

B R O B D I N G N A G

 Brobdingnag #63 1966AV (COA) 1966AQ (S'07) 8 June 1967

Game 1966AV

HEADQUARTERS TRANSFERRED

Players should take note of the following changes of address:

Richard Shagrin, playing Germany, will have address

2407 24th Loop,
 Sandia Base,
 Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87116.

The address becomes effective on June 15th and will, I believe, remain valid through the summer.

Charles Wells, playing England, will have temporary address, after June 20,

c/o Math Department,
 Bowdoin College,
 Brunswick, Maine, 04011.

This is a temporary address, for some four or five weeks. Date of termination will be published in a subsequent issue.

Game 1966AQ

Spring 1907

FRENCH AND RUSSIAN FORCES IN CONTACT SWITZERLAND TO NORTH SEA

CZAR AND SULTAN SWAP TERRITORY IN BALCANES.

The moves:

RUSSIA (Reinsel): Fleet Skagerrak support fleet Baltic to Denmark. Fleet Baltic to Denmark. Fleet Black Sea to Bulgaria (East Coast). Army Sweden support fleet Baltic to Denmark. Army Berlin to Kiel. Army Bohemia to Galicia. Army Venice to Trieste. Army Trieste to Serbia. Army Budapest to Rumania. Army Sevastopol support army Budapest to Rumania. Army Moscow to Ukraine. Army Munich support army Berlin-Kiel.

FRANCE (Thompson): Fleet Tunis stand. Fleet Marseilles to Gulf of Lyon. Army Gascony to Burgundy. Fleet Western Mediterranean support fleet Tunis. Army Belgium to Holland. Army Burgundy to Ruhr. Army Edinburgh to Yorkshire. Fleet London to English Channel. Fleet English Channel to Mid-Atlantic Ocean. Army Picardy to Belgium.

TURKEY (Greene): Fleet Ionian Sea to Adriatic Sea. Fleet Naples to Ionian Sea. Fleet Rome stand. Fleet Albania to Trieste. Army Rumania to Budapest. Army Smyrna to Armenia. Fleet Ankara to Black

Sea. Fleet Constantinople support fleet Ankara to Black Sea. Army Serbia support fleet Albania to Trieste.

GERMANY (Nelson): Army Holland to Norway, Fleet North Sea convoy army
Holland to Norway. Fleet Denmark to Kiel.

The Russian army Trieste is dislodged and has Tyrolia, Vienna and Budapest open for retreat. The Turkish army Rumania is dislodged and is annihilated, as there are no available spaces for retreat. The German Fleet Denmark is dislodged and has only Helgoland Bight available for retreat. Deadline for retreat orders is Thursday, 22 June 1907. All players are strongly urged to submit their moves for Fall 1907 at that time, making them conditional, if necessary, on the retreats. This is, of course, not demanded.

PRESS RELEASES

Teheran, 2 March. The Persian government continues to act as go-between for the Russian and Turkish governments' messages to one another. Today's north-bound message read: Abdul Osman III to Big Brother. We will always look back on those six years with the fondest memories, but, Your Imperial Majesty, you grow too big too fast without any sort of brake. Let us face it, you had the taste of victory in your mouth.

That message passed another one going in the opposite direction, reading: Big Brother to Abdul Osman. Sure I'll trade you my worthless fleet in the Black Sea for Rumania any day of the week. And on Sunday I'll take Serbia also! Beware of Big Brother!

Zurich, 5 March. The Swiss government has been asked by Turkey to present the following note to France: Hufta A. Pasha to the Earl of Paris. We will respect this line you have named, just make sure you apply the same restraint on Russian growth in the north. This could be an interesting three way contest, with Germany quite pivotal. We of Turkey salute the Kaiser.

Gunam near Mt. Talo, Abyssinia, 19 March. A massive battle was fought between Menelik's army and the combined Turkish army of Africa and the Sudanese army. Approximately 70,000 Abyssinians and 25,000 Sudanis were killed. The telling effect was the massive Turkish firepower and the three batteries of Creusots. Though not decisive, the advance on Addis Ababa continues.

Moslem revolts have broken out through Harar and Somali. British-Indian troop elements have landed at Berbera, Magadiscio, and Mombasa, and the Aden garrison continues to grow in strength, but is in a precarious situation, surrounded, as it is, by Arabs and the Turkish army of Arabia.

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The best soldier is not warlike; the best fighter is not easily angered.

Lao-Tsze (circa 800B.C.; I wonder what Chinese students of war feel about this doctrine today.)

