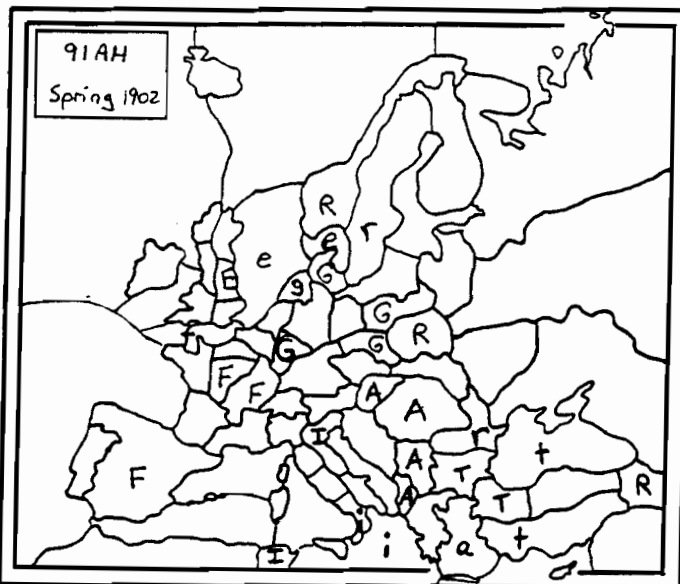
Commentary:

Fred Townsend: Bizarre moves by Germany. He launches an attack on Russia without (apparently) securing an ally in the West. Did France and England offer him a triple alliance? If so, the French move to the Channel indicates France did not even fake it for one turn. And the Western Triple is worst for Germany as he can be stabbed by his two allies far easier than he can stab them. Plus, Germany has now alienated the country most likely to help him against a Franco-German alliance, namely Russia. Maybe France offered to stab England; maybe Germany saw he could take Warsaw; or maybe Germany just went slightly nuts. Bad moves for Germany are good news for England and France. They should now beat Germany fairly easily.

In the East, the Italian/Austrian alliance capitalizes on their fine Spring 1902 moves and are in position to take the East Med, put an army in Greece and probably take Galicia. The German attack on Warsaw will only make their advance even easier. However, Austria should make sure to support the move to Galicia since the Russian A War will probably be moving there. (After all, if you are going to be dislodged, you might as well try to get some benefit.)

All in all, after only three moves, this game has shaped into England/France in the West against Austria/Italy in the East. Hopefully I am wrong and these pros will do some fancy stabs, or maybe Germany is not nuts. But at the moment, this game appears to have already entered Midgame status where two competing alliances clean up the board before turning on each other.

Garret Schenck: I guess the big news this turn was Germany's *Drang Nach Osten*. I suspect it caught me by surprise - probably because I don't think it is such a good move. If Mike were planning this all along, then why in God's name did he let Russia have Sweden? He will get Warsaw, but if England is desperate for allies and forgives the Russian for the theft of Norway, Germany may just end up trading Warsaw for Denmark, and cementing an EFR triple against him. (Certainly England's Spring moves are ambiguous enough, since Nwg/Nth would have lined up against Norway as effectively



as Skagerrak, but the Ska/Nth combo allows for a supported attack against Denmark or Norway both.) It is a toss-up whether Russia or England will get Denmark, but I lean towards Russia.

The apparent French/English alliance is another twist. My guess is that Berch has been able to force England to accept, finally, the French fleet in the Channel. Berch will probably try for the guaranteed center in Belgium (with the army, leaving the fleet at sea.) Since Belgium was German territory after 1901, this is another reason why I believe that Germany's wholesale abandonment of the west was a terrible mistake. Germany could well end up losing a center this Fall if the EFR is a fact. Who knows, Berch might even go for broke by feinting against Munich, grabbing Belgium, and screwing his new English pal by taking London for the hat trick! This is where knowing the character of the players could make a difference. I don't know if Berch is given to these kinds of dramatic (and risky) moves. If it were me, I'd settle for Belgium and Spain, and further strengthen my English alliance. The situation in the Med is just perfect from France's point of view, though I'd be writing Russia and Turkey to urge them to ally against GAI.

I know I started off saying that I thought France had begun with a terrible Spring 1901 opening. I may have to revise that assessment, though I feel French success is coming primarily from German idiocy. (Sorry if that seems too harsh, Mike.) On the other hand, I don't know what sort of things that Berch has been saying to Gonsalves - for all I know, this sudden German eastward lurch was due to French diplomacy!

