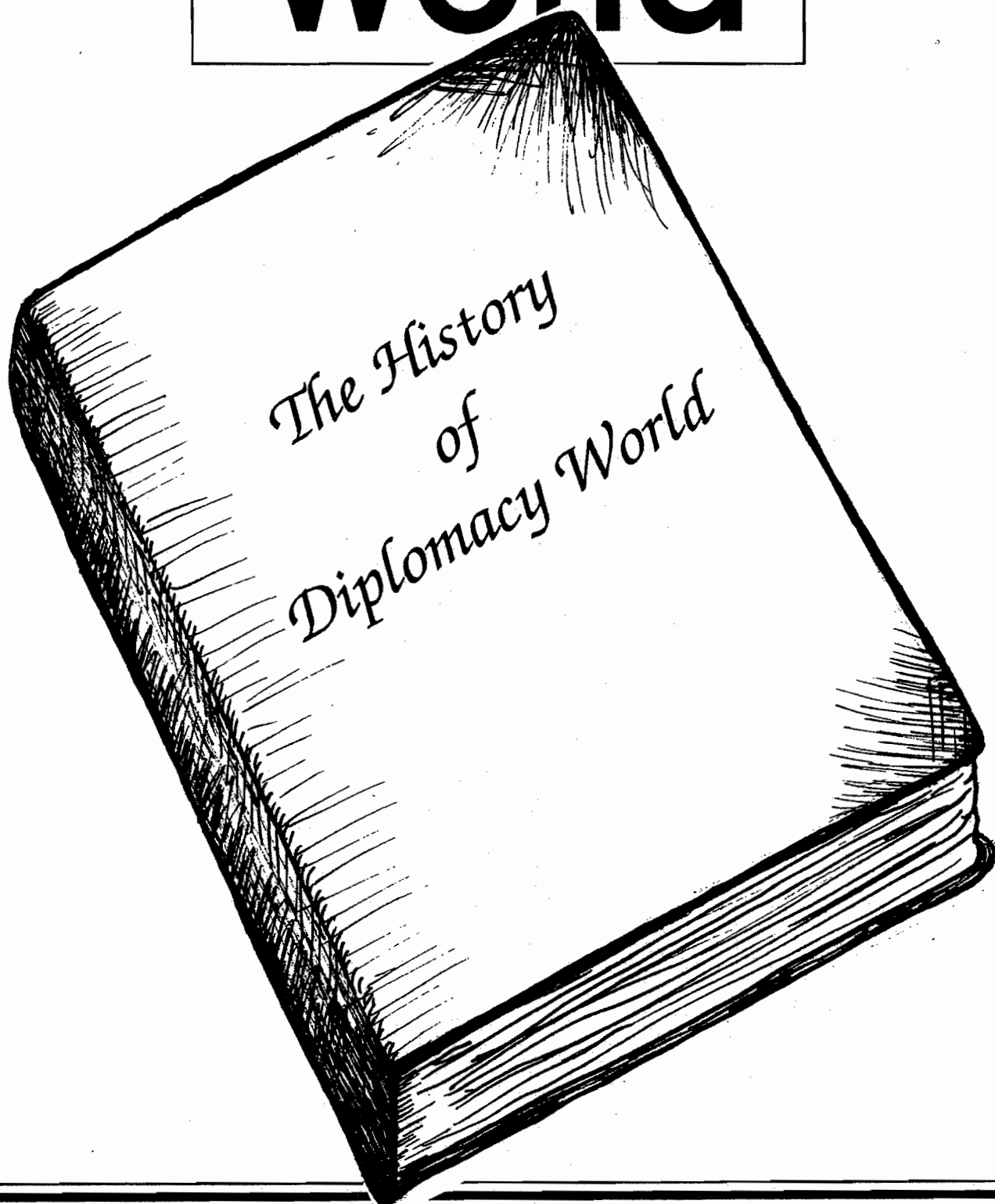


Summer 1991

No. 63

Diplomacy World



Editor's Desk

Welcome to my fourth issue of *DW*. If you have never seen this publication before, then welcome to the zine. The topic here is Diplomacy: the Game, the Hobby, etc. If there are any terms or other mysterious things in these pages that keep you from understanding what is going on, do not hesitate to write me. My address is below.

This issue is filled with lots of juicy material, and hopefully has enough different types of stuff to satisfy each one of you reader-types. The feature on hobby history may seem like a lot to newcomers, but I encourage you to wade through it anyway. There is much we as a hobby can learn from the past success and failures of *Diplomacy World*.

Let me mention some other publications you can order from *DW*. First of all, there are back issues and anthologies of past articles available from past and present editors of the zine. A full listing was printed last issue; if you are interested, I'll send you that list for free. You may also be interested in a copy of the *DW* Mailing List to keep as a handy address book and census. This list features over 1400 names of people around the world who receive or have received the zine within in the last year. Order this from me for \$4.00. An interesting analysis of the list by country, state, etc. is available from Fred Davis (3210K Wheaton Way, Ellicott City MD 21043) for \$1.00. Also available from Fred are photocopies of the only hard cover book ever printed about Diplomacy: *The Game of Diplomacy* by Richard Sharp. Send him \$6.00 (\$6.50 in Canada, \$8.00 overseas).

As you know, the third-class mail delivery that you get for \$10.00 (see below) does not always result in the most timely delivery of *DW*. Luckily, most of the contents of this zine are not time-sensitive. However, if you want to insure more timely delivery of your copy, send in two more dollars per four issues to get first-class postage.

I have recently moved to Hickory, near the Appalachian Mountains. Whether this will impact the zine in any meaningful way in terms of costs, I am not sure. This issue was printed and mailed back in the Raleigh area. If there are to be any changes, I will let everyone know next issue. I doubt very seriously that any prices will go up.

As usual, there were many great articles which did not make it into this issue. Next time you should look for Mark Fassio on playing Turkey, Fritz Juhnke on an idealized Diplomacy map, Gene Prosnitz on the new Colonia variant, and Pete Clark on the statistical performance of the Great Powers in Gunboat. These, along with other material already in hand, should make issue 64 quite a good one (assuming I edit it with any degree of competence.)

I encourage all interested persons to send along story ideas or completed articles for publication in this magazine. Much of the material you see in *DW* is the result of back-and-forth ideas between me and the writer, so if you haven't put pen to paper yet feel free to write and get feedback. While we have a great list of regular writers for the zine (see below), there is always room for the talented newcomer.

DipWorld

Editor and Publisher	David Hood 2905 20th St NE, Hickory NC 28601
Assistant Editor	Michael Lowrey 3005 Kenninghall Court, Charlotte NC 28269
Senior Writers	Jack McHugh 280 Sanford Rd, Upper Darby PA 19082 Dave McCrumb 3636 Old Town Rd, Shawsville VA 24162
Strategy and Tactics Editor	Mark Berch 11713 Stonington Place, Silver Spring MD 20902
Variant Editor	James Nelson 112 Huntley Ave, Spondon, DERBY, DE2 7DU U.K.
Interview Editor	Brad Wilson PO Box 126, Wayne PA 19082
International Editor	Mark Nelson 21 Cecil Mount, Armley, Leeds, W. Riding, LS12 2AP U.K.
Electronic Mail Editor	Eric Kilen 10 Sinai Cir #B10, Chelmsford MA 01824
Contributors	Gary Behnen, Larry Botmer, Eric Brosius, Jim Burgess, Chris Carrier, John Caruso, Pete Clark, Larry Cronin, Fred Davis, Randy Davis, Don Del Grande, Bob Greier, Jake Halverstadt, Melinda Holley, Michael Hopcroft, Bill Hunter, Fred Hyatt, Stan Johnson, Joel Klein, Andy Lischett, John McCausland, Phil Reynolds, Mickey Preston, Robert Sacks, Garret Schenck, Randolph Smyth, Conrad von Metzke, Jim Yerkey, Andy York

Subscriptions	Four issues for \$10 in USA (\$12 for First-Class Mail), \$15 Canada or overseas surface mail, \$20 overseas air mail. The last issue of one's subscription will appear on the mailing label.
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Contributors	Submissions are encouraged, with published articles paid for by subscription credit to <i>Diplomacy World</i> , as well as being recognized above as a Contributor.
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Hobby News

First of all, let's talk conventions. By the time you read this it will likely be too late to go to MadCon (in Madison, Wisconsin), PoolCon (in Marshall, Missouri) or the Origins Diplomacy tournament (in Baltimore, Maryland.) We'll get results of these and other events in the next *DW*. However, you should still make plans to attend one or more remaining tournaments, many of which boast flyers in this issue. These include PeeriCon, DipCon, AvalonCon and World DipCon. One that is not on this list is the annual ManorCon event held in Birmingham, England. This hosts the largest Dip event in the UK and, indeed, the world. I didn't have room for the flyer, but you can get all the info you need by writing Richard Walkerdine, 13 Offley Rd, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 2AZ, UK. The dates are July 19-22. If you live in the UK or will be visiting there this summer, attendance at ManorCon is mandatory!

About the DipCon flyer on page 5: I also didn't have room to print their latest newsletter, but if you have any interest in going to this event write Doug Acheson for a copy (address is on the flyer.) The same goes for the AvalonCon newsletter from Avalon Hill (see page 25.)

The summer's first Con in the US, DixieCon, is already over. Local boy Mark Stegeman again took top honors, as he

did in 1988. Second went to Carl Willner (from DC), while third was taken by Carolina Amateur Diplomat member Bob Odear. Dan Mathias, Jim Yerkey, Morgan Gurley and Mike Pinkerton rounded out the Top Board. Virginian Brian Bouton won both the Titan and Civilization tournaments, while Leo Yakutis took top honors in Gunboat. In a sort-of-tournament the last night of the Con, Dave McCrumb whipped me and three others at his own variant, 1499. Big surprise there.

Last time I promised I would list available back issues of Mark Berch's zine *Diplomacy Digest*. Alas, my perennial problem: no room. So, please feel free to order a catalogue from him directly (address on page 2.) This zine focuses mainly on strategy & tactics, postal play, and hobby history. I would recommend it in tandem with *DW* and a novice packet for all newcomers to the game.

Take note of the new hobby poll by Phil Reynolds entitled the "First Annual Hobby Favorites Awards." You can write him for a ballot at 2896 Oak St, Sarasota FL 34237. The poll asks about such topics as Favorite Variant, Favorite GM, Most Feared Player and Favorite New Zine. The voting deadline is August 17.

Also on the zine poll front, we have results for the Marco

Poll, run by Pete Gaughan. The Xyns People Read Poll by Tom Swider has finished its polling period but has not yet reported its results. Results from the Runestone Poll and the European zine Poll will also be presented next issue.

1991 Marco Poll results: 1) *Upstart*, 2) *Moire*, 3) *Kathy's Korner* and *Perestroika* tied, 5) *Been There, Done That* and *Diplomacy World* tied, 7) *Maniac's Paradise*, 8) *Northern Flame*, 9) *Benzene*, and 10) *Penguin Dip*. A full listing can be had from Pete at 1521 S Novato Blvd #46, Novato CA 94947. There were 48 voters total. Reviews of these zines and others that do well in other Polls will be published in the next *DW*.

One of the most regular and dependable zines to play in is *The Prince*, which just published its 100th issue in grand style. Editor Jim Meinel (2801 Pelican Dr, Anchorage AK

99524) put a lot of work into his commemorative issue, making it one of the best hobby publications of 1991 hands down. Jim plans to pour even more work into his new project; an encyclopedia of all the postal Diplomacy zines ever existent. See the announcement below.

If you haven't already sent in your Hobby Awards Ballot to Ron Cameron, it may be too late. The deadline is July 12. Given the unlikelihood of the USPS getting this to you in time, I did not print a ballot in the issue. If you do have time, write or call Ron for a ballot and/or an extension of time: 8781 Walker St #13, Cypress CA 90630. These awards recognize excellence in writing, playing, or service to the hobby. Winners will be recognized at DipCon in August.

Saving Our History: The Encyclopedia of Zines

by Jim Meinel

Who published *Liberterrean*, one of the longest running zines ever? When was the last issue of John Michalski's wonderfully entertaining, fast-paced zine *Brutus Bulletin* published? When did *Voice of Doom* begin its prodigious publishing career? How many issues did three-time Runestone Poll champ *Europa Express* run? What zine is credited with running the first subzine?

If you can answer questions like these by memory, you are a Hobby Old Timer of the First Order. Just looking up the answers will leave your fingers smudged with toner, ditto, newsprint, and dust from all the dipzines you'd have to wade through. Amidst the hobby services we enjoy today, there is not one publication to which a person can turn to read about all the postal Diplomacy zines ever published.

Such a project begs to be tackled. Since 1963, when John Boardman's *Graustark* appeared as the first zine ever, there have been hundreds of zines published. Many were widely known and acclaimed in their time. Today, however, they are lost for the most part. In another ten years the zines published today will suffer a similar fate.

To recapture this lost history, I have recently launched the Encyclopedia of Zines project. Its goal is to identify all postal Diplomacy publications ever and print a synopsis for each in an encyclopedia-type format. I have estimated a timespan of over a year to accomplish this Herculean task. During this time, I will publish (yet another) zine to keep interested parties informed of the project's progress: *The Curator*. You can subscribe for free.

The Encyclopedia will include North American zines which ran postal Diplomacy games or wrote about the game from 1963 to the present. By definition this excludes foreign zines, subzines, non-Dip zines, and one-shot publications.

Most of these exclusions are for administrative convenience or because the listing would be duplicative.

The standard entry would include the zine's name, name and principal home city, dates of start and end of publication, and a narrative describing the chief attributes of the zine. A major part of this project will be the solicitation of narratives for every zine. Ideally, the narrative would be written by a regular subber to the zine, and would capture the zine's flavor in a way that would preclude the need for continued revision. Current zines would, of course, require some updates. A new version of the Encyclopedia would come out every two years.

To date, I have identified some 350 zine titles. Each is recorded on a 5 x 7 card, as well as in a computer database. A listing of the data obtained to date was mailed out with the June issue of *The Curator*. People are currently in the process of filling in blank spots in that data. This list is also free to anyone who requests it.

I am willing to put forth whatever efforts are necessary to publish this Encyclopedia, but I do need some help. I need data on the older zines, especially. I have exhausted the resources available to me here in Alaska and thus must rely on the hobby to take the time to assist me. There are two ways one could render that aid. One is to research and correct any gaps in the data I have already collected. The second way is to write a one-two paragraph entry for zines no longer in publication. Do not worry about overlap; I will combine entries I receive. I would greatly appreciate your help, and so will the present and future members of the hobby.

>Jim Meinel (2801 Pelican Drive, Anchorage AK 99524) publishes *The Prince*.

DIPLOMACY IN THE GREAT WHITE NORTH!

What? CanCon IV / DipCon XXIV (The 1991 North American Diplomacy Championship)

When? 1900 hours August 2nd to sometime August 4th, 1991

Where? The Scarborough campus of the University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

How Much? If you want to do some gaming, a flat \$20 Canadian. This covers any tourney you decide to play in. If you don't want to play, you don't pay. Simple.

