

DRAGNET #9 "Only the timeliest and best stuff around" doing the

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Larry,
this has a few
ideas on SCORING
tournaments. Are we
demo game?
It's so much easier
to play than pub!

Steve

Almost three months ago, an issue of Dragnet appeared. I think it was five months ago I promised to be more regular. I'm just beginning to understand what a demand publishing a zine can be.

Now, for the paragraph of excuses. I've transferred to downtown L.A. and spend four hours a day just driving to and from work. I'm taking two difficult courses this semester, including a C programming class, which is taking 12 to 18 hours a week on the computer (at least 1/4 of that is due to having to learn the operating system and editing system). Other than working overtime and trying to get my 10 year old motivated to do school work (a 10 year old who hates school?), I'm just about out of excuses.

Which brings me to ORIGINS/GENCON '88 (please note the smooth transition, a trademark of all fine writers). I had a good time, and I ALMOST met Brad Wilson (publisher of Vertigo). Actually, I got his business card from a friend who did meet him.

The Diplomacy tournaments were certainly unusual. I placed first in one of the qualifying rounds. However, because of the relative inexperience of the tournament directors and the oddball rules employed at GENCON, I have a certificate which says I am the "Tournament Champion" of Diplomacy. What actually happened is that I barely survived as Germany in the final round--a round for which the winner received absolutely nothing. That's okay though, he got what he deserved. Imagine, getting into the final round of a big tournament, having two good friends also get into the game, the three of you drawing England, France, and Italy, and not being able to finish off Germany. The overall quality of play was extremely low.

As an example, in another game, I had formed an R-T alliance with a reasonably good Turkish player. At least I thought he was reasonably good and I had an alliance; until he stabbed me for Bud even though he knew he could get no further. After I "double-bounced" to keep Sevastopol, he said, "I've never seen that before"--and he was serious.

In that same game, Austria was out of action in '02 and Italy didn't get any of the centers. In summary, the skill level was seriously lacking.

I'd like to return to the subject of timeliness. I realize almost nothing is more likely to turn players off than the untimely publication of game results--the only exception I can think of is games where the players don't write. I feel a responsibility to be more timely and am taking the following steps to insure better results:

1. I am storing supply center sheets as separate documents, which will allow me to access and update the information far more simply.
2. I will be employing (where's the paycheck?--((she's got

a sense of humor too!))) the services of a professional typist (my wife)--to be honest, my slow-typing discourages me more than anything else.

3. I'll be getting a copy of the adjudication program advertised in the latest issue of Diplomacy World. The problem here is, I don't have an IBM compatible, so I'll have to attempt translating it to my Amiga.

4. In the event that I experience difficulties in the future which delay publication more than 2 weeks beyond the deadline for the games, I will look to place the games elsewhere. I don't want to hold the games up and if I can't handle the responsibility, I'll find someone who can.

The subject of tournament scoring systems has received quite a bit of attention lately. And, I think, it deserves continued discussion. Nothing can ruin a well-run con more thoroughly than an ill-conceived scoring system.

A good illustration was provided at the Gateway tournament in September. The GM had no previous experience and did not want to use the scoring system normally employed. He announced that total centers held at the end of the two rounds would be the sole criterion used to determine the winner from the field of 63 players.

Someone (with experience) asked if eighteen centers was the maximum number of centers that could be gained during a single game. The GM replied (naively) that a game ends when any player gains his eighteenth center during a fall turn, and that any centers in excess of the eighteenth would also be credited.

On its surface, it appears to be a simple and reasonable system. Ah, but Diplomacy players are such an awful collection of connivers and exploiters. I thought I was in good shape after an 11 center Turkey (my least favorite country) in the first round. In the second round, I was looking at 10-13 centers with England. With about 1 1/2 hours remaining, I heard that there had been a 23 center win. There was a 25 center win a few years ago, in which several centers were "given" to the winner to help him win the tournament, so I was somewhat suspicious of that result. Fifteen minutes later, I heard there was another 23 center win (This one by Nick Marks; I believe the other had been by the legendary Mark Freuh). When I heard of a third such win five minutes later, I lost control. There were only two other players on my board and they were also upset at the spread of cave-in-itis.

I proposed that we deliver a message about how we felt to the GM. I suggested that we collaborate on a 34 center win. The other players, spurred on by the outrage of having 13 1/2 hours of good play sabotaged by a weak GM and doormat players, agreed. Because of positioning and ill-will generated during the game, we agreed to throw it to the Austrian.

