

# DIPLOMACY DIGEST

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Issue #31  
Odds 'n' Ends

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This package should contain material to please --- and annoy --- most of my subbers. If present plans hold up, this issue will be mailed as a package (except to those whose subs run out with #31) with #32. The two issues are of very different types. It used to be that the dichotomy among my readers was that some liked the game-oriented material, especially strategy and tactics, while others disliked that, preferring personalities, humor, hobby history, etc. It was hard satisfying both types. Now a second division has arisen, arising in part from changes in the zine over the last year or so. Some prefer the traditional reprint format. Others like the original material, usually topical in nature (e.g. the controversies over trading, the Oaklyn business, rating and scoring systems, etc). These two issues are examples of each type. #31 with mostly topical material, and #32, a theme issue on "aspects of GMing", is in the more traditional mold, having one TZC, the front page editorial, and the rest all reprints. But which is the preferred type, or do you want plenty of each? Its very hard for me to judge, and of course, I don't know if those who write me are typical of my readers. Naturally, those who write will have more of an impact than those who do not, so if you've a preference, please speak up. After all, if the zine does not fulfill needs in the hobby, there's not much point to doing it that way. My present feeling is that I have gone a little too far toward the "topical" side, so I plan to move a little back toward reprints in 1980. But this is subject to either reversal or acceleration depending on what type of response I get, and how I feel about the product I turn out. I do not plan to go back to the style of the first year, with virtually no such material, and a very aloof tone, but there's a lot of room between that and where I am now.

Several people have asked whether the inclusion of reprints of more recent material and/or the topical material means that I am running out of old material to reprint. No. These represent policy changes. I realized that I was a little too biased against recent material. This material can be used to spotlight very good established zines (as in #31) or to give some publicity to more recent, less well known, zines (as in #32). But rest assured, the emphasis is still on the older, and less accessible material (as in #30).

I hope that you have noted hopefully (sez he, using the word correctly for a change) that recent issues of DD have not dealt with the sins of Oaklyn, and what the hobby should do about them. Indeed, except for one paragraph in #28, I have stayed off those two topics since #24. And that is the way it will be in the future too, I hope, since this issue has what I plan as my swansong of the topic. While I will continue efforts to round up additional signatures for the PST, this will be done in personal correspondence. I do, however, want to keep track of what he is doing, and will notify those who need to know (e.g. the BNC) if fresh problems arise. Toward this end, if any of you receive anything Bernie has written, either about me, or about the entire controversy (e.g. in the format of a letter inviting you to play in FLD), I'd appreciate your sending me a copy. → P11

((One of my most favorite zines is Fol Si Fie (Randolph Smyth, 275 - 3rd St. S.E. #314, Medicine Hat, Alberta Canada T1A 0G1, subs 5/\$2). Presently, Randolph is organizing a special demo game. Contact him if you are 1) Interested in 5-week deadlines 2) Like playing for an extremely reliable GM and 3) Think that you are good enuf to get into the game. Anyhow, Randolph recently published #122, having an amazing 26 pages without any games being reported. One of the major topics was the subject of passing along diplomacy letters. The endgame comments for two countries in 1976CD revealed that such a practice has significantly influenced the game. Randolph had written an article on the subject a few issues back, generating, in #122, quite a few letters on the topic. Here's an interesting sample:))

Eric Ozog: I wanted to comment on forwarding letters to a third party. Yes, indeed, it is a legitimate process. Diplomacy would be a bore if everyone were honest about it. Players would just say anything in their letter, knowing that they would not be forwarded, and feeling safe about it.

It is not a widespread practice, and I've only done it a couple of times. Usually, normal diplomacy can resolve a problem without resorting to letter forwarding, but when one gets desperate.....Most of the time, tho, I will just say in a letter, "So and so said such and such....."

As for other underhanded practices, lets get it all in the open. In 1979AG((a FSF game in which Ozog is Austria)) my situation was getting desperate. (Now it is practically hopeless.) So I took action in order to help my cause. I admit, even I, Eric Ozog, resorted to Dirty pool.

