

BROB D I N G N A G

Brobdingnag #83

Letter Issue

Dominion Day 1968

Recently Completed Games

The following games have been completed since the last issue of BROB:

Game 1966AC

Originating in Costaguana this game was transferred to ADAG in its first year of play. It was won in 1910 by Harold Peck, playing England. It is his first win and BROB would like to congratulate him on it. There is a centre year chart for the game in the latest ADAG which recounts t win.

Game 1966BC

This one also spent most of its life in ADAG, although it originated in that short-lived zine, Euralia. Another win for England, this time by Eugene Prosnitz. Best wishes and many of them, Gene!

Game 1967H

Although Charles Turner, the gamesmaster of Armageddonia, has won a game previously, that earlier win was for a 5-man game. With his recent win in Game 1967H, carried in Miskatonic University, he joins the ranks of winners of 7-man games, having won as Russia. BROB's congratulations.

1967AU

As will be noticed, two of the games mentioned as finishing were played in Hal Maus' zine, A Droite A Gauche, usually called ADAG. As most will know, Hal has been the "friend of all the world" in Diplomacy circles. When a magazine has folded who has always stood ready to take over and complete its games? Hal. And he has been among the most reliable of stand-by players in many zines. It is therefore a real pleasure to congratulate Hal on his own victory, his first, in game 1967AU. This game was Big Brother's game #6, in which Hal played Turkey. As Big Brother does not normally publish a centre year chart for its games, one is given below.

	<u>1901</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>	<u>07</u>
Eng	4	6	7	8	10	11	13
Fra	5	5	5	5	2	1	OUT
Ger	4	5	5	3	1	1	OUT
Ita	3	3/1	2/1	OUT			
A-H	5	5	6	9	9	6	3
Rus	5/4	3	1	OUT			
Tur	5	6	8	9	12	15	18

Magazine: Big Brother, its #6. Gamesmaster, Charles Reinsel. Players: England, Trevor Hearndon. France, Charles Roland, resigned Spring

1904. Germany, Wade Johnston, in disorder from Fall 04. Italy, Conrad von Letzke, in disorder from Winter 02. Austria, Robert Lake. Russis, Greg Warden. Turkey, Hal Naus.

The Rating List.

The last complete edition of the BROB Rating list was given in BROB #81, and it was amended in BROB #82. A further revision is required by the games mentioned above. Completed games now included are, 1963A, B, 1964A, B, D, 1965A, B, D, E, F, G, H, I, L, M, O, Q, R, S, T, U, 1966B, D, L, M, O, AI, AC, AI, AK, AM, AP, AQ, AU, AV, BC, BJ, 1967H, AK, AU. Underlined games are 5-man games and are not counted in the country listing.

Charles Alexander	-12; 19%;	(-33)
John Austin		(+8)
Brian Bailey	-8; 31%;	(-11)
Don Barrows		(+7)
John Beshara (W)	+6; 75%;	(+6)
Douglas Beyerlein	+2; 58%;	(-1)
Edi Birsan	-3; 46%;	(+5)
Dan Brannan	-8; 43%;	(-7)
Richard Bryant	+4; 67%;	(-2)
Art Canfil	-4; 33%;	(-6)
Chuck Carey		(+5)
Michael Childers	+2; 58%;	(+3)
Sid Cochran		(+4)
James Dygert (W)	+16; 72%;	(+24)
Thomas Eller		(+3)
Alan Fisher	-4; 33%;	(-10)
Ken Flethcher		(0)
Louis Gallo		(-2)
Margaret Gemignani	-17; 16%;	(-28)
Al Goggins	-2; 42%;	(-2)
James Goldman	-12; 31%;	(-14)
Stephen Gordon		(-10)
Jack Greene, Jr.	+4; 67%;	(+10)
Thomas Griffin (W)	+6; 69%;	(-8)
Bill Haggart		(-1)
Eduard Halle		(+2)
Trevor Hearndon	+4; 67%;	(+4)
Richard Houston		(+1)
Stephen Hueston		(+2)

