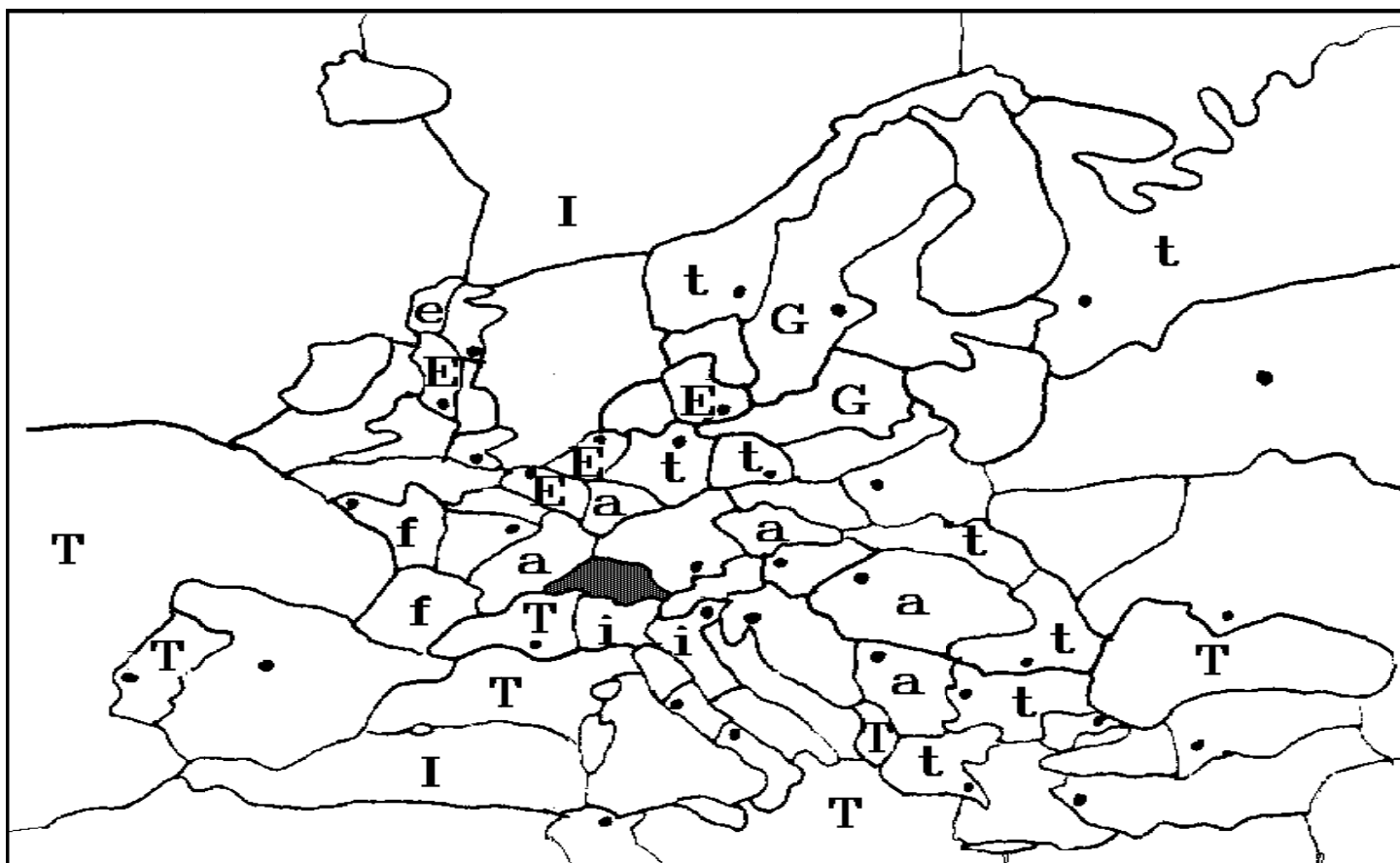


The Diplomacy World Demo Game

Flapjack - 1995HD

The Players: Austria - Dave Partridge
England - Mike Gonsalves
France - Paul Milewski
Germany - Stephen Koehler
Italy - James McQuinn
Turkey - Mark Fassio

The GM: Douglas Kent **The Commentators:** Brian Cannon
Jim Grose



Winter 1909/Spring 1910 Results:

Austria: Bld A Bud..A Bud S A Ser,A Ser S A Bud, A Vie-Boh,A Mun-Bur,A Ruh S A Mun-Bur.

England: Ret F Kie-Den,Bld A Edi..F Den-Kie, F Hol S F Den-Kie,F Bel S F Hol,A Edi-Cly,F Iri-Lvp.

France: A Bur-Mar(ret Pic,Par,OTB),A Bre H, A Gas-Spa.

