

DIPLOMACY DIGEST

Issue #86
December 1984
Potpourri

Mark L Berch
492 Naylor Place
Alexandria, VA 22304

Subs: 10 for \$4
Europe: 10/\$4.50 or 3/£1
Circulation: 103

It was at dusk on Nov 10, 1984 when Lester Green was driving east on Duke Street in Alexandria. Without warning and despite a good deal of traffic, he executed a U-Turn. Why he did this, we don't know. The fact that he'd been drinking, and the light had turned red while he was speeding might have had something to do with it. This brought him directly into the path of "incoming traffic", viz, Mona, who plowed right into him. The car suffered extensive damage; the passengers did not. Joshua (15 months) was completely unharmed, I had some inconsequential bruises, and Mona got some minor whiplash.

The moral of the story, as you may have guessed by now, is seatbelts and child safety seats. We were all wearing them. We hit Green so hard that I am certain that without them we would have had serious injuries, and Joshua could have been killed. I know many of you probably don't bother with them (figuring you are an expert driver), or wear them only on unfamiliar roads, or far from home, or at high speeds. Mona's an excellent driver, but there's no way she could have avoided hitting him. She was doing no more than 30, a few miles from home, on a road we've driven on hundreds of times.

Even more crucial are child safety seats. A recent issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association reported on results in Tennessee since 1978, when it became the first state to require safety seats for kids under 4. In that time, the use of such child restraints has quadrupled, and the number of kids killed has dropped by more than 50%. 81 children were killed in that time, and only 2 were in safety seats. Those without seats were 11 times more likely to die than those restrained. Travelling in parental arms left them just as vulnerable as if they were entirely unrestrained. Now, there are those who argue that such a law is too much government intrusion, that people ought to be allowed to make their own choices about risks. That's a valid argument in many cases, but not this one. It's not the child's decision as to whether to sit in a safety seat, it's the adult's. But it's the child who will pay the immediate price for such negligence.

On the way home from the trial where Green was convicted of reckless driving, we saw a car with a child standing in the back, probably standing on the back seat. Had that driver been in our accident, the child would have been a rocket, headed straight for the front windshield.

For those of you seeing this zine for the first time, the above essay is an anomaly. Normally, I keep my private life completely out of the zine, with rare exceptions (the last was in Sept 1983). I also avoid other wargames, movie reviews, national politics, science fiction, music, beer, etc, etc, just to name a few topics with enliven many other dipzines. But when it comes to Diplomacy, the game and the hobby, I cover pretty much everything here. The topics include the play of particular countries, press, hobby
(Turn to Bottom of Page 12)

WINTER 1901

((Statistics is a topic rarely covered here, so lets have a look at some for a change. The following is a letter from Mick Bullock in Greatest Hits #31, Nov 1976. The stats all refer to British games, which are sometimes referred to, as you will see, by other than the B cardman Numbers))

I presume that your query regarding a record for the FO1 situation in 1976HP refers to the 29 centers establishing a record low, rather than the possible unique make-up of the 5 specific neutrals left neutral ((Yup))) The latter I have no information on, the former is not a record.

As of Mid-Oct, the 364 U.K. games to have reached FO1 gives us the following:

Total Centers Owned	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
Number of Games	1	8	38	83	111	90	33

The freak 28's and 29's are usually the result of NMRs (as was yours) The 28 game was 1901 and all that's "Golf" (Germany 2 NMRs!) (I have a feeling that HDC 4+I also set off with 28 without NMRs, but that was an international game run by von Metzke and I can't class it as a UK game till it ends because I don't have the early season records). ((Here's the story on that fabled game, 1974N. SO1 saw no standoffs, but FO1 was a very different story. A and I stood off in Vie, E and R stood off in Nwy, E and F stood off in Bel, G and R stood off in Swe, Aus defended Tri with F Alb S A Ser-Tri (presumably expecting a supported Italian attack there, and possibly fearing A Bul-Ser, neither of which occured.) T unnecessarily supported Italy to Gre, so the latter passed up Tun. R took Ank. Thus, Bel, Nwy, Ser, Swe and Tun remained unseized, and for good measure, Russia, despite his heavy battles in the north, built only F Sev! The only army built was A Berlin; E,A, and T were all even. The nationality of the players, or more precisely, their locality at gamestart was Monaco, US, UK, UK, Denmark, France, and Canada. After that, tho, the game started getting wierd...but thats another story))

Thus, the norm can be seen to be 31-33 (78% of the total in this group), with the average being 31.91. Individual countries are:

A-4.32; E-4.16; F-4.75; G-4.88; I-4.15; R-5.42; T-4.23.

((He then notes that the averages after 100 and 200 games were very similar, so that)) I think it can be said that these are the inbuilt averages, whatever that may mean.

