

## B R O B D I N G N A G

Broddingnag #90

Transfer Issue

Christmas 1968

Broddingnag would like to take this opportunity of wishing its subscribers, and those to whom it goes in exchange for their journals, all health and success in 1969.

### An Error

Charles Reinsel has written to point out an error in the account of the Big Brother game, 1967AF, reported on in the last issue. The figure for Italy in the final year of play should read 6/5 rather than 8, as given. I think that 8 shown was just my mis-reading of my own scribbled 5. What happened was that Derek failed to make one of his moves and had a force annihilated. That reduction, together with several others due to the leaderless Austrian forces being wiped out, resulted in England's 15 constituting an absolute majority, so that victory was attained in mid-year.

This correction produces some parallels between this, The Winners', game, and The Gamesmasters' Game, in addition to those listed last time.

7. I was the runner up in both games.

8. The Third Man, whose action determined the form of the final play in both games, turned out to be the third player at the conclusion of each game.

The mystery deepens, however. With Wells' removal Koning, Nelson, and I were guaranteed nothing worse than third place. I find it harder than ever to understand why Derek settled for third place under the circumstances.

### Newly Completed Games.

The completion of four games has been announced since the last issue of Broddingnag. Details follow.

Game 1966F. Carried in Diplophobia, as its game PCA, it was won by Monte Zelazny, playing England. This is Monte's fourth win, putting him on a par with John Smy the and Charles Wells; it also puts his name at the head of the Broddingnag Rating list. Congratulations, Monte!

As Diplophobia does not supply a chart of the game, one is given overleaf. Zine: Diplomania #2 - #11, Diplophobia #1 - #43. Gamesmaster, Don Miller. Players. England, John Mazor '11 Monte Zelazny. France, Alan Huff. Germany, Ron Parks '05 Dave Lebling. Italy, Jim Latimer (with Turner as alternate on several moves). Austria, Banks Mebane. Russia, Sidney Get '03 Wayne H. Heisel. Turkey, Bob Weston '08 Cole Harrison.

	<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>	<u>07</u>	<u>08</u>	<u>09</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>
E	5	5	5	6	6	8	11	12	12	15	16	17	18 and wins!
F	4	5	5	4	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	OUT	
G	5	5	6	6	4	2	OUT						
I	5	4	6	8	9	10	10 14/13	15	13	13	13	12	
A	4	4	3	2	2	1	OUT						
R	5	6	4	2	2	2	1	1	1	OUT			
T	4	7	5	6	7	8	9	6	5	5	4	4	4

Game 1967V ended in Graustark several weeks ago, just too late to make the last issue. It was a five-way draw, the second such to have occurred in postal Diplomacy. Although the practice of publishing supply centre charts for completed games originated in Graustark, the latter has not provided charts for its recent games, so one is published below.

	<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>	<u>07</u>	<u>08</u>	<u>09</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>
E	4	3	4	5	4	4	5	6	7	7	7	7 Draw
F	5	6	6	7/6	8	8	8	9	9	9	9	9 Draw
G	6	7	8	7	6	6/5	5	3	2	2	2	2 Draw
I	4	3	3	2	2	2	OUT					
A	4	5	6	6/5	6	7	8	8	8	7	8	8 Draw
R	5	5	OUT									
T	5	5	7	7	8/7	7	8	8	8	9	8	8 Draw

Zine: Graustark, #'s 128-169. Gamesmaster, John Boardman. Players. England, Dave Lebling. France, Frank Musbach '03 Gene Prosnitz. Germany, Mehran Thomson. Italy, Thomas Griffin. Austria, Hugh Anderson. Russia, Stephen Gordon. Turkey, Sherry H eap.

1967AG, was played in Diplophobia as its game PPC. Won by Buddy Tretick, playing Austria. It is a first win for Buddy and he deserves our congratulations for winning with a country usually regarded as difficult.

	<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
E	4	4	5	5	4	3
F	6	6	7/6	6/5	6	5
G	3	4	5	5	4	5
I	3	4	2	1	OUT	
A	5	7	8	12/11	16/14	19/17 and wins!
R	5	5	2/1	OUT		
T	5	3	5	5/4	4	2

Zine: Diplophobia #'s 11-43. Gamesmaster, Don Miller. Players. England, Dave Lebling. France, Mulhauser '04 Jim Houghton '05 Hal Naus. Germany, Haramis '05 Doug Beyerlein. Italy, Jack Chalker '03 Paul Budd '04 George Schelz. Austria Buddy Tretick. Russia, Ron Glavio . Turkey Mike Miller '05 Dick Reiter.

