

DIPLOMACY DIGEST

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Theme issue: Austria

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As you can see by the above, pricing for the zine is staying where it is. My printer cut his hike back somewhat on seeing an all-typed-on-one-typewriter issue (#14-15), so I can continue at these prices. However, I will likely shift even more toward either double issues, or mailing two issues at once. Such a procedure saves me 7¢ per issue postage, and that helps. The largest postage savings actually occurs when I sell back issues, which are always available.

A couple of items updating the article on Trades of last issue. Since then, John Michalski, publisher of Brutus Bulletin has gone over to mutual subs. He cancelled all but three of his trades, and for those that he wished to receive, he sent them sub cheques. If they sub back, he'll have a mutual trade setup, altho John declined to call it that. I predict that, slowly, more publishers will switch to this, particularly those with relatively inexpensive, and rapidly appearing, zines. These are the people who take a disproportionate beating from the Trade system, financially. Second, shortly after the issue came out, Diman did arrive, so it has not folded. In it Brad announced that he will not be able to keep up a sort of scheduld that he would prefer, and offered refunds to those dissatisfied. If you are subbing, this is a relatively easy decision. 25¢ gets you a pretty interesting zine. But trading is another matter. Diman has come out 4 times in the last 8½ months. If your zine is a monthly and costs, say, 25¢, then trading for Diman will cost you more than 50¢. If your zine is triweekly, the price is on the order of 70¢. Not such a simple decision --- at 70¢ Diman is overpriced. Trading forces unpleasant decisions on people.

Remember just last issue that I predicted that Konrad Baumeister's Eggnog would have gameopenings, despite his statement to the contrary? The very next issue announced four new games wity openings. I have seen such intentions change quickly in quite a few zines, and saw no reason to think that Eggnog would be any different. It seems that GMs want to start by reassuring the players that the GM and zine won't be overloaded with games, and then decide that they can handle more. And speaking of Konrad, it seems that I have been challenged to a bet, on the subject of how often Conrad von Metzke will put out DW. Konrad takes the position he won't "get more than 4 out in one year." I accept!. Name your stakes, Konrad, or set out a rnage and I'll pick from it. Thenpick out a date, any date after you receive this zine, and tell me what you chose. Then we'll count issues between then and a year later. If there's 4 or fewer issues, you win. And no, Conrad von M, there's no cut in it for you.

Onto less pleasant matters. The Watergate can be considered to have folded. Cliff Mann indicated vaguely to me that he had promised various games to various GMs, without details. If you are one of those GMs, please make your moves before the games become irredemiably stale. If you are a player, and want help in placing, contact me. 1976EN has already been restarted in Dragon and the Lamb, and others can be helped too.

((Press is one item that gets all too little attention here, so its a good way to start. This was written by Bob Lipton, the Asutrian player in 1973BC, and appeared along with the Spring 1902 moves in Graustark #291 (6-23-73). A little backround is in order. Anstria had moved his armies into Bud and Ser, and then supported the latter into Rum in the fall, thus ann the Russian fleet there, with help from A Bul. Turkey launched an all out attack on R, but did not take Sev, as Russia did A Ukr S A Sev in FO1. Meanwhile, England convoyed to Mwy, and moved into the Ska. France contented himself with Iberia, and Germany took Hol and Den, and moved to Pie via Tyo. In winter, Fleets appeared in Lon, Rom and Smy, armies in Par, Mar, Mun, Kie, Vie, Bud, Mos and StP. Ooops, forgot: Italy convoyed to Tun, and in the fall, his A Ven-Tri was blocked by Lipton's F Tri H. Both Gre and Bel were totally ignored)).

Wien, AUSTRIA-HUNGARY(IDUMNO) Q: I thought we were allied with the Russians against the Turks?

A: We are.

Q: Then why did we attack the Russians with Turkish support?

A: Because we're also allied with the Turks against the Russians.

Q: How can we be allied with both sides against the other?

A: It is obvious that you do not a a grasp of the fine points of Diplomasy. We wished to pick up a supply center. The unobvious choice was either Rum or Bul. We wrote to both sides promising eternal alliances. They agreed and wrote to each other promising eternal alliances against us. This is known as Diplomasy. Do you understand?

Q: I don't know. ((Notice how the questioner is now doing the answers)).

A: Fine. Now, in the first move I moved to threatened both sides, which convinced both sides that they were safe from me, especially as they had not moved into my territory, but Germany had, and Italy had moved to Tuscany and Venice((sic)). Since I was obviously falling apart, they decided to support me. Do you understand?

Q: I don't think so. If-

A: But, unknown to Russia or Turkey, I had an agreement with Germany allowing him transit thru the Tyrol. However, what Russia didn't know was that I realized that he would side with Italy, so I sided with Turkey, letting Italy attack an occupied center without support because Germany was abandoning him ((Italy)) to attack France.

