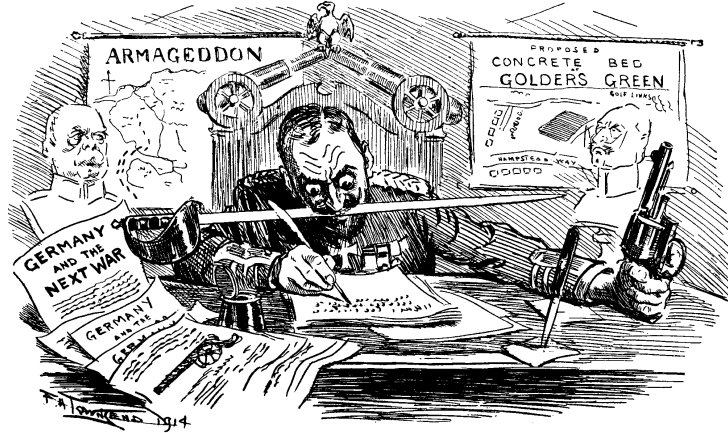




Diplomacy World No.87



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Editorial: Diplomacy and I

By Stephen Agar

I have been playing Diplomacy on or off for 25 years, that's even longer than I have been having sex. While I would not say that Diplomacy has been as big an influence on my life as girls (and indeed there have been times when my Diplomacy has suffered unduly because of the distractions posed by the opposite sex), it has without doubt been a big part of my life. I was wondering what it was about this game which has kept my attention all these years, while games such as Monopoly, L'Attaque and even Ker-Plunk have long since ceased to hold any fascination for me.

The biggest attraction the game has for me is that it legitimises lying. If I am honest, I am by nature a deceitful person who does get a slight buzz by not telling the truth, and to find a game where this is a necessary skill is very attractive indeed. On top of this there is the added *frisson* of knowing that the person you are lying to will have the lie revealed to them very shortly. This is the sort of excitement normally denied you in real life: if you regularly tell lies and are immediately found out, then your credibility may well suffer (which in turn denies you the pleasure of deceiving others).

Another attraction is the underlying logic of the game mechanism - it is something which appeals to those who are well-suited to deductive thought: if A then B then C, but if D then E etc. I suspect it is my fondness for deductive reasoning, plus my general inclination to bend the truth which one way or another led to my career decision to be a commercial lawyer and (more recently) a Business Strategy Director.

However, if it was just a game, it still wouldn't have taken such a big chunk of my life. What has monopolised my time is producing zines - a labour of love indeed. For me, zine production isn't really about Diplomacy itself, it is about the creative process. Whereas some people have produced zines (or GM'd games on the Internet) which consist of nothing but game reports, zines for me were a way to write for a captive audience - a peculiar form of vanity publishing. Another outlet for creative play was designing variants, particularly historical variants - combing my love of history and fascination with maps. And there is also the feeling of control - if you GM a game you are important, others are depending on you and your decision is what counts. It is a position of responsibility. When you combine all these aspects with the healthy (or sometimes unhealthy) competition which used to exist between zines (especially in terms of winning the Zine Poll or some such) then you had a recipe for a very lively hobby scene indeed - a bunch deceitful, logical, creative, egotists (or maybe that was just me?).

And to cap it all there was the technological aspects of producing a zine. Although, when I started publishing it was all stencils and mimeo correction fluid rather than DTP and laser printers, it was still a test of practical competence to actually get something put together which would eventually be put in an envelope. Today I might worry about the gaps between columns of the typeface, rather than have I typed too far down the stencil, but the satisfaction that I would imagine a craftsman feels when they finish making something, is still very real. The ease with which I have adapted to using a computer in my career comes from learning to type in order to produce a zine, so the trade I learned using my father's battered old Olivetti typewriter has stood me in good stead.

But I have to confess the buzz is not what it was. Lying by email is not as much fun as face to face, but with a young family the opportunity to attend cons is limited. I still like the logical deduction involved in planning strategies, but I think I am all dried-up as far as writing strategy articles is concerned - I can't think of anything new to say. Producing a PDF file is not quite as much of a thrill as producing a real zine, while competition between zines has disappeared as quickly as the zines themselves have (there is no compensating competition between web sites as such - though I wish there was as I believe that competition tends to improve standards). I daresay Diplomacy will continue to have a hold on me for some time to come, but it is a waning passion. Maybe I'm just getting old.

The 1999 WorldMasters E-Mail Tournament - Some Personal Thoughts

By Jim Burgess

[Lee Simpson](#) is the Winner!!! 553 players entered and after 87 games played over 20 months the [1999 WorldMasters E-Mail Tournament](#) is over with a clear winner after Lee recently took an 18 center win in the Final. From the point of view of *Diplomacy World*, what I think was most striking about this tournament was the wide range of hobby subcultures that intermingled in this setting. There were US postal players (many of whom had never played by E-Mail before), there were [Judge](#) players, [CAT-23](#) players, CompuServe players, representatives of most of the European hobbies (with particularly high representation from Scandinavians and Brits), and boatloads of Down Under players – not to mention many other smaller groups – this truly was a WORLD masters tournament. Presently, the [2000 WorldMasters Tournament](#) is just entering its much expanded second round (33 games as opposed to 7, in the 2000 tournament the new THIRD round will be the seven game semi-final). But it was not as large as the 1999 Tournament, which thus is the largest Diplomacy tournament in the world to date in terms of total number of players participating. There will be some other thoughts on the tournament from others in this issue and there will be [Diplomatic Pouch](#) discussions as well. This is necessary since a tournament of this size MUST be represented only by the personal thoughts of particular individuals from their own context. I can do no more. Even within that, the time I spent over those 20 months was so extensive that I accepted an offer to be part of the WMTMC for the 2000 Tournament, a totally different vantage point from which to observe it. It brought further recognition of just how limited the view presented here really is.

I have decided to focus on the following issues in turn: The Final Game – what a rollercoaster!; The Shame – why more people didn't follow the progress!; The Very Beginning – clashes of community and culture!; and finally, Thoughts on the Team Tournament (which will lead into Steve Hutton's comments on a similar issue). I'll spend the most time on the Final Game, which was not as publicly watched as I believe it should have been.

The Final Game – what a rollercoaster!

[The Final Game](#) was aptly sub-titled the “shark” game as you will tell if you follow those links. And sharks these were. Let's work backwards from the Winner. [Lee Simpson](#) may be relatively unknown to most of you. He is a Brit who actually has been playing competitive Diplomacy for a relatively short time, despite the fact that he is in his late 40's. Until recently, he played primarily in the “Armchair Diplomats” CompuServe hobby where he dominated. Despite this being a hobby, since Lee is semi-retired he plays Diplomacy extremely seriously and with a great deal of time to devote to it. This undoubtedly is at least one factor in his success. More importantly, from my limited observations, Lee appears to be a master of misdirection, so that he can gain leverage and position while not appearing to be a threat. Of course, part of this view might be related to his amazing comeback. Not only did he win the game going away, but he actually entered the game as a replacement England starting in Spring 1902!

The Final players were chosen as the “boardtoppers” of [the seven Semi-Final games](#), who in turn were [the 49 top players](#) using the C-DIPLO like scoring system from Round 1. Lee was the eighth rated player in the Semi-Finals, so he took over when Toby Harris resigned. Unlike Lee, Toby is very much working and the acceleration of the workload in Toby's job made it impossible for him to keep up the intensity of the Final Game. And Toby doesn't know any way to play Diplomacy except extremely intensively. The beginning of the Final game was extremely intense and Toby's England took the worst of it at first. Though Toby is a great player, his strength is in overwhelming people with his flawless tactics and ruthless pursuit of and exploitation of the smallest advantage. Toby is one of those players that when faced with intensity, can become more intense than anyone around him. This was [my view](#) of [1901 of the final](#) (thanks to Ray Setzer, I think, for the

audio entertainment – wasn't me but I love Blazing Saddles!). I'm not going to reproduce more extensive commentary by myself and others as this game progressed. I think you can find it on the [Webforum](#) for the game, though I'm not sure how long that will be maintained. In any case, after seeing France move into the Channel in [Spring](#), and Germany get into the North Sea in [Fall](#), England was in severe trouble, but let's follow Lee's progress player by player after taking over.

Lee's first and probably most important victim was [Charles Steinhardt](#) (France). Following this entire game from the [Webforum](#) is the way I would suggest, if you really want to try to understand the details of the French demise as well as the rest of the game. Conversely, there surely are the inside stories of the players not revealed there as well. What I do know is this, Charles self-destructed in a way I've never seen in a top tournament final board. Charles went from having fleets in Irish Sea and English Channel in [Spring 1902](#) and looking great to having English fleets in those two seas by [Spring 1903](#) and it was all over by [Winter 1903](#). Now, Lee just had Brest in this takedown (five centers in total, counting home plus Norway), but two trends that would continue throughout the game were firmly established. One I recognized and commented on at the time, but the other I (at least) did not realize until nearly the very end of the game. For whatever combination of reasons, Charles quit on the game and permitted England, Germany, and Italy to take all of his centers that quickly. I won't speculate on those reasons, but I do find that fact disappointing. Still, the way that Lee and the others orchestrated and took advantage of this MUST be part of the game – in fact in many ways that is The Game.

I'll comment on the implications of this below in my Team Tournament comments, but the other aspect of this that proved to be perhaps even more important was that Lee and Italian [Dirk Fischbach](#) were on the same Team – The Armchair Diplomats. This CompuServe group of players seems to have moved itself off of CompuServe in the last year or so and joined other parts of the Worldwide Diplomacy hobby. Dirk and I had many, many background discussions throughout the game, though I strongly encouraged him NOT to tell me any insider information so I could feel free to comment actively as the game progressed. Dirk complained to me that he really had no idea how to play Italy (attacking France early would seem to indicate that might be the case... hah, hah, hah, just kidding, Dirk) but he made it work. And in particular, his relationship with Lee and England was the key to this. The England/Italy alliance was cemented here and it would not be going too far to suggest that Italy was the obsequious member of the pair. Nevertheless, I like Dirk's game and think he has a great deal of potential to become a truly fantastic player. I kept challenging Dirk to play to a higher level as I pushed many of the players. In retrospect, I think I had more influence over the play of the Finals than I "should" have had, but all I wanted to see was complex high-level play. If urging and commentary on expanding choices did that, well then fine.