Game 1967AG. This game, begun in Cerebral Nebula was transferred to EFGIART, and from there to ADAG. Concluded in ADAG 35 it was won by Jim Munroe. Congratulations, Jim! As in the case of Buddy Tretick, mentioned just above, this is a first win. Also as in Tretick's case, it was made with a difficult country, in this case Italy. There is a supply centre chart and all details in ADAG #35 where the game ended.

### Rating List

The changes detailed above, plus normal wear and tear, require a revision of the BROB Rating List. The last complete version of it was given in BROB 88 and a previous revision appeared in BROB 89. Players whose names do not appear below have scores which are identical with that shown on the previous listing of their names. Fifty-nine standard 7-man postal Diplomacy games, namely games 1963B, 1964A, B, D, 1965A, B, D, E, F, G, H, I, L, M, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, 1966A, B, D, E, F, H, I, K, L, M, N, O, R, AA, AB, AC, AG, AI, AK, AL, AM, AQ, AU, AV, BB, BC, BG, BJ, BK, 1967E, H, V, AC, AF, AG, AK, AU, 1968P, are included in the completed games part of the Rating list. That is, in the first column, which gives the result of completed games reduced to a percentage basis, and the second column, which gives the completed game total score. The third column includes also partial results from other standard postal games in progress.

### Country List

England	60.5%	+74
Turkey	56.1	+43
France	55.2	+37
Russia	48.7	- 9
Germany	44.6	-38
Italy	44.4	-40
Austria	40.5	-67

### The Rest of Us

75.0	+ 8	+11	Mehran Thomson (W)
74.2	+15	+18	Rod Walker
67.6	+ 9	+10	Douglas Beyerlein
66.7	+ 4	+14	Jack Greene, Jr.
66.7	+ 4	- 1	Stephen Hueston
66.7	+ 4	- 3	Richard Bryant
66.2	+10	+18	Jerry Pournelle (W)
65.8	+19	+20	John McCallum (W)
63.7	+ 7	+ 7	Banks Mebane
62.5	+ 4	+ 7	James Munroe (W)
62.1	+16	+23	John Smythe (W)
60.4	+10	+16	James Latimer (W)
60.4	+15	+17	Derek Nelson (W)
59.8	+ 5	+10	Frank Clark
58.3	+ 2	+ 5	Cole Harrison
58.2	+ 2	+ 4	Hugh Anderson
58.2	+ 2	+ 2	Sherry Heap
55.9	+14	+ 1	Charles Reinsel (W)
54.2	+ 1	+ 2	Ken Porter
54.2	+ 1	+ 1	Mark Lyon
54.1	+ 3	+24	David Lebling (W)
51.2	+ 1	+13	Alan Huff (W)
50.0	0	- 3	Dave Francis
46.5	-3	+ 7	Edi Birsan
45.8	- 1	+ 5	Robert Johnson
43.9	-14	-17	Conrad von Metzke (W)

### Top Board

89.4	+38	+43	Monte Zelazny (W)
89.1	+20	+20	Donald Miller (W)
81.2	+16	+38	Harold Naus (W)
81.2	+10	+14	Harold Peck (W)
79.2	+12	+30	Eugene Prosnitz (W)
78.6	+21	+30	Charles Turner (W)
77.6	+23	+25	Charles Wells (W)

### Second Board

77.3	+14	+ 7	Bud Pendergrass (W)
76.0	+22	+30	James Dygert (W)
75.8	+31	+38	John Koning (W)
75.8	+16	+22	Larry Peery (W)
75.0	+ 6	+13	Eduard Hille (W)
75.0	+ 6	+12	Buddy Tretick (W)
75.0	+ 6	+11	Paul Leitch (W)

43.3 -12 -10 Dan Brannan	+ 1 Linn Haramis
41.7 - 2 + 1 Mike Miller	+ 1 Thom Holaday
40.3 - 5 -13 Thomas Griffin (W)	+ 1 Russ Jones
37.5 - 3 + 1 Gerald White	+ 1 Largess
33.8 -10 -10 Jack Chalker	+ 1 Edward Meyer
25.7 -10 -16 Sidney Get	+ 1 Bill Weyant
25.0 - 6 -18 Ron Glavic	+ 1 Bruce Wilcox
25.0 - 6 -22 Stephen Gordon	+ 1 Mike Williamson
20.9 -28 -29 Margaret Gemignani	0 Michael Dobson
16.0 -14 -14 Ron Parks	0 Jim Houghton
+14 Chuck Carey	- 2 Mike McIntyre
+10 George Schelz	- 4 Wayne Hoheisel
+ 5 Thomas Eller	- 4 Michael Vaughan
+ 5 Dick Reiter	- 6 Dave Bischoff
+ 5 Ben Turk	- 6 Paul Budd
+ 3 Norman Zinkhan	- 6 J. Longyear
+ 2 Harry Manogg	- 6 Charles McLenon
+ 2 Peter Rosamilia	-12 Louis Gallo
+ 2 Paul Scroggie	- 8 Robert Maloney
+ 1 Marvin Garbis	-10 Bob Reiter
+ 1 Mike Goldstein	

#### Draws.

With a new drawn game appearing in the listing I thought that it might be interesting to tabulate the data of past draws. There have been, altogether, 11 drawn games in 7-player postal Diplomacy, out of a total of 59 such games played, just under a fifth of the games.

