

Hoodwink #15

A Diplomacy zine published by Stven Carlberg.
1939 Windemere Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30324-4919. Phone 404/607-9157. Fax 404/526-8810.
A Quantum Production. November 19, 1991. Price per issue: 70¢ cheap.

Let's Talk About Games

You're probably familiar with *Games* magazine. The latest issue happens to be the one in which their annual review of the best new games of the year appears, and after perusing it, I thought I'd ask the readership of *Hoodwink* whether they have any comments to add on the games that sound most interesting to me:

Trumpet (\$10) – A combination board and card game for 2-6 players. Apparently there are six suits in the deck and three jokers. The *Games* folk speak very highly of this one, naming it their Game of the Year.

Intuition (\$36) – A party game where you're given puzzles to solve but not enough time to solve them, so "you have to use your intuition."

You Name It (\$35) – Another party game, where you get your teammates to name the things listed on the cards you draw.

Stack (\$17) – A game where you stack dice on top of each other according to specific rules and try to win the most stacks.

Daytona 500 (\$12) – "Easy-to-learn rules make this the most entertaining race game in years." You get cards to advance the little car tokens on your turns, and you bet on the races.

Screen Challenge (\$25) – A movie trivia game with various types of questions. It happens I'm a movie buff looking for a good game.

'Swoggle (\$10) – A crossword game where, instead of having tiles with letters, you write whatever letters you want onto a cleanable board.

Lapis (\$30) and **Quickword** (\$30) – Both games where you come up with words in certain categories containing certain letters.

Speculation (\$30) – Buy and sell stocks. "Unlike most financial games," it says here, "this one is fast-moving and entertaining."

Conquest (\$18 for 2, \$28 for 4) – A "complex strategy game, dating from the early 1970s, ideal for correspondence play," and I've never heard of it? What's the dang deal here?

Speed Circuit (\$23) – Another racing game, this one from Avalon Hill. "Despite its apparent complexity, this is not a hard game to learn, and it has a devoted following."

221 B Baker Street (\$15) – Sherlock Holmes mysteries for the home enthusiast. I've seen this one in stores before, but without a personal recommendation I've been leery of picking it up.

Master Labyrinth (\$34) – This is *Games'* pick as "Best New Abstract Strategy Game" of the year, for 2-4 players. It's one of those mazes where the tiles move, changing the maze.

Traverse (\$18) – This is a really good variation on Chinese Checkers that I *have* played and recommend. The field is the size and shape of a chessboard, and your eight different tokens have four different properties of movement.

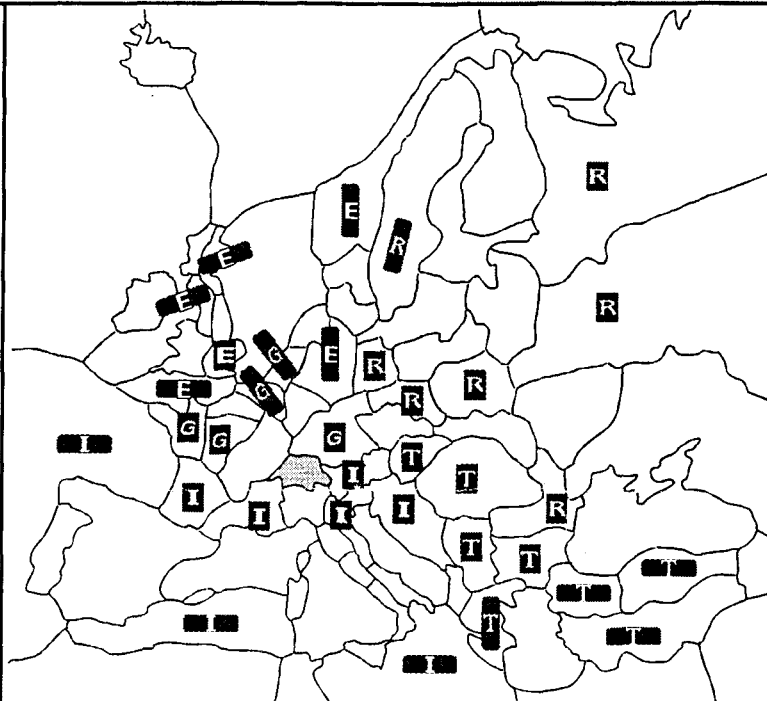
Variance (\$17) – Another Chinese Checkers variation, this one with a section of board that moves.

Deadline for all games is Monday, December 16, 1991.

