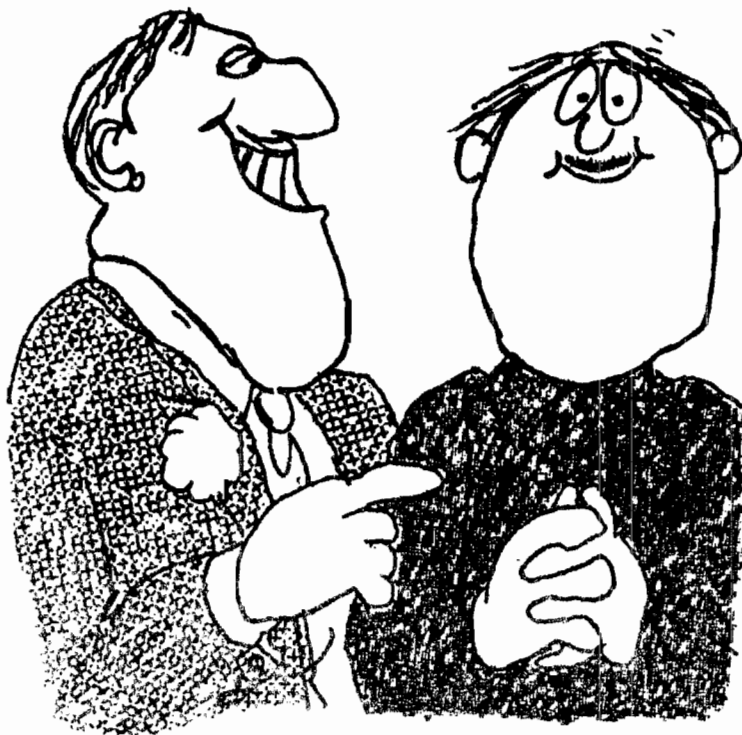


# DIPLOMACY WORLD



"IT'LL BE EASY. YOU GO TO THE DIPCON  
AND TELL THEM YOU'RE ME AND ACT JUST AS YOU  
USUALLY DO. IT'LL KEEP UP THE DIPLOMACY WORLD  
IMAGE.

"GOT THAT, NOW?"

NO. 20

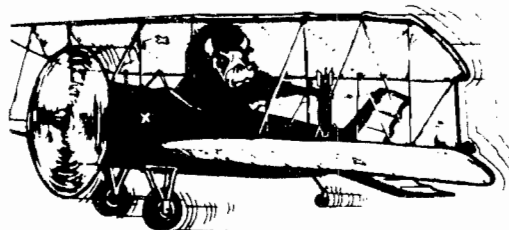
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SEPT. 1978

# DIPLOMACY WORLD

is a bi-monthly journal published in the odd-numbered months of the year at P. O. Box 626, San Diego, California 92112, U.S.A. The subscription rates are: One year (6 issues), \$9 in U.S.A., \$10 in Canada, \$11 elsewhere. Please add 6% sales tax in California, 4% in Indiana. The subscription agent in the United Kingdom is John Piggott, 15 Freeland Road, Flat 6, Ealing Common, London W.5. Back issues available are: Nos. 2-4 and 6, \$0.75 each; Nos. 7-11 and 13-20, \$1.25 each; No. 21 on, \$1.75 each. The Editor welcomes contributions of any type related to the game "Diplomacy" but can accept no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts unless accompanied by postpaid return envelopes. (Outside the U.S.A. we pay postage on return.) For unusual or lengthy items, please contact the Editor. No editorial control is maintained by the Avalon Hill Game Co. and all material herein is the responsibility of the Editor, C.F. von Metzke, and the individual writers as indicated.

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## THE HELL WITH IT!

Well, if that's how you feel about DIPLOMACY WORLD, you won't care that your subscription has expired. For the rest of you, please check the label on this issue's envelope. If it contains a number 20, your sub has just expired. We hope you will want to renew (see above left), because we sure would like to have you stay with us!

# INNARDS

THE HIGH HORSE . . . . .	3
The Editor's Inflated Column For Inflationary Subjects	
THE NOVICE CORNER - C.F. von Metzke . . . . .	6
Help For Newcomers Interested In Losing Their Virginity	
THE RULEBOOK'S FORGOTTEN SENTENCE - Mark Berch . . . . .	9
Even If You're Always Right, You May Sometimes Be Wrong	
NEWS FROM BRIXTON - Pete Birks . . . . .	11
Over The Water, Across The Sea, They're Just As Nuts As We Are	
HOOSIER ARCHIVES DEMONSTRATION GAME NUMBER SEVEN . . . . .	12
The Young Turks' Game (1977CL)	
Moderated by Walter Buchanan	
Analysis by Tony Watson	
Concluding comments by John Boyer, Steve McLendon and Howard Mahler	
DIPCON XI STAFF REPORT - Rod Walker . . . . .	19
If You Missed Being Stomped This Year, Here's How It Went	
DIPCON XI PHOTOS - Scott Marley . . . . .	20
A Rogues' Gallery Of Survivors	
FUGUE - "Pariah" . . . . .	21
The Meandering Mind Muses Again	
THE GAMER'S GUIDE TO DIPLOMACY: A REVIEW - C.F. von Metzke . . . . .	23
The New Booklet Pulled To Bits	
VARIANT DESIGN - Lewis Pulsipher . . . . .	26
Discussions Of Cloning That Went Awry	
VARIANT INFORMATION - Robert Sacks . . . . .	27
The Practical Application Of The Results Of The Cloning	
NEWS FROM THE CLASSICAL BOARD - Douglas Mills . . . . .	28
The Balloon Was Actually On Its Way To Play Some Games	
TRUMPETS AND HAUTOBOYS . . . . .	30
If The News Has Fits, We Print	
THE MAILBOX FILLETH . . . . .	34
Your Space, To Do With As You Please	
SOME THOUGHTS ON ITALY AND AUSTRIA . . . . .	38
The Disagreements Page	
NEED A GAME? . . . . .	39
Postal Game Openings (Regular And Variant)	

# INNARDVATORS

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# THE HIGH HORSE

There is, of course, one major problem with DIPLOMACY WORLD'S plan to convert some of its emphasis to the world of face-to-face play, and that is that the in-person hobby is in virtual anarchy. There are no tournament organizations, most play is on a local level with very little interrelationship between one city's clubs and another's, there are no big "personalities" and there are no institutions. The sole notable exception to all this, the annual DipCon, is an institution begun by (and largely for) postal players, controlled pretty much by them, and heavily populated (if not precisely dominated) by them.

Diplomacy is not yet a "major" game, as are, say, chess and bridge, in the sense that there are no professionals, and there are barely any serious amateurs. It is possible for quite a number of people to make excellent livings by playing or administering chess and bridge matches, but nobody does this with wargames in general, let alone one single wargame. Aside from the designers and manufacturers - and just a handful of those - there is no profit in Diplomacy. Even if the Editor of DIPLOMACY WORLD were to dump all his staff associates, bleed the readers for all they'll give, and make the biggest possible push for pure profit out of the magazine, a fair projection of my annual net would be \$1500. Including Avalon-Hill's subsidy. As it stands, I come nowhere close to that figure. And if that's the best I can hope for, it's frankly hopeless; there is no living wage to be made.

That's fine with me; this is a hobby. But the fact serves to illustrate the dilemma which faces the in-person hobby; without full-time, or at least serious part-time, guiding hands to establish organizations and institutions and have them work consistently and successfully, there is no way that very much can happen.

The postal hobby is, conversely, "organized," in a sense. It has institutions. Those institutions function, a majority of the time, to one degree of efficiency or another. The mere fact of compilation of data by a few individuals, and the widespread acceptance of these data as having some significance, has given postal Diplomacy a form of "organization by default," where in fact there is no organization at all. (Such groups as the International Diplomacy Association have had limited success as hobby service bodies, but have never made a dent as unifying or controlling forces; every time they try, a schism develops and chaos ensues until the attempt is shelved and the group reconstituted back in a service direction.)

If this is organization, then it's organization by virtue of the fact that nobody gets hurt by cooperating, and lots of people gain a little. Nobody has any chance of gaining a lot, because there isn't a lot to gain. Thus, publishers trade magazines and information because, gee, it's nice to read other people's stuff, and it's an egoboo to know that others are reading your stuff, and exchange of information and ideas is often informative and stimulating and sometimes helpful. Players cooperate for pretty obvious reasons. It's really not "organized" at all; it simply exists, and its "members" keep it alive because it suits their purposes to do so. Any time anybody gets tired of postal Diplomacy, they just pack up and walk. And that happens quite a lot.

But with very rare exceptions, nobody makes money. The only professional gamesmaster in existence, Rick Loomis of Arizona, makes money, all right, but not from Diplomacy; it's his other offerings that keep him in beer; Diplomacy is (financially) a small-potatoes sideline. DIPLOMACY WORLD does indeed make a profit for me, I'll admit; I'd guess that my hourly wage for the work I do on this is seventy-three cents. Why, I could live on that for an entire year, provided I died on Groundhog Day.

Postal Diplomacy survives, in its quasi-formalized state, primarily because the participants have a very cheap form of communication available - the mail. In-person games, if carried beyond the confines of a local area, are damned expensive - travel, food, hotels, etc. Each year, when DipCon is announced, dozens of people say "I'll try to be there." And they do try, but most never show up - the usual reason being lack of cash. These same people will, however, continue joining postal games, where money is generally not a problem.

Now, if Diplomacy were "big-time," with money to be made (at least in the form of administrative salaries), prizes and real recognition to be achieved, and so forth, then face-to-face might be able to move somewhere. As it stands, I see Diplomacy remaining just a fun hobby for a lot of people.

DIPLOMACY WORLD still intends to cater to both face-to-face and postal players. But if you thought this meant some boggling upheaval in content, read this editorial again.

## ----- IMPORTANT INFORMATION - PLEASE READ!

No matter how dry, the following needs reading by every DIPLOMACY WORLD recipient.

Walt Buchanan, publisher and general taciturn, has decided to go back to college - all the while continuing his full-time job. Thus, a certain amount of what he has been doing with DW will now have to be taken over by the others

on the start. Then the following changes:

In future, all subscriptions, editorial submissions, advertising, trade copies of fanzines - in short, absolutely all business with DW - should come to the editorial address, P.O. Box 626, San Diego, CA 92112, USA. (For U.K. subs, see inside front cover.) Walt will forward what erroneously goes to him, but he cannot be expected to act as a forwarding service, so please convert over your address file as soon as you can. Walt will continue as publisher and archivist, but material for the latter must now be routed through the Editor.

Next, there have been fears that the Need A Game feature was to be dropped. Well, that was the intent, but it isn't going to work. We had hoped to replace the page with the individual referral service suggested some time ago, and were fully geared to put the system to work, when it was discovered that the response had been far too weak to justify the changeover. So we stay with Need A Game. However, there will be a change in method here. In past, Walt Buchanan has prepared the list by culling archives copies of the fanzines. Walt cannot continue this, and even though the Editor will now be receiving all the archive copies, he can't do it either. So you gamesmasters will have to make up the lists for us. If you wish to be included in the Need A Game list in future, you must write to us specifically requesting inclusion - merely sending a sample or archive copy that announces game openings will not work. With your specific request for listing, your fee structure must be specified in full detail; no listing will be printed hereafter without fee information.

And finally - the bad (good?) news. The price is up, friends. This thing currently costs you four dollars a year. Effective immediately, the rate is \$9.00. Two and one-fourth times the price.

Does anyone seriously think we can get nine dollars a year? Well, maybe. In the first place, we have the usual pleas of inflation to fall back on - paper cost up, printing up, postage up, and all of that. Also, we'll be going to full-size issues next time - this costs us a bit more, but will produce a superior product, so it ought to be worth a little something.

But mainly, the increase makes sense because whereas at the \$4 rate you only got four issues, at the \$9 rate you'll get six. We're going bi-monthly.

This is admittedly a gamble. I may well be that with these new rates, all you subscribers will look at your checkbooks when renewal time comes round, chuckle, and toss us to the winds. If so, the gamble will fail and we'll have to retrench. But if it works, I think you'll be most pleased with the results. The biggest bonus will obviously be currency of information. In addition, I fully expect the overall quality of any given issue to go up, on the paradoxical basis that the more we need material to fill the

space, the harder we'll work to get it. And, too, with more issues comes the bonus of still greater variety. We've thought about this for some time. Now seems to be the best point at which to take the plunge. So - here goes.

Subscription money on hand already, of course, will not be "revalued" - if you paid for four issues, you'll still get four issues. Each of the 'new' issues (full size) will be at least as large in overall content as each of the 'old' issues, possibly a shade larger. Printing will be better (the process for the larger size gives superior results, I'm told).

So I hope you'll stick with us; we think it's worth it. For more details of the costs under the new schedule, see Page 2.

#### ON MAKING THIS MAGAZINE PERFECT

In the continuing saga of my attempts to create the "Tabloid of the Gods," the latest Reader Response Form (last issue) pretty well proves that pleasing all of the people all of the time is not only impossible, it's not even desirable.

A quick summary of results (32 replies in at this writing, and I don't expect too many more): #1, concerning inclusion of face-to-face material, Yes 21, No 11. #2, Is this magazine a worthwhile purchase?, Yes 28, No 1, Other 1. #3, Is material such as the "Phallic Symbol" thing appropriate for these pages, Yes 18, No 14, Other 2, and one person voted both yes and no. #4, is the Novice Corner useful?, Yes 9, No 1, Other 1. #5, Features you normally don't read, Variant Material was mentioned by 15 respondents and the Demonstration Game was indicated by 4; nothing else was mentioned more than twice.

And Question #6, listing the very good and very bad articles...in the "Good" column, the winners are: "The Play of Italy," 17; "The Novice Corner," 13; "Fugue," 12; and "Sooper Austria," 10. Nothing else got more than six. In the "Bad" group, the winner was (excluding variant material, which is obvious from Question #5) "Allen B. Calhaver is a Phallic Symbol," 8 votes (but also 5 votes in the "Good" column); "What About That Subsidy?," 6; Trivia Quiz, 5; "Fugue" and "Sooper Austria" 4 each.

Editorial analysis of the results? You can't please all of the people, so why try? It's perfectly obvious that most of you approve of the editorship, so I think it's time to quit asking questions and get down to editing. There will still be survey forms in future, but it won't be a constant barrage. Letters of comment, however, are always welcome.

And finally, the deadline for receipt of contributions for the next issue is October 15, 1978. As usual, the sooner the better.

THE

# NOVICE CORNER

by C. F. VON METZKE

Much argument and space have been devoted to the current (and, in my view, specious) argument over the distinguishing merits and demerits of postal and in-person play of Diplomacy. It is time to sort out these arguments, expose them for what they are (worthless), and inject one new element into the fray - namely, the 'phone. None of this is likely to solve anything. If, however, I succeed in convincing someone that there isn't really anything that needs solving, and that mere recognition of differing styles of play is about all that needs accomplishing, I will have used this space wisely.

Postal Diplomacy differs from Face-to-Face (hereinafter: FTF) Diplomacy in several ways. Some of these are merely administrative, or purely technical and thus largely irrelevant. Foremost is the question of time; FTF games can be done in an afternoon of concentrated play, while postal games generally last eight or ten months on a sporadic basis. I imagine that the total time expended is reasonably comparable; the difference is in when it is spent, and in what manner.

Next comes the psychological point, of extreme importance, of confronting your allies and/or enemies in the flesh versus in writing. Through the mail, a player who is telling you a blatant lie cannot be discovered merely by watching his eyes shift. In person, a player who has broken his word cannot be exposed by Xeroxing his lie and passing copies round. It is generally easier, in the sense of "Less Emotionally Distasteful," to lie in an impersonal letter than in a very personal tete-a-tete in the hall. However, a person who has only fifteen minutes to talk to everyone cannot be expected to get deeply analytical; a player who has (in theory) hours and hours to write a detailed missive can surely be presumed capable of thoughtful, reasoned specificity. FTF, everybody who has his eyes open knows who is talking to whom, and at what length, and in what strategic order of preference; by mail, no such information is usually available (unless, again, somebody starts sending Xeroxes around; but then, I've seen forged Xeroxes

too, it's easy enough to trace a signature onto a fake letter).

The extent of negotiations, and the thought that goes into moves, is another aspect. One may, in postal play, examine and consider the game board at great length; FTF, one cannot. This is seldom a major point, but for those incapable of, or uncomfortable, thinking quickly, it may be a consideration of import. (Conversely, for those with restricted patience or attention spans, dragged-cut postal games may be anathema.)

Then the administrative considerations: In postal play one can glance back easily over all the past moves and letters of negotiation; FTF, one generally does not have a gamesmaster (but you can have, and conversely a postal game can proceed without one - the first-ever postal game attempt, in 1962, had none); and, by mail, it is entirely possible for seven people to play a game without any one of them owning a game set (though it may also be a violation of copyright).

But the essential difference, the one that negates the importance of both of the others, is personal preference in style. And the reason there really isn't, or at least shouldn't be, any crisis between two distinct "camps" is that one is simply not any better than the other; it's all in what you prefer, or in what is more readily possible for you. And that is all. Anybody who tells you that FTF play is better than postal play, for any reason, is merely telling you that his preferences are better than someone else's preferences. It's like saying that hollyhocks are prettier than marigolds; they may be to you, but if Joe Schmoe disagrees, who's right?

There's also some question as to whether the FTF cries of discrimination (because more money and publicity is poured into postal Dip) aren't also specious. To be sure, FTF players rightfully want their particular version of the hobby supported, and it should be. But is the fact that it isn't the fault of the postal hobby, or of the FTF people themselves (or of nobody)? Getting equal time in DIPLOMACY WORLD is quite reasonable, and there is no real problem here any more. But on other levels, maybe we need to understand why the postal hobby has reaped, and is reaping, the goodies.

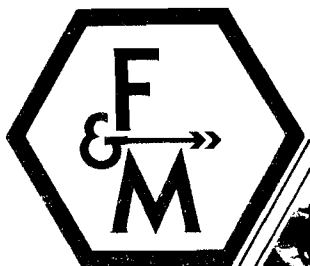
I think the answer is basic and very easy: Organization. The postal hobby, for all the screams about how there is no central authority managing things, is comparatively well organized in comparison to the FTF hobby. Almost all of the postal gamesmaster/publishers are in regular contact with one another, and cooperate actively on many levels (from cross-referrals of potential players to helping a floundering magazine save its games). FTF play is almost entirely localized, and while there may be intra-area exchanges

(as, for instance, among two distinct wargaming clubs in the same metropolis), there is almost no extensive intercourse beyond a limited geographical point. Most Diplomacy players do not travel a lot; after all, most are students or young professionals, and they have enough to do without traipsing cross-country to play games. Conventions to attract national attendance do succeed, but the numbers are seldom huge, and the bulk of the conventioners are invariably from a narrow radius around the site.

