

FARRAGO #2

16 NOV 1981
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Farrago is an irregularly produced zine by Mark Berch in his role as Tournament Director of the 1982 DipCon Tournament. #1 is not presently available. This is 16 Nov 1981

This issue is a general publicity release, to tell the postal hobby what has gone on so far in planning for DIPCON XV.

1. History and Organizational stuff. Dipcon was first held in private homes, moving later to a church, and then to hotels, and finally, in conjunction with major wargaming conventions. The planning for DipCons was usually a matter of private initiative, but after a while, it was clear this was a risky process, and produced some conflicts as to location. Beginning in 1977, the DipCon Society took charge of this job, and has been functioning with varying degrees of success since then. The present DipCon Society Committee of 3 has a signed contract with Atlanticon, a corporation which runs Origins this year. They have experience in running a major convention (their staff includes Avalon Hill personnel) and I am confident that both sides will comply with the contract, and indeed, the contract, we hope, will be used in the future. A Copy of this is available from me on request. The committee of 3 consists of Herb Barents, Chairman, Fred Davis and myself. All communications between Atlanticon and us go thru Fred.

2. Staff. The Committee has selected me as the Tournament Director. I have picked as assistants Rod Walker, Fred Davis, and Herb Barents. All three of them have had experience in running ~~events~~, or helping to run, at least two other major tournaments. The questions of whether Robert Sacks will be invited to join the staff is still under discussion between Robert and myself, altho it will be resolved by the end of 1981.

3. Schedule. We have obtained tentative (verbal) approval for the following plan:

Sat 10-Noon. Diplomacy Seminar/Panel Discussion

Sat 1 PM Assembly for Round 1

Sat 1:30-11 PM (if needed, of course) Round 1

Sat 9:30 PM DipCon Society Meeting

Sun 9 AM Assembly for Round 2

Sun 9:30-3 PM Round 2

I am reasonably sure that we will get this schedule, or something fairly close to it. The Seminar will probably be a Panel Discussion with some of the best known names from the world of Postal Publishing. The topic will likely be something suitably vague --- The Present and Future of the Hobby. Questions will be taken from the Floor. If this peters out, we will probably have some prepared talks in reserve, if needed. The DipCon Soc meeting, which will likely be chaired by Herb Barents. Note that it overlaps with Round 1. However, by 8 hours, the substantial majority of the games would be over. That we could have ended the games at 9:30, it didn't seem fair to curtail games so that people could attend a meeting that they might not be interested in anyhow. The tournament will probably be held in a very large room. The meeting will be scheduled for the same room; any remaining games will be switched to one end, and the meeting will be at the other end. Thus it would be at least theoretically possible for someone to attend both, particularly if his position, for whatever reasons, did not require much diplomacy. The purpose of the meeting is 1) Select a site for DipCon 1983, and 2) Elect a Committee of 3 to make all arrangements for that DipCon. The ending time for Round 2 is only approximate, as the Con organizers haven't yet given us a time for the Awards ceremony.

4. Tournament Procedures. The second Round will be seeded, except to avoid people who played together on the first round. A Scoring system has not yet been selected; that will be done this winter. A nice plaque will go to the winner; there will be smaller plaques for the runnersup, probably 2nd-8th.

5. Innovations. There are several. The most obvious is the timing. I believe this is the longest time that has ever been available for the first round of a two round tourney. This should provide time for virtually every game to be finished. Even the second round will provide enough time, I believe, for over $\frac{1}{2}$ the games to be finished. The most common complaint that I have heard at tournaments is the problem of curtailed games. The second is best-country certificates. Usually, these are given for the whole tournament. We will give a separate set for each round. This avoids two problems. If there are several big wins in round 1 (which is likely, given the virtually uncurtailed nature of the round), an average player may feel discouraged from coming back, particularly if he did quite poorly (over)

in round 1. He may well feel that several "Best Country" certificates are for all practical purposes out of reach. With this system, he knows there's a fresh set. A Second problem is that of the Round 1 player who ~~has~~ has a a very good Round 1 --- but sees his performance wiped out by a player who wins on a very low board against very weak competition in Round 2. There is a third innovation which is presently in the planning stage, but will, we think, add to people's enjoyment, in a significant way.

Thaxts about where things stand at the moment. I am contacting Glen Taylor to find out if he would like to run another variant tournament on Friday (he ran one at Origins 81). Planning is proceeding at a good pace.

Finally, some informantion about the Convention itself. "Origins" is traditionally the largest of all wargaming conventions, so if you're planning to go to just one, this is what your eyes should be set on. It will be held over the weekend of July 23-25, 1982, on the campus of U of Maryland, Baltimore County ("UMBC"). This is a very modern facility, built since 1965, and will be completely air conditioned. There are ~~1200~~ 1400 beds available at least in the dorms, at \$19 per person for 2 nights; \$6 for the third night (these are double occupancy). There are 3 dorms total, all with lounges/rec rooms for open gaming. In addition, there will be 150 "apartments", half of which have kitchennetts. These have 4 bedrooms and a bathrooms and a living room, and run \$60 total per day. There are also ~~key and linen~~ key and linen deposits. There are also ~~the~~ motel rooms nearby. You can get there via U.S. Route 40, or by air from BWI airport. For more information about DipCon, wontact me, Fred or Herb; for more information on the Convention, including exhibitors information, write them at Origins 82, P.O. Box 15405 Baltimore Md 21220

The next Farrago will deal with the scoring system. If you have any comments or suggestions, please get them to me by Dec 15, 1981. If you would like a copy of #3 (which, unlike this one, will not be a general publicity release) please send me an SASE