

DIPLOMACY DIGEST

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Results and whatever

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GAME OPENINGS

The only variant I have ever created is Succedaneum! This game leaves the board and basic rules unchanged, but with a simple procedural change produces a radically different game. Each player submits, along with primary orders for his own country, a set of secondary orders for one other country. He may also submit a "country preference list" listing other countries in the order in which he trusts them. The GM then looks (after the deadline) to see if any secondary orders have been submitted for a particular country. If not, the players own primary orders are used, just as in a regular game. If one set has been submitted, those are used (and the primary orders for that country are discarded). If several are submitted, the ones coming from the country highest on that person's list is used. Thus, the secondary orders can be used either to screw your enemy, or protect your ally against someone else's screwing. The GM will not reveal who wrote any set of orders, to give players the maximum freedom to misrepresent the situation. In this game, you can directly affect what goes on at the other side of the board, and even if you are down to one unit, you can by your secondary orders have quite an impact. The full set of rules are in DW #27, along with a discussion of strategy. At any rate, that article generated a flurry of response, and Steve McLendon is seeing if there are enuf to get up a game. Are any of you interested in playing this strage game? If so, write me. If Steve needs additional names to fill out that game, I'll pass them on to him. And if there are enuf, I'll organize another game, and find a GM with experience at variants to run it (it won't be run here). It should be a "wild" game to watch!

PLAYING STYLES, PLAYING FOR RATINGS AND ALL THAT ROT

There's been a lot of talk about this recently, most of which sounds plausible but is in fact nonsense. I'm going to leave off names because the personalities aren't that important.

Someone said something along the lines of, "I like to play for two way draws rather than wins because that's the best way to improve my rating, which is important to me." He was jumped on for saying this, and it was used as a springboard for an attack on ratings per se. Absurd. Look, if I am trying to get a two-way alliance, and I think that approach will work, I wouldn't hesitate to say just that. But if I thought the opposite approach was called for, I could say with equal sincerity, "....so I really want the two-way draw. I realize that going for the win is better for the ole' ratings, but what the heck....." There is no way you can say whether going for wins or going for 2-way draws is better for one's ratings. There's no doubt that draws earn less in the ratings, but are they proporitonately easier to get? I have my doubts. In fact, one of my 2-way draws (77KJ) was harder to get than either of my wins.

Besides, what's wrong with playing for a good rating? If I think someone is doing that, I'll be fairly sure that he won't NMR out, and that he'll be giving this game his full attention. Sloppy play and the like is a killer to ratings.

Another accusation has been made that a person is playing for ratings, an accusation which the person denies. This accusation seems very foolish in face of denials. The accuser, in effect says that the denier either a) does not understand his own playing style, or b) is lying. Either of these choices, it seems to me would be virtually impossible to prove unless you had an admission.

There is, tho, one way you can tell if a person is not particularly interested in ratings: If the person enters very few games. Rating systems are generally of two types. One does not divide by the number of games --- it's a straight accumulation of points. Masters' new system, and the Clahamer Point Count System are both in that category. Obviously to do well in that you have to accumulate a lot of points, which means you have to enter a lot of games. The other type divides by the Number of games (N), but even there, some sort of exponential scaling factor will be used. Otherwise a person with one big win and no other games will look stupendous. DTRS, for example, uses a factor of $(1 - 0.7^N)$, which means that even at 7 games rated, you still face a significant loss from not having enuf games. So if a person doesn't have many games under his belt, and is adding new ones only very slowly, he's not in it for the ratings....

Finally, keep in mind that commenting in a negative manner on another's playing style can stir up quite a ruckus. The generally accepted format is an endgame statement, which pretty much limits you to his play in that game. Broader than that may earn you a stinging rebuttal, and remember, he knows much more about the topic than you do, and won't hesitate to point out that nearly all good players vary their style from game to game for several reasons. What is generally not acceptable is to write players in a game you are not in to "warn" them about one of the players. This will make the "target" furious and resentful, since he will feel, with considerable justification I might add, that Diplomacy is for the players, not outsiders. The recipients of the letters may --- indeed, should --- suspect your motives for providing such "advice". And many GMs will take a very dim view. While I realize it's a free country and all that, newcomers especially should note that doing such a thing will get you on a lot of shit-lists, and such a thing cannot rebound to your advantage.

A COUPLE OF SAD FAREWELLS

Alas, two of my favorite zines are closing up. Brutus Bulletin, with John citing "family pressures" is in its last issues. BB was unique in a number of ways. Early on its fame arose mostly from the wide-open "black press", which I never cared for. People would write the most repulsive vulgarity they could think of, and assign the press to someone else. Later on, what shone thru was John's political views --- an articulate reactionary, willing to take on any "wisdom", however conventional. He could also be amazingly intelligent when it came to life-styles he didn't care for, or what to do when people make mistakes and all that. But most important, BB became in a sense the Bulletin Board of the hobby, a sounding board for complaints and new ideas, a place to conduct feuds --- handy if you weren't a pubber --- and an ideal place to get the word out about anything at all. John was always secure enuf to call things exactly as he saw them, even if he knew it would irritate people. BB had the best letter column that has ever appeared in a North American zine, and it will be sorely missed.

