

DIPLOMACY WORLD

ISSUE 94, SUMMER 2005

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Diplomacy World is available free on the Internet, as a web zine or as a downloadable ebook. Go to <http://www.diplomacyworld.org> to see web version.

Contributions for the next issue (articles, convention reports, art, cartoons, jokes, or anything else related to the game of Diplomacy, should be sent to Jim Burgess, burgess@theworld.org or Tim Haffey, diplomacyworld@aol.com by September 1, 2005.

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Comments

by Tim Haffey

I must apologize for the lateness of this issue but, I have been sick with the Shingles. Shingles is truly not something I would wish on my worst enemy. I was up in Oregon visiting my sister in Astoria at the end of April. I began to experience pain in my left thigh and hip. I figured I had pulled something or had pitched a nerve or something and it would go away. It didn't.

When I got home I went to the doctor and he thought the same thing even though I told him I did not think so. A couple of days later I was laid out on my deck when my son came by. I was wearing shorts and he looked at my leg and said you have shingles dad. I felt the leg and I feared he was correct. Tim, Jr.'s grandfather had shingles and my own dad had shingles and we were both familiar with shingles. So, he took me to the emergency ward at the hospital. The doctors there did not seem to be able to figure out if it was shingles or not and would not start treatment. Instead, they referred me to a dermatologist and gave me some pain pills. Idiots. I could not get in to see the Dermo Doc for four days. He took one look and said you have Shingles. He started my treatment immediately. Five pills for seven days. Now, that kills the Shingles virus but, it does not end the problem. Oh no, that is only the beginning.

Shingles is caused by chickenpox. If you have ever had chickenpox as a child or early in life, you will have shingles some time later in life. The chickenpox go dormant and takes up resident in nerve roots. When it does come out, usually when your immune system becomes weak for some reason and it can be decades later, 50+ years in my case, it breaks out and damages the nerve that it is connected to.

What this means is that the nerves must "recover" as the doctor put it. This means pain and lots of it. This is an intense, continuous, unrelenting pain that keeps you from sleeping, moving, eating (you lose your appetite) and even thinking clearly. All you want to do is stop the pain. Now the pain pills help. They gave me Tylenol 3 witch I took with Excedrin. That helped but, not by much. At least I could sleep for a couple of hours. But, then it came back in spades like it had to make up for lost time or something. Two weeks of this was enough to almost drive me crazy. But, then it started to get better day by day. Needless to say, I did not even look at my computer during this time.

However, here it is the first of July and now that you have heard my sob story, let me say that I am now able to type on my computer and try to get this out. My butt still hurts a bit but it is manageable. If you ever wanted to hurt so bad you wished you were dead, shingles will do that for you. OK, back to work.

Upcoming Tournaments

July 29-31, 2005 World Diplomacy Championships in Washington DC

For information on the World Diplomacy Championships go to www.WDCinDC.org
Visit <http://www.wdcindc.org/>, the Official Webpage of WDC XV, for more information about how to register! This years host is of WDC XV is the Potomac Tea & Knife Society

This Diplomacy Hobby's premiere event will be held at the Holiday Inn Capitol--just a block from the Washington, D.C. Metro (L'Enfant Plaza)--making the entire city accessible to our guests. The PTKS has arranged a special, block rate for WDC XV attendees--\$129 per night, a real bargain for a hotel of this quality in the heart of the city. You can reserve those rooms now, by phone or online at the website above. Just use this three digit code: DWC to get the reduced rate. You can reserve those rooms now, by phone or online at the website above. Just use this three digit code: DWC to get the

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reduced rate.

Origins

June 30-July 3, 2005, Columbus, OH
GM: Dan Mathias (dcmathias@comcast.net)
www.originsgames.com

HuskyCon (See Article on it.)

August 19-21
"Graham Woodring" <gramageinc@hotmail.com>

<<<Editor's Note: If you are interested in going to this one you will have to drop an email to Graham's email and ask for direction on how to get there. He forgot to tell us where it is.

ConQuest

Sept 2-4, 2005, San Francisco, CA
GM: Edi Birsan (edi@mgames.com)
www.con-quest.com

Dragonflight

Oct 7-9, 2005, Seattle, WA - Double Tree Hotel
GM: Buz Eddy
Contact Buz for details at BuzEddy@aol.com

The Whipping

Oct 29-30, 2005, San Francisco, CA
GM: Adam Silverman (agman@stanford.edu)

YE OLD MAILBAG

Edi Birsan
Sun, 17 Apr 2005 14:31
DixieCon 87

Around June 1987 the results of the DixieCon (Chapel Hill) may have been echoed in one of the achieved 'zines. If you can find the rankings or even an article or two on it... send it to David Hood and Gwen Maggi please.

Thanks

<<<Editor's Note: Sorry, I have been sick with the Shingles for the last month and a half. But, I will work on this.

Mon, 2 May 2005 15:54

"David Maletsky" dmaletsky@adelphia.net DixieCon + Other

Hi everyone! Wanted to post about a couple of things.

1. DixieCon, which is a fantastic con & actually relaxing (if you can believe that for anything Diplomacy-related), is fast approaching... check out the details at

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www.dixiecon.com. The site explains how ungodly cheap the lodging already is, and if travel cost is your sole concern, I can potentially be talked into driving, much as I'd like to avoid it. Furthermore, if you do find yourself able to fly to the DC area, your transit to & from Dixie from there can be facilitated pretty easily with a little advance planning... & frankly I'd prefer not to drive. So if you have the free time come on down to Dixie, you'll be glad you did!