Clyde Johnson	-6; 25%; (-8)
Mark Johnson	-4; 33%; (-4)
Robert Johnson	+4
Wade Johnston	-1; 46%; (-1)
Bob Kinney	(+1)
John Koning (W)	+25; 73%; (+29)
Terry Kuch	+5; 66%; (+14)
Bob Lake	+6; 69%; (+7)
James Latimer (W)	+6; 65%; (+14)
David Lebling	-5; 38%; (+9)
Paul Leithh	(+4)
Greg Long	-2; 44%; (+12)
John McCallum (W)	+15; 66%; (+18)
Peter McDonald	(+2)
David Mayhall	
Mike Melby	(+3)
Paul Mosslander	(+2)
Ivan Musicant	(-6)
Hal Maus (W)	+8; 75%; (+20)
Derek Nelson (W)	+10; 58%; (+21)
Harold Peck (W)	+10; 81%; (+14)
Larry Peery	+6; 69%; (+18)
Bud Pendergrass (W)	+6; 75%; (+11)
Perrin	(+1)
Eugene Prosnitz (W)	+6; 75%; (+18)
John Reiner	(-6)
Charles Reinsel (W)	+16; 61%; (+22)
Charles Roland	-1; 46%; (-1)
Gail Schow	+1; 54%; (-1)
Al Scott	(-1)
John Smythe (W)	+20; 67%; (+19)
Anders Swenson	-1; 47%; (-10)
Jeff Steinberg	0; 50%; (0)
Jerry Tenney	-5; 29%; (-5)
Buddy Tretick	(+2)
Charles Yurner (W)	+19; 83%; (+28)
Roland Tzudiker	-14; 21%; (-19)
John Videto	(-4)
Conrad von Metzke (W)	-8; 45%; (-7)
Rod Walker	+13; 68%; (+20)
Robert Ward	-1; 48%; (-9)
Greg Warden	-5; 29%; (-14)
Robert Whalen	-2; 42%; (-2)

W. Gerald White		(+4)
K. V. Wittmann	0; 50%;	(-5)
Michael Wolf		(+1)

Monte Zelazny (W) +18; 85%; (+25)

The corresponding country list is:

Turkey	+43	59.7%	37 completed 7-man games counted.
England	+40	59.0	
Russia	+ 8	51.8	
France	+ 6	51.4	
Italy	-26	44.1	
Austria	-29	43.5	
Germany	-43	40.3	

With a win for Turkey, two for England, and a second place for each of them, the four games added this time do little to upset the equanimity of the two front runners.

Those strong individuals who can stomach still another rating list will find one in the correspondence columns.

Conrad von Metzke has complained that he doesn't like Rating lists in alphabetical order. I thought I had explained the reason for that format pretty thoroughly in #81. Anyhow, here, in ranking order is the top of the percentage list. Following the percentage is given the completed game, and the current game, score so that one can judge whether the player is advancing or not.

85.2%	Monte Zelazny	+18/+25	90.4% Charles Wells	25/29
82.9	Charles Turner	+19/+28	84.0 Donald Miller	14/18
81.2	Harold Peck	+10/+14	78.1 Banks Mebane	9/7
75.0	John Beshara	+6/+6	75.0 Bruce Pelz	6/6
	Hal Matus	+8/+20		
	Bud Pendergrass	+6/+11		
	Eugene Prosnitz	+6/+18	74.3 Jerry Pournelle	10/14
73.1	John Koning	+25/+29		
71.9	James Dygert	+16/+24	70.8 Rick Brooks	5/5
68.8	Thomas Griffin	+6/-8		
	Bob Lake	+6/+7		
	Larry Peery	+6/+18		
67.7	Rod Walker	+13/+20		
66.7	Richard Bryant	+4/-2	66.7 Kenneth Levinson	4/4
	Jack Greene	+4/+10	Dian Pelz	4/4
	Trevor Hearnston	+4/+4	Chris Wagner	4/6
	Terry Kuch	+5/+14		
	John Smy the	+20/+19		
65.6	John McCallum	+15/+18	65.6 Ken Davidson	5/6
64.6	Jim Latimer	+6/+14		
64.2	Charles Reinsel	+16/+22		
61.7	Jock Root	+6/+2		

And that is all who are above 60.0%

Sealed Bag.