Also folding, contrary to what I said lastish, is Passchendaele, with Francois Guerrier noting his upcoming marriage, new job, and postal problems. P featured his own idiosyncratic writing style, lots of play-of-the-game reading, and the most entertaining jibes at Randolph Smyth anyone ever printed, all of which will also be missed here. He is selling his ditto machine; so contact him at Box 32 Station A Ottawa Ont K1N 0T9 if you are interested. While Francois will be cutting back considerably in his hobby involvement, neither he nor John will be leaving altogether, and indeed, I do not know if John plans any changes other than dropping BB. While all this is very sad (I note that EM is also folding), it's a normal part of the hobby, and fine new zines (such as DH and EE) are part of the process of renewal. (Turn to P 9)

THE 1981 DIPLOMACY DIGEST HISTORY, TRIVIA, AND GENERAL TOMFOOLERY QUIZ RESULTS

Results were vigorous, if not overwhelming. If a ! follows the answer, that means that no one got the answer right. If the initials are underscored, that means that only that person got the question right. If * appears after the initials, that means that he got the 1 point for the most amusing answer. Those responding were Don Del Grande(DG) Doug Beyerlein (DB), Lanny Myers(LM), Bernie Sampson(BS), Kieth Sherwood(TRO), Robert Sacks(RS), Dave Carter(DC), Rod Walker(RW), Bruce Linsey(BL), John Caruso(JC), Kathy Byrne(KB), Mark Lew(ML), John Michalski(JM), Jack Fleming(JF), Bill Becker (BB)

1. Lipton's bedroom moved down (sinking).
2. Conrad sent the \$148 to Staples because a fire burnt his house to the ground. Sever got that, but I liked JC: "To join a game"
3. Bob Sergeant described his zine as "vanilla". Several guess Baumeister for Vanilla Fudge, with scattered answers for Lischett, Brown and others.
4. 1981P (In LSD) had the I-R fleet clash & loss of 4 Home centers in O2! DG*: "I know its not 1981CP, since that never got past 1901.
5. Passchendaele #29 had 5 by me, the record. Never again, I assure you.
6. Ben Zablocki. Lots of right answers, with LM adding: "My play as France helped..."
7. Caruso and Byrne have the same address. I also got some secondary answers, such as Pam and Jeri Overby and Bob and K Amnett, but those who guessed those also got JC/KB
8. Tunis is unique in being named after a city rather than a country, among neutrals. Other differences cannot be cahnged without altering the game
9. Allen Wells as Austria stabbed Austria due to lack of calomine lotion in DH#6.BS
10. Rick Kovalcik says he is of Czech-Italian descent. There were 3 wrong guess for JC!!
10. Peggy Bowers was the first to reach 10 centers in a postal game in O2 (70AQ) BB
12. The special award for Len Lakofka for being "Most in need of minding his own business" was sponsored by Robert Sacks, who informs me that the correct answer is The Imperial Diplomacy Association. KB and RS got it; there were 3 guesses for Boardman.
13. John Baker didn't, but Bob Sergeant did run a Postal Dippy tournament! Several guesses for Sergeants GenCon victory, but ML*: pass computer class.
14. John Kelly was accused of marrying the widow for the Xerox 2400.
15. The first Miller designator went to a 3x3 team game, Turkey omitted.
16. Jerry Fournelle became a well-known SciFi writer. I got a scattering of other answers, but I don't consider them "well-known"
17. There were 130 British gamestarts in 1978! BL*:124, just edging out BS's 137.
- 18: The woman who once held a hobby post is Bernie Augusta, who was the BNC. I also gave credit for Marie Beyerlein, tho she was a co-holder of the post. Kathy Byrne does not count because I said "once held", which implies past tense.
19. Buz Eddy's plan was to rate Face to Face games. This was because Buz Eddy was very good at face to face play. I liked DG: "Whatever it was, it was fair and made a lot of sense." Several people guessed points for losing.
20. "No wife Yet" is Randolph Smyth. Not me --- I've been married for 11 years.
21. Von Metzke published Saguenay just for Sanadians.
22. Wilson and Caruso were the losers in the Hobby Feud Semifinals. BS. Several people get one but not both. And Caruso guessed: The readers --- they were ripped off.
23. rb20 is the ARDA number for my variant. RW. LM: Its a typo for your first name. A real good stab was made by DG: "You invented it." But that doesn't convey to me the knowledge that he knows what it is. He tried to add autheticity by claiming he made rb21 and for all I know, he did.
24. Ripping Yarns #6 was 124 pages long! ML*: It was printed in mirror image
25. This was a trick Question. NO One. Osuch did this, but he did it as Turkey
26. Graustark #64, touted as the "largest to date" was 10 pages! DG*: Any zine that could date must have been big. Did it stamp and address as well?
27. Greg Constikyan was eliminated as Austria in 1901 in 77HB
28. FALSE. There is no patent on Diplomacy, only a copyright (and perhaps a trademark). Note that I did not say that the running out of the patent was the reason, only the time, so you had to know the Patent business.
29. William Clumm was sentenced to 25 years in Jail for the axe-murder of his wife
30. Edi Birsan was the only person to win the DW demo game twice. I also counted "