Germany

by John Smythe

In an article in Graustark, #41, I attempted to initiate a discussion on the problem of Germany and the other "middle powers". I will try again. First, let me begin by defining some terms. A "middle power" is a country surrounded by three or more potential enemies. Please note that I underlined the word "surrounded". Germany and Austria-Hungary are middle powers. Germany with potential enemies to the east, to the south and to the west is surrounded. England, though faced with three potential enemies, fights on a single front, the Scandinavia-North Sea-English Channel front. A middle power is usually very meek and mild mannered when conducting diplomacy, for it must fear a two front war.

A "quasi-middle power" is a country possessing excellent natural defenses, in contrast to the exposed positions of Germany and Austria-Hungary. Though surrounded, its natural defenses permit it to be relatively aggressive in conducting diplomacy. Though a two-front war is a possibility, the quasi-middle power need not overly worry about it. France and Italy are quasi-middle powers.

Finally, there are the very strong "peripheral powers". Out on the edge of the playing board sit Turkey and England. Not surrounded, and possessed of superb natural defenses (anyone who has attempted to overcome a well played Turkey or England knows what I am talking about), they are overbearing in manner, even offensive at times, when conducting diplomacy. Turkey is guaranteed at least one build the first year, and England can only be denied Norway if faced with the improbable Russo-German-French alliance. They need never fear a two-front war. Their only problem is to limit the length of their single front. I leave it to the reader to classify Russia.

The first objective of a middle power is to achieve some measure of security by eliminating its neighboring peripheral or quasi-middle powers. To make an assault upon a fellow middle power is to find nirvana. The usual method is to enlist the aid of a quasi-middle power to fight the peripheral power or, though not as strong an arrangement, to ally with the peripheral power to defeat a quasi-middle power. Then as the middle power overcomes its first victim it prepares itself for its forthcoming battle with its ally. And if it has prepared well, the middle power may even survive the conflict or, better, force the peripheral, or quasi-middle, power to seek elsewhere for additional supply centers.

Germany, if she harbors any hope of surviving the game, must first eliminate either England or France, preferably the former. To attack either Russia or Austria-Hungary is to find nirvana. (I made the error, twice! In 1965Q and in Norstrillia I allied with England to defeat France, consistent with my theory. Instead of following through, by then attacking England, I made the error of attacking Austria-Hungary. Of course, I paid dearly for my foolishness. Moning and Castora are much too fine players to let such an opportunity pass

them by. I really should have known better).

Look at the assets given Germany. She is surrounded on three sides. Munich is usually threatened on the second move. Her convenient supply centers, unlike those of France and Italy, also are threatened on the second move by a potential enemy. (A very nasty situation.) (Here is where I disagree with the manner in which the game is set up. In the real world, Germany was capable of fighting on two fronts against three enemies. Only the intervention of the United States saved her enemies. The Germany in Diplomacy is a mere shadow, a farce, of the real-world Germany. I still believe that Germany in Diplomacy should be given three armies and one fleet to start the game. But...???) Germany should be able to gain one supply center the first year, perhaps two.

Even with two builds Germany cannot overcome France or England. She must seek assistance. To ally with England means giving England a foothold on the continent and the opportunity to become a super power. In simple terms, England will possess the power to parry every German thrust. To make matters worse, Germany's supply centers (Belgium, Holland, and Denmark) will be open to capture, while England's won't be. England surely will control the North Sea and the English Channel. Germany faces an impossible war. The only other alternative is to trust England and go after either Russia or Austria-Hungary, a very poor second choice.

An alliance with France is Germany's best hope for survival. A Franco-German alliance can eliminate England after a long and nasty campaign. ~~What does Germany gain?~~ The defeat of England usually leaves Germany in control of the North Sea and the Norwegian Sea, giving protection to her lowland supply centers and Denmark. Also Edinburgh will be hers. Norway may belong to Germany, if Russia permits. Finally, it is not too difficult for France and Germany to disengage and demilitarize their borders. But once England is gone, where may Germany turn? She has at least two fleets, maybe more. To fight Austria, or her conqueror, Germany needs armies. And the border between Austria and Germany is not littered with convenient supply centers. A German war with Austria is usually long and difficult and is without immediate rewards.

The only convenient supply centers, Norway and Sweden, are owned by Russia. Also, a war with Russia permits the use of the fleets. So it would seem that Germany and Russia would come into conflict over Scandinavia...not too bright a prospect.

The above is enough to demonstrate that Germany is faced with what amounts to an impossible position. For I have attempted to give Germany the best of all possible situations. I think it is to the best interest of England and France to smash Germany. Both gather in a wealth of supply centers. And both are then in an excellent position to disengage and go their merry ways. And in the early years France and England need not worry about Russia and Austria. For the first three years Russia, Austria, Turkey, and Italy are engaged in what is usually an impossible alliance structure for control of the Balkans and Asia Minor.