And then we must consider the foundations of the major conventions. There is an annual Monopoly convention, but it's so highly specialized that it can be disregarded. There is GenCon, annually managed by SPI Inc. in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. The primary *raison d'être* is, of course, to publicize and sell SPI games. Of late this has meant mainly Dungeons and Dragons. And then there's Origins, with a varying site but with a similar rationale, in this case the sale of Avalon-Hill products. A-H founded the

convention on what was at the time their best tournament-type game, Origins of W.W.II. (It was only after Origins had been firmly established that A-H acquired the rights to Diplomacy from Games Research.) The play of Origins is apparently on the wane now; postal activity is just about gone, and the new big boardgame seems to be Kingmaker -another A-H product. Thus, Kingmaker tournaments are showing up at Origins. So are Diplomacy tournaments. (Maybe Avalon-Hill should consider changing the name of its convention to de-emphasize a single game?)

But it must be remembered that, even in the time since Avalon-Hill obtained Diplomacy as a product, the annual Diplomacy Convention has never linked itself to the manufacturer's convention; in 1977 DipCon was held with GenCon in SPI territory, and in 1978 DipCon hooked up with an entirely unaffiliated affair, GLASC. In '79 DipCon and Origins will come together, but there is no reason to presume that this will establish a trend; in fact, DipCon is now



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formally being held in a rotation system that bears absolutely no relationship to the Origins site system.

So, while Avalon-Hill can be expected to pour money into Origins, and SPI into GenCon, there's no showing of rationale for pouring too much into DipCon, or into any other unaffiliated meeting that just happens to have one of the manufacturer's products run in public tourney style. Postal Diplomacy, on the other hand, while never formally linked to either of the game's manufacturers, has nevertheless always maintained close ties with them. Ranging from the fact that most postal magazines print the Avalon-Hill name and address, to the fact that game sets contain a flyer indicating postal people who can be contacted for more enjoyment of play (and, of course, for more interest in the product, generating more sales), to trophies at DipCon - postal Diplomacy and Avalon-Hill (and, formerly, Games Research) have always been closely intertwined. FTF Diplomacy, even at the national tournament level, has not. Indications are that this is changing, but it takes time, and Avalon-Hill cannot be faulted for moving cautiously so as to make certain they will give value for value.

Our secondary subject this issue is the telephone - its place in the play of Diplomacy. Whether or not you've ever used it, or had it used on you, the fact remains that it is a part of the game. Postally, this has been true from the beginning. It is of course not possible to inject the 'phone into a FTF game, but as a FTF spinoff it can come into consideration.

This is to say that there are two levels on which the telephone can be used in Diplomacy: as a negotiating aid in postal play, and as the specific medium of move transmission and negotiation in a specific and very special type of game. The latter first.

Telephone games, where all activity is carried on by 'phone and where there is a Gamesmaster who receives all moves and either reports results in person or by mail (or perhaps by posting in a specified location, as on a college bulletin board), has had a limited but intriguing history, and for some people it may represent a worthwhile avenue of play.

In general, the utility of a telephone game is among a rather specialized group of people: those who live close enough to one another to maintain regular contact by 'phone without running up astronomical bills, but who for whatever reason do not find it practical to meet in person to play. Ideally, either all the players should be personally acquainted, or none should; the former is obviously more usual. The problem of one or two strangers in a 'phone game is exactly the same as of one or two newcomers in a FTF game of five or six old buddies, or of a novice in a postal game of six long-acquainted

veterans.

Move schedules can be anything. I've seen bi-weekly, weekly, and in one case even daily schedules work well. The Gamesmaster must be scrupulously neutral, must adhere to all deadlines and special rules absolutely, and must arrange to be available for receipt of moves during a regular period of time. If necessary, steps must be taken to ensure that some player does not get the 'phone tied up (to other players' disadvantages) during move times - or, as in the case of a game among seven college friends, perhaps the moves should be submitted in writing with only the discussions by 'phone. Reporting of move results is a touchy business, and very time-consuming, but this is for the players and their Gamesmaster to figure out. Whatever system is decided, there are probably examples of its success, and of its failure, in past games.

In some ways, telephone games combine the most commonly favored features of both postal and FTF games. In relatively localized games, in-person contact is possible if desired. The game usually moves at a good pace (say, one game year a week, as opposed to 45 minutes in person and 6-12 weeks by mail), but not so fast that sudden, unreasoned decisions need be made. There is no mad scurrying; neither is there too much drag.

Disadvantages? Well, many telephone games eventually end up as FTF games; the players just decide to get together and finish it off at Fred's house. For people with many commitments, lengthy telephone conversations may be bothersome. If you're unlucky enough to have a boor in the game, you may wind up with 2 a.m. calls far too often. (Of course, he's undoubtedly being boorish with everyone, so just wipe him out!) And some people find a small sense of frustration at this system of contact; it's the "so-near-and-yet-so-far" syndrome, namely "why in hell am I talking to Eustace for two hours a night on the 'phone, when I could just meet him for coffee and look him straight in the eye?"

It's your choice. If it looks good to you, round up a few friends and try it out. It has worked in, among other places, New York, San Diego, Los Angeles, Saskatchewan, Belgium, and London (UK). It has failed in as many places. There was even once an attempt at a telephone game among seven players in seven different States, each of whom had access to a toll-free telephone line at work.

The telephone as an adjunct to what are supposedly "postal" games is quite a different matter. It's also fairly controversial at the moment; some oppose its use, and feel it should be banned; others feel it should be accepted as a perfectly reasonable tool; still others feel, big deal, let each do as he pleases. Some Gamesmasters have pretty well stated that in their games one is more or less expected to use the 'phone (DIPLOMACY WORLD Demonstration Games

have been like that in the past); let me be fairly said that my postal game with several deadlines and non-localized players is going to be something of a telephone game. (Thank God there aren't too many of those left any more.)

The difficulty is obviously that certain players are favored over others. Let's assume you live in Mississippi and your gamesmaster is in Montana. If you are wealthy, or not too squeezed for a little spare cash, you can call in your moves for the entire game and thus save three days per deadline on your time. Every time you call another player to negotiate, you have just saved up to six days (three for the letter each way) in negotiating with him. At certain hours telephone rates are pretty cheap for short calls; and of course the East Coast of the U.S. is favored over the West Coast. People who work normal hours are favored over those who work at odd times; people who have no 'phone are at a grave disadvantage; players who are deaf and/or dumb have more than just physical handicaps in such games; etcetera. The telephone in a postal game is just not an equitably-applied tool.

And any real limitation is pretty hard to enforce, except for the unreliable honor system. A gamesmaster can refuse to accept moves by 'phone, but most don't, and even if they do, there is still no control over negotiations.

The real issue, I suppose, is: Does it much matter? Probably not. For one thing, postal players are not fools; any of them can easily figure out all that I've said above. (Anybody who enters a two-week-deadline game and later blithely asserts that he had no idea the telephone might be involved deserves some sort of award for naivete.) If one has no 'phone, or is deaf, or morally objects to the incursion of the Bell System into the Postal Service's eminent domain, one need not play. But to go ahead and sign up, and squawk when the other players do not cater to your whims or special needs, is silly.

As a spinoff of the same general tenor of argument, some gamesmasters have made it their policies not to accept moves by telegram (because forgery is possible - which is absurd, if you think it over) or by special delivery (because it's a rip-off - and why is that the gamesmaster's business, eh?). These are aberrations, but the gist of the argument remains that some people sincerely believe a postal game ought to be a postal game and naught more, and they will enforce that codicil to the fullest extent of their ability. I say balderdash. In this regard, if in no other in postal Diplomacy, there are no virgins; he who signs up for play by correspondence knows full well that the telephone exists, and knows how to use it. And any attempt to mitigate or dissolve that use, on the pretext that it's a violation of some code of ethics or other (an unsettled point at best), is perforce asinine.

## THE RULEBOOK'S FORGOTTEN SENTENCE

by MARK BERC

Let me begin with a few biases:

1. My perspective is that of player, not gamesmaster.
2. The purpose of playing is to have fun, to enjoy a good game.
3. The purpose of the Rulebook is to facilitate #2, rather than just provide traps for the unwary.
4. The same should apply to any adaption of the rulebook to postal play.

There is a sentence in the Rulebook which, if gamesmasters would only use it, would promote the above goals and produce a superior game. "A badly written order, which nevertheless can have only one meaning, must be followed." Note the verb: "must." Let's look at how this can be applied to four of the most common types of badly-written orders.

I. PLAYER FAILS TO STATE NATIONALITY OF FOREIGN UNIT HE IS SUPPORTING. Thus, S.01: A Ven S A Mun-Tyo. Most gamesmasters would disallow this. However, contrary to popular belief, there is no requirement in the Rulebook that this nationality be stated; its requirement is the creation of postal GMs. The Rulebook is extremely specific on what is required for a valid support: "To order a support, it is necessary to write the location of the supporting piece, the word 'supports' or its equivalent, and both the location and destination of the piece receiving support." (Rule IX, 1) Note that it does not state, "location, destination, and ownership if foreign." It is true that Italy does not have Army Munich, in the above example, but the order does not state that he does. Further, the "badly written" rule covers this nicely; it can have only one meaning, because there is only one army Munich.

II. PLAYER FAILS TO STATE COAST UNIT IS LEAVING FROM. Thus, F StP-Bot. There is again no requirement that this coast be stated. Rule VII, 7 begins: "In each set of orders, the space each unit is in is written first, followed by its order." Note that it says "space," which is defined (VI, 1) as "province or body of water." That definition was included to foil the Coastal Crawl, by indicating that "space" includes the entire province. Further, the Rulebook carefully sets forth two circumstances where the coast must be specified (where a fleet enters a two-coasted province and either is possible, and when building fleets in StP) but this circumstance isn't one of them. Finally, the "badly written" rule can be applied, as there is

only one fleet in StP.

III. PLAYER MISSTATES THE COAST UNIT IS LEAVING FROM. Thus, F Spa (sc) - Mid where the player has F Spa (nc). This situation is more complex, as a portion of the order is incorrect. However, disallowing the move seems an extremely serious penalty for giving some wrong (coastal) information that wasn't required, but is provided as a favor to the gamesmaster, the other players, and the general quality of the game. An analogous situation would be disallowing "F Hollind-Nth."

(GM: Sorry, but you don't have any fleet Hollind.

(PLAYER: I only added the extra letters at the end to help you avoid confusion with my F Hel. They weren't required by the Rulebook. Your action serves as a disincentive to my being more fully explicit in the future.)

Again, the "badly written" rule can be invoked, as there is only one unit in Spain, and it "occupies the entire province." (VII, 2b)

IV. PLAYER MISLABELS AN ARMY FOR A FLEET, OR VICE VERSA. This is probably the most common error in writing orders; e.g. A Tri-Alb. The entire situation closely resembles #3, in that the labelling of a unit F or A is not required. "Tri-Alb" complies with the Rulebook, which requires only that you list "the space each unit is in." Further, there is nothing sacred about those particular abbreviations. You could have A for 'Armada' and F for 'Footsoldier.' Or you could use just U for all units. True, these are not the Rulebook abbreviations. But then again, the Rulebook's sample game has 'Norw.' for Norway and 'Norw. Sea' for the Norwegian Sea. When was the last time you saw those in a Diplomacy magazine?

In dealing with this type of error in Game 1970BB, John Boardman, postal Diplomacy's most experienced GM, wrote the following in GRAUSTARK 256: "The Rulebook is designed for over-the-board play, and minor fluffs as a result of haste are accepted in accordance with the badly written order rule. While speed is a factor in postal play too, it is the result of time to negotiate, not the minutes it takes to write orders. Consequently, it is my policy to virtually ignore the badly written order rule in postal games, especially when an experienced player commits the error." I must confess that the logic of this position is lost on me. Boardman's theory that the rule exists just to cover errors of haste strikes me as pure speculation. If it's a "minor fluff" in over-the-board play, then it's a "minor fluff" in postal play, because it's the game error. Boardman does state that "if the quoted rule is interpreted liberally" then the move succeeds. There is some precedent for this. In DIPLOPHOBIA 60, Don Miller, another very experienced GM, allowed "F Ven-Tri" in Spring 1901.

Several points need to be emphasized strongly here. First, GMs unquestionably have the right to disallow all the above moves. This has been

firmly established hobby tradition and will not be overturned simply by the likes of me writing an article. I am questioning the wisdom of the rulings, not their legality. Second, players should give all that superfluous information (coasts, etc.) even if not required by the GM, as it makes for less work and fewer errors. Third, some might argue that these additional requirements will introduce another small item of skill into the game, giving the edge to the more careful players. If this logic were accepted, GMs could throw in deliberate misadjudications, to give a small advantage to those skilled at spotting them. To me, success at Diplomacy should be a test of diplomatic, strategic and tactical skills; other considerations, like penmanship, should be minimized. The best game has no inadvertent errors, no missed moves, no misadjudications. Fourth, the use of these "unwritten" rules must surely function as a barrier to face-to-face players who are just entering the postal hobby. They are likely to be bewildered or discouraged when they are suddenly harshly penalized for not providing information they had no way of knowing was required. Finally, some errors are deliberate, as with players who wish a move to fail but don't want to reveal their intentions. The imaginative player will be able to think of options, such as "F Tri-Gre" or "F Alb-Gre."

Fine, fine, you say, but what can I, a lowly player, do? First off, always triple-check your orders. Next, write your GM (but not after the fact of error; that's too late). Suggest to him changes in GMing policy, outlining your reasons. Most GMs like to receive mail, and if they are interested in pursuing the subject, will print your letter to stimulate further discussion. Last, there is actually a 'zine whose house rules would allow the players' moves in the preceding four cases to proceed: FOL SI FIE (Randolph Smyth, 249 First Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1S 2G5 - subs 10/\$3.). Indeed, Smyth's house rules are designed to allow the maximum in player freedom to maneuver. Thus, he allows code words, joint orders, temporary substitutes, etc. In player votes, your vote will be kept secret - unless you ask for it to be revealed. Randolph has recently had a long series of sample rulings so that readers will have a solid feel for how the GM runs his games. The 'zine has recently passed its 100th issue, a real testament to reliability. Bet you didn't think this article would end with a plug, did you?

#### WORDS OF WISE MEN

(When you're conquering someone else's country) "Moderation in war is imbecility!" - Lord Nugent

(After stabbing someone) "A man that studieth revenge keeps his own wounds green." - Bacon, after Seneca

# NEWS FROM BRIXTON

by PETE BIRKS

This stuff gets published so goddamn late, I don't see how I have the nerve to call it "news." It's like the Washington Post solemnly informing the world of Nixon's resignation...the day after Carter beat Ford. Still, onward, keep up a brave face. True objective journalism.

People don't play in so many games over here any more, the average has dropped from a mid-'74 peak of about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per person to just over two. There are no real freaks any more, everyone's becoming too normal. One cause could be the expansion of other postal games, which are taking away players from postal Diplomacy. Sure, they still play in a couple of games, but nothing like the 22 I was involved in back in early '74.

But in those days we were all a bit out of control. A short-haired, army reject called Andy Davidson was in 51 games, John Piggott was in over 40 and was running 17 more in ETHIL THE FROG, and with 22 games under my belt I came a lousy twelfth. We were real men in those days, though nothing compared to Conrad; he was in around 112 games at one point, practically all of them as Austria, and all opened with some crazy dope-addled gambit F Tri-Adr, A Vie-Tyo, A Bud- wherever the dice said. It made for interesting games, but an early elimination of Austria. Somebody once theorized that the only reason Austria was so low in country rankings was that Conrad had played that country in about half the postal games ever started.

God, off on a tangent again. I'd meant to be telling you about the British hobby. I must try to remember that. So - what's been happening? Well, 'zines are folding, and 'zines are starting. 1901 AND ALL THAT reached its 100th issue (the second British 'zine to do that), and Mick Bullock (prop.) is now carrying on with NEW STATS-MAN, our equivalent to your EVERYTHING. 'Zines new or newish include GRIFFIN, a games 'zine concentrating on nothing but running games of everything. Keith Thomasson, 16 High Worple, Rayner's Lane, Harrow, Middx., HA2 9SU, if you're interest lies with postal 4000 A.D. or postal 1829 or postal Cosmic Encounter or postal Acquire or....

ENTENTE is another, but more of a Dippy 'zine this time. Shaun Derrick, 101 Ringwood Highway, Potters Green, Coventry, CV2 2GT. Young editor, but keen.

FILIBUSTER is a 'zine for people with weird senses of humor and strange brains to boot. Photo lithographed, its layout is impressive, but at 25p per copy ((40p)), not cheap. For info on this write Adrien Baird, 10 Haddon Close, Syston, Leics.

WHISKEY MAC is one of the more successful starters, from Paul Openshaw, 4 Beechmont Gdns.,

Southend-on-Sea, Essex. Once again more concentration on Diplomacy than anything else.

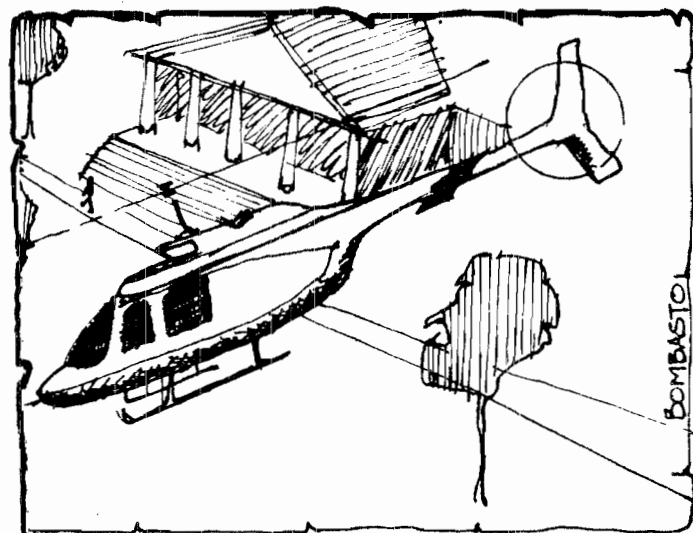
Eurocon, where 30-odd members of the hobby go off to the south of France and spend two weeks heavily into games, booze, food and anything else which comes to hand, had its second running from August 5th-19th. Richard Jarvinen, your own Oregon correspondent, came to the last one, and it was such a success it was tried again. I don't remember anything, so I can't write about it. The special Eurocon issue of DOLCHSTOSS (Richard Sharp, 27 Elm Close, Amersham, Bucks.) has a record of it, however. Available for a dollar or so.

So much for news; now some personal insertions. I hope Conrad doesn't mind the non-game crap I'm stuffing into this garbage. FILIBUSTER (see above) specializes in this kind of stuff, so you'll know whether or not you like it from your reaction to this column.

I think it's the non-game material which holds this hobby together. If every 'zine were like John Boardman's, or Hal Naus's (excellent as they are) then the hobby would disintegrate. Goods like COSTAGUANA make the hobby cohesive.

