

# DIPLOMACY DIGEST

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Austria

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Enclosed with this issue is probably a ballot for the 1989 Runestone Poll. This covers, zines, subzines and GMS. More people directly participate in the Runestone Poll than in any other single hobby activity. This is one activity that gives everyone an equal voice, and is the one where the hobby can collectively express its satisfactions and dissatisfactions (individual views can always be expressed). Those GMS and editors who have done well deserve the pat on the back. As for the others, well, the jarring news might instigate some needed shakeups.

As there have been every year that Bruce Linsey has run the RP, there are a few changes. The definition of what zines are eligible has been expanded to cover zines which don't directly deal with Dip, but whose participants are drawn mostly from the hobby. Eric Brosius will be the assistant this year. The pledge drive is again being run by Simon Billenness and Barbara Passoff, this year for the American Heart Association; the info on that should be on the back of your ballot.

And if you don't care for the Runestone Poll, please, just ignore it. Tactics such as submitting a ballot in the name of one's infant child, or offering a free issue of a zine for this or that vote (to name two tactics from the past two years) just try to spoil other people's fun. These go in the same category as submitting non-existent game starts to the BNC, sending in ringers to the editor of a hobby census, offering non-existent items for the PDO Auction or descriptions of non-existent zines to a Zine Directory. The hobby doesn't benefit by attempts to torpedo hobby projects.

In other matters, Kathy Caruso has written to Julie Martin (of all people) to complain of an error in DD #116/117. She says she does not work with Walker at the USOS, but with Robert Sacks at the OGP, for placing orphan games. I heard this originally from Rod himself, but of course it's possible that by the time the DD came out, it was no longer true.

I got a couple of comments about one item being too long last issue, so I've made an effort to use shorter pieces for this one.

((This item is from Mike Close and appeared in Ode #30, Feb 1982. The game was referred to only as Ode Zeme, so I don't have the Boardman #))

AAARGH! NO!!

I'd drawn Austria, so early in Spring 1901 I wrote to all my immediate neighbors in the game, and sat back for the flood of letters to come in. First one back was from Germany (Cliff Kennedy); a friendly letter ... offering an alliance, as is usual between A and G. Turkey (Karl Piper) was next, another friendly one allowing me Greece and suggesting A Bud-Rum in SOL.

The lack of reply from Russia (Colin Johnson) and Italy (Craig Nye) was a little worrying, so I contacted France and England (Richard Marsh and Pete Tamlyn) to ask if they had heard any news. I also asked Germany, and accepted his alliance - that was one less border to worry about -- and also wrote again to Turkey.

France had just written to say that he'd heard nothing from Russia or Italy either, when a letter from Russia appeared. It suggested an attack on Turkey, but could not guarantee he would not move into Gal. I wrote back, telling him to stay out of Gal, as it was a very sensitive area for Austria.

The fact that I hadn't heard from Italy was ominous. Germany wrote again ... to say that he couldn't move A Mun-Tyo, and a note from England said that he had concluded a pact with Russia over Scandinavia. This was bad news --- A Mos and A War were free to move south...I wrote Italy again asking him to talk to me, and sent the GM some provisional orders.

The deadline loomed, and the silence from Italy was deafening. The day I decided to write out my full orders, a short note from Russia arrived, stating that he would stay out of Gal. Should I believe him? Most of the evidence said no, and his last sentence did not instill confidence. It said, "You should be able to tell if I'm trustworthy or not by whether or not I move to Gal..." I was also disappointed that Turkey had not written again - it might have shed some light.

I already assumed Italy to be aggressive: A Ven-Tyo, A Rom-Ven looked very likely, and I contemplated F Tri-Alb, A Vie-Tyo, A Bud-Ser. But could I afford to let Russia into Gal? I decided not, and in a fit of paranoia, ordered the horrible hedgehog: A Vie-Gal, F Tri-Ven, A Bud-Ser.

The report arrived with John Marsden's usual promptness -- and what a shambles. Russia had gone south: F Sev-Rum, A Mos-Sev, A War-Ukr. Turkey: F Ank-Con, A Smy-Ank. And Italy, to my disgust, had opened a true Lepanto: A Rom-Nap, F Nap-Ion, A Ven H.

