

*The
Carolina
Command
&
Commentary*



Issue 106/September 1997

The Carolina Command and Commentary

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Game Starts:

Diplomacy: Have two, need five.

Gunboat: Have one, need six.

Winter 1898: Have one of two, need five or six.

Acquire: Have one, need three

Outpost: Have four, need two or more

Destroyer Captain: Continual openings.

Subscriptions: \$.75 per issue, \$1.25 overseas.

Gamefees: \$5 per game for Dip & Gunboat, otherwise free.

Current Standby List: Lutterbie, Kent, Holley, Taylor, Sheron, Wilson, Partridge, Scholl, Conlon, Easton, Milewski, Lurz, Davis, Whyte

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Random Notes

Welcome to this the 106th issue of CCC. As I started to work on this issue, I had decided to run down to a fold the zine after the current game starts filled. It seemed like the thing to do; I had run a zine for nearly eight years and was more than a little bored with it all. I went so far as to write out what I would say as I folded.

Then, as I continued to work on this issue, I changed my mind. I found that I do really enjoy doing this zine. If I do the letter column and the feature article ahead of time, this publication is really not that difficult to do in a timely fashion. It also helps when you, the subscriber and player, get your orders in early or on time; being able to adjudicate the Outpost game a week early spreads the work load out considerably and, in general, makes my life easier. Keep it up.

Work has started on *Zine Register 27*. Your contributions (reviews of zines) are very welcome. Target date for publication is November.

Well then, I guess it's on to the letters. I should like to thank those that sent letters and poems; at the moment the letter column and the zine in general is a bit short of space, so it may be another issue or two before your contributions appear.

Keith Oschman

I can unfortunately sympathize with your coughing problem. I came back from Origins '97 very happy and very run down. Bronchitis soon followed, but at least in my case antibiotics seem to have helped, at least somewhat.

At Origins (my first ever con) I had a great time. Had a "fireside chat" with Tom Clancy. Fascinating fellow but possibly a bit arrogant. Among other things he is heavily involved in a games/entertainment project that does have even one game designer on staff. We'll see.

Started a conversation with a small fellow my age in the lunch line. He was wonderful fount of knowledge, answering some really technical questions about WWII weaponry that no one else at Origins had been able to answer. On reading his

Continued on page 11

Reform the Jones Act

When one thinks of the sea, romantic notions of wind, surf and sail typically come to mind. Of course, sail has long since given way to steam, the 74-gun ship-of-line is long gone, and battleships are mere relics. In commercial shipping, the container ship has long ago replaced the bulk freighter, just as the freighter supplanted the barque. Yet despite these changes, U.S. maritime policy is still built around an outdated piece of 1920 legislation called the Jones Act. The results are no more satisfactory than trying to sail in calm winds: the domestic shipping industry is highly protected, uncompetitive, and costly to the average American worker and consumer.

The provisions of the Merchant Act of 1920 — typically referred to as the Jones Act, after its main sponsor — are quite simple: all merchandise shipped between American ports must travel on American-owned, built, registered, and crewed ships. The Passenger Vessel Act of 1886 has similar provisions for passenger travel. The intention of these jobs was to preserve American job and build a strong merchant marine. In fact, neither has happened.

The content provisions are the most stringent within the U.S. economy. No other industry is required to exclusively use American made-equipment. Even in the other major industry that requires majority American ownership — airlines — carriers are still free to buy equipment (airplanes) from foreign suppliers. Nor is any other trade, as a matter of law, required to specifically hire only American citizens — and not a single legal alien with the right to work in the U.S.

These strong regulations come at a cost: by effectively protecting the industry from outside competition, the Jones Act has transformed portions of the American maritime industry into, a comfortable oligopoly, with high prices, restricted capacity, and, often, little real competition.

North Carolina hog farmers have recently discovered one consequence of this: there simply aren't enough ships available or companies even interested in hauling Midwest grains by sea to Wilmington. As one U.S. Maritime Administration official put it, "It's like a bus service. There's some competition but not much."