Lodging? We have reserved a block of townhouses on the campus itself which go for \$30 a night if you book before March 31st. If you book after, then the cost is \$35 a night. These rooms are available from August 2 to August 10 for those who want to do the tourist thing afterwards. This is a lot cheaper than you'll pay anywhere else in Toronto.

The Games? Diplomacy, of course! Regular, Variant and Gunboat Dip! And Kremlin, Rail Baron, and Facts In Five! Plus as many other games as people decide to bring, (including Commodore Computer games!)

Prizes? Naturally! Winners of each tourney will be receiving either a prize certificate or trophy/plaque for their achievement as donated by either the Canadian Diplomacy Organization, Avalon Hill or CounterMeasures.

What about the wife/husband? Heck, bring 'em! Toronto has a lot to see and do for the non-gamer. They can take a ferry ride over to Centre Island and see the Centreville Amusement park or take in Casa Loma, a real castle, imported brick by brick from England. There's always the Royal Ontario Museum, the Art Gallery, or the Science Centre. For the shoppers, Downtown Toronto features some of the most amazing shopping opportunities in North America (don't miss the Eaton Centre!). For the kids (big AND small!) Niagara Falls is only a 45 minute away drive and Canada's Wonderland Amusement Park only a half hour away. Then there's always Ontario Place, a waterfront playground in the heart of Toronto (don't forget your bathing suit!). And plenty more!

What about food? The Scarborough campus is situated just minutes from a wide variety of dining establishments, fast food and otherwise. You will also be able to sign up for breakfasts at the Con (\$5 a meal) and a special barbecue Saturday afternoon (\$5).

What do I do now? Sign up! Fill in the coupon and send it off to **Doug Acheson Unit 5, Suite 330, 320 Yonge St, Barrie, Ontario L4N 4C8**. This will get you preregistered and put on our mailing list for the Con booklet.

**DIPCON
XXIV**

The Canadian Diplomacy Organization
1 Turnberry Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6N 1P6

**CANCON
IV**

Name _____

Address _____

Total \$\$ enclosed

Please preregister me for the gaming ☐

I'm interested in playing:



- Diplomacy ☐
- Gunboat Diplomacy ☐
- A Diplomacy Variant ☐
- Kremlin ☐
- Rail Baron ☐
- Facts In Five ☐

can★con
DIPLOMACY
Toronto

Please book me a room for _____ nights starting the night of August _____ until (and including) the night of August _____.

Please rustle me up _____ breakfasts at \$5 each. Same for that Barbecue _____ at \$5.

All prices are in Canadian dollars.

Cheques should be made payable to either "Doug Acheson" or "Nithgrove Health & Safety", and mailed to: Unit 5, Suite 330, 320 Yonge Street, Barrie, Ontario, Canada L4N 4C8

See you there!

A Draw is not a Win

By Stan Johnson

I recently had the unpleasant experience of playing Diplomacy with a pair of players who made no attempt to win. These miserable excuses for Dip players were suffering from what is commonly known as "Good Ally Syndrome." Everyone who has been in the hobby any length of time has had the misfortune of encountering these pathetic creatures masquerading as true Diplomats. They are easily identifiable by their plaintive cries of "Oh, I could never STAB anyone" or "I couldn't stab a faithful ally just to win a game!" These, along with the oft-repeated call, "I'm just in the hobby to make friends."

Disgusting, isn't it?

If all you want to do is make friends, join the local quilting club. A real Dipper plays to win each and every time. If I played Diplomacy against my mother and grandmother, I wouldn't show them any more mercy than I show anyone else. And that, of course, is none. I don't hide my light under a bushel, either, as everyone who has played against me can attest to. I expect my fellow players to do the same to me in

return.

If, on the other hand, you enter a Dip game knowing full well you plan to play for a draw, you have perverted the game. Indeed, you are playing an entirely different game. The idea that everyone is trying to win is what creates the ebb and flow of the game, and the shift in alliance structures that make the game fun. The good ally Dip game compares to real Diplomacy the way a stagnant, putrid, polluted pond compares to a fresh, swift-moving stream.

Why would anyone do such a thing to Diplomacy? One theory has it that these Good Ally players feel secure thinking "No one will like me if I stab them." Among real Dip players this is simply not the case. The Icons of the hobby, men like Walt Buchanan, Doug Beyerlein and Edi Birsan are winners all. Walt Buchanan's record was, I believe, seven wins in seven postal games; yet I am unaware of anyone who knows him who does not speak of him with anything but respect.

A second reason might be that these spineless jellyfish are ratings hounds. Their strategy involves kowtowing to deviant ratings systems that equate a two-way draw as half a win, a three-way as third of a win, and award points accordingly. But to a real player, the win is worth ten times one two-way draw, if not more. The jellyfish think that if they just pile up those two or three-way draws they will move up in the rankings. Perhaps if a more correct ratings system were instituted that properly reflected real Diplomacy values, such wimp attitudes would not be so prevalent in the hobby.

I'm sure some of you are saying, "Where does this Johnson fellow get off copping this attitude? What does he base his holier-than-thou attitude on?" My short answer is: The Rulebook! For years two things about the Good Ally Pukes annoyed me. One was their smug air of moral superiority, implying that they were too good to stab their loyal allies. The second thing was a sneaking suspicion that their "Good ally from start to finish" strategy was in fact a thinly-disguised form of cheating. Now I know I was right all along. Almost all postal House Rules state that "The 1971 Rulebook will be used", then they turn right around and allow people to vote for draws that exclude some surviving players. Not only are these guys wimps, but they are too lazy to honestly earn their draws by eliminating the competition.

But just take a look at the Rulebook. Section II, under the heading "Object of the Game", clearly states "Players may terminate the game by mutual agreement before a winner is determined, in which case all players who still have pieces in the board share equally in the draw." So unless the zine's House Rules specifically declare that section of the Rulebook

New Demo Game Starts

The latest Demonstration Game in *Diplomacy World* started by flyer in May. It features a stellar cast of top-rated postal players from the United States and Canada, along with commentary on the game by Garret Schenck and Fred Townsend, both outstanding players in their own right. The moves and commentary will be reported in *DW* in coming issues, always at least one game year behind the real-time action. The installments will appear in complete game-years so that readers can get a sense of what happened in that span of time. Novices or those looking for playing tips may want to follow the game religiously. Others can read along and pull for their favorite country or player. The player list is as follows:

Austria Bill Quinn
 England Mike Ward
 France Mark Berch
 Germany Mike Gonsalves
 Italy Randolph Smyth
 Russia Kevin Kozlowski
 Turkey Dave McCrumb

void, all those other declared draws are in fact illegitimate, and should not be considered for ratings purposes.

David Hood has mentioned that the statistics he received with the Dragonstooth Ratings System may be defective. I suggest he compile his own stats, counting only wins and draws that were Draws Include All Survivors (DIAS), or were played in zines (if any) where the House Rules specifically legitimize voted draws. If players feel that using the correct rules would make the game too long, I refer them to Section III of the Rulebook, entitled "The Short Game."

The whole accomplishment of Diplomacy is beating six other players. One over six. When you change this to 2 over 5 or (heaven forbid) 3 over 4, then the glow rapidly fades. Let all right-thinking Diplomacy players stand up and be

counted. Together we can get the game back on the right track. Let's put an end to all these disgraceful draws. The only legitimate use of a draw is to end a hopelessly stalemated game. If a draw is declared, the Rulebook should be followed and it should be DIAS. This by itself should greatly reduce the number of draws of convenience and this "play to a draw" attitude.

➤ Stan Johnson (10 Pine St, Edison NJ 08817) is one of the most prolific players in postal Diplomacy. He also invites former stabbees and those enraged by this article to set him up with a plane ticket to Dipcon so he can face the consequences of their wrath.

Letters Yes, Postcards No

by Joel Klein

Which do you look for when you contact a player? Are you first impressed by his ideas and willingness to work with you? Or is it instead the stationary?

I think style is as important in Diplomacy as it is in the rest of life. Having said that, I contend there is a great, unspoken syndrome now rampant in our hobby. It inflicts the "right" people and "some of my best friends." It is the dreaded Postcard Correspondent Syndrome (PCS), which renders those afflicted unable to use envelopes.

I'm not condemning postcard communiques wholesale. Like any tool, a postcard serves best at some times in some places. Yet, some fellow hobbyists use postcards wholesale. Always. And the current batch of postcards I've received are rather revolting. Stylistically, that is, not in substance.

Allow me to elaborate. You have carefully authored a postcard with the aid of a 10-power magnifier, leaving no space untouched. You put it in the mailbox, and it goes to your post office, which then proceeds to put a killer postmark on the written side. The card then gets misrouted or lost. Know what happens then? I know, from a killer postmark on the written side from Cairo, Illinois (ever hear of it?) Recognizing the error, the postal service routes the card to the main PO in Chicago. The main PO puts its own killer postmark, again on the written side. Finally, at long last, your postcard reaches the local PO in Oak Park, who (you guessed it) puts their killer postmark on the written side.

Then the card is squeezed through the mail slot here. Gross!! Let's think of an analogy to its appearance. Have you seen any of those Vietnam-era movies? Remember what the soldier's uniforms look like after they've spent a week in the

jungle or swamp? The ones where you can tell they're wearing something, but have no idea what they looked like before the ordeal?

I don't blame the PO. Letter-sized envelopes are more or less standard and, I think, handled accordingly. With the volume of mail generated in this country, somebody or something comes up short, i.e. handled with less care or speed. Nope, it isn't all that advertising that our postal rates subsidize. I think it's the postcards!

So, please, put an end to my silent suffering; an end to the pain of degenerate postcard abuse! I offer this advice:

1. Write or type letters, however short, and place them in your personal, secure, disposable, hygienic, diplomatic pouch (i.e. an envelope whose dimensions and materials conform to those now in use by the human race);

2. Use indelible inks. You needn't restrict yourself to Flair pens or their kindred, all of which smudge from a simple dirty look; and

3. Use standard lettering and leading (that is 10 points text, 11-12 points leading for you typographically-minded people.) Double-spacing is KEEN, and wide margins are SWELL. You won't be ridiculed for wasting paper, I assure you. Remember that silence and space send messages too!

Let us strike a blow for style in Diplomacy! Amen.

➤ Joel Klein (326 N Cuyler, Oak Park IL 60302) doesn't mind if you send him hate mail in response to this article. He just thinks it would be PEACHY for you to send your missive in the correct and appropriate missive receptacle.

The History of Diplomacy World

by David Hood

As I work towards improving the present and future of *DW* I thought it appropriate to take a look back towards the zine's past. Accordingly, a questionnaire was sent to all past *DW* staff whose addresses are available. As you read the responses below, and the articles accompanying this feature, remember that these people may not be the most objective reporters on the events they describe. Read this feature to get a feel for what it was earlier in the history of *DW* and the hobby. The more we learn about past issue and conflicts, the more we can work towards avoiding similar problems in the future.

I hope the readership will send me some comments on this for next issue. I would particularly be interested in what lessons can be drawn from our history that could be applied in the future.

1. Describe your involvement with *DW* past or present.

Dave McCrumb: I am a past Variant Editor, a past/present/future author, and a past Demo Game GM. I also serve currently as Senior Writer.

Fred Davis: I was Variant Editor from about 1984-87. Also, I've written several articles and have had many variant designs in *DW* over the years. If you check the *DW Index*, you will find about twenty entries under my name.

Mark Berch: I have been on the staff since 1977, far longer than anyone else in the zine's history. In terms of thousands of words, I've written more than anyone else, on pretty much every topic *DW* covers. I've advised every editor on editorial matters and have been offered the editorship twice (by von Metzke and Jones.)

Robert Sacks: Jerry Jones named me his successor as editor and publisher, but Walt Buchanan overruled him and named Rod Walker instead. I have occasionally been a columnist, department head, or contributor. I have also been a regular victim of *DW*, as it has been used to attack me and my associates and to try to seize our projects.

Larry Peery: I was an assistant to Rod Walker, and assumed the editorship from him as of issue 40.

Walt Buchanan: I founded *DW* in January 1974 after the circulation of my *Hoosier Archives* got too large for the spirit duplication process I was using. The idea was to present the "big picture" to postal hobbyists while keeping *HA* to run the

Demo Games. I published *DW* until 1978 although I had turned over the editorship to Conrad von Metzke a year earlier.

2. How has *DW* changed since you were involved? List both positive and negative trends.

Dave McCrumb: Positive things include more authors, more Diplomacy-related material and a cheaper price. Negative trends include the less durable paper now being used.

Fred Davis: I liked the quality paper and printing when *DW* was digest-sized. The current printing on newsprint may save money, but the copies will not last long. The nadir of *DW* was in the pre-Peery era, when the zine was appearing only about twice a year. I was very glad when it got back on track as a quarterly publication. During the Peery era there was too much boring material from Peery and Mark "Burden." Now I'm glad to see more interesting material in the zine.

Robert Sacks: There are no positive trends. *DW* early in its history became a threat to the hobby and to independent hobby projects, as well as a drain on hobby finances. Publishers of *DW* usually confuse what is good for *DW* with what is good for the hobby. This harms the hobby, and the backlash from it usually harms *DW*.

Larry Peery: *DW* reflects the hobby; good, bad or indifferent. Walt published his first two years as a bimonthly, and it came out like clockwork. Then it shifted to a quarterly schedule and the problems began. The truth was that for a long time people didn't know when to expect the next issue. That, I hope, has been resolved.

Money/time is another matter. Subscribers really don't think about such things when they sub to a zine like *DW*. When I took over I raised the price to a realistic level to cover my anticipated printing and postage costs. People screamed. But when they realized the zine was bigger, and sent out first-class mail, the complaints died off. Mark Berch screamed when I told him I spent \$400 on typewriter ribbons during my first year. I don't know why he did so — they were \$5 each and I used eighty of them.

This brings me to the editorial aspect of publishing *DW*. This involves solicitation of articles, editing (sometimes censoring), and making decisions about literary quality and the like. I usually published everything I received, and usually verbatim. It was a serious chore to try to attract a wide variety of writers. Con winners would not write about their

wins. Certain hobby factions wouldn't write anything, period, no way. I tried to encourage new writers and develop a pool of regular contributors. First among them was Thomas

Kane.

I'm a big person. I think big. It was inevitable that *DW* would be big. For some, I'm sure, it was too big; filled with

The Road Not Taken

by Mark Berch

This story has never been made public. It concerns a proposal that had the potential to radically change the tenor of the hobby in the mid-1980's and to catapult *DW* to heights never before seen.

After publication of *DW* #39 in Spring 1985, Editor Rod Walker was exhausted. He turned over the zine to Larry Peery, the energetic publisher of *Xenogogic*. *DW* was in a perilous condition. It had very little in the way of financial resources (but plenty of outstanding sub commitments.) The staff was in somewhat of a fractious state. General Editor Kathy Byrne (now Kathy Caruso) was on very poor terms with two staff members, Fred Davis and myself. *DW* itself was in some amount of controversy due to the blackout of anything associated with Bruce Linsey in #39. (Bruce and Kathy were the major antagonists in the feuding of the period.)