I wasn't sure how Gerry Van Alkamade (Russia) would move. So, I called him on the phone, and I posed as his ally Dan MacLellan (Italy). Gerry told me a couple of handy things: (1) That Vie would remain untouched in FO2, and that he was attacking Bud (Unfortunately for me, and lucky for you, Gerry, I botched the orders.) So you see, it proves that my evil bounced back on me. (2) He told me that he cut a deal with Turkey (Dave Marshall) that he arranged to move his fleet thru Con in the Spring, in order to get out into the Aeg in the fall. Now listen closely David, he plans to remain in Con in the Fall of '03, thus pulling off a stab! Don't be suckered into it!

Conclusion: It just goes to show how "dirty poolish" Diplomacy can be. Nothing is sacred when one is desperate. I must admit I was quite shocked at myself at what I did, and it shows how dirty but useful the phone can be. Nwo, when I answer my own phone, I won't know who the hell I am talking to! I have opened a "Pandora's Box" and it will dog me forever and ever. Amen.

Kraken ((Randolph Smyth)) Shocking! Anyone who could do such a thing is morally degenerate, and your opinion about such a small thing as letter-passing isn't worth anything to normal people. The last half of your letter weakened the impact (if any) of your first half.....that's terrible!

Regarding point #2 in his letter, concerning 79AG. I see nothing wrong with printing this "warning" to David, since Eric has presumably written David a personal letter along the same lines. However, I discourage the use of the zine for negotiational purposes, so I will list the following warnings of my own:

(1) I am just printing what Eric sent me; the information is no more likely to be correct than one of his normal letters. "Nothing is sacred when one is desperate", and it may be that Eric is just using the zine to give his negotiations a veneer of authenticity.

(2) I feel free to comment on anything sent to me for publication ((and his comments are frequently more interesting than the letter that he is commenting on)), so here is a list of some of the possibilities suggested by Eric's letter:

a) The phone call never took place; he's made the whole thing up as an elaborate way to suck in the Turks.

b) The phone call did take place, but nothing was mentioned about Turkey, and Eric fabricated that part of the conversation((I don't see that b) significantly differs from a) )).

c) Gerry did mention his deal with Turkey (if there was one, this may have been the only way Eric could have found out about it), but no stab was in the wind; Eric's using a minor ((?!)) piece of accurate information to substantiate a damning point of his own invention.

d) Eric's whole letter is accurate and David had better look out.

e) Gerry realized that something wasn't kosher halfway thr the conversation, and, pulling a fast one of his own, driveled on about a non-existent deal with Turkey in order to make Eric look like a fool in his negotiations!

Talk about dirty pool.....

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 Gee, maybe that wasn't such a good line to lead into this heaviness. What follows is first the cover letter, and then the PST itself.

Dear Publisher,

19 Jan 1980

You are probably aware of the "Oaklyn" controversy that has raged thru most of 1979 in many of the hobby's zines. While this may have struck you as just another hobby feud, in reality its something quite different. First, it has been an investigation and gathering of facts. The various items of proof that "Oaklyn" is indeed Tretick were assembled from a wide variety of sources, which takes time. This process was simplified, tho, by the fact that he never presented any evidence that "Oaklyn" was a real person, relying just on villifying those who contradicted him (For example, Don Miller, during his time one of the true pillars of the hobby, denied that he had ever referred an "Oaklyn" to Tretick, as "Oaklyn" alleged. "Oaklyn" responded by calling Miller "senile"). Challenging information about his numerous GMing abuses was more difficult, since this information was often known only to the players in the game, or even only by the one player directly affected.

In addition, this information was slowly disseminated to the hobby, often in piecemeal form. While this process is largely complete, in a sense it is never finished. New problems in his games, and fresh lies in print can continue to come to light. More important, there is a constant flux of newcomers into the hobby, who need to be warned. This sets the stage for an endless stream of articles and personal letters. This, however, is unacceptable. I and others are unwilling to spend large quantities of additional time on this issue. Many readers and publishers are understandably getting tired of the subject, and increasingly unwilling to read or print this material.

Another process has been going on: An attempt to show "Oaklyn" that the hobby considers his actions unacceptable, and that he must change his ways. This attempt has been a total failure. He has made crystal clear the fact that he does not consider his methods wrong and will not change them. I have corresponded directly with him, and via the intermediacy of a friend --- to no avail. For example, the last issue of his zine, FLD, that I received has his son James Alan signed up for another game --- despite the fact the he has repeatedly been told --- both in the early 70's and during this past year --- that this is improper. The most recent Dragon and the Lamb has a letter from him with two direct lies about a game he once GMed, 1977IW (see enclosed). For some reason, the normal processes of "peer pressure" have had no discernable effect.

