



# DIPLOMAG

This is the bimonthly newsletter of the Postal Diplomacy SIG of American Mensa, bringing hobby and SIG news to Mensans interested in Postal Diplomacy and related events. The SIG arranges postal games for its members, including first games for novices. For SIG game openings, contact the Chairman. Membership dues are \$3.00 per year. Diplomacy is a copyrighted board game produced in the U.S.A. by The Avalon Hill Game Co. of Baltimore, Maryland. Any opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of American Mensa, Ltd.

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 (c/a)

DUES RENEWAL PROBLEM. It seems that many people are overlooking the Membership Reports, where I advise members whose dues are about to expire that it's time to renew. In about half of the cases where a membership has expired, I have sent out either a follow-up letter or a copy of the following issue of DIPLOMAG, and in about half of those cases the party has responded with a belated dues payment.

May I suggest that you check the Membership Report in each issue to see if your dues are due, and, if so, to please respond promptly. Every follow-up letter costs us for the postage and photocopies. I'm wondering if I should do something more spectacular to alert readers that their membership is expiring, like the famous red heart of THE ISOLATED M. I have an old rubber stamp left over from the days when I was Membership Chairman of Maryland Mensa, that reads "Dues Not Paid." I could stamp this in red ink on DIPLOMAG copies going to those with expiring memberships, but this is pretty gaudy. Anyone got a better suggestion?

One month, I wrote "Expired" in big letters on the cover of a DIPLOMAG. The Post Office returned the newsletter to me, thinking the party had literally expired. So, I'm not going to use that technique anymore.

ON THE SAME THEME, if anyone finds they've joined the Diplomacy SIG because they thought we were an "International Relations" club, or is otherwise unsatisfied with the SIG, there's no need to endure receiving your 6 or 7 copies of DIPLOMAG. If you're not interested in Diplomacy, the game and/or the hobby, just let me know, and I'll refund the unexpired portion of your annual dues.

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The MENSA #27 game filled rapidly, and has now been assigned to Ralph Baty. We had eight names on that list. The eighth person will have the choice of being the stand-by for that game, or of playing in Mensa #28. We already have 3 people signed up for Mensa #28. Tom Dousette will be the GM, and will run the game by a flyer.

\*\* The November 1987 SIG Membership List is enclosed \*\*

SIG HISTORICAL NOTES

The Postal Diplomacy SIG was co-founded by Fred Davis and Don Horton in 1974. Fred took care of the paperwork, and Don ran all of the early games in his top-rated zine, CLAW & FANG. Since C & F folded, we have been spreading the games around in zines and flyers produced by other M's. Don left the hobby in 1983, making Fred the oldest SIG member in point of time. Two other Charter members (those who joined by November 1974) still belong, Robert Stimmel of California and Bill Young of Pa.

Among those M's who joined the SIG after it became operational, our longest-term member is Craig Reges of Illinois, who joined in December 1976. Only Fred and Bob Stimmel have been members continuously since the SIG's official founding, as both Bill and Craig let their memberships lapse for a couple of years.

Fred was SIG Chairman and DIPLOMAG editor from 1974 to 1981. Prior to July 1976, DIPLOMAG was called the "Diplomacy SIG News." It appeared on an irregular basis, usually as a one or two-page flyer. It has usually appeared on a bimonthly basis since issue #12 in July 1976, and has gradually expanded to fill first three, later four, and more recently six pages. Fred's last issue was Vol. II, No. 6 in August 1981, which broke all records with 7 pages of material.

Rod (Canada) Brown edited the next 9 issues from Quebec. Roy Smith printed and mailed some copies from his home in New Jersey. Bruce Poppe became our third Editor in April 1983, as Volume III began. The posts of Editor and Chairman were again combined when Bruce became Chairman in November 1983. Bruce added some feature articles for the 15 issues he produced. Fred Davis again became Chairman and Editor in November 1985. Since the newsltr. was running a month late, he skipped a month in the counting, and started a new series with Vol. IV, No. 1 (67) in January 1986.

Glenn Overby was Chairman briefly after Fred stepped down, but after just 7 months he resigned. Ed Bapple of Illinois served the remainder of his two-year term, but declined to run for re-election. Bruce Poppe then agreed to hold both the Chairman's and Editor's posts for two years, with the clear understanding that Fred would again take over upon his retirement from Social Security. Thus, with no objections, Bruce turned the SIG over to Fred in November 1985.

Bill Young and Chip Charnley have also served over the years as Committeemen on the three-man team that governs the SIG.