Meanwhile, in the East, Russia and Turkey are not allied, as I had predicted they would be. Is my face red! At least Fred Townsend was just as confused as I was. I suspect, though, that the players are more confused than anybody! The Austro-Italian alliance is as strong as ever, even though Randolph's armies seem content to continue their motor tours up and down the Italian peninsula. AI could be a little more effective in spots - the double bounce in Galicia was a conspicuous waste of time. With Austria's anti-Russian moves of last year, it should have been obvious which way things were shaping up, and the extra Austrian unit in Galicia would have given Austria far more options this turn.

Berch must be watching the situation in the Med with glee. If it is going to be EF vs. G, I as Italy would want to move A Ven-Pie to put at least some pressure on France, but this might be too little and far too late. I never did understand that move to Apulia last time.

I'll bet Kozlowski is regretting his ill-timed stab of the Turk, just as much as McCrumb is regretting his ill-timed move to the Black Sea. Both of these players need each other now - either they kiss and make up, or they are down the tubes, with Russia a goner in just a few years (particularly if

Germany continues to push in the center.)

This turn in brief: Germany and Russia are in big trouble. France, with a weak (and therefore pliable) ally, is singing from the catbird seat. AI have to get moving or the best they can hope for is a draw. Turkey will be hard to kill, as always, but is about to lose the Eastern Med.

Fall 1902

91AH

England's Danish Gambit Fails

Austria (Quinn): A Bud S Russian F Rum, A Vie-Tri, A Ser-Tri, F Aeg S Italian F Ion-Eas, A Alb-Gre

England (Ward): A Yor-Lon, F Ska-Den, F Nth S F Ska-Den

France (Berch): A Spa H, F Eng S A Bur-Bel, A Bur-Bel, A Par-Bur

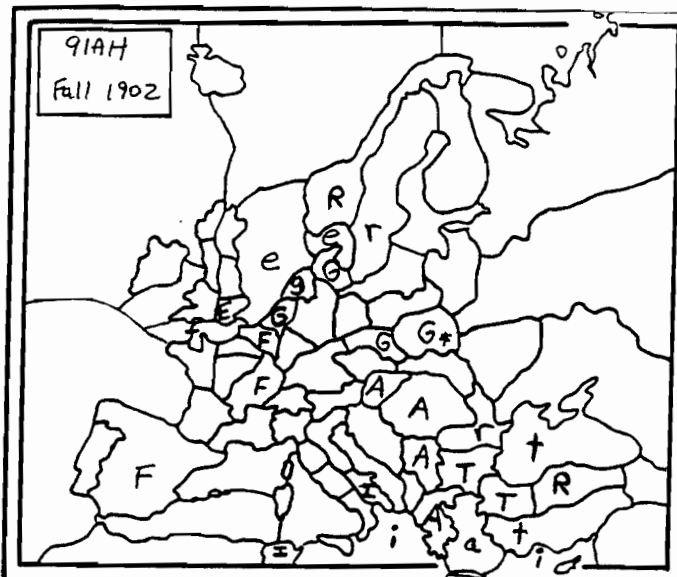
Germany (Gonsalves): A Pru-War, A Sil S A Pru-War, A Den H, A Ruh-Hol, F Hel-Nth

Italy (Smyth): F Ion-Eas, F Nap-Ion, A Tun H, A Ven-Apu
Russia (Kozlowski): F Swe S A Nwy, A Nwy S F Swe, A Arm-Ank, F Rum S Austrian F Aeg-Bul(sc)(NSO), A War H(d. gal. lvn. mos. ukr. otb)

Turkey (McCrumb): F Smy-Aeg, A Bul S Italian A Tun-Gre (NSO), F Bla S Russian F Rum, A Con S A Bul

Press:

Ankara: The Ottoman Environmental Protection Agency has finally convinced the Russian Olympic Team to cease using the Black Sea for training purposes. They are currently trying to convince the Austrians to stop fouling the Aegean Sea, but have been met with a cold (and uncommunicative) shoulder so far. The Italians, at least, said "Go to Hell", whereupon the Sultan pledged himself to a Jihad against the heretics.



Commentary:

Fred Townsend: As the curtain came down on Spring 1902, this commentator foresaw the English/French and Austrian/Italian alliances sweeping all before them. While that scenario is still a good bet, apparently the players don't see the future as clearly as I did. (You would think it was their game, or something!) Fall 1902 shows that the alliance structure is not cemented into place.