Indefatigable ~ Diplomacy 1990II ~ Winter 1905

**BALANCE OF
POWER SHIFTS
DRAMATICALLY**

**KAMIKAZE
KAISER CAN'T
KILL COUPLE**



Supply Centers

- *
Austria: 0
(-SER), (-RUM)
- England: 6
LON, LPL, EDI,
NWY, DEN, +KIE
- Germany: 5
MUN, HOL, BEL, PAR,
BRE, (-BER), (-KIE)
- Italy: 8
ROM, NAP, VEN,
TUN, SPA, POR,
TRI, MAR, (-GRE)
- Russia: 7
MOS, STP, WAR, SEV,
SWE, +BER, +RUM
- Turkey: 8
CON, ANK, SMY,
VIE, BUL, BUD,
+SER, +GRE

Austria:	Remove F ADR, A ALB
England:	Build F LPL
Germany:	Remove F NTH, <u>F BEL</u> (one too many; GM accepts first order)
Italy:	Steady as she goes.
Russia:	Build A STP, A MOS
Turkey:	Build F SMY, F ANK

Draw Proposals: From last time: G/I/R/T, G/I/R, G/I/T, G/I. All proposals failed by identical tallies, namely No 3, Yes 1, NVR 1. New proposals: E/I/R/T, R/T, T. I believe that, henceforth, I won't report tallies after all, just results. I'd like to hear your opinions about that.

England to Russia: It does look good regarding Germany, and I agree that we and Italy will probably be in conflict next. But I expect we have another year or two before that happens on my side of the map.

England to Germany: Stubborn, aren't we?

Turkey to Europe: C'mon, it's way too early to think about draws. Let's give it at least another year. This game is too interesting to stop now.

Turkey to Russia: Glad to do you a favor. We'll think of something to let you pay me back. Good luck up north.

Turkey to Austria: Interesting to see our alliance go out the same way it began-- with a bungled move. So long!

Turkey to Italy: Sorry to hear that you're so busy. Let's see if we can't lighten your load a little.

Russia to All: I am finally back in town for a while. Israel was great. If you haven't seen Masada, check it out. There are remnants of both the fortress and Roman siege-works.

One further note: Christmas season is super-busy for The Salvation Army, so the earlier you write, the more likely you'll get a fair amount of response instead of a hurried note.

Players in Indefatigable:

England	David Schlosser, 7324 Paso Robles Ave., Van Nuys CA 91406
Germany	Douglas Kent, 54 W. Cherry St. #211, Rahway NJ 07065
Italy	Bruce Reiff, 2207 Smokey View Blvd., Powell, OH 43065
Russia	Gene Gesner, 1308 Trailwood Lane, Longview TX 75605
Turkey	George Inzer, 1755 Ashville Road, Montevallo AL 35115

Deadline for all games is Monday, December 16, 1991.

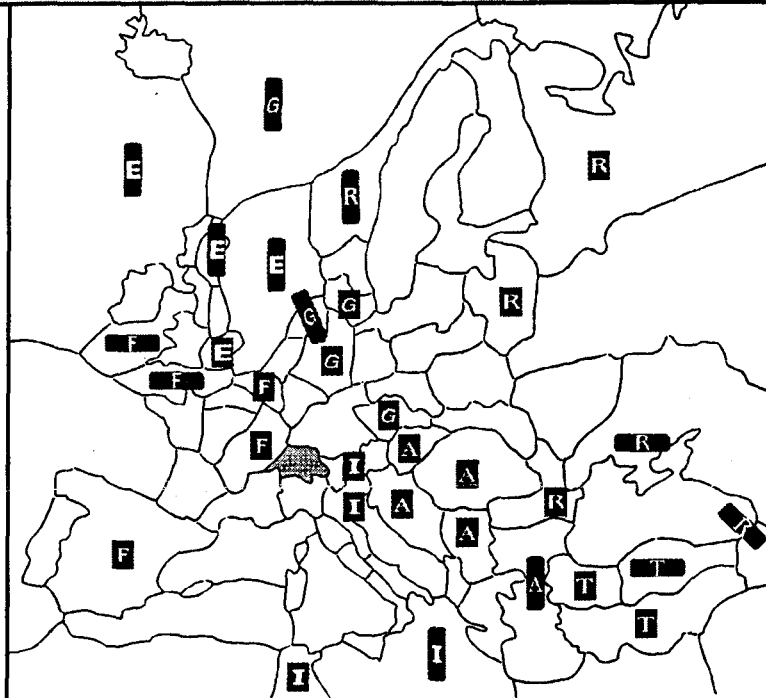
Witch of Endor ~ A Game of Diplomacy ~ Spring 1902

**F/G TIGHTENS:
BAD NOOSE
FOR ENGLAND**

**TSAR MAKES
HEADWAY IN
NORWAY**

**VENETIANS &
MUNCHKINS
ABUT VIENNA**

**A/R LOWER
THE BOOM ON
BULGARIA**



Austria:	A TRI-ALB, A BUD-TRI, A VIE sup A BUD-TRI, F GRE-BUL(s), A SER sup F GRE-BUL(s)
England:	F NWY-NTH, F EDI sup F NWY-NTH, F NWG-NAO, A LON hold
France:	A POR-SPA, A PAR-BUR, A BEL hold, F ENG-IRI, F BRE-ENG
Germany:	F KIE-HEL, F NTH-NWG, A DEN hold, A HOL-KIE, A MUN-BOH
Italy:	A TUN-ALB, F ION con A TUN-ALB, A TYO sup GA MUN-BOH, A VEN sup A TYO
Russia:	F SWE-NWY, A STP sup F SWE-NWY, A MOS-LVA, F SEV-BLA, F ARM sup F SEV-BLA, A RUM sup AF GRE-BUL(s)
Turkey:	F ANK-BLA, A SMY-ARM, A CON sup A BUL, A BUL sup AA SER-RUM (annih.)