Even worse was the hobby climate Larry had to operate in. Starting in the summer of 1984 over charges of misconduct by Bruce Linsey in his personal and hobby activities, Diplomacy hobbyists had rapidly polarized over a variety of issues. It is difficult to describe what the hobby was like in those days. Tremendous amounts of energy was poured, not into game negotiations or hobby projects, but instead into rebuttals and fresh charges of foul play. Feud letter columns pushed aside less inflammatory fare, new zines appeared devoted to feud topics, feud-related mass mailings were sent out, activities were boycotted, mail was refused, etc. There were many people caught in the middle, and many who quit the hobby in disgust.

There seemed no way out. The sides could not agree to terms for ceasefire, mediation, or arbitration. Even unrelated discussions of ideas in the hobby were colored by the Feud. Little was immune, including *DW*.

In the summer of 1985, Larry determined that *DW*'s financial situation was hopeless, and made one of the most gutsy calls ever: he cancelled all *DW* subs, and asked people to start all over again. As you can imagine, that stirred up all sorts of controversy. It was not clear whether *DW* would make it at all.

In September 1985, I wrote Larry an extraordinary proposal, one that I felt could deal effectively with both the Great Feud and *DW*'s current problems.

The proposal? In brief, Kathy and her team would put out the even-numbered issues of the zine while Bruce and his team would do the odd-numbered ones. Larry would handle

the money, provide continuity, etc. The tremendous energies devoted to the feud would be largely diverted into the task of topping the last issue put out by the other team. The hobby would thus gain twice — from the loss of feud energy and the gain of *DW* energy.

Bruce and Kathy were both prolific writers, and each had impressive writers in their corners. Kathy had Bob Olsen, Steve Langley, Ed Wrobel and Robert Sacks, among others. Bruce could count on Fred Davis, Steve Hutton, Ron Brown (the Canadian one) and I, to name a few. Moreover, there were some writers who would write for both sides to establish their neutrality. Since each team would have six months between issues, there would be no need for rush jobs. The talent and motivation were clearly there, and competition would drive each side to excellence. Larry would be freed to concentrate on his own writing and long-range planning.

I discussed this idea with Bruce. He was intrigued by the plan, but pessimistic that Kathy would go for it. I am not sure whether the proposal was actually discussed with Kathy. Ken Pecl (part of the *DW* management team at the time) felt Kathy would not go for it since her resentment towards Bruce was stronger than her commitment to *DW*. I'll never know whether that was a correct assessment. Rod Walker was opposed to the plan because he did not trust Bruce. Larry was also opposed, perhaps because he did not want to mediate the conflicts that would arise. There may also have been the feeling that Kathy could do the General Editor job herself, though at the time she was raising three kids, publishing very large issues of *Kathy's Korner* every month, etc.

I pressed the proposal during October 1985, but basically got nowhere.

The outcome? The Feud intensified in late 1985 and early 1986. A mere seven months after my proposal, *DW* #42 carried the news of Kathy's resignation as General Editor. Larry's hopes for Kathy's continuing role in rebuilding *DW* were dashed. Although I have had many ups and downs over my fourteen-year association with *DW*, the rejection of this idea was my biggest disappointment. There's no easy way to determine whether this would have worked, but I do think the hobby was and is the worse for the road not taken.

>Strategy and Tactics Editor Mark Berch (11713 Stonington Place, Silver Spring MD 20902) publishes *Diplomacy Digest*.

too much Peerbleah and filler. However, my models were not *TV Guide* and *The National Inquirer*. Instead, they were *Orbis* and *Foreign Affairs*. Heady company to be sure, but what else befits the best game in the world?

Walt Buchanan: The change in *DW* over the years has been less than I expected. Although each editor naturally imparts his or her own ideas, the general purpose of *DW* has pretty much remained the same.

3. *Do we really need a "flagship" zine? If so, does DW fit the bill?*

Dave McCrumb: Yes to both questions. I used to think a flagship zine would be nice, but not necessary. But now that I am limiting my hobby participation I find that this is an easy and enjoyable way to keep contact. *DW* fills this need more than any other zine in North America possibly could.

Fred Davis: Every hobby has some sort of flagship publication. I believe *DW* can fit the bill. The earlier objection to *DW* was from a group of self-centered would-be Hobby Masters who did not want *DW* to be the flagship because they wanted to run the hobby. Now that they've left, I see no reason why the rest of us cannot rally 'round the flag.' *DW* must do its share, though, by publishing important hobby info, including statistics and history.

Mark Berch: Yes, we need a flagship zine. Generally, *DW* fits this bill, though how well it does so has varied over time. The only other zines that could have been seen as flagships were *Graustark* (which did function as such in the early days of the hobby) and *Europa Express*. But *EE* never did try to cover the entirety of the hobby's topics, something which would be a prerequisite to being a flagship.

Robert Sacks: A flagship zine is a nice idea, but *DW* has always failed as such in the past.

Larry Peery: This is probably the silliest issue surrounding *DW*. Its role as flagship is the *raison d'être* for the zine. The problem is that many *DW* subbers and hobbyists don't understand what the term means. The role is not one of warship, but of command/control/communications. Many hobbyists are preoccupied with the command function.

The fact is that the hobby's elite, oldtimers, publishers, custodians, etc. do not need a flagship as such, though such people didn't hesitate to ask for one during my tenure. I distributed flyers, polls, ballots, etc. and was attacked when I asked for donations to cover the cost. Over a five-year period I donated over \$800 worth of publicity to hobby projects. Total income? \$35.

So who needs a flagship? The novices, beginners, new pubbers and, most importantly, the isolated hobbyist with no one around to talk Dip with. Another group we seldom think of is the burned-out hobbyist or retired hobbyist who uses *DW* as their last link to the hobby. One man from the early 1970s hobby scene got back in touch with me through *DW* and is now publishing again.

Walt Buchanan: I have always shied away from the label "flagship" zine, since I feel the gamezines are the backbone of the hobby. However, I do feel that it useful to have one zine that can give the "big picture" and provide useful information, particularly to new hobbyists.

4. *What was the most difficult part of your DW job? How about the most rewarding?*

Dave McCrumb: The most difficult part was trying to keep Larry from printing immediately everything I sent. He should have held things back to create a backlog to fall back on later. The most rewarding thing was when variants came out properly, i.e. legible rules and useable map.

Fred Davis: I didn't really have any difficulties, except that my lack of time eventually caused me to resign as Variant Editor. The most rewarding part was to see some of my Variant designs and articles appear in the flagship zine.

Robert Sacks: The difficult part was the constant betrayals by the controlling clique. The rewarding part was all an illusion.

Larry Peery: Personalities, rather than policies or procedures, have made *DW*. The person in charge must be a publisher, editor, player, GM and more. He should really be the best at all these things. That was the most difficult part of my job. Of course, other personalities help to shape the magazine. Every *DW* pubber wants a good and big staff, but the "big" part is a pain in the butt and the "good" part is difficult to recruit. Most of the *DW* staff I worked with were not worth the titles they had. That's a harsh judgment, but it's mine.

Maintaining a balance between *DW* and the Real World was particularly difficult for me. Perhaps even more difficult has been dealing with criticisms. While running *DW* I followed Davy Crockett's motto: "Be sure you're right, then go ahead." My policy was to let everyone involved in a decisions have their say, then I'd make up my own mind and go out and do what I thought right. I must say that there is not one major decision I made concerning *DW* that I would change. That's frightening, even to me.

Walt Buchanan: I published *DW* in the days before desktop publishing and word processors. Things must surely be easier

today in that regard, although keeping track of a large circulation must surely still be a chore. The reward of *DW* was in turning out a useful product.

5. *Do you have a favorite issue or article from past DWs?*

Fred Davis: The Variant Special Issue (#47, Summer 1987) was my favorite, since that was one of my main interests. My favorite article of my own is "Diplomacy Chronology, 1958-1983." Since I've read every issue of *DW* from #1 to the present, it would be impossible to pick out my favorite article. Sometimes I cut out and post something I like on my wall. Right now, I still have my all-time favorite *DW* poem, "The Ballad of Ollie North" by Brian Kelley, on my wall.

Mark Berch: My favorite article was "A Real Zoo" in part because I was trying to do something nobody else had done — a systematic view of triple alliances. The most important essay I ever did, though, was "Talking Turkey", my magnum opus on the play of Turkey. It appeared in #21, the first one put out by Jerry Jones. I learned from him later that he had trouble getting material for that first issue. To replace my huge piece would have meant him finding at least six ordinary-sized articles!



Mark Berch: You ask if feuds have ever impacted *DW*. Indeed so, and therein lies a tale.

After publication of #38, Rod Walker felt he could no longer go it alone. So, he announced the appointment of a triumvirate of Ken Peel, Kathy Byrne (now Caruso) and himself. At the time, the second and most destructive Linsey-Byrne feud was wrecking havoc in the hobby. Rod did not feel that appointment of Kathy was taking sides (neither did I), but things did not work out the way Rod wanted.

Between issues 38 and 39, several hobby events had occurred that involved Bruce Linsey. The question was whether Kathy would consent to them being reported on in *DW*. Rod Walker told me that he had discussed this with Kathy, and had determined there would be no conspiracy of silence against Bruce. However, any mention of him in #39 would be avoided so as to give everyone some slack in the transition period. I objected furiously, pointing out that failure to promote the Runestone Poll (then run by Bruce) would have been unprecedented. Also, Bruce had just folded his zine *Voice of Doom* with issue 100, a monster at 270 pages and 50 different contributors. Both hitting #100 and folding such a large circulation zine were news items *DW* generally reported on.

Alas, my arguments fell on deaf ears. Rod said that his decision stood, so Bruce was indeed blanked out of #39. And it's too bad, because had the issue included what it should have, it would have arguably been the best issue of *DW* ever produced.

The irony was that Rod compromised the integrity of *DW* and received little in return. His partnership with Kathy produced only one issue. A mere six weeks after publication of #39, Bruce did a fake *DW*#40 which included much of the

Larry Peery: My predecessors as publisher answered this question in the first *DW Anthology* volume, "The Best of *DW*." I've never tried to do so myself. I do look back with pride on issue 40, both for what was in it and what response it generated. I was also delighted with Kathy's "womens' issue" of #41.5. And although they were criticized at the time, the theme issues on Maritime Strategy, World War I and Internationalism all did well.

Walt Buchanan: My favorite article was one Doug Beyerlein and I wrote about the game-long two-way alliance concept. In my mind that is the most powerful tool in game strategy.

6. *How have personality conflicts, or even outright feuds, impacted DW past or present?*

Dave McCrumb: There are certainly been conflicts over the importance and direction of *DW*. But as long as I have been receiving it, feuds have not played a major role.

Fred Davis: I've been told that the barrage of criticisms, most of which came from Robert Sacks, the Carusos and the Martins, hurt *DW*'s circulation during the Great Feud period of 1984-87. With the disappearance or brown-out of most of the Feuders, though, I think this problem is behind us. While a few people may still deny the need for a hobby flagship, I feel that most hobbyists now agree that *DW* fills that role.

material that should have been printed in #39. He was resentful about the omissions and felt that the fake should include everything left out.

Robert Sacks: *DW* was bankrupted once or twice, lost most of its early influence, had poor hold on its readership, and lost the possibility of non-profit funding when the founder, Walt Buchanan, vetoed the choice of a new publisher.

Larry Peery: When I was in charge, here's the procedure I followed: if I felt a feud was likely to damage *DW*, the hobby as a whole, or novices in particular, I felt a responsibility to speak out. At one point during the Feud, *DW* was one of a handful of voices speaking resolutely against the whole thing and all it represented. Others rallied to this call, and it was eventually put behind us.

Walt Buchanan: Feuds never impacted *DW* while I was editor because I simply ignored them. This is not to say that I have not enjoyed reading about them in other zines!

7. Critique the present DW with an eye towards the zine's past.

Dave McCrumb: I would have a smaller letter column and better maps for the variants. I do like that the printing now is always readable, because that has not always been the case.

Fred Davis: My only real complaint is the inferior quality of the paper used. I do like the larger page size. I'd like to see more humorous pieces, and items on the lighter side of the hobby. I'd like fewer tactical subjects like stalemate lines, which put me to sleep. I would also reprint some of the articles on the postal hobby's origins for the benefit of new readers. Finally, emphasize the international aspects of the hobby, especially British and Australian cons and zines.

Mark Berch: If I were in charge, I'd make an all-out push to get the zine to bimonthly. The most important things for a *DW* editor to do are 1) to be organized enough to undertake such a large operation, and 2) to have the social skills required to coax articles out of the best writers in the hobby.

Robert Sacks: It is too early to tell whether Hood has a chance. His refusal to admit that he has succeeded villains and is still dealing with some of them will not help him. Those who do not learn the lessons of history are doomed to repeat them.

Larry Peery: *DW* moves in cycles. It moves up, down, and stagnates depending upon the hobby that surrounds it. What *DW* does need is an individual with a vision, and one who is willing to work from a master plan. You have to have both in

the same person to make it come together. In some ways *DW* is easier to produce than ever, what with new computers and fancy software. However, it still requires hard work and lots of personal contacts. Early on I wrote hundreds, maybe thousands of letters about the game, hobby and zine, and my phone bills were the delight of AT&T. Gradually I pulled back, for reasons which are now obvious. That wasn't part of the "flagship" purpose, but it did reflect the reality of time spent at sea.

I thought your first issue was the weakest first issue produced by a *DW* publisher to date. Your third issue was as good as any issue published by any prior *DW* publisher. I would call that progress. I do think the magazine looks bland, but after five years of Peeribleah maybe that's a good thing. I suspect the hobby is waiting to see what happens. It's as if a packed theater were attending the premier of a new play and slowly, the curtain rose a third, then two-thirds, and then all the way to reveal the entire stage. The question is, will the house still be full at the end of the third act?

Walt Buchanan: I am very happy about the current course of *DW*. About the only thing I would change would be to publish circulation information and periodically continue the old "Publishers' Survey." My biggest regret since going inactive is that a complete hobby archives is no longer maintained.

8. Please rank DW subject matter by category in terms of overall appeal.

Dave McCrumb: I like Variants, Strategy & Tactics, and Demo Games in that order. All the rest is filler.

Fred Davis: 1) Hobby news. 2) Zines & Postal Play. 3) Variant. 4) Letter Column. 5) Novice material. 6) International news. 7) Historical articles. 8) Strategy & Tactics. 9) Quizzes/Puzzles. 10) Demo Games. 11) Anything else.