Another player I did this to was [David Malloch](#). I was amazed from David's bio that he had only played eight Diplomacy games coming into the Tournament. I'll also have more to say about this below, but the nature of 553 players moving to 49 and then quickly to seven meant that some relatively inexperienced players made it to the Finals with some fortunate draws. It's worth exploring this one in some detail as an example. David's [Semi-Final](#) game was identified correctly by Emeric Miszti as the easiest one of the semi-final games. Lots of really interesting people here though. Pascal Nicolle was in the game I GMed in the first round and he defeated Chris Martin there (Italy to Chris' France) and I think Pascal will be a great player eventually too, but he drew Austria here and didn't seem to have the handle on playing it. Mike Mehaffey (Meef) achieved a great deal of notoriety by garnering the first 18 center win in the First Round, but unfortunately he wasn't able to follow it up. While I was arguing to Toby Harris, unsuccessfully of course, that laying low in the First Round rather than getting a prominent win was a good idea, Meef is the case study of what I was talking about. He was one of the few other people to carefully follow the final and comment on it and he surely is still open to learning about the game in major ways. This has been Meef's "opening" into the hobby so that he now is hooked. Meef played Italy in that Semi-Final to David Malloch's France and was unable to reproduce David's first round success. Germany's game was very tentative at first, though I think David himself underestimated his Diplomatic skill as he carefully balanced relationships with England, Italy, France, and Russia early on. Eventually, though, Lee's superior tactics and methodical advances (plus some neat double dealing between Italy and England that was

very subtle) put Germany on the ropes. In the end, David might have been more successful had he been more aggressive and decisive (in hindsight, of course). Lee overran Germany while never quite dropping his alliance, so Germany ended up the game in Austrian centers.

[Jon Crocker](#) was Austria and Austria eventually was eliminated once Germany joined Turkey/Russia/Italy in his backyard. Jon was not a very “public” player, so as an observer of the game I gained the least insight into what he was doing. But he did manage to survive until very near the end of the game. He combines two of the personality characteristics that are attracted to this game. He studied military and diplomatic history at West Point but he ALSO is a lawyer, a military lawyer. Jon is also one of those players who entered this tournament with very little prominent experience, having played almost entirely FTF in the past. He did win his Semi-Final game as France, defeating the second place player in that game as Austria who ultimately returned to win the entire tournament, Lee Simpson. This is another illustration of the fact that the luck of the draw in a short tournament can be seen to have had a major influence on the ultimate outcome.

[David Partridge](#) played Russia. Of course, I know David the best of any of these players by far. In addition to joining me on the staff of *Diplomacy World*, we are co-hosts of the regular Boston FTF gatherings called Diplomatic Incidents and he has a subzine *Tinamou* in my other szine, [The Abyssinian Prince](#). Originally, I was greatly looking forward to watching Dave and Toby square off since I believe that they are two of the top Diplomacy players in the World. Of course, that didn't last long, but Dave did not play his best game here, as I'm sure he will admit. In a “growing” theme, Dave has a growing family and a growing career and like Toby I have a feeling that he was not able to devote as much time to the game as some of the other players here. This was particularly evident to me in the latter part of the midgame when Lee Simpson was cementing his win. Dave just wasn't playing with the edge I know he has. But this is another part of the luck of the draw. The player who wins, in this case Lee Simpson, a tournament of this size has to have some fortunate happenstances break his or her way. Some purists may be annoyed by the presence of the luck factor, but I am not. Having an ultimate winner is a “good thing” but to me the journey is the more important part and I really enjoyed watching and interacting with so many Dippers from around the world in this tournament and I know David did as well.

[Egbert Ferreira](#) is last but not least. I found Egbert very enigmatic at the beginning, possibly with some degree of language barrier – he is a Brazilian and I forgot to mention earlier the huge Brazilian contingent as well. The Brazilian hobby is young, dynamic and filled with some extremely promising young players. If I am figuring right, Egbert was the youngest of the finalists at 28 (though I'm not sure, Charles might be slightly younger) and surely the most passionate. Egbert ended up with the second most number of centers, though one of Lee's successful ploys toward the end of the game was to isolate Egbert completely from a diplomatic perspective. At one point it even looked like Italy, Germany, and Russia were totally committed to eliminating Egbert, while England patiently waited with a guaranteed win in the backfield. But after the Tournament Director confirmed that if someone got an 18 center win then everyone else was going to tie for second (the C-Diplo philosophy follows that logic), Lee went ahead and quickly captured the win. Egbert had even less experience than David Malloch as he only had played FOUR games of Diplomacy prior to entering the Tournament. As such, Egbert is still coming to terms with the rules and goals of the game, is uncomfortable about the “true” role of the stab, and hasn't relished the sharing of a great game where true friends stab each other mercilessly and then sit down over a beer and tell the tale over and over. He will.

And that's all I have to say about the Final Game. I chose not to copy from my EXTENSIVE season by season commentary on the [Webforum](#) since you can go read it there. I hope Emeric Miszti leaves it up there for quite some time. The seven semi-final games also are still there as of this writing. My deepest, most heartfelt and sincerest thanks to Ted Miller, who served as Tournament Director for this tournament and GM for the final. I cannot even begin to imagine the countless hours he ended up spending on this tournament. Luckily for him, he is “Asst. TD” for the current tournament (which means he does much less work but contributes his extensive experience). In particular, he did a brilliant job of handling the Toby Harris resignation and the issues surrounding Lee Simpson's eligibility for the Tournament Championship. Now, it is difficult for me to believe that this choice was not instantly obvious (that if Lee won, he won). Plus, at numerous points during the final,

Ted had to intercede in subtle ways as the emotion and stress of the Final began to tell on a number of the players. Of course, I don't know the details of those interventions, but they worked. A few other short comments follow on some random areas of interest in the Tournament as a whole:

The Shame – why more people didn't follow the progress!

I really don't get it, really I don't. Unless some people were hiding in the background, only THREE people worldwide (Paul Riley, Mike Mehaffey, and myself) were following the Final Game on a day by day basis. One reason for me writing this article filled with links (and I could have done three times as many!!!) was to see if I could rectify this after the fact. But time for analysis, why was this the case???

First of all, of course, is the growing busy pace of life for us all, one of the things that goes by the wayside is observing Finals like these. I think that's a shame since it inhibits the building of community in the Diplomacy hobby. And in the end it's all about the community building. Secondly, I got used to the [Webforum](#) but it could be maddeningly slow when you access it through a phone line modem. It seemed to take too much effort for many people to keep checking in. Thirdly, I noticed that the interest in WorldMasters99 plummeted when WorldMasters 2000 started. One aspect of this is that the Webforum for WorldMasters 2000 was a DIFFERENT URL than the 1999 one that had the Final. I would politely suggest that not happen with the 2000 Final. Lastly, I would just reiterate how rewarding it can be for building community in the hobby to observe and comment on games being played by others. Good kibitzing stimulates players to their best efforts and does not disrupt the direct play of the game. Follow the 2000 Tournament, even after you are eliminated!

The Very Beginning – clashes of community and culture!

Tournaments like these are most important because they get people out of their usual situations and allow them to interact with different styles of play. Where you play, is F Tri-Ven a common Austrian Spring 1901 move that is NOT necessarily anti-Italian? Do you regularly pass letters? Do you talk about things other than the game? How well do you understand C-DIPLO style tactics? How often do you consider alliance changes? Do you play pure tit-for-tat strategies? Ultimately, such experiences improve the play of Diplomacy worldwide. Kudos to this tournament for that outcome. But, boy, the beginning was PAINFUL, and I don't mean solely because I had Toby Harris on my butt. In my first round game we had a Russian player who I think was playing his very first (or close enough to it, anyway) game. He didn't stay around long enough for me to figure it out for sure, but I'm pretty sure he was a high school student, about 15, who only had Internet access for limited periods of time in his school library. Plus, he only had interest in "chatting" with players. E-Mail seemed to be too much trouble and too slow for his attention span. Amazing but true. I think he was out by 1902 or 1903. You also had the people from many non-English speaking countries like the aforementioned Brazilians. They had a lot of energy and seemed to be fun to play with. Then you had the "time zone" problems as people from around the world played. I remember with some of the Aussies it was difficult to make quick progress since they were awake and E-Mailing when I was asleep and vice versa. Also, the different GMing styles and systems were a bit of a problem. This is where Ted Miller REALLY earned his nonexistent monetary bonus. With all those different GMs, many of them simply were not up to the task, while others just had a "different" way of doing things that confused players. I really enjoyed the game I GMed (and NO, not because Chris Martin lost) as I could see players like Pascal Nicolle improve before my very eyes. I see all of the fits and starts as part of the fun, part of the learning process. This tournament is carving out a unique niche in the hobby. Here's to it staying there.....

Thoughts on the Team Tournament

Finally, a few brief thoughts on the Team part of the Tournament. One of the neat things about this tournament was the presence of seven person teams, each taking a different country in Round 1 on a different board, and the competition for the Team Championship. The [Top 20 Teams](#) represent a Who's Who of the various sub-hobbies who competed in this tournament. The team named "Stan's Also Rans" just beat out the

aforementioned "Armchair Diplomats" for the Team win. Unfortunately Stan Kellett's team members did not hold up well in the Semi-Final games and none of them made the Final. While the Armchair Diplomats from CompuServe had Dirk and Lee make the Final, they did finish second. My team from the [Abyssinian Prince](#) finished ninth, despite no help from me, as I lost to Toby Harris' 18 center Turkish win as Austria. But Toby's team finished twentieth, which redeemed me somewhat (hey, I need some consolation after that extremely public thrashing that he gave me). Some of my most fun of the Tournament, as Jim O'Kelley and Steve Emmert did especially well, was in our "team chats" where we extensively broke down strategy and tactics in each of our games. In retrospect, I wish we had done even more of this. Country based teams from the UK, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Australia, France, and especially Ireland (Team Ireland had some REAL tough players on it) did extremely well in the Team Tournament in addition to some US teams. Of course, on the negative side in some people's eyes, the tournament rules encouraged "cross-gaming" efforts by the teams to improve themselves. Though NO team had two players in the same game until the finals, this did add a certain amount of extragame intrigue that some found distasteful. I loved it though and thought it just added to a finely nuanced and on the whole successful tournament. This article barely touches on a mere handful of even my experiences, which are only about 1/553 of the whole. Follow the 2000 Tournament, you won't be disappointed!! Next up is Steve Hutton with an article on the same subject.

Team Diplomacy: The Secrets of Success

By Steve Hutton

What is the most successful team in the brief history of the team Diplomacy tournament? Stan's Also Rans, who won the 1999 tournament? All Around Players, who (at the time of writing) are leading the 2000 tournament? Both fine teams, to be sure, but I would modestly suggest another contender: The Seven Most Evil Men in the World.

What do I mean by "successful"? Obviously nothing as crass as finishing in first place. No, a successful *team* is one that gets a better result than the seven individual players have any right to expect. For example, our players are a bit better than average but our team has done way better than average two years running. If you follow my advice, your team can be equally successful - no matter how good or bad the individual players. The first step is to round up eight players. Eight? Yes, because there's a good chance that at least one person will come up with a lame excuse like "My wife is going into labor" or "I've just been relocated to New Zealand" in the middle of the tournament and you'll need a replacement. If you have someone "on deck", you won't be fazed by unreasonable employers or spouses who engage in attention-getting behavior.