There is one hope for Germany. If France and England go after Germany, Russia and Italy must begin to fear for their future. Once Germany is gone, nothing prevents France from turning on Italy for mastery of the Mediterranean. And nothing prevents England from over-running Scandinavia and northern Russia. Germany just might be able to enlist the aid of Italy and Russia. That is, if those two powers are not fully engaged elsewhere.

What Germany really needs is for England, or France, or both, to be played by weak players. Then Germany has a chance. Otherwise, dear reader, forget about winning when you receive Germany as your country. You'll be lucky to survive, so don't delude yourself into believing that you can win. You can have one consolation: France is even more difficult to play.

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Country Performance

In Lonely Mountain, #35, Charles Wells suggests that there should be many statistics compiled on completed games, both for the players, and for the countries. In the last issue of EROB, in the reply to a letter from Chris Wagner, it was suggested that tabulated data on games might be more useful than a rating list. While the preparation of such a tabulation would be an arduous task for all Diplomacy players to be listed, the same type of thing can very readily be done for the seven countries, at least as far as completed games are concerned. Results of 7-man regular games completed to date are given below:

	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	
	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
	3	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	
	B	A	B	C	D	A	E	H	I	L	S	T	D	E
England	E	E	S	W	S	B	W	E	E	E	E	E	W	B
France	E	B	B	S	S	S	S	E	E	E	E	E	S	S
Germany	S	E	S	E	E	S	E	S	B	D	E	E	E	E
Italy	E	E	S	E	B	E	E	W	W	E	B	E	E	S
Austria-Hungary	B	E	W	E	W	E	S	B	S	E	E	E	S	S
Russia	W	E	E	E	E	S	E	E	S	D	E	D	E	W
Turkey	E	W	S	B	S	W	B	E	S	E	W	D	B	E

In this listing W means a win, D a drawn game, B the strongest survivor other than the winner, E means elimination, and S is survival without being winner, getting a draw, or coming second. In the scheme proposed in the last issue, R is also used, indicating a resignation. It is not required here as the country does not resign, whatever the people playing it may do.

That tabulation can be conveniently summarized as follows.

Turkey	3W	1D	3B	3S	4E
England	3W		2B	2S	7E
Russia	2W	2D		2S	8E
Austria	2W		2B	4S	6E
Italy	2W		2B	2S	8E
Germany		1D	1B	4S	8E
France			2B	7S	5E

In ranking the countries wins have been given first priority, draws second, second player position then counted, and finally other survivals. This listing is quite interesting when considered in conjunction with John Smythe's article on a previous page. It seems to confirm impressions of the strengths of the powers relative to one another which he there expresses.

SEALLED BAG

Charles Turner, 24 Boyd Court, Pleasant Hill, Calif.: I was quite interested in John Smythe's comments re rating systems. Smythe's contention that no one primary player motivation exists is, of course, correct. But the conclusion he draws (i.e. that rating systems are of no significance unless they take all the primary motives into consideration) does not follow. For no rating system purports to measure how far a player has succeeded in fulfilling whatever desire it may be that causes him to play this insane game. Rather, the various rating systems measure performance. The existence of a number of different systems indicates that there exist many criteria for judging performance (mean rate of growth, how many persons one outperformed, winning, etc.). The more games are finished, the more I would like to see if my own subjective evaluations correspond with an "objective" method of evaluation of players. Hence I favor rating systems.

And I agree with your reply to John Smythe on all but one point. I feel rating systems are a dis-service to newcomers! Granted that they allow him to have some basis on which to judge the other players, but this is precisely the objection! If I am in a game with a new player I don't want him to attack or ally with me on the basis of my reputation - I want to be judged on the sole basis of my correspondence with him. Suppose, for example, that Smythe enters a game and the neighboring countries are played by a bunch of newcomers. How unfair for them to look at the ratings and conclude, "Oh, my, see how many games Smythe has won. Let's wipe him out before he becomes dangerous!" Far better that John should be able to play the game and win or lose solely on the basis of his own diplomacy.

Of course, the reply to this is that the damage is already done: everyone already knows about Smythe's ability. So, you are right in your conclusion that rating systems are here to stay and that we shall have to live with them.