Austria to Italy: I'm gonna hurt you and I'm going to enjoy it.

Austria to R/T: A plague on both your houses.

Austria to France: Thanks for nothing! Your lack of aid against the Italian aggressors will be borne in mind if you ever need a favor.

France to England: Such a shame, all these construction delays and overruns on the trans-channel tunnel. Looks like we'll have to visit by hovercraft if we want to play tourist this season. How's the weather in Liverpool, anyway?

England to All: I'm back home-- not that anybody's shown any major interest so far. If you want my full attention this turn, write early. (See *Indefatigable* press.)

Italy to Russia: Sorry, witch hunts are passé.

Germany to Austria: It seems we haven't communicated very well. Too bad you think as you do, but your loss is Italy's gain.

Germany to Italy: Yes, Austria's loss is your gain, but I think I'll be better off as well. Your messages may be brief, but they are direct and they are difficult to misinterpret. I only hope you've been on the level with me; if you haven't, I look pretty bad right now!

Germany to Russia: I hope my fleet's actions in the North Sea have eased any worries I may have given you about me.

CON to VIE: Considering the results of this turn, even if you took BUL, you may find advantage in an alliance with me. Or if you did go into RUM, rest assured that you have a faithful friend in Turkey.

CON to ROM: If I can survive by selling my soul to Austria-Hungary, I will. Sorry, old man, but keep in touch.

W.W. East to W.W. West: Yup, it may be grim, but hang in there. Make them earn their dots! I tried to convince the Kaiser, but to no avail, I think.

Players in *Witch of Endor*:

Austria	Stan Johnson, 10 Pine Street, Edison NJ 08817
England	Gene Gesner, 1308 Trailwood Lane, Longview TX 75605
France	Peter Baker, 800 S. Washington St., Apt. A-106, Alexandria VA 22314
Germany	David Polley, 2504 Huntwick #1007, Austin TX 78741
Italy	David Schlosser, 7324 Paso Robles Avenue, Van Nuys CA 91406
Russia	Mike Gonsalves, 530 Treasure Lake, Dubois PA 15801
Turkey	Michael Alterio, 909 Sycamore Street, Buffalo NY 14212

The Dread Letter Office

Facts in Five!

Players-- hey, we've got players! A rules clarification: you get credit for only *one* correct answer per category per letter, so there's no need to tell me three different flavors of ice cream that start with R. Of course, if you're just guessing, feel free to guess as many times as you like!

And while we're on the subject of *ice cream*, I was amazed at the number of people who listed "orange sherbet" in this category! Sherbet and ice cream are two different animals, friends. Also, for all you proofreading fans out there, please note the correct spelling: it's *sherbet*, not "sherbert."

All the good answers this go-round:

Famous Scientists: Oppenheimer, Ptolemy, Pavlov, Pasteur, Priestly, Pauli(?) & Pauling, A.J. Quick(?), Max Quantum(?), Allan Quatermass(?), Röntgen, Rutherford, Walter Reed, Salk, Singer, Charles Steinmetz, Carl Sagan, Schrödinger, Szilard.

Baskin-Robbins Ice Cream Flavors: Old Fashioned Vanilla, Pralines 'n' Cream, Pistachio, Peaches 'n' Cream, Pecan Praline, Quince(?), Raspberry, Raspberry Crunch, Rainbow, Rocky Road, Rum Raisin, Strawberry, Spearmint.

Musical Groups of the 1960's: The Outsiders, The O'Jays, Oo La La, The Osmonds, Ohio Express, Pink Floyd, Peter, Paul & Mary, The Platters, Quicksilver Messenger Service, ? and the Mysterians, The Rolling Stones, (Paul Revere and) The Raiders, The Stone Poneys, Sha-Na-Na, Steppenwolf, The Supremes, The Searchers. (Queen and The Plimsouls, I'm reasonably sure, both got their starts in the '70's. I suspect the same is true of the Strawbs.)

Items in a Haberdashery: Oilskin, overcoat, pin, pen, plume, pants, quilt, quid (of tobacco), quarter (in cash register), register, rubbers (overshoes, that is), ribbon, ruffles, shirt, shoes, socks, scarf, stud, scissors.

Ingredients in Italian Food: Olive oil, oregano, olives, pepper, parmesan cheese, pasta, quail, quince, Ragu (hmm), ravioli shells, rotini, rosemary, ricotta, raisins, rigatoni, romano cheese, spaghetti, sausage, salt.

Nice work, everybody! And our grand prize winner this issue is..... (a drum roll, please!)

Stan Johnson, with 22 correct answers!

For his mighty abecedarian effort, Stan becomes the proud recipient of that coveted prize, a free issue of **Hoodwink!** All he lacked for a clean sweep were a scientist, a musical group, and an ice cream flavor (since I didn't quite allow "quince") starting with that dread letter "Q."