The shipping industry's response, from the Lake Carrier Association's webpage, states, "Even

a 'bargain basement' third-flag vessel with the cheapest third world crew could offer a better rate than the railroads only under the most ideal circumstances. Furthermore, there are no grain elevators at North Carolina ports." While railroads do and will continue to dominate the grain trade, this is hardly the attitude you'd expect from an industry interested in finding new customers and increasing market share. On several occasions, grain has been shipped by sea from Thunder Bay, Canada to Wilmington at competitive rates.

Certainly there are few indications of new commercial activity in the form ship orders. In the past decade only nine new merchant ships — and none in the past five years — covered by the Jones Act have been built. There are only some 125 ships of over a meager 1,000 tons that meet the Act's qualifications; the average age of the non-tanker portion of this fleet is over 20 years. The situation is even bleaker on the Great Lakes; where the average ship is 37 years old with no new vessels having been delivered since 1981. As a result of the Jones Act, the American shipbuilding industry — a supposed beneficiary — has virtual ceased to exist. Employment in both shipboard jobs and the yards has followed the construction and ship in use numbers downward.

Prices charged by Jones Act carriers, meanwhile, are quite steep by international comparison. It costs two-thirds more to ship a 40-foot container from the West Coast to Hawaii than it does from the West Coast to Japan, though the distance (and sailing time) to Hawaii is half the distance to Japan. The General Accounting Office put the price of the American-build provision of the Jones Act on service to Alaska alone at \$163 million. The International Trade Commission puts the total benefit of the Act to ship companies at \$635 million a year, with a total cost to the American economy of over \$3 billion a year.

Like the sea, protectionism may be romantic, but both can just as easily be dangerous. The outdated Jones Act does little to meet its stated objectives of encourage shipbuilding and employment in the maritime trades. The ultimate losers, though, are us, the American consumer, worker, and businessman.

— Michael Lowrey

Eduard Shevardadze Press

Russia-Italy: Why should I care about the Germans, they threaten the very lives of all Russians?
Oh, I get it...

Berlin-Rome: Keep talking and you're liable to find that France rather fancies the French Riviera a bit more than the coast of Spain.

London-Rome: If you kept Mar, your one lucky guy.

London-Berlin: Interesting, I haven't a clue what you're doing.

France-All: First one to Paris wins.

London-Paris: Okay, I lose. I bow before your tactical prowess.

Russia-GM: Guess I forgot to read your house rules. It's a good rule, although I'd say at least 1/2 for separations.

GM-Russia: No, I'd say 1/3 is enough.

Constantinople-Berlin: There once was a kraut from Berlin
Who didn't realize how much trouble he was in
After the fall of France, he just about lost his pants
As he watched the English fleets move in
There was no sea in which the High seas Fleet could enter in
Thus his face showed no grin! *Grin*

Russia-Germany: Back in the beginning

I gave you strong warning

About your blue friend

You know, from England

His Dip play is quite good

So I thought, if you would

Please go after he

And just let me be

Berlin-Paris and London: Drew Carey? Doesn't anyone watch Seinfeld anymore?

Berlin-London: That I'm the biggest guy on the board is precisely why I'm so paranoid. I'd much rather be drafting the leader with, oh, say, an unassuming six centers. Kind of like you.

Steve-Melinda: Still haven't heard from you. Oops, wrong game!

Russia-All: Great game thus far, y'all! Total lack of NMR's, knock-on-wood. Good press, too.

Konrad Adenauer (97W) Spring 1901

<i>Austria</i>	Ed Rothenheber	11757 Love Tree Ct. Columbia MD 21044
<i>England</i>	Kevin Wilson	373 Gateford Dr Ballwin MO 63021
<i>France</i>	Matthew Matz	4805 Cara Ct Chester Springs PA 19425
<i>Germany</i>	Timothy Scholl	2336 B Street Lincoln NE 68502
<i>Italy</i>	David Partridge	15 Elmer Dr Nashua NH 03062
<i>Russia</i>	Pat Conlon	PO Box 1413 Mammoth Lakes CA 93546
<i>Turkey</i>	Doug Hooper	1653 Allens Ferry Rd Smithville TN 37166

