



# DIPLOMAG

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This is the bimonthly newsletter of the American Mensa Postal Diplomacy SIG, bringing hobby and SIG news to Mensans interested in playing Postal Diplomacy, the board game produced in the USA by Avalon Hill. Membership dues are \$4.00 per year for members living in the USA and \$5.00 per year for those living elsewhere. Please send all dues and inquiries to the Chairman.

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## INTRODUCING...

Hi! I'm Bruce Poppe, DIPLOMAG's new editor. Now that the floor is mine, I'd first like to thank my predecessor, Ronald J. Brown, of Ottawa, Ont., for all the time and effort he put into DIPLOMAG during his tenure as editor. I see very large shoes sitting in front of me on the floor, and sense that it will take a lot to come near to filling them. I also want to give a continuing thank-you to Roy Smith, of Westwood, NJ, who is handling the printing and distribution. DIPLOMAG will continue to come via Roy's efforts during my editorship. You don't get much glory from a job like that, but knowing you're essential to the operation can be satisfying. Keep up the good work, Roy.

But about your new editor. I've been a SIG member since about 1979 or so, playing in Mensa #11 under Ed Bapple and in Mensa #13 under Chip Charnley (which I entered as a stand-by), as well as regular and variant games outside the SIG. Things that I intend to hit upon while editor include news from SIG games (who's doing what to whom), hobby news (who's doing what to whom in real life), the SIG Standby Pool, discussions of strategy and also discussions of interesting variant games, and a SIG Winners' Game.

## SIG STANDBY POOL

The SIG Standby Pool is truly an idea whose time is upon us. There are a half dozen or more SIG games going at the present time, and many of them have had troubles in getting or keeping standbys to jump into the breach when a player hasn't gotten orders to the GM on time. It is in the nature of our postal hobby that standbys are required--it is my hope that some of our more serious players will come forward, if only as a service to the hobby that they enjoy, to act as standbys to keep our games going smoothly. So send a letter (that should be easy enough for a postal Dip player) to our chairman, Ed Bapple, or to me, Bruce Poppe, to sign up for the SIG Standby Pool, to do your part for the SIG. Besides that, coming into a game as a standby can be a interesting challenge. Come on, you guys.

SIG Game News

Mensa #12 (1980 IC) GM: Ron Brown zine: SNAFU!

The final word on this game is that the draw between Sharon Poppe (Austria) and Charles Byrne (England) will stand. This one took everybody by surprise, including a strong Rick Young (Germany). Let this one serve as a reminder to all of you out there to be sure to vote in draw proposals.

This was Ron's first entry into GM'ing, and he left little doubt as to his desire to continue, building a very nice zine, SNAFU!, around it and then expanding into both SIG and non-SIG games and variants. It was very well run, indeed, requiring only one standby and reeling off deadlines regularly.

Remaining at the end were the winners, of course, and also Rick Young with a strong German position; Darryl Phillips, holding the balance of power with Italy; and Dan Wilson, with a still-large Turkey.

Mensa #13 (1980 KY) GM: Chip Charnley

Fall, '06 has been completed...An A-E-G draw was defeated by a 3 Yes, 2 No, and 2 Non-voting (No) votes. With a five-way draw now proposed, and alliances in various states of flux, this one may just wind up, too. Current totals stand at 8 for Baty's Austria-Hungary, 7 for Hess's England, 3 for Johnson's France, 4 for Poppe's Italy (that's yours truly), Brad Anderson's Russia lost 4, count 'em, four, in one year to be the first out--yes, this really is 1906--and Walter Compton's Turkey has 5.

Mensa #14 (1981 AQ) and Mensa #15 (1981 HR) GM: Ed Bapple zine: Migraine

Communications between the Windy City and the City of Brotherly Love have broken down temporarily. Sabotage is suspected, as the plot has thickened in each game. In #14, the suspects are Whitty's Russia and Strand's France, while in #15, Brown's Russia and Douglas' France appear to have plenty of motivation. The editor wishes to state that the enforcement agencies are on the trail and the guilty parties will certainly be brought to justice swiftly.

Mensa #16 (1982 I) GM: Ron Brown zine: SNAFU!

With the Winter of '04 completed, the latest sums are as follows: Mazzer (E)--3, Robert Young (F)--5, Windblad (G)--5, Sesler (I)---6, Lincoln (R)--8, and Dodge (T)--6. Seems like none of those people are interested in writing press, which is rather amazing considering who some of those players are. This game also has a Bourse currency speculation variant attached to it, with a very strong Russian Rouble. This one's so quiet that I'm not even sure Ron's allowing press.

Mensa #17 (1983 ?) GM: Steve Hutton zine: No Fixed Address

This game has just gotten under way, with country assignments as follows: AH--Richard Benjamin, E--Roy Smith, F--Windy Windblad, G--Eric Strand, I--Errol Platt, R--Larry Rystrom, & T--Keith Sesler. Stand back!

The Key Lepanto: Theory and Practice

by Ronald Brown

One of the most thoroughly analysed openings is also the most dramatic and exciting, yet it is rarely seen in actual play. Newcomers to the hobby are usually blissfully unaware of this attack and its defence, so this article is aimed primarily at them.