Let's try another one! Categories for next time:

One-Word Movie Titles
Breakfast Cereals
Fictional Newspaper Editors
Things that are Typically Green
Proper Nouns Containing Hyphens

Your letters will be: G, J, K, W, and *. (For your fifth answer, you may use any letter *other* than the four assigned letters. You do not have to use the same letter in every category.) Remember that we're playing this "on the honor system," so no recourse to reference books or otherwise looking stuff up! Have fun straining your brain!

The Zine Scene:

Several people have asked me about the delay of Bruce Reiff's zine **Diplomacy Downs**. I spoke with Bruce on the phone this weekend, and he said he's been incredibly busy, but is about a week away from getting the new issue out. We'll all be glad to see this exuberant, bounteous zine back in our mailboxes, I know.

Another zine that deserves a plug is **Your Zine of Zines**, a monthly review of zines (thus the title-- get it?) for a mere 50¢ from Douglas Kent and Jack McHugh (280 Sanford Road, Upper Darby PA 19082). These two gave **Hoodwink** a full page of enthusiastic commentary last month, so we know they've got good taste! They consider only three zines per issue, so they've got time to give a pretty detailed picture of each title. It's interesting reading, and they promise to review (eventually) any zine sent in trade.

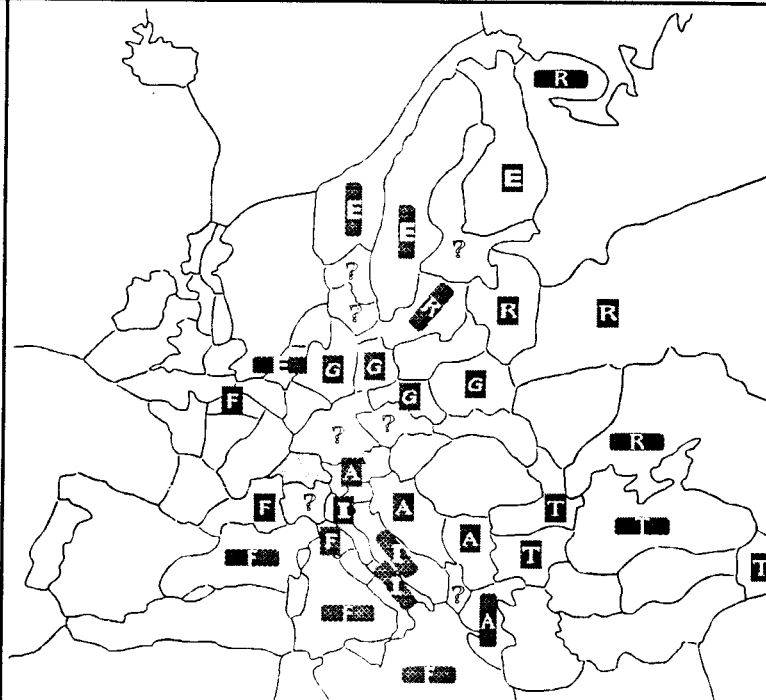
For a more comprehensive catalog of Dip and other gaming zines, we refer you to the **Zine Register**, recently taken over by Garret Schenck (40 Third Place, Basement Apt., Brooklyn NY 11231), whose goal is to publish twice annually a listing of every zine in the hobby. I haven't seen Garret's first issue yet, but I'm told it's a gorgeous piece of laser-printed work, and a bargain at \$2.50.

Finally, if what you're interested in is the latest info on game openings, the sheet you want is **Pontevedria**, available for an SASE from Phil Reynolds, 2896 Oak Street, Sarasota FL 34237. His current issue lists around 40 zines.

Atropos - A Game of Gunboat Diplomacy - Summer/Fall 1903

**GREEDY BRITS
TAKE IT OUT
OF NEW HUN**

**FRENCH PASS
GHOSTLIKE
THRU ITALY**



Supply Centers
*

Austria: 5
VIE, TRI, BUD,
SER, GRE

England: 6
LON, LPL, EDI, NWY,
+HOL, +SWE

France: 6
PAR, MAR, BRE,
SPA, POR, BEL

Germany: 4 or 5
BER, KIE, DEN,
(-HOL), +WAR, MUN?

Italy: 4 or 5
ROM, VEN, NAP,
TUN, MUN?

Russia: 3
MOS, SEV, STP,
(-WAR), (-RUM)

Turkey: 5
CON, SMY, ANK,
BUL, +RUM

Austria: A VIE-TYO, A TRI sup A VIE-TYO, A SER sup A TRI, F GRE-ION, F ADR sup F GRE-ION (ret ALB?)
England: F BAR-NWY, F NWY-SWE, A FIN sup F NWY-SWE, F NTH-HOL
France: F TUN-ION, F TYS sup F TUN-ION, A PIC-BUR, A MAR-BUR, A SPA-TUS, F GLY con A SPA-TUS
Germany: A MUN-KIE, A PRU-BER, F SWE hold (ret DEN, SKA, GBO?), A WAR hold, A SIL sup A WAR
Italy: F ION-ADR, F APU sup F ION-ADR, A TYO-TRI (ret PIE, BOH, MUN?), A VEN sup A TYO-TRI
Russia: A WAR ret LVA. A LVA-WAR, A MOS sup A LVA-WAR, F SEV sup TA BUL-RUM, F STP(n) hold, F GBO-KIE (no such unit; F BAL hold)
Turkey: A BUL-RUM, F BLA sup A BUL-RUM, A CON-BUL, A SMY-ARM

GM to Europe: Seasons separated by GM! As the retreat and adjustment situation is a wee bit complex, let's have just Autumn and Winter orders (and press) for next time, please! Meanwhile, our new German player is welcomed-- rudely!-- to these proceedings.