The game continued with Italy trying to convoy to Greece (!) until he dropped, and it looked for a while as if I would be flattened by the TR juggernaut...

However, a slow start (I gained only Ser in 1901) had cost dearly. I couldn't build a second fleet for some time, and by the time I dislodged the CD F Ion, England was entrenched in the Med, and a draw looked inevitable...And so it turned out, with E, G, and A sharing the honors, and I rued what might have been if I had played Sol correctly. ((Marsden then added a remark on how difficult SOL is because of the lack of information. You always have to balance the potential loss of being unprepared for the stab vs the potential loss of opportunity when you guard against a stab which is not there. But in 1901, so often it is the latter, not the former, which is the worse loss))

((The following dour view of the A-T alliance comes from a letter to The Pouch, Feb 11, 1974, from one of the hobby's foremost strategic writers))

Douglas Beyerlein: The Austro-Turkish alliance is a very weak alliance in comparison to almost every other alliance pattern on the board. Its weakness lies in two factors. (1) The alliance requires extraordinary trust on the part of Austria. Once the alliance gets moving in 1902 all of the paths for advancement of Turkish units border Austrian centers. This is true in the Mediterranean attack and the Russian attack. ((This is not 100% true. If Turkey is allocated the southern most tier of centers (Gre, Nap, Tun and Rom), then, then the Turkish fleet armada can sail toward Iberia and the Mid without passing alongside Austrian centers at all.)) At the same time the Austrian backdoor is completely open, with all of its units facing off with the Germans, Russians and Italians. In one bold sweep, Austrian can grab off three Austrian centers with literally no forewarning in Turkey's favor. Austria is also faced with the same problem vis-a-vis the Italian alliance, but there it is more a matter of two losers banig together in a common cause. Here it is more the fact that Austria probably sees no way to beat Turkey and allying with it is the next best thing. ((Similar problems do exist with AI. Indeed, Austria is more vulnerable to a backdoor stab than in AT, but it is much less cramping for Italy in IA than for T in AT, so Italy will likely be less tempted.)) (2) The alliance starts out of the southeastern corner of the board. Thus, while the alliance is quick to set up any potential stalemate line (and only then with control of Italy ((ie Italian centers are needed for this line))) it also faces out at numerous stalemate lines. In the Medit, it must first overcome Italian and then French resistance before even getting to the key sea provence of Mid --- which can be blocked by the English ((too)). In Russia is StP and the key to Scandinavia. The opposition has to be asleep to let StP fall to either A or T. In Germany is that vast wasteland of non-SC provinces...Tyo, Boh, Gal, Sil, Pru, Lvn. And once these provicnes are gained Germany ((or France)) can still construct a multitude of stalemate lines ((Even if all of Germany is taken, blockages at Den or at Bel-Ruh-Bar are easily formed. But note that IT and AI can be expected to run into the same problems on the continent)) Therefore the alliance has very little possibility of sweeping the board or even gaining anything more than southern Russia and Maybe Italy. Turkey can do much better with a Russian alliance as can Austria with an Italian alliance. ((Its debateable whether Turkey really does better with the Russian alliance. Some of the same problems will occur, perhaps even in worse form, such as the potential blockage at Gibraltar. Indeed, the AT alliance, which takes on Italy sooner (than RT) and can use the Austrian fleet, can be expected to get to Iberia quicker than RT. And T in RT usually finds his growth outstripped by Russia's, and can generally do little about it --- by contrast, A in AT is easier to stab than R in RT. And is IA really better for A than AT? If Russia is very hostile and diplomatically well set with E and G, I'd rather be allied with T than I.)) All of this is not to say that the A-T alliance cannot work. Take a look at 72BD ... I doubt you will ever find the alliance run better than in that game...The alliance will work, but it is certainly a high risk, low profit alliance ((Doug was later to write about his alliance with Walt Buchanan in 1972 BD. As for me, postally I've tried it only once, and as Turkey, I drew with Austria, 17-17.))

## WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

Many of you, I suspect, got recently a package from Robert Sacks, which had Lord of Hosts (LoH), KGO, and the Zine Directory. Randy Grigsby is the Miller Number Custodian, but in KGO, he is called by Sacks the "Variant Number Custodian", and in LoH, Sacks calls him the "Variant Banks's Walker Number Custodian". He in fact gives out Miller Numbers, but Sacks refers to them as Variant Bank Numbers. All of these terms starting with "Variant..." were coined by Sacks, and appended to people who never wanted them and who don't use them.

Not too long ago, a rival <sup>MNC</sup> project arose. On page 1 of this Lord of Hosts, it says, "The Miller Number Custodian is Julie Martin", but in some other places it uses the title "MNC under the covenant". The numbers she gives out are also called Miller Numbers, altho in some places called "recategorized Miller Numbers". The two operations give out similar materials, but not the same. Thus, in Alpha and Omega, the zine of Grigsby (and predecessors), Gunboat is "rb", in LoH, gunboat is "ra". Similarly, in A&O, the variant game starting with 1988AR is an Atlantica III game run by Fred Davis, but in LoH, its a Kremlin game run by Tom Swider.

Confused? You have every right to be. Wondering why there needs to be a duplicative operation? Join the crowd.

The central issue here is the right of the person running a project to name his or her own successor. This has been a cornerstone principle of the hobby, going back all the way to 1965. In this case, Grigsby was appointed by Fred Hyatt, who was appointed by his predecessor, etc, in an unbroken chain going all the way back to the first Miller Number Custodian, the late Don Miller. This tradition has served the hobby exceedingly well, and has been used in other places, such as for the Runesonte Poll and Diplomacy World. While people have occasionally criticized the particular choice of successor, with one exception, no one has challenged the right to pick one's own successor.

That exception is Robert Sacks. He was once a MNC, and persuaded his successor, Greg Costikyan to sign a document Sacks wrote called "the covenant". But none of the successors since then were the least bit interested in signing on. Accordingly, Sacks decided that he had the right to appoint MNCs, and not the current custodian. Accordingly, during the tenure of Lee Kendter, Sr (who was appointed by Leeder, who was appointed by Costikyan) or Fred Hyatt (Kendter's successor), he decided to appoint "Karel Aleric" (I'm not sure exactly when this happened). In 1987, Aleric stepped down, and then either he or Sacks appointed Julie Martin. Sacks stated that Aleric was a pseudonym, but refused to say who this person was, or to say whether he or she had any other role in the hobby under a different name. Given the sequence of events, Sacks and Julie Martin are the most likely possibilities, but who knows?

I believe very strongly in the principle that the person running the project has the sole right to name the successor. Sacks had the right to name Costikyan, and that's it. Neither he nor any other former MNC can start a fresh line of MNCs. Grigsby is the MNC, period. If Julie Martin wants her own title, fine, but she cannot use "Miller Number Custodian". Similarly, in my view she has no right to call her labels "Miller Numbers"; only Grigsby can do that. If she wants to label games, fine, its a free country, but she should use a different name. That one is already taken. I suggest "Sacks Numbers".

And what purpose does this confusing duplication serve? Sacks was kind enough to send me a copy of the Covenant. Its an amazing document, full of fancy titles, portentous organization, and obscure procedures. For example, the MNC is assigned a series of "Associate

Custodians' --- whether he wants them or not. Most of these are Variant Bank Directors, but since they too must agree to abide by the covenant, there's probably no one in that category. Another Associate MNC is the "Registrar of Projects" (RoP). The MNC is responsible, in a vague sort of way, to an electorate, which includes "hobby officers". No, I never heard of them either, but they are defined as people so designated by the RoP. There's even an impeachment procedure, and the person who decides whether or not to hold the "judicial hearing" is --- you guess it --- the RoP. And RoP is good old Robert Sacks, and no, there's no procedure to remove him. Why Julie would agree to such a set-up is a mystery to me.

Robert and Julie have made a big deal of the fact that the covenant bars the MNC from charging a fee for a MN. Alas, the hobby has been plagued from time to time with elaborate solutions to non-existent problems. No MNC has ever even proposed charging a fee for a MN.

I realize I've spent a lot of space on this. But the principle of who can appoint a successor is an exceedingly important one. The practice of having two MNCs, and two people giving out non-identical MNs is confusing to newcomers and puts a very poor face on the hobby. I strongly urge Julie to discontinue using "Miller Number" because I don't think she has the right to it.