((+(Strangely, your letter came in the same mail that brought Lonely Mountain #35. Your letter and Charles Wells' editorial both make the same point. You both accept Smythe's premise that a rating system cannot possibly evaluate a player's performance in terms of his inner goal in playing the game. You both reject his conclusion that rating lists must, therefore, be valueless. Needless to say, I agree with you both. jamcc)+))

Hal Maus, 288 Broadway, Space 139, Chula Vista, Calif., 92010.: A question that you might discuss is the subject of removals by the gamesmaster. Now the rules state ((that the removal should be)) the farthest from home and fleets before armies. Now a situation has arisen in an ADAC game where England has a removal to make. It owns two fleets, one in Portugal and one in the North Sea. But, what now constitutes home, since France and Germany occupy all the English home centers, and its only remaining center is Portugal. Do you remove fleet Portugal since it is the farthest from England, or do you remove the fleet in the North Sea, since Portugal might be considered its home in exile?

Retreats. If during the course of printing the moves a retreat must be made, and there is only one available area open, to which the gamesmaster makes the retreat for the player. The gamesmaster knows that the player has the option of either accepting the retreat, or to say that he does not want to retreat, or to submit a retreat order that is impossible, now does the gamesmaster have the right to stick to the original retreat or does he have the option of annihilating the unit.

On the removal part again. It is very nerve racking to have to decide what to remove and what not to remove. I had to call one player and ask him to check his removal, since the one that he gave me was a unit belonging to somebody else. If I had been forced to make the removal I would have had to remove a fleet that was in a strategic position. Or do you interpret the removal to mean that he had in mind the one area closest to the area he mentioned?

((+(On the removal question, I'd remove the fleet in Portugal in preference to the one in the North Sea, since I interpret "home" to be any supply center initially belonging to the country concerned. It is true, of course, that it might be much more to the player's advantage to remove the other fleet. But, if so, he should have himself submitted a removal order.

On the retreat question. As played in EROB the player has the right to opt for removal in such a case. In EROB #42 there was a rather lengthy discussion of this point. See the reply to a letter from Mr. Calhamer published in that issue. A procedure which is essentially the same as EROB's is used in stab, and in Lonely Mountain. Not all magazines play it that way, however. For example, in Graustark, if there is only one space open to a retreating force, the Gamesmaster orders it there and that is the end of the matter. The closest approach

to the basic game is probably the Wild 'n Wooly system, where every retreat order must be submitted by the player concerned, regardless of whether there are 6 spaces open for the retreat or only one. The player, and the player alone, must order the retreat. If not ordered it is removed. The difficulty with this is that it virtually demands five issues of the magazine per game "year". And the games take long enough now, without our adding 40% to the time required to play them. So, as Charles Wells once said, most of us fudge on the issue in one way or another. I think, though, that the players have a right to know what particular fudge is used in any magazine that they play in.

You mention phoning a player to have him correct a badly written order. I have phoned players, in case of non-receipt of moves which I had reason to believe that they had made. (In one case the letter with the moves had been mis-directed by the post office to the wilds of northern Alberta, and it was about two weeks late when I finally received it. I was glad I phoned that time.) However, I am reluctant to phone get amendments of badly written orders. If you once do that, where do you draw the line? The player whom you mention may have been a local or near local player. It was easy to phone him and get a correction of an obvious error. But what happens if next time it is a player who lives across the continent from you? Do you phone him as well? If you don't then there is an immediate question if it is a fair game, where one player is phoned and told of errors in his orders and another player is not. And if you do phone everyone who makes a mistake you will eventually run up an enormous phone bill. So my practice has been to let badly written orders stand. -jamcc+))

John Moning, 318 South Belle Vista, Youngstown, Ohio, 44509.: In EROB No. 59, while discussing publishing schedules, you missed one of the advantages of a tri-weekly schedule such as sTab's. Not only does publishing tri-weekly give me more leisure, and permit me to be a few days late with an issue (as with #31), it also permits me to bot a 10-day deadline on retreats, and get them out to players in time to prevent their having to submit conditional moves. I find this a desirable advantage, since for some reason I have four times as much trouble dealing with two sets of alternative moves as in making my regular moves in a game. The uncertainty introduced into my calculations by not knowing which of two (or three, or four) possible retreats an opponent will make has at times completely unhinged my planning. At any rate, I prefer having "summer" retreats out to players before "fall" moves are due, rather than forcing them to guess. "Fall" retreats are not so important, since "Winter" moves are rarely affected by them.

Again on your discussion in #60 of game fees: One of the primary reasons, I believe, that Wild 'n Wooly instituted the practice of accepting fees with the first move rather than with the application was that in its early days Wild 'n Wooly games often took months to form. A player who applied for a popular country - and early W'nW's list Russia as most popular - might wait 5 or 6 months before his turn came to play Russia in a new game. Brennan believed, and rightly I suspect, that it would be discouraging to ask a prospective player to tie up money for half a year before he got to play. (This is all surmise on my part.) This had a disadvantage, however, in that after six months or so had passed, players who had contracted for games

were often no longer interested. You therefore had the unfortunate cases of many Wild 'n Woolly games where some players never submitted moves.