Germany: Rem A Fin..F Swe S T. A Kie-Den, F GoB-Bal.

Italy: Bld A Ven..A Ven-Pie,A Pie-Mar,F Tun-Wme, F Nat-Nwg.

Turkey: A Kie-Den,A Ber-Kie,F Spa(sc)-Lyo,F Mar H, F Mid-Gas,F Por-Spa(sc),A StP-Nwy,A Mos-StP, A War-Gal, A Rum S A War-Gal, F Alb S A. A Vie-Tri(NSO),A Bul-Gre,A Sev-Bul, F Bla C A Sev-Bul,F Aeg-Ion.

A/I/T Draw Fails

Now Proposed - E/T Draw, Turkish Concession

PRESS

Faz - Jamie and Dave: I'm sorry, I really am. But Germany made me the same offer that Dave did a few turns ago, and it's just *so* tantalizingly close that I just have to try for the win. I know this will enrage and disappoint you, and make cause for utter, unremitting revenge against me--so be it. You guys were (are) loyal and fun, but I want to shoot for 18 and end it.

Austria - France: Certainly the last turn did show that! A little hyperbole on my part I'm afraid. And you were certainly right about an A/T being ridiculous. Now the "AInT IT A hooT" alliance, that's another matter, nothing ridiculous about that!

Faz - Steve: If you are a man of your word, many thanks for supporting me as a satellite ally. If you didn't follow through, well, your end will remain the same, albeit with a different executioner, is all. But I trust you and your intentions.

France - A/I/T and Readers: I am proposing a concession to Turkey. If we're all going to kiss his behind, let's all pucker up.

Faz - Paul: Noble Gaul, The A/T draw is not ridiculous, and the AIT was even better for utterly crushing you all. A better offer caught my eye, however. And, to misquote Mark Twain, "Rumors of my attempted premature Turkish win are, well, premature."

Faz - Mike: Hopefully this worked, or at least bounced. Your days of robbing Germany for centers are over.

Spring 1910 Commentary

Brian Cannon - And yet AGAIN (!!!) Faz turns his stripes - is anybody dizzy yet ??

Faz can guarantee picking up Naples & Serbia this year with Budapest following. Italy oppose Turkey in Iberia/France or in hisdots - but not both. Likewise, Austria can try and defend his dots & Munich or help France reclaim Marsailles - but not both. Germany "gives" a dot to Turkey and helps him hold Kiel. Will he take Denmark back from England from Sweden in favor of allowing Faz into Sweden as well? England builds an army for the defense of the home islands - but which is not much direct use in stopping Turkey. The Italian navy samples the climate of the Norwegian Sea (!) - but with Turkey again changing plans and Germany now basking in the glow of Ottoman despotism, there doesn't seem much for the fleet to do there. Of course, if Jamie decided to throw in the towel, he could always become part of a Turkish "Victory" convoy from Smyrna (or Syria) to St Pete in a couple of seasons.

Aside from the pervasive Turkish Presence throughout Europe, the remaining countries continue to appear in disarray as the sands in the hourglass drain down to the last few grains. The Mosque and the Scimitar appear ascendent throughout Christendom - Let all prepare their prayer mats and kneel towards Mecca.

Jim Grose - Is "Faz" Turkish for "silver-tongued devil?" Surely Mark no longer has any credibility with Austria-Hungary and Turkey. What I'd like to know is how he got this far!

This fall he'll take Ser and Bud from Austria-Hungary plus Nap from Italy, losing only Kie (if England and Germany can get their act together). Turkey will thus be at 17. We're clearly in the end game, long past the point of any real diplomacy. I'd concede to Turkey, if only to deny him the pleasure of actually really reaching 18.

Summer 1910 Results:

Concession to Turkey Passes! Game Ends!

1995HD, "Flapjack", Zine: [Diplomacy World](#), GM: Douglas Kent
Turkish Concession in Summer 1910

	<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>	<u>07</u>	<u>08</u>	<u>09</u>	
Austria	05	07	05	03	04	04	05	04	05	Dave Partridge (SURV Summer 1910)
England	04	05	06	07	07	06	05	04	05	Mike Gonsalves (SURV Summer 1910)
France	03	04	04	03	04	04	03	03	03	Tom Pasko (DROP F04)
Germany	05	05	06	06	07	05	04	03	02	Paul Milewski (SURV Summer 1910)
Italy	04	03	02	02	03	04	05	03	04	Stephen Koehler (SURV Summer 1910)
Russia	05	04	03	03	00	00	00	00	00	Jamie McQuinn (SURV Summer 1910)
Turkey	04	05	08	10	09	11	12	17	15	Jerry Ritcey (DROP S05)
										Civil Disorder (OUT F05)
										Mark Fassio (WIN Summer 1910)

Austria (Dave Partridge): This game opened up much like any other game as Austria. Try to make peace with Italy, arrange a bounce in Galacia with Russia, talk to Turkey even though you both know you are going to go at it in a year or two, then sit back and see what happens. Turned out that things happened pretty well. Italy told the truth about his western opening, and Turkey charged after Russia, alleviating the fears about the dreaded R/T. With no conflict at all Serbia and Greece were pacified and it was time to figure out what to do next.