And thus a dilemma: The present procedures used by his critics cannot continue indefinitely, but the need for them remains because "Oaklyn" will not change. Accordingly, several of us in private correspondence have tried to find an alternative approach, especially since our views seem to be converging. It was decided that a publisher's Statement would be the best method, and it fell to me to write it. A "Publishers' Statement on Tretick" was sent out to a small number of "old hands" familiar with the matter, to check for content and wording. Thus, the PST which is enclosed goes out not only under my name, but that of several others as well (Ityped their names rather than Xerox their signatures, which I have, for reasons of space). Collectively, we represent considerable diversity of opinion on hobby matters (Boardman and Walker, for example, almost never agree) but on this issue we are all united.

I urge you to sign this PST and mail it back to me promptly. After a reasonable period of time, I will publish a final list of signers; PST and this list should be published in DW. It is my fervent hope that this unified hobby statement will reduce or eliminate the need for further discussion. It will be useful as a statement-of-hobby-position for those officially in contact with novices. It will be the final form of pressure on Tretick, tho I am not sanguine about success.

If you do sign, all you are doing is associating yourself with the 5 recommendations. Notice that there is no call for "Oaklyn" to be expelled from the games he's already in (an action I oppose unless he has violated a HR). The operational verb is "urge". For example, your signing does not imply that you would necessarily criticize a zine that does not cooperate with Point #5. It simply represents the position that you hold and the urgings that you make.

I anticipate that the most sensitive item will be #5. I have included (I hope!) a copy of a letter to Steve McLendon on this topic. Altho a few items on it are only indirectly connected to that exact issue, I did not have the energy for a separate essay. I strongly believe that #5 is necessary. Pressuring him via #5 is the only way we have to influence what goes into FLD. That zine has the potential to harm the hobby. He has made a policy of sending samples, often several issues, to newcomers into the hobby. It is very easy for those unfamiliar with the hobby to be deceived. For example, this fall he maliciously slandered Lee Kendter's Need-a-game service, implying

Lee runs it "as a mechanism to get everyone to subscribe to his gamesine" and fill his games --- this despite the fact that Lee hasn't even plugged his openings in it (FLD IV, 7, Oct 79). In another issue he collectively accused all those running "blind" games of "an unethical act", and "outright plagiarism" (FLD IV, 10, Nov 79). And he has sought to bolster his credibility by pointing out how many zines will let him play. Novices persuaded to sign up for a game will have the expectation of a fairly run game --- and judging from the past, many will be disappointed. I don't need to point out to you how essential new blood is to the hobby, and how easy it is to be turned off if your initial contacts and experiences are bad.

Finally, note that even in the (very unlikely) event that all zines bar him from entering new games, he will not be shut out just yet. He entered a large number of games in 1979. As the number of games slowly dwindles down, he will have plenty of time to consider the consequences of his rejection of hobby norms. As he appears to be immune to persuasion, criticism, and peer pressure, all we have left is to deny him the privilege of entering new games.

So I urge you to sign and return. Everything in this package is on the record. If you quote at any length in your zine, especially from the PST, please make sure I get a copy.

#### PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT ON BUDDY TRETICK ("BERNIE OAKLYN")

In 1968, Buddy Tretick began publication of La Guerre. He dropped out of the hobby in the early 70's in complete disgrace. The charges against his GMing included pressuring players to end the game before they wanted to, repeated failure to receive orders, playing in his own games, using his son in his games, falsification of player orders, starting some games while dropping others, failure to mail issues of his zine, and others. He was the most intensely criticized GM in the history of the hobby, and had few if any defenders.

In late 1977, he resumed publication of La Guerre, under the pseudonym of "Bernie Oaklyn", later changing the zine's name to the Front de Liberation du Diplomacy. Not long afterwards, some of the same problems emerged. He has placed his son, James Alan (formerly, James Alan Tretick) in several of the games he GMed. This relationship was not revealed to the other players. In one game, either 2 or 3 players (who are quite possibly his 3 sons) actually lived at the same address --- a fact which was obscured from the other players by having them receive mail at friends' addresses. These games, plus others in which he was a coplayer with his son, will surely be labeled as irregular.