In the South, Austria halts his advance and bounces in Trieste to protect against an Italian stab which does not occur. Austria also supports Russia in Rumania while the Russian F Rum supports Austria to Bulgaria, but Austria doesn't go there. Russia, meanwhile, takes Ankara, which has got to be a stab. Without an Austro-Italian war, one must ask Russia who his ally in the East is going to be once Turkey is gone. But with two builds, and seven centers total, he may not think he needs an ally. He's wrong, but he may have promises from Italy or Austria (or both) for a future alliance. Don't bet on it big fella.

Up North Germany takes Warsaw and England/France appear to be allied. One wonders who Russia's northern ally is as well. This leads me to Fred's Multiple Choice Diplomacy Quiz: In the first two years of a Diplomacy game, your primary objective should be:

1. Take as many centers as possible.
2. Attack one of your neighbors to destroy them.
3. Protect your home centers.
4. Get your orders in before the deadline.
5. Find an ally (or two).

If you answered 4 and 5, you play my way. (The Frank Sinatra School of Diplomacy?) The key, as I see it, to Diplomacy is to find and keep an ally. This should come even at the cost of not taking centers (such as Belgium), not attacking any of your neighbors (as you sometimes do with Italy), and even giving up one of your home centers (as in some variations of the Key Opening.)

In this game, who is Russia's ally? Nobody that I can see. Who is Germany's ally? Germany is attacking Russia, took Belgium (which assured France would fight him) and is fighting England over Denmark. Maybe Germany can persuade France to attack the three-center England, but France will be much better off by waiting to stab England only after fatally weakening Germany. That way, there is no chance of an Anglo-German alliance.

So, the German attack on Russia makes no sense to me. It eliminated Germany's last possible ally up North. Similarly, the Russian attack on Turkey is short-sighted. To me, only Italy-Austria and France-England have concentrated on their alliances. So, I stand by my prediction that EF and IA will dominate the board.

A questions for my co-commentator. How would you

know that statements in the press were the truth? (Comments on comments; *Dip World* provides in-depth analysis. Accept no substitutes.)

Garret Schenck: Hmmm, just goes to show that us genius commentators don't have a clue about what's going on in this game!

I seemed to have called it pretty well in the West. The lack of cooperation between England and Russia was a surprise, admittedly, but I guess Russia was unwilling to risk Norway to help out England. Russia was presumably nervous of the growing power of France, and had no desire to see Berch's puppet grow any stronger. I do think this is a mistake, however, since Russia's position would have been helped by a weaker Germany, and by having England vacate Skagerrak. A stronger England would also inevitably protest French occupation of the English Channel, leading to a potentially exploitable squabble. Still, it would have been a risk to Russia for sure.

The other factor I missed was the anti-Turkish three-way that seems to have finally and irrevocably revealed itself (though I would not be surprised to see things change in 1903!) McCrumb must be bumming, especially since he apparently put his trust in Russia. Look for a Turkish revenge/suicide ploy in 1903 versus Russia as it appears that Kozlowski must have played the "good cop" of the AIR triple, while AI were the "heavies." You almost always turn on the one who actually does the lying, even though he or she may be no more guilty than the others.

Germany would like to build a fleet in order to shore up his position in the Baltic. If a hostile Russian fleet occupies the Baltic Sea it would cause all sorts of headaches for Gonsalves. If he does not build a fleet, the Russian fleet in Sweden is almost forced to move to Bal, making room for the Norweigan army to shuttle in behind, followed by F Stp(nc)-Nwy. (But then again, I am a naval fanatic, so maybe I'm wrong again.) One more reason why the Spring 1901 fleet move should be to Denmark and not Holland, especially if you want to attack Warsaw in 1902, is that Hel or Hol are absolutely no help when it comes to control of the Baltic, while Denmark is able to intervene in either the North or Baltic Seas.

As an aside, the Baltic region is one that is often neglected by Germany. Germany cannot afford to let either Russia or England maintain powerful forces there. Too often German players let England occupy Sweden, either before or after taking St Pete, and this leads inevitably to an unhappy result. Germany should never let England into Sweden, period, and should only allow Russia in if ER hostility is assured, and then for a short a period as practical. If Germany does build a fleet, though, that leaves only Silesia to cover Munich from French dragoons in Burgundy, leaving Warsaw rather exposed. The expression, I believe, has something to

do with a rock and a hard place.