- "None" because technically, the first was a HA demo game win .
31. Hal Naus brought more orphan games to completion than anyone else. There were at least 3 guesses for Beyerlein.
 32. Bill LaFosse was eliminated 3 times from round 1 of DipCon 1980
 33. The first person to reach 8 centers in O1 postally was Len Lakofka in 71BE
 34. IDK@ is Intimite Diplomacy Knock Out, a single elimination tournament for postal Intimite Diplomacy! *LM: Int Dip Kibitzers Organization. I expected better guesses.
 35. Richard Walkerdine runs the British Zine Poll. A lot guessed Bullock, who used to.
 36. "I won't promise you great articles..." Why Me? BOO on those who guessed DD.
 37. "The zine will contain no game openings..." is Utopia Ltd Tro. DD got 6 guesses!!!
 38. "This zine will cater to your wants..." LDNS! Tro*: It sure as hell wasn't VOD
 39. "It will be published as needed..." Flying Dogs of Retaliation! No good guesses.
 40. "I would like each subber to submit an article..." Enchain Macha! " " "
 41. "Press writers will be paid...." Passchendael
 42. "It might be interesting to publish a newspaper..." Graustark.
 43. The Bulgarian Gambit was named by Doug Beyerlein. DB. Several guessed me.
 44. The Karma League discussion took place in 1901 and all that! No cute answers.
 45. In 79IW ("Ozog I") A, I and T all went for Greece and no one got it! Like an idiot I started tracking down some of your guesses, but som far as I can tell you all were bluffing. DG*: "81C. It sounds like something those guys would do."
 46. The highest 1973 circualtion was Hoosier Archives! 246 people. I'm amazed that no one guessed it. And no cute guesses either
 47. Len Lakofka wrote the acclaimed "The Dream Maker" Press series.
 48. Bob Sergeant discovered dippy in Divinity school. 4 of you got this --- amazing.
 49. Reinsel has the HRs that permit the game to be adjudicated once all moves are in. Several guessed DG. Note I said orders, not just builds.
 50. The first try at hobbywide organization was Int. Dip. Federation in Summer of 66.
 51. Dian Pelz was the first woman to play in 63B. No, JM, its wasn't Rod.
 52. Germany is most likely to get at least 2 net centers in 1901, followed by F, then a virtual tie between A and R. Only JC got it exactly. Curiously, most people had guessed F first, not G. This is based on British statistics, I might add.
 53. Simon Dally arraigned for the publication of The Game of Diplomacy. DB.
 54. "With Luck, I can withdraw from the general population...." John Kelley.
 55. "To do a fake when your own zine is 4 months late is a little tacky" Dave Carter
 56. "Turns into a huge luminous monster..." Brux Linsey. 7 people got this right!!!!!!!
 57. "I like the way the hobby is moving. No Glamor..." Jerry Jones! 3 guesses for Konrad Baumeister. A tough one.
 58. "A non-teaching elementary teacher and non-selling author" John Leeder! There were three guesses for Linsey, but he guessed Hal Naus, so Brux it aint. He teaches HighS.
 59. "When you lose its "only a game" but when you win, its I WON!" Andy Lischette!
 60. "My political idol is Darth Vader" Michalski. 9 got this one, just about the highest of any question. Yes, Rod got it right.
 61. "Showing a person can make a total fool of himself...." Bruce Linsey
 62. Carmilla, Eureka Stockade and Tau Ceti are all Australian
 63. Marchervap, Excalibar, Gesta Danorum are all variants set in Britian; many got this.
 64. Berch, Lipton, Brux and Perlmutter are all Jewish.
 65. I really blew this one. Riley and Pimley are pubbers who died while pubbing, and I meant Koning but wrote Smyth who is still alive. Only DB got that, but I accepted those who said all three were dead, and would have accepted "No one" or "Nothing" but I didn't get that from anyone. Sorry about that.
 66. Impassable, Western Stab Dippy, Graustark and Libertarrian are all published by someone whose initials are JBI! Very sneaky. There were numerous guesses that they all reached 100, but that list would be way too short for that, and I don't think Impassable got that far --- the main zine died around 75. JM* gave it the best shot: Pubbers ran cons recently. Bumpas and Boyer did; Boardman helped Sacks this year.
 67. Tringham, Willis, and Pratt are the last names of pairs of British brothers, all of whom are in the dippy hobby. Tro*
 68. Sampson and Weswig both published Everything without being a BNC.