You'll need to come up with a team name (and, optionally a team cheer and T-shirt). The Seven Most Evil Men in the World are named after an episode of the British cult TV show Blackadder. We each took the name of a character in the episode, for example "Unspeakably Violent Jack, the Bull-Buggering Priest Killer of no fixed abode". As the eighth person to join the team, I received the rather less evil name "Baldrick, son of Robin the Dung Gatherer".

Next, get to know each other a bit. If you live far enough apart that sex isn't a realistic option, you might want to play a practice game. Just before the 1999 tournament, our team played a broadcast-only (also known as "Wilsonian Diplomacy") game. All of our negotiations, plus commentary and ideas for the upcoming tournament, went out to everybody on the team. The game was fun and educational. We didn't realize, though, that when we ended the game (just before the real tournament started) the complete record of our negotiations would be available to anyone on the Internet. Some of our more resourceful opponents used this information against us.

Now that you know each others' playing styles, and much more if you live near each other, you are ready for the

tournament. Assign one player to each country, and assign someone else as his advisor. So, for example, you might play Italy (really, somebody has to), advise your French player, and get advice from the Russian. If possible, choose people who have different playing styles to advise each other.

Before the tournament, be sure to discuss the scoring system and team strategy. The scoring system for the 1999 tournament gave enormous benefit for a solo, so we figured players would do whatever they could to prevent anyone else from getting one. We estimated that the winning team would have two solos or one solo and a bunch of strong finishes, for a total of about 220 points. (As it happened, the first two teams had 270 and 255 points.) We also noted that an individual would only advance if he got a solo or an unshared first-place finish. Nobody was going to play for a 17-17 tie!

You should also select at least one person to act as team propagandist, monitoring the conference discussion boards and deflecting any dangerous spin. (A first-rate propagandist can also get articles about your team into *Diplomacy World*, or so I hear.)

We discovered the importance of spin management early in the 1999 tournament when an anonymous commentator gave me the "piranha in the pool award" and declared that I was the best player on a board that contained *three* top-ranked players. I promptly pointed out that my "iconic" status in the postal *Diplomacy* hobby had more to do with publishing tasteless jokes than playing the game well, that I became ex-iconic more than a decade ago, and (the icing on the cake) that Jim Burgess had recently offered various prices for anyone who could locate certain hobby celebrities and my bounty was \$0.

No sooner was our flesh extracted from the steely jaws of the piranha libel than another menace reared its ugly head. Our team finished 1902 in first place, which led to some resentment on the part of lesser teams. An anonymous party (widely believed to be Toby Harris) then accused an Evil Man of interfering in someone else's (OK, Toby's) game by giving his opponents free tactical advice. There was talk of a posse being formed against us. I promptly confessed that "every good move made by any player on a team other than Toby's was the result of advice from one of the Seven Most Evil Men in the World" and, furthermore, that "as a result of our intervention, Toby has been held to only 11 centers in 1903." The posse dispersed.

Being in first place was a problem for several game years, until we weren't in first any more. (Lesson: if you're going to be in first place for half the tournament, choose the second half.) We tried to deflect the team-level "stop the leader" moves by stressing the individual aspect of the tournament. We also indicated that although we were well in the lead by some measures, our lead was much less overwhelming by other measures. (OK, humility isn't our strong suit.) In the 2000 tournament, we have managed things better and snuck into the top ten without anybody noticing (10th place with 140 points).

Throughout our games, we forward most (in some cases, all) of our negotiations to our advisor. The advisor provides a useful second opinion on tactics, strategy, or diplomacy. Sometimes, just formulating an explanation of your plans can lead you to see new possibilities. In other cases, it takes another player to say "I don't think Italy's being irrational - he's doing exactly what I would do. Appeal to his desire for survival."

Although most of our advice comes from the designated advisor, we send the game results and our preliminary orders (no NMRs!) to the entire team. Teammates are always free to chip in their opinions. This usually happens when a player faces a critical situation (possible elimination, possible solo, "to stab or not to stab" decision, etc.).

A good example of this comes from our only solo in the 1999 tournament, WM9947. Our player, Sean the Irish Bastard, is not only evil but also verbose. I quote from his 14-page copyrighted end-of-game statement (complete with font recommendations). He credits Unspeakably Violent Jack with giving detailed strategic advice starting in Winter 1906, blames Friar Bellows for convincing him (against his better nature) to stab his ally in Spring 1908, and would have us believe that Baldrick of all people urged him to go for an immediate win in Spring 1909.

Sometimes our advice was less successful, but even this served a purpose. In WM9944, Three-Fingered Pete received abundant advice but still got zero points when a...not conventionally rational...player gave someone else a solo. We commiserated with Pete's loss, made all the more poignant by his shortage of digits. And when, in WM9917, Guy de Glastonbury announced his intention to become Russia's whore, we urged him to at least maintain a list of things he would not do. One of us suggested that giving Russia a solo "seems like a public scene with a donkey in a Tijuana bar. I hope we aren't reduced to that!"

Can your team be as successful (or, let's be realistic here, almost as successful) as The Seven Most Evil Men in the World? If you work together as a real team, with good communication, no NMRs, seamless replacement of departing players, plenty of advice in critical seasons, and gentle warnings against "tequila and livestock" plays, you will improve your team score and have a lot more fun. You may even achieve our team goal: that future opponents will react with fear and dread at the sound of your team name.

Steve "Baldrick" Hutton is the official propagandist for The Seven Most Evil Men in the World.

Diplomacy Variants

Hello Diplomacy players. As many of you know I am a big rules variant fan. I have not ever really liked drawing maps or using different boards. The Standard dip map is fine for me. here are two rule variants that I developed on AOL. They have yet to be play tested. I would love to have any feedback on ideas for rule changes or playability.

Love And Hate Diplomacy

By Scott Morris

This game is best when the first move is scheduled on Valentines Day. I came up with this idea when I wanted to see how a game of Dip would go if each country had a predetermined country that they "loved" and one that they "hated."

- This would be determined by the GM who would draw a random country for each one.
- No country can be loved or hated by more than one country.
- No other player knows who anyone loves or hates. It's a secret unless you get caught passing notes.

LOVE COUNTRIES - The GM will assign you a country that you love. You can never support an attack on this country. This goes for your units or any other players. You can never take one of this countries Supply centers. If you happen to land in one of their Supply Centers on a fall turn, your fleet or army will commit suicide rather than harm the one he loves. This means that your unit is taken off the board and you don't get credit for owning the SC. You may cut support of one of his units. This is a touchy feely move and appropriate for one that you love, it has it's own special order which will reveal to the board that you love him. This may be a dangerous thing. If the country you love owns one of your HOME supply centers you may retake it but a third country will have to support you in. Hey! therapy ain't cheap.

LOVE RECAP

- Any support order for any unit (yours or anothers) in an attack on this country is invalid.
- You may never take possession of any of this countries Supply Centers, if you end up in one of his SC's your unit is destroyed and removed from the game. With no change in SC count. Love Hurts.
- The sole exception is that you may reclaim on of your Home Supply Centers by moving in or support from a third country.

- You may cut support or dislodge a unit of the country you love but the order must be written as follows A Rumania HUG Galicia.

HATE COUNTRIES - The GM will assign you a country that you hate. No country will be hated by more than one other country. (at least by the rules of this game, if you incite these kind of feelings your on your own.) You may never issue a support order for that country either to move or Hold. All such orders are invalid. Here is where hate gets really ugly, the Game does not end until you own one of this countries Home Supply Center AND have 18 SC's. Lord help you if you are Turkey and you hate England.

HATE RECAP

- No support order to hold or move will be valid
- You can't win or take part in any draw until you own one of this countries home supply centers.

This game was developed as a way to bring diplomacy and back stabbing into each individual country as well as the whole board.

Presidential Diplomacy

By Scott Morris

Standard rules of Diplomacy apply but instead of playing for an 18 SC victory 29 players play for points.

THE PLAYER WITH THE MOST POINTS AT THE END OF THE GAME WINS!

GRAB THREE BUDDIES AND FORM A TEAM!

FYI - The Gm will arrange to meet all players in a country in a chat room before the game to verify they are not the same account.

Each country has 4 players (Russia 5) The country consists of the following.

- 1 - President
- 3 - Generals in charge of a home SC. (Russia 4 generals)

When the game starts Each country gets it's players and they decide who is their president and who is the general for which home SC.

EXAMPLE - FRANCE - Tom is the president, George - Paris, Steve- Marseilles, Adam - Brest.

How they choose that is up to them. If the GM has to come in an assign the spots randomly at the deadline each player starts the game 10 points less than all the other players.

Once the President and Generals are chosen the game starts as any regular game.

The President in awarded 50 points.
The Generals 10 points each.

Each country negotiates how it sees fit.

The President sends orders for all the units to the GM. These orders do not move the units but score points for the President and General if the General's orders match up.

The Generals also sends in orders for the units they control. The GM uses these orders to adjudicate. NO unit moves without an order from the General regardless of what the President orders.

If the President and General's orders match + 3 points for the General, +1 point for the President. If they do not match, -1 for the General, -3 for the President.

IF THE PRESIDENT NMR'S all units HOLD. Elect a better President stupid! If a General NMR's -10 points for him HIS UNITS HOLD.

If a General gains an SC he gets 30 points and the President gets 10. The General must build in his original home SC and he then controls that unit as well.

EXAMPLE General Edinburgh takes Norway he must build in Edinburgh. The President controls Build orders. Once the president orders a build for Norway (which can only be in EDI) General Edinburgh controls that unit.

WINTER - The President controls production he alone orders what is built (if anything) in the Generals province. Time will be provided for the President to confer with his Generals if he chooses to build it must be in the generals home SC that captured the new SC. For every build 3 points for the President. If he chooses NOT to build or can't build -3. Rebuilds count for points as well.

If a General loses an SC he loses 2 points the President loses 4.

COUP - Spring 1901 to Winter 1903. COUPS CAN HAPPEN ANYTIME IN THE GAME. They are not part of the seasons. All Three Generals (or 3 out of 4 in Russia) Must agree to oust the president in SEPERATE emails to the GM. FAILED COUP -10 points to the Generals who voted for the coup. Spring 1904 and on 2 out of 3 Generals (still 3 out of 4 in Russia) make a Coup Valid. The New President then ascends the throne and can move the Generals around anyway he wishes ONCE as soon as he takes power. The old President must become one of the Generals.

EXAMPLE General A (original home SC Edi, also owns Norway and Sweden) has 3 SC's and 70 points. General B (original SC London, now owns Belgium as well) has 2 SC's and 40 points. The New President swaps them. General A Still has 70 points but controls London and Belgium. General B has 40 points and controls Edi, Norway, and Sweden. The most likely scenario is the deposed President would be given the smallest army.

The Reason for this is that Generals may make deals to support each other in Coup's for control of larger armies. Once any player has a point, it can't be removed except by a penalty or if that player chooses to purchase information from a fired General. (see below)

In a successful Coup all players in that country lose 10 points.