Larry Peery: What the hobby says it wants and what they really want are two different things. For example, everyone professes to want to read more S&T articles or Demo Game results. Yet it is impossible to get anyone to write such material. I tried for years to get Gary Behnen, for example, to write me a tactics article, but all I got was promises and no article. Human interest stories about Cons are fun and easy, but I've yet to see anybody produce a real Demo Game resulting from a FTF game at a con. (I tried at World DipCon II in Chapel Hill, but a certain Mark Berch wrote illegible orders and made off with a crucial year's orders...) The important thing is that you publish good stuff, in a variety to offer something for everyone. I can't think of one article in my issues of *DW* that was damned by someone that wasn't

praised equally by someone else.

Walt Buchanan: I would not care to rank subject matter by category since all of them are important. Individual importance will depend on the individual reader.

9. *Where has DW been, and where is it going?*

Dave McCrumb: I hope it goes up!

Fred Davis: Sorry, not enough time for a fair answer to this question. I'd say there was steady improvement in the zine from its start until the Jerry Jones era, when it stagnated. During the Rod Walker era things went downhill, but turned around again when Larry Peery took over. Without Larry's efforts, there would be no *DW* today. You keep up the good

work.

Larry Peery: I think I've said enough already, and I'm only a fourth of the way through my notes. I wanted to close this out by listing the people I wanted to thank for their help to me during my tenure. Unfortunately, the list would fill up half of one of your issues. So, I'll just get back to work on *World Diplomacy*. For eighteen years, *DW* has been a source of inspiration to countless Dippers, even me. My dream is that *WD* will someday be to the world what *DW* has been to us in North America.

Walt Buchanan: Good histories of *DW* have already been written and I am in no position to update them. I only hope that *DW* will continue for a long time and that David Hood will break all longevity records!

A DW Retrospective

by Larry Peery

Diplomacy World was started in 1974, by Walt Buchanan, and enjoyed support from just about everyone in the hobby at that time. But we should remember that before there was *DW* there was *Hoosier Archives*, which Walt and his first wife Carole published and edited for quite a few years. *HA* was the testing ground for many of the ideas that later appeared in *DW*, such as the Demo Games. It had some of the best games, best articles on the game, and best humor in the hobby. Top players flocked to it, and everyone read it.

Walt's reputation as a top player, gamesmaster, and publisher, combined with Carole's delightful wit, guaranteed *DW* a good reception when it first appeared. The new zine grew rapidly, riding the wave of growth that occurred when *Diplomacy* was bought from GRI by Avalon Hill. *DW*'s circulation grew from the original few hundred to over seven hundred in 1977. The zine appeared bimonthly and fulfilled everyone's expectations about what a "flagship zine" would entail. Future success seemed assured.

But success had its price. Walt and Carole broke up; not the first and surely not the last relationship destroyed by *DW*. Without Carole's input, publishing *DW* became just too much work and too little fun. Walt looked for an out. The original idea was for Conrad von Metzke and Rod Walker to take over as editors while Walt remained as publisher. That lasted for about a year, but it really did not work well. Still the magazine chugged along, and the goodwill Walt had built up kept the old timers around while attracting some new subbers. Finally, Walt and Rod transferred all responsibility for the zine over to Conrad. What most people do not know is that

Conrad got only a subber list, sub obligations, some articles, but no cash! Walt felt that his past efforts entitled him to keep sub monies already paid. This debt was to become the albatross that hung around the neck of his heirs: von Metzke, Jones and Walker.

Conrad von Metzke is a lovable cuss, as anyone who knows him will attest to. A fine writer he is, but not good *DW* editor and publisher material. He's a horrible player, GM, editor and publisher. When he finally dropped the ball on successor Jerry Jones, Conrad's last act was to chuck all the copies he had of the issues he had produced. This is why copies of his issues are so rare and expensive.

I should mention that during the von Metzke period I made my first contribution to *DW*. I informed the readership, in typical Peeribleah fashion, that my book on *Diplomacy* was finished. (The hobby yawned and I went back to serious gaming activities.) Another first contribution in that same issue was from Mark Birch. (Yes, that is the way Berch's name was spelled.)

By the end of Jerry Jones' tenure as *DW* publisher and editor, most of the goodwill was gone, along with the substantial revenue from advertisements Walt had attracted. Circulation was also down. Things looked OK on the surface, but the zine had become a shadow of itself.

It was time for Jerry to go. His replacement was Rod Walker, one of the hobby's premier personalities. Everyone knew Rod from his zine *Erewhon*, his authorship of *The Gamer's Guide to Diplomacy*, and his column on *Diplomacy* in *The General*. Rod's not a good GM or player, but is a

superb writer and editor. I regard my twenty-five year friendship with Rod in the hobby to be the best thing Diplomacy has given me.

When Rod asked for my help with *DW*, I agreed without hesitation. He needed somebody to help lick stamps and lug those damn bulk-mail bags to the PO. He figured it would keep my mouth shut. It did, for several days... The glue was horrible, as were the clerks at the bulk mail dock. I swore to myself that if I were ever in charge I would damn sure send *DW* out first class!

Rod's eleven issues of *DW* (28-38) were, in many ways, the best ever from a literary standpoint. Since we were not into high-tech computers and all that junkware, the zine looked good. But beneath the veneer there were problems. Circulation continued to go down, with each issue paid for by new sub money. The zine was living on borrowed time and borrowed money.

Yet another factor was threatening *DW* during this time: the Great Feud. Rod was heavily involved in it, rightly so in my view. The Feud was destroying *DW* just as it was destroying the rest of the hobby. The gaps between issues got longer and longer, while the toll (physical, mental, emotional) was having an effect on Rod's health. Rod had tried to revitalize the zine by bring Kathy Byrne is an Co-Editor, which was a mistake. No reflection on Kathy, but the move was fire, water and nitro all at once.

Rod had to go. At some point I realized that something had to be done. I remember one Sunday afternoon Mike Maston and I were sitting around talking about *DW*, Rod, and hobby affairs. I noted that something had to be done. Mike said, "Why don't you do it?" I thought a moment, then headed for the phone. Three and a half hours later it was a fait accompli.

For those of you who missed those remarkable events in 1985-86, there is little that I can write now that could convey to you what was happening to *DW* and the hobby. At the very height of the Feud, the hobby paused and rallied behind *DW*. I laid it all on the line to the subbers and other hobbyists, and promised actions to follow. The response was amazing. Eighty-five percent of the past subbers wrote off sub obligations owed them. Thousands of dollars in donations and new subs came in, a staff was recruited, and articles and other material filled the PO Box. Things looked good.

And they continued to look good for the first year or so. I had stated my goals simply: timely publication, quality writing, and avoidance of the Feud. The first was no problem: twenty regular issues, one special issue, and three mini-issues all appeared on time during the next five years. Quality is a relative thing and thus difficult to judge, but early Runestone Poll results indicated that the hobby was pleased with the new zine.

The Feud, though, could not be so easily ignored, and it

left a negative impact on the zine. The hobby had been divided into four camps: each "side", the neutrals, and a few brave souls who castigated both sides. More important to me were the newcomers to the game who would face, unprepared, our own version of Watergate and Vietnam. I tried to avoid the Feud, but both factions were determined to use the zine for their own purposes. Bruce Linsey faked an issue of *DW* and I blasted him clear into Ontario. Kathy Byrne (now Kathy Caruso) could not reconcile her needs with her role as Co-Editor. Eventually the feuders realized that I was not going to allow them to control *DW*. So they went away, which was a big loss for the zine. It was at that point that *DW* ceased to be the "flagship."

I had committed myself mentally to three years as head of *DW*. As I proceeded to watch the circulation fall, I thought it was my fault. Perhaps it was. But the same thing was happening to most zines not affiliated with a Feud faction. The hobby was dying: fratricide is the only name for it. I had poured thousands of hours and dollars into *DW* and was rapidly exhausting my reserves of energy and enthusiasm, so after those three years I began to look for a replacement.

Once before I had felt around for people interested in my job. I had three responses: one from each side of the Feud, and Elmer Hinton. Not encouraging. In the meantime I published the zine on schedule, within budget, etc. but it was filled with vintage Peeriblah and other things that might or might not appeal to the reader. It was a souffle made with stale eggs. And yet, ironically, each issue that some hobby publishers condemned for this or that was praised by novices and beginners. The theme issues drew a lot of flak, for example, and yet they sold out! I gradually let things with the zine wind down so that it could be put to rest if no replacement for me was forthcoming.

The Editor/Publisher of *DW* is the most difficult in the hobby. Ideally it requires an individual who is tops as a player, GM, editor, publisher, and personality. But where to find such a person...

It was time for David Hood to appear.

I had met David at DipCon '86, in Fredricksburg, Virginia. I knew he was a good player, a good GM, and a good editor/publisher of his zine *Carolina Command & Commentary*. The question was whether David had the personality for the job. Above all else the publisher and editor must be able to mobilize the hobby, speak for and to the hobby, and have the hobby listen to them.

I sounded out David's friends in North Carolina. I figured they would know him best. It was obvious the fellow could lead, and his friends attested to that. That left three questions. Did he want the job? Would his family support him in it? Could we teach him to speak and write English well enough that the hobby would support a "southerner" as *DW* Boss?

History

Well, yes, David did want the job. He wanted it right then and there. (Of course, I delayed turning things over to him until he finished running DipCon/World DipCon in 1990. I knew from experience that the staff would not take up the slack while he was busy with DipCon.) Yes, his wife Sandi would support him in it. David doesn't know this, but it wasn't until I had a chance to talk to her at my first DixieCon that he got the job. Only those who have had the job appreciate the importance of having somebody like Mike (to me) or Sandi (to David) around to use as a sounding board (or dart board, on occasion.)

David's English is improving, although I did note he had problems understanding the Canadians, Brits and Aussies at World DipCon...

The second best thing I ever did with respect to *DW* was to take it away from Rod Walker. The best thing I ever did was to give it to David Hood.

David's questions for this feature do not mention the future. No doubt he is preoccupied with the present. As one

who has been around from the beginning, though, I am very much preoccupied with *DW*'s future. Very few are aware of it, but there exists something I call the *DW* Patrimony. This consists of the sum value of *DW*'s assets, including hundreds of articles about the game and hobby, thousands of back issues, anthologies, etc. As these assets are sold a portion of the income goes to the current *DW* publisher to help defray expenses, a portion goes to produce new materials for sale, and a portion is set aside for future needs. This Patrimony has been passed down from the beginning, and I expect David to add to it in the future. When you see advertisements for back issues of *DW* and other related publications, and you purchase them, you will be investing in the future of *Diplomacy World*. Hopefully this feature on the zine's past will convince you that such an investment will bring a good return.

>Larry Peery (PO Box 620399, San Diego CA 92102) is a former editor and publisher of *Diplomacy World*.

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Is the Kingmaker Tactic Okay?

by David Hood

At this year's DixieCon there was some discussion about the play of a particular player in several of the games. The charge was, basically, that said person played the game in a manner not consistent with either the rules or of fair tournament play. His crime? Handing the win to one player out of spite towards another player.

Novices may be somewhat perplexed as to why such behavior would be objectionable to Diplomacy players. When I started playing the game, our gaming group did not consider second place to be a bad thing, so there was nothing inherently wrong with helping another person to win the game as long as there was sufficient rewards in doing so.

When I entered the tournament and postal hobbies, though, I found out that most hobbyists would never think in such terms. To such people, the purpose of the game is primarily to keep another player from winning, i.e. make sure that a stalemate line is set up to preclude a win. Hopefully, the resulting draw will include you, but if not at least you have done your job by preventing the win.

After I learned that's the way the experienced players are supposed to play, I proceeded to act upon this assumption in the last game of my first Diplomacy tournament. I was a big Germany, and I stabbed my French ally, played by the experienced hobbyist and publisher Marc Peters. Instead of defending his homeland from the rampaging Italy, as I expected him to do pursuant to the "prevent a win" strategy, he proceeded to hand Italy the win to make sure I wasn't in a draw!

At first this seems inconsistent. If the goal is really to prevent a win, then why didn't Marc negotiate with me about setting up a stalemate line to stop Morgan Gurley's Italy from winning? The answer is that there is no simplistic "goal of the game" that applies to every situation. While the initial goal of Diplomacy is to win or be in the draw, there are times when taking a different position in negotiation or actually doing something else in your moves is perfectly OK. One's goal in Diplomacy differs from person to person, and often from game to game.

Survival isn't even always the primary goal, at least not for me. Flip ahead quickly to Gary Behnen's contest on page 87. You will notice that in that game, my one-center position agreed to give up their only center in order to help Gary win. Why? Because if I did not do so, the guy who stabbed me would have won the next turn. Often the only way to try to convince a stabber to make peace with you, the stabbee, is to threaten to throw the game to someone else. There is absolutely nothing infantile or unethical about the threat to do so. It is the actual carrying it out that people hate.

I would argue that such hatred is irrational. If it's OK to

threaten to do something, I say it's OK to carry it out (at least in the context of a Diplomacy game.) The tactic will always be disregarded by the stabber unless it is actually carried out from time to time in actual games. The stabber should not be able to stab with impunity, knowing that the stabbee is bound by some ethical obligation to resist someone else's push for a win. If this were true, the stabbee could be forced out of a draw or even eliminated by tying his hands behind his back as the stabber continues his assault.

Now, let's return to the player at this year's DixieCon. In two different games, he supported one player to a win at the expense of one or more other players who either stabbed him or refused to cooperate with him. I find nothing wrong with such actions on his part. (I did largely the same thing myself as the Papacy in the 1499 variant tournament.)

The problem can be, nonetheless, with the manner in which the tactic is pulled off. One must be firm, but rational in one's carrying out of the threat to throw the game. One must always be open to negotiation with the other party so as to make sure there is no appearance of ill will. Remember that this tactic is not truly a question of spite or hatred for the stabber; it is simply a way of showing the stabber what the logical consequence of his actions will be. If he responds with emotionally antics or other such behavior, it is his problem rather than yours. Provided, of course, that you did not start the emotional war yourself.

North American Hobby Services

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

Miller Number Custodian (MNC): Records Variant gamestarts and finishes. Lee Kendter, 4347 Benner St, Philadelphia PA 19135. or Brad Wilson, PO Box 126, Wayne PA 19087.

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

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

Novice Packet: Tom Mainardi, 45 Zummo Way, Norristown PA 19401 or Bruce Reiff, 432 Caldwell Dr, Cincinnati OH 45216.

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

Pontevedria: A list of game openings. Phil Reynolds, 2896 Oak St, Sarasota FL 34237.

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16/353a Old South Head Road, Bondi, 2026, Australia.

UK and European Contact: Mike Gibson, 1/98 Great Titchfield St, London W1P 7AG, UK.
North American Contact: David Hood, 104-F Terrace Drive, Cary, NC, 27511, USA.

1991 World Zine Poll

by Mark Nelson

It is impossible, of course, to run a true World Zine Poll. The vast number of Diplomacy zines (at least 150 worldwide) and the scarcity of people who see more than one or two foreign zines ensure that such a Poll would have little merit.

However, there is still a good reason for listing my favorite ten zines (as I did in 1989 and 1990.) I get a number of requests each year from people who want to see foreign zines yet find it difficult to choose particular zines from the wide choice available. By listing my top ten I hope to point people in the right direction, though naturally the list reflects my personal bias in favor of more fannish-type zines rather than games-oriented ones. Next year I hope to present similar lists from a selection of international hobbyists.