<<<Editor's Note: Dixiecon for 05 is over now.>>>

2. In the interest of starting some house games again, I'm willing to host at my place in Rockport... now that the weather is warming (slightly) I've been motivated to clean out the nightmare situation winter helped me create in here. I won't have a date in mind, though, until it crests over 70 degrees (because I'll still be unmotivated), so if anyone has a preference for a particular weekend please pipe up so we can put something together!

3. If anyone wants to talk to someone about this year's World Diplomacy Championships in Washington, D.C., July 29-31, about anything, please share it with me if not the entire list. New England will be providing, I think, a record-breaking amount of travelers to this event, so if you ever wanted to jump on the travel-to-a-Diplomacy-con bandwagon now would be the time... furthermore, I intend on making an extended trip out of it for various reasons, so if anyone has broader travel plans than simply the dates of the con I can potentially make myself available to drive around with them, invite them to stuff I'm doing or know about, etc... aside from in-hobby friends, I have a ton of friends (not to mention my sister) in the D.C. area & am happy to help out with whatever I can.

If there's one convention you don't want to miss... well, perennially I still have to say it's HuskyCon. And now that I'm going to be running the Diplomacy event at Carnage, I should add that in as well. And frankly, the WAC Con in Seattle is another con with unbelievable amenities and hospitality. And Dixie is great. And there's no reason to fail to make Massacre in our backyard. And so on. ;) All of that said, THIS particular year, the WDC will be truly a special event that overshadows all of the above... and the experience you can expect to have there will not be likely to be repeatable for several years coming. So if you can make it to DC, make every effort, you'll be glad you did!

Tue, 24 May 2005 15:09

"David Maletsky" dmaletsky@adelphia.net

WDC '07 Bid

I've been asked by the bidders to mention to the Montreal crowd in specific (this means you, Etienne!): take a look at the bid at <http://www.nwdiplomacy.com/WDC07.html> ... if you find yourself able to make it to WDC this year, you can come out & support your Canadian brethren!

In a message dated 5/23/2005 9:26:56 PM Pacific Standard Time, MChirchill@comcast.net writes:

Hi,

Some of you already have this, but I'm not sure the attachment came through the first time, so I thought I'd send it out again.

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See you all in DC!
- Matt Shields

The PiggyBack Society for Northwest Diplomacy is pleased to present you with the following bid to host the World Diplomacy Championship in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada in 2007!

The tournament would be held from Thursday August 9th to Sunday August 12th, 2007 at the Student Union Building Conference Centre at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. The tournament will be six rounds, with the first round starting Thursday evening, two rounds scheduled each of Friday and Saturday, and a final round on Sunday.

The University is located about 10km from downtown Vancouver, at the western tip of the city, overlooking the Strait of Georgia. The site is an easy 20 minute drive from the Vancouver International Airport, from which you can catch direct flights from many major North American cities. The tournament committee plans to work with all participants to address transportation to and from the site.

Accommodations are provided at the University residence halls. Gage Towers, where the Diplomacy players can stay, is about 1 block down the street from the Student Union Building where the games will be held.

Standard rooms will cost \$40CAN per night for each person. The residence halls are divided into "pods". Each pod layout consists of 6 small private dorm rooms with a single bed, each connected to a common area with a shared kitchen, bathroom, and living area.

The tournament organizers will be reserving a large number of pods exclusively for Diplomacy players. Players can book rooms through the University individually, in which case you will be put into a pod with 5 other random players, or you can get together with several friends and book together so you are put into the same pod.

Suites are also available in a different section of the residence hall complex, for between \$120CAN and \$150CAN per night. This, while more expensive for individual players, could be an appealing options for players who are traveling with families or who might want more space or privacy.

Please try to book your rooms early, whether reserving pods or suites! Although the organizers are committed to reserving a large enough number of pods, suites may sell out early, and options for off campus housing are located some distance away and are considerably more expensive. So you can save yourself a lot of stress by booking early!

Many dining options are available in the Student Union Building, depending on the day of week and time of day. These vary from more formal sit-down restaurants to fast-food/take-out places. The pub on campus is open until 2AM, Monday thru Saturday. Several options for dining off campus are also available, if one walks a few blocks. The organizing committee is also currently exploring options for catering a select number of meals during the weekend.

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The admission fee for the event has not yet been set, but is expected to be approximately \$50 Canadian.

The tournament structure will be similar to other North American events. Rounds will be centrally timed - meaning all boards will run on one clock - but there will be no hour limit or year limit on the games themselves, except as necessary to complete the final round on Sunday. The scoring system will include elements that take into account both the size of the draw, and the size of each power at game completion.

The scoring system will be constructed in a way to allow players to skip a couple of rounds without significantly impacting their final score. While we encourage players to play as many rounds as possible, we also seek to accommodate both players who are unable to attend all 4 days, and who would like to take some time off from Diploming to explore this fabulous city. Plans are already being made to put together some organized touristy activities for Diplomacy players and their non-Dip-playing families.

If you have any questions, please contact the organizing committee, and please remember to vote for Vancouver in 2007!

Sincerely,

Your Vancouver '07 Organizing Committee
Nathan Barnes Mike Hall Matt Shields
Washington British Columbia Oregon
nbarnes99@hotmail.com spiritof67@shaw.ca MChirchill@comcast.net

Thu, 12 May 2005 21:42
"Andy Bartalone" buffalo@guisarme.net
WDC.....

Good Evening,

I know some of you are gleefully waiting for June 1st so that you can send me an extra sawbuck for WDC. As the Treasurer I appreciate this....
I know some of you are coming, just register why don't you.....:-)
You can do so by sending me 40.00 by paypal, or if you want to send me a check send me an email and I will send you my address.

