

DIPLOMAG

VOL III, No. 9
July-Aug, 1984

This is the bimonthly newsletter of the Postal Diplomacy SIG of American Mensa, bringing hobby and SIG news to Mensans interested in postal Diplomacy. The SIG arranges postal Diplomacy for its members; for SIG game openings, make inquiries to the Chairman. Membership dues are \$3.00 per year. Diplomacy is a copyrighted board game produced in the USA by Avalon Hill Game Co., Baltimore, MD. Any opinions expressed herein are not those of American Mensa Limited.

Chairman: Bruce Poppe, 1204 Heartwood Court, Arnold, MD 21012
Sr Committeeman: Chip Charnley, 4065 Concordia Way, VA Beach, VA 23456
Jr Committeeman: Fred C. Davis, Jr, 1427 Clairidge Rd, Baltimore, MD 21207

Fred Davis appointed to...

Former SIG Chairman Fred Davis has been appointed to fill the unexpired term of Junior Committeeman, left vacant by the recent resignation of Keith Sesler. I talked with Keith recently by telephone, and he mentioned some unusually heavy demands on his time at work. This particular position has about a year to run before it is filled by election. Speaking of elections, I have also appointed Fred as the SIG's election commissioner for this Fall's election for Senior Committeeman. Chip Charnley has agreed to stand for re-election, but said that he welcomes others who may wish to run for the same position. Nominations (self or otherwise) should be sent directly to Fred, the election commissioner (see above).

Change in dues collection policy for the SIG

The SIG is changing the manner in which its dues are collected. After handling a very good sized number of new members coming in this summer, it dawned on me that a better way to handle them is by giving them each a year's subscription for a year's dues, instead of the Mensa way of making all the dues come due at a certain time of the year. This will apply to all those who join in the future, enabling the SIG to accept dollar amounts other than that required for the balance of a year. There is one other point that this allows. As the dues for 1984 were set at a rate lower than 1983, those members who paid ahead for '84 did so at a higher rate...well now they will be credited with an additional couple of issues to make their cost for 1984 the same as everybody else.

"Laughter is the shortest distance between two people."

.....Victor Borge

SIG GAME NEWS

Mensa #14 (1981 AQ) GM: Steve Hutton zine: No Fixed Address

The news from this game is that it has been reassigned to Scott Hanson, following the fold of Sealer's "Manifest Destiny." I trust that this one has finally found a home to stay at for good after being orphaned a couple of times.

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

Last issue gave you the endgame statement by Dave Lincoln, who picked the win in this game. This month, courtesy of Snafu, the rest of the endgame statements are available.

England, Mike Masser

There's not much to say about this game except we were all completely outclassed by "Honest Abe" Lincoln who ruled the East with an iron hand. I stabbed Germany at the behest of Russia, then Russia quickly stabbed me. Germany was too slow to see the Russian danger and couldn't defend himself against Russian Stab No. Two. An altogether disappointing performance on my part. I wasn't even around long enough to stab Olsen!

One positive thing was getting a phone call from Paula-Marie Dodge. She gets my vote as having the hobby's sexiest voice. No wonder she had Italy enslaved. Sigh! I still have fantasies!

Thanks for the game, Ron.

France, Robert Young (Survived)

Congratulations to Dave and everyone else for a good game.

GM, Ronald Brown

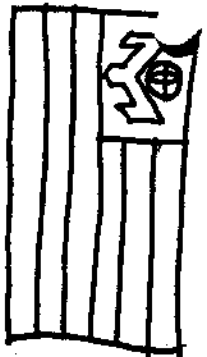
Whew! After Dave's statement, there's not much to say. I agree with most of his comments on the other players. If you want to liven up a game, bring in Mike Masser! Even when surrounded and being eliminated, he keeps making things happen. The Turkish-British War was a joy to watch. That doesn't happen too often!

Basically, we had a three-country steampunker against a divided opposition, with a stab for a win. Clean and simple. But the dynamics of convoying a Turkish army to England and getting Russian fleets into the Med demanded close cooperation. Turkey really went out on a limb, allowing her forces to be divided. I kept wondering when Dave was going to hit Turkey for four or five centres on one move. He didn't, but Turkey had nothing other than diplomatic skill to prevent it.

