

DIPLOMAG - MENSA DIPLOMACY SIG NEWS

NUMBER 15

January 5, 1977

An irregularly published newsletter of the American Postal Diplomacy SIG. Diplomacy is a registered trademark for a game Copyright by the Avalon Hill Game Co.

Chairman & Publisher: Fred C. Davis, Jr., 3012 Oak Green Ct., Ellicott City, Md. 21043
Senior Committeeman: Don Horton, 16 Jordan Ct., Sacramento, Calif. 95826
Junior Committeeman: Paul Hightower, 3118 Lamar Dr., Lexington, Ky. 40502

REFERENDUM RESULTS

Only 14 members bothered to vote, which is four short of a majority. However, the outcome was so overwhelmingly in favor of proposition #2 that it seems unlikely that a larger vote would have changed things. Here is the final vote:

1. Continue the present course (No dues) - 0 votes
2. Require \$1.00 Annual dues for all non-GM's - 12 votes
3. Incorporate DIPLOMAG into BUSHWACKER, and charge everyone not receiving same as a player or trader the regular sub rate of \$2.50/year - 2 votes

This means that I will attempt to get a DIPLOMAG out to you about the 15th of every other month. It also means that once the By-laws are officially amended, anyone who does not pay his dollar a year dues will be dropped from the SIG. This will not affect the member's status in any Mensa games he happens to be playing in, but it will sure make your Chairman's job easier.

I note that for the most part, the people who voted are also the people who have voluntarily contributed to the DIPLOMAG fund. We may expect to lose some members, but those who will remain will be among the most active.

Accordingly, the official ballot to amend the By-laws will be found on Pg. 3 (green).

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2. North Central New Jersey Mensa will conduct a SnowBall Regional Gathering at Lake Minnewaska, New Palz, N.Y. on the weekend of Saturday, Feb. 12th. The Games SIG will play a Diplomacy game at 4 p.m. on that Saturday. Non-M's may also come to play in the game at no charge. Dave Blank, Chairman of the North Central N.J. Games SIG, Wishes to invite all members of the Diplomacy SIG to come and play at the RG in Board 1. To register, send \$2.00 to Dave at: 7 Branch Rd., Oakhurst, N.J. 07755. The fee will be refunded if you appear and play; otherwise the forfeited fee will be used as a prize fund. (See Mensa BULLETIN for more details).
3. Don Dewsnap, 152 N. Parkview St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90026, is the publisher of a Dippyazine called THE DIPLOMACY BARON. You may wish to write to him and ask for a sample copy. Don's phone no. is (213) 484-0244. Please add this no. to your list.
4. Other membership list additions: First, a new member:

Craig A. Reges, 16 W 761 White Pines Rd., Bensenville, Ill. 60106. (312) 595-0129

And add these telephone numbers to your lists:

H. D. Bassett: (203) 426-0460
David L. Carawan: (703) 920-8775

5. Dave Reynolds writes: "We neophytes in Diplomacy see references to IDA, to Boardman Numbers, to ratings. But this is all we hear. Do I myself have a rating? I do not know. Where would I go to find it? An article explaining these things would be of immediate interest and permanent value." Accordingly, we will start a series in this issue to explain some of these things.

The Boardman Numbers, What are they?

Every Regular game of Postal Diplomacy is assigned a Boardman Number. These numbers were first assigned by the inventor of the postal game, John Boardman of Brooklyn, N.Y. John has been editing GRAUSTARK, the first and oldest Diplomacy zine, since 1963. The numbers were named in his honor. Numbers are assigned in the same manner as comets are listed by astronomers. The first game in any year is given that year's date plus the letter A. Thus, the first game started in 1964 was 1964A. The 26th game in a year is given the letter Z. Then, you go back to AA, work your way down to AZ, and move on to BA, etc. In recent years, there have been so many games played that the series has reached into the "F's".

