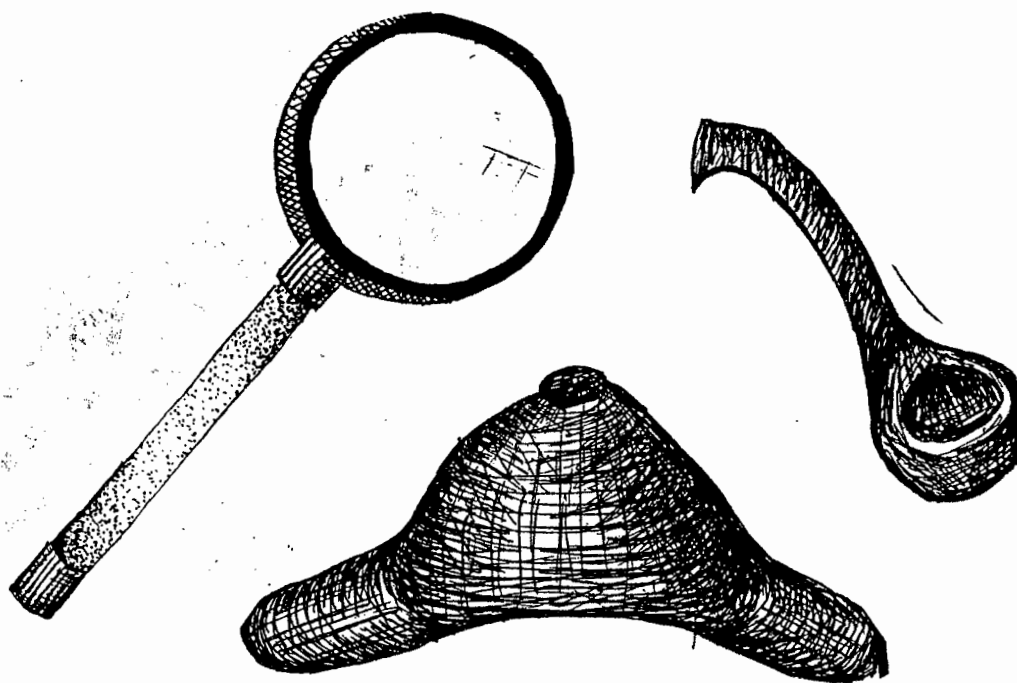


Fall 1991

No. 64

# Diplomacy **W** **orld**

## Sherlock Holmes



## and the Dip Mystery

OK, with any luck this will be the last significant delay in the publication schedule of *DW*. Since last issue I have transferred all publishing functions from the Raleigh area to Hickory. Since none of the rest of you publishers have to deal with newsprint printers and their peculiarities, the difficulty of this transfer will be lost to you. Suffice it to say that getting my own Macintosh was only half the battle...

Welcome to my fifth issue at the helm of *DW*. My attempt to expand the sub base of the zine has basically run its course now, with some measure of success. I have now sent a free copy to everyone in the hobby I know about, including hundreds of people who play Diplomacy, but not postally. This may mean that I will decide to go to a more normal printing process in the future. (The newsprint deal is not cost-effective when printing several thousand at a time.)

One thing that is definitely changing is that I will no longer do bulk-mail mailings. The Post Awful is simply too bad at it to make it worthwhile. Month-long waits for the issue have not been uncommon, and there have been a number of completely failed deliveries. Given those facts, I have decided to send everything first-class from now on. Those of you who have already paid for first-class will be credited with an extra issue instead. The third-class rates made it feasible to send all those free samples, but now that the process is over we'll just cut out losses and go at 52 cents per issue.

The latest *Zine Register* has appeared, along with several reviews of *Diplomacy World*. (The address for *ZR* is located

on page 16.) I encourage everyone to get a copy of this, the most complete zine review service available now. As far as the *DW* reviews go, there were lots of positive comments, along with a few criticisms as well. Perhaps the most serious is that we do not have a diverse enough stable of writers. Actually, I disagree with that assessment, but I take it seriously enough to reiterate my editorial policy: if you have a story idea, by all means get in touch with me! I also do a great deal of solicitation, but it is often difficult to get such material back on a timely basis...

The results for this year's Diplomacy event at Pacificon arrived after I wrote the hobby news column. Hence, let me list the top five finishers here: Brian Larson, Matt Calkins, Brian Beck, Pete Gaughan and Eric Voogd. (The last two are fairly well-known postal players.) This San Mateo, California event always has a pretty decent-sized Dip tournament, and may well be the odds-on favorite to host DipCon, the North American championships, next time it goes to the West Coast.

The 1991 International Diplomacy Tournament Ratings will appear next issue, but just to tempt your tummy, let me announce the top five finishers, based on tournaments around the world: Toby Harris (UK), Gary Behnen (USA), Andrew Moss (UK), Miguel Taliana (Australia) and Jim Yerkey (USA). The last four names all tied for second. The British have recaptured the crown, after losing to Australia in 1990.

Deadline for next issue is January 1, 1992.

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## Hobby News

First item of business this issue is to talk about our own North American Diplomacy Championships, DipCon, held this year in Toronto, Ontario. This was the first DipCon ever held in Canada, but by all accounts there was a good time had by all. While there were some of the usual snafus concerning the tournament itself, etc. (I'm sure there were even more last year when I was in charge of DipCon), Doug Acheson, Cal White and the other Ontario Dipsters deserve a round of thanks from all of us.

Now, on the important issue of WHO WON! The top ten finishers, in order, were:

1. Gary Behnen (Kansas)
2. Nick Beliaeff (California)
3. Bob Odear (North Carolina)
4. Pete Gaughan (California)
5. Larry Peery (California)
6. Bob Acheson (Alberta)
7. Jim Yerkey (Maryland)
8. Jerry Falkiner (Ontario)
9. Ron Spitzer (California)
10. Bruce McInyre (British Columbia)

Best Country Awards went to:

- |         |                      |
|---------|----------------------|
| Austria | Jeff McKee (Maine)   |
| England | Gary Behnen (Kansas) |

- |         |                            |
|---------|----------------------------|
| France  | Nick Beliaeff (California) |
| Germany | Marc Peters (Wisconsin)    |
| Italy   | Jim Yerkey (Maryland)      |
| Russia  | Vince Lutterbie (Missouri) |
| Turkey  | Larry Peery (California)   |

Longtime hobbyists will recognize nearly all these names, as these people are DipCon veterans all. Next year's event will be held in Kansas City, Missouri (see info on next page.)

Two other big tournaments have been held in the US since last issue of DW. The Origins gaming convention was held in conjunction with AtlantiCon in Baltimore, Maryland in July. Jim Yerkey won the Dip tournament (again), which just goes to show his relative dominance of the east coast Diplomacy circuit. Rounding out the top board were Dan Mathias and Frank Jones, both gaming buddies of Jim. There is obviously something in the water up there. For the first time in years, no Carolinians made it to the top board... AvalonCon also had a big Dip tournament, in August. Full tournament results from this one are on page five.

At this year's DipCon, the 1991 Diplomacy Hobby Awards were announced. Mark Berch took the Rod Walker Literary Award for his article "The Power and the Glory" published in *The General*. David Hood won the Miller Service Award for his work with *Diplomacy World*. Melinda Holley won the, you guessed it, Melinda Holley Award for

Quantity Participation! Finally, quite appropriately, Gary Behnen won the Koenig Best Player Award, on the strength of his postal showing alone!

Jim Meinel has received quite a bit of response about his Encyclopeida of Zines project, profiled last issue in DW. A similar project has recently been started by Buz Eddy. His *Maelstrom* zine has devoted itself to the establishment of a true Hobby Archives, as well as a comprehensive Ratings System. All interested parties are urged to contact Buz at 7500 212nd St SW #205, Edmonds WA 98020.

The latest issue of the *Zine Register* is out, with Garret Schenck making his debut as editor. Without going in to a long review, I think you should check this out if you have not already done so. Overall, it is well done. Garret's address is on page 15. There has recently sprung up another zine review publication of sorts, called *Your Zine of Zines*. Jack McHugh and Doug Kent are behind this new effort, which reviews a handful of zines in depth each month. This is a welcome compliment to the ZR, and comes at a reasonable price of fifty cents per issue. If you like to read zine reviews and keep up with new publications, contact Doug for a sample at: 54 W Cherry St #211, Rahway NJ 07065.

The results of the 1991 Runestone Poll have been out for a while now. This yearly poll is the premier ranking of zines in the hobby these days. A report on the results is on page 17,

along with my column for novices on page 16. However, the full results come out in another publication, available from Eric Brosius (41 Hayward St, Milford MA 01757) for five dollars. The publication has face-to-face matchups between each zine, and interesting articles about the Poll and ratings in general.

As you may know, Avalon Hill Game Company is going to release a new version of Diplomacy which returns to the wooden blocks. (We children of the eighties who prefer the plastic pieces will just have to grumble.) The new edition was to be out by Christmas, but Rex Martin has indicated that the release date will be July 4, the date for the 1992 DipCon.

Not many new Cons to report this time. The winter and spring usually see a great number of housecons, but few organized tournaments. One housecon I want to mention is NovaCon, at Pete Gaughan's house in Novato, California. This will feature Diplomacy, Titan, and other games like Snowball Fighting and Eurorails. If you can make it the weekend of February 14-16, contact Pete at 1521 S Novato Blvd #46, Novato CA 94947. Another feature will likely be a planning session for a bid to host the 1993 DipCon at PacifiCon, near San Francisco. Another housecon option is BozoCon, held by Jason Bergmann in Austin, TX the first weekend of January. Try him at 10000 N Lamar #2041, Austin TX 78753.

## SOMEWHERE UNDER THE RAINBOW

### Announcing **DIPCON XXV**

in Kansas City, Missouri!

July 3 through 6, 1992

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

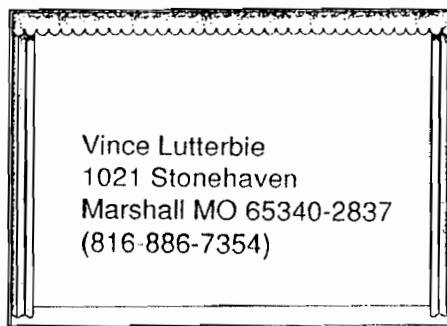
DipCon Committee:

Chairman Vince Lutterbie, Committee Members Gary Behnen & Marc Peters

#### WHAT HAVE THE WIZARDS GOT IN STORE FOR YOU?

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

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



# The AvalonCon DIPLOMACY Tournament

GM: Rex A. Martin

The DIPLOMACY competition at Avalon-Con (22-25 August, Harrisburg PA) drew some 56 competitors. Having to take over as a last-minute substitute GM (after the fellow who volunteered dropped out), I was forced to quickly devise a system whereby all could enjoy as many matches of their favorite game as they might wish through the weekend, yet be free to pursue other interests. Thus, I settled on a four-round Swiss style competition, with points awarded in each game by order of finish. Seven points were awarded for a 1st place finish, six for a 2nd, and so forth down to one point for seventh; in the case of a draw (by design or otherwise) for a position, all tied were granted the average of the points for the positions involved (thus, a two-way draw for 1st place would net each player 6.5 points). Ranking at the end of the fourth round would be accomplished by cumulative point totals; in the case of a tie for any of these placings, I would break such by highest number of games controlled in the players' best games.

Each round was slated for five hours (scheduled at 7PM Friday, 10AM Saturday, 7PM Sunday and 10AM Sunday). If a sole winner was not arrived at, nor an agreed-upon draw (by vote of all players still in the game), nor an agreed-upon concession, I adjudicated each game by strict center-count. At the end of the five-hour limit, the players in each game were allowed to finish the current turn only (and if a Spring turn, well, that's the breaks). All but one "sole win" came in this fashion. Needless-to-say, such a system promoted draws; and, with my announcement to each at the one-hour-to-go mark, there was often a last flurry of backstabbing and dot-grabbing. However, given that all were aware of these effects, such should have simply been another element of the game strategy and negotiation.

So much as possible, great effort was taken to match players only against others they had not faced in previous rounds. And to insure that every game had seven players. To this end, I played in two games to fill out the tables (having dropped out of the tournament when tagged to take it over as GM). When the dust had settled, we had completed 22 matches of DIPLOMACY. I gave merchandise certificate awards to the top eight diplomats, with Bruce Reiff carrying off the plaque for top dog.

I would hope that all involved enjoyed themselves, and that the experience - despite final relative finish - was rewarding. I would also hope that the flexible nature of the tournament allowed most to partake of other games offered at the convention (many played in only one or two rounds - as readers might note from the standings - and some arrived late, missing the first round). Some became discouraged by early-setbacks and dropped out, although many still had a shot at finishing high in the rankings going into the last round - which featured some of the most ruthless play it has ever been my pleasure to watch. The four five-hour rounds did prove as much about the stamina of the competitors as about their treachery. However,

throughout I noted that the level of competition was very high, with many of the games a great joy to watch as I played "fly on the wall". I would especially like to thank all the competitors for their patience, and oft-shown good sportsmanship and humor. It was evident throughout, and I would hope some lasting friendships (whenever not playing DIPLOMACY) resulted. Hopefully, we'll all meet again next year at AvalonCon.

For those interested in such things, there follows the limited statistics I maintained for the tournament. Order of finish is first, with the total accumulated points shown in parentheses (ties in points indicated by asterisk, with the order shown based on best-game center-count). As a point of interest (at least to me), the top eight finishers are separated by but seven points - exactly the amount awarded for a sole victory. Next is a brief listing of sole wins (most adjudicated, with but one concession by vote) and draws. Lastly comes a very brief listing of the order of finish for all 22 games (by country, standard abbreviations; hyphenated entries indicates a draw by vote).

## Order of Finish:

- #1 - Bruce Reiff (26.5)
- #2 - Karl Vogt (25.5)
- #3 - Richard Brochma (24.0)
- #4 - Steve Chilcote (21.0)
- #5 - Tim Gallagher (20.5)\*
- #6 - Jeff Jaffee (20.5)\*
- #7 - Frank Luberti (20.0)
- #8 - Phil Guincho (19.5)
- #9 - Michael Alterio (18.5)
- #10 - Ronald Newmaster (17.5)
- #11 - Marc Rosenthal (17.0)\*
- #12 - Joseph Licata (17.0)\*
- #13 - Steven Cameron (15.5)
- #14 - James Calabrese (14.5)
- #15 - Larry Daniel (14.0)\*
- #16 - David Sidelinger (14.0)\*
- #17 - Dennis Mason (14.0)\*
- #18 - Richard Copeland (13.0)\*
- #19 - Jim Stevens (13.0)\*
- #20 - James Yerkey (13.0)\*
- #21 - Todd McCulloh (13.0)\*
- #22 - Vincent Galanear (12.5)\*
- #23 - John Wetherall (12.5)\*
- #24 - Joe Rhodes (12.0)\*
- #25 - Kevin Kozlowski (12.0)\*
- #26 - Greg Geyer (11.5)
- #27 - Steve Koehler (11.0)\*
- #28 - Rich Amtower (11.0)\*
- #29 - Michael Pantaleano (11.0)\*
- #30 - Andrew Kutzy (9.5)\*
- #31 - Geoff Greasley (9.5)\*
- #32 - Troy Medler (9.5)\*
- #33 - Michael McKenna (9.0)
- #34 - Mike Stein (8.5)
- #35 - Rex Martin (8.0)\*
- #36 - David Robinson (8.0)\*
- #37 - Matthew Appel (7.0)\*
- #38 - Alex Leech (7.0)\*
- #39 - Pat Yakey (7.0)\*
- #40 - Daniel Mathias (7.0)\*

- #41 - Steve Pedlow (6.5)
- #42 - David Bozzini (6.0)
- #43 - John Powell (5.5)\*
- #44 - Salim Mohammed (5.5)\*
- #45 - John Guyton (5.0)\*
- #46 - Don Wilson (5.0)\*
- #47 - Nick Autges (4.5)\*
- #48 - Mark Sanders (4.5)\*
- #49 - Philip Lahue (4.0)
- #50 - Patrick Duffy (2.0)\*
- #51 - Andrew Ewing (2.0)\*
- #52 - Edward Zagadinow (2.0)\*
- #53 - Daniel Broh-Khan (2.0)\*
- #54 - Tom Pasko (1.5)
- #55 - Joe Rodebaugh (1.0)\*
- #56 - Dhad Leichter (1.0)\*

## Sole Victories:

Richard Brochma: Turkey (11 centers)  
Austria (11 centers)  
Russia (7 centers)

Karl Vogt: Turkey (13 centers)  
England (8 centers)

James Yerkey: Austria (10 centers)  
Greg Geyer: England (10 centers)  
Rex Martin: England (10 centers)  
Richard Copeland: Turkey (9 centers)  
John Guincho: Austria (8 centers)  
Bruce Reiff: Italy (7 centers)  
Alex Leech: Germany (7 centers)

## Draws:

Turkey & France (Reiff & Chilcote, respectively)  
France & Italy (Vogt & Reiff)  
Germany & England (Koehler & Kutzy)  
France & Russia (Medler & Pedlow)  
Turkey & Austria (Reiff & Jaffee)  
Germany & Austria (Rhodes & Luberti)  
England & Turkey (Chilcote & Galanear)  
Turkey & Italy (Daniel & Guincho)  
Austria & Italy (Gallagher & Calabrese)  
France & Germany & England (Newmaster & Calabrese & Cameron)

## Game Results:

- Round 1, Game #1 - F-I/R/E/T/G/A  
Game #2 - G-E/T/I/R/F/A  
Game #3 - G-E/T/F/I/A/R  
Game #4 - A/F/I/E/R/G/T  
Game #5 - T/G/A/R/F/I/E  
Game #6 - A/I/E/R/T/F/G  
Game #7 - F-R/T/I/A/G/E
- Round 2, Game #1 - T-A/E/F/G/I/R  
Game #2 - G-A/F/R/I/E/T  
Game #3 - E-T/G/A/I/F/R  
Game #4 - F-G-E/T/R/I/A  
Game #5 - A/R/G/F/I/E/T  
Game #6 - T/E/A/F/G/I/R
- Round 3, Game #1 - T-I/G/R/F/A/E  
Game #2 - F-T/R/G/I/E/A  
Game #3 - A-I/E/R/F/G/T  
Game #4 - E/I/A/F/G/R/T  
Game #5 - T/E/A/G/F/R/I
- Round 4, Game #1 - I/A/F/R/E/G/T  
Game #2 - E/A/I/G/R/T/F  
Game #3 - R/I/E/G/F/T/A  
Game #4 - E/T/A/G/I/R/F

# Don't Be a Turkey: Play Turkey!

By Mark Fassio

Disclaimer: Most of you Old Heads in the hobby already know all this stuff. I'm writing this more for the beginners entering into this august body (and to quell my egomaniacal desire to see my name in print!)

