

DIPLOMAG - MENSA DIPLOMACY SIG NEWS

NUMBER 16

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An irregularly published newsletter of the American Mensa Postal Diplomacy SIG. Diplomacy is the registered trademark of 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

BY-LAWS AMENDMENT - A revised copy of the By-laws should be attached to all copies of the newsletter going to members.

There were 15 "Approve" votes and one abstention on the Amendment to charge \$1.00 annual dues. Accordingly, the Amendment is declared passed. Effective April 1, 1977, all SIG members must pay a dollar a year to belong. The following people have already paid (All payments made on or after October 1, 1976 are being credited to the fiscal year beginning April 1st): Carawan, Caruth, Dewsnap, Funkenbusch, Paul Hightower, Scott Hightower, Jolly, Kenney, Reynolds, Rolfe, Smith (twice), Vagts, Young, Baker, Bixby, Chase, Compton and Maxman. The following are excused from dues payments because of other services rendered the SIG, or for special reasons: Davis, Horton, Montgomery, Pike.

Everyone else is expected to pay their dollar by April 1st. You're also expected to maintain your U.S. or Canadian national membership, of course. We will give everyone the benefit of the doubt until May 1st. After that, if you haven't paid, or sent me a darned good story, it's goodbye, Charlie.

This will make it much easier for me to know who's really interested in belonging to this SIG. It will also do away with the embarrassment of not knowing what to do when a SIG member drops out of an official Mensa postal game. Each publisher will continue to maintain his own House Rules for deciding when to blacklist somebody who drops out of a game without formally resigning, but we won't drop anyone from the SIG membership so long as they pay their national and SIG dues. This is in line with the policies of the other American Mensa SIG's.

("Blacklist" - in context of Postal Diplomacy, a publisher's refusal to permit a person to play in his zine if he has dropped out of a previous game in said zine without notice. Enforcement varies from quite rigidly to not at all in the 106-odd zines in the postal hobby. We hope there won't be any more unannounced Mensa drop-outs.)

NEW MEMBERS

John M. Baker, Cool Springs Rd., Gradysville, Ky. 42742. (502) 384-3432
Walter E. Bixby, P.O. Box 139, Kansas City, Mo. 64141. () 753-7000
Joel Maxman, Box 2581, Brown U., Providence, R.I. 02912. (401) 863-6661.

(C/A): John P. Koenig, 65-41 Wetherpole St., Rego Park, N.Y. 11373

GAME OPENING:

Don Horton announces the opening of a new Mensa Regular game in CLAW & FANG. Game Fee is \$2.00. Write to Don at 16 Jordan Ct., Sacramento, Calif. 95826.

GAME ENDING:

Eva Lydick, playing Germany, has won Mensa Game #4, 1975CD, in CLAW & FANG, with an 18-Center Rulebook Victory in Fall 1908. David Carawan finished second, as Russia, with 8. Other survivors were Chris Pike (Austria) - 5, and Robert Stimmel (Italy) - 3. Congratulations, Eva. Hope you'll now renew your national membership.

RESULTS OF SNOWBALL DIPLOMACY GAME, Feb. 12, 1977 (at N.J. RG) - by Dave Blank

While waiting for 3 no-shows in one car (who may still be lost in the mountains), we recruited 3 New Jersey M's and gave them a quick introduction to the art of Dippy. We made the mistake of letting Pete Boton give the instructions. When the countries were drawn, the neophytes were clumped together as Austria, Italy and Turkey. They apparently decided to band together with their instructor, Boton, who had drawn Germany, against whoever else happened to be nearby. Unfortunately for me, that was Russia. Two other skilled players, Dennis Agosta and Bill Young, played England and France, respectively. Germany finally crumbled under a persistent English-French-Russian attack, but by that time, Russia was down to 3 units. Austria had advanced deep into Russia, leaving her home centers open. Her former allies, Italy & Turkey, finally listened to Russian advice (begging) and took advantage of easy plunder. Russia was saved, and Austria eliminated by Fall '05. Italy, Turkey & Russia then quarrelled among themselves, and were distracted by other attractions at the RG, while England and France relentlessly and singlemindedly forged forward. Italy was eliminated in 1906 and Turkey in 1907.

Russia had meanwhile made a resurgence to the point where she was too strong to take out easily. So, a 3-way draw was agreed upon, as follows: England - Dennis Agosta-13; France, Bill Young - 13; Russia - Dave Blank - 8. (Dennis is not (yet) an M, but is a popular New Jersey Dippyazine publisher who was an invited guest at the RG).

This game illustrates that 3 beginners can give a very good account of themselves after an hour or so of instruction. Had the three novice countries not been in a row, with limited growth for Italy and Turkey (unless they turned on Austria), the alliance might have been even more successful. Russia's resurgence confirms my belief that it is always wise to completely eliminate a country once it has been weakened.

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WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY ASSN? (Second in a series)

The IDA is now the only North American hobby-wide postal Diplomacy club. Its officers are democratically elected. It aims to provide certain services to the hobbyists. One of these is the publication of a zine called DIPLOMACY REVIEW, to bring club and hobby news to the members. Another is the production of IDA HANDBOOKS, containing articles on various aspects of the hobby. (e.g. "How to Play Austria and Not Get Wiped Out in 1902"). Usually, one Handbook is produced each year. The IDA acts as the intermediary between the hobby and the Avalon Hill Co., publishers of the game, and has been responsible for obtaining a subsidy from Avalon Hill of \$800.00 a year for DIPLOMACY WORLD, the semi-official zine of the hobby. (You didn't really think they could afford to sell D.W. at \$1.00 a copy, did you?). From time to time, IDA has also produced a worldwide Player Census. Such a census is reportedly in the works for 1977.

An autonomous branch of the IDA exists in Great Britain. Originally, each of the 3 Regions of the U.S. (Atlantic, Central and Pacific) and Canada had its own Regional Secretary. These jobs were found to be superfluous. Under the new Constitution, the Council consists of just 7 members, all of whom are expected to be workers. To prevent U.S. domination, Canada is guaranteed one seat. An attempt is being made to consider the hobby from a North American viewpoint rather than from regional or nationalistic bases. The first election under the new Constitution is currently underway, and will be completed on March 15th. When the results are in, we will know whether the IDA is going to continue to be a truly hobby-wide club. I'll have something to say about the election results in the next issue.

Any questions? Topics you want discussed? Articles you want to submit? Please write.