Results of 100 US games taken at random from recent Everythings

A-4.49; E-4.15; F-4.68; G-4.68; I-4.05; R-5.42; T-4.12

Not much difference. A and R identical, G marginally better, at F's expense? A stabbing I more? ((Probably the reverse --- I stabbing A less)) (has 5 6's compared to only 10 Anstrian 6's in 364 UK games), Turkey? Complete Table of FO1 holdings by c'ntry:

SC's	Austria	England	France	Germany	Italy	Russia	Turkey
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
2	7	0	2	1	3	0	0
3	61	42	20	8	30	7	14
4	116	223	90	70	244	49	257
5	170	99	200	238	84	24	90
6	10	0	51	47	3	149	3
7	0	0	0	0	0	35	0
2+Builds	184	99	251	285	87	184	93

((The last column is my own addition. There's no simple criterion for "doing well" in 1901, but building at least two is probably as good as any. Two builds usually means that you can either move with strength on two fronts, or attack masively on one and still have some reserve (stab protection). This kind of flexibility means interesting options in 1902, and F and G seem to have this the most often. Its also interesting to note that while F has two uncontested neutrals, and G only one, G more often gets 2 or 3 builds.))

A WHIRLWIND OF KNIVES

((I'm an almost compulsive reader of endgame statements. The great majority, however are of real interest only to those following the game. In addition, most are educational only for novices, or for those seeking information about individual players and how they operate. The following victory statement is an exception to both of the above. The game was 1971BC, and it was the first of the now famous "Hoosier Archives" Demonstration games, run first in HA and later in Diplomacy World. It was called "the Grudge Game", and I believe the idea for it was Rod Walker's. The game ran with commentary in HA by Rick Brooks. The essay is by the French player, Edi Birsan, and is taken from Hoosier Archives #83. I think you'll find it a real treat.))

With the concession of the surviving players, 71BC has come to a finish in record time: 7 real months and some 6 game years ((the concession was in S07)). Billed as The Grudge Game, there was some reshuffling of the original 7 players that allowed me to enter the game after meeting the requirements of (1) being overrated somewhere and (2) having some reason to spark with the other players in the game. The following is my opinion of the flow of the game and how it looked from my viewpoint.

The original ... game plan that I worked up, once I saw the country assignments, was to have 2 countries eliminated from the board as my minimum objectives for the game. They were England (Prosnitz) and Turkey (Lakofka). The reason for their selection and not any others was a simple mix of strategic positioning and personality (it was after all a grudge game). I envisioned a French, German and Russian attack on E in the north, and a Russian, Austrian, and Italian attack on the Turks in the south. In the middle game period (that time where there is the first realignment of countries due to the elimination of a major power(s)), I would have the option to go after the Germans with the Russians or the other way around, or strike at the Italians. The odds were in favor of deciding between the Russians and the Germans as an attack on Italy ... is unattractive as long as Germany and a northern power (R) are still alive and kicking. In the final stage of the game (after another major power has been destroyed and realignment takes place by powers with 10 units or more) the odds are that it would be France in the west against either one eastern power (R or A) or Germany as a northern power. Most likely, it would be the Russians in the east, as after the elimination of E and T, the Russians inherit a powerful corner position with no real threats to their flanks. The same thing happens to France once E is out of the way, only to a lesser extent due to Italy's sea power position in the Mediterranean.

The strategy looked great on paper (the paper was mailed to Walt (the GM) along with all my correspondence just for the record) ((Ah, in those days players really knew how to make the game interesting for the GM!)); but the hard part as always is to make it work. An early 1901 attack on E just wouldn't work in this game. Prosnitz would never move A Lpl-Edi in S01 knowing that I was in possession of F Bre. Therefore, the idea was to bring G and R into the war early and then by building 2 fleets to hit E in 1902 when his attention was forced to concentrate in the north.

I negotiated with the Germans (Key) on the general plan of the attack; he loved the idea. It was agreed that I would take Bel and Lpl, and that Jeff would have Lon and Edi. Initially, Jeff would play the Jutland Gambit by moving to Ska ((i.e. F01: F Den-Ska, A Kie-Den, A Ruh-Hol)) allowing me to take Bel for 3 builds. In the winter he would build a fleet along with me building 2 fleets.

The Russians were also favorable to the attack on the English and agreed to play 2 units north, thus threatening Nwy in F01. He also agreed to build an additional F StP(nc) during W01. This would give us a total of 7 fleets to the three maximum for E by S02. No England could withstand a determined attack by such a force. Strangely enough, Prosnitz (E) told me that he couldn't understand why he was in the game as he claimed to be the only person in the game that didn't have any grudges. He was the first eliminated, which only goes to prove: if you have grudges you'd best find out about them, if you don't, stay away from grudge games.

In the east, I began to have some troubles. Smythe (R) didn't want to attack both E and T in 1901. In fact, he didn't want any part of Turkey. This meant that the Austrians and then Italians had to go against Turkey alone. To merely suggest that they do it alone is usually not enuf. The Italians needed security when they make the delicate move of SO2 Lepanto (F Ion-Eas, F Nap-Ion, A Tun H) as an Austrian backstab can lock up Ven with the Italian fleets spread out over the Medit.... Thus, I had to firmly inform Austria (Lakofka) that under no conditions would ZI attack Italy so long as Turkey was on the board, and that I would support the Italians with at least one army moving to Pie, and one fleet to Wes/Tyh Sea if the Austrians attack Italy while Turkey was still around. With the Italians I did the reverse, informing him that while I would back him up in any Austrian attack, I would attack him from the back if he went after any Austrians while the Turks were still around. Walker (I) was psyched up for the Lepanto Opening so it was easy to help things along with the mutual guarantees. Later in the game, these guarantees would become quite important.