## I. Introduction: Turkey is Good

Turkey. The images conjured up by this country are generally of a notorious nature militarily: Bashibazouks and Mamelukes. Pillagers of Constantinople and twice besiegers of Vienna. Impalers of heretics and, of course, "The Sick Man of Europe." Well, put away that thermometer and body bag and break out the dancing girls and hookah! When playing Diplomacy, you'll find that Turkey is one of the strongest countries on the board when properly played.

Granted, I (a self-proclaimed Hobby Old Fart since 1976) have played Turkey in most of my games. My bias thus naturally leans toward the Yellow-Pieced Country. And while it's generally true that the skill of the player will decide how he or she fares as opposed to the geographic location, I would still submit to you that a mediocre Turkish player can outdo a good Italian or Austrian (the Carusos and other Hobby Legends aside, of course.)

Turkey's geographic location offers a natural "hedgehog" position. It's a nice, compact area that is hard to be rooted out of early unless a solid AI or RA develops. Even then the hostile alliance usually tips their hands by Fall 1901, giving the Turk time to prepare a defense and seek help. But

let's discuss the Turk's offensive potential versus its defensive prowess.

## II. Drang Nach Westen (or, Go West Young Man)

Turkey should be able, though astute Diplomacy, to link up with one of his Balkan neighbors and cause some tensions between the other two. As to choice of allies, I personally prefer the Russians because almost all the considerations of playing that due are positive.

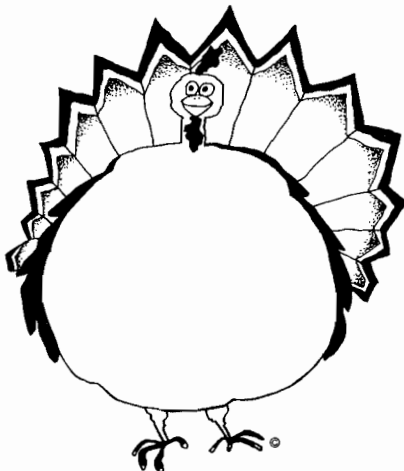
Geographically, an RT has no rear or flank enemies, due to the good ol' board edges.

Militarily, you're in like Flynn when it comes to coordinating moves. Once the land bridge of Ukr/Rum/Bul is established, you've got a natural springboard for joint operations. (Alas, poor Archduke; I knew him well...) The Russian should keep peace with at least Germany in the west, so that full attention can be devoted to the Balkans early.

As far as moves go, a good option is to simulate war between yourselves by moving to Arm/Bla, writing obfuscatory letters, etc. Then at a later date (Fall 1901 to Spring 1903 is good) you can use a Black Sea fleet to convoy into Austrian areas, optimizing surprise. A truly trusting alliance will also try to get the Russian fleet into the Med. Or you can arrange a Turkish "stab" (aided by the Austrians, no less) into Russian-occupied Rum in Fall 1901. Russia can retreat his fleet off the board and build an army to use against Austria in the Balkans. Hey, the RT has more options than a Chinese Menu!

Diplomatically, you and your Tsarist ally can smokescreen the board long enough to get positioned against any expected western counterattack that will organize. (Western players worth their salt will indeed organize to stop an RT, given its lethality.)

The best thing for Turkey and Russia is to immediately write both the Austrian and Italian early and often. Don't let them even think of forming an IA "Lepanto" against you in Turkey, instead offering each of them nebulous gains for neutrality while you do your deeds. Promise Italy you won't build fleets, even though "Austria says he wants me to sail against you." (It's probably a fib, but so what? We're not playing bingo here.) Tell Austria (rightly so) that you encourage him to go for two in 1901, if he'll let you get the other two in the Balkans. I recommend getting him to support you to Rum from Ser while he gets Gre and Ser. Austria will be more than happy to bide his time with an amenable Turk who's preoccupied "elsewhere." The true unsheathing of blades is best saved for the moment when Austria is out of





position (diverted west or sucked north versus Gal/Rum) - that's when the RT is best poised to strike.

Once you get rolling and Austria or Italy is weakened, you must write furiously and heavily to Germany, France and England. Stress that this "apparent" RT is temporary at best, that it's expedient for you to eliminate the "obvious AT" that was forming, etc. Solicit their help in "keeping Russia in check" while offering lots of vague promises of assistance to them. With a little luck and a lot of letters (remember that this game is called "Diplomacy") you can divide-and-conquer while the West fights among themselves. Timing is everything in an RT: when to strike, when to move, when to begin your disinformation campaign against the board, etc. Always stay friendly with others, since one never knows when the time may arrive for you to realign your priorities!

One word of caution: while RT alliances are very strong, perhaps even more so than the EF on the opposite edge, don't get overconfident or smug about you power and position. I remember a game back in 1988 where I was the Sultan and was allied with Don Williams. (I consider Don to be one of the great all-time Dip players, by the way.) We figured that our aggregate 30+ years of PBM experience and our RT geography would let us run rampant over the unknowns to our immediate front.

We were rudely awakened by a competent AI, which literally had our backs to the wall until the previously-mentioned factors of luck (Italian player resigned) and skill (we badgered and persuaded two other sharp players to help us out) came into play. We eventually won that with a 17-17 two-way draw, but in the first 3-4 game years all we could think about was survival as two-center puppets. Moral of the story: be humble with yourself, be smart versus enemies, and write incessantly. First impressions and continued writing mean more to us old gamers than any jazzy new move you can

think up.

I also recommend playing a "tactical game", in which you look 1-3 turns ahead and look for short gains. This would be as opposed to a "strategic game", in which you would do things like plan coordinated moves for 1906 while still in 1901! With your "nibbling" strategy and hoped-for suppression of anti-RT coalitions, you should be well on your way to imposing the Turkish crescent over half the board.

### III. Conclusion: You Can Have Your Cake and Eat It Too!

Even putting aside the main advantages of an RT alliance as the ideal Turkish policy, playing Turkey can offer a myriad of options. An AT works well when you strictly lay out demilitarized zones and growth paths, while the IT (very rare) can work at least until Midgame if you do an Italian fleet/Turk army mix. Turkey can always project itself as the friend of the country "over the horizon" (France's buddy against Italy, Italy's buddy behind Austria, etc.) You should get away with that most of the time, since everyone likes to have their neighbor made into the middle of an Oreo with your help.

Playing Turkey occasionally requires breaking some eggs (lying) with respect to your neighbors early on, but keep in mind that this is how successful omelets are cooked up!

Well, gotta go. I have real Turks to talk to here (I write this from Zakho, Iraq.) Hope this article stimulates some interest in playing The Best Country among any closet Turcophiles out there. Good hunting!

>Mark Fassio (Box 5265 USMLM, APO New York NY 09742) is indeed a Hobby Old Fart of the First Order, but since this article was written has returned from the Middle East. One wonders what new insights into Turkish play he learned there...

## Repeating What You Never Heard

by Mark Berch

Usually, when you lie in a Diplomacy game, you speak for yourself. You discuss moves you have no intention of making. You give explanations that have nothing at all to do with why you actually did what you did. But these have severe limitations. These explanations are generally not verifiable. And anything we say of ourselves is treated as self-serving and hence very suspect. But a lie about someone else can get around these problems, and therefore be much more believable.

I had the opportunity to do this in a postal game, 84HW in *Fol Si Fie*. I was France, corresponding actively with England and Germany at gamestart. Neither seemed to be interested in a western triple (EFG). So I wanted to poison

any and all EG relationships. But how?

Germany had, early on, written me a very specific and very aggressive proposal for an FG attack on England, starting right in Spring 1901. I knew him to be an active and thorough diplomat, so it occurred to me that he had probably written a very analogous letter to England. I figured that he had probably proposed an immediate F Lon-Eng, A Mun-Bur plan for Spring 1901.

So I wrote Germany, and casually mentioned to him that England had told me of the F Lon-Eng and A Mun-Bur proposal. I fleshed it out a bit to add plausibility. I did this for two reasons. First, I needed an explanation for why I had moved A Par-Pic, A Mar-Bur that first Spring. I said I wanted

to take some precautions against this plan without doing something as drastic as F Bre-Eng. Second, I did this to sow EG discord.

Of course, the truth was that England never told me of any such plan!

The German player did believe this fabrication about England. He confirmed my guess by pointing out that there was nothing wrong with him having made such a proposal to England early in the game. And during the crucial pre-Winter 1901 negotiations, he expressed distinct annoyance that England had done this. My plan basically worked.

Germany could have asked me for his original letter to England, but that would not have exposed my fib since I had never said that England passed me a copy of that letter. The German could also have asked for a copy of England's letter to me, though, in which case I would have fallen back on a general policy against letter-passing.

But Germany didn't ask me for anything, and I wouldn't expect him to. The point here is, if a lie appears on its face to

be plausible, then suspicions are never aroused as to its authenticity. Since my guess about the German letter was correct, it probably never occurred to him that the "England told me" part wasn't correct.

Opportunities to pull this particular type of deception on someone aren't going to come very often, obviously. But you should be alert to the possibility of passing along non-existent gossip that the recipient would have good reason to believe. And, as a more general rule, if one aspect of what you are saying is true, it's a lot easier to slip in another aspect of it which is far from the truth. This is the case particularly when what is ostensibly the most important part of the message is true. That was the case here, and it will be the case other times as well. Pay attention, and capitalize.

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Variant

## The Gunboat Winners Are...

by Pete Clark

"Any country can win in Diplomacy."

"All great powers are created equal."

My last article, in *DW* #60, described and quantified how well each of the Great Powers does in Play-By-Mail (PBM) Diplomacy. The goal of my latest study of Gunboat Diplomacy is to examine the role of the mapboard in the outcome of a Dip game. Gunboat Diplomacy is simply a variant of the game wherein the players do not negotiate with each other directly, due to the fact that they do not know the identities of the other players. My hope is that this article will describe which countries are weak or strong based solely on their relative position on the mapboard.

The data for the study were collected from 100 completed games of postal Gunboat, dating from 1983. Sources for the game results were *Lord of Hosts* and Melinda Holley's 7X7 Gunboat tournaments. No attempt was made to separate those games in which negotiation was allowed through the press, nor was any attempt made to evaluate the reasonableness of conceded wins or draws. These limitations may effect the results to some degree. In addition, I should point out that centers were counted only up to 1910 so I could compare the results with the early study of regular Diplomacy games (which also counted centers only to 1910.)

Looking at the gross figures, there are some general statements that can be made about regular Diplomacy versus Gunboat results. First, Gunboat games typically last longer than regular Diplomacy games. The average number of years each country was involved in the game rose by .38 over the regular games. This number would have been even higher had I counted centers past 1910. Second, the average number of centers controlled by each power varied, but the

overall average is virtually identical. There were about the same number of wins in Gunboat as in Diplomacy. Third, the draws in Gunboat include fewer players than in regular Dip, 2.44 versus 2.97. This can be explained by both the increased average length of the game, and the inability of Gunboat players to negotiate a bigger draw. Another factor may be the expertise of some Dip players in talking their way into draws while holding inferior positions.

Now, given this full plate of information, what can be said about how the mapboard effects the outcome of the game? Let's answer the question by country.

*Austria*: Comparing Dip statistics with Gunboat shows important differences and similarities. Austria wins more often, and draws less often, in Gunboat play. It also gets more total centers, stays in the game longer, and has more centers per year in Gunboat. This can be attributed to several factors.

First, Austria is close to a lot of centers in the opening stages of the game. Within two spaces of the red home centers are ten other dots. Austria need not look far to find the winning centers. Given the low number of years Austria typically remains in the game (more than a full year below others) and an above average number of Gunboat wins, I conclude that it is in Austria's best interests to rapidly expand into the nearby centers before opponents can organize a successful attack. Indeed, this may be Austria's best strategy in regular Diplomacy as well.

There is a small rise in the average number of years Austria survives from Dip to Gunboat. This rise reflects, not an improved defensive position, but rather shows the increased difficulty in Gunboat to eliminate any Power, even Austria. This increased difficulty stems from the lack of negotiated attacks. Overall, Austria's defen-



sive resources are poor, making it necessary for the astute Austrian to rely on offensive power. Austria rarely stagnates, instead becoming either a growing Power or a shrinking one. Essentially, Austria must obtain secure "rear-area" by eliminating one or two of its many neighbors very quickly.

Using Melinda Holley's Gunboat Scoring System (see *DW* #61), Austria curiously scores about the same in Gunboat and in regular Dip. These results in Table 3 suggest that the noncooperative nature of Gunboat offsets Austria's inability to alter events though diplomatic skill. However, whether in Gunboat or Diplomacy, Austria ranks low on the totem pole.

**England:** Statistically, England performs in a similar manner in both Gunboat and regular Dip. Its numbers reflect the differences between the two games, i.e. the variance of two or three-way draws. England does survive a year longer in Gunboat, exhibiting the Power's improved defensive capabilities. Not only does its elimination often require two allied powers (or a good stab by one), but England is in the corner on an island, yielding potent defensive options.

Looking at some of the other numbers, we can see that England's increase in the total number of centers owned during the game can be attributed solely to the extra year of survival in Gunboat. England's performance in Melinda Holley's Gunboat Tournament Scoring System is nearly identical for Gunboat and Dip. This suggests that England's tactical position on the board is unaffected by diplomacy, or that the benefits of playing without negotiation offset the benefits lost by playing regular Dip (and vice versa.)

**France:** Comparing French performances, there are several items of note. France's numbers changed in a similar manner to those of England, with two way draws going up and three-ways going down. France also was able to win slightly more than an average number of games. Years of survival went up by three-fourths of a year, though the smaller increase in total centers yielded a lower average per-year center count than in Diplomacy.

France is above average in every single category in Gunboat, just as it was in regular Dip. These numbers all suggest that the French position on the mapboard is a strong one. It has both good offensive and defensive prospects, usually gaining Iberia the first year with little possibility of early invasion. Indeed, a hostile Italy must move for a full year before being in a truly threatening position, giving France ample time to defend.

Using Melinda Holley's system, France does a little better in Gunboat. The Power appears, therefore, to benefit from a lack of diplomacy similar to the benefit to Turk (though not quite to the same degree.)

**Germany:** According to my statistics, Austria and Germany play in a similar fashion. Curiously, they retain much of this similarity in Gunboat, together with some interesting differences. In regular Dip, both win an average number of games, while drawing close to the same amount as well. However, while Austria improves its win percentage in Gunboat, Germany does not. Conversely, Germany improves significantly in the draw category while Austria does not. I can only explain this by concluding that Germany has a stronger defensive position.