THE OVERLOOKED ALLIANCE : AUSTRIA\*GERMANY AT GAMESTART  
by Mark L Berch

When Austria deals with her neighbors at gamestart, Germany is normally on the bottom of the list of concerns. Austria's letter to Germany (if one is even written), will likely go no further than a proposed demilitarization of Tyro-Boh, a general proposal to exchange info about the respective spheres of the board, and the usual introductory chit-chat. While that's all that needs to be done for WOO, it's a very short-sighted approach, and a poor start for what could be a useful and long-lasting relationship.

The primary shared concern the two countries have is Russia. But this is a topic which, at gamestart, is more important to Austria than to Germany, so you as Austria should raise it, certainly by the second letter, and preferably in the first. One approach is simply to ask Germany point blank in the first letter whether he'd prefer an AR alliance or AR war. If he gives you a preference, and that lands up as your policy, then Germany will feel you are taking his views into account (even if it had nothing to do with it) and this should help the relationship. Or if there is war, which Germany recommended, and you later want to end it, you can always say that you regret being so influenced by German ideas. Even if that doesn't get you off the hook, it might cool R-G relations.

If you've decided on war with Russia, you must think carefully about whether to tell this to Germany. The benefit is that G might be wavering about standing Russia out of Swe in FOL, and the notion that Russia will also have his hands full in the south may embolden Germany to do this, since Russia will not have a strong hand to retaliate. On the other hand, Germany may blab, spoiling an element of surprise. Look for clues here. If, for example, you hear of strong FG, then the prospects for a standoff in Swe are much poorer, since Germany is less likely to want to activate conflict in Scandinavia without an ally there.

If you have decided on peace with Russia, that's probably safe to tell him, but now you need to decide whether to press for good or poor R-G relations. If you are anticipating the south breaking as

AR vs IT, then you have a close battle coming up, and you don't want any serious distractions for Russia in the north. By contrast, if it looks like ARI vs T, then things should go smoothly, and your fear is that R may be growing too much faster than you, and a set-back in the north (such as a delay on taking Swe, or not getting it) would actually be welcome. The problem here, tho, is that if you are at peace with Russia, its hard to urge Germany act against Russia, since his attitude might be "If you aren't going to fight Russia, why should I".

And finally, if you hadn't decided on what to do, what you hear from Germany of his (and England's intentions) may well influence you. News of a solid EG alliance with Scandinavia as an early target (as opposed to attacking France first, with Russia only after R is dispatched) will strongly color your thinking. Now your decision is in terms of propping up Russia versus grabbing your share as fast as possible. This is as opposed to a more tradition "Would I prefer Russia or Turkey as my ally?"

The other area of early-game concern is Tyrolia. I suspect that Austrias tend to talk about this first with Germany, even tho I think Russia is really the priority topic. The most reasonable diplomatic goal to pursue, in my opinion, is getting Germany to write I that he will look with great disfavor on a) A Ven-Tyo, b) A Ven-Tri, or c) Italian attack generally on Austria. The problem you will face here is that 1) Germans tend not to be alarmed with A Mun-Tyo, since the army so rarely goes for Mun 2) Germany will need to be sold on the evilness of an early I-A war, since most players tend to prefer that their neighbors be tied up in early skirmishes. In the latter regard, however, you may want to try to sell the idea of the interior alliance - IAG - to Germany. Even if Italy doesn't sign up, she will get the idea that Germany won't be happy with such an attack, and that might be a factor in her decision.

One last tidbit you might want to get at gamestart is some clue as to France's direction, since this will be a factor in Italy's future. A pro-England France will likely show up with sou then fleet(s) much much earlier than an anti-England France. Of course, the best info on this will come from France, but if Germany is telling you a different story than France, then that detracts from how much you can rely on France

So get started right away with your relationship with Germany. It can pay off in significant ways, even if close military co-operation is still years off.