The initial stage of the game looked great: Everyone moved as planned. When Walker and Lakofka stood each other off in Tri ... no one believed that it was a real attack as Walker had not moved A Rom to a follow up position in Ven. The move to Tyo in FO1 by Italy raised a few eyebrows in Paris for I reasoned that had I stabbed Germany and taken Mun, the Italians would be in a good position from which to support them back into it in SO2. Such coordination between the Italians and the Germans can always be used against France in the middle game period; so I embarked on a very cautious policy in regard to Burgandy from that point on. The Italian move also sent off all sorts of flares in Vienna, as Rod had moved there against Austrian advice ... The greatest gain in 1901 was the surprise Turkish attack on R, which was not fended off by the Russians until FO1. By attacking Smythe (R), Tretick (T) forced R to join the coalition of A and I against him. This doomed T and delivered the game to blueprint copy of my game plan, which was quite the windfall ((The FO1 moves were thus A Vie-Tri, A Ser S RF Ruñ-Bul, F Alb-Gre; F Nwg S & F Nth C A Yor-Nwy; A Bur-Bel, F Mid-Por, A Gas-Spa; F Den-Ska, A Kie-Den, A Ruh-Hol; A Ven-Tyo, F Ion C A Apu-Turi, A StP-Fin, F Bot-Swe, A Ukr-Sev, F Rum-Bul(ec); A Bul-Rum F Bla S A Bul-Rum, A Arm-Sev)).

During the WO1 builds, Prosnitz realized that he was doomed once he counted the 7 fleets lined up against him. His only chance of survival was to try to reverse the triple alliance against him to one against the other player in the middle: Germany. He was willing to concede Nwy to the Russians, and then to place his units at their disposal in exchange for me supporting him in a convoyed attack on Hol which would most likely work. Smythe (R) thought that the plan would most likely work nicely especially when paired with French moves to Bur and the Russians shifting to Bal and Swe. Sure, it would have worked fine with Germany dropping Hol and Den in O2 and being eliminated in 1903. Only thing is, it would have worked fine for E and R and been terrible for F. The fleet advantage over E would have dropped from 7-3 to 5-3; the temptation for Prosnitz to ally with Russia against me would have been much greater than the reverse; topping it all off Prosnitz is one of the foremost win-only players always going after the front runner and of course our past experience of never having kept an alliance forced me to reject outright the Russian-English deal.

With France refusing to join, Smythe had no reason to back it as the chances of pulling it off dropped tremendously. Thus, Smythe agreed to the original plan of a supported attack on Nwy. With the English expecting to be supported into Hol they would find their army destroyed, which is what I wanted as an English army convoyed back to England would have delayed the invasion somewhat. Prosnitz of course was not told that we had rejected the idea and I encouraged him to believe that it was still on to insure the elimination of the army in SO2.

In the east, I had to get the Italians out of Tyo lest it break up the English Triple Alliance against Turkey. So, I reminded Rod of my Turkish policy as well as Len so as to ease his mind and I was all set to hit the Italians if they did attack A. Luckily, Rod backed off and informed Austria and France that he was moving south.

The SO2 results were very gratifying, as it showed the success of a lot of work behind the scenes: The English A Nwy was destroyed after receiving no support for its attack into Holland, Italy pulled out of Tyo and moved into Eas, and while my move to the Channel failed, the rest of my fleets were moving north.

At the end of the SO2 moves, I got a dejected phone call from Prosnitz. He realized now that there was no way he could break the triple alliance against him ... He asked me whose Idea it was not to go thru with the deal. I was stunned at first by the question. The only reason he could have for asking the question would be to know the object of a future of a future Bonzai-Suicide charge, thus giving his centers to another power by default. This gave me three big incentives to lie thru my teeth (you should NEVER provide incentives for lying in Diplomacy!). So I plainly told him that Smythe had vetoed the plan, so I couldn't go along then. He responded that since Smythe had stabbed him (!) and he had trusted him (!!), he would Bonzai against Smythe and yield England to me. There was all sorts of rejoicing in Paris as it not only sealed the English fate, but the English abdication allowed me to use the English units to delay the Russians and the Germans so that I could take all of England in a fiat-accomplish with the Germans and the Russians nowhere near England.

This marked the end of the early game period and projected the western powers into the middle game period in 1902 without the other powers knowing it, allowing the French to prepare for the middle game moves quicker and with greater assurance of what was going to happen in the transition than the other powers. Thus, the windfall of England was the first stormy blast that would allow France to create a whirlwind of moves that would always keep Europa reeling from one blitz after another.