I can think of at least 5 of you that I know are coming and haven't registered yet. So...please make our lives easier and do so.

Thanks, Andy--
Every normal man must be tempted, at times
to spit on his hands, hoist the skull and
crossbones, and begin slitting throats"
- H.L.Mencken

-
Thu, 12 May 2005 15:38

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buzeddy@aol.com

Dragonflight Diplomacy poll

Last year we had, in my opinion, a very successful stand alone Dragonflight Diplomacy tournament. I have been stalling the hotel on booking space again because I have heard from a few folks that they know they cannot play next Columbus Day week-end.

I was about to pull the plug and just run something at the August convention, but I suppose it is prudent to ask if there is enough interest in a stand alone Dragonflight to commit the money to run a second.

If there is a 2005 stand alone Dragonflight Diplomacy tournament Columbus Day week-end would you be likely to play?

I would like a response before Monday morning as I intend to tell the Double Tree yes or no then.

Thanks,
Buz Eddy

North American Diplomacy Federation website is <http://www.diplom.org/NADF/index.htm>

<<<Editors Note: Yeah, this is a little dated but, if you would like to let Buz know your opinion, drop him an email anyway.>>>

Cascade Summit

Mon, 25 Apr 2005 17:01

Cascade Comments

"Edi Birsan" edi@mgames.com

It would appear that there is a definite trend in the B.A.D. Ass's to attend more outside cons, after all we managed to take to Portland 6 players, which is more than what all of Oregon was able to provide. In fact the Portland group had problems outnumbering the Canadians who came down.... We B.A.D. Ass's also as group managed fairly well to spread out the country 'awards' amongst us with France: Sarah Irons, Turkey: Andrew Newmann, Italy: Edi Birsan

Sarah did very well with the highest single country center count as her France had 16 centers.

However, there was also another trend of note that seems to be growing... on my last board I was once again with two of our local buds: Tim Haffey (Russia) and Andrew Newmann (Turkey) to once again my Austria. Oh my my, oh the bleeding hemorrhoid. Such a collection of lies, deceptions and aggrievements, you would not believe. If I had been giving out 'poopy points' the place would have looked like a manure heap. And of course all to no avail. At the end Italy was down to three, Austria was UP finally to three, and Russia was at two as once again the perfidiousness of it all allowed everyone else to gain greatly from it.

<<<Editor's Note: I believe Turkey was Buz Eddy. Andrew was Italy I think. Just for the Record. Turkey was my trusted ally until he stabbed me.>>>

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We will not even go into an earlier sequence of boards with the mutual assured destruction was practiced by fellow BAD Asses in games as Austria and Turkey, and Italy and Turkey. Names have been concealed to protect the guilty. The worst part of it is not the attacking, certainly as a group it is better to be known for fighting each other than for working together as that would be just rude. However, the quality, planning and status of the lies were so poor and crude, that it was embarrassing at times...and some of the contagion may have worn on off on me ((I'm so sorry Elliot, but you didn't hear it from me)). Many of us have to improve on the techniques of 'misspeaking' and we will have to go over this at one of the club meetings...

Anyway, all of this resulted in most of us getting pounded included myself, with the exception of Sarah who wound up on the top board and came in 5th over all, then Tom Hilton at 9, Andrew Newmann at 13, Edi Birsan at 14, Tim Haffey at 18 and Elliot Olson at his first tournament winding up at 20 *and the players choice award, out of 21.

On the positive side, there was a lot of interest in the upcoming San Francisco Whipping over Halloween and we can expect several Canadians, as well as people from Seattle and Oregon to attend our own hosting of local blood letting. There was also some interesting ideas that were tried or talked about and have great possibilities for experimentation in the hobby. Some of these were:

1. Running a Gunboat game simultaneously with the main rounds though at a slower turn pace. Things learned here was that we needed a GM constantly for it. We also found that it was only practical to show the end adjudicated results and maybe let the GM handle all retreats. This lead to some funny things and gets rid of all the monkey business of putting messages in your orders. I suggested a further refinement of the idea to take teams of three people and have them assigned to each country and set up a box for each country on the table with the map/pieces. Then during the course of the time period any of the three players can place orders in and a random one used by the GM. This helps prevent Mis orders, makes the game more accessible to more people, gives funnier results, and allows for the game result to be truly the result of a team effort. A much better concept than any of the current concepts of a team round.

2. Elliot Olson came up with an excellent idea at one of the mass diners that in systems where there are points for a draw and points for centers, that what we could do is to, once the draw vote is passed, then the game goes for one more game year and it is the center count at the end of that year that is used for the centers. One additional suggestion was that the last year be played Gunboat style so as to avoid mass collusion and to allow for a mad panic scramble at the end. Could be something that we want to fool around with.

3. Tom Hilton had an idea of tournament rankings system having classes or groups such that while you could move up and down in the class based on yearly performance, you could not drop out of a class. This is something that is going to take some more exploration and research on data to support some of the under pinning concepts which I have already started and then will present it to the rating keepers that be for their consideration and input.

Some people would like to go over the games that they were in, but my masochism level is too low for such reporting. I will say that Doug Scott who was on one of my early boards as Germany to my Italy, did an excellent job and showed why he was deserving of the win...which as it turns out is his first tournament win in 8 tourney's. Well done...

Edi

HUSKYCON

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Thu, 12 May 2005 15:00

HuskyCon 3 Announced!

"Graham Woodring" <gramageinc@hotmail.com>

I know you've all been waiting for it, and here it is! The third consecutive HuskyCon is coming this August!