In the following list I have listed previous finishes in parenthesis, with "F" meaning folded and "X" meaning the zine did not qualify for inclusion.

1. *Northern Flame* (4-8) Cal White, 1 Turnberry Ave, Toronto Ontario, M6N 1P6 CANADA.

Cal White runs a wonderfully laid-back zine which has an immense charm and friendliness. The centerpiece of the zine is the long and rambling letter column. Games are carried outside the main zine, leaving even more room for reading material. It came as no surprise that this zine won the North American Runestone Poll in 1990, and is a strong contender for this year's award.

2. *Victoriana* (2-7) John Cain, 76 Banool Rd, Balwyn Victoria 3103 AUSTRALIA.

Vic is the best traditional Diplomacy zine in the world. If I wanted to run a regular games-service this would be my model. The zine comes out like clockwork, the games are well-GMed, and all include maps. It's the top zine for Australians to play in. The zine also contains a good letter column with contributions from around the world (John is a dedicated internationalist.) There are also articles, mainly on the Australian tournament Dip scene, that appear on a regular basis. It combines the twin aims of providing a zine which appeals to games players as well as to the more fannish fans.

3. *Electric Monk* (3-X) Madelain Smith, 44 Lytchett Way, Nythe, SWINDON, SN3 3PN ENGLAND.

After finishing second in the 1989 UK Zine Poll I predicted it would win the 1990 Poll, which it duly did. I would be surprised if it didn't go ahead and win the 1991 Poll as well. Upon its arrival in 1989 it stood out as the best new zine since

the mid 1980's. The key to its success is simple. Like *Victoriana* it is a good place to play games. It also runs a good range of non-traditional games. However, I mainly enjoy the zine due to its other contents, such as book reviews, bike ride tales, a long letter column and hobby news. It is also attractively presented. If *Electric Monk* has a fault, it is that it is a little fluffy, i.e. too clean and polite with very little controversy or arguments.

4. *Dolchstoss* (5-2) Richard Sharp, Norton House, Whielden St, Amersham BUCKS., HP7 0HU ENGLAND.

Dolchstoss is certainly the best place to play Dip in the UK. However, it is also very well-written. Whilst one may not always agree with Richard's views on a wide range of topics, such as South Africa, race relations and ratings systems, it is always a delight to read said views. His put-downs in the letter column are inspirational. The best description of Richard is a latent 17th century English Hooligan. Drinking beer and wine, stumbling across Europe overindulging himself, and playing bridge against all comers, he also finds time to distribute a quaint little journal.

5. *Lepanto 4-Ever* (X-X) Per Westling, Rysdv. 246 c:16, S-58251, Linköping SWEDEN.

Last year I tipped this zine for entry into my top ten, and it made it! Perhaps this zine is best described as a European *Victoriana*. Certainly there are similarities between the Scandinavian and Australian hobbies, particularly in their enthusiasm for FTF Diplomacy. Per has made a determined effort to establish himself on the international scene, and the zine contains contributors from all over the world. Not surprisingly, there is a concentration from mainland Europe. The zine has perhaps slightly more emphasis on games and fandom rather than the more general chat of, say, *Electric Monk*. *LAE* is another Bridge-carrying zine and, yes, is published in English.

6. *Variants & Uncles* (6-4) James Nelson, 112 Huntley Ave, Spondon DERBY, DE2 7DU ENGLAND.

V&U remains unique amongst my top ten in that it just runs articles on games, and makes no attempt to debase its noble origins by running other items. Betraying my background as a Diplomacy variant fan, I include this zine for the simple reason that this is simply the best zine in the world for Diplomacy variants. New rules, old rules, articles on how to play, reviews of variants and games run to 3-weekly dead-

lines are the usual fare. Issues are often thematic, which enables the editor to look at specific variants in great detail. Recent issues have included a Hypereconomic issue and a look at games which seek to improve the basic game by small changes.

7. *PenguinDip* (8-X) Stephen Dorneman, 94 Eastern Ave #1, Malden MA, 02148 USA.

I only see this zine irregularly (whenever a third party mails me their copy) but I always look forward to its mixture of science-fiction, role-playing and gaming as it produces an interesting read. The zine is simultaneously an active part of SFdom and the Diplomacy hobby, and as such contains a cross-section of the best writers from both worlds. Recommended. Indeed I plan to subscribe if Stephen doesn't want to trade...

8. *FTT* (X-X) Judith Hanna and Joseph Nicholas, 5A Frinton Rd, Stamford Hill, LONDON, N15 6NH ENGLAND.

FTT is an "SF" zine in the best tradition of SF zines, i.e. it has no SF except when it creeps in by accident. It comes out three or four times per year. What distinguishes this zine from the games-based zines which run similar material is that there are more outside contributors, all of whom are of a high standard. Consequently, it can be difficult to get one's own material into the zine. Of the thirty-seven contributors, only ten or so manage to make it past the editing stage. Many of the correspondents are from overseas, adding an international perspective to the discussions.

9. *Y Ddraig Goch* (X-X) Iain Bowen, 5 Wigginton Terrace, YORK, YO3 7JD ENGLAND.

Iain has always been an interesting writer, but over the past year he has slowly "come-out" to give himself the room he needed to develop his writing skills further. At the same time, he has become more open-minded: though the infamous Bowen sarcasm is still there it is now expressed only in opportune moments (and thus more effective). This has resulted in a more serious letter column. Combined with a fair dose of hobby-based material (intelligently discussed, at that) Iain runs one of the few UK zines I would continue to get if I ever folded my own zine. Although there is some way to go before *YDG* makes the transition from good zine to great zine, I do expect to see this happen sometime in the future. It may not win the Zine Poll next time, but is surely a strong contender for 1992.

10. *Gallimaufry* (10-3) Steve Doubleday, Norton House, Whielden St, Amersham BUCKS., HP7 0HU ENGLAND.

The Canadian zine *Passchendaele* (f-1-6), folded soon after I announced by results from last year! I hope this isn't a recurring feature of my Poll! Of all the zines I have seen in my time in the hobby, this was simply the best. It stands out head and shoulders over the rest and I await Francois Cuerrier's return. Not only was he the top North American writer on Diplomacy, hobby matters and current affairs, but he was also the best editor I've seen. A truly talented individual.

The American zine *House of Lords* (f-7-9) folded just prior to my 1990 results and the gap it left in the American hobby has yet to be filled. Dick and Julie Martin are still around in the hobby, though.

Finally, I might have remarked that *Shipyard Blues* (X-9-X) was a regular SF zine, but I do not think I've seen it since I wrote my column this time last year!

In some ways, *Gallimaufry* is a British *Northern Flame*. It is relaxed and low-key, and though the letter column may not be wide-ranging it does contain some good writers. Although the mix of SF, travel tips, variant chatter and increasing amounts of hobby news (Steve and Richard Sharp are becoming more involved in the hobby as BNC) might make for a truly excellent zine, I think Steve does not as yet make the most of what he has. The zine seems to have slipped into a steady, passive state which, whilst being perfectly readable, is not as challenging as I suspect Steve could make it. If Steve could inject more time (and thought) into the zine, then *Gallimaufry* has the potential to go far.

Of the zines I tipped for entry into my Poll last year, the Belgian zine *Dipsomania* remains too irregular for inclusion. Also, given that it is running more games the written content has shrunk considerably. I do not expect this Jef Bryant product to survive much longer. The American zine *Been There, Done That* seems to have had an off-year, and the switch from Air Mail to Surface Mail delivery has not been a step in the right direction. Editor Tom Nash is probably the biggest cheapskate in the world!

Zines to look out for next year include *BTDT* if Tom can produce it on a regular basis. David Hood's revamped *Diplomacy World* has an outside chance to scrape in if he can make the zine more lively and varied in content. The German *Europa 2000* has a chance also with its wide range of letter writers, although it may be a little game-heavy to impress me that much. Finally, Harry Bond's *U-Bend* has a glittering future provided it can be produced on time. He does have to face finals, and the transition from student to full-time worker. Hopefully he'll set up some international trades...

➤ Mark Nelson (21 Cecil Mount, Armley, Leeds LS12 2AP, England) is the International Editor for *Diplomacy World*.

My Own World Zine Poll

by James Nelson

In each of the last two years my brother Mark has listed his top ten zines from the UK and overseas. This year, Mark has invited me to list my own "Top Ten." Therefore:

1. *Northern Flame* Cal White (address above).

Cal won the Runestone Poll last year (the North American zine poll) and looks to be a likely winner in 1991. The zine is consistently produced to an excellent standard, with the main feature being the letter column. In it are featured a wide range of subjects from a wide variety of people: Americans, Brits, Ozzies, Canadians, etc. Cal also likes reader participation in other forms, such as Scruples-type Q & A, and games for all readers done with a narrative approach. I can recommend no other zine above this because the product is just superb.

2. *The Yorkshire Gallant* Mark Nelson, 21 Cecil Mount, Armley LEEDS, LS12 2AP ENGLAND.

My dear brother changes the name of his zine so often that I have lost track of its current title. "Whatever" is produced whenever Mark feels he has sufficient material to put out an issue. This means, consequently, that you receive five or so excellent issues per year rather than ten mediocre ones. My brother has developed immensely as a writer and now writes intelligently (where he previously had not) on a wide range of matters: Science Fiction, comics, bridge, Diplomacy, books, etc. Even Iain Bowen has said that it would be "one of the few zines I'd subscribe to if I folded YDG." How much better a recommendation can you receive? An excellent zine even if Mark beat me in the UK Zine Poll. (As a brother I should put him down rather than praise him. He did better than me only by getting his American cronies to vote 10's for him!)

3. *Y Ddraig Goch* Iain Bowen (address above).

YDG would be one of two (with *Dolchstoss*) that I would subscribe to if I ever semi-dropped out of the hobby. Its similarity with Sharp's zine does not end there. Iain has a controversial manner about him and has no qualms about printing controversial subject matter. His wonderfully acidic, sarcastic writing style, combined with profound knowledge on most subjects intellectual, makes Iain one of the best writers in the hobby. The zine has come on in leaps and bounds since the early days (How much should I start the bidding at for a copy of issue 1?). Iain has carved a niche for himself within the UK Diplomacy hobby as a Richard Walkerdine-in-waiting.

4. *Dolchstoss* Richard Sharp (address above).

This is the other zine that I regard as a must-see. Why? Richard is perhaps the best writer in the hobby. He writes about his life, the bridge he plays, the beer he drinks, the food he eats, etc. In short, nothing of great intellectual weight but nevertheless a damn good read. His politics are controversial (right wing of the political spectrum), his manner provocative, and his put-downs a sight to see. A large and healthy letter column provides Richard with a good vehicle to comment, in his own inimitable style, on every matter under the sun. The faint-hearted and easily offended need not subscribe, but I urge everyone else to do so.

5. *The Canadian Diplomat* Robert Acheson, 10883 Saskatchewan Dr #603, Edmonton Alb., T6E 4S6 CANADA.

Robert only manages to produce this four times a year but I still eagerly await the next issue. He runs many games, but the zine is made by the space fillers in between game reports. Robert reprints cartoons, quotes and small humorous articles to fill these gaps, and frequently leaves me in stitches. What's more, a fairly substantial letter column fleshes out the zine. I call it a letter column, but there is little comment on previous letters (given the time lag.) Instead, it is more a collection of peoples' thoughts on current events, particularly sports and politics.

6. *Victoriana* John Cain (address above).

Having been lucky enough to meet John not once, but twice, I can testify that John is a very nice man. What's more, this comes across in the zine. There are three main features to the zine: a long letter column on a wide range of subjects from all over the globe, coverage of Australian conventions, and the games (many of which have international players.) A less serious and more frivolous zine than many, but it will always be a favorite of mine.

7. *Lepanto 4-Ever* Per Westling (address above).

Many people are put off by the thought of a zine in, Shock!, Horror!, a foreign language. Since Per writes in English, this attitude should not apply to *L4E*. He writes intelligently on all subjects and prints articles, not just on Diplomacy and its variants, but also on current affairs and bridge. He runs a wide range of games, which feature much international

participation (as does the letter column.) Certainly, this is the best non-British European zine.

8. *Electric Monk* Madelaine Smith (address above).

EM came in second in the Zine Poll last year, won it this year, and will probably win it next year. If that is not testimony enough to the quality of the product then I'm at a loss for words. Part of the "fluffy" tendency of zines which sprung up in the last couple of years, Madelaine and co-editor Andy Key cover everything from Teddy bears to bike trips (and frequently, bike trips with Teddy bears!) The quality of writing and production is superb, and is coupled with a vibrant letter column. My own regret is that I haven't time to contribute!

9. *Issue* Jeremy Nuttall, 24 Eastwood Rd, Balsall Heath, BIRMINGHAM, B12 9NB ENGLAND.

There's a name which may ring a bell in the minds of some readers. Jeremy was once the big name in role-playing fandom, and was on the fringe of the Diplomacy hobby. The zine, though, has

connections with neither hobby. Instead, it is a zine covering Christian perspectives on current issues. A lively debate within his letter column from both Christians and non-Christians gives this zine a real tingle when Jeremy opens up a new topic for discussion. The issues are thoughtfully discussed and provide an excellent alternative view on current events and issues.

10. *Ode* John Marsden, 33 Weston Rd, Strood, KENT, ME2 3HA ENGLAND.

This is a zine you can depend on, since John has been publishing for over ten years without fail. One of the few zines I'd consider playing in, *Ode* has excellent GMing from both John and his outside GMs. John himself writes no articles for publication, but he does print contributions sent in. He occasionally slips in a controversial comment in the hope that it will spark a response. My own criticism of the zine is that the letter column expands and contracts rapidly, a fault which lies with the readership, not John.

➤ James Nelson (112 Huntley Ave, Spondon, DERBY, DE2 7DU, England) is the Variant Editor for *Diplomacy World*.

A Dip Tourist's Guide to Australia

by Don Del Grande

World DipCon III will be held in Canberra, in the Australian Capital Territory, on January 26-28, 1992. As a public service, and as someone who's planning on going there myself, I will present a series of articles to help the Dip tourist plan their trip to WDC III. First installment is: How to Get There.

First of all, I am assuming that you are not planning on getting on a plane, getting to Canberra somehow, playing Dip, going back to the airport, and flying home. There's a lot of time and money involved, so you might as well have some fun. More on that in another installment.

Second, this is written primarily for Americans. Canadians, British, and other non-Australians will just have to figure things out for themselves, although there will things of interest to you below.

Now that you're planning to go, what's really first is your passport. If you don't have one, you'll need some proof of citizenship (a birth certificate will do), a photo ID (like a driver's license), two passport photos (photo-machine photos are not valid for American passports), and, the last time I checked, \$42 in cash. Check your Yellow Pages under "photographers" for the places in your area that take passport photos. Most large post offices have separate passport offices that are open until 4 pm on weekdays, but they may be closed for lunch, so check in advance.