A President can fire a General (Only one at any given time) but can never rearrange ownership. Firings will be public knowledge. When the President fires a general he loses 25 points but he takes over control those SC's AND stays president.

The ousted General stays in the game and waits. Every other turn (starting on the turn fired Spring, not fall, or Fall and not spring depending when ousted) he is given the true orders of his old units that he may sell this information (true or false) as he wishes and he will always have a vote on a Coup attempt. The GM will provide the General with a few days to peddle this information if requested. The Transaction will be public record, the moves given are a private matter between the players.

The fired general can be re-hired at any time, with no point damage.

EXAMPLE - General A is ousted and the GM tells him how his old units were ordered. He may tell any other player those moves for whichever price they agree on. The GM transfers the points from the enemy General or President that he is negotiating with. The General is allowed to spread false information, but he will ALWAYS have the true moves in hand. The General will get paid for false information but his market may die down.

If a General has no SC's because he has lost them all he is an advisor until he gets his SC back or assumes the Presidency in a Coup. If a fellow General reclaims a home SC, the points are split between the two Generals and the build automatically goes to the original General of the SC.

The President is given 25 discretionary points every three years to give away at any time during the game.

(Winter 1903, Winter 1906, etc.) They may be given to his Generals only. These points stay with the Presidency and can be accumulated. These points are generally used to soothe battered Ego's, prevent a coup, or aid low SC producing area's. If the Presidency holds points at the end of the game they are given to the President.

WHEN ANY COUNTRY GETS 15 SC'S OR THE GAME REACHES WINTER 1910 THE GAME IS OVER.

Game ending votes. The President alone votes on game ending offers. But if all 7 Presidents vote to end the game the point totals still decide who wins. If a game ending vote is offered for example fall 1903 if all Presidents vote YES, the move is adjudicated and all points tabulated AFTER the move. Bottom line, if you think all the Presidents are going to sell you out, oust them!

IF A PLAYER DROPS THE PRESIDENT MUST FIND A REPLACEMENT OR THAT GENERALS SC'S WILL HOLD.

POINT LISTINGS

50 pts - President - selected at the beginning of the game

10 pts - General - selected at the beginning of the game

-10 pts - ALL PLAYERS - Failure of majority to elect a president at the beginning.

1 pt - President - orders match generals

3 pts - General - orders match Presidents

-1 pts - General - orders do not match Presidents

-3 pts - President - orders to not match Generals

30 pts - General - Claimed a SC

10 pts - President - One of his Generals claimed a SC

-2 pts - General - Loses a SC to the enemy

-4 pts - President - One of his Generals loses a SC to the enemy

-10 pts - General - NMR for a season

3 pts - President - Builds a unit in Winter

-3 pts - President - Won't or can't build a unit in Winter

-10 pts - General - voted for a failed coup

-10 pts - ALL PLAYERS IN A COUNTRY - Coup successful

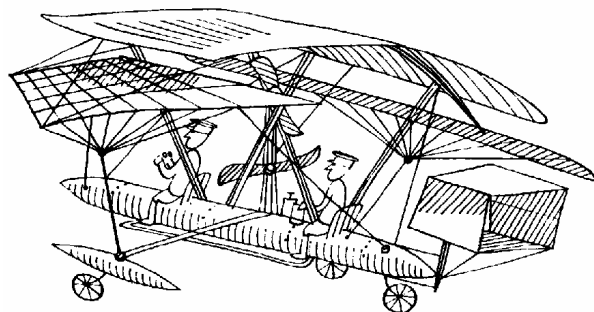
-25 pts - President - Fires General

?? pts - General - A General that has been fired may sell Unit information to enemy Generals or Presidents.

Enemies may pool resources, they lose the points given. General may or may not sell accurate information.

25 pts - Generals - given by President from discretionary fund. Restocked every 3 years. At the end of the game if any left in the discretionary fund, points given to the current President.

There you have it. Let me know what you think by emailing me at Scottm221@aol.com. Also please send me any variants you have for publication in next issue in Dip World. LETS GO GET EM.



Diplomacy World Interview

**Jim Burgess Discusses International Hobby Issues
with Vesa Virri**



Welcome to the third in my series of *Diplomacy World* interviews. In this issue, we begin an exploration into the Scandinavian hobby, which is likely to continue with other Scandinavian interviewees in future issues. I continue to welcome input on likely interested parties for interviews. I will continue to try to achieve worldwide balance in my subjects. Next we will probably head for the UK.... I include more background than usual since many of you may not know Vesa, obviously he had to help me out by writing most of the background.

Vesa Virri is 27 years old. He has played board and strategy games since the 1980's, starting from war games and gradually expanded his hobby interests into Diplomacy. He bought his first Diplomacy set in the early 1990's, but at first he thought it was a dull game.

It took him many years, before he found out how good a game Diplomacy really was: In 1995 he discovered from Hannu Tuikkala that people were playing Diplomacy by mail. He began his first PBM-game in *Diplomat* (edited by Thomas Franke from Germany) as Russia. He managed to play well and finished it as a draw with Austria. He could even have won the game, but since he had so much fun and had co-operated so nicely with Austria, instead he proposed a draw between Russia and Austria, which was accepted.

Vesa enjoyed PBM, even though he already thought that the games took too long. When he became aware of e-mail games as well, at first he was very enthusiastic, since the games became much faster. However, soon he noticed that he really enjoyed being a face-to-face-player the most. Nowadays he still plays some games by e-mail, but still likes the characteristics of FTF-games much more.

His first real FTF-convention was EuroDipCon IV in Oslo, when he finally got hooked on Diplomacy. One reason was that Borger Borgersen organized everything very well and the other was that he played pretty well. He managed to be 17th in the end, which he considers to be a pretty good achievement for a beginner. Vesa has participated in many cons after that, but that was still the Con in which he got hooked on Diplomacy.

During the 1990's there was some discussion that they should arrange to have EuroDipCon in Finland. During that time most of the players were from Helsinki, but no one seemed to be very interested in arranging EuroDipCon. So after a discussion with others, Vesa took the lead and made a decision that the Finns should make an effort to arrange EuroDipCon in Turku.

The European Diplomacy Association was very pleased to see the effort and they were able to arrange to host EuroDipCon VII in August 1999 in Turku. Vesa Virri acted as a General Secretary and with Mauno Joukamaa they essentially arranged the con all by themselves with a great deal of hard work; neither of them had ever

arranged a convention of that size before. But since everything went pretty smoothly after all, they were very pleased by their achievement.

After EuroDipCon, Vesa was a bit frustrated that there was no national Diplomacy organisation in Finland and on December 1999 he gathered a couple of friends of his in order to play some games and founded their own Diplomacy and board game association. So thus was the [Finnish Diplomacy Association](#) (FDA) born.

During the last few years they have managed to arrange annual [FinDipCons](#) and other gaming conventions, as well as participating in foreign cons like EuroDipCon in Paris and with Mikko Saari they began to organise e-mail games as well.

Even if Vesa and the others have done a great deal in order to achieve this much they think that there's still great deal more to do for the Finnish Diplomacy Hobby in the new millenium. Let's get to my questions then. My questions will be marked by my initials (JB) and Vesa's answers by his (VV).

JB: OK, Vesa, let me begin by asking some statistical questions to give readers an idea of the size of the Finnish Diplomacy hobby at the present time (feel free to give rough answers, no need to do lots of research). How many Diplomacy players overall do you think you have in Finland?

VV: Well, it's a bit hard to say. In our association there are less than 100 members, but this doesn't give any indication of the total amount, since most players probably haven't found our association, yet. And there are also many FTF-gaming groups, who just play Diplomacy by themselves. And there are even more players, who play PBEM e.g. in Judges. I presume there are around 200 FTF-players and around 800 who play-by-e-mail. Our intention is to gather most of these players into the FDA (Finnish Diplomacy Association), but this is of course a long-term-plan.

JB: Wow, that is an excitingly large hobby. I'm sure many of the other National Hobby groups around the world are somewhat envious of even that much organization. Of those, how many regularly come to the FinDipCons?

VV: Around 15-30 people have come to play Diplomacy, total participants have been around 50. FinDipCon has been purely a Diplomacy and Board game convention and we have liked it like that.

JB: And how many are members of the [Finnish Diplomacy Association](#), or do you automatically enroll every Finnish Diplomacy player in the organization?

VV: No. We have a membership fee (FIM 30 =around 5\$) for our members. It's pretty cheap, since we don't want money to be an obstacle to join our association. There are approximately 50-100 members in FDA.

JB: I know there have been some Finnish games (with Finnish as the spoken language of the game) on the E-Mail Judges. Have you played in that medium before?

VV: No, but I've heard that it's pretty popular and many of our members play there. There was even an article about Judge games in *Stab!*, which is the zine of our association.

JB: What proportion, roughly, of Finnish Diplomacy players are playing games using other languages with players in other countries?

VV: If you mean PBEM-players, I think it's the majority, some 80-90 per cent. The total amount is a bit smaller, since there are FTF-players, who only play with their friends.

JB: Now, let's turn to you. How many languages do you speak (and which ones)? Have you played Diplomacy (FTF, Postal, or E-Mail) in each of those languages?

VV: Seven. Finnish, English, German, Swedish, French, Russian and Spanish. I've used Finnish, English, German, Swedish and even used couple of comments in French in Diplomacy.

JB: I think it is VERY safe to say that no Americans I know of have such broad experiences. Tell me some of your experience in playing Diplomacy using those other languages, use examples if you can. Do you feel that it is a great barrier to playing the game well or not?

VV: Well, it depends, how well you speak the language. If you speak it well, like I speak English, it's no problem at all. However, if you (or the other player) doesn't know the language very well, it might cause severe problems, since players usually like to ally with someone they can understand. But that's why I personally believe that you should try to use foreign languages as much as possible, since with practise you can also improve your diplomacy skills.

JB: Yes, I plan to try to test my very poor French at World DipCon this summer and see if I can improve with some practice. Finland is a relatively small country and relatively few other people speak Finnish, so I suppose you understand why you have to do this if you want a wide range of playing partners?

VV: Yes, but practically all people in Finland can speak at least some English and often some other languages as well, so we've used to it. And it's always great fun to play with foreign players, since people from different countries really have different culture and styles to play Diplomacy.

JB: Thank you very much, Vesa, originally I was going to ask you some more questions, but I think we'll stop here for this issue. When I follow up with some of your fellow Scandinavians, perhaps we'll have a "Part II" at that point. I want to note to everyone that most of the Web Pages for the Finnish hobby are in Finnish, but they do have a main [Finnish Diplomacy Association Web Page](#) that is in English. It sounds like the Finns and all of the Scandinavians have exciting growth going on in their Diplomacy hobbies at the present time which is quite wonderful. See you all next issue with another interview!