For those of you who don't know, HuskyCon first started as just a little get together of friends for Diplomacy back in 2002. Now, just three years later, HuskyCon has grown in leaps and bounds, last year we had almost 40 players and 13 boards over the weekend.

Once again Chez Woodring will play host to HuskyCon; all out of town players are more than welcome to stay at my house for the duration of the tournament, and all Diplomacy playing will occur at my home. And the best part is, it's absolutely free! That's right, all you have to do is get to my house on Long Island, New York, and you can stay at my house, have delicious home cooked meals by my parents, and enjoy good times, all for free.

Space is limited (about 6 or 7 spare beds), so getting a spot on a bed is on a first come, first serve basis, so hurry up and let me know you're coming! And for everyone else, sleeping bags and makeshift beds are what's in store in my carpeted basement. Trust me when I say that sleeping in my basement is not that bad, I've done it many times before, just sprawled out on the carpet (I might've been drunk at the time, but who knows). I think it's a small price to pay, when you're not actually paying anything, right?

There are hotels in the area, but they all charge exorbitant prices. If you're really set on staying at a hotel, just let me know and I'll set you up. And for those of you who don't know, my family owns a giant 5 foot by 10 foot Diplomacy board that is really, really cool, as well as a well stocked collection of other games to play.

A weekend stay at a beautiful, water front property? Gaming, drinking, and, well, lots of drinking? A giant Diplomacy board, you say? And, it's all free? What are you waiting for!

Come one, come all! Last year we had 39 players, and over 15 people stay at my house. I want more people, more games, more fun. I challenge the entire Diplomacy hobby to try to overflow my house with people. Bring it on.

Mackey aka "Graham" aka "Weasel of Destruction"

Chaplain

New York Epsilon

Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity

Thu, 12 May 2005 20:33

Sorry about that, all the alcohol and ... other stuff has killed a lot of brain cells HuskyCon 3 will be August 19-21.

<<<Editor's Note: Maybe if some one sends him an email, he will let us all know where it is and how to get there.>>>

The Caesar Opening By Edi Birsan

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(With thanks to Andy Marshall for EDITING)

In a recent game, an upcoming young player did everything he could as Italy to convince my Austria that I should give him Trieste so that he could build two fleets to attack France. The classic flaw in the approach was that there was absolutely nothing in it for Austria and, in fact, it meant giving Italy something that would weaken Austria and replace a potential Austrian army for an Italian fleet, for nothing strategically or diplomatically useful. Additionally, knowing that he had already agreed with the French to bounce in Piedmont added an element of incredulousness to the plan. Diplomatically, there were no indications that Russia and Turkey would be fighting and, in fact, they had agreed to leave the Black Sea open without any talk of attacking the other. Nevertheless, youth sometimes persists in casting its own illusions around itself and its would-be targets.

Openings do not exist as a strict tactical exercise. They rest within a strategic plan and a diplomatic framework that must be aligned to make everything work. One of the basic problems with new players is that they ignore those dynamics when they decide on their opening moves and thus will take, for example, a Lepanto approach to things when Austria is NOT on board and there are serious worries about time constraints and Russian intentions.

Inspired by these issues, and having just reviewed the history of the Roman expansion into and through Gaul by Caesar and other Romans, here is a full plan for a rather unusual and mutually dangerous opening for the Austrians and the Italians to accomplish Caesar's Western March. Oddly enough, or if this was not scary enough, this plan can work also in one of the most rare triple alliances on the board: I-A-T (more on that at the end).

Diplomatic background:

Absolutely critical is that Italy and Austria have to be reliable to each other and of sufficient mutual comfort that they are willing to try to pull this off. Two experts playing the alliance against a group of mixed veterans and average players is the best background for the play styles that will be needed. Lacking equal expert status then, the Austrian in particular needs to have the highest diplomatic skill for his anticipated dealings with Turkey and Russia.

Further, the relations between the three western powers have to be brought up to a level of chaos-minimally, Germany opening against France directly into Burgundy either as part of the Spring 01 attack or at the least as part of a Fall 01 follow through. England being in the Channel with hostile intent can also replace the German role in the west. Both of them going after France is ideal.

In the east, Turkey needs to be engaged with the Russians. Going to Armenia and bouncing in the Black Sea may appear ideal, but as you want the Turks to build an army and go slow, then having them move Smyrna to Constantinople is probably the real ideal. Slipping into the Black Sea with Russia moving to Rumania may be tempting if there is an I-A-T triple alliance, but a slow deliberate moving Turkey is much better for this plan than an explosive one.

Russia needs to be a reactive player in that he is willing to switch sides, and be encouraged or even directed to change his role in the balance of power as the opening game shifts. This will be critical to the Austrians if they plan to dominate the East as Italy goes to dominate the west.

The integration of the Austrian fleet in the western campaign and the Italian army in the northern campaign also opens up a lot of diplomatic options for causing chaos amongst the remaining players as time goes on and for causing the alliance to be considered as less dangerously linked than it is.

Strategic Concept:

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The idea is to destroy France in the West and get allied fleets into the Mid as soon as possible. Russia is to be weakened in the East by the Turkish attack, so that the Austrian has the option to put the game into the middle period, by turning on the Turks and bringing the Russian on board (after his southern fleet and Rumania have been lost), so that the Russians become the northern fleet builder and secondary alliance member (alias puppet).

This will tip the western front wars combined with the Fleets breaking through the Mid Atlantic. Russia could also provide the one or two critical armies in the center when the Austrians join in a mass attack on Germany from the east and the Italians move through France to the lowlands and then to England (just as Caesar did).