It takes some time to receive your passport in the mail. How much time depends on when you apply. If you apply in the summer, allow two months. I applied for mine in February 1987 and received it four weeks later. Slowness is not limited to IRS refunds. In major cities there is a way to get your passport on-the-spot for a slightly larger fee and a wait in a long line, but you'll have to check on that. Passports are good for ten years (five if you are under 18.)

Next, get your visa. No, not the credit card. Australia is one of those few countries which require a visa in advance to enter the

country. You will need your passport, another passport photo, and an "Application to Visit Australia." The latter could be obtained from your travel agent or by writing the Australian Embassy or Consulate (see below.)

There are three ways to get your visa (though none involve a direct fee): send everything plus a SASE to the appropriate Embassy or Consulate, apply in person at the appropriate Embassy or Consulate, or give your stuff to someone else to apply for you in person. Your Embassy or Consulate depends on your state. For IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, OK, SD, WI: Australian Consulate-General, Suite 2930, Quaker Tower, 321 N. Clark St, Chicago IL 60610. For AK, CO, Northern CA, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY: Australian Consulate-General, 360 Post St, San Francisco CA 94108. For AZ, Southern CA, NM: Australian Consulate-General, 611 N Larchmont Blvd, Los Angeles CA 90004. For DC, MD, VA: Australian Embassy, 1601 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington DC 20036. For AL, AR, LA, MS, OK, TN, TX: Australian Consulate-General, 1990 Post Oak Blvd Suite 800, Houston TX 77056. For HI: Australian Consulate-General, 1000 Bishop St, Penthouse, Honolulu HI 96813. All else: Australian Consulate-General, 636 Fifth Ave, New York NY 10111.

I will take as many applications with me as I can when I apply (I'll let you know when.) At least one person within driving distance of these other places should volunteer to do the same. Contact me.

➤ Don Del Grande (142 Eliseo Dr, Greenbrae CA 94904) publishes the zine *Lemon Curry*. This is reprinted from his issue 111.

The MemorableDW Letter Column

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

Layout and Graphics

Pete Gaughan (1521 S Novato Blvd #46, Novato CA 94947): I recommend that inset boxes (such as the one about the PDO Auction on page 26) be moved to the bottom or top of the column so as not to break up whatever feature surrounds them.

Bill Stapel (21555 Olmstead, Dearborn MI 48124): It looks like you are doing a good job but I do miss the old-style cover page, since I save my old issues.

Daniel Jew (93 Mimosa Cres, Singapore 2880): One suggestion: print the variant maps slightly larger so that I can more easily photocopy them.

Eric Klein Interview / Electronic Mail

Michael Hopcroft (420 SE Grand Ave #215, Portland OR 97214): I see you're still getting mail from the interview with Eric Klien. It is so easy to lose track of a PBEM game, as I found out on Prodigy. Prodigy managed to scare away all its PBEM players by raising its E-Mail charges. It also does not allow games to be played on the public boards - any games! The other services are just too plain costly.

Demo Game Finish

Michael Hopcroft: An E/E/G/G/I draw? I object to any draw proposal which includes the word "egg." This type of draw reminds me of the old saying that in Diplomacy, there is no such thing as second place. This draw seems to award an official third-place plaque to Italy. That goes against the spirit of standard postal practice. It is the nature of the postal game that we must have draws, since playing out every game to the bitter end is just not feasible. But I don't see how 20% of a draw can really appeal to anybody.

Fog of War Variant

John Schultz (POB 41-19390, ICH, Michigan City IN

46360): I'm playing in two Fog of War games. One is in *Dipadeedoodah*, the other in *The Swiss Observer*. It's a great little variant. I'm going bald pulling my hair out. But, a big warning to GMs: be careful about sending the right unit positions to the players. I've been effected by two mistakes so far. One cost me dearly. The other cost an opponent dearly because I saw two of his units I should not have seen.

Letter Column

John Breakwell (62 Shackleton Way, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire RG5 4UT, England): Dave McCrumb must be a killjoy in real life. With 1250 people on your mailing list he wants two pages for the lettercol? I bet even five pages is not enough to do your mailbag justice. *Diplomacy World* is a great place for discussion, but Dave is trying to stifle people who haven't enough for an article but have a point to make. Yes, I like the modern font for when you respond to letters in the letter column. Now, how about a quarter-inch indention from both left and right margins as well?

Editor: I don't think the extra space will be worth the loss of material such a margin would cause. Or maybe I'm just a stick-in-the-mud conservative type. I've certainly been called worse...

Hood's All Relations Article

John Breakwell: One problem with Italy against France is the inhibitive small land border. Without a couple of fleets, it is difficult to break through into Marseille. This is why so many games I have seen involve Italy being held where he is, or trying to expand eastwards into Austria. Because of the number of units needed, Italy cannot normally afford to move West without letting Austria take him from behind. (This is not a pleasant experience for Italy.)

Daniel Jew: The brief description of the "Lepanto" in your "Overview on Austro-Italian Relations" was greatly appreciated. Perhaps it was intended for people like me who otherwise would not have understood the concept at all if it were suggested by a fellow player.

Caruso's PDORA Auction Allocations

Pete Gaughan: You don't remember the PDO? Wow. The PDO was a parody umbrella group, which had Commissars from various regions of the country and Secretaries for things like novice recruitment and ideology. It was run by the

Washington crowd in the early 1980s, produced at least one zine directory, sold Dip provinces (the official PDO Dip map includes a province named "Michalski", for example) and lots of other nonsense. The only legacy of the PDO today is, sadly, the name of the Auction.

Hobby News

John Schultz: I do empathize with Fritz Juhnke's comments in the last letter column. *DW* has a lot of "insider" feel about it. I'm going on three years into this PBM Diplomacy thing now, and still feel "outside" a lot of times. I think a lot of newcomers leave the hobby simply because they lack the tenacity to outlive the initial outsider feeling.

Bill Stapel: It would be helpful to have a calendar section that would list conventions with Diplomacy events in the period six months from publication.

Greier's Zine Publishing Article

Pete Gaughan: I wrote an article in the novice packet *Masters of Deceit* entitled "Publish! It's Good For You." I mention this because of Greier's piece; we cover slightly different details. A new or prospective publisher may want to check it out.

Editor: The address for *Masters of Deceit* is on page 16. Its new custodian, Tom Mainardi, is publishing a new version soon. It will be available in early July. Prospective publishers could also write Bruce Linsey for a copy of *Once Upon a Deadline* (PO Box 1334, Albany NY 12201.)

Feature on Postal Sports Games

Michael Hopcroft: I have some experience with mail leagues in which the home coach plays out the games while following concise instructions from the visiting team's coach. I did that in an international league using Strat-O-Matic Pro Basketball. That would be worth doing again.

I wonder how many computer baseball games John Caruso will run before he finds the right one. The current version of Strat-O-Matic will generate results, but to understand what is going on during play you need the cards from the boardgame (at additional expense.) But every game out there has a severe drawback for that sort of project. APBA and Pursue the Pennant both require manual input before every play. This involves lots of keypunch time. Mind you, there have always been dedicated sports gamers who like nothing better than leading a monastic existence for three months while playing out every game of a certain season.

Hood's I Hate Triples Article

John Breakwell: I find that triples are fine if the players are happy with such a finish to the game. The session of Diplomacy I played at Gamesfair this spring is a good example. After I and three others were wiped out or too small to be a problem, the triumvirate sat back and decided that they had all played well so why not call it quits? Of course, the losing quartet did not think they had played so spectacularly, but our opinions didn't matter much, did they?

Dragonstooth Rating System

Andy York (PO Box 2307, Universal City TX 78148): I have been playing games with Boardman numbers, but did not see my name on the list. Thus I'm a tad curious about which games are included. It could be that all my games were completed in 1990 or later, so they were not included in the Fall 1990 listing.

Editor: That is entirely possible. Once I finish updating my results based on the new game finishes reported by BNC Gary Behnen in April, I will be able to clear this up. I had wanted to put the new listing in this issue, but I have yet to finish the computations. All games that are not irregular in some way are included.

Del Grande's International Tournament Ratings

Andy York: I'm going to drop a line to Don Del Grande as there is a minor error in his IDTR ratings. Number 38, Bart DePalma, is an American, not Aussie. He played at the Origins tournament in Atlanta last year.

Michael Hopcroft: How long do you think it will be before Don Del Grande includes the French and other European championships in his IDTR system? It will be interesting to see how he broadens it in such a case. Only one of the people in the top ten has been heard of by me in the postal hobby: Jason Bergmann. Again, though, it should be noted that these are the best tournament players in the English-speaking world only. However, I still think the effort is remarkable.

Editor: Funny you should mention the European tournaments. Don says the organizers of French DipCon have recently contacted him about inclusion in the IDTR. Basically, the organizers must get in touch with him. There are plenty of small Dip tournaments at gaming Cons in the US, for example, that are not listed because they have no contact with the Diplomacy hobby as such.

Dave McCrumb (3636 Old Town Rd, Shawsville VA 24162): You misprinted Don's scoring system. It should read "100 X (50-[10X1])/50."

Editor: I stand corrected.

DW History

Fred Davis (3210K Wheaton Way, Ellicott City MD 21043): I see you have done what I suggested, by listing in #62 some of the better back issues of *DW*. A very nice job. However, to make it complete, I've looked up when my "Diplomacy Chronology" appeared: #35, page 23. The Appendix appeared in #34, page 8. I gather there is some question as to the availability of issues 24-40. I have copies, if anyone ever needs to make photocopies.

Cronin's Perpetual Tournament Article

Michael Hopcroft: Larry Cronin's idea of a perpetual tournament reminds me of the relegation system in English soccer. If you have a rotten season your team gets sent down to the lower division. The idea of first-class-only games does not appeal to me, though. It would increase the problem of mediocre players being scared away from an opening by who's already in it, as well as its reverse, where top players refuse to share an opening with novices.

Colonia Variant Feature

John Breakwell: The Colonia variant looks similar to the Mercator variant you see over here.

Michael Hopcroft: I have never played in a Colonia game. But aside from not understanding how Austria got a colony in Florida or how the Russians got to Brazil, this looks to be an interesting (if hard) game. It seems to me that novices would be eaten like cereal from wholesome oats.

Editor: The only time I played I did relatively well, sharing a three-way as China with Prosnitz' Spain and McHugh's Portugal. But China is significantly easier to play than the others. There are certain people identifiable as "Colonia" players, but I have also seen newcomers to the variant do well.

Nelson's Middle Earth Variant

John Breakwell: I'm a staunch Downfall man and proud of it. I can't really relate to a game based around such boring powers. There is no color to "Angmar" or "Hillmen" as the source material is not written as picturesquely as the Lord of

the Rings trilogy. Do you know anybody who has reread *The Silmarillion*, let alone finished it?

Editor: Uh, no. I must admit I never finished the damn thing myself, back when I was into that sort of reading (junior high.) The *Lord of the Rings* was even difficult for me to wade through, I'm afraid.

Internationalism Section

Stan Johnson: I felt that Mark Nelson's earlier criticisms about the international material in *DW* were completely invalid. In #60, for example, most of the articles were on the play of Diplomacy. Do they play it on a different board over there, or what? How were such articles irrelevant to him? It is nice of you to be so generous in accepting criticism, but you shouldn't accept such invalid attacks so meekly. Despite have played for 18 years, I felt I learned new things from issue 60.

John Breakwell: I think social zines win hobby polls because the readers are outgoing enough to push their favorite zine. People who just want games don't usually go out of their way to vote in a poll that their editor is unlikely to be interested in (and probably hasn't even plugged.)

Von Metzke / Burgess on the Runestone Poll

John Breakwell: I liked the idea of Gold, Silver and Bronze medal lists in zine polls. This is a brilliant idea for stopping the "last equals worst" misconception. C'mon, the poll lists only those zines voted for, so even the last zine on the list beat out those who couldn't get anybody to vote for them!

Contents in General

Dan Krane (Box 8232, Wash Univ Med Sch, St Louis MO 63110): The Strategy and Tactics articles, particularly McCausland's piece on Italy, were especially interesting to me. Please add my name to your New Blood listing. Thanks in advance and I'll be looking forward to more issues of *DW* as they come out!

Daniel Jew: The articles on game play, variants, etc. were more relevant to me. The ratings systems and hobby news less so, especially since I am both a novice and foreigner. Perhaps it would be true to say that these articles cater to a smaller number of your subscribers?

Mark Fassio (Box 5265 USMLM, APO NY 09742): An old fart like me doesn't have to look far to see the Old Guard names standing out in your zine: Caruso, Holley, Botimer,

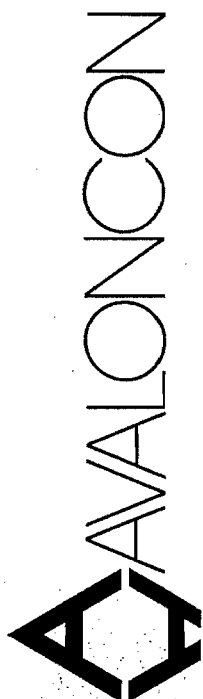
Berch, Behnen, etc. It's almost like Old Home Week at the Dip Sharks Home for Crafty Players. That alone enticed me to cough up bucks.

Bill Stapel: I am primarily a face-to-face player, but I do enjoy reading about the hobby in general. I like the variant section, and use the New Blood listing to find local players.

The Zine in General

Daniel Jew: Just reading a *DW* is simply amazing in that the

hobby has developed to such a stage. A stage with countless zines and editors, positions like BNC, projects like MOD and NAVB, massive conventions, etc. In Singapore, the hobby is in the barest fledgling shape, probably like the American one in the early 1960s. Dip is played by only a handful of people, mainly students like myself. There are no zines, conventions, and very few postal players (perhaps ten.) Keep up on the good work on *DW*; it is appreciated in as far-off corners of the globe as Singapore!



If you hold it, they will come

HOLD WHAT? AvalonCon—Avalon Hill's first game-playing-only convention.
WHEN? August 23-25, 1991: Friday 9am thru Sunday 5pm.
WHERE? Penn Harris Inn & Convention Center, Camp Hill (Harrisburg) PA. A pleasant suburban setting nestled between I-81, I-83, and the Pennsylvania Turnpike.
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WHAT CAN I BUY THERE? Zilch! Well, maybe a coke and a bite to eat. There will be no dealers. No flea markets. No auctions. No event tickets. Just pure, unadulterated boardgame competition. However, Avalon Hill will have a representative on hand to fill any special order direct from the factory to you before you leave Sunday afternoon.
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WHAT DO I DO NOW? Mark the date—August 23-25. Reserve your room. Then pre-register as soon as possible. At-the-door admission is higher and does not include a free t-shirt, so send your request for pre-registration forms to:



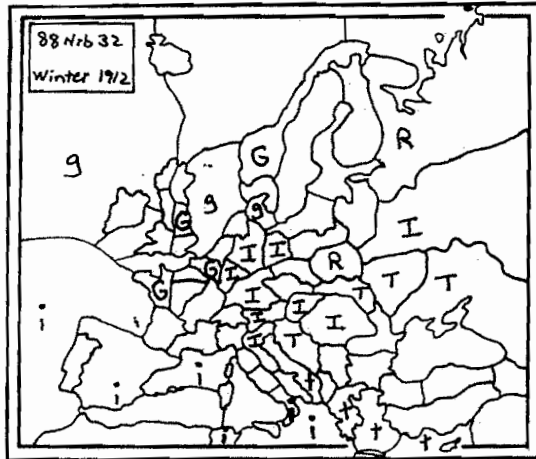
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Winning Answer to DW #61 Contest

In DW #61, Mark Nelson posed a contest for the readership to try out concerning an Italian position in a Gunboat game in Winter 1912. Readers were to send us their analysis of Italy's chances for a win either in a Gunboat game or regular Dip game, based on the unit positions given. Below is a map showing the positions as of Winter 1912.