((So ends the first part of his endgame statement. For the second and concluding part there is not room in this issue, so it will appear in the next issue. But even standing alone it has a lot to teach. Foremost is the clear value of long-range planning. Ed's early maneuvering went far beyond mere considerations of who gets which neutral. Notice also his marked attempts to project his diplomatic power into the east. France is the most western power, and yet he was apparently able to strongly influence the fate of Turkey. There is an air of decisiveness about him that allowed him to be able to take advantage of a major break when it came along, and allowed him to control, rather than be controlled by, events. Conclusion will be next issue, and there will be surprises))

DIPLOMACY IS

Saint George and the Dragon was one of those zines it was a real pleasure to play in. The reproduction was flawless, the zine was like clockwork. Bob Sergeant, the GM, used a system of notation which has become more popular in recent years, which not only relies on underlining, but uses CAPS for where the unit is, and lowercase for where it is not. And the GMing was very accurate. The zine also featured some nice touches, one of which was his "Diplomacy is" quote, which always kicked off the issue. I've collected some of them for you.

Diplomacy is the art of saying "nice doggie" until you have time to pick up a rock.

Diplomacy is realizing in the middle of an amusing anecdote about how you stabbed your old ally, that you're talking to your new ally.

Diplomacy is finally sitting down to get your moves submitted and discovering that your wife "cleaned" your desk.

Diplomacy is discovering that all those cities in Maryland and Virginia are all just suburbs of Washington DC and that the other 6 players in your game meet regularly to discuss your letters and chortle.

Diplomacy is realizing that the truth works as well as a lie - but not as often.

Diplomacy is putting a beautiful new zine in the mail, but no one wants to play in it because they think it's a fake.

Diplomacy is awakening in the hospital from a coma to inquire whether you missed the deadline.

Diplomacy is believing you've entered a game in which no one is writing anyone else ---- and then learning differently.

Diplomacy is looking up from your Diplomacy board to kiss the kids goodnight and noticing there are more faces than you remember.

Diplomacy is stabbing your ally 3 times, calling him a descendent of a 4-footed parent, persuading the person he finds to puppet to, to wipe him out so he won't be in the draw, and then, after the game is over, writing him and saying "Great Game. No hard Feelings."

Diplomacy is introducing a good friend to FTF Diplomacy, stabbing him repeatedly, and then wondering why he doesn't see the fun in the game.

Diplomacy is feeding the chickens with the right hand, while the left gathers the eggs.

Diplomacy is explaining to a cow exactly what part of a pig hamburger comes from.

Diplomacy is arranging a Balance of Power with your thumb on the scales.

Diplomacy is when you are playing E, and both F and G have informed you that a move to the North Sea is regarded as a belligerent act.

Diplomacy is convincing your new ally that your 5 Calhamer Points were from 10 2-way draws.

Diplomacy is writing to your GM about how you are setting up your ally and then discovering the GM thought it was press and printed it.

Diplomacy is learning the lesson "No one can be trusted" and sharing the lesson with an ally.

((And finally, Diplomacy is realizing that since St Geo and the Dragon made it to issue #100, that sometimes, the good don't die young.))

THE GOOD OLD DAYS IN GRAUSTARK

((The following is from The Pouch #53, 3-2-74, and is written by John Boardman))

12 years ago I lived in the Long Island community of Jamaica, just a block from a branch of Macy's. At some time in 1961, Macy's had apparently placed a large order with Allan Calhamer for Diplomacy sets. This was in the days when Calhamer was marketing the game himself, out of an apartment stacked high with long maroon boxes. It was not until that year, two years after the first production of the game, that copyright was bought by Games Research, Inc. At first glance, I was interested in Diplomacy, which unlike most "war" games then available reproduces the situation of an actual historical war, and which has no element of chance in it. It also accured to me that the game would lend itself to postal play.

Altho I bought a Diplomacy set in 1962, it was not until the following year that I set in motion my plan to introduce postal Diplomacy. By that time, I had married, moved to Manhattan, and bought a Gestetner 120 silkscreen mimeograph. I still have both the wife and the Gestetner, which are now domiciled in Brooklyn.

My original plan for postal Diplomacy is one that has been maintained to this day. I envisaged 7 players, amking alliances by mail among themselves, and mailing their moves to me by the stated deadlines. I would adjudicate the moves according to the Diplomacy rules, print up the results, and mail them out to the players and any other interested persons.

At about that time, thru science-fiction fandom, I met Fred Lerner, then a Columbia freshman and a member of the East Patterson Diplomacy Club. The EPDC met regularly in that New Jersey town to play a wild, free-swinging variety of over-the-board Diplomacy, which invariably began with a 7-power non-agression pact. I also had just described Diplomacy in my science-fiction fanzine KNOWABLE, and this description also elicited a few inquires. In May 1963 Graustark accordingly went out to about 25 people on the EPDC and KNOWABLE mailing lists. The most diligent inquiries failed to bring in more than

five people interested in the game. Accordingly, Graustark #2 announced the country assignments for a 5-man game under the then-existing rules, according to which R and T were the two unplayed countries.

Graustark was chosen as a name from George Barr McCutcheon's popular 1901 novel about intrigue in a small eastern European country. The choice of a name from a fictional country has been followed by other postal Diplomacy publications extant and extinct: Ruritania, from Anthony Hope's novels of the same period; Wild 'n' Woolly and Trantor from planets in well known science-fiction stories; Freedonia from an old Marx brothers film; Brobdingnag from Swift; Erehwon from Samuel Butler's "Erehwon"; etc. etc.

