20 Nov 1974

A rating system is like a jail...the more you put into it, the more you would like to get out of it.

LAPUTA is an occasional publication by and for the Postal Diplomacy Rating Commission, a voluntary association of curators of postal Diplomacy rating systems. It is automatically sent to members of the Commission. Interested parties may subscribe (on a delayed basis) @ 15¢ an issue. A copy will also be deposited with the Postal Diplomacy Archives in Lebanon IN. This issue is Pandemonium Publication #571, edited and published by Rod Walker, 4069 Jackdaw St., San Diego CA 92103.

THIS ISSUE is the long-awaited Constitution Issue. I assume you have all seen Len Lakofka's "elements" proposal of 21 August. What I propose to do here is to reorganize those somewhat, as I understand them, possibly incorporating some notions of my own where Len did not touch on the topic. I am going to separate out those elements dealing with the Boardman Number Custodian (BNC) (other than his being a member ex officio of the PDRC)--that seems to me to be a separate issue and it also seems a good idea to let Doug Beyerlein settle into the job. Ultimately, none of Len's (or anyone else's) proposals in that area can have any effect unless the BNC accepts them, so Doug should have a chance to formulate his own thinking about the position before we open discussion on it. Fair enough?

What I would like to do is to get comments from all of you regarding the material below, and to determine by vote or concensus what everyone wants (including additions to and deletions from). Ultimately, we can draft a full-scale document which can then be voted on for adoption.

I don't see any need for haste. The Commission is going along well enough now, anyway. But for the long haul, I would guess everyone agrees a founding document of some sort would be a good idea.

I. Len proposes that the following people or types of people be members:

A. Curators of rating systems (Len's term: ratingsmasters) which are active. Len defines active: the system has seen print on at least 3 separate occasions at least 2 months apart, has been updated within last 6 months, and is continually updated at (maximum) 6-month intervals. (Current practice is that a curator becomes eligible the minute his system sees print. There is no stated requirement for update frequency--but 6 months certainly seems reasonable.)

B. The current BNC.

C. Any prior member who is continued or re-opted for membership by (a majority of?) members under A & B above.

D. The Chairman. May be any member (other than the BNC) or any publisher (for 1 year or more)(w/"accepted accuracy and periodicity"), elected by the members.

E. Advisors. People with interest in ratings may be opted to membership by a 2/3 vote of the members other than Advisors. Includes IDA representative??

II. Expulsion of members if for cause, by majority vote. "Cause" would include, for Ratingsmasters, failure to update twice a year. If the Chairman is removed from office (failure to perform duties), he continues on the Commission if otherwise qualified to be a member.

III. Each member has one vote, regardless of positions he occupies (i.e., if the BNC is also a Ratingsmaster).

IV. Len proposes duties (standards of performance I suppose) as follows:

A. Ratingsmasters: maintain rating system w/minimum semiannual updates.

B. Chairman: conduct PDRC business via some vehicle w/frequency not less often than once in 8 weeks.

C. Advisors & members elected under I.C: Len suggests nothing here, but perhaps they can be required to participate actively in PDRC business (i.e., respond

to PDRC business, vote when required, &c.). One possible criterion could be failure to vote twice in a row would consitute lapse of membership. Suggestions?

V. Lon does not go on to specify the business and functions of the PDRC. I have some thoughts and suggestions in that area. The basic function of the Commission has to do with something I will call the Standard Rating Base (SRB). This is the basic collection of raw data from which all rating systems are compiled. The PDRC is working on determining which games constitute the SRB.

A. Games which everyone rates are part of the SRB. It appears that there will be some point in time, Point X, in the future, at which this will become operationally firm. That is, after Point X, games can't be removed from the SRB without a decision (unanimous vote, 2/3 vote, majority vote, whatever) by the Commission.

B. Games on which there is disagreement are not part of the SRB. There may be some kind of vote by which they are added (unanimous, 2/3, whatever).

C. After Point X, rating systems can simply say that the rating basis of a given system is the SRB, + or - certain specific games.

D. Ideally, each rating system uses only the SRB, so that their results can be completely comparable. We may or may not achieve this goal.

VI. The PDRC's business seems to me, then, to be twofold:

A. Designating categories of games:

1. Category of inclusion (I suppose we have only one: "regular 7-man postal Diplomacy game").

2. Categories of exclusion--what kinds of games are not rateable (i.e., local games, GM played, &c.). Some of these seem to be pretty universal, but none have been "officially" designated yet.

3. Partial exclusions--where a game counts but one or more players are not rated (played less than 3 years, "removed", &c.).

B. Determining if a given game fits into a given category and is therefore included or excluded.

C. I would guess that making determinations of category would take a heftier vote than under B. Unanimous or 2/3, maybe, for categories, and majority for which games fit where?

Well, that's enough to start with. Comments, proposals, &c., please! Let's set a deadline of Thursday, 19 December 1974.

After that we can begin working on a specific draft, based on your inputs and what the general concensus seems to be.

Ciao....

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