John Boardman, 592 16th St., Brooklyn, N.Y., 11218:

In looking at Broddingnag #82 I found references to a quiz in Broddingnag #81. I promptly dropped #82 and went back to take a shot at it. You can, if you wish, accept my word that I have not looked at the answers.

1. What provinces on the map are badly named?

There are a few that could meet this criterion. Ankara begins the game with a fleet, yet the city ((city? In 1900 it was a village.)) is well inland. Most of the territory usually referred to as "the Ukraine" is in the province labelled "Sevastopol", though some of it is also in "Ukraina"

... ..

5. Army Denmark-Sweden or its reverse would be impossible under 1914 conditions, though I believe there is now a bridge.

6. The highest point is Mount Kaf, in the Caucasus.

The article on replacements was most interesting. I think that the present Graustark system, with two stand-bys in every game, is the best. I no longer ask the same stand-by for moves for two different countries at the same time. And if I run out of stand-bys, I throw the country open to the first person to get moves in for it.

Now - let's open Broddingnag #82 and see how I did.

The Clyde estuary forms the southern edge of the region mapped as "Clyde" so it's not a complete misnomer.

The original Prussia (Preussen, Borussia) was indeed the region of our map so labeled. In the 13th century the inhabitants, a non-Germanic people related to the Lithuanians, were conquered by German speaking knights who established a sovereign crusading order. The Grand Master was nominally the vassal of the King of Poland, though there was a continual feud between them. Finally, at the Reformation, the Poles remained Catholic so the Knights became Protestants. (I have no doubt that, had Poland gone Protestant, the Knights would have stayed with the Church of Rome.) The Grand Master, a Hohenzollern, proclaimed himself sovereign Grand Duke of Prussia. Thus, for a couple of centuries, the reigning Hohenzollern was Elector of Brandenburg within the Holy Roman Empire, and Grand Duke of Prussia outside it. Finally, in 1701 the reigning Grand Duke promoted himself to King of Prussia. If he wanted to be a King, he had to be King of some region outside the Empire.

This is a sort of phenomenon by which the most vehement nationalists are those whose claims to that nationality are thought to be in doubt. Thus, the originally non-Germanic Prussians became the archetype of German nationalists - just as Napoleon was a Corsican, Hitler an Austrian, Stalin a Georgian. The most vehement British nationalists are the Irish Ulstermen, and the most militant U. S. nationalists come from a region which was once in revolt against the United States.

Now that I think of it, there is to this day no bridge between Sweden and Denmark.

The mountain I've called "Mount Kaf" is, I believe, modernly known as "Mount Elbruz". "Kaf" was the name given to it by the medieval Arabs; it appears under that name in "The Thousand and One Nights". The

Caucasus may be the same range which the ancients called the Rhiphaian Mountains. The names "Caucasus" and "Kaf" are originally the same; the Russians call those mountains "Kafkaz".

((+As you can see, John I have omitted large parts of your letter dealing with the more routine parts of the quiz. And inserted that remark about Ankara being a village. It is perhaps a little too extreme as Ankara was the head of a Sanjac. But let us compromise on "mountain town"; it was certainly less important than several places on the Black Sea coast.

In a part of your letter which I have omitted you placed Manchester in our "Liverpool". I considered this for a long time when preparing the quiz. The line between our "Liverpool" and our "Yorkshire" passes so close to Manchester that I think it might be argued either way as to which it is in. And I think you are in error in stating that Bologna is not in our "Venice". Its river, the Reno, drains to the Adriatic. And, as far as I can see, the line dividing our "Venice" from its western neighbours is meant to follow the height of land of the Apennines.