There is more support for this theory. Germany's survival is improved in Gunboat and it, on average, survives almost a full year

Table 1

Gunboat (100 games)

Power	Tot Cnts	Tot Yrs	Wins	2w	3w	4w	5w
Austria	3996	657	9	4	3	1	1
England	5162	879	8	12	7	3	1
France	5663	901	9	13	7	2	1
Germany	4431	733	7	9	5	1	0
Italy	3806	722	3	5	3	2	1
Russia	4690	724	4	5	4	1	0
Turkey	<u>5905</u>	<u>905</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Average	4777	774.4	7.1	9.4	5.5	1.7	.7
Total			50	33	13	3	1

Postal (100 Equivalent Games)

Austria	3281	614	6.7	2	9	5	1
England	4504	768	7	5	16.7	4.7	.7
France	5401	833	7.3	4.7	14	5	1
Germany	3810	662	6.7	3.7	10.7	3.7	.7
Italy	4102	731	3.7	3.3	6.7	2.7	.3
Russia	5429	765	11	5.3	10.7	3.3	.7
Turkey	<u>4866</u>	<u>783</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>4.7</u>	<u>16.3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>.7</u>
Average	4485	736	7	4.1	12	4.3	.7
Total			49.3	14.3	28	7.3	1

Table 2

Gunboat (100 games)

Power	Avg Cnts/Game	Avg Yrs/Srv	Avg Cnts/Yr
Austria	39.96	6.57	6.09
England	51.62	8.79	5.81
France	56.63	9.01	6.28
Germany	44.31	7.33	6.07
Italy	38.06	7.22	5.27
Russia	46.90	7.24	6.46
Turkey	<u>59.05</u>	<u>9.05</u>	<u>6.52</u>
Average	47.69	7.74	6.09

Postal (300 games)

Austria	32.81	6.14	5.34
England	45.04	7.68	5.86
France	54.01	8.33	6.48
Germany	38.10	6.62	5.75
Italy	41.03	7.31	5.61
Russia	54.29	7.65	7.09
Turkey	<u>48.67</u>	<u>7.83</u>	<u>6.21</u>
Average	44.85	7.36	6.09

Table 3

Ratings using Holley's Gunboat Tourney System

Power	Gunboat	Postal
Austria	18.79	18.30
England	23.71	23.56
France	25.38	23.44
Germany	19.87	19.75
Italy	12.77	14.47
Russia	14.86	25.16
Turkey	30.32	23.71

longer than Austria. Increased survival by Germany usually means that one or more of its neighbors has been eliminated. This bodes

well for German participation in a draw. Also, Russia is much weaker in Gunboat, perhaps giving Germany some relative advantage.

Germany's score using the Holley system is virtually identical to its score in regular Diplomacy games. Perhaps Germany's advantages of proximity to centers and non-cooperation between enemies are offset by the inability to neutralize one of its many fronts through aggressive negotiation.

**Italy:** This Power is truly the most difficult to succeed with. Looking at the statistics for both Gunboat and Diplomacy, Italy is at the bottom of both lists. Further, Gunboat only serves to worsen Italy's relative position. This shows how dependant Italy is on active diplomatic interchange. In Gunboat, Italy is one of only two countries which have both fewer average centers per game and fewer years of overall survival. Italy also suffers a drop in its already low win/draw percentage, winning three and drawing eleven out of 100 Gunboat games. Clearly, Italy has a weak position both offensively and defensively, and must rely on diplomatic acumen to do well.

The statistics further suggest that alterations of the initial setup may be necessary to make Italy a viable power in Diplomacy. This could include an extra center in Sicily or Sardinia, or giving Italy two fleets initially rather than one. The viability of these changes would require playtesting, but if we want to make Diplomacy more balanced as a game, we should do something about it.

**Russia:** This is the other Power that does significantly worse in Gunboat versus regular Diplomacy. Looking at the charts, we see that Russia has fewer wins and draws in Gunboat, winning only a third as often! Russia also survives fewer years per game and has lost more than one-half center from its per-year average. Just like Italy, Russia suffers greatly from the absence of negotiations, and is forced to rely on tactical strengths.

In Gunboat, Russia's major weakness derives from the splitting of its units. While it is true that it has four supply centers in 1901, Russia must decide which direction to move. Given the fleet starting

positions, there are at least two fronts upon which the Russians must operate. The question becomes whether to divide the remaining units equally between the two fronts, or to concentrate on one at the expense of the other. Given the lack of negotiation, Russia can fight both at a disadvantage, or fight on one front well while leaving the other wide-open. Neither choice is very appealing and, consequently, Russia does poorly in Gunboat on a regular basis.

**Turkey:** Turkey brings up the rear here, as they often do in Diplomacy. As Melinda Holley suggested in *DW #61*, Turkey is King when it comes to Gunboat. The yellow horde is first in the number of wins, two-way draws, and three-way draws. They also enjoy the highest total centers, highest years of survival, and highest average centers per year.

When compared to the numbers for regular Dip, it is clear that Turkey benefits greatly from the lack of diplomacy. The corner position occupied by Turkey makes it a difficult Power to take out, often requiring complete coordination by two or more Powers. In Gunboat, that level of cooperation is difficult to achieve. This study suggests, then, that Turkey's proximity to the Balkan knot of centers and its corner position gives it a significant advantage over the other Powers on the board. Given the fact that attacking Powers must devote most of their resources to the elimination of Turkey, the best strategy for the Ottomans may be to hold out long enough for the attackers to themselves be stabbed in their vulnerable rears.

In conclusion, this Gunboat study clearly shows that some countries start in superior positions. I know that it is no big surprise that all Powers were not created equally. However, if we as a hobby are concerned about play balance, then we should attempt to make changes in the game to correct the positional inequities that currently exist.

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## An Idealized Diplomacy Board

by Fritz Juhnke and Eric Westphal

Although it appears square, the Diplomacy board is actually round. (*The Gamer's Guide to Diplomacy*)

Have you ever wondered what the "real" shape of the Diplomacy board is? We ask this question because the geometry of the game does not always correspond to the geography of Europe. For example, on the standard Diplomacy map Finland is too large and Albania is too small. Norway curves too far south, and the Adriatic Sea juts too far north. How ought the board appear taking into account only the way the pieces move? We have provided one possible answer.

As a physics / math major duo, we came up with a model for the Diplomacy board that defines a much more plausible geography than the given partition of Europe in Calhamer's game. Imagine that instead of having a collection of provinces bordering one another, we have a set of balls connected with springs. Each spring is equally

resistant to stretching, and attempts to pull together the balls it joins. The forces of all the springs working simultaneously produce an equilibrium which we consider the natural shape of the map.

Unfortunately, to prevent the balls from collapsing into a single heap, we must arbitrarily stake down the edges of the map in some configuration. We chose to nail four balls on the corners of a rectangle, and to let the other edge balls slide on rails. (Actually, if the truth be told, we let the computer do all the pulling and sliding...) Although creating corners perpetuates the myth that the world is square, it makes the mathematics behave rather well. In fact, after sweating long hours to set up the system, it took less than five minutes to run on an Atari ST.

The only remaining task was to divide up the territory. We split every triangle along its medians. This treats large and small countries more fairly than other divisions. The resulting map accompanies this article.

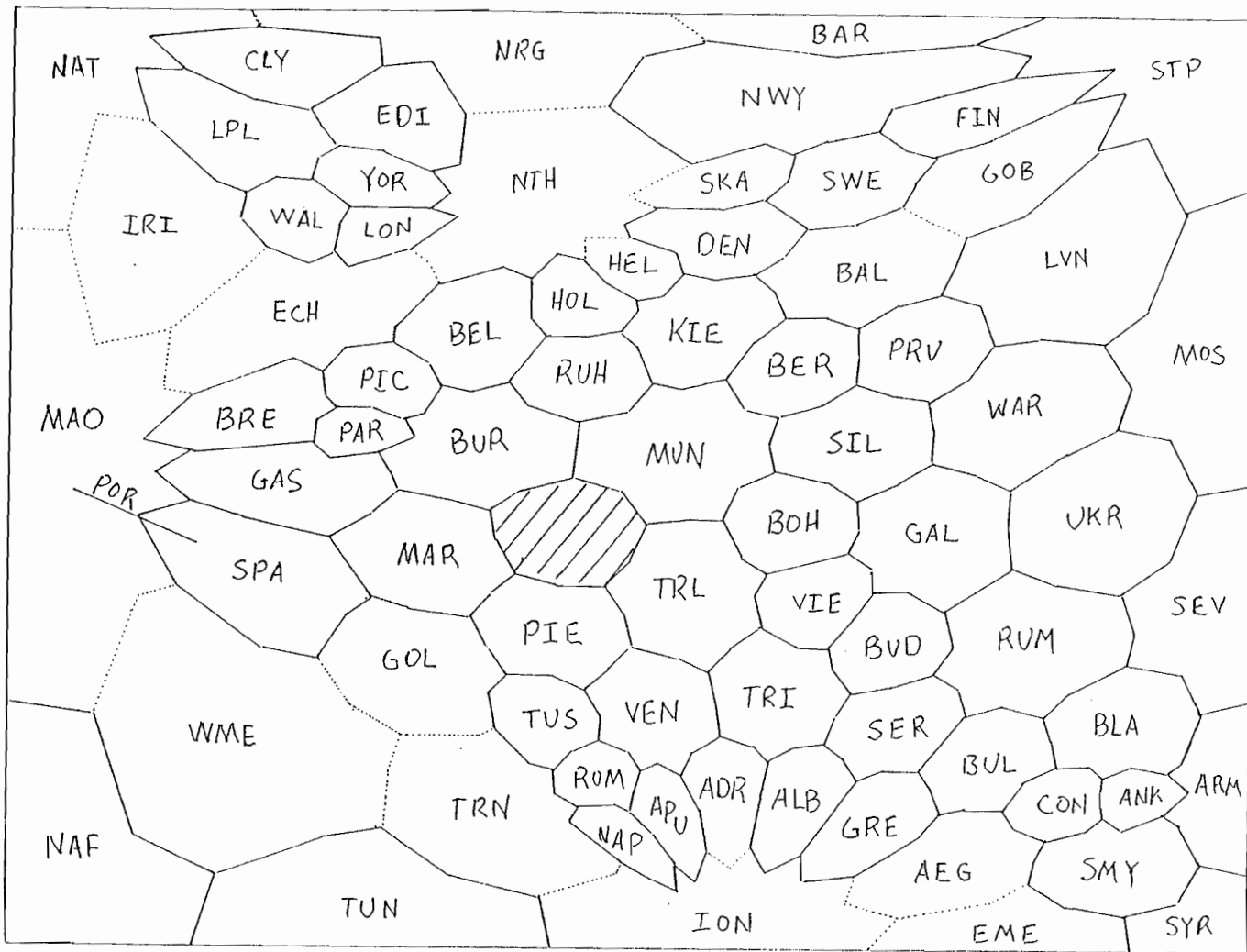
Our idealized map has many advantages over the standard map. In addition to the benefits mentioned in the opening paragraph, we list three more. First, novices need no longer be confused about, for example, whether Berlin borders Denmark or whether Spain and North Africa touch. Second, Clyde is north of England, where it belongs. Third, Munich is in the center of the board, a position befitting its strategic importance.

A single problem does arise, however. Portugal becomes one-dimensional. From the mathematical perspective, this is not troublesome. It simply reflects the reality that Portugal only connects

Spain and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean, providing no lateral motion, so to speak. But if the map is actually used for play, stationing armies in a country with no width does pose a slight problem.

This minor flaw aside, our map can provide new insight into the true shape of the Diplomacy board. We hope that you find it as interesting as we do, and welcome your questions and comments.

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# Colonia VII: The New Balance of Power

by Gene Prosnitz

Colonia is my favorite Diplomacy variant, even better than the original game. The need for worldwide strategy, planning of campaigns, and alliances on several fronts combine to make the game both challenging and exciting. (For a complete discussion of the variant's rules and basic strategy, see *DW* #62.)

However, the sixth version of Colonia was unbalanced. The strongest powers were China, Ottoman, France and Portugal. China and Ottoman were strong because of their concentrated mass in one area. France was strong because of their two strong colonies, giving them the ability to link up Europe, North America and Western Africa into one unified, powerful entity.

Portugal's strength arose for a different reason. That power had, and still has in Colonia VII, strong colonies removed from the main centers of conflict. In essence, Portugal is the scavenger of Colonia, sitting on the sidelines grabbing easy centers in the hinterlands of whichever empires were losing the main battles.

The variant's designer, Fred Hyatt, has attempted to make the game more balanced in his latest version, Colonia VII. Undoubtedly he has made some progress, though further play of the new version will be needed to make sure.

The map changes include the addition of fourteen new spaces, six on land and eight at sea. Jerusalem no longer is considered to have a south coast, so no longer can hold an Ottoman fleet build. One space, also a supply center, has been eliminated entirely: Oman (it has been merged with Yemen.) Other center changes include the elimination of Canton as a center, and the addition of centers in Venice, Raboul and Nanking. Three colonies have changed hands: Brazil from Ottoman to Russia, Hawaii from Austria to Ottoman, and Tahiti from Russia to Austria.

Below is an analysis of how the changes will effect each of the nine powers in Colonia VII.

*Spain:* Spain was, in my opinion, the weakest country in Colonia VI. It had weak colonies, with Somalia generally being overrun by Ottoman and Manila by China. Spain was also overly dependant upon Portuguese friendship with the reverse not being true.

Spain has been strengthened considerably in Colonia VII. The elimination of Jerusalem's south coast offers greater protection from Ottoman fleets. The creation of Suez also slows down Ottoman invasions into Africa. Another change which has the same result is the separation of the Arabian Sea from Somalia.

In the Pacific, the new supply center in Raboul will usually go to Spain. The elimination of Canton as a build center, along with creation of the Subic Sea and the Phillipine Sea, gives Spain more protection from the Chinese behemoth. This increases the likelihood that China will expand by land rather than by sea. The creation of the Solomon Sea will also give Spain more protection from invasion by whoever owns Hawaii.

In Europe, the new supply center in Venice will increase tensions between France and Austria, possibly fanning the flames for war. This is a definite boon to Spain. The only negative is that the

French fleet will start in Toulon rather than Bordeaux.

I predict Spain will be the biggest beneficiary of the Colonia VII rule changes.

*Russia:* In Colonia VI, Russia was weak because of the tremendous power of China and Ottoman, plus the fact that China was tactically able to overrun Russian possessions in Asia relatively easily. Also, while Russia starts strong and expands to twelve centers the first year, subsequent expansion was very limited. It had less access to neutral centers than any other power.

Militarily, Russia is greatly strengthened in the new version by the addition of the Jehol and Yellow Sea, offering substantial protection from China. Also, the addition of Kazakhstan offers significant protection from Ottoman in that the latter cannot move into Omsk in the fall of the first year. The addition of Kazakhstan also reduces the likelihood of Ottoman setting up a Baghdad-Armenia stalemate line. This will facilitate a Sino-Ottoman war, greatly benefitting Russia.

Given the map changes, Russia should now easily pick up Mongolia, Manchuria and Korea while China has increased incentives to move south. In Europe, the new Venice center increases the probability of Austrian moves west, giving Russia a good shot at both Poland and Rumania. (In Colonia VI, Austria generally wanted one of those two, sometimes leading to a source of tension.)

Thus, Russia will certainly benefit militarily from the new map. However, the trade of Tahiti for Brazil may hurt the Russians politically. In the earlier version, Russia could form an alliance with Austria by cooperating in both Europe and the Pacific against the often-allied Spain and Portugal. Now that Russia is no longer in the Pacific, and Ottoman now is, the chances of an Austro-Turkish alliance against Russia have gone up. Also, it is entirely likely that England and Netherlands will ally against Russia as well, operating in both South America and northern Europe.

Because of the political factors, the switch of the Russian colony to Brazil was the one revision vigorously opposed by several of us during discussions with Hyatt about the new map. Now, however, I am not so sure it is that bad. Russia's new strength in Asia gives it a lot of leverage. In addition, England and Netherlands may decide they need a strong Russia to help deal with China.

*Austria:* Austria was a weak power in Colonia VI, though not as weak as the ratings indicated. The problems were the weakness of the Florida colony and the position in Europe between a strong France and strong Ottoman.

In Colonia VII, the Florida colony has been strengthened both by the creation of the Sargasso Sea and the move of France's fleet to Toulon at the start rather than Bordeaux. That fleet frequently sailed across the ocean to attack Florida quickly in the earlier version of Colonia. In Europe the new Venice center will almost always go to Austria, which could be a big benefit should a war with France occur.

The only negative for Austria is the fact that Ottoman, with fewer opportunities in Africa, will be more likely to attack Europe. In the new Colonia VII game in which I am currently playing,



## The Colonia Variant: Conquer the World In One Sitting

Ottoman took Bulgaria and Greece the first year; a situation which almost never occurred in Colonia VI.

**Netherlands:** This power was also weak in Colonia VI, with vulnerable colonies and a weak position in Europe. In addition, the Dutch were much too spread out (a problem also faced by England and Spain.) Just as Spain was overly dependent upon Portuguese friendship, Netherlands was (and is) overly dependent upon English friendship.