69. If its free, leave two; Weekly Whimper; The Profound Clam, and Buchanan were all great zine titles, of zines published by Conrad Von Metzke. Dick Martin, take note.
70. Everything and all the rest were all zines that started with one pubber, and continued under the editorship of others. Bod adds: Brodingnag and The Diplomat.
71. 7 years war and all the rest were all variants designed by Lew Pulsipher.
72. Grafeti, EFGIART and Frigate all have the same country letters. This was too easy --- almost everyone got it. I should have left out EFGIART.
73. 69B, 72BJ, 72DX, 74BF all featured some contry losing 7 SCs in one year!
74. The Master Strategist was never even intended to be published. In FO1 of 79DW, Iain Forsyth (I) published a black press release saying that John Sandell (T) would publish TMS --- and some took it for genuine and offerent to sub or trade! BL*: Because no one ever gave thier zine that name, as it happens.
75. Swanson's zine was titled Rats live on no evil star and reads the same backward.DB
76. EIM is Envoy delays mailing; IWY is Invasion wrong year; VFA is Volker faked again; WTB is Whitestonia Typer Breaks; these are all squares in Peason's Dip Candy Land game!*DDG:Easy. They're acronyms.
77. Lerner's Theory of Fannish Institutions is "All genuine needs will spontaneously be filled! This was from a more optimistic day, I assure you. DB*: They expand like bacteria cultures and then collapse.
78. The first to play postally under an alias was "Adhemar Grauhugel", actually Bruce Pelz, in 63B. Boardman got a lot of votes on that one.
79. True. British players thought this was the case due to a poor map originally done.
80. The record for most spectacular move-writing screwups without any question belongs to Margret Gemignani. A few thought I referred to GMS; BB nominated Herb Barents and DDG nominated his own screwup with Kathy Byrne.
81. Regular Dippy, Mastermind, Colonia, WSIM, are run in Whitestonia.
82. Runestone began as a local zine by Leeder, who also pubbed Arrakis! Curiously, there were 3 buesses for Western Star Dippy. No funny guesses, tho.
83. Boast as the second oldest zine pubbed without a break. Tho this fact isn't widely circulated, a lot of people got it --- probably from old DWs.
84. Oldest continuously published variant zine is Bushwacker. Virtually everyone got it.
85. My picture was on the cover of Dragon and Lamb #35! Geeze --- it sure didn't make much of an impression. BB*: FBI July issue of Wanted Dead or Alive.
86. Grafeti was the first Scatish dipzine. DB
87. Press was printed flush against a toilet in Cheesecake #14, the Warehouse issue.
88. "Adventures of the Moonmen!" appeared in St Geo and the Dragon! BB*:At a theatre near you.
89. Libetarrian has dippy and non-dippy on two week deadlines.
90. Masters' 21 was a ratings zine cancelled before it appeared.BS
91. Arrakis at one time had 5 editors with trades split among themselves! RW*DB*:Pouch
92. Dolchstoss, published by Richard Sharp has not appeared in well over 2 years, he never returned the sub fees, and yet is still frequently and fondly mentioned! JM* found a reasonable second: Toronto Telegram. No, LM, The Watergate isn't even close.
93. Y'all #3 accused me of typing the zine with my toes. Tro got it, and explicitly accused himself of doing the issue. BB opined that it was done while I was in the bathroom, sitting on the throne. There were several guesses for VOD.
94. Trick Question. No zine has ever been postaed from Antartical! Not one of you called my bluff, so DG*: Operation Deep Freeze.
95. A.D.A.G is an acronym for a french phrase meaning neither to the left nor right.
96. The Watergate was the first zine publish by a black person.
97. I had thought that The Home Office didn't use Boardman Numbers for its games because it ran only variants, and indeed, RW guessed that. But I see that it ran 79IO and 79IU. Several guessed Invasion, but my copy of #6 shows numbers being used. Lord of Hosts would but close, but it doesn't have any games. I accept that or LM: None, tho I suspect that Invasion has discontinued thier use. Oh well.
98. Wild 'n' Wolly was the first to have more than one game in it. Wrong but common! Grau
99. Overbight, in its initial HRs, banned negotiations before winter seasons. BB

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100. The Orient Express was published by Steve Plater from Japan. DC
 101. Laputa is la puta, whore in Spanish. Published by a woman. RW
 102. Europa Express published an article on the obscure coins thrips, stellas etc
 103. FLD and Dot Happy are regualrly right-justified. Tro. Just amoung Freinds has only done it for the last few issues, not enuf to qualify as "regualrly".
 104. Sauce of the Nile refers to African river (I accepted Source...)
 105. Anubis, a canadian zine, is named after the God of death or embalming to be more exact!*DG: Lucky Stiffs
 106. Cream - Baumeister
 107. Hawkwind/Genesis - Marsden!
 108. Abba - Bullock
 109. Opera - Von Metzke
 110. Geografy/Fantasy - Walker
 111. Poker- Birks
 112. Baseball-Jones
 113. Visiting France - Horton. More got 112 right than any oth^{er}:
 - 114, and 115: Issue #10/11, the stalemate issue. It has gotten more reprint requests than any other, and just recently had to be reprinted. But it also got a huge number of complaints at the time as boring. Almost no one got either right, but ML got em both!
 - 116: Bank Computers were said to have made errors in Wells' favor.
 117. John Michalski fired his revolver at a ballot box in the story that ran in VOD. I did like KB: "Bruce Linsey, at the Leeder Poll."
 118. 1969CJ actually had 6 GMs. BB
 119. Randolph Smyth as Italy took Lpl in FO3 in 1980KB, a remarkable feat. BL. But BS says, "Dan Palter in 1980CE - what a pain that was" Alas, the last Tetracuspid I have in my file gives WO2, with Ital F Mid, with no english fleet adjacent to Lpl. So I'll guess that BS isn't bluffing and give him the point too.OOps, Tro got it too(as"120")
 120. "News from Carthage" was a column in DW covering the British scene. RW. Most gues- sed that it was a press byline or a press zine.
 121. Knowable #3 was the issue of Boardman's fanzine in which he suggested the playing of diplomacy postally, a suggestion which matured into 1963A and the start of the hobby as we know it. I liked KB: 3rd revision of Linsey's 100 HRs (I think he has more than 100)
 122. John Piggott delayed the revival of his Ethil the Frog to allow Glyn Palmer to hoax it but alas, it never appeared!
 123. The first postcard zine was Lilliput. A cruel question. JF answered only one question, Paranoic's monthly to this one and he --- and 5 others --- got it wrong. Jack, yours was the first reduced postcard zine. RW.
 124. Konrad Baumeister and Dick Martin were given 4½ free issues each for some writing referred to in #117. But a problem arises. Both KB and JC submitted identical answers: "Woody in Whitestonia - how did you know?" They were not collaborating in this contest, since there are numerous questions that one got and the other didn't. So again I'll assume they are not bluffing and give them both points for Woody, too.
 125. The Nixon award was given to Al Pearson in 1980AF, otherwise known as R-5 or Maniacal.
 126. Gary Coughlan told those wishing to discuss his HRs to write someone else.
 127. In 1963 and 1964 regualr games, only Austria won twice.
 128. Nick Shears published Down Alien Skies in Africa, shut it down, moved to England and restarted the zine! A tough problem here! DB guessed Bernie Ackerman, but he was the person who tried to keep the DAS games going in Africa. BL guesses Duncan Morris, a resouceful try, as Duncan did move from England to Rhodesia, but did not publish from there. I'll give the point to BL*