Next was a bit of a deviation from the norm and there were a couple of causes for this. The first was that Russia and France had already disappeared from the game diplomatically. This in turn cemented the E/G/I decision to dismember France, which was fine with me, but Italy was caught up enough in it that he declined to send even one fleet to the east. If there had been an active Russia to work with against Turkey, this would have been fine, fewer to share with, but with Russia not responding to letters, I was faced with going one on one against Turkey, not a particularly attractive course. Throw in a little extra inclination to do something out of the ordinary because this was a demo game, and I decided that it was time to give one of the most difficult alliances in the game, the A/T, a shot. Of course, having Italy's back turned made the decision even easier, and in 1902 I slipped the knife in. Never being one to take the slow road, I decided to try and upset all my neighbors at once, and so Fall of 1902 found me in Venice and attacking Munich, Warsaw and Naples all at the same time.

1903 was the turning point of the game. I was well aware that if Turkey was going to stab me, this was the year, and I figured that the odds were about 60/40 that he would stab. However, this was a demo game, and I like wide open games anyway, so I decided not to take the slow cautious approach but to leave myself open and push the offensive. One of two things would happen, Turkey would stay with me and we would give an impressive demonstration of a Blitzkrieg. With Munich already in my hands, Italy in disarray and the remnants of France putting up a fight to distract England, I think there is a fair chance that we could have broken across the stalemate lines and brought the game to a fairly rapid A/T draw. There are no guarantees of course, and England might have made peace with France to establish a blockade, but we had a good start and it would have been a fun fight.

On the other hand, if Turkey wanted to stab me, now was the time. I could have kept some builds at home and defended against it, but that would have made the game a slow one of position, so I left the opening, and Faz proved

incapable of resisting the temptation so he grabbed it. Protestations in the press aside, there was nothing of a lack of trust in the alliance or fear of a stab by me that led to this, my units were all on the front lines and he was never in danger, he just saw a chance to go for rapid growth and took it, a perfectly reasonable option. I figured however that if Turkey did go for the stab, that would make an interesting game as well. We'd get to show the audience a game of shifting alliances as I tried to get my neighbors to forgive and forget, and hopefully, there would be some good examples of how to conduct a tactical retreat.

The stab did indeed come, and luck was on the Turkish side. A 50/50 guess went the German way, and an fairly irrational move by Russia paid off for him, so I was faced with two disbands. Had I flipped the coin a little better, I would not have had any disbands, and would have been in a reasonable position to hold off Turkey. As it was I immediately offered full restitution to Italy and practical puppetdom to Germany if he would come down and help me hold the line, and went to work to see if the Turkish steamroller could be stopped. 1904 was a time of forming the lines and trying not to lose too much, and I found myself at the end of it in the unenviable position of owning only three centers, none of them in my homeland! All was not lost however as Italy and Germany had helped fill in the holes and we were now in position to attempt a counter-attack.

Just when things seemed to be settling down however, events in the west caused ripples through the east. For reasons not clear to me, a rift appeared in the E/G alliance. First Germany made some threatening moves in England's direction, then he backed off only to lost several centers to England's counter-riposte. This left me in quite a quandry, and one that Steve (Germany) never seemed to grasp. I was willing to fight against Turkey with his help when I had a fair chance to retake my centers and remain a power in the game, but I had no interest in simply fighting a hopeless delaying action so that German could go freely conquering in the north and west. My goal was not to stop Turkey from winning, it was to share in the win myself, and once German attention was diverted from the Turkish front, that goal was no longer achievable by fighting Turkey.

And so came another radical shift as I proposed to Turkey and Italy that we cease our hostilities and form an AIT alliance to take advantage of the current disarray in the West. This was a prime example of how the under currents of a game are not visible to the observers. Many comments were made on Faz's apparent ability to persuade Jamie and I to do his bidding, yet in fact, it was almost always a case of our persuading him to work with us, not the reverse. The initiative came from the small powers seeking a way back into the game, not from the large power seeking puppets. And so, for the second time I entered Munich and encured the wrath of Germany.