**THE ZINE**

**COLUMN # 112**

# LETTERCOLS

With Costaguana and Praxis on, shall we say, vacation, other letter-col zines can (and should) get more attention. Julie Martin (17601 Lisa Drive Rockville Md 20855. \$1 each) edits House of Lords/Operable. The recent issue has 44 pages, with contributions from at least 29 people. Its strengths are the large number of contributors, news column, superb typography, and grouping letters by topic. In this issue, Op has for example Julie's reaction to a mass mailing from Steve Kwiatowski, and John Caruso's description of, and criticism of, a letter he says hasn't existed for over four years. In HoL, there is Michael Hopcroft on desk-top publishing, a detailed analysis by Paul Milewski of the RNC finances, Peel on new subbers and new zines, several people on my WAP plan for avoiding some NMRs, 5 people on the canadian hobby, Kathy Caruso proclaiming that

John Fisher dropped out of the hobby (this despite the fact that she, as it turned out, apparently knew that he put out a subzine), 10 people on scoring/rating systems, me on having an OTR letter quoted from in KK/W and on the right of reply, and much much more. This issue unfortunately (but atypically) had very little of Julie's responses to letters. The main drawback here is that it comes out only every two or three months, which reduces the sense of dialogue. Julie's remarks could do with more evenhandedness, methinks, and she will take an occasional cheap shot (for example, in this issue, she says "Linsey has never shown a "true copy" of his letter" --- omitting the fact that Linsey never said there was a copy made in the first place).

Passchendaele (Francois Guerrier 2303 Eglinton Ave E #305, Scarborough Ont M1K2N6. Subs 10/\$7) has been coming out at a torrid pace in 1989: 9 issues just in the first 3 months, most of them about 20 pages. I don't expect this pace to keep up the whole year, but it does move the zine along. There isn't nearly as broad a range of topics or contributors as HoL, and it is not focused just on the hobby as HoL tends to be, but the letters (and FC's responses) tend to more detailed and in depth. While HoL/Op is almost entirely letter-col, Francois writes a lot of essays for this, which of course brings up fresh topics for the letter col all the time, especially since his views are frequently far from the mainstream. One problem is that his criticism tends to be overdone on occasion; he puts too sharp an edge on some of his comments. While this is balanced by praise of what he does like, things can get a bit out of hand, such as a review of XL in #75 which was more than a little unfair. But if a letter writer does hack FC's position to pieces (as Dorneman's letter superbly did in #83), FC is big enuf to concede this gracefully. The zine pays exceedingly well for contributions --- a full page will net you two free issues. With only two games being run, you get a lot of reading matter each issue. This is a sharp and lively place, fast paced and with good variety --- and if you write enuf, you won't even have to pay for it!

The young wippersnapper is MegaDiplomat (Chris Carrier 1215 P street #12, Sacramento CA 95814 75¢/issue 80¢ in Canada). #14 is by far the most impressive issue to date, running 26 pages, many oversized. Like HoL, it's almost entirely letters with no games, tho this issue has some satire items and an essay on national politics. Included are Walker on Julie Martin, and on how conservative Bush really is and on what actually constitutes a feud, Boardman on Robert Sacks, Mark Lew on Bruce Geyk, Martin Lewis on the British variant hobby, and much more. This zine is more in the vein of Brutus Bulletin, with Chris encouraging people to set out their views in as uninhibited a manner as possible. Not for the faint hearted, but he does have a nice range of views on both sides of topics, and he keeps his own replies reasonably short.

There are some other good lettercols (Doehstoss, XL, benzene) but I wanted to focus on these three. Give them a try!

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And speaking of printed letters, what should arrive yesterday but one from Kathy Caruso, opining that one of the two biggest problems facing the diplomacy hobby is "Mark Berch". After calling me some names (and this was in Everything!), she urges: "Get rid of the darkside and let the rest of us play and enjoy our games". Well, Kathy Caruso, we don't "get rid" of people in this hobby, and we never have. I would find this an odious suggestion regardless of who you were talking about. And if you, for one, can't play and enjoy your games without Berch being gotten rid of, that's just too damn bad. I've been here 13 years, and I plan to stay.