When the SIG was founded, our wildest hope was that we might gain a total of 14 members so we could play more than one Postal game. Some of the early SIG records have been lost, but it is documented that when Fred Davis stepped down the first time as Chairman in 1981, the SIG had 70 members. Because of some unfortunate events and the rapid turnover of Postal Dip hobbyists, the SIG fell to only 38 members by 1983. However, we have been slowly recovering ever since, rising to 45 members in 12/86, and 53 by November 1987.

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New Member John Galt has expressed an interest in being a Gamesmaster for a SIG game. I'll be happy to put you down for running Mensa #29, John, if that's O.K. with you. You would collect your own Game Fees, and would receive free SIG membership from the time your game begins, providing you send me a copy of each game report. Drop me a line if you want to do this, and I'll provide you with some information on the mechanics of running a postal game inside the hobby.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Inquiries have been coming in fast and furious for the past eight weeks. While I was somewhat disappointed that so many Sample copies of DIPLOMAG have not borne fruit in new memberships, we have gained seven new members since mid-September. A copy of our new Membership List is enclosed. However, our three newest members joined after that list was typed, so you may want to cut out the bottom half of the list below and staple it to the main list.

Even though we also lost a few members, SIG membership is now up to 53, as shown at the bottom of the List. I was hoping that we were going to have a member from a third Continent, as I received an inquiry from an American M stationed in Egypt. However, he may have joined the European postal hobby after I gave him a few leads in my reply. Our newest members are:

- John D. Galt, 3309 $\frac{1}{2}$  Mission St., #105, San Francisco, CA. 94110
- Geoffrey Meissner, 96 Mandalay Dr., Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 12603
- Preston Pfanner, 28 Par Lane, Hudson, N.H. 03051
- Ronald Welch, Jr., 35 Elm St., Eldred, Pa. 16731
- (plus the following, which may be added to the main list):
- Judd Gietzentanner, 12111 Park Shore Ct., Woodbridge, Va. 22192
- Donald P. Samuelson, 3820 Macalester Dr., N.E., Minneapolis, MN. 55421
- Steven Wilcox, P.O. Box 10804, McLean, Va. 22102 (Not to be confused with the Stephen Wilcox of Houston, Texas, who keeps statistical records)

The following members' dues will expire on December 31, 1987. Please send me your \$3.00 dues renewals ASAP:

→ Vince Offenback, Bill Port, Craig Reges, Stephen St. Clair, Robert Stimmel, Andy Thomas

\* \* \* \* \*

MORE COMMENTS ON RETREATS - by Bruce Poppe (A f/u to last issue's article by Andy Cruickshank)

I like my own system of handling retreats and combining seasons, which is as follows (taken from my House Rules):

In all years except 1901, the seasons will be combined as follows:  
Summer retreats + Fall moves

Autumn retreats + Winter adjustments + Spring moves

In 1901, the Winter adjustments will be separate.

Requests for separation of seasons ((after 1901)) will be considered by the GM on their merits.

To date, I haven't had a problem with this system. Basically, my rule was lifted from one of the Canadian publisher's house rules, which happened to make sense to me when I was writing mine. Once in a while the contingency orders get a bit involved, but I prefer that to trying to guess what provinces may be open for a potential retreat.

I believe that the postal game should stick as close as practical to the FTF Rulebook. In the FTF rules, a player knows what's gone on before a Spring or Fall season starts, having had to write retreat orders first, even if they are done without a Diplomatic period.

((I believe Bruce means that it's better to have the players write contingency orders for possible Summer and Autumn retreats after the dust settles from the Spring and Fall moves, rather than writing prospective Retreat orders for his units, to be sub-  
(over)

mitted with the Spring and Fall orders. I would only add that I believe there are times, when there are either several complex Retreats, or many Builds or Removals to be processed, when the GM may declare by fiat that there will be a separate Winter season. In a Regular game, no player should suffer the shock of being attacked in Spring by a "non-existent unit," i.e. one that either Retreated<sup>ed</sup> or was built in a most unexpected location.))

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### SIG GAME REPORTS

MENSA #23, 1986 CZ. GM: Scott Hanson, BIG HITS OF MID-AMERICA

In Spring 1905, the giant Austria (Bob Cheek) took Moscow & Warsaw at the expense of Russia (Craig Reges). Tony Dousette's Italy was stood out of Marseilles by France (David Coufal), but took the last Turkish Home SC of Ankara. Turkey (Paul Burroughs) clings to life with a F in Bulgaria. Steve Wallis has resigned the German position. Charles Byrne has been asked to take over this 5-Center power.