Five of the 11 were split-board ties in which, of necessity, each survivor has 17 forces at end of play. They were,

<u>Game</u>	<u>Surviving countries</u>	<u>Players</u>
1965L	Germany Russia	Clark Koning
1965Q	England Turkey	Koning Kuch
1965T	Russia Turkey	Brooks Hebane
1966I	Germany Turkey	Naus Davidson
1966AA	Germany Austria	Latimer Walker

There have been three 3-way draws. Two of them, 1965U and 1966O, had identical outcomes: Turkey in each game had half the supply centres on the board. In both games the opposition was furnished by an alliance of England and France. From the point of view of Turkey, though not of the western powers, such an outcome might almost be regarded as a split-board tie. In the first of them Smythe was Turkey and myself and Reinsel were England and France, respectively; in the other, it was Peery, versus Walker and Turner. The other 3-way draw was very different. In that game, 1966R, the France of Berman and the Turkey of Wagner each had 16 supply centres, Levinson's Russia being down to 2.

There has only been one 4-way draw, game 1965V. The four survivors,

England (Clark), Germany (Kuch), Italy (Mebane), and Turkey (Huff), being closely equal to one another and being allied in a two-vs-two pattern.

There have been two 5-way draws. 1966AL, in which France and Austria were eliminated, and the one mentioned in this issue, 1967V, in which Italy and Russia were eliminated.

If we assign countries points for draws the way points are assigned in the Calhamer Point Count Rating List, carried in Aceldama, that is, a half point for a two-way split, a third point for a 3-way draw, and so on, we get the following ratings for the countries on the basis of their drawn games:

Turkey	3.15
Germany	2.15
England	1.81
Russia	1.53
France	1.20
Austria	0.70
Italy	0.45

This does not differ markedly from the Ratings for the countries over all games: (for instance compare the Rating given on page 3) with the notable exception of Germany, which does very much better on drawn games than it does over all. In fact, Germany's first positive appearance on the Rating List was as a result of a tie, and it has been racking up a fair number of draws ever since.

Perhaps it might be mentioned also that the first win, or fractional win, by a member of the fair sex, was Sherry Heap's participation in the 5-way draw 1967V. Women have had runner-up positions before, for instance Dian Pellz in 1963B and Gail Schow in a 5-man game. But Sherry's part in 1967V is the first gain to have been credited to the distaff side in the Calhamer Point Count system, which counts only wins or fractional wins.

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As most will know, Charles Wells has revised his game Parlement. Parlement is a separate game, not even played on a board. However, several features of it were inspired by Diplomacy. Charles announces that he will be running a game under the revised rules. Those interested in playing in it should write him at 3021 Washington Blvd, Cleveland, Ohio, 44118.

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Meanwhile the inventor of our own game, Allan B. Calhamer, who has spent most of the last year in the Dominican Republic, has returned home. His address is now 518 North Spring Ave., LaGrange, Ill., 60525. He reports that he is preparing a new game for the market. Brob wishes him all success with his new game but thinks that it will have to be very good indeed to compete with Diplomacy.

### Transfer of Editorship.

For a half year or more Ed Hille has been contemplating publishing a Diplomacy journal. He and I have had, over that period, a fair amount of correspondence about the form that a Diplomacy 'zine sh could take and, some time ago, I suggested that he take over the publishing of Brob when I dropped it. He has now decided to do that, he has just told me - his letter arrived here Christmas Eve. Although I had planned to publish one more issue of Brob, it seems best to end with the old year - and a nice round number, #90 - and to let Ed take over with the New Year. Therefore, this is the last issue of Brob which I will edit; future issues of it will be from Eduard Hille, Box 903, Gainesville, Florida, 32601.

Some details call for further remark and they are referred to below.

Games. Ed has told me, in prvious correspondence, that he thinks five games are the optimum number for a zine. However, in this letter from him which I have just received, he speaks in terms of one or two games. Probably he intends to expand from there at a later date. He states that his first issue which he plans for mid-January will indicate the rules and playing procedures he intends to follow with games actually beginning in the following issue. He doesn't state the fee he plans to charge but I suppose it will be close to the three dollars which is now more-or-less standard. In any event it can do no harm to write him if you are interested in entering one of his first games.