But Russia, still believing that I was with him, even tho he was against me, or at least that Turkey was not against Russia, even tho he was in a position to attack Sev and anyway, Turkey had leaked information to Italy that he was attacking Greece which meant that I couldn't take Rum ((this also presupposes that Turkey won't cut the support of A Sev. Otherwise, Rum falls even without support from Bul)) but Turkey lied so I did((take Rum)). Do you follow me?

Q: But-

A: Of course, it all depends on Britian now. If he double crosses France and attacks Russia and France attacks Germany we're OK, and if he double crosses Russia and France and attacks Germany we're fine. Of course, if he doublecrosses Italy and attacks France and Germany with Russia's help the the sure winner will be the Gamesmaster because everyone will drop out of the game in confusion, leaving him with over \$70 for a few hours work.

And of course Italy might be doublecrossing Russia and just be pretending to attack me so that Russia will go off balance permitting Italy to attack the Balkans and Anatolia.

Q: I see! But if Russia, realizing the hopelessness of his situation offers Tur a deal he can't refuse then we'll have to ally with the Italians to fight the Russians and Turks and keep Britian zig-zagging between France and Germany while he launches an all-out attack against Russia because it will maintain a balance of power in this south but will in reality let us ally with the Russians to grab some supply centers quick.

A: You've got it. Now we've some positions in the Foreign Office. Would you like to be ambassador to Britian, France, Turkey or Montenegro?

Q: I want to be Gamesmaster and rake in all that money.

((For those interested, 1902 saw the A-T alliance continue, with Gre and Sev falling to the Turks. England attacked R only, but without much success))

((Two way draws are quite uncommon for Austria --- she has fewer than anyother country. 17-17 draws are rarerer still. This is an account of 1972K, the first game to start in Ethil the Frog. I have included the supply center table to show you that this did not take the usual format of an alliance which, once it got underway early in the game, just kept chugging along. Note that as late as 1907 Russia was in fact dead last. Anothr unusual feature is that of a 13 center power being completely eliminated.))

	<u>00</u>	<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>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>
ENGLAND	3	3	3	2	-											
GeERMANY	3	5	6	7	11*	12*	11	12	13	13	10	8	8*	6	3	-
RUSSIA	4	6	8	9	7	6	7	6	8*	9	11	13*	15**15	16*	17	
TURKEY	3	4	2	-												
AUSTRIA	3	5	6	9*	10	10	10	9*	8*	9	9	10	11	13	15	17
ITALY	3	4	4	2	1	-										
FRANCE	3	5	5	5	5	6	6	7	5	3	4*	3	-			

Official Austrian Version ((Peter Robertson))

As the Autumn of 1901 drew to a close, Austria entered the European conflict when savagely attacked by Turkish forces. The bridgebuilding service of the Austro-Hungarian Finance and Exploitation company, based in Trieste, repulsed enemy units back across the Servian border. War was declaired and, after consultations with the Russian ambassador, an anti-Turkey defense league was set up between our two nations. Through 1902, forces were bilt up while we held off Turkey's attacks. In the Autumn a massive attack on Bulgaria and a Russian attack on Ank so unnerved the Turk that he was unable to issue orders to his troops, who fled in terror((Turkey NMRed in FO2)).

This sucess saw relations with Italy depress somewhat; but England became most friendly, and we revoked a secret declaration of war which had been sent him for writing insulting letters.

Turkish forces continued to retreat through 1903, which enabled us to occupy Rumania ((from Russia, possibly in return for help in Russia's seizure of Con)). We then launched an attack on Italy, capturing Naples. Italy's damaging effects on our' overseas markets for the Austro-Hungarian Finance Co. had promised to become more serious, and French appeals for help against Italy could not be ignored. Venice was speedlily captured, Rome followed shortly afterwards and Italy collapsed.

Germany meanwhile had double crossed Russia, and since Turkey was no more and Italy merely a blot in Tunis, we agreed to build defensive fortifications in the south to prevent German expansion east and south. Before plans could be completed, Germany captured Warsaw ((in FO4)) and drove into the heart of Russia. Shortly after ard he attacked Austria's borders; using enormous forces which had been gathered after England's defeat. In 1905 Austria fared badly, but at last France entered the war against Germany, having failed to make any headway in Attacking Austrian held regins of Italy.((He is mistaken here. France did not attack Germany until Fall 1907. In fact, in 1905-6, Most of Austria's attention was directed toward France, not Germany. For example in FO5, he supported himself out of Tyo into Pie, and twice in 1906 attacked Mar. His WO6 build was F Tri --- hardly an anti-German move. It always fascinates me when people's reccolections are at variance with their actual moves)). 1906 was no better, with the battle so fierce and casualties so high; unit after unit was disbanded and reformed behind the lines. Brilliance Russian counter-attacks pushed the Germans back in 1907 while Austria reeled from German and French attacks, losing ground against Germany. Germany's sucess prompted him to invade France, which took the pressure off Austria's west flank in 1908. enabling us to rush troops from Italy to the besieged capital of Vienna. The French president disappeared, and Germany carved France asunder while Austrian forces hung grimly on.((Part of Austria's troubles resulted from a prime blunder. In FO8 Austria dislodged Ger A Tyo,

and ordered F Tri-Adr. The German army retreated to Tri.)).