The honeymoon was short lived however as that same fall, Turkey violated our agreement and took Warsaw from me, restricting me to a single build. I was quite prepared up until that point to make a real go of the AIT. We had great position, and while I'd have kept a better home defense up this time, with us already across both the MAO and Munich lines I thought there was little the west could do to stop us. The Turkish move convinced me of two things however, the first that he did not have the trust in the alliance that I thought Italy and I had, and two that he did not want us to grow enough that we would become too hard to swallow, and that therefore he still had his eye firmly on the solo victory.

The position was far from hopeless however. While Turkey was up to 11 centers, he was far more spread out this time, and with coordinated action by the rest of us, he could have been easily knocked back, and in fact, had the plan been adopted, we all would have had between 5 and 8 centers and it would have been a whole new game with 6 even powers. However, as always in Diplomacy, there was a fly in the ointment. Here is where I give Faz the credit for his single most impressive piece of Diplomacy in this game. Perhaps playing on Jamie's reasonable desire for revenge from my early stab, he managed to convince him that an I/T was a real possibility, and instead of turning on Turkey, Italy stabbed me. Germany as well fell under his sway and things did not look good strategically. Tactically however, they were not awful and I again presented a plan for Spring of 1908 that would have led to a balanced game. In came the promises from Italy and Germany, but not the actions and the squeeze continued. I tried yet again for Fall of 1908 as the situation was still not hopeless, and I fairly warned them both that I had no intention of going down a martyr to let them win. If they persisted, they would not share in the win. Again they agreed to work with me, but could not even muster a reasonable facsimile of sincerity, and so I decided that it was time to make an offer to Turkey that he couldn't refuse. After three successive failed attempts, it was clear that Italy and Germany were not going to stop until I was gone, so there was little to gain from a desperate defense. Far better to gain some measure of satisfaction from denying them any part of the win, and to ensure my own survival, by ending the game as soon as possible. To that end, I presented Turkey with a plan that would result in him gaining 6 centers in a single turn, achieving a sudden 18 center victory. It did leave Turkey open to a stab from me in some degree, and I could perhaps have then turned his attack on Italy and Germany to my advantage to try and convince them to join me again, but my evaluation of the situation was that that really wouldn't work, and that my chances of being part of a win at this point were truly gone. Even if they worked with me in the short term, I felt that in the end they'd succumb to the desire to shred the Austrian Empire. Apparently I was sincere enough to overcome Faz's misgivings, if not to quiet them completely, and we went for the Turkish win.

In one of those odd twists of the game, the moves would have succeeded, except for Italy accidentally misordering one of his units. Had he done as he intended, the game would have ended there. As it was, Turkey was at 17, but vulnerable in many areas. As far as I was concerned, the game was basically over, but it's against my nature to take the boring route, so instead of just handing him the extra centers I decided to see if I could once again persuade him to go with the AIT. I never expected this to last, but wanted to see if I could at least get it rolling, and how long I could keep it up. Besides, I thought it would be fun to once again return to Munich!

With his road to 18 rocky at best, and perhaps because of his strong spirit of fun, Turkey signed on once again and AIT headed out again. I suppose it shouldn't have come as a surprise to have our alliance shattered this time by my own trick. With a fairly hopeless position facing him, Germany decide there was no way he was going to let his old nemesis Austria share in a win and offered to hand the game to Turkey. This obviously could not be refused, and once again Turkey went for the solo. We put up a defense for the sake of never saying die, but there didn't seem much hope of stopping him this time. We actually held Turkey to 17 on the last turn, but perhaps fittingly, the game ended on a fluke as the Turkish concession passed because I had

forgotten that Doug's standing rules made no vote received a YES vote by default. This is different from every other szine I play in, and so I forget to include a vote and the concession passed. Hardly a large mistake though as I'm sure Turkey would have reached 18 the next year anyway.

All in all, this was an extremely enjoyable game for me. I had a great deal of fun working with Jamie and Faz. We stabbed and realled so many times that I lost count, and never lost our sense of the humor and ridiculousness of it all. We sent letters with 8 different colors of highlighters, letters in crayon, letters with little to do with the game. We played a roiling, turbulent game that was always fun and served well to demonstrate how little of what is going on in a Diplomacy game is visible from the outside. And we certainly demonstrated how differing players views of the game can be. To underscore that, I'm sure you need only read Germany's take on the game and contrast it to my own. My thanks to everyone for a great game, and for the chance to meet some of the most enjoyable players it's been my pleasure to know. This game reached the ultimate pinnacle of succes, it made me some new friends that will last far beyond its end.

France (Paul Milewski): What did we domonstrate? How to toady?

Germany (Stephen Koehler): As is my wont as Germany, I started this game with a desire to control Scandinavia, which I believe is the best way for Germany to secure its' survival into the End-Game. I discussed this at the beginning of the game with England (Mike) and he appeared to agree. He would take Norway for a year or two, but then swing west and cede Norway to me by about 03 ..