And now, the results. Incredibly close. The Winner, with 47 points, and 12 more issues on his sub is DOUG BEYERLEIN. Second, with 46 points, and 6 more issues on his sub is KIETH SHERWOOD. Also doing very well are Rod Walker (42), Bruce Linsey (36), and Mark Lew (34). The answer that I liked the best was Don Del Grande's #26, so he gets 5 free issues. The person who got the fewest wrong guesses was Rod. The person who made the most tries at something funny on those he didn't get was Don Del Grande. The most illegible entry was from Mark Lew. The person with the most jibes at Bruce Linsey was Kathy Byrne. The largest paper was used John Michalski. Doug did quite well because there was so much older stuff, at which he mastered --- by contrast, he didn't get questions like 7 and 60, which virtually everyone else got right. Tro was helped by hav- ing recently read thru the entire DD press run --- a lot came from DD.

7

No sooner did that get typed up than an entry arrives from England, Peter Birks, complete with instructions that "there is an inevitable gap between when an editor says a deadline for a quiz is and when it really is." Rather than retyping, I'll add corrections. Among others, Pete got 44 and 92, so you can ignore the 1 there. For 7, he notes: "Malcolm Smith and Ken Lussey both lived at ... producing Bohemian Rhapsody and The Diplomat respectively. Both have since moved and Tony Marchese now lives at the same house and has taken over TD, bringing about the phrase "Moved out of house and zine" *. Its much more common in England for one person to take over another's zine (rather than a straight fold) than here. I suspect that "The Diplomat" is the most common zine title. There are at least 2 U.S. zines by that name (both folded) and there may have been a third, plus that one. In #120, he also claims that this was a subzine to a british zine, but I'm not sure I should count it because the question did not have the underlining "required" for a zine. Amazingly enuf, Pete's letter took only 3 days from England, the same time as LSD came from Texas.

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The Zine Column #42

Da Nooze!

1. Here are some new zines, or zines newly independent:

Coat of Arms Tom Mainardi 1403 Lawrence Rd Havertown PA 19083

Anduin Eric Kane 109 Hicks Lane Great Neck N.Y. 11024

Erebor Brian Lorber (7 Polo Road) and Ken Halpern(11 Bellingham Ln) Great Neck NY 11023

Irksome! Scott Hanson 701- 15th Ave S.E. Mpls MN 55414

2. There's been a tremendous rash of articles on not moving A Con-Bul recently. Starting off was Keith Shapley's "The relatively merits of Turkey not opening A Con-Bul" in Fall of Eagles #58, an only-partly serious item touting A Con-Smy, A Smy-Arm, F Ank-Con on the way to attacking Italy and Russia. Bruce Linsey sets forth "The Astonishingly Arrogant Ankarass Assault" in DH #8, and entirely serious and tightly reasoned defense of A Smy-Arm, F Ank-Bla, A Con-Ank. The theory is that with no A Bul, Aus does not have to waste A Ser supporting F Alb-Gre (support which is usually unneeded) and thus can use A Ser to aid T against R. And in the upcoming DW #28, Mark Lewis's "The Anatolian Alternative" will appear, a mostly humorous look at a variety of choices (he points out that if you really want F Bul, A Con-Bul just isn't the way to get it). Apparently my article on B StP(sc)-Livonia wasn't strange enuf for some....

3. Two zines should be mentioned as greatly improved. One is Whitestonia, which features heavy doses of Kathy Byrne. The writing in W is quite informal, frequently sounding like a transcribed conversation. W has recently shifted to running games on flyers to players only, so that he'll have "enuf money to take Kathy out and buy her occasional flowers." (John Caruso 160-02 43rd Ave Flushing N.Y. 11358 10/\$5). Just Among Friends HAS RECENTLY expanded in size, and features a lot of hobby-oriented humor, including cartoons with newtag-lines in his continuing "Personal Glimpses of Famous Diplomacy Players" This are often reprinted elsewhere, but to see the full set you have to get JAF (Al Pearson Rt 1, Box 177B5 Kearneysville W Va 25430. Subs 10/\$5) This zine also features word-processor printing.

4. A few last comments on Poll Results. LSD #13 broke down the Leeder results into "Oldtimers", "Subzine", "Novice" etc. Mark Larzelere's "Marco Polo" has BB on top, followed by VOD, EE, LSD, with DD down at 11th. In this, you gave 5 points to your favorite, 4 to second favorite, etc down to fifth, unless your own zine was in the top five, in which case you couldn't do that. With only 31 votes, I'm not sure it means anything; the British run a poll with a similar style.