The new French government declared its sympathy with our aims to defeat Germany, and at the same time Austria allowed her ally to re-occupy certain areas of the Balkans to increase the size of her forces. Treachery was suspected by the GM, but Russia occupied Rum and Bul with Austria's blessing, since the Austrian emperor was at this time in the hospital suffering from injuries received directing his armies at the front ((He had a crushed vertebra, and was in traction. For a somewhat different version, note the Russian statement which follows.))

Tunis was captured ((this was before the new French player entered)), and joint Russo-Austrian attacks threw Germany back in 1909, but while Russia invaded Germany, the German troops, unable to retreat, threw their full force against Austria's main cities ((this refers to that forward German army which made its way to Serbia)). Disaster then struck for Germany: his master spy was caught in the act and executed, leaving his forces paralyzed without knowledge of our intentions. 1910 and 1911 saw the Austrian troops of the offensive, capturing Munich, while Germany tried to crush the remains of France out of revenge for their switching sides. Austro-Russian forces rolled through Europe, pushing Germany out of his homeland and trying to bolster France's bold stand ((The "master spy" business concerns a cheating question which will be taken up in a future issue of DD; the help for France was mostly the other way around: French fleet helps Austrians push German fleets back in the Atlantic)) Finally, in 1912 his remaining bases were handed to Austria by a France too confused and defeated to carry on. ((Totally inaccurate. Of France's 3 centers, two were taken by Germany. And what Austria got (Mar) was not exactly handed to him: He supported him self in, relying on German attacks on Spa to cut French support for Mar)) Germany was systematically squeezed, till he was finally trapped in Lon and Par in 1915, where his final extermination was celebrated by the victory of the allies who won the draw, and the longest convoy ((Smy-StP)) to show our joint mastery of the entire continent.

A thoroly enjoyable game. Thanks to all, including the GM, but especially to Graham Jeffery in Russia there. --- Franz Joseph Robertson

From Russia

I started the game with the idea of allying with Andy ((Davidson, Germany)) and either Austria or Turkey. I wrote off to all three (Andy and I had already discussed alliances before the game started, so things were already set up there). Pete Robertson was the only one, beside Andy, to reply; and so my mind was made up. I was anti-English and Anti-Turkish.

As is obvious to anyone following the game, I've been allied with Austria from 1901, despite a brief period in the middle of the game when things seemed to go the other way.

My plans had gone well. Turkey was eliminated and England had to fall in a couple of turns, It was then that Andy turned on me; I was stupid, really, to leave myself so unprotected. Russia recoiled into instant defense, and it is only thru the grace of God that I survived. I was lucky to have an ally in Austria, which did not waver in spite of being attacked.

Then came a surprise move. Andy offered me an alliance to break the stalemate! I had two turns with Andy off my back, after which I could strike back at the stabber. The offer of alliance came so close to the deadline that I could not let Peter know what was going on. It must have been quite a shock to him to see me and Andy break off hostilities and turn towards him...

My stab on Andy was somewhat more effective than his on me. The end was a long time coming, but it was worth the slog. Pete and I decided to have a long convoy;

initially it was to have been part of our campaign, but as time went on, our plans changed, and the convoy was extended just for the hell of it.

A fun game then, and my thanks to all the other players for making it so. And thanks to you too, John!

GM's notes((John Piggott))

This game shows the sheer power of a lasting alliance in a game of Diplomacy, where both parties really trust each other. Particularly interesting is the fact that, towards the end, Graham Jeffery did not stab his ally when he could have achieved the victory criterion easily by doing so; and that in the middle game he chose to remain with Austria rather than throw in his lot with Germany (which would have spelled a fairly quick doom for Austria).

Some would say however, that it isn't as much fun playing a game of Diplomacy where two players form cast iron alliances, as it is playing a more anarchic game. I've encountered this problem myself in face-to-face play, where sometimes the first task of five "normal" players is to eliminate the other two who are sure to ally with each other and split the board between them without bothering to take ~~any~~ to anyone else. Of course, this all depends on how often it happens.....

((The following article is of a very unusual type --- an attempt to deal with tactics beyond 1901. This article is part of a series, one for each country and is clearly an experiment. I'm not sure how much of a success it was --- you be the judge. It was written by Len Lakofka and appeared, in of all places Ethil the Frog#43 Jan 74))

PLANNING THE OFFENSIVE: AUSTRIA

The emphasis on the Austrian game plan will be on negotiations. Without strong diplomatic channels all over the board, Austria is doomed to be a target instead of the aggressor. With this in mind, we realize that Austria must set up strong early alliances to give her freedom of movement. She must also create a game plan that will bend to her wishes.