MENSA #24, 1987 AZ. GM: John Barnes (by flyer)

in Spring 1903.

The Italian concession proposal was voted down 6-1, / Guess 4 SC's just aren't enough for a win. Italy (Walter Compton) is submitting insurance orders one turn in advance to avoid an NMR from Venezuela. Turkey (Steve St. Clair) has taken Sev from Russia (Gerry Johnson). France (Kevin Self) defended Belgium from German attack (Andy Thomas), but had F Piedmont dislodged by the Italians. Current deadlines are running 5 weeks after publication, but there may be a longer period around the December holidays.

MENSA #25, 1987 HO. GM: Kate Robison, THE DIPLOMATIC RAG

This game will continue to operate under the "British" system, with Fall orders and prophetic Winter builds/removals submitted together. Steve Hutton has been replaced as the French player by B.J. Wyatt, in Spring 1902. As of Fall 1902, Germany (Ralph Baty) with 6 Centers, and Russia (Tony Dousette) with 7, are the two largest Powers, each gaining one SC. Turkey (Eric Young) went up 1 to 5. England (Bill Port) went down 1 to 4, having lost Denmark to Germany. Austria (Gerry Johnson) NMR'd. Since two units were dislodged, the GM removed both of them in Winter '02, leaving the Dual Empire one unit short in 1903.

MENSA #26, 1987 HY. GM, Bruce Poppe (by flyer)

The initial starting positions are: Austria - Diane Tewsley; England - Roger Belfay; France - Scott Shacter; Germany - Bill Maddox; Italy - George Kilmer; Russia - Leslie Fife; and Turkey - Bruce Filbeck. The Spring 1901 report has arrived, showing that all first moves succeeded, with no NMR's or standoffs. While German forces are moving west, so are the Russian forces behind them, leaving Turkey to take the Black Sea. Stay tuned for the next news report.

MENSA #27 will be GM'd by Ralph Baty. I gave him eight names. The first seven to get their Game Fees in will get the starting positions. The flyer announcing the country assignments and first deadline date should be out shortly.

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GAMES OPENINGS CORRECTION: The new editor of PONTIEVEDRIA, the list of Postal games openings, is Ken Peel, 8708 First Ave., #T-2, Silver Spring, Md. 20910. You may obtain a copy of this list, which appears quarterly, for just a SASE (or 25¢ if you're Canadian). This covers Regular and Variant Diplomacy games, plus other multi-player PBM games run by amateur publishers. Highly recommended.

AUSTRIA & TURKEY SWAP CENTERS. ITALY LIVES, WITH ENGLISH HELP. BRIT & TURKISH NAVIES BATTLE FOR CONTROL OF ATLANTIC. GERMAN FORCES MASS FOR SHOWDOWN VS. AUSTRIA.

- AUSTRIA (Shacter): A Venice-Rome. A Trieste-Venice. A Tyrol (S) A Trieste-Venice. (8) A Budapest-Galicia. F Apulia (H). A Rumania (H). A Vienna (H). A Warsaw (H).
- ENGLAND (Robertson): F MAO-Western Med. F Liverpool-Irish Sea. F North-Sea-Belgium. (6) A Burgundy (S) ITALIAN A Piedmont-Marseilles. F Brest-MAO. F Eng Channel (S) F Brest-MAO.
- FRANCE (Beaumont): A Spain-Marseilles. A Picardy-Paris. A Gascony (S) A Pic-Paris. (4) F Portugal (S) TURKISH F N. Africa-MAO.
- GERMANY (Burroughs): A St. Pete-Moscow. F Finland-GoBOTHnia. F Sweden-Baltic. (7)(6 units) A Berlin-Silesia. A Munich (S) A Ber-Silesia. A Kiel-Ruhr.
- ITALY (R. Brown): A Piedmont-Marseilles. F Tyrr-Gulf of Lyon. (2)
- TURKEY (Chang): A Moscow-St. Pete. A Sev (H). F-N.Africa-MAO. F Naples-Tyrr. (7) F Ionian (S) F Naples-Tyrr. F Aegean-Greece. F Con-Aegean.

PRESS:

ROME (by former occupant): Italian forces are said to be staging a strategic retreat. Others have called it a rout.

GM'S NOTE: Jim Robertson will be leaving for London (the real London) to attend school in early January. He will submit orders for ENGLAND for Fall 1906, and will then have to resign from the game. We need someone else to take over this fine position. Since Jim is not an M, it can be either an M or a non-M. Keith Johnson has been following the game regularly, so he has first dibs if he wants the slot. Please let me hear from you on this ASAP, Keith. Anyone else who'd like the position should let me know, too. Keith has already paid a standby fee. To anyone else, the price will be just \$1.00, to cover the cost of the "in-between-issues" game reports.