Strategically, the Turks can be brought in by the Italians as a triple alliance (an unknowing client state), being sold on the idea of building armies with the classic division of efforts of Fleet (Italy) vs Army (Turkey) powers, and that, in the middle game, the Austrians will be between them. This of course gives the Italians a flexible fallback plan if the relations with Austria are not as smooth as hoped. However, this is what the superior diplomatic skills of the Austrian player are relied on to prevent.

Tactically:

Overview: The Italians give up the idea of going to Tunis in order to get a fleet into the Gulf of Lyon in the Fall of 1901. This is why the Italians get Trieste. Also, in the Fall of 01, the Austrians move their fleet to the Ionian and shift their armies to the south. The Austrian fleet then goes from there to Tunis to make up for the loss of Trieste and becomes the third alliance fleet able to force the Western Med in the Fall of 02, under most circumstances. Additionally as the alliance advances, the Austrian fleet becomes a vital support unit and an alliance insurer just as the Italian army in the East moves up along the German border to the Russian front doing more or less the same sort of thing.

Options: Italy must be in Piedmont in the Spring and has to decide how to play the Fall 01 response to the French opening depending on what it is. With full hope of getting Trieste, Italy can (if the French are in both Spain and Burgundy) support Spain to Marseilles in the Fall of 01 for the hysterical pulled offside trick to defeat a self-bounce.

If the German is in Burgundy in Spring 01, the Italians could support the Germans into Marseilles with the knowledge that he will be ejected by the Italians in the next move, or he could try for two builds and go for Marseilles himself. If Italy gets two builds then he builds Fleet Rome and Fleet Naples and plays Fleet Rome to Tuscany in the Spring of 1902.

The Details:

Spring 1901

Austria

Fleet Trieste to Albania

Army Vienna to Trieste/Budapest

Army Budapest to Serbia

Italy

Fleet Naples to Tyrrhenian

Army Rome to Venice

Army Venice to Piedmont

Fall 01

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Austria
Fleet Albania to Ionian
Army Trieste/Budapest-Serbia
Army Serbia to Greece

Italy
Fleet Tyrrhenian to Gulf of Lyon
Army Venice to Trieste
Army Piedmont (deals with Marseilles however)

Winter 01

Austria
Build Army Budapest

Italy
Build Fleet Naples

Spring 02

Austria
Armies Greece/Serbia/Budapest deal with the East
Fleet Ionian to Tunis

Italy
Fleet Naples to Tyrrhenian
Fleet Lyon/Army Piedmont deal with Marseilles

Fall 02

Austria
Fleet Ionian support Fleet Tyrrhenian to Western Med

The Dangers:

There are mutual periods of danger here. At the first step the Italians in Fall of 01 could go to Tunis and take Trieste, moving Piedmont to Tyrolia. However, this would be done at the expense of having to face the Austrians in the Ionian with an army potentially in Greece that could be convoyed into Apulia and other rude places. Likewise, the Turk, who was on board at the start, has to be clued in that if the Italians double cross the Triple alliance then they have to build a fleet in Smyrna and move so that if the Austrians land an army in Apulia or are bounced out of the Ionian they can follow up. There is also a danger that Turkey will go vulture on Austria rather than balance the power relations; this is another reason why Austria has to have a high diplomatic skill.

The second critical phase is the Spring of 02 when the Austrians can deliver a devastating stab on the Italians by convoying Army Greece to Naples and moving on Trieste, as the Italians move Army Trieste to Tyrolia. This has the potential to cripple the Italians, but again, the Turk can play the critical balance role, moving on Greece from Bulgaria and trying to cut a deal with the Russians for peace against an explosive Austrian set of gains. This is also where the fact of a 'reliant' Austrian player is critical to the survival of Italy.

The third period of danger is when Austria must decide either to make this a real Triple alliance with

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Turkey, swinging north and around to Germany (which might work best in a tournament game that ends in 1907-09), or as probably the preferred plan, to attack Turkey while Russia is still around and will become the secondary ally of the Austrians. Bad timing by the Austrians and Italy is in the driver's seat.

The fourth period of danger is the transition in the west. The Austrians need to avoid having their fleet stuck in a front line corner for too long, such as North Africa, and tempt the Italians to stab as the West collapses faster than the East. The Italians may be getting substantially more builds than the Austrian, in which case the Austrians have to retake Trieste to even things out; this returns the border to an occupied zone of tension.

Maybe because of the dangers and the unusual aspects of the opening and its restrictive diplomatic framework, Caesar's March may be as rare as the original brilliant campaign in Gaul, but there you have it, one more opening for the arsenal.

Team Diplomacy

A Gunboat Approach?

By Edi Birsan

Traditionally the method of approaching a Team Event in a Diplomacy tournament is to have a group of players create a team name and then in one of the rounds of the tournament there is a designation that it is 'the team round' and everyone goes to their individual board with the sum of the scores for that round being compared on a team basis as well as being credited to the individual. Sometimes there are 7 player teams each player assigned to a specific country. Sometimes rather than a single round as the team, the sum of the event's results for the team members is declared. All of these approaches as far as I am concerned, have a fatal flaw: the product of the individual game is not the result of a team effort, it is the result of an individual effort. Even in the cases such as Baltimore where 'cross boarding' is allowed, or at ManorCon where team captains can go between boards, the real result is still the effort of the individual.

One of the major constraints on the team concept is that the individual tournament events are held typically over a Friday night, all day Saturday and half a Sunday and most players given the choice of playing in an individual game or sharing one game with a group will select the individual game. Time constraints cause priorities and after all Diplomacy is at its core an individual egocentric game ride. So what do we do?