Subscriptions. Each cash subscriber to Brob should look in the envelope which brought this issue. He will find a statement of the status of his subscription. There will also be a refund of the portion of the subscription which extends past the current issue, #90. The refund will be in postage stamps, in cash, or by Money Order, as seems appropriate for the amount involved in each particular case. I am sending Ed a copy of my mailing list and I imagine that many of you will receive the first issue which Ed publishes; however, future subscriptions you will have to arrange with him.

Brob Rating List. When Ed and I first disoussed the transfer of Brob, last August-September, he appeared anxious to contine the Brob Rating List. He doesn't mention this in his recent letter. However, if he has not changed his mind since early fall, the Brob Rating List will continue in the 'zine, continuing on from the point reached a few pages back.

Unfinished business. Ed told me that he would let me have space should I feel like using it. There are one or two matters of unfinished business continuing in Brob, - in particular, the von Metzke Contest is still in progress - and I hope that Ed will let me trespass on his space sufficiently to wind them up in forthcoming issues.

Letters. Any letters on Diplomacy of general interest which I receive, letters which seem to require wider distribution, I plan on publishing

in Aceldama. Several letters have already appeared in that journal; there may be some increase in the size of Aceldama's letter column, as I no longer will have BROB available for letter publication.

Trades. Brob at present goes to every editor of a journal of regular Diplomacy from the oldest, Graustark, to the youngest, Verbal Chaos, Ltd., this in exchange for their publications (though I must say that it is a long, long time since some of them last appeared in the mail box). Aceldama does likewise. I will continue to send Aceldama to other editors. However I realize that Aceldama alone is a rather slim trade for some of the monster Diplomacy Zines now appearing. If any editor feels that it is not a satisfactory trade for his paper I hope he will write so that an acceptable cash amount can be agreed upon to ensure that I still receive his output. My record of all standard Dippy games is nearly complete and I want to keep it that way.

Acknowledgment. Finally I would like to express my thanks to the many players who have written me during the three and a quarter years that I have edited Brob. Nearly every comment that I have had about Brob has stressed the "discussions" in it. Well, it is the people who have written me letters who are responsible for those discussions and I would like to thank all of them. Some of their letters have appeared here virtually verbatim; far more frequently their letters have been hacked to size, and hammered into place, as with an axe. Some have not appeared at all, on account of space limitations, or because some one else expressed the same thought. All of them - including those not published - have contributed their share of ideas to the game, directly or indirectly; and all of them have contributed to whatever success Brob has had as "discussion" zine. So many thanks, once more, to all who have written.

It remains only to wish Ed the best of luck with his new venture - new for him, at any rate. All the best, Ed. Readers wanting to enter the games Ed is forming will find his address a few paragraphs back.

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Sealed Bag.

Jerry Pournelle, 12051 Laurel Terrace, Studio City, Calif.

With regard to Brob, I can't think too much of your rating scheme; and that is I guess due to what it has done to me. I have been rated on, I believe, five games. I won three of them. Yet I find myself way down the list, below people who have yet to win at all; below single winners; and even below players who I believe have left Diplomacy forever. Now I don't think I am all that good; and in fact I suspect Smythe is the best of the lot; yet your scheme does, I think, rate me (and yourself as well, come to think of it) too low. At least that's my opinion, based on the only record I know of -- my own. I still think three wins out of five games played is a reasonable average, but maybe I do n't know the records of some of the other players.

((+(There is no question that 3 wins in 5 games is an excellent record which very few have equalled. Note what happened here. You were previously rated on three games, two of which you had won and in the third you were eliminated comparatively late in the game. This gave you a high enough score to put you close to, although not in, the "Second Board" in the Rating List in Brob #88. Then two additional games of yours were added in the revision appearing in Brob 89. One of them was 1966A, in Lonely Mountain, which you won, and so netted +6 points; the other was the Winners' Game, in Big Brother, where you were the first eliminated and so scored -6. In other words your total score remained precisely where it was before but now that score was averaged over 5 games instead of 3, with a considerable drop in your percentage points as a natural result.