I presume you all know the Canadian Postal strike has ended. Canadian zines and Third Class mail only started coming through about a week ago.

DEADLINE for FALL 1906 orders is MONDAY, December 14, 1987. Mail early to avoid the Christmas rush. Telephone deadline will be Sunday, December 13th, at 9 p.m., EST.

COMMENTS ON ABOVE GAME. If any novices care to set up the game positions on a board, you will see a semi-circle of Austrian units facing German and Italian pieces. The Turkish units are on both sides of the Austrian flanks, while the English appear to be wheeling into line on the German right flank. In short, it appears that a set-piece battle may be coming up. The French, while hard-pressed, seem to be working with the Turks against the English and Italians. The game's outcome may hinge on which of the two grand alliances can hold together better.

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MENSA #23 News Flash: Turkey (Burroughs) has been eliminated in Fall 1905. Austria (Cheek) has grown to 11 Centers. Italy (Dousette) is second, with 7 Centers. A four-Center Germany appears to be falling into Civil Disorder. If you'd like to run Germany, contact Scott Hanson, 3508 Fourth Ave., S., Minneapolis, MN. 55408.

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A MENSA VARIANT GAME? I have the names of six SIG members who've expressed interest in playing in a variant game. Perhaps, when Mensa #22 ends, we'll run a variant game here in its place. I'd suggest a fairly simple game, with no more than 7 players. Here are a few suggestions:

Blow-Up. Every player gets to plant one mine or write two "disarm" orders each Winter. Played on Regular board. (Designed by our own Ron Brown).

Balkan Wars IV. An improved version of the "III" game now running in BUSHWACKER. 7 players fight to control the Balkans in the 1910 era. Seven neutral SC's have been added to give more variety. Total of 28 SC's. (C. Reinsel & Fred Davis).

Atlantica III. Three N. American and 4 European countries, with off-board boxes permitting round-the-world movement. Starts in 1870, the year of the Franco-Prussian War. CSA won the Civil War, and is a Great Power. (Fred Davis) 48 SC's.

Conquest of the New World III. Four or five European Powers start landing in the New World, ca. 1492. An Indian power is an optional player. (Lew Pulsipher & Fred Davis).

Woolworth II-D. Five players and 10 Powers. Everyone owns one Public Power and one Secret Power. You try to figure out who's who. Modified European map. (Glen Overby).

The six names I have are: Nancy Calhoun, Leslie Fife, John Galt, George Kilmer, Bill Maddox and Don Samuelson. I'd like to hear from all of you, as well as from any other SIG members who'd like to get into a variant game. You may send me a 1-2-3 preference list on the above games. Thankyou.

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Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas. See you in January.

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DIPLOMAG - Mensa Postal Diplomacy SIG Newsletter  
c/o Fred C. Davis, Jr.  
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DIPLOMAG - MENSA #22 GAME REPORT

Number 78.1

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Published by Fred C. Davis, Jr., 3210-K Wheaton Way, Ellicott City, Md. 21043.  
Phone: (301) 461-1885. Call only between 12 Noon and 9 p.m., Eastern Time.

1986 HM - MENSA #22

FALL 1906

EVERYONE TRIES TO GO TO SPAIN. GERMAN TEAM "SHIFTS" TO RIGHT FLANK WHILE IT INVADES RUSSIA WITH FLEETS. AUSTRIANS INVADE REICH, COMPLETE TRADE WITH TURKEY, WHILE ALLOWING HOLY CITY TO REMAIN IN ITALIAN HANDS. FRANCE FADING.

AUSTRIA (Shacter): (8) F Apulia-Naples. A Tyrol-Bohemia. A Venice-Tyrol. A Rome-Venice. A Vienna (S) A Tyrol-Bohemia. A Galicia-Silesia. A Warsaw (S) A Galicia-Silesia. A Rumania-Galicia.

ENGLAND (Robertson): (6) F Irish Sea-MAO. F Eng. Channel (S) F Irish Sea-MAO. A Burgundy-Gascony. F Brest (S) A Bur-Gascony. F Western Med. (S) ITALIAN F Gulf of Lyon -Spain(sc). F Belgium-Picardy. A Spain-Marseilles /d/, Annih. A Gas (S) A Spain-Mars/d/, Annihil. A Paris-Burgundy. F Portugal-Spain(sc).