There are some gains for Netherlands in Colonia VII. The additional sea spaces in West Indies and Central Atlantic Ocean offer some protection to the Surinam colony, which used to border on the West Atlantic. The addition of Bhutan slows down a Chinese attack in India. In Europe, the Venice center benefits the Dutch by increasing the chance of an Franco-Austrian war and by putting Austria in a better position to attack France rather than Netherlands.

However, the Dutch have also sustained heavy losses in the new version. The strengthening of the Somalia colony and elimination of Jerusalem's south coast means that Ottoman will likely attack India rather than Africa. Similarly, the added strength of Russia and the Spanish in Manila will increase the likelihood of Chinese attack on Netherlands and/or England.

Diplomatically, the switch of Brazil from Ottoman to Russia may hurt the Dutch as much as it does Russia. In Colonia VI, a Brazil for Goa trade with Ottoman proved tremendously beneficial to Netherlands. In the two games in which it was done, the Dutch ended up in three-way draws. In almost every other Colonia VI game, Netherlands did poorly. I fear that Goa may be the weakest colony on the board and, consequently, that Netherlands may turn out to be the weakest Power on the board.

**England:** In Colonia VI, England was a middle power in being weaker than France, China, Portugal and Ottoman but stronger than the others. England starts off strong, but is greatly spread out and thus vulnerable to attack in the midgame.

On the whole, the map changes do not greatly effect England. The strengthening of Russia and Manila, along with the move of China's center to Nanking from Canton, increase the chance of Chinese attack upon the British colony in Malaya (Bhutan adds some minor protection.) On the other hand, the new Raboul center may induce Spain to head east from Manila, thus opening up the Indonesian centers to English attack. Also, China's anticipated move south may increase the likelihood of a solid Anglo-Dutch alliance.

**Portugal:** In view of its generally peripheral position on the board, Portugal is probably less affected by the map changes than any other Power. Spain's increased strength will make the negotiations with Portugal much more equitable towards Spain. However, the weakening of the big three (China, France and Ottoman) could leave the Portuguese the strongest country on the board. Portugal's ability to grab neutral centers in outlying areas is greater than that of any other Power.

**France:** The addition of Venice and the increased chance of Austrian attack in Europe may combine to hurt France in Colonia VII. Similarly, the added protections for Florida reduce or eliminate the advantages France had against Austria in a North American war. One possible benefit to France is the shift of the fleet to Toulon. This increases the possibility of offering Portugal an alliance against Spain.

**Ottoman:** The ability of the Ottoman Turks to roll over Spanish

East Africa has been greatly curtailed by the changes in Jerusalem, Oman, and Arabian Sea and the addition of Suez. The addition of Kazakstan lessens the probability of war with Russia since Omsk is no longer such an easy target. While in Colonia VI it was difficult for either Russia or Ottoman to conquer the other, in the newer version it will be nearly impossible. Ottoman's new Pacific colony gives it a lot more diplomatic leverage, and would be useful in an anti-Chinese war.

My favorite alliance on the board was always Russia/Austria/Ottoman, though it seldom materialized in Colonia VI. In the new version, though, this alliance is a lot more likely given its Tahiti/Hawaii/Vladivostok component in the Pacific. My conclusion is that while the easy pick-ups for Ottoman have been reduced, there are still tremendous military options as well as totally new diplomatic prospects.

**China:** China's ability to roll over Russia has been greatly reduced by the addition of Yellow Sea and Jehol. The prospects for China in the Pacific have also been reduced by the strengthening of Manila and the elimination of a build center in Canton. The addition of Kazakstan and strengthening of Russia will likely induce a Russo-Turkish attack on China from the west. Given all these factors, I predict that China will be the Power most weakened by the map changes. This is a good thing, and will add much balance to the game.

In conclusion, Fred Hyatt has done much to improve the balance of Colonia in his latest version. The powerhouses of China and France have been greatly weakened, while traditional poorhouses Russia and Spain have been significantly strengthened. As we playtest the variant more we will no doubt discover just how completely the balance of power has been altered.

>Gene Prosnitz (200 Clinton St, Brooklyn NY 11201) is one of the premier Colonia players in the North American hobby.

# Ring Around the Rosie Dip

by Fred Davis

The standard rules of Diplomacy, as described in the current Diplomacy Rulebook, will apply, except as described below:

1. Fourteen additional spaces have been added to the board. Two of these are on the original map; Switzerland (as a supply center) and Ireland. The other twelve are circles which form a "Ring" around the board, hence the name "Ring Around the Rosie."

2. There are 35 supply centers. Therefore, the Victory criterion remains at 18. Also, the game begins as usual in Spring 1901.

## 3. The Ring:

a. There are seven circles directly connected to all of the Homeland spaces of each Great Power. Each of these circles bears the name of the connecting Power. These are supra their respective Powers, as if they were stationary space stations. Hence, each can be called "Supra England," "Supra France," etc. For game purposes, the letter "S" will suffice, as in "S. England."

b. Five additional circles directly connect to all of the Neutral SC's on the board, plus a few other spaces. These are called North Pole, King's Contrivance, Kitty Korner, Swiss Miss and Ruritania. Each of these circles touches either two or three Neutral SC's and a total of four spaces (listed below in 4.)

c. Any unit on the board may move directly to whichever circle touches that space in one move. Any unit in a circle may move directly to any space on the board which the circle touches, except that fleets may not move to inland spaces, nor may armies move to sea spaces. A Power may have up to two of its own units in its own Supra circle in 1901 and Spring 1902. Otherwise, no more than one unit may occupy any circle at any one time. If two units remain in a Power's own circle in Fall 1902, one must be removed; fleet before army.

d. While on the Ring, any unit may move up to three spaces in either direction on one move. Units may pass through each other. Units already on the Ring may stand each other off in the usual manner, but units attempting to move from the Board to the Ring do not stand off a unit moving on the Ring. A unit attempting to move two or three circles which is stood off on its last segment will remain in the last space to which it could legally move. (Example: English unit attempts a three-circle move to S. France, is stood off in that space, finds S. Germany occupied, so ends up standing in King's Contrivance.)

e. Units on the Board may support only the movements of their own units on the Ring, whereas a unit on the Ring may support the movement of any unit on the Board, regardless of nationality.

f. Units on the Board may support the movement of a unit from the Ring to any space on the Board to which it may legally furnish support.

## 4. Ring Connections to Board Spaces (Supply centers italicized)

- a. North Pole to: *Denmark, Norway, Sweden*, Finland.
- b. King's Contrivance to: *Belgium, Holland*, Ireland, Mid Atlantic (fleets only).

c. Kitty Korner to: *Portugal, Spain, Tunis*, North Africa.

d. Swiss Miss to: *Greece, Switzerland*, Albania, Ionian Sea (fleets only).

e. Ruritania to: *Bulgaria, Rumania, Serbia*, Black Sea (fleets only).

## 5. Special Space Rules

a. Switzerland is defended in place by a standing army. This army must be dislodged before the space can be entered. It cannot retreat once dislodged.

b. No move or support of a move into Switzerland may be made in 1901. (This allows Italy and Austria to participate in any operations concerning Switzerland.)

c. Ireland is connected to Clyde by a direct passage. This does not effect the movement of fleets through the North Atlantic.

d. Finland is not part of Russia for Ring-connection purposes.

e. The Supra Circle over each Homeland connects with six spaces in its respective Homeland, except for the five spaces only in Turkey. For Russia, the connection is with four supply centers plus Ukraine and Livonia. For the other Powers, the connection is with three supply centers. Thus, every circle except Swiss Miss, King's Contrivance and Russia directly touches three supply centers.

f. Italy has a choice in Spring 1901 of building either an army or a fleet in Rome. This need not be disclosed until publication of the Spring 1901 orders.

6. Origin of Names: North Pole is obvious. King's Contrivance is the name of a very expensive restaurant in Maryland. Swiss Miss is the name of a cocoa mix sold in the States. Ruritania is one of those mythical Balkan countries favored in old novels and old movies, probably adjacent to Graustark. Kitty Korner was originally called "Hot Corner", but I like the alliteration better.

## Notes on Game Design

The original idea came to me in a dream, when I saw a Diplomacy board surrounded by seven additional outside spaces, one for each country. When I became serious about the design, I realized that there would have to be additional outside spaces to provide connections to the neutral supply centers. Originally, there were going to be six other circles, but I found that with six, some of them did not have enough connections to the Board to make it interesting. So, the number was reduced to five.

Every passable land space on the board now has a connection to the Ring. Even with the addition of Ireland and Switzerland, there were not enough land spaces to provide for connections for each circle, so I had to include three sea spaces. Some sea spaces, like North Sea and Tyrrhenian Sea, were just too critical to allow for such a connection, so I used second-level critical spaces like Black Sea and the Ionian.

Supra Russia has the advantage / disadvantage of being the only circle touching four supply centers. Also, Turkey has the advantage of a corner position. Therefore, both of these Powers



## Variant

touch each other directly on the Ring, rather than having an intermediate "neutral" circle. Austria and Italy need all the help they can get; therefore, each is adjacent to two neutral circles. England retains its splendid isolation, as in real life and most regular Diplomacy games. France and Germany had to be placed adjacent to each other simply because there wasn't any other place for them.

The idea of allowing two units to move to a Supra circle in 1901 or Spring 1902 is simply to encourage more movement to the Ring in the early stages of the game.

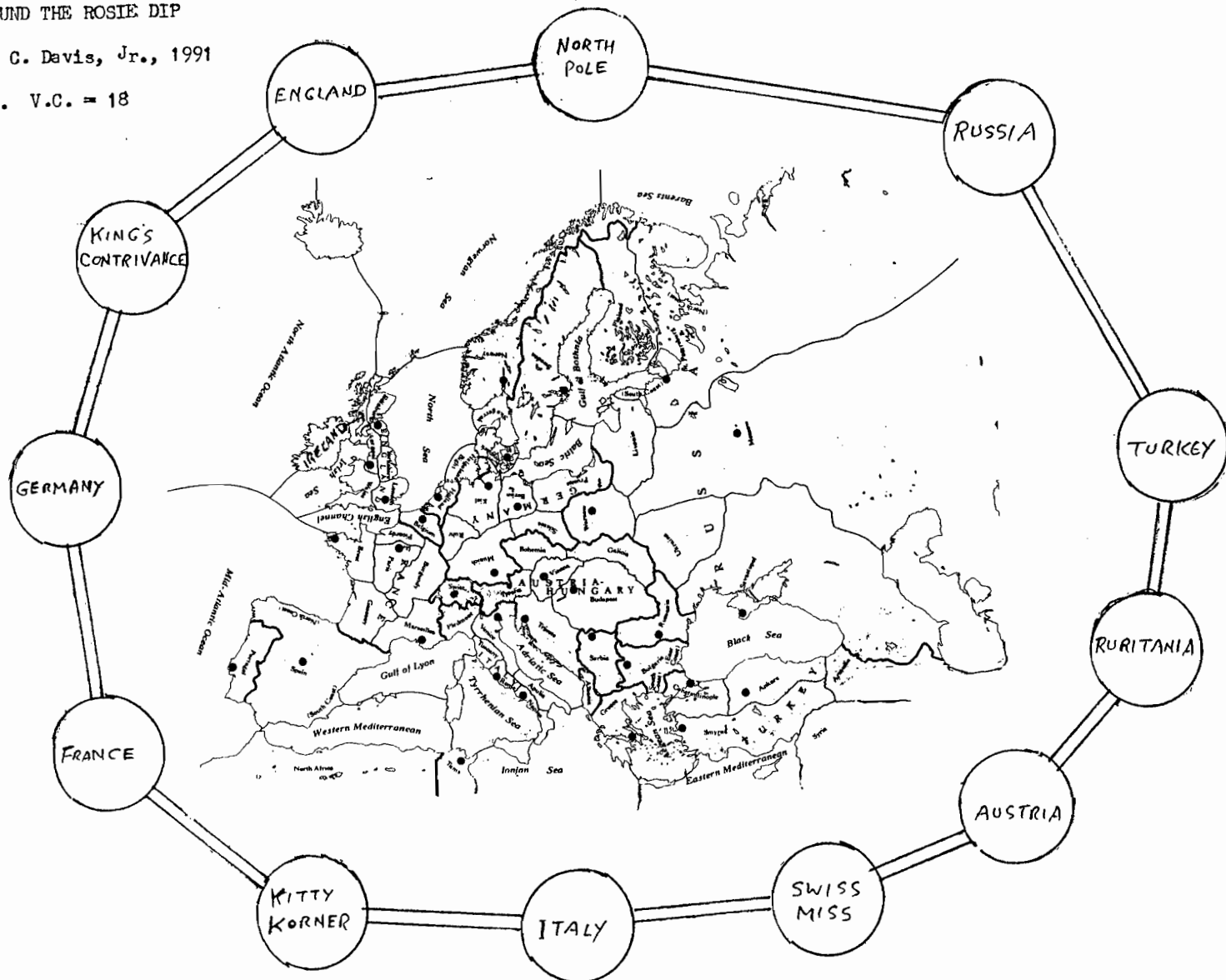
I was not thinking of Niven's "Ringworld" when I designed this game. "Ring Around the Rosie" came to me in a flash, since it's the name of a very old game. But, press writers could use the Ring part of the game for interesting pieces making use of either Niven's or Wagner's "Ring."

>Fred Davis (3210K Wheaton Way, Ellicott City MD 21043) publishes *Diplomag*, the newsletter of the Mensa Diplomacy group.

### RING AROUND THE ROSIE DIP

by Fred C. Davis, Jr., 1991

35 SC's. V.C. = 18



# A Look at the Top Five

by David Hood

The 1991 Runestone Poll results are reported to the right, but I thought it might be of use to our novice readers to do some brief reviews of some of the top zines. As a sort of disclaimer, let me start by saying that my views may or may not be congruent with others, nor may they be taken as definitive words-from-on-high. These thoughts are simply the rambings of one overworked lawyer and *DW* editor...

As in 1990, the top zine in the poll is Cal White's *Northern Flame*. The reason for this ranking is really pretty clear: reading material. Indeed, what games that Cal (address below in Services) does run are generally carried by flyer outside the zine itself. His visual product is improving with the advent of a new computer and layout software, but it is really not among the best in the hobby in that regard. The turnaround is not spectacular, and Cal offers little in the way of variants for those who like them.

No, the *raison d'être* of this publication is the letter column, hobby news section, and good writing in subzines from people like Michael Hopcroft and Mike Agnew. The discussions often deal with hobby and diplomacy topics, which are generally a good draw. (Too much politics can sometimes tire out the reader; see the *Upstart* review below.) Cal has done things like *Scruples* questions in the past, and generally involves his readership the way few zines nowadays do.

It's not often said, but I also think some of the success of *NF* comes from the fact that it is a Canadian zine. I know that I, for one, greatly enjoy what insights I can glean from its pages about life in Canada. In addition, Canadian subscribers flock to the zine in part because Cal is the current Canadian Diplomacy Organization chief. If you are looking for a reading zine in any way, shape or form, this would be your best bet right now.

Coming in at number two is Pete Gaughan's zine *Pere-landra*. This is another high-quality zine, showing the Runestone Poll to be pretty good at picking at least the top few zines (in my opinion, that is.) Pete runs a great game service here, offering everything from Diplomacy to Titan to Snowball Fighting. It is extremely punctual, and rarely features much in the way of GM errors.

The theme of the zine is literary, so there is quite a bit of that type of content. This includes a page one literary excerpt, literature quizzes, and games like Fictionary Dictionary. If I may be so bold, however, I would argue that such thematic touches have little to do with the zine's success. Instead, this is the classic case of high-quality GMing and publishing skills being utilized to produce a timely and diverse product. There is literally something for every type of gamer here. So, while those in search of a reading zine should try *NF*, those

in search of a new gaming venue should send off to Pete (1521 S Novato Blvd #46, Novato CA 94947) immediately for a sample.

The only zine in the top five I have not seen is Dick Martin's *fast trax*. This is a zine which runs postal 1830; indeed, I believe Dick (17601 Lisa Dr, Rockville MD 20855) may well have begun the 1830 postal hobby. At any rate, postal 1830 can be fun once you get used to the rules changes, so try him out.

Garret Schenck's own *Upstart* came in a well-deserved fourth in the 1991 poll. This is a well put together zine featuring Dip, Gunboat and Capitalist Diplomacy. It has excellent turnaround time, crisp layout, and a wide variety of players. Garret (address below) also edits one of the most caustic letter columns I have seen in a long time, focusing almost exclusively on politics. If you have not been savaged by Garret yet, then you have not yet made it in the hobby. For Diplomacy gaming, this is as good a place to play as *Perelandra*.