Unfortunately, for some unknown reason, Mike refused to cede Norway to me as planned. He claimed it was because he needed the unit, but he was not devoting himself to the destruction of France. This made me very nervous. Russia was on the ropes and things looked good for the E/G, but it is my belief that Germany can not tolerate an English presence in Scandinavia. Then there came several "miscues" where England was to support German unit into St. Pete, but failed to, further raising my suspicions that England did not intend to ally with me.

Meanwhile, I tried my best to ally with Austria and to assist him against Turkey, but he seemed incapable of staying with any ally. I was put in between a rock and a hard place.

My memory is somewhat faulty, but I think after the second English "miscue", I felt the need to move against him. At this time, I thought Austria was my ally, and so I took Norway. But England was able to garner French support and Austria was an opportunist and took Munich. At this point, I needed an ally, and so I tried to work with Turkey for a while, then Austria again and then England again, but I could never get enough people on board to oppose Turkey. Austria was continually seduced by Turkey into attacking me, even though it was ultimately certain to mean a Turkish victory. I still don't understand that, but let this be a warning to all you newbie Austria's out there: The Wicked Witch of the East is a harsh mistress.

Italy (Jamie McQuinn): The commentators, I am sure, will concur with my assessment that Italy lost this game through a combination of inept play and gullibility.

It started off so beautifully. Through tricky maneuvering, and with the help of England and Germany, I was able to engineer no builds for France in the first year. What fun! Meanwhile, I had what looked to be a solid alliance with Austria. With an ally at my back, I was prepared to pick up the pieces of the shattered French Republic.

Unfortunately, my euphoria only lasted one season. In the following year, Austria stabbed me, and I struggled through the rest of the game.

I won't bother to recount the shifts in alliances that characterized the rest of the game, but they were all possible combinations. Austria and Italy against Turkey, Italy and Turkey against Austria, all three of us against everyone else, etc. But it all boiled down to masterful and bountiful letter writing by the Sultan Faz. He played Austria and Italy against each other. He was also able to spin elaborate plans that sure sounded good on paper. If I stabbed him, he talked me out of it, if he stabbed me, he convinced me to work with him again. In fact, he wrote an article for *Diplomacy World* on this subject, and I know that I must have been the primary research.

So, congratulations Mark. You won this game the way it was meant to be played. I look forward to meeting you again over the game board. I can't help but be older, but I hope I'll be a bit wiser.

Turkey (Mark Fassio): Man; I never thought this one would end (or, if it did, not as favorably as this)! Before I begin, let me offer thanks to six fine players for a thoroughly enjoyable (and nail-biting) game, as well as to Doug for timely, expert GM'ing -- and for even considering me for this match. I am not worthy, I am not worthy....

How do I even begin to explain this, knowing that the majority of my board-brothers will laugh and think I'm lying (again)? The first point of note is that what I say here is really true; no post-game post-mortems to hide the smoking gun, and no skeletons in the closet. I won't deceive in end-game statements.

My actions this game resulted from my past gaming history. Those who truly know me (i.e., the OLD GEEZERS like Don Williams, Steve Heinowski, etc) can tell you that I was a pretty stodgy and predictable player for my first decade of gaming. I had this "gentleman knight" concept of playing, i.e., allying for the 17-17 draw was my idea of a correctly-played, enjoyable game. And stabbing was only done on a reciprocal basis, if I was hit first. The first time I really stabbed some guy was in TER-RAN as (surprise!) Turkey, hitting my (surprise!) Austrian ally when he was in BELGIUM. I still feel like a schmuck for doing it. But I did win.....

Anyway, that ancient stab essentially propelled me from my 'doldrums' of play, and I begin to play the game the way the rules urge you to: the solo win. I then started a schizophrenic style for the next few months/years, because my stabbing style was like my game style: "tactical," vice strategic, 'slash-and-burn' vice "methodical planning and timing," etc...you get the picture. As such, my stabs were often ill-timed (leading me to write cheesy DW articles like, "The One-Center Stab," to self-rationalize my play, hahahahahahahahaha); they were also ineffective. My one saving grace was (is?), to quote Don Williams, my "used car salesman demeanor," earning me the nickname "Flash" from the aforementioned friend. I can usually schmooze my way through a tough situation and compensate for less-than-sterling play (I guess that's why it's called "diplomacy").