Sailing to Denver: An ARMADA DipCon

By Rick Desper

I'd wanted to see how Manuscon turned out to be since he started it last year. I felt that Manus would be a good host, and after they landed DipCon, it seemed like a good time to visit Denver for the first time since the 60s.

On the whole, it was a very good con. I would say my only problem is with the scoring system, and I'll get into this below. I've had discussions with Manus about this, but the issue has yet to be resolved. Scoring systems are always problematic, but even with that in mind, I still don't like the Manus system.

I got into the Hyatt sometime on Thursday night. The early ads had said that Dip would begin early on Friday, and by the time the start had been pushed back I already had my ticket. But there were a few other gamers there on Thursday. Chris Martin and Dan Mathias played some D&D, while I used the hotel gym and watched Mitchell get his lazy emaciated butt voted off Survivor Australia.

On Friday I played a round of crayon-based choo-choo gaming, on a map of Australia with Edi Birsan and some choo-choo experts. I find playing with crayons a good way to get into the proper frame of mind for Dip. Also played a game of Settlers or two and a quick three-player Intimate with Chris and Edi.

Then I played four rounds of Dip...

RESULTS:

David Hood is the new North American champion. Congratulations, David! This is no shocker to people who are aware of David's ability. Chris Martin maintains that David is the best player in the US, and we saw nothing to detract from this assessment. David had a solo and two three-way draws, and his "worst" game was a four-way draw on a board which also included Edi Birsan and Tom Kobrin.

Tom Kobrin and Yarden Linvat tied for second place. Tom's France clobbered my England in the final round, based on an alliance with Tim Richardson's Germany. I did get some vengeance, turning Tom toward Tim before I disappeared. In fact, I outlived Tim. But I got squeezed out at the end of that game as Tom decided to play defensively and ended up going for a draw whittle.

Yarden's team won the Team Tournament. I wish I could remember who both of his teammates were. One was Mike Hall of Canada. The team was called 'The Rocky Mountain Crossers', though I renamed them 'the Donner Party' right before the award ceremony. I hope the name catches on. Maybe it can be a new "Reality TV" show on Fox?

(Aside: "Reality TV" is one of the biggest misnomers, and it has been since MTV started randomly making attractive people into celebrities with Real World in the early 90s. A sub-gripe is that shows like "Millionaire" and "Weakest Link" are nothing more than game shows, and don't really deserve the label "reality TV" any more than the Today Show does. But I digress.)

(Second aside: we really need to get a Dipper onto Survivor. Can you imagine any Dip player being as cowardly as Amber "I was too scared to talk to Kucha" Brkich?)

I think the single most impressive game was Edi Birsan's 1904 victory - "The Immaculate Concession" - as France in Round III. It was the kind of game you usually only see from somebody like Edi or David. He was up to 13 SCs by the end of 1904 and convinced the rest of the board he could easily force 5 more in short order. Andy Marshall took a lot of good-natured ribbing in this game as his Italy went from 5 SCs to 1 in 1904, and he lost all of his home centers to Edi in one massive attack. Andy insists that he would do exactly the same thing, given the same choices, all over again. In related news, Andy just picked up his second straight "Hammered" award at DixieCon, to match the one he won in Denver.

What more can I say about the course of play? There were a lot of solos. That is due to the scoring system, which allowed players to win with as few as 13 SCs at the end of the game. Apparently last year all of the games ended up either as solos or huge 5+-player draws. It was postulated that the game could not end up as a three-way draw. Well, my contribution to Manuscon game theory was to show the con how to pull off a 3-way draw. I did this in Round 2 - I discuss it below. It was the first 3-way draw in Armada history. (OK, the con only started last year, maybe it's not that impressive.)

RULES REACTION:

The Armada rules allowed a player to win the board with fewer than 18 SCs starting with 17 in 1905 and getting as low as 12 in 1910. This system came under a lot of fire during the weekend. To win, a player had to have the required number of SCs, and also have at least two more SCs than the next nearest player. Players quickly figured out that a good strategy to keep a game going was to throw SCs to the second-place player to make sure the leader did not get far ahead. I devised this strategy in the first round to preserve a 4-way draw in spite of a 15-SC Germany, and again in the second round to get a 3-way draw even though Turkey finished with 13 SCs. I found the implications especially disturbing in the second round, as my France had to literally walk out of Belgium and leave Munich undefended to ensure that England reached 12 SCs so Turkey would not win. By this time, the SC-tossing strategy had been discovered by everybody. I criticized this system during the business meeting. I think it's ludicrous that I would have lost the game, except for the fact that I walked out of a SC and let somebody else take it.

Why do I find this so problematic? Well, at the time I felt that, had this been a "normal" game, my France would have been in the best position. The English player had a lot of forces tied up stalemating Turkey, and my fleet presence in the Med was stronger than Turkey's. Even if Turkey had gotten his 14 SCs, he basically had a position which, had the game been played out, would have been a losing position. He had no stalemate line. I had the middle of the board and felt that my ability to stab England for a solo was much better than his ability to stab me (or at least, it would have been had I not walked out of so many centers). It seems silly to me that throwing away SCs is the key to avoiding a loss. Somehow this violates some law of monotonicity: I think that,

all other things being equal, if I have x centers and another player has y centers on one board, and I have $x + z$ centers on a second board, where the other player has $y - z$ centers, (for $x, y, z > 0$), then it MUST NOT be the case that I lose on the second board but not on the first board.

I know that there are analogous situations with the C-Diplo system, where a player can try to game the system by throwing away centers to lead to a 2-way tie for first as opposed to a person topping the board alone. But at least in that system, the person throwing away centers *hurts his own score*. I helped my score a lot by throwing away dots. This just seems wrong to me.

Manus heard the criticisms (loudest were from me and Buz Eddy) and seems to be receptive to modifying the scoring system for future years of Armada. This is quite important, based on the results of the business meeting. But Manus is very fond of the system as it is. I think he likes it because he feels it reflects the "true" result of the game, and that it leads to many more solos than most other scoring systems would. I certainly agree that it leads to more solos, but I don't like some of the solos it could lead to. I think some of the solos (such as the 14-center Turkey fighting a 10-center England and a 10-center France) really are losing positions. I know C-Diplo rewards the same kind of positions, but at least it doesn't call them "solo victories".

BUSINESS:

The major orders of business were to decide where Dipcon would be in 2002 and what con would be supported by the North American hobby in bidding for World DipCon in 2003 when WDC meets in Paris this summer.

The first issue was straightforward. David Hood presented a strong bid for DixieCon, which was unopposed. Those of us who have gone to DixieCon before can attest that this is a very good choice. (If only because it removes David from the player field!) So, DipCon is going to Chapel Hill next year.

The second issue was thornier. There were only two candidates, and neither was one of the long-established cons which have hosted WDC in the past (Origins, DixieCon, and The Con Formerly Known as AvalonCon were the last three to host WDC in the US; none of these three made a bid.) The only two bidders were ARMADA itself, and PrezCon in Charlottesville. David Hood expressed concern that if Armada were to win the bid, DipCon would naturally also have to go back to Denver in two years, and other regions might be resentful that their turn was skipped. But the general feeling was:

- a) PrezCon had not really established itself as a major con,
- b) Charlottesville probably will have less appeal than Denver, and
- c) Manus's standing in the hobby makes it much more likely that a Denver bid would win in Paris than a Charlottesville bid.

I felt I could not judge (a) - certainly the fact that Armada was only two years old made it seem unlikely to me that Prezcon was *less* of an established con. (b) seemed to be a bit unfair - since the vote was held in Denver, of course the locals would favor their own city. (c) was certainly true, I had to concede.

Manus really didn't like the fact that this vote was being held in Denver, but I think the result was legitimate. Although I voted for PrezCon, that vote was more of a reaction to the Armada scoring system than anything else. I think ARMADA represents the best option available for bringing WDC back to the US. I take comfort from the fact that many of the East Coast players also supported ARMADA over PrezCon. I have strong hopes that Manus will resolve the difficulties with the scoring system, which were really the only down point of the con. The upsides with Denver are many: great organization, a good location, and a proven ability to get a lot of very good players to come to Denver.

Location, Extras:

We played at a Hyatt, and it was pretty cool (though expensive). I learned again how bad it is to make a long-distance phone call from a hotel. It was much worse than I had remembered, as I was charged AT&T operator-

assisted rates. In my defense, I thought I'd configured my modem to use a calling card, but apparently it didn't work. The good thing was that the front desk was manned by a very cheerful high school girl, who somehow managed to knock off \$20 from my room price, because she felt so guilty about the phone bill.

The food was good. The beer in the bar was good, but they were badly understaffed on Saturday. I guess people in Denver don't go to bars on Saturdays?

Some time on Sunday I realized that I hadn't stepped foot outside the hotel since Thursday night. Frightening.

That's the short (but getting longer) report. I think it's unlikely I'll make it to World DipCon in Paris this summer, since I will be in Paris, but at the wrong time! I hope many of the people who missed DipCon in Denver will be able to make it to Chapel Hill next year. Considering how slowly I accrue vacation time here (I was spoiled in Germany!) I probably won't go to WDC in Canberra next Easter, but I will definitely be going back to Dixie next year for my third DixieCon and second straight DipCon.

David's Denver Dipcon in Detail

By David Hood

Frankly, I was a little concerned about the 2001 Dipcon, to be held in February in Denver. For one thing, Denver in February? That's almost as bad as the Canadian Diplomacy Championships in bloody January in bloody Saskatchewan! I was also worried about the scoring system, in which the 18 center requirement for a win was reduced by one every year starting in 1906, with games to end one way or the other by the end of 1910. Finally, I was also a little apprehensive about how the hobby meetings and my presentation would go.

When I actually started playing the games I realized that the declining victory thing was an interesting variant to play. It does lead to weird strategies, and thus is not good for a new player to have to play with often since it will stunt his development. For example, a perfectly legitimate strategy under this system is to feed centers to one of your enemies so as to keep him close in size to another one. This is because you have to win by at least 2 centers even if the victory criterion has gone down from the original 18. As far as whether the system was playable for Dipcon, I would say yes but not every year. The theory was to allow for wins under the pressures of time limits, and at least it accomplished that goal a little better than European systems which are designed for the same objective.

I played in four games. Here is a little blow-by-blow:

In game 1 was played Italy. And all you studious diplomats out there are thinking to yourselves that means I allied with Austria, as all good little Italys do. And you would be wrong.

Actually, the best road to victory or good draw for Italy is through Austria, preferably early in the game rather than later. The problem is, how do you take his centers without an RT getting out of control. The answer is to make sure that there is an RT war. If you reasonably think there is or will be, then you take those red men out as soon as possible, or at least push them into a small Serbia or Rumania reservation.

I ended up with a three-way, sharing the draw with my long-term Turk ally (yes an IT alliance is possible long-term, just unlikely) and England (Mike Hall was the only player of this bunch I knew before we started.) The primary reason this draw occurred was that France waffled too often. Had he actually followed through with either attacking me or England he would have replaced one of us in the draw.