Another area of GM impropriety is his habit of not using orders which he has received. In 1977IW, a game he was guest GMing, the Russian player was NMRed, with substitute orders from James Alan being used instead. It was conclusively proved that "Oaklyn" had in fact received the Russian orders; he was replaced as GM. In a similar incident, in his "1978YY", France was NMRed in FO1, with replacement orders used. In a letter to the player, he admitted receiving the orders, and asked her to cooperate in a dishonest cover story saying that the orders were delayed in the mail. Austrian FO1 and WO1 moves in yet another game were attributed to Ron Kelly. After Ron Protested, "Oaklyn" admitted that he had not in fact received any orders from Ron Kelly. Robert Baker reports that his orders in a fourth game repeatedly were altered by "Oaklyn". These and other actions are not just GMing incompetence, but show a fundamental lack of integrity.

In addition to the above GMing improprieties, Mr. Tretick has taken a deceitful attitude toward the hobby, and many of its members. He has misrepresented himself. The most visible examples are his hiding the facts that "Oaklyn" and Tretick are the same, and that James Alan is his son. This has meant that some hobby members have had to go to a great deal of effort to expose this fraud. His has misrepresented himself in other ways. For example, he has stated that he was a President of IDA, that his variant "Air Sea Diplomacy" is the most popular variant ever played, and that, in its prime, La Guerre had a circulation greater than the next 10 largest zines combined. None of these statements are true, but they certainly have the potential to deceive newcomers and those not well informed.

Finally, Mr. Tretick has made numerous untrue allegations about various hobby personalities. Space precludes a complete detailing of these. However, he has made allegations about Mark Berch, Edi Birsan, Vic Carpenter, Lee Kendter, Sr., Ron Kelly, Don Miller, and Rod Walker which simply are not true.

Details of most of these matters have been printed in such places as DIPLOMACY DIGEST #23 and #24, Dragon and the Lamb #38, the new Brutus Bulletin #48, Diplomacy World #24 and elsewhere.

For those interested in further information, contact:

Mark L. Berch 492 Naylor Place Alexandria, Va 22304  
John Michalaki Route 10 Box 526Q Moore, Okla 73165  
Rod Walker 1273 Crest Drive, Encinitas, Calif 92024

Accordingly, we the undersigned strongly advise the Diplomacy Hobby that:

1. Players not sign up for games run by "Oaklyn", or accept standby positions in games presently being run
2. Players already in such games should take extra care in keeping carbons of all correspondence with the GM. If problems occur, they should not hesitate to bring the details to the attention of the hobby
3. Statements made by "Oaklyn" about "Oaklyn" or Tretick should be viewed with great caution. Allegations about others in the hobby should be afforded little or no weight, unless firmly supported by evidence.
4. GMs should not permit "Oaklyn" to Guest GM games in their zines
5. GMs should not allow "Oaklyn" to enter new games either as an original or replacement player.

Signed, in alphabetical order:

Konrad Baumeister  
Mark Berch  
John Boardman  
Fred Davis

Ron Kelly  
Lee Kendter, Sr  
John Michalski  
Rod Walker

Since then, the following GMs have also<sup>6</sup> signed: Bruce Linsey, Bob Arnett, Mike Mills, Randolph Smyth, Jack Brawner, Fred Hyatt, Tony Watson, Elmer Hinton, Doug Beyerlein, John Kelley, and John Caruso. Again, note that all they are associating themselves with are the five recommendations at the end, tho of course I stand behind all the rest.

