

Black Frog

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Black Frog

March 25th, 1981

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BLACK FROG is a diplomacy 'zine that emphasizes that Postal Diplomacy is fun to play! The publisher is John H. ('Jack') Masters, 25711 N. Vista Fairways Drive, Valencia, CA 91355. (805) 259-2811.

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Subscriptions to BF are 50¢ per issue, with a minimum new sub for ten issues (= \$5.00).
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Black Frog features postal Diplomacy and postal Cosmic Encounter. Diplomacy game results are normally carried in the sister zine entitled East of Eden. Cosmic Encounter game results will be carried in a sister zine that is going to be entitled Roma.

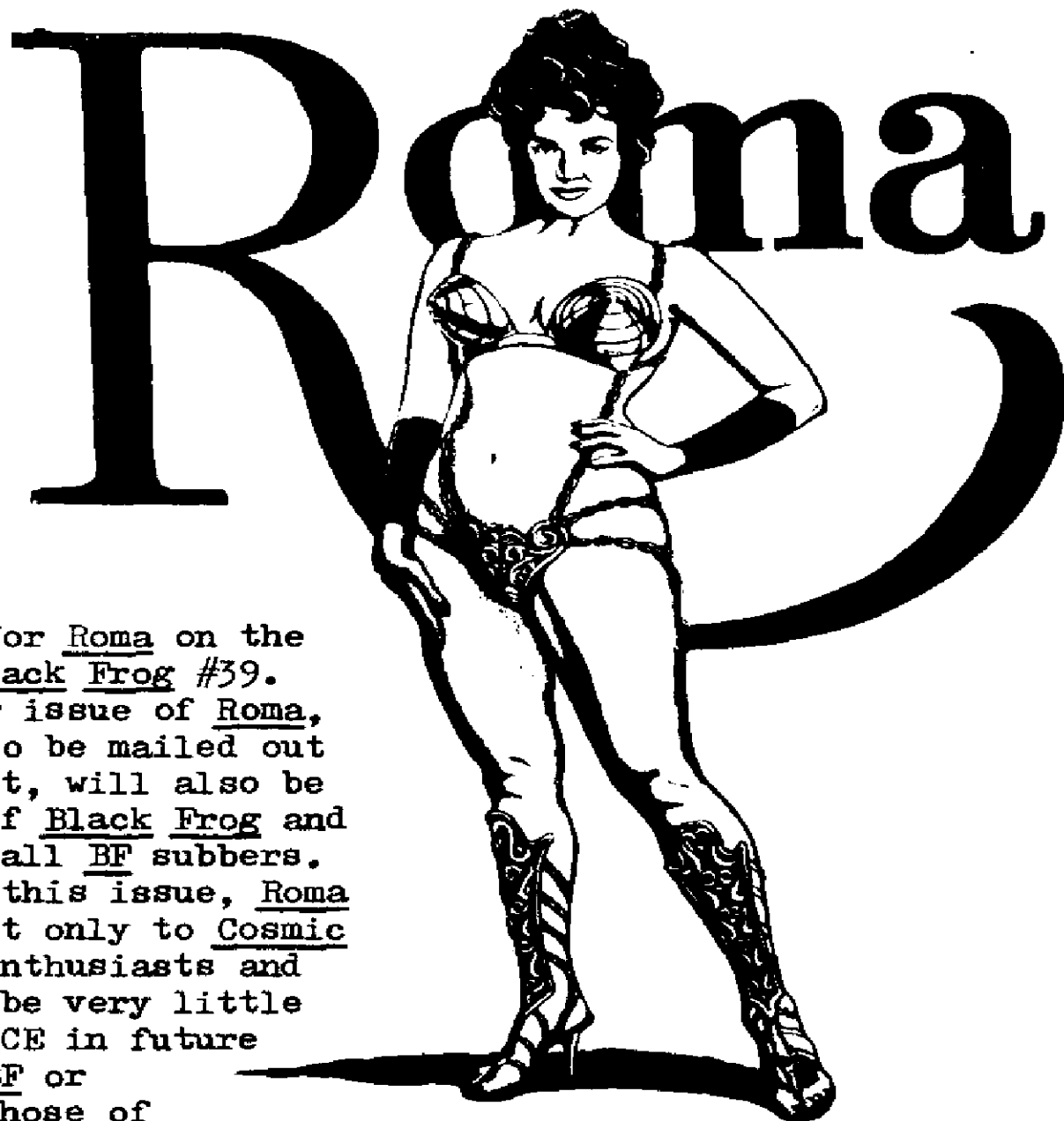
There are present game openings in at least two games of Cosmic Encounter. See Black Frog #37 for details. There is no game fee involved in order to play Cosmic Encounter.