5. Short takes till I run out of room: For GMing as good as it gets in the hobby Lee Kendler has openings (4347 Benner St Phila PA 19135) at \$5, with subs 10/\$4...other nice Gencon reports not mentioned lastish were in WhyMe?, Diplomacy by Moonlight (with some nifty capsule descriptions of people Eric met) and Whitestonia, featuring several writers....Lanny Myers belatedly claims that "Byran Syndrome" is the answer to #97, but Kathy didn't guess it...Work on DipCon XV is proceeding; a short report will appear in #51 or #52. I will be the Tournament Director...does one use spacefillers to fill lines?

LETTER COLUMN

8

I really should do these more often. Oh well.

Andy Lischette (March (1) 1981): "Your statement that I require subbers to join a game in CHEESECAKE is misleading. Since Cheesecake is free, I want some expression of interest from subscribers so I know they're not just throwing it away unopened. The "usual" commitment is to join the standby list or sign up for a future game, but about 10% (not counting traders) of the people who receive Cheesecake have special arrangements because they want the zine, but no more games....I try to be, and I think I am, one of the least bossy buplshers around. Other than that, I enjoyed DD #44/45. The English slant was nice ... but if that self conscious babble by Peter Birks is his usual style, I can't see how you could call him a good editorial writer... ((OK, anyone who wants to make a "special arrangement" (Porter Wrightman, one on my new subbers, writes me to say that he's inferred that I am a lawyer on the basis of the fact that I spell arrange with an i, viz arraing. Boy, talk about being (almost) right for the wrong reason! Porter, spelling around here is whatever keys the fingers feel like hitting) whatever that is, should contact Andy))

Keith Sherwood (8-20-81): "I have finally digested all your digests ((he had ordered about 2/3 of my back issues)) and am ready to order the rest. Altho I didn't read it when it arrived, your Israeli trip issue turned out to be very interesting. At first I scoffed at it and refused to read it. What had it to do with Diplomacy? But when I read every other issue and was then forced to read the trip issue, I was fascinated by it ... in fact, I am ordering an extra copy of that issue to send to my girlfriend in Israel. She was a foreign exchange student here last year..." ((#46 is turning out to be another issue like 10/11 --- lots of negative letters and lots of positive letters both. It even fetched my first anonymous letter! The negative comments tended to be along the lines of 2-or-3-pages-would-have-been-enuf. Sad to say, it takes me 2 pages just to set the scene sometimes!))

Brenton Ver Floeg (8-10-81): "Parenthetically, your background facts about 1972CR are necessarily defined by the fact that you are working with Doug's comments. Though it became apparent to me sometime in 1904 or so that it might be possible to stab for the win, and I had always entertained the possibility, properly safeguarded I would have been perfectly willing to accept the draw with Doug. Tho I double crossed as many times in 1972CR as I probably had in my other 9 or 10 games collectively, my tendency was still to honor a gamelong committment unless unnecessarily tempted by developements. Not of course that I didn't attempt to cause those opportunities to occur. ((Does that sound like someone trying to clean up his reputaton prior to re-entering the game as a player?(he asks hopefully but not realistically)?))

The Con reports in #50 elicited a few responses. First up is Robert Sacks (9-5-81): "The incident with the 3 proposals ((see near top of page 5)) was a mistake, I'm not sure on whose part." ((Take a guess. Its either the person who wrote the HRs (you) or the person who enforced the HRs (you).))...If Russia does so poorly in tournaments how is it Sergeant won at GenCon East? ((R does do poorly, but that does not mean that each and every Russia did poorly. Now for some lighter stuff:))

Julie Glass (9-11-81): "I'm glad I added something to the experience for you (not many people "scream with delight" at getting a build, I take it. I do because I feel very free about expressing myself)...You were one of my favorite people at GenCon((Yer Sweet))

Kathy Byrne:(8-31-81): "After the review you gave me, how could I not sub --- flattery will get you everywhere!" ((Everywhere??))

James Lawniczak: "...I have a lot of problems with your accepting a fake zine ((#42)) as a real issue and charging for it...." I got at least 4 letters in this vein, so perhaps others are thinking this too. #42 was indeed published by Bruce Linsey. The size, format, and contents are about the same as what you ordinarily get; only the printing was of lower quality. So you got about what you usually get. At my insistance I reimbursed him for the postage (apparently there were no printing costs). So I don't think that anybody got gipped in the deal. Actually, I was planning to skip that month anyhow, so you gys came out ahead in a way.

The Beyerlein interview got some response too, starting with Doug:
 "DD #49 (and pages 2-4 of #50) was terrific!!! It is the best thing that I have ever read in a Diplomacy Zine. You did an excellent job in getting everything from tape to typewriter and after reading it all there isn't anything that I would change (except your typos).((which I wouldn't change)).... Seriously, the interview was great fun and I hope your readers enjoy it as much as I did. I would also like to see interviews with Walt Buchanan, Edi Birsan, and Rod Walker. Also, I am curious as to how long it took you to transfer everything on tape and then edit it. ((I honestly have no idea, but it was much slower than just typing some article that I am reprinting)) Keep up with good work with DD. Just think, if #49 and #50 had come out before the Zine Poll, DD would have come in first place!"((I doubt it. The Lexicon happened to hit just as the Zine Poll of 1981 was underway....))