The fact that people are playing in fewer games and fewer 'zines also has had an effect. Getting into the hobby was always like getting into some kind of giant "in-joke," and although the effort was worthwhile, a lot of people got so they couldn't be bothered, and went off to create their own "in-joke" - but theirs isn't so good.

My God, I've gone totally off. What has all this got to do with American, or British, Diplomacy. Nothing. Will Conrad print it? What will Avalon-Hill do if he does? Will I care?



**"OKAY, FRED, STAND BY  
WITH THE HOOK - WE FOUND  
A SEVENTH!"**

# HOOSIER ARCHIVES DEMONSTRATION GAME NO. 7

## Spring 1911

AUSTRIA  
(John Boyer)

A kie-Hol. A Ruh S ITALIAN A Pic-Bel. A Ber-Kie. A Mun S A  
Ber-Kie. A Tyo-Tri. A Bud-Tri. A Ser-Tri. A Hoh H. A Sil H.  
A War H. A Mos-StP. A Lvn S A Mos-StP. A Sev-Mos. A Con S  
ITALIAN F Smy.

ENGLAND  
(Steve McLendon)

F Nat-Mid. F Eng S F Nat-Mid. F Iri S F Eng. F Bel H /a/.  
A Hol S F Bel. F Den H.

ITALY  
(Howard Mahler)

A Pic-Bel. A Bur S A Pic-Bel. A Mar S A Bur. F Bre-Pic.  
A Par S F Bre-Pic. F Mid-Bre. F Spa(sc)-Mid. F Por S F  
Spa(sc)-Mid. F Wes S F Spa(sc)-Mid. A Ven H. F Smy H.  
A StP H. A Nwy S A StP. F Nth S ENGLISH F Bel.

RUSSIA  
(Eric P. Verheiden, Jr.)

## Fall 1911

AUSTRIA

A Kie-Hol. A Ruh S A Kie-Hol. A Ber-Kie. A Mun S A Ber-Kie.  
A Sil-Ber. A Boh-Sil. A War S A Boh-Sil. A Mos-StP. A Lvn S  
A Mos-StP. A Sev-Mos. A Tyo-Tri. A Bud-Tri. A Ser-Tri. A  
Con S ITALIAN F Smy. OWNS: Bud, Tri, Vie, Bul, Rum, Ser, Ber,  
Kie, Mun, Ank, Con, Mos, Sev, War, Hol (15). Builds A Vie.

ENGLAND

F Nat-Nwg. F Den-Swe. A Hol-Bel /a/. F Eng S A Hol-Bel. F Iri  
S F Eng. OWNS: Edi, Lvp, Lon, Den, ~~Bel~~, ~~Hol~~, Swe (5). Builds  
A Edi.

ITALY

A Bel S AUSTRIAN A Kie-Hol. A Bur S A Bel. A Par S A Bur.  
F Bre-Eng. F Pic S F Bre-Eng. F Mid S F Bre-Eng. F Por S F Mid.  
F Wes S F Mid. F Smy H. A Mar-Pie. A Ven S A Mar-Pie. OWNS:  
Nap, Rom, Ven, Tun, Gre, Smy, Por, Spa, Bre, Mar, Par, Bel (12).  
Builds F Nap.

RUSSIA

A Nwy S A StP. A StP H. F Nth S ENGLISH F Eng. OWNS: StP,  
Nwy, ~~Sve~~ (2). Removes A StP.

((The following analysis reaches back to Issue 18 for the 1907 moves, and continues to the end of the game this issue.))

## 1907

Spring sees the drawing-up of a double thick line of Austro-Italian troops along the Kiel/Piedmont axis. Austria gains a center along the way, of course, Boyer's appetite is not to be re-strained. The Italian naval victories in and around Spain are crucial, for though the occupation is short, he manages to get a fleet into the Mid-Atlantic for a position that will eventually crack the Frenchman's back.

The French aren't putting up much of a defense, however; the wisdom of his attack on England, who seems erstwhile enough in his attempts to save France and the rapidly-failing position in the west, is questionable. A mad dog and an Englishman indeed!

Things aren't much better for McLendon in the north; not surprising, when one sees that he is faced with a force of six Russian units.

Lone Norway falls, but there are two consolations: the Russian did not move in with the more threatening fleet from Sweden, and Denmark has been taken in Norway's stead to at least keep the center chart balanced.

The most notable event of Fall is Austria's move against Russia. This is a situation that, at least in my opinion, was a near-certainty to come about. Why Verheiden was so trusting is an interesting question: Boyer must spin a sweet song of alliance indeed. I believe that the Boyer-Mahler alliance is too exclusive for anything but a temporary third partner. In any case we see why Austria needed a double line of troops - the most pressing of reasons, a two-front war!

Belatedly, France attempts to coordinate with England, or at least the orders would imply that. Only the darker reaches of Schlickbernd's mind hold the true motives behind his actions. But what can McLendon be expected to do but what he does, and react to the French attack of the Spring? Another season lost, and the Italians

## Spring 1912

AUSTRIA                    A Lvn-StP.   A Mos S A Lvn-StP.   A Sev S A Mos.   A War-Lvn.   A Con S  
ITALIAN F Smy.   A Ser S A Bud.   A Bud S A Vie.   A Vie S A Tyo.   A  
Sil-Mun.   A Tyo S A Sil-Mun.   A Kie-Den.   A Mun-Kie.   A Ber S A  
Mun-Kie.   A Hol S ITALIAN F Pic-Bel (nso).   A Ruh S ITALIAN F Pic-  
Bel (nso).  
ENGLAND                    F Swe-Nwy.   F Nwg S F Swe-Nwy.   A Edi-Yor.   F Iri-Nat.   F Eng-Lon.  
ITALY                      F Mid-Eng.   F Bre S F Mid-Eng.   F Pic S F Mid-Eng.   A Bel S A Bur.  
A Bur S A Bel.   A Par S A Bur.   F Por-Mid.   F Wes S F Por-Mid.  
A Pie S A Ven.   A Ven S A Pie.   F Nap-Tyn.   F Smy H.  
RUSSIA                    A Nwy-Yor (/r/ Fin).   F Nth C A Nwy-Yor.

## Fall 1912

AUSTRIA                    A StP S ENGLISH F Nwg-Nwy (nso).   A Lvn S A StP.   A Mos S A StP.  
A Sev S A Mos.   A Den S ENGLISH F Nwy-Swe (nso).   A Hol S ITALIAN  
F Pic-Bel.   A Ruh S ITALIAN F Pic-Bel.   A Kie S A Hol.   A Ber S A  
Kie.   A Mun S A Ruh.   A Tyo S A Mun.   A Vie S A Tyo.   A Bud-Tri.  
A Ser-Gre.   A Con S ITALIAN F Smy.   OWNS: Bud, Tri, Vie, Bul,  
Rum, Ser, Ber, Kie, Mun, Hol, Ank, Con, Mos, Sev, War, Den, Gre,  
StP (18).   Builds A Bud - two short.  
ENGLAND                    F Nwy S RUSSIAN A Fin-Swe.   F Nwg S F Nwy.   A Edi H.   F Lon-  
Wal.   F Nat-Iri.   OWNS: Edi, Lvp, ~~Lon~~, ~~Den~~, ~~Swe~~, Nwy (3).  
Removes F Nwg, F Nwy.  
ITALY                      F Mid-Iri.   F Eng S F Mid-Iri.   A Bur-Mar.   A Bel-Bur.   A Par S  
A Bel-Bur.   F Pic-Bel.   F Bre-Pic.   A Pie S A Ven.   A Ven S A  
Pie.   F Wes-Mar.   F Tyn-Wes.   F Smy H.   OWNS: Nap, Rom, Ven,  
Tun, Smy, Por, Spa, Bre, Mar, Par, ~~Gre~~ (11).   Removes F Wes.  
RUSSIA                    A Fin-Swe.   F Nth-Lon.   OWNS: ~~Swe~~, ~~Nwy~~, ~~Lon~~ (2).   Even.

GAME OVER!   The Winner - John Boyer as Austria.

bearing hard.

Winter bids a fond farewell to Germany, whose last remaining piece, the fleet Helgoland, put up a tragically heroic defense throughout the year. The amoeba-like Austria issues forth another pair of armies. Does Mahler note that Boyer is fast outstripping him in both centers held and in potential centers?

## 1908

The battle on the eastern front is an interesting one, spanning as it does from the Baltic Sea to the Black. Not going to Berlin is a smart move for Russia, as it pulls an Austrian army away from the Warsaw battle zone. Too bad for Verheiden that ample other armies exist to move into position on Warsaw and Sevastopol. The Austrian army in the Ukraine is pivotal, as it can threaten both Sevastopol and Warsaw in coordination with other adjacent armies, or move independently to Moscow in hopes of slowing down an effective Russian defense. The Russian is holding as well as can be expected, especially without the hoped-for, but not forthcoming, aid from Italy and/or England.

In the west, English fleets snake awkwardly westward on their way east, delaying quick deployment of fleets to Scandinavia, McLendon's best hope for more centers. The English diplomatic position is intriguing. While he finds common cause with Austria against Russia, Austria's very close ally Italy is steaming northward with the thoughts of foggy London on his mind.

The second Italian occupation of Spain is more permanent. Schlickbernd's day of reckoning is fast approaching.

Fall finds Boyer two centers fatter, and both of them snatched from Russia. His attack on Verheiden was well-time as all the Russian pieces were north; the payoff is equally fast in coming. The Russian has written off Warsaw as a lost cause and more prudently supports himself into Moscow while his fleets plan a diversionary attack on Berlin.

Schlickbernd, frothing at the mouth to the last, renews his attack on England. Oh, how poor McLendon's patience must be taxed! The assault falls through, and Italy winds up with Brest as well as Spain.

Builds, and more importantly removals, are good reflections of the board situation. Both France and Russia remove pieces that are too far behind enemy lines to remain viable. Italy's builds are the logical ones to make, but they are also the best were he contemplating stabbing Austria. Time will tell. Boyer seems to entertain no similar idea of attacking his ally. Trieste is a difficult place to build and operate a navy from, and such would be a crucial instrument in any attack on Italy.

But such conjectures could be moot. It could be that it is too late for Boyer to stab now; a two-way draw could already be a hard and fast agreement between the two.

#### 1909

Some may find it peculiar that Austria and Italy have not yet come to blows, but continue to remain staunchly allied. If Italy desired attacking Austria, this move probably would have been the best. The Russians are sure to lose and by 1910 they will not possess enough pieces to mount an effectual second front - vital if an Italian stab is to have hopes of succeeding.

One then can only conjecture about the nature of the Austro-Italian alliance. Is it out for a draw? Is Mahler simply playing for second? Or, have they agreed not to attack each other and just see who hits the magic 18 first?

The English, still hampered by the French, turn their fleets southward to block Italy. It may be too late. The Italian naval position is strong, and with another fleet on the way, only getting better. The army situation in France is also good for the Italian. Belgium and, later, convoys to England are possibilities.

The battles on the Russian plains are exercises in futility. Though the Russian recaptures Warsaw in the spring, he only finds himself more firmly encircled and winds up losing it and Moscow by year's end. His only real hope of hanging on is to gain a position where Austria's numerical superiority cannot be brought to bear, hence his retreat to his northern holdings.

The fall moves find Belgium very popular, but still English. The Italian's naval supremacy will soon come to the fore. Even though the peculiarly-behaving French fleet will be removed and no longer able to hamper McLendon's operations, Italy will have a new fleet in Spain and be able to utilize four fleets in the battle for the Atlantic.

The self-standoff by Austria in Constantinople might appear to some as a suspicion of Italy, I view it rather as healthy prudence. The easiest way to be stabbed is to ask for it. In any case, since Italy can't move to Ankara or Smyrna from Bulgaria, it is a foolproof way to hold three centers with two units.

Winter has Boyer at fourteen centers and within grasp of a win. But what four centers?

He is ill-suited to continue against Russia since he has no fleets, his own or otherwise, with which to attack Scandinavia and break the Russian line. Verheiden can hold put in St. Petersburg forever against a solely land assault.

For a win then, Boyer will have to turn elsewhere. Holland is one possibility, and if he chooses to stab Italy, he could reasonably hope for Greece, Smyrna and Venice pretty quickly. Yet, during winter he builds armies again. Italy's builds are once again the stab-possible.

#### 1910

Perhaps that handwriting is on the wall and the Austro-Italian alliance is pretty near insoluble. Austria moves his armies westward, taking a strong position on the borders of France and the Low Countries. The occupation of Tyrolia and Serbia are certainly moves to rouse thoughts of stab (at least the most blood-thirsty of us exclaim), but note some unusual things.

Why did army Budapest hold rather than move to Trieste or Serbia? Why wasn't Sevastopol sent to Armenia to aid in getting Smyrna? These moves would have allowed Austria to gain three centers in a year. Boyer knows this as well, so any intentions of a stab must have been, at best, half-hearted.

Italy wins the battle of the Atlantic and England's position continues to worsen. His position on the continent is fast becoming that of the poor man in the middle, and if he loses those vital European centers his fleet line will crack.

No centers change hands in Fall 1910. If Austria had used the army Kiel to attack Holland, then Belgium would have fallen to Italy (there exists the possibility that Boyer did not want Mahler to have a build without himself having a matching increase). As it is, the three Russian centers and the six of England are able to stymie for a time nearly three times their number.

Note, of course, that Austria does not attack Italy (though Italy's moves show that he half expected the attack). Boyer may have passed up the last decent time to go for a stab. But, as it appears, stab may not be his intention.

#### 1911

Spring sees Austria attacking (how rarely we see Austrian armies so far north and west!) and Belgium falling to Italy. By sliding his fleets along the French coast, Italy gives himself excellent position for the naval showdown with England that is soon to come.

The action in the Low Countries is about all the action there is. Austria ties up units in a large self-standoff at Trieste while allowing two armies to stand idle in central Europe. All because he can't find the room to properly

and profitably deploy them.

The shrewdly-placed Russian units (Verheiden is widely known for his defensive play, and this is a good example of why) continue to provide a vital link in holding the line.

Fall garners Holland for Austria, and England is pushed off the continent for good. His departure is the symbolic cap to the continental domination of the Austro-Italian alliance. Surprisingly, England turns sharply on Russia, nabbing Sweden and apparently planning on Norway as well. Why? Russia's units were crucial to any hope of holding this line against the red/green behemoth. By pulling out of his forward position, England only allows Italy to get even better fleet position.

#### 1912

The winter builds continue the motif of armies for Austria and fleets for Italy. The northern coalition (the term is used loosely) trades army St.Petersburg for army Edinburgh, with a corresponding loss in utility (if the halting of Boyer is of any concern to McLendon). Russia's removal practically hands St.Pete to Austria.

1912, alas, is an anticlimactic year. Little doubt exists about Boyer gaining the necessary centers for a win. The only real question is whether he will choose to hold at seventeen and allow his erstwhile Italian ally to catch up. Spring brings St.Pete and Denmark to Austria quite easily, while the majority of his armies mill aimlessly around the center of the board.

Russia's grabbing of London in the fall is humorous as an ironic comment on McLendon's vacillating play. The only really important move of the season is the Austrian grab of defenseless Greece. Dangling such a dainty before a country with as proven a voracious appetite for centers as Boyer's Austria at such a critical time is fairly begging for an attack. In fact, the move is accomplished with so little fanfare and should have been so obvious, one can hardly call it a stab at all.

#### Final Comments

First off, congratulations are in order for John Boyer. His play of Austria in this game was decidedly unorthodox but certainly successful. The mock war with Italy was one of the best-staged ploys of its type and certainly kept everyone in the dark as to just what was going on. One can only wonder why Mahler was so willing to accept a junior position in the alliance. There never appeared much chance of his gaining centers as fast as Boyer; as the center chart points, Boyer began a sustained push in centers in 1906, and in some years, '07 particularly, made considerable gains. Mahler was only playing catch-up and, though playing in the running, was never able to seriously chal-

lenge Boyer's lead without attacking directly.

Little can be said about Turkey. He was doomed from the beginning when confronted by the Austro-Russian alliance. Verheiden should be commended for having the pluck to try to forge a line to stop Boyer late in the game. Perhaps if he had not been so trusting of Boyer in the midgame, however, he might not have had to set up that defense line.

The western powers are difficult to analyze, especially in the case of the player for England, Steve McLendon. Frankly, from this point of view, many of his moves, and the motives behind them, were extremely obscure. The tendency seemed to be infectuous; much of Schlickbernd's later play was similar.

If one lesson is to be learned from this particular game, it might be the inherent superiority of land powers in the attack. It was noted throughout this analysis that Boyer built only armies. It was with this preponderance of armies that he defeated Russia and Germany (the source of a great proportion of his centers). Fleets would only be useful in attacking Italy and this was not necessary since centers could be gained elsewhere. Conversely, armies were adequate to defend against any Italian attack.

Mahler was faced with a circuitous route to gain centers, and a corresponding slower rate of growth. His naval expansion and convoys took time, and France did not fall as quickly as Boyer's victims succumbed to the bludgeon of his armies.

Naval powers such as England and Italy must remember that the oceans that so effectively insulate them from attack serve as an impediment to expansion, and a resulting difficulty to compete with rapidly-growing allies.

#### FINAL STATEMENTS FROM THE PLAYERS:

Steve McLendon, England: To begin, my play in this game was not very high-calibre at all. Hesitation and indecision at the start of the game cost me dearly later on.

Germany was the first to make an alliance offer, with France following about a week later. But neither one offered me Belgium, as they each wanted three builds in 1901. So I got both of them fighting over Burgundy and moved into Belgium on my own.

At the end of 1901 I was still undecided about whether I would go with Germany or France, but Italy tipped the scales when he told me he would join me and Germany in an attack on France. So I built F Lvp, F Lon. Then in Spring 1902, Germany joined with France and kicked me out of Belgium, with no Italian help anywhere in sight. I asked Mahler where his promised help was. He said he had "changed his mind" and was going to stay in the east. I then realized that Mahler had simply decoyed me into keeping France

off his back for a while.

Well, my fleets had position on France and the German threat to me diminished when Austria began amassing armies along the German border, and even took Munich. At that time it became apparent that an Aus-Ita-Rus alliance existed in the east. France and I were still going at each other's throats. He had F Iri and I had no way to stop him from taking Liverpool; I had F Mid and he had no way to stop me from taking Portugal.

Then Bruce called me and said he wanted to call a truce in light of the menace in the east. He would withdraw his fleets if I did. I welcomed this idea because I needed to get my fleets back up north to protect against Russia, and France needed to counter the Italian threat. Well, I really got suckered on that one because the fall moves found France in Liverpool as I had pulled back.

By that time I was beginning to feel like a pincushion, and Russia finally built the dreaded F StP (nc). But then I got a letter from Austria seeking a non-aggression pact. Austria had captured Berlin while I had retaken Belgium with a good shot at Holland, so the last thing I needed was a war with Austria in German territory.