At a recent event in Oregon a Gunboat game board was set up on the TD table. Seven players volunteered in secret and were assigned to the game. During the course of the regular individual rounds, the players would slip the TD a set of orders for the game, which proceeded at about half speed. Certain mechanical issues came up and it was a learning experience all round. However, it was the basis of what may be a good experiment for some of the events that have enough people to want a different concept in team games. What I suggest is the following:

There are 3 player or more teams.

There is a Gunboat board set up.

In front of the board are 7 boxes for orders for each of the countries.

Any of the Team members (or all of them) can put in orders into their team's box.

The TD selects at random one of the multiple sets of orders and adjudicates the game.

The TD makes all the retreats unless the player in his orders indicates a conditional retreat.

There is no posting of the actual orders, just the final position and what season the orders are do for...some may want to post the supply center chart with the builds and removals needed.

The game is played at half speed during the entire convention so that each season takes a full year of

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the individual time limits when using a central clock which appears to be the norm these days. The team members can work out amongst themselves if they want one player to take care of certain periods or all of them.

By allowing all members to put in orders, you reduce the No Moves Received possibilities. You also allow for the team members who may become more involved in their individual game to shove off responsibility, as it is needed to someone else in the team as the tournament goes on.

The most important thing is that product of the Gunboat game then reflects the actual combined work effort of the team.

This could be expanded; to allow for the Team Game to be a regular game going at half speed with all the players allowed to talk to each other during their individual games. This again allows for the teams to assist each other in the order writing duties and the diplomacy. For example, one variant would be that in a three player team, one player is responsible for 1901-1903, the next to 1906 and the final to 1909 when the game must end. Most people do not want to be distracted from their regular games, however a three year 'double up' at half speed is not exactly taxing anyone's ability who is in a 'serious' tournament such as an EDC or WDC. Further it allows for the players in the team who get pounded early on to make a greater contribution to the team effort game and thus provide a balancing of playing the game of Diplomacy.

What do you all think?

Diplomacy: The Challenge of Playing Germany Part 2: Opening moves and Tactics.

by Timothy R. Haffey, Sr.

The truth of the matter is that there are a lot of possible openings for Germany but, only two or three have any chance of being used in most games. First you must understand that in the two most common openings, A Ber goes to Kie and A Mun goes to Ruh. The difference is where the F Kie goes.

Denmark Occupation

Here the F Kie goes to Denmark. (A Mun-Ruh, A Ber-Kie, F Kie-Den.) The intent, or at least possibility, of this move is to bounce Russia's Fleet into Sweden. This can be consider an anti-Russian move. But, it can also be used for leverage in diplomatic discussions with Russia. Find out what he is willing to promise you to get into Sweden without opposition. Also, be aware of a sneaky little trick where Russia teams up with England where England attacks Denmark and Russia goes to the Baltic Sea. You go to Sweden and England gets Denmark with Russia in the Baltic. Not good.

A Ruh can be used to support A Kie-Hol in Fall 01 if you think England will try to bounce you there. Or, support France or England into Bel in exchange for an alliance. Trying to take Bel your self is not advised. Even if you got it, it would just make you a target for everyone around you as the only six center on the board. You scare everyone to death and they all jump on you. Let France get six center and get England help you fight the "big guy". However, if France moves to Burgundy you must, I repeat, must move A Ruh back to Mun and you affect on Belgium will be no existent.

Holland Occupation. (A Mun-Ruh, A Ber-Kie, F Kie-Hol.) If you are not interested in bouncing Russia in Sweden, perhaps due to the fact that you already got some concession from him to allow

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him to take it, then, by all means, move the F Kie-Hol. Your A Kie can take Denmark in the Fall. This move provides a much stronger position concern Bel. You now have F Kie and A Ruh to provide support for someone to go into Belgium. Even if France moves to Bur and you have to move A Ruhr back to Mun, you can still offer England support into Bel from Hol in exchange for an alliance. With such an offer England is much less likely to try and move to Denmark for a bounce in the fall. Unless I have a really hostile Russia, I prefer this move to all others.

Burgundy Bounce. (A Mun-Bur.) You should only make this move when you are pretty darn sure you have a hostile France moving to Bur. This bounces him back into Paris. However, he can support himself into Bur anyway with A Mar. But, you will have to move back to Mun anyway if you move to Ruh and he moves to Bur so try for a bounce. If you misjudged him and you get into Bur, oh well, so much the better. Now you have something to talk about.

A word about the so called Sealion Opening. Same moves as for Denmark Occupation. Frances joins force for an attack on England. France opens with F Bre-English Channel, A Par-Gas and A Mar-Spa. In Fall 01 France is suppose to support German F Den-North Sea. Then go from there. I tried to work this out with France when I was playing in a game as Germany. France went to the Eng alright but, he then stabbed me and supported himself into Bel. When I tried it in a different game as France, Germany stabbed me. So, I do not have a very high regard for this opening.

Diplomacy World Interview: Jim Burgess (DW—JB) Interviews Sascha Hingst (SH) & Julian Ziesing (JZ): The Challenge of Playing Germany

DW—JB: This is a little unusual in that I am interviewing two Germans at once, but the focus of the Diplomacy hobby at the moment is turning its eyes toward Germany. The German Diplomacy group has taken over the Diplomatic Corps web site (mostly Sascha Hingst) and is hosting World DipCon (mostly Julian Ziesing) and so I am taking this opportunity to interview both of them together.