# AUSTRIAN WINS

((This item appeared in Greatest Hits #85, June 1981, by Pete Birks))  
 The first part was a map, showing "the percentage of times a SC was held by Austria at the end of 20 Austrian victories. I counted only games where either 18 centers or more were held or when it was clearly stated what those centers would be. It doesn't exactly add up because more than 18 centers have frequently been held." I'll put this in table form:))

- 100% : Vie, Bud, Tri, Ser, Rum, Sev
- 95% : Ank, Bul, Ven, Gre
- 90% : Mos, War,
- 85% : Smy
- 80% : Con
- 75% : Rom
- 70% : Ber
- 65% : Mun
- 60% : Nap, StP
- 40% : Tun
- 25% : Nor, Kie
- 15% : Spa, Mar
- 10% : Hol, Den Swe, Por
- 0-5% : Bre, Par, Bel, Lon, Fdi, Lpl

((Centers 17-19 turn out to be Mun, Nap, StP. Those are the swing centers))  
 ((He then listed the 20 wins, noting that the modal year was 1911, six times, with the median at June 30, 1910. The range was 1907-1914))  
 Incidentally, I would be very surprised if a list of 20 North American Austrian wins had none going later than 1914))

PERFORMANCE OF OTHER COUNTRIES IN 20 AUSTRIAN VICTORIES				
Country	Eliminations	Average SC	Average SC if survive	Average Posi if surviving
England	4	4.45	5.56	2.87
France	9	2.75	5.00	3.32
Germany	9	4.25	7.73	2.35
Italy	8	2.75	4.58	3.25
Russia	10	1.1	2.2	4.1
Turkey	19	0.35	7.0	2.0
Mean	9.8	2.70	5.34	2.98

Excluding Austria, the average number of survivors when she wins is 3.05  
 The average number of total SCs held by survivors is 15.65  
 ((The table of position of survivors is omitted; I don't think the "when surviving" data is of much value. The general survival of England in Austrian wins is unsurprising, but I found it a bit surprising that F, G, I and R have about the same survival rate. It appears from this table that Turkey just cannot survive even as a puppet to an Austrian win. Since the Italian centers are about as accessible as the Turkish centers, Italy's far more often surviving bespeaks her usefulness to Austria. Note that while Germany is eliminated more than twice as frequently as England, her average SC count is about the same. If Germany survives, she does well. The pattern may well be Austria dominating the east much quicker than G can dominate the west, so the win goes to Austria))

((For those interested in more stats, Everything #78 (Heinowski) looks at W03 holdings in 20 games where Austria wins. My own essay in DW #16 looked at whether Austria is harmed by growing "too fast" This is available now only in the DW Anthology Vol 2))



((Austria, perhaps more than any other country, has trouble recovering from significant stabs. This account by John Gross of his win in 1974AU from Paroxysm #4, 4-6-75 shows him recovering twice from this by grabbing centers elsewhere. Its also a good lesson in Austria's ability to be active on more than one front at a time))

...To give a bit of an idea of how new I really was to all of this, when I heard I had wound up with Austria, I was delighted. Furthermore, when I spoke to Terry Knowles (I), and established a neutrality pact, and then proceeded to agree to an A-T alliance, everything seemed golden. Gold turned to rust as Italy took Tri in S01. However, thanks mainly to some persuasive arguing by Dave Pengelly (T), I decided ...on ... a dangerous gambit, and took War, Gre and Rum in the fall for 2 builds. It wasn't very long thereafter that Tri was regained, and under attack from AT, R quickly withered.

Meanwhile, in the northwest, the EF alliance was causing trouble for G, with F getting the better breaks and thus blooming to 9 centers ((by F03)). Italy was thus sandwiched between 2 major powers and was doomed. Again, I was fortunate in that Terry chose to devote most of his resistance to the French attacks, leaving his back door wide open for me to walk in. Dave P. then left for Australia, and Gary Blemings took over T -- seemingly perfectly content merely to support my units in their ((F04-F05)) manouvers in R and the Medit. No need to stab yet, thought I.

The summer was over and the game resumed with yet 2 more players, Ronson for E, Lang for F. Over the next gameyear or so the only action was the decimation of R, and I going under in 1905. A crucial miss by F at this point proved to be a turning point in the game, as G made a temporary revival, and E decided that the EF alliance was more F than E, deciding to toss in with G against F. Having virtually exhausted the resources of R and I, it appeared to be time to chose my next enemy. Turkey seemed to be the likely choice, but Gary's willingness to support my gains as well as his seeming indifference to his own progress, convinced me to proceed against G, whose shaky empire I had just agreed to somewhat resurrect.