But I did write to Russia and tell him that Austria was about to stab him. Eric didn't really believe me and, had I been playing Russia, I wouldn't have believed me either. But Eric did agree to let me move into Denmark (which was then in Russian hands) while he took Norway. A trade, so to speak, while he watched Austria. The Austrian stab did come the next season and Eric was caught off guard.

I then realized that I had to stop warring with France and try to prop him up as best I could (much as I hated to do so after all that had happened between us). Italy and Austria had grown very strong, and if I had continued to attack France, Italy would have gotten most of the spoils and, after France was gone, taken the few centers I would have been able to get. I would not have had the strength to match Italy's and keep what I had gained. Italy kept writing to me to attack France but I was not going to be suckered twice by Italy.

But France started pulling his old tricks. He would have none of my support, and even tried to take Belgium. So I pulled back and set my defenses while Italy eliminated France.

At that point it was me and Russia (with 9 units between us) against Italy and Austria (with 25 units). We knew we could not form a stalemate line, but the defense line we had set up was formidable. Austria was stopped cold and Italy was the only one with a chance of breaking through, but even for him the going would be slow and tedious. Eric wrote to Italy saying we would throw the game to Austria unless we got a 4-way draw or he attacked Austria. (I had stopped com-

municating with Italy some time before.) Italy would have none of either.

So I called John and told him that I would throw the game to him if he wanted the win (I wanted to make sure he had not guaranteed Italy a 17-17 draw). John agreed, and I hit Eric in the north to allow John to take St.Pete. I say "hit," but Eric had agreed to throw the game to Austria. I immediately got a postcard from Italy condemning me for my "stab of a faithful ally." Apparently he did not think Eric and I would follow through with our threat, as he had not comprehended what was going on. The next year I helped Eric into Sweden and let him have London while John took center #18 for the win.

Had Eric and I not thrown the game to Austria, Italy would have eventually broken through our defense, we would have been eliminated, and the game might have ended in a two-way draw.

I want to congratulate John Boyer on his win and fine play. I would also like to say I appreciated working with Eric Verheiden while holding off the two superpowers until the last. We almost pulled it off, Eric, ol' boy!

John Boyer, Austria (winner): 1977GL turned out to be a well-played Diplomacy game. That I won as Austria should go a long way to prove that, even at the highest level of competition, any country can win this game. I must admit, however, that I did not expect to be able to finish so well, much less win with Austria. To bait Howard Mahler, certainly a very good player in all aspects, I dangled Trieste and other goodies before

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him. Fortunately, we did not have any bad experience with each other in any Diplomacy game, though we only had a mutual non-aggression pact and no real active alliance. Now, I wonder if Howard can trust me in that game? Oh well, the price one must pay to win a DIPLOMACY WORLD demonstration game.

Eric Verheiden an excellent player in his own right, and a master of the art of defensive play - stalemate lines - was the Russian. To him I attribute a great game although I am sorry that as Austria I felt compelled to attack him and defeat him. I wish that any hard feelings between us as this is only a game, albeit an important one in many ways to all those involved.

John McKeon. I am sorry that he was doomed practically from the beginning. If it will give him any solace, I was ready to use him as an ally against both Russia and Italy if my trust (and risk) in Italy proved false. When things developed far enough to the point that Turkey attacked me in desperation, I was then forced to commit myself to the Italians. In any event, Russia was to be next as soon as it was feasible. The whole point of the early "fake war" was to confuse the potential alliance between Turkey and Russia. That it succeeded was a difficult achievement in the face of such great opposition.

As for the German players, I never really got to know them. I never for once considered Germany as an ally and was hoping for a French-German war. I was also quite willing to ally with France in order to give me leverage on my Italian ally who would be on my territory for quite some time, but the French insistence upon their alliance cast the die elsewhere.

England was played by none other than Steve McLendon. I must admit that at time I truly did not understand his moves. That he survived, of course, is due to what happened elsewhere to draw the strengths of Russia and France away from his country. Nevertheless, he played a crucial part in my victory by his willingness to stab Russia for a third-place finish. I do not know if I could actually have won the game if it weren't for Steve. If England and Russia had stayed together to the very bitter end, Italy and I would have been forced into a lengthy naval maneuver to crack their defense. The end result might have been totally different.

I do not wish to sound presumptuous, but I feel that this represents one of my best efforts in postal Diplomacy. I can imagine the agony that losing or elimination would have caused if it had happened to me instead of to all the others. Unfortunately, only one can win a game.

Actually, when you come down to the bottom line, it was the spectre of owning a trophy that nudged me into stabbing Italy for one lousy, stinking center, rather than take the chance that things would fall the other way. When one has total victory in his grasp, it is now often that one allows the jaws of defeat to snatch it away.

I am only human, fellas!

Howard Mahler, Italy: Many thanks to Walt Buchanan and the other players for my most enjoyable postal Diplomacy game. This has probably been my farewell appearance in postal Diplomacy.

The game from the Italian point of view was very hectic in the early stages. Austria called up to propose a variation on the "Key Opening." I agreed and we proceeded to stage our mock war. Although on the board we were only at a modest advantage, most of the other players were wrong in their idea of what was going on. This proved to be a valuable asset.

Russia "convinced" me to stop attacking Austria. Turkey was convinced he had stabbed me by helping Austria. There is a certain feeling of power in getting others to make the exact moves you want without having to lie, by roundabout means.

However, while I was doing okay in the east, my fate was being sealed in the west. Basically, it seemed at first as if England were in the driver's seat. He kept trying to convince me to attack France with him and Germany. I could not get Germany to even write me a letter the whole game. Thus I should have been more cautious. However, instead I finally gave England a half-hearted consent to his plan, thinking that I could decide whether to go along once England had launched his attack. Foolishly, I was looking for a way to supplement my projected eastern gains, in order to keep Austria in my shadow rather than vice-versa.

The reverse was to be the case. France had apparently been convinced to go into a strong alliance with Germany. The key to their plan was a joint attack on Italy and then England. I was caught with my pants down. By the way, I now think that England never had any intention of attacking France early on. His goal was merely to get France and me embroiled in a war while he went north. To aid in this respect England passed my letters to him on to France. I really was outmaneuvered in the west (not to mention whatever Austria had to do with it).

The French attack on me, turned out to spell doom for both of us. With England, Italy, Austria and Russia essentially united against France and Germany (Turkey was bottled up), the western allies found they had bitten off more than they could chew. However, although Germany and then Turkey fell, I had yet to make any real gains of supply centers versus France. I was in no position to exert influence in the east either, with most of my units on the French front.

Russia now made his fatal mistake. Austria had to attack either Russia or me for continued expansion. Russia assumed Austria would stab me. Russia left himself wide open and Austria walked right in. I neither knew of nor participated in this attack. When it took place I was in no position to do anything about it. The

perfect timing of this attack was the masterpiece of the game.

Meanwhile, throughout my war with France, I had been attempting to convince England to attack France from the rear. Since it would have been in his best interest, I still do not know why he never did. (There was one time when he had France by the short hairs. However, France managed to talk England into a truce, while France took Liverpool.) If I'd been able to get rid of France more quickly with English help, things might have been different.

How I was making my first small, still slow gains from France, while Austria was ballooning. England finally promised to help France hold me off. England broke his word at no gain to himself, and France threw his units against England. This speeded up my conquest by about one year, but by then Austria was making new gains in Russia.

Eric Verheiden, the Russian player, is justly famous for his ability to produce draws out of bad situations. He now began his futile and even counterproductive attempts to produce a draw in this game. He pulled back as quickly as possible versus Austria in order, presumably, to pressure me into a draw. All this did was to add to Austria's already immense strength.

Meanwhile, England, who would be the key man in any draw attempt, showed no interest. I kept telling Russia that a prerequisite for me to consider his draw plans was that I hear directly from England. England refused to write me. I suspect Russia's guarantee that he had England's support for a draw was wishful thinking on Russia's part. At one point England had written me saying that he would take second place if Austria offered it him.

England had played false with me the whole game. I wasn't even willing to consider putting myself at his mercy without hearing from him. England was to astound for one last time by stabbing Russia for no apparent reason. This sealed Austria's victory.

I still have no idea what was going through England's mind through the various stages of the game. If for no other reason, I did not deserve to win.

All of the players except Germany made this a fun game for me. I can't believe Germany did not write or 'phone me once during the whole game!

Finally, let me congratulate John Boyer. Thanks for an interesting game.

#### NEW DEMONSTRATION GAME NOW OPEN

With the conclusion of the current game, a new one will begin as soon as seven players can be signed. As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, Walt Buchanan will be unable to manage the new game owing to personal commitments, and the Gamesmaster for this foray will be Eric P.

Verheiden, Jr., 200 S. Azusa Ave., #2, Azusa, CA 91702. If you think you might be interested, read the information that follows and then, if you're still intrigued, write to Eric immediately enclosing the game fee. First seven applicants get in, and there are three signed now.

Eric will run the game on three-week deadlines by Xerox copy; all moves will be reprinted, as in the past, in DIPLOMACY WORLD. We suggest that no player outside of North America consider entering owing to time problems. Further, although there are no formal requirements of experience or past success, we urge novices and relatively new people to avoid this one. The pace is too fast, the competition too keen, and the class just a little too high for such. No insult intended, just stating facts. Finally, any person with a known record of unreliability in past games will be refused entry.

Seven players will be selected, and the fee will be \$15.00. This will include: All issues of Eric's move sheet by first class mail; and all issues of DIPLOMACY WORLD reprinting your game moves. If you drop out or resign, your subscription will be forfeit. If you are eliminated in play, however, you'll still get DIPLOMACY WORLD (though not Eric's stuff). Any player missing two moves in succession, or any three moves throughout the game, will be dropped and replaced.

In addition to the seven players, at least one standby is needed before we start. The only financial requirement here is that this person maintain a subscription to DIPLOMACY WORLD throughout the game (if the standby takes over play of a country, issues of DIPLOMACY WORLD thereafter will be free and the sub will recommence after the game). Additional standbys are desirable but will not receive Eric's move sheets unless and until they are needed for move submissions.

Eric cannot accept press from players, save maybe a one- or two-liner now and then. Do not enter this game for a press war unless you plan to print and distribute it yourself.

In all matters of money, game adjudication and game decision, Eric Verheiden will be the one and final authority, and DIPLOMACY WORLD will not interfere. If the game is abandoned, we will arrange to carry it on. We picked Eric precisely because we know this won't happen (though he could get flooded after a meteor shower, I guess).

Still interested? We hope so - and if so, write out your check and mail it to Eric now.

The second game that we were intending to run in these pages, from England, may or may not occur. I have been unable to get an answer from Richard Sharp lately. But I'll try again, and if things don't work out we'll find some equivalent substitute for the planned feature.

# DIPCON XI

by ROD WALKER

Under new rules adopted at DipCon X in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, the annual Diplomacy Convention (DipCon) must be rotated through three regions of North America: East, Central and West. The Eleventh DipCon was to be in the western region, and so wound up being held in conjunction with GLASC-II (Greater Los Angeles Simulations Convention) in the suburb of Northridge.

There is always a problem with Cons in the west in that they are very sparsely attended by people who aren't local. This year was no exception. We had only two persons from the eastern region, Bob Lipton of New York and Andy Cook of Virginia. We had only two from the central region, Walt Buchanan of Indiana and Jack Powers of Ohio. (Well, Walt's son Bill was with him, so I guess that makes 3.) There were a few from Arizona, Nevada and northern California. And that was it, gore fans; everybody else was from no further away than San Diego, 125 miles.

Now I'll admit that some of the blame for this falls on the Con's administration. There was very little advance publicity, and it was much too late. The information that did get out was quite good - concise and exactly what was needed. But, alas, many people had made other plans long before.

This failing was complicated by things not the management's fault. The Con's dates had to be changed; severe flooding in the area caused all events on the campus they used to be moved up a week. Furthermore, Origins/MichiCon in Detroit was only two weeks later, and probably drew off a good many people who might otherwise have come west.

The Convention itself was not bad at all. It seemed well attended and well organized. George Phillies, Russell Fox and others of the staff whom I met were entirely friendly and as helpful as possible. On the other hand, the Diplomacy tournament left much to be desired. The Con was not able to provide personnel to act as Assistant Gamesmasters, nor were they able to obtain timers or Diplomacy sets. Russell Fox had to leave for Chicago Friday night, so - guess who had to run the tournament almost single-handed?

Fortunately, things went pretty smoothly. For one thing, Walt Buchanan and Bob Lipton allowed themselves to be commandeered as assistants, and I can't thank them enough for their help. Secondly, the players themselves were enormously cooperative and understanding. I want to thank them all: the wonderful 70 people who were in the tournament, who stood around while I got things set up, who lent their Diplomacy sets, who acted as timers and assistant GMs for the various tables. Without their active help, the tournament would have been abso-

lute chaos.

The Tournament operated under the scoring rules I proposed last issue. 49 players showed up for Rounds I and II (although not the same 49 in each round), so we had seven boards. There were three boards in Round III. The final standings after all rounds show the top seven (all home towns in California unless otherwise noted):

Place	Points	Name & Home
1	68	David Lagerson, Canoga Park
2	62	Jim Bumpas, Los Altos
3	53.5	Doug Beyerlein, Menlo Park
4	51	Michael Foster, Quartz Hill
5	42.5	Mike Udell, Granada Hills
6	28	Tom Mirti, Los Angeles
7	22	Vic Carpenter, Gilbert, AZ
7	22	Dave Kadlecck, Crockett

(GLASC offered a trophy for first place and prizes for the first three places. In addition, Bob Lipton offered a subscription to his MIXU-MAXU GAZETTE which went to the 4th-place player.)

Saturday night saw three events. There was a panel and audience discussion on the future of the Diplomacy hobby. The panelists were Doug Beyerlein, Walt Buchanan, Bob Lipton and myself. We ranged over a broad spectrum of topics, including the growth of the hobby, the neglect by the hobby of face-to-face players, the decline in creativity (particularly literary creativity) in the hobby, the role of DIPLOMACY WORLD, and so on. Many excellent ideas and comments came from the panel and from members of the audience.

This was followed by the General Meeting of the International Diplomacy Association. This is the traditional focal point of DipCon. All Diplomacy players at the Con are encouraged to attend this event since it is less an actual business meeting and more a "town meeting." This time it was ably chaired by IDA President Bob Hartwig. He and other IDA officers provided information on what the IDA is doing and received a good deal of advice and commentary from those present.

At the conclusion of the IDA meeting, all those present voted to convene the DipCon Site Selection committee, and asked Bob Hartwig to continue as Chairman. The Committee, by its current charter passed in 1977, consists in any Diplomacy player at the current Convention who wishes to attend the meeting. It selects the site for the next DipCon, which under the charter must be in the Eastern Region next year. The Committee voted to hold the next DipCon in conjunction with the Origins convention if possible, and as Origins '79 has now been set for Philadelphia, that's where DipCon goes.

On the whole, the DipCon was a success, if it had its rough spots. I for one am looking forward to a particularly good Con next year back east.

# DIPCON XI

photographs by SCOTT MARLEY



The Awards "ceremony" - David Lagerson  
receives his plaque from Rod Walker



A typical tournament scene at DipCon  
(the blood has been brushed out)



Robert Bryan Lipton learns a new  
game from Bill Buchanan



The Diplomacy Seminar - Walt Buchanan (left)  
explains the secret of Rod Walker's happiness

# fugue

by "PARIAS"

I almost won a game of Diplomacy once. I know it's hard to believe, but it's true. The circumstances were somewhat suspect, but nonetheless it was a game of Diplomacy and I was leading at the crucial juncture. And then, Fate stepped in with her long arm and swept the pieces from the board and victory from my grasp. I look back often on that moment, wistfully, wondering and thinking on what might have been....

It was a cool, grey day, with clouds hanging over the park like dark airships, moving slowly about the turbulent heavens. On a whim, I had decided on a small stroll, hoping the fresh air would clear my mind and thus help solve a small problem on which I had been pondering. It concerned the strategic position of Ireland when faced with an aggressive Turko-Italian pact, a dilemma I had faced in two of my last three games. Suddenly I was roused from my deep thoughts by a clamor of voices ahead. Looking up, I saw a group of people surrounding one of the numerous chess tables to be found in the park, engaged in a rather vociferous argument.

"No, no, you idiots. If only six play, Russia drops out and Turkey gets a free move."

"You effing fool! It's England what gets the free move, while Germany...."

"You're both wrong. It clearly states in the rules, as I remember, that Austria controls Silesia, while...."

I could hardly believe my ears! Could they actually be discussing (I dared not even think the word) The Game? I approached cautiously and peered over one of the participant's shoulder. It was true! They had set up a Diplomacy board on the chess table, but having only six players and having forgotten the rules, they were trying to determine the initial positions. I jumped to the obvious conclusion.

"Ahem," I chanced. No response. "Ahem!" Louder this time, and two heads turned toward me. "Perhaps I can solve your predicament. I just happen to play Diplo----"

"Look here, you bleedin' git! If Germany doesn't get the extra piece, then it...."

"Germany, hell! England always has the historical position...."

Hmmm...I thought. Apparently they hadn't heard me correctly. I looked anxiously at all their faces. Nope, I knew nary a soul. Well,

that's not it, anyway. I decided to try again.

"Ah, excuse me, gentlemen. It just so happens that I do play Diplomacy. Should you care to let me into your little game, your problem...."

"Damn it, Barker! You're just trying to take advantage. Just because I dated Sally the other evening doesn't mean that France has to drop out."

"Sally! Last thing from my mind, you two-timing double-crossing...."

Well, it took me a little while, but I finally managed to convince them that it would be to their advantage to let a stranger into their game. I did think, however, that having Warsaw neutral and not allowing me, as Russia, into Scandinavia until 1904 was a bit harsh. The twelve dollars, at least, I could afford. But at last we were under way. As my opening move, I attempted F StP (sc) - StP (nc), A Mos holds, F Sev-Tri. I must modestly admit that this was a terrific success. Of course they didn't allow my move to Trieste (Austria had had a standoff in Venice), but the furor created (Germany and Turkey immediately assumed I had strong ties with Italy, which he vigorously denied) completely caused them to overlook my move to St. Pete (nc), a move with which I had previously had only limited success. Well, that sowed the seeds of discontent in central Europe. It remained to be seen whether I could foment dissention between France and England. Picking up on an earlier-heard comment, I quickly entered into their conversation with such remarks as, "Do you think the French fleet will Sally out into the Channel?" and "That's two times the English have made a double crossing to Norway." Again my little ploy worked. By Spring '02, the whole continent was embroiled in one heated argument, save yours truly. I continued this undermining technique for two more seasons with but one small fright. When I moved my army into the Ruhr, Germany became instantly suspicious. Luckily I managed to convince him that it was the only way in which I could get my fleet into the Channel to support an attack against Belgium, currently held by Italy. He reluctantly agreed. I determined to watch the German closely in the future, as his quick mind was apt to cause problems later. We rolled on into the afternoon and the autumn of '04. I now held an amazing 16 supply centers, and should my latest strategem be successful, I would gain the final two I needed for victory and immortality. I had worked long and hard to gain the confidence of Austria, and the future of the game now lay within his fall orders. Had my carefully laid plans borne fruit? Would my name now be entered into the list of (I almost cried at the thought of it) winners?! Please, Oh God, let it be just this once. Austria now began the reading of his critical orders:

"I, Franz Josef, Emperor of Austria-Hungary,

Lord of Transylvania, Holder of the Sacred Sword...."