France now looks very, very good. Turkey will take at least a couple of years to kill, and I suspect (nay, I know) that the AIR is only a temporary expedient. It will likely last no longer than the coming year. Barring a stab of Austria (and the move back to Apulia makes this, to say the least, difficult) Italy will get no more than one build next winter. If France decides to build two fleets this year (entirely possible since France already has three armies and, as usual, few options for their deployment) Italy could be looking at a very grim picture in a year's time. France now has a greater number of choices than any other power, ranging from a stab of his little English puppet to gobbling up the lion's share of the low countries, Kiel, Berlin, etc. to a full-blown Mediterranean Escapade. I'd put my money on the latter since an alliance with a weak England in the context of Russia vs. Germany is practically the ultimate French fantasy.

Interestingly, in spite of GR hostility, Germany did not attack Sweden with Denmark. Either England did not request the support cut, or Germany did not offer it, but it seems odd that Germany would seemingly make no attempt to get ER fighting. It would have cost Germany zip to make the move, and could have given England Norway, transferring one of Russia's builds to England. Just as a stronger England would help Russia, it would probably also help Germany, given that

the extra strength would have to come from Russia's hide.

Italy's 2nd Army continues the grand tour, this turn reversing itself again to return to Apulia. Italy won't build this turn, and there's now a serious power vacuum in the western reaches of the Mediterranean, which I suspect France will only be too happy to fill.

Austria continues his weak moves, again employing the self-bounce, this time over Trieste. Obviously there's not a great deal of trust between Austria and Italy, which probably makes Russia happy. But it seems to me that Austria, of all the powers on the board, can least afford this sort of defensive play. Austria is like the Red Queen in *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, and must run faster just to stay in the same place. Given the obvious GR war, and Austria's decision (by this turn, at the very latest) to commit to Russian alliance, what would have been wrong with moving to Bohemia or Tyrolia from Vienna? If need be he could have threatened German control of Munich, or saved that crucial space from the French. Austrian forces in Tyrolia could also complicate the inevitable French push into Piedmont. AI had better wake up before they are put to sleep... The Big Sleep.

Finally, I'm glad I'm not playing Turkey in this game. And that's all I have to say at present!

Autumn 1902 Retreat: A War r Ukr. Winter 1902 Builds: F Mar, A Par, A Kie, A Mos, F Sev. Removal: F Smy.

Tournaments

Tournaments: Deciding the Winner

by Bruce McIntyre

Don't turn the page; this is not an article about scoring systems. I'm not going to try to tell you that a two-way should be worth 52% of a win or something. The only thing I have to say about tournament scoring systems is that the silly argument over which one is best is keeping us from the real issues: logical logistics and reasonable regulations. The first topic will be covered this issue, with the latter to be discussed in DW 66.

I think that a single change could have a positive effect on future DipCons. The change? Score the results, using whatever system the director has decided upon, once the last game ends on Saturday night (or, more likely, early Sunday morning) and have the top seven play in the Grand Final following Sunday breakfast. The Grand Final would decide the top seven positions in the tournament: no player qualifying for the Grand Final could possibly sink below seventh even if eliminated in 1901.

Four possible results would be available to each of the seven players: win, draw, survival or elimination. Within

those four categories, all results would be equal; and all draws would render the draw participants tied regardless of supply centers. The ranking of the top seven players would be based on their result in the Grand Final, and if tied then their rank in the qualifying games would come into play.

This is not a new idea. The Australians used it in their national championships for a while, although they had only two rounds of qualifying maximum. They decided that the solution was to go to three games for everyone. Most North American weekend Cons allow time for three rather than just two rounds of qualifying.

One disadvantage cited with the final round method is that players would not be able to get a bad game "out of their system" as they might be able to do with an extra Sunday round. I don't buy this. At the last two DipCons there was no time trouble at all having a round Friday, two Saturday and one on Sunday. Qualifying scores would be based on each player's best two games, so that a player with a Friday elimination would have two chances to redeem himself.

Another problem might be that in a sixty-person tournament, fifty-three people are not going to be playing on Sunday. My reply to this is to recall a few Sunday games I've played in where the strategy was skewed by the times that the players had to get on the highway or to the airport. If seven people want to play Diplomacy on Sunday while the Grand Final is happening, that is fine. But far better to give seven people a shot at the championship (without risk of dropping out of the top seven) and let the rest watch eagerly while catching up on the socializing.