Dave's complaint about Windy is well-taken. Imagine my position as GM receiving four or five postcards per season with partial orders on each, scratched out, over-written, with ambiguous instructions on which set they overrode. When one of these cards arrived from a different source, without code word, I cried "Enough!" and raised a stink about it. Windy settled down somewhat after that until he NMRed out.

Other than that, it was a very enjoyable game. Interesting cast. Keith went on to found a very good zine, and Dave and Paula signed up for many more games. Walter, Mike, and Bob are old hands, of course, and are very active elsewhere. I don't know about Robert's other involvements in the hobby. I've played games with the majority of players here and look forward to playing against the rest sometime.

Again, congratulations to Dave and thanks everyone.



SIG GAME NEWS (CONT.)

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

Fall, 1905: Two more players bite the dust, including the last original player!

Well, one more player drops out, and the stand-by doesn't send orders. What's a mother to do?

This game has certainly had a strange history. While I realize that Steve has his own unusual type of humor, this is one game that has had more problems than any of the participants deserved. There has been a seven-way draw proposed. Does that give you any idea of the level of frustration of some the players?

At the moment, the strongest player on the board is Ron Brown (Germany) who has nine centers to his name and controls Scandinavia. The next highest total (eight) belongs to Turkey which has just now been assigned to Paul Milewski. (Didn't I tell you that a new stand-by entering this game could do well?)

Rounding out the game, we have five other players, ranging from two to four centers each, who are Mike Ehl, Kevin Brown, John Ellis, Dave Carter, and Dave Lincoln (playing A, E, F, I, & R, in that order).

Mensa #18 (1983 AV) GM: Scott Hanson zine: Irsome

This game has made it to Fall, 1906, and now appears to be shaping up as a horserace between Kevin Brown's France and Ron Brown's Russia, both of whom have eleven centers. Both of them have posted gains in the last game year.

The rest of the game board is arranged in two tiers, with three players at the 3-4 level, and two more who are at 1 unit each. The 3-4 level has Ellis, Michael Keller, and Mark Keller, while the two folks staving off elimination at the one level are Tighe and Reges.

It should be noted that Paula Dodge has resigned from her games, citing both the problems surrounding "Manifest Destiny" and also her sudden and abrupt transfer to Manassas, VA.

Mensa #19 (1984 CJ) GM: Konrad Baumeister zine: Give Me a Weapon

As you can see above, this game has been assigned a Boardman number. Its first deadline passed a little while before this is being written, so by now its first season of results are certainly on their way. This means, of course, that I can't tell you anything about this game, but promise to be able to next time.

It should also be mentioned to those who are interested that the quality of reproduction of GMAW has improved, with assurances that that happy state of affairs will continue in the future.

SIG GAME NEWS (CONT.)Mensa #20

There are 3 players signed up for the next game. A gamesmaster is also needed. It should be commented on at this point that the GM does not need to be a publisher of a zine. A number of SIG games have been played "by flyer" which means that the Gamesmaster issues game reports that are nothing but game reports, not a magazine that prints letters, articles, etc. So if you've thought of GM'ing a game, but don't want to get heavily into publishing, this could be the way to approach it. I must warn you that I will not consider a novice as a GM--a GM must be a player who has a couple of completed games behind him/her. (Why? Because a GM of all people has to be a reliable participant, even when things get frustrating or boring or you-name-it as things inevitably will on occasion. I could write a whole article on the fact that every game starts out with seven players, but ends up with one win.)

Mensa #14 revisited

While I was typing this section, a game report for Mensa #14 came, so you deserve some more information about it. Namely:

Fall, 1910: France and England go to war!

A five way draw was defeated, and the battle for Europe continues, with Dave Lincoln's France picking up Edinburgh, but losing Brest and Belgium...he's still the strongest country on the board with 10 units. Following him at about 6-7 units each are Craig Reges's England, Ralph Baty's Russia, and Ken Hager's Turkey. Rick Young has resigned as the Italian player, for reasons that are not mentioned, leaving Italy with questionable ownership as the stand-by called for did not respond. Anybody who wants to pick up the ownership of a four-center Italy should immediatly write to Steve as follows: Steve Hutton, 704 Brant St., London, Ont. N5Y 3N1 (Canada). Next deadline is September 6th.