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This issue of Black Frog sports the first new cover design since the inception of the zine. I will continue to use the "old" design in the future but will mix it with this one.

The cover was actually drawn to be used on a new zine that I intended on naming "21". "21" was going to be the vehicle to publish my "percentile" hobby wide ratings system. But that has now changed, the ratings will be published in Black Frog and there will be no "21." This has changed primarily because BF will only rarely carry game results. After this issue game results will be carried almost exclusively in East of Eden and Roma. I have always managed to publish game adjudications within 24 hours of a deadline and the arrangement using East of Eden will allow this to continue as the number of games increases.

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It has been four weeks since Black Frog #37 was mailed out. This is the longest interval between any two issues since issue #9 on July 23rd of last year, but of course three issues of East of Eden went out in the interval. This is, in a way, a 50th anniversary issue, because it is the 50th issue of a "zine" published and mailed out by me since the first issue of Black Frog.

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With the publication of East of Eden and Roma (plus a few other special projects that are not appropriate to discuss here) expect to see Black Frog less often in the future.



Look for Roma on the cover of Black Frog #39. The premier issue of Roma, scheduled to be mailed out on April 1st, will also be issue #39 of Black Frog and will go to all BF subbers.

After this issue, Roma will be sent only to Cosmic Encounter enthusiasts and there will be very little said about CE in future issues of BF or EoE. For those of

you not yet familiar with Cosmic Encounter, I encourage you to try it--and to try one of my postal games--I think you will like it.

Several have wondered where I came up with "Roma" as the name of the 'zine. Well Cosmic suggests Comic to me and the CE games are going to be named after comic book heros. That goes for the 'zine itself. Roma was not one of the better remembered comic book heroes, but she is genuine and I thought that she would make a better looking cover than Plasticman or The Flash or whatever.

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MASTERSCON II, A CORRECTION. Masterscon II, a ftf Diplomacy get together at my home was announced in EoE #4 as being on May 5th, 1981. It will be on April 5th on Sunday at 9:00 A.M. All are invited.

BOB ARNETT AND THE MATTER OF TRUST

Postal Diplomacy is a very cruel game, particularly when you consider what it can do to one's basic personality or even basic moral fiber. Take, for instance, the case of Bob Arnett, a person who was for year after year voted the most trusted Insurance Salesman in America. So voted until he took up Postal Diplomacy that is.

I am a personal friend of Bob's and I can now relate, for the first time, the true story of how he achieved this title--and how he lost it.

Bob Arnett was born in Volkersburg, Pennsylvania (a Philadelphia suburb), the only child of an upstanding Baptist minister and a housewife. When Bob was only seven years old, his mother sent him to the store for a quart of milk. Bob saw a lady drop a dime on the floor of the store. He picked it up and gave it to her. The lady was so impressed that she patted little Bob on the head and said, "Someday you will be the most trusted insurance salesman in America."

These words so impressed Bob that he never forgot them. The incident completely changed Bob's life, because from that moment on, he knew exactly what he wanted to be when he grew up.

Bob attended George Washington High School and he was the only student that the teachers there would trust to clean the blackboards. He was the only boy in all of eastern Pennsylvania that parents would trust to go out with their daughters. Bob never violated their trust, and most of the girls he went out with reported that he was the most boring date that they ever had.

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After finishing high school, Bob enrolled at George Washington University where he majored in Trustworthiness with a minor in Integrity.

Although he had a brilliant record in scholarship, his social life suffered because the word was out that Bob could be trusted not to make a pass at a girl. The coeds at GWU refused to have anything to do with him.