Game 2 I played Austria. Some people would be complaining to the tournament director about playing AI in a row, but I actually enjoy that sort of thing. (TD Manus Hand probably thought he was screwing me, though, so I still will plan revenge at a future Dixiecon...) I knew my Italian neighbor Tom Kobrin, of course, since he is

nearly always my traveling companion to these things. My biggest goal is to do better than he does - we'll get to that at the end of the report.

Anyway, I like to do weird Austrian openings, so I did one of my favorites - allow Italy in to Trieste for the Key opening into Serbia for him in Fall 1901 while using my armies to support into Galicia, thus stranding the Russian A War for the pivotal Fall 1901 moves. Our opening eventually led to a 5-way draw, which would have been smaller had Edi Birsan wanted that. Playing in the other side of the board, he essentially kept the rest of us from eliminating another player or two. Go figure.

Game 3 was the key to my eventual tournament victory, as it was the last time I won Dipcon 14 years ago. In that distant game, my Turkey stabbed my Austrian ally for the win. In this game, my Russia stabbed my Turk ally for the win (although the one in 1987 REALLY counts since that was an 18-center win...) In this game I got some mileage out of the fact that I had given a speech to the attendees shortly before in which I denounced RT as an overrated alliance. Both Jerry Fest (T) and I immediately realized we could get the jump on the others by having a closet RT after a fake 1901 war. This worked like a charm, with Austria going down under the Italian knife. Later on Italy assumed he could get me to turn on Turkey, which was correct but way too late to help Italy.

I also benefited in this game by taking Scandinavia really early. This was because of a three-way melee between the Western powers. Memo to file: he who hesitates in taking control of his side of the board will often find someone from the other side of the board taking control for him. The key to winning a Russia is growing fast, because it is difficult to sustain a long, slow offensive as Russia given the stalemate line situation (which is not relevant under this variant scoring system, but thought I would throw it in anyway...) The bottom line is I won, and thus won the tourney, but did NOT get Best Russia since somebody had a bigger Russian win.

Game 4 was a fun alliance game for me. My England allied the whole game with Jon Saul's France. Jon was a great ally, and we just cooked along. We were helped by the east's inability to settle on a strong alliance until it was way too late (see memo to file above.) Eventually, Turkey shared in the 3-way with us after resisting the siren song of Jeff Dwornicki, who tried to talk him into letting Jeff's Italy live in the draw.

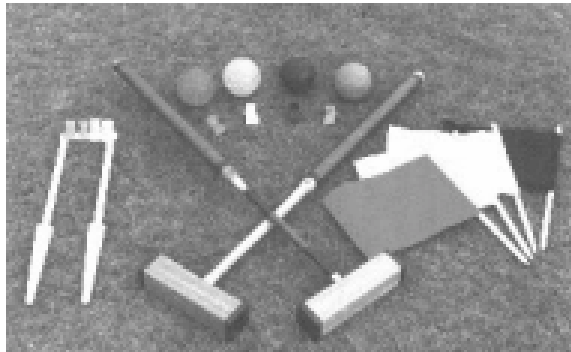
The Con was fun. I got to give a lecture about Misconceptions in Diplomacy, of which there are many. The biggest, as those in attendance will remember, is that Chris Martin knows what the hell he is talking about. One of my theories which did get a lot of serious discussion was my Hood Diplomacy Theory, which essentially holds that each power should be focused on immediate control of its heartland first (either the east or west) and then immediately run towards the stalemate line in the beginning of the midgame.

One thing which did not go my way was the World Dipcon discussion. Denver attendees voted to have Denver as the bidding North American site for the 2003 WDC. This will not go over well in the rest of the country, because it seems self-serving and will require a bid alteration of the Dipcon rotation scheme. I know Manus was not that keen about all this himself, so I don't blame him, but this was not very clear thinking in my opinion. While the Denver vote technically is not binding on the rest of North America, it will probably need to be honored to avoid conflict.

All in all, I had a good time even if the altitude made me sick over the course of the weekend. Kudos to Manus for a very fun event. And apologies to Tom Kobrin who, for the third time I believe, has come in second to my first. One of these days he will win another tournament - maybe when I'm not there...

Diplomacy Croquet

by **Stephen Agar**



While I have been playing Diplomacy for 25 years now, my interest in croquet must be some 20 years old. I played a lot of croquet at college (to a very mediocre standard – though I did improve when I started to wear glasses), but it was only when I was completing a recent email Diplomacy game that I realised how similar the two games are in some respects. Indeed, I think there are a couple of things that Diplomacy players could learn from basic croquet strategy. Let me explain.

Apologies to fans of croquet for the explanation of the game that follows, but I need to simplify it quite a bit. The aim of croquet is to get your two balls through 12 hoops (well, six hoops but once from each direction) in a certain order and then “peg-out” (hit the centre peg) before your opponent does. Each turn a player can choose which of his balls to play with and he plays with that particular ball until the end of the turn (the balls are different colours for easy identification). In other words, like Diplomacy it is a race – though to 26 (24 hoops, two peg-outs), not 18. The basic mechanism of croquet differs from a game such as golf in that a player can effectively get an extra two shots by hitting another ball (as opposed to going through a hoop). Although you can only claim your extra shots once for every other ball (therefore a maximum of six extra shots), once you go through a hoop this entitlement is reset.

It follows that a good player will get his balls around the course by using the other balls to claim extra shots, get through a hoop, use the other balls again, get through the next hoop etc. Tactically this is done by making sure that you not only get your ball through a hoop, but that you leave the other balls in positions where you can make most use of them once you get through the hoop. This is done by thinking ahead and positioning one of the other balls adjacent to the next hoop but one – or even the next hoop but two. Thus, to get a big break you have to think beyond the short-term goal of the next hoop and plan for which ball you are going to use to help you go through the hoops beyond.

The same is true for Diplomacy. A great deal of forward planning is required to win a game against serious opposition. You need to have an idea from quite early on where your 17th and 18th centres are going to come from. Indeed, it may be that you have to try and secure some of the more distant centres earlier in order to prevent a stalemate line being formed. Furthermore, just as in croquet you use the other players balls to run hoops, in Diplomacy you usually need an ally to make quick gains. However, there will come a time when you have done all you usefully can with that particular ally/ball – in which case you need to have positioned another prospective ally/ball in the correct place to be able to keep going.

For example, in my recent game I was playing Austria and had sworn a game long alliance with Italy. The alliance prospered – though I prospered more than my ally did – and soon Turkey was eliminated and Russia reduced to a lone unit in StP. The time had obviously come to stab my ally. However, in the meantime England had been eliminated and a Franco-German alliance was emerging to keep me back from winning the game. Therefore, for a couple of seasons before I stabbed my ally I had to work hard on France to ensure that when the

stab did come, I had positioned France as my new prospective ally in order to keep expanding. Sometimes you have to make the time and put in considerable effort to line an ally for use in the future – rather than (for example) me just stabbing Italy and then saying to France “how about it?” Thus planning ahead means not only knowing where you are going, but who is going to help you get there and when – and then making sure it happens.

The other lesson I take from croquet is what you do when your momentum stalls and you can't make any immediate advance. In croquet the tactic is to position the other players balls on the field as far apart from each other as possible and also as far away from your own balls as possible, while keeping your balls close to each other. Divide and rule. If you don't have the ally/ball to keep going forward put your energies into denying others the position to get momentum and start to go forward themselves. Obviously this means trying to undermine alliances – but it also means that you make sure that when the board leader needs to move on to his next ally, that no such alliance is forthcoming. Try to engineer a diplomatic position where the leader cannot keep momentum by stabbing one ally and taking up with the next. Make sure you get an ally you need to deny to someone else on-side now, before they need them (and hopefully before they are aware that they need them).

My personal view is that in a hard-fought game without serious dropouts it is usually impossible to win outright without the assistance of at least two (and maybe three) of the other players. Occasionally you may be able to do it with a single ally by stabbing them right at the end of the game, but this is rare as they will usually see it coming. Given that, I think you could do well to line your balls/allies up well in advance so that they are correctly positioned (or in the right frame of mind) to help you where you need it (and have planned for it) at the right time.

In the game I referred to above, I ended up on 17 centres after 1909 – which is when the game ended (as it was a time limited game in a tournament). Lining up my allies and keeping the other players apart served me well in that game – but if only I could have kept the French and German balls further apart I am sure I could have reached 18. Well, you know what I mean.

Let's Vote On It: Conducting Votes In Diplomacy Games

by Edi Birsan

The recent presidential vote in the United States has placed a focus on the details of how people vote and in line with that a quick review of the Diplomacy board votes would be in order. In this way a future Tournament Director (TD) can select what they want and we can also appreciate some of the oddities and minute details involved.

Proposals

Unlike postal or email games, in all the known tournaments the originator of a proposal is known in face to face play. Someone is always identified as proposing a specific draw or a concession.

There can be restrictions on proposals. The most common reason for a restriction is that players can use proposals as a way of wasting time in games with time limits. The approaches to this are as follows:

1. Portland method: you can make one proposal only and then have to wait till everyone playing has also made a proposal before making a second proposal. This works very well with a time limit.
2. Veto method: you can make any proposal you want but any player can simply veto it to avoid wasting time.

When Proposals can be made:

They are generally not specifically addressed as to when within a game turn they can be proposed. This causes

classic problems for example: a vote proposed after the Spring adjudication but before the Fall needs to have something to decide how to handle the supply center count if it is important in the system: is it the situation as the last adjudicated Fall or is Spring treated as a Fall move and centers as owned? The most common approach has been to treat the last completed Fall moves as the supply center count. You also have to address whether in a Fall vote the vote is to be adjudicated before the resolution of the Fall results and its corresponding 'winter' adjustments.

DIAS v.s. Other v.s. Concessions

What a proposal can contain needs to be detailed in a tournament system. The questions are:

1. Must Draws Include All Survivors (DIAS) so that you can not vote someone out of a draw.
2. Can you vote a supply center count. This is not currently in vogue but it use to be that players could vote a specific supply center count at the end as long as it was unanimous. This opened up a lot of abuse of tournament systems and has left many players as ex-players because of the abuse they feel that it focuses on the tournament system rather than acceptable fair play.
3. Can you vote yourself out of a draw? This is the opposite of DIAS
4. Are votes allowed only after a certain time. Most commonly is 1904 as a minimum though some have all sorts of times and quantities as limits
5. Concessions are a tricky situation and sometimes tournaments do not allow a concession unless there are certain number of centers in the winning power. You have to be careful to state that the concession can only be to a player in the game or to a power with the majority of pieces on the board. In several unique postal games, games were conceded to Margaret Gemignani who was not a player in the game and in one case where she had the least number of centers in the game.