Many features of the early Graustark have since become standard in postal Diplomacy. With the "Spring 1901" moves of the first game, three players submitted press releases. The first press releases were fairly straightforward announcements of troop movements. It was only later that they became grandiose, fantastic, satirical, or didactic.

The first game, involving 3 EPDC members and two others, was won by Derek Nelson, who remained for several years one of the most active fans. The major element in Nelson's victory was another player ((Dave McDaniel, the Austrian player)) who tried to program a computer to make his moves. His collapse so enriched Italy that victory was only a matter of 12 moves.

From then on, things came with a rush. Ruritania was founded by TV scriptwriter Dave McDaniel in Sept 1963 with the first 7-man game. ((He wrote a number of the episodes of "The Man From Uncle" and is now dead)). Wild 'n' Woolly was founded by Charles Brannan in the following month ((He is still around, playing under the name Steve Cartier)). Other early bulletins were Freedonia (now merged with Graustark) and Brobdingnag. Wild 'n' Woolly was the first postal Diplomacy fanzine to carry more than one game at a time. Another important innovation came in 1966, when publishers began printing a player's name in parenthesis after the name of his country. This greatly facilitated following the progress of the game.

From its first game, Graustark has indicated impossible ((failed)) moves by underlining them. Other GMs use a convention introduced by Brannan, printing successful moves in capital letters and other in minuscules ... Graustark deadlines (including those for the "winter" builds and removal following the "Fall" moves) were until last March two-week intervals. This made it one of the fastest Diplomacy zines; Wild 'n' Woolly once experimented with a 9-day deadline but found it impracticable ((I believe that Brutus Bulletin ran one or two games on 7-day deadlines)).

With the increasing deterioration of the United States Postal Service, the two-week deadlines became impracticable, and in 1973 Graustark and most other two-week bulletins went over to a 3-week schedule. When the old Post Office Department was replaced by the semi-private USPS, the last vestiges of public accountability disappeared, and the soaring postal rate increases have been accompanied by a severe decline in the quality and frequency of mail pick-up and delivery. The forthcoming increase to 10¢ per ounce ((from 8¢)), and the shift to thrice-weekly delivery will further damage the efficiency of postal war-gaming....

Early Graustarks were small in size; a five page issue mailed on 25 Jan 1964 was proudly billed as "the largest postal Diplomacy fanzine ever published". Two pages was then the more general rule. It was only when Graustark had a very crowded letter column that this size then increased. Subsequently, Graustark expanded further to include book reviews, two serials, and the publisher's comments on both the game and real-life international intrigues. Now a 12-page issue is produced on every third Saturday, so that its mailing weight is just under an ounce.

By the spring of 1964 the number of postal Diplomacy fans had increased to the point where a second bulletin was printed to accommodate a second game. This bulletin, Freedonia, ran 14 months and 28 issues, or until the game contained in it ended. By this time, it was obvious that there was no reason why a bulletin cannot carry more than one game at once, and so Freedonia was merged back into Graustark. The same thing hap-

pened when the original publisher abandoned Ruritania; I took over its publication until the game was ended, and then merged it with Graustark.

Originally, I tried to keep track of postal Diplomacy by assigning a number to each game, publishing periodic lists of players, and giving brief summaries of the completed games. However, by 1966 this job became too much for me. I passed it on to Charles Wells, who in turn sent it on to John Koning. It is now handled very competently by Conrad von Metzke, who has recently assigned the 1000th of these "Boardman Numbers". Von Metzke's Everything now keeps up to date a master list of postal Diplomacy games and players, and assigns the Numbers. ((CvM founded Everything. Previously, BNCs had run this in their own zine)). These designations consist of the year in which the game began, followed by a letter or letters in chronological order. Thus for example, the first game begun in 1973 was 1973A. After 1973Z came 1973AA ... This is the same system used by astronomers to designate new comets as they are discovered.

Other postal Diplomacy bulletins have tried various variants, but Graustark has stuck fairly close to the original game. This includes the Calhamer rules as modified in 1971; other GMs have further modified them in their publications. Two variants have been introduced briefly in Graustark: a team game and a game which set the actual Entente powers of 1914 against the actual Central powers.... Neither variant proved viable. In 1972 I looked over James Dunnigan's new game of "Origins of World War II", published by Avalon Hill, and decided to expand my war-gaming repertory to include it. Based on Diplomacy fandom's experience with postal games, Dunnigan included a system for postal play of this game. On Feb 26, I revived Freedonia in a second volume for the postal play of "Origins". However, Origins never caught on as vigorously as did Diplomacy, and after 14 months I remerged Freedonia back into Graustark. Graustark still carries postal Origins games, but the greater simplicity of Origins and its negotiating system has less appeal for wargaming fans.