Of her neighbors, the potentially most harmful is Turkey. In a blitz stab, Italy is the most dangerous. Therefore, Austria tries to:

- 1) Hold down Russia by getting an attack going on her in north and west in 1902
- 2) Make France the object of a German-English alliance
- 3) Get Italy to Lepanto into Turkey
- 4) Get Russia to co-operate in the early destruction of Turkey whilst keeping an eye on the north!

If all four of these objectives can be reached, England and Germany will be caught between France and Russia, and Turkey will be open to destruction by Italy and yourself. Spring 1901, ideally, will yield:

A: F Tri-Alb, A Vie-Bud, A Bud-Ser	G: A Mun-Ruh, A Ber-Kie, F Kie-Hol
I: F Nap-Ion, A Rom-Apu, A Ven H	F: F Bre-MAO, A Par-Pic, A Mar-Spa
T: F Ank-Bla, A Con-Bul, A Smy-Csm	E: F Lon-Nth, F Edi-Nwg, A Liv-Yor
R: F Sev-Bla, F StP-Bot, A Mos-Stp, A War-Ukr	

In 1901, the first part of your game plan is carried out with Excellent results:

A: A Ser S F Alb-Gre, A Bud S Rus A Ukr-Rum	G: F Hol S A Ruh-Bel, A Kie-Den
I: F Ion C A Apu-Tun, A Ven H	F: F MAO-Por, A Spa H, A Pic-Bel
T: F Ank-Bla, A Con-Bul, A Bul-Rum	E: F Nwg S & F Nth C A Yor-Nwy
R: F Sev-Bla, A Ukr-Rum, F Bot-Swe, A StP-Fin	

Builds: F Liv!; A Mun, F Ber!; A Kie; A Par, A Mar; F Nap; F Smy; A Mos, F StPnc
A Vie, A Tri.

The German-English alliance versus Russia can provide F Ber, A Den, F Nwg, F Nth and A Nwy to the immediate conflict. Russia can oppose with A Fin, F Swe, F StPnc and perhaps A Mos. France can send three armies effectively against Germany, and

Germany and England, have F Liv, F Hol, A Kie, a Mun and A Bel to turn on France. All in all, a beautiful balance; who could ask for more? ((actually, France looks a little out gunned to me.)).

In the east, you, Austria have a terrific advantage over poor Turkey. While you must invest every diplomatic note you can in the west to keep that status quo, in the east the Spring of 1902 is fairly straightforward:

Austria: A Tri-Alb, A Bud-Ser, A Ser-Gre, F Gre-Aeg

Italy: F Ion-Eas, F Nap-Ion, A Tun H

Russia: F Sev-Bla, A Rum H, A Mos-Sev

Turkey: A Con S A Bul, F Ank-Bla, F Smy-Eas

In the west, we see developement. In scandinavia:

England: F Liv-NAO, F Nrg S A Nwy, A Nwy S Ger A Den-Swe, F Nth S A Nwy

Germany: F Ber-Bal, A Den-Swe

Russia: F StPnc-Nwy S by A Fin & F Swe((I suspect F Swe-Bal, tho risky, is likely))

While in the French situation:((I'd have included the move to NAO in this section))

France: F Por-Mid, A Spa-Gas, A Mar S A Par-Bur, A Pic-Bel

Germany: A Bel-Ruhr, F Hol-Bel, A Mun S A Bel-Ruh, A Kie-Hol

Notice that A Vie and A Ven have not been ordered yet. Depending on the Diplomatic situation, one of these moves should have been made:

1) A Vie-Tyo. A Ven-Tyo

2) A Vie-Tyo, A Ven-Pie

The first move just bides your time. The second is obviously aggressive and invests some interest in the outcome of the German-French border conflict.. In a good tight game, the latter should be played so that both Austria and Italy do have some play in the west at once. It shows that Italy will not just give Mar to the Germans, and Aus A Tyo enforces that option((actually, Germany will be a long way from Mar at this point)). Assuming that as the actual move, then FO2 should see some movement toward the final goal of destruction of Turkey whilst keeping the rest of the board static:

Austria: A Tyo H, A Gre S A Ser-Bul, F Aeg S Ital F Ion-Eas

England: F NAO-Mid, F Nrg S A Nwy, F Nth S Ger F Hol-Bel

France: A Gas-Bur S By A Mar, A Pic S A Bur-Bel, F Mao-Eng

Italy: A Pie-Mar, F Ion-Eas, F Nap-Tyr, A Tun-NAf

Russia: F Swe S F StPnc-Nwy, A Rum S Aus A Ser-Bul, F Se-Bla, A Mos-Ukr

Turkey: F Ank-Bla, F Smy-Eas, A Con S A Bul, A Bul H (ann)