Supply Center Chart

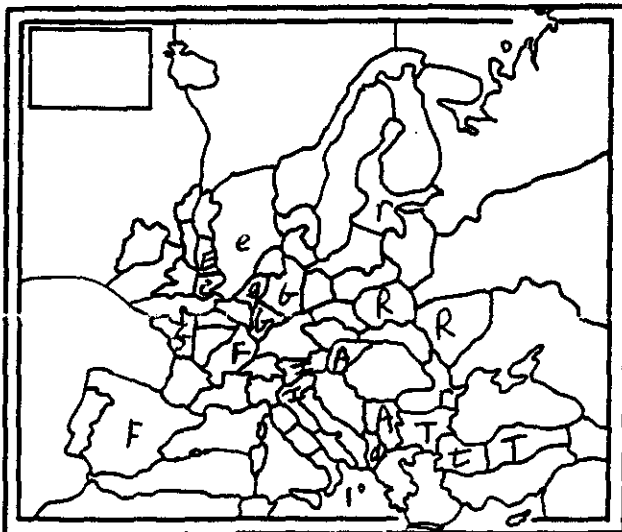
<i>Austria</i>	(3)	bud, tri, vie
<i>England</i>	(3)	edi, lon, lpl
<i>France</i>	(3)	bre, mar, par
<i>Germany</i>	(3)	ber, kie, mun
<i>Italy</i>	(3)	nap, rom, ven
<i>Russia</i>	(4)	mos, sev, stp, war
<i>Turkey</i>	(3)	ank, con, smy

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Deadline: Fall 1901 orders are due October 23.

Notes: Please note Timothy's COA. Press is on page 9.

<i>Austria</i>	F Tri-Alb, A Bud-Ser, <u>A Vie-Gal</u>
<i>England</i>	<u>F Lon-Eng</u> , F Edi-Nth, A Lpl-Yor
<i>France</i>	A Par-Bur, A Mar-Spa, <u>F Bre-Eng</u>
<i>Germany</i>	F Kie-Hol, A Mun-Ruh, A Ber-Kie
<i>Italy</i>	A Ven-Tyl, A Rom-Ven, F Nap-Ion
<i>Russia</i>	A Mos-Ukr, <u>A War-Gal</u> , F Sev-Rum, F Stp (sc)-Bot
<i>Turkey</i>	A Con-Bul, F Ank-Con, A Smy-Ank



Drake Turn Thirteen

GM: Michael Lowrey 6503-D Fourwinds Drive Charlotte NC 28212 (704) 563-9226

Deadline: Turn Fourteen orders are due October 23.

David Hood	Hickory Instellar Colonial Kingpins (HICK)
Keith Oschman	Galactic Unicorn
Vince Lutterbie	Vince's Winches
David Partridge	Barsoom Project
Pat Conlon	Spacehog

1. *HICK* opens the bidding at 53 and wins the Ecoplants (Mi17, Mi17, Ti11, Ti8). *HICK* also buys another Titanium factory (Ti8, Ti8, Ti7, Wa7) and two population (Wa5, Or5) to man the new plant plus an existing ore factory.

2. The *Barsoom Project* buys two Titanium plants (Ti11, Ti10, Ti9, Wa9, Ti7, Wa7, Wa6, Or1) and transfers population from an Ore plant and a Water plant to the new factories.

3. *Vince's Winches* buys a New Chemical plant (Re13, Re12, Wa10, Wa9, Wa8, Wa4, Or4) and transfers a crew from ore production to man it.

4. *Spacehog* bids 100 on the Laboratory and gets it (Mi18, Ti13, Ti13, Ti10, Ti9, Wa8, Wa8, Wa6, Or5). Transfers a man from water production to the free research factory.

5. *Galatic Unicorn* passes.

Factories/Upgrades

<u>Outpost</u>	<u>Factories</u>	<u>Upgrades</u>	<u>VP</u>
<i>HICK</i>	OrF, OrF, 2xWaF, 6xTiF	HE, No, 2xEP, OL, OL, Ou	37
<i>Barsoom Project</i>	OrF, OrF, WaF, WaF, 5xTiF	DL, Wh, HE, No, EP	21
<i>Spacehog</i>	OrF, OrF, WaF, WaF, 3xTiF, ReF	DL, Wh, HE, OL, La	18
<i>Vince's Winches</i>	OrF, OrF, 4xWaF, NCF	DL, DL, No, Sc, Sc, Ro	18
<i>Galatic Unicorn</i>	OrF, OrF, WaF, WaF, WaF, WaF	Wh, Wh, HE, No	9

Purchase Order: HICK, Barsoom, Spacehog, Vince's, Unicorn

Colony Upgrade Cards Available: Outpost (100), Laboratory (100), 2 Robots (50), Orbital Lab (50)

Not Yet Delievered: 4 Moon Bases, 4 Planetary Cruisers, 4 Space Stations, 2 Outposts, 1 Ecoplant, 2 Laboratories, 1 Robot, 2 Scientists

Notes: Minimum bids are listed in parenthesis. Vince's Wenches opts to take a MegaWater card.