The serials began in Graustark #93 (12 June 1966) with the first installment of "The adventures of Secret Agent O-O-Hate" O-O-Hate, a combination of James Bond and Batman, disguises his identity as a mild-mannered comic book collector, but is actually the top field agent of an unnamed government agency dedicated to getting another war going again. Aided by his teen-ages assistant ... he rushes around the country frustrating the efforts of the Sinister Forces of World Peace to undermine the American Way of War. Another serial, "Brief History of the Grand Duchy of Beaucouillon" dealt with one of many imaginary countries which have appeared in the pages of postal Diplomacy bulletins. Unlike Rod Walker's Poderkagg or Terry Kuch's Grand Duchy and People's Republic of Herinia, Beaucouillon comes from outside the Diplomacy field. This minuscule country on the Mediterranean shore first appeared in the pornographic novels of the American writer whose pseudonym is "Akbar del Piombo". Both serials are long gone, and the former in particular represented a phase of radical anti-war agitation on the part of the author. The events of October 1973 brought this phase to an abrupt close by demonstrating what happens to people who think they know better than the President of the United States. In general, the cause of peace now seems to be about as viable as the cause of Royal Stuarts. ((In #300, Nov 1973, Boardman switched from an overly anti-war, anti-Nixon stance to "total, undeviating support of the President". The "President is able to overwhelm any opposition that can be brought against him", and ridiculed talk of impeachment as "foolishness". The irony was that Boardman wrote this at a time when Nixon's power was declining at an accelerating rate, and in only a few months, he was a goner.))

The chief feature of 1969 in postal Diplomacy was contests. Any GM with specialized knowledge in some field would throw at his readers a number of questions: identify the Lokey Republic, name the last King of Ireland....

In its 11th year of publication Graustark has settled into a fairly comfortable routine. Gone are the variant games, the oversize issues, the attempt at a player rating system (which I now feel to be futile), the rosters of current games, the occasional dittography when a mimeo broke down, and the two-page issues. The typical 1974 issue of

Graustark is 12 pages long, carries some half-dozen games of Diplomacy and Origins, and is other wise filled with press releases, book reviews, strategy articles, over-the-board games, and miscellany. I would like to get into some of the Simulations Publications games insofar as they lend themselves to postal play, and have just begun a tournament form of their Fall of Rome game, based on an idea by John van de Graaf.

((Here it is, 10 years later, and Graustark still chugs along! With its 21½ year track record, it is therefore the most reliable zine in the hobby. The zine has now, and pretty much always has had, a cadre of players who play in Graustark and nowhere else. This is a clear indication of customers who are so satisfied with the operation there that they see no need to try out another GM. The zine has not really changed a great deal since this essay was written. The non-Diplomacy games have again been split away from Graustark, and so games such as Empires of the Middle Ages, A Mighty Fortress and others have been carried in Dagon. In a hobby where the typical publisher only lasts for a few years, and 6 years is considered to be a long run, the longevity of Graustark has certainly contributed to the stability and continuity of our hobby. There has, after all always been a Graustark.



((When it comes to style of play, few issues divide players more than the question of what to do when you cannot win. The Rulebook describes only two outcomes, win and a draw. This leaves a lot of questions unanswered, such as whether the tie of the draw matters, or what to do if neither outcome is realistic. And of course, not all players are convinced that any draw is better than second or even third place. Here is the view of one man, Fred Davis, writing in Bushwacker #2, April 1972))

SOME THOUGHTS ON PLAYING FOR SECOND PLACE

There appears to be quite a dichotomy of opinion among Diplomacy players as to whether second or third place finishes mean anything. One school holds to the concept that only winning the game matters, and that all other players have "lost," regardless of whether they finish with 1 unit or 16. Probably, this concept is held mostly by those whose gaming background has been mainly in two-sided games, such as chess or bridge. It could also be a carry-over from being used to single-member election districts in politics, where it's "winner-take-all" to the man getting the largest vote.

The other school holds to the concept that in real life, there are usually more than two sides involved in any issue, and life is a constant reallocation of pecking orders. People whose gaming background includes considerable participation in games such as poker or Monopoly are likely to belong to this school. In these games, while there will be one "big" winner, there are also several other people who will come out ahead or finish in 2-3-4 order. Horse players would also favor a Win-Place-Show philosophy. Anyone who grew up in a State where there are multiple-member legislative districts would also find the concept of more than one winner entirely logical.

I can understand the position of the person who insists that there is only one winner in any Diplomacy game, if one thinks of Diplomacy in the same context as a chess game. However, it is my personal opinion that for those of us who want to think of Diplomacy as a representation of Europe, circa 1914; that is, as a game of power politics, there is nothing wrong with the concept of Great Powers finishing up in second or third place. In the real world, one nation very seldom entirely wipes out the existence of other nations. When this occurred under Napoleon and Hitler, the rest of the world resisted and fought back until the would-be continental rulers were destroyed.

There is also the practical matter of the danger of creating a psychological barrier to spreading enthusiasm for Diplomacy if we insist that everyone else except the winner has "lost." It is human nature to want to win any contest, and if 6/7 of all players in a game are told that they have "lost," we may drive away potential players.

However, if we apply the carrot of saying, for example: "That's pretty good for a novice, coming in third," we will keep such players in the game. Most in-person players whom I've met want to calculate at the end, not just who won, but who came in second or third.

I am not going to come out in favor of any particular rating system, or say that I think that second place should be worth exactly 3 points, or any other value. I'm merely saying that I think the game will be more fun to more people, and also more realistic, if we acknowledge some sort of credit to the players who finish second or third. Of course, every player should strive to win. But what should a player do in the end-game, when he finds it's impossible for him to win? If he is rated no better for finishing second than for finishing fourth, why should he even bother? But if second place is still something worth striving for - a "silver" instead of a "gold" - he will continue to intrigue (that's the name of the game), and do his damndest to knock someone else over and come in second. I don't think this will spoil the game for those who prefer to operate on the level of the "winner-take-all" concept.