Lessee. Dave Crockett called to say that he's not 7-for-7, he's 8-for-8, and he would be 9-for-9 except that one of those is a local (telephone) game. So much for the theory that Dave only can win when he has the telephone advantage. Anyhow, next is John Kador: "The interview with Doug Beyerlein: What you had was "A conversation with ... " An interview is more than a transcript of a conversation. It's more work, but a transcript must be edited before it becomes an interview. If one is careful, one can combine answers, delete questions, reverse orders, all without distorting the content. Look at the Playboy interviews. These are obviously heavily edited, logically organized, smooth, glossy like the magazine itself." ((I agree that "conversation" is better than "interview", but I do not think that the latter is incorrect. First, "interview" does not necessarily require any significant editing. My Webster's sez: "... 2. a meeting between a reporter and a person whose activities, views, etc are to be the subject of a published article. 3. A journalistic article giving such information" Second, there was some editing. Tho the order was not changed, some questions were combined, and a number were dropped, particularly in the last 2/3 of the interview. At the very start, tho; I did want to give the flavor of a conversation (whatever that means!)))

 (Continued from Page 2) THE FUTURE OF THE "QUIZ" AND "THE INTERVIEW"

A number of "special" types of issues have gotten unusually strong response, such as #46, #10/11, #14/15. But unlike these, indeed, unlike any except the Lexicon, the responses were entirely positive --- no one objected to them per se. The only complaints about the quiz were that it was too long or too hard. Thus, I got quite a few "do it again" but no "I wish you hadn't done it" responses. Is this representative? I'd like to hear from some of you who haven't written me. If the response stays this good, I can do them again, tho you will have to wait a while. They consume a lot of space, particularly the quiz, which in a sense has things two times. Was the old/new ratio OK in the quiz -- I tried for a balance, but I "used up" a lot of hobby history in this quiz? There is also the question of value --- I tend to think the interview is probably more valuable in the long run, even if the quiz is more "fun". But I suspect that the quiz is probably boring to those who entered the hobby recently, or who are only very marginally involved. If the response is "more", another interview could appear in a year, with a quiz perhaps in 1 1/2, i.e. about Jan 1983. I've already got a subject for the interview/conversation. Plus of course Son of Lexicon this winter.

MORE COMPUTER PEOPLE

Ake Jonsson; Gruvvagen 26, S-981 35 KIRUNA Sweden (does speak English)

Hugh Polley 2620 16th St S.W. #208 Calgary Alta T214G2

Chris Bumcrot 4393 Yale Station New Haven Ct 06520

Elmer Hinton 20 Almont Street Nashua N.H. 03060 (Couldn't find his address before)

It seems to me you guys (and those listed lastish) should get together, start a zine or something, because I suspect that there is a lot of duplication of effort going on. Apparently there are several supposedly operation GMing programs around, tho so far as I know, only Steve McLendon is using his to GM postal games. It is inevitable that computer technology will be impacting the hobby more and more in the 80s.

Its time to put my neck back on the chopping block: I disagree with the way the hobby (collectively) has dealt with the Marion Bates hoax. For those of you who've been in a coma for the last few months, the story is this: Plague Times, a zine with a rather morbid sense of humor is published by Marion Bates, who has had serious and continuing health problems. A letter went out that Marion was, in a word, dead. Games would be transferred, sub fees refunded, etc. The letter, in fact, was a hoax, and he was not dead at all. The hobby then proceeded to blow the thing all out of proportion and treat it as the news story, hoax, and crime of the century. Very few zines ran the original story, and of course some people wrote thier friends. But the hoax was a very limited one --- I didn't get a copy of the letter, and neither did a lot of other people. Not so the response! For a period of time not a week went by without some indignant denunciation, threats of physical retaliation, and promises of a real chewing out if the identity of the person should become known (thereby virtually insuring that it won't become known). Zines which never printed the original stbry suddenly found it necessary to join the general hue and cry. Far more people heard about the whole thing from the denunciations than from the original announcement.

Mind you, I'm not defending the hoax. It was insensitive in the extreme. And for a hobby hoax, it was humorless and pointless --- about the worst things I can say. And I have no idea who did it, beyond the fact that I didn't. For all I know (=zero) it could be someone outside the hobby, it could be Marion, or it could be someone who really did think Marion was dead. But it got one hell of a lot of publicity! Zines which would not give "fun" hoaxes a passing mention gave this one lots of attention, and I for one think thats totally backwards. Those who originally printed the false nooze (and Marion) are entitled to bitch, but the rest, methinks, would have been better off with a simple "Contrary to what you may have heard Marion Bates is alive". Should something similar ever occur, I would hope that we'll handle it better.

A couple of people have asked me about my views on the "Arnett-Linsey" matter, since my name was dragged in. "Jane Proskin" to most of you is the voluptuous puber of Peek. In fact, she began as a creation of Brux himself, a fake person created to get into a frendly feud with Jack Masters (at the time a good friend and ally in one of his games) via letters in various zines. He used the address of his coursing Rob Proskin. He let Kathy Byrne in on it, possibly to give the character more of a feminine voice or handwriting. He then told Bob Arnett, off the record, about this, and Bob said that the "andy Harris" articles in Volkerwanderung were similarly pseudonymous. Then the "Black Hole" affair intervned, plus the "rigging" controversy, which poisoned the Brux-Byrne relationship. Brux was afraid that Kathy would spill the beans (which was potentially a problem because, to add to her realism, Proskin was on some standby lists, with instructions not to be actually used) and so he called me and told me the above story. In fact, his fears about Kathy were totally unfounded --- it was Bob Arnett who revealed the story. But it was a vastly different story he told: "We were fooled at first But due to some information from some other people, I found out that Jane did not exist. Linsey made her up. This is the kind of stuff that Bernie Okalyn/Buddy Tretick was accused of." Those "other people" were not named --- but according to Bruce, only Kathy and I knew --- and neither of us break confidences. Plus Bruce said that he told Bob himself. The reference to Tretick is pure sleaziness "Proskin" wasn't in any games, let alone games with Brux in them.