We would like to thank all those who entered — there



were several good responses to the contest. Congratulations to Dave McCrumb, whose answer was judged to be the best. He will receive a four-issue subscription to Mark's zine *The Mouth of Sauron* as well as an Avalon Hill gift certificate.

Dave McCrumb:

My answer begins with suggested Spring 1913 moves:

Russia: A Stp-Lvn, A War-Lvn.

If Italy is dislodged now, it is a guessing game in the fall. So keep them bottled up in Moscow, and take it in the fall for a build.

Germany: F Nat-Mid, F Nth-Eng, A Yor H, A Bre-Gas, A Bel-Bur, A Nwy-Swe, F Den-Kie.

Must prevent the Italian fleet incursion into the northern seas. Germany can hold Scandinavia easily once A Nwy gets into position. They should try to move south and take Iberia/Mar, but must keep Brest/Paris in doing so. One advantage is that they can lose two centers with no loss in unit strength.

Turkey: A Ukr-Rum, A Sev S A Ukr-Rum, A Tri-Ser, A Gal-Vie, F Eas-Ion, F Aeg S F Eas-Ion, F Gre S F Eas-Ion, F Adr S F Eas-Ion.

Turkey is by far the hardest power. They have

overwhelming fleet strength, but there is little that it can pick up. Certainly nothing soon. I think the best option is trying to consolidate and making a more defensible line with the armies until the fleets can come into better play. Also, Russia should be on the scene very soon.

Italy: F Mid-Eng, F Spa(sc)-Mid, F Lyo-Wes, F Tun-Ion, F Nap-Apu, A Vie-Tri, A Ven S A Vie-Tri, A Bud S A Vie-Tri, A Tyl-Vie, A Mun-Bur, A Ruh S A Mun-Bur, A Kie-Hol, A Ber-Kie, A Mos-Sev, F Ion-Adr (retreats to Naples).

The trick is to hold even in the line from the North Sea to the Balkans. Germany is pretty solid, but picking up the centers in Belgium, Brest and Paris must be done quickly. The Balkans should be put into as much disarray as possible, but Italy must still come out ahead since Moscow will be lost. Italy should try for the win before the Turkish fleets come into play, or all is lost. One advantage is that the opponents' armies are in very bad positions for giving each other much support.

Now let's turn to the orders for Fall 1913:

Russia: A Stp-Mos, A War S A Stp-Mos.

This takes an Italian center, and allows for the build of F Stp(sc) to threaten the holdings in Germany.

Germany: F Nat-Mid, F Nth-Eng, F Den-Nth, A Swe-Den, A Yor H, A Bel-Bur, A Gas-Bre.

This could lose two centers, but that is not unexpected. It will firm up the stalemate line if Italy goes after Brest. Scandinavia is already blocked from Italian invasion by A Swe.

Turkey: A Rum S A Gal-Bud, A Ser S F Adr-Tri, A Gal-Bud, A Sev S Russian A Stp-Mos, F Adr-Tri, F Ion H, F Gre S F Ion, F Aeg S F Ion.

Try to hold the line in the Med. In the Balkans, Turkey will be no worse off than even, so gamble on Bud and Tri to try to get a gain. Also, Turkey should help Russia.

Italy: F Mid-Bre, F Wes-Mid, F Spa(sc) S F Wes-Mid, A Bur-Par, A Ber-Kie, A Hol-Bel, A Ruh S A Hol-Bel, A Tyl-Vie, A Bud-Ser (d.ann), A Tri S A Bud-Ser, A Ven S A Tri, F Apu-Adr, F Tun-Tyn, F Nap-Tyn, A Mos-Stp (d. retreat Ukr).

These guys should try to sneak into Ser since Bud is

Contest

gone. Also, hold the Med until another fleet can be built. Go center-happy in the West. There will be a positive gain here regardless, hopefully more than the loss in the East.

Winter 1913 would look like this:

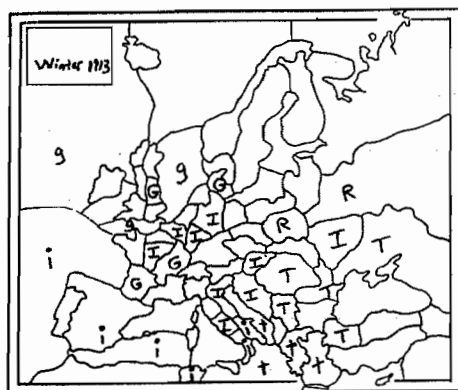
Russia	+Mos (3)	Builds F Stp(sc)
Germany	-Par, -Bel (7)	Even, was two short
Turkey	+Rum, +Bud, -Tri (9)	Builds A Con
Italy	+Par, +Bel, +Tri, -Rum, -Bud, -Mos (15)	Builds A Rom

Now, to Spring 1914. Make sure you look at the Winter 1913 map first.

Russia: A Mos-Ukr, a War S A Mos-Ukr, F Stp(sc)-Lvn

This will force Italy south while moving on German holdings.

Germany: A Den-Kie, A Yor-Hol, F Nth C A Yor-Hol, F Eng-Iri, F Nat-Iri, A Bur-Mun, A Gas-Mar.



The Atlantic is temporarily blocked. The problem now is to pick and choose any stray centers.

Turkey: A Ser S A Bud, A Bud S A Ser, A Con-Bul, A Rum S A Bud, A Sev S Russian A Mos-Ukr, F Ion-Apu, F Adr S F Ion-Apu, F Gre-Ion, F Eas S F Gre-Ion.

This holds the fort while pecking away at the Italian position by sea.

Italy: F Tun-Tyn, F Nap-Tyn, A Vie S A Tri, A Tri S A Vie, A Ukr-Gal, A Ven-Pie, A Rom-Ven, F Mid-Bre, F Wes-Mid, F Spa(sc) S F Wes-Mid, F Apu-Adr (d.ann), A Kie-Mun, A Ruh-Mun, A Bel-Bur, A Par S F Mid-Bre.

Things look very bad. It is impossible to cover everything. The trick is to grab what they can without losing

more.

Now for the all-important Fall 1914 turn:

Russia: A Ukr-Gal, A War-Sil, F Lvn-Bal.

Move south and west, keeping Italy hemmed in while threatening with the fleet.

Germany: F Nat-Mid, A Bur-Bel, A Hol S A Bur-Bel, F Nth S A Hol, F Eng S A Bur-Bel, A Mar-Spa(dislodged), A Den-Kie.

Germany need only play cat-and-mouse while RT takes Italy out.

Turkey: A Ser-Tri, A Con-Ser, A Bud S A Ser-Tri, A Rum S A Bud, A Sev-Ukr, F Apu-Ven, F Adr S F Apu-Ven, F Ion-Tyn, F Gre-Ion.

Keep pushing and pushing. There is no easy way to stop that push. It can only be slowed.

Italy: A Pie-Mar, F Spa(sc) S A Pie-Mar, F Mid-Eng, F Bre H, A Par-Bur, A Kie S A Bel-Hol, A Bel-Hol(dislodged), A Ven S A Tri (dislodged), A Tri S A Gal-Bud, A Vie S A Gal-Bud, A Gal-Bud, F Nap-Tyn, F Tun-Tyn.

Winter 1914

Russia	(3) Even	
Germany	+Hol, +Bel, -Bre (8)	Plays 1 short
Turkey	+Ven (10)	Builds F Smy
Italy	+Bre, -Bel, -Ven, -Hol (13)	Removes A Tyl

In the gunboat game context, Italy will not be able to hold out, not with Germany hopping around in the West. There is no way to track them down for the needed units. In the East, Turkey can easily set up a wall which will slowly move eastwards at an unstoppable pace, both by land and sea.

In a regular Dipgame, the same result would occur, only faster, because you would have better coordination between RT and RG.

Obviously, both scenarios assume no stabbing among RTG. Otherwise, stopping Italy would be infeasible. In a real game, I would foresee a stab of Russia by Turkey in Fall 1916 for the win.

>Dave McCrumb (3636 Old Town Rd, Shawsville VA 24162) publishes *The Appalachian General* and *Twains*, and is Senior Writer for *Diplomacy World*.

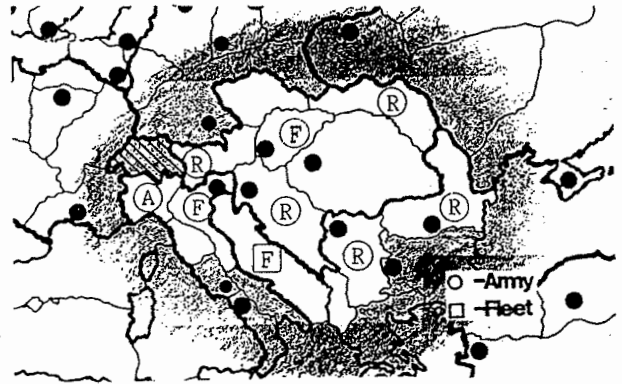
Thrust or Parry?

by Gary Behnen

It is generally accepted that in Diplomacy your prowess as a diplomat is the single most important attribute in the game. In some instances, however, it still comes down to your grasp of tactics and the ability to "read" your opponent. In this contest you will have to decide what your best tactics are as France to maintain 18 centers in the Fall after taking them in the Spring. In tackling this problem, you need to consider what Russia will do to retake a center. You should also know that, given the tactical position elsewhere on the board, Russia will definitely win next year if you do not win now!

The unit disposition is shown on the map. Last winter, Vie/Bud/Tri/Ser/Rum were held by Russia, while Austria held Venice. Diplomatically, Austria has permitted you to take Venice this Spring to help you wreak revenge on the 17-center Russia that stabbed him, though Ven is his last center. You should assume that his army in Piedmont is under French direction. To win, you must control two of these six supply centers after the Fall season.

Determine what you would do and why you feel it offers the best opportunity to win. Analysis of the situation



from the real-life French player (me) will accompany the winning answer in a later issue of *DW*. Send one copy of your answer to me, and another to David Hood (the real-life Austrian in the game) by August 1. The winner will receive two free issues of *DW* and Avalon Hill merchandise coupons.

➤ Gary Behnen (13101 S Trenton, Olathe KS 66062) is the top-ranked postal Dip player in N. America and current BNC.

Ultimate Gunboat

by Garret Schenck

Round Robin Gunboat Tournaments (RRGTs) have become quite popular lately. Several GMs offer their versions of this variant where seven people play a different country in seven different games of Gunboat. (Gunboat is simply Diplomacy with no negotiations, where the players do not know the others' identities.) The rationale is that by playing each country once, over the course of the seven games the "best" player will rise to the top.

Admittedly, a well-run seven-game RRGT will do a better job of showcasing the talents of a superior player than just one game. In a single game it is possible that bad luck or confused moves by other players can doom an otherwise well-played effort. However, to my way of thinking, RRGTs go only a very small way towards addressing this central problem of the "luck of the draw."

For instance, what if when you play England you are opposite a real flake-out as France, i.e. someone who always opens to the Channel. Then when you're Germany

the same flake plays Austria and, what-do-you-know, Army Vienna decides to vacation in Bohemia! See what I mean? Even though you are definitely the better player, the final stats may not show it. There's still too much left up to luck.

There is a solution to this problem: a RRGT where every possible combination of seven players is used. The total number of possible combinations of seven players is 7! ("7 factorial" or $7 \times 6 \times 5 \times 4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1$). We are talking about 5,040 games.

I propose to open the first section of "Ultimate Gunboat," a RRGT with 5,040 linked games of Gunboat. This should establish once and for all the finest Gunboat player on the North American continent. No longer will luck play a predominant role in winning a RRGT. While in some of the 720 games a person plays England that idiot player will play France (120 games, to be exact), in 120 other games the dorkhead will be safely distant in Turkey.

The gamefee will be set at \$9,500.00, or less than two

dollars per individual Gunboat game; well below the industry standard for gamestarts. A special arrangement with Microsoft Corporation, which is writing the adjudication and mapping programs, allows me to charge this bargain-basement price.

A modified Calhamer point count system will be used to determine the overall winner of this game of Ultimate Gunboat. Supply centers will not count towards victory, while a win and a loss will count slightly more than two two-way draws. No prizes will be awarded, but the victor will have the obvious satisfaction of being the best on the Continent.

A new zine, *Ultimate*, will be established to carry all the adjudications. It will come out every four weeks, with a special five-week interval four times a year (Christmas, mid-February, July 4, Thanksgiving), giving a publication schedule of twelve times a year. Turnaround time, due to custom software, should be very fast; at least as quick as *Maniac's Paradise*. Each issue will be a "perfect-bound" book, approximately the thickness of a Brooklyn telephone directory. (As the game progress, the size will likely shrink somewhat.) Each adjudication will come complete with a map, with four adjudications per page. Consequently, each issue of *Ultimate* will likely run well over 1000 pages.

Unfortunately, *Ultimate* will be a warehouse zine with no additional reading material. However, non-players are welcome to subscribe and follow the games, and standbys will likely be needed.

The subscription fee, necessary to pay for xerographic reproduction, will be \$500 per issue, or \$6,000 per year. Regrettably, free samples will not be available, but a complimentary copy can be had for \$500. Standbys will receive a free issue if they submit orders when requested. Players must keep their subs current or they will be dropped from the games.

100% recycled paper will be used to produce the zine. It may be possible to make arrangements for electronic mail transfer through Compuserve or another network. An ultra-high speed modem would be needed, though, to avoid prohibitive on-line charges.

So far two players have paid the required \$9,500 game fee and have signed up for "Ultimate Gunboat." I am presently accepting applications for the other five players. Applicants should submit evidence of their superior ability such as plaques from prior Dip-Cons, high Dragonstooth ratings, laudatory endgame statements from humiliated opponents, etc. To discourage casual or inappropriate applicants, a non-refundable \$500 fee should accompany all applications. If a player is accepted, the \$500 will be applied towards the game fee.