"What about the seventh qualifier getting a fluke win in the final, especially if the scoring system is bad and he qualifies over two or three others that should have had his spot?" "What if a guy gets two wins in the qualifying rounds and then draws Austria on Sunday?" People have managed draws as Austria in tournaments, even wins on occasion. But I have a borderline-radical idea for that as well. We could let the seven finalists choose their countries in order of qualifying, as an added reward for doing well until that point. This would make things a bit harder, but far from impossible, for the lower-ranked players.

The advantages of a final-round scheme are easy to see. There would be an electric atmosphere surrounding the Grand Final game. The game would likely have a go-for-broke feel, with no serious penalty for a poor result. One can easily foresee a Bourse being conducted on the Grand Final among the spectators (or speculators, I guess) or other contests to predict the winners, or even to predict the next

season's moves. The entire game could be easily preserved and commented upon in *Diplomacy World*. The tournament director could give out the certificates from seventh up to first as players are eliminated, and there would be no lengthy wait for the final tabulations as there sometimes is at tournaments.

There would be an effect on the qualifying rounds as well - most tournament players feel that a two-way or especially a win on Friday might be difficult to handle once word gets around, with three rounds to go, that you are winning. With only three rounds total, giving up a better, smaller draw for the innocuous bigger one on Friday night is probably not as sound a strategy. I think as well that this system would increase attendance at DipCon, because the Grand Final would be a great experience in which to participate, and would be very educational for those who do not qualify.

Well, I would like to hear comments on the idea. I made a similar proposal two years ago in my zine, but made the grave error of combining it with an insane scoring system. The result was predictable - everyone slammed the scoring system while saying little about the Grand Final idea. If I do not hear any reasonable negative responses, I will propose to amend the DipCon Charter so the DipCon would be a final-round setup, with the actual scoring system at the discretion of the host Con. Think about it. No other game decides its national champion solely on a ratings system, with a final game.

> Bruce McIntyre (6636 Dow Ave #203, Burnaby B.C. V5H 3CY, Canada) publishes the zine *Excelsior*, and has attended the past two DipCons.

MANORCON 10

FRIDAY 17TH TO MONDAY 20TH JULY, 1992

at Lake Hall, Birmingham University

THE VENUE A modern university hall of residence nestled among the trees and rolling grasslands of the Birmingham University campus. Reserved for our exclusive use are several hundred single and twin bedrooms, a large games room for the main tournaments, up to four additional rooms for specialist tournaments and other events, a self-service cafeteria and separate dining area, and a comfortable and well-stocked bar.

THE EVENT This is the tenth time that Manorcon has been held at Birmingham University, in which time it has become a major item on the games calendar after hosting the first ever World Dip Con in 1985. It has attracted 200 games players in each of the last three years and, as well as featuring the largest Diplomacy tournament in the country, now offers up to a dozen other tournaments covering most areas of popular gaming. For 1992 we are moving to bigger and better accommodation and an even larger turnout is expected.

THE MAIN TOURNAMENTS Diplomacy remains the core of the convention and as usual two tournaments are planned. The National Team Championship will take place on the Saturday and will involve teams of seven players drawn from 20 clubs, universities and other groupings. In 1991 we had 14 teams and this year we expect something similar. We will also host the British Individual Championship on both Saturday and Sunday which, with 100 participants playing a total of 20 games in 1991, is the most popular of the largest Diplomacy tournament in the country.

OTHER TOURNAMENTS David Watts, the inventor of Railway Rivals, will be running a Railway Rivals tournament and a tournament of other board games. Francis Lewis, of Hartland Trefel Games, will be running several historical wargames and demonstrations. Alan Parr, the inventor of the soccer management game Zolnet, will be present and will be taking part in a Zolnet tournament. As well as all these there will be tournaments organised of Aquire, Bridge, Grognet, Diplomacy Variants, Kingsboard, boardwargame, 5-a-side Soccer, 1830 and possibly other games including some not listed before. Tournament sizes vary considerably but some of the most popular ones in 1991 included 45 players and 17 games of Railway Rivals, 32 players and 17 games of Aquire, 40 players and 14 games of 1830, 32 players of Zolnet and 16 players of Bridge.

OTHER GAMES As well as the organised events there will of course be dozens of other games being played throughout the convention. Don't think that if you attend you will be expected to take part in a full tournament - if you just want to play a few sessions of your favourite games you'll have plenty of opportunity to do so.