The Open Vote

This is the most commonly used at social games and is found at some tournaments. There is an open proposal made and players openly raise their hands for or against the proposal. The game goes on if one person votes against it. This is my favorite way of voting as it maximizes peer group pressure and allows diplomatic pressure to be directed at the voters. However those that prefer covert diplomatic actions hate it as there is no room to say one thing and do another without being caught.

The Secret Vote

Secret votes are the common approaches in tournaments and they are done where there is a non playing party who will collect the votes and announce the results.

The Vote Mechanics

1. Piece Vote

A neutral party offers a hat or a box top and players place a piece in the container in secret. Generally an Army for 'Aye' or yes and a Fleet or Navy for 'Nay' or no. The adjudicator then checks the results and then asks for the second piece to be placed in and then makes a public announcement that the vote passed or failed.

2. Written Vote

In the Auckland Championships they have separate voting pieces of white and brown with one designated as the yes vote.

3. Weighted Vote

In Baltimore and at times in Columbus there is a vote which is weighted by the supply center count of the

power. In those cases the pieces have to be identified with the countries involved so the adjudicator can figure out how many votes are being cast for each country. These systems use one supply center =1 vote and either 29 or 30 votes are needed to pass a proposal. The advantage of this is that it truncates the game and keeps small positions from dragging out the game. The disadvantage is that it keeps small positions from dragging out the game.

Of course players will try to abuse or use any system.

The reason that it is a secret vote is so that players can not and should not show other players what they voted. The slime techniques on this 'tip off' are fairly legendary with people dropping their non voting piece on the floor or throwing their piece up over the rim so everyone can see how they are voting.

When using a box top and armies and fleets for voting, at least one young player tried to hone on the sound of the falling piece hitting the box top with the concentrated mass of an army piece giving a different sound than the longer and thinner fleet so he could try to tell who voted how.

In the Canadian Championships in Calgary they write their votes with their orders however this requires that the orders are read by a third party and the orders destroyed after being adjudicated. The votes are kept tabulated secretly and only the pass fail announced. Failure to vote is counted as a vote for or against (can not recall) so there are no abstains.

The Results Announcements

In all known face to face tournaments the results are always announced as pass or fail. In the 60's and 70's there was a period when it would be announced that the result was so many for and so many against but not identified who.

This system also was subject to abuse as a certain juvenile delinquent at one time reached in and placed several no votes in the box and slyly took out some of the yes votes in a slight of hand not caught by the TD. The resulting chaos of accusations when everyone but one person voted for the draw was rather amusing for a time in a perverse manner.

Some of the sillier results mechanics are used in places where form is valued overly and you will see the adjudicator insist on the casting of the second piece when the game ending proposal has passed.

Time Factors

As mentioned above some players will call for votes as a method of wasting time in a tournament. Down Under they make the players use the diplomacy time to conduct a vote thus the technique is used to cut down on a coalitions planning time when they are ganging up on a single leader player.

The Canadian method of voting with orders, is the least time abusing method but does require a TD to read the orders apart from the players.

Time Draws v.s. Voted Draws

Only in one case that I can recall was there a different value placed on a voted draw as opposed to a force or Time Draw (that is the game is forced to be called a draw at a certain real time or game time limit). This idea, actually favored at a time by A.B. Calhamer never caught on from its one time demonstration. The method has a way of placing even more emphasis on the tournament aspects of the game setting rather than the individual game focus.

So just like the vote in the US where local customs and conditions prevailed to provide a patchwork quilt of voting details, the current hobby has its many choices.

1. How often can players make a proposal?
2. When in a turn are proposals allowed? (How to handle the votes in Spring?)

3. When in the course of a game can a proposal be made? (Game year and strength issues)
4. Is the vote open or secret? (By hands up, pieces or written with orders.)
5. Is the vote equal parts or weighted by supply centers?
6. Is it DIAS or can you vote yourself out of a Draw?
7. Are there restrictions on concessions?
8. Are the results to be announced pass fail or in detail as to how many for and against?
9. Can you change the supply center chart?
10. Is a voted draw counted any different from a Time Called Draw?

Of course there is always the simplest method employed in a lot of European C-Diplo tournaments where votes are not allowed at all!

WORLD DipCon XI Results - Paris, FRANCE

Top 25 (Point totals for top 3 only)

- 1) Cyrille Sevin (178.50)
- 2) Brian Dennehy (192.60)
- 3) Chetan Radia (147.25)
- 4) Edi Birsan
- 5) Leif Bergman
- 6) Doug Massie
- 7) Thomas Sebeyan
- 8) Fearghal O'Donnchu
- 9) Pierre Malherbaud
- 10) Chris Martin
- 11) Tanguy Le Dantec
- 12) Mark Wightman
- 13) Yann Clouet
- 14) Stuart Evers
- 15) Dave Horton
- 16) Vick Hall
- 17) Vincent Mous
- 18) Niclas Perez
- 19) Stephane Derdi
- 20) Demis Hassabis
- 21) Ricardo Carneiro
- 22) Susie Horton
- 23) Toby Harris
- 24) William Attia
- 25) Michael McMillie

Top Team

The Champions (Toby Harris, Shlomi Yaakobovich, Cyrille Sevin, Bruno-Andre Giraudon)

Top Board

AUSTRIA: Mark Wightman (out in 1905)
ENGLAND: Doug Massie (out in 1905)
FRANCE: Edi Birsan (seven centers in 1907)
GERMANY: Cyrille Sevin (eight centers in 1907, voted winner by 3-0 vote of France, Italy and Russia of game and tournament)
ITALY: Thomas Sebeyan (six centers in 1907)
RUSSIA: Pierre Malherbaud (five centers in 1907)
TURKEY: Brian Dennehy (eight centers in 1907)

18 center wins: Chetan Radia as AUSTRIA in Round 4

Top Country Awards

AUSTRIA: Chetan Radia (18)
ENGLAND: Brian Dennehy (17)
FRANCE: Chris Martin (13)
GERMANY: Vincent Mous (13)
ITALY: Leif Bergman (15)
RUSSIA: Erlend Janbu (12)
TURKEY: Greg Alexopoulos (12)

Diplomacy Tournaments at Conventions

World DipCon:

The Diplomacy Association of Australia and New Zealand will host **World DipCon XII** on **29 March to 1 April 2002** in **Canberra, Australia**. Full details of the convention plans are available at daanz.org.au/wdc2002/.

World DipCon XIII will be held in **2003** in **Denver, Colorado, USA**. Here is [a short article describing the proposal](#).

A mailing list has been created for anyone interested in **World DipCon** information. To join, send an e-mail to majordomo@diplom.org saying "**subscribe wdc-1**".

Besides the wdc-1@diplom.org (for all WDC's, not just 2002) mailgroup, there is the WDC2002@yahoogroups.com mailgroup. If you want to be added to the list, send a blank E-mail to wdc2002-subscribe@yahoogroups.com and reply to the confirmation E-mail.

After several years of work, a [World DipCon Charter](#) was ratified as applying to the North American hobby at World DipCon X in 2000; it was ratified as applying to the European hobby at World DipCon XI in 2001; and the Australasian hobby will vote on its ratification in Canberra at World DipCon XII in 2002. It establishes how future events are selected, what convention organizers need to do, and so forth. For the most part, this charter formalizes the methods that have guided the event since its 1988 origin.

EuroDipCon:

EuroDipCon, the European Diplomacy championship convention and tournament, will be held on **9-11 November 2001** in **Dublin, Ireland** in conjunction with **BoruCon** and the host multi-game convention **GaelCon**. Here are a few [details](#). For more information, go to the [EDC 2001 mailing list's website](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/EDC_2001), groups.yahoo.com/group/EDC_2001, and sign up; ask questions there (or to the contact people listed in the previous sentence's "details" item) for any other information.

Australia & New Zealand:

Links to a number of websites for conventions/tournaments in Australia and New Zealand are listed on the DAANZ site's [Tournaments page](#). Listed events for the rest of 2001 include:

25-26 August 2001: [Wellington Diplomacy Open: "Absolutely Diplomatically Wellington 2001"](#) (Wellington)
For more information, contact [Jimmy Millington, jimmij@paradise.net.nz](mailto:jimmij@paradise.net.nz) or [Rob, robs@paradise.net.nz](mailto:Rob.robs@paradise.net.nz) or [Dom Stephens, StephensD@rbnz.govt.nz](mailto:Dom.Stephens@rbnz.govt.nz) or see the event's [web page](#).

29-30 September 2001: [ACT Diplomacy Championships](#) (Canberra, A.C.T.) Cost: \$15.00, free for new players and overseas players. Billeting and accommodation available, but get in quick! For more information contact Arianwen Harris on (02) 6248 5348 or 0418 407 321.

20-22 October 2001: [New Zealand Diplomacy Championships](#) (Newmarket, Auckland)
For more information, contact [Grant Torrie](#).

1-2 December 2001 : [The Don Challenge Cup](#) (Preston, Victoria)
For more information, contact [Jason Whitby](#).

Most if not all of the tournaments run during 2000 will also run during 2001. Check the DAANZ site for more events.

Listed events for 2002 include:

29 March - 1 April 2002 (Easter): [WDC XII](#) (Canberra): The DAANZ's proposal to host **WorldDipCon XII** on **29 March to 1 April 2002** in **Canberra, Australia** was ratified at World DipCon X (2000). Full details of the convention plans are available at daanz.org.au/wdc2002.

Many of the sites hosting 2001 events will be announcing 2002 dates. Check the DAANZ site for more events.

Brazil:

DiploCamp-I, the first regional Diplomacy convention in Brazil, will be held on **12-14 October 2001** at the University of Campinas in **São Paulo, Brazil**. For more details, contact Cristiano Corte Restitutti, restitutti@bestway.com.br.

CoBraDip-II, the second annual Brazilian Diplomacy Convention, will be held on **6-7 April 2002** at the University of Campinas in **São Paulo, Brazil**. Here are the [CoBraDip-II website in English](#) and [CoBraDip-II website in Portuguese](#). For more details, contact Cristiano Corte Restitutti or Wolfgang Lenk at cobradip@bestway.com.br.

Canada:

A Diplomacy tournament will be held as part of the 13th annual gaming convention **FallCon** on **14 September 2001** at the **Calgary Marlborough Community Centre** in **Calgary, Alberta**. For details, visit the official FallCon website at www.fallcon.com. FallCon hosts events for over 50 different games. Contact Steve Zanini at stevezanini@fallcon.com for FallCon-related questions, and Robert Vollman at vollman@home.com for Diplomacy-related questions.

For details on the 9th annual **Canadian Diplomacy Championship**, to be held on **5 January 2002** at the **Sentry Box** in **Calgary, Alberta**, visit [the Stratagem Gaming Society's CDC information page](#) or send e-mail to host organization Stratagem, stratage@home.com or chairman Robert Vollman, vollman@home.com.

The third **Stratagem's Diplomacy Variants** event will be held on **11 May 2002** at the **Sentry Box** in **Calgary, Alberta**. Colonial Diplomacy and Machiavelli will be the featured variants. For details, contact James Istvanffy, j.istvanffy@home.com.