➤Garret Schenck (40 Third Place, Basement Apt, Brooklyn NY 11231) publishes the zine *Upstart*, and will soon take over the

Wilbur and Ed Play Dip

by Michael Hopcroft

Have you ever had a situation where you just couldn't fill that game you wanted to play in so badly? Looking for someone to play Austria whom you can mop up in an instant? Everybody looks for something like that. Have you ever thought of playing Diplomacy against domestic animals?

Animals have several disadvantages as Dip players. For one thing, they cannot talk! This is a serious impediment, as they cannot initiate negotiations. But hey, at least no one can claim they were lying! If the animal can write his or her own orders, that's a definite plus. But it is hardly a given (unless you have a poetic cat with a large vocabulary.) There is the additional problem with many animals: colorblindness. Colorblind animals have a hard time distinguishing their pieces from those of the enemy.

Despite these flaws, animals can be weird but effective partners in an alliance.

The most common animals in households are dogs and cats. Dogs are the ideal alliance partners; they never question their allies, they do what they're told, and always remember a promise. Only a heartless cur would stab his own dog. Of course, 95% of all Diplomacy players qualify for that description. So, dogs tend to be eliminated eventually in every game they play.

Cats are somewhat different. They tend to follow their own paths. Thus, cats occasionally NMR. When they don't, though, they tend to play aggressively. To have a cat with seven centers against you with two is the definition of misery. She'll toy with you for years before finally putting you out of your misery. Speaking of seven, it is nearly impossible to eliminate a cat from the game. After all, you

have to stab the cat seven times before all their lives run out!

Rabbits are miserable Dip players. Centuries of life on the business end of the food chain has taught them meekness, hiding and running away when necessary. Rabbits do savor the moment when they eliminate someone, though, as a form of vengeance against all rabbit-eaters of the world. They can proudly point to a Russia, in addition, where no rabbits are eaten. Once a rabbit actually did get an 18-center victory! Mind you, the other six players were chickens. I don't want to discuss how badly chickens play Dip.

Finally, there are horses. Horses can be loads of fun over a Diplomacy board. They are sturdy, determined, able to bear heavy burdens, and very attractive to women. On the downside, it is incredibly easy to bribe a horse. Give him a carrot and he'll follow you anywhere. Give him some sugar and you have the most enthusiastic toady that ever lived. Horses have been known to change allegiance seven times in seven game years, reflecting the use of vegetables and sweets in such games. They do add an element of chaos in the game that cannot be denied.

But perhaps the most important advantage about horses is that if you bring one to the game, you'll never have to worry about getting a ride home.

➤Michael Hopcroft (420 SE Grand Ave #215, Portland OR 97214) was seen recently teaching a covey of quail how to play Statis-Pro Football. His pet iguana is one of the top rotisserie baseball managers in the country.

A Look At Postal Election Games

by David Hood

For most Dippers, Diplomacy is not the only game in the world and our zines reflect this. In issue 61, we looked at the postal sports games that appear in Diplomacy hobby magazines on a frequent basis. Now we turn to another series of games: those which recreate a presidential election in the U.S. There are at least three different ones which have been played postally: Campaign Trail, Presidential Politics, and the one run by veteran GM John Caruso. (A description

of his game did not make the publication deadline for this issue. You can contact him directly for more details at: 636 Astor St, Norristown PA 19401. Descriptions of two of these games follow. Future installments of this series about non-Dip games in hobby magazines will cover, among other things, train games and word/language games. I also encourage anyone with another idea for the series to write and tell me about it.

Presidential Politics

by Jake Halverstadt

As far as I know, no one is currently running the game I designed, Presidential Politics. However, several years ago I conducted a postal playtest, and Don Del Grande once ran the game back when his zine was called *Life of Monty*. While my Gonzo baseball and football games have received more notoriety, I am still proudest of "PP."

The game can be played with as many as a dozen players. Each begins the game by declaring a party preference and taking stands on a number of real-life political issues. "Candidates" battle through 51 primary elections, trying to pile up enough delegates to win the top spot of their party's ticket. The nominees (three, if anyone meets the third party criteria) then compete in a general election for the presidency.

I was idealistic, and made the issues portion of the game most important. The player faces as many as 64 of these questions and must declare strong or mild support, or opposition. A neutral stand is also permitted. The issues range from abortion and SDI to agriculture subsidies and most-favored-nation trade agreements. A candidate's stands on the issues generate votes in each state, as well as influence the candidate's rating with ten Special Interest Groups (the elderly, labor, farmers, non-whites, etc.) who also contribute votes.

Each of the states is represented by a historically accurate Voter Profile chart. The candidate who builds the best farm policy should do well in Iowa, but it won't help him much in Nevada. The candidate's stand on civil rights might win him votes in the DC primary but cost him votes in Arizona.

Campaign finances are also important. Media Spending determines which of the Issues and which Special Interest Groups will deliver votes in each of the elections. Players can spend on travel, jetting off to stump for votes in cities ranging from New York City to Hilo, Hawaii.

I have already put together "1988" and "1984" versions of the game. At this point I would be more willing to do "1968" or even "1948" rather than "1992." I made a great effort to make the thing as historically accurate as possible, so I don't know how that would effect either its commercial viability or popularity.

>Jake Halverstadt (1106 Castlerock Dr, Fort Collins CO 80521) invites interested players or GMs to contact him.

Campaign Trail

by Andy York

Bruce Linsey, well known to veteran Diplomacy players, has been running a play-by-mail version of the game "Campaign Trail." The game reports are distributed in his zine *White House Mania*. He started six games over a year ago, with a second wave of three games beginning about nine months ago.

Each game consists of six presidential hopefuls, who move both themselves and their vice-presidential candidate around a stylized map of the United States. (Sometimes a player might also control a Political Ally campaigner on the board.) There are twenty rounds, each consisting of three turns for each campaigner. Movement is conducted between campaign stops, based upon die rolls. Each stop will generate popular votes in that state ranging from one to four.

Victory is determined at the end of the game, with the person having the most popular votes in a state gaining that state's electoral votes. The person with the most electoral votes wins the game and the White House.

Special events, and campaign options, ensure that no game (or even turn) will be the same, or at all predictable. Each player starts with a number of airline tickets (permitting movement between any two campaign stops) and media shares (used after the last turn to provide additional popular votes in close states.) Also, every other turn each player has the option of doubling the popular votes on the first stop of his presidential candidate, or drawing a random event card. The cards provide bonuses (such as political allies, endorsements, or media shares) or debts (lost turns or popular votes.)

Additionally, each presidential and vice-presidential candidate has a home state where they begin the game. They also receive popular votes in that state automatically (ten for the president, five for the vice-president.)

Strategy is paramount in the game, from the initial choice of home states to the distribution of media shares at the end. Each round gives a player many movement options, as they must guess at their opponents' intentions for three turns! Diplomacy plays a large part in victory as well, since a leader can be attacked in several states simultaneously by a coalition of players. Also, a coordinated campaign by three or four players can divide the country between them and keep the remaining players out of contention.

The zine *White House Mania* is of high quality in its reporting of the games. One is provided with a synopsis of all the games, plus

detailed listings for the game one is in. There is a listing of each player's movement, popular votes gained, current leaders in all states, number of tickets / media shares remaining, and other pertinent information. There is also a well-done map that shows graphically which player is leading in which states. This makes it easy to see who has the support of the Rust Belt, the Bible Belt, the West, etc.

Currently, Bruce does not plan any new games. However, enough letters of interest may prompt him to reconsider. Also, his future wife Krissi may run the game herself in the near future. The postal version of the game will continue to evolve as new games are begun. For example, there is talk of limiting the number of rounds

in the game and/or separating the turns of the final round. If you are interested in this game, I recommend you send Bruce a self-addressed, stamped envelope to PO Box 1334, Albany NY 12201. You'll be glad you did..

➤Andy York (PO Box 2307, Universal City TX 78148) publishes a new Diplomacy zine, *Rambling Way*. Postal Campaign Trail gamestarts are also available from Alan Moon. His rules are a bit different in that there are six turns per round, the campaign options are different, and the vote totals are not always known to all players, to name some of the changes. If interested, contact Alan at 15 Burnside St, Lancaster NH 03584.

Perestroika VI

by Larry Cronin

Perestroika uses the same board, tactics, nations, provinces, supply centers and players as in Diplomacy. The additional rules are:

1. Each supply center in 1900 contains one block. Blocks reflect industrial capacity, and each block generates one point per year. (Points are like currency.) The total number of blocks in a nation's supply centers yield the gross national product (GNP) for that year. (Do not confuse blocks with points.)

2. The points from the GNP are added to the treasury (see #6) following fall adjustments. For example, if at the end of fall the GNP total equals 15, then 15 more points are added to the treasury. In winter, points may be used a) to buy or maintain fleets and armies, b) to buy more blocks, yielding a larger GNP the following year, or

c) in the treasury as reserves. During fall or spring, points can be loaned/given/traded to another player.

3. New blocks cost two points each to build and require no further expense to maintain them in subsequent years. Blocks can be built in winter in any supply center a nation possesses. The number of new blocks built in a given winter cannot exceed the number already existing in that supply center.

4. Military units: The game starts in Fall 1900 without armies or fleets, awaiting the winter builds. This reflects the reality that some nations never had fleets and some may not have had to militarize. One block must exist in a supply center for a unit to be built. The first set of orders are Winter 1900 builds, and may be order military units

New Blood

Thomas Lee, 1426 Gray Bluff Tr, Chapel Hill NC 27514
Tom Schnurr, 25 Rockledge Ave #510, White Plains NY 10601
Dave Jabs, 2607 E Locust Ln, Nampa ID 83686
Keith Schneider, 1-54 Cal Tech, Lloyd 114, Pasadena CA 91125
S.T. Weinfeld, 5760 P Rexford Ct, Springfield VA 22152
Dan Lapp, 25 Old Colony Rd, Foxboro MA 02035
Jason Nichols, 46227 Trillum Sq #304, Sterling VA 22170
Mark Bauer, 7509 S Timberlane Dr, Cincinnati OH 45243
Joe Brooks, 300 Market St, Navarre OH 44662
Rich Price, 5812 W Giddings, Chicago IL 60630
Daniel Jew, 93 Mimosa Cres, Singapore 2880
Dave Ayres, E 525 Central, Spokane WA 99207
Dan Bergh, 19296 Torrey Pine Cir, Huntington Beach CA 92648
Dan Krane, Box 8232, Wash. U. Med. Sch., St Louis MO 63110
Bob Brown, 196-40 45th Ave, Flushing NY 11358
Fred Twist, 650 Karesh Ave 1, Pomona CA 91767
Jim Romani, PSC 5 Box 211, APO New York 09321
Gary Pomeroy, 17555 SE 134th St, Renton WA 98056
Brian Lewis, PO Box 10002, Salinas CA 93912
Steve Joubert, 3399 Ranchwood St, Newbury Park CA 91320
Alidad Fartash, PO Box 30092, Santa Barbara CA 93105
Jim Ulaky, 5727 Rivere Dr, Charlotte NC 28211
Peter Baker, 800 S Washington St #A106, Alexandria VA 22314

Game Openings

Well Martha..., John Schultz, POB 41-19390, ICH 308, Michigan City IN 46360 (Dip, Gunboat, Snowball Fighting).
Cheesecake Andy Lischett, 2402 S Ridgeland Ave, Berwyn IL 60402 (Diplomacy).
California Acres, John Fisher, 20811D Bear Valley Rd #120, Apple Valley CA 92308 (Dip, Perestroika).
Dogs of War, Kevin Kinsel, 21561 Oakbrook, Mission Viejo CA 92692 (Dip, Machiavelli, Twin Earths Dip, Pax Britannia).
Concordia, Tom Mainardi, 45 Zummo Way, Norristown PA 19401 (Dip).
Northern Flame, Cal White, 1 Turnberry Ave, Toronto Ont M6N 1P6, Canada (International Dip).
Gingwatzim, John Breakwell, 62 Shackleton Way, Woodley, Reading RG5 4UT, England (Definitive Downfall, SF Sopwith, Boggle, Dip).
Rambling Way, Andy York, PO Box 2307, Universal City TX 78148 (Dip, Gunboat).
Diplomacy Downs, Bruce Reiff, 432 Caldwell Dr, Cincinnati OH 45216 (Dip, Origins of WWII, Win Place or Show).
The Prince, Jim Meinel, 2801 Pelican Drive, Anchorage AK 99515 (Dip).
The Diplomat, Thomas Franke, Haarenufer 12, D-2900 Oldenburg, Germany (Int'l Dip, Dip for Germans)

Variant

and/or blocks to be built in any supply center owned. (Winter 1900 and Winter 1901 should usually be separated from the following spring turn.)

5. Play begins with Winter 1900 builds. Spring and fall are otherwise as usual. In the fall of each year one point is earned for every block owned, to be deposited in the treasury. The number of blocks occupying any given supply center is signified after each center's name, e.g. LPL-5. The sum total number of blocks is the national GNP. For example, if in Fall 1905 England owns the following centers with their respective blocks: LPL-6, LON-5, EDI-7, DEN-3, NWY-5, then the GNP is 26 points. This is added to the treasury, which may purchase up to 13 new blocks, or build or maintain up to 26 armies and fleets (or even more if there were extra points in the treasury to begin with) or some combination.

6. The treasury can hold points indefinitely. The treasury has no particular location but does not continue to exist after loss of all supply centers. The points vanish.

7. Loans/Gifts can be made to another player in the spring and/or fall by telling the GM the exact amount of points and their intended disposition. They are published with the moves and are automatically deposited in the recipient's treasury.

8. Overspending is not allowed. If orders are beyond treasury means, those orders written first are executed, while those beyond budgetary means are ignored. Thus the order in which builds and loans are written may be important. Military builds are given priority over blocks unless otherwise requested.

9. Neutral Supply Centers spend all points on blocks. Neutrals' treasuries disappear when conquered.

10. The Rubble Rule operates when a supply center is attacked, yielding the effect of blockade or bombardment. When a supply center is attacked, it loses as many blocks as there are units attacking plus those supporting the attacks. Defending units do not cause rubble. If offensive support was cut it does not count towards rubble. This rule is applied regardless of whether resistance was rendered. Centers can be reduced to zero, and later rebuilt. However, a center reduced to zero cannot build a military unit.

11. Disbanding: To encourage peace, any fleet and/or army may be disbanded during a winter turn. A player may not build military units in the same winter they disband a unit. Dislodged units retreating off the board are excluded from this rule.

12. The goal of the game is to dominate Europe. A win is decided by unanimous concession of the other players. Draws are not allowed. It is the opinion of the variant designer that draws are nothing more than truces, which are just part of this game rather than the end. Military stalemates may occur, but full stalemates are very difficult given the fluid economics in this variant.

➤ Larry Cronin (PO Box 40090, Tucson AZ 85717) publishes the zine *Perestroika*. Other zines offering game openings of the *Perestroika* variant include: *Diplomacy Tribune*, Gerald Todd, 8047 Highpoint Rd, Baltimore MD 21226; *California Acres*, Guest GM Kevin Kozlowski, 417 Southway, Baltimore MD 21218. Write Larry for his list of optional rules to add spice to the game.

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