The GM, obviously upset by the whole thing, nullified the entire tournament. It seems obvious to me that there needs to be some incentive (perhaps a randomly selected prize; eligibility would be based on survival). I guess I would like the players to be more "dedicated" or professional. Maybe if there were some big money tournaments such as were held in Europe in the late sixties. I believe that it was in one such tournament that the legendary (now a recluse) Mark Richards introduced the "Key"

opening, the Lepanto, and the all-out Russian attack on England.
Will the hobby even produce another ftf player of his caliber?

BENEDICT ARNOLD 87AP SUPPLY CENTERS

Austria: Home, Bul, Ser, Rum
England: Home, Bre
France: Par, Mar, Bel, Por, Spa
Germany: Ber, Kie, Mun, Hol, Den
Italy: Home, Gre, Tun
Russia: Home, Rum, Swe, Nwy
Turkey: Home

SIR OMAR 87E SUPPLY CENTERS

England:Home,Bel,Bre,Par,Nwy = 7, build one
France:Por = 1, even
Germany:Home,Den,Hol,Stp,Swe = 7, build one
Italy:Home,Bud,Bul,Gre,Mar,Rum,Ser,Tri,Tun,Vie,Spa =13, even
Russia:War,Mos = 2, even
Turkey:Home,Sev = 4, even

DEADLINES: For both games will be January 8, 1989 at 1700 PST. I

would really appreciate your help--mail early and often!

HAVE A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

England(Fisher?):NMR! F MAO retreats otb. A GAS-Spa, F BRE S F Mao(nsu), F ENG S F Mao(nsu), A BUR S F Bel, F BEL S F Nth, F NTH S F Bel.

France (Lutterbie): F POR S A Mar-Spa.

Germany (Williams): A Lun ret to STP. A STP S A War-Mos (nso), A SIL-War, A BOH-Sil (d, ann), A Mun-BER, A Ruh-MUN, F Den-BAL, F Hol-HEL.

Italy (Hood): F MAO S A Mar-Spa, A Mar-SPA, A Pie-MAR, F WES S A Mar-Spa, F NAF S F Mao, A SEV S A Lvn-Mos, A RUM S A Sev, A GAL-Sil, A Vie-BOH, A TYL S A Vie-Boh, A Tri-SER, F Bul(sc)-Con, F AEG S F Bul(sc)-Con.

Russia (Crosby): A WAR S A Lvn-Mos, A Lvn-MOS.

Turkey (Davis): A Ank S A Con, A CON H, F BLA S A Sev, A SEV H.

GAMENOTES: The draw proposal failed. There is a new proposal for a concession to Italy. No vote received counts as a 'yes' vote! Scott Fisher has taken advantage of the lengthy delay and very much wants back into the game. Because of the limited number of standby's I've got I'll be leaning on Mark Berch's "last orders" rule for nmr's. At least your pieces will do something!

PRESS:

Tur-Ita: Did you get my letter? If not, let me say again: I'm sorry, it was a mistake. And, besides, I just don't care anymore.

GM-Tur: If he didn't get your letter, he probably doesn't remember getting it.

Tur-Ger: Welcome to the game! To answer your question, Russia stabbed me (foolishly) and I went crazy on him. In the meantime, Italy swelled up like a balloon. I suspect we may be able to talk after this turn.

GM-Tur: It's going to take a lot more than talk.

Ita-Tur: I was with you all the way (to an 18 center win?), but your stab has changed that for good. I told you a build would trigger conditional orders against you!

Austria (Kremer): Remove A Vie. A SIL-War, A Gal-RUM, A BUD S A Gal-Rum, A Ser S A Gal-Rum, F Bul(sc)-Con.

England (Crosby): Remove F Eng. A Yor-LPL, F NWG S F Nth-Nwy (ret to Edi, Nat, Cly or otb), F Nth-Nwy.

France (Heinowski/Townsend?): Build F MAR. F Mar-SPA(sc), A BRE H, F Nat-IRI, A BEL H, A BUR S A BEL, F Mao-ENG.

Germany (Botimer): F Ska-NTH, A MUN H, A HOL H, F Den S F Ska-Nth, A BER-Sil.

Italy (Smolik?...PLEASE!): A TYL H, A GRE H, F AEG H, F EAS H, F TYH H.

Russia (Holley): Build F STP(nc). A Ukr-GAL, A WAR S A Ukr-Gal, A RUM S A Ukr-Gal, F SEV S A Rum, F Stp(nc)-BAR, F nwy-NWG, F CLY

S F Nwy-Nwg.

Turkey (Minnig): A CON-Bul, A ANK S F Smy, F SMY H.

GAMENOTES: No press, no proposals. Steve Heinowski has resigned from the game for personal reasons. Would Fred Townsend PLEASE take the French position? Would Mike Smolik PLEASE take the Italian position? Would David Hood PLEASE submit standby orders for Italy? Any one not in the game care to standby for France? These are desperate times! I need your help to complete these games!

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