SH: OK, some Bios: I never even heard of the game Diplomacy until someone started an email game on the Apolyton forums (a website dedicated to the game of Civilization). That must have been around... 1996 I think. I played a few PbEM games, found other websites for Diplomacy, and ended up on a board with Cyrille Sevin (*Two time WDC World Champion*) one day. When we realized we were both living in Germany, we met. He convinced me to come to Paris for the WDC where I played my first ever FTF game. From there on I just couldn't stop ;-)

JZ: My Dip Bio: After my first brief encounter with Diplomacy at school, without actually playing myself, my brother showed me the DEAC website where I played my first games with a judge, rather unsuccessfully ;-). That was in 2000. One year later I found Ludomaniac.de, a platform that does not only offer standard games and lots of variants with human GM and a website for each game, but also a large vivid community. I felt at home there. Together with 2 other players I founded the German Diplomacy League in 2003, a league-like perpetual diplomacy tournament that attracted more than 60 players and still keeps going (liga.ludomaniac.de). At that time I got more involved with the organisation/administration of the Ludomaniac.de website and community. It was also the year of my first ftf tournament, the German DipCon in Waldkappel. A fantastic experience! One year later, in 2004, I organised the first ftf convention in Berlin, BerliCon, with 40 players. BerliCon was German DipCon in 2005 and will host WDC 2006. In between I organised a NoPress pbem Team Tournament (U-Boot-Cup), created a new tournament system for the German pbem Championships (DM) and founded a dip magazine (*die tatz*). This spring I succeeded Sascha as the vice president of the German Diplomacy Association (DDB). FTF and pbem play are equally interesting to me.

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DW—JB: What is striking about what both of you have said is how fresh and relatively new you both are to the hobby, and how new many of the German players are, but also how you've all jumped into the hobby with both feet and are one of the most vibrant parts of the hobby in the world now. As this summer's World DipCon in the US approaches, people are starting to think ahead to the next World DipCon, can you all give us the basic particulars of dates, location, etc. starting with your Web Site (which I believe is still <http://wdc.diplomacy-bund.de/index.php> so don't bother repeating what we can see on that fun site)?

SH: Julian will have much to say here, but when I think of WDC 2006, what I'm looking for most is the atmosphere. Those who have been to the EDC in Germany will know what I mean: we play and live in the same venue, we spend a weekend together. In Berlin, that venue will be our own hotel in one of the hippest parts of town, with many bars and clubs close by. Of course we have enough space to play other games, or just hang around and talk and have fun. And if the weather permits, we'll even have a BBQ. In Germany, we like to think of ourselves either as powergamers (Edi or Yann would fit in that category) or fungamers. In Berlin, there will be something for both groups.

JZ: You are right about the website. We will keep it updated all the way up until August 2006 and we will publish results, pictures, etc. there afterwards. You will find everything you have to know: how to get to Berlin, registration, accommodation details, costs, who is already registered, schedule, scoring system, tournament rules, Berlin Berlin Berlin, tourism, nightlife, public transport, pictures, and organizational contacts. The tournament will be August 4th - 6th, 2006, that's Friday to Sunday, with 1 or 2 rounds on Friday, 2 on Saturday and 1 on Sunday. Many players will have arrived already on Thursday the 3rd and use it as a get-to-know-each-other and gaming night. It will be no problem to spend a week or so in Berlin for a holiday once you've made your way across the ocean, or to stay a day longer because of your flight time. We will be happy to arrange it for you, possibly at the same hotel. We will stay and play at the "Hotel 4 YOUTH" right in Prenzlauer Berg, the most exciting quarter of Berlin. It's kind of multicultural Bohemian. You step out of the door and find yourself surrounded by student pubs, cafés, Turkish vegetable shops and night clubs. The hotel itself however is very quiet, and we will have it all for ourselves. If you'd like to stay some place different, e.g. at a 5 star hotel, just drop a line and we will help you find it.

DW—JB: I want to emphasize up front your commitment to the cheap price of 100 Euros for the fee that includes hotel and con registration, and we are looking forward to you being the great hosts that we expect, but I keep coming back to that Berlin nightlife, will be allowed to sleep at all??

SH: No. :-) OK, on second thought, you may. After all, we rented an entire Hotel with very nice rooms just for that purpose, haven't we? And you need to be fresh for the sightseeing tours we will organize over the days. Did we tell you about those? The idea is to show you different sides of Berlin. There's the tourist Berlin, the one everybody sees. But there are other Berlins. Some that we are proud of, like the coolest nightlife and most fashionable shopping. And some that we're not so proud of, namely the ruins of what was the capitol of the "Third Reich" If there's interest, we will organize tours for you. Oh, and yes, there's the games ;-)

JZ: It will probably cost even less than 100 Euros because we rented the whole hotel. We just have to make sure that enough people are coming ;-). The idea is that with small rooms with 4 beds max, gaming rooms downstairs, plus walking distance to the city, everybody can decide for themselves how long they want to stay up playing or going out. You are free to stay out all night, but you will always find your way back to the hotel and to your room easily. I mean, it can be exhausting to play 2 rounds on one day, especially with so many good players around ;-)

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DW—JB: Though it is somewhat of a boring question, some people want to know what the scoring system will look like, could you tell us some particulars on how the tournament will be scored and why you like the choices you have made?

SH: This is Julian's Department, but I can tell you that we are still discussing the details there. But basically it is squares modified, 4 rounds out of five (that is subject to change) and a topboard.