For this game specifically, I had the same schizo game plan: ally if possible, but stay flexible and stab if the urge hit. One thing I ALWAYS do in a game is to identify who I think is the toughest/smartest/most dangerous opponent, and try to isolate that person (a la Bismarckian foreign policy). In this game I saw Austria as the most competent (and thus, to me, the most dangerous) foe -- or, conversely, the best potential ally. (If you can't beat 'em, join 'em, right?) Why Dave? It's like I've mentioned before. He wrote religiously, he had fresh ideas that had "success" written all over them, and he knows his game inside and out. He called, wrote, listened, offered up plans, and could be in every true sense of the word both a "great Dipper" and a good friend, despite us never meeting. (Italy's Jamie McQuinn is in a similar category, in my books...and I have met him. He likes jerk chicken.)

This game then saw me trying to ally, while nonetheless nervous that my ally was better/sharper/MORE SKILLED AT STABBING than I. In essence, I built my own insecurity dilemma and then acted on it, despite no real overt threat from him. This "Jekyll and Hyde" approach toward my ally would remain throughout the game. It began in 1903, when I perceived he would out-gain me in centers, and continue to expand at a faster rate than I. I therefore wrote a "friendly" letter to Russia--our target--through a non-gaming friend. I like this tactic, where you feign being an anonymous friend with mutual anti-X interests (see my article last issue called "In Defense of Snail Mail"). In my letter to Russia I provided the Austrian moves, and a few of mine, to give the letter legitimacy. The result: the non-responsive Russian indirectly aided me by seizing Vienna unsuspectingly (yes, Dave, this does answer your game-long question, "How did Russia manage to guess right and walk into Vienna?") Russia thought he was hurting the A/T, but never knew it was me that connived to hurt only my partner. This letter misdirection was done at that time ONLY to minimize rapid Austrian gain until I felt comfortable enough in center count and position.

A/T then proceeded to level Russia and Italy; at one time the Archduke had nearly all of Italy, I most of Russia, and we were facing a pseudo-coalition of E/G. (The original French and Russian players were absolute zeros in this game, in my opinion. Little to no correspondence, no spark, no anything. I assume, from being starters in a Demo Game, that they are good players and Great Americans, but I found neither to be true in this specific matchup.) Austria and I then went separate ways as I hit him, and I/A allied and bottled me up but good! Masterful defense. A and G also began some disquietingly-allied moves against me.

I tried to reinitiate the obvious plan: that IAT were wasting our time while EG grew at our expense. A/I agreed (it was obvious to all, really) and we were back in the 'alliance' mode. The game then devolved to a series of "on-again" "off-again" alliances and actions. We spoofed the enemy and began some great advances, getting into Munich, luring the German in the East (the commentators couldn't understand some of the German moves, but that's because he was stabbed by A/T, then offered help by me, stabbed again, etc etc. It wasn't poor play on his part, just a deception plan on ours.) We had the Hun on the recoil after that. My (tactically) correct move of taking MOS with WAR support (WAR at that time being an Austrian claim) didn't mesh well with Dave, him seeing it instead as a (politically in-)correct move. This began the Years of Tension, where Austria countered by attacking me in SER/RUM, claiming I was being devious; I claimed in return that Austria was merely waiting for the chance to marshal

the rest of the board against me and "strike while the iron's hot." One of my better memories this game was getting Italy to stab Austria at the same time Austria stabbed me--so instead of gaining big and reducing me, Austria managed to eke by with little gain AND enemies in his back.

At this stage (1908-ish, methinks), I truly intended a two-way (old habits die hard): an I/T. Dave then dropped a bombshell on me: utterly honest and prescient, he offered to help me advance against the rest of the board, as they refused to marshal effectively against me. It wasn't, I feel, so much pro-T as it was an anti-EFGI move. Had he fibbed to me, he could've wrecked me big-time, but his support allowed me to stab Italy and go for the solo try. In fact, had Jamie not made a true mistake and followed an old set of orders (bouncing me in VIE instead of going toward TRI), I would've picked up six in one turn and the solo! Instead, his miscue gave me 17 and convinced me that I was now a marked man with everyone ready to team up against me--and that 18 centers were out of reach. I then decided, for show value (see the press releases throughout this time; they're true), to go for the three-way. Part of it was "shock value," and part was for guilt (I hate stabbing, even now, and liked the idea of low-center A/I allies sharing the draw).

We thus created ANOTHER A/T/I alliance, and once again swept all before us. Had I stayed true, Italy would've crushed France, Austria would've gotten the Low Countries, and Germany would've had a Scandinavian Redoubt until the bitter end. Dave and Jamie were sold on the alliance because the alternative was being stuck between a growing EFG and a defensive T, with them as the creme between the Oreo cookies. And again, had things not developed as they did, I would've settled for the three-way; I mean, I LIKE these guys. But Germany offered to play Kingmaker and help me, provided I cut A/I out of any draw. Again, not so much pro-Faz as anti-others. And again, I sweated it out: what if the board really was united? What if Germany was leading me on, promising support and letting me hit my allies again for no gain, earning me emnity? It was overly suspenseful for me, but luckily he stayed true to his word.