Germany to Russia: Don't shoot me, I'm only the standby player.

Germany to World: Why do I feel so naked?

Germany to E/F: Far be it from me to upset the apple cart-- especially such a beautiful cart as this appears to be.

Italy to France: Let's not get so pushy just cuz I'm choosing your side.

France to Kaiser Rolf: It was a pleasure doing business with you.

France to Germany: Welcome to the E/F/G. Glad to have you. Hope you subscribe to our world view. If not, please let us know before you do anything rash.

France to Italy: Relax, relax. I assure you, I have no bright ideas. Such stress will kill you. I'll support you in VEN. Hope you enjoy (and I hope you're taking) your Eastern junket. Have you ever seen the Grecian marbles?

France to England: We'll have to discuss my good friend Italy. He's upright, honest, judicious, and he's helping besides. Any ideas?

Turkey to World: Sorry about the NMR. There was a bit of miscommunication between myself and the GM and I didn't get #13. No biggie-- I'm not doing so hot anyway.

Turkey to Italy: Just an observation, but with France heading east through the Mediterranean (and presumably toward you), it's probably better to defend against France instead of assaulting Austria. But I'll help you, whatever you decide.

Turkey to Russia: Sorry, buds, but if you're going down, I want a piece of the action. Smell ya later!

Turkey to Austria: Ain't I lucky you didn't attack me!

Austria to Italy: You're getting exactly what you deserve.

Austria to France: Say hello to the Pope for me.

Austria to Germany: Welcome to the show. As you can see, you have inherited an E/F/G three-way. I hope you're a little more suspicious of your "friends" than the last player.

London Times Headlines: Coup d'Etat in Berlin!! Old Kaiser Rolf in Hiding, Seeks Asylum in Britain!! Europe in Turmoil!!! House of Commons Demands Reprisals!!

The British Prime Minister has dispatched the British Expeditionary Forces to bring order to the Lowlands and Sweden until the new German masters make their policies known.

England to Russia: While our relations have been strained in the past, we hope you will respond favorably to the quickly shifting events. After all, you have been requesting this for a while, and while I would have honored my commitments to the old Germany, I couldn't count on the new Germany to be so understanding. I would welcome cooperation in pacifying the German problem.

England to France: Don't let my northern shift alarm you. We will still honor our commitments to France. Belgium will not be molested by the English. Further, should we gain builds, we will not build a fleet in London. By the way, you're welcome to join me in bringing stability to Germany.

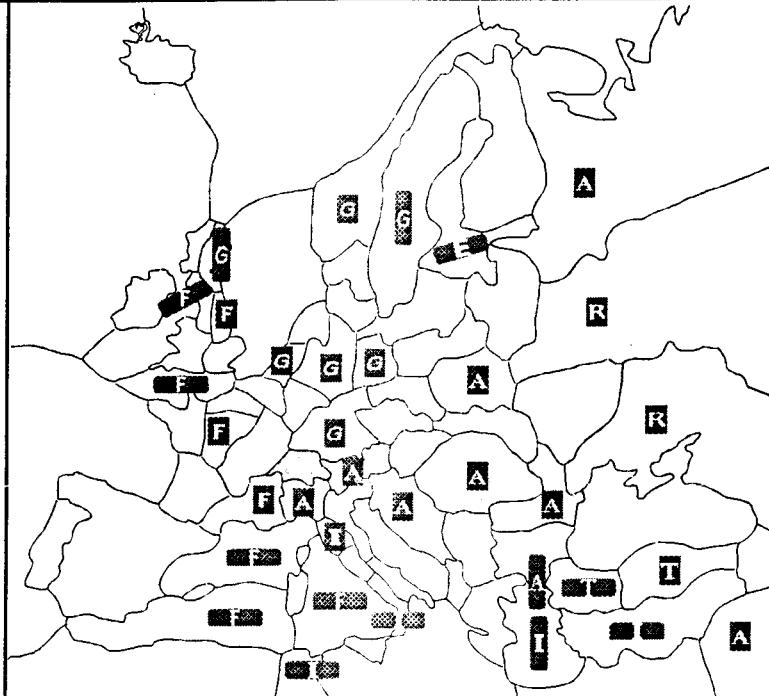
England to Austria: Well, what do you know? Sometimes wishful thinking and dreams *do* come true. Here's that move on Germany you were hoping for.

Confidential from London to St. Petersburg: I wonder if you noticed that Kiel was wide open and took it. If you did, both our positions would be enhanced, and Denmark is sure to fall. May I claim dibs on Denmark? After all, St. Pete was spared certain disaster. Also, a nice gesture would be to remove your F STP(n), should you have to remove one.