"C'mon, get on with it, jerk!"

"Hmph. So," he paused now for effect, his eyes meeting and holding each of ours as he scanned the table, "my orders for Autumn '04 are: Army Gascony supports convoy of Turkish army Prussia, via Baltic Sea, Denmark, North Sea, Norwegian Sea, North Atlantic Ocean, Mid-Atlantic Ocean to Spain! (Gad!, I cheered, he did it, which assured me of taking Berlin now that the pesky Turks were removed from the scene. But, I thought in a panic, did he issue that all-important support for Liverpool, upon which my victory now rested? I awaited breathlessly.) As my final order, the Royal Austrian Fleet, on maneuvers in the Irish Sea, is proud to assist in the sup----"

A sudden and brilliant flash of light, followed almost immediately by a tremendous clap of thunder, drowned out his words. And then, torrents of rain burst from the skies, flooding the map and washing away the helpless armies and fleets.

"No!" I cried. "Stop! Wait a minute!" But the owner of the game was already grabbing his pieces and throwing them into the box. The others had already scattered for shelter from the downpour. Within seconds I was alone, stand-

ing at the empty chess table, my dreams shattered, my hopes turned to dust. The rain continued to pound me, running in rivers down my neck, my back and my trousers. And now, when I reflect upon that moment of personal tragedy, I realize that that was the moment when I truly became

-----Pariah.

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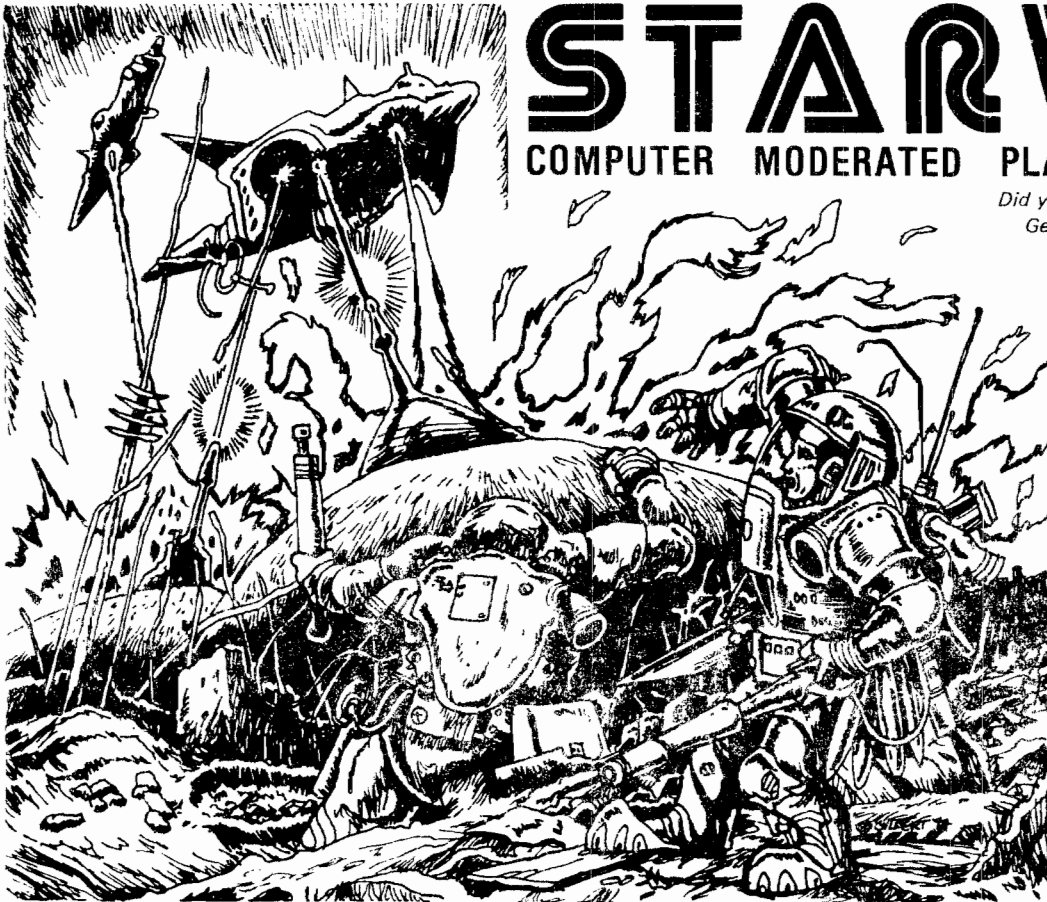
#### WORDS OF WISE MEN

(To someone you've just stabbed) "In taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; in passing over it, he is superior." - Francis Bacon

(To someone who believed you, to their detriment) "Words are wise men's counters, they do but reckon with them but they are the money of fools." - Thomas Hobbes

(When Germany is the enemy) "To God I speak Spanish, to women Italian, to men French, and to my horse - German." - Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor

(When opponents scream because you've built three units) "Guns will make us powerful; butter will only make us fat." - Hermann Goering



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# THE GAMER'S GUIDE

TO DIPLOMACY -

a review by C. F. VON METZKE

Avalon-Hill Game Company have just published and released a new booklet giving us a comprehensive overview of "our" game in as many lights as possible. Written entirely by Rod Walker, it can be obtained by writing the publisher at 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214. Price \$3.00 (I believe you are supposed to include postage, in which case I'd suggest adding 50¢).

I should like to preface my review of THE GAMER'S GUIDE TO DIPLOMACY with a few codicils, to take the sting out of certain points which may creep into my writing. For one thing, I have no illusions about my being able to do it better; there was a point at which I might have obtained Avalon-Hill's commission for myself, but I'm not stupid. Rod is one of perhaps three hobbyists in the world who could have done this decently. (One of the others is Richard Sharp of London, who is soon to release his own book-form analysis of the game. I look forward to reviewing it too.) For another, some of the gripes I have about the finished product are things I might have corrected before publication; Rod kept me supplied with advance drafts, chapter by chapter, and I must confess that my criticisms were few and minor. Some of those were taken, too. Of course I was never able to see the entire manuscript before it was all put together, and the things I like least about Rod's work have to do with overall balance and emphasis among the separable parts. Still, if I'd done my critiques properly....

The work excels in four specific overall areas, and in a multitude of smaller ways. The biggest bonuses are: Organization of subjects; Comprehensive nature of the product; Smooth and interesting writing style; and Avoidance of information either too technical or too simplistic. It is an effort designed to be useful for novice and expert alike, and - to my conceded surprise - it works.

**ORGANIZATION:** Rod has created his essay in a superbly logical and sensible progression from basics and generalities to specifics and details. Each part of the whole follows quite naturally from what precedes, and at no time does he ever get ahead of himself. There are a couple of extraneous tangents, but they are comparatively insignificant. Whenever a given section touches on a subject that is more fully treated elsewhere, it is carefully cross-referenced; this is occasionally inconvenient (requiring some mental note-taking to "come back the point again later"), but there really is no way around it if all subjects are to be adequately considered in sensible order. Perhaps just a little less mention of what I must call "postal technicalities" - Boardman

Numbers, ratings, and the like - would have made for fewer of these check-backs.

**COMPREHENSIVENESS:** If one is going to flaw Rod's tome on this level, one is going to have to do so on the level of claiming too much. There is not a reasonable topic in the whole field on which Rod has not touched at least slightly, and in most cases deeply. I have a few quibbles about the amount of detail employed in spots, one way or the other; these will be discussed later. There is only one item in the entire 34 pages of text that I would specifically have excluded; one-sixth of a page devoted to selecting countries by preference list. I can think of nothing that is wholly absent that cries for inclusion. This means that, as concerns content, I take exception to one-two hundred and fourth of the effort.

**SMOOTH WRITING STYLE:** Writing has always been Rod's forte. It still is. Astonishingly, at no time does he descend into the boring; in only rare instances does he fall into the trap of "writing down" to his potential audience; and he seldom wanders into technicality left unexplained. There is no way to write a work of this type without a few such moments; the wonder is that there are as few as there are. Precisely one sentence (!) glares; the line, "This sort of deception, while rife with spiffitude, can't be repeated too often," makes absolutely no sense to anyone who doesn't know Rod personally. I believe I have just said that, in rewriting for a new edition, Rod ought to change one word. My goodness!

**AVOIDANCE OF TECHNICALITY:** Already noted to some extent. I suspect that the single greatest danger in putting together this kind of work lies in erroneously assuming that the reader knows more than he does, or will memorize technical terms as he reads. In a few oft-repeated phrases ("face-to-face" = "FTF," "magazine" = "'zine") Rod has defined the abbreviation once and carried on. In less obvious cases ("Boardman Number" = "BN," "supply center" = "SC") Rod has wisely avoided using the abbreviations at all, except in specific paragraphs that deal precisely with the abbreviated item. His only real presuppositions for the reader are that they have a Rulebook (and have presumably perused it) and are familiar with the three-letter province abbreviations. On the other hand, this is not a two-way street; too many abbreviations and technical references can confound the novice, but there is no such thing as "too few" for the expert.

So much for the overview. Let us now proceed through THE GAMER'S GUIDE TO DIPLOMACY, touching on the high and low spots as appropriate. However, no attempt is going to be made to be too exhaustive; I guess I learned, back in elementary school, that one of the most repugnant forms of

writing is the critical essay that is longer than the piece being critiqued.

Rod begins, after some introductory material, with a discussion of "Objectives in Diplomacy." He summarizes superbly the varied styles of play, "win-draw" vs. "balance of power" vs. "anything goes." This is, in my view, one of those major points that seems to most like a minor point, and I'm glad Rod chose to include a comparative discussion as well as some general analysis.

There follows an eight-part section under the heading, "Elements of the Game." In general I am pleased, but there are gripes. The first segment, "Communication," is in my view the weakest, and that's too bad because it ought to be one of the very strongest in the work. Rod acknowledges this when he writes as his third and fourth sentences, "The real game of Diplomacy is played mostly during the negotiation periods. The key to victory is communication."

True enough - but it's also a fact, shown by experience, that communication is one of the weakest aspects of the average player's game. Of course nobody can teach effective human relations, but something more than a third of a page seems mandated for the subject that represents "the real game." Several issues ago, DIPLOMACY WORLD published a quiz-article by Nicky Palmer, "Are You A Master Diplomatist?," concerned with effective understanding and manipulation of the negotiating process. Nicky's format would not have been suitable for transfer, but the idea inspiring it - understanding communications in relation to tactics and strategy, and learning to analyze the opponent as a person as well as a military force, was superbly stated and very germane. Naturally I do not expect a rehash of Dale Carnegie here, but I would like considerably more depth than just why one should never "stop negotiating with enemies."

There is a second section of this "Elements" chapter that I am not fond of, though here my distress is smaller. Element Four is titled, "Cheating." Within the heading Rod discusses a few tricks that are flatly illegal or unsportsmanlike (bullying opponents physically, adding Flying Dutchmen - improper extra units snuck into place - to the board) and a few that are perfectly within the purview of the game (sabotage and forgery, spying). I think the former things would have been better left out; my view of this game does not extend to blatant impropriety (nor does Rod's in the case of violence, but he does suggest that Flying Dutchmen are acceptable), and I really see little point in discussing at all, let alone discussing favorably, aspects that ought flatly to be excluded from play of the game. To state that "(bullying and alliances based on extraneous personal factors) have no place in the game" is approximately like saying, "do not break the rules when playing." Obviously. The items listed in this "Cheating" list that are

legal and proper, on the other hand, should be mentioned - but not under "cheating." There is a miscellaneous category; let them fall there.

Quite possibly the single best moment in the entire booklet comes in the discussion of "Stalemates." Rod is careful to warn the unsuspecting learner, "...players may be tempted to spend more time on (stalemates) than they are worth. A stalemate is, after all, a sort of last refuge." Rod is careful to list all of the significant stalemate positions, with their variations and units/conditions needed to achieve them. The novice, merely running step by step through this part, will gain an immense amount of knowledge, some of which is only incidentally related to stalemates. (I've always felt that stalemates are primarily important for their ability to lead to deeper understanding of the dynamics of the game, and not for their intrinsic worth.)

Under his analysis of the inherent power of convoys, Rod follows a couple of his examples with an italicized note that says, in relevant part, "These are the rulings of the game's inventor...For reasons which are very technical and not really relevant to a basic understanding of the game, I disagree with Mr. Calhamer." This is what I meant earlier when I said there were infrequent examples of Rod "talking down." If Rod's converse opinion is too technical to be explained, let it go unmentioned. Particularly since it isn't relevant....

The largest single section of the work, obviously, is the seven-country strategic and tactical analysis. Rod has done here, in nine pages, what others have taken scores of pages to accomplish. And Rod has done far superior work. It begins with some general points and then proceeds to a prose matrix, country by country and enemy/ally by enemy/ally. It all fits together like one of those mileage charts on road maps; find the meeting point of the horizontal file for Minneapolis and the vertical file for Andover and you've got the distance. Find the Italian subsection of the English discussion and you've got your basic game patterns. All of this material is thorough, and most of it is top-drawer. There are a couple of weak spots ("Endgame" for England is poor), but they are so few, and the bulk is so thought-provoking, that the minor slips don't matter - in fact, in a backhanded way it may be an instructional aid in that anyone of any intelligence, working in depth through all of this stuff, will quite likely expand the weaknesses and fill the gaps on his own, by cross-referencing material from one spot where it exists or is implied to the place where it's lacking.

The time is nigh to mention the one big goof in the physical product. Halfway through the section on Austria (beginning "GERMANY," P. 12, col. 1), the material breaks off and - lo and behold - we're into a discussion of England.

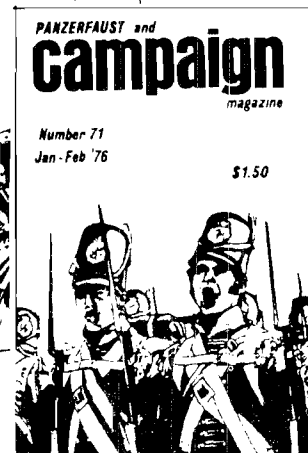
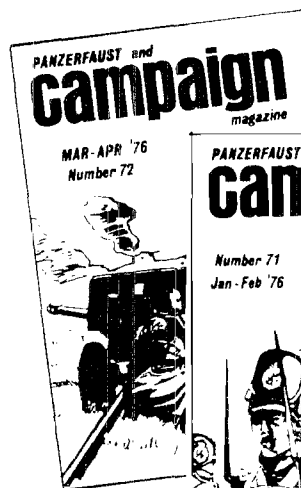
This goes on for a time, to the top of P.12, col. 3; then, beginning "Midgame," the Austrian material reappears and carries on where it should. Following Austria is England, of course, wherein all of the misplaced material reappears in its proper place. Avalon-Hill have noted the flub and plan corrections. No big deal, as long as you know that nothing is actually missing.

Following the reams of material on the seven Powers, there's a cute 'aside' - photos of the Great Power leaders in 1901 with their proper titles &c. Nice touch. Better if it had come in a different location - at the very end, for instance - but nice touch anyway.

I do not feel a compelling need to discuss most of the remainder of the booklet; most of it represents the "extra" stuff, the expansions on the basic information - if you will, the frosting. And it is good stuff, too. I will comment on one more aspect; Rod has included a complete report of an actual postal game, with commentary. He's picked a good game, one which shows all kinds of worthy moments and situations, and he has carefully explained the terminology and the postal eccentricities (i.e. "NMR") that creep in. He has not, in my view, given us sufficient analysis of the moves. This is primarily mere description. Inasmuch as there is some analysis, and since much of what happens speaks for itself, the lack is not nearly as serious as I at first thought. The analysis is far stronger in the earlier years of the game, which is logical because (a) it shows somewhat more decisive single moves, (b) it shows more single-unit effects (inasmuch as each power has fewer units to use for a given purpose), and (c) it was written first, before Rod lost some of his depth of animation. Of course I haven't the faintest idea what was written when, but it looks precisely as if Rod started on a high point and gradually allowed the "let's-get-on-with-this" attitude to crawl out of the woodwork. Do not read too much into this; the worst is not really bad at all, just not as good as it might have been with more effort.

A pleasant touch at the end is a reprinting of the map and rules for Calhamer's original 1958 version of the game; the map is a little small for actual use (though it might work with plastic sheaths and grease pencils), but it's fairly easy to re-draw in enlarged form.

This has read like a litany of criticism. How typical of negative reviewers! But I have spent the most time on suggesting improvements and identifying holes needing repair; I really ought to emphasize that the entire work is a masterpiece in its field, easily definitive and superior by light-years to its predecessors in the same vein. I consider it a mandatory purchase for any player; in fact, making one more move in any game without first reading it is a serious tactical error!



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# VARIANT DESIGN

by LEWIS PULSIPHER

It seems that an international Diplomacy activity of any sort is hard to organize successfully. The first Variant Design Competition suffered because only North Americans entered. Having moved across the water, I tried again from the European side; this time there were entries from the Netherlands, Belgium (including one Pole), Denmark/Switzerland (but he is English), Northern Ireland and Canada - but not from the USA or the island of Great Britain! There were no entries in the SF/F category. John Lipscomb of Canada won in the historical category with his ANCIENT EMPIRES II (no relation to John Boyer's game). Nicky Palmer of England won the simple variant category with his entries printed here. Michel Liesnard won the open category with his QUEST FOR THE RUNIC CHIP, which will appear here next issue. (Note: I have had trouble distributing the prizes because I've lost contact with Nicky Palmer. Anybody know where he is?)

Thanks to all who entered or contributed prizes.

## PACIFIST DIPLOMACY

Nicky Palmer

1. Rules as standard DIPLOMACY except where stated.

2. In every year in which a player neither gains a center from, or loses one to, another player, an extra unit can be built in any home center. Such units are referred to as "bonus units" and are marked with an asterisk, e.g. F\* Kie-Hol. Bonus units reflect extra economic strength for powers not interested in major territorial changes.

3. In every year in which the condition in Rule 2 is not satisfied, the player loses one bonus unit (his choice). When all bonus units have been lost this has no effect - losses are not saved up, and a "year of peace" will again generate a bonus unit.

4. Bonus units are built and removed in Winter. Removals cannot replace or be replaced by regular removals - the two types of unit are accounted for separately. Bonus builds can be saved up.