Rounding out the top five is Bruce Linsey's *White House Mania*, which runs postal Campaign Trail. (You may remember the spotlight on this elections game in the last issue of *DW*.) Bruce (PO Box 1334, Albany NY 12201) has not opened up any new games yet, but is rumored to be thinning about it. I played CT here, and can truly say that it was one of the most enjoyable postal gaming experiences I have ever had.

## 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, 2207 Smokey View Blvd, Powell OH 43065.

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

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

# The 1991 Runestone Poll

## Main List entries finishing at or above average

### Zines

(73 on main list)

Rk	Zine Name	Votes	Score
1	Northern Flame	39	9.173
2	Perelandra	48	9.002
3	fast trax	19	8.882
4	Upstart	52	8.787
5	White House Mania	20	8.569
6	Kathy's Korner	35	8.335
7	Maniac's Paradise	31	8.183
8	Diplomacy World	80	8.132
9	ark	12	8.019
10	The Boob Report	25	8.015
11	Cheesecake	30	7.750
12	DMZ	23	7.711
13	Penguin Dip	26	7.681
14	Hoodwink	19	7.642
15	Diplomacy Downs	33	7.494
16	Buckeye Rail Gazette	13	7.334
17	Concordia	12	7.245
18	Carolina Cmd & Cmnty	40	7.241
19	benzene	24	6.935
20	Pilot Light	16	6.928
21	Ramblings by Moonlight	21	6.846
22	The Prince	11	6.654
23	The Metadiplomat	21	6.618
24	The Home Office	31	6.588
25	Electronic Protocol	24	6.569
26	Disease City	10	6.463
27	DOGS of War	23	6.454
28	Ohio Acres	26	6.426
29	So I Lied	23	6.350
30	Moiré	38	6.322
31	Acropolis	18	6.273
32	The Abyssinian Prince	19	6.249
33	Excelsior	38	6.225
34	Vertigo	41	6.209
35	Rebel	48	6.194
36	Lemon Curry	15	6.190
37	Why Me?	18	6.171

All the zines listed above finished at or above average.  
The 36 zines that finished below average are not listed here.

This is the second, corrected version of the results. I'm sorry for any inconvenience which was caused by the error in the first version.

### Subzines

(22 on main list)

Rk	Subzine Name	Votes	Score
1	DIDOES	22	8.750
2	Fred's Column	7	8.143
3	One Regular Guy	13	7.270
4	The Pocket General	5	6.988
5	Extremism In Defense...	14	6.508
6	The Unabashed Bo(t)	24	6.412
7	Standard Deviation	14	6.333
8	Notes from the Bunker	22	6.295
9	Poll Talk	16	6.156
10	Subwithnoname	11	6.128
11	Water on the Knee	16	5.833

All the subzines listed above finished above average. The 11 subzines that finished below average are not listed here.

### GMs

(60 on main list)

Rk	GM Name	Votes	Score
1	Eric Brosius	8	8.923
2	Bruce Linsey	18	8.829
3	Jim Burgess	14	8.742
4	Andy Lischett	19	8.688
5	Fred Hyatt	18	8.579
6	Garret Schenck	27	8.528
7	Scott Cameron	10	8.483
8	Kathy Caruso	17	8.464
9	Lee Kendter, Sr.	11	8.429
10	Jeff McKee	12	8.177
11	David Hood	6	8.091
12	Pete Gaughan	19	8.080
13	James Goode	10	7.921
14	Bill LaFosse	5	7.842
15	Douglas Kent	19	7.666
16	Stephen Dorneman	11	7.625
17	Fred Davis	6	7.613
18	Cal White	16	7.454
19	Lee Kendter, Jr.	12	7.433
20	Jeff Suchard	9	7.336
21	Kevin Kinsel	8	7.293
22	Stven Carlberg	7	7.233
23	Bruce Reiff	13	7.225
24	Dick Martin	12	7.137
25	Alan Levin	6	7.053
26	Conrad von Metzke	11	7.041
27	Melinda Holley	36	7.021
28	Michael Gonsalves	14	7.015
29	Kevin Brown	10	6.973
30	John Boardman	5	6.917

All the GMs listed above finished above average.  
The 30 GMs that finished below average are not listed here.

To order the 1991 Runestone Poll publication, send \$5.00 to Eric Brosius, 41 Hayward St., Milford MA 01757.  
I expect to mail the publication around September 1.

# In Search of the Perfect Zine

by Steve Nicewarner

With the continuing debate on zine regularity and the results of the 1991 Runestone Poll, this seems to be a good time to reexamine exactly what makes a good hobby zine. Hopefully, by redefining what makes a good zine, we can end the simmering animosities between publishers and focus on a more important issue - keeping novices in the hobby no matter what zine they read first.

Most people would agree that there are four basic components to a good zine; timeliness, form, content, and quality of GMing. Different people, however, give these components different priorities. Some worship timeliness and 24-hour turnaround time over everything else, while others are willing to see even significant zine delays if the time is used to put out a quality product. The key to putting out a good zine, however, is to strike a good balance, never sacrificing one component at the expense of another. A look at the four components and some case studies should bear this out.

Timeliness is everyone's favorite bugaboo right now, as shown in the publication *CCC Review of Zines* and the results of this year's Runestone Poll. Promptness is indeed important; if you can't remember why you moved to Munich last turn, for example, it certainly hurts your diplomacy. Timeliness is certainly a key component of the quality zine, but, as we'll see, it is not all important.

Form is another component of a good zine that has received a lot of press recently. After all, a new subscriber's first impression of a zine, and perhaps of the hobby as a whole, is based almost entirely on a zine's production quality. We all know how important first impressions are, so the significance of a good-looking zine really should need no elaboration.

The flip side of form is content. Conventional wisdom is that, while form convinces a new reader to subscribe, content is what makes him resub and actively participate. In fact, many zines which fall short in other areas are successful because their contents are interesting. Nonetheless, content is but a component of the excellent zine, not the whole thing.

The last component of the "perfect zine", and the one most often unmentioned, is the quality of the GMing. This is probably due to the fact that one must really follow the zine (and probably play in a game or two) to get an idea of the GM's skill. Poor GMs make people quit out of frustration, while good GMing goes almost unnoticed (which is as it should be.)

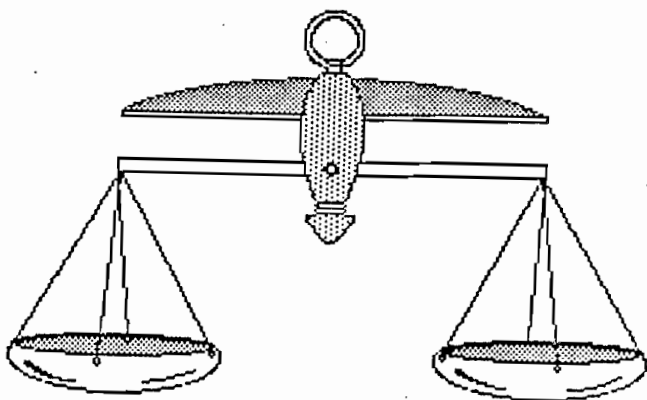
As we have seen, there are many components that go into making a really good zine. Some short examples should show that the key is to have a balance of all these qualities. For starters, let's look at the recently folded zine *Been There, Done That*, put out by Tom Nash. The last few issues of *BTDT* had the sharp look of laser printing, a lively letter column with debate on both sides of a variety of issues, and reasonably good GMing. Tom's flaw was that his turnaround time was erratic. As the zine slowed down, the general perception of its overall quality went down too. The thirty point drop between its 1990 and 1991 Runestone Polls bear this out.

Another good case study is Brad Wilson's *Vertigo*. This is another zine with a strong lettercol, good GMing, and predictability (a weird schedule, but basically predictable.) The problem with *V* is that it is ugly, and kinda proud of it. *V* has a strong cult following, but how many people do you know who say "*Vertigo* was my first zine"? Those of us who already know what we're getting in to subscribe, and continue to sub, but a complete novice would probably be put off by the printing quality.

The third example here is *Perelandra*. The quality of *Pere* is almost unmatched. Editor Pete Gaughan writes good columns, and there are no serious adjudication errors. As the regularity problems of last year began to recede, the general opinion of the zine went back up. *Perelandra* is possibly the best example of a so-called "perfect zine."

These three examples show that zines need to strike a healthy balance between what I have identified as the four keys to a good zine. Zines that do not strike a good balance may succeed (many do), but their success is more of a cult following. Zines which have a correct balance usually find their way to the top of the polls, and to the top of the hobby.

➤ Steve Nicewarner (1310-11 Ephesus Ch Rd, Chapel Hill NC 27514) has the unfortunate distinction of having been both a Warthog and a CAD. He publishes *Heroes of Olympus*.



# A Matter of Honor

by Mark Nelson

This article deals with problems in the field of GMing and more loosely with publishing ethics. The first three come from GMing problems that I have faced recently, the middle two from recent issues of *Springboard* (the UK novice zine), and the last from the pages of the zine *Eclipsor*.

Recently, a player had the audacity to ask for a holdover because I had misadjudicated. The player objected to the order F Gas S F Spa(sc). I wrote back pointing out that under the 1971 rules of Diplomacy, this was a perfectly legal order, and I asked that the player send in orders pronto.

The player concerned wrote back: "I am sorry but you are wrong. I have always trusted your adjudications until now, and cannot understand why you allowed this support. I don't have the original rules handy, but the 1989 version states that 'in practical terms a unit may give support to any area to which it may move itself.' F Gas S A Spa is legal as armies can act on both coasts, so F Gas can move to where the army is. F Gas S F Spa(nc) is likewise legal but supporting F Spa(sc) is not."

"As an aside, are the following legal: a. F Yor S F Lpl, b. F Bar S F Stp(nc), c. F Ven S F Pie, d. F Mar S F Gas? And if not, why?"

In response to this player, I sent him a copy of the rule in question, which reads: "A fleet which may move to one of these provinces [those having two coasts] may 'support' in such a province...without regard for the separation of the coastline into two stretches." Of the four given support orders, only "b" is legal.

All this was perfectly clear, and the matter was cleared up without hard feelings on either side. A GM should never feel aggrieved if a player questions an adjudication through lack of knowledge, but of course should give the reasoning behind the adjudication as clearly as possible. Also, the editions of the rules which appeared in the late 1980's are less than clear on this point.

This does emphasize a point, that players should read the houserules under which the game is being run. Not only do my rules clearly state that I use the 1971 rulebook, but I go on to say "...If your rules are not 1971 and you think that there may be differences between the two sets the GM will send you a copy of the 1971 rules for cost."

A player who orders on the basis of an incorrect explanation in a new rulebook has only himself to blame. I am told that the new rulebooks specifically forbid the "unwanted convoy", wherein a player fouls up an adversary's move down the coast by convoying it to the intended destination and having someone else disrupt the convoy. Since I use the

rules as written in 1971, I recognize this ploy as being perfectly legal.

This general principle applies to other games where it is often the case that different editions differ on certain points. It is the GM's responsibility to tell players which edition he is using and the player's responsibility to obtain these rules. This is particularly true for boardgames other than Diplomacy. For example, there are significant differences in Kingmaker rules - make sure you and the GM are using the same ones!

In a Diplomacy variant, in what may turn out to have been a critical season, a player submitted a general set of orders which stated, in their fullness, the word "any." A unit had to retreat, and without thinking about it I disbanded the unit. That disband may have given the game to another player. The disbanding player has indicated an interest in appealing to an outside arbitrator over the incident.

My justification for disbanding the unit is two-part. One of my houserules states that "Retreats may be made conditional on the preceeding moves, provided the GM is not required to form a conclusion..." By stating "any" the player is forcing the GM to form a conclusion about the game. Does the GM generate a random retreat order or decide where the best place to retreat is, and in this case how does he reach a conclusion? Of course, the bottom line is that disbanding a unit is a legal retreat option. I will agree to go to arbitration if pressed, but I do feel the adjudication is clearly correct.

Now, if a player sends in general retreat orders of "alphabetical order" or even "random", these are perfectly acceptable. But the order "any" is ambiguous, putting the GM in the untenable position of being asked to make a judgment call.

Although many of the issues of my zine *The Mouth of Sauron* have been sporadic, I have always been proud of how regular my games-only issues have been. Alas, this has not always been the case over the past year. Unfortunately, there was a three-month gap between issues at one point. The next turn a player's orders arrived three days after the deadline and came with the message that "In view of the turnaround of last issue, I think it would be unreasonable of you to cite me for NMR [No Moves Received]. If you do so I will resign from all your games..."

Now, I had not adjudicated those games yet, so I accepted those late orders. What would I have done if I had adjudicated those games? One of my houserules states: "A deadline will be set for orders to reach the GM. Adjudication

will be ASAP after first post. Orders received late but posted in good time... will almost always be accepted, if they arrive before the zine is mailed to the players. Otherwise orders arriving after the deadline will only be used when the game has not been adjudicated."

So, it is quite clear that I could accept the orders as I had not yet adjudicated. However, another houserule states that "...Abuse of the GM or Publisher is also grounds for expulsion from a game..."

The above letter is clearly abusive and contains an attempt to blackmail the GM to provide an adjudication favorable to the player concerned. I gave serious thought to

expelling the player from all his games and confiscating all of his credit. However, in the end, I decided against this course because first, I felt guilty about my reliability in recent months, and second I had not yet adjudicated. However, players abusing the GM should be aware of houserules such as mine and take care not to violate them.

➤Mark Nelson (21 Cecil Mount, Armley, Leeds, W. Riding, LS12 2AP England) publishes the zine *The Mouth of Sauron*. He also serves as the International Editor for this zine. This article is the first of a two-part series, with the second to appear in the next *Diplomacy World*.

## History

# The History of the PDO

by John Caruso

The Peoples Diplomacy Organization (PDO) was originally set up by Michael Mills. His goal was to organize Dipdom, but in a fun way. He created geographical regions, with regional commissars, as well as a governing politburo and service commissars. The PDO progressed nicely on the strength of its founder's will. There were no dues and no feuding. I suppose that Michael envisioned a PDO that would eventually fill the void for hobby organization. Alas, it was not to be.

Everyone in Dipdom was automatically a member of the PDO unless they didn't want to be, or were censured. (Michael took care of the latter.) The elections that were held were more symbolic than binding. Only a handful of people voted. Michael was the Grand Commissar with the rest of us being his disloyal subjects.

In its infancy, the PDO had district elections of its commissars, most of whom ran unopposed. There were trials and condemnations, all of which took place before Avalon Hill came out with its game *Kremlin*... For the most part, Michael carried the PDO torch, sent out the newsletter, and kept the whole thing together. There were many of us who participated, but Michael did all the work. I suppose our enthusiasm did help give him the energy to continue.

Shortly after creating the PDO, Michael decided to use this unorganized organization to start up an auction. The first auction was held in 1983 and was such a success that Michael decided to continue it.

In 1985, Michael started to phase out of Dipdom, and passed the auction on to someone else. The new auctioneer never had time to start it up. Enter John Caruso to grab the bull by the horns and restart a good idea. At the time, of course, I was in the middle of what could be called a "hobby controversy." In order not to compromise my position of that

of the PDORA, Simon Billenness and I agreed to work together and to incorporate a number of safeguards that exist today. These include a geographically dispersed financial committee, committee members with custodial or financial experience, an initial screening system along with override powers by the committee, the submission of all requests for funding to the committee, and a requirement that committee members have at least five years of hobby experience. No committee member or auctioneer could receive money from the auction except to recoup postage for sending out auctioned items. Simon and I set up a system whereby the committee would decide which of the requests to fund and by how much.

Simon's two years with me were a blessing for both the PDORA and me. He is a hard worker, and found a way to get PDORA stuff done even when his time started to get crunched. Simon gave me the energy to continue when I thought I would collapse from the workload.

Through the years, a certain number of hobbyists have tried to label the PDO a "joke" organization. The PDO was indeed meant to be fun, and to mock all the past attempts at hobby organization that had failed as well as those which had died in a creator's mind. At any rate, the PDO still lives on through the Relief Auction. People are still having fun, and we're helping hobby services in the process. Isn't having fun what the hobby is all about? Even the naysayers and doubting Thomases have participated in the auction fun.

So, take care, and have fun. DO YOU KNOW WHO YOUR COMMISSAR IS?

➤John Caruso (636 Astor St, Norristown PA 19401) is the auctioneer for the PDORA, and for years published the zine *Whitestonia*.



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Publicity: John Cain Tel: (03) 836 2285

Accommodation:

Neil Ashworth Tel: (02) 477 5230

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Send to: Luke Clutterbuck, Organiser, World Dipcon III,  
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.

# The Breathtaking DW Letter Column

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

## *Hobby News*

David Charlton (150 The Parade, Island Bay, Wellington New Zealand): Your overview of available publications is most welcome. I have written off for some of the publications listed.