One time, while sitting under a cherry tree, Bob started having doubts about still wanting to be the most trusted Insurance Man in America. He confided to his mother, "Maybe I should go into law or politics instead." His mother, always sympathetic, consoled him and said, "I know it's very hard not to lie and cheat and mess

around in convertibles, but someday if you stick to your vows and become the most trusted Insurance Man in America, women will throw themselves at your feet, and you will never have to do without again."

It was difficult for Bob, but he did stick to his vows and eventually graduated from college "magna cum virgin". Then he went into the insurance industry, which many have called the oldest racket in the world. Bob worked hard at the "racket" however, and by 1977 had achieved his lifelong ambition--he was unanimously conceded to be the most honest insurance man in America.

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Somehow Bob met and married Kay (the details on this are a little sketchy) and moved to Virginia.

He had reached his self imposed pinnacle of success, but something went very very wrong. It started Christmas of 1978 when Bob's wife Kay (still a virgin after four years of marriage) bought Bob a Diplomacy set as a Christmas present.

Something, possibly the little wooden blocks, seemed to intrigue Bob and very shortly he had signed up to play the game postally.

The Most Honest Insurance Man in America was everybody's first choice as an ally and all of Bob's games started very well. His Russia in 1979AI had six allies doing his bidding. In 1979KE the other players were all trying to see who could provide Bob's France the most support each season in order to gain his alliance. But no matter what he said, he found the other players not only believing him but more than anxious to help him. That is how it was in 1979Z where he convinced George Pyfrom (Austria) to let him (Italy) into Trieste in S'01 in a Key Lepanto opening.

Slowly things changed as Bob realized what a powerful weapon his honesty (rather his reputation for honesty) could be. Completely convinced of Bob's amiable intentions towards him, George Pyfrom was wiped out in 79Z; similar fates fell to Dan Kuszynski (Germany in 79AI) and Dave Martin (Italy in 79KE). This list could go on and on--but the reader can well understand what has happened to Bob. After achieving great success (early success that is) in a game by his dishonesty, Bob's whole life changed.

In the Diplomacy hobby, Bob's reputation for honesty is gone now. Few, if any, players believe a word he says anymore. For every Paul Smyth or Kirby Garrett that he has wiped out, there is a Walter Blank or a Kevin Mooney

that has found him out in time to salvage the game. Bob still starts a new game, every now and then, but his new games are a lot harder going than the early ones--when he was still The Most Trusted Insurance Man in America.

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Outside of the hobby, Bob's life has undergone a lot of change too. He is still married to Kay, still lives in Virginia and still sells insurance. The fact that he is no longer the Most Trusted Insurance Salesman in America, is only one of many subtle changes that have taken place in his life. Bob has children now, at least seven of them, and only one of them is Kay's.

Recently Bob was standing in line in a super market to buy a bottle of Seagrams. The little, old lady in front of him was cashing her social security check and buying a bottle of milk. This activity seemed to take quite a bit of time and this was rather annoying to Bob. A quarter fell out of her purse and rolled down the counter to where Bob was standing. Bob suddenly remembered an event from long ago in his past. His eyes became wet as he thought back of his childhood in Volkersburgh, PA. Bob picked up that quarter and put it in his pocket. He still has it to this day!

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(The above story of Bob Arnett is purely fictional and intended in satire only. Any resemblance in name or otherwise to any person in the hobby (whether living or dead) is strictly intentional.

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CURRENT STANDINGS: BLACK FROG TROPHY DERBY

Twenty-eight BF Diplomacy players (those in the Four Horseman game series) are competing to play in the "Fifth Horseman" game for the coveted Black Frog trophy. The player from each country with the best percentile ranking after the 1905 season will go into the "trophy game".

Standings, through the 1903 season, are updated here. Townsend and Lew seem to have the inside track for the weakly contested English and Austrian berths. Kuszynski and Burnett are pulling away in the German and Turkish bids. All others, and especially France, remain very hotly contested. Gallagher is ahead, by a few points, in the battle for the French position, but Carson and Albrecht are closing fast. Italy is also quite hotly contested, but Schiwautz could pull away from the pack.