The Lepanto is an opening series of moves for Italy. In Spr '01, he orders: F Nap - Ion; A Rom - Nap or Apu; A Ven at discretion. In Fall '01: F Ion C A Nap (or Apu) - Tun. The build is F Naples. Then, in Spr '02, he orders: F Ion - Eastern Med; F Naples - Ion. In the Fall, the two fleets convoy the A Tun - Syria.

Turkey, of course, is skewered. The only defense Turkey had was to order his F Ankara to the Aegean in 1901, then build F Smyrna to disrupt the convoy.

The Lepanto becomes a Key, when Italy's A Venice is used to cross Austria. The A Rom and F Nap are ordered as above, but the A Ven is ordered to Triest, then to Serbia. Of course this involves Austrian co-operation. Generally he would open with A Bud - Ser, F Tri - Alb; then order A Ser - Gre in the Fall, supported by his F Alb.

Why would Austria want to do this? After all, he'd be giving up a build and having an Italian army roaming through his innards. Two reasons: having an Austrian A Greece, and an Italian A Serbia will be a powerful attack on Bulgaria, especially when combined with the Lepanto. Also, what about his second army? It is freed to attack Galicia!

With the Key Lepanto, Austria is in a good position to attack Russia. His Winter 01 build, of an A Vie or Bud can be devoted to bringing down Russia, in combination with the army which began in Vienna. He will not have to worry about Turkey, as Italy will be able to take him out with a minimum of help. And, of course, he will not have to worry about Italy, as most of Italy's builds will be fleets.

Yet, this opening is rare. Austrian players have doubts about the intent of that Italian army in Triest, and sometimes panic. Italian players sometimes feel greedy and see the Key as a chance to eliminate Austria. No matter how good the intentions of the two when they agreed on this course, frictions sometimes develop.

However, it is the best response when Turkey and Russia appear to be developing an alliance, as it stymies Turkey and puts considerable pressure on Rumania, Galicia. Of course, it can be varied. One time that it worked, Italy's A Tri went to Bud in the Fall. Then, in Spr 02, Austria supported A Bud - Rumania, from both Serbia and Galicia! (He had taken Greece with his fleet.) Combined with the Lepanto into Syria, Turkey and Russia gave up and sat, supporting themselves while they were being eliminated.

In general, the Key Lepanto is a powerful opening that Turkish players should be aware of. Young Turkish players should always be aware that their biggest threat in the early game comes, not from Russia or Austria, as they often suppose, but from Italy.

there: happy stepping!  
 face to face games for the local group, for example. To everyone out  
 get involved in other ways. (Our local secretary asked me to set up  
 in January, I'm happy with the changing of the guard. It frees me to  
 standbys in M Games was no  
 all SIG games were carried.  
 The other is the SIG standb  
 work on.

Chicago the DIPLOMAG material over  
 4531 of the year we've set this one  
 returned to: Ed Bapple we have five or six players stay around and quality  
 If under the conditions with new winners to add to the list. On the top  
 see the SIG do. A SIG winner's game is become more possible  
 response from him

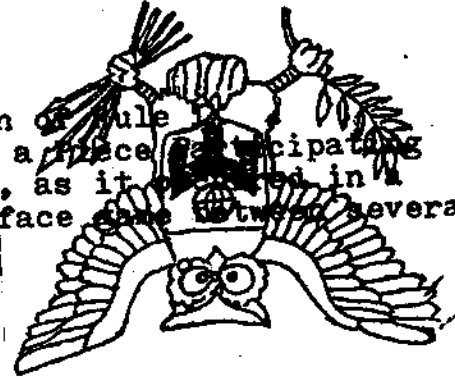
**More SIG Game News**

Mensa Variant #18 GM: Scott Hanson  
 As of April this game has not gotten rolling yet. The SIG's darkest hour. He has since  
 be filled soon (maybe already?) with Dippers getting ready for more of  
 Scott Hanson's special brand of humor.  
 Mensa Variant #19: Fred Davis  
 I was pushing a while ago.

The news of this month is that the game has been...  
 At the finish, Rick Kungis and Ed Bapple's Russia  
 15 centers, while Chip Charnley's England had 13 and Ed Bapple's Russia  
 had 6. Total sources at the end counted up to 49, which has something  
 to do with our and of...  
 reached as high as at one point in the...  
 Fred's report goes on to say that the game lasted exactly 25 years  
 with five of the original seven players playing either until game end  
 or their end. None of the four surviving at the end of the game  
 entire game. For one reason or another, the...  
 Beginning next issue DIPLOMAG will be under the care of Bruce Roppe.

While the filling of Mensa games is the authority of the SIG Chairman,  
 Ed Bapple, I'm sure Fred and Ed (and me, too) are in a position to  
 start taking names for another All-Mensa Variant game. The only  
 question to my mind right now is which variant? I have my own preferences,  
 but let's see what some of the other members have in mind. You would like to  
 participate in these games are available for your comments. With only  
 200 variants in the North American Variant Bank, I look forward to  
 hearing from you in regard to your favorites.  
 Chairman: Edward C. Brown  
 Editor: Ronald Brown  
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to the Chairman. Edited by Ronald Brown.  
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 interested in playing postal  
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