Sutherland ~ Diplomacy 1991AI ~ Autumn/Winter 1904

**NOTHING
ROTTEN
IN DENMARK**

**A/F/G RAISE
ARMIES AND
MORE ARMIES**



Supply Centers

- *
 - Austria: 9**
VIE, BUD, TRI,
SER, GRE, RUM,
BUL, STP, WAR
 - England: 1**
DEN
 - France: 8**
PAR, BRE, MAR, SPA,
POR, BEL, LON, LPL
 - Germany: 7**
BER, MUN, KIE, HOL,
NWY, EDI, SWE
 - Italy: 5**
ROM, NAP, VEN,
TUN, SMY
 - Russia: 2**
MOS, SEV
 - Turkey: 2**
CON, ANK

- Austria:** Build A TRI.
- England:** A EDI ret OTB, F SWE ret GBO. Remove F DEN.
- France:** Build A PAR.
- Germany:** Build A MUN, A BER.
- Italy:** Build F NAP.
- Russia:** Remove A UKR.
- Turkey:** (By GM) Retreat A SMY-ANK. Remove A ARM.

GM to Europe: In retrospect, it seems obvious that the best course of action would have been for the GM to declare a season separation at the same time as the Fall 1904 results were published. I apologize to everyone involved for the extra bother caused by my not having done so.

For those who missed the flurry of activity between issues, I attempted to engineer a mini-

separation prior to the Spring 1905 deadline-- but a change in England's Autumn and Winter orders crossed in the mail with that, so we've got a full-scale separation here and now in this issue.

I have Spring 1905 orders on file from all players, but those of course are subject to your revision if you get any bright ideas before the deadline for **Hoodwink #16**.

Players in Sutherland:

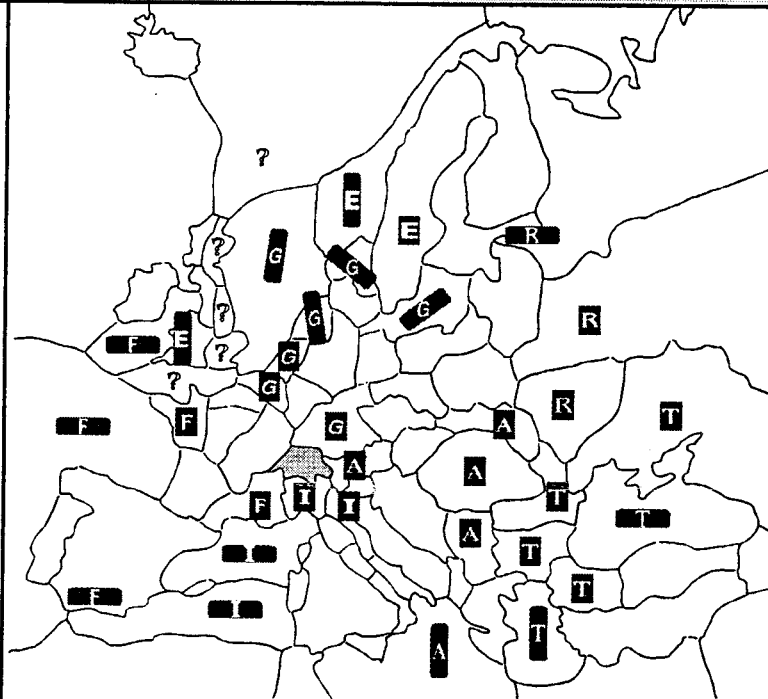
- Austria** Don Williams, 28162-F West Sloan Canyon Road, Castaic CA 91384
- England** John Schultz, P.O. Box 41-19390 ICH 308, Michigan City IN 46360
- France** Alex Leech, 502 Ricky Road, Mechanicsburg PA 17055
- Germany** David Pierce, 8503 Coran Drive, Cincinnati OH 45255
- Italy** Frank Wranovix, 710 N. Belvedere, Memphis TN 38107
- Russia** Ward Batty, 931 Forest Park Lane, Suwanee GA 30174
- Turkey** Played by house rules

Deadline for all games is Monday, December 16, 1991.

Marie Galante - Diplomacy 1991AJ - Winter 1902/Spring 1903

**DOS-Y-DOS
DANCING IN
SCANDINAVIA**

**MULTIPLE
MOVES WEST
IN MED**



Supply Centers

- * Austria: 5
BUD, TRI, SER,
GRE, VIE
- England: 4
LON, LPL, EDI, NWY
- France: 5
PAR, BRE, MAR,
SPA, POR
- Germany: 7
MUN, BER, KIE, HOL,
BEL, DEN, SWE
- Italy: 4
ROM, VEN, NAP, TUN
- Russia: 3
MOS, STP, WAR
- Turkey: 6
CON, ANK, SMY,
RUM, SEV, BUL