5. Victory is by overall majority of centers, not units.

COMMENT: The purpose of this variant is to add a new alternative strategy: holding back (except for neutral conquest) and building up forces for a big offensive later. Not, perhaps, pure pacifism! - but an intriguing alternative to non-stop attack. Secondary virtue: gives hope to 1- and 2-unit powers who may have a

better chance of avoiding center changes than the "superpowers."

## SHADOW WORLDS

Nicky Palmer

1. Rules as standard DIPLOMACY except where stated.

2. Each player has the same country in two simultaneous games, "A" and "B".

3. Before the Winter adjustments in the simultaneous games, each player lists the centers he owns in either game, counting his home centers only double if owned in both games; all non-home centers only count once even if held in both games. Thus if Italy owns: (A) Ven, Rom, Nap, Tri, Mar; (B) Ven, Tri, Nap, Vie, Tun, he is counted as holding 9 centers: 2 x (Ven, Nap) + Rom, Tun, Mar, Tri, Vie - not 10 as it would be if Tri were counted twice.

4. These centers may be divided each year between the two games as the player wishes; in the example, If Italy had 6 units in "A" and 2 in "B", he could build one in either game - or disband a unit in one game and build two in the other, or cut his losses and go down to zero in "B" and build three in "A". (Note that this would not preclude him rebuilding in "B" in a later year, if his build centers had not yet been captured.) Play continues on both boards until one player has all 34 centers in his control list (not necessarily all on the same board). If two achieve this simultaneously, the result is a draw. For a shorter game, substitute 18 for 34.

COMMENT: The fastest growth is achieved by stabbing in opposite directions in the "shadow worlds" - but this risks alienating one's allies in each! Added to this tricky strategic problem are various tactical twists: when to strip one board to benefit the other, and balanced growth vs. alternating drives on each board. Note that one can win even if wiped out on one board - but only just, by completely conquering the other.

	Origins VI Final Round						
	A	E	F	G	I	R	T
1901	5	6	5	4	4	5	4
1902							
1903							

Benel

"I know, I know, but he kept telling me I'd be part of a Diplomacy record, so I convoyed him in"

## VARIANT INFORMATION

by ROBERT SACKS

"Hey, Robert, Conrad wants you and Pulsipher to stop sniping."

"Fine by me - I didn't start."

"He also wants some more postal openings."

"But nobody has written to correct or add to the last ones we announced! Oh, well...."

First, I'd like to list some long-awaited variant openings. Unfortunately, that isn't possible, since such lists are at least four months out of date, so I am going to give you a different list: 5 respected gamesmaster publishers from different regions who have variant openings and either know of or publish variant openings of other publishers:

Gregory Costikyan, 1675 York Ave., New York, NY 10028.

Larry Dunning, 46 Holmesdale Road, West Midland 6056, Perth, Western Australia.

John Leeder, 1211 5th St. N.W., Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2M 3B6.

Douglas Mills, 210 Bramhall Lane South, Bramhall, Stockport, Cheshire, U.K.

Ken St.Andre, 3421 E. Yale, Phoenix, AZ 85008.

Next, I ought to give notice that the deadline for filing for election to the Diplomacy Variant Commission (DVC) for the 1979-80 term, and to the Variant Awards Panel for 1978, is 18 November. (Statements are required only for DVC.) In spite of rumors to the contrary, geographical spread is desired. Candidates should file with Robert Sacks, 4861 Broadway, Apt. 5-V, New York, NY 10034, USA.

Third, I will not take this opportunity to tear apart a letter I received opposing the International Variant Association. The attitude that there should be no cooperation astounds me as much as the attitude I have heard that there should be no organization in the variant hobby. I simply do not understand the politicians of hate and division, nor do I understand how they came to be so powerful.

Let me give an example of the kind of project that is needed that can only be done by a group with extensive backing: a catalogue or handbook of variants. You may ask why this is needed. It is the old problem of reinventing the wheel. Every time new blood comes into the variant hobby, a good portion of it is devoted to variant design. Unfortunately, with the lack of any catalogue or handbook, there is the tendency to design variants similar or identical to more ancient ones. One of the more distinguished new bloods has just reinvented Anonymity under the name Highly Public Diplomacy. Another has created an extremely limited version of Bribe Diplomacy which is becoming quite popular. I question the dis-

organization and disunity that encourages this situation.

Another problem this catalogue or handbook would answer is the problem that faces almost every variant gamesmaster, and is probably the major bane of the variants hobby: in order to open a section, get players, and actually play and adjudicate a variant (not to mention replacing players or gamesmaster), the variant must be published and widely available. Some gamesmasters get around this by publishing their own variants, but only a limited number can do this - one or at most two for any given variant. Others republish variants, except that this may not be possible, either because the variant cannot be found, or republishing it is officially prohibited. Of course a handbook may be faced with the same republishing restrictions, just as the several variant banks have been in the past. Again, there is a large need for cooperation.

((The Editor wishes to add that a full list of all known variants, in a form that can be corrected and expanded at will, has just been issued by Der Garvey of Ireland. In computerized form, it lists all games alphabetically by name and provides references to designer, number, players required, etc. The perfect starting point for Robert's hoped-for catalogue!))

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The NAVB is on loan from the Custodian, Dave Kadlecik, to Rod Walker. The purpose of the loan is to allow an expansion and restructuring of the Bank.

During this interim period, Rod Walker will be Acting NAVB Custodian, although it should be understood that Dave is the primary Custodian. Fred Davis, of Baltimore, MD, has been appointed Custodian of NAVB-East. Dick Vedder, of Tucson, AZ, has been appointed Custodian of NAVB-West. It is our hope to appoint one or two more Custodians: NAVB-North (preferably in Canada) and NAVB-South. It may be that these area designations will not work in practice, but the multiple Custodianships will continue on another basis. We are looking for volunteers for the vacant position(s), and are specifically looking for one from Canada.

Using the Bank's files, it is our plan to construct a set of standard files of variant games. Copies of these games will be available from any of the Custodians for a standard fee (generally 10¢ per page plus a handling fee of 50¢ per game). Lists of available games will be made available, along with the number of pages for each. For the present, anyone who needs a copy of any particular game should enquire with Rod Walker, 1273 Crest Dr., Encinitas, CA 92024.

It is not our plan to make all variants available. Only the best and most playable ones will be put into our "active file." Games which are inferior versions of those in the active file, or for which there is no demand, or on which we have insufficient information, will be kept in a "research file." Finally, a "pending file" will be kept on games which will become "active" as soon as we have an accurate and reproducible copy.

Gamesmasters who wish to run particular variants, and would like to have copies available for their players in the file, should write to Rod and indicate which games. Please enclose a stamped envelope for his reply. It is our hope that easier availability of variant rules and maps will encourage people to play these games; some of them are excellent, postally or face-to-face. We also hope to increase our coverage by joining with other variant banks in a world-wide network.

As its first effort, NAVB now has available a 20-page packet consisting in full maps and rules for the various versions of the Youngstown Variant (Versions II and IV-XII; the last two are newly designed by Rod Walker especially for this pack), at a cost of \$2.50. Also, the popular Aberration (Versions I and II), 6 pages, \$1.10.

SPECIAL REQUEST: Variant designers are requested to send at least one extremely legible copy of each new variant to Rod Walker. Suggestions and comments, as the NAVB project goes forward, will also be welcome.

- Rod Walker

## NEWS FROM THE CLASSICAL BOARD

by DOUGLAS MILLS

The winds of change continue to blow through the pages of DIPLOMACY WORLD, and this regular feature is no exception. Only into its third installment and our friend Michel Liesnard has already been reluctantly forced to relinquish the column due to conflict of interest, and has finally gone NUTS!, leaving Yours Truly to step into the breach and soldier on.

Yes, Michel is now the big nut in Continental Europe, having been ordered into the Brussels office of Kamlag (a major importer of adult games in Benelux) and told that he was to become the full-time Editor in Chief of a professional, bilingual (French/Flemish) wargame/hobby publication. Michel has been given a completely free hand in deciding content and organization of the mag, including the choice of a somewhat unusual name: NUTS! He tells me the name is universal in its meaning...anyway, I'm sure you'll all join me in wishing Michel the best of luck with this new venture, and we will all wait with bated breath for the first issue's appearance, sometime during September.

Turning to the more 'fannish' side of the hobby, some interesting things have been happening on the 'zine scene. If you're interested in Diplomacy variants, then Europe's the place to be. Although just one year old, the Dutch CONFLICT GAZET, published by Paul Meerts on behalf of Ducosim, seems to have earned itself a good reputation and now has a circulation of around 100. CONFLICT GAZET is currently running a regular game and a variant, Dutch Diplomacy, which is having its first gametest.

In Germany, STABSANZEIGER (published in German by Hartmut Halfmeier) has also just celebrated its first birthday, and has three Abstraction II and a couple of Railway Rivals games in progress, not to mention German Politiplomacy. Openings available at the moment include regular and Multiplicity.

GETTYSNEWS, care of Michel Liesnard/Belgium, is also...you guessed it!, blowing out the single candle, and pounding on at the incredible frequency of 20 issues per year. Completely dedicated to the publication and playing of variants, GETTYSNEWS has eight openings (including Treachery, Sacred Rhino and LiMa 5), and is also prepared to consider running other variant games provided there is sufficient demand. Subscribers to GETTYSNEWS also have the added bonus of Michel's particular brand of humor and excellent GMing capabilities - entertaining reading provided

you can understand Brussels French!

The older long-term hobby freaks will be glad to hear that Ake Jonsson of Sweden's THE POLAR KNIGHT fame is making a comeback of sorts (in fact he never went away, but allowed publication to stand still about a year ago, continuing his games by carbon copy), and has decided to open some new waiting lists, both regular and variant, which will be GMed by him, reports being published in the pages of my own 'zine AIDE DE CAMP. Hopefully I'll be able to persuade Ake to donate the odd article in the form of a sort of sub-'zine.

France's VORTIGERN plods on steadily to middle-age and its 49th issue (published by Roland Prevot, the Boardman Number custodian for continental Europe). Roland, like the rest of the editors mentioned, is following the trend and has decided to open a variant waiting list, though for which variant he's still not sure. Of particular merit in VORTIGERN is the excellent cartoon art-work, courtesy of Didier Guiserix.

Belgian-born and British-bred (published in French and English out of Manchester), AIDE DE CAMP has plenty of reason to celebrate - three of them in fact: 1, she's one year old; 2, she has hit a circulation of 100+, and 3, she has 12 games in progress, of which no fewer than 6 are variants. Currently, four openings are available within ADC's pages: French and English language regular, Highly Public Diplomacy, The Pleiades Cluster (a sci-fi game which has nothing to do with Diplomacy), and 'Amazon,' a regular game reserved only for the fairer sex. Three girls still needed for this last one - anyone interested?

While on the subject of variants, European editors requiring Miller Numbers should contact Douglas Mills, who is the Custodian for that neck of the woods.

The 'zine RASPUTIN, supposedly published in Belgium and mentioned previously in this column, appears to be a hoax, or figment of somebody's rather vivid imagination.

However, even vivid imaginations can be catered for, and I would suggest sufferers attend the European Science-Fiction and Fantasy Convention (EUROCON 4) taking place at the Free University of Brussels, in Belgium, on November 1-5, 1978. This event has been held bi-annually since the first one took place way back in 1972 in Trieste. Many famous writers and fantasy illustrators will be on hand, and there will be numerous film shows.

Another event which will have taken place by the time you read this, but which would probably have been more suited to the murderous tendencies of certain 'diplomats' reading this, is PRESTONDIPCON, the major Diplomacy event of the year here in the U.K., kindly organized by Bob Brown, editor of THE TINAMOU, and currently the National Games Club face-to-face secretary. Held on the premises of Preston Poly-

technic, sleeping accommodation for more than 200 was made available, and most of the British hobby's major personalities attended. I'll tell you more about the actual events next time.

The International Conflict-Simulation Group Weekend '78 Convention, held at the end of June at Waterloo (the real one!) in Belgium was a great success, with people attending from all over Western Europe, and a similar event is planned for next year.

Finally, a couple of new 'zines have popped up here in Britain. They are: WHISKEY MAC, from Paul Openshaw. Already into its 6th issue, WM runs on a 4-week deadline and has three games in progress already. Openings now for regular, Stab and Bourse. Full of good-natured chat and Paul's local brand of humor. A good players' 'zine. The second newcomer, MEGALOMANIA from Chris Tringham, which is also up to its 6th issue is a completely different breed of British 'zine. Despite already having eight games under way, which is impressive by any standards, and a stream of openings which fill up overnight, MEGALOMANIA also contains several pages of pithy comments and news about the British hobby, and mostly the centered around the National Games Club. Although somewhat obscure to hobby-followers living outside the U.K., it's still well worth the 25p per issue ((40p)), especially if you're looking for honest, off-the-cuff observations about U.K. hobby politics.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE ABOVE PUBLICATIONS AND EVENTS CAN BE OBTAINED FROM:

AIDE DE CAMP and THE INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT-SIMULATION GROUP: Douglas Mills, 210 Bramhall Lane South, Bramhall, Stockport, Cheshire SK7 3AA, UK.

CONFLICT GAZET and DUCOSIM: Paul Meerts, Badhuis weg 211, 2597 JR, Den Haag, Holland.

GETTYSNEWS and NUTS!: Michel Liesnard, 415 Avenue de Tervueren, Woluwe-Saint-Pierre, B-1150 Bruxelles, Belgium.

THE POLAR KNIGHT: Ake E.B. Jonsson, Gruvvagen 26 S-98100 Kiruna, Sweden.

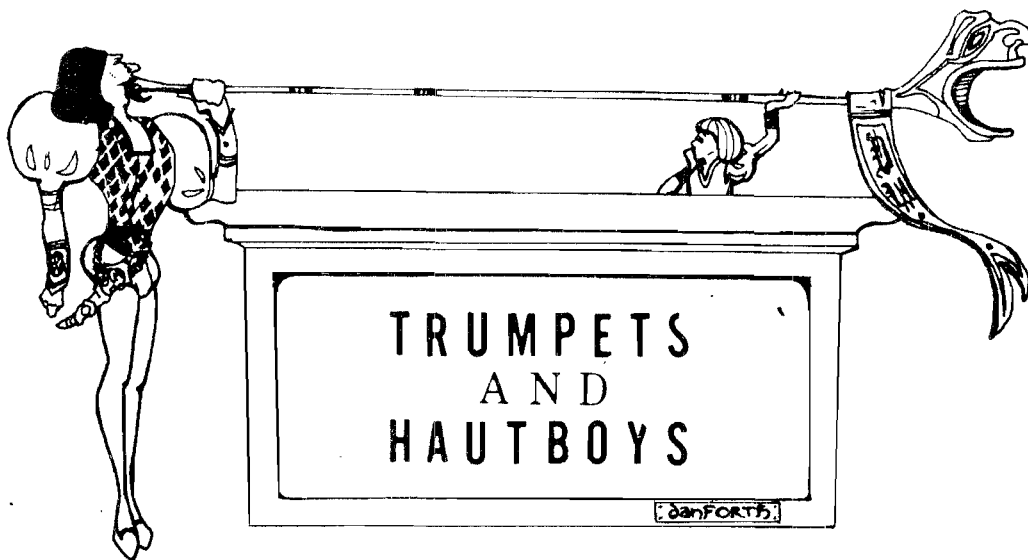
MEGALOMANIA: Chris Tringham, 25 Auckland Road, London SE19 2DR, UK.

VORTIGERN: Roland Prevot, 16 rue Descombes, 75017 Paris, France.

STABSANZEIGER: Hartmut Halfmeier, Stapelstr. 13, 2000 Hamburg 54, West Germany.

WHISKEY MAC: Paul Openshaw, 4 Beechmont Gdns., Southend-on-Sea, Essex, UK.

EUROCON 4: c/o MALPERTUIS, 18 rue des Eperonniers B-1000 Bruxelles, Belgium.



1. There seems to be some confusion concerning the Boardman Numbers, those little identifiers assigned to all postal games. The current Custodian, Cal White (1 Turnberry Ave., Toronto, Ontario) recently announced that he was resigning the position, but no confirmation has come either from Cal or from the supposed new officeholder. Until the situation can be clarified, we suggest that postal Gamesmasters continue to apply to Cal for numbers; if there is in fact a new Custodian, I'm sure Cal will pass requests along.

2. The Miller Numbers, similar little markings for variant games, continue to repose with Robert Sacks, 4861 Broadway, Apt. 5-V, New York, NY 10034. No muck-up there....

3. DIPLOMACY WORLD's European correspondent and columnist, Michel Liesnard, regretfully announces that he must terminate his column owing to his new position as Editor of a new professional gaming magazine in Belgium, which binds him to an exclusive contract. Michel has passed the reins to Douglas Mills of Stockport, U.K., who will, we think, carry on Michel's efforts admirably. Hail and farewell, Coupi, and best of luck in your new enterprise!

4. The 1978 North American Postal Diplomacy Magazine Poll is now completed, and John Leeder has published the results. At the top of the heap is BRUTUS BULLETIN, followed in descending order by: LIES, DECEITS AND NEFARIOUS SCHEMES; DIPLOMACY DIGEST; FOL SI FIE; RUNESTONE; CLAW AND FANG; MIXUMAXU GAZETTE. These are the 'zines that were rated above 8 on a scale of ten; many other magazines trail, including DIPLOMACY WORLD, which ranked tenth with a score of 7.54. In general, we agree with the results - certainly to the extent that the postal hobby has the right to vote any way it bloody pleases, and also to the degree that the leading magazines are easily among the best and most consistent available. (I ranked FOL SI FIE first, but then, what

do I know?) As to the matter of DW being down in the tenth-place dungeons, well, we'll see about that next year, folks. With a steady improvement in quality, coupled with selective bribery and assassination threats.... (What we really need is better proofreading to eliminate typogarithmic errors.)

5. How would you - yes, dammit, you! - like to help us get ranked ninth next year? Maybe even eighth, the good Lord willin' - well, anyway, how about giving some thought to writing an article or other submission for DIPLOMACY WORLD? There's no reason you can't, you know; you may think that there are only half a dozen or so writers in this hobby good enough to meet our standards, but that is ridiculous. If anything, the opposite should be true; there are so many good writers out there that our problem ought to be sifting from too much material, but it turns out that we seldom really have enough. Note this issue's letter column for some ideas on this subject. And if you come up with an idea, don't just think about it; cram that paper into the typewriter and get cracking! We do not guarantee to print everything, but we'd sure like to see your offering. In fact, to help you (and us) in this, we've published a set of Guidelines (to cover format and give broad hints on subjects) which we'll be glad to send you if you supply a long-stamped, self-addressed envelope. Please ask. P.O. Box 626, San Diego, CA 92112. For those living outside the USA, we'll even supply the stamp. BUT - please don't withhold your article just because you forgot to ask for the Guidelines. DIPLOMACY WORLD NEEDS MORE WRITERS!