Robert Staats (UCSC Crown Col, Santa Cruz CA 95060): You and the rest of the staff of *Diplomacy World* are doing a great job. I was wondering when you mailed issue #63. I received it on August 13, making much of the information in the zine worthless. If you published dates that were a little further into the future, it might be a little more useful to the readers of *Dip World*. I also noticed that there was no information on Pacificon in issue #63. Pacificon may not be a very large Dip-oriented Con, but it is the largest Con in Northern California and possibly the largest with Dip on the West coast. Publishing that type of information in your zine would be of use to new and old Dippers out here on the West Coast, who do not have many chances to go to large gaming events.

Editor: I apologize for leaving out the PacifiCon details, but the fact is that I did not know who the contact person was. Now I do, so you can expect publicity for that event next year. Also, I don't know who to contact about the LA events like StrategiCon or Gamex.

Kevin Brown (6703 St Augustine Rd #209, Jacksonville, FL 32217): Hey, can I get some notice as the only zine in the world to run postal Candyland? This is important hobby news! "*Pilot Light*, a leading United soccer zine, diversifies." If you want I can even provide the houserules.

## *Johnson's Draw is not a Win article*

Robert Staats: The article by Stan Johnson on Strategy & Tactics in issue 63, "A Draw is not a Win" was well done. A while back I thought I was one of the few people alive who believed that Diplomacy should be played to win. A draw has little value except to those who crave ratings points. There

does need to be a system in which only winning the game is rewarded, while still keeping the interest of all players.

Mark Fassio (Box 5265, CAD-B, APO NY 09742): This article struck me a very humorous but personal tone with me, since I am one of the so-called wimps of the hobby who believe in a two-person alliance to the bitter end. I mean, the game is supposed to be representative of pre-World War I. Correct me if I am wrong, but didn't both sides have multiple allies before and after the war? Anyway, history aside, Stan is right (for once) and I for one have changed my ways. I stabbed Joel Klein in our most recent game. It was a hideous mistake — we non-stabbers need more practice at such stuff. Perhaps Stan would be gracious enough to join in a game and let us wimps have practice on him? I do want to comments on Stan's invocation of hobby greats to support his position. I have news for him: I'm sure Edi Birsan, Walt Buchanan, and the rest were nice guys and great players, but so what? They're not the role models current players look up to. The new gamer of the eighties and nineties has no frame of reference for them — so why invoke their names? It's yesterday's news, and Stan's allusion to them on how to pattern your Dip life is bogus.

## *Demo Game Finish*

Kevin Brown: That silly demo game finish; I can hardly wait to see the A/A/A... (add a hundred or so As here) ...A/A/A/I draw. How will that be scored?

## *DW History*

Kevin Brown: I used to feel kinda like an outsider to the hobby, until I met Larry Peery at DixieCon. Talking with Larry made me realize that the cliquiness that seems to abound in the hobby is largely a mirage. 95% of the people involved are just here to play games and make friends; the rest usually don't last long. It's natural to feel a bit like an outsider when first joining the hobby, because it's something everybody goes through. This is something that happens in most any group of people when a new person joins. The new guy will always feel a little out of place. In a by-mail society, like the hobby, acclimation can take a little longer since the communication is not so immediate.

Sam Mustafa (8352 Loveridge Ct, Richmond VA 23294): As a fellow southerner, I'm sure you understand the value to be placed on avoiding rudeness and unnecessary squabbling. But in my decade of professional writing and editing, I have

never seen such an incredible collection of self-important, ego-beating buffoons as appeared in your DW History feature in issue 63. My God, but I have grown weary of people who think they are on the verge of deism because of the marvelous, history-making things they have done for what we reverently call "The Hobby." Honestly, I edit a hobby magazine, and have a healthy ego, but the stuff in that issue was ridiculous. The "Great Feud of 1984-87": these people write as if they are discussing actual historical events that were important! I'm sorry, but wargamers are just not that important in the greater scheme of things. I like *Diplomacy World*, and have had no cause for complaint until this time. As a single subscriber, I wish to go on record as voting to keep the magazine devoted to coverage of Diplomacy — not to the slavish indulgences of several egomaniacs who wish to beat their breasts and nostalgize at my expense.

Mark Fassio: I find all this talk about the need for *Diplomacy World* to be so much booshwah. It seems like the people who call most for "Flagship" status are the same people who have or had a stake in DW personally. In my fourteen plus years of PBM Diplomacy, I rarely was influenced by anything in DW, and could really care less what was in it. Rather than be influenced by what they read in this zine, most players out there learn the Dip basics by playing in local zines, and using whatever articles appear in their GM's zine. I would submit to you that DW is a nice conglomeration of things diplomatic, but do the hobby folks really need such a "Flagship?" The hobby players are individualistic, and I don't think any of them really need a security blanket. Give them news on upcoming Cons, recent Con results, and a good article or two. That's sufficient. Of all the millions of words previous editors have spewed forth, I doubt any of it has ever really mattered one iota in The Big Picture. In fact, ramblings from guys like Berch and Peery during the Great Feud days were one reason I didn't bother to stay in touch with hobby stuff and DW. I don't want to appear cynical or cruel, and I welcome novices and old hands alike to critique my thoughts.

#### *Hood's Kingmaker Tactics article*

Kevin Brown: Hey, I was there for one of those games at DixieCon. It wasn't Kremer that gave Yerkey the win, it was me! Kremer thought he could get a 2-way, but he tipped his hand a season early, thus allowing me to stop him from stabbing me. The next year Yerkey stabbed him at my urging, and (with me giving one center) Yerkey won. That was the only way I could finish second instead of third or fourth.

#### *Klein's Postcards article*

Mark Fassio: Joel is not only one of the Top Five Dip players I have met in this hobby, he's also a gamesman and gentleman

to boot. He and I both decry the New Wave gamers of the nineties who live by the postcard — if they even bother to write at all. Diplomacy is at least half communication, so those who forfeit their corresponding chances deserve to be smashed like the zeroes that they are! (Uh, Joel, ahem, now that I've sucked up to you with these compliments, can you forgive my Stan Johnson-inspired reckless stab?)

#### *International Tournament Ratings*

Roland Isaksson (Tvillingvagen 13, S-14400 Ronninge, Sweden): I've sent Don Del Grande some information and addresses on five Swedish, two Norwegian, and two Danish conventions with Diplomacy tournaments. I also sent along address for conventions in Germany, Holland and Austria that I have heard of. I would very much like to see Don extend his IDTR list.

#### *Brosius' Poll Talk article*

John Galt (701 Welch Rd #323, Palo Alto CA 94304): I agree with Eric Brosius that polls tend to reward style over substance. If I ran a poll I'd have three columns for ratings: style, content, and reliability. This means more work, but would give much better feedback to publishers.

#### *Colonia Variant Feature*

Fred Hyatt (60 Grandview Place, Montclair NJ 07043): I really have no comments to make on the Colonia articles in DW 62, except for McCrumb's "Certifiably Insane" remark when referring to GMing the variant. I am not Certifiably Insane per se. My wife has tried twice to have me "certified." I beat the rap both times!

#### *The Contents in General*

Roland Isaksson: I would like to see longer deadlines on the contests. I tried to make an entry for the contest in issue 63 but did not make it in time.

Editor: Yours was not the only letter I got on this subject. What happened was that the zine's publication schedule got delayed by my studying for the bar exam. The August 1 date was unfortunately not changed even though the zine did not go into the mail until mid-July. My apologies all around. We will try to avoid this type of mistake in the future.

Alan Levin (7042 W Carol Ave, Niles IL 60648): Do you think there would be merit in reprinting some of the really good articles from back issues that are more than ten years old? If you did this, you could expose people to some really good writing from those days, and spare yourself the neces-

sity of having to publish marginal articles about stationary and animals as filler.

Editor: I do think there is merit in what you suggest, and I had been planning to do some reprints all along. The problem has been a surplus in original material, most of which should take precedence over old stuff. I did not consider the humrous articles last time "filler" since I thought they would be good additions to the zine. There was a truth in Joel Klein's article about the importance of visual impressions, a truth novices should take to heart.

### The Zine in General

Paul Glenn (1532 Endsley Pl, Crofton MD 21114): I started reading the magazine at the end of the Peery era, and I think

your handling of the magazine is much better. It looks superb, and the articles are good. Thanks for changing the magazine for the better.

Roland Isaksson: I must say, *Diplomacy World* is the best Dipzine I have ever read, by far. Keep up the good work, and good luck!

John Galt: *DW* is starting to look like *The General*, but more focused. Way to go!

John Dods (PO Box 2110 Ahuriri, Napier, New Zealand): I want to extend an open invitation to any World DipCon attendees that they can stay with me some on the way there or back. Anyone interested should write me soon.

## Demo Game

# New Demo Game Starts!

Hi friends, and welcome to what promises to be a showdown between seven of the giants of the Diplomacy hobby today. The whole purpose of the Demonstration Game is to let novices and old hands alike in on the happenings of a Diplomacy game played by those who have something to "demonstrate." These seven have been selected by your careful editor and gamesmaster because of their records in postal and face-to-face Diplomacy. We also have two excellent diplomacists in their own right, Fred Townsend and Garret Schenck, doing commentary on each season for the benefit of the readership.

The following is a report on the first year of play, 1901, along with analysis by our commentators. Before we get to that, though, let me briefly introduce the protagonists in this struggle:

Bill Quinn (Austria) is a former Boardman Number Custodian, the guy who catalogues all postal Diplomacy starts and finishes. Bill is currently concentrating on being a dentist, and is less involved in the hobby than he once was.

Mike Ward (England) hails from Vermont, but don't let his rural surroundings fool you. He has an impressive record postally for winning games.

Mark Berch (France) is the current Strategy & Tactics Editor for *Diplomacy World*, as well as editor of his own zine *Diplomacy Digest*. I wouldn't expect many mistakes here.

Mike Gonsalves (Germany) is one of the most prolific players in the hobby today, and easily one of the best. He also publishes the zine *Crimson Sky*.

Randolph Smyth (Italy) was the longtime publisher of the Canadian zine *Fol Si Fie*. He also has the distinction of having won postally with every Great Power.

Kevin Kozlowski (Russia) has posted a strong record in both postal and tournament play. He publishes a subzine in *California Acres* that focuses on the Perestroika variant.

Dave McCrumb (Turkey) is a seasoned tournament winner,

postal player, and gamesmaster. His *Appalachian General* recently topped issue #100.

Garret Schenck (Commentator) is the new publisher of *The Zine Register*, as well as his popular zine *Upstart*.

Fred Townsend (Commentator) is one of the most experienced players in the hobby today, particularly in tournament play.

Garret had a few comments before we begin Spring 1901: "Michael Gonsalves is the only player I have prior experience with among your starters. He's played in several games with me as GM, and he was Russia in the first postal Diplomacy game I ever played in. I almost won that game, but it eventually ended up an EIR draw. That was due in no small measure to the tenacity of Mike Gonsalves. He will not NMR, nor will he give up. His negotiation letters are short, but effective. The only problem is that he is somewhat predictable, and his style doesn't lead easily to intricate, involved plans. The other players are personally unknown to me, but they have been in the hobby even longer than Mike. This should be a great demonstration game."

The game will be reported in one-year increments, along with commentary, about a game-year or so behind the actual game time. (I am GMing the game by flyer in my publication *The Game*.)

There are some good players on my standby list as well, in case any of the starters have to be relieved... Let's go!

Spring 1901 91AH

### Great Powers Bounce In Usual Trouble Spots

Austria (Quinn): F Tri-Alb, A Bud-Ser, A Vie-Gal  
 England (Ward): F Edi-Nth, A Lpl-Yor, F Lon-Eng  
 France (Berch): A Par-Bur, A Mar-Spa, F Bre-Eng  
 Germany (Gonsalves): F Kie-Hol, A Ber-Kie, A Mun-Ruh  
 Italy (Smyth): F Nap-Ion, A Ven H, A Rom-Apu  
 Russia (Kozlowski): F Stp-Bot, A Mos-Stp, A War-Gal, F Sev-Bl

Turkey (McCrumb): A Con-Bul,A Smy-Con,F Ank-Bla

Press:

Paris to London: If I really am in the English Channel, I am sorry. I did ask you for an explicit statement that you definitely would not open F Lon-Eng. You never gave it to me.

Ankara: The Ottoman Environmental Protection Agency has requested that the Russian Olympic Committee cease its practice of having Russian swim team training in the Black Sea. They leave a ring around it...

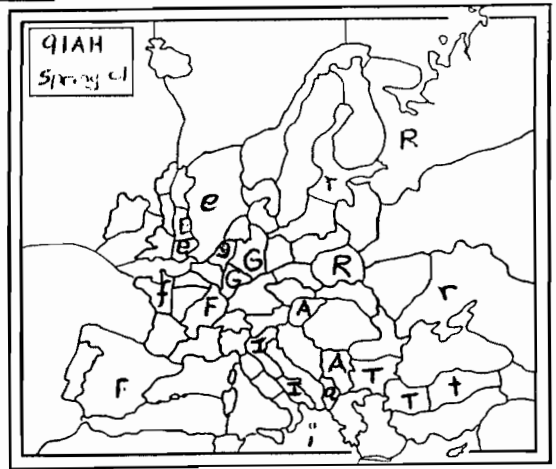
Commentary:

Garret Schenck: I think France has made the worst move. He is guaranteed only one build this turn. The bounce in the Channel was uninspired. Whether England "explicitly" and "definitely" eschewed a Channel move, it would have been better to let England take the Channel, then (on the basis of the marginally anti-German move to Burgundy), offer to support to Belgium. (I've noticed that Belgium is the Fall 1901 destination of choice for English fleets in the Channel anyway.) The French press item suggests a lack of communication between France and England, but no conclusion can be drawn as to who's fault that was. My Fall prediction: A Spa-Por,F Bre-Mid,A Bur-Bel.

France's move is really only equaled by the poor English move. Whether it was lack of diplomacy that led to the bounce in the Channel, England has been left with few options, and risks getting *zero* builds this fall (but will probably pick up Norway, all the same.) If anything, the results from this turn indicate the dangers of opening to the Channel. You may not get Norway, England's make-or-break center for 1901. As it is England has won French enmity, risks getting no builds, and has no options. The one bright spot for England is the possibility of French theft of Munich, which would throw Germany onto a land course and into a whole-hearted English alliance. My prediction: A Yor-Nwy,F Nth C A Yor-Nwy,F Lon-Eng.

Germany is looking good. He has two builds sewn up, and has a good chance of a third. My guess is that he will go for the three neutrals, and risk France going to Munich. France would obviously want a second build, but an unsupported French unit in Munich won't last very long. Germany can easily build two armies and boot him out. This would cement an EG alliance, with Germany in the drivers' seat. This would hardly be a positive development for France. Berch may try diplomacy to win a second unit, either Belgium or the ploy "give me Munich for a year; we'll make it look like fighting," but Germany would be a sucker to listen to this entreaty while Germany holds all the cards. Germany will only cover Munich if completely convinced that Italy will intervene in favor of France. My prediction: A Ruh-Bel,F Hol S A Ruh-Bel,A Kie-Den.

Italy sets up for the Lepanto, though undoubtedly this will end up being short-circuited by events elsewhere on the board. Of all the openings in this hobby, none have wasted as much ink as the so-called Lepanto! I don't think I've ever actually seen it completed (i.e. a Fall 1902 convoy into Syria) and it rarely survives Winter 1901 intact. Invariably the army is left to languish in Tunis for several years; I don't see how this helps Italy. I would suggest that the reason the Lepanto has lived as long as it has (in print, at least) is because of a catchy name. PR, in other words. France will probably prevail upon Italy to assert its usual "balance of power" role vis-a-vis



Germany/France, and A Ven-Tyl seems like a pretty good bet. Italy has to be careful of an EG alliance clobbering France right off the bat. If Italy moves to Tyl, then a French move to Mun is decidedly more possible, and more profitable. My prediction: A Apu-Tun,F Ion C A Apu-Tun,A Ven-Tyl.

Russia looks excellent in the north. He is guaranteed Sweden (and if there was ever a sure bet it's F Bot-Swe for Russia this turn!), and can play a guessing game over Norway. England will be threatening bloody hell, but given his weakness these threats will be ignored. However, if Russia desires another northern fleet, then a bounce over Norway is not advised; instead A Stp-Fin is called for. Then with Russian units in Fin, Swe and Stp, England loses Norway (and presumably her army as well) in S '02. Russia will only bounce over Norway if he will be unable to build in St Pete this winter anyway. To some extent, England's 1901 build is hostage to events on the other side of the board, but the net result at the end of 1902 is likely to be the same: Russian hegemony over Norway. Warsaw is a wild card, but I suspect that Russia won't return to the fray in Galicia (even though he'd probably take the space this time.) My prediction: F Bot-Swe,A Stp-Fin,F Sev-Rum,A War-Ukr.