- Austria:** Build A TRI. A TRI-TYO, A SER hold, F GRE-ION, A VIE-GAL, A BUD sup A VIE-GAL
- England:** F ENG-WAL, A NWY-SWE, F SKA-NWY, F NTH_h (ret NWG, EDI, YOR, LON, ENG?)
- France:** F MAO-IRI, F WME-MAO, F GLY-SPA(s), A MAR hold, A BRE hold
- Germany:** Build F KIE. A BEL hold, A HOL sup A BEL, A SIL-MUN, F DEN-NTH, F HEL sup F DEN-NTH, F KIE-BAL, F SWE-SKA
- Italy:** A PIE sup VEN, A VEN sup AA TRI-TYO, F TYS-GLY, F TUN-WME
- Russia:** Remove A TYO. F STP(s) hold, A WAR-UKR, A MOS sup A WAR-UKR
- Turkey:** Build A CON. A SEV-UKR, A CON-SEV, F BLA con A CON-SEV, A RUM-GAL, A BUL hold, F AEG sup A BUL

Germany to Russia: That was the stupidest stab I've ever seen!
Germany to Turkey: Welcome to the game. We need more live ones. Get around a bit, don't you?

Germany to England: I'll grind your bones to bake my bread.

Turkey to Russia: I know you weren't sure who would be in, but your lack of correspondence is not helpful. Perhaps these moves will provoke some interest.

Turkey to Austria: I hope that your correspondence has a positive impact on our countries' relationship. However, something better than vague references to past circumstances would be appreciated.

Turkey to Italy: I understand your situation. Good luck versus France. Do keep in touch, though.

Turkey to Germany: I keep coming across you in games recently. Drop me a note. There might be some possibilities.

Turkey to England: I know we're a long way away from each other, but maybe we can write.

Turkey to All: See my press in *Indefatigable* about my schedule and correspondence.

Italy to France: If you are honestly pulling back, this is purely a defensive move for me. Notice I didn't attack Marseilles this time.

Italy to Austria: I hope we got it right this time.

Italy to Turkey: Welcome aboard.

France to Italy: Hope you took me up on my offer.

France to Germany: As per my note, see my moves.

Players in Marie Galante:

- Austria** Larry Behrendt, c/o Atlanta Christian College, 2605 Ben Hill Road, East Point GA 30344
- England** Michael Geifman, 17050 San Bruno #E7, Fountain Valley CA 92708
- France** Sean Brown, 520 South Verde Street, Apt. K, Flagstaff AZ 86001
- Germany** Stan Johnson, 10 Pine Street, Edison NJ 08817
- Italy** George Inzer, 1755 Ashville Road, Montevallo AL 35115
- Russia** Mike Gonsalves, 530 Treasure Lake, Dubois, Pennsylvania 15801
- Turkey** Gene Gesner, 1308 Trailwood Lane, Longview TX 75605

continued...

For allies, France seems to be the best bet. The obvious north/south division is somewhat better than the fleet/army arrangements with Germany. Russia is good as the swing vote in the early game. Where you land your armies is probably dependent on your allies. England usually does well or gets stomped, not often so--so.

+++

Many inexperienced players like the idea of England because it seems so well defended behind that big moat. Facing a French fleet in the Channel and a German fleet in the North Sea will disabuse the novice of that notion in short order. Even a singlehanded attack by France, properly timed, can be quite lethal to English aspirations.

The irony is that England must devote its forces to securing that moat strictly under its own control-- and there are no supply centers in the moat. Only after patiently defending itself with naval power for years and years can England hope for an opportunity to make a Continental landing with any prospect for real gain. Even with a French or German ally, you can go just so far on the Continent before any well organized resistance at all slows your advance to a standstill.

That said, France is probably the better choice for an ally because France is more dangerous to England. Take your time beating your way through Germany in the E/F, and then when the number of competitors is narrowed down and your pal France is thinking contentedly about the easy two-way he's fallen into, make your stab for the game.

+++

I used to think England was a great position to play because you're tucked away behind the Channel-- but I've changed my mind. It's not a *bad* position, but it's not great. You absolutely need to have either France or Germany as a dependable ally, because the two together can stomp you flat in short order. There aren't a lot of handy neutrals you can pick up for easy builds.

Which one, France or Germany? I don't see it as that definite a decision; depends on the personalities of the players more than anything else. Given my druthers, though, I'd take France, because that means you'll be able to rake in all of Scandinavia eventually, if the game goes well. And there's much more room to expand into Scandinavia, Germany and Russia than into France and Iberia.

Suppose you and Germany ally, France collapses, and Germany gets distracted so you get all the spoils. What have you got? Three French centers, two Iberian, maybe Belgium and/or Holland-- and nowhere left to go, except through your own ally or way around the south to Italy.

Suppose you and France ally, Germany collapses, and France gets distracted conquering Italy or something. What have you got? Three Scandinavian centers, three German centers, maybe Holland and/or Belgium-- and Russia and Austria are lying open to you.

And because of this, I don't open to the Channel unless the French player's a jerk, and I make my land assaults through Scandinavia as much as possible. Let the French slog through Flanders, while the carefree English go roaming about in Norway and Sweden and Denmark.

The drawback, of course, is that you're more likely to wind up fighting Russia this way-- but given Russia's tendency toward early collapse, is this *really* a drawback?

+++

I usually prefer to ally with France. The E/F richly deserves its reputation as one of the most deadly on the board. The obvious division of areas (England on the flanks of Europe and France in the center) makes it one of the easiest alliances on the board to work with.