Press: Barsoom-Spacey Unicorn Wench: Hey guys, want to pool our bets, we might be able to keep up with The David then.

Spacehog-Wenches: You lucky bum! I had more ducats to bid on that Scientist, but thought 76 was high enough. So close...

Your production cards are:

Eduard Shevardadze (97E) Fall 1903

<i>Austria</i>	Eric Mikulaninec	2529 North Halsted, Apt N-1 Chicago IL 60614
<i>England</i>	Steve Cooley	23927 Ranney House Ct Valencia CA 91355
<i>France</i>	Matthew Matz	4805 Cara Ct Chester Springs PA 19425
<i>Germany</i>	Jim O'Kelley	664 West Irving Park Rd, Unit I6 Chicago IL 60613
<i>Italy</i>	Rob Hensley	1314 Joni Dr Louisville KY 40216
<i>Russia</i>	Randy Davis	5982 South Cedar St Freeland WA 98249
<i>Turkey</i>	Stephen Mayer	9454 Hawksmoor Ln Sarasota FL 34228

Supply Center Chart

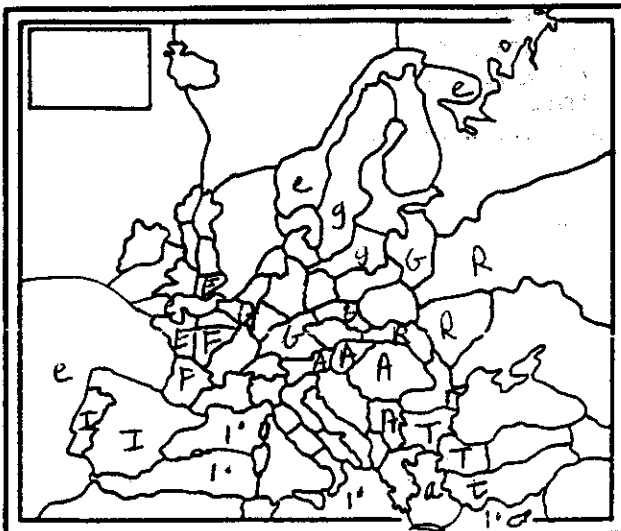
<i>Austria</i>	(5)	bud, gre, ser, tri, vie	
<i>England</i>	(6)	bre, edi, lon, lpl, nwy, stp	
<i>France</i>	(1)	par, por	Remove one
<i>Germany</i>	(8)	bel, ber, den, hol, kie, mun, swe, war	Build one
<i>Italy</i>	(7)	mar, nap, por, rom, spa, tun, ven	Build one
<i>Russia</i>	(3)	mos, rum, sev, war	Remove one
<i>Turkey</i>	(4)	ank, bul, con, smy	Build one

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Deadline: Winter 1903/Spring 1904 orders are due October 23.

Notes: Please note Randy's COA. Press is on page 4.

<i>Austria</i>	A Gal r Vie, <u>A Vie-Bud</u> , <u>A Tvl-Vie</u> , <u>A Bud-Ser</u> , <u>A Ser-Gre</u> , F Gre-Aeg
<i>England</i>	<u>F Nwy-Swe</u> , F Stp (nc) H, F Eng C A Lon-Bre, F Mid S A Lon-Bre, <u>A Lon-Bre</u> , <u>A Bre-Par</u>
<i>France</i>	<u>A Gas-Bre</u> , A Par S A Gas-Bre
<i>Germany</i>	A Bur-Mun, <u>F Swe-Nwy</u> , <u>A Bel S English A Lon-Pic (nso)</u> , A Pru-War, A Lvn S A Pru-War, A Sil S A Pru-War, <u>F Bal-Swe</u>
<i>Italy</i>	F Ion S Austrian F Gre-Aeg, F Eas S Austrian F Gre-Aeg, A Por H, F Tyn-Lyo, F Wes C A Naf-Spa, A Naf-Spa
<i>Russia</i>	A War-Mos, <u>A Ukr-War</u> , <u>A Gal-Bud</u> , <u>F Rum-Bul (ec)</u>
<i>Turkey</i>	<u>A Bul-Gre</u> , <u>A Con-Bul</u> , <u>F Aeg S A Bul-Gre (d. ann)</u> , F Smy S F Aeg