At this point, I viewed E as my main competition. He was making good progress against F, and I felt that if I continued my previous hostility towards F, E would grow tremendously. I explained my thoughts to France, and he agreed to turn his attention towards E.

Bill Denning grasped the reins of power in T ((in F06)). He at first agreed to continue the arrangement I'd had with his predecessors, but it soon became evident that he was, unlike Blemings, uncontent to sit around and support my units. I considered stabbing him when I first suspected his discontent, but put it off at least until I had finished the attack on Germany. This proved too late. By the end of 1907, T had turned on me and had captured Nap, Gre, and Ser. I managed to retain my level of power ((10 SCs)) by taking all the German home centers over that same period. Over the next year, I carefully moved my units into position, and in F08, took Sev from T, as well as finishing off both G and R simultaneously by capturing Hol and StP BOTH WITH ENGLISH SUPPORT ((Its now A=13, E=T=8)) Unfortunately, I had room for only one build, and spent the next year making positional gains, as well as opening up two home centers ..to build.

I was able to gain one SC in S10, and negotiations with E promised one more in F10. By now, I really had my heart set on winning the game. A fone call to E set the stage for the final sweep ... a week before the last deadline, I enquired of Doug how he felt about my ((soon to be)) position of 15 centers, i.e. was he going to be satisfied with second place?: ..."NO", which sort of bothered me in a way, since I knew

that if I had to fight him for the win, I would lose, due to his strong navy (and my virtually nonexistent one). Thus, T decided that if I was ever going to win the game, it would have to be quick, while I still had England's support. How ironic it would be if E gave me the last center I needed to win the game!

My final blitz against T (and indeed all my anti-T manouvers) was based on my conception of Bill Denning as a conservative player. Nothing nasty intended here, Bill, but from your first moves I could see you were playing things very cautiously, which made things easier for me; all I had to do was figure out the most defensive, (I hate to say obvious, because in this game, little is obvious) moves for T, and plan my orders around these moves, which inevitably were similar to those actually used... ((In 1910 he hit 18, with T falling from 8 to 5))

Actually, all that stuff above has little to do with why I won. The real reason is more tangible: Robert Correll. Obviously, no one else could stand a full game of his GMing: E, F, and T replacements were necessary ... the other three were eliminated...the frequent player changes did somewhat mar the game, making it difficult to negotiate...

...My final 18 centers: ... all the home centers of A, I, R, and G (13) plus most of the Balkans (3), plus the last two were taken only with the help of a faithful ally who didn't realize that his help would give me the game ((he then thanks other players for this and that))

((Few, if any, countries seeking a win will have as much problem with a non-neighbor as Austria has with England. It is very seldom that Austria can both gain the strong growth needed for a win and build up a good navy. A navy is much more valuable defensively to Austria than offensively. She can only build one fleet at a time, it takes two moves to get it even to a half-way useful sea space (ION). But without naval support, Austria finds herself knocking at centers where England's uncontested naval power puts Austria at a decided disadvantage. The most spectacular example of this is of course StP. If late-midgame finds Austria within striking distance of a win, Russia has probably been knocked out. A strong England will nearly always under such circumstances, have already taken StP. As Austria can only bring two armies to bear (Liv and Mos), it is almost impossible for Austria to take it away. Even if Austria has taken it, if E has the units, she can retake it by force. Tunis is another problem. If Austria is fortunate enuf to be able to take it early on, a strong E can often take it back. If the west is initially EG vs F, E will be able to move into the Med and Iberia with force, and even Aus F Ion & Tyh S Tun will not suffice, as England starts pressing F Tyh. And if E gets Tun first, forget it. You'll have to jam your armies into the Italian boot to hold onto Naples. Even Berlin can present a problem. Austria can do nothing against F Bal, and F Bot can start unzipping the Austrian line at Liv unless there are enuf <sup>supp</sup> A strong E makes Kie almost inaccessible, and that increases the problems holding Berlin. Austria's best bet is the blitz. A fast pushto take centers she couldn't hold in the long run. Here, England's problem is the slow speed in bringing units forward, filling up the sea spaces for the counterattack. The Rulebook requires only that you reach 18, not demonstrate that you can hold all of it!