The key strategic move here is the exposure of the German-English alliance vs France - not a real surprise, but it hadn't shown yet.. Notice what knots the west goes into! They are tied up, almost hopelessly inside each other.((And also notice that the ~~Austrian~~ pieces in Tyo, and Pie that Lakofka spends so much time on haven't the slightest effect on the FO2 moves. Germany ignored A Tyo, and A Pie-Mar had no impact)) Austria has gained at the expense of Turkey, who is about to collapse in the east: A Con, F Ank & FSmy cannot defend against F Sev, A Bul, F Aeg and F Eas ((Actually, I think the german player would be hard pressed to pass up the convoy to Livonia. AKie-Hol isn't too thrilling, and the support for A Den-Swe isn't likely to help. And A Liv will not only divert R away from T, but may cut down on Austria's share of Russia))

The year 1903 should also see the stab to take Rum from Russia while using him against Turkey: A Bul-Con, A Gre-Bul, A Ser S A Bud-Rum, F Aeg-Smy s by F Ems breaks Trukey amd probably Russia too, unless A Ukr S A Rum. Naturally, A Vie-Gal just in case Russia saw the stab coming. After this, Con will be taken by Austria and Smy is given to Italy.

In the west, Nwy, Swe, Lon, and Por are liable to change hands. This game plan is a demonstration of the 2:2 stalemate ideal, while you and an ally beat a seventh country to death

The usual sorts of openings you can find in the usual sorts of zines. Here I try to go for the offbeat. This is from Paroxysm #114 (19 Dec 1976), entitled "Taking the Lepanto to its illogical Conclusion", by Peter Swanson. I have excised the first page of it, as it is a fairly standard description of the Lepanto and Key openings (For the latter, cf. DD #2)

...I have recently completed a game where we put together an excellent example of a deviant of the Key opening. This was 1974 BZ, started in Der Krieg in June 1974. It just so happened that Italy (Pete Cousins) and Austria (me) were at a small con when this game was announced, and so of course we got to talking, palning, scheming, plotting, etc --- the normal things that two Dippy freaks do when they get together. After having agreed that we were the two secret masters of British Diplomacy, we also agreed that we should try a new, fun, but devastating Austro-Italian opening. This is what we came up with.

The initial aims of of Diplomacy were clear - we had to get Turkey and Russia at each other's throats. I made strong "alliances" with each of Russia and Turkey against the other, claiming a non-agression pact with Italy. We also cultivated something healthy up north in the other corner of the board - like England stabbing France stabbing Germany stabbing England. Since this Russo-Turkish conflict was essential to the plan, as it is in any Lepanto, the wait for the first season was nail-biting.

The Strong 1901 moves were:

Austria: A Vie-Gal, A Bud-Ser, F Tri-Adr!
Italy: A Ven-Tri! A Rom-Ven, F Nap-Ion
Russia: F StP-Bot, F Sev-Bla, A Mos-Sev, A War-Ukr
Turkey: A Con-Bul, F Ank-Bla, A Smy-Arm
E,F,G : Amusing themselves and leaving us alone.

Which moved the GM to comment "Pet Balloon Bursts!" (Pet Balloon was an unearned nickname I have acquired from John Piggott)...God knows what Greg Hawes (R) and Mick Bullock (T) thought - hopefully they believed I had stabbed Russia and Italy simultaneously and very badly, and that Italy had stabbed me, and that Russia and Turkey had stabbed each other. At least, that's what I told them had happened!

The diploming became furious now. I managed to throw myself at the mercy of Greg Hawes. "We're in the same boat, mate. We both have stabbed and gotten stabbed (by the way, heh, sorry about that, ahem.) Let's get ot together against Turkey and Italy, OK?" Needless to say, I said roughly the same thing to Mick Bullock, but with greater credulity, it seems, especially since he was the one I had apparently not plunged my dagger into - "I can hold Italy off while we take care of Russia, but Ineed another center -- how about supporting me into Rum?"

Now came the crunch: Fall 1901.

Austria: A Ser S A Gal-Rum! F Adr C Ital A Tri-Gre! Build A Vie, A Bud.
Italy : A Tri-Gre, F Ion C A Tri-Gre, A Ven-Apu Build F Nap
Russia : A Ukr S F Sev-Rum, F Bot-Swe, A Mos-Sev Builds F StPnc!
Turkey : A Bul S Aus A Gal-Rum, F Ank-Bla, A Arm-Sev Builds F Con
((With regard to the Russian build, in Der Krieg builds were required with the fall moves. England had convoyed to Nwy))

Suddenly, out of the mess that was Austria, arises Phoenix-like from the ashes a less-mess. However, Turkey looks decidedly more pale than anyone else, since Italy carries out the usual Lepanto convoy moves, but this time, Bulgaria gets the immediate bad flak, and Russia shouldn't like what's going on either. Of course it helps if you can still keep Russia and Turkey on unfriendly terms, thd if they're smart, they'll kiss and make up pretty quick. These moves also show the usefulness of stabbing in the fall season of a two season game. Greg builds F StPnc, which in this case was the most useless unit he could posibly want - however, assuming his plans had gone!

as expected, he probably would have been able to start an anti-English campaign while beating up Turkey with Austria and Italy in the south.