The second annual **Victoria Diplomacy Tournament** will probably be held in **early June 2002** in **Victoria, British Columbia**. When details are determined, they will be posted on the [Diplomacy Victoria](#) website. For more details, contact Mike Hall, diplomacy.victoria@home.com.

Finland:

FinDipCon IV, the fourth annual Finnish Diplomacy Championships, will be held in **2002** in **Turku, Finland**. English-language details of the 2001 event can be found at www.melankolia.net/sds/fdc3_en.html, and details in the Finns' language of the 2001 event can be found at www.melankolia.net/sds/fdc3.html. For more details, contact Vesa Virri.

France:

The XVIth annual **French National Diplomacy Championship** will be held on **24-25 November 2001** at the **Boulogne Town Hall** near **Paris, France**, hosted by the convention **Jeux en Feres**. It will be a four-round

tournament with a final (top 7) table, using the C-Diplo scoring system. Over one hundred players have attended this event in recent years. For details, contact [Yann Clouet, yannc@pt.lu](mailto:Yann.Clouet@pt.lu) or [Moi Fink, moise@club-internet.fr](mailto:Moi.Fink@club-internet.fr).

Germany:

NordCon will be held on **25-26 May 2002** in **Hamburg, Germany**. For details, contact [Michael Goetze, mgoetze5@yahoo.com](mailto:mgoetze5@yahoo.com).

Ireland:

The annual **EuroDipCon** will be held on **9-11 October 2001** in **Dublin, Ireland** in conjunction with **BoruCon** and the host multi-game convention **GaelCon**. It is expected to be a four-round tournament with a final (top 7) table, using the C-Diplo scoring system. Here are a few [details](#). For more information, go to the [EDC 2001 mailing list's website, groups.yahoo.com/group/EDC_2001](mailto:EDC_2001_mailing_list@yahoo.com), and sign up; ask questions there (or to the contact people listed in the previous sentence's "details" item) for any other information.

Israel:

(The first Israeli Diplomacy Convention was recently held. Check the [event's website](#) (on the **IsraelDip** website) for updates on possible future events.)

Norway:

(More information on all these events can be found on the [Norwegian Diplomacy Association website](#). For more details, you can send questions by E-mail to ndf@diplomacy.no.)

RegnCon 9 will be held on **12-14 October 2001** in **Bergen, Norway**. For details, see the [RegnCon website](#), or contact [Asbjorn Myklebust](#), or the NDA contact points.

HexCon 2001 will be held on **9-11 November 2001** in **Trondheim, Norway**. For details, see the [HexCon website](#), or contact [Erlend Janbu](#), or the NDA contact points.

San Marino:

The **Associazione Sammarinese Giochi Storici** in the independent republic of San Marino is scheduling Diplomacy events in 2001 and 2002. For details, see the Italian-language [ASGS website](#). Currently scheduled for the rest of 2001 is:

There will be a Diplomacy tournament at the fourth annual **San Marino Con 2001**, with its schedule not yet announced. Watch the ASGS website (linked above) for dates and other details.

Currently scheduled for 2002 is:

There will be a Diplomacy tournament at the annual **Diplomaticamente in Treno** (Diplomacy and Trains), which will be held in **2002**, with its schedule not yet announced. Details can be found on the ASGS website (linked above) and on its [Diplomaticamente in Treno page](#).

Sweden:

The Swedish Diplomacy Association is compiling a "Swedish Championships" page for their upcoming website, with information about the 2000 and 2001 national tournaments. A link will be added when they inform us of its release to the public.

The Swedish Diplomacy Association is compiling a "Tournaments" page for their upcoming website, listing a number of face-to-face tournaments. A link will be added when they inform us of its release to the public.

United Kingdom:

MidCon will be held on **2-4 November 2001** at the **Birmingham City Thistle Hotel** in **Birmingham, England, UK**. This long-running annual convention has for several years hosted the **UK National Diplomacy Championships**. For more information, write to Events, SFC Press, 11 Greyfriars, Bedford, UK MK40 1HJ, or phone Maurice at 01234 219679.

The annual boardgame convention **OxCon 2001** will be held **15-17 February 2002** at Keble College in **Oxford, England, UK**, with the **Diplomacy** tournament on Saturday. For more details, contact [James Pinnion, james.pinnion@keb.ox.ac.uk](mailto:James.Pinnion@keb.ox.ac.uk) or ask to be put on the mailing list at dipsoc@hotmail.com.

The long-running annual convention **ManorCon** will soon have information about **ManorCon XX**, to be held in **2002** in **Birmingham, England, UK**, at the [ManorCon website](#). For more details contact Steve Jones or Kath Collman at manorcon@diplom.org.

United States:

The eleventh annual **Hickcon** will be held on **24-26 August 2001** in **Hickory, North Carolina**. This housecon, which rotates among sites in western NC, features friendly play of Diplomacy and other boardgames. For directions and other details, contact [David Hood, david_hood@w3link.com](mailto:david_hood@w3link.com).

The next **Dragonflight** will be held on **24-26 August 2001** in the **Seattle, Washington** area. This large annual convention features all kinds of boardgames and role-playing games, including a Diplomacy tournament. For general details, see the [Dragonflight website, www.dragonflight.org](http://www.dragonflight.org). Here is a list of [expected attendees](#). For more Diplomacy details, contact [Buz Eddy, BuzEddy@aol.com](mailto:BuzEddy@aol.com).

The next **CONQUEST** will be held on **31 August to 3 September 2001** in **Palo Alto, California** (in the San Francisco Bay area). This large annual convention features all kinds of boardgames and role-playing games, including a Diplomacy tournament on **Friday, 31 August to Sunday, 2 September**. Here is the [location, schedule, scoring system, and special awards](#). For more details, see the host event's website at www.conquest.com, or for more Diplomacy details, contact [Edi Birsan, edi@mgames.com](mailto:edi@mgames.com).

A **FTF Diplomacy Game** will be held on **8 September 2001** in **Brookline, Massachusetts** at 1033 Beacon Street, starting at 10:00 am. It is a few doors down from the St. Mary's Green Line (C Line) T stop. It is apartment #2. Refreshments will be provided, and a break will be taken in the middle of the game for food (sushi, pizza, etc.). The apartment is spacious and comfortable. The game will take place in the dining room, and there are plenty of other rooms to plan stabs in. Send questions to [Taylor Hayward, taylorhayward@yahoo.com](mailto:taylorhayward@yahoo.com) or thayward@gjpc.com. Taylor and [Adam Silverman, agman@mit.edu](mailto:agman@mit.edu) are running these games. Taylor has a web based "reservation" system set up that is QUITE neat. E-Mail him to be added to it.

The 3rd annual **Tempest in a Teapot** Diplomacy Tournament will be held on **5-7 October 2001** at the Best Western in **Beltsville, Maryland, USA** (near Washington, DC). For details, visit the [Potomac Tea & Knife Society website](#), or contact tournament director [Andy Marshall, landruajm@netscape.net](mailto:landruajm@netscape.net). Here are the PTKS site's pages for Tempest [directions](#) and [registration](#). Steve Mauris and Andy have created several excellent **posters** for Tempest in a Teapot III. (**These are the NEW posters with the changed site.**) Here are the ["Napoleon" \(size 57K\)](#), ["Warhol-style" \(60K\)](#), ["Prussians" \(122K\)](#), and ["Movie Poster" \(110K\)](#) images, all in JPEG format. Steve grants hobbyists permission to download, print, and distribute the images to promote the convention among their local Diplomacy players.

The fifth annual **Rubicon Games** will be held on **12-14 October 2001** in **Dayton, Ohio**. This housecon convention features friendly play of Diplomacy and other boardgames. For details, contact [Jamie McQuinn, mag_jamie@dayton.lib.oh.us](mailto:mag_jamie@dayton.lib.oh.us).

Diplomatic Incident XV, the next of a twice-a-year series of informal gatherings for Diplomacy and other games, will be held on **dates to be announced** in the **Boston, Massachusetts** area. For more details, contact [Dave Partridge, rebhuhn@rocketmail.com](mailto:rebhuhn@rocketmail.com) or watch future issues of Dave's Diplomacy subzine "[Tinamou](#)".

Winter War 29 will be held on **1-3 February 2002** at the Chancellor Hotel in **Champaign, Illinois**. This longtime multi-game convention will include a Diplomacy tournament. For details, see the [Winter War website, winterwar.prairienet.org](#).

PrezCon 2002 ("the Winter Nationals") will be held on **20-24 February 2002** at the Doubletree Charlottesville in **Charlottesville, Virginia**. This longtime multi-game convention will include a Diplomacy tournament. For details, see the [PrezCon website, www.prezcon.com](http://www.prezcon.com). For more PrezCon details, contact kingmaker96@mindspring.com. For more Diplomacy tournament details, contact Tournament Director [Dan Mathias, dcmathias@erols.com](mailto:Dan.Mathias@dcmathias@erols.com).

The second **Missouri Compromise** Diplomacy tournament might be held on **March 2002** in **Eureka, Missouri, USA** as part of the **Name-That-Con 15** annual convention. For details, see the [relocated Name-That-Con website, www.namethatcon.com](http://www.namethatcon.com) [which in late July shows no date or location for 2002, just an event name "Con Tiki"] or contact [Mike French, md_french@yahoo.com](mailto:md_french@yahoo.com).

The large annual convention **Origins** will be held on **4-7 July 2002** at a location to be announced. Origins features all kinds of boardgames and role-playing games, including a Diplomacy tournament. For details, contact [Bruce Reiff](#).

DipCon XXXV:

The North American Diplomacy championship **DipCon XXXV** will be held on **Memorial Day weekend of 2002** in **Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA**. For details, see [an information site will be posted soon and linked here when available]. If you have any questions, send e-mail to [David Hood](#) of the Administrative Committee organizing the event.

The Boardgame Players Association is presenting the **World Boardgame Championships on 30 July to 4 August 2002** at Marriott's Hunt Valley Inn in **Hunt Valley, Maryland** (near Baltimore). One hundred different strategy boardgames have major tournaments at this event, including Diplomacy. In 2000 this event hosted World DipCon X/DipCon XXXIII. The BPA website, featuring information on this convention, is at www.boardgamers.org. The schedule, houserules, and past winners can be found on the BPA site's [Diplomacy page](#). You may request email copies of this information at doncon99@toad.net.

The next **GenCon** will be held on **8-11 August 2002** in **Milwaukee, Wisconsin**. This large annual convention features all kinds of boardgames and role-playing games, including a Diplomacy tournament run by the CAT23 group. As Diplomacy details are developed, they will be released on the [CAT23 group's website, www.cat23.com](#). For more details, contact gencondip@cat23.com or [Edi Birsan, edi@mgames.com](mailto:Edi.Birsan@mgames.com).

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