((Poker was not a good choice for a game which values outcomes other than winning. Coming in second normally gives you absolutely nothing, and indeed you may have put more of your money into the pot than people who finished further out. Gaming situations valuing a second place finish tend to be those with large numbers of people, such as, for example, an "egg toss" competition at a big picnic, or a sweepstakes. Diplomacy, with 7 players is large enuf for the issue to raise significant problems. My own observation, for whatever its worth, is that the more successful a player is, the more he is likely to view coming in second (as opposed to a win/draw) as a failure. But which is the cause and which the effect?!?!? At any rate, if you are interested in a broader discussion of this subject, DD #59 is devoted entirely to various aspects of this question, including, for example, the problem of which type of player makes for a better ally (35¢))

~~~~~

## THE ZINE COLUMN # 8/

The big nooze is, er, ah, well, there is no big nooze (which is not in itself big nooze). So I'll start with a couple of unusual game openings. Konrad Baumeister, 11416 Parkview Lane Hales Corners WI 53130 has a few openings left in a game with 10-day deadlines. That is much too fast for my taste, but those who have played in such games generally have enjoyed them. Konrad is a real old-timer and has been around since I believe 1971 .... Mark Larzelere 7607 Fontainebleau#2352 New Carrollton MD 20784 has openings in another Intimate Diplomacy Tournament. ID is a two-person tactical game. You have a single country, and a pile of credits. After each winter, you submit bids which will give you one years control of a given neutral great power, to use its units as you see fit. Its a lot of fun, tho of course there is no negotiating. The current tournament is down to me and Don Ditter in the Finale --- the tourney is run for 8 players, done single elimination style. There is a \$10 game fee, covering 1-3 games, a sub to his zine for as long as you last, and a \$40 prize fund.

And now an undate on some unpleasent old business. In the last issue (page 16) I mentioned that Steve Langley had printed a story about me in a Magus suppliment which was totally false and defamatory. Steve did not print his source. I have written him twice, asking him to name his source, but he has refused. And so far as I am aware, he hasn't had the decency to even print my denial. Apparently, being able to face your acuser, and being able to get your denial in, aren't part of the Langley concept of hobby ethics. I have every reason to beleive, however, that his source, directly or indirectly, was Kathy Byrne --- there is no one else it could have been. In my files, I have all the correspondence dealing with that rather strange affair. It would thus be very easy for me to give all the details and thereby show that the version was utterly false, and that I handled the situation in a totally proper manner ---- much the same way that you all would have handled it. Unfortunately, the crucial letters are all either Off-The-Record letters from Kathy to me, or are my responses to her, which of course deal with

this off-the-record information. Thus, I cannot reveal the specifics without Kathy's clearance; I have written her, but she has not yet given me this permission. I cannot tell you how frustrating it is to have Kathy leak a totally false version to Steve Langley on one hand, and then on the other block me from defending myself by keeping her letters off the record. I'm sure that some of my readers are friends with Kathy. Why don't some of you --- you know who you are --- write Kathy and ask her why she will not give me a release on this matter. I for one would like to know.

Pat Conlon will be helping out Bruce Linsey with the Runestone Poll this year. Those who don't want to send their ballots\* can send them to Pat, who will pass them on, minus the names, to Bruce. (\*to Bruce). In addition, if anyone would like to have his zine's score checked independently, Bruce will forward the ballots to Pat, who can check them out. People have grumbled in the past about the score that their zine got, but Bruce is the first person to provide such an independent check. Bruce's subzine, "Echo of Doom" appears in Europa Express, and will be used primarily to discuss various issues relating to how the zine poll should be run, e.g. should people be able to vote for zines they don't get. The first issue had some amazing letters in response to VOD's final, 270 page issue. I thought I had been munificent in giving Bruce a lifetime sub to DD. But letter after letter had people refusing their refunds! I've seen dipzines going back to the start of the hobby and I've never seen such a thing. Some of these checks were big, e.g. Jake Halverstadt's \$9.50 ("You don't owe me \$9.50, you don't owe me a damn thing. I really owe you and 111 other people...."). Over half a dozen people did this.

## NEW ZINES

Ectopia Pete Gaughan 7500 W. Camp Wisdom Road Dallas TX 75236 (5/\$1)  
Bruce Paul Simkins 27 West Park St. Dewsbury W. Yorkshire England WF13 4LE  
Diplomacy Report David Rothery 19 Chestnut Ave Leeds 6, England  
The Inner Light Kieth Sherwood 8866 Cliffridge La Jolla CA 92037

Not too many zines this time for some reason.