JZ: We will play Squares to 1908 or 1909. If modified or not is still to be decided, but it won't change much regarding the way you make points: Balance the rest of the board and top it with as much distance between the topping number of SC's and the second place player as possible. In the end, every dot you get is worth something, and every dot taken from the leaders is worth something. It turns out to produce a lot of long-lasting alliances (because your centers count, not your place) but as many evil stabs (because you need to keep the others small). So it has everything. The squares approach has proven to be a reliable and somewhat fair scoring system in a number of tournaments, so we are on the safe side. It takes too long to calculate your own score during the game, but you can estimate it pretty well. Thus, you won't see the maths specialists running around all the time calculating down to the dot whether they have to stab their ally now or not to be ahead of their competitors on other boards, but you can make decisions based on the expected score outcome. Another good thing about Squares is that everybody scores and it produces a wide range of score numbers and therefore you seldom need tiebreakers. As opposed to C-Diplo, where the places 4-7 hardly score at all, everybody has a reason to fight until the end, even the small countries, and everybody profits from fighting the leaders. We see the fact that a weak board top can be worth less than a shared top or a second place on some other board. However, with 3 decent results you can make it onto the top board, and that's all you need. We chose 1908/09 because it's fast, and we'd rather have more games and a top board than 3 rounds without a top board. A top board means that good luck in the heat draws doesn't decide the tournament and a solo does not automatically ensure you the trophy. You will still have to enter the tiger cage on Sunday and compete with the best. Each player will have to sit out one of the first 4 (or 3) rounds. This way it is no disadvantage if you can't make it to the first round or if you'd like to take an afternoon off to go see Berlin.

DW—JB: Since I like to scoop everyone else in these interviews, can you give me just ONE of your "special event tidbits" that you have planned for the event that is not yet generally known to the Diplomacy Hobby public?

SH: Let's just say there will be a present for everyone, how's that? A nice one!

JZ: As Sascha said, there will be an incentive for every participant, but we won't say what yet ;-)

DW—JB: Lastly about World DipCon, especially for us Americans whose German might be poor or non-existent, will most of your German Diplomacy Association members be able to communicate with us English speakers around the board pretty well? I always enjoy the challenge, but I want to encourage my fellow Americans to put this on their priority list.

SH: No, you will have to learn German before entering the country, it's the law. But we can send you CDs with German lessons :-). Of course English will be the negotiation language in Berlin. And all Germans can handle that. However, if those Californians insist on Spanish, some of us may have to pass!

JZ: Yes, the German players speak English. We didn't have any problems at the EDC in Germany last year. I'll leave the rest of the questions to Sascha because he knows far more about the DipCorps than me. If you want to know anything else just let me know. Best, Julian

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DW—JB: Thanks, Julian, I really appreciate your help, I'm so sorry my summer schedule has led to the long delay in actually getting this out so everyone can see it. And SEE, you stay-at-home Americans? You nailed it exactly, Sascha, you actually can get around in English better in Europe than in some parts of the US. At the same time as this, the German hobby also is taking over the Diplomatic Corps web site (www.diplomaticcorps.org) and already has made some great new changes, all of these being addressed to Sascha. I like the new design and Sascha you shouldn't apologize for it, the site is supposed to be attractive to newcomers! I like the "What's New" feature that highlights the changes you've made already, but can you give us a preview of the coming attractions, especially the new Tournament list with the "tickler E-Mail updates", this sounds neat!? This is the only site where I've seen an announcement about Euro DipCon in Feb/Mar 2006, and I'd like to get an E-Mail when they finalize the date.

SH: Yeah, I'm waiting for that email too. But with the new forum, I hope we will have all the information all the time. Let me talk about that forum first. I know there have been many attempts to introduce those bulletin boards to the hobby. Some were successful, others less so. For DC, I set up the forum, because myself, I started getting confused with dozens of mailing lists and yahoogroups I'm subscribed to. Sometimes I remember that I have read some info or comment, but how will I ever find that one message there again? The DC Forum can change that. Just take the EDC announcement: Toby created the topic, it's there to stay. When they have the date, they add a post to the topic. When someone has a question, another post, later people can start talking about their travel plans there, nothing will get lost and the topic is always easy to find! In fact, we could have an announcement topic for DiplomacyWorld :-)) (**DW—JB:** *I'll definitely add one and tell people about this issue when it gets out.*)

SH: But you wanted to know about the tournament database. The idea is this: you want a central place for the world wide hobby, where TDs can register their Cons with a central database. You also want a central place where players can register and tell that same central database that they are interested in playing. The database should then be able to 1) send an email to every player who is interested in a Con in a certain region. 2) create a link and infopage in the "upcoming tournaments" section. And 3) automatically create the same info on any other website that wants the info. Is such a database possible? It already exists! The German Dip Association has it on the website, it handles the Con info, sends info mails to players and generates Con info pages on other websites, all by itself. Arne Senffleben programmed it and together we will install this database at the Diplomatic Corps website in the coming weeks. The advantages should be obvious: TDs and players have an interest to register their info and requests. When they do, info will always be up to date, unlike websites where webmasters have to upgrade manually. And since the database can generate the info elsewhere, all interested Dip sites world wide could profit from the data in a matter of seconds, fully automatic. Personally, I'm excited about this project!

DW—JB: I just registered on the Corps and checked out the forums pages, but you don't have too much activity yet, would you like to tell us why everyone should register and join all of you?

SH: Hey it's only been online for 3 days and I have not even officially launched and announced it yet! And still 26 people checked in for reading today, which is nice for a start ;-)) Of course, the more people post, the more content we have, the more interesting it will get. For example, I'll start polls soon about Diplomacy. As I said, the forum gives us a platform for Dip talk of all kinds. And it's a way for everybody to post info on a well visited Dip website. Some people prefer mailing lists. But it's hard to keep track of info and mailing lists don't sort the content. The bulletin board does that, which makes it easy to handle. Messages stay there as long as we want. After all, this whole website will be what we want it to be. It's not my website, the Corps idea is that it is everybody's! Eventually, responsibility will pass from me and the German Association to another Dip group. Cheers, Sascha