FRANCE (Beaumont): (4) A St. Pete-Norway. F Gulf of Bothnia-St. Pete(sc). A Munich-Burgundy. A Ruhr (S) A Mun-Burgundy. A Silesia-Munich. F Baltic-Livonia.

ITALY (R. Brown): (2) F Gulf of Lyon-Spain(sc). A Marseille (S) F G of Lyon-Spain(sc).

TURKEY (Chang): (7) A Moscow (H). A Sev (S) A Moscow. F N. Africa-Western Med. F Tyrr-Tunis. F Ionian (S) F Tyrr-Tunis. F Greece-Bulgaria(sc). F Aegean-Bulgaria(sc).

GM'S NOTE: With this move, Jim Robertson regretfully resigns the English position. The new ENGLAND is: David Anderson, P.O. Box 3761, Pontiac, Mich. 48059. David is not an M, but has played in several of my BUSHWACKER games, and is familiar with my House Rules and idiocyncracies. He's also received a sealed letter from Jim.

David was the only person to respond to my request for a new player. I have to assume that Keith Johnson is no longer interested in this game.

PRESS:

LONDON: His policies in ruins, his reputation tarnished, anti-war demonstrations increasing, and the shocking disclosures in the wake of the Sven Ingardson spy trial, has led King James to step down from his throne today. Obsessed with the still-at-large Ingardson, King James swore himself to avenge his unjust downfall. He plans to carry out his personal vendetta against the man he holds responsible for the downfall of the greatest empire the earth has ever seen. And so, the ex-king, now just plain old "Jimmy-boy," cums the streets and back alleys of Europe, while back at home, the population wonders what has happened, and looks around at each other for leadership. Will someone arise from the ashes of England? Only time will tell.

LETTER FROM Jim Robertson: Thanks all for good gaming! Good luck to my successor. It really pains me to have to give up such a position (my first ever postal game), but London calls. I'll be studying over there and doing an internship with a video-production company.

(more)

SUPPLY CENTER COUNT, MENSA #22, WINTER 1906: GAINS, ~~LOSSES~~

AUSTRIA:	3 Home, Rumania, Serbia, Venice, Warsaw, NAPLES, <del>GREECE</del>	(8) (-), No change
ENGLAND:	3 Home, Belgium, Brest, <del>NORWAY</del>	(5) (-1), Remove 1
FRANCE:	Paris, Port., <del>MARSEILLE, SPAIN</del>	(2) (-2), Remove 0 (2 annihilated)
GERMANY:	3 Home, Dem, Hol, St. Pete, Sweden, NORWAY	(8) (+1), Build 2 (was 1 short)
ITALY:	Rome, <del>MARSEILLE, SPAIN, TUNIS</del>	(3) (+1), Build 1
TURKEY:	3 Home, Bul, Moscow, Sev, <del>GREECE, TUNIS, NAPLES</del>	(8), (+1), Build 1

TEMPORARY C/A: From December 21 to January 15, 1988, Scot Shacter (AUSTRIA) will be at his home address: 5651 N. Paseo Niquel, Tucson, AZ. 85718.

COMMENTS ON THE GAME: There are now three 8-Center Powers on the board. Was the German occupation of Norway a stab, or just a readjustment of the E-G alliance? Italy is displaying great skill in staying alive. He must be considered an important factor in the course of the game.

Germany demonstrated great nerve in moving westward, leaving two Home Centers open, in the expectation of getting two builds to defend them. Sacrificing Silesia for the sake of the whole is similar to the way Germany gave up part of East Prussia to Russia in 1914 in order to reach for Paris. The question now is whether a stalemate line can be established. I've never been a fan of stalemate lines. I've always felt that some unforeseen event will break the stalemate if the game continues, since all the players are human. There are still some wild card possibilities here. The new English ruler is certainly one of those wild cards.

DEADLINE for WINTER 1906 and (maybe) SPRING 1907 will be THURSDAY, January 14, 1988. Telephone deadline (for emergencies only) will be Wed., Jan. 13th, at 9:00 p.m. EST. We have 5 Builds and 1 Removal in Winter. We will grant a separation of seasons if just one player so requests, but I suggest that you may wish to enclose Tentative orders for Spring 1907 in any case.

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COPIES of the 1987-88 North American Variant Bank Catalog are now available from me. Over 850 Diplomacy variants are listed by category therein. There are 36 regular pages, plus two cardboard covers. The price will be \$3.00 in orders postmarked up to December 21, 1987, and \$4.00 thereafter.

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