An Anglo-German alliance can be quite useful as well. However, it tends to be much harder to maintain due to German suspicions over England's intentions. Its main advantage is it will not alarm the board the way an E/F will.

In either alliance, England should try to land its army in Belgium. Undoubtedly neither ally will like that, but you must do it-- there is simply no place else for the army. Try and argue you want the army destroyed so you can rebuild it as a fleet.

Regardless of who England allies with, she must, *must*, avoid the the trap that is Scandinavia. It is a dead end. At best, there are only four dots up there (NWY, DEN, SWE and STP) for England. England should go up and take Norway and St. Pete (the latter to deny Russia the ability to build fleets in the north). If allied with France, take Denmark and Sweden. If allied with Germany, let the Germans keep them, or get Sweden if Germany is expanding rapidly elsewhere.

Game Openings

One section each of Regular and Gunboat Diplomacy. Gamefee is \$5. Preference lists will be consulted for country assignments. If there's somebody you were thinking of recommending a zine to, please grab this chance to recommend **Hoodwink** while I've actually got games available! As they say on TV, "This offer may not be repeated." It might even be withdrawn-- but don't panic! Just let me hear from you!

Yer Blues #39

Stven Carlberg for ALPS in Dec. 1991

I've decided to bring back an old favorite feature, my Top Ten Albums of the moment.

1. If There Was a Way – Dwight Yoakam
2. Rhythm of the Saints – Paul Simon
3. Hejira – Joni Mitchell
4. Lulu – Trip Shakespeare
5. Crosby, Stills & Nash – Crosby, Stills & Nash
6. Aja – Steely Dan
7. Across the Universe – Trip Shakespeare
8. Their Satanic Majesties Request – Rolling Stones
9. Ellington at Newport – Duke Ellington
10. The La's – The La's

This is nothing more nor less than a list of what I've been listening to lately, with priority given to the stuff that's been sticking in my head or my CD player the most.

The Dwight Yoakam album at the top of the list is the same one I gave such a lukewarm review to when it first came out. Somehow or another, it has been growing on me. The title tune and three or four others have nice hooks that I find myself humming here and there, until eventually I just have to go put it on the stereo again.

Hejira, *CSN* and *Aja* are old favorites recently acquired on CD. It's been a while since I heard them much, and they're still wearing very well.

Trip Shakespeare's two latest albums both make the list, their popularity buoyed by a terrific live performance in Athens last month-- the most exciting show I've seen in quite a while. Ward and I were part of a sparse crowd (a hundred or so) on a cold, rainy night at the 40 Watt Club. Despite having less than a packed house, the band proved to be every bit as good as their records had led me to believe, with plenty of verve, plenty of talent, and plenty of good material.

Their drummer is a dark-eyed brunette with a Cher haircut, but she's not just here for her looks; for sheer musical ability, she just might be the most impressive player in the group. Her beat textures were consistently intriguing, her changes from one rhythm to the next had power and grace, she was always exactly in the middle of what was happening, and she churned out a surprising number of surprises! I really think she made the band about twice as good as it might have been with a lesser drummer.

The other guys were no slouches. The two guitarists, the centerpiece and writers of the band, are brothers whose voices have that kind of smooth blend that only a close genetic relationship makes possible. Their liberal and fearless use of falsetto helps give their sound its strong flavor of pop psychedelia which I find so appealing. The bass player has a slightly deeper, smokier kind of voice which adds another dimension, whether harmonizing or taking his occasional lead vocal.

They are all excellent and imaginative on their instruments, and again, their material is just so darned good that I felt rewarded to hang on every note.

After the show, Ward and I hung around the club and got to talk to everybody in the band and get their autographs on one of their albums. Their spirits seemed undampened by the weather and the low turnout, and we made sure they knew how enthusiastic we were about the quality of their work so that there was no way they could feel it had been a wasted effort.

Ward says he's going to institute the "Best Live Performance" category I suggested for this year's Egoboo Poll, and Trip Shakespeare is going to be at the top of my list. It was a good year for live music for me, so I'll have quite a few memories to sift through while deciding what order to put my choices in: Boozoo Chavis, Richard Thompson, the Bobs, Taj Mahal, World Party, Paul Simon, Pete Fountain, Dash Rip Rock, Jellyfish, and the Grateful Dead all come to mind as contenders.

On the downside, I also saw a few far *less* than stellar outings by people whose live work I'll disrecommend to everyone: Jerry Lee Lewis, Blues Traveler, Adam Schmitt, Black Uhuru, Rockin' Dopsie, Donovan, and darn it, the B-52's just aren't that good live, either. There, I've said it.

The other fun musical thing since last mailing is that I've gotten a clock radio that also has a cassette player, so that in the mornings now, instead of waking up to staticky old Album 88 and its unpredictable assortment of music, I now get to choose my own tunes for starting the day. I've been enjoying it! Anthology tapes I've made for various trips are getting more ear time now than I'd ever have expected. Old stuff like the Plimsouls and Simply Red that I've got on tape but not CD are back in the air as well. Need a change in the morning? Give one of these a try!