There were Two Big Observations I noticed in the game. Number One: By talking up certain players in the press and in the mails, I tried to create an aura about them -- an aura others didn't think was deserving, or that seemed to grate on the readers. Having done that, I 'displaced' my blatant nastiness and supplanted another target of opportunity, allowing my foes to fight amongst themselves. I could blame the great Austrian (not me!) for the Munich stabs, the Warsaw hits, the Italian ploy, the anti-France options, etc etc. And it worked. Personality played a very, very great part this game in overriding the natural inclination to band against me; there were always 'worse enemies' for these guys over the next hill, instead of me. The Second Observation was the utter lack of a perceived, coherent "stop the leader" plan on the part of the West. Granted, the sudden shifts in A/I/T alliances and fighting made for a tough read of the tea leaves for everyone. But even when the chance was there, I didn't see an initiative on their parts to muster everyone against me. (Remember, that was a complaint Dave voiced to me during The Great Assistance move in 1908; he did what he did because no one was with him vs me.) England and Germany were against me/us, true, but they were also fighting among themselves. France was just trying to stay afloat. In such an environment, one can take greater liberties and chances than if faced by a unified group. I feel that was THE main reason that I managed to work my wiles (with or without allies) and pull this off. Do you other players or readers agree on

this point, or am I mistaken?

Even at the end my stabs were sloppy. Had the concession not passed, I would've been under 18 and ripe for rollback; look at how spread out and unsupported all my forces were. Again, no one wanted Faz to win solo, but none of them could muster a unified board to guarantee I wouldn't win. I thus tried to play them off piecemeal vs each other. Only that aspect (and NOT good play on my part) saved me, I feel.

Well, regardless, it's done. I'm sorry I stabbed folks (especially the long-suffering A/I/G players), and I admire the heck out of them for being flexible and allying when the chances came, and for riding the tiger. Each of them played a heckuva game. Paul's France and Mike's England also played well, although they seemed to be in isolation of the others. Mike, you are a loyal ally and an implacable foe! I'm glad I didn't have to tangle with you up there. Paul, you're just a class act all around. I just hope Dave, Jamie and Steve (and Paul & Mike) realize that this game is an aberration for me. I truly (fingers uncrossed!) can be a good ally -- but that's another game, another time.....

Until then, good hunting in other games and in life to you all. Readers, I hope you enjoyed the twists and turns, and learned some stuff. Much of what we did was to entertain you and try to make an exciting and fun game; I hope we succeeded. Doug, thanks again!

Commentator #1 (Brian Cannon): Here's my End-Game Commentary for DW Demo Game #1 "FlapJack"

After spending some time going over the game reports for each season through this game I thought it would be useful to briefly review the flow of the game, highlight a few "KEY" (Watershed) moments in the game, and finally draw a some instructive lessons.

After some typical jockeying for position at the beginning two alliances emerged by 1902: An Austro-Turkish team aimed at Russia & Italy, and an Anglo-German alliance aimed primarily at France. In 1903 Austria, trusting in the strength of his alliance with Turkey stabbed Germany giving A/T a solid shot at punching past the normal East vs. West stalemate line.

Then in Fall, 1903, Turkey stabbed Austria for the first time. By 1904 Turkey had reached an impressive 10, but still faced a united E/G who could expect cooperation from Austria & Italy. The momentum was with E/G and Turkey had actually begun to be forced back when, in 1905, Germany grabbed Belgium from England - upon which England retook it and snatched Denmark from Germany. The E/G war that resulted lasted until the end of the game.

Immediately, Austria & Italy changed sides and began aiding (puppeting to?) Turkey - almost as if they figured that with E/G squabbling there was no point in laying down their lives for a lost cause. By 1907, I/T had passed Gibraltar and A/T had reached Kiel & St Petersburg. The end of the game consisted of Turkey stabbing Austria & Italy in 1908 (to jump to 17), re-allying with Austria & Italy in 1909 (giving up some of his gains to them), and stabbing Austria & Italy again in 1910 - at which time, with E/G still bickering, the Board conceded the victory to Turkey (Faz).

Throughout the game, France was mostly involved with defending his own dots (with occasional forays against England) and Russia, apparently never communicating much, was eliminated early on.

For me, in retrospect, the "Watershed" moment in this game was Spring of 1905 when Germany walked into England's Belgium and touched off the Anglo/German conflict that, in the event, handed the victory to Mark Fassio's Turkey. Being only a commentator I am not privy to whatever communications or attempts were made to repair the E/G differences as Turkey grew and dominated the board. Whatever may have been attempted, the failure to mend those fences was the single most important factor in the Turkish solo. The lack of any solid support from E/G left I/A flapping in the breeze and appears to have been a major part in driving them to continue re-allying with Turkey - even when it was apparent that it was only handing the game to Faz on a silver platter.