The cover letter referred to another letter, which I am not reproducing here, but the GMs did get it, but I will summarize parts of it, material that has not appeared in print before. Reference is made to 1977IW, a game which "Oaklyn" Guest GMed for Don Horton's Claw and Fang, until Don relieved him of his duties and took over the game himself. In Dragon and Lamb #39, there was a letter by "Oaklyn" containing two flagrant lies about his role in that mess. First, he said, "As far as Don taking his games away from me, it was based on the bitching of only one player." This makes Don look pretty bad. Just one player's bitching and out the GGM goes?? In fact, in a letter to "oaklyn" and the players, dated 21 Feb 1979, Don stated "I have received letters (unsolicited) from four players, some in fairly strong language, about undue and excessive gamesmaster interference in the conduct of the game." He later referred to "the virtual unanimity of the requests." --- quite a contrast from "the bitching of only one player". Second, "Oaklyn" says "You see, the game had bogged down and I tried to stir the pot by saying publically 'Hey, you, stab him, and you stab him, and you....'. Nothing else transpired." In reality, one of the players had established a blockade on the board, and another player had been unable to break it. With no warning to the players, "Oaklyn" suddenly published an article in the zine in which the game was being run, telling how to break the blockade. Nor was that his only stunt. One of the players in the game was was NMRed by "Oaklyn" in the spring, and he used substitute orders from his son, James Alan. However, the player had not actually NMRed --- his W and S orders were on the same sheet and his W orders were used. As a result, the Spring season had to be replayed. Usually when a season is replayed, someone is harmed by having tipped their hand. 1977IW was no exception.

Well, what of it you say? There is nothing unique about these events for Tretick. When he ran La Guerre, the most common complaint was his excessive interference in the games, and in "1978YY" he also NMRed a player whose orders he did receive. In Brutus Bulletin, Robert Baker has reported that his orders were repeatedly altered by "Oaklyn", with "Oaklyn" subsequently agreeing to correct the errors.

The real point tho is that there is no end in sight for his improprieties and his lies. The reason for this is that Tretick still sees nothing wrong with what he has done. His reaction to the 1977IW mess that he caused is summed up by the close of his DML letter: "I feel no guilt for anything I did as GM of IW." And seeing nothing wrong, he has no reason to change. Which is why pressure, via the PST, is required. Since Tretick has been immune to criticism and persuasion, if the hobby does not do something collectively, we have only ourself to blame for the damage that Oaklyn will surely continue to do.

I'd like to close by discussing a few of the criticisms of this approach. I do this here, rather than another long round of discussions in other zines. The first is that Tretick's indiscretions were as a GM, so this should not affect how the hobby treats him as a player, and thus point #5 is improper. However, his improprieties have extended to his role as a player as well. He has not only GMed games with his son; he has also entered games with Alan as a co-player --- you really cannot separate his player and GM roles, its all the same person. Also, by entering under a pseudonym, he violated the HRS of at least one zine (Graustark), and was quite properly expelled. Further, without point #5, the PST is rather toothless. Its just not any meaningful pressure without it. Further, it permits him to say to novices, "Look, all these GMs accept me into their zines, accept me as Oaklyn, so why can't you? Ignore people like Berch and Walker who insist that I am someone else and a pariah. Clearly I am not."

In this regard, Bob Sergeant writes in Eggnog #41: "If after all the warning about him that have appeared novices still can be persuaded to enroll in his games, then those novices have a subconscious desire to be ripped off." Bob is wrong. First off,

I estimate that approximately 50 novices enter the hobby each month. That means for every month that goes by, 50 people are unwarned if there are no warnings. And I can tell you, there will be very few warnings in zines in 1980. Any number of pubbers have written me that they do not plan to mention Oaklyn again, period. This is an understandable reaction. And Oaklyn doesn't need 50 per month to keep himself going. He probably doesn't even need 5. If this were a static hobby, Bob would be right, but it isn't. Not only that, but there are plenty of people around who have not gotten the message. Somehow, the impression has gotten around that EVERYBODY has been warned. Don't kid yourself. For example, I challenge Bob Sergeant, or anyone else for that matter, to show me a single warning about Oaklyn's GMing abuses in any Canadian zine in 1979. If one has occurred, it has certainly escaped my notice. And I assure you, there are plenty of Canadians who get only Canadian zines.

In a similar vein, Bob (I don't mean to pick on him; I'm sure many others share these thoughts too. But his remarks have been published, so they are on the record.) says, "Anyone who would buy Oaklyn's argument that his playing in a 'zine constitutes endorsement of his own zine is incapable of being saved from himself." As a minor point, it's not the endorsement of his zine he'd go for, it's the acceptability of the person that he'd claim. But don't forget, most novices have very little knowledge of this hobby and how it operates, and Oaklyn is a rather unique case. My favorite in this regard was a newcomer who wrote me asking for a sample. He said he knew he was supposed to include an SASE, but didn't know what they were. He had tried to buy one in his game store, but they didn't know what an SASE was either. Even the novice GMs can amaze. I once got a call from a GM who wanted to know if a player could change his orders. It seems that a player was rather annoyed when he sent in two sets of orders, both arriving before the deadline, and the GM used the first set, thinking that players could not change orders. Let's not forget, we were all novices once, and knew little of the postal hobby.