Arleigh Burke (96J) Spring 1909

<i>Austria</i>	Pat Conlon	PO Box 1413 Mammoth Lakes CA 93546
<i>England</i>	Paul Milewski	7 Mallard Drive Amelia OH 45102
<i>Germany</i>	Melinda Holley	1823 Enslow Blvd Huntington WV 25701
<i>Italy</i>	Stephen Mayer	9454 Hawksmoor Lane Sarasota FL 34238
<i>Turkey</i>	Steve Cooley	23927 Ranney House Ct Valencia CA 91355

Supply Center Chart

<i>Austria</i>	(3)	bud, mos, sev
<i>England</i>	(11)	bel, bre, edi, hol, lon, lpl, mar, nwy, par, spa, stp
<i>Germany</i>	(6)	ber, den, kie, mun, swe, war
<i>Italy</i>	(4)	nap, por, rom, ven
<i>Turkey</i>	(10)	ank, bul, con, gre, rum, ser, smy, tri, tun, vie

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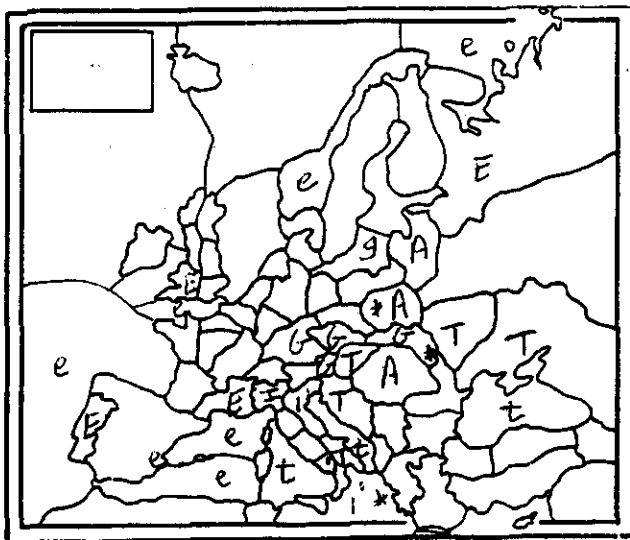
Deadline: Fall 1909 orders are due October 23.

Old Proposal: ET draw fails (2 to 1)

New Proposal: ET draw Please vote. Not voting = yes.

Notes: Press is on page 9.

<i>Austria</i>	Build A Bud. A Bud S Turkish A Vie, A Mos-War, <u>A Lvn-Mos</u>
<i>England</i>	Build F Lon, A Lpl. <u>A Stp-Mos</u> , F Bar S F Nwy-Stp (nc), <u>F Nwy-Stp (nc)</u> , <u>A Mar-Pie</u> , F Lyo S F Wes, F Spa (sc) S A Gas-Por, F Mid C A Gas-Por, A Gas-Por, F Wes S Turkish F Tun-Tyn, F Lon-Eng, A Lpl-Wal
<i>Germany</i>	A Mun S A Tyl, A Tyl S A Boh, A Sil-Gal, A Boh S A Sil-Gal, <u>A War S A Sil-Gal (d, pru, sil, otb)</u> , F Bal H
<i>Italy</i>	Remove F Por. F Nap S F Tyn-Ion, <u>A Pie S F Ven</u> , F Tyn-Ion, F Ven H
<i>Turkey</i>	A War r Ukr. Build A Con. A Con-Sev, A Tri-Apu, <u>A Gal-Sil (d, rum, otb)</u> , A Vie S A Ser-Tri, A Ser-Tri, F Tun-Tyn, F Bla C A Con-Sev, F Adr C A Tri-Apu, <u>F Ion S A Tri-Apu (d, aeg, alb, eas, gre, tun, otb)</u> , A Ukr S Austrian A Mos-War



Dispatches From the Front

Arleigh Burke

Rome-Constantinople: I may be totally out of line but I'm not outa my mind Tuscany is not the capital of Italy (maybe you'll make it be) so better watch what you put in your waterpipe before you type like a guttersnipe. *Grin*

Austria-Turkey: Hey there, Mr. AvalonCon Tournament Winner, guess we get to see how well you fare against gunboats.