Olympic Mensa Game?

As an international organization, Mensa may be the perfect place for an international game of Diplomacy. Selecting the player to represent a given country would be interesting, but it seems appropriate for the USA to be the host country (meaning supply the GM) since the summer games were held in the US this year.

With the Presidential election coming up in November, I would be interested in hearing the views of the membership in regard to this election, and the issues and personalities involved. Expect your letters to be printed...that's my intention, ok? I hope to hear from both Americans and also from others, especially Canadians, as to how they view this election. Let me hear from you before the end of September, or so, to get it into the Sept/Oct issue.

MENSA DIPLOMACY SIG BIOGRAPHY

New and used members can send this form to the chairman:
 Bruce Poppe, 1204 Heartwood Court, Arnold, MD 21012 (USA)
 Please indicate if it (wholly or partially) is not intended for
 publication in Diplomag.

Biographical data:

1. Name: CRAIG A. Reges
2. Telephone: 312-860-0654
3. Address: 16 W761 White Pines Rd, Bensenville, IL, 60106
4. Date of Birth: 8/1/56
5. Marital Status: MARRIED
6. Occupation (or school if a student): AT+T INFO SYSTEMS REP
7. Year joined Mensa: '76
8. Are you active in your local group? NO
9. Are you an Isolated M.? NO
10. Year you began playing Diplomacy: '76
11. Year you began playing Postal Diplomacy: '76
12. How many games are you currently in? 2
13. How did you learn about Diplomacy? FRED DAVIS + DIP SIG
14. Other games you like to play: BRIDGE, BACK GAMMON, ALL CARD GAMES
15. Other major interests: GOLF, FINANCIAL MARKETS + INVESTMENTS

Remarks, comments, and all that stuff: DIPLOMACY IS A GREAT WAY
 TO MEET PEOPLE ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, THEN STAB THEM
 IN THE BACK!!

Would you be interested in attending a meeting of the Postal
 Diplomacy SIG in connection with a Mensa Annual Gathering or
 Regional Gathering or in connection with a Diplomacy tournament?

Yes No Maybe Other _____

Are you planning to attend an upcoming Annual Gathering?

'84 (Washington, DC)

'85 (Milwaukee, WI)

'86 (location=?)

Others? (such as Canadian AG's, Regional Gatherings, &c.)

More space for comments

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Bruce Poppe

If undeliverable, return to:

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MARYCON. a Diplomacy Convention/Tournament

After the last issue of Diplomag had been typed and printed, I undertook play in a face-to-face tournament held in Fredrickburg, Virginia, at Mary Washington College. Now, this was the first time I had played Diplomacy with most (all?) of these people, let alone in a tournament, for goodness sake, so I was pretty hyped up about the whole thing. I hope that some of my enthusiasm comes through in this account of my weekend.

As my house is strategically located about two hours from the site, there were four Diplomacy players who arranged for lodging here on the living room floor for Friday and/or Sunday nights. They arrived while Diplomag was being printed, and I returned to discover that my wife had allowed this bunch of Huns and Pirates entry to my humble abode. After suitable amounts of pizza, beer, and soft drinks were consumed at a nearby establishment, we resumed play in the living room.

All of the participants squeezed into one car, and drove to the beautiful (not exaggerating) campus of Mary Washington College. Now, I may be ignorant, but who is Mary Washington? (or was, maybe). Anyhow, we lucked out, because even though the dorm accomodations were not air conditioned, it was cool enough not to be needed.

Yours truly was not so lucky on the playing boards. I scored a grand total of zero points in the tournament, being eliminated in both of my games. I was lucky enough just to get a "Death with Dignity" award. The certificate even has a drawing of a coffin on it.

My account of the tournament would not be complete without mentioning that SIG member Dave Lincoln (one of those who spent Friday and Sunday here) won the tournament by a hair, just squeaking thru at the end, by a fraction of a point.

After the Friday night ritual was repeated, we all sacked out. Now if I can only get the board replaced that was used to make the tournament's trophies, I'll figure I'm all set to do it again next year.