Unfortunately, lacking inside knowledge of the communications that flowed during this game the lessons that seem to most arise from this game are couched in questions.

(1) As Turkey grew, what efforts were made (or were NOT made) to end the Anglo/German fighting and forge an effective anti-Turkish alliance? Did Austria or France (having units in the vicinity) attempt to broker an E/G peace? For example, by suggesting a fair division of the dots E/G were fighting over and vowing to use their units to enforce that division so that both E/G would realize that fighting would gain nothing. Or, alternatively, by supporting England in taking out Germany on the theory that a strong England would serve as a better counter balance to Turkey than a divided & squabbling E/G. In this case, Italy, Austria, & France would be attempting to play a balance of power in hopes they could find a way to salvage their position later - or at least to salvage a part of a draw.

(2) Indications are that Jerry's Russia never really communicated much with his neighbors. Also that Mark Fassio's Turkey was voluminous in his correspondence - both between players and in the Press. It is, I think, significant that Russia was the first eliminated and that Turkey won the game. Silence is a good thing in Diplomacy on only very rare occasions. When in doubt, communicate!

The game itself, running 10 game years and 2 calendar years (Spring '01 moves were due 9/23/95; End game statements were due 9/19/97), was of only average length (or even a little on the short side). Still, it included the amazing spectacle of repeated stabs & reconciliations of/with the same victims and a marked absence of "ELS" (Early Leader Syndrome) or "BOP" (Balance of Power) in which the board drops it's disagreements and cooperates to bring down the main power. It also appeared to be dominated more by Diplomacy (or it's lack) and "mind-games" and less by simple "raw" Tactics. Looking ahead, it will be interesting to compare & contrast this game with the new DW Demo Game "Ruy Lopez" which, as of this writing, is already into 1903 (and in which your commentators, Jim Grose & myself, are occupied as Austria & Russia, respectively). Communication abounds (I already have a stack of notes to & from other players several inches thick!), strategy is rife, and tactics appear to be not for the faint hearted !! And to all appearances it will be a totally different type of game than this last one - but then, you'll all see that as the game is published <grin>.

Thanks to Dave Partridge (Austria), Mike Gonsalves (England), Tom Pasko & Paul Milewski (France), Stephen Koehler (Germany), Jamie McQuinn (Italy), and Jerry Ritcey (Russia) for their participation (especial thanks to Paul for taking over as France in Spring '05 and seeing the position to conclusion). And Congratulations to Mark Fassio on his Victory! Appreciation to Doug Kent for spearheading the revival of Diplomacy

World and GM'ing this game, and Special thanks AND appreciation to you, the faithful readers, without whom none of this (the game, the zine, the articles) would not be possible.

Commentator #2 (Jim Grose): Congratulations to Mark on his win as Turkey in 1910.

In my Fall 1903 comments I accused Austria-Hungary of "sloppy play." Mark took the time to send me a letter in which he corrected me and explained that Russia seized Vie from Austria-Hungary based on information Mark had sent to Russia on an anonymous postcard, supposedly from a western power! This guy is the kind of scheming sociopath I'd like to play against some time.

With the exception of Stephen (Germany), the other players were either blind to Turkish expansion or toadying to Turkey, all the while busy squabbling among themselves. Maybe this was initially due to Mark's excellent diplomatic skills but couldn't the rest of you see the obvious towards the end? If you re-read my commentary I confidently predicted a Turkish win as far back as Fall 1906. Given Mark's record of making and breaking alliances, why did anyone still trust him after that?

I have two suggestions for future demo games:

1. Frankly, apart from Mark's play, this game was not very interesting. Why not choose a game which has already been completed and judged to be worth sharing with a large audience? When I first subbed to DW and saw the previous demo game I assumed this approach was being taken, since it seemed so obvious to me. The commentators, who must know nothing about the game beforehand (and might be kept anonymous until the end so no one could tell them the outcome) could be provided with a new season's results every two weeks or so. This would allow the entire game to be replayed quickly, holding the audience's interest. It would also prevent decisions being made by players based on the fact that it was known to be a demo game, as Mark claimed in Fall 1909.

2. If you're going to stick with the current approach, having commentators following a live game with an unknown outcome, urge all players to provide the commentators with confidential summaries of each season's diplomacy. I am constantly amazed at people who believe everything they read in the press or, worse, actually conduct diplomacy via the press, for all to read. Relying on the press alone is madness. Summarizing each season's negotiations will provide the commentators and audience with a more complete understanding of what's going on between moves. Remember, this game is called "Diplomacy" and not "Tactics."