OTHER ATTRACTIONS Several major games companies will be supporting the event and at least one games distributor will be selling games at discount prices. We will also be operating a waiting list service for players seeking opponents for particular games and hope to organise an Exchange & Mart area for people wishing to swap or sell old and unwanted games.

THE MARCH Send off the booking form today to ensure your place in the biggest bobby event of the year! Once you have booked you will receive Progress Reports every two or three months giving all the latest details of the event. If you are booking a room before April you only need pay a deposit, with the balance due in April 1992 - and please note that the University regulations require that if you intend to remain on the premises after midnight you must book a room for that night.

THE CONTACT: Richard Valderline, 13 Offley Road, Nitchis, Werts, S65 2AZ
Telephone Nitchis (0462) 455741.

AP366

MANORCON 10 BOOKING FORM

Friday July 17th to Monday July 20th, 1992

Name <input type="text"/>		Tel no. <input type="text"/>	
Address (Students should give home and college addresses) <input type="text"/>			
<p>NOTE: You don't have to book in advance, but it makes the organising a lot easier if you do. And to encourage this all the following prices will increase on July 17th.</p>			
Convention Fee (To be paid in full at time of booking) Full Convention £ 8 Daily Rate (Please indicate which days) /Fri /Sat /Sun /Mon £ 1.00 / 1.00 / 1.00 / 1.00		PAYMENT ENCLOSED <input type="checkbox"/>	
Cost of Room, Bed & Breakfast (Deposit payable until April 1992, full payment required 17th May 1992) Please note that the University regulations require that you must pay for a room on any night that you intend to stay on the premises after midnight - and we will be strictly enforcing this rule.			
Room Deposits (If booking before April 1992, you must pay a deposit of £5 per person per night, with the balance payable by end April 1992. If booking during or after April 1992 we require payment in full.) SINGLE ROOM (1 Bed) £10 per night TWIN ROOM (2 Beds) £16 per night			
If room required for less than three nights please indicate which nights required: /Fri /Sat /Sun /Mon			
If twin room required please give name of second occupant: <input type="text"/>			
Hobby Services Levies Totally voluntary but included as a reader that hobby services cost money and all donations are welcome.		Stets Service (£45 collected in 1991) Hobby Dev. Fund (£57 collected in 1991)	
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The Wacky World of WRASSLIN'

WRASSLIN' is a quick-playing, hilarious strategy card game that portrays the rough and tumble world of professional wrestling. Wrestlers of varying size, skill, and nastiness wreak havoc upon one another by playing various Hold cards to batter their opponents senseless en route to a quick fall or submission.

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Play is fast and furious; most matches last but a few minutes. This is a simple, light-hearted, yet challenging game—ideal for family or social events, and for those moments when the last ringside seat at the arena isn't available.

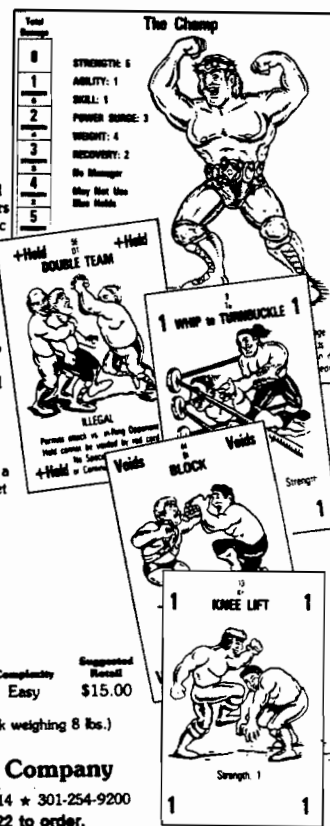
Includes Handicap, Tag Team, and Battle Royal rules so that any number can play.

No.	TITLE	Players	Age	Complexity	Suggested
9450	Wrasslin'	2 to 8	10 & up	Easy	\$15.00

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Postal Games

A Survey of Word/Language Games

by David Hood

In this third installment of the DW survey of non-Diplomacy games being played in the postal hobby, we turn now to those games which can be loosely classified as "English" games. That is to say, these are games which focus upon words, language, or trivia. For the most part, these games are not the star attractions of their respective postal zines, but instead serve as "audience participation" games or as general reading material. I would say that the trend has been towards the play of these games, adding variety and interest to each zine in which they appear.