<u>country</u>	<u>player</u>	<u>game</u>	<u>1901</u> <u>perc.</u>	<u>1902</u> <u>perc.</u>	<u>1903</u> <u>perc.</u>	<u>average</u>
AUSTRIA	Lew	80hs	63	41	38	47
	Cusack*	80id	11	18	38	22
	Schaller	80hr	33	22	07	21
	Giddings	80hu	02	18	14	11
ENGLAND	Townsend	80hu	41	62	53	52
	Grabar	80id	68	37	35	47
	Perlmutter*	80hr	41	37	03	27
	Colombo	80hs	24	15	08	16
FRANCE	Gallagher	80hu	99	66	83	83
	Carson	80hr	62	75	95	77
	Albrecht	80hs	45	75	83	68
	Guajardo	80id	82	75	39	65
GERMANY	Kuszyński	80hs	54	72	81	69
	Carter	80hr	70	50	57	59
	Mercer	80id	87	50	30	56
	Rodriguez	80hu	09	07	13	10
ITALY	Schiwautz	80id	70	91	95	85
	Schwartz	80hu	89	78	81	83
	Hanson	80hr	48	63	81	64
	de Vries	80hs	28	31	62	40
RUSSIA	Conner	80hu	82	56	83	74
	Tilley	80hr	82	56	72	70
	King	80hs	70	56	43	56
	Shufeldt	80id	49	43	72	55
TURKEY	Burnett	80hr	51	65	70	62
	Hartman	80hu	51	42	53	49
	Mooney	80id	74	42	21	46
	Hart	80hs	27	42	53	41

A SECOND TROPHY GAME

In response to popular demand, there will be a second trophy game to start in 1982. Players in 80KJ (V.I.P.), 81K (Greed) and new game (Lust) and the 2nd place finisher from the "Four Horseman" series, will compete for the honor of being in it. As in the contest for the first trophy game, you will be competing against the others playing your same country only. In the percentile rankings for the 2nd game, the percentiles will be averaged through the 1906 season--unlike the first one when they will go only through the 1905 season.

The first postal Cosmic Encounter game ever has started and was announced in East of Eden #3. This game is entitled "Batman" and one of the players is my stepson, Kevin Buckalew, who lives at my address. All players were informed of this situation in the gamestart and I anticipated no problems. However, I have received the following letter from Mark Lew.

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((letter from Mark Lew, in part ...))

"Dear Jack,

..... About 'Batman'.

Having Kevin Buckalew in a game is not at all suggested by me. Having his son in a game is one of Oaklyn's charges ((I assume Mark means .. one of the charges against Oaklyn)). 'He will have no unfair advantage' I challenge that. Are you going to make him mail his orders in? Will he have to wait for the game report to arrive in the mail? If you do make him mail, he can send his orders on a postcard safely and the others can't, he has the opportunity to try to get a slip of the tongue out of the GM more often and less expensively, etc. The list goes on and on.

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Mark Lew"

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((a reply to Mark Lew))

For one thing Mark, this is Cosmic Encounter and not Diplomacy. The Cosmic Encounter game is being play-tested in order to try postal rules that I have derived. It is not part of a large hobby participation as is the case in Diplomacy. In Diplomacy a large number of people play for pure enjoyment, but many others play for ratings (some, maybe most of us play for both). Because of this there is a concern about something that might make a Diplomacy game irregular. If Kevin wanted to play in a postal Diplomacy game, I would not let him play in Black Frog. There are a dozen good zines that he could play the game in. But he wants to play CE and there are no other places to play it postally.

Similar things are not unheard of in Diplomacy by the way. In 1979KE (the R1 game in Retaliation) GM Dick Martin's brother Dave was the starting Italian player.

This game has not been called irregular and, as far as I know, nobody has equated Dick Martin to Bernie Oaklyn because of it. I see no real difference between the situation with Dave Martin in "R1" and the situation with Kevin in "Batman".