As it was, Greg carried on with his somewhat tenuous Austrian agreement (I suppose as an alternative to a non-existent Turkish one) and Mick tried very hard to pull Greg over to his side. But, to no avail: Spring 1902:

- Austria: A Vie-Gal, F Adr-Ion, A Rum S A Ser-Bul, A Bud S A Rum
- Italy : A Gre S Aus A Ser-Bul, F Ion-Eas, A Apu-Rum, F Nap-Tyr
- Russia : F Sev-Bla, A Ukr S A Mos-Sev
- Turkey : F Bla S A Bul, A Bul S Rus A Ukr-Rum(NSO), A Arm-Smy, F Con-Aeg

By Fall 1905, Turkey was out, Russia was left with two supply centers, Liv and Edi! (An interesting point: Russia kept those two centers for the rest of the game, and kept a F Bla supplied from England to haunt me until 1911 when the game ended. Until then, I needed four units to keep it penned up and out of my supply centers! Some more funny things about this game: Peter Birks dropped out (not his fault) as England, then GMed the game from one game year later ((after Der Krieg folded)). Austria eventually won; however, I was helped to a 16 center stalemate line for a while, and voted yest to a four way draw with Germany, France and Russia. But Germany voted no, hoping to break e down with French help. He then changed his plan, decided he would like a two way draw with me, suddenly switched direction just as I was having what I thought was a last ditch effort to sneak into the other two centers I needed!

Now, I'm certainly not recommending that you all go out and try exactly that opening in your next game. First, anyone else who has read this article will know what's going on. Second, I'm certain that the opening is not tactically ideal. (Why not just convoy X A Apu-Gre from the Standard Lepanto, for Example?) However, I hope that this opening will show a different attitude towards the game than most people subscribe to, i.e. the standard opening can get just a teeny bit tedious, and makes the game stereotyped. A far out play like this one can give more fun and interest, and above all, can work!((Notice something missing in that wrap-up?? What happened to loyal ally Italy?? Stabbed in 1905 by Austria, that's what!))

This is an unusually thoro look at the A-T alliance, from Graustark #263, 22 April 1973

THE IMPROBABLE ALLIANCE
by Rod Walker

In a recent issue of Erehwon (#65), Dave Lebling discussed the play of Austria. In a short reply to the article, I noted that it had been written in 1969, and reflected thinking common at the time, which often assumed more or less automatic Italo-Austrian enmity. I also discussed some of the reasons that Turkey is really Austria's worst enemy.

This represents an expansion of those comments, based on further research. The basic premise of this article is two-fold: first, that Austria and Turkey are the two most automatic enemies on the board and second that there are at least some ways of cementing an Austro-Turkish alliance despite the difficulties involved.

The simple truth is that Austria and Turkey are reasonably automatic enemies. Each must normally eliminate the other in order to win. This may be demonstrated statistically. Austria has won 21 postal games, while Turkey has won 31 (this is counting regular 7-man games, a few excluded on technical grounds.) In the table below, AUS denotes Austria's performance in games won by Turkey, and TUR denotes Turkey's performance in games won by Austria. 2-7 indicates place in the game (7 being first eliminated), S indicates survivals, E indicates eliminations.

	2	3	4	5	6	7	S	E
TUR	1	3	4	4	4	5	2	19
AUS	1	3	4	7	4	12	7	24

In each case, each country does remarkably more poorly than its average performance

over-all. Austria's survival rate is less than 23%; Turkey's less than 10%. Each survival strongly in only one instance (1966AK for Turkey, 1966BN for Austria). Later on, I will examine those two games to see why this occurred.

Why are Austria and Turkey normally so opposed? This is due to the geopolitics of the playing board. Each country represents a threat to the other so basic, so intrinsic, that it cannot normally be ignored or sublimated. For Turkey, the Austrian threat is to the offense; for Austria, the Turkish threat is the defense.

Turkey: Every pair of powers on the board has a reasonable pair of expansion routes. The exception to this is A/T. Austria stands precisely in Turkey's way. In alliance with Austria he must pick up 3 or 4 centers in Russia and then swing through the barren zone of Pru/sil into Germany. Or he can squeeze fleets past Greece into Italy, and hope that by the time he makes the Straits of Gibraltar they are not held against him... both of these expansion routes are restricted and timeconsuming, and one of them will be in use by Austria. Turkey's chances of winning or doing well are not very good under such circumstances.