As you note later in your letter, there is no bridge between Sweden and Zealand. For that matter, there is no bridge between Zealand and Fyn, the next major Danish island to the west. There is now one between Fyn and the Jutland peninsula, but I believe it is a relatively recent construction. However, I fail to see the relevance of this to the question of the possibility of the move. Where did this idea that "convoy" means that the fleet carries the army arise? It is true that in the days of sailing ships armies were often carried in naval vessels. That day ceased with the coming of the ironclad: the space was occupied by machinery leaving no room for troops. Of course detachments of marines were, and are, often carried by warship. Similarly for specialist troops required somewhere in a hurry. And the general commanding the convoyed army might have his cabin in the flagship of the admiral doing the convoying. (Whether this would lead to mutual understanding, trust, and support, or to such exacerbation of the feelings of both that the whole operation would be fore-doomed to failure, would depend on the personalities of the two men.) But an army, as a whole, is not carried by a fleet but in transports. In the last war these transports would often be vessels especially constructed for the purpose, assault craft of various sorts, and the like. In the first world war the troopships would, much more usually, be ordinary merchant vessels. The role of the fleet is to accompany, shepherd, and protect these transport vessels; it is not itself to carry the troops. This is the meaning of the word "convoy" as used in everyday speech; it is supported by the etymology of the word, to "travel the same road". And that it corresponds to Calhoun's mental picture is shown by his contribution in BROB #54. Close to land this protective task is far more readily done by shore batteries, and the whole of the Sound between Denmark and Sweden is close to shore. Vessels of some sort would be needed for the move, fleets no.

I can't find reference to your "Mount Kaf". (There is a library here but it is mostly given to organic chemistry and biology, and is completely inadequate for items of geographic, historic, or

literary reference.) If I had been asked to guess the Caucasian peak it referred to, I would have said Mount Kazbek, which is just about in the middle of the range of the Caucasus. (Over the "1" of Diplomacy, while Mt. Elbruz is somewhat to the left of being over the "D".)

Well, of course, every gamesmaster thinks his own replacement system is the best. If he didn't, he would change it. It seems to me that the two different points of view differ in their fundamental philosophy of the game. There is the person to whom "England", "France", "Germany", and the rest, are real entities; for him it does not really matter who plays the positions, the country goes marching on. This is, to some extent, the position in team sports where substitution is effectively unlimited. And the average spectator does not care who is playing in various positions - except, of course, for a few star players - and it is the team, as such that he is rooting for.

On the other hand there is the Diplomacy player who regards the game as a battle of wits between Koning, Wells, Zelazny, Prosnitz, and the rest. The names of the countries serve much the same purpose as the light and dark trunks of the two boxers in the ring, or the colours of the jockies in a horse race; they have no importance other than as indicators, it is the boxer himself, or the horse-and-jockey, that is of interest. For such a player the bringing in of a substitute, far from lessening the disruption caused by the departure of the initial player, often merely adds a second disruption to the first.

I think the analogy of the horse race is instructive. Personally, I take so little interest in horse races that I haven't seen one in over 30 years, but let us try. Even for me there was a certain mild pleasure in the sound of the pounding hooves and the flash of silks as the field went by; I expect for many that a much heightened version of this is the main attraction of a horse-race (coupled, of course, with the possibility of a re-distribution of wealth in the individual's favour.) To such a race goer it can hardly make much difference what horse is actually running under a certain name. If a certain horse falters in the back stretch, why not substitute another, carrying the same colours? By such means one ensures that there are the requisite number of hooves to thunder by the finish line.