Boardman numbers are useful in identifying games. You say "I was in 1976B" instead of saying "I was in Joe Blow's second game in his zine, GASPAYNE." Upon completion, all regular games are reported, by Boardman Number, in EVERYTHING, a factzine published bi-monthly by Doug & Marie Beyerlein, 230 Hawthorn, Apt. F, Palo Alto, Calif. 94301. Regular games are those played by the 1971 Rulebook (or by the 1961 Rulebook if begun prior to 1971). Games with peculiar house rules which make them irregular are not counted. A complete year-by-year Supply Center Chart, and the names of each person who played in the game, are listed. It is the GM's responsibility to report these facts to the Boardman No. Custodian (currently Doug Beyerlein), usually in the pages of his zine. Subscriptions to EVERYTHING are 10 issues for \$4.00. Interesting and unusual statistics are also printed in EVERYTHING. (Two examples: The greatest number of wins by any player in Regular postal games is 10 wins by Edi Birsan. The fewest no. of Centers owned in 1905 by the eventual winner was France in 1969B, 4 Centers - a game won by someone named Fred Davis.) Boardman Numbers are also used to keep track of the games for rating systems.

Rating Systems

There are about 5 different rating systems currently in use, invented by different authors. The most famous may be the Calhamer Point Count system and the OddMod System. Each rating system attempts to rate a different thing, depending on what its author thinks important. Some attempt to duplicate the Rating systems used in Chess. Some rate only wins; others attempt to show differences between finishing, say, 2nd and 4th. No system is perfect, but the same names will usually show up toward the top of each rating list. Every player who has finished at least one Regular game has some sort of a rating, but usually the published ratings in zines list only those players who've completed at least 3 games.

Where do you find your rating? Mainly, in DIPLOMACY WORLD, the zine every player ought to subscribe to. Subs are \$4.00 per year, payable to Walter Buchanan, R.R. #3, Box 324, Lebanon, Ind. 46052. Back issues of some copies are available. Published quarterly. The Summer 1976 issue (Vol. III, No. 2) lists the OddMod System. This will tell you that the three top-rated players are Don Pitsch, John Stevens and Walt Buchanan. Len Lakofka prints his rating system in his LIAISONS DANGEREUX. Rod Walker has his Stars & Bars system in EREHWON. Personally, I pay no attention to the ratings, but if you have a penchant for mathematics, you may find them interesting. If your name happens to be on the Top Board or the Top Ten, on a particular system, well, then, you may conclude that that particular system is a very good rating system! (Next issue we'll try to cover What is the IDA, AND explain Miller Numbers).

OFFICIAL BALLOT - BY-LAWS AMENDMENT

Please return this ballot to Fred C. Davis, 3012 Oak Green Ct., Ellicott City, Md. 21043. Please place your name on the envelope.

Motion to Amend Article 5, Finances, of the By-laws as ratified on July 17, 1974.

To delete: "No finances will be handled by ~~this~~ SIG."

To add: "a.. The Chairman and Executive Committee will be empowered to levy dues upon all members who are not GM's for Mensa Postal Diplomacy games. The initial dues will be \$1.00 a year, effective April 1, 1977. The Officers may raise or lower these dues as financial considerations require. The person in charge of publishing the SIG newsletter will also serve as Treasurer. These dues shall be used only for the expenses of publishing and mailing the SIG newsletter."

Also, to make the rest of Article 5 into a separate paragraph, labeled "b."

Approve

Disapprove

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS:

Walter Compton, Rua Embaixado, Carlos Taylor 190, Gavea, Rio de Janiero, BRAZIL 20020
L. Allan Chase, 2973 Crooked Creek Dr., Diamond Bar, Calif. 91765

(We'll print more Thumbnail Biographies in the next issue).

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Mensa Diplomacy SIG News
c/o Fred C. Davis, Jr.
3012 Oak Green Ct.
Ellicott City, Md. 21043
U.S.A.

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