Austria: Austria's expansion possibilities are not particularly curtailed by an alliance with Turkey. He must allow Turkey to use either the Russia/Germany route or the Italy France route. However, Austria will always have Turkey at his rear and on one of his flanks. Considering the good chance that Turkey will be frustrated by his limited expansion potential, Austria must always fear a strong attack on the Balkans and on his home land. It is hard to imagine any alliance working smoothly under such circumstances. Yet in at least two cases this occurred.

1966AK, Big Brother game #2, was won by Austria in alliance with Turkey...Austria was played by Monte Zelazny(I was to have played Austria, but could not get Reinsel to extend his 13 day deadlines in view of my reassignment overseas, so I resigned after SO1...) Turkey was played by Jim Dygert. Both are strong players, and both normally play for the win. The A-T alliance was formed in 1901 (there was an abortive joint attack on Rum, each supporting the other in), and continued throughout the game. The supply centers held at the end: Aus: Home, Germany, Ser, Rum, Mos, StP, War, Mar, Ven, Bel, Swe, Nwy, Den, Par (18). Tur: Home, Bul, Spa, Por, Gre, Tun, Nap, Rom, Sev, Bre, Hol (13). (England held 3). At the end of the game, Austria had only one fleet (in Bel) and Turkey had only three armies (in Liv, Mos, and Bul). It is obvious that the alliance allowed Turkey to be the naval power, widening the westward passage by giving Greece to Turkey. It is amazing to see players like Dygert and Zelazney cooperating under such circumstances, yet no indications of real strain in the alliance appear in my cursory examination of the game records. Their plan was no doubt helped by the fact that Italy was played by Margret Gemignani (a weak player) and Russia by Charles Alexander (who was sporadic before he dropped out entirely).

1966BN, begun in Kalmar, was transferred to Hal Naus' A.D.A.G./ Sweetwater Valley Daily Bugle in Winter 1907. It was won by Turkey in alliance with Austria. The circumstances here resemble those of 1966AK up to a point. A/T allied early in the game, and by 1904 Austria was the largest power on the board (11 units), with Turkey second. Some friction developed in 1906/7; this was the period when Greg Long, the Austrian player, was beginning to drop out of postal Diplomacy. He was dropped and replaced in W07 by Brian Bailey. The Turkish player was Charles Turner. Brian and Charles are good friends, went to school together, members of the Lafayette Tactics and Brotherly Love Association, and so on. From that point on, of course, there was no question about the A-T alliance ((John Boardman at this point inserted: "This is unusual. Turner is on record as believing that the human race is innately depraved and evil)). At the end, Aus held: Home, Mar, Bre, Bel, Hol, Germany, Swe, Den, Nwy (13); Tur held: Home, Bul, Gre, Rum, Ser, Russia, Italy, Tun, Spa, Por, Bre, Lon (19). Austria had no fleets; Turkey had five armies (Ser, War, StP, Alb, Rum). Turkey's domination of Austria is obvious. Equally obvious were, again, outside circumstances which contributed to the expansion and success of the alliance. Italy resigned and went

into civil disorder, in FO1. Russia resigned and went into cd in FO4. The English, French, and German players were all dropped in 1904 and had to be replaced. A combination of missed moves and civil disorder favored A-T. If Austria had taken three of the Russian centers and had kept Serbia ((a big if)), he would have won, rather than Turkey.

What may we conclude from all this? First, an Austro-Turkish alliance is possible, but requires special trust. Second, its success may well depend on special conditions favoring rapid expansion. As a corollary, we may surmise that the flower might wither if strongly opposed. In each case, Turkey's route west was widened by possession of Greece, and Turkey was the prime naval power while Austria, the land power. This is probably the most successful combination. In this case, the Austrian fleet will have to lead the way, and a route thru the Straits of Gibraltar will have to be blasted as quickly as possible. In 1966AK and BN, A-T were aided by weak or non-existent Italian play. It is probable that an active Italy opposing them will cause enough delay so that England or France can plug the Straits. One possible answer is to form an alliance with Italy which can be broken as soon as the Straits are breached. Of course, a wise Italy would insist on being the only naval power in the west, which would pretty effectively scotch any plans of stabbing Italy and gaining control of the Mid in the aftermath.

The upshot of this is that it is not wise to expect too much from an Austro-Turkish alliance. It is obviously a combination which most people will not expect, and its advent would have, thus, the advantage of surprise. But if Italy and Russia are on their toes, the surprise will not be enough to make up for the difficulties in coordination and the strains on mutual trust which such an alliance would seem almost inevitably to provoke. The combination A-T would thus seem to have rather a dismal future. It is thus, as I labeled it at the beginning, the Improbable Alliance. ((For a rather different view of this alliance, note my upcoming article in DW #21)).
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Diplomacy provides such a lovely context for the recycling of old jokes. Witness this one from John Kador, appearing in Impassable #50 (5 May 1978)

A Dippy veteran of some reputation was teaching his little brother the complexities of the game. Suddenly the little tyke (as little tykes are wont to do) asked, "Suppose your're playing Austria and an Italian-Turkish alliance is giving you trouble. What do you do?"