Arnett then went on: "I wonder how Berch got involved in this....Has Mark gotten boxed, thus joining Linsey's game to slip something over on the hobby?" Well! This is innuendo, pure trash. I am neither involved nor am I slipping something over on the hobby. So far as I know, Arnett has never retracted or apologized to me for this. Nor is this all. He also said: "I'm more curious as to why Berch has been "dumping on us" recently --- it probably goes back to the Leeder poll. Berch and Linsey seem to be bent out of shape because of their rating for 1979-1980." I most certainly was not bent out of shape. I had attributed my drop to 13th to the fact that: "while DD hasn't changed a whole lot, my competition (i.e. the top 15) has improved, and DD then suffers

by comparison" (DD #40). And I most certainly did not blame Arnett for this. At any rate, his credibility is practically zero around here. I might add that my treatment is nothing compared to the hatchet job Arnett has done on Brux, particularly in Volker #15, one of the most disgusting issues you'll ever see. There have been some attempts recently to gloss over that issue, which I find unconvincing. One is that the quotes on the cover weren't really quotes (e.g.: "Me and Mark run this hobby." Can you imagine!) Nonsense. They were in quotation marks, and on page 3 he sez: "The cover expresses many quotes that I have heard in the past year." In BB #103 someone suggested that the cover couldn't be read as an attack on Linsey, a position which Michalski's reply demolished. Enough. If I never have to mention his name here again that will be fine with me.

I have on a number of occasions had nice things to say about the quality of writing in Black Frog. Alas, it was too good to be true: Many of the stories turn out to be plagiarized. His "Greatest Player" and the "Brux vs Trouble" items were directly taken from Thurber short stories, including whole paragraphs taken almost word for word. The Diplomacy Chimp story is from another writer, and apparently some other stories are suspect as well. If Jack had wanted to do this he should have told people that this prose was not his own. The irony is that BF recently won the Leeder Zine Poll, which he certainly would not have if people had known this. I might add that I still like BF for the writing that almost certainly cannot be borrowed, but I think that Jack owes the hobby either an apology or an explanation.

The Zine Poll results as given last issue were accurate. I am very pleased that 60 of you voted for Diplomacy Digest. Indeed, some of the totals were amazing. The largest vote getter was VOD; no one else was even close, and quite a few have higher circulations. John Leeder appended some analysis of the results, but as I said last year it's mostly just speculation. Comparisons from year to year ^{are} worth little, in my opinion, unless there is some massive change. For the comparison to have any meaning, you have to assume that approximately the same people are voting and using around the same standards, which is just not the case. For one example, in one paragraph, he starts by saying, "The decline of the Canadian segment of the N.A. hobby is reflected in the poll", and cites some evidence. He then cites more evidence and comes to the opposite conclusion! Or take this: "the fact that six of the top 10 zines are from new publishers bodes well for the future of the N.A. hobby." Its possible, but unlikely again, in my opinion. To begin with, whether Masters is a "rookie" is a semantic question, since, by his own description, he began pubbing in Oct 1979. More important, this could just be another case of the "new" being significantly overrated. For example, DD was "new" for the 1978 poll, in which I finished third, a ludicrously high result for a zine that was still feeling its way at that time. Or take this year's GM poll. Third place went to Gary Coughlan. Now, for all I know Gary may be destined to be the greatest GM the hobby has ever known (and he certainly has an interesting zine). But even by the closing date for the poll, Gary had only three games, and none of them had gone beyond Fall 1901. The only way you could explain his finishing well ahead of people like Lee Kendter and Bob Sergeant is to recognize that "new" does get overrated. At any rate, John Leeder is to be thanked for doing an enormous amount of work. And there was a good analysis of the results in Brutus Bulletin.

For those still interested in the should-there-be-a-tournament-GM debate, Jim Bumpas responded to my editorial in Liberterrean #159. Among other things, he said that if the players had been unable to break 3-3 tie, the game would have ended right then and there (Fall 1905), a prospect that didn't seem to bother him! I can assure you no such stall will be possible at DipCon XV in 1982. The discussion continued in #160.

Well, that traps it up for this somewhat miscel issue. Next issue will go back to straight reprints, with a somewhat unusual topic --- I think I have enuf on it to fill an issue. And don't forget, "Hill Street Blues" begins its fall season Oct 29. This is the best scripted show on TV, and the acting is quite good as well. If you don't think that "Police Show" and "intellegent" belong on the same sentence, then you haven't seen this show yet. I even watched a lot of the reruns this summer, something I almost never do with drama shows.....

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If the Number "51" appears by your name, please consider that to be a reminder that your sub has expired, and the tendering of \$3.50 will enable me to place a larger number by your name and send you additional copies of this zine.



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