Constantinople-Berlin: What exactly do you have on England? It must be life-threatening.

Constantinople-London: Okay, what does she have on you? I won't tell! Laugh, maybe; throw up, possibly; tell, never!

London-GM: Would you believe it? Someone sent me a postcard addressed to 8905 Second Ave 7 Mallard Dr and wants to know why I have two street addresses.

MPL-London: Because your acclaim as a Diplomacy player is so great that no one site can hold all the accolades due you. Or maybe because your editor is incompetent.

Austria-Italy: Speaking of taking away the devil's tongue...

Constantinople-Budapest: Well, hopefully, you were a bit more...reliable this turn.

Konrad Adenauer:

Berlin-Paris: German counsel urges quick and decisive action on the French proposal. Things look good for unification.

Germany-Austria: With the glory and surge of nationalism predicted for the blossoming Weimar Republic, it only makes sense to further join the Germanic tribes into a nation of true leaders interested in moving forward the glorious history of our peoples.

Italy-Austria: Sorry friend, but Lepanto bores me!

Russia-Austria: What did you do with the extension of the deadline?

Vienna-Moscow: Pat, I am really sorry for not getting back to you. I moved to GAL figuring that you would go with the bounce that you suggested. If I guessed wrong I will pull the unit back next turn. I promise to write after the next set of moves come out.

Vienna-World: I apologize for my lack of communication. Life has been hell recently and I haven't had chance to catch my breath let alone get my letters off. I am better responding to e-mail, rothenheber_ed@bah.com.

Russia-All: Rasputin has taken control of Mother Russia and her armed forces.

Rasputin-Willy: Go west, young man, and stay there this time.

Rasputin-Joey: Better stay home. Us Serbs and Slavs stick together.

Rasputin-Vicky: You look like it's been years since you've been goosed. Here, allow me.

Rasputin-Sultan: How's this for variety. We can swap harems for a month.

Bonefish Turn Eight

Pat Conlon	Plays F12	Passes
Ed Rothenheber	Plays I9	Buys 1 Continental
David Hood	Plays A7	Buys 2 Luxor
Vince "The Drill" Lutterbie	Plays H7	Buys 1 American, 2 Luxor

	<u>A</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>\$</u>
Size	2	4	6	2	2	6	5	—
Price	300	600	700	400	200	600	600	—
Bank	0	14	15	24	15	5	15	—
P. Conlon	8	4	4	-	-	3	3	0
D. Hood	-	3	-	-	5	7	7	0
V. Lutterbie	8	-	-	-	5	10	-	800
E. Rothenheber	9	4	6	1	-	-	-	0

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Deadline: Turn nine orders are due October 23.

Order: Rothenheber, Hood, Lutterbie, Conlon

Press: PC-GM: Will you break a turn into two or more adjudications if more than one merger occurs in one turn?

MPL-PC: I will either split the adjudication or request additional instructions from players, depending on the circumstances.

Tegetthoff Turn One/Two and End

1:03 AM: As might be expected when enemy warships slight each other at medium range, shells splashes soon follow. And shell splashes are the key words, for given the distance, gunnery was not yet extremely accurate. The Japanese concentrated their fire on *Taussig*, though only *Shimakaze* found the range and did moderate damage to her American adversary. The American destroyers failed to find the mark altogether.

Considerably more success was enjoyed by Japanese torpedoes. An unfortunate decision to slow to 12 knots by the American commander left

the last ship in his formation, *Lowry*, in the path of several Long Lances dropped minutes before. Though able to avoid several of these deadly fish, the final torpedo in the salvo caught the American destroyer, blew off her stern, and started her on her long trip to bottom.