If you get copies of Everything (the official publication of the Boardman numbers custodian) Mark, you might be interested in 1980LG, 80LH, 80LI, 80LJ and 80LK. These games, being played in a 'zine called Tel Amifir's Journal, all feature Bruce Stewart as both a GM and a player. Bruce Stewart certainly has a great opportunity for unfair advantage wouldn't you say? Is there anything wrong with a game like this being played? ABSOLUTELY NOT! However, in fairness to the part of the hobby that is concerned about ratings, the game should not be rated. Lee Kendter has noted this fact and has declared the game irregular.

In the case of Bernie Oaklyn, the charges against him are quite different. (I say charges because he has not admitted to or been convicted of anything--although the circumstantial evidence is overwhelmingly high.) Bernie is accused of placing James Alan (who is alledged to be Bernie's son) in several Diplomacy games that he GM'd with the two of them conspiring to conceal the facts of their close relationship. This, by the way, is, in my opinion, one of the minor charges that have been levied against Bernie.

As for your other questions. No Kevin will not have to mail in his orders. No he will not have to wait for the zine to arrive in the mail to get the results. No, it is not advisable for others to mail there orders in on a postcard because Kevin could well see them and may have a considerable advantage if he did. If anybody is really upset about having to send their orders in with an 18¢ stamp instead of a 12¢ postcard (after getting a free game and free 'zine for agreeing to take part in the mail play testing of CE) I will happily refund them the balance of 6¢ each month. However, Charles Letcher no longer gets Black Frog and I can only think of one other subber who might be this picky.

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I would appreciate any comments or feedback from others in regards to the situation discussed above.

1980HR

War

F' 1904

Germany and especially France improve positions in the west while Turkey takes initiative in the east. ...England hangs on without Perlmutter ...

ENGL (CD)	A FIN (h).
FRAN (Carson)	F Gol-TYR; F TUN(h); F Mao-WES; <u>A MAR-Pie</u> ; F Bre-MAO; A BUR(h); F Lon-NTH; A LPL(h).
GERM (Carter)	<u>A EDI-Nwy</u> ; <u>F NWN(c)</u> A Edi-Nwy; <u>A DEN-Swe</u> ; F Kie-BAL; A Mun-SIL; A BER(s) A Mun-Sil.
ITAL (Hanson)	F Apu-NAP; <u>A VIE(s)</u> A Tri; A TRI(s) A Vie; <u>A PIE-Mar</u> ; <u>A VEN-Pie</u> ; A TUS(s) A Ven-Pie.
RUSS (Tilley)	<u>A STP-Nwy</u> ; <u>F SWE(s)</u> A Stp-Nwy; <u>A BUD-Vie</u> ; A GAL(s) A Bud-Vie; A War-PRU; <u>A Rum-Bud</u> /dislodged must retreat Ukr, Sev or OTB; <u>F Bla-Rum</u> /dislodged must retreat Sev, Arm or OTB/.
TURK (Barnett)	F Con-BLA; F ANK(s) F Con-Bla; A Ser-RUM; A BUL(s) A Ser-Rum; A Alb-APU; F ION(c) A Alb-Apu.

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Note: There was a GM typographical error for the spring 1904 season; the Turkish order F Smy-CON was mistakenly typed as A Smy-CON. This unit, which is now in the Black Sea, is and always has been a fleet.

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1904 supply center chart

England:	Nwy	1 ..even
France:	Home, Bel, Por, Spa, Lon, Lpl, TUN ..	
	9 build 1
Germany:	Home, Den, Hol, Edi	6 ..even
Italy:	Home, Vie, Tri, Tan	5 .. remove 1
Russia:	Home, Swe, Bud, Rum	6 .. remove 1
Turkey:	Home, Bul, Gre, Ser, RUM ..	7 .. build 1

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The deadline for Winter 1904 orders is Tuesday April 7th, 1981 at 12:00 noon PST. Please note that while Russia has to effectively remove one unit, depending upon his retreats he may possibly be even or building one unit in the winter.

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1980HR Press:

MOSCOW to MUNICH: The question is; who is attacking who?

GERMANY to RUSSIA: Have you considered taking up mind-reading as a vocation? Or is it that my moves are so obvious?

PARIS to BERLIN: The only German boxers I don't care for are the ones that bite.