Here's the bottom line. I believe in operant conditioning. That means that if someone is doing something wrong, and you can't talk him out of it with just words, then you have to take actions that will provide a specific disincentive to his present behavior. If you fail to do so, 1) he cannot be expected to change because there is no need to, and 2) you send the real message that, while you don't like what he's doing, you don't find his actions sufficiently objectionable to actually do something about it. And the actions you take must be something meaningful to the malfeasant --- not to oneself. It is for this reason, for example, that I am very much in favor of a U.S. boycott of the Olympics. The Olympics have less to do with Afghanistan than Tretick's games have to do with his GMing. But the Olympics mean a great deal to the Soviets (much more than these winter ones have meant to us). And by withdrawing --- and pressuring our allies to withdraw --- we send a meaningful message to the Soviets that such actions have a price, which is payable immediately.

And gentlemen, we have a problem. Inaction now will cause future problems just as surely as his unfettered actions in the past caused present ones. I got a letter from John Caruso, publisher of Whitestonia, along with his signature on the PST. He's in one of those games with Oaklyn and Alan as coplayers, and doing well. And he is understandably bitter about the fact that that game will be called irregular, though he recognizes what will be done. And now I hear that a Canadian zine has gotten an entry application for a game from one of Bernie's sons. Is this for real, or is Tretick getting ready to set up another scam? Another stunt has just come to light. In 1979 IW, GGMed by a totally inexperienced GGM, the Austrian player NMRed in FO1. The house rules called for the use of neutral substitute orders. Bernie was kind enough to submit them, including A Boh-Gal, and A Ser S Tur A Bul-Rum. Bernie knows what "neutral" means. He just doesn't think that the hobby's rules apply to him, and this is just another example. He has screwed up games as a GM, and if we tolerate him, he'll screw things up in other roles as well.

But this PST finishes things for me. I am getting a little tired of the crossfire of conflicting and impractical attitudes the hobby is throwing at me. Publisher A tells me that I have a "credibility problem" because I have never GMed a game, saying that "you do not have to implement your plan", and that when people do, it is "amazing how...attitu- (turn to middle of last page)

((I've gotten two responses from people mentioned in the last issue; the first is from Richard Kovalcik, Jr (#40 1001 Murrieta Blvd Livermore Calif 94550, publisher of The Tetracuspid), who was one of the secondary characters in the 1975GM theme of lastish))

There is a fair bit of background to the case which I am not sure you have heard. Gladstein was the original Editor of the E<sup>x</sup>ponent. After a while (six months?) he tired of the work and convinced me to take it over. This was right about the time when 1975GM started. ((Kovalcik took over on Feb 7, 1975; the game start was announced April 18, with Kovalcik as a player and Gladstein as GM)). At this time as publisher I was obviously getting adjudications ahead of the other players. I had never played postally or seen a diplomacy zine other than the e<sup>x</sup>ponent when I took over as editor. ((Interesting how one's memory plays tricks. This is probably not true, since the first issue he pubbed was sent to Doug Beyerlein --- he must have heard about Doug from somewhere. All the games had Boardman Numbers, and there was an article by Lipton, who had been publishing for over 1½ years at that point, and TE had about 7 trades at the time.)) It was either sink or swim. And I swam after getting some water in my mouth. ("Correct Calhmer Notation", "The value of Building F StP (nc)", etc.) After about 6 months, I graduated, so I had to find a new editor for TE (which was tied to the John Dewey High School (of N.Y.C.)) Strategic Games club). Fred Brenner was interested. I think he may have started playing in some postal games, but was also somewhat inexperienced when he took over as editor. I think this inexperience of his may have led to some of the problems. Also, the fact that Gladstein was the original editor explains why he wasn't "supervised". Eventually, Brenner graduated and couldn't find a replacement as editor. So, TE folded, and the games were absorbed into The Tetracuspid. After a while, it was clear that Brenner wasn't performing that well as ((Guest)) GM, so I took over as GM of the last game he was GMing (1976BU).