The two lead ships in the formation, *Taussig* and *Walke*, at their slow speeds were perfect targets for *Shimakaze*, which dropped six torpedoes from a range of 4200 yards, and hit and sank both American destroyers in one very fatal salvo.

<u>Ship</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>Plot</u>	<u>Direction</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<i>Shimakaze</i>	6	X20-X19-X18-X17-X16-X15-X14	6	-3 Leader
<i>Sakaki</i>	6	X21-X20-X19-X18-X17-X16-X15	6	
<i>Tanigiri</i>	6	X22-X21-X20-X19-X18-X17-X16	6	
<i>Walke</i>	2	P18-Q17-Q16	6	Sunk
<i>Taussig</i>	2	P19-Q18-Q17	6	Sunk
<i>Lowry</i>	2	O19-P19-Q18	6	Sunk

Random Notes

Continued from page 2

name tag to thank him, I found I had been talking to Frank Chadwick! I was so dumbstruck that I just stood there. I had in my hand a Twilight 2000 module and a Space 1889 GM screen that I had just purchased — both written by Frank. It didn't occur to me until later that I could have asked a truly nice guy for his autograph on two of his works...

Mark Sheron

Have you ever been to Pearl Harbor? I was in Hawaii a couple of weeks ago and went to see the Arizona memorial. It was my second visit, but the first was when I was only about 9 years old.

The memorial is a very emotional experience. I have always been interested in World War II, especially the Pacific Theater. I lost a relative in the attack. He was strafed on the beach. We found his name on a display listing the casualties from each ship. He was assigned to *Enterprise*, but was on leave while the carrier was off delivering planes.

Anyway, if you have never been, I believe every American should visit there. Good luck with your classes.

»I have never been west of Oklahoma, though I truly do want to see the West Coast and Hawaii. Pearl Harbor is among the things I want to experience while in the islands. When this will happen is another question. With my parents moving to Germany, I'll probably see Prague before I see Honolulu or San Francisco.

I too have always been interested in World War II. For me, this comes with strong and mixed emotions. My mother's side of the family is from Germany (she lived there until she was 24) and I was born there. My grandmother's first husband died near Leningrad while serving in the German Army. My grandfather, meanwhile, was in the Luftwaffe during and after the war. He served, among other places, in France, Greece, North Africa, Rumania, and Russia. I have seen his war album, including a picture of a captured Vickers Wellington bomber. To this day he hates the British for their treatment of him as a POW, though he rarely talks about it.

In the general postwar squalor, one of my mother's brothers died in infancy. She, herself, barely survived numerous illnesses, including (among others) scarlet fever, hepatitis, and diphtheria.

As you might expect, my interests lie more in the Pacific Theater.

Paul Ruffs

Sorry to see that you are continuing to be unwell, but at least you have an idea of the problem now. Aspiration can be very dangerous, but I imagine that you are aware of that by now. I hope that you begin to improve at any rate. Stop sniffing that chalk too! Ask for, nay, demand!! a large white board and marking pens. I'm sure that you could get that through the teaching administration if you dropped veiled hints about going off on work-related compensation for a situation that is being exacerbated by existing work conditions. You'll have to let me know if anyone has threatened you with surgery to the sphincter above the stomach opening as well. That can be beneficial. Just continue to take care of yourself as much as possible and keep on pumping out this excellent gaming zine and enjoying life.

Here on my home front, all is well. Lo and behold, our organization did get accreditation status for three years. No one was more surprised than all of us who had labored so hard to attain it. This certainly makes myself look fairly good and competent, and I like that. It keeps them guessing anyway. Jam is doing well with the pregnancy and everything is well. I have been busy repainting the cot, and rearranging all the wardrobes and furniture. I have been up into the roof space making more storage areas. Isn't it amazing how much *stuff* you collect in a few years.

»The cough really hasn't gotten better. My lung function is still normal, so the situation doesn't warrant drastic immediate action. I've been to the allergist; I'm allergic to dust mites, cockroaches, and various pollens. Still, I don't sense that this is the whole cause. I don't cough in bed (a classic sign of aspiration and, I'd imagine, dust mite allergies) though I do cough a lot in the shower or when I take a walk. I'll let you know how things turn out.

—MPL

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