## WE MEAN BUSINESS

For Austria to take War in 1901 is pretty rare, but readers of 1901 and all that actually got to see this twice in a very short time period. The first was in #23, where Austria grabbed War, supported Turkey into Rum, and sparred with Italy over Ven. Indeed, in SO2, Italy switched to an attack on France, and Austria actually got Ven, as well as Greece, while T got Sev and Bul, putting the allies at 13 centers, and got to 17 centers in 1904 --- except that they were not longer allies at that point, Tukey having stabbed to take War....Remarkably, two issues after the original swipe of War in 73EF, Jane Coombe did it in 73IP. But there the AT alliance was much less aggressive as Austria contented herself also with Ser and Gre, leaving T to make fruitless attacks on Sev and Rum. Armed with three armies, Austria pressed the attack against R and stabbed Turkey in SO2, but lost that War beachhead in FO2. Unfortunately, Turkey NMRed out and, as this was a Britishgame, was put into cd, making the south much less interesting. But it does show --- if Austria wants to grab a home center, it doesn't have to be Ven, and if somebody's just done it, you can do it too!!

In 1980HC, Fred Townsend took Den in 1904. A smash thru Germany and a sudden grab Den, you say? No, Fred did it the hard way. He took Norway in FO3, passed thru Sweden in SO4, and then took Den --- retaining Nwy as a SC, I might add. Germany and England had other things on their minds, I guess!

One of the most explosive years any Austria ever had was in 1975BF. After 1902, Richard Lucknall had Rome + Ser, Gre, Bul, and Hun, allied with R against G and T, while "nibbling at Italy". But the TIE STAB. War, Rum, Con and Kie were all taken from Russia, and Rom from Italy ---- all in 1903! He reached 16 in 1907.

Ordinarily, for Austria to be clashing with three countries in FO1 is a recipe for disaster. But not if you are doing the attacking, and not if your name is Richard Sharp. (1977 DB)

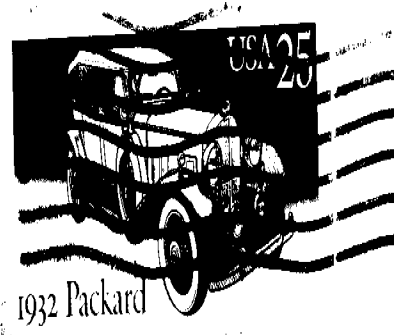
In SO1, Sharp aggressively entered both Gal and Rum, and stood off Italy in Ven-Tri. In FO1, it was F Tri-Ven, A Gal-War, A Rum-Gal. The standoff with Italy was probably arranged, as Italy convoked to Greece. The standoff in Bul is harder to judge. The result in the Balkans was extraordinary: Gre to Italy, Serbia to Turkey and Rum to Austria. Add to the mix that Russia entered Arm and Turkey took the black sea! Moreover a northern triple seemed to be operating, as E took Bel and Bre, R took Nwy and Swe! Armies appeared in Vie, Mos, Ank, with Fleets in Sev and Nap.

SO2 marked a radical switch. Italy unsuccessfully attacked Ven and Alb (F Tri deftly stood both off with F Tri-Alb!) but moved into Adr. But AR relations were repaired, as Austria moved A Gal-Bud, and Russia exchanged places in Bla/Arm, sent A Mos north, and moved into the Baltic. In FO2, AR made no headway against Turkey, who actually gained by taking Bul. Curiously, Austria supported an unsuccessful German attack on Italy, even tho Austria's Russian ally took Den away from Germany -- handling such conflicting alliances can be tricky. But Austria was still stuck at 4 centers, with seemingly little to show for his fiery opening. (A FO3 NMRed ruined his SO3 progress, and in 1904 he was eliminated)



Let me remind you here that DipCon will be July 28-30 in San Diego. This is by tradition where the North American champion is selected, and is usually the best attended of the various cons. Larry has planned a full set of activities, as is his custom. For info: Larry Peery, PO Box 8416 San Diego CA 92102

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