((Thanks go to Richard for a look at some hobby history from the mid-70s. So far as I am aware, The E<sup>x</sup>ponent was the biggest High School dippy zine that has ever existed. His letter provides additional insight into the 1975GM affair.))

((This next letter requires some explanation. John Boardman and I have been corresponding on, among other topics, the Boardman-Walker feud, which, in one form or another, goes back at least 10 years. As anyone who has read a lot of JB's writings can testify, he passes up very few opportunities to put in a dig about Walker, even if the connection is extremely tenuous, or even non-existent. Other targets, to an lesser degree, are Larry Peery, and Carol and Walt Buchanan.. Rod, especially in his Erehwon days, was much the same against JB, with Beshara and and Tretick as secondary targets, and usually with more humor than JB, who generally adopted the moral-outrage stance. Anyhow (Is this shaping up into another hobby-history issue?), this began spilling into Brutus Bulletin, not a surprising development in view of Michalski's whatever-will-be-dark-enuf-to-Xerox standards. In response to some Boardman sniping, Rod made a major escalation by dragging up some supposedly unsavory events in JB's past, all of which were at least 8 years old. At that time, I wrote both of them, saying that I was not too thrilled by all this, and pointed out that, to outsiders, this would begin to look like two old farts rummaging around in the mud trying to find the same rocks they threw at each other 10 years ago. Rod's response was more or less that JB started it (the ole' he-hit-me-first routine) and that furthermore, it was none of my business. JB said that Rod had yet to apologize for his past misdeeds (Rod had supposedly tried to drive one John Beshara out of the hobby, for example). To this I said that these events were of another era, and that even if they were true, they were hardly relevant to 1979. JB was worried that Rod's supposedly (I keep using this word to avoid having to take sides) low moral standing would taint the anti-Tretick campaign. I might add that I used that same line to Rod about the lack of relevancy to today of his discussions of JB's past. It didn't get me any further with Rod than it got me with JB. Anyhow, JB then wrote me that I was displaying "time-dependent morality", and suggested that a certain infamous Nazi doctor in Latin America would doubtless be interested in such a doctrine. I said that there is eventually a time for letting go, and that actions taken so long ago cannot disqualify Rod from contributing to the hobby indefinitely. "There is a point at





THE REVISED BERCH TOURNAMENT SCORING SYSTEM

A. Allocation of points

1. Players receive:

Win	60	5- way draw	19
2- way draw	46	6- way draw	10
3- way draw	37	7- way draw	0
4- way draw	28		

2. A bonus of +4 points is given to the drawer with the largest number of centers; and -4 points are given to the person with the fewest. In 4, 5, and 6 way draws, +2 is given to the next-to-the-largest power; -2 to next-to-smallest. In case of ties, the bonuses are shared equally.

3. 0.01 points are given for each SC held at games end.

4. If the tournament is 3 rounds, 8 points are added for anyone winning 2 games

5. 10 points are added to the scores of all players on the top board; 5 points to those on the second to top board. (of the last round, which is seeded)

B. Voted Conclusions

1. After W05, players may vote a winner or draw, a vote which must be unanimous and signed by all surviving players.

2. The winner must have at least as many centers as anyone else.

3. A voted draw must specify exactly who is to participate in the draw.

C. Curtailed Games (games ending because time has run out)

1. The person with the largest number of centers is the winner, provided that s/he has at least Q centers.

2. If 2 or 3 players have tied under C1 above, then they (alone) have drawn.

3. The value of Q depends on the year in which the round is officially set to end:

1906: 11	1908: 13	1910: 17
1907: 12	1909: 15	

4. If Q is set at 12, 11-11-11-1 will be a three way draw.

Tournament procedures are as described earlier (DD #24)

Comments: The basic philosophy and principles of the scoring system are described in #24; those unfamiliar are referred there. I will only discuss here the changes.

The biggest of these is A2. The Rulebook notwithstanding, a lot of people took great offense at the notion that all drawers should share equally. A2 is a compromise toward that view. Frankly, I think it is unnecessary, but it is also harmless --- I don't see that it will have much of an effect on how the game is played. And apparently it will make the scoring system seem more fair.