6. It seems reasonable that if we're to list the results of the North American Magazine Poll (see item 4), we ought to give equal space or so to the more established poll in England. This year's results, as reported in Mick Bullock's NEW STATSMAN, show that Richard Sharp's DOLCH-STOSS carries the field (as well it ought), followed by ETHIL THE FROG; CHIMAERA; LEMMING

EXPRESS; NEW STATSMAN; TINAMOU; JIGSAW. This poll is much more involved than the North American one, and includes among other things a separate rating developed from the votes of other publishers only. It's intriguing to see that, of the seven top magazines in the overall list above, five reappear in the publishers' separate poll (and the other two are rated 8th and 9th), with the two top rungs unchanged.

7. Frequently we get letters from novices trying to enter postal games, complaining that they're having problems finding an opening. Well, there are lots of sources for games, but the search process is admittedly often hard. But there are two ultra-reliable, stalwart sources that should be thought of as the backbone of game openings. The first is CLAW AND FANG, a journal with lots of games, lots of different gamesmasters, lots of interesting reading, and mainly lots of top quality. It comes from Don Horton, 16 Jordan Court, Sacramento, CA 95826, USA. Game fees \$3. plus a subscription at 6/\$2., an overall average one-game cost of \$13. Not bad at the price.

8. The other top-drawer item is FOL SI FIE, my own favorite North American magazine on several levels, from Randolph Smyth, 249 First Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1S 2G5. Fees roughly the same as CLAW & FANG. One very small grouch is that Randolph prints by carbon duplicator, so legibility is occasionally rough. But this minor disadvantage is heavily offset by a flowing editorial style, great literacy, superbly-managed games, absolute reliability and a real sense of friendship emanating from

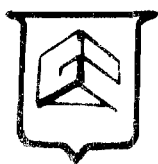
the editor and his crew of regular players. If ever I join another postal game, I assure you I will go to CLAW and FOL first.

9. Time for our periodic plug for DIPLOMACY DIGEST, the magazine without any games from Mark Berch, 492 Naylor Place, Alexandria, VA 22304, USA. Ten issues for \$2.50. This is an articles-only effort, primarily reprints, designed for the reader and strategist - in a sense, the DIGEST (as the name implies) is intended to present the cream of the articles from the postal hobby, past and present, and thus allow the average hobbyist to get volumes of information without forcing him to subscribe to dozens of magazines.

10. Quite possibly the most prolific publisher now active - he has several other magazines on other subjects - is Greg Costikyan, 1675 York Ave., New York, NY 10028, USA. Diplomacy is carried on in URF DURFAL, which in 34 issues has set for itself a reputation for fun reading, nice gamesmastering, exotic variety of content, controversial editorializing, and uncorrected typographical flubs. This is a magazine strictly for people who want to gain pleasure rather than glory or tactical mastery. It is highly commended to you. Current openings exist in several variants and in regular games; the fee for regular is \$5. plus a sub at 7/\$2., average one-game cost about \$13.50. BUT - you can, if you don't miss moves, get all or part of that \$5. back. Variants are otherwise priced, but not radically so.

11. Possibly the most massive, and comprehensive magazine now published is THE WARMONGER, from Alan Rowland, 52 Eighth Ave., Westwood, NJ

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Gamesmasters Publishers Association  
20 Almont St., Nashua, NH, 03060

\*Prizes void where prohibited or restricted. Winners must pay all taxes on awarded prizes. This offer good only in U.S.

07675, USA. Our information on openings is a bit outdated, but at last report regular games and variants could be had - \$2. fee plus sub at 10-\$2., average one-game cost \$8. That is awfully cheap, and it worries me a little, particularly when you consider that Alan is giving us ten to twenty pages per issue. But it's worth an inquiry. In addition to Diplomacy, the magazine covers a wide variety of other games and has a good deal of game-related reading matter. It's a good product, and Alan has now published thirty issues, so he has established some sense of continuity and reliability.

12. I plugged NON SEQUITUR last issue. I am going to plug it again this issue. I am going to continue plugging it in each issue in which I continue to feel, as I do now, that it is a good representative of what I'll call the "wave of the past" - an eminently literary game magazine, with emphasis on reader interest and participation and a sure hand at putting together a product to bring joy to the recipient. Games too, of course, fee \$1.50 plus postage for all issues (better write and see how it's to be handled), from J. Richard Jarvinen, 2404 Sunset Ave., West Linn, OR 97068, USA. Wave of the past, did I say? Yep. In days gone by, most Diplomacy magazines were this good. Nice to see one restore my faith in the future.

13. Very new magazine arrived just a shade too late for last issue. Looks good. Looks damned good, in fact. Called BREW AND REEFER, which makes absolutely no sense to me, but then that's a good sign right there. Fees: \$2. refundable deposit plus sub at 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ per page plus postage, making it impossible to calculate an average cost. (But I can mention that, in the other magazines that charge this way, costs tend to be quite competitive.) Although the magazine is new, the editor has guest-games-mastered for some time elsewhere, so this isn't your usual wet-behind-the-ears novice bit. The content is smoothly and interestingly written, with emphasis once again on readership interest. Try it! From Roy Smith, 64 Addicks Road, Westwood, NJ 07675, USA.

14. You have 17 centers, and are guaranteed to have 18 next year, and all of a sudden your game is orphaned! As the months go by, and your game is in limbo, you keep wondering...WHY ME? There is, of course, no answer to this question, but the mere propounding of it leads me to mention Lee Kendter, 4347 Benner St., Philadelphia, PA 19135, USA. Why? Because the opening lines of this blurb are stolen from atop Lee's fourth issue of (what else?) WHY ME, which looks to be a well-done magazine published by a man known to be reliable and steadfast. Emphasis is on games. Fee: \$2. plus a sub at 10/\$3.50 plus a small deposit (conditions of deposit not indicated), thus average one-game cost \$12.50. I'd like to see more issues of this one so I can offer a more informed discussion of its content. As it stands, it's well-recommended.

15. EAESSA is a warehouse-magazine (games only) of Diplomacy and innumerable other games from Elmer Hinton, 20 Almont St., Nashua, NH 03060. Photo-reduced, which makes it hard to read at times, but very active in picking up other people's abandoned games, which gets lots of points for public service. Elmer has recently indicated a major change in his publishing, such that issues will now contain "at least 20 pages" of material other than game moves, whereas players only get moves for the game they're in. Fees for new Diplomacy games \$16.00, overpriced. Many other games available, enquire. This is a magazine that could be superb, but isn't yet, and I suspect it's because Elmer is trying to do too much at once. But it bears keeping in touch with.

16. Just prior to press time, I received an announcement of a new magazine yet to be started, but I'm not in the least concerned about plugging it sight unseen, as I know the editor to be reliable and capable. It will be called EGGNOG and can be had from Konrad H. Baumeister, 11416 Parkview Lane, Hales Corners, WI 53130, USA. Monthly, with variants both played and printed, as well as articles and discussion of other wargames. And, of course, the obligatory regular games (which Konrad has been running elsewhere for some time) - fees \$3. plus sub at 10/\$3.50, average one-game cost \$13.50. But if you enter a game right now (say, before mid-october) the fee will be eliminated. Don't be put off because I'm not reviewing an actual issue; this one will be worth it.

17. Another new magazine, this one from French Canada, has been announced by François Guerrier, RR #1, Maxville, Ontario, Canada K0C 1T0. In fact, François is going to start two magazines - one French, one English. They will be LA CITADELLE and PASSCHAENDALE respectively, and the fees indicated are \$2. per game plus a sub at 3/\$1 (with slight adjustments for oversized/undersized issues). Average per-game cost \$12. M. Guerrier is a newcomer to publishing but not to the hobby, and he has a reputation for reliability and general enthusiasm, so I strongly urge investigation of Canada's newest offering. (Note: Canadian publications have a way of being, on the average, far superior to U.S. in terms of reliability.) French-speakers (or readers, actually), here's your chance! And the rest of us have our outlet too. Nice idea!

18. For our readers in the United Kingdom, an introductory packet is now available (or soon will be) for newcomers interested in finding out general information about what they're getting into. It's from Stephen Agar, 3 North Road, Chester-Le-Street, Co. Durham OH3 4AQ. Stephen plans to use material from DW and many other sources (yes you may, sir!), and though no cost is mentioned, I'd think an offering of, say, 20p to cover costs might be nice. A similar item is available in Canada from CDO, P.O. Box 642, Sta. Q, Toronto, Ontario M4T 2N4 - cost not

given, but 25¢ would be nice. We need one for the U.S., and Randolph and I are working on it. So (supposedly) is IDA.

19. Many people have written to indicate corrections to last issue's Publishers' Survey. They've all been made, thanks. Inasmuch as we are not going to be printing that list here any longer, I don't think a published correction has much utility.

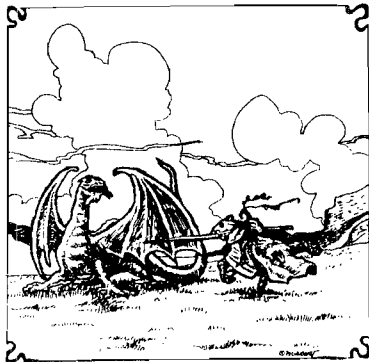
20. CONVENTIONS: Start planning for next year's conventions now; there will be plenty of them. Anyone involved in convention planning may wish to pass the word that DIPLOMACY WORLD will gladly publish, free, any convention news in this column - we reserve the right to summarize of course. Also, any convention including Diplomacy as a scheduled event is offered one free display ad in advance of the convention. Copy may not be larger than 7" high by 4" wide, must be legible when reduced, and must be submitted not less than 90 days in advance of the convention (more if possible). Advance news this time of two 1979 meetings: First, ORCCON (Orange County Simulations Convention), to be held January 5-7 in Fullerton, CA. Tournaments, seminars, displays, dealer booths, auctions, prizes, and Ghod knows what else will be there. The cost is \$3.50 for pre-registration (\$5. at the door); checks payable to Alan Emrich, 2922 Angler Lane,

Los Alamitos, CA 90720. Then later in the Spring will be the Las Vegas International Diplomacy Tournament, limited to 49 players and involving no other activities. Dates: May 26-28, 1979. Fees: \$200. per person including room and board. There will be a prize fund, made up from the entry fees, of approx. \$4000 to be divided in a way that the players decide later. Send no money now, merely write and express interest to David Grabar, 4346 E. Armel Ct., Las Vegas, NV 89110, USA. David is a reliable guy, but I strongly urge him to get a professional receiver for the money.

21. Another comment about the new Demonstration Game would not be amiss here, for the readers who bypass all the chat at the end of those reports. A new game will begin next issue and there are still some spots available for \$15 per player, which fee includes DIPLOMACY WORLD during the course of the game as well as the game reports. It is advised that new players (novices, as we style you) avoid this one. If interested, send the fee indicated with your application to: Eric P. Verheiden, Jr., 200 S. Azusa Ave., #2, Azusa, CA 91702. Commentary will be provided in DIPLOMACY WORLD by a series of experts beginning with Mark Berch. Move deadlines will be at three-week intervals.

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## THE MAILBOX FILLETH

Editor,

Could you possibly send me a list of dates by which articles should have reached you?  
- Douglas Mills

((Articles from regular contributors should be planned to arrive by the 15th of the following months: Aug, Oct, Dec, Feb, Apr, Jun. Regular contributions not involving extreme currency of information may be sent at any time, and in fact the more of a backlog we have the better, so please send too much. Non-regular writers have no formal deadline, except that the sooner you send it, the sooner we print it. Please be as early - and as frequent - as possible.))

Editor,

Instead of strong seconds helping someone win a Diplomacy Tournament, by the later rounds you would have weak 5th and 6th giving the leader their centers so as not to finish with negative points. I feel the present system is better but not perfect.

The ideal Tournament is where there are seven rounds and every player plays every country. There are thousands of games which tell us that Russia has the greatest win potential, Italy the last and France the toughest defense. Why award more points to a 12-center Russia than to a 14-center Austria simply because Austria did better on one given day? This type of tournament can take four days, but most conventions last 4 days, and a game can finish in five or six hours.

- (unsigned - on back of response form)

((There is no consistent "present system." Each tournament seems to set its own rules, and I have personally seen such wide variations as to make comparison absurd. Some day, maybe a

standard system will be adopted. I doubt it.

((Seven rounds is perhaps ideal, but it seems impractical. Nobody goes to a convention to play just one game, and they don't care to be tied down for the full four days with a single event. But then, nobody's ever tried a four-day, seven-game system in person before. Any tournament director brave enough to stab at it? In any case, if more than 7 people play - i.e. more than one round of seven games - a system of comparing the two or more groups must be set. Any ideas?))

Editor,

With regard to "Allan B. Calhmer is a Phallic Symbol," while it might, in some quarters, be considered entertaining for its avant-garde and satiric points, with respect to the general audience this piece was unsuitable. The small number of women notwithstanding, increasing numbers of new players are minors, and there are a number of words and phrases and descriptions not suitable for use in mixed company. They were in bad taste at least, and bordered on irresponsible, as subject matter for publication in DW.

The answer, that such material is inappropriate for any general-circulation magazine, especially DW, is so obvious that one wonders how the Editor could possibly have had some question about it. One wonders very much.

While satiric pieces may be enjoyable, and may even include any number of sexually-implicit jokes, they are, being implicit, in the mind of the readers and may be understood by many and enjoyed. The explicit feature, on the other hand, even when used legitimately, belongs either in novels or magazines...which are known for a modicum of explicit and possibly offensive material.

It is hoped that, in the future, the Editor will keep in mind not only the type of audience he has, but the kind of image which he as an Editor, and DIPLOMACY WORLD as a magazine, wish to project: Quality reading and responsible service, or enjoyable but unproductive and valueless trash.

-- W. Elmer Hinton, Jr.

((If something is "enjoyable," it cannot by definition be "trash." And what makes you think the women of the readership are any more offended than anyone else? Is the name Gloria Steinem yet unknown in the Granite State?

((I agree that such articles won't be turning up here any more, but I don't concur that the answer was so obvious. The response forms still endorse the piece by a narrow margin; and though a narrow margin is not enough to make me keep doing it, it is quite sufficient to make me think it was worth a try. But I do acknowledge that you represent a very strong viewpoint, and I appreciate your going

to the trouble to explain your stand.))

Editor,

I should explain why "The Play of Italy" got thumbs-down ((on the Response Form)): not because the article was bad in itself, but because I don't think the article in its entirety should have occupied space in the magazine. The listing of errors in a previous article (which didn't get read too closely itself) was simply boring - how many people do you think dug out the earlier DW and reread everything to make Mark's comments intelligible? Anyone who was interested in the original article would have drawn his own conclusions about its lack of coherence - this way, four pages have been wasted instead of two.

- Randolph Smyth

Editor,

I was disappointed at the articles of Richard Nash on Austria and Mark Berch on Italy. The first, I felt, was a too-shallow analysis of a very difficult position to play. Some attention should have been given to "misdirection" i.e. diverting possible enemies to other avenues to free yourself, as Austria, to your own ends. The second article, I felt, did as much to muddle the issue as the first.

- Dave White

((I should perhaps point out that Richard Nash's series were originally set forth as general surveys, hitting high points and avoiding great depths and lengths. They were written at a maximum one-page - typed - length, so built-in limitations may be part of the situation.))

Editor,

In regard to the variant article by Lewis Pulsipher and Ken St.Andre, Ken has a better method of doing variants than Lew. I have played in both their games. I've found that you get rules, maps and then play-testing from Ken's games, and his games tend to move faster than Lew's. I find Ken more clear than Lew, and less controversial. Much of Lew's controversiality arises from the fact that he is not always clear; his methods work for him but not always for others.

- Peggy Gemignani

Editor,

I guess you plan on printing Ken St.Andre's Aztlan. ((I intended to, but it looks to take up too much space.)) Why? There are many, many more variants much more deserving of inclusion in DW than this totally unbalanced, dull, poorly-written and ill-conceived so-called Dippy variant. Perhaps you enjoy Aztlan, but most players play for fun, and not to satisfy their masochistic desires.

I periodically read my youngest brother's copy of St.Andre's STORMBRINGER. In it I find

little but badly-designed variants, shitty games mastering, and other unsavory characteristics. The rules for each game are changed every second issue or so, so that after a few months your head spins with questions. Lew Pulsipher knows exact what he's talking about. Ken's self-proclaimed motto for designing games is that "life isn't fair, and games shouldn't be either." Who wants to play in a game where the designer actually strives to make the game unbalanced? After such an experience, the first-time variant player won't want a second time.

- Konrad H. Baumeister

((Aha! Controversy!))

Editor,

I'd find a DW modelled on "Allan B. Calhame Is A Phallic Symbol" infinitely more fun, and superior to the present format. I mean, no wonder the U.S. hobby takes itself so seriously (and is often so boring). Look at what the biggest-circulation hobby organ purveys! How many people after their first year in the hobby, really care about how-to-win articles? especially those that concentrate on board tactics rather than how to be an effective diplomat? Tactics articles belong in the novices' section.

- Donald G. Wileman

((If I were editing DW for myself, it would be one parade of "Phallic" after another. That is, humor and reading interest, not filth. You should have seen the original version of that piece, before I cleaned it up!

((However, any general-circulation effort has got to respond to its readers, and if the fun-lovers are outvoted, then they stay outvoted. I guarantee, there are ways of livening up this magazine without offending too many people. It is slowly being done.))

Editor,

Considering that Eric Verheiden's mini-article was titled, "The Guest G.M.," it's a pity he didn't bother to stick to the subject. Nothing is more infuriating to me than the utter waste of using a good idea as a mere excuse to be bitchy.

Now, I know bitchiness when I read it, if for no other reason than the old saw, "it takes one to know one." If Eric wants to grump about people who have felt obliged to dump some or all of their publishing activities, he may certainly be my guest. I wish, however, that he would be open about it instead of disguising his plaint as an article on Guest Gamesmastering.

Eric has of course touched a raw nerve. I cannot disguise that fact, even though I know that he did it with all deliberate malice. It is not an easy thing to shut down something which has been part of your life for 10 years. When it became clear that I would have to stop publishin

altogether, I went into a blue funk that lasted several months. I believe that whenever an Editor has to fold an established 'zine, he probably feels the same way. On the other side of the coin, it is better to have published successfully and then to have had to give it up, than never to have published at all.

- Rod Walker

((Hey you! You're co-editor! You can't go writing letters for this column!

((Eric may have hit a nerve, but maybe the nerve needs hitting - and remember, I'm as guilty as you. There are ways of shutting down one's magazine without hurting others too much, such as having the decency to tell them. And maybe transferring the games. I'd think that abandoning games is much like dealing with creditors when you're broke; they're more likely to treat you with civil concern if you only go to them and tell them what's what.

((And as for "deliberate malice," fooley.))