Perhaps the most well-known game in this category would be the classic boardgame Scrabble. As nearly all of you surely know, this is a game about building a sort of crossword puzzle of interlocking words on a grid to earn point values based upon the use of certain letters. The best known venue for playing this is in Mark Lew's *Benzene*, in which

anyone can submit a turn for one side or the other, rather than having set players for each side. Mark (5390 Broadway #2, Oakland CA 94618) has not published his popular political discussion zine in some time, but I did hear recently that he plans to publish again soon. I also believe that Mark Larzelere (7607 Fountainbleau #2352, New Carrollton MD 20784) was running postal Scrabble in his zine at one time.

A variation of Scrabble is being run in the French/English zine *Dipsomania*, published by Jef Bryant (121 Rue Jean Pauly, 4300 ANS, Belgium). Quadrosrabble is run by his wife in both English and French (!), and seems to enjoy popular appeal. The game plays similarly to regular Scrabble, but instead of trying to explain it here, perhaps you had best just write to Jef for a sample of his zine and copy of the rules. The zine itself features lots of players from lots of different countries playing lots of different games, so is pretty interest-

ing in general. There is not a great deal of reading material in the regular part of the zine, but the subzines often contain quite a bit of good stuff from writers on the continent and in Britain.

One parlor game which has been adapted to postal play is Fictionary Dictionary, run by Pete Gaughan in his zine *Perelandra* (1521 S Novato Blvd #46, Novato CA 94947). The basic idea of this game is simple - the GM picks a relatively obscure word from the dictionary and tells it to the players. Each player then writes a fictional definition of the word, either as a bona fide guess at the actual definition, or as a clever and devious meaning that sounds right. Then the fictional definitions are listed along with the real definition, and each player chooses the definition he believes is the correct one. You score one point for guessing the correct answer and one point for each player who votes for the definition that you made up. So, the goal is to skillfully make the other players fall for your fake offering, while you skillfully avoid falling for the fakes of the other players. This would seem to be an excellent postal game that could involve much of a zine's readership, and should be run by other zine editors anxiously to better their zines. (Hint, hint.)

Perelandra also runs a Literary Trivia Contest just about every issue. Trivia contests are nothing new to the hobby, and have been run by myriads of zines over the years. The idea is, again, to involve the readership, whether they be Diplomacy

players or not, as well as to generate possible letters and so forth stemming from the contest. Often there are prizes awarded, from gamestarts to free issues of the zine. There are other zines in the hobby currently running Trivia Contests of some sort, not to mention those I don't know about: *Rebel*, Melinda Holley, PO Box 2793, Huntington WV 25727 and *Canadian Diplomat*, Bob Acheson, 1510-10883 Saskatchewan Dr, Edmonton Alberta T6E 4S6, Canada.

While on the subject of Trivia, I have had much fun playing Facts in Five in Cal White's *Northern Flame*, even though I'm not doing too well. This is a game in which the GM gives the players five categories each turn, along with five different letters. The players are to come up with answers which fit each category and that begin with each of the five letters. The score is determined by how many one gets in each category. This game can be harder than it looks, or am I just ignorant in most aspects of knowledge? Don't answer that. Just write to Cal at 1 Turnberry Ave, Toronto Ontario M6N 1P6, Canada for a sample of his zine, which has also won the Runestone Poll for the last two years.

Facts in Five is also being run by Stven Carlberg in *Hoodwink* (1939 Windemere Dr, Atlanta GA 30324). In Stven's version, any reader of the zine can play at any time by sending in a set of answers. The winner each issue receives free issues of the zine. (In Cal's zine, the winner of each game is tallied after five rounds of play. He has even begun to

New Blood

Bret Pettichord, 22 Reed St #3, Cambridge MA 02140
Dennis Lynch, 589 St Andrews Ct, Crystal Lake IL 60014
Drew James, 8356 Radian Path, Baldwinsville NY 13027
Beau James Brock, 222 St Louis St, Baton Rouge LA 70801
Dean Goodwin, 1901 E. 1st St #B, Post Falls ID 83854
David Jhirad, 3009 Daniel Lane NW, Washington DC 20015
Halvard Hagesaether, Dale, 4260 Torvastad, Norway
Norman Berdichevsky, POB 335, Zichron Yaacov, Israel
Roberto Chavez, 245-B East Dr, Vista CA 92083
Andrew Cohen, 25-19th Ave D, Venice CA 90281
Timothy O'Hare, 16831 E. Girard Ave, Aurora CO 80013
James Tarsi, 3532 Molara Dr, Orlando FL 32837
Marc Landry, 4886 Jeanne-Mance, Montreal Quebec H2V 4J7
Jim Robertson, 628 W Lafayette St #8, Tallahassee FL 32304
Michael Castille, 3201 Tenth St, Port Arthur TX 77642
Ron Artigues, 933 D Ave, Coronado CA 92118
Brian Cannon, 2031 W Lindever Dr, Le Habra CA 90631
Charles Crook, 58 Pearl St, Clinton MA 01510
James McQuinn, 214 E Church St, Adrien MI 49221
Joergen Rasmussen Hoerskaetten 1F DK2630 Taastrup Denmark
Jamie Chrones, 2117 Wildwood Dr RR1, Duncan B.C. V9L 1M3
Roy Li, Flat C 27th Floor, Cheung Pak Mansion, Park Vale, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong

Game Openings

Well Martha...., John Schultz, POB 41-19390, ICH 308, Michigan City IN 46360 (Snowball Fighting, 1898 Dip, Solo-Anon).
Diplodocus, Pierre Touchette, 741/2 Falardeau, Hull Quebec J8X 3E2, Canada (Diplomacy)
Caveat Emptor, Alan Levin, 7042 Carol, Niles IL 60648 (Gunboat Diplomacy)
Comrades in Arms, Tom Swider, 75 Maple Ave A, Collingswood NJ 08108 (Balkan Wars, Diplowin, Blood and Iron, others).
Starwood, Melinda Holley, PO Box 2793, Huntington WV 25727 (Gunboat Tournament).
Heroes of Olympus, Steve Nicewarner, 1310-11 King's Arms Apts, Chapel Hill NC 27514 (United, Pax Britannica).
Maelstrom, Buz Eddy, 7500 212nd St SW #205, Edmonds WA 98026 (Diplomacy)
Rambling Way, Andy York, PO Box 2307, Universal City TX 78148 (Diplomacy, Gunboat).
Hoodwink, Stven Carlberg, 1939 Windemere Dr, Atlanta GA 30324 (Diplomacy, Gunboat)
Crimson Sky, Mike Gonsalves, 530 Treasure Lake, Dubois PA 15801 (Diplomacy, Gunboat)
The Home Office, Fred Hyatt, 60 Grandview Pl, Montclair NJ 07043 (Diplomacy, Gunboat, Landbridge Dip, Eurasian Dip).

number each Facts in Five gamestart.) There was also a Facts in Five tournament at DipCon '91 in Toronto, so perhaps this game will become the new craze, sort of like those Sea of Despair games that made the rounds in the 1990-91 period.

Steven alternates his Facts in Five game with a similar game available in most toy stores, Scattergories. In this game, there are ten categories, and the players must come up with answer that begin with one particular letter for all categories. The scoring is a little different in that multiple word answers can receive double or triple points. For example, under the category "Famous Wives", the answer "Barbara Bush" would receive two points rather than one. I can attest to the fact that this game is a blast when played face-to-face with a timer, and seems to be quite adaptable to postal play as well.

Perhaps the most famous trivia game of our time is Trivial Pursuit, which has been adapted to postal play by *Lemon Curry* publisher Don Del Grande (142 Eliseo Dr, Greenbrae CA 94904). In Don's version, you can pick your categories for each color from those available in three different sets of the game. For example, since I have virtually no aptitude for the literature questions in the original game, I can choose some other brown category from the other two versions. The game is played in postal turns, in which Don randomly calculates how many

questions you must answer in order to get to a pie piece space. Once all the pieces of the pie have been received, the winner is based upon the player who missed the fewest questions on their way to the completed pie. Again, if you want to beat me up in one of these games, try Trivial Pursuit in *Lemon Curry*, where I am doing very badly to say the least.

This overview of word and language games is not meant to be exclusive. There have been many other such games played in the hobby's zines, with no doubt many more types to be played in the future. One of the great things about such games is that they can be a good way to involve spouses in the zine; people who may not be hip on stabbing people in the back, or building train empires, or the other things that we do in our postal zines. For that reason alone, publishers ought to consider making word/language games an integral part of their publications.

The next of these articles on other postal games will cover what may be the biggest category of all: Choo-Choo Games. Those of you who GM or play Empire Builder, 1830 and its ilk, or Railway Rivals may want to send in descriptions of their zines and games run for next issue. I would also like volunteers to write the articles on each game system, focusing on rules, strategy, and adaptation to postal play.

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