I must say that I am not really happy with the Brob Rating List. The idea behind it was to reduce the arbitrary elements to a minimum. Every measuring scale, whether for a Diplomacy Rating List, for temperature, or for anything else, has at least two arbitrary elements, its zero, and its scale size. The zero of the Brob Rating List was chosen so that the total contribution of any game was zero, the losers contributing as many points as the winners gain. This has an appreciable practical advantage - it is very easy to check if an error has been made. Add up all the figures in the second column, or in the third column, in any Brob Complete Listing, and it should total zero; if it doesn't, an error has been made. (Note that this requires a complete listing, not just an amendment listing such as appears a few pages back.) Such errors have often been made in the published version of the List, but the check at least provides a flag of warning that there is an error, and I can correct it by the next issue; it usually turns out, in such cases, that the source of error was my assigning a country's score in a given game to both the initial and the final player. Though such errors have been made this check prevents them from remaining and accumulating. The scale size was taken as the smallest possible that never requires fractions for a single game, although, of course, they appear when we take averages over games played. But, beyond this, there is no arbitrary element. We do not have to consider the ratio that should exist between the score for a win and the score for survival as had to be done when the Reinsel system was set up. Or the ratio between worth of supply centres and winner's bonus, as occurred for most of the supply centre systems; nor any of the countless ratios that exist in the Walker system. All such details handle themselves. Of any two players in a given game we only have to ask "Which did the better?". "Better" meaning to out-survive, or, if both survive to the game's end, to out-gun at the end. No question of how much better need be asked, nor assessed.

However, this lack of an arbitrary element was bought at some practical cost. As I see it there are two objections to the Listing:

1. The runner-up gets a score which seems too high in comparison with the winner's. Using the rules, outlined above, the winner gets



a score of +6, the next strongest survivor a score of +4. In a game, like 1964A, where there were only two survivors, the winner with 18 supply centres and the other with 16, a score two thirds as large as the winner's may not seem unreasonable for the runnerup; it was obviously a close and hard-fought battle, and the closeness of the result is reflected in the closeness of the two scores. But in a game, such as 1964B, where there were 5 survivors in addition to the winner, each with trifling force at the end of the game, +4 points for the one of the 5 who leads the others by a hair, is ridiculous, when we consider that the winner with 18 forces, more than three times as much as any of the other survivors, only gets +6 points.

2. Those eliminated early are treated far too roughly. Who ever heard of a horse race, with a field of seven, where the entry fee for the trailing horse was the same as the purse for the winner? But this is effectively what the sytem amounts to since the first eliminated loses 6 points and the winner only gains 6 points. In a Poker hand, where 7 players stay to the end, it would be ridiculous to expect any loser to pay as much into the pot as the winner takes out of it. So agin, I feel that this feature of the Brob Rating List does not reflect one's instinctive ideas of what is equitable. It was this feature which so seriously damaged your score, of course.

I have been thinking lately of the possibilities of a Rating List on the following lines. At the conclusion of a game every "loser" in it, whether survivor or eliminated, to contribute one point to the winner. Also every eliminated player to contribute one point to a pot to be divided among the survivors, winner included. The net result would be the following table:

<u>No. of</u> <u>Survivors</u>	<u>Winner's</u> <u>Score</u>	<u>Survivors'</u> <u>Score</u>	<u>Eliminated Players'</u> <u>Score</u>
2	+8.0	+2.0	-2.0
3	7.34	+0.33	-2.0
4	6.75	-0.25	-2.0
5	6.4	-0.6	-2.0
6	6.15	-0.83	-2.0
7	6.0	-1.0	N/A

Note that this introduces an arbitrary element absent in the present Brob listing. Each non-winner, whether survivor or eliminated, contributes a point to the winner; let us call it the Winner's Penny. Each eliminated player contributes another point to be divided among all the survivors; let us call it the survivor's Pfennig. There is no gold standard, or other standard, to which we can tie these two currencies on any a priori basis. In the table above I have made the choice - a purely arbitrary one - that a penny equals a pfennig. But a player who thinks a win is all important and that nothing else counts at all in comparison with it might value a penny at 100 pfennigs, and a player who likes a stone-wall, never-budge-an-inch tight finish, might value a penny at only hal f a pfennig. Any of the infinite number of ratios between 100:1 and

1:2 are logically as good as one another, and the choice must be made arbitrarily.

Nevertheless, I think that the 1:1 choice which I have made gives a not bad result. The winner always gets far more than a mere survivor. The ratio of possible gains to possible losses is about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 1, about right for a 7-entry race. A sole non-winning survivor, necessarily a real threat, nets a lot more than a survivor who is merely one of a large trailing field.

I haven't worked this thing out for many players. My guess would be that you would be in the Second Board, topped by those, e.g. Wells, who have more wins, and by those, e.g. Miller, who have nearly as many runs with fewer times at bat (we have had Horse Races and Poker Hands in this discussion, why not baseball, too?). An elimination would still take its toll but would not be quite the calamity that an early elimination now is.