"I'd try to talk Russia into taking Turkey off my back," the veteran replied.

"What if Russia was too busy fighting with England to help you?"

"I'd form an alliance, or try to, with France to neutralize Italy."

"What if France and Italy had an unshakeable non-aggression pact?"

"I'd sell me soul to Germany if she would give my units support ((Gee, I didn't know that Dippy players had souls.))"

"What if Germany wouldn't talk to you?"

"I'd call my friend Bernie."

"Bernie!!! What could he do?"

"Nothing. He just likes to watch Austria get creamed off the board."

All you Austrias who've really wanted another build in Winter aren't going to want to hear about the Austrian player in 1973AR (Pellucidar) Mr. Dority. He got three builds, and turned one down! But he's not as nervy as Mr. Wheeler in 1975BE (1901 and all that). He had only two builds, and turned one down!

THE AUSTRIAN ODDS AND ENDS

Austrian so often has trouble getting his way on the board, that off the board problems can be overlooked. But not here! Witness this exchange from The Mixumaxu Gazette #20 (8/74) between GM and player:

Charles Schandl: I must insist that you publish my moves under the heading "Austria-Hungry" and not just "Austria" since the Hungarian part of the empire takes up 2/3 of it, and on the game map, 2 of the 3 home centers are in it. Also, the archduke from 1899-1913 made his capitol in Budapest, capitol of Hungary.
Bob Lipton: And where is he today? I must say no. If I said yes to this, then in a few weeks, a Turkish player would write, saying "Call it 'ottoman Empire', willya?" And then Germany would want to be called "German Empire", and France would insist on "Le Troisieme Republic de la France", and England would chime in with "The united kingdom of England, Scotland, and Ireland, Empire of India, etc." and Russia would insist on the subsidiary titles. Pretty soon, each issue would have just enough space for the naems of the various countries, and where would we be? No, you may not call yourself "Austria-Hungary". In fact, you're lucky I let you stay in the game, troublemaker.

One of the shortest and simplest endgames statements came from Graham Jeffrey, the Austrian player who was eliminated from 1973IU in 1902: "I had a beautiful alliance with ((Andy)) Davidson ((Italy)) until he stabbed me in S01¹ (Der Krieg) #40, May 1975))

His problems were nothing compared to Mr Clogg in 1976CJ (Paroxysm), who was hit by the most ecumenical lynching possible. Italy supported himself into Tri, Russia supported Germany into Vie, and Turkey tried to block Austria out of Greece!!!!

But the record worst performance for Aus goes to Greg Costikyan in 1977HB (Caerleon) who was eliminated in 1901. This was manifestly deliberate, as he made no attempt to either defend himself or to take a center in F01. It is a mystery to me why people who do not wish to play in games sign up for them, and Costikyan's action was manifestly unfair to Austria's non-neighbors. At least the Austrian player in 1976DX (Graustark), hwd to one center in 1901, went down fighting.

Usually when Austria decides to attack Russia, his 1901 activities are limited to Rum. But in 1969CD (Brobdingnab) Andy Bytwerk took Rum and attacked Ukr to boot. S. Roberts in 1976AC (1901 and all that) attacked War and took Sevi. And Hipschman in 1976IA (Caerleon) seized both Rum and War.

Other Austria prefer to show their agression by attacking large numbers of countries very quickly. Like Kutta in 1972M (Smut), who attacked both Turkey (taking Bul with Russian help) and Italy in 1901, then attacked Russia in S02. But the "Unexpected Explosion" award goes to Seilers in 1977X (A..D..A..G). In F01 he tranquilly supported himself Greece, and did A Tri H. 1902 was a different matter, and by the time the dust had settled, he collected Bul, Ven and Mun!!!

One of Austria's problems is that he sometimes has to compete with not one but two other countries to get a particular neutral. Thus in 1975C (IGHIP), Schaut had to overcome both Turkish and Italina attacks to take Greece. In 1976EG (Graustark), Bowman supported himself into Rum. And so did Russia. And so did Turkey. Six units expended, and still Rum did not fall. Bowman would probably be jelous of Howard Mahler in 1975T (Impassable), who ordered A Gal-Rum, and was supported by both R and T. Another odd point of that game was that at its end in 1908, Por was still unseized.

Austria is supposed to attack either T or R its its early years, but some players just don't get the message. In 1970AG (Graustark), A Tri-Ven was supported by F Adr and F A Pie in F01. In 1902 he took Munich as well.

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IF 16 Appears by your name
Your sub is finished. #17
is being mailed with this,
except to those with 16 by
their name. When a renewal
cheque is received, #17 will
be sent out.

*Sell
Letter
Enclosed*

Joery Jones (25)
P.O. Box 8529
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