((+(It seems to me that Wild 'n Woolly has had a rather peculiar influence on the Diplomacy scene. There can be little doubt that it has been the most influential 'zine of all, with the exception of Graustark, where the postal game originated. But it has been largely followed in its vagaries and mistakes, while its very real positive contributions have been ignored. For an example of the latter, note its retreat rule, referred to briefly in the reply to the letter from Hal Haus, above. Wild 'n Woolly had a far better and truer understanding of what is involved in the retreat order than any other 'zine of its time. But it is only now, two years later, that a few others are beginning to take steps to achieve the same effect, by a different method.

On the other hand, to allow absolute freedom of choice of country is not a feasible policy at all. It would only be practical if one could begin a new game every three weeks and if the popularity of the various countries were closely equal. The absolute choice policy would be equivalent to a railway only selling seats which were exactly what the passenger would prefer, and not dispatching the train until some passengers came along who had a preference for a seat over the wheels - certainly no way to run a railroad. The situation is made worse by magazines adopting as their own a payment policy which was made necessary in Wild 'n Woolly by its method of assigning countries, but which is by no means necessary, and actually harmful, in the very different circumstances of the other 'zines.

Another instance of this is in the matter of conditional moves. Brannan, when he began Wild 'n Woolly, saw very clearly that there are five movements per playing "year", and not two or three as was commonly supposed. He geared his publication schedule to that fact. He was then able to state, quite correctly, that no conditional moves were used in Wild 'n Woolly. As we all know, one disciple latched on to the phrase, "no conditional moves" and elevated it to an article of faith. He mouths this shibboleth at frequent intervals, but takes no action whatever to make "no conditional moves" a truly practical policy in his 'zine. In other words, Wild 'n Woolly is a good example to follow, at least in places; if one has as good an understanding of the game as Brannan has. If one hasn't, it can very easily lead one astray.

To get back to the game fee issue, I suppose that any 'zine which has a policy of continuous recruitment, where there are always game openings, will have to use a pay-~~in~~^{at}-first-move scheme. In the nature of the case, it will often have extensive periods with no new game beginning but with several names on the books for the next game. As you suggest, in such cases neither editor nor players would be happy with pre-mature payment. In the case of 'zines with only limited openings, I can't see any advantage in the deferred payment, in spite of arguments which Rod Walker, Doug Beyerlein, and others, have advanced in its favour. It weakens the control which the gamesmaster has of his game; although, of course, to only a slight extent. To that extent, his assurance that he is offering a fair game is lessened. -jamcc))

John Reiner, 361 South Elm Drive, Apt. 4, Beverly Hills, Calif., 90212, wrote to say that he intends to

go ahead with his plans to publish his Diplomacy 'zine, The Broken Line. He still needs a few players for the game forming; write him for details. Those who don't know The Broken Line might be interested in learning that previous issues devoted considerable space to discussions of the world situation. Anyone interested in discussing the inter-action of diplomatic and military events should have no dearth of subject matter these days.

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Newsstand.

Recently, sample copies of, or announcements of, several war gaming magazines have come in. Panzerfaust, Box 280, RD #2, Sayre, Penna., 18840, is edited by Donald Greenwood, Jared Johnson, and others. The price is fifty cents a copy, with a subscription price of \$2. per year. I believe that this covers all fields of war gaming, something like Strategy and Tactics.

Strategy and Tactics, itself, has improved steadily with every issue. It sells for 60 cents a copy, or \$5 per year. The address: Box 65, Adelphia, N. J., 07710.

The Canadian Wargamer, P. O. Box 100, Chester, Nova Scotia, is a mimeographed magazine. No price is indicated but I imagine that a sample could be obtained for the asking; I got mine without asking. It is devoted to miniatures.

The Trumpeter, J. A. Hutchings, c/o The Vancouver Sun, 2250 Granville St., Vancouver 9, Canada. That is the editor's business, rather than personal, address. However, as he states that he is in the middle of a move, it is probably the safer one to use. It also is largely devoted miniatures. Again, no price is indicated.

Diplomacy, as we all know, has its dozens of magazines devoted to the game. Among which is,

BROODINGHAG is a journal of Postal Diplomacy, edited and published by John McCallum, Belston, Alberta, Canada. It currently reports on games 1966AQ and 1966AV. The price is ten cents per copy and subscriptions may be entered for any desired number of issues. Copies of most back issues are also available at the same price.