(Germany is obviously friendly to Russia, while England and Germany are probably allied. What does it mean if England and Russia, both allies of Germany, come to blows? Will Germany be forced to choose one over the other? My guess is if Germany builds no fleets this winter then something will be worked out; otherwise Germany, born between two lovers will be forced to choose.)

Finally, the situation in the southeast is hardest to call. Both Austria and Turkey bounced with Russia, but neither Big Red nor the Yellow Peril made all-out anti-Russian moves. For example, Bud didn't move to Rum and Smy didn't move to Arm. It is even possible that the Black Sea bounce was arranged (the Galician bounce, though, almost certainly was not.) Is it possible there is a hidden RT alliance? If so, Turkey has made a poor move, since he will be unable to get A Con out of the way of F Ank, and simultaneously keep Smy open for a fleet build. This will make it difficult to project Ottoman power out of the Med much before 1903. Given this, I suspect that AT will ally to fight Russia. My prediction: A Bul-Rum,A Con-Bul,F Ank-Bla.

Austria would probably prefer a Russian fleet in Rum rather than a Turkish army (since Ser/Bud are then not threatened nearly as much), but my guess is he will promise to support both Turkey and Russia into Rum, then wisely support his own fleet, as usual, to



Greece. This would leave Rum empty, and both of the antagonists pissed at Austria, but probably even angrier at each other. Still, just about any combination is possible in the Balkans, and this game is (happily) no exception. My predictions: F Alb-Gre, A Ser S F Alb-Gre, A Vie-Tri.

*Fred Townsend:* And they're off! Highlights of Spring 1901: England and France bounce in the Channel. Is it war, or did they arrange it? I would say it was not arranged because of the awkward position both of them are left in. This is particularly true for England, for if Russia moves to Stp (and he did) England could be shut out in the fall. No builds. Zilch.

I predict Russia will indeed go to Norway because Germany moved F Kie-Hol, not Denmark. The joint moves of Mos-Stp and Kie-Hol smack of an alliance. I myself refuse to move to Stp as Russia unless Germany agrees to go to Holland, thus guaranteeing Russia Sweden. In this game it looks like England is alone against his three neighbors.

England must find an ally. His best bet is France, because France has the least to gain (at this point) from the triple attack on England. Moreover, France is in Burgundy and Germany went to Ruhr, leaving Munich wide open. Will Germany cover it? Can France sneak in? If I were Germany, I would offer support for France into Belgium in return for an alliance (and for not going to Mun.) On the other hand, Germany has two pieces on Belgium and may be tempted to try for three builds.

If Berch is particularly devious, he will accept the German offer of Belgium and then go to Munich anyway. Germany will be at only four, France would be at five, and Belgium would be unoccupied. Or even better, get England to convoy there as part of an Anglo-French alliance. The mind boggles.

Meanwhile, the East is boringly predictable. The standard RT versus AI structure appears to be shaping up. Italy slides to Apulia as part of the Lepanto, while holding in Venice. Austria and Russia bounce in Galicia, and Turkey does not go to Armenia. Ho hum. The only possible hint of excitement is the bounce in the Black Sea. But with Italy and Austria showing no signs of fighting, Russia and Turkey will have to solidify their alliance.

Unless, of course, there is a little deception going on here. (Perish the thought!) With Russia sending Moscow north, he will be open to the Turkish suggestion that nobody go to the Black Sea in the fall - Russia will want to order F Sev-Rum. What if Turkey goes there anyway and moves A Bul-Rum? In return, Italy agrees to go to Trieste and IT are off to a roaring start. Possible? Yes, but dangerous for Turkey if Italy welches (and vice versa.)

Most likely, of course, is that these hot shots will do something I haven't thought of.

Out on a limb predictions: England will not even try for Norway. One way to break up an alliance is to let one partner get way ahead. With Sweden, Rumania and Norway, Russia would be at seven, and would make neighbors nervous.

Fall 1901 91AH

Cornet Power Shut Out In the West

Austria (Quinn): F Alb-Gre, A Ser-Rum, A Vie-Gal  
England (Ward): A Yor-Nwy, F Nth C A Yor-Nwy, F Loëing

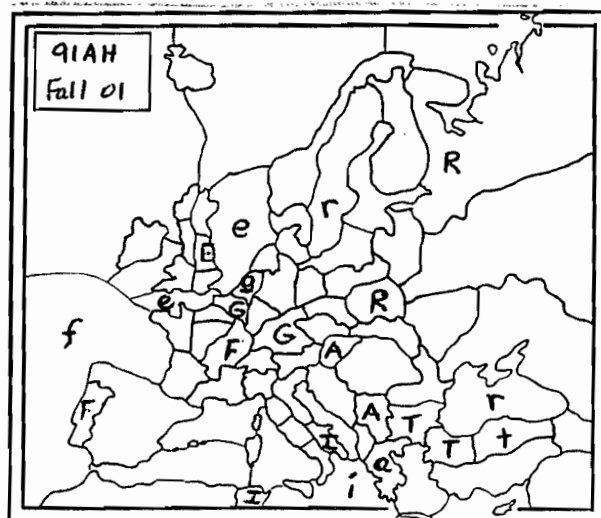
France (Berch): F Bre-Mid, A Spa-Por, A Bur-Bel  
Germany (Gonsalves): F Hol S A Ruh-Bel, A Ruh-Bel, A Kie-Mun  
Italy (Smyth): A Apu-Tun, F Ion C A Apu-Tun, A Ven-Apu  
Russia (Kozlowski): F Sev-Bla, A War-Gal, A Stp-Nwy, F Bot-Swe  
Turkey (McCrumb): A Bul-Rum, A Con-Bul, F Ank-Con

Press:

*Sevastopol:* The Russian chapter of the Balkan Environmental Protection Agency has donated \$2 billion for Black Sea Ring cleanup. We hope this arrangement is acceptable to Ankara.

Commentary:

*Garret Schenck:* I seemed to do a pretty good job guessing what was going to happen in the West. I called the moves of France and England perfectly, and only missed on one of Germany's units (and if you asked me, it's Germany that missed on that one.) Is it possible that Germany had offered Denmark to England, but the cagey Brit,



smelling a rat, opted for Norway instead? We may never know, unless these players come up with more press!

The farther east we travel, though, the worse my predictions get. Italy's moves are quite interesting. If F Ion moves in the Spring 1902 season, Italian convoying won't be over until late 1903, if then. Perhaps A Tun is meant to stay in Africa, while the Apulian army acts as the Marines. A convoy to Alb looks possible, though we could still see a classic Lepanto unfold as well. With Italy's most threatening neighbors (France, Austria and Turkey) all embroiled in imbroglions with their own respective neighbors, Smyth's Italy is likely to emerge into respectable size in the Midgame. Italy bears watching, in spite of the typically slow start.

Meanwhile, the RATs appear to be involved in some sort of horrid orgy of self-immolation. RA bounced in Galicia again, AT bounced over Rumania (causing a huge Turk traffic jam), and Russia took the Black Sea, foregoing Rumania. Something is happening here, and I don't know what it is. My best guess is this: Russia and Turkey are allied, as I suspected from the first turn's move. Let's face it; they're the only pair of the three who didn't clash last turn. Probably Russia, Turkey, or both tried to use diplomacy to immobilize Austria's A Ser (perhaps Russia sent a message to Austria stating that he "knew" that Turkey was going to try for



Greece - in hopes of forcing A Ser to support the fleet in.) Austria must have smelled foul play, and made the perfect move to ruin (or at least delay) the RT attack.

On the other hand, it could be an AT that got its signals crossed; or maybe they are all just playing Gunboat!

The builds could be interesting. France is almost certain to build F Bre, although English weakness coupled with the Russian push on Norway may convince France that Germany is the more formidable foe. You can bet that France will keep the telegraph wires humming in an attempt to break England off from Germany. We may yet see EF versus RG in the West. If I were Germany, I'd be tempted to build two fleets and lunge towards the North Sea, but that's just because I love a naval strategy. At any rate, I suspect Germany will build more conservatively: one army in Kiel and one fleet in Berlin.

Italy will certainly build F Nap, if only to transport the Apulian Marines, and because if Smyth had anted an army in the north of Italy, one suspects that he would have just left A Ven where it was in Fall 1901.

Austria could easily build a fleet and an army, but I suspect that Italy's price for A Ven-Apu was no Austrian fleets. Given the situation, and Austria's limited room for expansion, however, A Tri may be as dangerous to Italy as F Tri. With Italy so weak in the north, Austria may be tempted to snatch Venice, especially if the RT does emerge and start putting pressure on Bud or Ser.

Russia will probably build A Sev, to help take Rum (alliance with Turkey) or to move to Arm (Eastern free-for-all.) I can't see the utility of another Russian fleet in the South, especially with yellow units clogging up Turkey's Black Sea ports. Meanwhile the odds on Turkey building F Smy are running about 15 to 1 in favor.

A combination of Anglo-French weakness, Italian withdrawal, and mass confusion in the East are making this a very interesting game. Particularly if you are Mike Gonsalves and playing Germany!

*Fred Townsend:* Action in Rumania! Austria and Turkey bounce while Russia doesn't even go there. The Russian fleet slides out into the Black Sea while the Turkish F Ank fails to go to Con. And the Italian convoys to Tunis, continuing the Lepanto. What is going on here? Is everyone attacking Turkey?

Certainly Austria and Italy are. A Ven-Apu can only be to cement the AI alliance. Italy will build F Nap and then move F Ion to either Eas or Aeg. The move to Aeg can be supported by the Austrian F Gre and only stopped by A Bul-Gre, F Smy-Aeg; a dangerous set of moves for Turkey.

This problem explains Turkey's Fall 1901 moves. Seeing the Lepanto developing, Turkey sought to get his fleet into Con so, with the build of F Smy, he could stop the Italian attack. Thus the Russian move to the Black Sea was not an attack on Turkey, but part of the RT combined moves to beat the AI. Russia agreed to let Turkey have Rumania so the alliance would have two armies in Rum and Bul, and two fleets in Con and Smy.

Unfortunately for them, Austria was one step ahead. His move of Bud-Rum gets the 1901 Best Move Prize. He risked not taking Greece but the rewards were greater. Now Turkey is in an extremely awkward position, so bad that Russia may consider stabbing his ally (but probably not this Spring.)

My preference for the Italian/Austrian Spring moves would be

A Bud-Gal supported by A Vie, and A Tri-Bud. This guarantees Galicia and guarantees A Tri moves forward. F Gre-Bul supported by Serbia, F Ion-Aeg, F Nap-Ion would round out the moves. This may take the Aeg as Turkey could well be going F Smy-Eas, and has a good shot of taking Bul (or keep it empty), since Turkey may again be trying for Rum. The complete moves have the advantage of possibly letting Russia and Turkey waste two units taking Rum while AI gains elsewhere.

Meanwhile, the news up north is England's failure to build, and Germany's decision to leave Denmark open to cover Munich while taking Hol/Bel. The move to Munich, and France's move to Bel (which failed) indicate no Franco-German alliance. This is good news to England since Germany and Russia are plainly allied (at least for now.) The strength of an Anglo-French alliance is such that even though they are off to a slow start here (only one build between them) they should be able to push Germany back.

If so, this proves once again one of the key rules in playing England, France or Germany. The primary, overwhelming objective in the West is not to take centers. Instead, the objective is to avoid being the odd man out. Despite Germany's strong start and Russian alliance, Germany looks to be the odd man out unless he can break the EF alliance that appears to be developing. He will in deep trouble if he is unable to do so.

But then, my predictions last time were a touch wide of the mark, so stay tuned.

*Winter 1901 Builds:* A Bud, A Tri, A Par, A Kie, A Ber, F Nap, A Sev, F Smy.

## DW BACK ISSUE BONANZA!

For a limited time, the first four issues published by David Hood are available at **BARGAIN BASEMENT PRICES!** You can get one issue for two bucks, two for three bucks, three for four bucks, or five smackers for all four issues! This is a savings of as much as **60% OFF THE REGULAR PRICE!** These prices won't last long, so contact the editor immediately if interested.

Issue	Featured Articles, Variant published
60 Fall '90	Conventions, Openings, Fog of War
61 Winter '91	Gunboat, Sports Games, New World
62 Spring '91	Runestone, Middle Earth, Colonia
63 Summer '91	History, Elections Games, Perestroika

# Winning Answers to DW #63 Contest

Gary Behnen and I received over fifteen responses to his contest published last issue. We would like to thank everyone who did submit answers, even those who smugly (and incorrectly) assumed that France's win in this game was automatic! To refresh your memory, the problem was this: given the board positions noted on the map, can France take 18 this season to avoid the otherwise inevitable Russian win next year? Answers were to assume complete Austrian cooperation, and a previous year's supply center count of Russia: Vie, Bud, Tri, Ser, Rum, and Austria: Ven. France had to control at least two of the six centers at the end of this season.

We had a tie for first-place in the contest. Each will receive two free issues of *DW* and a coupon for Avalon Hill merchandise. Congratulations to both Carl and Gene.

*Carl Willner:*

In order to win, the French player must either (1) occupy both Vienna and Venice at the end of the Fall turn, or (2) occupy one of the two centers and take Trieste from Russia. There is no reasonable prospect of taking Budapest from Russia if the Russian player actually remembers to write orders, and the other Russian centers are out of reach. Thus, the French player has the options of attack or aggressive defense. An entirely passive defense is not feasible, because no French units are in position to offer defensive supports to A Vienna. At the same time, there is no risk of losing both Vienna and Venice to Russia provided that the French player does not leave one of those centers open, since there are only three Russian units in a position to attack the two centers.

The French player knows that the Russian must attack somewhere, and must seek to hold Trieste at the same time; it will do Russia no good to dislodge the French from either Vienna or Venice if Trieste falls. There is also no way Russia can take both those centers. Unfortunately for the French, there is no foolproof strategy for achieving either the first or second of the possible French goals in the Fall turn. This crucial turn is essentially a guessing game. All France can do, barring some special knowledge of Russia's character or intent, is to identify a strategy that offers the best probability of success, in light of the various options that the Russian might elect to follow.

In any possible rational Russian strategy for the Fall, A Rum-Bud is inevitable, so as to preclude a retreat or move to Bud from Vie. The other possible Russian moves offering some chance of success, and the French moves that would effectively counter them, are as follows:

Option 1 (Attack on Venice): This strategy can take

two forms for Russia: (1) A Tyl-Ven, A Tri S A Tyl-Ven, A Ser S A Tri, or (2) A Tri-Ven, A Tyl S A Tri-Ven, A Ser-Tri. In either case, A Gal-Vie is needed to cut any support from A Vie for an attack on Trieste by France.

From the French perspective, this potential Russian strategy is easily countered. A Pie S A Ven guarantees its failure, while if France prefers a more aggressive use of the Austrian toady so as to cut possible supports for other Russian moves, A Pie-Tyl can be used to cover the flank of A Vie-Tri, A Ven S A Vie-Tri, F Adr S A Vie-Tri. That series of moves would lead either to deadlock if Russian A Tyl-Ven, or to an exchange of Tri for Vie if Russian A Tri-Ven. Indeed, if the Russian chose to attack from Trieste, a different French response, A Pie-Tyl, F Adr-Tri, A Ven S F Adr-Tri, would give France control of Trieste as well as Venice and Vienna. In sum, the Venice attack is so unlikely to succeed that the French player can safely assume that a competent Russian will not attempt it. More likely, if the Russian player attacks Venice at all it will merely be an unsupported move by a Tyl-Ven so as to cut any possible support from A Ven for a French attack on Trieste. The Russian player knows that A Ven is limited to a supporting role. This is so because if it were to lead an attack on Trieste and succeed, Venice would be left in the hands of the Austrian toady and France would fall short of victory.

Option 2 (Attack on Vienna): This strategy can take three forms for Russia: (1) A Tyl-Vie, A Gal S A Tyl-Vie, A Tri S A Tyl-Vie, A Ser S A Tri; (2) A Gal-Vie, A Tri S A Gal-Vie, A Ser S A Tri, and either A Tyl S A Gal-Vie or Tyl-Ven; or (3) A Tri-Vie, A Gal S A Tri-Vie, A Ser-Tri, and either A Tyl S A Tri-Vie or Tyl-Ven. In the second or third of these options, using A Tyl to support the attack on Vienna increases the chances that the attack on Vienna will succeed if Austrian A Pie is used constructively to support A Ven rather than to attack A Tyl. However, the support would be negated if A Pie-Tyl occurs, while the French A Ven would still be free to support a French attack on Trieste. On balance, therefore, it is more likely that a capable Russian player would use A Tyl for the support-cutting attack on Venice.