On the other hand there is the horse-race enthusiast who is a student of the breed. He is genuinely interested in whether such-an-such a combination of blood lines is superior to another or not. He can watch a silent black-and-white film of a race with greatest interest, although the gleaming coats and bright colours are now turned to dull grey, and the thunder of hooves is completely absent. To such a person any substitution at all would make a travesty of the whole thing; he will greatly prefer no race at all to such a mockery.

Diplomacy players who feel that the game should go on somehow - anyhow, it doesn't really matter - are like the first race goer. It is the thunder of the hooves that stirs them, I mean the clatter, natter, patter, or is it chatter, of the press releases. To the player, however, who thinks of the game as a struggle between Smythe, Pournelle and Beshara, the substitution of someone else for Smythe, makes Beshara's counter moves

meaningless - as meaningless as such a player regards 90% of all press releases.

Diplomacy is not really a tactical game. It is a tactical game for a time for the beginner. A beginning player can spend hours looking at the board and deciding what is the best play, meaning best in the sense that it is used in Chess, the best against any and all defence, regardless of who the opponent is. But for old Diplomacy hands most of the tactical lessons have long since been learned and surprises will be few and far between. But the game still retains for the old timer a psychological interest. He does not make a move against an anonymous entity nicknamed Russia for convenience, he makes it against Maus, playing Russia, and he makes use of his assessment of 'Maus' character in planning the move. If in fact the person he moves against is not Maus but, for that move, the gamesmaster's stenographer, hurriedly briefed on the rules of the game, the real interest for such a player, the psychological probing, is gone.

The point is sometimes made that, in a game with a no replacement policy, a player can win by default, since, if a neighbour leaves, he can readily over-run the abandoned territory. Is this always a matter of default? Surely most wins are made by exploiting the weaknesses of opponents, helped along by a lucky break here or there. If a certain player is known to lose interest as soon as his chance of a win is gone, this is a weakness of his play quite as much as rashness, over-cautiousness, gullibility, and so on, are weaknesses. In a game with a no replacement rule, a player, finding himself next to one known to lose interest rapidly when hope of victory fades, would be well justified in hemming that neighbour in, if more active measures are impossible, in the hope of making him quit the game in his frustration. The ploy is a legitimate one, and I see no reason why its success should be greeted by cries of "Win by default", any more than in the cases of a win as a result of a single missed move, or a win from a bad guess by the opposition.

As you know, BROB is not at either extreme in this, as it allows some restricted replacements. I realize that there have been games where the bringing in of a replacement has helped the game and added to the enjoyment of most of its players. However, I have 4 or 5 times played as a replacement myself, and have played in many games where there have been other replacements, and know, from personal experience, that replacements have added to the resentment and annoyance, rather than the pleasure, in many cases. BROB's policy, for games beginning in it, will remain what it was, somewhere in the middle ground. However, if I had to choose between the two extremes of unlimited and automatic replacement, and of no replacement at all, ever, I would opt for the latter.

You are now conducting a poll among your players over a detail of game administration in Graustark. When you return from vacation why not conduct a similar poll on the more basic question, replacement or no replacement? I think you would find that there would be quite a number who would feel as Swenson expresses himself in Grau #162. A minority, perhaps, but a sizable minority, and one made more impressive by containing in its ranks such outstanding players as Wells and Zelazny.

By the way, John, I find it odd that such a stickler for the letter of the rules as you are should be so insistent on player replacement. If you turn to what the rulebook says on the matter, the last paragraph of the main body of the rules, you will find these words which have been quoted in Graustark:

If a player leaves during the game, it is assumed that civil government has collapsed. His units stand in position and defend themselves, but do not support each other. If they have to retreat, they are routed and removed from the board. No new units are raised for this country. If the country has to remove units because it has lost supply centers, the unit farthest from home comes off first, and the fleet before the army.

Not a word, you will note, about asking the first casual passer-by to take over the abandoned position.