The numbers under A1 have been improved. Originally there was too little difference between 6 and 5 way draws, with a huge gap between 3 and 2 way draws. Also, as Zablocki has pointed out, too huge a chasm between the wins and the draws, making all draws seem worthless by comparison. These numbers now provide sensible spacings between the outcomes.

The remaining changes are all minor, and most reflect points made by Ben Zablocki in the most recent DW.

Incidentally, Rod Walker has set up a 5-man committee to select a scoring system for DipCon 1980. Those interested submit their scoring system to the committee, plus whatever materials they want to add to it, and the committee will pick their favorite. This is a very sensible plan, and I hope it will be used for future DipCons as well.

Lastish I mentioned that a fake issue of Volkerwanderung #5 had gone out. Bruce Linsey took credit for the fake in VOD #5 and then said in #6 that his taking credit in VOD #5 was itself a fake. Obviously one of these is false, but I have no idea which one.

In other news, another zine from the "Class of 79" has bit the dust, as Dan Morris has folded Revenge. The pressures of college work have forced him to leave the hobby, a common occurrence.

As most of you know by now, the hobby has a new BNC, Lee Kendter, Sr., who has already published an issue of Everything, fat with game starts and conclusions. Very shortly after the announcement, several New Yorkers put up a hue and cry over the \$1 for each number granted. Threats of non-cooperation and denunciations of this policy were made. Boardman's requests came in without the \$1, and there was the usual talk of boycott, as happened before when Beyerlein first raised the proposal. As is quite typical for these characters, nobody bothered to see exactly what it was that Lee had said. In the Why Me? #24, it was clearly labeled as a "donation", and Lee will in fact give the number to those who are too stingy to make the donation, as did Beyerlein. Anyhow, ole' mischievous Rod Walker isn't going to pass up a perfect opportunity to slip in the needle:

"I, Rod Walker herewith promise to pay to the Boardman Custodian, Lee Kendter, Sr. the sum of \$1 for each Boardman Number he assigns to games being played in GRAUSTARK and game-mastered by John Boardman, Mr. Kendter, upon becoming Boardman Number Custodian announced that he would continue to request the traditional (but voluntary) contribution of \$1 for each number assigned. Mr. Boardman has, as in the past, refused to honor this entirely reasonable request.

"As a former BNC (1969-1972), I support this nominal and voluntary contribution. I recognize that not all GMs can afford it, but those who can should help support this valuable hobby institution. Mr. Boardman obviously can afford it, but has chosen to evade supporting the institution he founded.

"It is my hope that in the future Mr. Boardman will adopt a more public-spirited attitude. In the meantime I will make his contribution for him and in his name."

And that, methinks, is a lot more "positive" than dragging up old supposed errors in the dim past, and a lot more clever than toad contests.

des change" (this despite the fact that GMs with long experience, like Boardman, Smyth, Walker, Beyerlein, and Watson agree with these recommendations). Publisher B doesn't want to sign, saying that a better plan would be "numerous warnings appearing all the time to keep people from giving him business." (this despite the fact that large numbers of pubbers have said that they do not plan to ever mention Oaklyn again, they are tired of it.) In today's mail (March 3) Publisher C tells me he will sign if I will please supply "proof about Oaklyn's guilt" (while other pubbers gripe to me that I've oversaturated the hobby with this material). Pubber D, when I ask why the Canadian hobby failed to publish a single warning in all of 1979, innocently replies that no one asked him to issue a warning. Pubber E, having been tricked (as many were) by Oaklyn's I-am-not-Tretick, can't bring himself to admit he was wrong, so he airily informs his readers that all the evidence is "circumstantial" on this point, and says he thinks they are different. Publisher F tells me that it could "disrupt" a game he and "Oaklyn" are in.

It's this simple: Belief in the integrity of the GM is the very cornerstone of the postal hobby. The "high" level of warnings in 1979 was not enough to stop him from opening new games, and from disrupting games, and 1980 will have far fewer warnings. Is the hobby willing to tolerate a steady stream of damaged games, at the hands of a person who has repeatedly indicated that he does not intend to follow the hobby's rules? Or do we tell him, with actions rather than with words, that he is no longer welcome in this hobby?

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If the number 31 or 32  
appears by your name,  
your sub has run out,  
and fresh supplies of  
\$\$\$ will be needed to  
assure future delivery