There are difficulties, as usual. Consider the case of a drawn game, with only two survivors, i.e. a split-board tie. If each of the eliminated players contributes 2 points, as above, and this is divided among the two, they will each net 5 points. A true winner's score is, about, 7 points. That is, a split-board tie is valued at five sevenths of a win. I think we would all agree that a tie is worth, at most, half as much as a win. If we say, in such a case, that, since there is no winner, therefore there should be no Winner's Penny, each tying player will get  $2\frac{1}{2}$  points; reasonable enough. But consider now the first man eliminated in such a game. He left the game back in 1903 but whether he has to pay two points, if there is a win, or only one point, if there is a tie, is decided by the actions of other players in 1915; the cost of the game to him is something over which he has no control whatever, direct or indirect. Obviously the thing needs more thought.

There is another way of doing this, and that is to divide the survivor's Pfennig only among the non-winning survivors. The resulting table is:

<u>No. of Survivors</u>	<u>Winner's Score</u>	<u>Survivors' Score</u>	<u>Eliminated players' Score</u>
2	+6	+4	-2
3	+6	+1	-2
4	+6	0	-2
5	+6	-0.5	-2
6	+6	-0.8	-2
7	+6	-1	N/A

It gives a very big score to the runner up in the two-survivor case. However, of necessity, this is the case where the runner-up would nearly win, so perhaps it is not a serious error. In this form it is very close to the Reinsel Rating List, with the zero displaced by one unit. The 4 survivor case is, indeed, identical with the

original Reinsel system, except that all scores have been displaced one unit downward to preserve the zero-sum feature. This system would, of course, be an averaging one, not a cumulative one as the Reinsel system is. But for individual games it would give closely equivalent results. -(jamcc)+))

Edi Birsen, 48-20 39th St., Long Island City, NY, 11104.

It may interest you to note that since Nixon won it has rained every day here in N. Y. Plus we got hit with a huge storm: The Gods are angry!

((+Well, I hope the rain has let up occasionally in the weeks which have intervened since you wrote that letter. Although I am not sure but what I would prefer a little rain to the fifty below stuff we have had lately. It was so cold last Saturday night, literally fifty below, that it delayed my mailing Aceldama, I wouldn't venture out.

The other day I ran across the following passage:

Karion: Y ou're a good man, a patriot?

Politician: If ever there was one. Oh, yes,

Karion:                      And, as I guess,  
                                A farmer?

Politician: I? Lord save us, I'm not mad.

Karion: A merchant then?

Politician: Ah, sometimes I've had  
To feign that trade - as an alibi.

Karion: You've some profession surely?

Politician: No, not I.

Karion: But how do you make a living?

Politician: Well, ther're several  
Answers to that, I'm Supervisor General  
Of all things here, public and private too.

Karion: A great profession that. What did you do -  
To qualify for it?

Politician: I w a n t e d i t!

-Aristophanes: Plutus.

Twenty-three hundred years have elapsed since Aristophanes wrote that.

Some recent elections - yours, ours, and others - make me think we haven't made much progress in twenty-three hundred years. I say, Edi, what do you think Graustark will say about our poaching on its preserves with political commentary? - jamco)+))

Eric Just, P. O. Box 131, Paoli, Okla., 73074.:

I would like to clear up the matter of my playing in 1968BD and acting as its gamesmaster too. ((This refers to the final paragraph of a reply to Gene Prosnitz appearing in the letter column, page 15, of Brob #89.))

The situation is asymmetric, I admit, but not so much so as it may seem. The third alternative in such a situation is what we use. I employ an assistant co-ordinator (or perhaps I should say an assistant gamesmaster) who takes my moves. The moves for this game are always due on Monday, so on Saturday I give my moves to one of the other players, usually Jeff Key or Jim Bradley. The players send their moves at the same time, usually the day before or so. This means that some moves are late, but I do not enforce the deadline that strongly. So it turns out that the only penalty we have to pay is that my assistant and I lose the ability to change our moves at the last minute.

((+(Played so, provided the other players understand that their moves are to be mailed late enough so that you don't get them before the Saturday, it is a fair game. Though the machinery is very cumbersome to do what can be done much more simply by a neutral gamesmaster. What do your players say? Do they regard the game as equivalent to one with a neutral gamesmaster? - jamco)+))

Doug Beyerlein, 3934 S.W. Southern, Seattle, Wash., 98116.:

We are holding a Diplomacy tournament at the Seattle Chess Club. I expect about 20-30 players. This all leads me to the subject of postal vs. live Diplomacy. So, I will not talk about rating systems or rules, but about the future of live vs. postal Diplomacy. Looking back to the fall of 1966 when I first joined a postal game I did so because in all of Seattle we had maybe four hardcore players & a half dozen more semi-interested friends. To get seven players, or even six, for a game was very difficult. I can assume that other Diplomacy players throughout the U.S. and Canada have had and still have the same problem. How many players do you have in Ralston? Perhaps only in New York City, the Bay area, San Diego, and Washington D.C., can one dig up, within two or three days notice, seven players for a game. This is becoming less and less of a problem in some areas because of the growing number of new players. To fill for the lack of live games many players have turned to playing the game by mail, which has its good and bad points. The largest plus for postal is the chance to meet and play with a far far larger group of players than in any one city or region. However, a huge minus is the length of a postal game -- some lasting up to four years, though the average is about 16-20 months -- plus the fact that everything must go by mail. This produces the need for a number

of rulings regarding things like retreats, builds, etc., plus what to do with a player's country when no moves are received. This, as you know, has lead to a number of devices to correct the problem, from Walker's Neutral Player and Sealed Orders ((actually suggested first by Ollila)) to Reinsel's Three-Misses-and-Y ou-Are-Out Rule, to your "~~He-Paid-For-It-He-Can-Play-It~~" rule. All of these setups are forced on the game because of the good possibility that a player will lose interest in a weak country in a game that moves once a month or so. A live game is finished in about four hours and everyone knows when a player has left the game by his lack of presence at the game board. However, I think nobody will dispute that any player would -- if he had a choice -- play his postal game in person. I have met Nelson, Peery, Naus, and the Brannans, but I have played in games with Prosnitz, Lebling, Walker, and countless others, and I would enjoy meeting them all. The question I pose is this: Will postal Diplomacy lose favor with the rise of local live Diplomacy? If Diplomacy follows the way of chess it would appear this would be true. Of course, another factor to the growth of chess tournaments is the cash offered as prize money. We tried this at our summer convention and found that money holds more respect than a good alliance. Unless some rating will take this factor into consideration it appears cash prizes are out. No doubt you and some of your readers have opinions on this, and you must admit it is more interesting than oranges.

((+(Oranges? Y ou are out of date. The subject of discourse is now blueberries. Note how all of these items - beer, oranges, and blueberries - can be consumed without the aid of a knife. Never mention rope in a hanged man's house, or a knife in the pages of sTab.

If I have understood you correctly, postal Chess has been less popular in recent years. I had not realized this and, if it is correct, I am sorry to hear it. My father had a series of heart attacks, with other ailments, and had to retire from his work in his mid-fifties, and went to live in a village with a population of something over 1000. He had previously been active, not only in his work but on the district school board, and other civic and club committees. After his retirement he had to give up all this activity, of course; he was no longer able even to drive. Had he not discovered postal Chess at that time I think his retirement would have been almost immediately fatal to him, as the change from a very active to a completely inactive life would have been too much of a contrast. As it was he did learn about postal Chess and was soon playing dozens of games - there is no doubt that they provided one of the few interests of the last half dozen years of his life.

However, as you imply, postal Chess, at best, is a substitute. It would certainly be more interesting if one could play all of those games in person. You then suggest that the same is true of postal Diplomacy. I am not so sure that this is the case. In Chess the postal game and the regular game are the same game, or nearly. A player with poor powers of visualization may prefer the postal game, as he can actually try out various moves of his own and

his opponents possible replies before making up his mind. Most players are able to do that sort of thing mentally without touching a piece. So that the two games, postal and over-the-board, are nearly identical in principle, and the postal version can only be regarded as an ersatz game which one plays because there are not enough suitable opponents locally available for over-the-board play.

Diplomacy is different: the two games, postal, or, by extension, other types of delayed action game, and the standard game, are different in two respects, as pointed out in these pages in the last issue. First, they differ in the time available to a player to consider his move. I suppose this is true in Chess too, to some extent, though we should note that only rarely is the clock used in casual play. In Diplomacy this time difference of the two types of game can be important. I remember, in one of the two games completed in Brob about a year ago, getting a letter from a player saying "I am all pooped out, I've spent two hours on these moves." He was an experienced player and an active one if not quite as active as Latimer and Birsan with their 30 simultaneous games. How do you give this much thought to a set of moves when only allowed 10-15 minutes, during which you not only have to make up your own mind but also convince your allies or potential allies that they ought to support you?

But it is the other difference between the two types of games which is the important one, the fact that in postal - or other delayed action - game negotiation is fully secret. And it is the delayed action game which is, in this respect, closer to the ideal. So, contrary to your view, I feel that, in this respect at least, it is the over-the-board Diplomacy game which is the ersatz game, the poorer game, the game where we do the best we can under the circumstances, but realize that we are not playing the ideal game which we would really like to play.