Well, to get on with your letter. The matter of "Clyde" is debatable. If you look at the outline of the west coast of Scotland as shown on our map it does appear as if the Clyde estuary would reach the line between "Liverpool" and "Clyde". However, if you use the east coast as a reference, and it looks correct, we note that Greenock, at the very mouth of the Clyde, is in the same latitude as Edinburgh. It is on the south bank of the estuary but the latter is by no means wide enough to extend from opposite Edinburgh north as far as the "Clyde-Liverpool" boundary. It is like the case of "Ruhr" that Graebner objects to, either the region doesn't reach the river at all, or it just touches it.

In Prussia, the Protestant Poles, the Masuren, who given the choice, after the First World War, of being placed in Germany or Poland, voted almost unanimously for Germany, so that the between-the-wars boundary between East Prussia and Poland was, except near Dantzig where special provision of the Treaty of Versailles operated, a religious rather than an ethnic dividing line.

Instances of the phenomenon you mention, of dubiously acceptable members of a nation being among its most strident patriots, are legion. As you know, the Croats - I imagine you spell it "Hrvat" - were among the most loyal members of the Austrian Empire, although having no ethnic ties to Austria. They objected strenuously to being placed in the Hungarian part of the Empire on the creation of the dual monarchy, but were Austrian patriots. A few months ago I met in a bar in Calgary a young Croat who had recently left Tito's Yugoslavia and had emigrated to Canada. I would judge him to be about 22 and it is 50 years since a Kaiser has reigned in Vienna; even his parents if they were ever subjects of the Empire at all, would have been young children at the time. But there was no doubt that the good old House of Hapsburg was still the idol of his dreams.

One could go on endlessly. The French North African colon, often of Italian descent, and more of a French patriot than the French. The colonial visiting Britain, mildly shocked to find that he is more of a British patriot than his hosts. There were even tales, just before Hitler came to power, of there being Jewish Nazi groups in Germany. -jamcc))+))

NEW BLOOD

Those whose names are listed below have shown an interest in postal Diplomacy. In some cases their interest was so great that they entered a game immediately after receiving a letter, so that the blood is no longer all that new - none the worse for that, of course.

Kurt Krey, 897 West Hoyt, St. Paul, Minn., 55117

Donald L. Hetsko, 34 Pearl Court, Sayville, N.Y., 11782

R. W. Dellbring, 9921 D Tam O'Shanter, Overland,
Missouri, 63114

And there was a note from Joanne Burger, denying an interest in the game, but saying she found it interesting trying to figure out what BROB was all about. The closing salutation was "Peace". Somehow, I think she has missed the underlying spirit of the game. However, maybe one of your editorials, John? (The address, 55 Blue Bonnet Court, Lake Jackson, Texas, 77566.)

- - - - -

Scott P. Duncan, 2249 W. Broad St., Apt. 1, Philadelphia, 19132, reports that he is running a game in connection with his activities with Gamescience, Inc. As far as I know there is only one game planned (in which, by the way, von Metzke yet once more holds high the Hapsburg banner): however, those interested in more might write Scott.

- - - - -

Eugene Prosnitz has a new Current Rating List which I had intended to run in this issue along with some comments of my own. However, enough suddenly seemed too much. My apologies, Gene. However, I have calculated the results for all games up to about June 25th and perhaps I'll be able to run them next issue. (And disregard the notice about this back on page 4.)

- - - - -

I expect to be publishing one or more moves of the games currently being run in Graustark, Erehwon, and Armageddonia this summer. All games will be conducted, as far as possible, in accordance with the procedures holding in their parent zines. Neither Gamesmasters or players in these games need be alarmed by editorial expressions of opinions of mine which are in conflict with their own.

- - - - -

BROEDINGNAG is a journal of postal Diplomacy. It is edited and published by John McCallum, Ralston, Alberta, Canada, and sells for 10 cents a copy. (By the way, I pronounce BROB to rhyme with "rob". von Metzke pronounces it to rhyme with "robe". Is there a Swiftian in the group who can decide the question?)