Ectopia is the official newsletter for DipCon XVIII, to be held in Seattle. If you want to get your input in on scoring systems, choosing the locations for DipCon XIX, etc, or just want to be kept informed, this is the place to do it. Bruce is a revival of a zine which folded 6 years ago. DR was set up primarily to play the "Fleet Rome" variant (Italy begins with F Rom rather than A Rom), which should make playing Austria more relaxed. Kieth, while saying that Ultimately Cool was a fake, this new zine is real. He asked me to sub to his new TIL without actually sending me a sample to see. That's the laid-back California style of publishing for ya'. Kieth also pubs an archive zine called Every Little Thing, but has folded his rating zine You Know My Name. Actually, what the hobby could use now is a few new Canadian zines. The last year or two has seen two mainstays, Runestone and Snafu! close up shop. Two new zines, Weismark Dip-Press, and C.F. Machiavelli each had only a few issues out. The two restarts, Passchendaele and Battle Stations both failed in short order. I don't know the status of Baltic Sea, but it's always been a very marginal zine. That really brings things down to just 4 zines that I know of in Canada for sure. New Canadians are arriving; I've gotten 3 of them as subbers here this fall. And there's nothing wrong with those 4 zines, but the Canadian hobby seems to be at a low ebb in terms of number of active zines.

Envoy has apparently not folded, and Roy Hendricks is trying to get things back on track. Part of this has been to turn over most of the leg work for ZR to Bruce Linsey, who will be in charge of gathering the information on the various zines; Roy will continue to be the publisher of the "Zine Register" .... Erehwon #125 had a nice essay on Limericks, with some very funny examples given. This has now spread to No Fixed Address, with Steve Hutton writing some too. Perhaps feuds in the future could be fought out with rules requiring that only limericks be used... The next DW has been delayed again, and likely will not go to the printer until some time in January, Rod tells me. In the

recent Whitestonia/Kathy's Korner, Kathy deplores the lack of cooperation she's been getting in rounding up material ("I have tons of promises, but promises don't fill up space") for DW. In the same issue, she grouses about the "totally unjustified .... abuse" and the "snide comments" she has received for her decision to become co-editor of DW, from her "friends" Some friends.

The final issue of Anduin, referred to in DD #85, has now come out, with an upbeat tone, but explaining that time pressures at college were just too great. He is looking for someone to take over his 3 variants games, tho (Eric Kane Box 2028, Alumni Memorial Hall JHU, Charles & 34th, Baltimore MD 21218)....And speaking of variants, Fred Davis (1427 Clairidge Rd Baltimore MD 21207) has openings in Vacation Dip III, a slight revision of a game invented by Dan Kuszynski, which features various "event cards" which make somewhat unpredictable changes in the game. At least in earlier versions, it has proved popular....Conrad Minshall (3702 Tarragona Ln Austin TX 78727) has openings(2) in a game where you forfeit your NMR deposit every time you NMR. The money goes into a pool distributed to those who NMRed the least, so this is a game for those who want to avoid the NMRers...Electronic Mail takes another small step into the hobby, as Paul Rauterberg will now be composing his zine, Midlife Crisis on his new Apple IIC, and plans to get a phone modem, which will allow people to submit orders, etc, via EM, if they have a modem as well ... If any of you want to watch the DipiMaster in action, I'm in the new invitational game in Fol Si Fie (Randolph Smyth 212 Aberdeen St SE Medicine Hal Alta T1A OR1 Canada) as France, which should be fun for me since I've never played France as an original player in a postal game....Finally, DD ends its short run of potpourri-type issues with this one. Next few issues will all be theme ones.

There's space here only for some filler items. Since Limericks were mentioned above, I'll run one from En Passant #48, Feb 1974. It appeared as undated Press. "Jamul" was the byline for Conrad von Metzke, and Zane was one of the players in the game:

There once was a man from Jamul  
Who Closely resembled a fool  
When stabbed from behind  
An Act most unkind  
He foamed, Zane eats from a cesspool

Clumsy, eh? But you rarely see them in dipzines, and like other forms of topical humor, they require varying amounts of explanation.

Lets end the reprints on a silly note. Tired of GMs who can't quite get your orders? Here's a snippet from 1901 and all that #80: "Utter confusion Dept - 76HJ in Greatest Hits - Pete Birks ((the GM)) had the French player as Les Adamson in the WOO gamestart announcement, Leo Anderson in SO1, Leo Adamson in FO1, back to Leo Anderson in SO2-SO3, and back to Leo Adamson in FO3!! Nice one, Paul...."



(FROM PAGE 1)

history, publishing, ratings, personalities, tactics, openings, Gamsmastering, ethics, dropouts, face to face play, variants, tournaments, rules, humor, losing, philosophies of play and much more. The great majority of what appears here are reprints, drawn from my archives of over 7000 zines, which includes extensive holdings of zines from the 60s, from Britian, and from Continental Europe. Some issues are potpourri like this one, but most are grouped around a theme. There is also "The Zine Column", my vehicle for news and commentary about what is appearing in other zines. There are occasional special issues which I write myself, such as the Lexicon. At present, all back issues are in stock, and as a subber to DD, you can order whatever you like (non-subbers can order the Lexicon and Son of Lexicon). If you'd like a list of back issues, just drop me a postcard. I've had a few people recently order virtually complete runs, which is always gratifying. Single issues are 11 or 12 pages. Typing and spelling around here sometimes leave quite a bit to be desired. DD has been going for 7½ years.