Editor,

I was saddened to read your denunciation of Bernie Oaklyn in the last DW. I have talked to several people about the true identity of Bernie Oaklyn; the answers were mixed. However, it really doesn't make much difference as long as the 'zine is regular and the games are well-run.

Your warning has probably killed his 'zine. Does he deserve it, even if Oaklyn is Tretick? I think not.

The reason I disagree with you is that there has been a trend to welcome back several people into the mainstream of the hobby. Rod Walker's handling of the Numbers, his term as IDA Ombudsman, and the dropping(s) of his 'zine all point to a past history that is less than desirable. When I entered the hobby, one of the more disturbing pieces of news that came to me was, "Beware of von Metzke! Avoid the von Metzke drop!" Yet with a DW six months late you manage to explain away the past by stating that you've cleaned up your act. Should all pubbers cut trades and advise their readers not to sub with DW?

I don't think that you should have commented until you had seen a few issues. Several people I know, as well as myself, feel that it is regular and the games are well-run. Do we have any guarantee that Bernie won't abandon his games? No, but the only guarantee we have for anyone is his word. I fail to understand how you can demand more.

- Alan Rowland

((What I demand is honesty, not perfection. If Oaklyn and Tretick are distinct entities, I want to know why the huge volume of evidence that points otherwise. Why does Oaklyn write that he has "known Walt Buchanan for years," when in fact only Tretick has? Why is a telegram signed Oaklyn

listed by Western Union as coming from Tretick? Why does Oaklyn claim to have been referred to Tretick by Don Miller, when Miller is on record as detesting Tretick's gross ineptitude? Why does Oaklyn say he looked Tretick up in the 'phone book when that is impossible?

((And if Oaklyn is Tretick, why the subterfuge? Lots of people drop out; some of them try for comebacks. But they do so UP FRONT. I see no reason for hiding something unless there is something to hide, and in that case I think it should be known - just as I agree that warnings against any future publications under my control are not out of place.

((And while we're still here - no way are my warnings going to kill Oaklyn's magazine. What was terrible about the way Rod handled the numbers? And when was DW ever six months late?))

Editor,

After receiving only two issues I must say I am pleased by what I have seen of your magazine. In particular, I am glad that you are not limiting yourself to the play-by-mail crowd, but are trying to include itels of more general interest. How about listings of clubs and tournaments to complement your publishers' list? I would like to find opportunities to play Diplomacy with people living near me, but I don't even know where to start looking!

Also, your attempts at humor, although not always successful, are welcome. Your main problem seems to be too many "in" jokes, which are only appreciated by those who know the authors or certain of their friends. "Pariah's" article in Issue 19 was a good example of general humor that can appeal to anyone familiar with the game, although his previous effort wasn't quite so good. On the other hand, Lew Pulsipher's writings (on whatever subject) seem to be limited to manifestations of personality conflicts between himself and other individuals, which most readers couldn't care less about.

Pulsipher did make one good point in his letter in the last issue, though. What good is it to have a variants column if you don't tell us how to buy or play them? Descriptions of games I've never seen and don't know how to get ahold of are pretty worthless.

Finally, it is ridiculous for members of your staff to argue back and forth with one another (and with you) in the letter column. If they have quarrels, let them settle them privately, and if they have something to say that is of general interest, let them say it in their columns. Your justifiably strong response to Pulsipher last issue is a step in the right direction. I paid my subscription money to read information about Diplomacy, not to spectate at personal feuds!

- Russell M. Blau

((Thank you for a superb general letter,

as well as for the excellent typing and spacing. People like you help.

((Club and tournament information will be printed as submitted, or as scrounged by me, but my sources - especially for club material - are severely limited. I would suspect that your best bet for finding in-person opponents would be to get ahold of Avalon-Hill's GENERAL and get an ad into the Opponents Wanted section. The address is: 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214. We'll do what we can, but it will take time.

((Airing personal feuds in the letter column will stop, except when the feud touches on a legitimate disagreement over substance. I think you'll find this issue - thanks to some careful pruning by the Editor - lacking in the stuff to which you refer.))

Editor,

Some suggestions for future additions to DW's content:

A column on "My Favorite Game." This would be a good way to draw in writers who would be ordinarily hesitant to write for fear that they didn't really "know" that much - on the subject of that game, they'd be the expert. It could be anywhere from a few sentences to a full-blown article. This has the potential for drawing writers you've never heard of before.

An "Experts" column. This would be an invitational series of articles by people on their special areas of expertise. ((Seventeen examples are then offered.)) The idea is to get a greater variety of topics covered by getting a greater cross-section of writers. A series of specialized formats/columns is a good way of doing it.

- Mark L. Berch

((The above was culled from a six-page letter, and I assure you we're taking these and many other ideas in tow. In particular, I like the "Experts" column idea. What worries me about the "Favorite Game" scheme is that so much about a given game that makes it memorable is valid only for the person doing the commenting, and cannot be communicated. I'm willing to try, but I think we may find ourselves bogged down in stuff that is too personal and too meaningless. However....))

Editor,

Hi. I'm the anonymous writer of last issue's "What About That Subsidy?" bit, and the printer of FACE TO FACE. I appreciate the reprinting of the article. One of its main purposes was in fact to encourage discussion. The point is that the hobby is so often thought of as just postal. We need a wider angle vision. About 85 copies were distributed.

I do disagree with your "pure yellow journalism" description. I believe my description

was factually correct. I wonder if Doug or Cal was offended. Of course it was biased, but deliberately and explicitly so; I wanted to show the Boardman Numbers as seen by the Face-to-Face players. To him, its support by Avalon-Hill is an expression of support for the postal hobby. Further, since most convention-goers are face-to-face players, the use of part of the entrance fee to support the Numbers is in fact a diversion of face-to-face money to a postal purpose. Finally I did not state that the Numbers are intrinsically "worthless," or that I personally felt that they were worthless. I do in fact think them indeed worthwhile - but then again, I've played postal Dippy.

You might be interested in the following exchange of views from THE BRUTUS BULLETIN 15.

MARK BERCH: "It's interesting how different people have read different things into FACE TO FACE. You, for example, read it as a call for a face-to-face organization, and explained in some detail why it can't work, why such a thing cannot form. Yet, as I look over my copy, one thing it doesn't call for is a new Dippy organization. Even the proposed setup for how FACE TO FACE could be published (which strikes me as impractical) is extremely anarchical. What organization are you referring to? Seems to me it was a call for recognition and support, but then I could be reading it through the filter of my own prejudices."

JOHN MICHAISKI: "Recognition and support of what? That there are face-to-face players out there? Should we hold a party for them or something? The 'organization' I referred to was the implied one necessary to receive/use the "compensating" donations from Avalon-Hill that were asked in parts of it. Without an organization, what are we supposed to deal with? If Avalon-Hill knew who all the players were, sending a postcard to each would exceed the cost of the contributions to postal Diplom. Knock 3¢ off the shelf price? We wouldn't see it even if they did so, as the retailers would ignore it. Even if the faceless mass of face-to-face players got together for 'their share,' how would they organize? By turning out local newsletters, exchanging them with others, writing and calling each other now and then? Presto, they'd become postal hobbyists! That, in a nutshell, is why I felt the whole business behind FACE TO FACE was idiotic."

Ah, the fatal fascination that postal players have with organizations! John feels that one would be essential to receive financial support from Avalon-Hill. Correct me if I'm wrong, Conrad, but as I recall none of the various postal organizations (IDA, TDA, GPA) ever received financial support from Games Research or Avalon-Hill, and I assume Avalon-Hill would react similarly to a face-to-face organization.

What they have supported are activities, viz. the Boardman Numbers and DIPLOMACY WORLD. The same arrangement could be done for a face-to-face 'zine. For example, a central editor could have a staff of regional editors who would send material, preferably in stencil form. He could add other material such as I suggested in my editorial (e.g. articles on face-to-face play, history, telephone games, etc.). The whole thing would somewhat resemble the Guest GM approach. Avalon-Hill could support this in the exact same way that DIPLOMACY WORLD has been supported - a cash contribution to keep the rates low. The size of this contribution would be much less than what DIPLOMACY WORLD has gotten, in part because FACE TO FACE would not have the financial responsibility of paying for magazines for the Archives. Such an expenditure would make good financial success, since a stronger face-to-face hobby would generate additional sales. And, Mr. Michalski's opinion notwithstanding, those players receiving the magazine would not automatically "become postal hobbyists." Many people just don't care for postal play, but would like more exposure than they get in their own local games.

As for Mark's crack about it being "impractical" - why? Indeed, the original form suggested in my editorial could even receive a subsidy: If Avalon-Hill liked they issue, they could send the editor a check. Just 'cause you don't run your own magazine that way....

((The other obvious way in which Avalon-Hill might subsidize face-to-face activity is in passing money or tangibles onto the management of conventions and tournaments. Donations of prizes or games to use in play, or offsetting entry costs, are possibilities.

((On a very limited basis, Games Research did once subsidize IDA, but only in the formation stages and only indirectly.

((It strikes me that the biggest question still unanswered is, what do Avalon-Hill think of all this? Had you, O Anonymous One, considered writing them a formal letter, signed and all, suggesting this stuff? I'm hardly able to speak for their budget or marketing staffs, but it seems to me that if they have any interest in a further investment in Diplomacy in the context you've mentioned, some of the ideas tossed about here would be worth a try. I am personally far more sold on support of conventions than of a magazine - frankly, I don't anticipate any subsidy for this effort to continue too much longer, and for very good reasons - but the details are obviously negotiable. For one thing, some sort of market survey concerning interest in a magazine might be in order first; I'm not convinced it would gain much support.

((As for an 'organization,' I quite agree with you - balderdash.))

SOME THOUGHTS ON

## ITALY & AUSTRIA

by ROBERT SACKS

I have recently read in DW (Issue 19) how Italy will attack Austria because attacking France is hopeless. If it is so difficult for Italy to fight France when Italy wants to, how much more difficult is it for Italy to defend against France (or England, or whoever takes France out) when the fleets come barrelling down from Gibraltar? Clearly an Italy engaged in plundering Austria and fighting Russia and Turkey (or perhaps only one of them) is in a poor position to defend itself from the west.

I also read how the veteran Italy would casually negotiate with everyone. Perhaps this is true, but the most effective Italy I remember from a face-to-face game sat in the corner and cried. I was a game organized at a summer mini-con: Italy knew no one, Austria and France were married and immediately went off to negotiate, and the other four were members of the host organization. So when the orders were all ready Russia suggested that Austria read first, and after Austria, Italy and France had read, made the mysterious (to them) remark that Italy would survive. It seems that France and Austria had neglected to do any other negotiating, so Russia had agreed with Turkey to take out Austria, and agreed not to attack Germany or England to allow them to take out France. When the game was called, Italy, England, Russia and Turkey were the surviving players. (I remember that game fondly - I was Russia.)

Another platitude invoked was how Italy couldn't help Austria in the east, and so failing an attack on France had to attack Austria. This of course contradicts the experience of the Italo-Austrian alliance against Turkey, which has proven successful in various games. It is my personal experience that Italian armies can be quite effective moving through Tyrolia, Bohemia, Silesia and Galicia to fight Germany or Russia or both. Assuming that France has been neutralized by a short-term truce or treaty, after the obligatory conquest of Tunis or Greece, the use of three or four Italian units as Austrian auxiliaries will introduce an unexpected shift in the traditional balance of power in the east.

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((Robert Sacks is a long-time player of face-to-face Diplomacy and other diplomatic games who has served as Diplomacy Tournament Manager at the first three M.I.T. WinterCons and has most recently concentrated his efforts as a gamesmaster in five different magazines.))

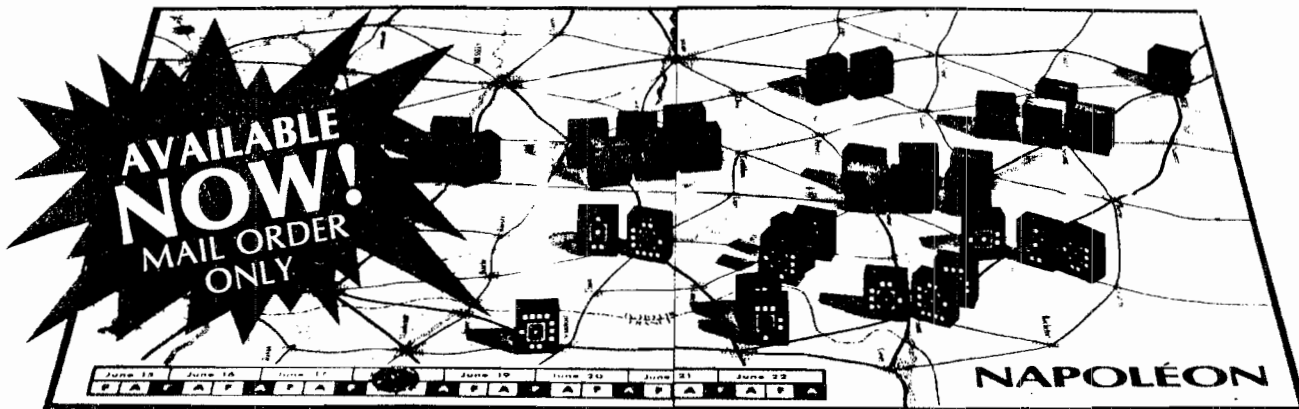
# NEED A GAME?

Interested in playing in a postal Diplomacy game? The following Gamesmasters have openings at this time, according to our most recent data. The listings show: Name of magazine; Name and address of publisher; Fee structure for regular games (for variant fees, enquire of publisher); Type of game currently open (regular, or variant by name); DIPLOMACY WORLD's rating (Excellent = experienced, reliable and accurate; Adequate = Acceptable in most ways, but may occasionally make errors or have delays; New = only recently begun, too new to evaluate but appears to be at least Adequate; Poor = not recommended, magazines in this category will not be listed at all).

Please note that the Rating represents only the considered opinion of the Editor of DIPLOMACY WORLD, Conrad von Metzke. Note also that, while we try to be as accurate as possible, we cannot guarantee these listings nor the gamesmasters themselves. Neither can the Avalon-Hill Game Company. If you have any doubts, write to the publisher with specific questions and a request for a sample issue. If any reader has any problems with any name on the list, please let us know at DIPLOMACY WORLD; we'll look into it.

FOL SI FIE - Randolph Smyth, 249 First Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1S 2G5 - Approx. \$13./game - Regular - Excellent  
 CLAW AND FANG - Don Horton, 16 Jordan Court, Sacramento, CA 95826 - \$3 plus sub @ 6/\$2, approx. \$13./game - Regular, some with different gamesmasters - Excellent  
 URF DURFAL - Greg Costikyan, 1675 York Ave., New York, NY 10028 - \$5 plus sub @ 7/\$2, approx. \$13.50/game (partial refund possible) - Regular, Youngstown (version unknown), Swiss Variant, Machiavelli - Excellent  
 NON SEQUITUR - J. Richard Jarvinen, 2404 Sunset Ave., West Linn, OR 97068 - \$1.50 + postage - Regular, Great Outreach, Russian Civil War, Mighty Fortress, SPI War of the Ring, Machiavelli - New  
 STABSANZEIGER - Hartmut Halfmeier, Stapelstr. 13, D-2000 Hamburg 54, West Germany - Enquire for overseas fees (they are reasonable) - Regular, Multiplicity - Excellent (NOTE: Games in German language only)  
 BREW AND REEFER - Roy Smith, 64 Addicks Road, Westwood, NJ 07675 - \$2 plus sub @ 1½¢ per page (partial refund possible) - Regular - New  
 KAISSA - W. Elmer Hinton, Jr., 20 Almont St., Nashua, NH 03060 - \$16 - Regular, 2001, Machiavelli (others on request) - Adequate  
 PASSCHAENDALE and LA CITADELLE - Francois Guerrier, RR #1, Maxville, Ontario, Canada K0C 1T0 - \$2 plus sub @ 3/\$1, approx. \$12/game - Regular, variants on request - New  
 STORMBRINGER - Ken. St.Andre, 3421 E. Yale, Phoenix, AZ 85008 - enquire - variant only - Adequate  
 THE WARMONGER - Alan Rowland, 52 Eighth Ave., Westwood, NJ 07675 - \$2 plus sub @ 10/\$2, approx. \$8/game - Regular, various others - Adequate  
 WHY ME? - Lee Kendter, 4347 Benner St., Philadelphia, PA 19135 - \$2 plus deposit plus sub @ 10/\$3.50 approx. \$12.50/game - Regular - New  
 EGGNOG - Konrad H. Baumeister, 11416 Parkview Lane, Hales Corners, WI 53130 - \$3 plus sub @ 10/\$3.50 - Regular, misc. variants - New

Gamesmasters wishing to be added to this list should so request, supplying a recent sample issue and full information on fees. Listings are not carried forward unless requested.



# NAPOLEON

**\$12  
Retail**

It is noon, June 15, 1815, and the battle which will shape the destiny of Europe is about to begin. Despite the ominous presence of two opposing armies, the surrounding hillsides are strangely silent. Only the sporadic clatter of a hurriedly-summoned battery dashing off to the right wing interrupts the panoramic spectacle presented by row upon row of soldiers whose brightly colored hue belies their grim intensity. Off to the right the unmistakable sounds of skirmishing bring news of the French diversionary attack on the Chateau at Hougoumont. It has begun. A squat figure of a man, somehow commanding stature far greater than mere height can bestow, murmurs to an aide and, with a drop of his hand, two hundred cannon shatter the previous silence. Ahead, the blue lines suddenly lurch and move steadily forward, interrupted briefly but not stopped by the sudden gaps within their ranks torn by the answering fire of British guns. This is NAPOLEON, and today will live forever in the annals of history.

NAPOLEON is an historical strategy game in which two or three players may restage the famous Waterloo campaign. The game opens with Napoleon's army mobilized on the French border. As Napoleon, you must invade Belgium and quickly defeat the allied British and Prussian armies before they can unite and crush you beneath their combined weight.

Luck plays little part. By smartly maneuvering your army along roads, through towns and across rivers, you can create the very maneuvers which Napoleon used so long ago in bringing the allied armies to battle under his terms.

Actual battles are ingenious and exciting conflicts which readily capture the style and tempo of a Napoleonic battle. Your three dimensional playing pieces mask the type and strength of your forces to the enemy while you deploy for battle. Your infantry, cavalry, artillery and horse artillery all have different tactical roles and advantages. Your infantry can attack, defend, or form square against unsupported cavalry. Cavalry can charge with doubled shock effect, cover retreats, or wreak havoc among unsupported or retreating infantry and artillery. Artillery can mass to bombard a defensive position or tear huge holes in an attacking infantry force.

Napoleon lost at Waterloo, but a victory was very possible and this game allows you to turn the tables on history.

Game includes 16" x 22" full color mapboard, set of 48 wooden playing pieces, four dice, two Battle Cards, rules and historical notes.

Rated Introductory I on the Avalon Hill Complexity Scale for ages 12 & up.

Playing time: 2 hours.