There is no doubt, of course, that many postal games last far too long, and that players can lose interest in the course of them. Probably the really best type of Diplomacy game, giving the full secrecy of all the delayed action games, but still played at a brisk rate, is a telephone game such as John Beshara is now running in New York. Or games such as those formerly run by Boardman in the Physics Department of Brooklyn College, which had two moves a week. Such a game, played among people who meet together frequently anyhow, will only last about 10-12 weeks and negotiation can be completely secret - it should be the ideal way to play the game.

Anyway, length of game and boredom with it are not always positively correlated. Game 1966A, in Lonely Mountain, mentioned last issue, lasted just about a month short of three years, i.e., it was a very long game as most postal games go. I have had a letter which makes me think that my remarks last issue may have over-estimated the interest of the players somewhat. Still, it is certain that, for most of the players for most of the game, interest was high. We have all seen games where interest waned long before 3 years passed. It is curious; perhaps someone will analyze the factors which do make

for high player interest.

So, Doug, you say that the standard over-the-board game is the better game and that we only play by mail in order to be able to meet a greater variety of opponents. I say that, in some respects at least, the postal (or other delayed action) game is superior to the standard over-the-board game, and that it would still be played even if everyone could join a face-to-face game whenever he wanted. I am certainly biased since I was introduced to the game in the postal form and have much more experience of that form than of the game over-the-board. It would be of interest to hear the opinions of other players with wide experience of both types of game. Means will be found to publish such opinions, even if the Brob letter column is no longer available.

Doug, I think I should mention here an item from another letter of yours. When Richard Shagrin recently went into the army, he gave Doug a large accumulation of postal Diplomacy magazines. Douglas Beyerlein would like to sell them to interested collectors. Further remarks on this follow the next letter which deals with a similar topic. -jamcc+))

Charles N. Reinsel, 120 8th Ave., Clarion, Penna., 16214.:

I have hundreds of postal Diplomacy zines I'll sell in lots of 50 or 100 at ten cents each and I'll pay postage. Every zine is different but I reserve the right to decide which titles I sell first. I want to save my favorites till last but I will sell them all eventually.

((+(So collectors should note that both Douglas Beyerlein and Charles Reinsel have accumulations of Diplomacy zines for sale. Doug has not catalogued his but, since they come from Richard Shagrin who entered postal Diplomacy in the early summer of 1966, I would guess that the majority of them come from that period, through 1967, and trailing off in 1968. Charles Reinsel entered Diplomacy fandom about a year earlier in the spring of 1965. He has been very active ever since and, in his early days, had the ambition to play in every zine published; so I expect his collection is nearly complete in the latter half of 1965 and extensive, if not complete, thereafter.

As I understand it, Doug will look up individual items which a collector may need to fill gaps in his collection, items which he will then sell at a price agreed on by himself and the buyer. According to his letter, Charles, on the other hand, is selling in relatively large lots. Collectors wanting to extend their collections, or to fill gaps in them, are urged to write Douglas Beyerlein and Charles Reinsel. Their addresses appear above. -jamcc+))

((+(And there was a long and very interesting letter from our founder, Allan B. Calhamer, on a variant game. It will have to wait for another occasion; perhaps in Acelanda.- jamcc+))

New Blood

The following have written, expressing an interest in postal Diplomacy:

Glen Hertz (Sgt. Glen W. Hertz, Jr., AF 16828556), 2127 Comm Sq, Box 1733, APO San Francisco 96328.

Louis Menyhart, 30-53 88th St., Jackson Heights, 69, New York City, NY.

David R. Lindsey, 2245 Fairmont Parkway, Erie, Penna., 16510.

John J. Seman (Pfc John J. Seman), RA 15 734 183, P. B. #6133, Goodfellow AFB, San Angelo, Texas, 76901.

Stuart Stinson, Acme, Michigan, 49610

Jeff Power, 521 Sixth Street, Traverse City, Mich., 49684

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Diplomacy is a game invented by Allan B. Calhamer. It is manufactured and sold by Games Research, Inc., 48 Wareham St., Boston, Mass., 02118. The game may be bought from them, or in many game stores, for \$7.50.

Broddingnag is one of a small army (at last count 40) of magazines devoted to the play of that game by mail. It is edited and published by John McCallum, Ralston, Alberta, Canada, and sells for 10 cents a copy. Copies of most back issues are available at the same price.

To subscribe to future issues of Broddingnag, or to apply for entry to one of the games about to be begun in it, write to Ed Halle, Box 903, Gainesville, Florida, 32601.

Aceldama is my other postal Diplomacy journal. Its subscription rate is one dollar for all issues. Unlike Brodb it contains games; unlike Brodb it contains very little else.

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Stop Press New Blood

Mike Mellott, 29020 40th St., South, Auburn, Wash., 98002 (per Doug Beyerlein).

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Diplomacy as a career is becoming ridiculous.

- Prime Minister Trudeau, as quoted in the press this week.