PARIS to EUROPE: Isn't it a disgusting fact of life that those powers who are doing better than their neighbors also seem to take up the majority of space in the press section? Good time for me to shut up, huh?

BURGUNDY to MOSCOW: I don't know, who do you think I should be stabbing?

MERION COUNTY to WAR: See how much better I am doing now?

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1981??

Last

W' 1900

A new invitation Diplomacy game to be played in EoE, looks for participants!

This is the "honor role" game which has had some discussion in the past. The game will start as soon as I have confirmations from seven players. The game will be carried completely in EoE and participants will be competing to play in the 2nd BF trophy game. Country assignment will be by random draw, except nobody will play a country that he is already playing in another BF game.

The invitational list is as follows:

1. Jeff Albrecht
2. Allen Wells
(alternate Mary Beck)
3. Joe Gallagher
4. James Townsend
(alternate Fred Townsend)
5. Steve Colombo
6. Al Giddings
7. Peter Ashley
(alternates)
8. Keith Sherwood
9. Dave Manuel

Please let me know as soon as possible if you want to participate!

1980id

Death

S'04

A brief summer interlude!

France (Guajardo) A Spa r to Por/annihilated!
Italy (Schwartz) A Mun r to RUH; F Mao r to Por/
annihilated!
Russia (Shufeldt) A Bul r to GRE.

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Fall 1904 orders will be due on April 21st, 1981 at
12:00 noon PDT.
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THE CHAMBER: New 'Zine Plug

Dave Manuel just beat the postal rate increase when he mailed out the first issue of his new 'zine, The Chamber on April 21st. The 'zine is a nice looking product with a Black Frog like format. Since I furnished Dave with Black Frog mailing labels, I am sure that most of you received a sample of his first issue, so I won't waste a lot of print describing it.

Personally, I had hoped that Dave would have waited a bit before undertaking a publication. But Dave has a lot of enthusiasm that could not be contained. Considering how new Dave is to the hobby and that he is 14 years old, he is off to a good start.

Dave may well want to rethink and rework his house-rules just a bit. Especially number (11) that states that a concession can be made if it is simply "liked" by a simple majority of the people in that game. A one supply center power could be voted a win by concession if two other players (with one supply center each) voted for it, over the objections of two other players controlling 31 supply centers between them. A few of Dave's other house-rules seem to be patterned after Black Frog's, so they can't all be bad.

Dave picked up and printed a player "black list" from Bruce Linsey's Voice of Doom. This was Bruce's list of people who NMR'd out of games in VOD. Not knowing anything of the circumstances of these people of his own knowledge, I think Dave used a bit of poor judgement in reproducing it. I know that Jay Shufeldt was rather upset by it and rightfully so.

..... What this hobby needs is

..... A full fledged official hobby

QUEEN

The hobby mascot poll is not yet finished, but it is already time to move on and ahead to bigger and better things..... the hobby QUEEN poll.

Who should our hobby "Queen" be? Queen Victoria, who ruled England in 1901? Kathy Byrne, Jennifer King, or some other real life Diplomacy player? How about Jean Marie Corfeld? Or Sue Martin? Or Mickie McAuley? The last three all being notable female personalities involved, to some extent in the hobby, but not being players.

Or how about Marina Javernik--remember her? Jane Proskin, who could forget her? Martha Cole? Mona Lisa?

Of course we could have hobby wives, mothers, sisters, daughters, etc., sweethearts, fiancée, lover or whatever. Phyllis Byrne, Pam Overby, Jeri Overby, Char Brown, Mona Berch, Linda Simpson, Kay Arnett.

And don't forget Mary Beck!

Or it could be a familiar face from completely outside the hobby; Bo Derek, Mary Tyler Moore, Candy Loving, or even Peggy Gemignani.

Marion Bates???? Nah!

In any case nominations must be published in a North American 'Zine before May 15th, 1981. Photographs would be helpful, but in good taste please. A list of all candidates will be published in Black Frog in late May, and votes may be cast through Black Frog. After a suitable polling period, the votes will be tabulated and Black Frog will declare a hobby queen. For more information write to 25711 N. Vista Fwvs Drive. Valencia, Ca 91355.