Assuming that the Russian player chooses (1) or the variants of (2) or (3) in which A Tyl supports the attack on Vienna, France can effectively counter all of the Russian attacks by ordering A Vie-Tri, A Ven S A Vie-Tri, F Adr S A Vie-Tri, and A Pie-Tyl. Under all three of the alternative Russian attacks, France exchanges Vienna for control of Trieste (although no Russian unit enters Vienna in the third case, control reverts to Russia anyway since they controlled it last fall.) Under the variant of attack (3) where A Tyl-Ven, France would remain in Vienna and establish control by the same response. Only the variant of attack (2) in which A Tyl-Ven occurs would overcome the French counterattack,

dislodging A Vie while maintaining Russian control of Trieste. The French player needs an entirely different set of moves; F Adr-Tri, A Ven S F Adr-Tri, A Vie S F Adr-Tri, A Pie-Tyl to negate this variant of attack (2). The same French moves would fail to defeat Russian attack (1) or the variant of attack (3) in which A Tyl-Ven.

It is apparent from this analysis that, assuming an equal probability of the Russian player choosing any given plan of attack on Vienna and attaching some possibility to a Russian attack on Venice instead, the French moves most likely to lead to success are: A Vie-Tri, A Ven s A Vie-Tri, F Adr S A Vie-Tri, A Pie-Tyl. This set of moves protects Venice effectively and offers the greatest chance of defeating the various forms that a Russian attack on Vienna might take, either by holding Vienna or exchanging Vienna for Trieste. Only one Russian strategy can defeat these moves, less than any of the other options open to France.

Of course, this conclusion depends on the assumption that there is an equal probability of the Russian player choosing any of the attack strategies open to him. The French player, faced with a highly skilled Russian, might well assume that the Russian will detect the optimal French strategy as well and order the one set of moves that counters it.

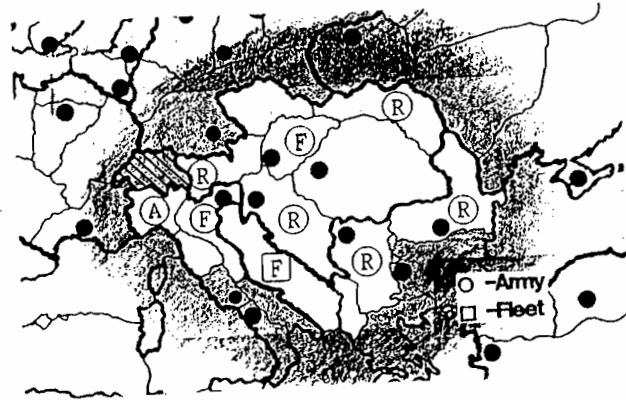
If the French player believes that his opponent is that good, and that the probability of his choosing the moves needed to counter the A Vie-Tri attack is much higher than random chance, he could reasonably opt for the seemingly inferior alternative based on F Adr-Tri. That is why, even in a "pure" tactical scenario such as this, the subjective evaluation of an opponent's ability (an attribute of one's diplomatic skill in the broad sense, and not mere tactical competence alone) remains important in winning Diplomacy.

*Gene Prosnitz*

There is no clear solution to this problem. It depends upon who your opponent is.

Against most players, or against a computer which can plan the Russian moves with mathematical perfection with no insight on psychology, I would make the mathematical percentage play, i.e. A Vie-Tri supported by A Ven and F Adr, with Austrian A Pie-Tyl. Against a very good player, I would move A Vie-Tri supported by F Adr and A Ven-Tri, with again the Austrian move to Tyl. Against a truly great player: It's too tough. It just becomes a poker game.

Here's the analysis. Look at it from the Russian perspective. Any competent Russian player knows that for Tyrolia to either support Tri or support an attack on Ven is a waste of time, since that support will be cut. So there are two possible Russian moves for Tyrolia; to Vie with A Gal S, or



to Ven to cut its support. If A Tyl-Vie, then Ser must support Tri. (Also, A Rum-Bud in all variations.) If Tyl-Ven, then Russia has a choice, either (1) Ser S Tri and Tri S Gal-Vie, or (2) Ser-Tri and Tri-Vie (A Gal S).

The move of Vie-Tri with two supports thus works 75% of the time, i.e. whenever Russia moves Tyl-Vie, and half the time when Russia moves Tyl-Ven. It is defeated only when Russia moves Tyl-Ven, Gal-Vie (A Tri S), and Ser S Tri.

This choice has something else going for it. The average Russian player will probably not move Gal-Vie supported by Tri, because he will figure that the Tri support will be cut. My experience is that against most players, the obvious percentage play works, as my opponent doesn't analyze that deeply and thus doesn't anticipate it.

Against a really good player, it is a different story. For one thing, this opponent may anticipate the "obvious" move of Vie-Tri with two supports. Also, the good player, in deciding what to do, will reason as follows: I (Russia) have a choice of moving either Tyl-Ven, or Tyl-Vie supported by Gal. In either case, I have to guess whether France will move Vie-Tri supported by Adr, or Adr-Tri supported by Vie. This Russian also reasons there is another alternative: France may move Vie-Tyl supported by Pie, which is correct strategy if France thinks Russia is moving Tyl-Vie supported by Gal.

Accordingly, the good Russian player will work out that Tyl-Tri is the best move, since it wins whenever France moves Vie-Tyl with support, and wins half the time otherwise.

Now, return to France. Once I as France decide that my very good Russian opponent has worked all this out, and will move Tyl-Ven, I have the winning solution: Vie-Tri (F Adr S) and Ven-Tri. If Russia moves Gal-Vie supported by Tri, my Ven army cuts that support. If Russia moves Tri-Vie supported by Gal, my move Vie-Tri (Adr S) makes it a two-on-two standoff.

This analysis reminds me of a story about the legendary tournament bridge star, John Crawford. He was given a hand to play, and asked, "Who is my partner?" The answer was "another John Crawford." His next question was "Who are my opponents?" The answer was "Two more John Crawfords." Crawford's reply was: "I wouldn't play in that game, it's too tough."

### Gary Behnen's Comments

Did you find a 100% solution to the problem I posed last issue? If you did, you know by now to look again. As is so often the case in Diplomacy, nothing is absolute. There are some minor variations, but essentially there are two plausible tactical options for France. Unfortunately, for each maneuver are Russian moves to counter them. To win here you had to

get inside your opponent's head.

Both Carl and Gene hit the nail right on the head. How did you do? If you solved the tactical possibilities, theoretically you have as good a chance as anyone - 50% to win. If you "read" your opponent in this situation, however, you could improve your success to 100%, provided you "read" him correctly! By the way, in the game this article was based on, France did win.

>Carl Willner (901 6th St SW #905A, Washington DC 20024) is a perennial power in the east coast Diplomacy tournament circuit. Gene Prosnitz (200 Clinton St, Brooklyn NY 11201) is a longtime hobbyist, with an article about the Colonia variant appearing elsewhere in this issue. Gary Behnen (13101 S Trenton, Olathe KS 66062) serves on this year's DipCon Committee.

# Sherlock Holmes and the Dip Mystery

by Bruce Linsey

Sherlock and I were enjoying an afternoon tea one day at my residence when the post arrived. It had been a few scant weeks since I had decided to try my hand at the fascinating game of Diplomacy, and had sent in a game fee. I drew England in the game, and negotiated furiously. Apparently my efforts paid off, for I had one of the most successful games ever played by anyone in postal Diplomacy.

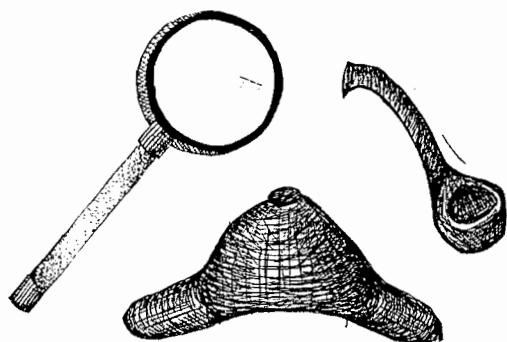
The previous month had brought the news that my England had won the game, and the gamesmaster requested endgame statements from all participants. Today the post brought the following issue of the zine, and sure enough there was a game-end statement from each of the seven players. Alas, though, it seemed quite impossible to tell much about the game from these statements alone, and the GM had neglected to reprint the final supply centre chart which had appeared the previous month.

Nonetheless, I was elated with my victory and showed the zine to Sherlock, who lit his pipe and began to browse through the endgame statements. "Congratulations, Watson," said he. "I see you won against some pretty stiff competition. Let's see, it says here that Fred Davis, David Hood, Nelson Heintzman, Paul Gardner, Mark Berch and Steve Courtemanche were also in the game. You must have really done some fancy negotiating!"

"Indeed I did," I replied. "But it is unfortunate that the GM did not print the final supply centre chart with the endgame statements. Now, you have very little idea how the game progressed."

"Not so, my dear Watson," he replied. "On the contrary, these endgame statements are quite informative." He spread the zine out on the table, and together we read the following endgame statements.

## Sherlock Holmes



## and the Dip Mystery

*Steve Courtemanche (France):* My troubles began in 1901, when I didn't take any neutral centers. Despite this, I was able to build that year. In 1902, one of my units moved out of and then back into my homeland. Another of my units entered Spain in Spring 1902, and moved to the Mid Atlantic Ocean the following season. Also in Spring 1902 I moved a unit into Austria. By the end of 1902, one of my units was not adjacent to any supply centers, and then I moved to the Irish Sea in Spring 1903. I'd like to play this game over again!

*David Hood (Germany):* I think I must be the first Germany ever to be eliminated in 1901! But I still had fun watching the rest of the game from the grave. I think it was interesting that nobody ever tried any impossible moves, or misordered any

units, or declined any builds, and no units were ever left unordered! Exactly two units were ordered to hold in 1902, and exactly seven armies were built in 1901. My biggest problem was in trying to take a neutral in 1901. Well, I did try to do so, but given the Spring 1901 results and the other players' Fall 1901 orders, there wasn't any way I could have done so. Congratulations to Watson on his 18-center win in 1903!

*Nelson Heintzman (Turkey):* I first thought about attacking Russia. Indeed, after the Spring 1901 moves, I had a unit adjacent to Sev. But the plans fell through, and I wound up taking three neutrals and building three armies in 1901. 1902 was a productive year for me, even though in the Spring of that year three of my units merely exchanged places in rotation. All of my units moved in Spring 1902! 1903 wasn't quite as successful, however. I started out the year having to play three units short, performed a self-bounce in the Spring, and all of my units bounced in Bulgaria during the Fall of that year. My major mistake may have been that no Turkish fleet ever entered a water space.

*Fred Davis (Italy):* I got Spain in 1903, without ever having entered a French home center! In fact, in Spring 1903 I ordered all of my units to hold, but then they all moved in Fall 1903, and one of them ended up in Russia in that year! Plus, I was in Austria by the end of 1901, in Burgundy by the end of 1902, and my fleet had a choice of four centers to attack in

Spring 1902. Congratulations to Watson for his win. This was a very exciting game.

*Paul Gardner (Austria):* What can I say? This wasn't exactly my most successful game! I started out well by gaining three in 1901, without even taking a German center. But after that things didn't go as well. In 1902, I supported an Italian unit into Turkey, but I finished the Fall moves that year with units in four different foreign countries - and none of them in supply centers! Indeed, I felt fortunate that I still owned Budapest after 1902. In 1903 all of my units bounced in Bohemia, leaving it empty. The army in Warsaw successfully supported a move in Fall 1903, and Silesia was empty after the Spring 1902 moves. That's all I have to say about this game!

*Mark Berch (Russia):* What a game - it was positively loaded with, uh, unique moves and clever strategies. For my part, it's a pity my fleet was not in a position to stop the German move to Livonia in 1901. Also, I made a mistake in that I did not move to an English-owned center in 1902, even though, given the right Fall 1902 orders from me and others, it would have been possible for me to take three English centers that year. Stp was left empty in Fall 1902 because two of my armies bounced there. And surely there are not many games on record like this, where a Russian unit makes it to Burgundy but no Russian unit ever enters Belgium! However, the most interesting happening of the entire game occurred in Fall

## New Blood

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B.M. Bryant, 222 Ontario St #3, Albany NY 12203  
Randall Schultz, 24 Sandpiper Cir, E Falmouth MA 02536  
Steve Koehler, 6166 Winged Elm Ct, Charlotte NC 28212  
Ken Kohn, LC #1187, Lewis and Clark Col, Portland OR 97219  
Michael Mingus, 2120C Raven Dr, Oak Harbor WA 98277  
Patrick Fitzgerald, 9929 NE Failing St, Portland OR 97220  
John Wetherell, 999 Oak Ln #B, New Cumberland PA 17070  
Donald Garlit, 17430 Brady, Redford MI 48240  
Jonathan Benton, 329 Mohawk Ave #4, Scotia NY 12302  
Victor Stevko, 1774-17th Ave, San Francisco CA 94122  
Ken Henke, 905 Ashwood Ave, Norwalk IA 50211  
Asher Gaylord-Ross, 196 Forrestwood Dr, Nashville TN 37209  
George Young, RR1 Box 1372, Shelburne VT 05482  
Brad Schuman, 3 Circle Dr, Palao KS 66071  
Mike Johnson, PO Box 114, Claredon Hills IL 60514  
John Parr, PO Box 464336, Lawrenceville GA 30246  
Michael Swift, 2622 25th St, Lubbock TX 79410  
Bob Shurdut, 55 Rangeley Rd, W Newton MA 02165  
Tom Wenck, 219 Mariners Row, Columbia SC 29212  
Bill Mansfield, 50 Jadwin St #45, Richland WA 99352  
David Hiebert, 820 Honeyman Ave, Winnipeg Man R3G 043

## Game Openings

*Well Martha....*, John Schultz, POB 41-19390, ICH 308, Michigan City IN 46360 (Gunboat, Get Them Dots Now).  
*Metadiplomai* Jeff McKee, 481 Westbrook St Apt 105G, S Portland ME 04106 (Gunboat, Gunboat Tournament).  
*California Acres*, John Fisher, 20811D Bear Valley Rd #120, Apple Valley CA 92308 (Dip, Acquire, Titan, Perestroika).  
*Comrades in Arms*, Tom Swider, 75 Maple Ave A, Collingswood NJ 08108 (Balkan Wars, Diplominn, Final Conflict, Dune).  
*Concordia*, Tom Mainardi, 45 Zummo Way, Norristown PA 19401 (Gunboat).  
*Heroes of Olympus*, Steve Nicewarner, 1310-11 King's Arms Apts, Chapel Hill NC 27514 (Dip, Pax Britannica).  
*Gingwazim*, 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).  
*Perestroika*, Larry Cronin, PO Box 40090, Tucson AZ 85717 (Simple Perestroika, Dollar Dip).  
*The Prince*, Jim Meinel, 2801 Pelican Drive, Anchorage AK 99515 (Dip).  
*The Home Office*, Fred Hyatt, 60 Grandview Pl, Montclair NJ 07043 (Dip, Colonia, Fog of War Dip).



## Contest

1902. There is a grand total of two supply centers on the board which Turkey can never capture in 1902. I had the great fortune to capture them both in 1902. It didn't surprise me to see Watson winning, since he was able to persuade the other players to do some very strange things!

*Mr. Watson (England):* This was my first game, and a very rewarding one. I amazed myself by winning in 1903! Thanks very much to all. What surprised me the most was the frequency with which I left my supply centers empty. I didn't have any units in centers at the end of the Spring 1902 season, and only two of my units were in centers at the end of the Spring 1903 moves (with me owning only one of the centers at the time!) Just to recap a couple of my strategies; my northernmost army did not move west in Spring 1903. My FNth did not move in that season either, and although it was a tough decision, I decided not to order FNwy-Nwg in Spring 1902. Some of the high points of the game, aside from winning it of course, were that I built three in 1901 and owned all three French home centers by the end of 1902.

After looking carefully at the above statements, I asked Holmes whether he might, given such skimpy information, be able to reconstruct the entire supply center

chart for the game. His reply astounded me.

"Not only that, Watson, but I can tell you every single order that was made during the course of the entire game. It's elementary, my dear Watson," he explained.

"No s—, Sherlock!" I cried, amazed. "I'd certainly love to see you tell me exactly what happened in this game. In fact, if it's really possible to do that, I'll bet David Hood will be kind enough to print the answers in the next *Diplomacy World*. And I'll bet he'll even print the names of those readers who are brilliant enough to solve the puzzle!"

"Right again, Watson. I'll send him the answer in a couple of months. In the meantime, I'm sure many of his readers will have fun trying to reconstruct the game."

Well, dear readers, that's how the events were related to me by Holmes and Watson. And who am I to turn down a suggestion by the great detective Sherlock Holmes? Send a correct solution to Bruce Linsey, PO Box 1334, Albany NY 12201, no later than January 1, 1992, and your name will be published in lights as matching the wits of the great Sherlock Holmes. You will also get two free issues of *Diplomacy World* if you are correct.

> Bruce Linsey (PO Box 1334, Albany NY 12201) was the longtime publisher of the zine *Voice of Doom*, from whose pages the original version of the puzzle was taken.

# Diplomacy World

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